

The benefits of learning a second language on wider academic studies and student development.

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Vision Statement

‘Languages for all’ is a notion that continues to be a key driver for me in my work as an educator and teacher of language. Sharing my love, enthusiasm and passion for learning a second language, no matter what your ability or background, and aiding individuals to be the best they can be, is motivational to say the least.

Being a child’s advocate and helping them realize their full potential is a huge joy and privilege in teaching, and knowing that I am making a difference, however big or small, is extremely rewarding.

Teaching languages allows me to: work on hearts and minds; guide young people in becoming open-minded to other cultures; encourage risk-taking; develop literacy; and, creativity. Forging positive relationships within a welcoming, safe and supportive environment is hugely important to me, as a big part of learning a language is built on trust. Displaying a positive attitude and an expectation that my students will succeed, whilst having fun, further enhances this. A variety of research studies highlight that if you enjoy what you do, you are more likely to succeed. As Steve Jobs famously said, "the only way to do great work is to love what you do." (TED, 2013, How to live before you die).

Alongside a caring, engaging and motivational environment, my approach to teaching and learning is consistent, so students feel a sense of routine, whilst personalizing their learning experiences. Tailoring my activities to support varying abilities is key to ensuring my lessons are accessible and appropriately challenging for all, thus keeping interest and engagement high, and maximizing learning potential.

It is essential for me to keep up with changes in pedagogy and advancements in technology, to further improve my own teaching; this affords me the opportunity to regularly reflect on my own practice. My students know that I too am learning every day, that I do not always have all the answers, which models and supports positive learning habits.

To date, I have been privileged enough to teach and hold leadership positions across three levels (Junior School, Middle School and Senior School), in two different countries, within the State and Private sectors. Prior to teaching everyday French in the Junior School, and the birth of my son, I held a variety of leadership positions including Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Deputy Head of Year, Head of Year, Head of upper Senior School and then Assistant Head Teacher, with oversight for Behavior and Safety. Holding such positions allowed me to have a whole school strategic oversight and an understanding that access to quality data can inform whole school development.

My passion for ‘languages for all’ started early on in my career when working as a Head of Year of an option cohort. Data available to me highlighted that there was a lack of

understanding of the benefits of learning a language on wider academic progress. This became apparent to me when option uptake numbers post Year 9 were continually low. I worked hard to improve this situation and through stakeholder engagement, promotion, transdisciplinary work, career talks and a strategic approach to teacher placement, option numbers increased by approximately 25% in the first year and went from strength to strength thereafter. This led to the appointment of an additional teacher and additional languages being offered.

My interest in conducting research into the benefits of learning a language on wider academic studies started at that point, and being a part of the Junior School everyday languages program has afforded me this opportunity.

The research I conduct on the academic and developmental impacts of learning a second language will hopefully feed into Whole School Strategic Plans and enable for further growth of our languages program, further enhance our enrollment strategy and ultimately benefit the students.

Introduction

A major point of difference for PLC, compared with other local State and Private schools, is the everyday Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Pre-Primary Language and Music program, as well as the nearly every day program in Years 1 to 6. Currently, students in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Pre-Primary learn French every day, ranging from twenty to thirty minute lessons. Students in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 learn French four times per week, which includes three half an hour lessons and one, one hour lesson per week. Students in Year 6 study French five hours per fortnight. Students can opt to study Mandarin from Years 3 to 6 and the time proportion is equal to that of French.

Much literature supports the positive relationship between second language learning and academic achievement. The connection between French and English, in terms of lexical similarity, is 27%, with clear similarities in regards to phonetics, morphology and syntax, so a complimentary relationship between English and French language learning is clear. Steiner (2009, p.19) wrote, “one study found that children who knew just a little French, in addition to their native English, had a greater understanding of words and more enhanced reading skills than their peers who spoke only English.”

The connection between second language learning and overall academic achievement is an area of real interest to me in the context of PLC. In particular, the noted but unofficially researched observation of higher academic achievement of students at PLC, who have been introduced to daily or nearly daily Language B, versus those who have not for as long.

Below is a ‘SWOT’ analysis to help further highlight, in a succinct way, the current situation in relation to our Languages program, as well as support, or challenges, I have identified in literature.

Strengths:

- Feedback shows colleagues and parents see the advantages developmentally and academically of our Language B program (this can be found in the ‘findings’ section);

- NAPLAN, PAT R and Australian Spelling data (all national tests) highlight that those students who have studied a Language B longer than those who have not, generally perform higher (specific data in ‘findings’ section);
- Observations of Language B lessons show high student enjoyment and engagement;
- Experienced staff planning and teaching the Language B program in the Junior School, including one teacher educated to Masters level, one teacher who has taught in two countries, across the State and Private sector for ten years, and has worked in educational administration, and myself, who has held a variety of leadership positions and has thirteen years of teaching experience;
- High levels of parental support and engagement in relation to languages events. This is shown during Languages Week, where parents are giving of their time to lead fun and engaging cultural events for our students;
- In relation to literature on this topic, Kathleen Kirby, of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) argues the benefits of language studies go beyond being able to speak another language, "Young people who have the opportunity to learn languages will not only be able to communicate better with people across the world, they have deeper inter-cultural understanding and cultural intelligence." (SBS, 2014, Should learning a language be compulsory).

Weaknesses:

- Mandarin is not on offer in the early years and this is an area suggested as a development by parents in G8 meetings with the Principal of the Junior School;
- The everyday program has meant limited working flexibility for staff, to date;
- Many are skeptical about the benefits of learning a second language and literature on this topic shows some are actually against it, “pupils are not stupid. They take subjects they find relevant to their future lives. European languages are not that. Europe is universally adopting English as a lingua franca.” (Guardian, 2017, Ignore the panic).

Opportunities:

- Further promotion of our daily Languages program to support and enhance the school’s advertising campaign;
- Introduction of Language B taster sessions and/or a playgroup for toddlers to promote what we do and support our enrolment strategy;
- A more strategic and planned approach to how Language B can further support and enhance specifics within academic subjects (a more collaborative inquiry), particularly related to Language A, as a knowledge of common linguistics can help spelling and phonetics- (the roots of words, prefixes and suffixes) and standardized tests;

- Offer Mandarin in the early years, parallel to French; meaning all students have the opportunity to sample both languages, and also so as not to lose the achievements of the current French program;
- Allow for professional development of Senior and Junior School colleagues, to allow for Junior School timetable flexibility and the upskilling of both sets of colleagues to teach in the Junior or Senior school;
- Review Language B programs or offer a lunchtime or after-school ‘French club’ to cater for bilingual or language ‘experienced’ students;
- Bilingual classroom trial (point of difference) to investigate if this has impact on student development and achievement;
- Whilst lots of literature highlights the benefits of a bilingual classroom, a study which examined four approaches to teaching English to language learners, in a partnership between the Stanford Graduate School of Education and San Francisco Unified School District, led by Sean Reardon, Professor of Education and Scholars at Stanford’s Center for Education Policy Analysis (Myers, 2014) found that students learning English as a second language, benefit more in two-language instructional programs than full English immersion.
- On the contrary, however, Brisk and Proctor’s research (Brisk and Proctor, 2012, p.2) concludes that bilingual programs actively facilitate language, literacy and content-area learning by providing students with the opportunity to function in the language in which they can best carry out relevant tasks.

Threats:

- Staffing availability;
- Budget;
- Time to investigate and input opportunities highlighted above;
- Enrolment numbers;
- Balance between Language B and time allowance for other subject areas;
- Other priorities i.e. well-being and safeguarding procedures.

Research Process

After completing an online International Baccalaureate Action Research course, with a small group of worldwide International Baccalaureate Teachers, I learnt that there are a number of ways of collecting and collating research data.

From this, I discovered that a research process can include a variety of research methods including observations, conversations, internal and external questionnaires, analyzing already collected validated data and researching into existing research on my tension.

In terms of identifying baseline data, I decided to audit the data that was available to me, which allowed me to undertake the best form of analysis. I firstly discussed data types with our Pre-Kindergarten to Year 6 Learning Coordinator, who explained that PAT M, PAT R and SA data is available for Years 4 and beyond, as well as NAPLAN data.

Alongside speaking with the Learning Coordinator, I discussed our outsourced data with the Deputy Principal of the Junior School, who taught me how to navigate around the data website 'Valuate' as a means of analyzing NAPLAN scores both nationally and against our school mean.

I also met with the Head of the Junior School, to gauge her opinions on language learning and its impact, and she explained that in her experiences, a control group is ideal, as it allows one to easily measure progress. Not having the luxury of a control group, however, I decided that the best way for me to identify progress was to analyze the above-mentioned data sources for those students who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten, versus those who have not.

The first form of research I conducted involved classroom observations. This allowed me to see, first hand, the experiences available for students in other Language B lessons, their level of engagement, enjoyment and ability, as well as to look out for links to support other core subject areas. These observations involved Years 1, 2, 3 and 4.

In addition to this, I observed a variety of year levels in Language A and Mathematics lessons to enable me to gauge student experiences and to get a 'feel' for their levels and capabilities. These observations highlighted that language is present everywhere and a good understanding of language supports in these subject areas, in terms of reading, comprehending questions and providing full answers.

From this, I held professional dialogues with other Junior School Language B teachers and the Head of Languages. These conversations showed their passion for teaching and learning languages and their beliefs regarding the huge benefits of learning languages for individuals in terms of academic and social skills. In relation to social benefits, my observations of a variety of language lessons highlighted the enjoyment of students when learning a language. At a glance, I observed self-confidence grow and resilience and tolerance enhance. I also felt that students developed an understanding and respect for other cultures, people, their ideas and ways of thinking, all of which positively support student development. An article written by the Georgia Coalition for Language Learning (GCLL) advocate that, "students of foreign languages have access to a greater number of career possibilities and develop a deeper understanding of their own and other cultures. Some evidence also suggests that children who receive second language instruction are more creative and better at solving complex problems. The benefits to society are many." (Georgia State University, n.d. Why, How, and When Should My Child Learn a Second Language?).

Following this, I liaised extensively with the PLC Council Secretary, in relation to distributing a whole school Junior School questionnaire to parents in order to ensure the layout and type of questions would enable me to gain the most beneficial and reliable results. In distributing this, I aimed to find out their opinions about our Language B program overall, whether their Junior School child showed higher levels of confidence and use of the English language versus other older children who had not been exposed to as many Language B lessons when in the Junior School. Also, I wanted

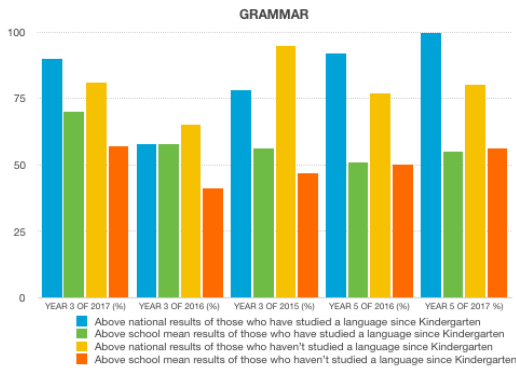
to find out whether they felt, overall, that the Language B program has had an impact on their child's overall development.

I also distributed a questionnaire to all Junior School colleagues to gauge their opinions on our Language B program. Results for both sets of questionnaires can be found in my 'Findings' section.

Returning to the Head of Junior School's suggestion, ideally, for research purposes, we would have a 'control group', where some students start to learn a Language B, whilst the same number of students focus on other subject areas and then they complete an activity or assessment that would allow me to measure their progress. In a meeting with Associate Dean of Murdoch University, this idea was also suggested as another means of clearly showing whether learning a second Language has an impact on academic achievement, or not. The Associate Dean of Murdoch University also suggested I look at the NAPLAN scores of a cohort for whom the everyday languages program was not available and compare the results to those students who have been a part of the everyday program. This could be something we consider in the future and would certainly be a recommendation if the school decide to take my research further.

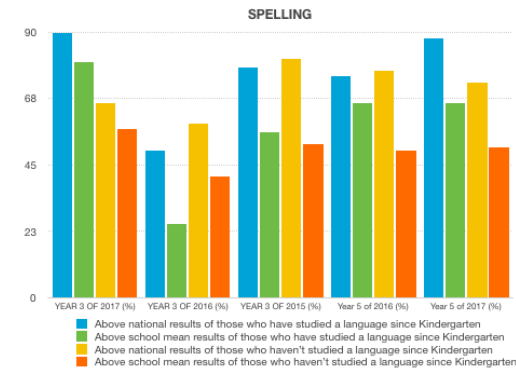
In terms of identifying post intervention data, as I have not produced a 'product', as such, whereby the impact of this can be measured, it is difficult to identify a measurable impact. I do believe, however, that I have shown impact. My study has enabled a variety of stakeholders to reflect on our Language B program, allowing for further improvements, and has certainly brought languages further to the fore-front, supporting what we already knew; that learning a language has an impact on wider academic studies, certainly in Language A and other literacy-focused subjects. The data analysis (which can be found in the 'Findings' section) shows that of those students who have studied a Language B longer than those who have not, overall, their 2015-2017 NAPLAN grammar, spelling, reading and numeracy scores are higher.

Findings



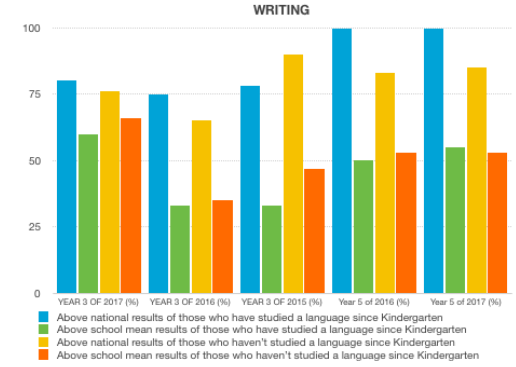
GRAMMAR

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3 OF 2017 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2015 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2017 (%)
Above national results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	90	58	78	92	100
Above school mean results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	70	58	56	51	55
Above national results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	81	65	95	77	80
Above school mean results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	57	41	47	50	56



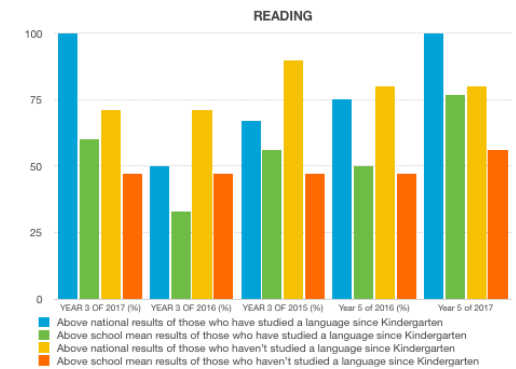
SPELLING

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3 OF 2017 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2015 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2017 (%)
Above national results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	90	50	78	75	88
Above school mean results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	80	25	56	66	66
Above national results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	66	59	81	77	73
Above school mean results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	57	41	52	50	51



WRITING

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3 OF 2017 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2015 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2017 (%)
Above national results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	80	75	78	100	100
Above school mean results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	60	33	33	50	55
Above national results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	76	65	90	83	85
Above school mean results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	66	35	47	53	53



READING

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3 OF 2017 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2015 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2017 (%)
Above national results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	100	50	67	75	100
Above school mean results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	60	33	56	50	77
Above national results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	71	71	90	80	80
Above school mean results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	47	47	47	47	56



NUMERACY

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 3 OF 2017 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 3 OF 2015 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2016 (%)	YEAR 5 OF 2017 (%)
Above national results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	90	100	100	66	88
Above school mean results of those who have studied a language since Kindergarten	70	91	66	58	55
Above national results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	81	82	72	78	78
Above school mean results of those who haven't studied a language since Kindergarten	57	83	40	57	48

PAT R, M and SA Scores

Year 3 of 2016 PAT R, M and SA scores of <u>current</u> Year 4	PAT R and SA	PAT M
School mean of those students who have studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	63%	64%
School mean of those students who have not studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	25%	31%

Year 3 of 2015 PAT R, M and SA scores of <u>current</u> Year 5	PAT R and SA	PAT M
School mean of those students who have studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	66%	66%
School mean of those students who have not studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	52%	78%

Year 5 of 2016 PAT R, M and SA scores of <u>current</u> Year 6	PAT R and SA	PAT M
School mean of those students who have studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	58%	25%
School mean of those students who have not studied a language since Kindergarten – above school mean	60%	79%

Parent Feedback

Q1 - For each of your children currently enrolled in the PLC Junior School, please rate their confidence levels in Language B.	Q2 - Since commencing Language B, have you noticed any improvements at all in your child's spoken English i.e. improved fluency, better use of grammar, with a wider range of vocabulary?	Q3 - Parents of Year 3 and 4 students only – For those children who commenced their PLC journey in Kindergarten, which is when our daily language B program commenced for these cohorts, have you noticed any improvements in your child's written English i.e. does her written work appear to be better formulated in terms of grammar, punctuation and more elevated language use?	Q4 - Year 3 & 4 Parents only - If your child has older siblings who did not study daily Language B from Kindergarten or Pre-primary, how does your child's written English work (as described above) compare with their older siblings?	Q5 - For each of your children, do you believe that our daily Language B program impacts positively on their overall development?
Very reluctant to use target language at home – 9%	Yes – 27%	Significant improvements – 0%	Significant improvements – 0%	Yes – 91%
Reluctant to use the target language at home – 24%	No – 26%	Some positive improvements – 26%	Some positive improvements – 19%	No – 2%
Makes an effort to communicate in the target language – 48%	Maybe – 26%	Very little improvement – 0%	Very little improvement – 7.7%	Maybe – 4%
Very confident to communicate in the target language at home – 19%	Unsure – 17.6%	No noticeable improvement – 16.6%	No noticeable improvement – 18%	Unsure – 3%
		Unsure – 58%	Unsure – 59.6%	

Staff Feedback

Question 1 – In your observations, professional understandings and knowledge of your students, do you believe that our Language B program impacts positively on your students’ overall academic development?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
13 – (68%)	4 – (21%)	0	0	2 – (11%)

19 responses in total

Question 2 – If you believe that our Language B program does support the academic development of your students, in which areas do you believe it most impacts?

Language A	Mathematics	Unit of inquiry	Other specialist areas	Well-being	Other
12	6	10	4	7	2

Some colleagues responded in more than one area so it is therefore difficult to show this as a percentage.

Findings Explained

On analyzing the school PAT R and SA data in Years 4, 5 and 6, reading and spelling results of those students who have studied a Language B longer than those who have not, are higher than those who haven't studied a language as long. Progressive Achievement Tests in Reading (PAT R) assess students' reading comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge and spelling. The South Australian Spelling Test (SA) is a standardized test of spelling achievement for students in the age range 6 years to 15 years. The test enables teachers to determine the spelling ability of each individual student and provides data that can be used for lesson design, group allocation and reporting.

My analysis of the scores for the current Year 4 show that in the PAT R tests, of those who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have scored significantly higher versus the school mean in comparison to those who have not studied a Language B since Kindergarten. In Year 4, those students who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have performed 38% higher in PAT R and SA overall, versus those who have not studied a Language B as long. There is the same outcome for the current Year 5 also. Those students who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have performed 14% higher in PAT R and SA overall, versus those who have not studied a Language B as long. My findings are supported by studies conducted by Yellend et al (as cited in Nagy & Anderson, 1995, p.9) which have shown that children need certain preparatory skills in order to learn to read, "Learning a second language has been shown to enhance children's metalinguistic awareness and thereby their reading readiness."

I also decided to analyze the PAT M data to determine whether there is any correlation between Language B studies and scores in Mathematics. Progressive Achievement Tests in Mathematics (PAT M) provide information about the level of achievement of students from Years 1 to Year 10. The tests assess students' skill and understanding in a multiple-choice format in the six strands of:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Statistics
- Probability

My analysis of the PAT M scores for the current Year 4 show that in the most recently sat test, those who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have scored 33% higher versus the school mean, in comparison to those who have not studied a Language B since Kindergarten.

Turning my attention to NAPLAN tests, which, in the primary years, are completed in Years 3 and 5 and include assessments in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In school research and analysis of 2017 NAPLAN scores, using the most recent Year 3 NAPLAN data, show that those who have studied a Language B longer than those who have not, in relation to spelling scores, score 24% higher against national averages, 4% higher in writing and 29% higher in reading. In grammar and punctuation, against national averages, those who have studied a Language B longer, scored 9% higher versus those who have not learnt a Language B for as long.

Looking at the 2017 Year 5 NAPLAN results, those students who have studied a Language B longer than those who have not, against national averages, scored 20% higher in grammar and punctuation, 15% higher in spelling, 15% higher in writing and 20% higher in reading. My analysis is echoed in the work of Baker (2006) in a report written by Fernandez (University of Melbourne, Department of Education, 2007, p.3) who found that, “A component of literacy common to all languages is the skill of making meaning from texts. Readers must learn to combine a number of strategies in order to do this: using their knowledge of the world, skimming, making inferences, contextual guessing of words, etc. These skills are common to literacy in all languages, and are transferable from one language to another.”

In relation to numeracy scores, in the Year 3 of 2017, 10% more of the students who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have scored on or above the national average and in the Year 5 of 2017, 33% more of those who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten have scored on or above the national average. Those who have studied a Language B since Kindergarten in Years 3 and 5 of 2017 have also scored higher in school mean scores versus those who have not studied a Language B as long. Doctor Paul Swan’s work on ‘Mathematical Literacies’ advocates the huge importance of literacy in understanding mathematical problems which ultimately leads to greater progress, “In order to improve word problem solving in mathematics schools need to improve the mathematical vocabulary of students. A rule of thumb is that if you are going to comprehend a text you will need to know 90 percent of the words in that text. However just learning vocabulary is not sufficient to truly comprehend word questions in mathematics”. (Swan, 2017).

Parent feedback shows that nearly half of those questioned stated that their child makes an effort to use the target Language B at home and the majority of parents believe that since commencing the Language B program, their child’s use of the English language in terms of fluency, grammar and use of more elevated language, has improved. When asked the question regarding whether PLC’s Language B program impacts positively on their child’s overall development, a huge 91% of parents believe that it does. This outcome supports my observations, conversations and the work of Markos in relation to learning languages and student social development.

Junior school staff feedback is also very positive. 89% of colleagues strongly believe or agree that in their observations, professional understandings and knowledge of their students, PLC’s Language B program impacts positively on their students’ overall academic development. The majority of colleagues believe that our Language B program mostly supports Language A and Units of Inquiry.

Discussion and Conclusion

This has been an extremely rewarding project, due to the vast variety of opportunities it has afforded me. Learning from, and holding professional dialogues with numerous colleagues across the whole school, has provided real insight into their positive thoughts about Language B learning.

Throughout this process, I have had the opportunity to reflect on my own practice. Classroom observations were extremely rewarding and highlighted to me the ‘awe and wonder’ of students when learning a language, as well as their infectious enthusiasm.

The positive results and responses to my Action Research provide a solid foundation for PLC’s Leadership Team to further promote the daily Languages program to

enhance the school's marketing campaign. I must, at this point, however, acknowledge that the mainly positive results will also be as a result of excellent teaching and learning, leadership, school culture and a wealth of other subject areas. Moreover, I also believe that whilst I have 'scratched the surface' of the benefits of learning a second language, and fulfilled the brief of this project, there is a lot more data analysis that could be done in the future to further deepen the scope of this tension.

Therefore, in terms of recommendations, I suggest PLC considers introducing Language B taster sessions and/or a playgroup for toddlers to promote what we do and support our enrolment strategy. This could be delivered in the Lighthouse once opened.

As well as continuing with our everyday Language B program, due to its clear academic and social benefits, I recommend a more strategic and planned approach to how Language B can enhance specifics within academic subjects, particularly related to Language A and standardized tests. My research shows that learning a Language B aids literacy and numeracy skills and the positive national test results of those who have learnt a Language B since Kindergarten, shows with a more focused approach, results could improve even more.

Furthermore, investigating a bilingual classroom model could also prove to be a point of difference for the school, Steiner (2009, p.11) believes, "Learning another language gets the brain machinery going. The tasks of learning two or three sets of vocabulary and grammar, then learning how to shift from one language to another, provide terrific brain stimulation."

Alongside this, there has been discussion around offering Mandarin in the early years; my findings would certainly support the introduction of another language for students to current and prospective parents due to the many advantages they bring.

Finally, analyzing the national test scores of those students who have not had as much exposure to language learning, for example, those students in the Middle and Senior School, would be extremely interesting in relation to widening this research further.

Not only is the support for languages positive here at PLC, but the data I have shared shows a strong correlation to the academic impacts of learning a second language. National test scores in reading, listening, spelling, writing and numeracy for those who have learnt a Language B since Kindergarten, generally, show that they are performing better in these areas, nationally, and versus the school mean, in comparison to those who have not learnt a Language B as long. The work of Doctor Paul Swan, Steiner, Baker, Yellend et al, Katherine Markos and Kathleen Kirby of Asia Education Foundation all support my findings. This, along with 91% of PLC parents, and 89% of Junior School colleagues, who believe that PLC's Language B program impacts positively on their students' overall academic development, further reinforces the importance and place learning a second language has, the sooner, the better. Here's to our next generation of PLC language learners! "Without language, one cannot talk to people and understand them; one cannot share their hopes and aspirations, grasp their history, appreciate their poetry, or savor their songs." (Mandela, 1995, p.67).

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