

# Silly Linguistics

TEACHING  
METHODS

MAMA  
THE UNIVERSAL  
WORD



WATCH  
AND  
LEARN

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# S IS FOR...

# Shilly-Shally

■ **By Chris Davy**

Basically, I wanted to write about hesitation, deliberation, and stalling. Because I know a lot of whether or not we actually learn something is basically down to that; especially when it comes to the self-taught stuff, we often find a reason to put something off. Naturally, being the wordsmith that I am, I couldn't just settle for S is for...Stalling. I mean, I nearly did, but one thing I frequently do as a writer is look towards the almighty S is for...Synonyms. Because it makes things varied, exciting, and engaging. So, whilst surfing through the synonyms I came across shilly-shally. I'm familiar with the term. I've seen it before. And it stuck out, because in this day and age it's so random.

Shilly-Shally is an old term and by most accounts is basically a play on the phrase 'Shall I?'.

So, here's the deal with avoiding the shilly-shallying business; so that you can actually learn and put all this language you've been absorbing to good use. You don't want to. Let me make that clearer, you don't want to avoid shilly-shallying. You do want to shilly-shally. I mean, think about it, it's very very important to shilly-shally. It's part of the reason you've managed to stay alive for so long. What you do want to do however, is not get consumed by the shilly-shally. Which is distinctly different to avoiding the shilly-shally altogether.

Ha! It's such a good term. Shilly-shally! ShhaaaaaaIIIIIIly!!



Looking both ways before crossing the street. Waiting for the green light before you go whilst driving in the car. Checking you have actually turned the gas off before you leave the house. Making sure you haven't posted anything too outrageous on social media today that is going to get you banged up. Spending some time reading Silly Linguistics articles that you've already read more than once before and know like the back of your hand, because you love them so much. Nice work! All good execution of the shilly-shally!

BUT, we are trying to learn about language here. And when it comes to learning we want to find a way to successfully navigate through the shilly-shally. Otherwise we won't make any progress or get anything done. So, how do we do that? WELL, this is the tricky part. I'd love to say – just go out and do it mate! Just pack up, drop whatever it is you are doing, and DO IT! It being the thing that you want to work on. However, we know it isn't as simple as that. You probably have some responsibilities and need to survive. So, whether it's working in the office, living off the land, or mastering the worlds of cryptocurrency or drop-shipping, chances are you can't simply separate yourself entirely from society and dedicate waking second of the day to learning. It's simply not practical for most of us.

So, you are going to have to S is for...Schedule and S is for...Stick to it.

Cold hard facts. That's what I try to give you. But for those of you that are only just sliding into the S is for...Slipstream at this point, everything I give you begins with the letter S. Because then it's pretty much no excuses. You can't really easily forget what I'm talking about. 99% of the time it normally begins with the letter S. It's mnemonics mate.

But essentially, that's it. Set a schedule. If you want to learn

something that bad you will make time for it. But to save you from turning your life into a dizzy spiralling mess, where you are making time for everything but are always late to half of it, make a schedule. Whatever resources, methods and tools it is that you use to learn your chosen language(s), book some time in with yourself. Monday morning 7:00am – 30minutes. Saturday evening 10:00pm – 30 minutes. Whatever it is, book it in. If you find that it isn't working with your schedule, then CHANGE IT! MAKE IT WORK!

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[www.sisforsomething.com](http://www.sisforsomething.com) for more  
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Listen, I'll just go straight out there and say it. Schedules are cool. There I said it. Be a nerd, be a geek. Whatever it is. You have to have a schedule. It's simply part of an S is for...Sustainable Strategy.

Maybe, the shilly-shallying you are doing somewhere else in your life is getting in the way of this whole learning language thing we've got going on. Maybe it isn't that you are shilly-shallying over learning language at all. But you know what...yeah...you've guessed it! Set a schedule and S is for...Sort it out!

Now listen, you won't always hit 100% attendance and success rate. I don't expect you to. But I do expect that by setting a schedule you will be actively trying more and all in all more successful. It's just how it works. Hold yourself accountable. You can thank yourself for it later.

Oooh, I've just checked and you've got a slot in about an hours time where you will be free to do just that!

S is for...Succes!

(That's good luck in Dutch! HOW COOL!)

