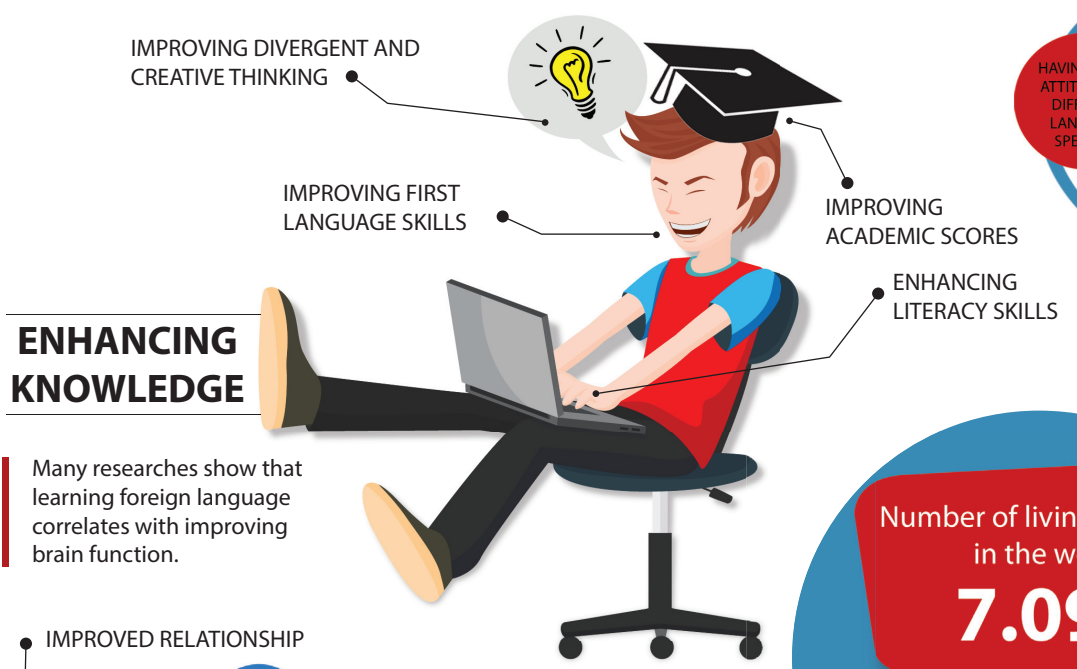
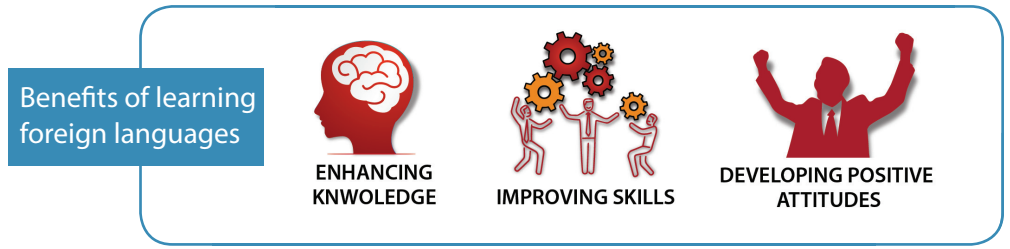


The Importance of Language in Your Life

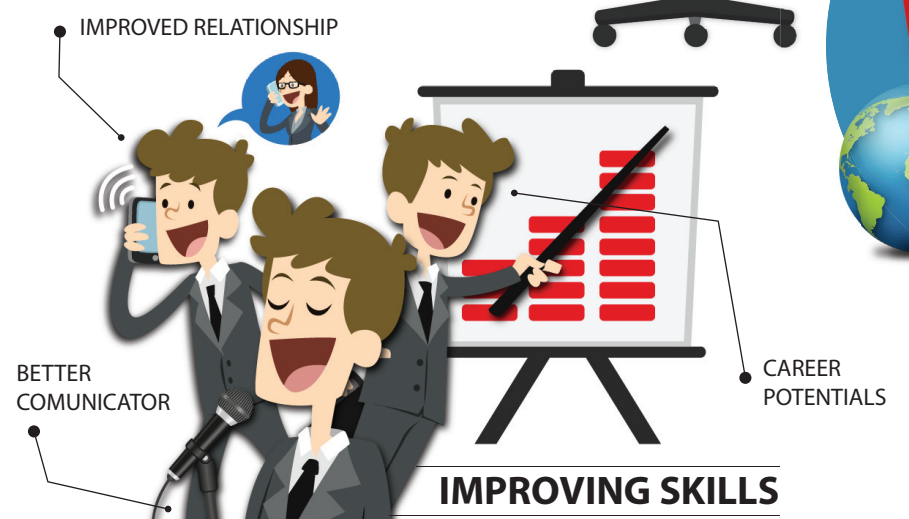
"Those who know nothing of foreign language know nothing of their own"
~ J. W. Goethe ~

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way."
~ Frank Smith ~

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart"
~ N. Mandela ~



Many researches show that learning foreign language correlates with improving brain function.



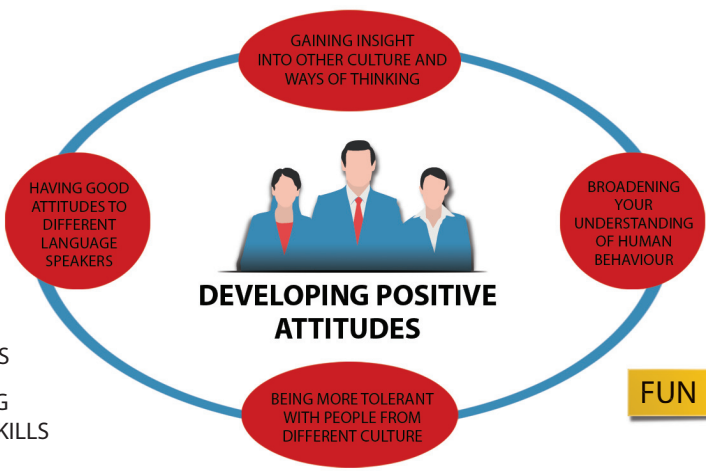
Mastering foreign languages open more opportunities for your social life.

Number of living languages in the world:
7.097

Source: ethnologue.com (2016)

FUN FACT #1

You can develop positive attitudes because by learning foreign languages, you can have better understanding on different culture and people.



FUN FACT #2

60% of world's population speak more than one language.

Source: languages.org/bilingual.php (2015)

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Rebecca Oxford explains that there are several strategies to learn language. The strategies can be divided into direct and indirect.

DIRECT STRATEGIES:

These strategies are related to the language require mental activity in your mind. There are three kinds of Direct Strategies, namely memory, cognitive and compensation.

Memory Strategy

Memory strategy helps you store and retrieve new words. Here are some examples of the strategy:

1. Classify or reclassify words that you hear or read based on the word class or topic or number of syllables or other categories;
2. Generate an imagery that shows relationship between a word in a foreign language with another word in your local language based on their sound similarity;
3. Review the words periodically (for example 10 minutes after initial learning, then every the next 20 minutes) until you can use the word in a natural way;
4. Express the words by miming them using gesture.

Cognitive Strategy

Cognitive strategy enables you to understand and produce language.

1. Listen to native speakers or read a foreign language literature repeatedly once, twice or several times;
2. Use resources (dictionaries, thesaurus, grammar books, phrase books and etc.) to find out the meaning of the words;

3. Compare similarities and differences between the target language and your language in the language system (sounds, words and syntax);
4. Take notes or summarize words you have heard or read.

Compensation strategy

The strategy can be used to overcome your limitation in the foreign language

1. Guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context.
2. Overcome your limited productive skills (speaking and writing skills) using these strategies:
 - a. code switching or mixing to your own language;
 - b. peer correction, asking your peer to correct your sentences;
 - c. using gesture to say something whose name in the foreign language is unfamiliar to you;
 - d. select the topic that you know well;
 - e. make your ideas more simple by saying something in a different way but still means almost the same thing.

INDIRECT STRATEGIES:

These strategies will help you to manage your language learning. There are three types of indirect strategies, namely metacognitive, affective and social strategies.

Metacognitive strategy

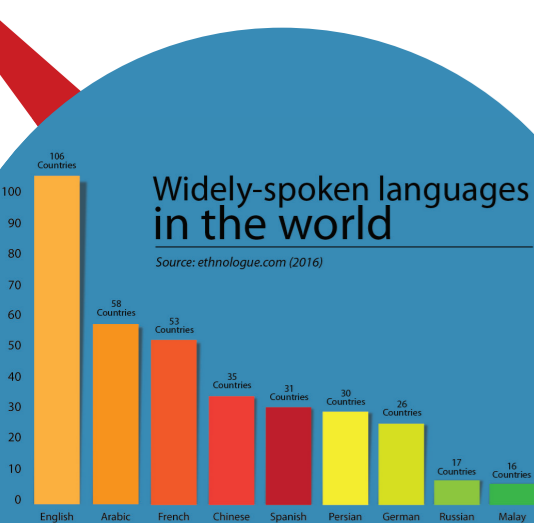
The strategy helps you focus and concentrate to avoid distraction and frustration while learning new vocabularies and grammar.

1. Centering your learning

Focusing your energy and attention on certain language tasks, activities, skills or materials. For example, give larger portion to practice your listening instead of other skills so that your listening skills may improve more effectively.
2. Arranging and planning your learning

This strategy helps you organise and plan your learning by

 - a. Finding information on language learning and using it to improve your own learning;
 - b. Organising the schedule, note and comfortable environment for learning;



FUN FACT #3



Languages with most speakers (L1 & L2):

Chinese : 1,299 Million
English : 942 Million
Spanish : 517 Million
Hindi : 380 Million
Arabic : 263 Million

Source: ethnologue.com (2016)

FUN FACT #4

- a. Make positive statements and say it regularly, especially before a potentially difficult language activity, for example: *It's OK if I make mistakes.*
 - b. Reward yourself with personally meaningful things.
3. Taking Your Emotional Temperature

It is all about affective self-assessment. You need to be in touch with feelings, attitudes and motivations. You need to listen to your body, notice your emotions, avert negative ones and make the most positive ones. Use a checklist or write a language learning diary to describe your feelings, attitudes and perceptions about the language learning process. Then, find out whether it is an effective process or not. Next, discuss your feelings with someone else.

Social Strategy

The strategy helps you learn by interacting with others.

Since language in all of its aspects is a social act, social strategies are essential. Here are some of the strategies:

1. Do not hesitate to ask questions and clarifications
2. Cooperate with your peers and proficient users
3. Empathize others by developing your cultural understanding and become aware of other thoughts and feelings



Affective Strategy

The strategy helps you regulate your emotions, motivations and attitudes.

1. Lowering Your Anxiety

Anxiety hinders your optimal performance. Therefore, if you can lower your anxiety, then you will gain better performance in all four language skills. For example, low anxiety during speaking will make you speak more fluently and accurately. To do this, you can:

 - a. do progressive relaxation and take a deep breath or meditation;
 - b. listen to soothing music
2. Motivating Yourself

You need to find ways to keep your spirit up and persevere as you try to understand or produce a foreign language.

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FUN FACT #5

Most popular languages to learn:



Source: SCMP Graphic: Alberto Lucas Lopez (2015)