

A big applause to Ross Kovanis on his speech about being bilingual

The following text is the speech read out by Ross (Triantafillos) Kovanis, Year 6 student of Clemton Park Primary School. It was presented during Open Day (Education Week 09) on Thursday 28 May 2009. He writes about the meaning of being bilingual.



in life, teaches you to appreciate and enjoy two languages and with that two cultures. You appreciate people's differences like their history, their climate, their food and music and at the same time you appreciate many things that two cultures have in common, like people's struggle to find happiness and a good life. In Australia we are lucky enough to be able to become bilingual even later in life as there are many opportunities to learn a second language. From Primary school to high school and through to university students and adults are able to choose from many languages.

would stop ripping off all the tourists and you would probably manage to get the decent food in most restaurants. You would understand their songs and movies without the subtitles so you would not laugh two minutes after the punch line has past.

Australia is a multicultural society and we are very lucky to live in it because it promotes all cultures all languages and all dreams as long as people are prepared to work hard to achieve these goals.

And for that being bilingual is BONZA!!!!

Clemton Park Primary school gave Triantafillos a big round of applause at the end of his enthusiastic speech and his insight into the benefits of being a bilingual is a credit to himself, his family, his school and his current Modern Greek teacher, Mrs Anna Skribias.

BEING BILINGUAL

"Hello my name is Ross!

GEIA SAS, ME LENE TRIANTAFULLO.

A bilingual example and let me tell you I am one of many in our community. Many of our teachers and most of our fellow students are also bilingual. Being bilingual is an advantage in many professions. For example a bilingual ambulance worker can speak to a migrant that is ill or sick in another language than English.

Being bilingual is something you don't at first choose but it is a situation you are born into most of the time in Australia. When I was born and growing up I responded to meanings in two languages: Greek and English of course "gaga goo goo" belongs to 50th languages. When I started school, English became the dominant language. I was taught in English and spoke to my

friends in English, watched TV shows and movies in English.

However I didn't forget my Greek. How could I ever with both grandmothers on my back?? You have to imagine the following spoken in Greek:

"Rossy, only two jumpers? Wear another jacket, its only 25C."

"Rossy, eat up or you must be hungry?"

"Why yiayia giagia?" "Because I only see 1 lunchbox! Tell mummy next time to put you 2."

Yes, folks you get to be very fluent and bilingual when you hear these instructions every day of your school life.

On a serious note, being bilingual is a definite advantage because

It allows your brain to open up and operate at a higher level. It processes, thinks much faster.

Being bilingual, whether you are born into it or you pick up the language later

Sometimes they start with the language of their backgrounds and later they pick up a new language and that makes them multilingual. So if I could say a lot more than just Geia sou, Bonjour, Bongiorno or Guten Tag, that will make me a multilingual.

But because I can't say much more at this stage I'm only a bilingual.

How exciting would it be if we could learn a language in a few weeks? Imagine how different travelling will be the taxi drivers around the world



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