



The Abbey

Flowers need
time to bloom.
So do you ♡

KINDNESS

The common language
used around kindness

Lottie, Upper III (Year 7)

Quando com
e p

Quando estiver in
MUITA PRESSA, LEMBRA
o trem da vida terminando





The common language used around kindness

Lottie, Upper III (Year 7)

Hello. ¡Hola! Bonjour. Hallo.

Modern foreign languages: a department that has always been relevant, interesting and evolving. Modern foreign languages are a diverse and exciting area that anyone can be a part of. Another thing that anyone can be part of is kindness. Kindness can range from massive gestures such as calling someone who you know is going through a hard time and giving them the words of encouragement that they need, to just smiling at someone.





Being randomly kind decreases stress, depression and anxiety. When you are kind to someone, you and the person you are being kind to get a flood of endorphins and serotonin (hormones that make you feel happy and less stressed). If someone else sees you being kind, they get a rush of the same hormones and are more likely to pass on the kindness. Kindness is a chain reaction. Kindness is contagious.

'One kind word can warm thee for three winter months, while vile talk wounds like bitter cold in June' - Japanese Proverb.

So how is kindness reflected in different languages? Language is used to acquire, understand and teach new knowledge and to make sense of your emotions. Therefore, the language used around kindness has a direct impact on how you think about kindness and emotions in general.



If you speak a different language to somebody else then you probably express feelings through language slightly differently. This is all due to Historical Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics. In other words, how language has changed due to historical events, how society changes language and the thought process of different cultures.

In English, kindness is often referred to as being selfless, caring, compassionate and unconditionally kind. In French, kindness is often referred to as benevolence, pleasantness, softness and consideration. In Spanish, kindness is often referred to as help, notice, graciousness, attention and thoughtfulness. In German, kindness is often referred to as friendliness, quality, sweetness and politeness.

The etymology of the common words used around kindness is equally interesting. Kindness itself originates from Old English 'kyndness' meaning nation and 'kin' meaning one's family, race or relations. However, this evolved to mean 'courtesy of noble deeds,' and now has evolved to mean the characteristic of being friendly, generous and considerate. Sympathique (French) has late Latin and Greek roots. Amabilidad (Spanish) comes from the Latin word 'amabilitas.'

The best part (in my opinion) of kindness in modern foreign languages is the diverse range of people that you can understand and communicate with in more depth because of your wider understanding of languages and cultures.

Can kindness be cultural?

To some extent, yes. In Spain, people tend to talk to each other more, people go outside more due to the hot weather in Spain. It is socially acceptable to go up to a stranger and ask how they are feeling and many people know their neighbours. However, in England, this is not the case. Could kindness be affected by the weather?

In Germany, Gemüchlichkeit means warmth but goes deeper than that. It is the sense of belonging, social acceptance

and well-being. People from Germany are often described as direct or abrupt but they have just the right balance between that and kindness, helpfulness and honesty. Kindness in different cultures could be impacted by social conventions. Social conventions are the expectations and boundaries set by society.

'A foreign swear word is partially inoffensive except to the person who has learnt it early in life and knows its social limits.' - Paul Theroux

The Abbey Learner Profile includes many qualities that are central to both kindness and language study. Clearly, **communication** is necessary in language. With that comes **care** and **reflection**, both of which are very important in both language and kindness. Reflection is used to perform linguistic acquisition, understand language and teach language. Care is very fitting to kindness in language: care is often associated with kindness, and is needed in language. **Risk-taking** - it takes a lot of courage to speak to a native speaker in the language that you are learning. However, it shows respect and no one is going to dislike you for trying to learn their mother tongue. The importance of **thinking** is crystal clear with most things and it is no exception for modern foreign languages. **Principles** and **open-mindedness** go hand-in-hand and play a big role in kindness as well as language. It is important to be principled when learning a new language because when you get to speak it to a native speaker you need to know their social conventions or you could deeply offend them. Being open-minded is extremely important when learning a new language: you have to be open-minded to the new language itself, new culture, different social conventions, new types of food, different types of people, new music, new environments and so many more.

'That best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.'

- William Wordsworth.





The Abbey



www.theabbey.co.uk

