



# Chapter 5

## THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



## WORLD LANGUAGES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The **establishment** and **maintenance** of high-quality elementary programs are critical for building a successful world language sequence through Grade 12 and for enabling students to achieve greater levels of language fluency. Based on research and experiential data, **time** and **intensity** are two key factors to be considered in designing a quality program (Met & Rhodes, 1990). **The amount of time students spend communicating in meaningful ways, while engaging in activities that are relevant to them, will significantly impact their ability to effectively communicate both linguistically and culturally in a world language.** Time and intensity, therefore, have important implications for program selection, scheduling, and curriculum content.

Elementary program models are available that vary in the amount of class time, goals, and communicative outcomes. The term **FLES** (*Foreign Language in the Elementary School*) is commonly used to refer to the following types of elementary program models. The suggested models vary in allotment of instructional time.

Most of the information below is summarized from *Languages and Children: Making the Match* (Curtain & Pesola, 1994, pp. 29-38).

### Program Models

**Sequential FLES.** This program is an **extended sequence of the study of one world language through the elementary grades.** Classes meet regularly during the school day, typically three to five times per week for 15 to 30 minutes, and are usually taught by a world language specialist trained to use appropriate instructional methods for younger children. The goals of a sequential FLES program are functional proficiency in a world language and development of cultural understanding. **Language proficiency outcomes will vary depending upon the frequency and nature of instruction.**

**Content-enriched FLES.** This program has the characteristics of a sequential FLES program with a systematic and sequential development of language skills within the parameters of themes, topics, or content areas. **It focuses on using the world language as a vehicle for reinforcing and enhancing academic content taught in the elementary curriculum.** This type of language instruction offers a means by which students can develop fuller proficiency in interpersonal skills while enriching their expanding content knowledge in other subject areas. All areas of the elementary school curriculum are suitable for integrated language instruction. Curtain and Pesola (1994) suggest that **integration of other subject areas is a natural teaching style for a world language teacher. The students need topics of conversation; those topics come from their personal life experiences and what they are learning in other classes.** Coordinated curriculum planning between the world language teacher and the classroom teacher is essential in this model.

**Immersion.** In this program, **the focus of instruction is on the regular curriculum with the world language used as a tool to teach this curriculum.** The methodology is similar to that of any elementary classroom, except that content is taught in a world language. Teachers are generally ele-

mentary-certified teachers who are native or near-native speakers of the world language. There are many variations on the basic immersion model, in which all classroom conversation and instruction initiated by the teacher is in a world language. Early immersion develops second language proficiency quickly, and it is possible for students to acquire the fluency needed for subject content areas with minimal difficulty.

**Two-way immersion** (*Two-way bilingual/dual language*). This program serves as an alternative to transitional bilingual programs while giving native English speakers the opportunity to learn a second language. Instruction is typically given in each language for one half day, and the student group is half native English speakers and half native speakers of a second language. Each student group thus receives instruction in the native language half the time, but more importantly, all students benefit from language reinforcement from their classmates who are native speakers.

The chart on the following page gives an overview of the various program model options. See also **chapter 11 for models of K-12 world language programs in current practice.**

## ELEMENTARY PROGRAM MODELS

| Program Type   | Goals   | % of Class Time Spent in World Language per Week  |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>FLES</b></p> <p>Refers to ongoing instruction by a world language specialist trained in the learning styles and needs of elementary students. It is part of an extended sequence of study through the elementary grades.</p>       | <p>To acquire proficiency in listening and speaking (degree of proficiency varies with the program).</p> <p>To acquire an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.</p> <p>To acquire some proficiency in reading and writing (emphasis varies with the program).</p> | <p>5-15%</p> <p>(Minimum 75 minutes per week, at least every other day. Time is increased as student advances in the language sequence.)</p> <p>Time is spent learning the world language per se.</p> |
| <p><b>Content-Based FLES</b></p> <p>A FLES program with less than half of the school day spent studying content areas in the language.</p>   | <p>To acquire proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing the world language.</p> <p>To use subject content as a vehicle for acquiring world language skills.</p> <p>To acquire an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.</p>                         | <p>15-50%</p> <p>(Time is spent learning the world language per se as well as learning subject matter in the world language.)</p>   |
| <p><b>Partial Immersion</b></p> <p>Students spend less than half the school day studying content areas in the target language.</p>   | <p>To become functionally proficient in the language (although to a lesser extent than is possible in total immersion).</p> <p>To master subject content taught in the new language.</p> <p>To acquire an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.</p>               | <p>Approximately 50%</p> <p>(Time is spent learning subject matter taught in world language; language learning per se is incorporated as necessary throughout curriculum.)</p>                        |
| <p><b>Two-Way Immersion</b></p> <p>(Also called <i>two-way bilingual</i>, <i>dual language</i>, or <i>developmental bilingual education</i>)</p> <p>Student population is both native speakers of English and of the world language.</p> | <p>To become functionally proficient in the language that is new to the student.</p> <p>To master subject content taught in the world language.</p> <p>To acquire an understanding of and an appreciation for other cultures.</p>   | <p>At least 50%</p> <p>(Time is spent learning subject matter taught in world language; language learning per se is incorporated as necessary throughout curriculum.)</p>                             |
| <p><b>Total Immersion</b></p> <p>Students spend most or all of the school day studying content areas in the target language.</p>   | <p>To become functionally proficient in the world language.</p> <p>To master subject content taught in the world language.</p> <p>To acquire an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.</p>   | <p>50-100%</p> <p>(Time is spent in learning subject matter taught in world language; language learning per se is incorporated as necessary throughout curriculum.)</p>                               |

*Note.* All programs are sequential, cumulative, continuous, proficiency-oriented, and part of an integrated K-12 sequence. Chart created by Nancy Rhodes, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1985. Adapted from *Language and Children: Making the Match* (2nd ed., p. 30), by H. Curtain and C. A. Pesola, 1994, White Plains, NY: Longman. Copyright 1994 by Longman. Adapted with permission.

**Recommendations for Administrators and Program Planners**

- The FLES program is an integral part of the purposes, goals, and curriculum of the elementary or middle school in which it is taught.
- There is a world language planning/advisory committee for K-12 programs.
- The program is designed and coordinated with the district's world language teacher/specialist or supervisor well-versed in standards-based methodology.
- The elementary classroom teacher works with the FLES specialist as a full, participating partner dedicated to helping children acquire world language skills and a deeper knowledge of the culture(s) in which the language is spoken.
- FLES classes are offered at set times throughout the week. (See chart on previous page.)
- There is more than one world language offered at the FLES level, depending on the size of the school and the school community.
- FLES goals are realistically stated and periodically interpreted to parents, educators, and the school board.
- There is a written FLES curriculum that indicates progress, based on the standards, in linguistic, cultural, and interdisciplinary approaches.
- The FLES instructional program in class reflects the goals of the program through the curriculum content and the methods used.
- There is continuous evaluation of student progress in the FLES program in terms of the stated goals. Both classroom and district assessments are performance-based and reflect instructional activities practiced in the classroom.
- There is continuous evaluation of the impact of the FLES program on the middle school and high school programs to determine the extent to which total articulation of the long world language sequence is being achieved.

(Adapted from Lipton, 1998, p. 319)

**Creative Procedures for Establishing an Elementary Program**

- Explore long-term funding from foundations, government grants, and contributions by local businesses and foundations.
- Investigate which foundations are interested in funding the teaching of less commonly selected languages.

- Explore long-term hiring practices that might emphasize the hiring of effective elementary school teachers with a background in a world language.
- Survey the current staff to uncover world language skills.
- Explore inservice staff development for elementary school teachers.
- Enlist the cooperation of local and/or state universities that might be able to plan for long-term training of prospective teachers.
- Explore the use of technology with elementary school classroom teachers in the form of video programs, university programs, etc.
- Explore with media specialists the possibilities of satellite programs for direct instruction for students and teacher-training programs for teachers using a distance learning option.

(Adapted from Lipton, 1995, p.47)

## WORLD LANGUAGES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The following information has been adapted from *Bringing the Standards into the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide*, developed by the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University (1997, pp. 25-28).

Many teachers find that the textbook is an important vehicle in their teaching, and they have a clear idea of the goals of their instructional program at the level(s) they teach. Paving the way for students to meet the state standards does not mean abandoning successful practices and programs. It will necessitate, however, **a thorough examination of the existing instructional program to ensure that it is both comprehensive and standards based** (i.e., it meets the criteria outlined in chapter 2 of this *Framework*, "The Essential Components of an Effective World Language Program").

The results of this scrutiny may mean complementing or supplementing what is already in place. It may also indicate that some content in the current program may need to be omitted in order to allow for the introduction of new materials and more relevant learning experiences.

In examining a textbook unit, for example, the teacher might ascertain the degree that the objectives reflect the standards and cumulative progress indicators. The teacher would then proceed to look at textbook activities and accompanying textbook materials to consider the extent to which they meet the standards and indicators. During this process, s/he may discard some exercises and activities and keep those most critical for meeting the standards. The teacher may also preview the list of resources being used for the unit and begin to measure the extent to which resources beyond the text can provide opportunities for students to explore those progress indicators not addressed adequately. During this process, collaboration with colleagues is critical in order to maintain programmatic consistency in terms of long-range goals and alignment with the standards.

As K-12 programs become more prevalent throughout the state, existing programs will need to be redesigned to accommodate students entering secondary programs with greater degrees of linguistic and cultural proficiency. A variety of work-related, experiential courses may also be developed and added to the high school curriculum (e.g., world languages in international business; world languages in the field of medicine; world languages and careers in technology). Career-related internships using the target language may also be offered in partnership with businesses and local high schools.

See chapter 11 for models of K-12 world language programs in current practice.

## MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS

Multiple entry points are essential to good programs because some provision must be made for transfer students from other districts, states, or countries who may not have had the benefit of an articulated program. Because languages are more easily acquired at an early age, multiple entry points are not as critical a factor at the K-4 level. In addition, assessment results are primarily diagnostic at this stage and will be helpful in providing information about the strengths and weaknesses of students' language skills at this point. Moreover, research shows that the study of any world language at the K-4 level will facilitate further second language acquisition.

**The opportunity to begin a new language at the middle school or high school level or to continue with the language started upon entering the district must be made available to students.** At the middle school and high school levels, the following strategies might be considered to address the issue of multiple entry points when offering a full section is not feasible:

- newcomers' classes;
- individual tutoring or small group instruction by high school students, college students, parents, or community members;
- ITV; and
- after-school and/or Saturday programs.

Language proficiency levels should not be tied to a student's grade level. Thus, varying sequence patterns of study need to be considered. Experts in the field recommend that districts offer entry choices at different points along the K-12 continuum. Offering additional world languages at the middle school level is highly appropriate, provided that they are part of a well-articulated sequence. **This Framework strongly discourages language sampling (i.e., offering semester or half-year courses in one language followed by another) as this approach will not lead to the outcomes set forth in the standards and related cumulative progress indicators.**

As students mature, their personal needs, preferences, and/or career interests may propel them towards the study of a new language, and they may decide not to continue with the study of their first world language. Scheduling constraints may also affect this decision. These students may not

develop the highest level of competency in the first or second choices, but they will still reach communicative or functional competencies in both languages (e.g., in a program in which they study French K-8 and Italian 9-12). **Students should, therefore, be given the option of dropping a first language to pursue another once some measurable competency has been achieved.** Achieving competency in two languages does have academic equivalency with a higher competency in one language (June Phillips, personal communication, June 25, 1998).

Additionally, students may be given the option to continue the study of the world language begun at the elementary level, while also studying a possible second or third world language at given multiple entry points if scheduling permits. (This is referred to as *language layering*.)

In the situations described above, proficiency in a second or third world language can be attained in a shorter period of time, especially in the case of related languages (e.g., Romance languages) due to positive transfer, familiarization with language acquisition strategies, and growth in cognitive development. Thus, all three of these factors would enable the student to reach a comparable degree of proficiency in learning a second or third language within a shorter time frame.

*No single continuum of language learning exists for all students. Rather, the progress and performance levels of individual learners at any given time depends on a number of factors, including motivation, learning styles and preferences, age, and language learning experiences which include the languages the learner speaks and the one being learned.*

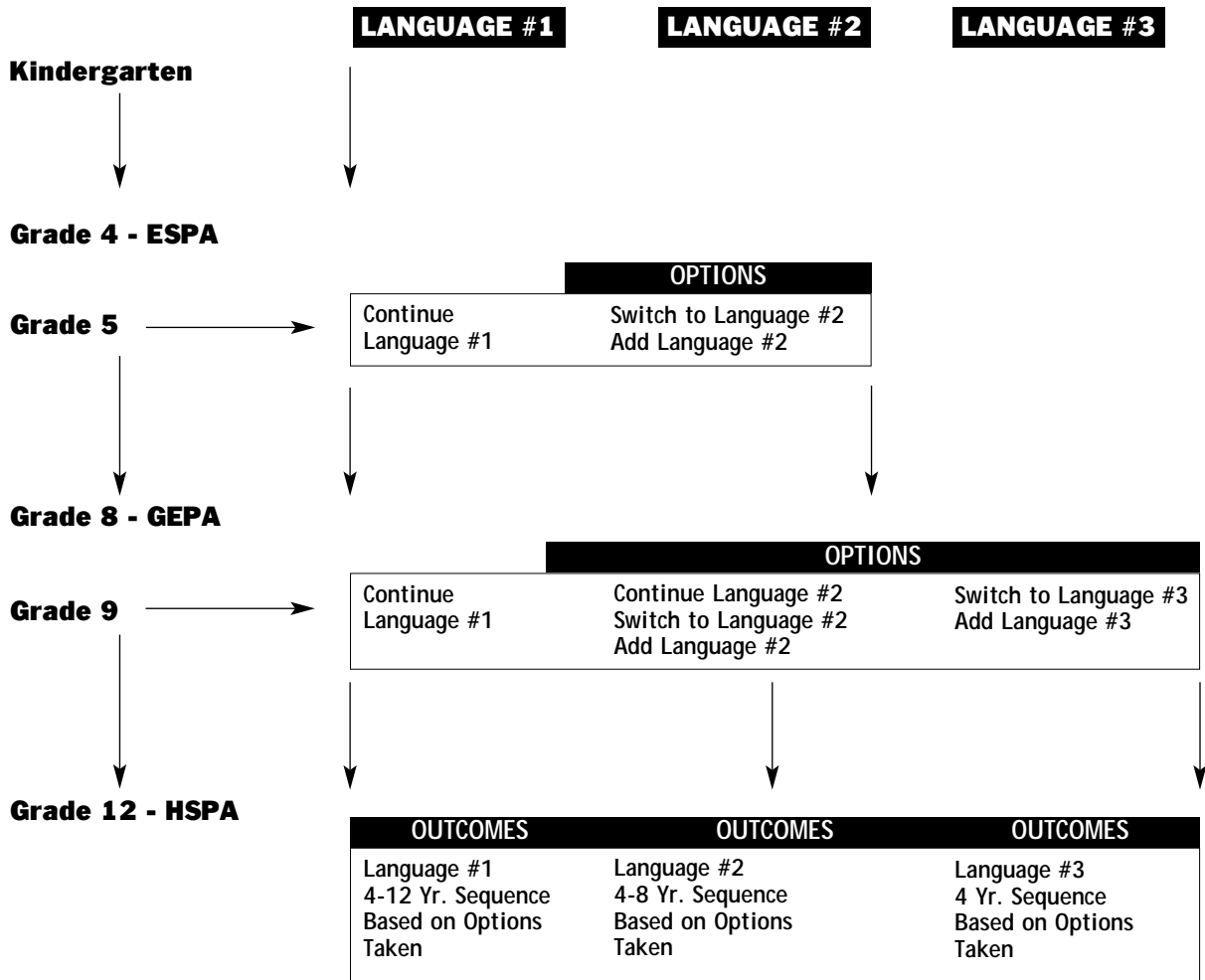
(ACTFL, 1996, p. 14)

Each district will vary in its approach in providing different language entry points. There is no one proven solution because of the size and variety of programs in districts throughout the state. The following chart illustrates the concepts of multiple entry points and language layering.



## MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS AND LANGUAGE LAYERING

The chart below illustrates the concepts of multiple entry points and language layering discussed on p. 45-46. Multiple entry points will vary from district to district depending upon grade configurations (e.g., K-4, K-5, K-6, K-8).



- Key Concepts**
- Students may elect to study a second world language once some measurable competency has been achieved in their first world language.
  - Students may study the language begun at the elementary level while adding (“layering”) a second and/or third language in middle and/or high school.

## CHOICE OF LANGUAGES

Most districts in New Jersey typically offer three or more languages at the secondary level. With the adoption of the world languages standards, all districts are required to offer world languages at the elementary level. A well-designed world language program includes the option of studying *at least two or more languages offered in the K-12 continuum*. **A K-8 program implemented in only one language will most likely have an adverse effect on enrollments in other languages at the high school level.**

The choice of languages **might include, but is not limited to**, the study of commonly taught European languages, classical languages, less commonly taught languages, heritage languages, and American Sign Language. **All languages can benefit from earlier and longer sequences of instruction.** The choice of languages should be made by local districts based on the following criteria:

- **Community interest:** This includes parental input and the cultural heritage of the community, as well as the changing demographics of the community. In some communities there is great fluctuation in student population, while in others the population remains stable over time. As communities vary, so will their world language programs. Community resources can support the creation of a two-way bilingual program at the elementary level. This is an excellent means of taking advantage of languages spoken in the community and to coalesce previously disconnected groups of children in a school. It is also a means of capitalizing on available resources such as staffing, materials, and existing programs within the district.
- **Potential for articulation:** It is essential that districts decide which languages will be offered at the elementary and middle school levels in order to provide continuous language instruction throughout the extended sequence. Long-range planning and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the articulation process are extremely important.
- **Availability of qualified teachers:** This includes existing district world language staff, classroom teachers who are fluent in a world language, and possible cross-district collaboration.

Certain languages have become increasingly important to business and government, both nationally and internationally. Districts might consider offering one or more of the less commonly taught languages (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, or Hebrew) at the elementary level. Because of their level of difficulty for the English speaker, these languages require much longer contact time to achieve desired levels of proficiency.

**In support of the study of more than one language, the following observations were made by members of the New Jersey educational community.**

The offering of more than one language:

- is philosophically aligned with the core curriculum standards;
- serves the larger need for New Jersey schools to produce students who have proficiency in other critical languages and who are knowledgeable about other nations and cultures playing dominant roles in global affairs;
- affords heritage learners the opportunity to learn about another world language and its culture;
- addresses the issue of cultural diversity (diverse language choices are needed in a diverse world); and
- addresses future needs (there are many languages that offer opportunities for future employability in an ever-changing world, in addition to those frequently spoken at this time in the United States).

**The following observations were made by members of the broader educational community in relation to the choice of languages:**

*No one selection can satisfy all the purposes for studying a foreign language, but any choice can broaden one's perspective and enhance one's personal and professional life. . . . We must be cautious, however, in promoting specific languages solely on the basis of their utility in the local social milieu.*

(Myriam Met, 1989, pp. 54, 56)

*The nature of the program and the results it achieves in student competence are more important than the specific languages chosen. Factors such as parental support and involvement and the existence of an articulated program that will lead to development of advanced language proficiency and cultural knowledge far outweigh the individual choice of language taught.*

(Peter Eddy, 1998, p. 91)

*Compelling rationale can be developed for any of the commonly taught languages, and any language, when well taught, can provide children with the benefits of global awareness, enhanced basic skills, identification with other cultures, self-esteem, and communicative language skills.*

(Helene Curtain & Carol Ann Pesola, 1988, p. 46)

## THE CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

This *World Languages Framework* supports the inclusion of classical languages in world language programs. There are many compelling reasons for the inclusion of classical languages in the school curriculum in New Jersey:

- As the parent of Romance languages, Latin provides both a strong foundation for future or concurrent study of these languages. As an inflected language, the study of Latin also provides a strong foundation for the study of non-Romance languages, such as German and Greek.
- Latin programs address many of the goals of modern language study and provide the opportunity to explore areas of history, philosophy, art, mythology, and literature not typically included in other curricula. By studying the culture, daily life, and politics of the Romans, students of Latin are studying the foundations of western literature, law, and government. In addition, the Roman empire spanned a multicultural world, and the study of its people and their history equip students to analyze, criticize, understand, and respect the similarly diverse cultural threads of the modern world.
- The study of Latin or any world language has had an observable influence on standardized test scores, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (e.g., SATs and GREs).

Teachers of the classical languages will need to apply the standards differently because classical languages are taught primarily as a literary rather than a spoken language. **Communication should be defined as it applies to the learning of a classical language** in order to meet the goals of the world languages standards. This has been addressed in the recently published *Standards for Classical Language Learning*, a collaborative project of the American Classical Association, the American Philological Association, and regional classical associations. That document (listed in the reference section of this *Framework*) contains learning scenarios drafted especially for classical languages.

## THE LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

The *Core Curriculum Content Standards* and accompanying *World Languages Framework* are designed to be general in nature and inclusive of all languages. However, the vocabulary, syntactic structure, sound systems, writing systems, and cultures of languages are somewhat different and may offer greater or lesser challenges to the native English-speaking student.

The Foreign Language Service Institute provides classifications for languages according to their level of difficulty for native speakers (e.g., Romance languages fall into *Group I* because they are among the least difficult languages for speakers of English). Languages with non-Latinate alphabets (such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian) fall into *Group IV*, indicating the greatest level of difficulty for speakers of English.

It follows that students learning these languages will need more time (longer-sequence programs) to meet some of the cumulative progress indicators for reading and written language than the level indicated in the standards. This also applies to the cultural standard (Standard 7.2) because students may need more opportunities to develop cultural competence in the societies where these languages are spoken.

Modifications are also necessary when working with visual languages (e.g., American Sign Language). American Sign Language is a visual-gestural language that is devoid of voice and does not have a written form. It provides a means of communication with deaf individuals in the context of the deaf culture. The emphasis on communication is applied in situations characterized as *receptive*, *expressive*, and *interactive*. Cultural traits that exist in the context of the deaf culture and cultural patterns are learned through the use of American Sign Language (New York State Education Department, 1996, p. 4).

See p. 63 of this document for additional information regarding students who are deaf/hard of hearing.

## THE ROLE OF GRAMMAR

The focal point of modern language instruction is *communication*, and grammar plays a supporting role to communication needs. Students should be provided with ample opportunities to create meaning and use critical-thinking skills. Furthermore, in order to communicate accurately, both in speaking and writing, students should have control of grammatical structures. Meaningful communication and speaker credibility are enhanced by accuracy of expression. **Much as a native speaker initially learns a language by hearing and speaking it, and then analyzing it later, languages are to be taught with emphasis on using the language and then studying its structure in subsequent years.**

Related cumulative progress indicators include:

- Indicator 7.1.7, “identify some common and distinct features, such as parts of speech and vocabulary, among languages” (Grades K-4);
- Indicator 7.1.16, “identify common and distinct features, such as prepositional phrases and clauses among languages” (Grades 5-8); and
- Indicator 7.1.23, “identify common and distinct features, such as grammatical structures, among languages” (Grades 9-12).

As evident in these three indicators, an awareness of grammatical features and linguistic systems expands as students progress through the grade levels.

