Yuko KINOSHITA and Yanyin ZHANG
Australian National University

Why do we teach languages at universities?
Re-conceptualization of foreign language education

Abstract

Despite the public recognition of a skill shortage in foreign languages, the environment around foreign language education at Australian universities has been harsh. Many language programs are under financial pressure, and some have been closed. In our day-to-day operations, we language educators are challenged, implicitly and explicitly, by a deeply uncomfortable question: Should foreign languages be taught at universities?

We believe the answer is “Yes”, but our belief alone is not enough to change public perception. We must examine the foundation of our belief, and openly discuss whether our belief is indeed sustained by current practice.

This paper presents some first steps in this exploration. We first discuss the current trend in the Australian university sector and the received conceptual basis for foreign language education. We then present our re-conceptualisation of the role of tertiary language education—a powerful educational platform for the liberal arts values. To support our argument we will cite evidence from graduates who have studied Japanese language at the University of Canberra (UC). By way of conclusion, we will suggest future directions for foreign language studies at universities.

1. Introduction

“Should foreign language studies be a part of university education?” Many of us find this question absurd and the answer is obvious—yes, of course. However, evidence around us, including market responses and political beliefs, suggests that the question is not absurd at all and must be treated seriously.

In this paper, we tackle the question by exploring the conceptual basis of university language education. We argue that language studies at university should not be considered simply as professional, vocational or technical skill training, as it often is. Rather, it is a part of liberal arts, contributing to the intellectual development as well as the employability of students beyond mere language facility. This does not mean that cultural studies or exposure should replace the linguistic curriculum, as has been suggested by some. On the contrary, the framework of language learning itself is the key; it provides a platform for implicit intellectual and cultural development.
and offers a different pathway to such attainment. This is what makes language studies unique and valuable.

In subsequent sections, we first briefly discuss the current climate around foreign language education in universities. We then look closer at the dominant paradigm of foreign language by examining questionnaire results from current students and present our position: language education is a part of liberal arts, where students develop intellectual arts rather than engage in skill training for vocation. Finally, we support a reconceptualization of the role of university language education by examining the views of former university language learners who, having been in the workforce for a number of years, place great value on their former university language learning experience in their intellectual development.

2. What is foreign language education for?

2.1 Current climate around foreign language education

Major parties in Australian politics agree that Asian languages play an important role in Australia’s future. Many Australians do not have the capability to effectively engage with their Asian neighbours, mainly due to a lack of Asian literacy and language competence. Some leading universities, such as The University of Melbourne and The University of Western Australia, have responded to this social need by introducing more flexible degree structures where students can easily incorporate foreign languages in their university studies. This initiative was met by students’ enthusiastic responses, resulting in a massive increase in enrolments in foreign languages at these universities (Lane 2012).

This is an exception to the current trend in tertiary language studies, however. Many university language programs in Australia are suffering from financial pressure, accused of ‘insufficient’ enrolment numbers. The Japanese program at the Australian Catholic University was closed at the end of 2011. The Indonesian language programs at La Trobe University and the University of New South Wales were under threat in 2012. The University of Western Sydney closed its Italian, Spanish and Arabic language programs in the same year. In 2013, Curtin University proposed the closure of its Asian Studies program, including Chinese and Japanese language programs. This proposal was retracted, but a few weeks later, the University of Canberra (UC) closed all its language programs—Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish—despite the Japanese program having been given three years’ reprieve in 2012 after heavy campaigning against proposed closure at the end of 2011. Thus, except for a few heartening anomalies, most university managers appear not to value language programs sufficiently to accept the financial costs of running them.

This apparent negativity towards language studies from university management naturally puts the value of foreign language education in question: “Why do we teach foreign languages at universities, a relatively expensive educational undertaking?” For language education professionals, this is an uncomfortable question, but one that we must answer.
2.2 Current dominant paradigm

What is foreign language education for? The most common answer would be to equip students with competency in a foreign language. Indeed, students focus heavily on acquiring language skills. Table 1 shows the results of a small-scale survey carried out in 2013 with students in the Japanese program at UC (number of respondents = 53). Students were asked to indicate what they wanted to learn in the Japanese program (multiple answers permitted). The results revealed that these students wanted to acquire the four core linguistic skills (see Table 1).

Table 1: Survey result on the goals of learning Japanese (Total respondents = 53)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What students want to learn</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Grammar</td>
<td>71.70% (38)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Japanese characters</td>
<td>66.04% (35)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Speaking in and listening to Japanese</td>
<td>90.57% (48)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Writing and reading in Japanese</td>
<td>79.25% (42)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Culture and history</td>
<td>54.72% (29)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. How to interact with people from different backgrounds</td>
<td>28.30% (15)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. How to think from different perspectives</td>
<td>32.08% (17)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Analytical skills</td>
<td>15.09% (8)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. How to learn a language</td>
<td>41.51% (22)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. I don’t know</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.66% (3)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These self-reported goals of students emphasize the linguistic aspects of the language (a-d). Language learning is viewed, to a large extent, as acquiring the technical details of the language. Cultural knowledge, interpersonal skills and intellectual development (e-h) seem secondary. This brings the value of university language education into question. If indeed foreign language is no more than a practical tool and language learning is no more than practical skill development, then it is legitimate to ask whether the university system, which is a relatively expensive one, is the right place to deliver it. Perhaps TAFE is a more suitable place, since there are no compelling reasons to engage expensive academics with active research practice to teach purely technical skills such as carpentry, hairdressing, and perhaps, foreign languages.

Further, once we subscribe to this skill-training framework, the ‘ultimate attainment’ argument of second language acquisition can also be used to dismiss university language education as a waste of resources. It has been well established that children are more likely than adults to achieve native-like competency (DeKeyser 2000; Johnson and Newport 1989; Long 1990); for an overview see Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2003). In fact, some European countries (eg. Germany, Spain)
changed their education policy for English language in schools for this reason: it is now introduced as part of the school curriculum two years earlier, at the age of 8 (Celaya, Torras and Pérez-Vidal 2001). One might argue that it is more cost-effective to allocate resources to schools and not universities, for maximum return.

2.3 Re-conceptualization: language studies as a platform for developing ‘intellectual arts’

What, then, is the role of foreign language education at the university? We propose that foreign language education at the university should be re-conceptualised as a form of liberal arts, which contributes to intellectual development beyond language facility. Blaich, Bost, Chan and Lynch (2004: 12) define the educational goals of liberal arts as “placing a greater value on intellectual arts than on developing professional or vocational skills”. Blaich, Bost, Chan and Lynch (2004: 13) expand on ‘intellectual arts’ as follows:

An attitude of intellectual openness, especially to inquiry, discovery, new ideas and perspectives. The eagerness to grapple with difficult questions, to develop and act on provisional answers to these questions, and to continue to re-evaluate these provisional answers in light of experience. The ability and desire to adopt a critical perspective on one’s and other’s beliefs, behaviours, values, and positions, whether this perspective leads one to a reaffirmation or revision of one’s current position. (p.13)

Viewing foreign language education as the development of ‘intellectual arts’ does not mean that arts and cultural studies should replace linguistic content. On the contrary, we argue that the process of learning a foreign language itself serves as an effective platform for such development; the change in the quality of mind through language learning, plus the command of a language through the learning process, is what makes language education unique and valuable at the tertiary level.

3. How do foreign languages and liberal arts education intersect?

3.1 Educational goals in liberal arts

There may be different views on the educational goals of liberal arts, perhaps more so than other disciplines. As a starting point, however, we construct a framework for analysis using the educational goals proposed by Winter, McClelland and Stewart (1981, quoted in Blaich et al. 2004: 4):

1. Thinking critically or possessing broad analytical skill
   (a) Differentiation and discrimination within a broad range of particular phenomena (especially within the history of Western culture)
   (b) Formation of abstract concepts
(c) Integration of abstract concepts with particular phenomena or concrete instances; making relevant judgments
(d) Evaluation of evidence and revision of abstract concepts and hypotheses, as appropriate
(e) Articulation and communication of abstract concepts
(f) Differentiation and discrimination of abstractions, identification of abstract concepts
(g) Comprehension of the logics governing the relationships among abstract concepts

2. Learning how to learn
3. Thinking independently
4. Empathizing, recognizing one’s own assumptions and seeing all sides of an issue
5. Exercising self-control for the sake of broader loyalties
6. Showing self-assurance in leadership ability
7. Demonstrating mature social and emotional judgment; personal integration
8. Holding equalitarian, liberal, pro-science, and antiauthoritarian values and beliefs
9. Participating in and enjoying cultural experience

While all are potentially relevant, we find points 1, 2, 4, and 9 to be particularly transferrable to the foreign language education context. Our research on the course descriptions for the Bachelor of Arts at 34 universities within Australia found that many of their learning outcomes overlapped with the items listed above, with the items under point 1 being the most commonly featured outcomes (29 out of 34 course descriptions included values set out in point 1). In subsequent sections, we discuss how foreign language education could contribute to achieve these educational goals.

3.2 Developing liberal arts values through language studies

Winter et al. (1981) define the first educational goal—critical mind and analytical skills—essentially as the ability to process abstract concepts. While this is often overlooked, abstract thinking and foreign language studies have a natural affinity. Language is an abstract system of signs. The association between the signs (sound) and the objects (meaning) is by nature arbitrary. At the sentence level, ‘Who does what to whom where and when’ is expressed through rule-based word order and morphology, which are largely abstract and language-specific. Information such as politeness and temporal semantics is often embedded in the linguistic rules of the language, as well as expressed through lexical items. Students in a foreign language classroom experience this firsthand from Day 1, as they have to exercise their analytical skills to learn this abstract system of association, analysing, constructing,
dismantling and manipulating language-specific abstract forms and concepts. Various problem-solving strategies such as trial and error, hypothesis testing, observing and deducing rules from available information are used in this learning process.

The use of problem-solving skills by adult second language learners, rather than relying on the innate language faculty, has been debated and discussed extensively from both theoretical linguistics and Second Language Acquisition perspectives (eg. Bley-Vroman 1990; Cook and Newson 1996). Over the last 50 years, experiments have shown that adults learn a foreign language through the use of a powerful cognitive ‘engine’ capable of dealing with abstract concepts and solving problems. This cognitive capacity enables adults to approach language learning in a way similar to other knowledge learning, such as learning history, geography, mathematics—they all involve conscious exercise of high-level intellectual skills. This is congruent with the education goals of universities. Thus, language education at the university performs functions beyond vocational skill training: it utilises and develops the learning process and learning capacity specific to mature minds.

The second goal, “learn how to learn” also relates to how adult learners approach the learning task. They adopt various learning strategies, flexibly modifying them in response to the desired outcome, to the progress and to the task at hand. This process involves a great deal of learner-specific reflections on ‘what works and what does not work,’ essentially a process of learning how to learn—one of the goals of the liberal arts education.

In fact, we argue that a language classroom can be an effective environment to develop and stretch this ability. Learners are required to use and test their strategies continuously in the learning process and in the classroom activities and they receive immediate feedback, either formally or in the form of success or failure of their communication. The cycle of strategy testing and feedback in a language classroom is much shorter than in other liberal arts subjects and this enables learners to update and improve their learning strategies and learn how to learn.

As for the remaining two educational goals, 4) Empathizing, recognizing one’s own assumptions, and seeing all sides of an issue, and 9) Participating in and enjoying cultural experience, together, we believe that the same fundamental nature of language studies contributes to both goals.

Language is intimately connected with the cultural values of the society where it is spoken. When learning a language, students are challenged to learn that their value systems are not universally held. They are constantly required to think outside their native cultural norm.

For example, Japanese language explicitly expresses respect or appreciation to others in its grammatical structure, reflecting an ingrained part of communication. The settings of Japanese native speakers are very different to those of Anglo-Australians, for whom respect is less linguistically structured and expressing it is more clearly a choice, rather than a linguistic obligation. By learning about these culturally-embedded linguistic features, students develop an understanding of the
importance of cultural attitudes in relationships of all kinds. Such an understanding serves as a stepping stone for developing the capacity for students to empathise and reassess their own viewpoint from other perspectives.

Through this, learners also get a glimpse of life within a different cultural framework. This will help them to approach different cultural values and practices with respect and curiosity, rather than fear. Some suggest that students may be able to learn more efficiently through ethnographic or cultural studies but experience is more powerful than knowledge alone. In a language classroom, students constantly put their newly-encountered cultural understanding into action and experience the target language and culture in an immediate and personalised way. Although cultural immersion in the country would give more intense experiences, jumping into a new culture and living in it is often too challenging for many unprepared, albeit well-intentioned, individuals and the outcome may not be as expected. In contrast, a language classroom offers a controlled and emotionally less intimidating environment that makes the potentially overwhelming cultural experience manageable and more accessible to a wider range of people.

4. What language studies brought to me: Students’ views

4.1 Data and analysis method

This section examines what students value in foreign language studies, using data collected from graduates of the Japanese Program of UC. If our proposed educational goals are not valued by students, no matter how beneficial we believe them to be, foreign language studies remains irrelevant for most.

The data consist of 33 letters sent to the UC Council in April 2012, in response to a request from the first author during the initial campaign to prevent the Japanese program from being closed in 2012. The writers of the letters had studied at UC between 2002 and 2012. No request or instruction was given as to the content of the letters. Since the letters were written by former students willing to take the time to support the program, we cannot generalise from them. However, they offer us a valuable glimpse into the educational outcomes that students value.

For the analyses, we first identified 18 key benefits mentioned in the letters, and counted the frequency of each item. The two authors conducted this analysis separately and we compared the results afterwards. Where there were disagreements, we examined the disputed items together to reach an agreement. The 18 items were then grouped into five categories (see Table 2). Three of the categories (B, C and D) were directly linked to four liberal arts educational goals outlined above.
### Table 2: Eighteen key benefits of language studies and their categorisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key benefits</th>
<th>Categories and educational goals for liberal arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Linguistic knowledge &amp; skills</td>
<td>A. Skills associated with traditional language learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cultural understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Generic understanding of language (how languages work)</td>
<td>B. General intellectual skills development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Analytical ability</td>
<td>Liberal arts goals:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Critical thinking</td>
<td>1. Critical thinking and analytical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Learning how to learn</td>
<td>2. Learning how to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Broadening of the mind</td>
<td>C. General personal character development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tolerance &amp; Respect</td>
<td>Liberal arts goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Empathy</td>
<td>4. Emphasizing, recognizing one’s own assumptions, and seeing all sides of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Recognizing other point of view</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Developing a range of generic skills</td>
<td>D. Opportunities brought by learning Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Confidence</td>
<td>Liberal arts goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Understanding of oneself</td>
<td>9. Participating in and enjoying cultural experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Participating in and enjoying cultural experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Social connections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Opportunity and career development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Enriched life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Life changing</td>
<td>E. Life changing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the fourth category “D. Opportunities brought by learning Japanese” needs to be interpreted with caution. “Opportunity and career development” (16) appears to be more about practical gain and thus outside the scope of the educational goal of liberal arts. However, many students also talked about the multicultural friendships gained through the class: “Social connection” (15), which fits into Goal 9 of liberal arts ‘Participating in and enjoying cultural experiences.’

The final item “E. Life changing” is of a more holistic nature than other identified benefits. In the letters, it came up typically as what we might call a secondary benefit, realized as a result of the other educational outcomes. For example, language skills and cultural awareness brought learners more career opportunities that were ‘life changing’. What ‘life changing’ means varies greatly; some talked about tangible changes in their life circumstances, such as employment opportunities or living in Japan, and others described their personal growth or friendships. We will not classify
or analyse this item any further here. However, this item is noteworthy for two reasons; it is the second most frequently mentioned benefit (21 occurrences in 33 letters); and it refers to an end goal of education. If ex-students see foreign language education as life changing, we will have good reason for advocating it.

4.2 Results

The analysis of the letters revealed that many graduates felt that what they had gained from Japanese language studies went well beyond traditional linguistic competency. The letters contained 173 descriptions of benefits associated with Japanese language studies at UC. Figure 1 presents the overall distributions of the perceived benefits by the graduates according to the aforementioned five categories of key benefits. The corresponding educational goals of liberal arts are also indicated in the boxes outside of the chart.

Figure 1: Students’ views on the benefits of their Japanese language studies

Clearly, linguistic skills are only a part of what graduates thought that they had gained from Japanese language studies (23%). The development of their personal character was mentioned more frequently than that of linguistic skills (29%). More than 40% of the letters referred to the benefits corresponding to the liberal arts educational goals, including cultural experience. Limited as they are, these data support our proposition: foreign language studies are perceived by ex-students as having contributed to the educational goals of liberal arts.
The contrast between this result and the survey on current students presented in Table 1 is rather striking and reveals another important point: what students believe they want to learn in language courses and what they value after graduation are very different. While the current students of Japanese were mostly interested in acquisition of language skills, the graduates listed non-linguistic outcomes more often. The picture that emerges here suggests that foreign language studies bring educational benefits that students are not expecting during their study and these benefits tend to be longer-term, long after they stop language learning. And students are either unaware of or do not value the non-linguistic benefits until later, possibly until they join the workforce.

The fact that students are unaware of or do not seem to appreciate the depth and range of benefits demands our attention, as it points to our shortcomings as language educators. We have failed to communicate the full benefits of foreign language studies to our students and the public or, worse still, we ourselves have neither recognised nor consciously embraced them in our teaching practice.

The lack of mention of the general intellectual skills, such as critical thinking and analytical skills, is another notable finding. We hypothesised that foreign language education can foster such skills but the graduates did not associate their language studies with the development in this area. A few talked about their improved learning skills and understanding in language in general but only one mentioned analytical ability and none mentioned critical thinking. There are at least three possible interpretations: (1) foreign language studies simply do not foster those attributes; (2) they did not recognise their improvement in these difficult-to-measure skills; or (3) they did not associate their improvement in these skills with foreign language studies. Considering the survey result displayed in Table 1, we feel the final interpretation is quite plausible, especially as it is not something that was explicitly discussed in classrooms.

Examination of unit guides also seems to support our theory. We examined 68 unit guides for the first year language units offered at Australian National University (ANU; 15 languages), University of New South Wales (8 languages), and University of Melbourne (10 languages). The depth and style of the descriptions in the unit guides vary from university to university, especially with the generic skills where much of the liberal arts values naturally appear, so simple generalisation is not possible. However, as a general tendency, we found that amongst the four educational goals of liberal arts, cultural understanding and awareness appear most frequently as a part of their learning outcome (78.8%), and critical thinking and analytical skills appear least often (21.2%). Furthermore, less than half of those (8.8%) referred to these skills as a part of the main learning outcome; the rest mentioned this skill as part of the generic skills section. Whilst those skills are indeed a part of valuable generic skills, it is doubtful that students pay much attention to the attributes referred to in the generic skills section and recognise it as a part of core learning of the subject. Thus we feel that it is very plausible that neither students nor graduates associated the development in skills such as critical thinking and analysis with their language studies.
Language skills are quickly lost if not used, and not all graduates have the opportunity to use their foreign language skills at work. The non-linguistic educational benefits are, on the other hand, much more versatile and long-lasting. Not only are they used in much wider contexts, they appear to be retained better. Further study is necessary to come to firm conclusions, but the findings of our study seem to show that the educational benefits of foreign language studies exceed the expectations of both students and the public.

5. Where to from here: Educational strategy in tertiary language education

So where does this re-conceptualisation of tertiary language education lead us?

We urge language educators to first have a clear vision of what language education at the university is for. In our view, it is for intellectual development, the same as other courses offered at the university. Viewing university language education from this perspective, the overall curriculum of language courses should first and foremost have a clear focus on cognitive development. This includes attention to content and materials that spur the imagination and curiosity and encourage exploration and discussion of various aspects of the target language and culture, including the social, historical and political contexts that shape it. The emphasis on the broad understanding of the target language and the people who speak it will pave the way for the development of the ability to evaluate one’s own opinions, nurturing an attitude of understanding and tolerance of different viewpoints (Goal 4 in Winter et al.’s (1981) list). As an added benefit, this process would deepen the learner’s interest in the target culture and ultimately strengthen the motivation for language learning (for a detailed discussion on various motivators for language learning, see Oxford and Shearin (1994)).

In practical terms, a university language classroom should allow a genuine ‘liberal’ form of education, i.e. promoting intellectual exchange and development, encouraging students to observe, reflect and communicate. One of the effective activities is interaction with native speakers of the target language. The benefit of such tasks goes well beyond language skill practice. Students test and practise their communication strategy and cultural understanding. Given suitable discussion topics, they are challenged to reflect and reassess their own views and assumptions through this experience. It also has an added benefit of motivating students. Practices at UC, where students were given opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target languages, either through bringing native speakers into classroom (Zhang 2005) or via Internet-based audio-visual chat sessions (Kinoshita 2008), proved to be very popular. Clearly recognising that the value of these sessions was not limited to language practice, one student described her experience:

We exchanged each other’s knowledge, ..., we taught and shared each other’s experience and culture.
Regarding the linguistic aspect of language teaching, we propose to adopt a more analytical and deductive approach, along with other practices of proven quality. Rather than analysing foreign language materials for students, language teachers should show students how to do it, and consciously encourage students to try themselves. Language learning inherently offers opportunities for such analytical exercises, be it in morphology, phonology or syntax. Analytical abilities through trial and error, hypothesis testing and logical association and reasoning develop as a result, in tandem with linguistic skills.

Naturally, assessment criteria must not be based exclusively on linguistic accuracy, which is the mainstream practice within the traditional (and current) conceptual framework. In addition to linguistic attainment, the learning outcome of the liberal arts should be built into the assessment criteria.

Finally, we need to communicate the liberal arts learning outcome to students explicitly. For foreign language studies to be a part of university education, the process of language learning needs to encompass the values of university-level education agenda, which, in our view, coincides with the goals of liberal arts education. Therefore, students should be made aware of this agenda and understand from the outset the long-term cognitive and linguistic benefits of foreign language studies.

6. Conclusion and future research directions

We believe that the current lack of enthusiasm, or even hostility, by management of tertiary institutions towards university language education can be turned around. Lamenting the current state of foreign language education or being exasperated by it has yielded nothing so far. We need to have a long hard look at what we do and rethink why we are where we are. We foreign language educators passionately believe in the value of foreign language education and overall we probably have made important contributions to students’ personal, intellectual and linguistic development. However, this seems not to be recognised outside the language education community. We ourselves are, perhaps, partly responsible for we have not had a clear picture of what foreign language education can achieve and how it fits into university education. Without such clarity, advocacy of foreign language education will not achieve its full effect.

This paper is our first attempt to tackle this issue. We propose to conceptualise foreign language education at the university as a form of liberal arts education, not as instrumental or vocational skill training. If this is recognised, foreign language education may stop being viewed as an optional appendix easily jettisoned by university management. We conclude by quoting the words of some of the graduates who have inspired us to undertake this study.

The most important thing I gained ... was a perspective other than my own. To learn any language is to learn another mode, another way of thinking, it allows one to express themselves in a way that may not previously have been able to...

(Letter 24)
I believe that studying a second language greatly benefits not only the students but society as a whole. It promotes tolerance, understanding and greatly improves student’s understanding of their own language. (Letter 30)

References


