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Bilingual Education

Speaking more than one language is a skill that many people take for granted and it opens the door for communication with people from other parts of the world. The United States is a huge melting pot as it is and the number of people who grow up knowing more than one language continues to increase as well as the question of bilingual education. Bilingual education and bilingualism should be encouraged in the United States because knowing two languages will help with connecting to other cultures among peers and it will expand job opportunities as bilingual individuals are in demand.

Firstly, bilingual education helps individuals communicate with people from different backgrounds. American society as a whole is and will be a huge melting pot of different cultures, ethnic backgrounds and languages. People who grow up bilingual in these diverse settings tend to have more meaningful conversations and interactions with others without the need for an interpreter which helps with not alienating others and leading them to believe that they belong to one group or are not welcome in another. “Students are able to engage with languages through folk tales, songs, idioms and other primary sources of information without requiring translation leading to more meaningful cultural exchanges.”(Anglia). Those who know multiple languages bond and interact with each other on different levels including culturally, musically, and

personally. By having a language in common with people of different backgrounds it helps them feel more comfortable around each other even if they are in a foreign place. Bilingual education and bilingualism in general promotes more cognitive development than with monolingual speakers due to bilingual speakers having “enhanced attention, memory, cognitive flexibility, symbolic representation and other forms of a set of skills known as executive control.”(Öztürk 27). This leads to more meaningful interactions with others in a way that increases appreciation for the differences in each culture as well as an open-mindedness to new cultural experiences. Bilingualism creates better communication skills which help for future relationships with other individuals in different settings; such as the workplace or job hunting.

Secondly, bilingualism opens up more job opportunities for speakers of more than one language. In the United States the demand for multilingual speakers is increasing at a tremendous rate “Over the past five years, demand for bilingual workers in the United States more than doubled. In 2010, there were roughly 240,000 job postings aimed at bilingual workers; by 2015, that figure had ballooned to approximately 630,000.”(“Demand for Bilingual Workers”). The rising need for bilingual speakers in different occupations in the United States is getting even higher, which is another reason why being able to speak more than one language is becoming an important skill needed for different aspects of life. Bilingual education would not only help bilingual students in forming more impactful relations in general, but also in the workforce, “Bilingual college graduates are in high demand, and employees who can speak multiple languages frequently ascend to higher levels of the corporate structure than their monolingual colleagues. Between 2010 and 2015, demand for bilingual employees rose more than 150%.”(“Read Why Bilingual Education is Important”). For some jobs, interacting with

people who do not speak English that well on a daily basis is a common occurrence while those seeking employment or recent graduates from universities and colleges who also happen to know another language will find that the professional opportunities within their reach are much closer than for monolingual speakers.

In conclusion, bilingual education and bilingualism should be encouraged in America because it not only opens up more possibilities of meaningful interactions but also increases job prospects for recent graduates or those close to joining the workforce. By creating a bridge among the huge melting pot that is American society, people will tend to be more open-minded, have a bigger impact in terms of relationships and a better sense of unity among different types of people. This commonality of language closes the language barrier gap as well as better prevents alienation while also giving bilingual students better job prospects once they are done studying.

Works Cited

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