

The Grandeur of the Greek Language

by Anna Arsenis

A campaign has already started at Beverly Hills Girls High School to ...save languages. The number of students choosing a second language has been dropping year by year. However, teachers try their best to keep classes going for the years to come... I spoke with one of the new young language teachers, Konnie Zagrimanis who is trying hard to convince her students about the value of learning a second language. Both she and her colleagues have put up many signs around the school (and a lot of their own personal time) to convince students that languages are not as hard as they might think! Students seem to have the wrong impression about the study of a language, they are either intimidated by it or consider it too hard, some even think that choosing a language may scale them down in the HSC...

Our Greek Experience

"Learning" Greek in primary school at afternoon/Saturday Greek school was sometimes a dreaded experience. Some teachers taught the Greek language using their old fashioned teaching methods. Evidently, this did not achieve the ultimate goal which was to improve the language skills of the children. Indeed, at times these methods worked against the goals of second language acquisition!

The emphasis, these days, is to give students the opportunity to learn Greek in an encouraging and refreshing environment.

At Beverly Hills Girls H.S. we have chosen to study the Greek language for a number of reasons. We are taught by a young enthusiastic teacher who has herself experienced the old fashioned Greek school teaching methods and wants to provide her students with a much more meaningful experience.

The passionate new teachers that have emerged in the languages faculty at this school, bring modern, relevant learning, that attracts both Greek and non-Greek students.

Our syllabus covers issues faced by teenagers in Greece, the migrant experience, Greek celebrities and famous figures. In all, it provides a greater insight into Greek culture.

A particular feature of the Greek syllabus at Beverly Hills Girls High School, is that students are offered the opportunity to travel to Greece to strengthen their language skills also experience the Greek lifestyle and culture.

Learning Greek has not only helped us develop our language skills, but it has indirectly helped us understand mathematical, historical and scientific words that derive from the Greek language!

Knowing a second language opens up so many doors in this multicultural country and having the opportunity to travel to Greece with fellow students is an experience we will remember for the rest of our lives!!!

Despina Fandakis,
Elena Kambas,
Irene Panayiotou,
Barabara Iordanidis and
Elena Kavallaris

Konnie is a young, enthusiastic, very approachable teacher who is always willing to extend the lesson beyond the classroom. She attends seminars, makes sure that her students love the study of language and always comes up with fresh ideas about how to make the lesson more interesting for her students.

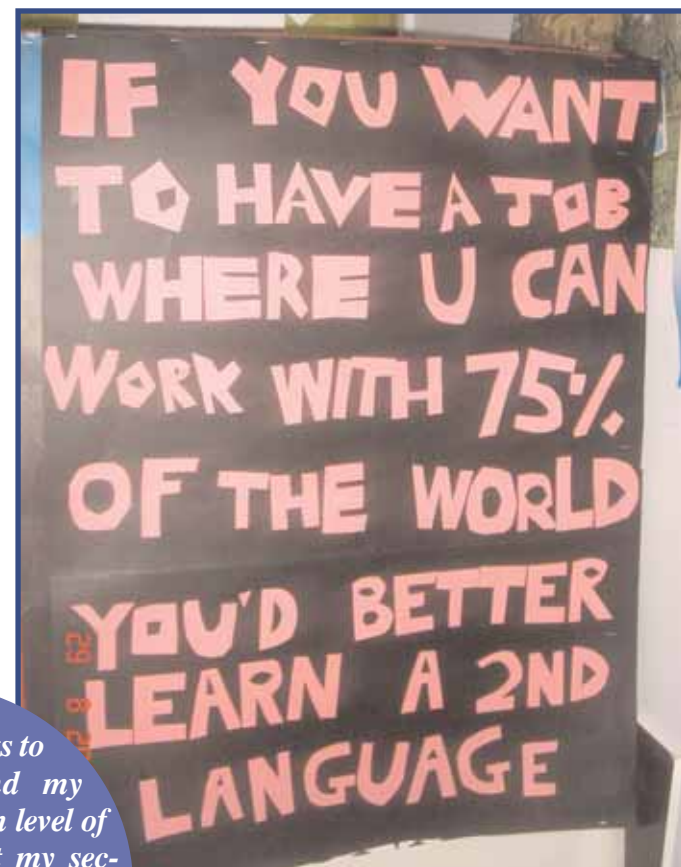
She is living proof that learning a language is beneficial for all. In particular, she advocates that "the Modern Greek is a language that everyone should choose to learn..."

Things have changed throughout the years... There are new ways of teaching... and if you learn Greek you are learning the language behind much medical and scientific terminology. Greek words are everywhere... The Greek language has deep and strong roots in the past and opens up a whole new world... Why do you think so many poets and writers have studied Modern Greek?

Students should first be encouraged from their own family the positive aspects of learning a language. If parents do not encourage learning a foreign language, they cannot expect their children to select a language as a subject.

Conflicts in the family sometimes have a negative influence on children's decisions. Australia is a multicultural nation. One parent could be Greek, the other not. But the parents should stay focused on what's best for the child. Obviously if the parents are from two language backgrounds, children would benefit from formally studying both

The greatest benefits to my learning and my exposure to the high level of teaching throughout my secondary public education has only helped me to kick that ball in the right direction.
Denise Triantafyllou



languages! The more children know, the better it is for them.

Language is a means of expression. Through language -using a series of words- you can express your feelings, your thoughts... and the Greek language is such a rich language... don't hesitate, just try it!

Beverly Hills girls High School is a very special school because it actually offers students the opportunity to learn five languages: Arabic, Italian, French, Chinese and Greek! The language teach-

