

## Want To Make Language Learning Easier? Rhymes To The Rescue!

Learning a foreign language can be enjoyable - but exasperating. Anything you can do to accelerate learning or make language acquisition more enjoyable is a valuable weapon in your learning arsenal. Kathy Steinemann shares a helpful and unique approach to this challenge.

Take a look at the following two sections of text:

\*Version 1

The sky is blue today. I'm sitting on the beach. A bully kicks sand in my face. Too bad for him! Here come my bodyguards!

\*Version 2

One, two, a sky so blue. Three, four, a sandy shore. Five, six, a bully kicks. Seven, eight, he's sealed his fate. Nine, ten, here come my gunmen!

Now go back and re-read the verses.

Did you notice that you have already started to anticipate what comes next in the second version?

Conclusion: It is easier to memorize rhyming poetry than to memorize prose.

So what implication does this have for learning a foreign language?

If you memorize well-written \*modern\* foreign language poetry, you can accelerate your learning curve. (Notice the keyword 'modern'.)

Poetry written in the 18th Century may have deep cultural and educational significance. However, words penned to page over 300 years ago will utilize obsolete vocabulary, spelling, and grammar formations.

As an example: consider the popular King James Version of the Bible. If you started using 'thee' and 'thou' in your daily speech, people would understand you - but they would treat you like an alien in a time warp.

You can search the internet for poetry written by contemporary authors. Try searches like:

parallel translation poetry

parallel translation poems

parallel translation poems German English

parallel translation poems French English

parallel translation poetry Italian English

parallel translation poetry Spanish English

Substitute search terms as necessary with the name of the specific language you are studying. Review the webpages you find with a tutor, professor, or knowledgeable person to determine grammar and vocabulary suitability.

Attempt to have the poetry dictated and recorded by a native language speaker. Softly recite the poetry while you listen to the recordings. This will improve your verbalization skills. With luck, you may find online audio for some of the poetry.

Are you a budding poet? Try creating foreign language poems yourself.

No poetic talent? Attempt the following simple approach. If you are learning German, for example, you might produce a 'poem' like this:

the dog - der Hund

the mouth - der Mund

the air - die Luft

the scent - der Duft

to buzz - summen

to growl - brummen

little - klein

clean - rein

to brood - grübeln

to iron - bügeln

You don't have to worry about grammar - just definitions, pronunciations, gender, and spelling.

If you have an audio dictionary on your computer, listen carefully to the pronunciation of each word. There are also excellent online dictionaries with audio.

Now produce your own poetry recording using audio capture software.

- First, dictate each English word or phrase and save as an individual file.
- Next, save foreign language audio clips from your dictionary or from the internet.
- Now load your audio capture software and play the files in the correct order. Try to create short productions of a minute or two in duration.
- Edit if necessary to eliminate excessive pauses or add definite articles.
- Finally, convert to MP3 or WMA. Now you can use your iPod or portable media player for something besides music.

The 21st Century is a wonderful time to be learning a foreign language!

### About the Author

Find parallel-translation German-English poetry at: <http://www.a-language-guide.com/german-short-stories/> - and other language resources at: <http://www.a-language-guide.com/>. Kathy is a webmaster and author who writes for 1st Rate Articles: <http://1stratearticles.com/> and several other websites.

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