

took this attitude. In the first place, the Missions in foreign countries were very few - Tokyo being the only "difficult" language post. It was also assumed that either a well-educated and intellectual secretary, a priori familiar with French and English and one other popular European language (e.g. Spanish or German), could if necessary, readily acquire, while en poste, the rudiments of another local foreign language, - for which, following British practice, he could claim tuition expenses and afterwards a language-knowledge bonus while at that linguistic post; or he could rely on local interpreters and assistants. In other words, knowledge of an alien language (other than the common European languages) was not emphasized or a sine qua non for admission.

In the Latin-American posts, opened during the Second War, almost all officers readily acquired a knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese, which presented no great difficulties. In the Japan post, opened in 1929, most of the officers, including the commercial officers, privately acquired an elementary working or conversational knowledge of Japanese and some passed elementary British tests which qualified them to receive a language bonus; but a professional knowledge was not attempted, since the usual consular training for Japanese language was a full-time three-year course. Moreover, the young Canadian Foreign Service did not contemplate a corps of permanent area specialists such as the British Levant or Arabic Service, the China or Far Eastern Service, etc.