

Languages in the News

Study on the Contribution of Multilingualism to Creativity

A recent report by the European Commission reveals that multilingualism contributes to creativity. Data were collected from a forum of 30 country-specific experts in Europe across a wide range of European languages. Analysis of these data resulted in six primary findings:

1. Multilinguals have flexible minds, that is, they are open to a variety of perspectives and are able to think divergently and convergently.
2. Multilinguals have enhanced problem-solving capabilities.
3. Multilinguals have expanded metalinguistic awareness (ability to analyze how language is used and use languages to achieve goals).
4. Multilinguals have stronger memory abilities that improve the learning process.
5. Multilinguals possess robust interpersonal communication skills.
6. Multilingualism may slow the rate of decline of certain cognitive processes as a person ages.

The report includes results for participants' language group, age group, gender, occupation, and language skills. The percentage of positive responses to the survey rises with the number of languages known. One of the main conclusions of the report is that multilingualism appears to help people realize and expand their creative potential.

The authors of the report recommend that the benefits of multilingualism should be widely publicized to the general public.

Click here to read [Study on the Contribution of Multilingualism to Creativity](#).

Patricia Kuhl: The Linguistic Genius of Babies

In this ten-minute video, Patricia Kuhl reports on brain research that reveals new information about how humans learn. Kuhl speaks about her recent research in Seattle that provides evidence of a critical period for learning languages, occurring before a child's first birthday. She claims that babies and children are "little geniuses" at learning languages until they turn seven years old.

Kuhl's research findings show that during the first year of life, babies are able to discriminate all the sounds of any language they hear, no matter what language it is. Kuhl describes this as "taking statistics" and she claims her research has found that it takes a human being (versus a television or audio-recording) in order for babies to take their statistics. One implication of her research is that we have the capability to preserve languages simply by speaking to babies.

Click here to view [Patricia Kuhl: The Linguistic Genius of Babies](#).

Tips and Tools for Early Language Learning

[Aprender Jugando Operaciones Basicas Matematicas Para Chicos](#)

This collection of children's online math games (for children 6-12) provides a colorful and fun way for students to work independently on math skill such as adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. The instructions for the games and puzzles are in Spanish, but it is fairly easy to maneuver through the games, whatever the Spanish language level. Many of the websites linked to this site were created by the Spanish government.

Click here to access [Aprender Jugando Operaciones Basicas Matematicas Para Chicos](#).

[BBC Languages](#)

Through the BBC Languages website, one can access an enormous amount of text, audio and video in a large number of languages: French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Chinese, and Greek—but there are also links to find useful phrases in Estonian, Gaelic, Urdu, Lithuanian, Catalan, Polish and more. There are interactive videos, many photo slide scenes, and links to student and teacher resources in the target language. Those links include Internet tips, TV links (with BBC news links in target languages that include transcripts), and tutoring tips (with ideas for games and assessments.) This site yields numerous resources to support teaching and learning of foreign languages.

Click here to access [BBC Languages](#).

[NCLRC Language Resource Podcasts](#)

The National Capitol Language Resource Center (NCLRC) provides a variety of podcasts for visitors. Current feeds include:

- Simulating the Souk in Arabic Class
- Metacognitive Language Learning Strategies
- Teaching Reading in Arabic
- Guitars in the Spanish Language Classroom
- Introducing La Francophonie by Marcel Lavergne
- Culture Club Hangout Interview: Bayoan Santiago
- Culture Club Hangout Interview: Natalia in Puerto Rico
- Global Career Opportunities & Languages
- Teaching Techniques for Effective Communication
- Capital City Chinatown

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This issue of *Newsworthy* was compiled by Tammy Dann. Send any comments, questions, or information for future issues of *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at trdann@q.com.

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