

EXPLORING DIFFERENT CULTURES AND LANGUAGES ~ Δ BILINGUAL'S PERSPECTIVE

In conversation with:

Dr. Gurmeen Kaur, MDS
(Assistant Professor,
Conservative Dentistry and Endodontics),

Mr. Anshuman Nautiyal (Intern, BDS),
Ms. Heba Zafar (3rd yr. BDS)
Ms. Anvita Shetty (1st yr. BDS)



Dr. Gurmeen Kaur

Forefathers from Rawalpindi,
Pakistan.

Family based in Delhi & Punjab.
Brought up in Sangli, Maharashtra.
Studied in Mangalore, Karnataka.
Working in Pune, Maharashtra.

Anvita Shetty - "You've traveled to all these different places and lived in so many different states. How would you describe your experiences, and what have you picked up?"

Dr. Gurmeen- "Every place has its unique culture and story to tell, and that's what I've experienced throughout my life. As a person who has lived in different states and traveled to various places, I've been fortunate enough to explore different cultures and pick up new languages.

In my opinion, diversity is what makes this world beautiful, and every language that I've learnt has given me something new to learn. It has also given me an opportunity to connect with different types of people in different places.

FUN FACT!

MANY PEOPLE WHO SPEAK MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE SWITCH PERSONALITIES WHEN THEY SWITCH LANGUAGES

When I was in 8th grade, I got a Punjabi alphabet book, and with the help of my grandmother, I learned Punjabi. It gave me a sense of satisfaction that I could read Gurbani (holy scripture) in the purest language that it is in, even though I am not fluent in speaking Punjabi. This experience taught me that even though I may not be perfect at something, putting in the effort to learn is what counts.

Furthermore, the people around us can also influence the way we speak a language. I hardly have any Punjabi friends where I live, and it is difficult to find a group of people who speak the same language in different states. However, I believe that if I hang out with people who speak the same language, I would most definitely get better at it."

However, speaking multiple languages can also be a challenge, especially when it comes to speaking one's mother tongue. I've experienced this firsthand, where my younger cousin could read and write Punjabi fluently, while I could not. It used to bother me sometimes, but I decided to take action.

Did you know?

Learning a second language can increase the amount of grey matter in the brain, improving cognitive function and potentially delaying the onset of dementia



Anshuman Nautiyal:

"Over the years, I have observed that people around the world have become more accepting of various regional languages. Being a bilingual or multilingual person may mean speaking a broken language, but it shows the effort that we put into adapting to different cultures. It is a beautiful thing to be able to speak so many different languages and explore diverse cultures. We are blessed to have the opportunity to come out and see the world, interact with so many people, and learn from them."

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”

-Frank Smith

Heba Zafar:

"Language and culture tend to go hand in hand. It gives an insight into an entirely new set of beliefs, values and practices. Language helps understand people and gives a glimpse into what a particular society deems important. It really is a wonderful thing that separates yet beautifully brings people together from all over. I feel that learning and most importantly, respecting other languages is really important; it's how you will really be able to connect to people emotionally and moreover grow as a person. We should really appreciate this because most people only dream of moving to other places, meeting new people and cultures, and tend to grow old in their native places. So, we should really make the most out of it and collect as many experiences as we can because we are nothing but small pieces of people we meet along the way."

ONE OF THE BENEFITS OF BEING BI-CULTURAL IS SIMPLY THE AWARENESS THAT HOW YOU LIVE IS NOT THE ONLY WAY
-ANN CAMPANELLA

Anvita Shetty:

It takes courage to step out of one's comfort zone and immerse oneself in a new environment. However, the rewards of such an experience are immeasurable. Being able to communicate with locals in their native language not only helps in building relationships but also shows respect for their culture. It is heartening to see that people appreciate the effort put into learning their language, and it shows how language can be a powerful tool in bringing people together.

Anvita's positive attitude towards exploring diversity at a young age is commendable, and it is something that everyone should strive for."

Speaking multiple languages has given us a broader perspective about life and opened doors to new experiences. They believe that everyone should take the opportunity to learn a new language and explore different cultures. It is the best way to break down barriers and connect with people from all over the world.