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COMMUNITY

Learning Luxembourgish has never been easier

A woman's mission to teach her Canadian husband the local language has resulted in the release of a "fun" English text book for learning Luxembourgish.

13.03.2015



12.3. ITV Liz Wenger Buchautorin Learn Luxembourgish Foto: Guy Jallay

A woman's mission to teach her Canadian husband the local language has resulted in the release of a "fun" English text book for learning Luxembourgish.

Learn Luxembourgish, by Luxembourg national Liz Wenger was published at the beginning of March in a bid to help time-poor expats like her husband, who want to learn the language but, for one reason or another, cannot.

"I became pregnant and that was when my husband and I decided enough was enough, he would have to speak Luxembourgish to our children," Liz Wenger explained, adding: "We tried for many years previously to teach him Luxembourgish but failed."

She said part of the problem was that at the time many of courses were overbooked, private lessons were too expensive and Liz simply didn't have the grammatical knowledge to teach her partner.

So, Liz returned to school in 2011 to study a certification in teaching Luxembourgish at the INL.

"That's when I realised it's not just my husband. There were more people out there looking for something," she said.

Writing the book

Shortly after completing the course, Liz and her partner moved to Canada where, while waiting for a work visa, she put her studies into practice and began writing a text book.

She applied the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in structuring the content, which is pitched at A1.1 to A1.2 learners (beginners).



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At the same time, Liz was keen to avoid writing dry grammar book and wanted to make something people could use without the need for a teacher.

"I think that diversity is the thing. I don't always start chapters the same way and I talk to the reader. It's a conversational style of explaining," Liz said, adding: "One of my proofreaders told me 'it's like standing in front of a class and talking'. That was what I wanted to do." Throughout the book are QR codes which, when scanned, take the reader to listening exercises which can be accessed via smart phone. There are also fun games to "drill" the knowledge available online via a code in the book.

Liz's husband, who was her first test subject, now has an excellent grasp of the language, largely thanks to his contribution proofreading the book.

"As an adult learner, it was so valuable to have him," Liz said, adding that the family now sets aside time each week to speak Luxembourgish, even if they live in Canada.

Book responds to demand

While results for other learners depend largely on how much time they spend studying, the book could respond to a growing demand for Luxembourgish teaching among expats.

"I would say for the overall majority there's a big willingness among expats to learn Luxembourgish. The only big part is people who are not sure if they are going to stay or people who are busy," said Liz.

As for the other common complaint among learners "I tried to speak Luxembourgish but they just reply in English," Liz has another solution.

She is selling a line of clothing and other items bearing the moniker "Schwätzt Lëtzebuergesch mat mir, ech léieren," (Speak Luxembourigsh with me, I am learning).

The "functional gear" as Liz describes it, helps get the message across and hopefully will add to a few more success stories for learners.

The merchandise can be purchased by visiting www.zazzle.de/learnluxembourgish (http://www.zazzle.de/learnluxembourgish)

Attend a book signing

Liz's book Learn Luxembourgish is currently available online for 34.99 euros (http://learnluxembourgish.com/).

It is offered at a special introductory price of 30 euros at Liz Wenger's book signing events.

You can meet Liz at:

- Cité bibliothèque, Rue Genistre, on March 14, at 5pm,
- Cathy Goedert café, Rue Chimay on March 17 at 12 noon.

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