

CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS AND BENEFITS OF LEARNING OTHER LANGUAGES - MULTILINGUALISM

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Annotation: the challenges and solutions of being multilingual, in not only Uzbekistan but also other countries, are to be explored in this article. Being multilingual is a complex experience which offers both unique challenges and rewarding benefits. In this contemporary world, learning other languages is required in many fields, therefore it has become of utmost importance. Young people, these days, are trying to be at least bilingual, leading them face a great number of setbacks. This article investigates multilingualism, examining common difficulties and effective solutions and advantages of acquiring proficiency in multiple languages. Additionally, findings, such as problems, solutions and challenges, of researchers will also be presented.

Key words: difficulties, measures, benefits, multilingualism, motivation, discipline, learning styles, time management, effective materials for practice, career opportunities, problem solving, global mobility.

Introduction

It is true that there are numerous problems that language learners encounter, meaning that becoming bilingual or multilingual is effortful – may even cost person’s several years. However, if language learners find right solutions for the setbacks, they will save their money and most importantly time. Our world is increasingly interconnected. Knowing multiple languages opens doors to communication, understanding, and collaboration on a global scale. It’s no longer a luxury, but a necessity for individuals and societies to thrive in a globalized world. The demand for multilingual individuals in business, healthcare, education, and diplomacy is soaring significantly. Many language learners hardly know how to study in a proper way, encountering an array of problems in their study time frame. Yet, they can overcome the setbacks and reach their goals in their future if they make an adequate plan and stick to it. Every problem can be puzzled out or at least mitigated.

Challenges

It is known that language learners face with confusion between the languages they are learning in their learning period. To be more precise, they may mix the languages

they knew with the language that they are learning. For instance, Ellen Bialystok, a Canadian psychologist and professor, had a research which highlighted the cognitive effort bilinguals go through. They have to constantly switch between languages, suppressing one while activating the other. This "cognitive control" can be taxing, especially in early development or stressful situations. Research highlights the cognitive challenges of managing multiple languages, such as switching between languages and inhibiting irrelevant information (e.g., preventing words in one language from interfering with the other). This can be particularly demanding during the early stages of learning a new language.

In addition, language learners may not input enough money, time or energy into their studies. According to Stephen Krashen, an American linguist, educational researcher and activist, who is Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Southern California, bilingual learners need to be exposed to enough language they understand (even if it's slightly above their current level) in 'both' languages to acquire fluency. This can be tricky in environments where one language dominates, making it difficult for bilingual children to get enough input in their less dominant language.

Furthermore, continuing the discussion in other languages can be difficult because of the complexity of the field that is being discussed although multilingual people have rich vocabulary. For example, Jim Cummins who is a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto where he works on language development and literacy development of learners of English as an additional language. He differentiated between basic conversational skills (BICS) and more complex academic skills (CALP). While bilinguals often develop strong BICS, achieving CALP in a second language can be tougher, requiring specialized support.

Plus, people who are going to be multilingual often find it difficult to organize their time, especially if they work somewhere or study at a university simultaneously. Besides that, finding suitable along with effective materials for learners to grasp the languages has also become problematic, because there are too many confusing and unauthentic materials. Interestingly, mastering a language from different teachers who use different teaching methods should also be taken into consideration, as learners' have their own learning styles, such as visual learning and tactile learning. Furthermore, being demotivated is a realistic case that many language learners face, me for example. When I was learning English language as my 4th language, I had lost my motivation for several times, wishing to give up learning and losing self-confidence.

Solutions

Language learners should take some strong measures to prevent the difficulties they face in their learning time frame. For example, Bialystok's research suggests that the cognitive challenges of multilingualism can actually enhance cognitive abilities,

such as attention and working memory. By embracing the challenges, learners can develop these cognitive strengths.

What is more, Krashen emphasizes the importance of immersion and exposure to the target language through real-world experiences, such as living in a language-speaking community, interacting with native speakers, and engaging with authentic materials like books, music, and films.

When it comes to the Jim Cummins’ research, he advocates for additive bilingualism, where learners develop proficiency in both languages without losing their first language. This requires supportive environments that value both languages and provide opportunities for language development in each.

Students who are suffering from managing their time efficiently can lessen their working time or have more days off and make a to-do list. They might need to take fewer courses or consider a part-time job if the workload is too intense. Talking to employer to let them know about your academic commitments and see if there's any flexibility in your work schedule, and to professors to Inform them about your situation and ask for any possible accommodations or extensions. Join study groups or find peers who are also juggling work and school, for mutual support and accountability. Through that way, in my opinion, they can puzzle out the setback. For example, they should work for 4 days and spend the rest 3 days on their personal needs and studies.

Regarding fake materials, I would undoubtedly recommend bringing official materials from world-leading academic publishers and assessment organisations. Cambridge University Press can be the best example here. Additionally, if students learning styles hardly match with the teachers’ teaching methods, they can make a complaint about it to the educational center’s quality department so that they meet their needs. Learners can also have a meeting and ask some questions about the teachers’ teaching methods before attending the lessons in order not to lose golden time.

It is totally natural for language learners to hit a slump in motivation and confidence. To avoid such cases, they should have a well-made study plan and should stick to it. Staying disciplined is tough, but while it's hard to stay disciplined all the time, especially when life throws distractions and temptations at them, the pay off can be huge. Being disciplined helps them achieve their goals.

Benefits

There is no doubt that although being a multilingual individual has some difficulties, it has an immense number of benefits to consider. In other words, becoming multilingual is challenging yet rewarding, opening doors to a world of benefits, impacting students not only communication skills but also cognitive abilities, cultural understanding, and even their career prospects.

Firstly, the globalized nature of business demands employees who can communicate effectively across borders. Companies like Google, Microsoft, and

Amazon actively seek individuals with multilingual skills to handle international clients, partners, and diverse teams. This creates a "Globalized Workforce" where multilingual candidates stand out, increasing their chances of getting hired and securing promotions.

Secondly, fluency in another language is often a "Competitive Edge" in various fields. For instance, in international business roles, a grasp of languages like Mandarin, Spanish, or Arabic can facilitate negotiations, build relationships, and secure deals. Similarly, in diplomacy, translation, tourism, and healthcare, multilingual skills are often a requirement or a significant advantage.

Finally, the value placed on language skills translates to tangible benefits for multilingual professionals. They often earn higher salaries compared to their monolingual counterparts, reflecting the demand for their unique abilities. Language skills also open doors to international assignments and career advancement opportunities in global markets. For example, a marketing manager fluent in French might be offered a promotion to oversee a new European branch, showcasing how language skills can lead to leadership roles.

So, the benefits of being multilingual are undeniable, leading to increased employability, expanded career opportunities, and a richer understanding of the world.

Conclusion

Becoming bilingual or multilingual is a journey that demands dedication, perseverance, and a strategic approach. While challenges like cognitive overload, limited language input, and the complexity of academic language can arise, they are not insurmountable. By embracing the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, immersing oneself in authentic language experiences, and fostering environments that value both languages, learners can navigate these hurdles and achieve fluency. The research of Bialystok, Krashen, and Cummins offers valuable insights into the challenges and solutions for language learners. By embracing their findings, individuals can unlock the potential of multilingualism, expanding their horizons, enriching their lives, and becoming truly global citizens.

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