



# More than words: Real Life Stories

**1. What is your name and what is your course of study?**

Maryam Awawdeh, PhD  
Bilingualism

**2. What languages do you speak, are interested in, or that you relate to in any way?**

I was born and raised in the West to Arabic-speaking parents so I speak Arabic at home and English at school. I took French at GCSE but then decided to go to a German-Jordanian University (in Jordan) where I learned German. I am currently learning Spanish and Welsh at university while pursuing my PhD in Bilingualism.

**3. At what point in your life did you realise how important and how valuable knowing multiple languages was?**

From a young age, I have always loved languages and I aspire to become a polyglot. Knowing multiple languages can open so many doors for you.

**4. How has being able to speak more than one language helped you in your personal life?**

As a Muslim, knowing Arabic is a vital part for building a spiritual connection with God as both the Quran and prayer are in Arabic.

**5. How do you think knowing more than one language has helped you, or will help you, in your professional life?**

Professionally, it has opened the door to a PhD in Bilingualism. Being bilingual, I am able to use my own skills and experiences to enhance my research.

**6. What career/s do you hope to go into in the future?**

Lecturer in Bilingualism

**7. What has been the most impactful thing about learning a language on your life to date?**

Learning languages has helped me to communicate with people from different cultures and countries.

[www.mflmentoring.co.uk](http://www.mflmentoring.co.uk)

Twitter: @MFLMentoring

Instagram: @MFLMentoring

LinkedIn: MFL Mentoring

To find out more information please visit:  
[go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24](http://go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24)

**8. What has been the most unexpected benefit of learning languages during your life?**

The ability to interact and build relationships with people from different backgrounds that speak other languages.

**9. What has been the most challenging aspect of learning languages during your life?**

Being consistent and practicing the language so I don't forget it. Also, pronunciation and grammar rules can be challenging.

**10. What is your favourite word or phrase in a language other than English?**

*"InshAllah"* – it's an Arabic phrase from the Quran and it means "God willing". We use it any time we plan to do something because it will only happen if God wills.

**11. Are there any other languages you wish you could speak?**

Japanese because I love the food and would love to visit Japan and order food in Japanese.

**12. How has being an MFL Mentor supported your journey with languages?**

I've been able to share my language journey with students who want to learn languages, but I've also learned a few things from the students and presentations too.

**13. Has anyone or any one particular moment or thing, inspired you on your language learning journey?**

The benefits of knowing more than one language - communication, travel, and cognitive benefits.

**14. Do you have any funny stories to share about your language learning experiences?**

In English, we would say "I wear make-up" so when I was speaking

[www.mflmentoring.co.uk](http://www.mflmentoring.co.uk)

Twitter: @MFLMentoring

Instagram: @MFLMentoring

LinkedIn: MFL Mentoring

To find out more information please visit:  
[go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24](http://go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24)



to my friend, in Arabic, I said I am wearing make-up. BUT in Arabic, that doesn't make sense: the verb would be "to put" so I should have said "I put on make-up" not "I am wearing make-up". It was a funny learning curve for me.

**15. If you could give one piece of advice to students thinking about learning another language, what would it be?**

Be consistent. Even if it's just five minutes a day, do something related to learning another language – whether it's memorising a new word, or listening to a video, song or podcast in the other language.

[www.mflmentoring.co.uk](http://www.mflmentoring.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @MFLMentoring

**Instagram:** @MFLMentoring

**LinkedIn:** MFL Mentoring

To find out more information please visit:  
[go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24](http://go.pearson.com/MFLGCSE24)