



While the study of a language at VCE level provides a welcome boost to a student's tertiary ranking, Elijah Ziegeler, who studied both Japanese and French through to Year 12, believes his language studies provided him with something far more valuable - doors to opportunity and an open mind to new experiences.

During his time at Emmanuel, Elijah was Dux of Japanese and the recipient of the Vince Callaghan and Julie Keane Award for Excellence in Languages. "I regard language studies as some of my most valuable time at Emmanuel College," said Elijah "and I look back at this fondly. My language teachers, especially in Year 12, were dedicated, inspiring, intelligent and a constant source of support."

After graduating, Elijah went onto complete a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Political Science and Criminology at the University of Melbourne. While there, Elijah also studied both French and Japanese and in his final year, he was awarded a scholarship to study in Paris at Sciences Po - one of the most prestigious political science universities in the world. Elijah comments, "At university I was able to enter into the highest level of language learning because of the education I received at Emmanuel, and furthermore this took me on the adventure of a lifetime - studying in one of the most beautiful cities in the world at one of the best universities."

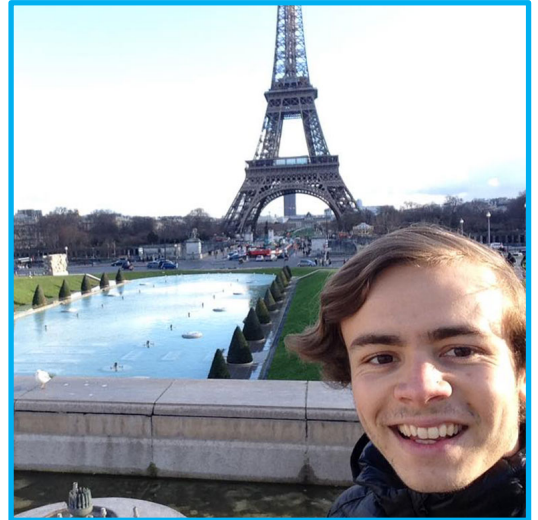
Elijah gives us an insight into his time in Paris and says, "On my days off uni, I would just jump on the metro, go to a random stop and just walk for hours, coming across hidden gems across the city in the form of beautiful churches, fancy little restaurants, bars, markets and my favourite - parks."

"My favourite pastime in Paris was going to the local boulangerie (bakery), grabbing a fresh baguette before purchasing cheese, olives and wine and sharing it with other university students, both local and international, on the banks of the Seine River."

Elijah believes that beyond his learned capacity to use a language other than English, his resulting personal development is of greater value. "My language skills improved my confidence. Having to speak a language daily is quite literally throwing yourself into a completely new and foreign world. As a result, you need to learn problem-solving skills quickly and learn to be confident and sure of yourself."

"I've also become more open to new experiences. Language learning requires you to be self-aware, open to learning and making mistakes. As a young teenager, I was very against any form of change and disruption to schedule. Living in an environment where no one spoke my language meant that I had to be willing to accept sudden changes and a lifestyle completely different to the one I was used to."

"Learning languages," said Elijah, "although at times tough, is so worth it in the end. The doors that are opened and the increased range of job opportunities, combined with the ability to travel with work that comes with being fluent in a foreign language, are endless. I don't think there is even another VCE subject on offer that can open as many doors for its students as a language can."



Now beyond merely adapting to change, Elijah is creating change of his own. He is soon to complete his second degree in an area that is about as far from Political Science as one can get - Music Theatre! "A massive change of career plan!" Elijah admits and comments "my future is so open and I truly can work anywhere around the world."

*Elijah Ziegeler - Class of 2013*

