

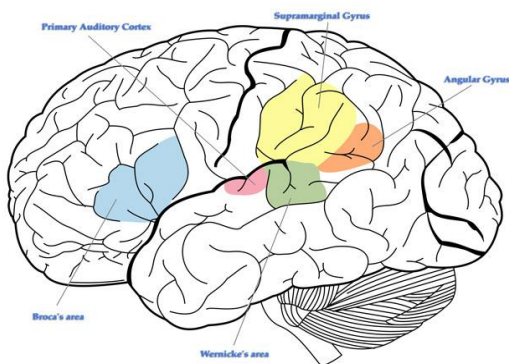
Why Study Arabic?

A worthy question, and we are familiar with the usual reasons: because we want to read the

Qur'an with understanding, because we want to travel and visit countries where Arabic is spoken, because we want to understand what is going on when we attend cultural events, or just to learn the language of people who are friends.

I have a different reason for you, and it is one worth considering: for your health. Many older people do crossword puzzles, Sudoku or "Lumosity" in the belief that this practice will prevent dementia or loss of cognitive function. And these practices will preserve brain function, *but only for the skill that is practiced*. So a person who does crossword puzzles will remain good at crossword puzzles, but there is no clinical evidence of carryover of these "skills" into improved mental function or life skills.

Language learning, however is a different story. Most people believe that one can only become proficient at a language by learning as a child. This is not really the case. However, one cannot "pick up" a language in the way a child can. To succeed at studying a new language, an adult must employ multiple sensory and motor modalities. Vision, hearing, fine motor coordination, and specific areas of the brain related to language acquisition are stimulated and grow by studying a language.



Read Arabic for Wellbeing and with Understanding

MCC's Arabic Program begins September 12th

In-Person Registration is August 22nd in the Library

Send Inquiries to: hdanfodio.mcc.ap@gmail.com

In this image we see some of the areas that were measured in a Swedish study of the effects of language learning in adults. A summary of the study is at the following URL:
<http://www.sci-news.com/othersciences/anthropology/article00642.html>

What we do not see in the image are other brain areas that are engaged in language learning: the hippocampus, the precentral and postcentral gyri, the association areas, and the visual cortex of the occipital lobe.

In addition to these brain benefits, language learning in a class improves a person's sense of well-being. Practice and mastery of skills provide a boost to a person's self-efficacy and optimism. The camaraderie of learning in a group creates a shared sense of purpose and sometimes a bit of friendly competition. To complete the picture, there is also an element of fun and laughter. We all make errors while learning and some of them are hilarious. Try Arabic with us at MCC: the largest cost will be the time invested. It may become a lifetime hobby that will keep your mind sharp and your spirits joyful.

Alexandra Sterling, Arabic Instructor at MCC
MS Arabic
MSPT
Geriatric Clinical Specialist (ABPTS certified)