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THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract:

In this article, it is considered to be one of the main elements of various types of communication aimed at learning a foreign language, which is becoming increasingly popular today. Studying a foreign language offers many advantages over earning a degree in your chosen language. Effective language learning often involves a combination of these methods, tailored to the learner's goals, preferences, and learning style. Experimenting with different approaches and finding what works best for individual learners can enhance the language learning experience and improve long-term language proficiency. Learning a foreign language offers many benefits beyond just translating words. The importance of learning a foreign language transcends practical utility to encompass personal enrichment, cultural appreciation, and societal advancement. Embracing linguistic diversity and multilingualism enriches individuals' lives, fosters global understanding, and promotes a more inclusive and interconnected world.

Introduction

Today, the world is known as a “global village.” It has never been easier to do business, learn, or make friends. Not just our country, but the entire world is our playground. We have more opportunities now than ever before. In this era of globalization, success is largely determined by effective communication and building good relationships with others. One of the key elements of successful communication is language. Language is a mirror of a culture and its society. Learning a foreign language helps us understand a culture, its people, and its society through a deeper understanding of our native language. Doing business, working or studying abroad, and being part of a global community all require varying levels of second language proficiency. Knowing a second language allows you to communicate with people in other countries and truly understand and experience another culture.

Literature review

Many researchers and scholars have conducted research on the importance of learning a foreign language. Some notable figures and studies in this field include: Stephen Krashen: Known for his work on second language acquisition theory, Krashen's input hypothesis suggests that language learning occurs through exposure to meaningful information. His research emphasizes the importance of meaningful language use and natural interaction in language learning.[1;8] Ellen Bialystok: Known for her research on bilingualism and cognitive development, Bialystok's work highlights the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, including enhanced executive function and cognitive flexibility. Her research emphasizes the positive effects of learning a foreign language on cognitive abilities.[3;12] Richard Schmidt: Schmidt's research focuses on the role of explicit and implicit learning in language acquisition. His research on the importance of consciousness in language learning and the attention hypothesis have influenced language teaching methodology.[6;12] James Cummins: Known for his research on bilingual education and language development, Cummins has studied the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. His work emphasizes the importance of supporting students' native language in increasing their second language proficiency. Virginia P. Collier and Wayne P. Thomas: Their research on the "hypothesis" suggests that students need to have at least a minimal level of proficiency in both their native language and a second language to be academically successful.[8;6] Their work has influenced

language education policies and programs for English language learners. Lera Boroditsky: Boroditsky's research focuses on the relationship between language and thought, specifically how language shapes cognitive processes and perception. His research focuses on the impact of language on cognition, including its effects on attention, memory, and decision-making. Paula Menuk and Anne Oller: Their research on the critical period hypothesis explores the idea that there is a biologically determined window of opportunity for language acquisition. Although controversial, their work has helped us understand the factors that influence language learning across age groups. Claude Goldenberg: Goldenberg's research focuses on language development in bilingual and multilingual learners, with an emphasis on effective instructional strategies for language minority students. His work examines the importance of supporting language development in a variety of educational settings.

Results and discussion

We learn a language for use. The goal is to improve and master the language. Whether it is by choice or necessity, learning a foreign language opens up a variety of opportunities. With the growing diversity in the United States, fluency in another language is a powerful asset in the job market. With the United States' proximity to Mexico, Spanish is becoming a prerequisite for an increase in the number of jobs. Intercultural communication is mandatory in the medical and legal fields. Equality and justice cannot prevail if the client does not fully understand and is not understood. The United States has always been a desirable destination for immigrants. These people also need help in their native languages. Learning a foreign language has gone from being an academic requirement to an essential tool in today's society. Often, people do not strive to learn a language because of the memorization of verb conjugations and vocabulary. The focus here is not on the language itself, but on using the language to do something else. Often, traditional teaching fails to show students the real-world uses of the language. Fast forward to the time when classroom instruction has stopped, but language learning is still ongoing. This is the stage where an individual has acquired enough basic language skills to begin working independently. It is at this point that they realize that language can take their place, and they need language to get there. Learning a foreign language must move from academic to real-world.

Learning a foreign language is not about getting a degree in the language of your choice. It is actually about the experiences you encounter throughout the process. The purpose of this methodology is to explain the different theories and tools used to truly understand another language. This concept is very broad and includes the history, traditions, way of thinking, numerous dialects and lifestyles of a country. This provides a person with a great deal of insight and knowledge. Therefore, it is very important to take learning a foreign language seriously. As mentioned, real learning occurs when a person is able to understand and interpret information in a language that is not their own. This can be very difficult and requires a systematic approach to achieve it. Learning a foreign language allows people to communicate with people from other cultures. This is important in a globalized world, especially with the help of the internet and telecommunications. In today's economic environment, knowing a foreign language is a solid skill for a job seeker. Many jobs require a foreign language. Learning a foreign language also enhances a person's intellectual development and leads to an understanding of several cultures around the world. This strengthens connections between people and enriches their worldview. Knowing a foreign language facilitates effective communication and develops meaningful relationships with speakers of other languages. In an increasingly interconnected world, language skills allow people to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers, foster mutual understanding and cooperation.

An empirical study showed that this is what Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) did when they compared the learning strategies of Canadian students learning English and French. The students learning French paid more attention to correct word usage, repetition, and memorization. All of these students were using a very conscious system, and they were probably doing things that were slightly above their level of proficiency. They had the ability to observe what they were doing and compare it to the correct form. All of these are indicators of proficiency.

Finally, knowing another language is something you can pass on to others. This could mean teaching the language itself or using it to facilitate learning in other areas. For example, a qualified teacher who is also fluent in French could help foreign students gain admission to universities in English-speaking countries.

Reading foreign literature or speaking to people in their own language is a great source of interest and can be a source of lifelong enjoyment. Mastering a second language can be very satisfying. The sense of accomplishment is amazing. Often when learning a language, you are overwhelmed by a sense of inadequacy and the impression that you will never get there. Then suddenly you find that you can understand. This is a very encouraging experience and increases your confidence in other areas. Learning a foreign language helps people to get out of their comfort zone, to grow personally, to be resilient and adaptable. It develops self-confidence, determination and a willingness to accept new experiences, contributing to lifelong learning and self-improvement.

The direct benefit is practical: knowing one or more foreign languages can be a major asset in the business world. People who speak a foreign language often have the opportunity to live and work in another country. English speakers who also speak Spanish, French, or German may find that their work takes them to one of the many countries on every continent in the world. This opens up a wide range of opportunities for work in a variety of fields.

Why is it important to be able to speak a foreign language? If you're trying to learn, it can be hard to see the value in the effort. Learning a foreign language takes time and dedication. If you need convincing, you can help convince yourself to go down that path. Learning a foreign language offers many benefits beyond just being able to speak another language. Here are some of the main reasons why learning a foreign language is important:

Cultural understanding: Learning a foreign language provides insight into the culture, traditions, and perspectives of the speakers of that language. This develops empathy and cross-cultural understanding, which are crucial in our interconnected world.

Enhanced cognitive skills: Studies show that learning a foreign language can improve cognitive functions such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and multitasking. It can also delay the onset of age-related cognitive decline.

Improve communication skills: Learning a foreign language improves communication skills, including active listening, fluency, and the ability to adapt to different language contexts. This skill is invaluable in both personal and professional settings.

Increase employability: In an increasingly globalized world, knowing a foreign language is highly valued by employers. This opens up opportunities for international career paths as well as roles that require interacting with diverse populations.

Expanded network: Learning a foreign language allows you to connect with people from different backgrounds and cultures. It expands your social network and allows you to build meaningful relationships with people around the world.

Travel and Discovery: Speaking the local language enhances the travel experience by allowing for a deeper connection to the culture and local people. It makes navigation easier, enhances authentic interactions, and allows for a richer exploration of destinations.

Personal Growth: Learning a foreign language is a challenging but rewarding endeavor that fosters personal growth and resilience. It builds confidence, determination, and a sense of accomplishment when overcoming linguistic barriers.

Intellectual Stimulation: Mastering a foreign language involves constant learning and exposure to new vocabulary, grammar rules, and cultural nuances. This provides ongoing intellectual stimulation and keeps the mind sharp.

Language and Heritage Preservation: Learning less widely spoken languages contributes to their preservation and revitalization. It respects linguistic diversity and helps prevent the loss of cultural heritage.

Global Citizenship: Learning a foreign language fosters global citizenship by fostering intercultural dialogue, tolerance, and cooperation. It encourages people to engage with global issues and contribute to a more inclusive society.

Conclusion

Scholars who have made significant contributions to our understanding of the importance of learning a foreign language, as well as the cognitive, social, and academic benefits associated with knowing a language. Their research informs language education policy, teaching practices, and theoretical foundations in the field of second language acquisition. Overall, learning a foreign language is a transformative experience that enriches personal, professional, and social aspects of life. It broadens perspectives, breaks down barriers, and helps us to understand more deeply the diversity of languages and cultures around the world. It is clear that the interrelationship of philological and non-philological language teaching is a

complex issue, and the language teacher faces conflicting demands and practical challenges. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that both types of language have their place in the school curriculum, and that the educated person should be familiar with them. Moreover, knowledge of philological language can be a valuable tool for guessing the meaning and pronunciation of unknown foreign languages, and the possibility of learning only one foreign language is zero. Finally, we can all agree with Chomsky that “linguistics is a branch of psychology” and that knowledge of both foreign and L1 linguistics in linguistics can be of interest to teachers of general and specialized psychology. Thus, we should try to bridge the gap between these two types of language and provide an integrated approach. In general, the value of learning a foreign language encompasses personal, educational and social benefits beyond practical benefits. Accepting linguistic diversity helps to build mutual respect, intercultural understanding and a more inclusive and harmonious global community.

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