

Now we've left Bratislava and are driving east, all the way to the border with Poland and almost as far as the Ukraine hoping that our knowledge of the Slovak language will be good enough to communicate.



Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, English is a language choice in schools. Before that, you learned Russian, German or French. However, the average person remembers as much English as we do of our high school Spanish or French. The people in the tourist industry who are paid to take care of you speak excellent English, but that's not how we're traveling. We're staying at hotels and eating in the restaurants patronized by local people on vacation.

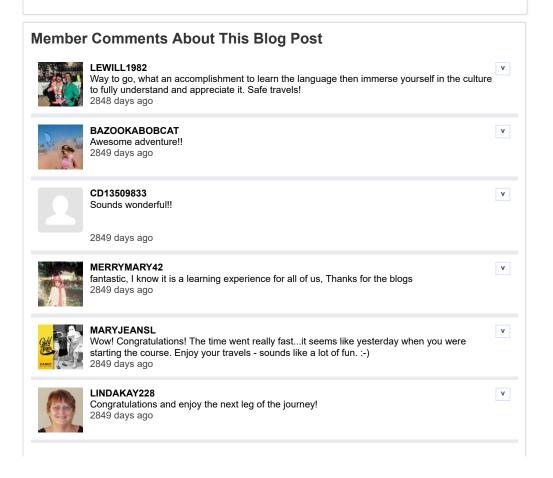
One guy at dinner told me that he speaks English like I speak Slovak. His daughter, who works for an International company speaks excellent English because it's required by her job. However, he said that he understood my Slovak very well.

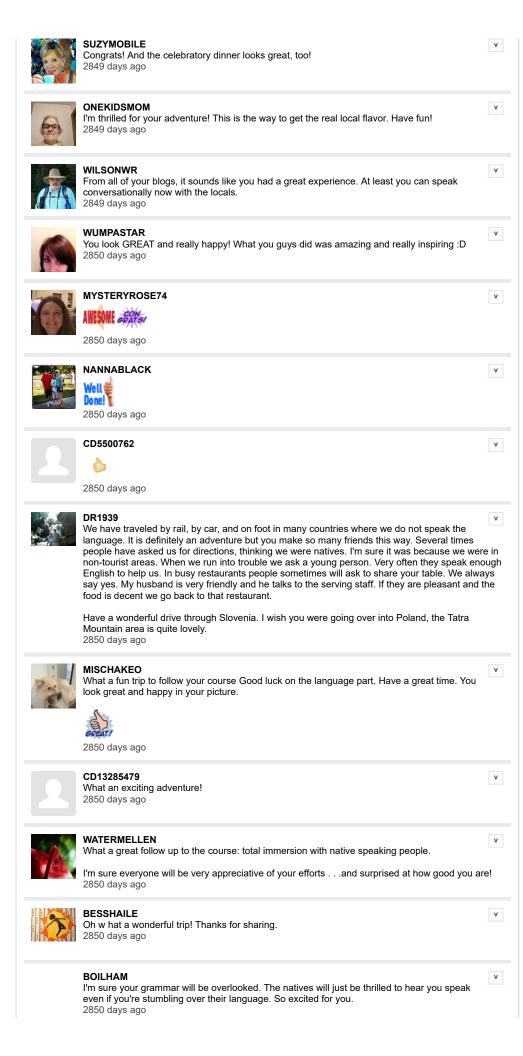
Another guy that we met in a supermarket spoke excellent English because he was an American married to a Slovak woman. He said that she wouldn't let him speak Slovak to their children because his grammar was so bad she didn't want them to pick up any bad habits. The grammar is really complicated, but so far, so good.

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