Professional Organizations include:
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages: www.actfl.org
California Foreign Language Project (CFLP): www.stanford.edu/group/CFLP/
Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) – Resources for Elementary School Foreign Language Programs www.cal.org/resources/archive/rgos/flex.html
Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS): casls.uoregon.edu/
East Bay Foreign Language Project: www.blc.berkeley.edu/index.php/blc/pages/ebflp/
ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics: www.cal.org
International Baccalaureate Program: www.ibo.org
National Foreign Language Center, University of Maryland: www.nflc.org

1. Key Benefits of Language Learning

A Cure for Monolingualism
Elementary-level foreign language instruction helps create global citizens.

Bilingualism, Biliteracy, and Learning to Read: Interactions Among Languages and Writing Systems
Ellen Bialystok, Gigi Luk, and Ernest Kwan, York University

Child-Adult Differences in Second Language Acquisition

The Cognitive, Academic and Attitudinal Benefits of Early Language Learning
Starting in the 1960’s and continuing into the 1990’s, some 12 dozen studies were conducted on the relationship between learning a second language early in life and cognitive ability. Robinson summarized many of them in this article, concluding, “the picture that emerges is . . . a youngster whose experience with two language systems seems to have left him or her with a mental flexibility, a superiority in concept formation, and a more diversified set of mental abilities.” The studies also demonstrated that children who have studied a foreign language perform better on standardized tests and tests of basic skills in English, math and social studies. Data from the College Board’s 1992 edition of College Bound Senior revealed that students who had had four or more years or foreign language scored higher on the verbal section of the SAT than those who had had four or more years in any other subject area. This information corroborated Cooper’s conclusion in 1987.

Cognitive Development in Bilingual Children: A Case for Bilingual Instruction in Early Childhood Education
The Effect of Second Language Learning on Test Scores, Intelligence and Achievement An Annotated Bibliography
Prepared By Elizabeth L. Webb, Program Specialist for Foreign Languages and International Education, Georgia Department of Education.

Five Facts About Bilingualism
Delia Lloyd on October 13, 2011, www.huffingtonpost.com

Foreign Language Study and SAT-Verbal Scores
Data from the College Board’s Admission Testing Program concluded that students who study foreign languages for longer periods of time did better on various SAT sub-tests and on the test as a whole than students who studied less foreign language, even when the variable of verbal giftedness was controlled. Economic background, which was measured by the number of students receiving free and reduced lunches, did not affect students’ performance. Even those who came from lower socio-economic backgrounds, but took foreign language, performed “basically just as well as their more fortunate peers.”

How Language is Stored in Brain Depends on Age

A study of 12 healthy bilingual volunteers at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York revealed that the capacity to speak a second language is stored in different areas of the brain depending on when in life a person becomes bilingual. Children who learn a second language store that capacity, together with their native language, in one sector of the brain. Adult language learners store each new language learned in a separate area. This finding helped explain why children who learn two languages develop the ability to speak both with native proficiency and supported the argument that foreign language instruction should be part of the elementary and middle school curriculum.

Language Acquisition: The Age Factor

Languages and Children: Making the Match: Foreign Language Instruction for An Early Start Grades K-8
Curtain and Pesola’s text is regarded by many as the authoritative work on early language learning. In their introduction, they provide a broad overview of the benefits of early language learning. Immediate benefits include greater academic achievement in other areas of study, including reading, social studies, and mathematics and earning higher SAT and ACT scores, especially in verbal areas. Long-range benefits include enhanced career opportunities, developing more flexibility in thinking processes and exchanging professional ideas and information in commerce, science, law and the arts. They also summarize studies concerned with the relationship of language learning to English language and mathematics. “The evidence was consistent: There was no sacrifice of basic skills when time was given to learning a new language” (7). In fact, some studies indicated that language instruction resulted in dramatic gains in test performance in basic skill areas.
Learning a Second Language: Exposing Your Child to a New World of Words Boosts Her Brainpower, Vocabulary, and Self-Esteem
Brain research indicates that learning a second language is a powerful experience that helps the brain of young children develop. The young brain will actually grow the connections needed to learn the language. That is no longer possible after age 12. Seven states have instituted a second-language requirement for all children in elementary school: Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, Montana, New Jersey and Oklahoma.

A study of 13,200 third and fifth graders in Louisiana public schools revealed that regardless of race, gender or academic level, kids taking foreign language classes did better in the English section of the Louisiana Basic Skills Test than those who did not.

Learning a Second Language: What Parents Need to Know
Marcos summarized research on early language learning and concluded that learning a second language in the elementary school usually enhanced a child’s ability in English. In addition, early foreign language study offered students various benefits in terms of their ability to communicate, their cognitive development, cultural awareness and future job opportunities.

Multilingualism is Basic
The argument is that basic education in the new millennium must include second and third languages if the United States is to cope with the unprecedented growth in diversity within its borders and also continue to compete successfully in the global marketplace. Research indicates that foreign language study provides both cognitive and sociocultural benefits. Cloud and Genesee conclude, “Linguistic and cultural competence will be the mark of the well-educated citizen of the 21st century.”

The National Imperative for Language Learning
Anthony W. Jackson, Charles E. M. Kolb, & John I. Wilson
Education Week, www.edweek.org

2. What does a comprehensive language program look like?

A Decade of Foreign Language Standards: Impact, Influence, and Future Directions
This report concludes that “the National Standards influence and instigate change in how languages are taught and learned.” The information provides direction for the future of language education and summarizes major findings from survey data and supporting evidence. As a result of this and the other two reports done in conjunction with this grant project, a new standards package is being developed which will include a renewed version of the generic standards with a CD for all the language-specific standards.

Basic Skills Revisited: The Effects of Foreign Language Instruction on Reading, Math and Language Arts
This carefully constructed study demonstrated that third graders who were taught Spanish for thirty minutes, three times per week showed statistically significant gains in their Metropolitan Achievement Test scores in the areas of math and language after only one semester of study. This study verifies two earlier studies that showed that foreign language instruction either had no detrimental effect on basic skills or a positive effect on students’ achievement in basic skill areas.

*The results of this study are particularly interesting since one class of students in the experimental group had actually received one-and-one-half fewer hours of math instruction per week, yet still outperformed the students in the control classes in math.

California to Offer 'Seal of Biliteracy' to High School Graduates
A “seal” will be issued to high school graduates who demonstrate fluency in English and another language, including American Sign Language. Students must demonstrate proficiency in one or more languages other than English in one of four ways: Passing an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam with a passing score of 3 or higher; completing a four-year high school course in the same foreign language with an overall grade point average of at least 3.0; passing a district's foreign-language exam at a proficient level or higher; or passing a foreign government's approved language exam.

Do Early Language Programs Improve High School Proficiency?
Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), University of Oregon, June 29, 2010, casls.uoregon.edu/pdfs/tenquestions/TBQEarlyLanguage.pdf
The data in this study showed that students who begin in elementary school are about 70% more likely to reach basic communication levels by high school. Students who begin in middle school are about 50% more likely. (Another study: “How Many Hours of Instruction Do Students Need to Reach Intermediate-High Proficiency?” 9/10/10 showed that only 15% of students reach Intermediate-Mid proficiency after approximately 720 hours of study (about four years in a typical high school program).

Early vs. Late: The Practitioner’s Perspective

The Effect of the Study of a Foreign Language in the Elementary School on Scores on the Iowa Test Of Basic Skills and an Analysis of Student-participant Attitudes and Abilities
Saunders specifically examined the performance of third grade students enrolled in the Georgia Elementary School Foreign Language Model Program. She compared students who had not received any foreign language instruction with students one year younger who had received four years of instruction, five days each week, for thirty minutes per day. She found those students in the ESFL program scored significantly higher on the Math portion of the ITBBS than the older students had scored. They also performed better on the Reading portion, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Effort Aims to Tie Foreign Language Study to Common Standards
Erik Robelen, November 15, 2011, Education Week, www.edweek.org
The ACTFL in partnership with other world language organizations to identify specific practices geared toward the common standards which make clear that literacy is the ultimate goal. It cites a new report by the ACTFL: “A Decade of Foreign Language Standards: Impact, Influence , and Future Directions.” This reports discusses the
importance of the national standards in every area from classroom teaching to professional development.

**Elementary School Foreign Languages and English Reading Achievement: A New View of the Relationship**
Garfinkel, A. and K. E. Tabor. (1991). Foreign Language Annals, 24/5, 375-382. The authors examined English reading scores of students of varying levels of intelligence who had had one to two years of Spanish instruction in grades five and six. They found an especially significant relationship between high scores in reading and extended foreign language study in the cases of children of average intelligence. The data gathered indicate those students of average intelligence, rather than above-average intelligence, may benefit the most from early instruction in a second language.

**Foreign Language Learning: An Early Start**

- Longer sequences of instruction lead to higher levels of language proficiency
- Beginning FL study before age ten helps in the development of global understanding
- Cognitive development and basic skills are enhanced by foreign language learning
- Communication skills, including memory and listening skills, are sharpened by foreign language study
- Many personal benefits accrue, such as enhanced career potential

**Foreign Languages: Learning to Communicate in the Real World**
Willis, S. (1998). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Winter, 1-8. Willis found significant gains in language learning teaching foreign language along the national standards developed by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language, emphasizing communication skills rather than grammar rules. But learning a second language takes a long time regardless of methodology. To put U.S. students on par with students in other countries, foreign language must become part of the core curriculum from K–12th grade.

**Global Learning Scales Up**
Ron Schachter, District Administration, Mar 2011, www.districtadministration.com
Districts build on the success of private, internationally oriented schools and foreign language programs.

**Implementing a District-Wide Foreign Language Program: A Case Study of Acquisition Planning and Curricular Innovation**

**Language Planning Around the World: Contexts and Systemic Change**

**Learning A Language**
Holman stressed the advantages of learning foreign languages as early as possible. She cited the benefits in other areas of study, as well as recent neurobiological research that strongly suggested that the best time to learn a second or third language is before age 10. Holman also emphasized that adequate time must be devoted to language study in order to achieve the desired results; She quoted Dr. Lightbrown of Concordia University as saying, “Twenty minutes three times a week is not a very effective way to acquire a language, no matter when you start.”

The Plattsburgh French Language Immersion Program: Its Influence on Intelligence and Self-esteem
Comparison of a group of students who participated in a French Immersion program for one year to a group of students who were enrolled in a regular classroom revealed that the first graders who learned French showed significant gains in measures of performance I.Q. The students in the immersion program performed better on test items that asked them to interpret and organize a series of seemingly unrelated objects. Study of an unfamiliar language appears to sharpen this skill.

Providing Opportunities for Foreign Language Learning in the Elementary Grades
www.internationaledwa.org/.../mmet/starting_language_learning.doc
This is a comprehensive resource with a summary of the benefits of language learning and bibliography as well as an outline and plan for building a comprehensive program.

Research Notes: Language Learning and the Developing Brain.
Studies suggest that the brain of a child has more synapses and greater plasticity and is therefore much better suited to learning foreign language than the brain of an older child or adult.

Special Report: Fertile Minds.
Nash summarizes current research on the development of the human brain. She states that there are a series of “windows for developing language.” She states that the window for acquiring syntax may close as early as five or six years of age and that the ability to learn a second language is highest between birth and the age of six, at which point it then undergoes a “steady and inexorable decline.” She concludes, “it is clear that foreign language should be taught in the elementary school, if not before.”

Survey information dating to 2008 regarding state of foreign language teaching in US.

3. How do you do it well?

An Assistant Superintendent and Curriculum Specialist View the Models.
The Chapel Hill-Carrboro (NC) City Schools decided to provide all students in the district with foreign language instruction. In this article, Hart and Harris contend that the Foreign Language in the Elementary School or FLES model of daily language learning...
learning that they have chosen helps to “level the playing field with ESL and other at-risk students.” They also state that the FLES program greatly benefited all students by reinforcing concepts that have already been taught in the regular classroom. FLES is considered a part of the core curriculum and a component of basic childhood education.

The Effect of the Study of a Foreign Language in the Elementary School on Scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and an Analysis of Student-participant Attitudes and Abilities
Saunders, C. M. (1998). Unpublished dissertation, University of Georgia. Saunders specifically examined the performance of third grade students enrolled in the Georgia Elementary School Foreign Language Model Program. She compared students who had not received any foreign language instruction with students one year younger who had received four years of instruction, five days each week, for thirty minutes per day. Students in the ESFL program scored significantly higher on the Math portion of the ITBS than the older students had scored. They also performed better on the Reading portion, but the difference was not large enough to be considered statistically significant.

Foreign Language: On Starting Early
Met, M., Educational Leadership, September 1991
Met summarized both the advantages and the shortcomings of three different approaches to early language learning: immersion, FLES and FLEX. In immersion, the content is taught through the foreign language. Since the classroom teacher is also the language teacher, this is a cost-effective model that achieves excellent results, but teachers with the language skills and certification to teach such classes are rare. FLES programs are sequential programs beginning at any grade K-6 that meet for a minimum of 90 minutes two to five times per week. If a FLES program is part of a well-articulated, long sequence of study, students will typically gain useable levels of proficiency in the language and also improve their knowledge of and attitude toward other cultures. FLEX programs are short-term classes that focus primarily on culture. These programs can provide students with strong motivation to continue their language study later, but do not result in any meaningful level of language development.

Foreign Languages: The Road to Success in a Global World, Information for School counselors
Public Schools of North Carolina; State Board of Education; Jay Robinson, Chairman; Department of Public Instruction; Michael Ward, Superintendent.
This brochure is intended to be a practical guide for school counselors and asserts that foreign language study is appropriate for all students, whether they plan to attend college or not. It cites many academic reasons for studying a foreign language, including higher ACT and SAT scores, stronger English vocabulary skills, a better understanding of English, improved literacy, greater cognitive skills and enhances listening and memory.

Georgia Elementary School Foreign Language Model Program: An Evaluation
In the program evaluation conducted in 1995, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) conducted site visits to ESFL Model program schools, observed classes, interviewed school and system administrators, students, parents, teachers and Georgia Department of Education personnel and also surveyed teachers and administrators regarding the program. Adger noted that the Georgia ESFL Model Program was regarded as a state-of-the-art model within the field of foreign language. She concluded that the ESFL program was “excellent by any measure. Moreover, the fact that continuous renewal of the curriculum and professional development are inherent in the program promises that it
will continue its high quality (3)“.

**Listening and Speaking Assessment of Third Grade Students in the Georgia Elementary School Foreign Languages Model Program**

The 1997 evaluation of the ESFL Model Program focused on student’s ability to speak and understand the language being taught. The Student Oral Proficiency Assessment, a listening and speaking instrument, was administered to third grade students by a team of CAL staff and Georgia teachers. Interviews were conducted at eight sites representing all four languages taught: Spanish, French, German and Japanese. Most students scored at the Junior Novice Mid or Junior Novice-High level, indicating that they were reaching desired levels of language proficiency and making progress toward the goal of becoming fluent users of the language. Boyson concluded, “the evidence that is available here seems to indicate that the students in the Georgia ESFL Model Program are making impressive progress toward mastering foreign languages” (3).

**Report on Current Practice**

Ferndale Public Schools established its Elementary school foreign language program in 1981, with the philosophy that each child in the district should have the opportunity to learn a second language, regardless of physical, emotional or learning disabilities. In grade K-3, most children with disabilities had been able to attain an adequate level of proficiency in the foreign language. In the upper elementary grades, students with disabilities often did not do well on written tests, but were able to be successful on informal, oral tests.

**Speaking in Foreign Tongues**

(1998). Kid’s Sense, 42. Arkansas Children’s Hospital.
This short article emphasizes the importance of early language learning. Mathematical skills, problem solving skills and the ability to synthesize information increase with exposure to foreign language. Other advantages include improved reading and writing skills, a stronger vocabulary and better job opportunities later in life.

**Student Oral Proficiency Assessment of Fifth Grade Students in the Georgia Elementary School Foreign Languages Model Program**

The third program evaluation compared the performance of fifth grade students enrolled in the ESFL Model Program to that of third graders in the program. It also compared the performance of fifth grade students in Model program schools with the performance of students in non-model Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs.

A new version of the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment was developed for the fifth grade level to conduct this program evaluation. The results demonstrated that fifth grade students scored one level higher in both listening proficiency and oral fluency than the third grade students and were reaching “commendable levels of proficiency” (1). The comparison of the ESFL Model program with the non-model FLES programs revealed that all students were making progress, but that a substantial percentage of the students in the Model Program were exceeding expectations in their ability to comprehend and speak the languages they were learning.

**What Factors are Important for an Effective K-8 Program?**
The article is based on the premise that it’s better to start teaching foreign languages in elementary school. While immersion programs lead to the highest proficiency levels, for non-immersion programs (FLES), time and intensity prove to be the two key factors.

Nanduti, Foreign Language Learning Grades Pre-K through 8. Website project of Center for Applied Linguistics with resources and research for teachers and parents.
http://www.cal.org/earlylang/index.html

4. Technology and Language Learning


Brave New Digital Classroom interweaves results of pedagogical research and descriptions of the most successful computer-assisted language learning (CALL) projects to explore how technology can best be employed in the foreign-language curriculum to assist the second language acquisition process. Directed to all language teachers whether at the school or the postsecondary level, with or without prior experience, this book focuses on how to use new technologies effectively.


This article describes distance learning (DL) for languages within the context of recent advances and research findings in computer-assisted language learning (CALL). In addition to reviewing the different DL modalities, theoretical underpinnings, and the most appropriate technological applications to second language learning, the issues of conducting DL research and training faculty to work with this new learning environment will be examined. A key consideration is the notion of interactivity, which is analyzed in depth with relation to both tutorial CALL and social computing.


This paper argues that the spread of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), i.e., a spread throughout language materials and curricula, makes it difficult to draw a clear distinction between CALL and other language materials. The opportunities for professionals to reconsider assumptions held about comparative research, draw upon research perspectives and methods from applied linguistics in materials evaluation, and include critical perspectives which examine the opportunities that materials offer language learners to engage in language and culture learning are discussed.


Rosetta Stone® recreated the natural way of learning by developing a method that uses a computer to mimic the environment in which we learned our first language. It is called Dynamic Immersion™. A simple, intuitive interface and advanced technology confirms learning at every step of the process by prompting you to make connections between images you already understand and the new language. You receive immediate feedback, which helps you to reinforce learning. This systematic structure builds from simple nouns and verbs to more complex concepts and phrases very quickly, helping you achieve your language-learning goals faster than
you ever thought possible.


Many language training software packages are intended for self-study and marketed as complete language learning solutions; however, little is known about how well they work or under what conditions they should be used. This article reports on a research study conducted at the University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language that explores the way adult learners use Rosetta Stone and Auralog’s TELL ME MORE—two popular, commercially available, technology-mediated self-study packages.


This study conducts a comprehensive investigation of flashcard software for learning vocabulary in a second or foreign language (L2). Flashcard programs are defined as software that encourages learners to study L2 vocabulary in a paired-associate format.


With the advent of networked multimedia computing and the Internet, language teachers have been utilizing computers in the classroom more and more. This article outlines three examples of how technology is being used to support language learning in the classroom.


This study describes the use of Daedalus InterChange, a local area computer network application, to facilitate communicative language use through synchronous, written classroom interaction.


This pilot study investigates the potential role of Internet resources as a means to gain a deeper sense of the culture of the Spanish-speaking world for college students. Thirteen college students enrolled in the first quarter of Basic Spanish were instructed to utilize the Web to complete five activities that expanded on the aspects of culture studied in the class. Data collected demonstrate that the Web is a suitable tool to increase language and cultural knowledge, as well as a means to increase motivation.


The project purpose was to investigate how routine use of computers and technology influence teaching and learning. Findings from the first 10 years of the project include:
• As teachers became more comfortable and competent with the technology, they began working in teams and across disciplines.
• Classrooms became a mix of traditional and constructivist instruction.
• Students became more collaborative.
• Teachers altered their classrooms and daily schedules to permit students more time to work on projects.
• Teachers began to develop new forms of assessment that were performance- and portfolio based.
• Technology encouraged student-centered, cooperative learning.
• Technology often inspires teachers to use more complex tasks and materials in their instruction.
• The influence of technology on teaching and learning occurs over an extended period of time.


This article speaks to the importance of casual connections with native speakers to reveal how the target language is authentically used. Examples of online resources are also provided.


A brief on the role technology can play on improved classroom language instruction versus the old ‘drill and kill’ methods and vocabulary memorization.


5. Professional Development and Language Learning


