Foreign Language Instruction in U.S. Schools: Results of a National Survey of Elementary and Secondary Schools

Ingrid Pufahl
Center for Applied Linguistics

Nancy C. Rhodes
Center for Applied Linguistics

Abstract: How well are our schools preparing students to become global citizens who can communicate in languages other than English? To answer this question, we surveyed a nationally representative sample of more than 5,000 U.S. public and private elementary and secondary schools. Results identify current patterns and shifts over time in five key areas of K–12 foreign language education: amount of language instruction; languages and program types offered; curriculum and instruction; teacher certification, professional development, and teacher shortages; and the effects of education reform. Results reveal that despite some positive developments, overall foreign language instruction has decreased over the past decade and the achievement gap has widened. The article concludes with recommendations on how to progress toward achieving foreign language proficiency for all students.

Key words: foreign language education, K–12 education, language policy, language survey, world language education

Introduction
For decades, U.S. policy makers, educators, parents, business leaders, and major research organizations have called for an education system that prepares students to become competent world citizens who can communicate effectively in languages other than English (e.g., Committee for Economic Development, 2006; Goals 2000: Educate America Act, 1994; National Research Council, 2007; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004; U.S. Department of Defense, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2008; for historical overviews, see Jackson & Malone, 2009; Scott, 2005). However, recent economic constraints combined with unintended adverse effects of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation and ambivalence toward foreign

Ingrid Pufahl (PhD, Georgetown University) is a consultant at the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC.

Nancy C. Rhodes (MS, Georgetown University) is Director of Foreign Language Education at the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC.
language instruction have negatively affected long-standing elementary and secondary foreign language programs (Center on Education Policy, 2009; Hu, 2009; Lizama, 2009). At the same time, institutions of higher education, facing major budget cuts, are discussing reductions in their language offerings and/or requirements, thus shifting the burden of language instruction to the K–12 level (Aujla, 2009; Perry, 2009).

In light of these concerns, educators and policy makers need up-to-date, detailed information about the state of K–12 foreign language instruction in the United States. In 2008, the Center for Applied Linguistics surveyed more than 5,000 public and private schools to gather data for both national and regional profiles of foreign language instruction. Moreover, by comparison with the results of two previous surveys (Rhodes & Branaman, 1999; Rhodes & Oxford, 1988), the current researchers were also able to identify patterns and shifts over time in amount of language instruction; languages and program types offered; foreign language curricula and instruction; teacher certification, professional development, and recent effects of language teacher shortages; and the effects of education reform (national language standards and NCLB legislation) on foreign language programs. In this article, we describe the survey methodology, present and discuss some of the key survey results, and make recommendations for future action.

Methodology
This section provides information about the questionnaire design, respondent selection, data collection, and data analysis.

Questionnaire Development
Two separate but similar four-page questionnaires were developed for elementary and secondary schools, with variations in item wording to reflect the two different levels of instruction. Overall, survey items were as closely worded as possible to those of two previous surveys to allow for comparison (Rhodes & Branaman, 1999; Rhodes & Oxford, 1988). However, based on suggestions by foreign language specialists, survey research consultants, and representatives of key language organizations, some items were changed or added to collect more accurate and meaningful data (see Appendix 1 and 2 for questionnaires).

Both print and online versions of the questionnaires were developed. Content validity, including the clarity, appropriateness, and utility of each survey item, was assured through several survey reviews, including a formal clinical trial with elementary and secondary principals and foreign language teachers. The online survey was also pretested with principals and teachers for robustness of the system, user interface, ease of navigation, and clarity of page layout.

Respondents
The surveyed schools were selected through a stratified random sample design from universe lists (i.e., sampling frames) of public and private elementary and secondary schools in the United States.

Sample Stratification
Schools were selected within four major subgroups, defined by crossing instructional level (elementary vs. secondary) with type of control (public vs. private). Ten sampling strata were defined by crossing the level (elementary or secondary vs. “combined” [i.e., schools with elementary and secondary grades]) with school size based on enrollment. Within these strata, additional implicit stratification was induced by sorting schools by the following variables:

- Metro status (city, urban fringe, town, rural)
- Geographic region (Northeast, South, Southwest, Central, Pacific Northwest) (Appendix 3)
- Socioeconomic status (SES; percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch)—public schools only
- Minority enrollment (percentage of students classified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic black, or Hispanic)
Weighting for National Estimates
In general, weights are required for analysis of data from a stratified sample design. In this survey, the purpose was to reflect the variable probabilities with which schools were selected and to compensate for differential rates of nonresponse. Under the stratified sampling procedures described above, large schools were generally sampled at higher rates than smaller ones and thus should have correspondingly smaller weights than small schools. Similarly, to compensate for survey nonresponse, schools with low response rates should have relatively larger nonresponse adjustments than schools with high response rates.

Data Collection
The researchers collected data during the 2007–2008 school year. They sent surveys to the principals of 3,561 elementary schools, including 2,165 public elementary schools and 60 public combined (elementary and secondary) schools, for a total of 2,225 public schools; and to 927 private elementary schools and 409 private combined schools, for a total of 1,336 private schools. The secondary survey went to foreign language department chairs of 1,554 secondary schools, including 748 public secondary schools and 29 public combined schools, for a total sample of 777 public schools; and to 316 private secondary schools and 461 private combined schools, for a total of 777 private schools. After reminders and follow-up phone calls to more than 3,200 nonresponding schools, the researchers received 3,670 valid and completed questionnaires (72% of originally sampled schools). (See Table 1 for demographic profile of responding schools.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>Demographic Profile of Responding Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>797 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>1,020 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>851 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1,835 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>833 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>630 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>679 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>526 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>167 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>341 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>325 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,668</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

260 Summer 2011
Data Analysis

The researchers reviewed all returned surveys for consistency and contacted approximately 350 schools for clarification or missing information. For surveys submitted online, data entry and processing were automatic. After the data from the print surveys were entered and processed, tabulations and standard errors for all data were produced using SAS (9.2 TS Level 2M0), a computer statistical program. In addition to examining overall results for the 2008 survey items (the current study) and comparing subgroups (e.g., by school size, region, socioeconomic status [SES]), the researchers analyzed data from the 1997 (Rhodes & Branaman, 1999) and 2008 surveys for statistically significant increases or decreases for comparable items. Tests for statistical significance (i.e., t tests for means and/or proportions) used weighted data and a significance level of 0.05. When results are statistically significant, this means that the differences obtained are unlikely to have occurred by chance. With the significance level used for these data at 0.05, noted as p < .05, there was less than a 5% probability (p) that the difference between two numbers presented, such as an increase or decrease, happened only by chance. The SAS program used for tabulations for the 2008 data produced standard errors that accounted for complex sampling procedures.

Results

Amount of Foreign Language Teaching

Schools Offering Foreign Language Instruction

Fewer elementary schools offered language instruction than a decade ago. In 1997, 31% of elementary schools taught languages, compared to 25% in 2008, a statistically significant decrease. This reversed a trend from 1987 to 1997, when the percentage of elementary schools offering foreign language instruction had increased (Figure 1).

The overall decline in elementary school language instruction was almost entirely the result of a statistically significant decrease in public elementary schools offering foreign languages, from 24% in 1997 to 15% in 2008. In contrast, the percentage of private elementary

![FIGURE 1](attachment:image.png)

* A statistically significant decrease from 1997 to 2008.
schools offering language instruction remained steady at more than 50% of schools.

The percentage of secondary schools teaching foreign languages also fell to a statistically significant degree between 1997 and 2008, from 86 to 79% (Figure 2). However, this drop was accounted for primarily by a decrease at the middle school level. In 1997, 75% of middle schools offered language instruction compared with 58% in 2008, a statistically significant decrease. In contrast, both public and private high schools maintained foreign language instruction over the same period.

Whether schools taught languages varied by metropolitan status, size, SES, and geographic region. Rural schools overall, small middle and high schools, and elementary and middle schools with a lower SES were less likely to offer languages. (At the elementary school level, school size was not a factor; at the high school level, SES was not a factor.) Although language instruction decreased in all conference regions, schools in the Northeast (and the Southern region for elementary schools only) were more likely to offer languages than any of the other regions.

**Plans to Offer Foreign Languages**

Of the elementary schools that were not teaching languages during the school day, 5% of public and 25% of private elementary schools reported plans to offer languages in the next 2 years. Of the schools not planning to offer languages, 177 volunteered explanations, including:

- Lack of funding (e.g., “We do not have the financial resources.”)
- Decisionmaking at the district level, not school level (e.g., “The decision is made by the central office.”)
- Languages not seen as a core component of an elementary school curriculum (e.g., “We don’t teach foreign language, we’re an elementary school.”)
- Previously existing program no longer feasible (e.g., “We used to teach foreign language, but we don’t anymore.”)
- Shortage of language teachers (e.g., “[We don’t offer foreign languages] because we don’t have a teacher.”)

![FIGURE 2](image)


*Figures 262 Summer 2011

*A statistically significant decrease from 1997 to 2008.*
• Extracurricular foreign language instruction available (e.g., “After school, there's someone who comes and teaches Spanish for students who pay for it.”)

At the secondary school level, 17% of the secondary schools not currently teaching foreign languages reported plans to offer languages in the next 2 years. While there was no difference between middle and high schools, there was more interest among private schools than public schools.

Because of a change in the wording of the question about plans to offer foreign languages, the researchers could not compare the 2008 data to the 1997 data. However, in 1997, 54% of elementary and 68% of secondary schools had reported that they would be interested in starting language instruction at their school.

### Student Enrollment in Foreign Languages

In 2008, an estimated 4.2 million elementary school students out of 27.5 million (15%) in the United States were enrolled in foreign language classes at school. However, because a sizeable minority of schools did not provide data on the number of students enrolled in languages, the researchers estimated the total foreign language enrollment based on the mean enrollment of schools providing data. Still, given the extent of missing enrollment data, estimates using the imputed value were subject to biases of unknown magnitude. In addition, the method of calculating enrollment varied between the 1997 and 2008 surveys. In 1997, enrollment ranges were used; in 2008, actual enrollment numbers were elicited.

From 1997 to 2008, the number of public elementary school students enrolled in language classes declined from 2.5 million to 2.2 million, while the number of private elementary school students enrolled in language classes increased from 1.5 million to almost 2 million. In public elementary schools with foreign language programs, 67% of the students were enrolled in these language classes in 2008, up from 50% in 1997. In private elementary schools with foreign language programs, 78% of all students were enrolled in these language classes, relatively unchanged from 1997.

At the secondary school level, an estimated 10.5 million students out of 25.7 million (41%) were enrolled in language classes in 2008, a decrease from the nearly 12 million (52%) enrolled in 1997. Of the students enrolled in language classes in 2008, about 2.3 million attended middle or junior high schools, 6.7 million attended high schools, and 1.5 million attended combined junior/senior high schools. In public middle schools with foreign language programs, 36% of all students were enrolled in language classes; there are too few private middle schools in the sample for reliable estimates. In public high schools with foreign language programs, 48% of all students were enrolled in language classes, compared with 73% of students in private schools.

### Languages, Program Types, and Types of Classes

Unless otherwise noted, the results presented below refer only to schools with language programs—that is, schools that offered languages other than English as part of their regular curriculum.

### Languages Offered

Among schools with foreign language programs, Spanish was the most commonly taught language and increased over the past decade. In 2008, 88% of the elementary schools that offered language instruction taught Spanish, compared to 79% in 1997 (Figure 3). At the secondary school level, 93% of schools with language programs offered Spanish, unchanged from 1997 (Figure 4). However, note that because fewer public elementary and middle schools offered foreign languages in 2008 than in 1997, the percentage of public schools teaching Spanish nationwide actually decreased: In 1997, 19% of all public elementary schools in the United States taught Spanish; in 2008, only 12% did.
Similarly, in 1997, 62% of all U.S. middle schools taught Spanish; in 2008, 55% did. On the other hand, in 1997, 41% of all private elementary schools nationwide offered Spanish; in 2008, 46% did.\(^6\)

Of the schools that had foreign language programs, more offered Chinese in 2008 than in 1997 (although the total number of schools offering Chinese is still very small); at the same time, fewer schools taught French and German. Although Latin instruction increased in elementary schools with language programs, the increase was not statistically significant; at the secondary school level, schools with foreign language programs were less likely to offer both Latin and Japanese than in 1997.

Spanish for Spanish speakers classes remained essentially unchanged from 1997 among elementary and secondary schools that offered instruction in foreign languages. All other languages were taught at fewer than 2% of schools with language programs.

**Program Types and Types of Courses**

To gain information about the goals and intensity of schools’ language instruction, the researchers asked elementary schools to indicate whether their language program was an exploratory, language focus, or immersion program (see Table 2 for definitions). At the secondary level, questions included those about Advanced Placement (AP), honors, and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, among others.

Public elementary schools were most likely to offer exploratory programs, while private elementary schools were most likely to offer language focus programs; at the same time, public schools offered more
immersion programs than private schools (Figure 5).

At the secondary level, continuing a trend from the previous decade, AP foreign language and literature class offerings steadily increased. There was a correlation between AP classes and high schools’ metropolitan status, school size, SES, minority enrollment, and geographic region. Urban and suburban schools, larger schools, higher SES schools, and schools with a higher minority enrollment were more likely to offer AP classes, as were schools in the Southwest, Southern, and Northeast regions.

Curriculum and Instruction

Responses on curriculum, instructional materials, assessment, teachers’ language use, and articulation provide self-reported information on what kind of instruction was taking place in classrooms and on how schools and districts planned for articulated instruction from one school level to the next.

Curriculum

More than three-quarters of elementary schools with language programs reported having an established foreign language curriculum or set of guidelines, a gradual increase over the past two decades (64% in 1987, 70% in 1997, and 78% in 2008). At the secondary level, the percentage of schools with an established curriculum held steady at about 85% (Rhodes & Braman, 1999; Rhodes & Oxford, 1988).

Instructional Materials and Assessment

Schools reported using several types of instructional materials more often in 2008 than in 1997. The use of literature from the target culture increased at both the elementary and secondary school levels (from...
as did the use of technology-based instructional materials. The use of Internet resources more than tripled at the elementary level and more than doubled at the secondary level (to 70 and 87%, respectively), and the use of computer-assisted instructional materials and other instructional technology (e.g., satellite broadcasts, interactive television, video conferencing) increased at both levels. All these increases were statistically significant.

Schools reported a wide range of strategies to assess students’ language proficiency. In both elementary and secondary schools, the most frequently used strategies focused on comprehension, both listening and reading, and oral proficiency: asking students to use illustrations to indicate understanding, having students explain in English what they heard or read in the target language, and having students engage in oral language activities to assess their oral proficiency (ranging from 85 to 97%).\(^7\) In addition, secondary schools widely used selected-response tests, short-answer tests, and written works such as essays and reports (about 98%). At both school levels, self-assessment by students increased to a statistically significant degree, from 31 to 51% (elementary) and from 39 to 70% (secondary).

A comparison of teachers’ use of the target language showed that overall, secondary school language teachers spent more time in the target language than elementary school teachers. For example, 79% of high schools and 81% of middle schools reported that their teachers used the foreign language during at least half the classroom time, but only 58% of elementary schools did. In addition, the percentage of secondary schools stating that their language teachers spent at least 75% of the classroom time using the target language increased to a statistically significant degree over the past decade, from 22% in 1997 to 36% in 2008.

**Program Articulation**

Articulation—that is, ensuring continuity in language study from one level of
schooling to the next—remained a major challenge. About 50% of elementary schools reported that there was no articulated sequence of instruction for their language students when they entered middle school. Most of the schools not offering articulation (30% of all respondents) said that students who had studied a foreign language in elementary school were placed in Level 1 classes in middle school, along with students who had had no prior language instruction; 12% reported that students were placed in exploratory language classes; and 8% noted that the languages taught in their elementary schools were not offered at the middle schools.

Fewer than 40% of elementary schools reported some form of articulation, which included placing students into middle school classes that were specifically designed to provide continuity from language study in elementary school. Other options were advanced language classes that were not specifically designed for continuity and subject matter courses taught in the foreign language. The remaining schools (11%) marked “other” (see Figure 6).

At the secondary level, about one-quarter of high school respondents reported that their incoming students had not received foreign language instruction during their middle school years. Of the high schools whose incoming students had studied foreign languages previously, more schools reported providing continuity of language study in 2008 than in 1997. There was an increase of schools that placed those students in advanced classes specifically designed to provide continuity from their prior language study. At the same time, there was a decrease in the percentage of high schools that placed incoming students with prior language instruction in Level 1 classes together with students who did not have prior foreign language experience (see Figure 7). The researchers did not conduct tests of statistical significance on articulation data.

Foreign Language Teachers
Information about foreign language teachers focused on three areas: teacher certification, professional development, and teacher shortages.

Teacher Certification
In 2008, elementary schools with foreign language programs reported that 76% of their language teachers had some type of teacher certification and that 24% of language teachers did not. Public school teachers were more likely than private
school teachers to be certified (Table 3). Of public elementary schools, rural schools were less likely to have teachers with any kind of certification or with certification for foreign language teaching. In contrast, the majority of secondary school teachers were certified, either for foreign language teaching at the secondary level or at the K–12 level (Table 4).

Professional Development
In 2008, 63% of elementary schools and 73% of secondary schools with foreign language programs reported that their language teachers had participated in professional development or in-service training in their subject area during the previous 12 months, which were similar participation rates to 1997. However, as in previous survey periods, more public schools than private schools reported teacher participation in professional development. In addition, rural schools and smaller schools reported less participation in professional development, while schools with a higher percentage of minority students reported more participation in professional development.

Teacher Shortages and Hiring Practices
Because many states and school districts reported problems finding and hiring qualified foreign language teachers (Bousquet, 1999; Murphy, DeArmond, & Guin, 2003), the researchers asked all schools with foreign language programs if they had been affected by teacher shortages. In addition, the researchers asked elementary schools—which have reported particular difficulty finding qualified language teachers (Rhodes & Branaman, 1999)—whether any of the school’s foreign language teachers had been hired through alternative means.

Notes: Data for 1997 were recalculated from Rhodes and Branaman (1999). No tests of statistical significance were conducted on articulation data.
Of all schools with language programs, 25% of elementary schools and 30% of secondary schools reported being affected by teacher shortages. Rural schools and schools with a lower SES were more affected than urban or suburban schools and schools with a higher SES. Geographic region was also a factor, with elementary schools in the Pacific Northwest and Central States regions being most affected by teacher shortages, and secondary schools in the Northeast reporting the largest effect.

A total of 99 elementary school respondents (44 public, 55 private) and 127 secondary school respondents (72 public, 55 private) provided written comments about teacher shortages. More than 85% of these respondents stated that they had been negatively affected by the lack of qualified language teachers. The following are examples of comments:

- “We would not be subcontracting out to private language schools for our teachers if there were qualified teachers available.” (public elementary school)
- “It is hard to find Hebrew teachers with certification.” (private elementary school)
- “Since it is difficult to find qualified teachers for foreign language, we have to resort to more video curriculum or not offer foreign language.” (private secondary school)
- “I called 12 different colleges seeking a foreign language teacher. We now have a teacher who is on a certified waiver.” (public secondary school)

To cope with teacher shortages, 10% of elementary schools reported that they had
hired teachers through nontraditional means, using four strategies:

- Hiring teachers from other countries through domestic agencies or foreign government programs
- Contracting with proprietary language schools
- Hiring instructors from local colleges and universities
- Sharing teachers with other schools

**Educational Reforms**

We also collected data on the impact of educational reform on foreign language teaching in the schools, specifically the implementation of national standards and NCLB legislation.

**Standards for Foreign Language Learning**

Over the past decade, the percentage of both elementary and secondary schools that implemented national and/or state foreign language standards increased to a statistically significant degree. While public schools were much more likely to follow national or state standards than private schools, both posted notable increases (Table 5.) As one private school respondent commented: “We integrate [the standards] not because we have to, but because they make sense for teaching language.”

**No Child Left Behind Legislation**

The 2008 survey asked respondents whose schools offered foreign languages whether NCLB, signed into law in 2002, had affected foreign language instruction at their schools. Because private schools are not bound by this law, the researchers present results only for public schools.

About one-third of all public schools with foreign language programs reported that their foreign language instruction had been affected by NCLB. Urban and rural schools were more likely to be affected than suburban schools, and lower SES schools were more affected than higher SES schools. In addition, schools with a very high minority enrollment (more than 50%) were

---

**TABLE 3**

Certifications of Elementary School Language Teachers (by School Type) (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public (%)</th>
<th>Private (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level and for elementary school teaching</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the K–12 level</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school teaching, but not specifically for foreign language</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the secondary school level but not at the elementary level</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others who are not certified</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Data refer to percentage of elementary school teachers with the specific teacher certifications. Totals add up to more than 100% because respondents could check more than one response.*
more likely to report being affected by NCLB than schools with a lower minority enrollment.

The vast majority of schools that provided written comments cited a negative impact of NCLB, in particular a focus on tested subjects; for example, “Funds and time have been directed to reading and math. In some cases, we pull students from foreign language and other non-tested content classes in order to provide more extensive content language support” (public elementary school). Other comments referred to teacher requirements; for example, “Our

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4</th>
<th>Certifications of Secondary School Foreign Language Teachers (2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the secondary school level</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the K–12 level</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one foreign language</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school teaching, but not specifically for foreign language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognized as National Board Certified</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A different foreign language from the one they teach</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level but not at the secondary level</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others who are not certified</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Data refer to percentage of secondary school foreign language teachers with specific teacher certification. Totals add up to more than 100% because respondents could check more than one response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5</th>
<th>Schools That Integrate the National Standards or State Standards into Foreign Language Instruction (by School Type and School Level) (1997, 2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* No statistical tests were conducted on these data. 1997 data are from Rhodes and Branaman (1999).
Japanese language teacher did not make "Highly Qualified Status" and we had to lose the program (public secondary school). Finally, some schools explained in detail how they adjusted to NCLB; for example:

When our district is faced with budget cuts (now every year), we are put on the chopping block since Math, Language Arts, and now Science are more important, and FLES [Foreign Language in the Elementary School] is a luxury. Fortunately, with a supportive School Board and a focus on content-related instruction (teaching key objectives from the [state tests] for Math, Language Arts, and Science, through French) we have been able to maintain our excellent program. Rather than lament and complain about the NCLB legislation, we've been proactive and made it work for us. (public elementary school)

Discussion and Recommendations

Results of the national K–12 foreign language survey show that foreign language instruction has remained relatively stable at the high school level over the past decade but that it has decreased substantially in middle and elementary schools nationwide. An additional concern is that there is unequal access to foreign language instruction as students in rural schools and low SES schools have had less opportunity to study languages than other students.

The researchers observed several positive trends among the elementary and secondary schools that still offered foreign languages: More of these schools taught Arabic and Chinese than previously, language teachers integrated the national standards more into their teaching and used the target language more frequently in the classroom, teachers used authentic literature from the target culture and technology-based materials more often, and schools continued to offer language classes for native speakers. Finally, there were pockets of innovation—in particular, immersion programs in elementary schools, which allow students to achieve high levels of language proficiency.

Despite these improvements for the students who have the opportunity to study foreign languages, the survey results reveal that there is a huge mismatch between what is happening in our schools and what the country is demanding; that is, an education system that prepares all children to be competent world citizens, who can communicate in more than one language. Thus, while most countries around the world are moving toward foreign language instruction for all their students at an even younger age (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2008; Pufahl, Rhodes, & Christian, 2000), the vast majority of students in the United States are not even given the opportunity to study a foreign language before middle school and many not until they reach high school.

Educators need to ask themselves why, despite the numerous calls for more foreign language education over the past decades, significant progress has not been made toward reaching this goal, leaving the status of foreign language education in the United States relatively unchanged. The researchers believe that the underlying cause is that despite paying lip service to an internationalization of our students’ education, many policy makers, as well as educators, do not recognize the vital importance of the ability to communicate in languages other than English, nor do they realize the well-established cognitive, social, and academic benefits of foreign language learning (e.g., Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2009; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2009). Therefore, before offering specific recommendations on how to achieve the goal of foreign languages for all, our first priority has to be to advocate for the importance of foreign language education as part of global competence (Aoki, 2010).

We need to work together to educate the public and policy makers about the vital importance of an American citizenry that can communicate effectively in many languages and across cultures, and make the
teaching and learning of foreign languages a priority in the K–12 curriculum.

Research institutions, government agencies, parents, educators, and members of the business community have recognized that providing first-class language education to all students would contribute greatly to our nation’s capacity to maintain national security, promote international cooperation, compete effectively in a global economy, and enhance our domestic well-being (Committee for Economic Development, 2006; National Research Council, 2007; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004; U.S. Department of Defense, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2008). However, until there is widespread acknowledgment among decision makers that knowing another language is as important as knowing science, social studies, language arts, and mathematics, our specific recommendations are not likely to be implemented on a large scale. Only when legislators, administrators, and other education policy makers recognize the need to incorporate foreign languages into the core curriculum will the necessary funding and other resources needed to make that happen follow. This change in attitude is the first step in moving our country toward parity with nations around the globe that graduate students who can communicate in more than one language.

At the same time, the language teaching profession also must demonstrate that it can deliver instruction that leads to students’ linguistics and cultural proficiency. In what follows, we propose recommendations that focus on developing rigorous, long-sequence (K–12) foreign language programs whose goals are for students to achieve proficiency in a second language.

**Recommendations**

1. **Establish new foreign language programs, particularly those that start in the elementary school and aim at a high degree of proficiency**

   In 2008, only 25% of all U.S. elementary schools—fewer than during the previous decade—offered foreign language instruction. From the 1980s through 2004, a nationwide grass-roots movement of community activists, parents, and local school officials, assisted by several language organizations, had led to the implementation of many new elementary school language programs nationwide (Heining-Boynton, 1990; Taboada, 2004; Viadero, 1991).

   However, one of the major factors that seems to have led to a decrease in foreign language programs this past decade was the enactment of NCLB in 2002. Its focus on math and reading led some school districts to cut foreign languages and other subjects that are not tested under NCLB in order to shift more resources to the tested subjects (Manzo, 2008; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2005).

   Thus, while other countries have instituted compulsory foreign language instruction in the earlier grades (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2008), the percentage of U.S. elementary schools teaching foreign languages declined over the past decade. Because research has shown that sustained and extended language instruction provides significantly better learning outcomes (Baum, Bischof, & Luna, 2004; Quinlan & Forrest, 2007), we urge school districts nationwide to initiate, or maintain, early-start comprehensive language programs that provide students the opportunity to develop high-level language skills over an extended period.

2. **Offer more intensive foreign language programs**

   Research has shown that intensive language instruction leads to better language proficiency outcomes (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Yet despite increases over the past decade in the percentage of secondary schools offering AP and IB courses, as well as language classes for native speakers, there has not been a major increase in intensive language programs.

   The most common type of public elementary school foreign language program, offered by almost half of schools with language programs, was the exploratory model,
which provides only introductory exposure to the language. This means that many of those elementary students who are receiving foreign language instruction will not achieve any measure of proficiency. The immersion model—the only model that consistently provides instruction that allows students to attain a high level of proficiency—was offered by only 6% of public schools with language programs. School districts across the country need to provide more options for both elementary and secondary students, including immersion-type foreign language programs or content-based language classes, in which selected academic subjects are taught in the foreign language.

Schools also need to reconsider the traditional method of measuring success in language learning by “seat time,” or the number of years a student has studied a language. Because of wide variations in teaching methods and in students’ language learning abilities, the profession now recognizes that standards that define what students should know and be able to do provide states and school districts with a gauge for measuring both student achievement and excellence in language curricula. The outcomes of standards-based programs that provide proficiency-based instruction are well worth the effort: high student foreign language proficiency, enhanced academic success in English and other subject areas, and the ability to communicate and compete in an increasingly global workplace and community (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010).

We recommend that school districts collaborate with universities, educational associations, and research organizations to design and implement language programs that offer intensive, standards- and proficiency-based instruction from elementary school through high school.

3. **Improve the articulation patterns for schools that offer language classes in the early and middle school grades**

While more high schools in 2008 placed students with prior language experience in advanced classes that were designed to provide continuity from their previous instruction, well-planned articulation of language programs continues to be a major challenge confronting all educational levels. We recommend that all school districts offering foreign language instruction adopt a coherent sequencing plan from elementary school through high school to ensure that every year students are provided with foreign language instruction that builds on the knowledge and skills they have acquired in previous classes. This type of articulation is a necessity for students to achieve proficiency in the language they are studying.

4. **Offer programs that teach major world languages**

Survey results over the years have revealed ups and downs in the teaching of specific languages. These variations appear to be politically motivated as schools change their language offerings according to major world events and contexts. For example, the teaching of Russian increased in the 1980s, Japanese rose in the 1990s, and Chinese and Arabic are on the rise now.

Our schools need to offer a wide range of languages, with instruction in each language available at multiple levels for students to develop a high level of proficiency over an extended period of time. For the individual to reap the cognitive, academic, and social benefits of foreign language learning, the specific language taught is less important than the type and length of instruction offered (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2009; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2009). Moreover, development of a citizenry with proficiency in a wide range of languages will provide the United States with the linguistic and cultural skills needed to further international cooperation, national security, and commerce, among other areas.

We recommend that school districts implement strong programs in languages that make sense for their local context, such as availability of qualified teachers, pre-
sence of heritage language groups, and proximity to or commerce with other countries, and that they maintain those programs through whatever international challenges arise. If districts choose to begin a program in a new language, we encourage them to add this language to their existing repertoire without displacing any of the languages already offered.

5. Address the major problems identified by the survey, including inequities in access to foreign language instruction, shortages of funding and teachers, and lack of certification among many elementary school language teachers

Survey results show that insufficient funding for language programs continues to be a major obstacle to the development of high-quality, long-sequence, well-articulated foreign language programs that allow students to achieve communicative proficiency. Inequity in foreign language instruction compounds this problem: In 2008, rural schools and low SES schools were less likely than other schools to offer foreign languages.

A shortage of qualified language teachers also limits schools’ ability to offer language instruction and has forced many districts to look for alternative sources of teachers. Particularly at the elementary school level, there is a clear need for more teachers with certification in foreign language teaching.

The implications for teacher training institutions are obvious: Universities and colleges need to augment and improve the preparation and training of K–12 language teachers (Schrier, 2001) and actively recruit foreign language teacher candidates (Long, 2004). At the same time, school districts, state departments of education, and the federal government need to identify ways to meet the need for expanded language teacher education, certification, and professional development. The resulting professionalization of foreign language teaching will lead to more committed and motivated teachers, which will improve teachers’ performance, and thus student learning (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1993).

6. Expand the research base on foreign language instruction

While the researchers were conducting the survey, the scarcity of quantitative and qualitative research on language instruction became more obvious. For example, survey responses revealed a need for data on how much language instruction is needed for students to attain various language proficiency levels and on proficiency outcomes in various types of language programs and with various language teaching methodologies. This may be a good time for the profession to revisit the development and administration of a National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), “the nation’s report card,” in foreign languages to provide the nation with data from a nationally representative assessment on what students know and can do in the foreign languages they have studied. Researchers should also investigate what characterizes “good” language teaching and how teachers can maximize classroom time for the best proficiency results. Further study is also warranted to determine how technologies are being used in the language classroom and how effectively, to what extent, by whom, and for what purposes. Despite the sizeable increase in the use of technology in language instruction, language educators still know little about how technology-based materials are being used and to what extent they enhance foreign language learning.

Finally, it may be time to survey major stakeholders, including parents, the general public, students, and businesses about their beliefs and attitudes regarding the need for and benefits of foreign language education for both the individual and the country, similar to a recent survey conducted in all
27 European Union member states plus Norway and Turkey (Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency, 2009). In addition, educators should examine the apparently successful strategies used abroad to win support from all major stakeholders for early and sustained foreign language instruction.

Despite setbacks in achieving the goal of foreign languages for all students, we hope that the United States, through federal, state, and district-wide initiatives in the decade to come, can change the trajectory of language education documented in this survey and turn President Barack Obama’s (2009) goal to “ensure that every child has access to a complete and competitive education—from the day they are born to the day they begin a career” into reality with an educational system that provides a world-class education to all children.

Notes
1. Foreign language is used here to refer to any language other than English. We recognize that the use of foreign language is becoming increasingly problematic in the U.S. context (National Standards, 2006, p. 27). Many of the languages taught in U.S. schools are not foreign to the United States (e.g., Native American languages or American Sign Language), and many are not foreign to all students (e.g., heritage speakers). Many states and school districts are therefore using terms such as world languages, second languages, or languages other than English. However, for the survey, we used the term foreign language because we believed that it would be the most widely recognized and understood expression.

2. This article is based on the final report of the survey. For details and complete results, see Rhodes and Pufahl (2010). Funding for the research that led to the report was provided by the U.S. Department of Education’s International Research and Studies Program. The Center for Applied Linguistics was assisted by Westat in the sampling, data processing, and data analysis for the study.

3. For details on methodology, including sampling and weighting procedures, adjustments of simple random sample standard errors, and demographic sample profile, see Rhodes and Pufahl (2010).

4. The sampling frame for public schools was the 2005–2006 Common Core of Data Public School Universe Survey File compiled and maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The sampling frame for private schools was the 2005–2006 Private School Survey Data File, also maintained by NCES. The public school frame contained a total of 85,719 schools, including 52,076 elementary schools, 31,804 secondary schools, and 1,839 schools with combined elementary and secondary grades. The private school frame represented a total of 27,389 schools, including 17,616 elementary schools, 2,921 secondary schools, and 6,852 schools with combined elementary and secondary grades.

5. For reporting purposes, we combined the urban fringe and town categories into a single category, Suburban; we renamed the city category Urban. For details on definitions, see Appendix 4.

6. In 1997, 24% of all public elementary schools offered languages, of which 80% taught Spanish; thus, 19% of public elementary schools taught Spanish (i.e., 80% of 24%); in 2008, 15% of all public elementary schools offered languages, of which 82% taught Spanish (i.e., 12% of all public elementary schools).

7. These three strategies were not included in the 1997 survey.

References


National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). Numbers and types of public elementary


Submitted October 18, 2010
Accepted January 6, 2011
APPENDIX 1
Elementary Survey Questionnaire

NATIONAL K–12 FOREIGN LANGUAGE SURVEY
Elementary School Questionnaire

To: School Principal or Foreign Language Teacher

This survey is about foreign language instruction in your school during the 2007–08 school year. Please complete the survey, even if your school does not offer foreign language instruction. In this survey, foreign language instruction refers to the teaching of any language(s) other than English. If your school teaches elementary through middle or high school levels, please fill out the survey only as it applies to the elementary grades at your school.

You can complete this survey online or by mail.

To complete the survey online: Go to www.cal.org/languagesurvey. Use the login ID and password on your address label below.

To complete the survey by mail: Fill out this survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope provided. Please correct any inaccurate information on the address label.

Please respond to the survey (online or by mail) by October 31, 2007. Thank you very much!

Questions: Contact Dr. Ingrid Pufahl at 202-355-1567 or by email at ingrid@cal.org.

Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016-3740

Name of person filling out questionnaire: ________________________________________
Title/position: ________________________________________________________________

Contact information (in case of questions): Telephone: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________

☐ If you’d like a copy of the survey results, please check here and make sure you’ve included your email address above.

1. What grades does your school include? (Check all that apply)
   a. ☐ Prekindergarten  g. ☐ Grade 5
   b. ☐ Kindergarten     h. ☐ Grade 6
   c. ☐ Grade 1          i. ☐ Grade 7
   d. ☐ Grade 2          j. ☐ Grade 8
   e. ☐ Grade 3          k. ☐ Other (specify): ____________________________
   f. ☐ Grade 4

2. How many students currently attend your school?
   ___________ Number of students

3. Does your school currently teach foreign language(s)?
   ☐ Yes  ➔ SKIP TO QUESTION 5
   ☐ No

4. Is your school planning to offer foreign language instruction in the next 2 years?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

   NOTE: if your school does not teach foreign language(s), you do not need to complete any more of the survey. Please mail it back to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Thank you for your help!

5. How many of the students in your school are currently enrolled in foreign language classes?
   ___________ Number of students

6. When are the classes taught? (Check all that apply):
   a. ☐ During the regular school day
   b. ☐ Before or after school
   c. ☐ Other (specify): ____________________________

Center for Applied Linguistics & Westat
www.cal.org

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, International Research and Studies Program
7. In the chart below, mark each language taught at your school. For each of the languages taught, mark the corresponding letter of the program type from the three descriptions above that best describes your program, the number of students in your school studying that language, the grades in which it is offered, and an average number of minutes per week students spend in the study of the foreign language. Note: If you have more than one program type for a language, or if instruction time differs substantially by grade level, please indicate this under "Other."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Average Mins/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Arabic</td>
<td>A B C</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>PreK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8</td>
<td>150 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. German</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Hebrew</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Japanese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Latin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Portuguese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Russian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Sign Language (American)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Other (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Other (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Other (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language for Native (or Heritage) Language Speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Spanish for Spanish Speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Other (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8a. What percentage of your language classes last for the entire school year?

   ___  Percent (if 100%, ✗ SKIP TO QUESTION 9)

8b. For those language classes that do not last for the entire school year, please identify the average length of the classes. (Check only one)

   ☐ 1, 1-5 weeks
   ☐ 2, 6-10 weeks
   ☐ 3, 11-15 weeks
   ☐ 4, More than 15 weeks

9. How many foreign language teachers (full or part-time) are there in your school?

   ___ Number of foreign language teachers

10. Please write in the number of foreign language teachers in your school who are certified for: (Write one number for each line; if answer is none, write “0”)

   a. ___ Elementary school teaching
   b. ___ Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level
   c. ___ Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level and for elementary school teaching
   d. ___ Foreign language teaching at the K-12 level
   e. ___ Foreign language teaching at the secondary school level but not at the elementary level
   f. ___ Others who are not certified (e.g., paraprofessionals, career changers, volunteers, college students)

11. Please write in the number of foreign language teachers in your school who are native speakers of the language they teach. (If the answer is none, write “0”)

   ___ Number of native-speaking foreign language teachers

12. Are any of your foreign language teachers hired through alternative means (e.g., agencies that provide teachers from other countries, commercial language schools, foreign governments)?

   ☐, Yes ☐, No

   If yes, please explain: _______________________________

13. Have any of the foreign language teachers at your school participated in professional development or in-service teacher training in their subject area during the past 12 months?

   ☐, Yes ☐, No

14. To what extent do language teachers in your school use the foreign language in the classroom? If you have more than one language program model, please answer for the program that sets the highest proficiency goals. (Check only one)

   ☐ 1, Less than 50% of the time
   ☐ 2, 50-74% of the time
   ☐ 3, 75-90% of the time
   ☐ 4, More than 90% of the time

15. Is there an established and written foreign language curriculum or set of guidelines for your program(s)?

   ☐, Yes ☐, No

16. How often do foreign language teachers in your school use the following instructional materials? (Please indicate, for each type, whether it is used frequently, sometimes, or not at all)

   a. Commercially published textbooks/ workbooks ........................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   b. Teacher-made materials (specify): .............................................................. ☐, ☐, ☐
   c. Literature from the target culture (e.g., stories, books, songs, poems, rhymes) ... ☐, ☐, ☐
   d. Media (e.g., films, videotapes, DVDs, CDs, audiotapes) .............................. ☐, ☐, ☐
   e. Authentic materials from the target culture (e.g., menus, magazines, advertisements, newspapers, bus tickets) ................................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   f. Visual/tactile materials (e.g., puppets, posters, pictures, flash cards, games, puzzles) .......................................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   g. Internet resources (e.g., World Wide Web, online activities, virtual tours, electronic mail, discussion lists, chats, blogs, wikis, podcasts) .................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   h. Computer-assisted instructional materials (e.g., computer software programs, CD-ROMs) ................................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   i. Other instructional technology (e.g., satellite broadcasts, interactive television, video conferencing) ........................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
   j. Other (specify): .......................................................... ☐, ☐, ☐
17. How is students' foreign language proficiency assessed at your school? (For each assessment format listed, please indicate whether it is used frequently, sometimes, or not at all)

- Student use of illustrations to indicate comprehension (e.g., match illustrations to sequence heard or read) .............
- Student use of English (or native language) to explain what is understood from something heard, read, or viewed in the target language ........................
- Oral proficiency interviews (teacher or outside evaluator interviews individual student to determine student's fluency) ....
- Student presentations (e.g., student prepares presentation/demonstration and delivers it to demonstrate proficiency in the foreign language) ...........
- Oral language activities (e.g., student conducts interview, describes drawing, engages in interpersonal exchange or impromptu skill) .....................................
- Written works produced by student (essays, letters, reports, brochures) ...........
- Student portfolios (e.g., compilation of student-selected and/or teacher-selected work over a set period of time, with rating criteria) ........................................
- Student self-assessment (e.g., student evaluates his/her language skills using oral/written self-evaluations) ...........
- Translation exercises (e.g., English → German; German → English) ...........
- Selected-response tests (e.g., multiple choice or matching of vocabulary words or grammar structures) ...........
- Short-answer tests (student is asked to respond in writing to questions) ...........
- Other (e.g., standardized tests) ...............

18. Do the foreign language teachers at your school routinely integrate the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning and/or state foreign language standards into their instruction?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Optional comments:

19. What type of sequencing (articulation) exists for students who have studied foreign language(s) at your school when they continue to junior high/middle school? (Mark the one statement below that best describes the sequencing for the majority of the students at your school)

☐ Students are placed in exploratory language classes (general exposure to one or more languages and cultures)
☐ Students are placed in Level I foreign language classes along with students who have had no prior instruction in the language
☐ Students are placed in more advanced classes where the course content and objectives are designed to provide continuity from their prior level
☐ Students are placed in more advanced classes where the course content and objectives are not designed to provide continuity from their prior level
☐ There is no foreign language instruction (for the language(s) taught in our elementary school) in junior high/middle school in our district
☐ Other (specify):

20. Has foreign language instruction in your school been affected by a shortage of qualified language teachers?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please explain how foreign language instruction has been affected by the shortage:

21. Has foreign language instruction in your school been affected by No Child Left Behind legislation?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please explain:

Please include any additional comments/questions here or on a separate sheet.
APPENDIX 2
Secondary School Questionnaire

NATIONAL K–12 FOREIGN LANGUAGE SURVEY
Middle School/Junior High and High School Questionnaire

To: Foreign Language Chairperson or Foreign Language Teacher

This survey is about foreign language instruction in your school during the 2007–08 school year. Please complete the survey, even if your school does not offer foreign language instruction. In this survey, foreign language instruction refers to the teaching of any language(s) other than English. If your school teaches elementary through middle or high school levels, please fill out the survey only as it applies to the middle school/junior high and/or high school grades at your school.

You can complete this survey online or by mail.

To complete the survey online: Go to www.cal.org/languagesurvey. Use the login ID and password on your address label below.

To complete the survey by mail: Fill out this survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope provided. Please correct any inaccurate information on the address label.

Please respond to the survey (online or by mail) by October 31, 2007. Thank you very much!

Questions: Contact Dr. Ingrid Pufahl at 202-355-1567 or by email at ingrid@cal.org.

Center for Applied Linguistics
4848 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016-3740

Name of person filling out questionnaire: ____________________________

Title/position: ________________________________________________

Contact information (in case of questions): Telephone: _____________ Email: ____________________________

☐ If you’d like a copy of the survey results, please check here and make sure you’ve included your email address above.

1. What grades does your school include? (Check all that apply)
   a. ☐ Grade 5
   b. ☐ Grade 6
   c. ☐ Grade 7
   d. ☐ Grade 8
   e. ☐ Grade 9
   f. ☐ Grade 10
   g. ☐ Grade 11
   h. ☐ Grade 12
   i. ☐ Other (specify): ____________________________

2. How many students currently attend your school?
   Number of students ____________________________

3. Does your school currently teach foreign language(s)?
   ☐ Yes → SKIP TO QUESTION 5
   ☐ No

4. Is your school planning to offer foreign language instruction in the next 2 years?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   NOTE: If your school does not teach foreign language(s), you do not need to complete any more of the survey. Please mail it back to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Thank you for your help!

5. How many of the students in your school are currently enrolled in foreign language classes?
   __________ Number of students

Center for Applied Linguistics & Westat
www.cal.org

Fundied by the U.S. Department of Education, International Research and Studies Program
6. In the chart below, mark each language taught at your school, the levels offered, the average number of hours per week spent in the foreign language class, and the approximate number of students in your school currently studying that language.

**EXAMPLE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Average Hours/Week</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7a. What percentage of your language classes last for the entire school year?

_____ Percent (if 100% ☐)  SKIPTO QUESTION 8

7b. For those language classes that do not last for the entire school year, please identify the average length of the classes. (Check only one)

☐ 1–5 weeks
☐ 6–10 weeks
☐ 11–15 weeks
☐ More than 15 weeks

8. What types of foreign language classes are offered at your school? (Please check each type offered)

a. ☐ Standard (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture)

b. ☐ Exploratory (general exposure to one or more languages and cultures)

c. ☐ Literature only

d. ☐ Conversation only

e. ☐ Advanced Placement (for college credit)

f. ☐ Honors/Accelerated (other than Advanced Placement)

g. ☐ International Baccalaureate (IB)

h. ☐ Language for native or heritage language speakers (e.g., Spanish for Spanish speakers) (specify languages):

i. ☐ Regular subjects (e.g., history, math, science) taught in the foreign language (specify language and subject);

j. ☐ Distance learning (classes taught via distance technology) (specify languages and delivery of format);

k. ☐ Other (please specify):

9. How many foreign language teachers (full- or part-time) are there in your school?

_____ Number of foreign language teachers

10. Please write in the number of foreign language teachers (full- or part-time) in your school who are certified for:

(Write one number for each line; if answer is none, write "0")

a. ☐ Foreign language teaching at the secondary school level

b. ☐ Foreign language teaching at the K-12 level

c. ☐ Secondary school teaching but not specifically foreign language teaching

d. ☐ Foreign language teaching at the elementary school level but not at the secondary level

e. ☐ A different foreign language from the one they teach

f. ☐ More than one foreign language

g. ☐ Recognized as National Board Certified

h. ☐ Others who are not certified (e.g., paraprofessionals, career changers, volunteers, college students)
11. Please write in the number of foreign language teachers in your school who are native speakers of the language they teach. (If the answer is none, write "0")

        Number of native-speaking foreign language teachers

12. Have any of the foreign language teachers at your school participated in professional development or in-service teacher training in their subject area during the past 12 months?

        Yes    No

13. To what extent do language teachers in your school use the foreign language in the classroom?

        (Check only one)

        Less than 50% of the time
        50–74% of the time
        75–90% of the time
        More than 90% of the time

        Comments: _____________________________________________

14. Is there an established and written foreign language curriculum or set of guidelines for your program(s)?

        Yes    No

15. Do the foreign language teachers at your school routinely integrate the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning and/or state foreign language standards into their instruction?

        Yes    No

        Optional comments: __________________________________________

        __________________________________________

16. How often do foreign language teachers in your school use the following instructional materials? (Please indicate, for each type, whether it is used frequently, sometimes, or not at all)

        Frequently  Sometimes  Not at all

        a. Commercially published textbooks/workbooks
        b. Teacher-made materials (specify):
        c. Literature from the target culture (e.g., stories, books, songs, poems)
        d. Media (e.g., films, videotapes, DVDs, CDs, audiocassettes)
        e. Authentic materials from the target culture (reallia) (e.g., menus, magazines, advertisements, newspapers, bus tickets, movie posters)
        f. Visual/Hands-on materials (e.g., posters, pictures, flash cards, games, puzzles)
        g. Internet resources (e.g., World Wide Web, Web Quests, online activities, virtual tours, electronic mail, discussion lists, chats, blogs, wikis, podcasts)
        h. Computer-assisted instructional materials (e.g., computer software programs, CD-ROMs)
        i. Other instructional technology (e.g., satellite broadcasts, interactive television, video conferencing)
        j. Other (specify): __________________________________________

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3

        □ 1 □ 2 □ 3
17. How is students' foreign language proficiency assessed at your school? (For each assessment format listed, please indicate whether it is used frequently, sometimes, or not at all)

a. Student use of illustrations to indicate comprehension (e.g., match illustrations to sequence heard or read) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

b. Student use of English (or native language) to explain what is understood from something heard, read, or viewed in the target language ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

c. Oral proficiency interviews (teacher or outside evaluator interviews individual student to determine student's fluency) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

d. Student presentations (e.g., student prepares presentation/demonstration and delivers it to demonstrate proficiency in the foreign language) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

e. Oral language activities (e.g., student conducts interview, describes drawing, engages in interpersonal exchange or impromptu skill) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

f. Written works produced by student (essays, letters, reports, brochures) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

g. Student portfolios (e.g., compilation of student-selected and/or teacher-selected work over a set period of time, with rating criteria) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

h. Student self-assessment (e.g., student evaluates his/her language skills using oral/written self-evaluations) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

i. Translation exercises (e.g., English > German; German > English) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

j. Selected-response tests (e.g., multiple choice or matching of vocabulary words or grammar structures) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

k. Short-answer tests (student is asked to respond in writing to questions) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

l. Standardized exams (e.g., AP exams, National German Examination, National Latin Exam, National Spanish Exam, SAT II, STMP) (specify) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

m. Other (please describe) ............................................. ☐ ☐ ☐

18. What type of sequencing (articulation) exists for students who have studied foreign language(s) at their previous school level (i.e., in elementary school or middle/junior high school) when they continue foreign language study in your school? (Mark the one statement below that best describes the sequencing for the majority of the students at your school)

☐ Students in our school district do not have foreign language instruction (in the language(s) we teach) before they enter our school

☐ Students are placed in exploratory language classes (general exposure to one or more languages and cultures)

☐ Students are placed in Level I foreign language classes along with students who have had no prior instruction in the language

☐ Students are placed in more advanced classes where the course content and objectives are designed specifically to provide continuity from their prior level

☐ Students are placed in more advanced classes where the course content and objectives are not designed specifically to provide continuity from their prior level

☐ Students can enroll in some subject matter courses taught in the foreign language

☐ Other (specify)

19. Has foreign language instruction in your school been affected by a shortage of qualified language teachers?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain how foreign language instruction has been affected by the shortage:

20. Has foreign language instruction in your school been affected by No Child Left Behind legislation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain:

Please include any additional comments/questions here or on a separate sheet.
APPENDIX 3

Foreign Language Conference Regions as of 2008

Central States (16)
Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin

Northeast (12)
Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

Pacific Northwest (6)
Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming

Southern (9)
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia

Southwest (8)
Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah

Note: The 8 states in bold (Arkansas, Colorado, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia) are considered to be part of more than one region. For the purpose of this survey, they are included in only one region. California and Hawaii were part of the Pacific Northwest region in the 1997 survey, but they are now included in the Southwest.

Full Names of Conference Regions:
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSC)
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NEC)
Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)
Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (SWCOLT)
Pacific Northwest Council for Languages (PNCFL)

APPENDIX 4

Definitions of Metropolitan Status (based on National Center for Education Statistics, 2007)

Urban
Large cities: A principal city of a Metropolitan Core-based Statistical Area with the city having a population of 250,000 or more.
Mid-size city: A central city of a Metropolitan Core-based Statistical Area with the city having a population of less than 250,000.

Suburban
Urban fringe of a large city: Any incorporated place, Census-designated place, or nonplace territory within a Core-based Statistical Area of a large city, and defined as urban by the Census Bureau.
Urban fringe of a mid-size city: Any incorporated place, Census-designated place, or non-place territory within a Core-based Statistical Area of a mid-size city, and defined as urban by the Census Bureau.

Large town: An incorporated place or Census-designated place with a population of 25,000 or more that is located outside a Metropolitan Core-based Statistical Area or inside a Micropolitan Core-based Statistical Area.

Small town: An incorporated place or Census-designated place with a population less than 25,000 and at least 2,500 that is located outside a Metropolitan Core-based Statistical Area or inside a Micropolitan Core-based Statistical Area.

Rural
An incorporated place, Census-designated place, or nonplace territory within or not within a Metropolitan Core-based Statistical Area that is defined as rural by the Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau defines urban territories as having a core population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile and surrounding clusters with an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile. Rural areas are located outside of urban areas or clusters (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002).