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# “WHY LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE”?



“The advantages & disadvantages of learning a second language for all age groups. Also, the employment & business opportunities to be explored.”

**Please Enjoy!**

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## Introduction

For a long time now, I've been interested in the benefits of learning a second language through home online learning. I myself completed a technical course through home learning with just a little portion of the course done in college.

However, when it comes to learning a second language, this can be done completely from home. My Learning a Second Language report has some interesting insights about learning a second language for adults and children. It also contains some interesting links to resources that you may like to consider.

The main topics covered in the report are:

- The benefits of teaching a second language to your children
- Employment and business opportunities for adults and children when they reach adulthood
- Is certification necessary to gain employment or to avail of business opportunities?

In any case, I hope you enjoy reading your FREE gift as I've enjoyed researching and compiling it for you.

Kindest regards,

Ray Hemsworth.

## Children Learning a Foreign Language

We are now living in a more diversified culture and society. It's now natural to find people speaking in at least two languages – these people are bilingual. However, there are some parents who believe that teaching their children a second language could make them more confused when speaking their own national language. So, is teaching a second language beneficial to our children?



Most of the time children who have learned a second language find it to be a huge benefit in their everyday lives. There is little evidence to show that teaching your children a second language will have any negative affect on their current language development. There are many children who have grown up in bilingual and even multilingual families and communities and have not developed any language disorders or delays because of learning a second language. Indeed, there are many linguists and child development experts who recommend that children should be introduced to a second language between the ages of birth and seven.

So, what as a parent can you do now if you want your children to acquire a second language:

- Make sure your child is exposed as much as possible to the language that you want them to learn
- Allow them time to learn at their own pace
- Introduce them to books, CDs and online courses

- Children can become very enthusiastic when listening to music. So foreign music can be another great learning tool

Remember also that languages are very closely linked to a child's emotions and identity. Some parents may stop responding to the child when they are speaking in another language. Be aware that this could cause behavioural problems with the child in later years.

The same is true for children who are not learning a second language in the same house hold as a child who is. Make sure they receive the same attention as those who are learning a second language.

If you feel for some reason that your child is not meeting the milestones that a child should meet at that age, then don't worry. You simply consult the professionals. It may be just a simple hearing disorder or slow learning difficulty. All of these can be easily overcome.

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## Adults Learning a Foreign language

Learning a foreign language is no longer about having a better travelling experience. It pays to learn the local language of the country you are visiting or doing business in. Learning a second language can also mean making connections with a people's culture, traditions and history. Knowing how to speak a second language can also improve your employment prospects and give you that vital edge when doing interviews.



Many jobs require second language skills.

Many people think the learning English is more than sufficient. However, it should be known that only [5.6%](#) of people in the world speak English; the rest speak other languages. Speaking English alone will not suffice in today's world with a greater demand for global communication and understanding.

Learning a foreign language also provides an opportunity for an individual to broaden their educational and career horizons. Many employers struggle to find fluent second language speakers. There are many educational and career opportunities that we can explore. It would not only help us transcend cultural boundaries, but also help us understand subjects and concepts associated with the language.

When learning a second language, it's also beneficial to understand the cultural values and structures of the people who speak this language in their everyday lives. In addition to that, most literacy, music and other artistic milestones are not written in English. To fully understand and

appreciate a literacy work, it needs to be read and understood in its original form.

Language becomes a window where we can see, understand and also put into context the nature of a country's culture. This is important, especially if you are doing business with foreign clients. You need to understand their culture, so you can build trust, cooperation, and compromise with them.

Another good reason for you to start learning a foreign language is the career opportunities for multilingual professionals. Here are some fields where speaking another language could give you a head start:

✓ **Social Services**

- Social worker, criminology & law enforcement, social counsellor, drug abuse counsellor, occupational health care, income maintenance counsellor and more

✓ **Business & Finance:**

- Accountant, administration, economist and more

✓ **Communications:**

- Reporter, journalist, publisher, editor and more

✓ **Education:**

- Teaching at various levels and more

✓ **Government:**

- Translator, interpreter and more

Learning a foreign language can be a huge benefit when it comes to looking for a career in this period of globalization. Many of these

opportunities may not require any official qualifications in your chosen language. However, your level of fluency in your chosen language will be verified by any potential employer. In business transactions, we cannot avoid the need for communicating in the language of our foreign business partners.

Learning about foreign languages will help you promote your business in other countries more effectively. If you want to build long, solid business ties and relationships in other countries, then you need to be familiar with their native language.

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## Learning a Foreign Language – A Cultural Immersion for Adults

There are some studies conducted showing that children from the age of birth until they reach the age of seven, are at a stage where they could acquire a second language more easily. However, the latest data collected by [Hakuta, Bialystok and Wiley](#) has shown that older people are as just as capable, and in many cases better at grasping a second language as their younger counterparts. How can adults learn a language more easily and faster?

There are many ways of acquiring a second language. These can include:



books, DVDs, dictionaries, online courses and magazines. These can be bought easily in bookstores or online. But experts have agreed that the most important method is by also submerging ourselves in the language's culture.

This is known as “Language Immersion.” However, reading grammar and vocabulary books are still extremely important to increase our language fluency.

For all people, it's found that practice and exposure that you'll find the most helpful when learning a new language. For example, if you go abroad and live in another country, then it would be inevitable that you would pick up the language. This is because you are exposed to the different aspects of culture that uses the language, like television, movies, radio, restaurants, museums, transportation and other public places.

Language immersion will keep learning a second language balanced. Language is something reflected by the people's culture. Thus, to

understand the language it would be best to understand the ideas and concepts behind it by immersing ourselves in the culture.

Aside from that, it keeps learning interactive and fun. You don't have to pour over boring texts for hours and still be unable to retain anything.

Language immersion does not mean that you have to live in Spain to learn Spanish or go to France and fluently speak French. There are different ways to immerse ourselves in other cultures without spending too much money on airfares.

- ✓ You could start by renting [foreign films](#) and listening to different radio programmes using the language of your interest. Use Google and other search engines to research radio stations from different countries. There are teachers who will testify that students would get involved in dramas and they don't even realize that they are slowly improving their language skills.
- ✓ Eating in foreign restaurants would also allow you to get acquainted with foreign dishes and how they are pronounced.

Learning different languages can be done in ways that you don't have to spend too much money or leave the country. But if you feel that travelling will boost your experience and education, then go ahead. There are many options to choose from; make sure you pick the most practical.

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## Preparing for Language Proficiency Examinations

Language proficiency examinations are intended to measure or test the proficiency of an individual speaking various foreign languages. Language proficiency tests, unlike other examinations, are not based on any particular scope, course materials or software programs. The student is assessed through different grammar and vocabulary questions, which can be found in any language book, DVD or online course.

There are some institutions who offer language proficiency examinations for evaluation purposes only. Some schools would require a student to pass a language proficiency test to assess the capability of the student in the reading and writing of a foreign language.



For employment purposes, many employers don't require a person to have passed any test. The only requirement is that you can speak the language fluently.

When planning to take the exam, the most crucial mistake that test-takers would commit is to be misguided into thinking that they are ready to take the exam. Most of the time, individuals would be taking the proficiency test because they have already developed their grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Others would take the exam because they know some techniques that will help them pass the exam.

Unfortunately, these assumptions are not true. It's important for exam-takers to be fully aware that you would need to be at least at an intermediate level before taking the exam.

If you think you are already prepared to take the exam, then here are some practical tips that could help you:

- ✓ Make use of your grammar, vocabulary books, online course or DVDs and do some exercises. The benefit of having completed some exercises is that it can help you to at least have an idea of what to expect from the language exams
- ✓ Some colleges have an oral proficiency test. In this case, make sure that you are also prepared for that. Don't talk too fast or too slow; just take the speed in which you are comfortable speaking, using the required language. There's nothing wrong in pausing to formulate your answers. During oral proficiency exams, it's strongly recommended to expand on your answers. In this case a simple yes or no will not get you anywhere.

Our knowledge of languages can be measured by taking language proficiency tests. But for some individuals it's not just about getting evaluated, it could mean a better education, better career and business opportunities. As stated earlier, for most employment opportunities to be availed of, no examinations are required, just a good knowledge of your chosen language.

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## Conclusion

Learning a second language can be beneficial to children because they can casually begin to learn a second language at an early stage in life. The parents can easily learn the same language at the same time and so get better value through the whole experience.

For employment and business, learning a second language can play a major part on obtaining a job or winning that important business deal. All professions on many occasions in today's labour market do require a second language skill. Just check job websites in your area and you will find employers looking for second language speakers.

The idea that one is just too old to learn anything is simply a myth as shown on my eBook report. Adults are more passionate and interested in what they are doing. When one is seriously interested in a subject matter, they naturally grasp what it's all about. As a result, learning a second language will come just as natural to them as it will for their younger generation counterparts.

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# Interesting Places to Visit After Learning a Foreign Language

## Germany

The Federal republic of Germany is the most influential country of Europe. It has witnessed the most controversial facts of history like Nazism, the Holy Roman Empire and the building and demolition of the Berlin wall. With many magnificent castles, it has wealth of art and culture. German is the widely spoken language here, but outsiders can find many English-speaking locals, especially in the common tourist destinations.

### Weather in Germany

The weather here is very unpredictable as there is a possibility of rain almost all months of the year, so carry clothes accordingly. April and May are the months of spring, which bring with them the full bloom of fruits and flowers. The month of May to September have very fine

weather with sunny skies and is the best time for traveling and sightseeing. People who have a passion for sports like swimming, hiking, and cycling can have the best time here during these months. Winter sports can be enjoyed at the resorts in the months from November to early March. The temperatures are below freezing and the days are short (comprising of only six to eight months) in winter.

### Local Customs

The locals greet each other by handshaking and saying Guten Tag. To say goodbye, people use Auf Wiedersehen. Guests are expected to bring uncovered and an odd number of flowers, especially roses, when visiting someone's home. The guests are welcomed with either food or refreshments.

At the table, hosts say "Guten Appetite" to which the guests should reply with "Ebenfalls". Smoking should be better avoided in public areas. Locals

dress informally but certain occasions like opera, theatre, certain restaurants and social functions call for formal wear.

## **Electricity**

The voltage is 220 volts and frequency is 50 Hz.

## **Moving Around**

The best way to get around is to buy the Welcome cards or the city passes, which allows the customer to access unlimited bus facilities in many cities of the country. It also provides special offers on certain tourist attractions. For flexibility, one can rent-a-car or go for chauffeur driven cars. Car insurance should be available before hand in case of any accident. The speed limit within the cities is mostly 50km/hr and 100km/hr on the highways.

## **Nine stars**

The nine stars of Southwest Germany comprise of Baden-Baden, Freiburg, Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, Heilbronn, Mannheim, Pforzheim Stuttgart, and Ulm. They are considered to be some of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

Each of the cities plays a vital role in the culture of Germany. Baden-Baden has some of the finest resorts and also has Europe's second largest opera and concert hall. Freiburg is known as the historic city centre and is famous for cobblestone mosaics, open streams and ancient alleys.

Heidelberg has some of the world's most famous castles and Germany's oldest university. Karlsruhe has the famous museum centre for Art and Media.

Look out for various amusements along the Neckar River of Heilbronn. Pforzheim is the capital for watches and jewellery. Stuttgart is famous for theatres and opera. Ulm is the birth place of Albert Einstein and is also house to the world's tallest Church Spire.

## **Travel**

The national airline that serves Germany is Lufthansa. Berlin-Tegel airport is situated 8 km away from the city and it takes about 20 minutes to reach there. There is a provision for duty free shops, banks, post offices, eateries, conference hall, car hire and tourist's information for passengers.

Another busy airport is the Frankfurt Airport, which is located 13km away from the city. Buses take about 20 minutes to get there. Taxis are available at any time. The Intercity railway network at the airport also provides international services to Hungary, Switzerland and Austria. The facilities provided here are duty free shops, left luggage, restaurants, banks, conference halls, post office, car hire and tourist information.

Those wishing to travel by sea can avail of the ferry connections to Finland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Latvia, and Norway.

Eurostar provides railway service to and from Belgium, France and the UK. Booking can be made by telephone. The Inter-Rail offers unlimited second-class train travel within 29 European countries. The Eurailpass offers unlimited first-class train travel within 17 European countries.

Euro City and InterCity trains have a restaurant on board, providing food and drinks. InterCity Express target the business class and provides services such as fully equipped office, conference compartments, etc. Tourists over 17 years of age can carry alcohol and tobacco with them within permissible limits.

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# Belgium

Belgium is situated in the west of Europe. The land here mostly comprises of flat coastal plains in the northeast. The southeast is occupied by the Ardennes Forest. Dutch, Flemish, French and German are the official languages of Belgium, with Dutch being also widely spoken followed by French.

The weather here is predictable. The months from April to September are the warmest. Otherwise, the weather is pretty humid and skies are grey, which explains why umbrellas and raincoats are a part of the fashion. So, if a visit is planned for holidays during the rainy season, one must not forget to carry sufficient cover for maximum protection, as this is a coastal region. In case of an emergency, call 100 or 112.

## Culture

Belgians are English-friendly and will make every attempt to speak in English with a foreigner. Always remember to carry a small gift or at least flowers especially when invited to dinner. The dress to wear will be mentioned in the invitation when invited for a party.

## Shopping

Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Ostend, Namur, Mons, Liège, Ghent and Mechelen are the main shopping centres. Belgium is famous for ceramics and hand-beaten copperware from Dinant, laces from Bruges, crystals from Val Saint Lambert, woodcarvings from Spa and Belgium's finest chocolates. In jewellery, diamonds from Antwerp are in high demand.

## Electricity

The voltage is 230 volts and frequency is 50 Hz.

## Travel

Delta Air Transport has inaugurated its new European airline SN Brussels Airlines recently. It flies to more than 58 destinations in Europe and worldwide.

The Brussels Zayentem airport is 12 km from the city and it takes 35 minutes to reach the city from the airport. The airport has facilities like duty free shops, car parking, taxi booking, car hire, banks, post office,

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