

Conversations With Kate

Lesson Guide Based On Podcast Episode [097] My Conversation With Lindsay Williams, Part 1

“A Passion For Languages”

Episode 97 - Conversations with Kate podcast

Lindsay Williams

A Passion For Languages



 bit.ly/cwkpodcast

Web link

<https://soundcloud.com/user-404896233/097-a-passion-for-languages-my-conversation-with-lindsay-williams-part-1>

12:06 minutes

Vocabulary and expressions

- **obsessed** - constantly thinking about something,
- **chica** - Spanish for young woman
- **competence** - skill or ability to do something successfully
- **tremendous** - very great amount, huge, enormous
- **polyglot** - a person who knows and uses several languages
- **memoir** - a personal account or record of something like a trip or one's life experience
- **mono-lingual** - speaking one language
- **extra-curricular** - activities in addition to regular school subjects, often taking place after school
- **encounter** - something experienced, often for the first time
- **essential** - absolutely necessary, very important
- **prime time** - the best time
- **to opt for** - to choose
- **relevant** - closely connected, appropriate
- **to segue** - to move smoothly from one thing to the next
- **honeymoon** - newly married couple's vacation
- **Dobuan** - a language spoken by a small number of people in Papua New Guinea
- **to set off** - to begin a journey

Conversation questions:

Describe the language used by your family when you were growing up. Was it a mono-lingual household?

What kinds of obsessions have you had in the past? Do you have any currently?

What kind of extra-curricular activities did you enjoy as a student?

Tell me about your honeymoon or the honeymoon you wish had been possible.

Transcript:

Hello, dear listeners! I'd like to take a moment at the beginning of this episode to say thank you. I know I won't have the opportunity to meet many of you listeners but it makes me happy to see the statistics of your countries and cities. I hope that my work has in some small way helped you with your English, your knowledge of the world, and also connected us all via the air waves.

The next 4 episodes are with a woman who, I believe, exemplifies this mission of connecting cultures. So I'm very happy that our conversation will round out this part of my podcast at 100 episodes. I've decided at 100, to take a break before coming back with a slightly different theme. So, enjoy these next four episodes. And let's look after one another. There are challenges now and in the future, but together we can meet them.

This is episode number 97. My guest today is Lindsay Williams!

Lindsay is the language-**obsessed chica** behind Lindsay Does Languages, a community dedicated to inspiring independent language learners and online tutors to succeed when doing it solo. She speaks a varying number of languages depending on the day of the week and how awake her brain is, but has studied 12 to some degree of **competence**.

That's how she describes herself. I would add that she's been a **tremendous** inspiration for me and countless other language learners through her award-winning blog, website and courses; has her own podcast for online language teachers; has been a presenter at numerous **polyglot** gatherings and conferences; and with her husband, Ashley, created one of my favorite YouTube video series which is also available as a podcast. It's called *Language Stories*. One of the episodes, "Keeping K'iche" won an award at the Northampton Film Festival in 2019. She also is the author of *Not a Year Off*, a **memoir** of her travels while filming Language Stories.

Welcome to the podcast, Lindsay!

Aww. . . I'm gonna steal you to write every single bio. That was lovely, thank you.

I'm just so happy to have you on the podcast. And I'm looking forward to talking with you about *Language Stories* today but always like to begin the conversation with my favorite question which is: When did you first realize that there were other languages? Tell us a little bit about growing up in the UK.

Oh, that's a good question. So, I grew up in a **mono-lingual** English house in a more or less, at the time at least, mono-lingual English middle England town. And I would say the first thing that comes to mind is that we went to France camping. We would drive to France and stay in like, you know the kind of camping place where the tents are already there for you? (Okay)

And so, we would go to places like that and also I would go to French club at school which was like an **extra-curricular** thing at that time. It wasn't **essential**, it wasn't, you know, a legal requirement that you had to do a language at that age in school. So it meant that I would get lunch times and sometimes even class times. They'd say, "French Club is on. You need to leave class." Yes! You'd get time out and go and eat croissants and do French Club.

But I remember going to France and wanting to order in the bakery and things like that. And I think that really was my first **encounter** with other languages. So it was definitely French, I would say.

And about what age? I started the club at age 8 or 9. And we probably went to France a bit before that.

It's that age when it's really **prime time** to learn another language. Right?

Yeah, so, yeah. Around age 6, age 7.

Yeah, I think that's the ideal time, although I do believe that anyone at any age can learn a language.

A hundred percent! A hundred percent! Yeah, it's never too late. It's never too early.

I think it's on your website that I found out that it was really Shakira and Spanish that set off on this passion, or. . . ?

Yeah, I talk about it a lot so it might not be just on my website. It's kind of everywhere. Shakira came into existence and on her first English album had some songs in Spanish. And some of these were the same songs, with one version in English and one in Spanish and I thought, well that's cool. Hang on a minute, if I've learned French, there's no reason why I can't learn Spanish. I just felt like, if I've done that, why can't I do it again?

And so I just asked for a Spanish dictionary for my birthday and an older Spanish Shakira CD that was fully in Spanish and I got that just before I started my GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). So when it came to picking my GCSE's, I **opted for** Spanish and my school said, "Well, if you're going to do Spanish, then you have to do French to prove you can do languages."

So I kept going with French. And I think that if they hadn't said that, I probably would have forgotten my French and I might not have got as interested in the idea of learning multiple languages.

You said you've learned 12 languages. I think I know what they are. May I just list them off?

Yes, please. That would be helpful.

Okay, French, the first language. . . then Spanish. And then I don't know about the order of the other ones but Italian, Chinese, German, Dutch, Portuguese (Brazilian), Japanese, Esperanto, Indonesian, Korean and Guarani.

Yes. And Bulgarian. And now I'm learning Manx, Welsh, and Cornish and Scottish Gaelic. I started and I'll be going back to them later this year. . . for Language Stories!

That's going to be 3rd season, right?

Yeah, yeah.

I'm so excited that there's going to be another season.

Aww, thank you.

And of course, you have many other fascinating videos on your YouTube Channel - reasons to learn other languages. Some of them are ones that you haven't studied, I think, maybe, right? You just researched them?

Yeah, a lot of the time with the "9 Reasons" series, it allows us to learn. . .well it allows me. . . . my husband actually does the editing but he's not as interested in the languages as me. . . but it allows me to learn a bit about other languages. It also allows me to work with people who do know stuff about those languages.

So, it started at the very, very beginning of my YouTube Channel. I thought, what do I talk about on video? What's important, most **relevant**? So I thought, okay, let's talk about why to learn a language. So I did "9 Reasons to Learn a Language" and it got, you know, quite a good response, if you like. And so I thought, okay, let's get more specific. I could do 9 Reasons to Learn French, and Spanish, you know, and I kind of went down that angle.

And then as time went on, people would request languages in the comments. Do 9 Reasons to learn Russian. Do 9 Reasons to Learn Turkish, Arabic, etc. People have sent me lists of reasons and then I've expanded on the scripts.

This really **segues** nicely into the way that you're connecting people around the world. And I really want to talk about Language Stories.

Language Stories is your podcast and video series about discovering languages around the world and meeting the people who speak them. I'm a huge fan. . . from day one.

So far, seasons 1 and 2 have taken you from The Americas across to Southeast Asia. I think there are about twenty episodes altogether?

I'm pretty sure there are 7 episodes in Season 1 and 7 episodes in Season 2, but with Season 1 we did mini-episodes, as well.

Right, so this was a holiday. It was a **honeymoon**. It was a project. So tell us a little bit about how the whole idea came up.

It's a bit strange how it started really. Like I said, I grew up in a small town in the middle of England and I went to the small library in this small town in the middle of England one day and found what looked like an exercise book in the language book section. And I pulled it out and thought, what is this?

And it said on the front **Dobuan** Grammar. And I'm like, what? What is **Dobuan**? What is this here? I open it up and it's like a typewriter font. And I think, okay. This is curious. And I find out that it's a language of Papua New Guinea.

I borrow the book. I'm looking into it. This is amazing. Wow! Okay. And we'd already decided that we wanted to travel more, you know, in a few year's time.

And this felt like a good thing to work towards. . . to find this language. . . to go to Papua New Guinea and to discover this language and the people that speak it, and kind of maybe learn some on the way with this one tiny resource that I had.

Then we decided, that sounds quite intense. We'd been traveling before but we'd never done anything like that. . . like traveling and filming on the road. . . having all of this equipment to manage as well as like your clothes and toothbrush.

So we decided that might be a bit much to just do as a first time thing. And not only that, we were going to go overland, like sort of over Europe and Asia to get there, right?

Then, LangFest had happened the first time the year before. And I'd been to that and it was amazing. Yeah, it was happening again for the second time in Montreal in August of 2017.

And I thought, maybe this is a sign. Maybe we should go that way. I've just finished a degree where I've spent basically, you know, 15 years of my whole life learning Spanish. And there's this huge language festival happening where we could, you know, essentially kind of talk and meet people and, you know, connect with people about this.

And maybe all of these signs are pointing to the fact that we should go that way instead.

So **we set off**. We went to New York. We went to Montreal. We went down to Cuba, and then on through Central America and into Ecuador, Peru, and Paraguay in South America before moving on to Southeast Asia for Season Two.

You've been listening to the first part of my conversation with Lindsay Williams. Tune in next week to hear much more about Language Stories, the video series and podcast created by Lindsay and her husband, Ashley. You can find a link at Lindsay's website, www.lindsaydoeslanguages.com.

The transcripts and lesson guides to these and all of the episodes are available for at least one more month at <https://www.patreon.com/conversationswithkate>.

To all my Patrons and especially my top tier Patreon supporters, Pawel Dłużniewski, Natalia Szłapka, Spence Morley, and Maddie King, a huge thank you for making this podcast possible.

When you visit my website, www.conversationswithkate.net, click on "Listen to the Podcast" for more information including directions on how to review the podcast. If you enjoy listening, please rate it with stars and/or leave a comment so that more people will be able to find the podcast.

Thanks to Aaron Burdett for our music.

This is Kate. Remember that every day is a gift. I'm honored that you spent some of your precious time with me. Thank you for listening. Until next time.