

Language Notes: 9

Longevity

Being in the member care business, I am always interested in finding out why people come and go in ministry. I recently discovered for myself another factor that keeps people working and staying in their new host country. I have moved from being able to say things in Hungarian to talking, conversing, joke telling, story telling, and teaching. Until this point, no one knew me. Even though I had told people for 3 years, "I work for S***** and I help people with problems." And, "I am from Michigan. Michigan is cold in the winter." It did not mean that anyone really knew anything about who I was as a person, the real me. A friend called the other night while I was sick and coughing, I answered the phone and said, "Let me put out my cigarette. I know I need to quit." That's me, a little sarcastic.

Loneliness is a significant enemy and huge potential problem. It is a potential problem when a person wants to have longevity living in a foreign culture and is unable to form lasting friendships, unable to feel that there is anyone where they live that really knows them. Without that, most people can endure a few years, but eventually the loneliness will make even daily life chores unbearable.

Technique

It is always the little words that are throwing me off. I learned one word for "pile" as in "That is a pile of dirt," but it turns out there are three or four words that are for used for "pile." My daughter knows them and my son will, but I don't. They use the words that everybody uses, but I learned the standard one. I was walking with a friend and our kids started playing on a pile of dirt, and I said as much. Then I heard how it is really said. I was not evening say word "dirt" right, because the dirt the kids where playing in was not just dirt it has small bits of gravel in it and that is a different word.

There really is no end to the amount of studying and learning you need to do in order to speak a foreign language. I have a running list of new words and phrases that I add to every other day or so. I write everything down on scraps of paper and then put it into my master list. What is your method?

Here is a lists of many words that are basic to start with. You can find this list at: <http://www.lexicarry.com/> I was able to work with the author of this book and publish the Hungarian list shown on the website. Having done this, I still have to review this material often to keep it in my working memory. EDP