

Careers with Languages

Nayotu Kasase

Carer



Nayotu Kasase is a carer. Here, she shares her love of languages and why she believes communication is key to caring

Language is more than words

At home, I speak Lunda, Bemba, Nyanja, and English – each language representing a different part of who I am and my community.

Lunda is my birth language, Bemba is my husband's, and Nyanja serves as a widely spoken local language in Zambia, where I grew up. English, Zambia's official language, was essential to learn as all study materials in school were written in this.

Learning languages was more than just a necessity – it was a way to connect. I picked up Bemba and Nyanja to communicate with people in my community. But language is more than just words; it carries meaning, nuance, and culture. As a child, I quickly realised that not all words were appropriate in every situation. Accuracy mattered, not just in vocabulary but in politeness and respect.

Care and connection

Language is also deeply personal, as is my job as a carer. I once cared for a woman (a former nurse) who was suffering from a terminal illness. As her condition progressed, she reverted to speaking Lozi, her mother tongue. While I couldn't speak Lozi fluently, I understood enough to respond. It was incredible to see how much this comforted her, and how being understood in her own language made her feel safe and valued.

Speaking someone's language is more than communication; it is connection. In care work, this can make all the difference. When a client can express their deepest thoughts and needs, they feel truly heard. Trust builds naturally, and care becomes more than just a service that is being provided.

A lifelong love for languages

While I already know several languages, I would love to learn more. French and Spanish are at the top of my list, so I can immerse myself in the experience and culture of countries I will one day visit.

Learning a language is about understanding a new way of thinking, a new perspective on life. If more people learned languages, then trade, mutual respect, and cross-cultural understanding would flourish. Studying languages at school is vital as they equip young people with much-needed skills to connect and collaborate with people beyond their school (and even their community) walls.

When you speak a person's language, you don't just talk, you truly connect.

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#morethanwords