



THE MENTAL BENEFITS OF LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Anthony C McHenry

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It has been shown that people who speak other languages often exhibit more empathy and a global mindset.

The many cognitive benefits of learning languages are undeniable. People who speak more than one language have **improved memory, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, enhanced concentration, ability to multitask, and better listening skills.**

What does speaking another language have to do with psychology?

A study done at Penn State University by psychologist Judith Kroll indicated that speaking more than one language **keeps the brain in shape and improves mental function.** The study found bilinguals performed better than monoglots in mental tasks like prioritizing and multitasking.

More and more research is revealing a long and convincing list of psychological benefits to bilingualism; these Top 3 may convince you:

Delays Dementia and Alzheimer's

In a study done by Ellen Bialystok, a psychologist at York University in Toronto, researchers compared bilinguals with people who spoke only one language (monoglots) and found that learning a second language and speaking it regularly can improve your cognitive skills and delay the onset of dementia for an extra four years on average. Their study also suggested that school-level language skills used only occasionally may also improve brain function to some extent.

Increases Mental Function

A study done at Penn State University by psychologist Judith Kroll indicated that speaking more than one language keeps the brain in shape and improves mental function. The study found bilinguals performed better than monoglots in mental tasks like prioritizing and multitasking. While these skills don't necessarily make people more intelligent or better learners, bilinguals are better at prioritizing tasks and working on multiple projects at one time. Other studies have shown that these benefits persist in daily life instances, with bilinguals better at remembering shopping lists, names of people recently met, and directions to a new destination.

Improves Decision Making

Researchers from the University of Chicago found that bilinguals react less emotionally to the meaning of words, expressions and advertising slogans in their non-native tongue and suggested this may make people rely more on their analytic processes to make decisions. Plus, a study done in Spain also showed that the improved focus of bilinguals helped them to better spot misleading information.

This is good news for all of us, not just those who learned a second language and speak it fluently at home. According to a study by Dr. Thomas Bak at the University of Edinburgh, you don't need to be fluent in a second language to see the dementia-delaying and other positive effects; it just matters that you try.