

**Foreign Language Educators in K-12 and Postsecondary Institutions:
Needs, Shortages, and New Directions**

By

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I. Introduction

When we speak of needs and capacities in languages other than English in the educational system in the United States, we should start with the obvious: there is no federal language policy, no generalized recognition that the study of languages other than English is a necessary component of an education, and no systematic approach to ensuring that every student in the United States will have the opportunity to achieve proficiency in another language. In this regard, the United States is behind virtually all other industrialized nations; in Europe alone, acquiring two languages in addition to the native language is the educational norm. We must insist, then, that the basic need to be addressed is the nation's lack of consensus on the key role languages play in education from the early grades through to postgraduate studies.

This need, we recognize, has to do not only with educational policy issues, but also with deep-rooted cultural issues. It is well known that the United States is a nation of immigrants that tacitly encourages newcomers to "lose their language" as soon as possible. Instead of cultivating retention of heritage languages and promoting advanced literacy in them, we accept attrition as an acceptable outcome. Further, we generally see languages as a curricular extra somewhere in

the proximity of art, music, or physical education. In tight budgetary times, the axe falls on what is considered marginal.

In this paper, we review the essential data that our organizations have analyzed in order to sketch the state of language studies in the K-16 system. We construct a framework with which to view the information we present by describing needs and shortages as well as positive future directions and ways to achieve them. Our paper contains many encouraging signs, yet it doesn't avoid noting trends that should cause worry. Above all, it is our hope that this paper will provide fellow language advocates with some resources to help us all achieve our goals.

II. Foreign Language (K-12) Teacher Needs and Shortages

While education reform efforts continue in the K-12 arena, primarily through the No Child Left Behind legislation that is currently focused on state waivers and Race to the Top and Innovation grants, the significant need for language teachers and the increasing needs of language teachers are reaching a critical level. Both in terms of human capital and teacher training, we need to develop a focused and concerted effort to build the highly qualified foreign language teacher community. The increased attention by the business community on the importance of language skills in the workforce as well as the enthusiasm from parents for early language study make it a priority for efforts in three specific areas of need at the K-12 level:

1. Increasing the number of teacher candidates for K-12 public school positions in a variety of languages from Spanish to Chinese;
2. Raising the language proficiency level of both pre-service and in-service teachers and language majors; and
3. Training teachers to integrate technology into language instruction.

Teacher Shortage

The U.S. Department of Education tracks on an annual basis the shortages that states encounter in hiring teachers.¹ The document is intended “to notify the nation where States and schools are looking to potentially hire . . . licensed teachers . . . in specific disciplines/subject areas, grade levels, and/or geographic regions.” It also serves as a blueprint for awarding TEACH Grants sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education: grants of up to \$4,000 per year are given to students who agree to serve as highly qualified full-time teachers in a high-need field in public or private elementary or secondary schools that serve students from low-income families. Current high-need fields designated by the Department of Education include Bilingual Education and Foreign Language.

The data provided in the most recent Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listings summarize the shortage areas for the 1990-2000 academic years and the 2013-2014 academic year. It also divides the shortage areas by grades K-6 and 7-12. Table 1 summarizes the 1990-2000 data; it indicates that during that time period 23 states identified foreign language teacher shortages at the K-6 level and 35 states reported this shortage for grades 7-12. These numbers increased by the 2013-2014 academic year to 36 for the K-6 level and 39 for grades 7-12.

It is important to reference the shortages in the foreign language field with those for other subject areas. Table 2 shows that the oft-mentioned STEM fields of science and math have very similar shortages in terms of the number of states identifying them, whereas social studies and the arts exhibit much lower shortage numbers--16 and 15 respectively.

¹ “Annual Publication of the Teacher Shortage Areas (TSA) Nationwide Listings for 1990-1991 through 2013-2014,” Last modified March 2013, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.html#list>

Policymakers need to make note of the similarity in shortage areas between foreign languages and math and science. With the current emphasis on the STEM subjects, including major federal grants and corporate sponsorships for teachers and students in these areas, it is not surprising that there are teacher shortages. However, there has been no similar investment of resources on behalf of the study of foreign languages, yet the teacher shortages are there as well. With the anticipated launch of a national public awareness campaign in Fall 2014, sponsored by ACTFL and a broad coalition of organizations from the education and corporate world, the focus on language education could potentially intensify to a point where the demand for language classes far exceeds capacity because of an increasing shortfall in the number of qualified teachers.

Table 1: Number of States Designating Foreign Language Shortages

1990-2000		2013-2014	
K-6	7-12	K-6	7-12
23	35	36	39

Table 2: 2013-2014 Foreign Language Shortage Compared to the Subject Areas

Subject	Reported Shortages
Science	41
Math	39
Social Studies	16
Art	15

Not all states indicated which languages were experiencing shortages; of those that did, the number is listed in Table 3. The most commonly taught languages at the K-12 level -- Spanish,

French, German, and Latin -- are the most frequently identified needs, along with Chinese, which equals Latin. This information is parallel to the most recent enrollment figures available through a study done by ACTFL comparing the 2003-04 academic year with the 2007-08 year². Some less commonly taught languages also appear in Table 3, including Native American languages, Hawaiian, and American Sign Language.

Table 3: Specific Language Shortages Identified in 2013-14

Language	Number of States with Identified Shortages in 2013-2014
Spanish	9
French	6
German	4
Latin	4
Chinese	4
Native American	2
Italian	1
American Sign Language	1
Japanese	1
Portuguese	1
Russian	1
Hawaiian	1

Individual states have a variety of ways that shortages are listed or remediated. For example, in the state of Maine, “the Commissioner shall annually designate shortage areas for the State or, at the discretion of the Commissioner, shall provide for a targeted need certificate in another endorsement or certificate area in which a superintendent documents an emergency that results in an immediate shortage.” This procedure allows local district control of the targeted

² 1. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), *Foreign Language Enrollments in K-12 Public Schools: Are Students Prepared for a Global Society?* 2010 (Alexandria, VA)

2. The U.S. Department of Education, *Foreign Language Enrollments*

areas of need and allows districts to hire candidates who may not have met the full licensure requirements of the state.³

Other states have found alternative ways to respond to the shortages. In 2013 the state of Oklahoma formed the Education Workforce Shortage Task Force to address the critical teacher shortage.⁴ The task force consisted of state legislators, school administrators, teachers, and other education officials who made recommendations on how to alleviate these shortages. In addition, Oklahoma changed certification rules last year to add a visiting guest teacher certification, and the Department of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Embassy of Spain. Oklahoma is currently planning to bring about 30 visiting guest teachers to two of the largest school districts next school year. The state may also utilize their French partnership connections from the *Académie d'Amiens* to find French teachers. In addition to seeking candidates to fill vacancies from other countries, the Oklahoma Department of Education created an alternative pathway to certification for Native American Languages (which qualify as world languages there) to support the revitalization efforts in the state of 39 federally-recognized tribes. This alternative pathway will bring Native American language educators into the public school workforce from community-based programs. Many states have developed specific methodologies to determine the shortage areas. The state of New Hampshire uses three components in its methodology⁵:

1. The first component consists of the Critical Shortage Survey. This survey is sent out for response to all the school districts in New Hampshire in the late summer every year.

Superintendents are asked to contribute data on any vacancies that they have considered

³ Jay Ketner, National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, email message to Martha Abbott, March, 2014.

⁴ Desiann Dawson, National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, email message to Martha Abbott, March, 2014.

⁵ Ken Relihan, National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, email message to Martha Abbott, March, 2014.

difficult to fill under several criteria. Those criteria, broken down by endorsement area, include an overview of the vacancies over the school year, data on the number of positions versus the number of applicants, number of applicants, and contributing factors making the positions difficult to fill.

2. The second component includes an analysis of all the candidates who have been prepared in approved programs in New Hampshire's institutes of higher education in the previous year, reported by program completion, endorsement area, certification, and employment. Program completion data is then compared against the "difficult to fill" areas.
3. The third component addresses the non-traditional routes to certification for the preceding year, reported by endorsement area and specific alternative route for elementary and secondary schools.

Regardless of how the state determines the shortage area, the fact that 39 states currently list grades 7-12 as having a shortage indicates that efforts need to be made to attract more people into the language teaching profession either through financial incentives or some other means. Reaching students in grades 7-12 is critical; if students study another language, they are most likely to do it during those years. In addition, states have indicated that teacher preparation programs, rather than continuing to expand, have recently suffered major cuts, and that many have closed. Consideration should be given to some kind of national effort to certify teachers in these high needs areas and have all states accept these candidates for licensure.

Raising the Language Proficiency Level of Language Majors and Teacher Candidates

In 2002, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Preparation (NCATE) transformed teacher education programs by announcing that the criteria for national recognition

would be based on an output model rather than the traditional input model, i.e., instead of measuring program statistics like student grade averages and faculty credentials, the measures would focus on what teacher candidates could actually demonstrate in terms of mastery of the K-12 student standards. As the Specialty Professional Association (SPA) for foreign language programs, ACTFL developed teacher education standards for foreign language teacher preparation programs. As part of the standards vetting process in the profession, ACTFL designated a minimal proficiency level target for teacher candidates as Advanced Low for most languages but Intermediate High for languages with a non-Roman alphabet, such as Arabic and Chinese. The Advanced Low level of proficiency was set as a minimum so that the teachers would have a level of language proficiency that would enable them to teach classes almost exclusively in the target language as stipulated in the National Standards for Language Learning. Speakers at the Advanced Low level can speak in paragraph length discourse in three major time frames and are able to handle a complication when it arises.

A recent study published in *Foreign Language Annals* indicates that just slightly over half of the teacher candidates are reaching the Advanced Low level on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Scale.⁶ A similar study completed by Elvira Swender on the proficiency levels of undergraduate language majors found that approximately half rated at the Advanced Low and higher levels and the other half scored at the Intermediate High and below.⁷ While we can state categorically that language learning should begin in the elementary schools and provide articulated programs through grade 12, the reality of that happening for most students is slim. It is more realistic to encourage Foreign Language Departments to:

⁶ Eileen W. Glisan, Elvira Swender and Eric A. Surface, "Oral Proficiency Standards and Foreign Language Teacher Candidates: Current Findings and Future Research Directions," *Foreign Language Annals* 46 (2013): 264-289

⁷ Elvira Swender, "Oral Proficiency Testing in the Real World: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions," *Foreign Language Annals* 36 (2013): 511-517

1. Set language outcomes as part of the department's curricular goals and make sure that students reach the level of performance or proficiency required.
2. Provide opportunities for students to participate in immersion experiences whether on campus, by living in language immersion environments (such as language floors of dormitories or language houses), or in a structured study abroad program that involves pre- and post-program language testing.
3. Measure student progress toward the targeted proficiency levels

Departments could be provided with grants for training faculty members to administer proficiency tests, funds for testing students, and additional funding for immersion opportunities for students, such as study abroad.

Training Teachers to Integrate Technology into Instruction

As we look at how little our language classrooms have actually changed to accommodate our 21st century learners, it is increasingly difficult for teachers to get out ahead of learners in terms of engagement with technology. As we all know, today's students are adept at using social media and accessing information at an amazingly fast pace. Immediate feedback motivates them to continue their engagement in online games, competitions, and learning in general. Our teachers are challenged to create comparable learning environments within the confines of what are for the most part 20th century classrooms. Maximizing the use of technology can allow for a degree of simulation of the kind of learning environment that students are experiencing in their daily lives. Not only is the integration of technology into the classroom crucial to enhancing learning outcomes, but it is also important in helping our teachers find ways to "work smarter."

In both an ACTFL member survey⁸ (2012) and a national survey⁹ that ACTFL conducts annually in collaboration with the National Center for College and University Admissions (NRCCUA), teachers overwhelmingly identified increased knowledge of how to integrate technology into their instruction as a leading professional development need.

In a 2012 ACTFL Member Survey, members rated the professional development priority of “Technology in support of language learning” as one of the top priorities for language educators at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels. Likewise, in the NRCCUA survey, which gathers responses from approximately 2,500 high school language teachers annually, the highest ranked professional development need identified each time the question was asked (2008-09, 2012-13, and 2013-14) was “Technology Integration.” It is important to note that it ranked highest in 2008-09 at 61.6% and, while it remained the top need in subsequent years, the percentage dropped to 49.9% in 2012-13 and 39% in 2013-14. A recent poll¹⁰ by Katharine Haber, education editor for SmartBrief, showed districts and schools reporting that 47.83% were in need of improvement when it came to adequately preparing students to join today’s global workforce. Almost 70% of these districts and schools reported that “very little” or only “some” technology was used in their foreign language programs. Additionally, the type of technology used was limited to only software programs (66.67%); videoconferencing with native speakers from other countries stood at only 2.78%, and blogging at 0%. The results of this poll are an indication that even when technology is used in the classroom, it is not at the cutting edge level, the kind that most students have access to in their daily lives.

⁸ American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), *Member Survey* (2012)

⁹ National Center for College and University Admissions (NRCCUA), Annual survey conducted in Collaboration with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2007-2013)

¹⁰ Katherine Harber, “Readers’ Views: Foreign Language instruction and the Use of Technology,” *SmartBrief* February 17, 2014,

Language instruction in the U.S. is still in the transition stage from the grammar-focused classes of yesteryear to the dynamic, learner-centered, technology-infused variety of the 21st century. Significant professional development is needed to ramp up the engagement that is so critical for students in today's classrooms. While parents are demanding language programs in local elementary schools, students at the middle and high school levels vote with their feet. If the programs do not prove engaging for them, if students do not feel that they are making their way up the language continuum by improving their performance in the language, and if they are not connecting with peers from the target language countries, they will find ways outside the school structure to learn languages. It is a most critical time to make sure that our K-12 language teachers are equipped to work with today's learners, not just by using the latest technology innovations but also by being current in the latest second language acquisition theory, which can translate into classroom applications that improve students' communicative competence.

A 2013 briefing paper by the Coalition for International Education entitled *U.S. Global Competence: The Role of International and Foreign Language Education* states: "...it is a federal interest to ensure that Americans are successfully prepared to engage with other cultures and languages in today's interconnected world."¹¹ Federal programs can provide the necessary leverage to solve each of the three challenges to securing a highly qualified language teacher cadre at the K-12 level. We need to attract the best and the brightest to become teacher candidates, ensure that they have access to opportunities to develop their linguistic and cultural competencies, and become expert at incorporating the dynamic technologies available into their language instruction practices.

¹¹ Coalition for International Education, "U.S. Global Competence: The Role of International and Foreign language Education," 2013.

III. Higher Education (HE) Foreign Language Faculty Needs and Shortages

Rising enrollments in languages other than English indicate that college and university students believe they need to learn foreign languages. MLA Language Enrollment Surveys document that since 1980, when enrollments were at 877,691, there has been a steady rise in enrollments (with the exception of a slight dip in 1995) to the most recent figure available: 1,629,326 in 2009. These numbers represent a slight rise in the percentage of modern language enrollments as compared to total student enrollments at colleges and universities, from 7.3% to 8.6% between 1980 and 2009. Motivated by reasons that range from vocational, cultural, family heritage, scholarly, or religious, students want to learn foreign languages, which they consider to be a critical part of a postsecondary education. Colleges and universities, therefore, need to create sustainable models for delivery of language instruction in an articulated curriculum that takes those eager students from first semester through advanced courses and beyond. The higher education community must continue to prepare well trained language teachers (whether they be graduate student instructors, lecturers, “professors of the practice,” or tenure-line faculty members) who can teach students at beginning and advanced levels. In particular, there is need for a cadre of teachers ready to educate the students who rise to the advanced levels. Enrollment data show that we have plenty of students taking courses at advanced levels in all languages. It is essential that the profession cultivate the initial enthusiasm students show in language learning and equip them with meaningful levels of proficiency.

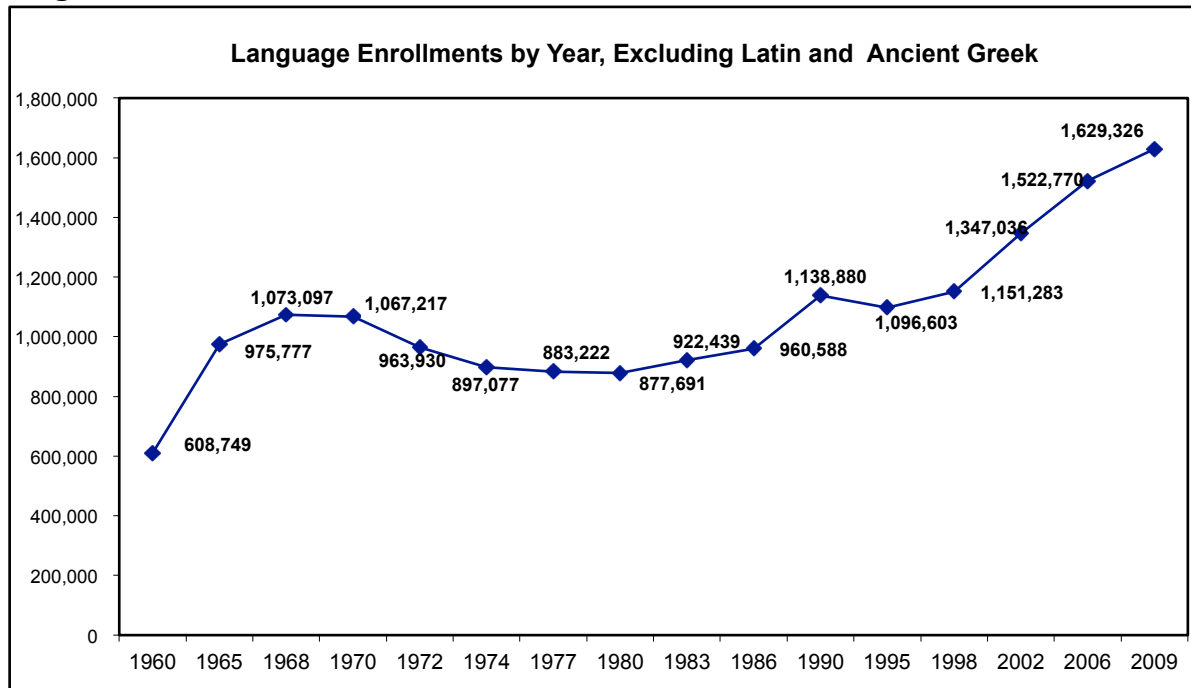
Enrollments, Degrees Completed, and Doctorates in Languages other than English

Enrollments

MLA surveys show that enrollments in languages other than English at the college and university level have increased considerably over the years. Enrollments in 1960 were 608,749;

in 2009, they reached 1,629,326. It was not an uninterrupted climb upward: enrollments declined in the 1970s and 1980s, and began increasing steadily again only from 1995.

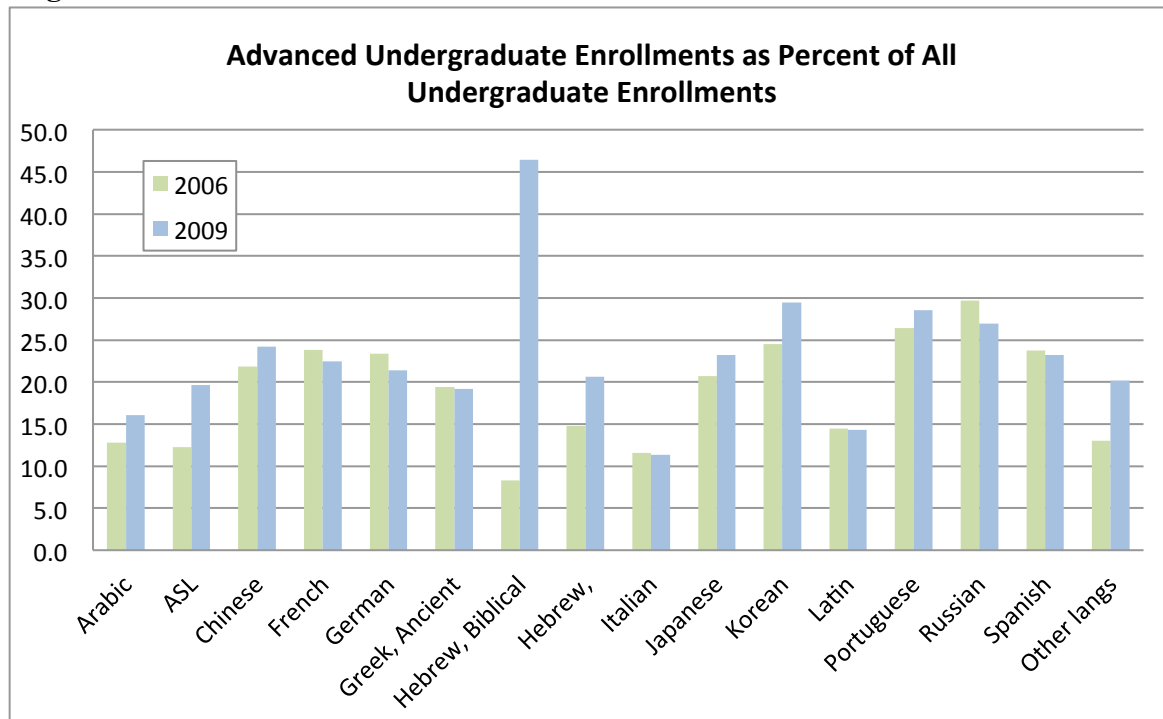
Fig. 1



The number of overall enrollments is one important measure, but what percentage of enrollments is in advanced courses? This is a relatively new question in the MLA enrollments survey; it first appeared in the 2006 iteration. But since the question has already been asked in two surveys, we can begin to compare results over time. These results help us to formulate some conclusions about the development of more advanced curricula that would enable students to specialize or major in a given language. In looking at enrollments in advanced undergraduate courses as a percentage of enrollments in all undergraduate courses in languages other than English, we see that the results are mixed: some languages showed an increased percentage in advanced undergraduate courses between 2006 and 2009, and some did not. Several commonly taught European languages showed a decline in the percentage of advanced enrollments: French, German, Russian, and Spanish. There appears to be less demand for an array of advanced

programs in these cultural traditions. A larger and more varied group of languages showed an increase: Arabic, American Sign Language (ASL), Biblical and Modern Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese. Enrollments in each of these languages may be driven by different issues that should be taken into consideration in a more finely-grained analysis, yet there is a clear need for program development in all of these languages. Italian, Latin, and Ancient Greek showed little change. A cause for concern is the relatively low percentage, an average of 22% over all languages, of enrollments in advanced undergraduate courses as a percentage of all undergraduate enrollments in those courses.

Fig. 2



Another important subset is the number of enrollments in graduate courses. Looking at the last three decades, we see that there has been a noticeable decline in graduate enrollments, and in some languages there has been a steep decline. The most notable exceptions to this trend are Spanish and Korean; (Korean graduate enrollments are tiny when compared with Spanish, however).

Fig. 3

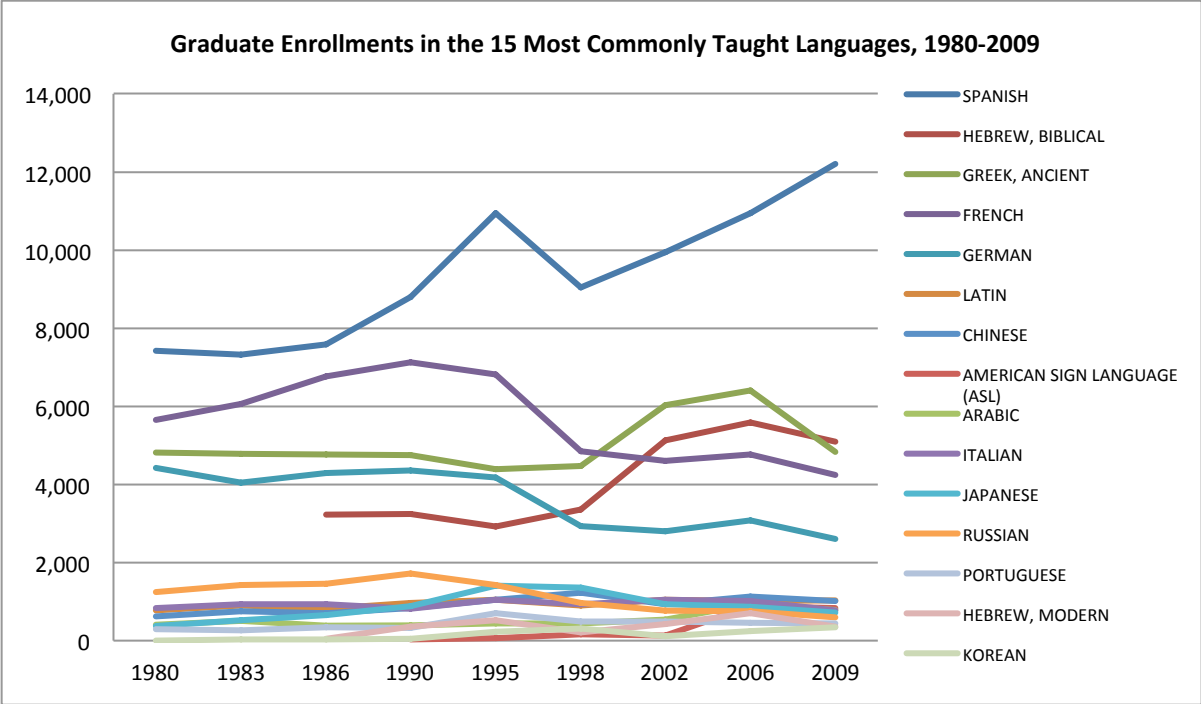
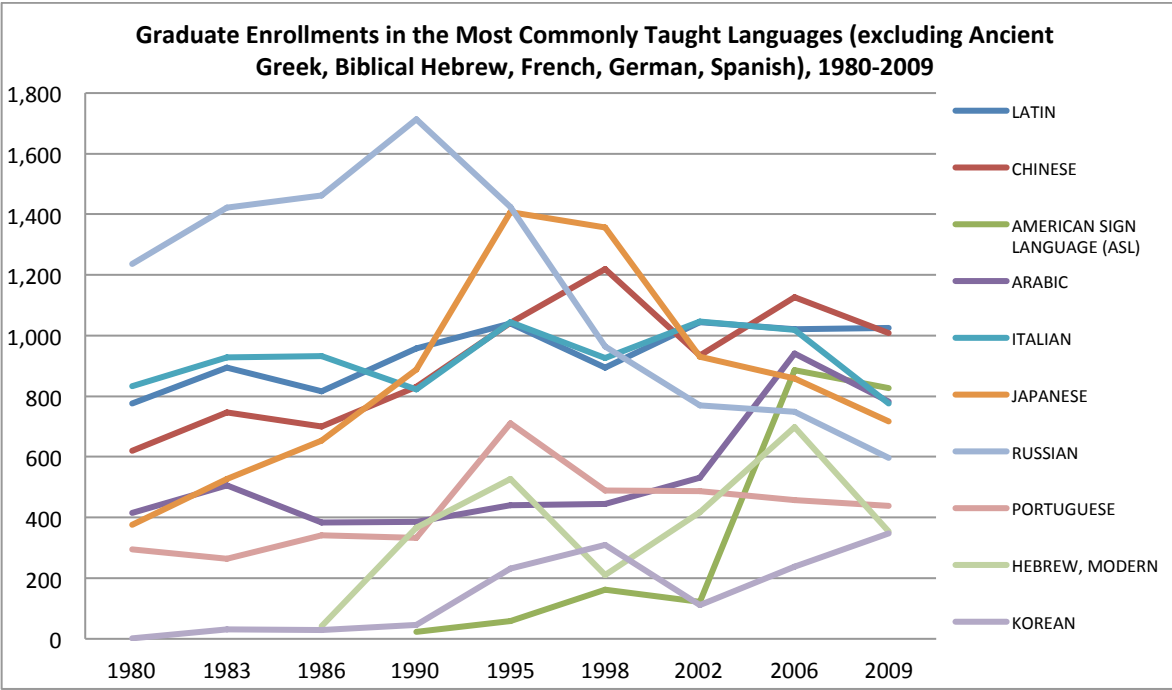


Fig. 4



While all enrollments are important, enrollments in critical languages are especially significant. The definition of “critical” varies—it can refer to languages deemed important to

national security or to the languages of key trading partners. The Department of Agriculture designates Spanish as a critical language.¹² One critical language, Arabic, has had a dramatic increase in enrollments since the 2002 survey (10,584 in 2002, and 35,083 in 2009). Others are notable for how few students are studying them; e.g., Pashto/Pushtu had approximately 100 enrollments in 2006 and 2009.

Fig. 5

	2002	2006	2009
ARABIC	10,584	23,956	35,083
PERSIAN	1,117	2,037	1,897
FARSI	85	243	322
FARSI/PERSIAN			335
ARABIC, CLASSICAL		4	285
DARI	41	104	17
PASHTO	14	103	19
PUSHTU, AFGHAN			95
ARABIC, IRAQI			61
TAJIK			4
ARABIC, SUDANESE			3

Majors/Degrees Completed in Languages other than English¹³

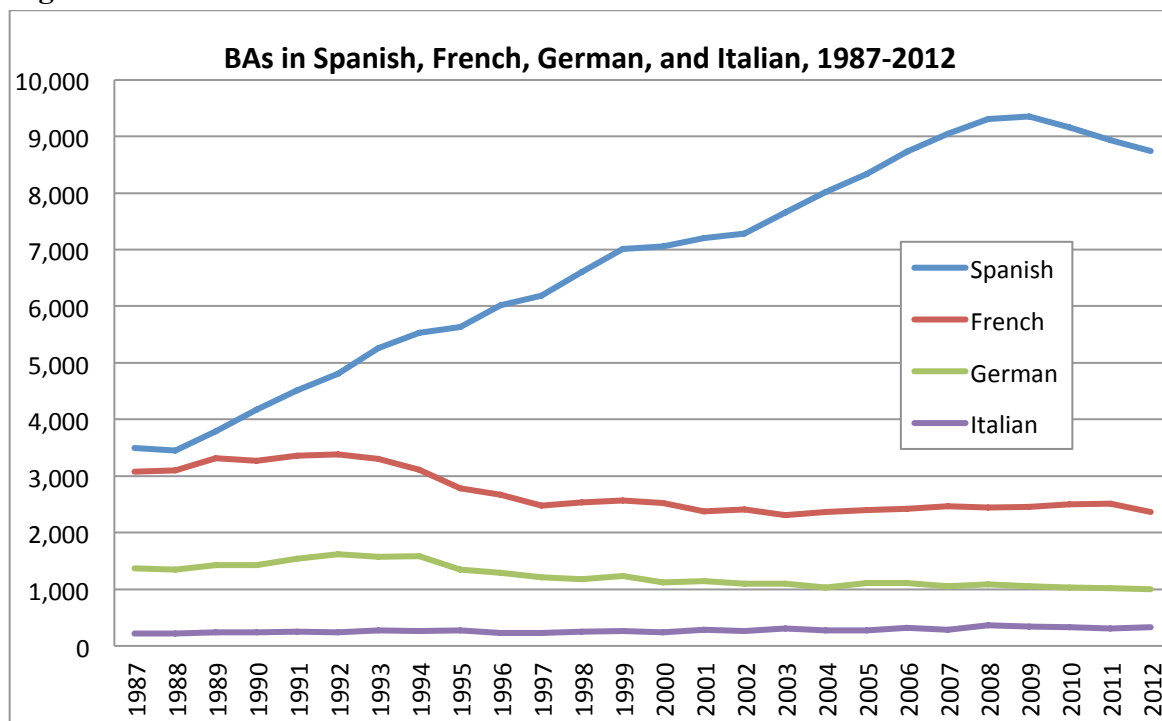
Moving from enrollments in courses to completed degrees in languages other than English, some interesting details emerge. First, we have seen and continue to see respectable-sized cohorts of students completing postsecondary degrees in the languages that still form the core of the typical high school foreign language offerings (Spanish, French, and German). As early as 1987, Spanish had already made its way to the top of the list with almost 30% of the students majoring in a language other than English completing degrees in Spanish. That percentage rises to 40% in 2012, a figure that actually represents a slight leveling off after the peak in 2005 of over 45% of the total number of foreign language majors choosing Spanish.

¹² From the website "Consultation with Federal Agencies": "The Department [of Agriculture] also notes that although Spanish is commonly taught, broad understanding of Spanish and Western Hemispheric cultures are critical to the success of U.S. agriculture."

¹³ The data below on completed degrees are from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) made available online by the National Center for Education Statistics (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>): 3,496 Spanish majors of 11,770 total majors in languages other than English in 1987; 8,745 Spanish majors of 21,855 total language majors in 2012.

MLA Language Enrollment Survey data and IPEDS data on completed degrees corroborate this steep upward growth trend in the study of Spanish over the last two decades, with a shift to perhaps a more sustainable level in recent years. The actual number of completed degrees in French and German, contrasting 1987 and 2012, seems not to have dropped as precipitously as one might expect. French counted 3,075 majors in 1987 and 2,366 in 2012; German moved from 1,366 to 1,001. But the percentages tell a different story. In 1987, French majors accounted for over one quarter of the total number of foreign language majors (26.1%), whereas in 2012, French majors have dropped to only 10.8% of the whole. Similarly, German moved from a share of 11.6% in 1987 to one of 4.6% in 2012. Despite the uptick in Italian language enrollments between 1987 and the rise in majors, the percentage of students majoring in Italian has remained rather constant just at or slightly above 1.5% of the whole between 1987 and 2012.

Fig. 6



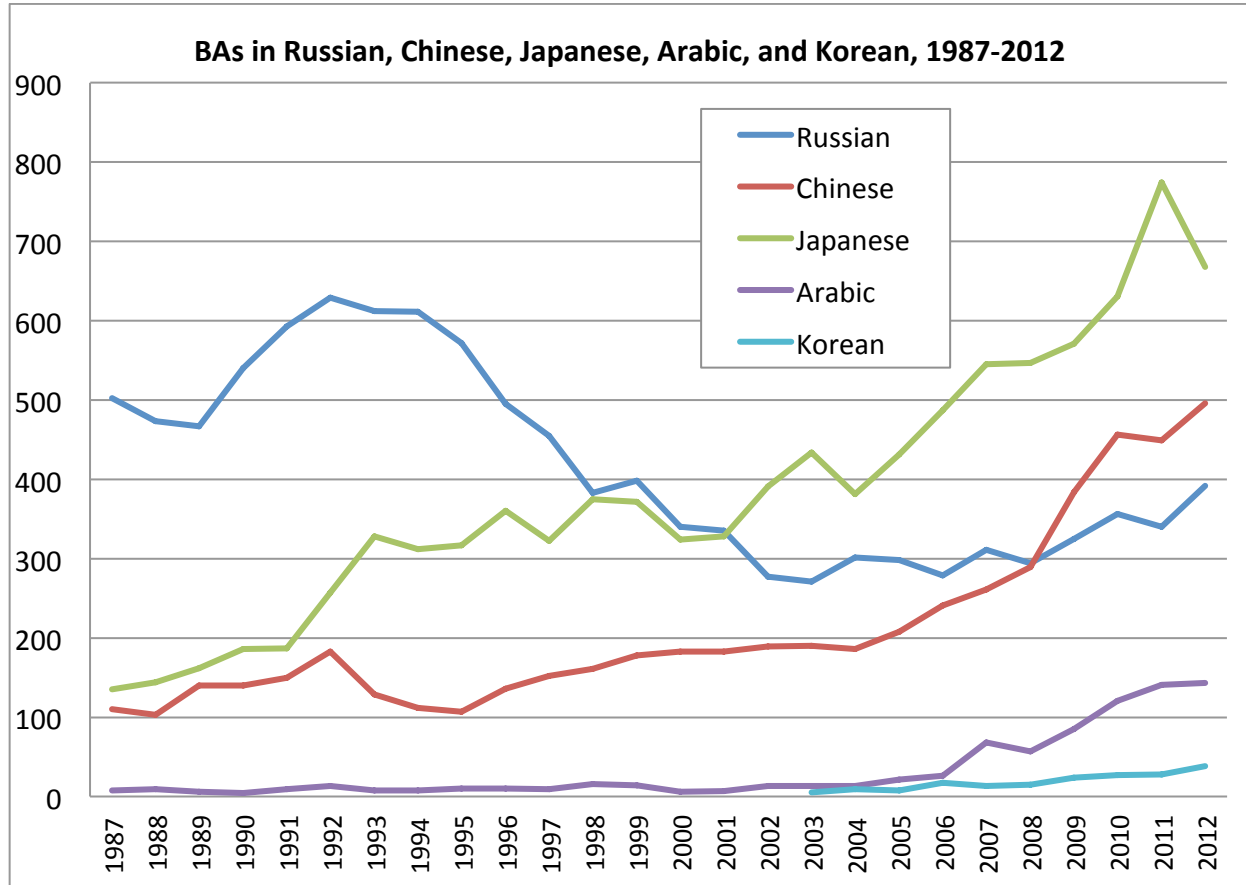
One has to qualify any tabulation of degrees completed in foreign languages with the caveat that many institutions still do not have adequate mechanisms to account for the dual and

joint majors that have become more common as the postsecondary degree has become more expensive. A very familiar second (or even third) major is now the specialization in a foreign language. Administrators in higher education need to develop satisfactory ways to report these degrees, which represent significant numbers of students who have worked at the highest levels in our undergraduate programs.

The other perhaps more interesting story to relate is the situation surrounding the study of some of the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), which have been designated critical, in particular Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Korean. Undergraduate degrees completed in Russian have dropped somewhat between 1987 and 2012, from 502 to 392 (but recently they have risen noticeably from the lowest number of 271 in 2003 to the 392 majors reported in 2012). The remaining critical languages that receive the most attention in American colleges and universities—Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic—have experienced significant growth in general enrollments as well as in the respective numbers of degrees granted, which implies that the curricula in an increasing number of institutions around the country are being developed to move language learners effectively from lower levels of proficiency to advanced. Most dramatic, not surprisingly, is the change in the numbers of students completing degrees in Chinese, from 110 in 1987 to 496 in 2012. The decrease in the percentage of students completing advanced study of French and German reported above is balanced in part by this increase of advanced interest in critical languages like Chinese. Whereas less than 1.0% of students studying a language other than English majored in Chinese in 1987, in 2012 that percentage had risen to 2.3%. Japanese jumped from a 1.1% share in 1987 to a 3.1% share in 2012. And Arabic went from a negligible .1% to a less negligible .7%; in actual numbers, IPEDS reports that 8 students graduated with a degree in Arabic in 1987, 143 in 2012. Korean, too, has entered the picture with 5 students

reported as having completed degrees in 2003 and a growing number since then culminating in 38 in 2012.

Fig. 7



Doctorates in Languages other than English

The number of doctoral degrees in languages other than English as reported in the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) corroborates the general trends in language enrollment numbers as well as in completed degrees at the undergraduate level. From a high point of nearly 250 doctoral degrees over several years, Spanish seems to be leveling off at 200 or so PhDs per year. French, hovering at some 150 doctoral degrees around 2000, has now settled into a number closer to around 100 PhDs granted per year; German has fluctuated between 100 at the top year of 2003 to

nearly 50 in 2005, finding a midpoint between those two extremes in recent years. Of note is the steady growth at the doctoral level of the LCTLs, especially Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic. Doctoral degrees in Russian moved from 19 in 1987 to 24 in 2012; numbers in Chinese have risen from 13 in 1987 to 41 in 2010 with a recent dip to 20 in 2012; Japanese has more than doubled from 9 PhDs granted in 1987 to 20 in 2012; and Arabic has grown from numbers in the single digits since the 1980s to 12 in 2012.

Fig. 8

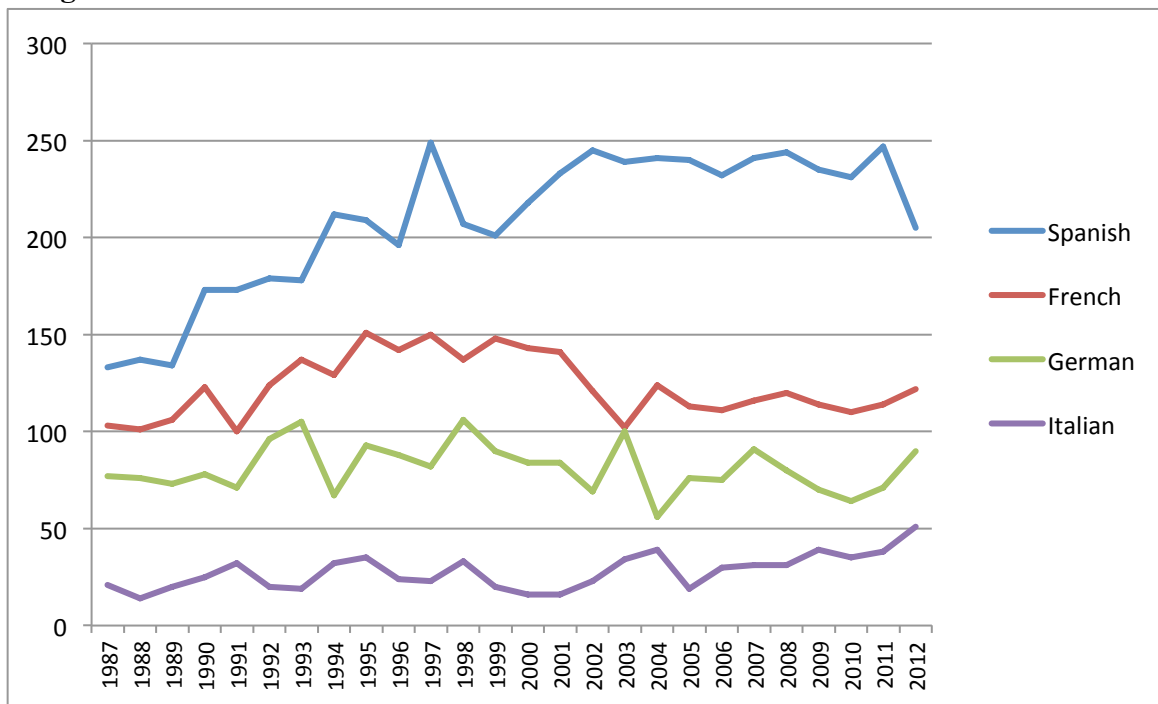
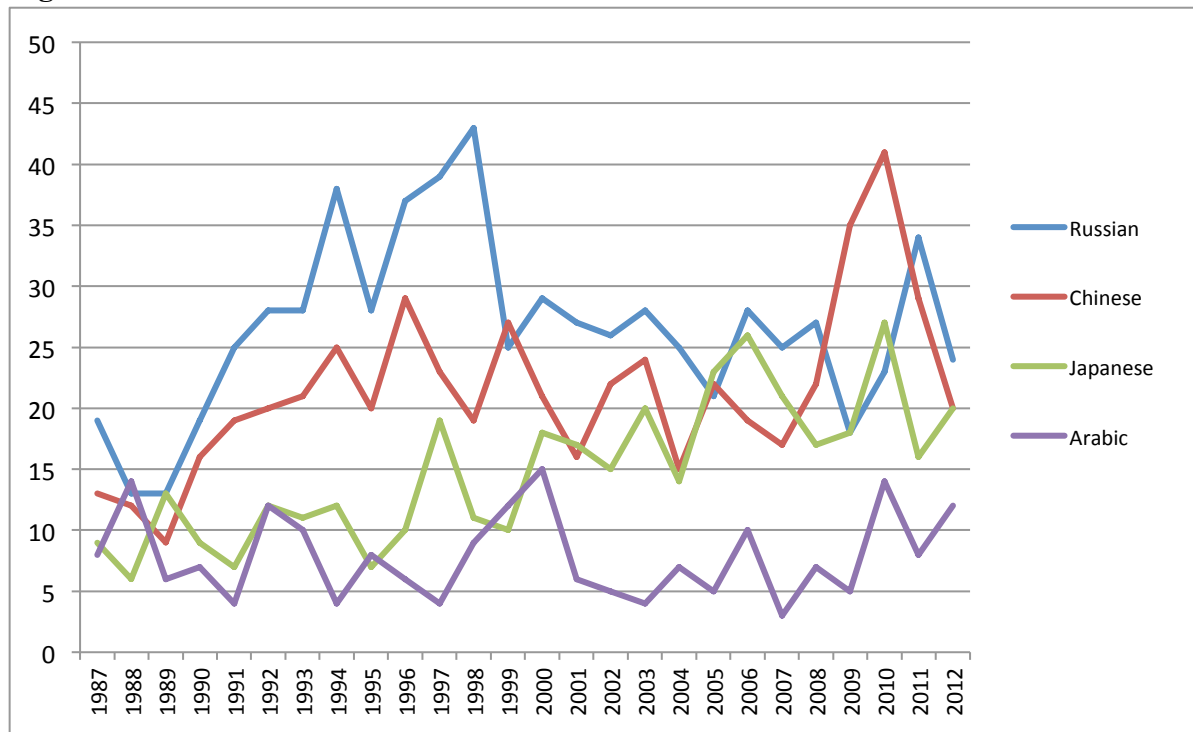


Fig. 9

The Study of Arabic as Emblematic of Faculty and Programmatic Needs and Shortages

Growth in Arabic immediately after 9/11 was dramatic yet, seen in retrospect, probably unsustainable. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, there was marked growth in the study of German for several years, but it did not last. And one waits to see the impact that current events in the Crimea may have on the study of Russian and Ukrainian in the coming years. Between 1998 and 2002, numbers of Arabic programs increased from 14 to 34 in two-year colleges, from 10 to 24 in liberal arts colleges, from 12 to 37 in master's granting institutions, and from 65 to 103 in doctoral-granting institutions programs. But the National Middle East Language Resource Center (NMELRC) estimates that while 48% of all students of Arabic in 1990 studied in institutions that housed Title VI National Resource Centers focused on the Middle East, in 2009 only 10% of students of Arabic studied in such institutions, where faculty have ready access to professional development. While there was a ten-fold increase in students of Arabic in U.S.

postsecondary institutions between 1990 and 2009, (3,475 to 35,083, MLA Language Enrollment Survey 2009), the ratio of introductory- to advanced-level undergraduate students in Arabic in 2009 is 5:1, and the number of graduate enrollments in Arabic between 2006 and 2009 fell by almost 16%, something that does not bode well for the field's capacity to accommodate the next generation of students or to meet any increase in demand. Fewer teachers will mean more crowded classes and less personally-directed instruction, which has been identified by the highly successful Flagship programs (among others) as a key to bringing students effectively and relatively quickly to more advanced proficiency levels. Applications for study abroad to pursue professional-level training in Cairo or Damascus through the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (a consortium of 34 universities) increased from 42 in 2000-01 to 192 in 2010-11, but in 2011 NMELRC predicted a 50% reduction in funding for these programs. More students than ever before in the U.S. now have interest in and access to Arabic 101; we need to continue to develop and support programs that can sustain and deepen student interest beyond the elementary levels and into advanced courses in language and culture. NMELRC draws the same conclusions, to varying degrees, about Turkish, Persian, and Hebrew.

Heritage Learners

Languages other than English spoken in American communities represent irreplaceable national resources. They also present serious challenges to administrators of schools and institutions of higher education. Over 57 million Americans reported to the American Community Survey in 2010 that they spoke languages other than English at home, up from 47 million in 2000. These numbers often define communities: Chicago, to give one example, has been called the second largest Polish-speaking city in the world. Also worthy of note: 69% of all Armenian speakers in the U.S. live in Los Angeles County, and 26% of all Russian speakers in

the U.S. live in New York State. Of the 57 million speakers of other languages in the United States in 2010, 43.7 million report speaking English well or very well. Of the 57 million, 11.3 million were children from 5-17 years old in 2010, suggesting what may be the biggest challenge presented by heritage language speakers in the U.S.: helping these children both learn English and to cherish and maintain the developing linguistic skills that tie them to their families, their cultures, and in most instances, to communities beyond U.S. borders. The first of these challenges is the less severe, since only the most isolated of children are at risk of not learning English in the United States, although adult immigrants often have greater difficulty. (Much focus of current scholarship focuses on helping heritage speakers learn to better speak and understand their own languages and English.)¹⁴ The greater challenge, in the face of a sociopolitical ethos that valorizes monolingualism, is to encourage heritage speakers not to abandon their home languages. Heritage language speakers should not be seen exclusively as an element of American diversity. Rather, they should be recognized as experienced language learners who have cognitive and translingual and transcultural skills that are in themselves an important resource, since bilinguals are often adept at learning third languages.

International migration and immigration patterns bolster growth in U.S. heritage languages. At the same time, however, indigenous North American languages struggle to survive, and in many instances are considered endangered. Navajo speakers dropped from 178,020 in 2000 to 169,998 in 2010, and that loss of speakers did not occur among the aging Navajo population, but instead among the 5-17 years olds, whose number of Navajo speakers

¹⁴ See the website of the National Heritage Language Resource Center for recent papers on this topic: <http://web.international.ucla.edu/nhlrc/>.

decreased from 42,555 to 30,411 in a single decade (see figure 10)¹⁵. In other words, in ten years the Navajo language community lost about 25 % of its capacity to produce a new generation of speakers. Navajo is the most spoken Native American heritage language; scores of others face far greater risk.

Fig. 10

		Age 5-17	Age 18-64	Age 65+	Total
Navajo	2010	30,411	120,615	18,962	169,988
Speak English "well" or "very well"		28,794	115,396	10,502	154,692
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"		1,617	5,219	8,460	15,296
	2000	42,555	122,180	13,285	178,020
Speak English "well" or "very well"		39,640	112,820	5,540	158,000
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"		2,915	9,360	7,745	20,020

Language shift from mother tongue to English in immigrant communities is amply documented; with the rarest exceptions, immigrant groups do not maintain minority languages beyond two or at most three generations. (Veltman) Social pressure and immigration trends are cited as powerful motivators. German provides a suggestive example. In 1915, 24.4 % of all U.S. high students identified as German (the degree to which they self-identified or were identified by other means is unclear); in that same year, 324,272 students in grades 9-12 were enrolled in German classes. In 1922, less than 1% of U.S. high students identified as German, and 13,385 were enrolled in German classes in grades 9-12-- a drop in enrollments of 95.9%. (Gilbert) Even if changes in immigration policy detained the influx of new German families, it is hard to imagine that the students of 1915 could have had so few younger siblings. French enrollments in the grades 9-12 rose from 116,957 to 345,650 between 1915 and 1922, while students identified as French rose from 8.8% to 15.5%. We should note that the equivalence is

¹⁵ Data on Navajo speakers are drawn from the MLA Language Map, which is based on US Census data and American Community Survey (ACS), Aggregate Data.

not uncomplicated: by 1934 French identified students had dropped to 10.9%, even as French enrollments rose to 612,648.

Fortunately, there is also a long-standing counter phenomenon in the U.S. of teaching children family languages. By one count, 6,553 ethnic mother-tongue schools were teaching 50 languages in the U.S. in the 1980's. (Fishman) The tradition of these schools has been taken up by recent immigrants, Iranians and Hmong among them. Chinese heritage schools offer a particularly strong example. Community-based Chinese language schools are not a new phenomenon, beginning first in the 19th century when Chinese business men in the U.S. were first allowed to bring their families from China. These schools taught Cantonese. After the immigration act of 1968, a second wave of Chinese immigrants came to the U.S., largely from Hong Kong, eventually establishing schools that taught Mandarin –at their height, by one estimate, to about 100,000 students in 1995. A third wave of Chinese immigration established yet another school system apart from these two: in 2008 this third system boasted 100,000 students taught by 7,000 teachers in 410 Chinese heritage schools. (Wang) The National Heritage Language Resource Center at UCLA has established a database of community-based K-12 programs that lists classes from Anishinaabemdaa to Urdu. This database does not include postsecondary enrollments.

In the past decade, at the K-12 level, two-way immersion programs have been gaining popularity: these programs teach all subjects in the curriculum in two languages, integrating language-minority and language-majority students, so that English dominant and partner-language dominant students receive instruction in the partner language at least 50% of the instructional day at all grade levels. The Center for Applied Linguistics maintains a database

currently including information on over four hundred two-way immersion programs in the United States (<http://www.cal.org/twi/directory/>).

American institutions of higher education have also begun to help strengthen English instruction for bilinguals and to maintain and strengthen heritage speakers' knowledge of their home languages. The field of heritage language studies has taken root in U.S. higher education in workshops, programs, institutes, and publications dedicated to teaching and scholarship in heritage languages. An important example is the National Heritage Language Resource Center at UCLA.¹⁶ Since 2007, the Center has sponsored an annual research institute; it also gathers teaching materials and offers teacher training workshops for heritage language teachers.

Student interest is, of course, a key factor, and more research into student motivation is needed. One study of 880 college and university students of Spanish, French, Russian, Japanese, Arabic, Chinese, and Italian found that 11% were studying to “better understand [their] ethnic identity.”(Rifkin) Dual-track programs in higher education, where true beginners and heritage learners study lower-level language in Chinese, Russian, and Spanish in separate classes have also been introduced in recent decades with varying success (one study found that students of Spanish at a university in Texas found these classes stigmatizing). (Pino and Pino) More research should be focused on tracking the number of heritage language learners. Research in pedagogy for bilinguals has been an active subfield in applied linguistics and in schools of education for decades, and recent scholarship in areas such as bilingualism and diglossia, language maintenance, and the demographics, sociology, and psychology of heritage communities and speakers continues to strengthen the possibility that the U.S. may one day more broadly recognize the linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural, transcultural, and international advantages

¹⁶ Directed by Olga Kagan.

offered by bilinguals. The larger goal-- to join other societies in being actively multilingual-- hinges on such efforts.

Internationalizing the Educational Experience of Undergraduates

Institutions of higher education have undertaken work to internationalize the educational experience of undergraduate students, and foreign language educators are often at the forefront of these campus initiatives. The ten high-impact educational practices recommended by the American Association of Colleges and Universities form a helpful list of categories through which to think about the challenges of internationalizing the undergraduate experience in a comprehensive way. (Kuh) These practices include:

1. First-year seminars
2. Common intellectual experiences
3. Learning communities
4. Writing-intensive courses
5. Collaborative assignments
6. Undergraduate research
7. Diversity/global learning
8. Service learning
9. Internships
10. Capstone courses

The ten practices can be divided into three distinct areas that focus on curriculum (1,2,3,10), pedagogy (4,5,6), and examples of extramural experiential learning (7,8,9). In each of these areas we need to encourage the incorporation of an international perspective where possible.

On curricular internationalization: first-year seminars have become a common feature of current educational practice designed to provide students with an academic experience that fosters the development of necessary skills for successful college work in subsequent courses, including critical thinking, analytical reading, writing, and research. In addition, students may encounter their first exposure to information literacy in such seminars. Faculty members often select course topics connected with their research; in some cases, general topics form a thematic

umbrella under which to contain a series of courses linked to the topic. It is fairly straightforward to internationalize this feature of the curriculum and thus to introduce students to the key concepts and the practice of thinking like a global citizen early on in their academic career.

There is another kind of first-year seminar worth mentioning in this context: the course designed especially for international students to assist them in making the transition from their respective home cultures to the culture of the host campus. International students—a growing segment of the university population across North America at both the undergraduate and graduate levels—have unique needs as they adjust not only to a given college in general but specifically to college life in the American academy. Those needs must be met in order for an institution to be as successful as possible in retaining international students on its campus. First-year seminars for international students need to be developed as a feature of the first-year curriculum, since more international students will arrive on campuses across North America in the future. (Andrade)

The high-impact practices of common intellectual experiences and learning communities built around clusters of coordinated courses for undergraduates correlate to higher student retention, and they are also easily adapted to internationalization. In fact, a logical way to create a learning community for first-year students is to pair a course in a foreign language with another course on some aspect of the culture associated with that language, whether historical, literary, political, and so forth. The community can extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom to include the living arrangements of students in residences with international themes. The capstone course or experience at the end of the students' intellectual trajectory through the curriculum can be adapted to the specifics of any number of majors that have an international focus, including foreign languages.

Foreign language teachers in higher education are leading the way in developing courses that utilize high-impact practices that affect pedagogy, such as writing intensive courses, collaborative learning, and undergraduate research. Elola and Oskoz document how a pedagogical approach centered on second language collaborative writing, for example, “demands reflective thinking, helps learners to focus on grammatical accuracy, lexis and discourse, and it encourages a pooling of knowledge about the language” (51). The use of social technologies has made collaborative projects in L2 language learning, both written and spoken, more common in recent years.

Extramural experiential learning responds directly to the need for high-impact practices that emphasize diversity and global learning. Study in other countries, international internships, and field trips abroad that are integrated into the syllabus of a specific course, can complement classroom learning, but institutions of higher education need to develop structures that enable more students to participate in such ventures. According to the National Association of International Educators, 284,000 collegiate students studied abroad for academic credit in 2011-12. At first glance, this seems like a significant number, but the data show that less than 10% of U.S. undergraduates study abroad before graduation. At the high school level, that figure drops to 0.001%, or one student in 10,800. It is to be hoped that the new initiative sponsored by the Institute for International Education (IIE), Generation Study Abroad, will help to correct these deficiencies. While Kinginger and many others have examined the general impact of study abroad on foreign language learning, recent work by Allen and Dupuy addresses the complexities of that process, focusing specifically on how foreign language educators can intervene in the study abroad experience—before, during, and after it—in order to enable the learner to maximize linguistic and motivational trajectories. Woolf reminds us that we need to

teach our students to take an active role in their own education abroad. Rather than coming home and saying “study abroad changed my life,” our students should be saying, “I changed my life by studying X in Y.”

An interesting development in the relation of foreign language learning to other disciplines in the undergraduate curriculum has been the creation of programs such as the International Engineering Program (IEP) at the University of Rhode Island (URI). While new programs are beginning to spring up, IEP at URI has for more than 25 years offered a five-year undergraduate curriculum that leads to joint degrees: a B.A. in a language and culture and a B.S. in one of the engineering disciplines. The IEP today enrolls over 350 students in languages such as Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. German at URI is now the second largest undergraduate German program in the country. The increase in the number of German majors from a handful before the inception of IEP to over 175 has exerted a beneficial effect on all languages. There has been an increase not only in applicants to all engineering fields at URI but also in the quality of the students. By marketing the IEP as a challenging program for gifted students who want more than what an engineering major alone can provide, URI became a magnet for students in search of the outcomes this program promised. IEP graduates can claim to be highly qualified engineers who have strong writing, speaking, analytic, and problem-solving skills, command of a second language, and cross-cultural communication skills. The program continues to boast an almost 100% employment rate. All language majors (in Chinese, Classics, French, German, Italian, and Spanish) at URI are now strongly advised to develop an expertise that accompanies their language skills and cultural understanding—engineering, computer science, business, teacher education, journalism, or international policy studies. The directors of IEP see their program fulfilling today’s need for “philosophically astute engineers, and . . .

philosophers who understand, appreciate, and can contribute to the world of science and technology.”(Grandin and Berka, forthcoming) In their words, “language without application is inadequate, just as technology without the liberal arts is inadequate.” IEP has provided a model for international engineering or science programs at Valparaiso University, University of Connecticut, University of Cincinnati, Iowa State University, Purdue University, and Northern Arizona University.

Service learning -- or community engagement, as it is beginning to be called-- can also assume an international dimension and accordingly enrich the experience of undergraduates. A thematic issue of *Hispania*, “The Scholarship of Community Engagement,” edited by Josef Hellebrandt and Ethel Jorge in 2013, provides documentation of this trend. Colleagues in the European Union enjoy a model that manages options for study abroad, work experience, and service learning through the Erasmus Program, or the *European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*. Erasmus is one part of the broader Socrates Program, implemented to promote a common body of knowledge by emphasizing education with a strong emphasis on languages. Erasmus has allowed over two million university students and faculty members to spend between three months and a full year of study at a cooperating university in another country for the same tuition as at their home institution. The new Erasmus+ program will have a 14.7 billion Euro budget for 2014-2020; it aims to provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain work experience, and volunteer outside their countries of origin.

We turn now to assessment in foreign language education and in the internationalized experience on campus. In recent years many colleges and universities have fully embraced the culture of assessment. Regional accreditation agencies have led the way in setting high standards

for program and student assessment at academic institutions across the U.S. and have required adherence to those standards in order to satisfy the reviewers of institutional academic quality. Foreign language professionals have been at the forefront of developing standards for assessment of individual learners, with our colleagues at ACTFL leading the way.¹⁷ We need to continue to search out and promote best practices in implementing on-going performance-based assessment in the foreign-language classroom. The concept behind integrated performance assessment (IPA) of language learning should be applied at all levels of instruction, from introductory to advanced levels; IPA measures progress in the four skills of second-language acquisition based on the three modes of communication: interpretive reading, listening, and viewing, interpersonal listening and speaking and presentation writing and speaking.

The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is the most familiar instrument used to measure foreign language learners' competence in speaking; there are also standardized tests for the skills of reading (reading proficiency test), listening (listening proficiency test), and writing (writing proficiency test). Members of the higher educational community have come to recognize the value of the OPI as one form of oral assessment, yet to implement OPIs (or any of the other proficiency tests) to the extent that its standards become a meaningful tool in assessing students (and, by extension, programs), there is a need for certified oral proficiency interviewers on colleges and universities. These interviewers do not necessarily have to be professors on the faculty; they can come from among the numerous professionals who populate the typical academic campus provided that they have the skills and training. To satisfy the specific need for interviewers requires a degree of commitment and financial support from administrators at institutions of higher learning and most likely from outside funding sources. Administrations,

¹⁷ See the ACTFL *The Language Educator* 9/2 (February 2014) for an issue dedicated to assessment in the profession.

therefore, need to support the specialized training of campus members to become OPI interviewers. Few foreign language departments have adequate funding built into their budgets; area studies programs can often build into their budgets support for the expense of standardized testing. To become a certified OPI interviewer, an individual must be trained at a specialized workshop, pass a test to demonstrate native competency, complete an application form, and submit the fee of \$350; the certification remains valid for four years. In addition, administrations need to compensate faculty members fairly for assuming the responsibility of administering OPI interviews. Institutions must also determine if the cost of testing should be paid by students or covered (or subsidized by the institution). The Modified OPI and the Simulated OPI offer less expensive alternatives that can be explored as options for appropriate contexts. These various forms of oral assessment based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and proficiency tests of other skills do not merely measure individual learners' progress. Equally important, they are opportunities to assess learning outcomes at various strategic points in a sequence of instruction so an institution can understand overall program effectiveness. In other words, they can function as instruments to evaluate programs. Some institutions have also begun to investigate the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the related European Language Portfolio (ELP) and its Language Passport. The ELP Language Passport uses self-assessment based on checklists of "I can" descriptors, and is designed to promote life-long learning and to develop intercultural competence. The National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) has developed a parallel Global Language Portfolio (GLP) and related Language Passport, which describes skill levels using both the ACTFL scale and the European CEFR scale, which allows for coherence and transparency between U.S. and European environments. Both the ELP and the GLP incorporate language biographies and dossiers of

speaking and writing samples and professional certifications. We need to encourage teachers to familiarize themselves with best practices in assessment and to embrace them, because when teachers are engaged they can become key leaders in innovative curricular design and pedagogy.

Responding to Needs and Shortages through Delivery of Foreign Language Courses

The internet and new media have radically transformed the profession of language teaching and the practice of language learning. A continuing challenge for leaders in higher education is to explore how teaching and learning can take the most educationally productive advantage of new technologies and social media. The mobile device has become a virtual language lab that users can carry in their pockets. Colleges and universities increasingly rely on new instructional technologies that enable innovative models of instructional delivery. Most foreign language courses are still taught primarily face-to-face, but an increasing number take place entirely online, and we note a trend of courses being delivered in a hybrid format. Computer-assisted language learning programs have made huge inroads into the pedagogical toolkit of foreign language teachers. For-profit models that depend entirely on computer-assisted language learning have not significantly altered the landscape on campus.

A recent study by Magnan, Murphy, and Sahakyan documents the impact of new media and technologies on foreign language study and learning. Magnan, Murphy, and Sahakyan show that the goals and expectations of collegiate language learners in the lower division two-year sequence (first four semesters of language courses) align more or less with the five interlocking concepts—the 5 Cs—that make up the Standards for Foreign Language Learning set forth in 1996 and reaffirmed in 1999, 2006, and 2013. But of the 5 Cs—communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, communities—today’s students focus much more on two in particular: communication and communities. Magnan, Murphy, and Sahakyan posit that new

technologies and use of social media in language learning explain the focus. Whereas previous studies document how foreign language educators prioritize communication and cultures over the other standards (ACTFL 2011a, 2011b), Magnan, Murphy, and Sahakyan argue that foreign language learners most value communication and communities. The target language becomes an instrument of social interaction used to build relationships with individuals in the target culture. No study to date examines the extent to which this model also applies to language majors and minors in upper division courses. Magnan, Murphy, and Sahakyan emphasize that the 5 Cs match the goals and expectations of students of less commonly taught languages (e.g., Russian, Chinese, Arabic) as well as, if not better than, students of commonly taught languages.

We have observed excellent consortium models for providing students access to learning less-commonly taught languages. Institutions that enter into consortium arrangements, using technology, self-study, tutors, and so on, find that they can meet students' needs to learn languages that would otherwise remain out of reach. Further, consortium models create communities of learners and often involve native speakers who would otherwise not be engaged in the language acquisition enterprise.

IV. Conclusion

A recent (undated) study by the National Middle East Language Resource Center of 1,766 students of Middle East languages in 77 institutions showed that 73% of these students wanted to acquire sufficient proficiency so they could use the language in professional activities. The MLA Executive Council affirmed in 2012 that it “regards the learning of languages other than English as vital to an understanding of the world; such learning serves as a portal to the literatures, cultures, historical perspectives, and human experiences that constitute the human record.... [A]nyone interested in the long-term vitality and security of the United States should

recognize that it will be detrimental for Americans to remain overwhelmingly monolingual and ill-informed about other parts of this increasingly interdependent world.” United States federal agencies in 2013 identified 78 languages in which there is a national need for expertise. Besides the obvious urgency for language expertise in the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Justice, the needs that other agencies experience are notable. The Department of Agriculture identified linguistic needs in areas ranging from all dialects of Arabic to the languages of Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands; the department also states that knowledge of Spanish and broad understanding of the cultures of the Western hemisphere is critical to the success of U.S. agriculture. The Department of Commerce lists urgent needs in Mandarin, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese, and adds that expertise in French, Indonesian, Turkish, and German is also desirable. The Department of Energy identifies needs in Russian, Turkish, French, Arabic, Spanish, German, Italian, Polish, Bulgarian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Hindi, Urdu, Indonesian, Malay, Thai, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Portuguese. Health and Human Services cites needs in Arabic, Bahasa, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Even the Department of Veterans Affairs, focused within U.S. borders, identifies needs in Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Chinese, German, Native American Languages, and Arabic. In the face of these stated shortages, cut backs in funding for the study of languages run counter to the nation’s best interest.

Our decades of experience in education lead us to conclude three things: one, the interest that students (and their parents) in the United States have shown for languages in schools exceeds our capacity to deliver; two, progress on the language shortage depends in part on intelligent use of technology, tapping our nation’s heritage linguistic resources, and preparing

teachers with high levels of language competence; three, federal funding must be adequate to the tasks we have outlined here. The last conclusion not only strikes us as obvious, but also recurring. How many times must we collectively document the needs and rationales for a more robust language infrastructure in the nation's educational system before sustainable progress happens? We remain optimistic for our students' sake.¹⁸

¹⁸ We would like to thank David Goldberg, Natalia Lusin, and Doug Steward at the Modern Language Association for their help in collecting, analyzing, and presenting much of the data in the higher education section of this paper.

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