

"Learning a Second Language: When & Why." *District Administration Magazine* (2006): n. pag. *Direct Administration*. Nov. 2006. Web. 20 Oct. 2013.

This source comes from a scholarly journal entry that discusses when to learn second languages. It is published without a specific author, but sites many studies and specific researchers through its entirety. This entry specifically doesn't try to argue that one needs to be multilingual at a young age to have a chance at learning new languages later on in life like Asha Smith does, but argues that it is beneficial, and goes on to argue that the American Education system should certainly begin teaching foreign languages in the elementary years. . This article simply makes a less biased argument at a slightly different argument than Asha's dissertation. The argument is that those that are multilingual at a younger age are more successful in academia and some types of cognitive development. This article also definitely pushes on the idea of making learning multiple languages compulsory in the American education system.

This article helps me understand and answer my research question because it gives me broader, yet still credible and scholarly information on which to base my research. It also makes a slightly biased argument that an early start to second language acquisition can benefit students because, "In the U.S., most students who study a foreign language begin at age 14 or later. But linguistic studies show that children who begin learning a second language before adolescence exhibit more native-like pronunciation and are more likely to become fluent speakers." (Learning a Second Language: When & Why) Obviously, based on this statement and study findings, students can benefit a great deal from an early start. In addition, Wilburn Robinson concluded in a 1992 study that, "early experience with two language systems seems to leave children with "a mental flexibility, a superiority in concept formation, and a more diversified set of mental

abilities." (Learning a Second Language: When & Why) Coming from a conservative Dominican family, the language of English was not taught in the highly Hispanic town of Lawrence, MA, but as Kelvin developed English proficiency on his own, he stated that, "Knowing both English and Spanish has played an enormous role in my life. From helping my parents with translations to making connections in both the English and Spanish world, knowing two languages will prove to be my most useful skill in my arsenal." (Native Tongue Twist) After reading this statement from Kelvin, it became very clear that every child should have this opportunity to learn compulsory second languages in school. The American Education system's conduct of foreign language program obviously needs to be revamped.

However, as much scholarly data in this article, there is some data that seems a little skewed. For instance, "Higher standardized test scores. When Thomas Cooper examined data from 23 high schools in the Southeast in 1987, he found that students who took a foreign language in high school scored significantly higher on the verbal scale of the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who studied a foreign language performed "basically just as well as their more fortunate peers." (Learning a Second Language: When & Why) Some points that one could make is that the data is no longer accurate. Since the study was conducted in 1987, this is no longer relevant in a nation where the education system has fallen under much critique over the past decade, and has fallen in the ranks considerably when compared to Asian and European counterparts. In addition, this data is skewed a little bit because is only a regional study of the southeast. Although this article provides some great data, due to the skewedness of the article, some of the content needs to be further examined before taking the content as fact.