

*The Need for the Implementation of Foreign Language Instruction in North Carolina
Elementary Schools*

Honors Project

In fulfillment of the Requirements for

The University Honors College

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

By

Senel Izin

Department of School of Education

May 2, 2005



Senel Izin
Honors College Scholar

Date: 4/29/05



Sandra Strickland
Faculty Advisor

Date: 2 May 2005



Carolyn R. Thompson, Ph.D.
Director, University Honors College

Date: 3 May 2005

This research is dedicated to my intelligent young niece, Selin.
Continue to learn your second language, as this is a portal to your future.

Cage
AS
36
.N6
P458
2005
no. 2

Acknowledgements

Foreign languages are essential for one who wants to achieve in life. As a bilingual myself, this is seen in every aspect of my life. Having the opportunity to learn, not one foreign language but two, has molded me to become the person that I am today. Learning a foreign language truly opens the door to success. This thesis covers the importance of learning a foreign language and the educational background. It discovers the state of North Carolina's view on foreign language and answers the question of implementing foreign language in the school systems.

I would like to especially thank those who have assisted me with this research. I am especially appreciative of my husband, Hasan, and my family. They have supported me throughout my whole research and have given me insight on the advantages of learning a foreign language. They have given me examples of advantages daily through their lives and speaking a foreign language. Secondly I owe much appreciation to Mrs. Sandra Strickland, my faculty advisor, and my University Honors College Director, Dr. Carolyn Thompson. Mrs. Strickland has given her time and devotion in assisting me with this research. Not only have I had an intellectual advisor, but also a dear friend. Dr. Carolyn Thompson has also been supportive of my research and has also become a mentor. Without these people by my side, this would have been a difficult thesis to research. They have truly supported my educational dream.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTERS	PAGE
1. Introduction: The Issue	1
2. Literature Review: Linguistic Diversity, Bilingualism, and Advantages	4
3. Methodology: Methods for Research, and Implementing Foreign Language in Schools	12
• Table 1	29
4. Results: Analyzing the North Carolina Standard Course of Study	20
5. Summary: Conclusions on Results	33
6. Documentation	37

ABSTRACT

THE NEED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION IN NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

By

Senel Izin

Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

May 7, 2005

The United States seems to be facing an issue in the educational system. Foreign language curriculum seems to be limited in elementary education. However, the state of North Carolina seems to be devoted to foreign language learning. Evidence of this occurring in the state is with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. North Carolina seems to truly understand the value of learning a second language and how important it is to implement it in elementary education. Goals and objectives for this curriculum are covered in the curriculum.

This research is to provide evidence of the importance of learning a second language. Evidence showing the importance of learning a second language lies within discussion of linguistic and cultural diversity within the United States and the advantages of bilingualism. Researching these topics will reveal the necessity of learning a second language within the United States. Afterwards, exposing different methods and ways of

implementing a foreign language will provide hope for teachers. They will become motivated in teaching a foreign language or even starting a foreign language program within the elementary school. Later, analyzing the North Carolina Standard Course of Study is essential when trying to discover that state's stand on this topic. Results will later reveal that North Carolina is in support of learning a foreign language, however, research is limited on implementation of foreign language instruction in elementary education.

Accomplishments include providing important facts about foreign languages, ways of implementing foreign language, and revealing North Carolina's stand on foreign languages. The most important fact about the study, however, is that the resources are limited to find out schools teaching foreign languages in elementary education. One then has to assume that the curriculum is being taken lightly and not truly being implemented in elementary education. Teachers need to take on the role and take the first step in foreign language instruction implementation in elementary education.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Issue

Would we be depriving North Carolina students by not teaching a foreign language early in life? Is the state implementing foreign language instruction within elementary education? This seems to be a potential challenge for the state. Through research, a set curriculum for foreign language was found. However, evidence that this is being implemented in the school system could not be discovered consistently across the state. Research to support implementation was limited. While some elementary schools offer a foreign language program, others seem to disregard teaching a foreign language. This becomes a real issue when trying to accomplish successful student learning.

There are many benefits when one learns a foreign language at an early age. For those who do not learn a foreign language early in life, it inhibits future success. Reynaldo F. Macias' *The Flowering of America: Linguistic Diversity in the United States* stated that "without major changes in foreign language education policies and a better sense of the foreign language proficiency of those who study foreign High school and college graduates often complain that they did not learn to speak or use foreign language very well despite having studied it in school" (p. 51).

There seems to be an issue rising in the United States with people lacking the knowledge of learning a second language. While other countries are pushing their citizens towards learning a second language, such as English, it seems as though the United States is lacking in this area. Countries around the world understand the value of learning a second language. They realize learning a second language has many advantages and success that follows. They continually stress foreign languages within

the schools systems. However, since the primary language in the United States is English, some believe that there is no need in learning another language. Yet, without knowing another language today's society, it is less likely that one will have opportunities of success in their future. Although, lessening the opportunities of success does not necessarily have to occur. Implementing foreign languages within the school systems is the beginning stage.

Learning a foreign language in elementary education is essential for offering success at an early age to our children. The state of North Carolina, through their curriculum, seems to understand the importance of languages. The state seems to value learning a second language in elementary education. It is realized that each content area is vital for a child's growth. In addition, they understand that each content area offers a way for a child to grow mentally, socially, academically, and emotionally. The state seems to truly believe that each content area is necessary for the child to be able to function effectively in society. However, as mentioned earlier, there is not much evidence to prove implementation of a foreign language within the school systems, especially elementary education.

The essence of researching foreign language learning in the North Carolina curriculum and school systems is to discover whether this is taking place. If the school systems of North Carolina value other content areas, then they surely value learning a second language. Whether some elementary schools in the state teach a foreign language, or not, hopefully this research will give insight to the importance of learning a foreign language at an early age. With the assistance of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and other documents, the value of learning another language will be

revealed. This research will explain the value of learning a second language in the United States since there is linguistic and cultural diversity. This research will also provide evidence to show the importance of learning second language within elementary schools by taking an insight view on bilingualism. Evidence on advantages of learning second language is shown when the upcoming topic of bilingualism occurs. The topic of bilingualism discusses the benefits of speaking another language. In addition, there is documentation from a resource stating that there are degrees of bilingualism, therefore implying that anyone even learning another language has some degree of bilingualism.

Afterwards, ways and methods of implementing a second language are specified. These methods are suggestions for teachers. Teachers can use these types of methods when teaching foreign languages within their classroom. This assists the research because it gives examples of ways to teach foreign language with other curriculum through integration. Integration takes place with other content areas.

Lastly, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study will be analyzed. Analyzing the Course of Study is necessary in figuring out the state's stand on foreign language. As mentioned earlier, the state supports foreign language. However, analyzing the document will prove the different ways they support foreign languages. It will also show teachers in North Carolina that the curriculum exists and is required for the state. They will notice that the curriculum is compromised of goals and objectives. Therefore, they are required to teach those goals and objectives within their classroom.

Finally, the summary concludes that educators already have an advantage, which is that students spend the majority of the day at school with the teacher. Just as any other content area is taught within the schools, so can second languages. It is just a matter of

understanding the necessity of teaching second languages and how one can implement it within their schools. As Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Bjornstad Pesola in *Languages and Children: Making a Match, Foreign Language Instruction for an Early Start Grades K-8*, having “foreign language program draws from and reinforces the goals of the general elementary school curriculum, including across-the-curriculum goals such as cognitive skills development and global education” (p. xiv).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Linguistic Diversity, Bilingualism, and Advantages

In order to learn more about bilinguals and the demographic profile in the United States, research had to be completed. The use of books on the topic of bilingualism and the demographic profile had to be studied. There are studies that have been recorded in these bilingual books that are still apply today. It can be used to support the idea of teaching second languages in elementary schools.

Studies performed twenty years ago are not just previous studies that cannot be used, but studies researchers used for their very own new research. A foundation is given to new research. These studies done in the past were the basis of today’s studies. Thus is the reason of referring to the older studies because there is truth in them and it lays the groundwork for today’s research. The upcoming explanations dealing with bilinguals and the study of bilinguals are the literature review for this thesis. It allows the topic of the importance of second languages in elementary education to be supported by these older studies. It puts the study in context with the other research in the field.

Social interaction occurs all around the world as it does in the United States we well. America is a country of "linguistic diversity." As Macias Reynaldo stated in *The Flowering of America: Linguistic diversity in the United States*, "The North American area that is now the United States has had a linguistically diverse population since before the first European contacts. Whether one considers the 500-plus indigenous languages, the various colonial languages, or the subsequent numbers of immigrant languages and Creoles developed within the current national borders, the area has seen substantial numbers of speakers of different languages" (p. 11).

The United States is made up of different cultures and different languages. It is the melting pot of the world. The United States is constantly becoming more diverse. Even if one does not want to learn a second language and travel abroad, it is still necessary that they know another language other than English because of the diversity within the United States. There are many different languages spoken in the United States other than English.

Macias declared that "the language diversity in the United States has several implications for schooling. First, the language and educational needs of those students who have limited English proficiency require some attention. Second, the development of second or foreign language competencies among the national population, for both the language minority populations and native English monolinguals, should be explored" (p. 41).

He goes on to report that a study in 1987 dealing with teaching foreign language in elementary and secondary schools specified that only 22% of elementary schools taught foreign language and that 87% of secondary schools taught foreign language.

However, the problem that has risen is that *less* than half of the students were enrolled in some type of foreign language classes. Only about 10% of the schools were serious about teaching foreign languages in their schools and offered a rigorous course in foreign language. He goes on to state that “56% of the elementary schools and 37% of the secondary schools, the foreign language teachers were native speakers of the languages being taught, and most had had no in-service training during the year prior to the survey. Half of the foreign language elementary school teachers were not certified to teach foreign languages “ (p. 51).

Those who have taken foreign languages in elementary school had to retake their language course in secondary education since there were no special classes for those who had been enrolled in FLES. FLES is a foreign language program called Foreign Language in Elementary School. Even though teaching Spanish has increased in elementary school, all the other languages decreased. Such languages were Japanese, Italian, and Sign Language (p. 52). Therefore, even though the predominant language in the United States is English, there are a number of non-English speakers living in America. “Both non-English speakers and foreign language study contribute to national linguistic diversity” (p. 52).

There are many adults and children who are bilingual. This is seen evidenced as early as when a child begins to speak. It is then evident that it is also seen during the elementary years. They become bilingual as early as elementary school. Many people ask what bilingualism means. It simply means having two languages. They know how to speak two languages. As mentioned earlier, one who knows another language a little is bilingual to some degree. As George Saunders also included in *Bilingual Children*:

Guidance For The Family, “there are different degrees of bilingualism from those who know the second language well, to just learning the language” (p. 9). Thus, even if one does not want to be bilingual, those who live in the United States are bilingual to some degree.

Many people question whether being bilingual is an advantage or a disadvantage. However, many people really do not have that choice to make. One cannot simply choose to be or not to be bilingual because they are born into that situation. Yet studies show that bilingualism is a positive aspect toward people who are bilingual. Saunders described that “There are certain cognitive advantages, earlier and greater awareness of the arbitrariness of language, earlier separation of meaning from sound, greater adeptness at evaluating non-empirical contradictory statements, greater adeptness at divergent thinking, greater adeptness at creative thinking, greater social sensitivity, and greater facility at concept formation” (p. 17-20). These items mentioned point to bilingualism as being an advantage.

Keeping in mind, as Saunders mentioned, there are degrees to bilingualism. In that case, teaching students second languages in elementary education will give them a degree of bilingualism, which would then give them these advantages mentioned earlier. He mentions “the bilingual children become conscious at a much earlier age of the fact that names are arbitrarily assigned to objects and are subject to change” (p.17).

They are also able to separate a meaning of a word from its sound. This is something that is done when they are very young. Saunders reported that “Cummins found in his 1978 study that grade 3 and grade 6 bilingual children (whose home language was English but who at school were being taught through Irish) were better able

to evaluate non-empirical contradictory statements than monolingual children with whom they were matched on IQ, socio-economic status and age” (p. 18-19). Therefore is evidence displaying the difference between a bilingual and a monolingual’s separating the meaning from a word.

Divergent thinking also increases with bilingual children. It is a type of thinking that allows the child to explore all the possibilities to a statement, solution, or question. Along with divergent thinking comes creative thinking. Creative thinking is already essential in the elementary school years. Allowing foreign language to be taught would expand the creative thinking of the children. It also welcomes greater social sensitivity. Saunders pointed out “there is some evidence indicating that having two languages can give greater social sensitivity than monolingual children” (p. 19). Children are able to feel comfortable with others and socialize in a relaxing manner. This is a life long skill. Wherever one is, either at school, home, or work field, socialization is necessary. Children need to be able to socialize with other children when at school. When they become older they need to communicate with their spouses and neighbors at home, and almost in all cases when working. This is especially necessary if the occupation is working with people abroad. Focusing on foreign languages within the elementary classrooms gives the children the opportunity to expand their social skills and practice it within the classrooms.

Finally, it creates greater facility at concept formation. Concept formation “is a major part of intellectual development.” Saunders wrote that intellectual development is not actually hindered, but enhanced. Children who are bilingual are better at concept formation. Saunders stated “They surmise that this is because the bilingual child, by

virtue of his or her two languages, is exposed to a more complex environment and to a greater amount of social interaction compared to a child acquiring only one language” (p. 20). There are many advantages to bilingualism, and children learning a second language in elementary schools can attain. If there are any disadvantages, it usually occurs because of society or culturally. Society and culture may cripple one from practicing bilingualism. Those who fear bilingualism fear it because they feel it threatens their way of life. They are accustomed to their way of life because they fear change. Yet, it is the situation the child is put in. A child in a classroom would not necessarily be in this situation because the teacher would be able to control the environment. However, this is just touching the surface of the advantages of bilingualism, and learning a foreign language in elementary schools.

As Curtin and Pesola listed, studying a foreign language, which bilinguals already exhibit, “fosters a sense of humanity and friendship.” They also “increase students’ adaptability to different environments and modes of acting and thinking, furnishes the key to thinking patterns, cultures, and social institutions to other peoples, and provides insights into the human mind and language itself” (p. 5). This is also seen with bilinguals. Students who learn a second language in elementary education will be able to share these advantages as bilinguals do.

As mentioned earlier, students’ social skills will increase with making new friends, adapting to different environments, and understanding the whole idea of language itself. In addition, they will learn to value customs, while sharing their very own to others. They learn to appreciate other cultures, which is what America great! Since America is made up of different cultures, it is necessary for appreciation of

differences to occur. Students will develop this appreciation for others and will advance in careers and professions dealing with people from other nations. This will then lead to global interdependence (p. 5). Thus, working together is necessary and learning another language is vital in order to accomplish this step in global interdependence.

Bilinguals have a language choice. Taking a look at Francois Grosjean's *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism*, it is noted that bilinguals have a lot more language choice when speaking to another bilingual than speaking to a monolingual. With another bilingual, they will use language with code-switching and without switching. "Not only can bilingual speakers, like their monolingual counterparts, choose among different varieties of a language but, when speaking to other bilinguals, they can also choose between two languages. Whereas a monolingual can only switch from one variety to another (colloquial to formal, for instance) in one language, a bilingual may change varieties in one language, change languages, or do both" (p. 128). Grosjean continues to state that "The bilingual will quiet naturally choose the language of his interlocutor, and the interaction will be like that of two monolinguals" (p. 129-130). In addition, it is noted that bilinguals "unconsciously and without no extra time or effort" are able to switch into another language to speak to someone (p. 130).

They are mentally capable of switching from one language to another without any difficulty. They understand both languages well enough to do so. In addition, they are able to speak to different people from different cultures. They are able to reach out to, not just one group of people, but two groups of people. It is also noted in Jack Richard's *Understanding Second and Foreign Language Learning* that "second and foreign languages are learned and used not a formal codes but as vehicles for social

interaction and for the expression and comprehension of complex semantic, social, and psychological content” (p. 13). Thus, there seems to be many advantages, just as Richards and the rest of the authors have mentioned.

Social interaction is important in order to create economical success, and other, types of successes. Cultural, economic, and social success is seen when one knows another language other than English. The success is seen in their educational and professional lives. The changes of these types of success are greater when one knows another language. They are diverse people and capable to handling situations because of their experience with knowing a different language.

Taking a look at the benefits, Curtain and Pesola divide the benefits into two main categories: immediate benefits and long-range benefits. Starting with the immediate benefits, the first and foremost important immediate benefit would be “attaining greater academic achievement in other areas of study, including reading, social studies, and mathematics” and then “developing clearer understanding of the English language and greater sensitivity to structure, vocabulary, and syntax” (p. 5).

Learning a foreign language will help the students in these areas, which bilingual children already obtain. Students also score higher in the Scholastic Aptitude Test, also known as the SAT and the American College Test, known as ACT. This was especially scored high in the verbal areas. This also leads to them to gaining opportunities in the student exchange programs in the future. Their knowledge of geography and different cultures becomes much stronger than the average student. And lastly, earning college credits while in high school occurs. These are all just immediate benefits (p. 5-6).

Along with immediate benefits are long-range benefits with learning a second language. It prepares one for traveling, whether for business, education, or just pleasure. Those who invest in learning a second language perform research abroad and have opportunities for foreign-study programs. Such programs offered are student exchanges, junior year abroad in college, summer courses, and business internship. They also have opportunities to exchange ideas and information with others in the fields of commerce, law, education, and the arts. In addition, they develop more flexibility in the thinking process through reasoning, problem solving, and much more. Most importantly, they are satisfying their dreams by learning another language (p. 6).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Methods for Research and Implementing Foreign Language in Schools

After learning about the advantages of bilingualism, it is essential to try to make with goals and then to take those goals to combine ways of teaching bilingualism into the classrooms. There are many types of methods of teaching a second language within a classroom. In order to do this, researching methods of implementing a foreign language was performed. It is important to realize that it is not only the method of teaching a second language that will ensure successful language learning, but many other factors as well.

After researching different methods and factors in successful language learning, the analyzing of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study will take place. Following this will be using the methods and factors mentioned from researching different books and figuring out which ones would best fit the state of North Carolina. This will be the results section to this thesis.

The result will be to find out about North Carolina teaching a second language in elementary school and comparing it to other states. In addition, coming up with the best types of methods and instructional deliveries for North Carolina classrooms will be noted. This will help better prepare North Carolina to advance into the twenty-first century because they will be preparing their students for global interdependence.

There should be basic goals set for elementary education. Curtain and Pesola listed several basic skills that students attain when learning a second language. The first one is actually the basic skills. As mentioned earlier, test scores increased for students who had studied a foreign language for five years. They had higher verbal scores on their SAT than those who did not. As far as communication, another basic skill, students' listening skills were enhanced, memory was increased, and the concept of communication was understood. Curtain and Pesola also reported that "many of the activities common in elementary school language programs-emphasis on movement, imagination, and role play, for example-stimulate the right hemisphere of the brain, which is often underplayed in the formal school setting. Foreign language instruction can make a contribution to "whole-brain" education, and one consequence can be enhanced creativity." They go on to report that FLES (foreign language in the elementary school) program offered "greater skills in divergent thinking/figural creativity than did those who were monolingual, according to research conducted by Landry (1973)" (p. 8). Students also have higher self-concept, a better change of career development, integration of all areas of the curriculum, and cultural enhancements. These are basic goals that foreign languages offer to the students and the programs instill these basic skills within the children.

As mentioned earlier, there are different types of methods and factors in implementing methods within a classroom. Richards researched many ways of teaching second languages. He points out that “successful second and foreign language learning results from a convergence of positive teacher, instructional, social, learner, and method factors, though none of these factors in isolation can guarantee successful language learning” (p. 13). Research shows that having these factors will allow successful language learning to occur.

Having a positive teacher is very essential, especially one that has a positive attitude about learning a second language and is competent in teaching the second language accurately. A challenge is presented when a teacher does not exhibit these qualities. It is largely believed, and proven, that a child best learns a language when the teacher knows the language. For example, it is better to have a teacher who knows the language from experience, rather than from a book. If a teacher knows that language personally, then he or she can teach it better than one that has recently learned the language and is trying to teach it to the students.

A foreign language program is necessary for foreign languages to take place in elementary education. Such as program already exist, such as FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School). However, schools need to have certified staff for this program to take place. As Curtain and Pesola stated, “teachers for FLES programs will need to have considerable fluency in the target language as well as meaningful living experiences in countries in which the language is spoken. Children will not be able to achieve fluency greater than that of their teachers. It is also important that these teachers have education and experiences in working with elementary schools children and that

they have an understanding of teaching and learning a second language” (p. 39). There needs to be a language specialist when teaching students a foreign language. It is very important for these methods to be used when teaching a foreign language. Someone who does not know the language very well, of course, will not be able to teach a foreign language. This will take willing and motivated teachers who want to be able to teach a foreign language within their classroom.

Yet, this is not the only component for successful language learning, but there are other factors that play a role in it. Instruction and the way it is delivered to the students is vital. For example, J. Holmes in *Understanding Second and Foreign Language Learning: Issues and Approaches*, his essay *Sociolinguistic Competence in the Classroom* explains the delivery of the instruction and how it plays a role in the child’s learning a second language. He first describes an environment that is not suitable for a child to learn a second language. A formal type of environment, one where students’ desks are not grouped together, is not focused on learning the language, but the teacher’s instruction instead. In order to learn a foreign language, one must be able to practice it. This is seen in every grade level.

When students are in a classroom where it is very formal, the desks are spaced out, and the teacher is in the front of the classroom teaching the second language. Successful learning will not occur. This has been seen because students who use manipulatives retain more material. It is not a suitable environment for the learners. However, in an environment that allows interaction with other students, the desks are close together, and discussion is occurring that is suitable and encouraged (p. 135).

Examples of this type of environment are small group instruction, or learning centers. Even though learning centers are designed to cover many content areas, teachers can use this to integrate second languages into learning centers and with different types of content areas. For example, a reading center can entail reading a story in another language with an audio cassette. A writing center can have the child write in that language. Therefore, a classroom environment is one of the components that affect learning a second language.

Other factors that assist in learning a second language, as Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Bjornstad Pesola stated, involves organization "in terms of concrete experiences; visuals, props, realia, and hands-on activities are integral components of instruction" (p. xiii). This statement is factual because elementary education children need to learn in this type of instructional style. The use of hands-on activities, or also known as manipulatives, help a child learn something better because they are able to visually see the situation before them. Manipulatives allow the child to work out the situation with their hands and this allows them to expand their thinking skills. Other ways of teaching a second language to elementary education students is through songs, rhymes, stories, arts, crafts, and other creative ways. Just as this is vital for a child to learn any type of content area, it is also vital for them to learn a second language in this fashion.

Curtain and Pesola also stress reading and writing as communicative tools for this age developmental group. In addition, through cultural experiences, the child is able to gain a better understanding of the language being learned (p. xiv). Looking at reading and writing as ways of implementing foreign languages, this is just like learning a first

language. The main subjects stressed in the primary grades are reading and writing. The child already knows how to speak their language, however, they do not know their language completely without reading and writing. In the primary grades, teachers try to reach into the child to pull these things out of them. Reading and writing is necessary to be able to communicate. Just as it is important in the first language, so is it when learning a second language. Reading and writing are ways of communicating to another and it is vital to learn in any language.

There are many resources that a teacher would be exposed to when teaching a foreign language. The public library usually has a foreign language section. Many English books are translated into, mainly Spanish, and have a audio cassette to go along with it. Teachers are able to place that book and tape in a listening center to have the child to read along while the tape is playing. The other option is that the teacher can become familiar with the story through the tape and practice it. Once the teacher feels confident enough to read the book in another language, she can read it to her students and translate each word and page. There are also video cassettes, mainly cartoons, that help children to learn a different language.

Many say that the best way to learn another language is through watching children programs and cartoons because there is a lot of imagination and creativity that goes along with the show. Such is the case with the videos. There are videos, such as *Muzzy* that help children to learn a different language. There are activities that a child can do while learning a new language. This can also be implemented within the classrooms by the teacher and are in the public library.

Along with learning to integrate subjects and speak the language is learning the culture. This can be integrated into the reading and writing. As in English, when a child is learning how to read and write, they are also learning about their culture. An example is holidays. A teacher will take a prompt about a particular holiday and have the children write a story about that particular holiday. Furthermore, she will also read a book about that holiday to the students. This same concept can be taken and applied to second languages. A teacher can take the culture they are learning about and its' holidays, and have the students write a story about as if they were at that country for that particular holiday. In addition, the teacher can either read to the students about the culture, or allow the students to read the book themselves. Yet, ways of teaching the culture should not be limited to reading and writing. There are numerous ways in teaching the culture. Going back to hands-on activities, students will also best learn the culture through hands-on activities. Cooking, making puppets from that culture, and other items are ways of allowing the child to learn about the culture with hands-on activities.

As is with any content area, activities should be appropriate for the developmental age. Curtain and Pesola explain that activities "are designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles and to incorporate frequent opportunities for movement and physical activity" (p. xiv). Activities, especially for elementary students, should be developmentally age appropriate. Secondly, language can be taught at any grade level, however, the instruction is how the teacher delivers it during the lesson. In delivering the instruction, the teacher needs to prepare and organize activities that will allow the child to be successful when doing the activity. It does not necessarily have to be easy, just something that they are able to finish and something they understand. For example, with

Kindergarten, playing games and singing songs are the best way for them to learn a second language. However, when you get to the upper grades, writing, reading, and the use of a computer to do websites in that language would be beneficial. One would not give this type of activity to a fourth grader. Vice versa, a fourth grader could sing songs and play games, however, they would gain a lot more knowledge if it were an activity at their age level. This is true with any content area.

There are other ways of implementing ways of teaching second languages to elementary education students. The use of technology, as is with any content area, are ways of implementing a foreign language. As mentioned earlier, videos are ways a child can learn a second language. Cartoons capture a child's thoughts and attention. Another way of using technology and teaching a foreign language, just as Curtain and Pesola mentioned, is through interactive television (p. 42). Usually, this is seen in high schools and middle schools. A teacher is in a different area. The students are in a classroom. Video cameras and monitors are set up to allow the teacher to broadcast and teach to the students. The students then interact with the teacher through the use of the camera. They speak to each other in a foreign language. It makes learning fun and the students want to speak a different language with the teacher. Some believe that this is far too advanced for elementary students. However, with the proper supervisors at hand with the students, this can be made possible. This is especially useful when there are a limited number of professionals in the foreign language field. A classroom teacher could set up the classroom for the interactive television with cameras and monitors and the professional can teach the class right where they are located.

Field trips are another strategy of getting the students to learn a second language. For example, if teaching German, making a field trip to a German restaurant will enable to children to do several things. They get a glimpse of the German culture through the food and the German restaurant's environment. They also get to practice speaking in German freely. There are also shops that children can be taken to. This allows them to get a glimpse of products from that culture. Food products, books, and other items allow the child to connect better with the language they are learning.

Chapter 4: Results

Analyzing the North Carolina Standard Course of Study

As a result of taking a look at the demographic profile of the United States and its' diversity, one now realizes the importance of learning a second language. We are surrounded by different cultures. One cannot merely avoid learning a second language because it is in our daily lives. As a result of looking at the advantages of bilingualism and benefits, both immediate and long-range, one understands the necessity of learning a second language. In addition, one also knows, by looking at ways of implementing a foreign language into the school systems and different methods to use, our students can easily learn a second language.

All of the items mentioned points to the main idea, and that is the importance of learning a second language at an early age. The best way to educate Americans about foreign languages and teach a foreign language is through schools, which should be started at the elementary years. In the state of North Carolina, there is actually a second language curriculum. This is made possible with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

The North Carolina Standard Course of Study is the North Carolina curriculum made up of goals and objectives for any content area. The curriculum is for Kindergarten to twelfth grade. As is with any content area, there is also a curriculum for second language studies. Before studying each grades curriculum, the purpose and philosophy is written for the Second Language Studies Curriculum. It actually is aligned with all the information that was given earlier in the thesis. Taking a look at the purpose and philosophy will give one an understanding of the curriculum. It will show the result when analyzing the Standard Course of Study, whether North Carolina is really implementing second language learning into the school systems.

As stated in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, there is a rationale for language learning. It also states “the ability to communicate with others is central to human nature.” The rationale continues to state “as boundaries between countries are being dissolved, the need for foreign language instruction has become a necessary component for linking with the rest of the world and for producing an enlightened citizenship able to function in today’s ever-shrinking world.” The rationale continues “in addition to the need for communication within a global world, the study of a foreign language is needed to ensure economic competitiveness, to maintain national security, and to teach tolerance and respect for others inside and outside of the United States.” The last rationale states “learning another language is a passport to greater understanding of one’s own language and culture.”

After the North Carolina Standard Course of Study discussed the rationale for language learning, it shares with the public studies and reports. “The National Commission on Excellence in Education published a report *A Nation at Risk* (1983)

which ranked a foreign language education at the same level as the “basic academic fields-English, mathematics, computer science, social studies, and the natural science” (pp. 25-26).

It goes on to say that “The National Association of State Board of Education (NASBE) stated that “...it is far more effective to initiate foreign language study in the elementary school than in secondary school both from the perspective of more advanced language study and enhancing general academic skills” (p. 1). They also gave three reasons for learning a foreign language, which are economic reasons, social reasons, and academic reasons.

Starting with the economic reasons, “in NC alone there are over 800 international firms. The United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and France have the largest number of firms.” And the North Carolina Standard Course of Study quoted that “the workplace of tomorrow is a world of many cultures and languages... with new forms of global commerce we can’t even imagine today” (Kiplinger Washington Editors, 1996).

The social reasons are the same as mentioned earlier, with the exception that “North Carolina has a growing non-English speaking population. There are more than 17 languages currently spoken by students in our schools. The immigration population is expected to rise as long as the state’s economy remains strong. The ability to speak a second language helps us to communicate directly with those who speak that language. In addition, it enables us to understand firsthand the process for second language acquisition and to be prepared to handle challenges of living the working with non-English speakers.”

Lastly, the Standard Course of Study mentions the academic reasons for learning a second language. As mentioned earlier, the SAT scores will increase, especially the verbal scores. Those who take a foreign language for at least five years will see these results when they take their SAT. Their cognitive skills increases as well. This includes “mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking, and higher-order thinking skills.” The Course of Study continues to mention that Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools have many benefits. Such benefits are pronunciation, higher scores, listening skills, basic skills, cognitive development, cultural pluralism, self-concept, previous knowledge, and foreign language and the brain. They mention that over the past twenty years, research has been conducted and these were the both the immediate and long-range benefits of learning a foreign language.

It mentions that “children have the ability to learn and excel in the pronunciation of a foreign language (Dulay and Krashen; Krashen and Long, et al.; Krashen and Terrell). This is to be true, especially in the elementary education levels. In fact, learning another language will allow phonics to occur, which will assist in both learning a second language and continuing in learning English in school.

Higher scores have been mentioned. However, this is not just limited to the SAT and ACT. These are on standardized tests, such as reading, language arts, and mathematics. Their reading comprehension increases dramatically. This is seen in both the native language and the language they are learning. The score is higher in “reading achievement, including vocabulary, cognitive learning, and total reading ability” (Masciantonio, 1977; Rafferty, 1986).

Listening skills are enhanced when learning a second language. This also includes their memory skills because they understand the concept of communication. Basic skills also increase when learning a different language. Those students who take the Basic Skills Test score higher than those who do not learn a second language. As far as cognitive development, “Ginsburg and McCoy (1981) cited research findings to support that when students learn another language at the elementary level and there is a good program articulation, second language students advance more rapidly than monolingual students in cognitive abilities, independent of IQ.”

Students have an appreciation for other cultures and “improve their self-concept and sense of achievement in school.” In addition, they are “less dependent on previous verbal learning than are most other elements of the curriculum.” Lastly, “recent research in brain mapping reveals that young children who learned another language in infancy use the same brain circuits for both their native and the foreign language whereas adult learners rely on special brain circuits to learn another language (Hirsch, 1997)”. In addition, the Course of Study states that “obviously, learning continues to take place throughout a person’s life; however, the optimum time for learning occurs until the age of 10 to 12 when the brain of young children is believed to be most receptive (Chugani). For this reason, language learning is most effective when it is started early on in a child’s life.”

All of these are things mentioned in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. An extensive evaluation and analyzing is necessary to give a result on whether North Carolina is implementing secondary language in elementary education. However, before giving the final result, taking a look at the curriculum in the grade levels is necessary.

Are there goals and objectives? What are the goals and objectives? Are they listed in the same way and pattern as the other content areas? This is essential when trying to find out whether North Carolina is implementing second languages in elementary education. In addition, one needs to compare the state of North Carolina to other states. One already knows that, by evaluating the purpose and philosophy of the second language curriculum, that North Carolina seems to believe in the same ideas as mentioned earlier in the thesis. Yet, how is the actual curriculum set up for each grade level?

When one views the curriculum for each grade level, there are goals and objectives. The curriculum seems to cover modern foreign language. In the elementary education curriculum, it starts out with the basic level. The first grade's first competency goal is interpersonal communication. This goal covers objectives such as expressions, basic words, answer and questions orally, and exchanging personal information. This is the basic that they start with, which is with anyone when learning a new language. The students are already learning what people try to learn when entering a foreign country.

The second competency goal is interpretive communication. This is where the students are doing written and spoken communication in another language. This exceeds the first competency goal because they start to understand everyday spoken words. They also start to follow oral directions and commands. They learn this goal through song, rhymes, and poems. These are the best methods to teach these types of objectives. Eventually, they begin to understand general phrases and gestures that follow along.

Along with learning the language, they begin to learn the culture. This is covered in the competency goal number three. This is essential when learning a second language. They learn how to recognize gestures and phrases within the culture. An example is counting in German. In the German culture, Germans usually start counting numbers with their thumb. While other cultures use the pointer finger to begin counting with one, Germans use their thumbs. This is cultural and the students start to learn this culture when this competency goal is taught to them.

Starting as early as first grade, students begin to explore the comparisons and differences between their own culture and the culture they are learning about. This increases their divergent thinking. It allows them to really gain an understanding about the culture they are learning about. Learning how to compare and contrast, this also helps them out in other subject areas. An example is using the Venn Diagram in mathematics. They need to be able to compare and contrast when using the Venn Diagram. In addition, the double bubble map, which is used in writing, also deals with comparing and contrasting items. Therefore, this proves that the subject areas all work together for the child.

The last competency goal that is covered in the first grade is covering the communities. This competency goal actually works hand-in-hand with technology. This is where students put what they learned into practice. They begin to greet people with phrases they had learned. They also either visit places in order or by using technology, such as the internet or web camera. It allows them to take a look at the country they are studying about in their class.

When one takes a look at the fifth grade curriculum for learning a second language, the materials covered are the same topics as the first grade. The exception is that the students have learned a lot since they first started. Students get involved with more of the costumes and using props when learning a second language. It becomes more of a socializing time and practice when they get in the upper levels in elementary education. Yet, the concepts are still the same. Communication, culture, and other items mentioned with the first grade curriculum still occur. Each year is an increase from the last year, as is with any type of curriculum.

Therefore, since North Carolina truly believes in second languages because of their purpose, philosophy, and curriculum, is it being implemented into the school systems? Are we seeing this subject focused on and taught within our schools? Are students getting an equal opportunity in learning a second language as they are in math, reading, and other core subjects? Since they have a curriculum, they have to be focused on teaching a second language, because it is in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Even though the resource is very limited, results show that North Carolina is focused on teaching foreign languages to elementary education students. The first proof is the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. There is already a curriculum set up for North Carolina to teach foreign languages. The outline is there and it gives the public the importance of teaching foreign languages. It is listed as a curriculum, just like any of the other curriculums. In fact, it is split up into each grade level and has students building on their prior knowledge. Therefore, North Carolina is ready to teach a foreign language.

The Department of Public Instruction's website even has a special page promoting foreign language study, with given statistics. There are two main statistics that the state of North Carolina shares dealing with foreign languages. "In 1999, there were 800 international firms in North Carolina investing more than \$4.5 billion in the state in the previous five years. Japan is North Carolina's second largest trading partner, after Canada. There are more than 150 Japanese companies operating in NC." This shows the importance for North Carolina learning a second language and implementing it within the school systems.

In North Carolina, Spanish is the largest speaking population when it comes to foreign languages. Many South Americans and Mexicans migrate to North Carolina. In addition, we have many Puerto Ricans in North Carolina. The military also is very diverse and since Fort Bragg is a very popular military base, we see a lot of diversity coming into North Carolina as soldiers are assigned to Fort Bragg.

Taking a look at the statistics, one sees that there are fifteen common languages seen with North Carolina students. This chart, taken off of the Department of Public Instruction's website promoting foreign languages, shows the number of students who speak different languages at home. This chart gives the language and the number of students speaking that language.

Table 1

15 MOST COMMON HOME LANGUAGES OF NC STUDENTS

Spanish	60,536
Hmong	4,505
Vietnamese	2,330
Chinese	1,927
Arabic	1,568
Korean	1,440
Laotian	968
Hindi	943
Russian	893
Gujarati	858
Japanese	842
French	725
Cambodian	680
German	546
Cantonese	529

This chart shows that Spanish is the largest speaking language among North Carolina students with a number of 60, 535 students. Following Spanish is Hmong with 4, 505 students speaking this language at home. We then have Vietnamese with 2, 330 students speaking it at home. Chinese is fourth with 1, 927 students and Arabic fifth with 1, 568 North Carolina students speaking it at home. The list continues on the chart to list ten more languages spoken at home that North Carolina students speak. This shows that North Carolina is a very diverse state in the United States.

The Department of Public Instruction also lists five languages that are taught in North Carolina for the second language curriculum. They are Spanish, French, Latin, German, and Japanese. The first two main languages taught in North Carolina are also known as the “Romantic Languages.” Spanish is the main language focused on because of the large Hispanic population in the state of North Carolina. In addition, they are the largest speaking student population in the state of North Carolina. French follows Spanish and then Latin. Latin is essential because most of the English words derive from the Latin root words, which help out students in English. This also assists them, as mentioned earlier, with SAT scores because those root words that Latin teaches helps them with their verbal scores. Lastly, German and Japanese follows the foreign language list.

On the Department of Public Instruction website, they even point out how North Carolina teaches students foreign languages. They mention that there are “three major types of programs [that] are available in elementary schools. Immersion programs allow children to spend part or all of the school day learning in a second language. In full or total immersion programs, available in a limited number of schools, children learn all of

their subjects in the second language. Partial immersion programs operate similarly, but only a portion of the curriculum is presented in the second language.” The three programs are FLES, which was mentioned as a program to use earlier in the thesis, FLEX, and activities to explore new languages and new cultures.

FLES is Foreign Language in Elementary Schools program. It is the better known program to use in schools systems for immersion programs. The foreign language is taught in the same order as science and social studies would in elementary schools. Normally, science and social studies are taught three to five times a week. Foreign language would also be taught in this same way. Then North Carolina has the program called FLEX, also known as Foreign Language Exploratory. This introduces other cultures and the language to the students. The students spend time “exploring one or more languages or learning about language itself. The emphasis is not on attaining proficiency. Although some proficiency may be attained with a once or twice weekly program, parents should not expect fluency.” The last program is activities to explore new languages and new cultures. This is where students are able to check out online newspapers to encourage language learning and cultural learning. Most countries, if not all, post their newspapers online. Students are able to read those newspapers and gain some type of knowledge from reading those newspapers.

There is even a section, which gives points to for parents in supporting their child’s foreign language study. Some points include “encouraging your child’s interest in the language and in other cultures.” This is important because a parent who does not support their child, whether it be in foreign language or anything, will hinder their child from succeeding. A parent must also show that they really do see the importance of

speaking a different language. Attending cultural events broadens the horizon for their child. Lastly, summer programs that offer the child to enhance in learning the language, such as international exchange student, helps tremendously. Parents need to keep in mind that they are a major tool and help to motivate their child when they want to learn another language. They parent must seem interested and care about the child's motivation for learning. This is true with any type of curriculum.

In addition, on the Department of Public Instruction website, adapted from the National Association of District Supervisors for Foreign Languages, 1990-1993, they have descriptions for an effective foreign language program. Some of these include encouraging students "to use the target language by the teacher, who also uses it extensively." They also state that students have opportunities to communicate "in the target language in activities that are meaningful and simulate real-life situations."

It is necessary to devote time in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. These are skills and objectives that the student needs to cover. Culture should be integrated into the lesson. Teachers should not focus on correcting "activities that focus on practicing communication." Students should be able to check on their own progress and feel comfortable when learning a new language.

Therefore, analyzing North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction's website, one can see that the state is focused on teaching foreign languages in elementary education. However, it also has to start somewhere before the elementary schools. Professionals have to be trained to teach. This is also taking place in North Carolina. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro believes in the FLES program. The

School of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction offers a course in Teaching Second Languages: Elementary/Middle Schools. Topics in this education class include the going over the historical section of FLES and program models. They also go over the topic of “role of age in second language acquisition, theories of cognitive development, classroom management, planning for day to day instruction, standards, and evaluation” (p. 2). They focus on the FLES program and how it can be used in the elementary schools. In addition, they also have to do clinical experiences where they observe elementary school and middle school foreign language classrooms. They have to observe two hours a week for five weeks in the elementary schools (p. 2). At North Carolina State University, they also focus on foreign language education with a graduate course focusing on this topic.

Chapter 5: Summary

Conclusion on Results

After all these findings, the question on whether North Carolina is implementing foreign languages in elementary education has been answered. The universities in North Carolina do offer courses in teaching those who are interested in implementing foreign languages in elementary education. That is where it really needs to start. Teachers need to be trained in this area. As the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and North Carolina State University offer courses, teachers are getting training to teach.

After reviewing the topic of the importance of foreign languages in elementary education, having programs such as FLES and FLEX is essential. These programs allow foreign languages to take place in the school systems. They are professionals that are

able to teach the language in the school systems. However, classroom teachers should also receive training in this area. Foreign language should be integrated along with the other curriculum, just as they are with each other.

There are many ways in which a teacher can integrate foreign languages into their classrooms. For example, a teacher can use the simple tool of integration. Technology is also a key when integrating. Teachers can use the internet and travel to the countries. They are able to take virtual tours of the country and learn the language. If there are schools that have to share professionals in the foreign language field, they could use interactive television. This would be easier for the teacher. In addition, the students are able to use technology and practice speaking to someone in the language they are studying.

There is such an importance for learning a second language in elementary education. It is comforting to know that the state of North Carolina believes in this and has a curriculum set up. The state is in support for this type of learning. However, the key is motivating the teachers. Teachers need to take this curriculum and put it into practice. Even with the absence of a foreign language program, teachers still have an advantage. There are many materials and resources available for teachers to use. Even as simple as the public library, there are materials that assist in teaching a foreign language.

A foreign language reading center can be done with books that are translated in both English and the foreign language that is being taught. Students can listen to an audio cassette and read along with the book. Later they can read it in English in order to

understand the book. Along with reading the book can be activities to go along, preferably manipulatives. Hands-on activities are essential when teaching any type of curriculum.

As mentioned earlier, there is a real need for learning a second language. It is essential for our future. Our children are the future. Without preparing them, our future is bleak. As the world is becoming globally interdependent, we must prepare ourselves for such a world. Economies are dependent on one another. The key element for other countries to communicate is communication itself. Without communication, countries cannot function together.

Teaching our students a foreign language also will enhance their scores on any type of standardized test, especially the SAT and ACT. We are preparing them academically for universities. However, there has to be a beginning. Elementary education is the beginning for our students. North Carolina firmly believes in teaching foreign language to elementary students. Progression must be made.

It is important to take this one step further. Students in North Carolina would dramatically succeed if there were some type of foreign language program in every school. Universities need to offer even more courses in foreign language studies in order for teachers to be able to teach their students when they get out into the teaching work field. Even if there were a shortage on professionals, while they are being trained at the universities, there could be other forms of teaching foreign languages. Mentioned earlier, interactive televisions are possible. However, our best method are the teachers. Teachers hold the key. If every teacher took some type of language and integrated it into the other

curriculum some how, students would be motivated to learn more. Teachers would be teaching about another culture and another world. Teaching about the world is as simple as pointing to a map and talking about that land.

Thus, North Carolina is ready and already striving to better its' students. We have all the background information about the importance of learning a second language. Having the statistics and benefits on the internet is the first step. North Carolina also has a curriculum to go by. Even if there were not a foreign language program at the school, teachers can still take these goals and objectives to integrate them into their other curriculum they are teaching. The research reveals that, since the resources are limited when finding schools that implement foreign language instruction, then one has to assume that it is not truly being implemented in elementary education. However, teachers need to take on the role and begin to teach foreign language. They need to take the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and implement it within their classrooms.

The support of the universities in North Carolina is a benefit. Universities in North Carolina also have seen the importance of learning a foreign language in elementary education. They are training those to come out and push this program even farther. If every school in North Carolina had some type of program at the school, whether it be FLES or FLEX, then the students in North Carolina would be ready for the world. They will become our world leaders of tomorrow because they know and value the importance of learning a second language.

*The Need for the Implementation of Foreign Language Instruction in North Carolina
Elementary Schools*

Honors Project

In fulfillment of the Requirements for

The University Honors College

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*The Need for the Implementation of Foreign Language Instruction in North Carolina
Elementary Schools*

Curtain, Helena, and Pesola, Caroll Ann Bjornstad. *Languages and Children: Making
the Match, Foreign Language Instruction for an Early Start Grades K-8*. New
York: Longman, 1994.

Grosjean, Francois. *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism*.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Richards, Jack, ed. *Understanding Second and Foreign Language Learning: Issues and
Approaches*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, 1978.

Saunders, George. *Bilingual Children: Guidance for the Family*. Clevedon, Avon,
England: Pitman Press: 1983.

Antonek, Janis. *University of North Carolina at Greensboro: School of Education,*

Department of Curriculum and Instruction. 2002. UNC-Greensboro. 20 April,

2005.

<http://www.uncg.edu/cui/cuisyllabi/cui527fa2002.pdf#search='North%20Carolina%20schools%20and%20FLES'>

www.dpi.state.nc.us/student_promotion/mtg/winter02.html

http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/second_languages/1999/purpose.htm