

Why You Should Learn a Foreign Language

Name

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Learning a Foreign Language

There is no doubt that English has become a lingua franca, which is a language two people from different countries would probably speak to understand each other. However, if you speak English, you should not be overly optimistic. Statistics show that only 5.6% of the world's population speaks English as a primary language, and twice as many people speak it as a second language. As you can see, sometimes you are required to know at least one more language to be able to understand a person.

There are stronger reasons why knowing a foreign language is good for you. Federico Fellini, an Italian film director, said, "A different language is a different vision of life." It is difficult to understand another culture without knowing the language. And understanding another culture is important nowadays, since we live in a multicultural world, and cultures have become closer than ever before. Knowing foreign cultures will help with cooperation, understanding the people, and avoid misunderstanding. In terms of culture, knowing a foreign language will allow you to enjoy international films, music, and literature. You may think it is not a problem to find a translated movie or a book. However, you would not believe how much can be lost in translation. If you compare an original movie and a dubbed one, you will see that some of the phrases, jokes, or wordplay may not be understood in the latter. To know cultures and countries better, you may want to travel extensively. You will meet many people while traveling, and sometimes you will need to talk to them. How frustrated you will get, if you are lost and the only person you can talk to does not speak English. Thus, try to learn at least some basic words and phrases of a foreign language when you are going to spend some time in a specific country. If you work for an international company with offices in many other countries, be ready to go to those countries on business trips or even work in another country on a permanent basis. These are other cases when foreign language is needed. People with foreign language skills are needed in the travel industry, economics, international law, government agencies, education, advertising, entertainment, scientific research,

etc. If you want to speak another language well by the time you want to find a job, you should start learning it while you are in high school. By the way, many colleges and universities require at least two years of high school foreign language instruction.

Foreign language does not only give you an opportunity to understand others, but it can also be a great method to understand yourself better. If you learn a foreign language, you will understand how your own language works. By comparing your native language to a foreign language, you will pay attention to grammar, punctuation, lexical standards and many other aspects in both languages. Knowing a foreign language is seeing the world from another perspective. That will give you a better understanding of your own culture as well. Moreover, learning a language, as well as learning anything else, will sharpen your cognitive skills. It requires you to memorize much information, analyze it, and use it properly. Once you have learned at least one foreign language, the second one will seem to be a little easier to learn. So, now that we have figured out why it is good to learn a language, try to make your studying process both useful and enjoyable.

Bibliography

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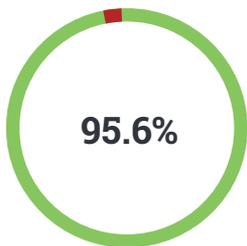
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