

England – aspirations and realities

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The
Languages
Company

 Languages for all
Languages for life

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We tend to forget that our educational systems had their foundations laid in the age of relatively small independent nation states. They transmit a largely national culture and are primarily vernacular systems with much emphasis on national traditions, national values and a national language. They are even today still in the main monocultural, monolingualistic and ethnocentric.

The introduction of a foreign language into this limited monoglot world has far reaching consequences. We are, in fact, breaking with the nineteenth century tradition of literacy in terms of a national language if we propose to introduce into the concept of fundamental literacy the mastery of another language ... It has repercussions which are not confined to the primary (and the secondary) stage ...

”

H H Stern, West Berlin, 1964

Civil Service Dictionary

Czar

A figurehead, usually related to a very high-profile (and insoluble) issue, whose purpose is to think the unthinkable, say the unsayable, and thus draw all the flak which would otherwise be directed at Ministers (particularly the PM). See “Champion”.

THE NUFFIELD AGENDA

1. A national strategy
2. A languages supremo
3. Raise the profile
4. Education business partnerships
5. Reformed school languages
6. Languages in primary schools
7. A new secondary curriculum
8. Wider participation

THE NUFFIELD AGENDA

9 Languages for all 16-19

10 Strategy for HE

11 Develop life long language learning

12 Recruit more teachers

13 Exploit new technologies

14 Base policy on research

15 Establish a national standards framework

Late 90s - The accepted wisdom

Foreign languages are a useful skill:

- for employment

- for trade

- for leisure

Foreign language learning:

- may support cultural understanding

- may help communication and basic literacy

IMPORTANT BUT NOT ESSENTIAL?

Languages for All: Languages for Life: A Strategy for England

Languages for All: Languages for Life

A Strategy for England



Department for Education
Languages for All: Languages for Life
A Strategy for England

Lifelong skill

To be used for business and pleasure

Open avenues of communication and exploration

Instil broader cultural understanding

An essential part of being a citizen

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THE LANGUAGES REVIEW 2007

For today's young people languages matter: they are an investment that can enrich their lives socially, culturally and economically. They are a personal enfranchisement, an entitlement for all and one recognizes the distinctive learning needs of every child...Language is the emergent property of the human will to communicate

A key theme - Engaging learners

...the cognitive level of the teaching as driven by the examination is not right for teenagers..... Languages would be more stimulating if they provided a framework for discussion, debate and writing about subjects that are of concern and interest to teenagers

Interim report Chapter 7.15

What have we achieved?

A new structure (paradigm)

- 7-14 for all

- Differentiated 14-19

A more engaging offer

- The new curriculum

- More appropriate assessment

- Choice and personalisation

Improved pedagogy

- CPD; Networks

Promotion and “making the case”

EMAG

There are significant numbers of minority ethnic pupils in schools across England. Minority ethnic pupils from overseas have diverse needs, and may experience formidable barriers to learning..

The national curriculum is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

COMMUNITY COHESION

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community

England and Wales - The educational purposes of mfl teaching (1990)

- Practical communication
- Base for further study, work and leisure
- Insights into culture of other countries
- Awareness of nature of language
- Enjoyment and intellectual stimulation
- Positive attitudes....sympathetic approach to other cultures
- General learning skills

The National Languages Strategy

Drawing on the skills and expertise of those who speak community languages will promote citizenship and complement the Government's broader work on the promotion of social cohesion.

Primary Entitlement

Every child should have the opportunity throughout Key Stage 2 to study a foreign language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations. They should have access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities, making use of native speakers and e-learning. By age 11 they should have the opportunity to reach a recognised level of competence on the Common European Framework and for that achievement to be recognised through a national scheme.

KS2 Framework

Five strands

- Oracy
- Literacy
- Intercultural understanding
- Knowledge about language
- Language learning strategies



Intercultural Understanding

L40. to empathise with others and imagine how others may see their own way of life and culture

L41. to compare attitudes to different languages and reflect on the importance of respect for others.

The Languages Ladder

Assessment for Learning:

Using The Languages Ladder can-do statements for formative, self & peer assessment for any language

Informal certification (through Asset Languages)

Using the teacher-assessed model which leads to a Grade Award for any skill at any grade

Formal certification (through Asset Languages)

Using the external tests which lead to a recognised NQF qualification, available at each stage, in all 4 language skills.

Available in 25 languages:

Arabic	Bengali	Cantonese	Cornish	French
German	Greek	Gujurati	Hindi	Irish
Italian	Japanese	Mandarin	Panjabi	Polish
Portuguese	Russian	Spanish	Somali	Swedish
Tamil	Turkish	Urdu	Welsh	Yoruba

OUR LANGUAGES

- Support for community languages teaching
- Collaboration between the complementary and mainstream sector
- Model good practice in teaching & learning
- Promote community cohesion
- Value plurilingualism
- Celebrate pupil achievement

And why bother?

Not

YAK YAK YAK so I hit him

But

I used to think it was funny when I heard people in the street speaking different languages. Now I listen to see if I can understand them

