SPEAKING: PROS AND CONS OF LIVING ABROAD – THINGS I MISS FROM HOME

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad, focusing on the personal, social, cultural, and linguistic experiences of individuals who move to foreign countries. In the modern world, international migration, educational opportunities, and professional development have encouraged many people to live outside their home countries. Although living abroad provides opportunities to discover new cultures, improve language skills, gain independence, and develop professional abilities, it may also involve several challenges, including cultural differences, language barriers, loneliness, and difficulties adapting to unfamiliar environments.

The article also examines the emotional connection between individuals and their home countries, particularly the things they miss when living abroad, such as family members, traditional food, familiar places, native language, and cultural customs. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of speaking skills in expressing personal experiences, describing cultural differences, and communicating feelings effectively. The study emphasizes that living abroad can contribute significantly to personal growth and intercultural understanding, while maintaining a connection with one's homeland remains an important aspect of personal identity and emotional well-being.

KEYWORDS: Living abroad, advantages, disadvantages, cultural adaptation, language barriers, homesickness, personal development, intercultural communication, cultural identity, foreign countries, native culture, speaking skills.

INTRODUCTION

Living abroad has become an increasingly common experience in contemporary society. Due to globalization, international education, employment opportunities, and cultural exchange, people frequently move to other countries in search of better living conditions and new experiences. For many individuals, living in a foreign country represents an opportunity to develop personally, professionally, and academically. However, moving away from one's homeland also involves significant changes in lifestyle, social relationships, and cultural surroundings.One of the greatest advantages of living abroad is the opportunity to experience different cultures and traditions. Individuals can meet people from diverse backgrounds, learn foreign languages, and develop a broader understanding of the world. Living in another country also encourages independence, responsibility, and the ability to solve problems in unfamiliar situations. These experiences can positively influence an individual's personality and future opportunities.

Despite these advantages, living abroad is not always easy. People may experience homesickness, loneliness, financial difficulties, and communication problems caused by language differences. Adapting to unfamiliar social customs and cultural expectations can also require considerable time and effort. Furthermore, being separated from family members, friends, and familiar surroundings may create emotional challenges.

The main purpose of this article is to examine the positive and negative aspects of living abroad and explore the emotional importance of the things individuals miss from their home countries. It also aims to highlight the role of language and speaking skills in describing personal experiences, cultural differences, and the challenges of adapting to a new environment.

Advantages of Living Abroad

Living abroad offers numerous opportunities for personal and professional development. One of its most significant advantages is the possibility of receiving a better education and accessing a wider range of career opportunities. Many students choose to study abroad because foreign universities provide different academic approaches, international qualifications, and opportunities to interact with people from various cultural backgrounds.Another important benefit is language development. Living in a country where a foreign language is spoken allows individuals to practise that language in everyday situations. Through conversations with local people, participation in social activities, and exposure to authentic communication, individuals can improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, and speaking abilities.

Moreover, living abroad helps people become more independent and responsible. They learn to manage their finances, organize daily activities, solve practical problems, and make decisions without always relying on family members. These experiences contribute to personal maturity and self-confidence.In addition, exposure to different cultures broadens people's perspectives and encourages tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. Individuals become more aware of different lifestyles, traditions, values, and social practices. As a result, living abroad can help develop intercultural competence and improve the ability to communicate with people from different backgrounds.

Challenges and Disadvantages of Living Abroad

Although living abroad provides many opportunities, it also presents several challenges. One of the most common difficulties is homesickness, which refers to the emotional feeling of missing one's home, family, friends, and familiar environment. Being separated from loved ones can sometimes make individuals feel lonely and emotionally disconnected.Language barriers are another significant challenge. Even people who have studied a foreign language may experience difficulties understanding native speakers,

following fast conversations, or expressing their ideas accurately. These communication problems can affect their confidence and make everyday activities more complicated.

Financial difficulties may also influence the experience of living abroad. Accommodation, transportation, education, healthcare, and other daily expenses can be expensive in certain countries. Individuals who move abroad may need time to find employment, understand local financial systems, and establish a stable lifestyle.

Furthermore, cultural differences can create difficulties in adapting to a new society. Differences in communication styles, social relationships, food habits, working conditions, and traditions may initially seem unfamiliar. Therefore, individuals need patience, flexibility, and an open-minded attitude to overcome these challenges successfully.

Cultural Adaptation and Language Barriers

Cultural adaptation is an important process that individuals experience when moving to a foreign country. It involves becoming familiar with new social values, traditions, behavioral patterns, and everyday practices. This process does not happen immediately; it usually requires time, observation, and active participation in the local community.

One of the main factors influencing cultural adaptation is language proficiency. Knowing the local language makes it easier to communicate with others, understand cultural expectations, and participate in social activities. However, language competence involves more than grammar and vocabulary. Understanding humor, informal expressions, politeness strategies, and culturally appropriate communication styles is equally important.Another important aspect of adaptation is accepting cultural differences without immediately comparing them negatively with one's own traditions. People should be willing to learn from unfamiliar experiences while maintaining respect for their cultural identity. Building friendships with local residents and participating in cultural activities can also make the adaptation process easier.

Consequently, successful cultural adaptation depends on a combination of language skills, emotional flexibility, cultural awareness, and willingness to experience new ways of life.

Things People Miss from Their Home Countries

One of the most emotional aspects of living abroad is missing the familiar elements of one's homeland. Although people may enjoy their new environment and appreciate the opportunities available in another country, they often maintain strong emotional connections with their native culture and surroundings.

Family members and close friends are usually among the first things people miss. Celebrating special occasions together, having everyday conversations, and spending time with loved ones are important parts of personal life. Modern technology allows people to communicate through video calls and social media, but virtual communication cannot completely replace face-to-face relationships.

Traditional food is another important element of cultural identity. Many people living abroad miss homemade meals, national dishes, and the familiar tastes associated with their childhood and family traditions. Food often represents more than nutrition; it reflects cultural heritage, memories, and a sense of belonging.

People may also miss their native language, familiar streets, local markets, national holidays, and traditional celebrations. Even ordinary daily experiences can become meaningful when individuals live far away from home. These familiar elements provide emotional comfort and remind people of their personal history and cultural roots.Therefore, missing one's homeland does not necessarily mean being dissatisfied with life abroad. Instead, it demonstrates the importance of emotional connections, cultural identity, and personal memories.

The Role of Speaking Skills in Expressing Personal Experiences

Speaking is one of the most important language skills for communicating personal experiences and describing life in different cultural environments. When discussing the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad, individuals need to express opinions, explain difficulties, compare lifestyles, and describe their emotions clearly and confidently.

Effective speaking skills allow learners to discuss topics such as education, employment, cultural differences, family relationships, and personal independence. They also help individuals participate in meaningful conversations, share experiences, and understand different perspectives.Furthermore, speaking activities encourage learners to develop fluency, expand their vocabulary, and organize their thoughts logically. For example, discussing the things people miss from home provides opportunities to use descriptive language, express emotions, and explain personal preferences. Comparing life abroad with life in one's native country also develops critical thinking and the ability to support opinions with relevant examples.

In foreign language education, this topic can be particularly useful for developing communicative competence. Through discussions, presentations, debates, and personal storytelling, students can improve their confidence and learn to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, living abroad is an experience that offers both valuable opportunities and considerable challenges. It allows individuals to improve their language skills, receive international education, develop professional abilities, and become more independent. At the same time, cultural differences, language barriers, financial responsibilities, and separation from loved ones may make the experience difficult.

The discussion also demonstrates that missing one's homeland is a natural emotional response connected with family relationships, cultural traditions, familiar food, native

language, and personal memories. These elements remain important even when individuals successfully adapt to a new country and enjoy their lives abroad.Furthermore, the ability to express personal experiences and discuss cultural differences is an important aspect of effective communication. Developing speaking skills enables individuals to share their thoughts, describe challenges, and communicate with people from different backgrounds.

Ultimately, living abroad should be viewed not only as a geographical change but also as an opportunity for personal growth, cultural understanding, and self-development. Although people may build successful lives in foreign countries, their connection with their homeland continues to play an important role in shaping their identity and sense of belonging.

6. REFERENCES

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