

Babita Persaud's Monday article on immigrants juggling languages was an excellent reflection of the challenges faced by those with limited English fluency. Ours is not an English-optional society and language remains a primary vehicle for assimilation. Learning English can also open doors to economic success.

A 2006 Pew Hispanic Center survey showed that Latinos, by a large margin, believe that immigrants have to speak English to be a part of American society. The Pew analysis found that 89% of Latinos recognize that they need English to succeed in the United States, while 46% of respondents said language is the leading cause of discrimination against them.

The Orange County Library System offers a number of fast, fun, easy and free ways to increase English fluency. Access to the *Tell Me More* database, a language-learning method that combines flexibility with interactive features, is available free with a library card.

ELLIS, an interactive way to learn English in a self-paced format, is offered at seven library locations. ELLIS provides business-specific modules for varying workforce sectors including hospitality, transportation and office social skills. As of February 2008, 1,571 registered ELLIS users have logged in nearly 10,232 hours using the language-learning software.

OCLS also offers monthly programs called *English Chatter* at multiple library locations. *English Chatter* gives patrons the opportunity to practice and improve their English-speaking skills with others.

I invite anyone interested in learning or improving their English to check out the library's resources to help those with limited English proficiency.

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