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Advanced French

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### “Why Learn a Second Language” Reflection

The article “Why Learn a Second Language?” by Tamim Ansary touches upon the importance of being immersed in more than one language. A language was described as being its own world and learning a new language was like looking through a different lens. Although some words in different languages can be translated and have the same meaning, this causes words to lose their connotation. When speaking, words are associated with a feeling or emotion, but words in different languages create different feelings. It is impossible to fully translate a word from one language to another because meaning is not the only thing behind what makes a word a word. I think that these types of words make each language unique because they simply cannot be recreated in another language. The feeling they are associated with cannot be expressed in one word but would have to be expressed in multiple sentences when translated which defeats the purpose of efficient and understandable translation. This definitely points out a flaw in translation and why it does not always work.

Additionally, the rules of some languages vary from others; therefore, the structure of a word in one language could be completely different in another. An example given in the article is the Finnish word “juoksentelisinkohan” which translates to “I wonder if I should run about aimlessly.” Clearly, the rules and structures of some languages allow for more concise communication. Moreover, I’ve noticed something similar when trying to write or say something in French. I cannot simply take an English

sentence and translate it into French, but I need to understand the different rules that the French language has or else my sentence will not make sense. Clearly, every language is unique in its own way and cannot be recreated with another language.

I think this article perfectly describes how every word has a feeling to it that can only be understood when speaking the language. It is interesting to see how different and complex each language is. Languages are incredibly important for communication; however, diversity can sometimes create a divide within communication. That is why knowing more than one language opens more paths of communication between people that do not speak the same language and otherwise would not be able to communicate with each other. On the other hand, I think it is interesting that there is not one universal language that everyone knows in order to communicate considering communication between different countries is essential for multiple different things. This also makes me wonder how much information has been translated and interpreted wrong which has led to unnecessary conflicts or misunderstandings. These issues definitely could be avoided if people who speak different languages could better understand each other. The perfect solution to that problem is to learn more languages.

In conclusion, full translation from one language to another is simply impossible due to the feelings associated with each word as well as the complex rules each individual language has. Knowing more than one language would allow for better communication and understanding between different people.