

The Independent Self-Directed Language Learner and the Role of the Language Educator — Expanding Access and Opportunity

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Abstract—There is a foreign language deficit in the US – not only do Americans tend to speak only English, but US students do not always have the opportunity to learn additional languages, including heritage or family languages. On the other hand, most Americans have a heritage language in their background, and 70M in the US speak another language in the home. Independent learning is an important element in effectively addressing the foreign language deficit both in terms of Anglophone Americans learning additional languages and of heritage language speakers maintaining and re-acquiring their heritage language(s). This article examines how, in the classroom and beyond, language educators can play a valuable role in empowering and supporting independent self-directed learners to learn another language and in developing sustainable environments for language use in the home, community, and workplace. In addition, it is necessary to work to increase the accessibility and affordability of language learning so that those who are not in the educational system, especially adult learners, have access to learning new languages, including heritage languages. It is equally – and perhaps even more – important that parents and communities are supported in their efforts to maintain their family language and ensure that their children have an opportunity to learn and use their family language. Language educators can also work to develop materials for language learning freely accessible to all as well as opportunities for the use of different languages in their institutions and communities, as well as in the workplace.

Index Terms—independent learning, self-directed, heritage languages

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a foreign language deficit in the US – not only do Americans tend to speak only English, but US students do not always have the opportunity to learn additional languages, including heritage or family languages (Stein-Smith, 2016; McComb, 2001; AMACAD, 2017; Ryan, 2013). They may be potential language learners and supporters of language learning and language use, and language educators have a significant role in empowering all language learners – world language learners and heritage language learners both in the classroom and beyond.

It has been said that monolingualism is the illiteracy of the 21st century, and that the US lags behind much of the world in language learning – to the extent that a US foreign language deficit negatively impacts not only the ability of individuals to engage as global citizens, but also to effectively navigate an increasingly multilingual society (Roberts et al., 2018; Devlin, 2018). While more than half of the world population is bilingual, only one in four Americans is able to hold a conversation in a language other than English (Grosjean, 2010, 2020; McComb, 2001; Jones, 2001). The lack of foreign language skills also impacts organizations in business and industry with a gap between supply and demand. On the other hand, most Americans have a heritage language in their background, and 70M in the US speak another language in the home the US workplace (ACTFL, 2019; NAE, 2017). The often-unmet need for language skills extends also to government and to non-profit and humanitarian organizations as they work to bring aid in response to crises around the world (Translators without Borders, 2022).

Independent learning is an important element in effectively addressing the foreign language deficit both in terms of Anglophone Americans learning additional languages and of heritage language speakers maintaining and re-acquiring their heritage language(s). In the classroom and beyond, language educators can play a valuable role in empowering and supporting independent self-directed learners to learn another language and in developing sustainable environments for language use in the home, community, and workplace.

II. LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE UNITED STATES – WORLD LANGUAGES AND HERITAGE LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM AND BEYOND

Language learning in our schools is sorely needed, with only 15% of public elementary schools offering language programs, and fewer than 20% of US K-12 students studying an additional language (AMACAD, 2017; American Councils, 2017). At the postsecondary level, only 7.5% of college and university students are enrolled in a course in a language other than English, and in recent years, the number of foreign language programs has declined significantly

(MLA, 2019; Johnson, 2019). An additional consideration is that language learners include both Anglophone students learning other/new languages and heritage speakers learning, perfecting, or re-acquiring a heritage language.

The central question is how best to address this gap between the need for language skills and the supply, or language capacity, of the US. In addition to support for language educators and language programs at all levels, it is necessary to consider the challenges facing potentially interested learners, especially questions of access and affordability. It is equally important to consider all the language learners who may or may not be at the present time in the education system. A key issue is the number of those in the US who – although of a non-Anglophone ancestry – no longer speak their heritage language(s), but may actually be interested in learning more about their family language and culture. Many of this pool of potentially interested learners may no longer be in school, but could potentially be independent self-directed learners, using online and other resources as their learning materials, and online technologies as well as in-person settings as their learning environment. Key issues include access to the technologies and materials, as well as to advice and guidance from educators. The COVID pandemic has demonstrated both the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, but has also demonstrated the proliferation of free and low-cost learning possibilities, including OERs (open educational resources) (Villasenor, 2022).

It is interesting to note that fewer than 20% of Americans claim English or Irish ancestry (Americans, 2022; O'Connor et al., 2013). There are many millions of Americans whose family language or cultural identity is other than English or Anglophone, learners of all ages, with varying degrees of linguistic knowledge, with a wide range of goals and interests, and with different amounts of time and funding available. The disparity between the number of Americans with another language in their cultural heritage or family history and the number of Americans studying or learning that language is significant.

Using French as one of many possible examples, French demonstrates the disparity between those who have a cultural heritage language other than English and those who speak or study the language. While over 10M in the US are of French and Francophone ancestry, 2M speak French or French Creole in the home (Americans, 2022; Ryan, 2013). In addition, 1.3M K-12 students and 176K college and university students are enrolled in French courses, making French the second most widely studied foreign language in the US although in decline at the college and university level (American Councils, 2017; MLA, 2019).

Among the many possible responses, scholarships, grants, and financial aid come to mind, along with online and distance education, and increased availability of language learning opportunities both within educational institutions and beyond. Additional funding for language learning would be enhanced by the establishment of a language policy, as well as by support from language stakeholders, external partners, private philanthropy, and community groups. Online learning could make language learning accessible to those who cannot travel to an educational institution for a variety of reasons, including distance, disability, work schedule, and family responsibilities, and a recent study has found that online classes offer the same quality as traditional classes (Villasenor, 2022). Community-based programs can be of special interest to heritage language speakers and learners, as well as to those interested in a less formal and structured approach.

In order to increase accessibility of language learning and to effectively address the foreign language deficit, it is essential not only to support foreign language educators and programs, but also to look beyond the classroom. Online learning provides access to language learning to many who cannot travel to a distant school or campus, or afford in-person study abroad. However, online learning can also provide opportunities for working adult learners to access language learning despite work schedules and can empower heritage language communities to provide linguistic and cultural learning for all ages and interests.

Building on the idea of the increased access that online learning can provide, it is necessary to consider the broader question of language learning beyond the classroom and of the challenges and opportunities facing the independent language learner. Just as the opportunities for those with language skills include personal, professional, and cognitive benefits, so too the challenges include visible constraints such as time, money, and availability of learning opportunities. Perhaps even more importantly, sustainable motivation and the development of the habit of language learning and use pose significant challenges, but are less often discussed and addressed. The professional potential of foreign language skills is important to emphasize in both communities and educational institutions (Gagliano, 2019; Cultural Services, 2021).

The potential for independent language learning is significant, either for the majority of Americans who have one or more additional languages in their heritage, but may have little or no knowledge of them due to assimilation, language loss, etc., as well as for the 70M Americans who speak another language in the home and are concerned about the maintenance of the family language among present and future generations (Zeigler & Camarota, 2018).

The language professional can play a key role in making known the role of independent self-directed learning in acquiring new languages or in re-acquiring a heritage or previously learned language now partially lost or forgotten, along with the most effective strategies and methodologies in achieving a positive learning outcome to current and potential learners, parents and communities, and language stakeholders and advocates (Antony-Newman, 2022).

III. THE INDEPENDENT LANGUAGE LEARNER

In a discussion of the independent self-directed language learner, it is important to understand the identity of the learner, the nature of the process, the characteristics of a successful independent learner, the adult learner, and the link between independent and lifelong learning.

Independent learning has been defined as “a method or learning process where learners have ownership and control of the learning.” In addition, “the independent learner is able to set goals, make choices, and decisions about how to meet his learning needs, take responsibility for constructing and carrying out his own learning, monitor his progress toward achieving his learning goals, and self-assess the learning outcomes” (Livingston, 2012, p. 1526). “Being able to make informed choices and taking responsibility for your own learning activities are two facets of learning independently,” with motivation, confidence, and reflective learning important characteristics of the successful independent learner (U of Hull, n.d., para 2).

Independent language learning exists both in the classroom and beyond. While independence and autonomy are characteristics of independent language learning, the role of the teacher is of critical importance, as “teachers scaffold students towards independence using a variety of strategies in order to help students develop autonomy” (Masouleh & Jooneghani, 2012, p. 835).

In addition, as independent learning takes place both within the classroom - as when a student realizes that learning may not be progressing as well as hoped and expected, and then takes action to address the situation - and beyond, as in the case of the learner outside of a traditional educational setting or program, it is important to consider the role of the educator in both.

Beyond the traditional educational institution or program, guidance of the independent learner may take many forms, whether taught and learned as a specific study skill or given as informal advice by an educator, librarian, or other informed individual, or through the means of OERS (open educational resources), and lead to lifelong learning.

It is especially important to remember that independent learners may vary in terms of age, and that adult learners are often characterized by the need to know the details of the learning process, by a desire for independence and autonomy, by the ability to build on prior experience, and by motivation and readiness to learn – within the context of an adult learning theory known as andragogy (Knowles et al., 2020). Adult learners may also vary in terms of educational background and ability, and it is essential to ensure that independent learning opportunities are inclusive and available for all.

IV. LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE INDEPENDENT SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNER – MOTIVATION AND SUCCESS

Considering the importance of language skills, it is especially important to ensure that the opportunity for language learning is available to all interested learners, that it is affordable, both economically and in terms of time, travel, materials, etc., and that it is successful – and motivation is consistently mentioned as the most significant factor in successful learning outcome. Taking into consideration the generally lengthy process of language learning, sustainable motivation is of the utmost importance, as are the strategies to develop long-term and even lifelong motivation for language learning.

In addition to providing a gateway to a new culture, language skills and cultural knowledge bring personal, professional, and societal benefits and advantages (ACTFL, n.d.). Not only is multilingualism a quintessential 21st century skill, learning a new language is even a popular New Year’s resolution, viewed as self-improvement, a lifelong goal, and even as an enjoyable recreational pastime. It has also been determined that using more than one language is like fitness for the brain, staving off the onset of dementia (Shute, 2012). However, beyond the initial burst of enthusiasm of a New Year’s resolution, for example, learning a new language is often relegated to the list of failed and/or forgotten resolutions by the first day of spring. For all of us who believe in the importance of languages, it is essential to make languages and language learning a lifelong habit rather than a short-term resolution. This is especially important for the independent language learner.

Language learning is a topic of both academic and general interest, with scholars and researchers examining the reasons for the variations in language learning success among individuals, language educators and language professionals searching for methodologies and best practices, and language learners and language learning stakeholders aware of – and seeking the reasons for – the visible differences among those who develop proficiency and even master other languages, and those who do not.

Language learning success varies greatly among individuals, and aptitude, motivation, and the development of effective learning strategies are among the factors that play a key role in language learning outcome (Dornyei, 2010). The importance of motivation, or “wanting it enough,” is a key factor, essential in language learning successful outcome (Mackey, 2014, para 1). Motivation itself varies, with integrative motivation – interest in other languages and cultures -- playing a larger role in language learning success (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; U of Texas, n.d.).

While it may be tempting to consider in-class and independent language learning as separate, they are actually interconnected – all the more reason for the language educator to include independent learning in their overall approach. Language learning among college and university students increasingly involves independent self-directed learning online, especially via mobile technology, with special attention to cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies (Lai et al., 2022). Other widely-discussed issues include methodologies of language teaching and learning, including immersion, as well as the importance of an early start to continued language learning (Fortune, 2012; Pufahl

et al., 2001). Independent learning has been increasing in importance, with issues including the increased need for language skills and cultural knowledge in a globalized world and in increasingly multilingual societies around the world driving both language learning and language use.

Many students do not have the opportunity to learn additional languages in the classroom. In the US, for example, language programs exist in only a small percentage of public schools and a decreasing number of middle schools. Language study is also decreasing at the postsecondary level, with only 7.5% of college and university students enrolled in a course in a language other than English (AMACAD, 2017; MLA, 2019). On the other hand, online technologies have increased the opportunity for language learning both within educational institutions and for learners everywhere (Villasenor, 2022). The increasing interest in heritage languages, along with the increasing number of those in the US who speak a language other than English in the home are also contributing to the rise in independent language learning in communities (ACTFL, n.d.b).

The language educator can play an important role in encouraging and supporting sustainable language learning and use from the earliest stages of interest among potential learners to empowering successful language learning outcome through planning, methods, and materials.

V. DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR THE INDEPENDENT SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNER – MOTIVATION, TIME, METHODS & MATERIALS, BUDGET, AND STRATEGIES

Developing a framework for language learning – planning, methods, materials, as well as developing and supporting sustainable motivation -- is an area where the language educator can make a difference, not only to their students in the classroom, but also in their communities, making better known the benefits of language learning and language skills and the wide range of available pathways for current and prospective language learners. It is also an opportunity for language advocacy and to develop a community of language learners within both the educational institution and in the community leading to more widespread use of the language in homes, businesses, and other community settings, all of which supports sustainable multilingualism.

A. Sustainable Motivation – From Resolution to Habit

The primary challenge for any language learner is persistence. Language learning is a long-term, time-consuming, and labor-intensive process, and motivation to begin language study is sometimes lacking, especially among English language speakers. Even if sufficient motivation to begin language study is present, the process itself as well as external distractions may cause motivation to decrease. For these reasons, this connection, or bridge, between the initial decision to learn another language – however difficult that may have been – may be followed by the even more difficult decision, whether or not to continue language study beyond the beginning stages.

It is important to remember that, beyond language learning, the leap from resolution to habit can be challenging. The formation of a new, durable habit requires a change of behavior, and it is important to have a clear plan of action in order to be successful (O'Neill, 2020). As far as language learning specifically is concerned, first, we need to clearly demonstrate the importance of languages in all aspects of life and the importance of languages. Then we need to clearly establish pathways to success in language learning – in the classroom and beyond, on site and online, and in alignment with the learner's personal and professional needs and goals.

The initial step in the process is the determination or decision as to whether the student will have an educational advisor. If the student is completely independent, outside the framework of any educational institution or setting, school, college or university, library, etc., the learner will need to proactively envision and frame the process, find materials, and development assessment strategies. If on the other hand, the learner has an educational advisor, even if informally, the advisor will normally assist in sustaining motivation, setting goals, and planning for learning (Wilson & Conyers, 2018). Sustainable motivation, especially integrative motivation, is especially important in language learning (COERLL, n.d.).

In addition to sustainable motivation, important areas for planning for the independent self-directed language learner include curriculum, learning activities, budget, and schedule. Developing responses to these questions and keeping these responses front and center during the learning process are pillars of success for any language learner, but are especially important for the independent self-directed language learner. The following are just a few of the most frequently asked questions and just a few of the many possible answers.

(a). Developing Motivation

Language skills and cultural knowledge bring personal, professional, and societal benefits. On a personal – possibly the most important – level, we can make new friends, have interesting conversations across cultures, and develop new understanding of the world around us. We can also find professional advancement, and in addition, foreign language learning and use are actually good for us, as are many other New Year's resolutions, in terms of physical and mental fitness. Other reasons to learn a new language include the following. We live in a multilingual world, and our own communities are increasingly multilingual. Half of the world population is bilingual, and 70M in the US speak a language other than English in the home (Grosjean, 2010, 2020; Zeigler & Camarota, 2019). In the workplace, the demand for language skills exceeds supply in the US (ACTFL, 2019; NAE, 2017). In order to work with people from

other cultures to create a better world, knowledge of other languages is an asset that should be developed and refined over time (AMACAD, 2020). Many jobs require language skills – different types of jobs, and the need for skills in different languages is the rule rather than the exception (NAE, 2017; ACTFL, 2019).

B. Making Time for Your New Language

Language learning is a long – and lifelong – process. Not only does it take time to achieve proficiency, and even fluency, but the cultural knowledge and skills that accompany language learning are part of life, expanding and evolving over time. Language is inherently interdisciplinary, an integral part of every aspect of our lives. Unless we make our new language a part of our lives, we may encounter challenges in achieving proficiency (Leveen, 2021). We can do this by planning for language learning and use. It is important to build a time, place, setting for language in a busy daily schedule; to build a network of language partners, in person and online, for conversation practice; to follow and develop your personal and professional interests within the context of another language and culture; and to experience the culture of the target language in your community, through media and online, and through travel.

C. Methods and Materials

There are many ways to learn another language, but they all rely on authentic communication. These include classes both traditional and online/hybrid, immersion programs, as well as in-person and online meetup and conversation groups. They also include various language learning methods – video, audio, print, online conversation, etc. It is important to choose the language learning methods that work best for you – even learning language while you sleep.

D. Budget

Learning a language does not necessarily cost a lot of money. There are many free language learning materials, free sources of authentic language, and even free online courses and OER (online educational resources) materials. There are also many community-based initiatives, including library language tables, etc. Learning a language does take time, but if we look at the way we actually live our lives and spend our time, it may be possible to re-allocate time for language learning! Language learning need not take all our time, but it is necessary to make time for languages and language learning in our lives.

E. Strategies

There is no time like the present. Begin foreign language learning now -- Why wait? Think about why, when, where, and how you want to learn. There are so many reasons – personal and professional, and beyond. You can begin at any time, online or onsite, or as an independent self-directed learner. Always remember the importance of rewards, large and small. Be sure to include conversations in another language with friends, experiential learning, and travel – local, global, and online, in your reward list.

F. Closing the Loop -- From Resolution to Habit

It is important to understand why we want to learn another language as these underlying reasons are likely to influence the likelihood of success (Dornyei, 2003). If we are learning a language because we want to – rather than merely fulfilling a course requirement or for purely professional reasons – we are more likely to succeed. In terms of language learning, even if we may need to study another language because it is a requirement in school or in our job, we are more likely to succeed if we can make it enjoyable in ways ranging from studying with friends or making friends who speak the language we are learning, to planning a fun vacation trip to a place where our new language is spoken. This is often referred to as intrinsic motivation.

It is important to start small, creating “tiny habits” (Fogg, 2021, p. 3). In terms of language learning, it is important to keep in mind that while envisioning ourselves speaking fluently and having good times in the language is helpful in creating and maintaining a positive mindset, it is just as important to take a multitude of small steps and small decisions to integrate our new language into our lives.

It is also important to realize that making an important change in ourselves and in our lives is not necessarily always a quick and easy process, that it requires many steps and “small changes” over time, and that we need to be prepared to overcome challenges including distractions, procrastination, discouragement, etc. (Milkman & Duckworth, 2021, p. 12; Milkman, 2022).

It is important to understand that the process of change begins with “a sense of urgency” (Kotter, 2008, p.1). For the language learner, this is the moment of our decision or resolution to learn another language. While it is indeed urgent for people to increase their language skills and, this is indeed an important first step, it may be tempting to assume that this is enough. However, we need to realize that change is a process, and that understanding the process will improve our chance of success.

For many language learners, cultural understanding and appreciation are goals of language learning, and the 4-step process, including interest, knowledge, strategy, and action, in developing cultural intelligence (CQ) are especially appropriate for the language learner (Livermore, 2011).

G. Conclusions

As the educational background, language skills, interests, and age vary among individual self-directed learners just as they vary among classroom learners, it is important to develop a framework for language learning, and this is even more important for those who are working outside a traditional classroom environment. While developing this awareness of one's own learning may be a process in itself, the skills set of the independent learner is one that can be applied to other disciplines and to workplace and lifelong learning.

While independent language learning takes place in the classroom and beyond, for the purposes this discussion, the focus is on the independent self-directed learner outside a traditional classroom environment. Independent learning is centered on the goals of the individual learner and of the purpose(s) of each learner based on the CQ framework of language and cultural learning drive, knowledge, strategy, and action (Livermore, 2011).

It is essential to keep these individual goals – personal, professional, academic, etc. – along with the process of language and cultural learning -- present throughout the learning process. It is that sense of purpose in the language learning process, that drives the individual language learning program, along with the development of time management, organizational, and motivational strategies.

In addition, in order to create a learning environment for sustainable multilingualism, it is essential that the individual self-directed language learning program, based on the language learning purpose and goals of the individual, include a wide variety of learning materials highlighting authentic language resources.

While independent self-directed learning highlights the role of the learner as a proactive leader in the learning process, an advisor or mentor can play a significant part in planning and implementing the independent learning experience, from developing a learning plan and sourcing materials to supporting sustainable motivation, and beyond.

Initially, it is essential to realistically determine if the prospective independent learner is ready and prepared for self-directed independent learning. Deciding on a whim, or making a New Year's resolution, may – or may not be enough to ensure an effective and success independent learning experience. While a decision to learn another language can be made in an instant, the process itself is time-consuming and labor-intensive, and purpose is key to maintaining the sustainable motivation essential to a positive experience and successful outcome. Staying in touch with the purpose that is driving the independent learner – even when tedium and external factors make this a challenge – is key to success. In this area, an advisor – an educator, mentor, or family member or friend – can make all the difference – helping the learner to persevere and to carve out a place for the new language among all the demands of daily life (Leveen, 2021). It is interesting to note that, while the independent learning experience begins with and revolves around the independent self-directed learner, the role of the educator advisor is significant, even in the case of an adult learner.

Purpose established, and motivation in place, it is important to address the action steps needed to implement an effective learning program likely to lead to a successful learning outcome. The time to be allotted to learning is the central question, requiring realism and self-discipline on the part of the learner. Goals are also important, with the goal of being able to hold a conversation and to talk about oneself general learner goals, and specific goals such as being to talk to a family member or friend, or the educator advisor, or to be able to engage with local native speakers in the new language during travel among possible individual learner goals.

In the independent learning process, it is essential to consider the responsibilities of the learner as well as the role of the educator advisor. In this new learning framework, both are different that they would be in a traditional learning environment. It is especially important for the individual independent self-directed learner to understand their motivation in order to maximize its positive impact on their learning. Motivation has often been considered in terms of integrative motivation – an interest in another culture or in people from another culture, or instrumental motivation – learning another language in order to achieve a goal.

VI. CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Language skills are needed in a globalized world and an increasingly multilingual society. Independent self-directed language learning not only empowers the learner, but also expands access to language learning and of an additional or heritage language. While independent learning has been examined here specifically within the context of learning additional languages, independent learning skills -- once mastered – can be applied in other settings with other goals. Setting goals, developing a plan, and assessing progress are key. Online resources and community-based programs are dramatically increasing the possibilities available to the language learner, even to those with the most limited budget or ability to travel.

Learning additional languages is a worthwhile endeavor in every aspect, empowering us to grow as individuals, to better understand the world around us, and to interact directly with other cultures. Language skills may also bring opportunities in the workplace and in our research.

We can successfully learn a language at any time, at any age, and through many different methods. The important factors are motivation – wanting to learn; making the decision to learn and a plan for learning; making time; and understanding the process of making change and how to deal with the inevitable ups and downs of any important long-term undertaking.

In our language learning and in working with language learners, it is always important to keep in mind our reasons for language learnings, and all the benefits and enjoyment that knowledge of other languages bring to our lives. Keeping these goals in sight at all times, while maintaining motivation through awareness of the process of change and

frequent positive reinforcement and rewards, can help. In addition, planning for language learning and use is important for all learners, especially for students during school breaks and for independent learners.

For language learners, it is especially important to take ownership of the process of learning and for language educators encourage each learner to do so, again especially for students during school breaks and for independent self-directed learners.

Beginning with the initial encounter and decision to learn another language, to the integration of another language and culture into one's life, learning another language is a unique and rewarding journey. It is essential to read and study, to watch and listen to media, to experience other cultures in a variety of settings, to interact with others, to travel globally and locally, and to enjoy the process at every step along the way.

VII. CONCLUSIONS – EXPANDING ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY THROUGH INDEPENDENT LANGUAGE LEARNING

Beyond the classroom, language educators have the opportunity to expand access to language learning through the encouragement and support of independent language learning – by learners of all ages, and of differing ability and educational background. As language educators, scholars, and researchers, it is natural to focus on students in the classroom.

However, it is necessary to work to increase the accessibility and affordability of language learning so that those who are not in the educational system, especially adult learners, have access to learning new languages, including heritage languages. It is equally – and perhaps even more – important that parents and communities are supported in their efforts to maintain their family language and ensure that their children have an opportunity to learn and use their family language.

Language educators can also work to develop materials for language learning freely accessible to all as well as opportunities for the use of different languages in their institutions and communities, in-person and online, as well as in the workplace, effectively demonstrating to learners the benefits of their language skills.

These are areas where educators can make a real difference, working with parents and developing language use in the home and community, as well as creating freely available online materials for all languages and grade levels, and by developing opportunities and materials for adult learners and for all learning styles. Beyond the benefits to the individual, the family, community, and society, sustainable multilingualism supports the development of an international mindset and the values of global citizenship. The independent language learner and the language educator can play a significant role in this process.

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