

0014-1
K-12 FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER STUDY

completed for

The Joint Boards of Education

— Board of Education and Board of Higher Education —

INTRODUCTION

In fall 1992, the Joint Boards of Education requested a profile of Oregon's foreign language teachers, kindergarten through college, to provide information needed to prepare for the reforms called for in the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century (HB 3565), and in anticipation of planned actions by the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education¹. The Joint Boards were particularly interested in learning about the current assignments of language teachers in Oregon's K-12 schools and their readiness for implementation of proficiency-based second language programs.

Similar questions were asked about foreign language faculty at community colleges and four-year colleges and universities, particularly their readiness to prepare teachers for the school reforms expected to impact foreign language programs at all educational levels in the future. Two companion studies were, therefore, initiated in winter 1993, one focusing on K-12 foreign language teachers and one on postsecondary level faculty. This is the report of the K-12 study.

STUDY DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

During winter 1993 a cover letter and 33-item questionnaire were developed by the Oregon State System of Higher Education staff and reviewed by a core group of the Oregon Department of Education staff and K-12 and higher education foreign language teachers. Packets of surveys were mailed on March 31, 1993 to all elementary and secondary schools in the state -- 778 elementary, 195 middle/junior, 316 high schools, and 29 miscellaneous schools for a total of 1,318. Mailings were sent to school principals with a request that they distribute surveys to every teacher (both full- and part-time) in their building teaching a foreign language class, including before- and after-school classes. Mailing lists were provided by the Oregon Department of Education.

¹In January 1993, the Board of Education approved a second language component as part of the Certificate of Initial Mastery, with second language learning opportunities to be available within the Certificate of Advanced Mastery. In February 1993, the Board of Higher Education approved a Second Language College Admissions Requirement, to be effective in 1997-98 for all students seeking admission to a State System institution. In December 1992, the Oregon Progress Board issued the following relevant benchmark: "percentage of high school graduates proficient in at least one language other than English (overall and learned in school)."

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Principals of schools that do not provide foreign languages or that provide foreign language via distance education were also asked to provide that information via a response postcard enclosed with the surveys. This made it possible to determine what number of districts do not have teachers on-site teaching foreign language classes. A postcard was mailed to principals on April 22, reminding them to encourage teachers to return their surveys.

By May 1, 1993, 841 responses from principals and 660 responses from teachers were received by the Office of Academic Affairs, Oregon State System of Higher Education. Since the population of foreign language teachers in the state is not known definitively (there are a number teaching a foreign language class who are not certified in a foreign language), only an estimated response rate for the teachers can be computed.

A 1987 study completed by the Oregon Department of Education (*Foreign Languages In Oregon Schools*) found there were 1,081 teachers of foreign language -- 908 in the public K-12 system and 173 in the nonpublic system. Using this number as the best estimate of the population of teachers (staffing in public schools in 1992-93 was not expected to be too different from 1987 due to budget restrictions facing districts throughout this period of time), the response rate for this study is estimated at 65-70 percent.

Data entry was completed by Precision Data Services, Eugene. Computer analysis was completed by Dr. Lee Young, University of Oregon research assistant on special assignment to the State System. Data were reviewed with the Oregon Department of Education and a core group of K-12 and higher education foreign language teachers in July and August.

This report is a summary of the findings from this study. Full data summaries are being provided to the Oregon Department of Education and interested groups. Inquiries about the study should be referred to Dr. Holly Zanville, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Oregon State System of Higher Education, who served as project director for the Joint Boards' study.

GENERAL CONTEXT FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The 1987 study found that foreign language instruction was provided in 27 percent of all public and private K-12 schools (in 432 schools out of the then school population of 1,630). The majority of public junior and senior high schools provided foreign language instruction (75 percent and 92 percent, respectively), compared to elementary schools at 13 percent.

The languages offered by most K-12 schools were Spanish (369 schools), French (236), German (146), and Japanese (38). A small number of schools offered Latin (12), Russian (9), Chinese (6), Italian (1), Swahili (1), and a "sampler" of languages (8).

Although the 1993 study does not provide directly comparable data to the 1987 study (the 1987 study was a study of the entire population, the 1993 study did not receive responses from all schools and topics for data collection were very different), of the 566 elementary school principals who responded to the 1993 survey, 479 indicate they currently do not provide foreign language instruction in their school building via on-site teachers; 65 of the middle/junior high school principals indicate their school does not provide foreign language with on-site teachers; and only 16 of the high school principals indicate that their school does not provide foreign language with on-site teachers. The following number of principals report their schools bring in foreign language instruction via satellite from ED-NET, Texas TIE-IN, Star Schools, etc., but they do not have their own foreign language teachers on site: elementary schools, 19; middle/junior high schools, 3; and high schools, 22.

The present school context for foreign language instruction is quite varied, both by level (elementary, middle/junior, and high school) and by language (languages that are offered).

Elementary Programs. Although most elementary schools in Oregon are not teaching foreign language, many are providing some introduction to language and culture in some grade levels (FLEX programs). Only a few are providing immersion programs. Many have PTA-sponsored programs before and after school, some for a fee to parents and others supported by the parent club. Parent volunteers appear to be used in many settings, in before- and after-school programs. Many schools, furthermore, indicate they do not provide foreign language programs but they have English as a Second Language programs -- most of these are for Spanish-speaking students. The ESL teacher in some sites does provide foreign language instruction as well.

Definitions

FLES is the umbrella term for all kinds of foreign language programs in the elementary and middle schools (K-8).*

SEQUENTIAL FLES is instruction in one foreign language for two or more years, with sequential development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as cultural content. Experts recommend that classes be scheduled five days a week, 30 minutes a day if proficiency is to be expected after four or more years in the program.

FLEX (Exploratory/Exposure) is an introduction to one or more foreign languages. A FLEX program can be designed in a variety of formats, but the two basic models that have emerged are the "sampler" and the "mini-course."

In the "sampler" model, students explore two or more languages, with the emphasis on the nature of language and how it relates to culture. Few language skills are acquired although a good sampler program builds readiness for language skills through some memorization and listening. In this model, classes may be scheduled once or twice a week over the course of the school year.

In the "mini-course" model, students are introduced to one language in a six to nine-week program that meets five days a week, 30 minutes a day. Because of the intensity of this format, some language skills can be acquired.

IMMERSION is the use of the foreign language throughout all or part of the school day for teaching various content areas of the elementary school curriculum. Fluency in the language is expected after four or more years in the program.

Taken from Collaborare, Vol. VIII, No. 3, June 1993

Examples from Elementary School Principals

"We offer a culture and language awareness workshop in Japanese for 20 sessions for 40 minutes each in grade 5 by two volunteers."

"We offer Spanish in an after-school class for a fee to the parents."

"We are currently offering a 30-series tape program in Spanish."

"Our PTA has sponsored after-school language study until 92-93. The required liability insurance cost became prohibitive to continue."

"We have a new ESL program. Teacher offered Spanish introduction to all classes in the first 9 weeks of 1992."

"Last year we offered Spanish through TIE-IN on tape delay. A horrible experience."

"We do use French, Spanish, and German in multicultural units in some of our classrooms, but it is not school wide."

"Do not provide foreign language now, plan to next year."

"Some teachers randomly utilize foreign exchange students and parents to teach a little French and Spanish to students occasionally in our school."

"We tried to offer through rec program. No one signed up."

"We are definitely interested in adding foreign language."

"Elementary school administrators in our area are beginning to investigate language instruction. We are very interested but have not engaged in any formal in-school program."

"We have block for Spanish in 4-5th grade."

"We offer Spanish one-half hour per week and Japanese for 20 minutes per week (times vary at grade level)."

"We have foreign language classes after school through our local city rec program."

"We are a spanish bilingual school with one class teaching Spanish at each grade level K-6, two at first grade - total eight."

"PTA sponsors before-school program in four languages. Teachers paid by tuition charged for enrollment."

"We provide second language instruction in American Sign Language in our school."

"Our bilingual instructor goes to all of our elementary schools."

"We have a bilingual program, one bilingual teacher at each grade level K-6 except 5th."

"We have before- or after-school classes through gifted education but it is open to all."

"Our PTA pays for two language teachers in German and Spanish, 2-6th, twice a week after school."

"We provide before- and after-school enrichment program in foreign language."

"A student from a local university is teaching a class in Japanese after school."

"We provide optional Spanish after school."

"After school mini-Spanish class for our staff."

"Before-school instruction funded by parent group."

"Have only one after-school class taught by volunteer teacher."

"We started a new foreign language program in April. Parents were notified of the opportunity to have classes for their children in French, Japanese or Spanish. The overwhelming interest was in Spanish although some interest came back in other languages. We have started with Spanish. We have approximately 15 students receiving Spanish instruction. They are divided by grades (3 and 4) into two groups. Classes are held once a week for an hour."

"Our parent club sponsors French and Japanese classes after school one day a week for a fee."

"We have a Spanish teacher one day a week for two hours."

"High school teacher rotates through each class, grades 3-5."

"We are teaching some Spanish K and 5-6 and introduction to French, German and Spanish to 7-8. The program is not funded but donated by concerned parent/teacher."

"We have a fee-based Spanish class after school. In the past 4 years we've had student from a community college teach after school (Spanish, German, French) for college credit. We had a parent volunteer teaching Japanese for 1 1/2 years. We've grabbed resources wherever we can."

"We were forced by Measure 5 funding to cut all elementary foreign language."

"Community college provides Spanish instruction for 16 3-4 graders."

"Parents pay the Spanish teacher to teach before school. This is sponsored by the PTA."

"Spanish program sponsored by our parent club."

Middle/Junior High School. At the middle/junior high school level, there is quite a bit of variation in what is offered in foreign languages. Many schools offer some language on site, typically Spanish, but some schools offer as many as three to four languages. Many schools are using the services of the high school language teacher to offer some foreign language classes. Many middle/junior high schools continue to offer before- and after-school programs, typically by charging a fee.

High School. The majority of high schools are providing some foreign language, ranging from those that offer three to four languages with on-site teachers to those that offer only one language (usually Spanish). Some are bringing in additional languages via satellite programs and some are offering languages via a contract basis with a nearby community college.

**Examples from
Middle/Junior High School Principals**

- "We teach only an 18-week foreign language sampler."
- "We teach Japanese and Spanish culture class that introduces the languages and culture. We also have a Japanese Exchange program."
- "We currently offer Spanish to students in grades 6-8."
- "Have an existing grade 7-8 program."
- "We offer French 1 & 2 and Spanish 1 & 2."
- "We have no formal language instruction at this time; a 6th grade teacher has had a parent volunteer provide some informal vocabulary introduction in Spanish."
- "French is taught as elective to 7th grade students."
- "Offer Spanish as an elective to 8th grades."
- "We teach Spanish and Russian."
- "One foreign language survey class is offered to 8th graders."
- "Our 9th graders receive foreign language instruction at the high school."
- "We currently teach Spanish in our building, but we also bring in foreign language instruction via satellite."
- "We offer one class in Spanish."
- "We offer one class of French."
- "Our foreign language program is a 9-week sampler taught by one teacher for one period. We do not consider that as a true foreign language program."
- "We plan to offer Spanish 1 next year."
- "We only offer ESL from the county."
- "Our high school teachers teach Spanish here."
- "We offer a language culture elective class to 7-8th graders."
- "We have after-school instruction by volunteers (French/Spanish) in middle."
- "The foreign language courses we offer are self-study with cassette."

**Examples from
High School Principals**

- "We share a foreign language teacher with a neighboring district."
- "We bring in foreign language via Star Schools from Washington."
- "We use Texas TIE-IN."
- "Texas TIE-IN and our own teacher on site."
- "We offer foreign language via satellite and regular instruction."
- "We use Star Schools for Japanese, on-staff for Spanish 1-2, and French 1-2."
- "We offer Spanish only now, hope to offer French next year. Also, in-building teacher for Spanish, satellite for Latin, German, Japanese, and French."
- "We have classes and use satellite."
- "Our language arts teacher teaches German on misassignment."
- "We offer French, German, and Spanish. Japanese is offered by satellite."
- "We offer Spanish 1-2 through our own teacher. We plan to offer foreign language through STAR/STEP starting next year in addition."
- "We offer two sections of Spanish 1 through a nonendorsed instructor. He is currently seeking endorsement so we can expand the program."
- "We just dropped TIE-IN and will have a teacher for French 1 next year -- budget restraints."
- "We have both ED-NET and instructor-taught courses. We offer Spanish. German and French 1-2 will be on ED-NET next year and we may in the future take advantage of their offerings in addition to ours."
- "We offer four years of French, German, and Spanish."
- "We teach Spanish and Russian."
- "We have one part-time foreign language teacher 9-12."
- "We offer Spanish, French, German, and Japanese."
- "Offer German by satellite, have Spanish taught in-house."

TEACHER PROFILE: GENDER, AGE, AND ETHNICITY

Among the 660 respondents to the survey, the majority are female (75 percent), over 36 years old (78 percent), and white (79 percent). There are significantly more ethnically diverse foreign language teachers (16 percent) compared to recently licensed educators in Oregon during 1989-91 (4 percent minority) or teachers currently employed in public K-12 schools (3 percent minority).

Age		
	No.	Percent
25 and Under	18	3%
26-35	128	20%
36-45	272	41%
46-55	197	30%
56+	42	6%

Gender		
	No.	Percent
Female	492	75%
Male	162	25%

Ethnicity		
	No.	Percent
White	522	79%
American Indian	3	1%
African-American	4	1%
Hispanic	59	9%
Japanese	20	3%
Other Asian	14	2%
Decline to respond	38	6%

Nearly a fifth of teachers (18 percent) indicate that English was not their native language. Spanish was the most commonly cited native language (40 percent of the non-native speakers), with Japanese, French, and German accounting for nearly one-half.

Native Languages Other than English		
	No.	Percent
Spanish	49	40%
Japanese	22	18%
French	20	16%
German	18	15%
Italian	2	2%
Greek	1	1%
Other	12	10%

RETIREMENT/TURNOVER PROJECTIONS

Nearly a fifth (17 percent) of the teachers in the survey expect to retire or leave teaching within the next five years, with 41 or six percent expecting to do so within the next two years.

More than three-fourths of the teachers (83 percent) expect to remain in teaching for the next several years, pointing to the need for staff development for the majority of the foreign language teachers.

Expect to Retire or Leave Teaching		
	No.	Percent
1-2 Years	41	6%
3-5 Years	68	11%
6-10 Years	119	19%
11+ Years	408	64%

LOCATION

Forty-five percent of the foreign language teachers responding to the survey teach in the Portland metropolitan area. Another 40 percent teach in the areas from Ashland/Medford, Eugene/Springfield, and the mid-Willamette Valley.

Geographical Areas Teaching In		
	No.	Percent
Portland Metro Area/Includes Astoria	287	45%
Salem/Albany/Corvallis/Newport	102	16%
Ashland/Medford/Coos Bay	80	13%
Eugene/Springfield/Florence	70	11%
Pendleton/La Grande/Northeast	42	7%
Bend/Redmond/Central Oregon	36	6%
Klamath Falls	14	2%
Ontario/Southeastern	11	2%

PREPARATION AND LICENSURE

Ninety-one percent of the teachers responding to the survey have received a baccalaureate degree. Of these, about one half (51 percent) indicate their major in college was a foreign language. Fifty percent of the teachers indicate they have received a master's degree, with 20 percent indicating their major was a foreign language. Four teachers (1 percent) have received a Ph.D., with two of them majoring in a foreign language.

Most of the language teachers are endorsed (licensed) in Spanish, French, and German; most of them have received their endorsements by completing college preparation programs. By contrast, most of the teachers endorsed in Japanese have received Certificates of Accomplishment since until very recently there have been few college licensure programs in Japanese. Most of the NTE Add-on Endorsements (adding an endorsement by passing the National Teacher Examination in a specialty field, permitted by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission) have occurred in Spanish and French.

Many teachers are also endorsed in more than one language; 110 reported they are endorsed in two, and nine reported they are endorsed in three or more.

Many teachers (174) who responded to the survey are not endorsed in a foreign language. These may be teachers in other areas who are teaching some foreign language classes, unlicensed teachers (community volunteers) who are involved in before- or after-school programs (in some cases sponsored by PTAs), or teachers in private schools who do not fall under the state's licensure requirements.

Language Endorsements Held By Teachers

Language	No.	Endorsements Received Through:		
		College Program	Certif. of Accompl.	NTE Add-on Endorse.
Spanish	287	243	10	25
French	175	147	2	13
German	86	73	-	7
Japanese	29	8	14	6
Chinese	1	1	-	-
Russian	14	9	1	3
Italian	1	-	-	-
Latin	7	6	1	-
Other	17	10	1	2

The majority of teachers have been teaching for several years. Three-fourths (75 percent) report they have more than five years experience teaching "any subject" in Oregon, another state, or country; 64 percent have been teaching foreign language courses for more than five years. Nearly one-fifth (18 percent) of the teachers are in their first year of teaching foreign language courses.

Years Teaching Foreign Language Courses vs. Any Subject

	Foreign Language		Any Subject	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1-2 years	108	18%	53	9%
3-5 years	111	18%	92	16%
6-10 years	123	20%	118	21%
11+ years	268	44%	308	54%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS/TEACHING ASSIGNMENT

About three-fourths of the foreign language teachers (78 percent) are fulltime teachers. They are generally evenly divided among rural, suburban, and urban districts although more are teaching in rural than urban districts.

The majority of the teachers (86 percent) are presently teaching foreign language courses in only one school, although 11 percent are teaching in two schools. A small number of teachers (2 percent) report they are teaching in three or more schools.

Teaching Status

	No.	Percent
Fulltime Teacher	506	78%
Part-time Teacher	143	22%

Type of District Teaching In

	No.	Percent
Rural	254	40%
Suburban	201	32%
Urban	180	28%

Number of Schools Teaching Foreign Language Courses In

No. of Schools	No.	Percent
1	559	86%
2	69	11%
3+	11	2%

Sixty percent of the teachers presently teach no other classes than foreign language. The greatest percentage of language teachers (158 or 24 percent) are teaching five foreign language courses per day, although the assignments in foreign language classes appear to be quite varied, with nearly 100 teachers (97) teaching one class of foreign language, and nearly the same number teaching two classes (94), three classes (91), and six classes (91).

Forty percent of the teachers teach "other" classes in addition to foreign language. Sixteen percent of the teachers (103) teach one to two "other" classes per day, and nearly one-fourth (158 or 24 percent) teach three or more "other" classes per day.

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES

Within the seven language categories for which we received data in the study (Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Latin, and other), all teachers report devoting instructional time to the five components of speaking, listening, writing, reading, and culture, though in varying amounts.

Teachers of Spanish, French, and German, on average, devote about one-fourth of their class time in the majority of their classes to speaking and listening skills, about one-fifth to writing, and somewhat less to reading and culture. Teachers of Japanese report they emphasize the components generally equally. Russian teachers emphasize writing more than the other skills. Latin teachers emphasize reading significantly more than the other skills. "Other" language teachers primarily emphasize speaking and listening skills.

Teachers report many differences in emphasis on these language components among the various levels, with elementary teachers emphasizing listening and culture skills more than other skills; middle school teachers emphasizing speaking more than others; and high school teachers putting less emphasis on culture and reading, more on writing, speaking, and listening. These differences are depicted for all languages and for various languages by levels in the bar charts on pages 8-10.

About half of the teachers (45 percent) report they use native speakers in their foreign language classes at the present time. Of those who are not using native speaker volunteers, about half indicate they are available in their community but many do not know if they are available.

Statistical analysis revealed that teachers of a specific language(s) were no more likely to have used native speakers in their classes but teachers at various levels were: elementary level foreign language teachers were more likely to have used native speakers (65 percent of them have used native speakers) than middle school teachers (41 percent) and high school teachers (43 percent).

F.L. Classes	Number	Other Classes	Number
0	47	0	399
1	97	1	52
2	94	2	51
3	91	3	36
4	70	4	56
5	158	5	38
6	91	6	20
7	6	7	5
8	6	8	3

The majority of the teachers (62 percent) have taught Spanish in the past five years; about one-third (32 percent) have taught French. The majority have taught at the high school level; about one-third have taught at the middle school level and fewer have taught at the elementary level. The exception is in Japanese, where more teachers have taught Japanese at the elementary rather than middle school level, although the majority have taught at the high school level.

The majority of foreign language teachers (57 percent) are presently primarily teaching at the high school level, with 13 percent teaching at the middle school level and 7 percent at the elementary level. Twenty-three percent of the teachers have "multiple" level assignments.

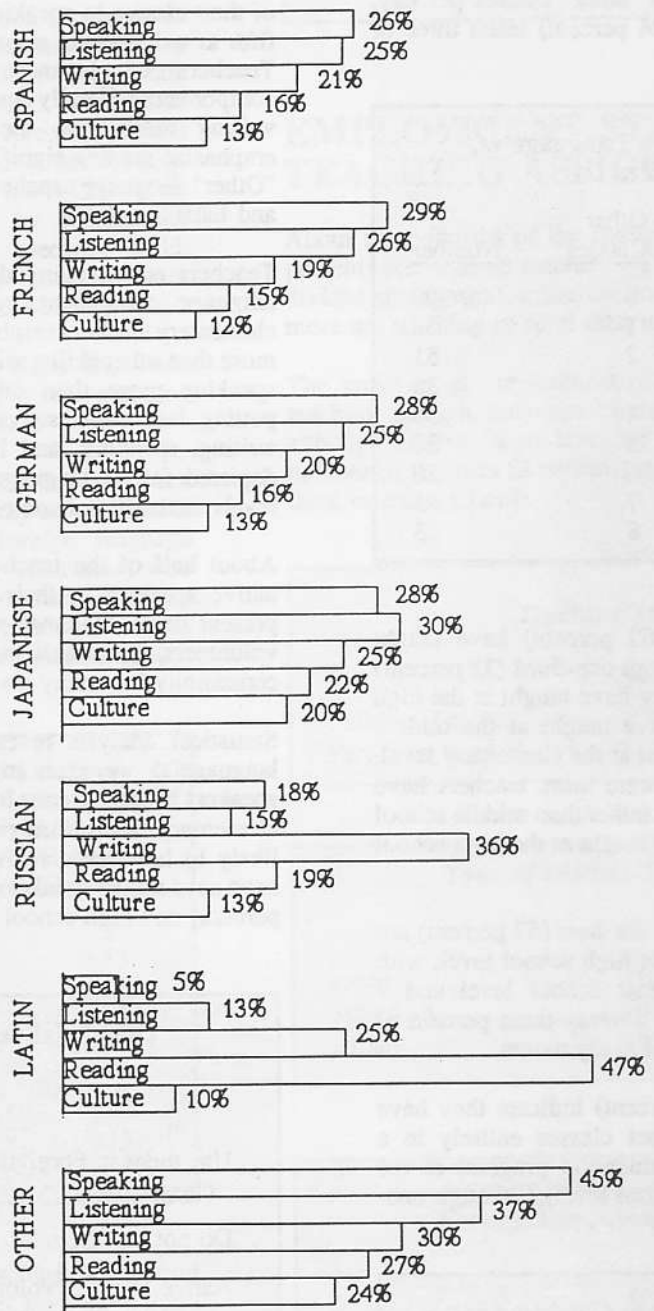
The majority of teachers (66 percent) indicate they have the language expertise to conduct classes entirely in a foreign language (e.g., in an immersion program at the elementary, middle, and high school level), although one-fifth believe they do not.

	No.	Percent
Yes	421	66%
No	128	20%
Don't Know	90	14%

	No.	Percent
Use them in Foreign Language classes	288	45%
Do not use them	347	55%
Native Speaker volunteers are available in community	202	46%
They are not available in community	79	18%
Don't know if they are available	159	36%

LANGUAGE COMPONENTS EMPHASIZED BY LANGUAGES*

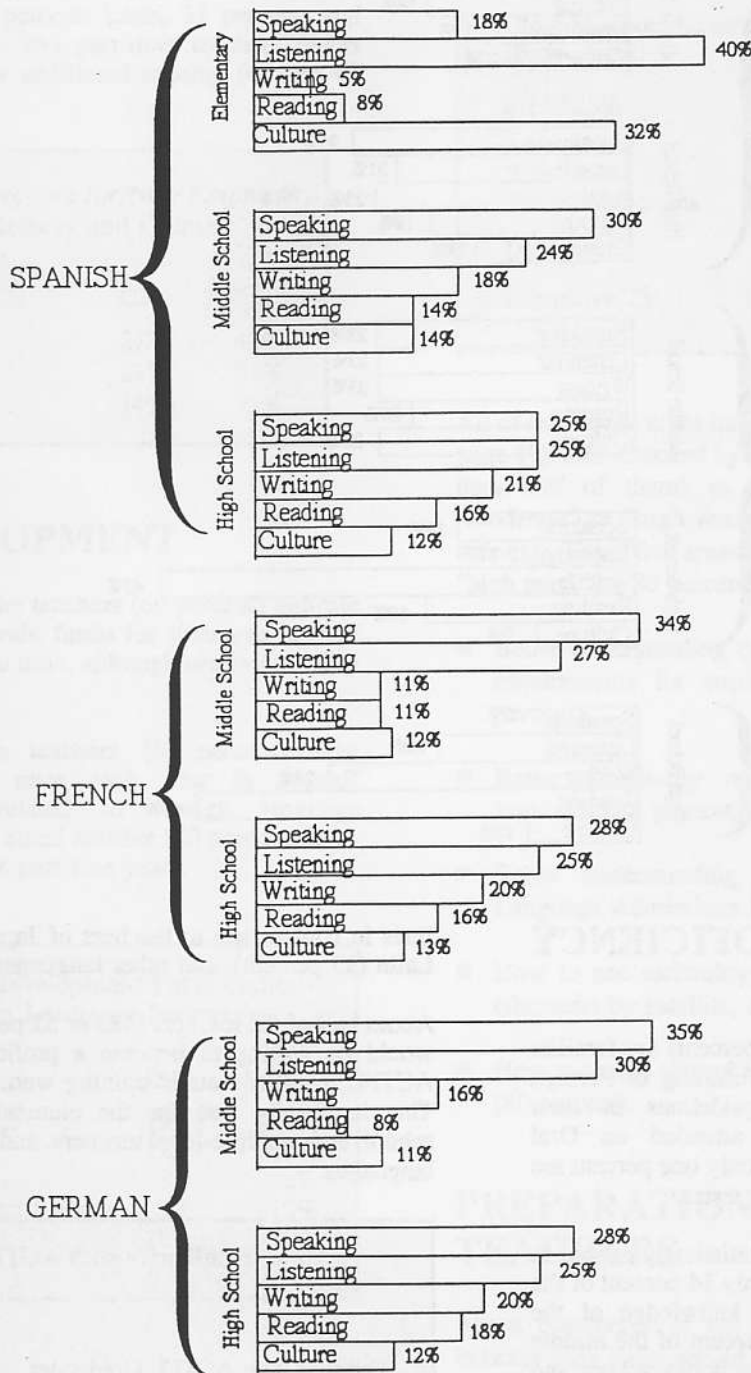
Numbers represent the average percentage of emphasis teachers report they place on the five language components (speaking, listening, writing, reading, culture) in the majority of their language classes.



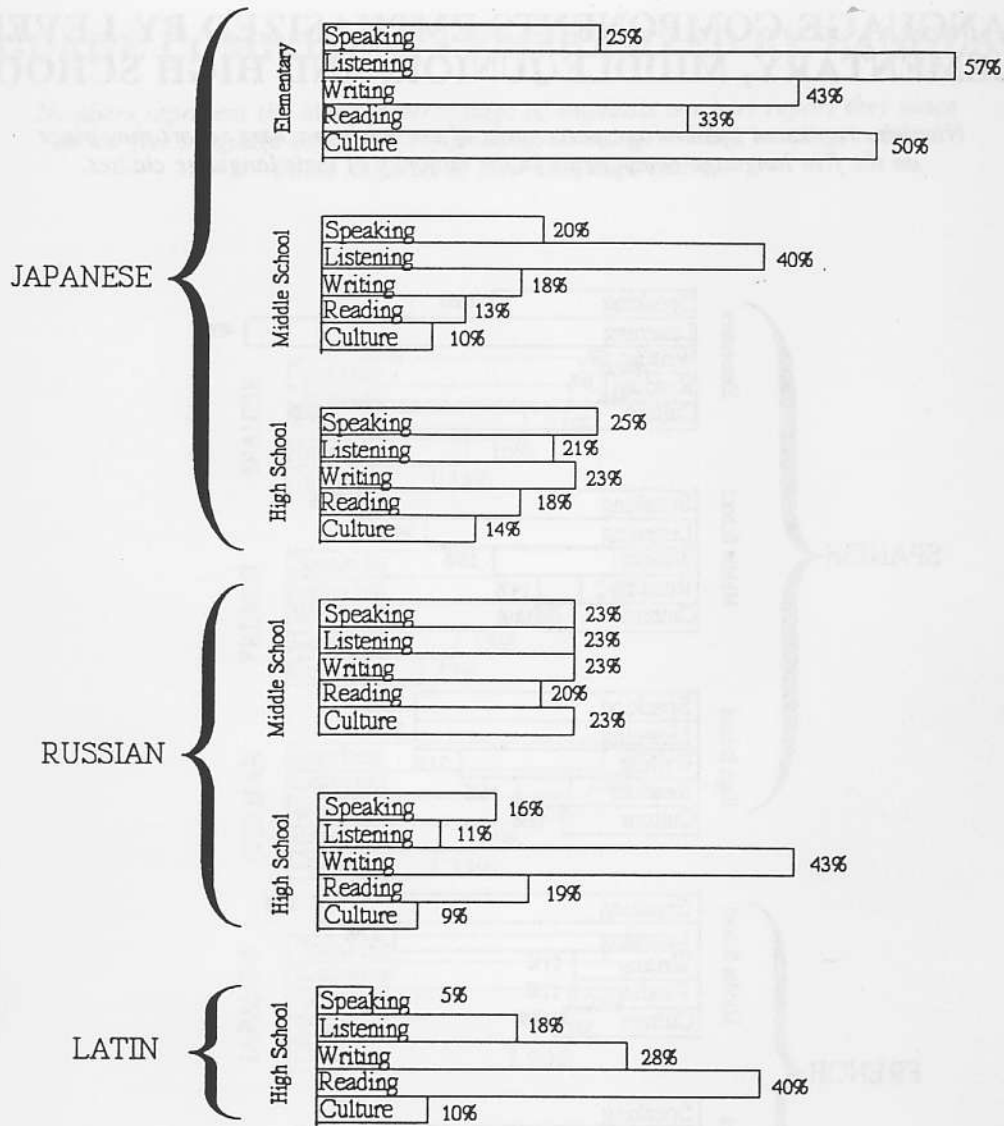
*Not all graphs total 100 percent because of teachers' over- or under-estimates of emphasis on language components.

LANGUAGE COMPONENTS EMPHASIZED BY LEVEL (ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE/JUNIOR, AND HIGH SCHOOL)*

Numbers represent the average percentage of emphasis teachers report they place on the five language components in the majority of their language classes.



*Not all levels are represented because of the small number (or lack of) foreign language classes available at certain levels in certain languages. Not all graphs total 100 percent because of teachers' over- or under-estimates of emphasis on language components.



READINESS FOR PROFICIENCY MOVEMENT

A slight majority of the teachers (57 percent) are familiar with the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines in their language. Only 11 percent have attended an Oral Proficiency Interview Workshop, and only one percent are a Certified Oral Proficiency Interview tester.

Knowledge of ACTFL guidelines is statistically related to the level of a teacher's assignment. Only 14 percent of the elementary school teachers indicate knowledge of the ACTFL guidelines, compared to 42 percent of the middle school teachers, 67 percent of the high school teachers, and 56 percent of the multiple-level teachers.

Knowledge of ACTFL guidelines is also somewhat related to language. More teachers of French (74 percent), Spanish (71 percent), German (68 percent), and Russian (67 percent) indicate familiarity with the ACTFL guide-

lines in comparison to teachers of Japanese (54 percent), Latin (33 percent), and other languages (17 percent).

About half of the teachers (333 or 52 percent) indicate they would be willing to become a proficiency tester using ACTFL or other tests if training were available to them. This is equally true for the elementary, middle, high school, and multiple-level teachers, and equally true for all languages.

Familiarity with ACTFL		
	No.	Percent
Familiar with ACTFL Guidelines	373	57%
Attended Oral Proficiency Interview Workshop	71	11%
Cert. Oral Proficiency Interview Tester	3	1%

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About half of the teachers (272 or 43 percent) indicate they need additional training to prepare for Oregon's new emphasis on oral proficiency and culture, although nearly one-fourth "don't know" if they will need training. Needs for additional training are generally evenly divided by level of teaching assignment (elementary, 36 percent; middle school, 42 percent; high school, 43 percent; and multiple-level teachers, 45 percent); and by language: Russian, 50 percent; Spanish, 45 percent; Japanese, 42 percent; French, 40 percent; German, 31 percent; Latin, 33 percent; and other, 33 percent. Full- and part-time teachers report nearly the same needs for additional training (42 and 43 percent, respectively).

Need Training to Prepare for New Emphasis on Oral Proficiency and Culture

	No.	Percent
Yes	272	43%
No	217	34%
Don't know	149	23%

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

More than two-thirds of the teachers (69 percent) indicate their school districts provide funds for their use in staff development at the present time, although nearly one-third do not (31 percent).

Nearly one-third of the teachers (30 percent) have participated more than once each year in a staff development activity related to foreign language instruction. However, an equal number (30 percent) have participated in none in the past five years.

Frequency of Staff Development Participation Related to Foreign Language Instruction

	No.	Percent
More than once each year	191	30%
Once each year	125	20%
Once every two years	38	6%
One to three times in past 5 years	97	15%
None in past 5 years	189	30%

The most acceptable location for teachers to participate in additional training is "close to their school or home" (84 percent). The most acceptable scheduling for staff development is in summer programs (53 percent). Interactive television as a delivery system is noted as acceptable for a majority (87 percent) of the teachers.

Acceptability of Training Locations, Scheduling, and Delivery

<u>Location</u>	<u>Very Accept.</u>	<u>Accept.</u>	<u>Not Accept.</u>
Close to school/home	84%	16%	--
Study abroad	40%	38%	22%
<u>Scheduling</u>			
After school	32%	44%	24%
Weekends	21%	48%	31%
Summer programs	53%	38%	10%
<u>Delivery</u>			
Interactive TV	43%	44%	13%

All of the eleven areas included in the survey (see chart on page 17) were checked by a majority of the teachers (more than half of them) as areas in which they have a "moderate" or "high need" for additional information or training. These five areas were identified as "moderate" to "high need" by 80 percent or more of the teachers:

- Better understanding of Certificate of Initial Mastery requirements for second language and culture (91 percent).
- Better familiarity with the ACTFL proficiency standards (88 percent).
- Better understanding of OSSHE College Second Language Admissions Policy (84 percent).
- How to use technology in my classes, e.g., distance education by satellite, computers (81 percent).
- How to assess second language proficiency in students (80 percent).

PREPARATION OF NEW TEACHERS

About one-fourth of the teachers (150 or 23 percent) indicate they have served as a supervising teacher for a student teacher in a foreign language endorsement program within the past five years. The majority of supervising teachers (80 percent) indicate that their student teachers were adequately prepared, although only one-third believe they were "very well prepared."

Adequacy of Student Teachers' Preparation

	<u>No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very well prepared	51	34%
Satisfactorily prepared	69	46%
Not very well prepared	25	17%

Those teachers who indicate their student teachers were not very well prepared or who elaborated on preparation issues cited the following:

"There has been only one of my student teachers who came to me with enough information on how to educate children. Most knew enough about the subject area but were woefully lacking in curriculum and instruction expertise."

"Did not have a command of the spoken language."

"Lacked organizational skills, timid with the language, did not interact with students or staff."

"Language skills good but teaching skills were poor."

"The personality of student teacher offended students; not a well-organized person or creative."

"Student teacher was not very well prepared in the language."

"She had a high level of literary and grammatical training (a Ph.D.) but was not cut out to teach--inflexible, difficulty establishing rapport."

"Concepts strong, reality weak. Too much grammar as a focus."

"Very well prepared in methodology but not very well prepared in language."

"She was not very well prepared but she went to France after her student teaching experience so I'm sure her fluency improved."

"The one who was well prepared spent a year abroad. The other one had not and was lacking true proficiency."

"He had few organizational skills and difficulties developing a lesson plan. He did not complete the program."

"Main problem was interacting with students/discipline rather than knowledge of subject."

"Language skills were not high enough to seem natural. Needed work in pronunciation and phonetics."

"Language proficiency minimal, education prep was worse. They do not know what is expected of them and are largely unfamiliar with methodology."

"Pronunciation/grammar not 100%."

"Did not have adequate language skills. She was terminated before finishing her student teaching."

"Her language skills were excellent but her teaching skills were very weak."

"She lacked good people skills."

"Ability to explain how to put the words together (grammar) was lacking. Ability to speak weak."

"Language proficiency was good, however, student teachers were not prepared to enter the real high school classroom. Lack of foreign language teaching techniques and classroom management skills."

"Required more cultural awareness instruction, multicultural studies."

"She did not have much training in specific foreign language methods."

"Language proficiency was fine but preparation in dealing with secondary students created unrealistic expectations, idealized view."

"No knowledge of methodologies, classroom management or behavior management techniques."

"Many/most do not have the proficiency level I would expect for someone who will be teaching students to speak at a higher than I+ level."

"Pronunciation not too good, not prepared to 'push' students to learn and perform."

"Not able to teach concepts beyond first year, 'unfocused' in interpersonal interactions with students, totally unprepared to plan units of instruction."

"My student teacher's supervisor knew nothing of foreign language."

"Unaware of school 'realities', how much work, how much organization, and how much effort it takes to be good."

"Her Spanish was not very good. She was not able to handle material to read and did not have command of the class (language and management difficulties)."

"This particular person should never have gotten as far as he did preparing to become a teacher and I had to be the one to tell him he was not at all qualified."

"She had been a TA at the university and was very unwilling to change her ways or vary from her book learning."

INTERACTION AMONG THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

The majority of teachers (56 percent) rate the level of interaction among the K-12 foreign language teachers at different school levels (elementary, middle, and high school) as "not very good or limited interaction." They cite a number of reasons for this, typically, lack of time, the few number of foreign language teachers within their districts, decentralized organizational structures, lack of funds for special meetings, and poor attendance when meetings are held.

Interaction Between Teachers Within District

	No.	Percent
There is excellent interaction among the elementary, middle, and high school foreign language teachers in my district.	32	6%
There is good interaction.	101	19%
There is fair interaction.	101	19%
There is not very good or limited interaction.	300	56%

Teacher Comments on Interaction

"No time or money to visit and exchange ideas, or to observe/peer coach. There used to be funding for this."

"There are few opportunities for interaction among levels except for COFLT."

"There is not enough money allocated for these meetings to happen."

"Interaction is mainly limited by lack of time to get together. Few people attended middle school-high school interaction the last time it was attempted."

"There has been some coordination previously but minimal now. With a few shining examples, the middle school teachers are not as strong in the languages as the high school teachers."

"Depends on politics."

"Since site-based councils have begun and curriculum councils have disbanded, there is no communication between schools."

"Middle through high school interaction exists but there is no interaction with volunteer PTA elementary program."

"I am the only one in my district."

"There is informal networking but nothing organized."

"We do not meet at this time to articulate, share, or network."

"We seldom meet together. We are supervised by the English department in some schools and by the social studies department in other schools, and at the district level."

"District used to provide time, now we have four secondary schools and no coordinator."

"Never see each other. No articulation because there are no foreign language coordinators in our district. Used to meet monthly, now we never meet."

"We used to have a district foreign language coordinator and terrific rapport and communication among all levels. Central administration dropped the position in favor of department chairs in each high school. They look out for their own. Junior high school programs are left adrift. No time is given to meet across levels or with other colleagues."

"There is not much time to work together. I have not met even one of the other French teachers."

"We see each other seldom at times other than at scheduled meetings. We do feel a strong need for more time to interact."

"We have decentralized organization and don't meet."

"It could be better but we call one another, invite each other to meetings and attend regular foreign language teacher functions together."

"We used to have get-togethers within the district. However, this year with all the changes taking place, we've had to forgo most of our meetings."

"Very poor communication among schools and departments."

"We would like more time to get together. We have very few department meetings."

"Some teachers communicate monthly. Some attend foreign language conferences. Some share ideas, techniques, and materials with others."

"We have no interaction at all."

"Time is limited."

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About one-third of the teachers (31 percent) indicate they have had the opportunity to interact with community college faculty related to their foreign language teaching in the last five years, 53 percent with faculty from four-year colleges and universities, and 19 percent with faculty from private colleges and universities. About one-fourth of the teachers (28 percent) have had no opportunity to interact with any college/university faculty in the last five years.

Opportunity for Interaction with College/University Faculty Related to Foreign Language Teaching in Last 5 Years

	<u>No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Opportunity with community college faculty	203	31%
With public four-year college/university faculty	352	53%
With private four-year college/university faculty	126	19%
With no college/university faculty	186	28%

Most Common Contexts for Interaction

No. of Teachers Mentioned by

Professional development courses taken at college/university	255
COFLT	245
Other foreign language associations	114
When serving as supervising teacher for student teacher	82
Committee work related to special projects	70
Some aspect of curriculum or teaching	55

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENTS

Nearly one-half of the foreign language teachers responding to the survey (306 or 41 percent) belong to the Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers (COFLT). Membership in COFLT appears to be related to level, with 24 percent membership by teachers with primarily elementary school assignments, 33 percent membership by those with primarily middle school assignments, 53 percent membership by those with primarily high school assignments, and 46 percent membership by those with multiple-level assignments. Of those teachers who are COFLT members, 86 percent (266) indicate they have attended a conference/program of COFLT in the last two years.

Teachers belong to a large variety of other language associations, both state and national. Membership appears to be somewhat higher in national associations than state associations in the specific languages.

Interaction has occurred most commonly in courses taken for professional development at a college/university and through the Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers (COFLT). One teacher noted that: "A National Endowment for the Humanities summer grant and teacher scholar year grant has given me my best university-level language contacts."

Professional Affiliations

	<u>Member of:</u>	<u>Attended a Conference/Program in Last 2 Years</u>
Advocates for Language Teachers	8	12
Confederation of Oregon Foreign Language Teachers	306	266
Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages	139	96
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language	57	32
American Association of Teachers of French	47	19
Oregon Association of Teachers of French	32	22
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese	71	28
Oregon Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese	50	26
American Association of Teachers of German	44	21
Oregon Association of Teachers of German	32	17
Oregon Association of Teachers of Japanese	22	18
American Classical League	5	2
National Committee for Latin and Greek	2	-
Other	63	37

Teachers' Perception of Need for Additional Information or Training *

	<u>High Need</u>		<u>Moderate Need</u>		<u>Little or No Need</u>	
1. Better familiarity with the ACTFL proficiency standards.	309	49%	245	39%	74	12%
2. Better understanding of Certificate of Initial Mastery requirements for second language and culture.	377	60%	198	31%	56	9%
3. Better understanding of OSSHE College Admissions Policy.	274	44%	247	40%	101	16%
4. How to teach a second language to different groups of students (for example, younger students -- elementary and middle school students).	110	18%	278	44%	239	38%
5. How to provide foreign language assistance to regular teachers (non-foreign language teachers) in elementary and middle schools.	142	23%	244	40%	231	37%
6. Culture components within language courses.	75	12%	283	45%	269	43%
7. How to assess second language proficiency in my students.	200	32%	301	48%	126	20%
8. Improved skills in my second language to teach more effectively.	122	19%	273	43%	235	37%
9. How to use technology in my classes (for example, distance education by satellite, computers).	246	39%	262	42%	121	19%
10. How to incorporate second language instruction into the regular elementary curriculum.	170	27%	199	32%	251	40%
11. How to serve as a curriculum leader for instruction in second language and culture in my school.	210	34%	225	37%	170	28%

* See Staff Development section, page 11.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

- School districts at the elementary and middle school levels provide considerable variation in their foreign language programs, ranging from introductory language and culture classes in some grade levels (FLEX) to no language programs to schools that have a significant emphasis on foreign languages (immersion and FLEX "mini-courses"). If the state's school reform goals are to be implemented with the Certificate of Initial Mastery required of all students, elementary and middle schools will be expected to significantly expand and strengthen their foreign language programs over time. Given the resource restrictions facing districts, the demand for elementary and middle school teachers who possess foreign language teaching skills will likely grow over the next decade.
- High schools also offer considerable variation in their foreign language programs, ranging from schools that offer one language, usually Spanish, to those that offer three or four via on-site teachers and/or provide additional language through distance education programs. If the state is to realize its goal of a certain percentage of students achieving a high level of proficiency in a language through the Certificate of Advanced Mastery, more attention will need to be placed toward significantly expanding foreign language programs at the high school level.
- A majority of the foreign language teachers are female, predominantly over the age of 35, and white. Given the increasing needs for schools to employ a diverse staff to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population, the development of further diversity within the foreign language teaching pool is indicated.
- About 100 K-12 teachers responding to the survey indicate they expect to retire or leave teaching within the next five years, about half of that number within the next one to two years. Although statistical analysis does not indicate that retirements will affect any one language group more than another, there will be a need for districts to employ a number of new foreign language teachers within the state (Spanish teaching positions currently outnumber other language positions significantly so the employment of Spanish teachers is likely to be greater than other languages).
- Since nearly a fourth of teachers responding to the survey are currently part-time teachers, it is expected that school districts will continue to hire many of their foreign language teachers on a part-time basis. It will be important to advise teachers-in-training that many of the positions opening up for foreign language teachers may be part-time.
- There are many teachers teaching foreign language classes who are not endorsed in a foreign language (174 of the respondents of this survey). These may be community volunteers or teachers in other areas who are teaching some foreign language classes. Efforts should be made to provide staff development to teachers who are teaching classes outside of endorsement to ensure that they possess the necessary skills to teach foreign language classes effectively.
- The survey reveals that many teachers teach both foreign language as well as "other" classes during the day. This suggests that school districts will need to employ teachers who have the capability to teach in multiple subject areas, including foreign language. Teacher preparation programs should recognize the needs of school districts for this type of staffing flexibility and prepare teachers in multiple content areas.
- The survey reveals that there is quite a bit of movement among foreign language teachers between levels, i.e., teachers with multiple-level assignments. Since most foreign language teachers complete their student teaching at the high school level and may not have much experience teaching foreign language to elementary or middle/junior high students, teacher preparation programs should redesign their programs to prepare new teachers for multi-level assignments.

- Many of the teachers responding to the survey indicate that they do not possess the language expertise to conduct classes entirely in a foreign language. If many school districts wish to expand or add foreign language programs in the next decade, perhaps going as far as introducing immersion programs in new locations in the state, many teachers will require further staff development in their language and teaching skills.
- Many teachers are using native speaker volunteers in their foreign language classes, however, many teachers are unaware of the availability of native speakers in their communities. Given the increasing emphasis on oral proficiency at all levels (elementary, middle/junior, and high school), it will be important for language teachers at all levels to investigate the feasibility of increasing the use of native speakers to assist in their classrooms.
- The major emphasis in school reform is to encourage the oral proficiency skills of students with a strong emphasis in culture. The study reveals that many of the language teachers try to equally emphasize speaking, listening, writing, reading, and culture, with very few beyond the elementary school level emphasizing speaking and listening skills well above the other skills. Most of the teachers do not appear to be emphasizing culture components very much in their classes. If the school reform goals are to be realized within the next decade, foreign language teachers will need to reconsider the allotment of time in their foreign language classes to emphasize speaking, listening, and culture skills above reading and writing until students develop more advanced level skills. Staff development opportunities may be needed to help teachers prepare for these curricular changes.
- A number of the foreign language teachers indicate a lack of familiarity with the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL) for their language. A small number of teachers have attended an oral proficiency interview workshop in the past, and almost no teachers are certified oral proficiency interview testers. If the state is to realize its goals for school reform with proficiency being the major outcome of foreign language at the K-12 level, many teachers will need to increase their familiarity with ACTFL proficiency guidelines. A large number of teachers will also need to be trained to complete proficiency assessments of students. Since teachers did indicate a willingness, generally, to become proficiency testers if training were available to them, the state should develop a plan to extend over the next decade to train a sufficient number of teachers in various of the languages to enable proficiency testing to occur at many locations in the state.
- Although many teachers indicate they have participated in staff development activities related to foreign language within the last few years, a good number have not participated and teachers generally indicate a high need for additional training in a number of areas, particularly related to the state's school reform agenda, the use of technology, and proficiency assessment. Staff development programs that are keyed to the greatest need areas should be developed and provided to foreign language teachers at all levels and in all languages over the next decade.
- While the majority of teachers who have worked with preservice teachers in the past five years indicate the new teachers have been adequately prepared, one-fifth of the teachers did indicate that preservice teachers needed better preparation. Colleges and universities that prepare foreign language teachers should review the concerns raised by supervising teachers and redesign teacher preparation programs to ensure that new teachers have excellent grounding in the language, particularly speaking proficiency as well as teaching methodologies.
- Interaction among foreign language teachers at both the school (elementary, middle, and high school) and college/university levels is generally not very good, with half of the teachers reporting "not very good" or "limited" interaction between foreign language teachers at different school levels in their districts, and about one-fourth reporting they have had no opportunity to interact with college/university faculty related to their teaching within the past five years. School districts should work to establish avenues for ongoing information-sharing between foreign language teachers at all levels, kindergarten through college. Since many teachers maintain their primary associations with colleagues through professional organizations in their languages, particularly COFLT, it will be important that teachers increase their participation in these and other organizations to facilitate local and regional networks for information-sharing. Staff development initiatives may be able to play an important role in the development of needed networking among the state's foreign language teachers.

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Issued September 1993