

Foreign Language Programs in the Elementary School

An Honors Thesis

by

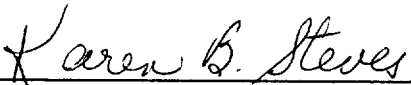
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explains why foreign language education is vital, and why it should begin at the elementary school level. It examines social and neurological reasons that young children are the best students of language. Different types of elementary-level programs are described, and issues involved in beginning a new program are explained. Methods of teaching and gathering resources are also discussed, along with practical tips to aid in starting a program with as few problems as possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	2
Preface.....	4
Introduction.....	7
Language Acquisition & Children.....	10
Neurological Analysis.....	12
Getting Started.....	13
History of Languages in the Elementary Schools.....	14
Types of Programs.....	15
Program Goals.....	16
Starting a Program.....	21
Success Stories.....	23
Methods.....	26
Classroom Activities.....	28
Introducing a New Culture.....	30
Home Study Projects.....	32
Evaluating Students' Progress.....	34
Materials.....	36
Conclusion.....	38
Works Cited.....	39
Appendices	
A. Foreign Language Education Requirements Around the World.....	42
B. Sources for Materials.....	48
C. Internet Resources.....	57

PREFACE

Three years ago three young women joined together with a common belief. That belief was in the importance of foreign language education at the elementary school level. Although they came from different backgrounds and had very different career goals, they decided to unite in the endeavor of researching a thesis for the Honors College. What was initially intended to become an informational paper has become much more to those conducting the research.

Although we are not experts, we have each grown immensely and learned a tremendous amount from this experience. Over time, this paper has taken on a life of its own. What you see before you is nothing like the thesis which was originally envisioned. We do not promise solutions, but we do hope to provide guidance as to how the goal of elementary foreign language education can be achieved.

This thesis explains why we believe that foreign language education is vital, and that it should begin at the elementary school level. It examines different types of elementary-level programs and what is involved in beginning a new program. Methods of teaching and gathering resources are also discussed, along with practical tips to aid in starting a program with as few problems as possible.

Only when parents and other individuals within their own communities make a plea for elementary school foreign language programs will they occur. Policy-makers will continue to neglect such programs as long as the community remains silent. Hence, it is our hope to dispel some common misconceptions and educate as many individuals as possible as to how elementary foreign language programs are possible.

We need to plan for the future of our country and make changes now that will benefit both our nation and our citizens. We hope that if nothing else, we can at least encourage someone who would have previously glanced over this issue to give it a second look. If even one person is caused to rethink this topic, we will have achieved our goal.

Reaching this point has not been easy and we have not made it here alone. We would all like to thank both of our advisors, Dr. Karen Steves and Dr. Patricia Beilke, for the support and information they have provided. We would also like to thank our families and friends who have

probably heard so much about this topic throughout the past three years that they could write a similar paper themselves. (We're sorry, and we love you all for your patience.) Last but not least, we would like to thank the Honors College for giving us the chance to come together and pursue this topic.

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"Teaching a language is teaching a child to put on a perspective - the lenses of another culture."

Paul Garcia,
Language Director
Kansas City, Missouri
(Reitman B1)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The issue of whether or not foreign language education should begin at a young age has been one of great controversy within the United States. Arguments exist in support of both sides of the issue. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge both arguments before continuing.

Some individuals worry that time spent on language education is time wasted. Others fear that language education hinders the ability of students to learn other subjects. In addition, probably the greatest argument against foreign language education, at any level, is that of where funding should come from. Every educational program has costs associated with it. Opponents to elementary foreign language education argue that the cost is too great considering the age of the children. Since doubt may exist as to the effectiveness of foreign language education on young children, funding for such programs may be more difficult to locate.

On the other hand, proponents of foreign language education fear that the United States is lagging behind other countries. As a former Democratic Senator from Illinois, Paul Simon, contends,

"The U.S., long a foreign-language laggard, can no longer afford to be so. Teaching children to speak other languages not only enhances cognitive skills and cultural appreciation, it is also becoming an economic necessity as trade barriers crumble and businesses turn to foreign markets of expansion. 'You can buy in any language; but to sell you need to know the language of your customer'" (Reitman B1).

While this statement may initially be seen as harsh, validity for such a statement does exist. Foreign language education within the United States is often seen as an afterthought. As of the fall of 1990, "only about 5 percent of children in U.S. elementary schools study a foreign language, and none of the 50 states requires a language course for all high-school students (with the exception of the District of Columbia)" (Seligmann 36).

If an individual were asked to list the pros and cons of foreign language education within the school systems, regardless of the age of the pupil, one would anticipate the list of cons to be considerably longer than that of the pros. Individuals generally tend to be informed as to the potentially negative aspects of this topic. Therefore, in the following pages an attempt is made to inform readers as to the importance of elementary foreign language education.

By the very nature of its formation, the United States is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country. It has been such from its inception when the first immigrants from Europe traveled to her shores. One would assume that knowledge of multiple languages would abound, but this not true. Foreign language may even be a necessity even if one never intends to leave the U.S.

"A new wave of immigrants is swelling the ranks of the U.S. residents who don't speak English at home, and that has spurred marketers to invest in advertising to a wider variety of foreign languages. A U.S. Census Bureau study release (April 1993) showed more than 31.8 million people, or 14% of the population aged 5 and older, spoke a language other than English at home in 1990" (Levin 33).

Although movements in the importance of foreign language education are reflection of historical events (ie: the teaching of German was called to a halt at the beginning of World War II), it does not account for the overall lack of emphasis placed upon foreign language education. "Why do our own otherwise strong elementary schools neglect foreign languages?" questioned a nationwide study conducted in 1986 by the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. (Roberts 58). This studied acknowledged that foreign-language programs tend to be few and far between. The last major push for foreign language education occurred in the 1950s and 1960s when many elementary schools offered foreign language programs (Roberts 58). The push for elementary foreign language education at that time period is also evident by the number of books written on the subject. Within the last decade, however, little has been written to encourage foreign language education, especially at the elementary level.

Contrary to popular belief, foreign language education does not prove to be detrimental to the learning of a child's native language. "For schoolchildren to study a foreign language - even though some of them may never become proficient in it - invariably has a beneficial influence on their understanding of their native language," says Margareta O. Thompson, assistant professor of Russian at the University of Georgia in Athens. She continues saying, "studying one, two, or even three foreign languages in no way prevents the students from equaling or surpassing the achievements of their American contemporaries in other subjects" (Thompson A10). Standardized tests have been used to actually measure the effect of foreign language study on children. "Standardized tests show that children taught in another language actually do as well as or better in English grammar, reading, comprehension, and vocabulary" (Reitman B1).

Foreign language skills are essential for the future. The world is an increasingly smaller place. As globalization of business continues to occur, Americans will need greater knowledge of both foreign languages and foreign cultures. The United States has long been a world leader in business, but it stands to lose this position if continues to neglect its responsibility as a world leader. As Appendix A, "Foreign Language Education Requirements Around the World", indicates, foreign language education standards in the United States lag far behind those of most countries. As Myriam Met, foreign language coordinator for the Montgomery County, Maryland public school states, "Languages will be a survival skill for the 21st century" (Seligmann 36).

"As this country becomes increasingly involved in foreign trade, tourism, and international cooperative ventures, the number of jobs open to fluent speakers of a foreign language increases" (Bluford 25). Business-related jobs, however, are not the only jobs which will continue to be affected by foreign languages. Doctors may need to know a second language in order to communicate with their patients; knowledge of a language may open up new roles for actors and actresses; even some airplane attendants need knowledge of multiple languages to do their jobs. These are only a few of the careers which may be enhanced by foreign language knowledge.

While the benefits of knowing a foreign language are extensive, this does not mean one should devote all of his/her time studying a foreign language. Foreign languages should be seen as a way to enhance other job-related skills.

The combination of a foreign language and almost any other skill is an excellent selling point and often increases the possibility of finding interesting employment. As a complementary skill in business, government service, law, education, the social and physical sciences, the media, and the health professions, foreign language professions, foreign language proficiency can be a big advantage in hiring and promotion (Bluford 25).

Furthermore, the benefits of foreign language education extend far beyond that of merely being able to better engage in business transactions. "Foreign language study also acquaints you with the geography, history, customs, and traditions of other countries" (Bluford 25). Making an effort not only to learn another language, but also to learn about another culture shows respect to the citizens of other countries. As was mentioned earlier, globalization is continuing to occur. Perhaps through respect and understanding of one another, the United States and other countries will be able to make this transition to an inevitable global community a much smoother one.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION & CHILDREN

Young children have a remarkable ability to acquire languages. Both physiological and psychological factors affect language acquisition. On a physiological level, up until the age of 10 the neuro-pathways in a child's brain are still being formed. In addition, the younger a child is, the more likely he/she will be able to produce sounds foreign to one's native language.

Psychologically, "research has proved that young children learn quickly and willingly, free from the self-consciousness that afflicts adolescents" (Thomas II). Children do not possess the same inhibitions which hinder adults. A child typically does not fear embarrassment that may result from making a mistake. While an adult may dwell upon the nuances of grammatical patterns, a child instead concerns him/herself with simply getting the message across. Children "seem to learn languages better because they're not embarrassed by trying unfamiliar sounds. For them learning a language is like learning to ride a bicycle: they assume anyone can do it" (Collins C10).

Children are introduced to languages in manners that are not as intimidating as the methods employed to educate adults. Children are introduced to language through venues such as stories, songs, games and simple playing activities. "The methodology used to teach primary children is aural, verbal, quick and fun. Vocabulary and grammar are taught through games, songs and visual exercises - very different to the way language teaching at secondary level has traditionally been approached" (Klein R4). Children are not subject to complicated syllabi, examinations, or the rigid constraints of a textbook. The approach for teaching the language is one in which the child learns without even realizing that he/she is learning. "They (children) will learn more effectively if they are put in real-life situations where they want to communicate and can also enjoy playing games with one another" (Merrick 9).

"Most linguists agree that foreign languages are easiest to master at a young age, when children have no fear of their difficulty, aren't embarrassed about pronunciation and actually consider them fun" (Reitman B1). Furthermore, starting language education at a young age may help to improve attitudes toward language study. For some, merely the mention of studying a foreign language can bring forth a moan. Many of those who have waited until adolescence or

later have had negative experiences in their studies. A giggle from the class when a mistake has been made or a poor score on a language examination could permanently deter an individual's desire to study a foreign language. Proponents of early language education contend that elementary school foreign language education harbors "improved attitudes toward language learning - early starters seem more confident, more fluent, and more enthusiastic about oral language" (Roberts 60).

Although the above primarily deals with the psychological factors affecting children learning foreign languages, the physiological factors must not be forgotten. The following section discusses the neurological aspects of language acquisition in more detail.

NEUROLOGICAL ANALYSIS

"Before there are words, in the world of a newborn, there are sounds" (Begley 57). As Patricia Kuhl of the University of Washington explains, "when a child hears a phoneme over and over, neurons from his ear stimulate the formation of dedicated connections in his brain's auditory cortex" (Begley 57). This connection within the auditory cortex of the brain forms what may be referred to as a "perceptual map." As explained to novices in this field, this map "reflects the apparent distance - and thus the similarity - between sounds" (Begley 57).

As Kuhl reports, neurological research has shown that "by 6 months of age infants in English-speaking homes already have different auditory maps (as shown by electrical measurements that identify which neurons respond to different sounds) from those in Swedish-speaking homes" (Begley 57). In essence, during the process of learning their first language, children tend to become functionally deaf to sounds which are not utilized as a part of their native tongue. Research shows that the pathways within a child's perceptual map are well established by the time a child has reached his/her first birthday. Kuhl contends that "by 12 months (of age) infants have lost the ability to discriminate sounds that are not significant in their language, and their babbling has acquired the sound of their language" (Begley 57).

After obtaining a basic understanding of the formation of neurological pathways for language acquisition in the brain, one can begin to more fully understand arguments by proponents to begin second and even third language education while children are still young. Kuhl's findings have given her insight into why foreign language education may be so difficult for the majority of individuals. She insists, "the perceptual map of the first language constrains the learning of a second. In other words, the circuits are already wired for Spanish, and the remaining undedicated neurons have lost their ability to form basic new connections for, say, Greek" (Begley 57).

As the above research indicates, a window of learning spanning from birth until approximately ten years of age is in existence. Kuhl goes so far as to suggest if attempts are made after a child has reached the age of ten, it is unlikely that the child will ever be able to master a second language with the skill of a native speaker. A final observation derived from Kuhl's work "suggests why related languages such as Spanish and French are easier to learn than unrelated ones: more of the existing circuits can do double duty" (Begley 57).

GETTING STARTED

The idea of creating an elementary school language program from scratch may initially be intimidating to many individuals. However, language education does not necessarily dictate large capital outflows. "Worthy elementary-school language programs need not be elaborate, high-cost affairs. By involving parents and other volunteers who have some language competency, or high school students now in the third or fourth year of language study, you or your school may be able to work out a good program for little cost" (Roberts 60).

The following list of suggestions is meant primarily for parents to provide them information as to how a school might go about beginning an elementary school language program with relatively little cost:

1. Compile information about other programs and, if possible, accompany your school principal or district curriculum person on field visits to schools with language study .
2. Ask your school principal to explore the possibilities with the regular teaching staff. It may be some have interest in starting a program on an after-school or club basis. If, on the other hand, there is staff resistance to further intrusion into the school program by yet another 'outside' interest, consider beginning the program as a nonschool activity, perhaps on weekends or in the summer .
3. To further encourage language interest on the part of your child, whether or not a program gets underway, join with your child in language learning on an informal basis by tuning into foreign-language channels, visiting ethnic neighborhoods of large nearby cities, going to restaurants where the menu is bilingual, and perhaps traveling to another country for a vacation or to visit another family .
4. If interest in your school area is small, get in touch with the PTA presidents in some neighboring districts to see if you can work out a shared program .
5. Keep an eye on the local and state policymakers. With a little encouragement, county and state education officials and members of the legislature may endorse your efforts.
6. Contact the nearest college or university to see if it has such programs on a pilot basis as a part of teacher training. Additionally, they may be interested in a collaborative program with area school districts. (Roberts 62)

Although this list may seem rather vague, it does present an important message. Language education need not be an all encompassing, phenomenally expensive venture. Individuals exist who would enjoy the chance to open up the world to young minds via language and cultural study. By remaining active and well-informed one would be amazed by the resources that exist.

HISTORY OF LANGUAGES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Many people in the United States today agree that it is important for children to begin the study of a foreign language while in elementary school. People generally accept, at face value, the idea that children under the age of ten have a better chance of native-like pronunciation and foreign language acquisition. They believe that children who study another language and culture while they are young grow to respect other cultures more so than children without this opportunity may. Most people can understand that children who have yet to develop prejudices and biases are easier to teach about the ways of others, and learn more easily. If so many people agree to all this, why are there still so few elementary schools implementing foreign language study?

These ideas are not new ones. Foreign languages, especially Latin and Greek, have been taught in some elementary schools in the United States since the first schools were established in the U.S. In the nineteenth century it became common to find modern languages being taught in elementary schools. Often there were many immigrants living in an area, therefore, the immigrant language would be taught in school along with English.

World War II brought with it a sudden feeling of xenophobia throughout the United States. People became afraid of foreigners, a passionate hatred of Germany arose. With that hatred came a complete end to German language classes in the United States. The popularity of foreign languages declined. Suddenly, being "American" did not include learning about other languages or people. Being "American" was speaking English and not tolerating those who did not.

In the 1960s there was a surge of interest in teaching foreign languages in the lower grades. Once again, people became interested in children's ability to learn and acquire language skills and pronunciation. A desire to beat the Russians at everything was developing. When Russia launched Sputnik, a fear of being beaten by the Russians started growing in the American public. Americans realized that if they wanted to join the race into space, they needed to become more global and their children needed to begin to learn to communicate with the rest of the world. Foreign language instruction became the latest bandwagon to join (Lipton, "FLES* Today" 2). Schools, principals, and teachers became excited and enthusiastic about new programs and rushed to implement them into their schools.

This rush to begin new and innovative language programs overshadowed the need to plan for the future. People wanted to jump in and get going. Nobody cared to look at the plans and logistics of implementing a new program to teach foreign languages. Many of the programs failed miserably. Some did not produce desired results, some ran out of money, and some simply ran out of interest. The reason programs failed are varied. Many were poorly planned. Funding had not been properly addressed. The money did not magically appear as perhaps they had hoped it would. Some schools failed to determine beforehand what their objective in implementing a foreign language program was. They did not seek program examples that could deliver results based on the predetermined goals and objectives. The programs that schools often chose did not produce results that were satisfactory simply because the public, and often even the administration, did not understand what outcomes the program they selected was designed to help obtain.

A large part of the success of a language program is finding the right program to match the needs and objectives of the schools. Not all schools have a budget that will support all programs. Some schools may be interested in producing different results than that of another school. Therefore, finding the right program is absolutely essential.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

There are many programs which a school can choose and adapt to suit their own needs. Different authors use different definitions for the various programs that are encountered in schools today. The definitions used here are from Lipton and are as follows:

FLES--Foreign Languages in Elementary School (describes all programs for foreign language instruction)

Sequential FLES--an introduction to foreign language for two or more years

FLEX--an introduction to foreign language in a limited manner usually for a year or two only

Partial Immersion--half of each day is spent learning subject content through the target language

Total Immersion--whole day is spent learning subject content in the target language (Practical 1-2)

Each program is characterized by the amount of time spent in the language, what is primarily taught (language skills or core content), and the language goals to be attained. The programs should be examined for these characteristics and chosen to fit the schools needs.

FLEX, Foreign Language Exploratory or Experimental, programs have the least time requirements. They usually have around five percent of the week devoted to the target language. This is usually done in one day a week in 30 to 60 minute sessions. The class time is usually spent learning the target language as well as about language in general. Much of the instruction is often given in English. FLEX programs generally do not address core curriculum content through the target language. Many FLEX programs are offered for only one or two years or to one grade level. They are not usually continued throughout each grade.

The goals of FLEX are mostly geared toward language experimentation. It is desired that children will explore language and develop an interest that will lead to future study. The expectation is also that children will begin to appreciate and understand another culture.

Sequential FLES programs, often referred to simply as FLES, generally have five to fifteen percent of the week spent teaching the target language. That is about once a day for 30 to 60 minutes. The time is generally spent learning the actual language and the four language skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The culture of countries where the language is primarily spoken is also introduced during these class sessions. FLES also does not tend to provide core curriculum instruction in the target language. These programs are geared to provide long-term exposure to the language, running for two or more years.

The goal of sequential FLES is to develop proficiency in speaking and listening and a somewhat lesser degree of proficiency in reading and writing. The levels of proficiency will depend upon the time devoted to the language. This program also strives to develop a cultural awareness and appreciation.

Total and partial immersions programs are generally taught in similar manners. Total immersion calls for the entire day to be spent using the language. All subject content is taught in the target language. Little special attention is paid to the language except as needed throughout the time of study. Mini-lessons are often used to teach the language rules and skills needed for other activities. Partial immersion works much the same way except that only half of the day and certain subjects are taught in the target language. The rest of the day is spent in the native language. Subjects that are often chosen to be taught through the target languages are ones in which words tend to be similar or cognates. Science and mathematics are two commonly chosen subjects.

Many schools combine total and partial immersion programs. Often children in kindergarten through the third grade will be in total immersion programs. Starting in third or fourth grade, small amounts of English, or native language, will be added to insure the students develop proper grammatical use of the initial language. This continues through the sixth grade when the two languages are used about equally.

The goal for immersion programs is for functional proficiency in the language. This means that the children should be able to hold conversations about topics relative to their age as well, or nearly as well, as a native speaker. It is expected that children in total immersion programs will develop a higher degree of proficiency than those in partial immersion programs. A good deal of emphasis is also placed on culture. Children are expected to develop respect, knowledge, and understanding of the cultures of the countries where the languages are spoken.

It is important to remember that these models are not strict regulations for implementing a foreign language program, but rather guidelines to help a school system plan for a program that will meet its needs. Alterations and amendments can and should be made in the interest of the program and the children that will allow the program to have long-term success.

PROGRAM GOALS

Before beginning any foreign language program for elementary schools, planning must be done to assure that the new program will meet the needs of the students and the community and to help ensure success of the program. The committee developing the program needs to look at various issues and concerns. The planning committee should consist of teachers, school board members, the principal and language specialists. Considerations need to be made for the years following the initial one. A budget for maintaining the program should be developed. The planning committee should assess the needs of the community as well as look at the resources currently available. In some cases the school may already have certified staff or a staff member who could easily become certified to teach the language for the program. Some schools may need to hire new personnel. The necessary skill and proficiency levels of the personnel involved will depend largely on the type of program selected to meet the needs of the individual school (Lipton Practical 48).

Before beginning a program, the choice of language must be considered. Often a school's proximity to a large ethnic group can help determine the language. Parent and student interest can be considered as well. Another consideration may be to look at languages held by staff that would be certified or easily certified to teach a foreign language. If the resource is already available, it should be considered.

It is necessary to develop a set rationale for the program that would facilitate explanations to interested parties as well as potential opponents to the program. Often communities are reluctant to take what they may view as core content instruction time and devote it to a new, unproved (in their minds) program. If the school can explain why they feel this is beneficial educationally to students, it may make selling the community on the new program a simpler process. The rationale will help give the school a chance to predict and address the concerns of opponents, allowing the school to be fully prepared for any opposition.

The rationale is important also in the development of a type of program. Your program choice will depend on the needs of the school and the perceived educational value of foreign language. If the rationale includes the idea that children need to develop a functional proficiency in

the language, then a full or partial immersion program may be the desired method to obtain desired goals. If, on the other hand, your rationale states that students need to have the opportunity to experiment with and develop an interest in languages, then FLEX or FLES may suit your needs.

When a school system begins the process of planning a program, it is advisable that the committee involved in the planning contact other schools that have had success with their programs. Some questions to consider asking may include: What has made your program successful? What planning procedures did you find absolutely essential to your success? What are some unexpected roadblocks you have encountered and how have you met them productively? Foreign language consultants can also offer great advice and assistance when a program is being considered.

Another consideration a school must make when choosing a program is staffing. Sequential FLES and FLEX programs do not require a lot of staff. Generally one language specialist is sufficient for each school building. The teacher should be knowledgeable in the subject as well as have an understanding of children and how they learn.

Immersion programs require more specialized staff. One teacher is needed for each classroom that will be learning the language. The teacher needs to be not only very proficient in the language and have a native or native-like pronunciation, but also needs to be a trained elementary school teacher. Even in partial immersion programs it is preferred to have the same teacher teaching in both languages. It is also helpful to have an aide for the classroom at least part of each day. The aide needs to be proficient in the target language as well.

One consideration that is essential to a well planned and successful foreign language program is the budget. Anticipated startup costs need to be addressed. Either hiring certified staff or insuring certification for your current staff will incur costs. After the initial year, which costs will continue to be added to the yearly school budget? Decisions about how to obtain the money must be made. In some situations there may already be money in the budget that can be set aside for the new program. Some schools may be able to receive assistance in the form of a grant. Regardless of how the money is obtained, it is important to remember that it does not just magically appear each year. Provisions need to be made to insure it continues to be available.

Once a school has written objectives and goals for the program and chosen a program type as a pattern for their own, and after they have determined that funding will be available, curriculum

decisions must be made. As with any class, a teacher must be given some goals to obtain in order that what the teacher works for and what the community wants to see are similar. The committee that is developing the program must use the goals and objectives determined earlier in the planning, to develop a curriculum for the program.

Secondary schools' language teachers should be consulted during the curriculum planning phase. It is important that the goals of the primary grade foreign language programs coincide with what the children will encounter in the higher grades. In addition, secondary level language teachers may have more experience with language learning than the committee and may be useful in setting realistic goals.

Another key to success for a good program is publicity. Continually publicize what is happening in the classroom. Newsletters will help keep community interest up. Some schools offer a special day for parents to come and observe the instruction their children are receiving. Continual parent involvement and interest are helpful in maintaining respect for the educational value of a program.

A final, key element in a successful elementary school foreign language program is evaluation. Constant critical evaluation will help keep a program running smoothly. Teachers need to know what is working, what is not, and how instruction and the program as a whole can be made more productive. Classroom teachers can also offer evaluation as they watch the children and discover how the children incorporate the target language into daily activities. Evaluation needs to be made continually to help attain all goals set for the program.

STARTING A PROGRAM

Planning for a foreign language program takes time and effort. There are many concerns that a school system will need to address to implement the right foreign language program for their community. No program is the best for all schools and situations, so the best one for each school needs to be chosen carefully. It is important that all the long-range planning and goal setting be completed before a program is begun if it is to succeed.

Once basic choices such as beginning grade level, language to be studied, and program type have been made, a schedule will be needed, especially if an itinerant teacher will be used. Some type of schedule must be devised that will allow regular opportunities for each child involved in the program to participate. Often the program can be set up alongside or as a part of the language arts or social studies schedule, where interdisciplinary studies would be easiest to arrange. Whether a special room is set aside or the language teacher floats from room to room to teach each class may depend heavily on your physical building space. There may be no available rooms for a new classroom. In either situation, developing a set schedule for each class will help ensure that there will be minimal disruption in the students scheduling and for all teachers. Care must be taken that an itinerant teacher does not have an unreasonable number of classes per day. Lipton suggests that no more than seven to ten classes per day should be assigned. She also mentions that “probably the simplest scheduling procedure is to hire competent classroom elementary school teachers . . . who are also proficient in a foreign language.” (Practical 48)

One of the most common problems facing schools in the implementation of a foreign language program is the shortage of qualified teachers in school districts. If additional teaching staff will need to be hired for the program, fluency in the target language should be the basic hiring requirement. Part of the interview with each prospective teacher should be in the target language, and a written skills test could also be used. The teacher could be asked to explain how he or she would teach a lesson involving a dialogue, how provision would be made for students with different learning styles, and how discipline would be kept and the students’ interest held. According to Lipton, basic knowledge of linguistic principles and “the ability to apply these principles to strategies for second language instruction”, understanding of the methodology to be

used and a solid knowledge of and sensitivity to the target culture should also be included in the qualifications of any second language teacher (57-63).

Many other decisions must also be made before a program can be started:

1. Who will be responsible for the program on a district-wide basis and in each school?
2. How will middle and high school level programs be affected by the elementary school programs (especially if most or all of the elementary students will be involved)?
3. If the program will include only lower grade levels, will any provisions be made to help students graduating from the program retain the skills they have used until they are able to enroll in high school language classes?
4. What will be done with children who move into the school without any foreign language experience? (37-54)

SUCCESS STORIES

The entire planning process for implementing elementary foreign language programs may appear daunting. There is a lot of necessary planning. The people working toward the goal of setting up a new program must be dedicated to the process and to success. It may begin to sound unmanageable or overwhelming, impossible to achieve. Success stories in elementary foreign language education, however, do exist. Across the nation, schools are working toward to begin new and exciting programs.

An exciting step forward in foreign language programs for the elementary schools has been taking place in North Carolina. Nineteen eighty-one saw the beginning of new curriculum study and development statewide. The entire curriculum, kindergarten through twelfth grade, was revised. This new curriculum became known as the Basic Education Program (BEP). In 1985, after State Board of Education approval, the BEP was sent to the state senate for approval. Senate Bill #1 of North Carolina Appropriations Act became law. It carried with it funding for schools to begin implementing the new changes. The BEP was set to be phased into all schools in North Carolina by 1995 (Heining-Boynton 430).

The BEP requires that all school systems have foreign language programs available to all K-12 students. Elementary schools are required to have at least one language for all students to study from kindergarten through fifth or sixth grade, depending on which grades the school houses. After the initial foreign language requirement in elementary school, the students will have the opportunity to continue with the same or another language if desired.

The new mandates do not regulate the type of program to be used. Schools are free to choose from FLES, FLEX, total or partial immersions, or a combination of the above molded to fit their needs. The state also does not dictate a required number of hours spent per week in the study of the language. The time duration and frequency of the language contact as well as which language will be taught are decisions made on the local level (Heining-Boynton 431).

North Carolina instituted a major curriculum overhaul to achieve the mandating of foreign language programs for elementary schools. Schools in other states may not have as much backing and push from the state, but they can still, successfully implement good, effective programs.

There are many schools, public and private, in numerous states that have set up their own programs with little or no state assistance. Until more states move toward mandating languages, it will be each school's responsibility to obtain support for and begin the setting up of the new foreign language programs.

In South Carolina, Lexington School District One has set up its own program for elementary foreign language instruction. Oak Grove Elementary began a program in the 1994-95 school year. Their program allows each student to spend 20-25 minutes a day two or three times a week in the foreign language program. The school's belief is that shorter sessions will be better and more suited to the children's attention span than are longer sessions. Young children are not as able to stay on task as high school age children; therefore the elementary sessions are half as long as the high school classes are likely to be.

Lexington School District One set the curriculum based on student needs. Children in grades one through three have classes that focus almost entirely on oral communication. As children below third grade are still new to the idea of reading and writing in their native language, it is a common opinion that they are not ready to begin the task in a new language. It is also believed that focusing on the oral language first most closely resembles the original language learning experience.

Once children have gained more mastering of the ideas behind reading and writing, it is more easily accepted that they can begin to write in the new language. Therefore, in the fourth and fifth grade, Oak Grove Elementary students begin to focus more on writing the new language. They begin to visually identify words and begin to write them and learn the formation of written sentences in the target language.

The program that the students at Oak Grove Elementary participate in would not fit directly into any of the previously described categories. It is an example of a program that was designed around the needs and facilities of the school. It is very similar to FLES in that it is a continual program. The students study the language from first grade through the fifth grade, and continually build on what they have learned. In the amount of contact time per week, the program would be considered more like FLEX. The children have only two or three 20 to 25 minute sessions a week. Many schools choose a schedule such as this to accommodate as many students as possible using limited resources and only one or two teachers.

Another example of a school custom tailoring a program to its needs is that of New Palestine elementary school, a part of Southern Hancock Community Schools in New Palestine, Indiana. The school decided to include their Spanish program in a block schedule of four classes that is referred to as Unified Arts. Every two and a half days each class from first grade to fifth spends half of the day rotating between Physical Education, Art, Music and Spanish. The children spend half an hour in each area. This rotating schedule causes the students to spend two days most weeks in the language. Every third, due to the rotation, a student will only attend the class once.

The primary language teacher for the school teaches Spanish to 20 of the classes. The remaining four classes are taught by another teacher who teaches in another school in the district, therefore allowing the language teacher have a preparation period. This reduces the cost to the school since they do not have to pay several language teachers.

The program is again, neither FLES nor FLEX. It is a combination of the two. The continual and sequential nature of the program is consistent with a FLES program whereas the time allocation is more geared toward a FLEX program. Budget is a big motivator in determining the program. A school may have desire to implement a language program in which children attend language classes each day for thirty minutes, but unless it can find the funding to do so, it is likely to have to adjust from its ideal program to another which will still be beneficial to the school and the students.

METHODS

Many resources are available for the use of elementary-level foreign language instructors. Because of the time, effort, and staff requirements discussed in previous sections, FLEX and FLES programs are the most common types of foreign language programs offered by elementary schools. For this reason, this section will primarily deal with the methods and materials which are applicable to these programs, although much of the information will also apply to immersion programs or after-school classes. The selection of methods and materials should be based upon the goals of the individual program and the amounts of available time and resources. Therefore, the responsible parties should have a detailed, written statement of what will be put into the program and what will be expected out of it. This will make decisions concerning methodology and the selection of materials easier, since everyone involved will have a good idea of the objectives and limitations.

In most programs, the time that can be spent teaching the target language will be little, perhaps from one half of an hour to five hours a week. Therefore, the time available must be used wisely. The students should be communicating in the target language as much of the class time as possible, not simply listening to the teacher or a cassette (R. E. Blum Qtd. in Richards, Language 38). Parroting responses to the teacher is not enough -- students must be encouraged to use the language to express themselves individually. Also, it is important to take full advantage of methodologies such as Total Physical Response, which will help the child retain concepts far better than simple repetition or memorization of vocabulary will allow (Lozano 28).

Total Physical Response is an approach in which the basic knowledge of the target language is taught through commands. At first, the teacher will model the commands addressed to the students. According to Ramiro Garcia, who has studied and used this approach for more than twenty years, "the idea is to synchronize the motor behavior of the students with the listening of the command. This is achieved by executing the action involved in the command in harmony with the audio input delivered by the teacher" (I-2). Simple commands such as 'sit' or 'stand' are used at first, and gradually more complex instructions are introduced. Eventually role reversal may be used, where the students give commands to one another. Other methods that include physical

involvement may also be used. For example, in a lesson on indirect pronouns a teacher might throw a ball to a student and ask the child “What did I throw to you?” Skits and simulations are also useful activities in this methodology, as are games such as Simon Says and Mother, May I? This approach has the advantage that it is able to eliminate the need for translation into the native language of the students (I-2 - I-3).

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

In-class activities, in order to be effective, need to hold the attention of the students. Activities should be varied, fast-paced, and fun. Instead of expecting the students to practice speaking the target language by repeating after the teacher, use games and songs to provide the needed repetition. Songs are especially beneficial, as they promote correct grammar, pronunciation, and intonation as well as reinforcing vocabulary and cultural ideas (Lozano 28). On the other hand, it is helpful to write new vocabulary words on the chalkboard, even if reading and writing are not specifically being taught to the level in question, as this will help visual learners. (Lozano 16).

Songs and games are very enjoyable for the students when carried out well, and thus could even be used as positive reinforcement for desired behavior patterns. For example, Lozano suggests that a teacher “keep a container of favorite songs and games listed on scraps of colored paper. When a class or a particular student has a very good day, they (he/she) may choose one for the class to sing or play” (34). This need not be done only when the target language is being taught, but can provide a change of pace at the the end of a day or be used as a brief interlude between other subjects. Another idea to reward students for exceptionally good work in the classroom is to drop a bean or other token into a glass jar for any especially good answer or activity, and, when it is full, give the class a short party with food from the target culture (salsa and tortilla chips, for example) (Lozano 34).

Although helpful songs and games should not be the only activity in class, nor should they be used for the sole purpose of to filling extra time. Rather, the instructor should have specific instructional goals for each activity. Marcel Danesi states:

If puzzles and games are used only to fill in time, both the teacher and students will soon lose interest in them. But if they are integrated into a basic program, it is highly likely that they will be enjoyed, promoting a lively and uninhibited learning environment. This in turn will result in a more positive attitude toward the language being studied (6).

Dialogues are a popular activity in second language classrooms because vocabulary, syntactic structures, and idiomatic expressions can be practiced in a natural setting using a topic

that interests the students. A good dialogue will contain cultural significance (perhaps acting out an important event in the life of a person in the target culture or even a historical event or a folk tale) and gestures or culture-specific nonverbal communication as well as the spoken lines (Lipton Practical 77-78).

In real-world situations, it is often more important that a person be willing to use the language in question and to attempt to communicate than that every utterance be grammatically perfect. For this reason, a teacher may not wish to instantly correct every mistake which does not interfere with communication. The students will normally increase in grammatical skill as the learning process continues (Norman, Levitin and Hedenquist 19). Techniques such as repeating the phrase in the correct manner, perhaps stressing the corrected word, without specifically correcting the child, may be helpful. Of course, when the majority of students makes a certain error or it is often repeated, a brief reminder or review can be given (R. E. Blum Qtd. in Richards, Language 38).

INTRODUCING A NEW CULTURE

Children also must be introduced to the cultures associated with the language they study. The instructor may use a variety of methods to do this. For example, a letter exchange by the students with students who are learning English in the culture being studied can be a wonderful educational and motivational endeavor for both groups, as they can send and receive pictures, audio and/or videocassettes of themselves, favorite recipes, etc. Also, guests who either have recently visited or are natives of the culture in question may be brought into class to share their experiences, impressions and expertise (Turner 15). Humor from the target culture, either from exchanges or from comic strips, etc. can be very enlightening, as the students see that what seems funny to them may not be to others, and vice-versa (Lipton 92). As Carol Pesola and Helena Curtain suggest, "Cultural practices such as bowing or handshaking can be employed as a part of daily routines and classroom activities" (11). Other cultural topics which are often of interest to students are dress and grooming, types of houses, folk stories, sports and hobbies, superstitions, money (and attitudes toward it), religion, accepted roles for men and women, comfortable "personal distance" for people standing together, and cultural gestures (Lipton 77, 96-97).

Many of these and other cultural topics can be dealt with in inter-disciplinary lessons. An art class can discuss and try traditional handicrafts of the target culture and learn about the lives of artists from countries where the target language is spoken; music classes can learn folk and popular music from the culture (and in the target language - often students are pleasantly surprised to learn that singers they know may be popular in other cultures and languages too, such as Gloria Estefan in Spanish or Celine Dion in French); in physical education classes students can learn sports popular in or native to the target culture and folk dances from areas where the target language is spoken. In science and math classes the metric system can be introduced and discussed, rates of exchange and currency values calculated, and famous scientists and mathematicians and their work can be introduced (Lipton 97).

Cooking foods from the target culture and making crafts native to countries being studied are popular projects and can help students develop useful domestic skills as well as learn about the target culture. For class projects such as these, however, much preparation and supervision is

needed. To facilitate this, parent volunteers can be asked to help supervise in-class cooking or to help with craft projects. They can also assist on field trips. Using volunteer parents has the added benefit of allowing them to see what sort of activities are done in class, and how quickly their children are learning to communicate. A good report can spread in the community, and this is especially important in cases where foreign language classes are optional for some grades or are extra-curricular activities (Lozano 31).

HOME STUDY PROJECTS

Another factor to be considered is that “a foreign language program is most effective if the students receive some instruction, no matter how minimal, every day” (Lozano 36). Children in a FLEX or after-school program will not usually have this unless the teacher assigns some type of home study materials. These materials are vital for this kind of program, but to have the most worth they must be varied and enjoyable. They might include games, exercises in creativity and workbook pages, and they should focus on reading, writing, and speaking (36). New material should not be introduced in these home-study projects. They are only useful as review and manipulation of ideas and vocabulary learned in class. Some ideas for fun home-study projects are: Draw a family (real or imaginary) and be prepared to tell in class the names and ages of the people and who they are (mother, cousin, etc.) and tell what pets they have, if any. Draw an extra-terrestrial and tell the class about it (this can be used to review anatomical vocabulary). Write a menu. Make a collage of pictures cut from magazines that relate to the vocabulary being studied or to things learned about the target culture, and tell in class why the pictures were chosen. Draw a room or a house and describe it (37).

These projects, however, will accomplish nothing if the children do not do them. There are several ways in which a teacher can motivate students to complete home-study materials. They can be tied into class lessons occasionally, perhaps by having the students show and tell (in the target language) about what they did for a creative project such as a drawing. Parents can be encouraged to help their children (or at least to try to make sure they do the assigned work) (16). The familiar star or sticker chart may be used, with each child who has earned a certain number of stars for the week or month receiving some special prize or reward (R. E. Blum Qtd. in Richards, Language 38). Lozano suggests a more unusual, but perhaps more educational, method.

Design a “mercado” (market). This is an attractive box filled with inexpensive trinkets from foreign language countries; for example, small coloring books, comic books, pencils, snacks, key chains, toys, ceramic knic-knacks, postcards, posters, buttons, jewelry, etc. The teacher must also have a supply of “money,” which may be index card francs, plastic centavos, construction paper marks, Xeroxed pesos, etc. Students may earn “money” by completing homework, giving exceptional answers during class, having perfect attendance, preparing special projects, etc. At the end of the month, students may

buy items from the market with the money they have earned. (Pencils might cost fifteen marks, coloring books, twenty marks, a candy, two pfennig, etc.) Note that this activity is not only motivational and cultural, but conceptual (counting and money) as well (35).

Another way in which the teacher can encourage students to practice the target language at home is to suggest that they teach their parents or siblings what they are learning. The parents are usually more helpful about this (as they are with most things) in a program where the foreign language classes are optional or extra-curricular, but many will be willing to go along with the idea in any case. It is also a good idea to send a weekly vocabulary list home (with English translations) so that enterprising parents may help their children review (Lozano 31).

EVALUATING STUDENTS' PROGRESS

One complaint often heard from school districts with elementary school foreign language programs is that no standardized method exists for evaluating the progress of the students in the language. Nevertheless, this does not mean that educators must choose between using testing materials originally designed for high school students and doing no evaluations at all. Although some formal tests especially designed for elementary school programs are beginning to appear, they are generally still in various stages of development. Several effective non-standardized methods, however, do exist for evaluating the students individually and as a group, and for examining the effectiveness of the school's programs.

In the classroom, an ongoing evaluation should be made of each student's progress in listening and speaking the target language and in understanding of the target culture. Reading and writing skills should also be evaluated in immersion programs and others in which acquisition of these skills is a primary goal. According to Lipton, "There should be listening checks for comprehension, . . . oral tests for the ability to answer and ask questions and to respond in real-life situations . . . [and] checks to highlight student's grasp of cross-cultural similarities and differences" (Practical 198).

Tests of listening comprehension can be taken in several ways. On a less formal basis, the children can be given Total Physical Response commands to see if they respond correctly to them. On a more formal level, one type of test is to give each student a sheet with several sets of four or five pictures on it. The teacher then describes one picture from a set, and the students are instructed to circle the correct picture. This is repeated for each set of pictures. Another option is for the teacher to give the students a paper with several pictures on it and describe each picture. If the teacher describes the picture correctly, the student writes a "yes" next to the picture. If it is incorrectly described, a "no" is written. For upper grades the students may be asked to correct the description, which should be short and direct (for example, "Two people are standing by a tree") (199-200).

A student's speaking proficiency should also be tested regularly. Questions might include "What do you see in this picture?" During class, simple checks can be made by instructing a

student to ask someone else a question, for instance “Ask Jack how old he is” (201). Questions asked when doing a more formal test might include “What do you see in this picture?” or “What do you like to do in the summer?” Various aspects of the response, such as pronunciation, accuracy, appropriateness, fluency and comprehensibility could be rated (201-202).

Similar techniques could be used to test writing skills. Students may be asked to write answers to oral questions, write a short letter to a friend, or write an invitation to a holiday party. If a school grades writing skills in English using a holistic or global approach, this could be used for grading written work in the foreign language also. Another option is to use a grading system similar to that suggested above for speaking proficiency (203-204).

Reading skills may be tested using matching tests, where a student matches words to pictures or words to translations, or tests involving completion of sentences. Another idea is to have the students read a sentence or short paragraph, then answer a question (perhaps multiple choice) about what they read, or read a description and then choose the name of the item they believe is being described.

Testing does no good if the results from tests are ignored. A teacher should look at test results both individually and collectively to determine what areas need improvement. A review of difficult material may be needed for the whole class, or perhaps a certain student may need a reminder to study the new vocabulary words. Whatever the case, effective evaluation techniques make it much easier for a teacher to notice and correct small problems before they become large or ingrained in the students’ minds through repetition.

MATERIALS

Materials are usually the single largest expense in a program, so precisely what will be needed should be carefully ascertained. Lozano suggest budgeting \$345 per year for materials for a once-a-week, half-hour class (6-8). It should be remembered, however, that less total expenditure may be needed for materials when the same instructor teaches several different classes. Also, this will largely be a first-year expense, as the same textbooks and visual aids may be used from year to year and only workbooks, student incentives and consumables will need to be replaced. Some of these consumables may be copy paper, tagboard, construction paper, cooking supplies, party supplies (piñatas, food, napkins, etc.) and miscellaneous other aids such as puppets, flash cards, markers, etc. (Lozano 7-9).

If textbooks will be used, a series which meets the needs of the program will need to be chosen. According to Richards, effective textbooks must be based upon sound educational principles, maintain the attention and interest of the learner, provide good examples of how the language is used, be appropriate to the learners background and needs, and provide meaningful exercises for the students (Language15). They also should be attractive, free from bias and stereotypes, and have a teacher's guide which includes suggestions for adapting the material for appropriate time constraints and for use with various enrichment activities. In Immersion programs, generally materials from foreign sources are often used (for example, materials in French from Canada), but these often must be supplemented and/or adapted so that they meet guidelines for U.S. elementary school materials (Lipton Practical 231-233, 289).

Materials do not always have to be expensive. Excellent teaching aids may often be obtained for the price of one or two postage stamps by writing to consulates, embassies, and tourist agencies. Also, large cities in the country or countries which use the target language will often have tourist information centers which are willing to send tourist information about the city. A teacher or one of the teacher's acquaintances (including parents of students) who travel may be able to pick up brochures and information (often free) as well as inexpensive souvenirs such as postcards which can be used in class. One of the best ways to get information about a culture is to set up contact between the teacher and a teacher of English in the target country. They can

exchange information, pictures, and perhaps other items such as videotaped television programs (Melvin and Stout 49-50).

Another valuable resource for teachers on a tight budget (or even for those with money to spare) is the library. Elementary school libraries often are comparatively small, but they specialize in offering materials which are appropriate to the reading abilities of the students. Local public libraries may have videos on the target culture or even in the target language, magazines with articles about current events in foreign lands, audio cassettes of music from certain lands, books of folk tales, and biographies of famous people from many countries, as well as informational books about the countries and cultures. Nearby university libraries may have educational resources such as posters, dolls in native dress, and large maps of countries being studied.

Teachers can also create some of their own materials, such as worksheets. These should have clear instructions, contain pictures or other visuals for eye-appeal, and should be designed to add variety to the program. Usually it is best to attempt to address only one concept with any given hand-out, and this should be by way of review, not an introduction to the material. As with all materials for elementary students, variety should be stressed (228, 233-234).

CONCLUSION

To call the final section of this thesis a conclusion is perhaps to apply a misnomer. This work is not intended to be the final word in elementary foreign language programs. It does not attempt to answer all the questions surrounding such programs. On the contrary, it perhaps leads to more questions that must be considered by school systems, parents, and teachers. This work is intended to encourage the consideration of foreign language programs for elementary schools and to facilitate their implementation. It is the authors' hope that those who read this will be inspired with new rationale and new questions and answers which will guide them and their schools toward developing foreign language programs which are challenging, encouraging, educational and motivational.

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Appendix A

Foreign Language Education Requirements Around the World

- Afghanistan** English, French, and German are required, starting in elementary school.
- Arab Emirates** English is required from fifth through twelfth grades. The last two years of high school are divided into two streams, literary and scientific. Those who are in the literary stream must take another foreign language, usually French.
- Argentina** Elementary system is divided into two categories, and in one, a foreign language is required, starting in the third grade. High schools require a foreign language all five years, three years of French and two of English, or three of English and two of French.
- Australia** Some public schools have foreign language requirements, but most do not. Where there is no requirement for foreign languages, the states provide training availability at the elementary and secondary level, including Indonesian, Japanese, Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, French, Greek, German, Hebrew, Latin, Czech, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Turkish, Ukrainian, Italian, Malay, and in the state of Tasmania, Esperanto is also available. Enrollment percentages are more than double those of the United States.
- Austria** For admittance to a university, eight years of a living foreign language plus four years of Latin are required. Before age ten, there is no requirement for a foreign language but courses are "very popular." Of children ten to fourteen, 75 percent receive four years of instruction in at least one living foreign language and, in most instances, Latin also.
- Bahamas** Spanish or French is required during the first three years of high school.
- Barbados** Spanish is actively promoted by the government as a second language.
- Belgium** Foreign languages are compulsory in some areas from third grade on, throughout the country from fifth grade on. Foreign language is compulsory throughout secondary school (ages twelve to eighteen). A second foreign language is available from third grade on, a third foreign language available from fourth grade on.
- Benin** There is no foreign language requirement in elementary schools. Two foreign languages (English and one other) are required in the secondary schools.
- Botswana** Setswana, the national language, is used for the first four grades, and English is taught. From grade five on, English is used as the medium of instruction.
- Brazil** There are almost no foreign languages taught in the elementary schools. English is taught in all three years of secondary school. University entrance examinations require the knowledge of foreign languages.

- Bulgaria From fourth grade through high school, Russian is taught; from eighth grade on, English, French, or German. Students graduate from high school with two foreign languages.
- Burundi French is required in elementary schools. French and English are required in secondary schools and at the university level.
- Cameroon French and English are required from elementary school through the university level. "Faculty of the university are obliged to be bilingual and deliver lectures in each of the two languages. Medical school graduates are expected to present their final dissertations to an international jury in their first language, a summary in the other, and answer questions from the jury in the language in which it is asked.
- Canada An important post in Canada is Commissioner of Official Languages. Because of the language question in Canada, stress is placed on learning French in English-speaking areas and English in French-speaking areas. Immersion is gaining in emphasis. Not only is language training stressed in the schools, but also for adults.
- Central African Rep. Sango and French are taught in elementary schools. In the secondary schools and universities, French, English, German, Spanish, and Russian are available.
- Chad French and Arabic are taught in grade schools. German, Spanish, and English are taught in high schools and universities. Russian is optional.
- China Foreign language are stressed. In urban areas, three years of primary instruction and five years of middle school are provided, fewer in rural areas. Radio broadcasts are used extensively for foreign language instruction.
- Cyprus English is required both in elementary and secondary schools.
- Denmark Starting in the fifth grade, six years of a foreign language are required, and a second is optional.
- Egypt Starting in the sixth grade, six years of English are required; in the tenth grade, three years of French.
- El Salvador A foreign language is required in secondary schools. In order to graduate from a college or university, students are required to show proficiency in a foreign language.
- Fiji English is required both in the elementary and secondary schools.
- Finland In the comprehensive schools (ages seven through fifteen), the first foreign language starts in the third grade and the second starts in the seventh grade, both required. Sixteen hours per week are spent on the first, seven hours per week on the second. It is possible to study two additional foreign languages before graduation from high school.
- France Sixth grade through secondary school, one foreign language is required. Ninth grade on, a second foreign language is required. For entrance into college, students must pass at least one foreign language examination.

- Germany One or more foreign languages is generally required at some point in what would be the equivalent of our elementary or high school.
- Great Britain About 5 percent study a foreign language in elementary schools. From age eleven, 85 percent study for three years, 40 percent, four years or more.
- Greece It is common to study a foreign language at elementary level but not required; one foreign language is required at secondary level.
- Guatemala Foreign language study is voluntary at elementary level, required at secondary level.
- Guinea-Bissau Portuguese is required in elementary schools. Both French and English are required in secondary schools so that, by graduation from high school, all students have had three foreign languages.
- Haiti English and Spanish are required in secondary schools.
- Honduras Five years of a foreign language are required.
- Hungary In grades five through eight, Russian is compulsory, another language optional. In high school, Russian and one more foreign language are required, a third optional. They also have a series of specialized foreign language high schools. At the university level, two years of Russian and two years of another language are required. Fluency in another language is required for Ph.D.
- Iceland Danish is required from age ten for six years. English is required from age twelve for four years. In *menntaskoli* (last two years of high school, first two years of college), Danish is required. Other languages can also be taken.
- India All students are required to study two languages other than the mother tongue.
- Indonesia One foreign language is required in elementary school, one in junior high school, two in high school, two in universities.
- Iran Seven years of foreign language are required, starting in the sixth grade. At the university level, six "units" out of 120 needed for graduation must be in a foreign language.
- Ireland It is not required but "the majority of students do study a foreign language during the course of their education." French is optional in elementary schools.
- Israel English is required from grades four or five, through twelve. Arabic is being encouraged as a second foreign language. All schools in the Arabic section learn Hebrew from grade three. English is required in the university unless the student passes an English proficiency test.
- Italy Foreign languages are required in high school, optional at elementary, and university levels. Most popular language is French, followed by English.

- Jamaica Foreign language study is limited at elementary level, "fairly universal" at secondary level. Students must pass a foreign language examination to be admitted to study humanities at university.
- Japan Although foreign language study is technically not required, more than 80 percent of Japanese students take foreign languages starting at the age of twelve. Two foreign languages are required for university graduation.
- Jordan English study is required from the fifth grade through university.
- Kuwait In grades five through ten, eight forty-minute classes a week in English are required. Grades eleven and twelve are divided by course; either English or French is required.
- Lebanon One foreign language is required in elementary school and secondary school. Two foreign languages are needed before graduation from college.
- Lesotho The government requires that classes be held in English, so that all students learn at least one foreign language.
- Liberia Knowledge of French is required for high school graduation, and it is taught in grades eight through twelve.
- Luxembourg In elementary schools, German and French are required. In secondary schools, English and either Latin, Italian, Spanish, or Russian are required.
- Madagascar French is required at elementary and secondary level. For university graduation, written and oral tests must be passed in English, German, or Spanish.
- Malawi English is required from third grade to university.
- Malaysia Foreign language is required either from first grade or fourth grade, depending on the area, through twelfth grade.
- Mali Foreign language is required in secondary schools.
- Malta Maltese and English are taught from first grade. In secondary schools, students must study Arabic and one other foreign language. Proficiency in English and one other foreign language is required for university admission.
- Mauritania Students start studying French in second grade. English is compulsory in secondary school.
- Mauritius English is compulsory at elementary, secondary, and university levels. It is the official language, though the population is largely French speaking. Other language are available as electives.
- Mexico Primary schools generally offer a foreign language. Study is required in secondary schools. Student must pass a foreign language examination to get a university diploma.

- New Zealand At the secondary level, those who take the pre-university courses usually take two or three years of a foreign language. Those who attend vocational schools are much less likely to.
- Niger Two foreign languages are required in secondary school. Before entering a university, students must pass examinations showing an ability to read and understand two foreign languages.
- Russia In a ten-year school system, almost all take at least one foreign language in high school; one foreign language is required in university; a second or third foreign language is required in graduate school.
- South Africa "Every elementary school child is required to learn at least two languages." Two foreign languages are required in secondary schools, a third is optional.
- South Korea In grades seven through twelve, English is required; in grades ten through twelve, another language is also required. At university level, English is required all four years.
- Spain Foreign language is required in elementary and secondary schools.
- Sri Lanka Foreign languages are required from grade one.
- Sudan There is no elementary instruction, but English and French are required for three years in secondary schools.
- Sweden By graduation from secondary school, students have nine years of English, and two-thirds of the students have either French or German from grade seven on.
- Switzerland A second Swiss national language must be started in the fifth or sixth grade. A foreign language (or a second language) must be begun in the seventh or eighth grade and continued through secondary school and university.
- Syria In intermediate and secondary schools, all students must take five to seven hours a week in a foreign language, usually French or English.
- Taiwan English is required from seventh grade on. A second of foreign language is required in college.
- Togo Two foreign languages are required at the secondary level.
- Tunisia French is required in elementary school, and a second foreign language is required in high school.
- Uganda "English is the official language while Swahili is the National language." Mastering English is stressed and required.
- Yemen Foreign language study is required in secondary schools. Knowledge of a foreign language is required for college or university graduation.

Yugoslavia From fifth grade through high school, a foreign language is required. A language examination must be passed for university graduation.

Zaire French is required in elementary and secondary schools. Other languages are optional at secondary school and university levels.

* The above information is from Simon's The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis (1980).

Appendix B Sources for Materials

This list is not intended to be complete, but it should give you a good start. All information is taken from the most recent 1996 or first 1997 catalogs.

1. **AIMS International Books** 1-800-733-2067
 7709 Hamilton Ave. 1-513-521-5592
 Cincinnati, OH 45231-3103

AIMS' featured products are books for all reading levels in Spanish and French, although some are also available in Arabic, Polish, Korean, German and Latin. Teachers of any language, however, may wish to call and request information about the Interlingo Series of fables for beginning students. The fables are inexpensive (\$3) and well designed, and are available in many languages including Russian, Swahili, Esperanto and Haitian Creole.

2. **AMSCO** 1-212-886-6565
 315 Hudson St. 1-212-675-7010
 New York, NY 10013-1085

While most of the books in this catalog are for middle or high school programs, the Discovering Language series of books is offered for elementary Spanish, French, Italian, German and Latin programs.

3. **Applause** 1-800-253-5351
 85 Fernwood Lane 1-800-APPLAUSE (277-5287)
 Roslyn, NY 11576-1431 1-516-365-7484 (Fax)

Applause offers many types of resources for all grade levels. Languages included are Spanish, French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian and Japanese. The catalog lists books, games, puzzles, posters, maps, magazines, readers, workbooks, movies and software for Macintosh, Windows, Dos and Apple II systems in each of the first four languages and almost as much in the other three. A page of teacher resources is included which offers several very useful books. The catalog has no pictures, which makes thing a bit difficult when examining its selection of posters and other visual aids.

4. **Aristoplay** 1-800-634-7738
 P. O. Box 7529 1-313-995-4611 (Fax)
 Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107 <http://intergalactic.com/aris.htm>

A vendor of educational board and card games, Aristoplay offers a small number of bilingual games such as ¡Tierra Tierra! and a limited selection of games which teach about foreign cultures, including By Jove, a board game of classical mythology, and a card game of Mexican painters. Some of the company's wares are sold in retail stores, and a call to the above number or a visit to the web page will provide a complete list of these.

5. **Carlex** 1-800-526-3768
 P. O. Box 081786 1-810-526-7142 (Fax)
 Rochester, MI 48308-1786

Carlex is a wonderful resource for French and Spanish teachers, but don't leave the catalog where the students can find it or they will be begging for all sorts of things which won't fit into the budget. It includes craft sets such as skeleton puppets for Día de los Muertos and cardboard models of the Eiffel tower and Notre Dame, many, many classroom decorations, awards and certificates, transparencies, games (including many varieties of vocabulary bingo for Spanish students), flags, many miscellaneous items such as notepads, toys, bookmarks and stickers which could be used as incentives or prizes for games, books, videos, decorations and games for every major holiday celebrated in Mexico, Spain, France, Canada and New Orleans and computer programs and clothing for teachers. Disney and Warner Brothers cartoons and folk dance instruction are among the videos offered.

6. **Delta Systems** 1-800-323-8270
 1400 Miller Parkway 1-800-909-9901 (Fax)
 McHenry, IL 60050-7030 <http://www.delta-systems.com>

This catalog, which includes materials for all levels, includes many Spanish, French, German, Latin, Italian, Russian and Japanese resources. It offers software and many useful reference works for educators as well as books, games, videos, reproducibles and music.

7. **EMC Paradigm** 1-800-328-1452
 875 Montreal Way 1-800-328-4564 (Fax)
 St. Paul, MN 55102 educate@emcp.com
<http://www.emcp.com>

This company mainly markets products designed for middle and high schools, but some items such as videos may be useful to an elementary teacher. Languages included are French, Spanish, German, Modern Greek, Russian, Italian and Japanese.

8. **Evan-Moor** 1-800-777-4362
 18 Lower Ragsdale Dr. 1-800-777-4332
 Monterey, CA 93940-57476 <http://www.evan-moor.com>

Evan-Moor offers about 20 children's activity books in Spanish at relatively cheap prices. Many are on topics relating to science, and almost all are also available in English.

9. **Hampton-Brown** 1-800-333-3510
 P. O. Box 369 1-408-384-8940 (Fax)
 Marina, CA 93933 1-408-625-3666 (International)

Hampton-Brown's catalog has many materials for Elementary Spanish students, as well as a few picture books in Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean and Haitian Creole. It includes a useful chart showing what is available for each grade level. Most of the textbooks are designed for ESL students, but the other materials include children's fiction and nonfiction covering many subjects including science and history as well as cultural themes.

- 10. International Linguistics** 1-800-237-1830
 3505 East Red Bridge Road 1-816-765-8855
 Kansas City, Missouri 64137

This company designs products for home schoolers, but some of the materials, such as the Picture Descriptions series (available in French, German, and Russian) could be useful in classes. Some materials are also available for students of Chinese, Hebrew, Czech, and Japanese.

- 11. L and L Enterprises** 1-800-426-5357
 401 Town St. LandLMLang@aol.com
 Gilberts, IL 60136 (Spanish & French)
<http://home.aol.com/LandLMLang> LandL800@aol.com
<http://home.aol.com/LandL800> (Greek & Latin)

This company doesn't seem like much -- the "catalog" is a few photocopied sheets stapled together -- but they have some truly wonderful materials that just can't be found anywhere else. From a CD of Elvis' greatest hits performed in Latin to paper dolls with French folk costumes, they have fun, original materials at competitive prices. CD-ROM software is available for Macintosh and Windows. Spanish, French, Latin and a few Greek materials are available.

- 12. Language Odyssey** 1-800-259-0033
 401 N Michigan Ave. 1-312-828-0909
 Chicago, IL 60611 <http://www.languageodys.com/language>

Language Odyssey offers textbooks for elementary school Spanish and French programs. The books have cultural themes and follow a group of children through Spain and Central and South America in the Spanish books and France, Senegal and Corsica in the French series.

- 13. MEP** 1-847-676-1199
 8220 N. Christiana 1-800-433-9229 (Fax - Library Cat.)
 Skokie, IL 0076 1-800-380-8919 (Fax - School Cat.)

The MEP library catalog has a juvenile section including French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian works. These include fiction and nonfiction, and book and tape sets are available. Comic strip books such as Garfield are offered in Spanish, German and French.

The MEP school catalog offers computer software, videos and elementary school materials for students of French, German and Spanish, with some materials also available for Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Japanese and Russian students. Juvenile dictionaries are offered in Spanish, French, German, Italian, Hebrew, Japanese and Portuguese.

- 14. Multi-Cultural Books** 1-800-567-2220
and Videos
 28880 Southfield Road, Suite 183
 Lathrup Village, MI 48076

This company specializes in offering many bilingual books for children in an astounding array of (mostly oriental and middle-eastern) languages which includes Arabic, Bengali,

- 18. Secunda Enterprises** 1-800-317-8610
 4217 Elbow Rd. 1-757-471-2056
 Virginia Beach, VA 23456 SecundaEnt@aol.com

For Latin and Classical Greek teachers, this has a few elementary level resources. Cultural materials are available for Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Medieval lessons. Texts, videos and classroom decorations are available.

- 19. Weston Walch** 1-800-341-6094
 321 Valley Street 1-207-772-3105 (Fax)
 Portland, ME 04104-0658

This company offers a small number of books for use in elementary Spanish, French, and Latin classes (for a total of five pages in the catalog).

- 20. Whole World Language Catalog** 1-800-243-1234
 Suite LA80 1-203-453-9794 (Fax)
 96 Broad Street 74537.550@compuserve.com
 Guilford, CT 06437-2612

This catalog from Audio-Forum contains resources for students of 96 languages! In major languages, feature films, children's books, and specialty items such as tapes of radio commercials are available, as are items in various dialects. Various cultural materials are also offered (such as a "Learn to Play the Castanets" video in the Spanish section). Languages include Afrikaans, Albanian, Ameslan, Amharic, Apache, Arabic (several dialects), Armenian, Azerbaijani, Basque, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cajun French, Cantonese, Catalan, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Chinese (several varieties), Chinyanja, Choctaw, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Esperanto, Estonian, Finnish, French, Fula, Gaelic (Scots), Georgian, German, Greek (Classical and Modern), Haitian Creole, Hausa, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Khmer, Kiowa, Kirundi, Korean, Lakota, Latin, Latvian, Lenape, Lithuanian, Malay, Mandarin, Mohawk, Mongolian, Moré, Navajo, Norwegian, Ojibwe, Passamaquoddy, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Salish, Sanskrit, Serbo-Croatian, Shona, Sign Language (American), Sinhalese, Slovak, Sotho (Northern and Southern), Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Telugu, Thai, Tibetan, Tlingit, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese, Welsh, Xhosa, Yiddish, Yoruba, and Zulu.

Catalog - Language Chart

Catalogs 11-20

Language	Catalog (see list above for names)									
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Africaans	X
Albanian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Ameslan	X
Amharic	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Apache	X
Arabic	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Armenian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Azerbaijani	X
Basque	X
Bengali	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.
Bulgarian	X
Burmese	X
Cambodian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.
Cantonese	X
Catalan	X
Cherokee	X
Chickasaw	X
Chinese (Mandarin)	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	X
Chinyanja	X
Choctaw	X
Czech	X
Danish	X
Dutch	X
Esperanto	X
Finnish	X
French	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	.	X	X
Fula	X
Gaelic	X
Georgian	X
German	.	.	X	.	X	X	X	.	.	X
Greek (classical)	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.
Greek (modern)	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Gujarati	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.

Language	Catalog (see list above for names)									
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Haitian Creole	X
Hausa	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Hawaiian	X
Hebrew	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Hindi	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Hmong	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.
Hungarian	X
Icelandic	X
Igbo	X
Indonesian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Irish	X
Italian	.	.	X	.	X	X	X	.	.	X
Japanese	.	.	X	.	X	X	.	.	.	X
Kazakh	X
Khmer	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Kiowa	X
Kirundi	X
Korean	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Lakota	X
Laos	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Latin	X	.	X	X	.	.	.	X	X	X
Latvian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Lenape	X
Lithuanian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Maylay	X
Mohawk	X
Mongolian	X
Moré	X
Navajo	X
Norwegian	X
Ojibwe	X
Passamaquoddy	X
Persian	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Polish	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X
Portuguese	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	X
Punjabi	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.

Appendix C

Internet Resources

A tremendous amount of information relating to elementary school foreign language programs, the teaching of foreign languages, and foreign cultures is available on the internet. Internet sources, especially world wide web pages, are constantly being added, deleted, moved and changed. Therefore, a list of internet resources quickly becomes obsolete if it is not continually updated to reflect these changes. For this reason, rather than attempting to provide a complete list of sources for materials and information on the internet we have decided to include a selection of on-line lists of sources which are updated regularly. These contain links to thousands of sites created by teachers, universities, governments, and ordinary people who love their languages and encourage language education.

<http://www.bethel.hampton.k12.va.us/langlink.html>

This site is itself a list of lists, and is an excellent starting place for browsing internet resources. It contains links to many sites which contain information about linguistics in general, educational resources, cultural and historical information about many countries, and many languages.

<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/lctl/LCTLresources.html>

This site is sponsored by the Less Commonly Taught Languages Project and is designed to help teachers and students of all languages other than English, French, German and Spanish. It contains links to several sites containing useful information, many of them pages of links.

http://www.cortland.edu/www_root/flteach/flteach-res.html

Following all of the links from this page and the pages it links to would take a lifetime. All types of information about teaching foreign languages can be found here, though wading through the incredible volume of material to find exactly what is needed could take a while.

<http://www.olsen.ch/cgi-bin/exmenu>

This page links to currency conversion pages which can be useful when discussing money and the economy of the target culture.

<http://www.sil.org/ethnologue>

Ethnologue attempts to have linguistic and cultural information about every language on the planet, and with more than 6,700 languages listed it certainly comes pretty close to fulfilling its goal. For each language, links to a few web sites are provided.

<http://babel.uoregon.edu/Yamada/fonts.html>

This site is devoted to computer fonts and character codes. It is a wonderful resource for teachers of any language who wish to use their computers to design worksheets, classroom decorations, etc. From it fonts for many alphabets can be downloaded, often free of charge. It even has font collections for American Sign Language, Egyptian hieroglyphs, several phonetic and runic alphabets, Klingon, Morse Code and Tolkien.