

Thinking in English

We often underestimate our ability to learn languages. The brain offers enormous capacity for languages. If someone learns different languages then this will develop the thinking processes within the brain itself. This is why the ability to 'think' in different languages is so often seen as an advantage.

What we need to realize is that the ability to use different languages, even to a modest extent, can have a positive impact on our thinking processes. Being able to see the same phenomenon from different angles, as though looking through different language 'spectacles' can have a very interesting impact on our ability to think and understand. In other words, being able to frame our thoughts in more than one language can give us advantages in terms of thinking and studying.

Thinking in English doesn't only promote linguistic competence. Because of the different 'thinking horizons' which result from working in another language **Thinking in English** can also have an impact on conceptualization, literally *how we think*. Being able to think about something in different languages can enrich our understanding of concepts and help broaden our *conceptual mapping* resources. This allows better association of different concepts and helps the learner go towards a more sophisticated level of learning in general.

Thinking in English provides a situation in which your attention is on some form of learning activity which is not the language itself. So what we are doing is providing the opportunity to learn to 'think' in the language, not just learn about the language itself as the major learning focus.

1. We usually think we are better at learning languages than we really are.
2. Learning languages improves the brain's ability to work.
3. We think in different ways when we think in different languages.
4. Thinking in a foreign language helps you to learn that language.
5. We understand concepts in the same way, whichever language we are using to think.
6. The more languages we speak, the more ways of looking at a situation we have available to us.
7. Knowledge of different languages obstructs our ability to link different concepts together.
8. We can learn languages through using them as much as through studying them.



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1 Look at the title of the article. What issues do you think it will address? You are going to discuss this question with your partner. First of all, imagine the conversation you are going to have with them in English. Make a note in the box of any language you are unsure about, or phrases you would like to improve.

2 Now read the text and see if the issues you discussed are mentioned in the text.

In a moment you will discuss your conclusions with a partner. First of all, think through the conversation you are going to have with them in English. Make a note in the box of any language you are unsure about, or phrases you would like to improve.

3 Now read the text again and decide if the eight statements under the text are true, false or not clear from the text. If they are false, correct them so that they are true.

In a moment you will discuss your answers with a partner. First of all, think through the conversation you are going to have with them in English. Make a note in the box of any language you are unsure about, or phrases you would like to improve.

4 Your teacher will give you a number. Imagine they are going to ask you to give your answer to the class for that statement. What will you say? Think about it quietly for 30 seconds. Make a note in the box of any language you are unsure about, or phrases you would like to improve.

5 Next you will discuss with your partner your opinions of the text and the points it makes. Think through what you will say to them and imagine their replies. Make a note in the box of any language you are unsure about, or phrases you would like to improve.

