

Careers with Languages

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Raksha Daryanani Thani lives in Barcelona. She has built a career working in HR for a large, multinational organisation, but has also found that her language skills have given her the opportunity to pivot into writing, editing and even voiceover work. Here, she shares how languages have played a crucial role in her life.

A bridge to connection

Growing up in Suriname with Indian roots, languages were a constant part of my world. At school, I learnt Dutch; at home, Sindhi and English. Spanish became a self-taught language thanks to US cable TV with Spanish subtitles, while Bollywood movies and music introduced me to Hindi/Urdu. Early on, I realised that languages are a bridge to connection and growth and something I was really eager to take part in.

Learning accents was tricky at first, and having bilingual friends and switching between Spanish, Dutch, and English sometimes caused confusion. Even today, I still do my multiplication tables in Dutch but instinctively name colours in English - code-switching is second nature!

I wanted to work with people, and languages have helped me do that

I knew I wanted to work with people and began to build a career in Human Resources. I found my languages became a real asset with multinationals. My dream job came at 23, working for a Canadian gold mining company with 1,700 employees. In my interview, my fluency in Dutch and English impressed the senior manager, who offered me a more senior role than I had applied for. This led to trade union negotiations, director-level meetings, and translating critical documents, where one small mistake could impact salaries! It was

exhilarating and I loved working with people from all over the world. A career in HR is more exciting than one might think. Working with companies and people is a real pleasure and I love helping employees and organisations to make things happen.

Recently, I pivoted to freelancing as a writer, editor, and voiceover artist - and again, languages have played a key role. I've written in Dutch and English, worked as a content manager in Barcelona (even delivering a keynote to 500 people), and recorded voiceovers in Hindi, English, and Dutch. Knowing multiple languages has kept doors open, offering endless opportunities.

Languages play a role in all of my life, not just careers

Beyond work, languages have expanded my world - friendships, cultural awareness, and access to books, stories, and traditions. When I was learning Spanish in Suriname, I never imagined I'd move to Barcelona, but that foundation made settling in much easier.

Now, I'm learning Arabic and hoping to add Turkish, as both connect to my Sindhi heritage. I believe speaking another language is a vastly underrated career booster, helping young people find jobs, study abroad, and build meaningful relationships. It's more than just words, it's a way to say, *'You matter, and I want to understand you'*.

Knowing different languages really helps on the career ladder, be it HR, or any other form of people focussed careers. Studying and mastering languages opens doors to success. Why not walk through them?

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