

*Lorraine D'Ambruoso and Duarte Silva* argue that we need to transform our World Language teacher supply system and infuse it with 21st century innovation

## Preparing Teachers for the Modern World

### The forces driving greater demand for World Language

teacher preparation in developing students' linguistic and cultural competency in the U.S. have changed dramatically. Americans are ever more cognizant of the fact that we need a linguistically and culturally competent citizenry for an ever smaller world where languages play an important role and are the key to global understanding. This new awareness has serious implications for the future of teacher preparation programs. No longer will we simply be preparing students for post secondary education, but rather to function as world citizens. Although the global economy dictates that all students be able to communicate effectively in English, they must also function in other languages, be it in small business settings or in community service sectors. Thus we must change how we prepare our teachers, so that they are not simply fluent in the languages they teach, but also well-versed in sound pedagogical practices, utilizing current multi-media technologies, and successfully interacting with their students, schools and communities.

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Post-Secondary Education reported that 36 states, including California and

the District of Columbia had teacher shortages in languages other than English (LOTE). Yet at the same time, we are experiencing the rapid growth of a global market requiring professionals with diverse linguistic and cultural competency, talent, innovation, creativity and problem-solving skills. Expanding America's linguistic competency is a market-driven imperative! However, we cannot accomplish this unless we transform our World Language teacher supply system and infuse our programmatic offerings with 21st century knowledge and innovation. This includes the ability to look at life from other perspectives and to communicate with diverse audiences, not just abroad but here in the U.S., where we have residents who speak more than 300 languages and come from almost as many cultural backgrounds.



### The changing landscape of World Language majors

According to some experts including House Representative Rush Holt (D — NJ), a major supporter of the National Security Education Program, most students are not interested in majoring in languages. Rather, they often fall into language study as part of a double major, for example, in combination with studies in engineering, business, or science. So we are faced with the challenge of how to capitalize on this new trend and tempt such students to consider language education as a career. At the same time, we need to ensure that they acquire the advanced level of proficiency necessary to become the dynamic language teachers so needed in today's society. The changing landscape of world language education clearly demonstrates that, in order to remain a viable and vibrant professional community and meet the new and challenging demands of our ever-evolving discipline, we can no longer rely on the same paradigm pertaining to teacher recruitment, preparation, and induction into the profession.

### The evolving nature of language programs

The demands of the 21st century have led to changes in our traditional world language program offerings. In early language learning, immersion programs are increasing in popularity; but these effective programs require a high level of language competency as well as a breadth of subject matter knowledge on the part of the teacher. Today more than ever, "language teaching involves more than just teaching languages" (Tochon, 2009, pg 20). In other words, these programs require teachers with the kind of language and subject matter majors previously described, yet there are still too few such programs to effectively address the growing language needs of the nation. In addition, there are too few teacher preparation programs that focus on preparing individuals to teach in these content-based language programs.

At the high school level, heritage/native speaker language programs are also increasing across the nation, but especially in California. These programs also require teachers who possess high levels of language, literacy, and cultural expertise, as well as competency in other subject areas, due to the fact that students often take other course work in their native languages and in some contexts, receive academic credit for both the language and the content work. Thus, today's language educators need to be prepared to address the learning needs of their diverse student populations, which also include students who have already completed immersion programs and have needs different from those of the traditional world languages student.

Another major trend in language education is the growth of programs in the less commonly taught languages, such as Arabic, Farsi, Hindi and Mandarin. STARTALK, FLAP grants, Flagship programs and other such initiatives are generating growing enthusiasm for the learning of these languages which are commonly touted as the "languages of opportunity" for the 21st century. These programs demand additional, more effective and differently prepared teachers who can develop elementary and immersion language programs, teach less commonly taught and high need languages, and perhaps even create online and blended learning opportunities for diverse language learners.

We need to augment the supply of candidates to the language teaching profession in order to meet the changing programmatic demands and, at the same time, enhance our current programs to increase their effectiveness in preparing world language teachers for all learning contexts, including those that extend learning beyond the classroom. How might we remediate the current situation in terms of teacher supply and preparation? There are several avenues by which we might find these potential new sources of educators and explore different approaches on how to best prepare them to support 21st century language learners.

In terms of financial support, there are incentives available for students interested in majoring in World Languages, in the form of the College Cost Reduction Act, H.R. 2669 (<http://www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/ccrasummary.html>). These incentives may encourage more students to choose World Languages as a major focus for post-secondary studies. Then, there are the human resources found in the heritage language communities, STARTALK participants, educated native speakers and non-teachers with high levels of cultural knowledge and language proficiency. These include former Peace Corps volunteers, language majors who previously pursued other careers, and former military and government personnel. All of these have the potential of increasing the pool of language educators, pro-



vided that we have a range of preparation programs that address their diverse backgrounds and needs.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is to transform the teacher-supply system by creating innovative approaches related to licensure. As we begin to examine and understand more fully the changing local and global contexts of language education and their implications for teacher preparation, the need for a paradigm shift emerges regarding how we recruit, prepare, certify and support new language teachers. President Obama has stated that “Education and innovation will be the currency of the 21st century.” In no discipline should this be more evident than in World Language Education.

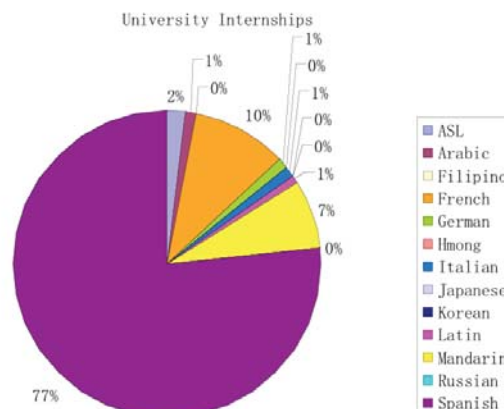
**Who is currently preparing California’s educators?**

**Number of Total Credentialing Documents Issued in California between July 1, 2008–June 30, 2009**

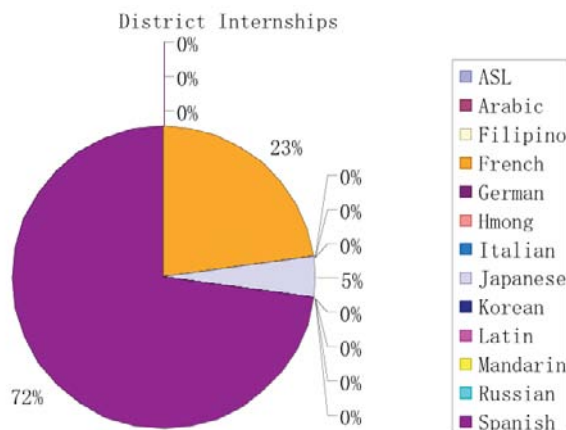
	Single Subject	Multiple Subject	Education Specialist	Total
<b>CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY</b>				
First Time	579	987	58	1,624
New Type	2,562	3,736	1,496	7,794
CSU Total	3,141	4,723	1,554	9,418
<b>UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA</b>				
First Time	162	119	3	284
New Type	314	313	19	646
UC Total	476	432	22	930
<b>PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS</b>				
First Time	354	524	22	900
New Type	2,531	2,675	1,323	6,549
Private Total	2,885	3,199	1,365	7,449
<b>ALL INSTITUTIONS</b>				
First Time	1,095	1,630	83	2,808
New Type	5,407	6,724	2,858	14,989
Total	6,502	8,354	2,941	17,797

Although a primary mission for the California State University (CSU) system continues to be teacher education, according to the above chart providing the latest (2008-09) data available from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, private/independent institutions appear to be gaining ground in teacher preparation for California’s public schools, preparing approximately 8,000 teachers annually, while CSU prepares nearly 10,000 and the University of California just under 1000 (Suckow 2010), pgs. 18-20).

A new trend for alternative teacher preparation programs has emerged in California, where local educational agencies offer preparation programs and, in 2008-2009, were responsible for supporting approximately 4000 teachers to become certified as a result of completing district/county office of education-based programs. This new development is not unique to California - the National Center for Alternative Certification (NCAC) reports that every state now has at least one alternative route to teacher certification. While California offers several of these alternative routes, recent data suggests that alternative/internship programs have declined between 2007-08 and 2008-09 at the rate of 27.7 percent for institutions of higher education and 2.2 percent for county/district-sponsored programs. Despite this trend, approximately 4000 teachers were granted alternative certification via Institutions of Higher Education and district-based programs in 2008-09 (Suckow, 2010, pg 7).



**Chart I: University Internship-based Issued Credentials**



**Chart II: District Internship-based Issued Credentials**

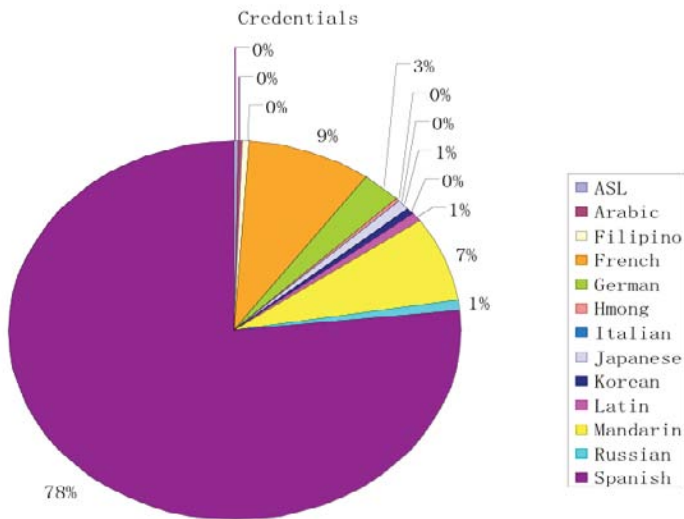
Across the nation, in 2007-2008, 62,000 individuals earned certificates to teach through alternative routes, nearly doubling the number of five years earlier. An overview of alternative routes shows that they are market driven, with the driving factors being school requirements and teacher candidate needs. They result in a multiplicity of tailor-made programs designed to meet specific needs for specific teachers in specific areas.

We will need to examine the possibilities of alternative or multiple-pathway routes within and outside of traditional teacher education programs in order to remain the key purveyors of the World Language “education currency” that Americans need to successfully interact in today’s global economy. Furthermore, we will need to leverage our national and international resources to form partnerships that create and perpetuate innovative best practices in teacher preparation that offer an array of alternative pathways for future educators to demonstrate what they know and are able to do in terms of content knowledge and pedagogical skills. They will also need to be certified based on these competencies and not necessarily on completing a number of hours in a specific program. (In fact, this parallels the current vision for language learning that advocates for demonstration of communicative competence rather than seat time.)

These proposed alternative routes all have characteristics in common. The candidate must possess a bachelor’s degree or its equivalent in the language(s) they plan to teach, pass a screening process to demonstrate subject matter knowledge, acquire effective pedagogical

practices through coaching and mentoring while teaching, collaborate with colleagues in the field by joining professional organizations and networks, and meet high performance standards while engaging in on-the-job training. In California, each alternative program must show how interns are mentored and assessed in addition to demonstrating how it enables them to continue to grow as professional educators.

The research of Feistritz and Haar, 2006, reveals some surprises about alternative credentialing pathways. First of all, there is no evidence of differences in teacher effectiveness after two years of teaching. The candidates report that their clinical teaching experience was the primary variable in developing teaching competence and cite it as more valuable than course work. For individuals who are changing careers or who must earn a living while completing a credentialing program, internship and other multiple-pathways to licensure are a viable option for meeting the increased need for potential educators who have the knowledge and cultural competency as well as the professional experience and disposition to teach critical languages in our schools.



**Chart III Percentage of World Language teachers certified in California in 2008-09**

When looking at the data featured in Chart I opposite, it becomes abundantly clear that California continues to focus on credentialing teachers for the traditional commonly-taught languages such as French and Spanish. Regardless of language, we seem to rely on attracting the World Language majors and minors from colleges of arts and sciences or from the schools of education in our public and private universities, both inside and outside of California. However, this source of potential educators is insufficient to meet California's current needs.

Currently, California, along with approximately 26 other states, uses guest teachers from other countries to address its teacher shortage needs. The majority of these guest teachers come from China, Spain and France, with smaller numbers from Mexico, Taiwan and Germany. But this is hardly enough to meet the growing demand; and since most of these teachers stay on an average of three years or less, this model does not provide for a long-term sustainable supply to address the critical needs in the field. Another source is teachers prepared outside of California.

### New ways to address the ever-growing demand

Although it is not yet considered a formal alternative or internship credentialing program, the recently established STARTALK teacher professional development program appears to be a good basis for recruiting, preparing and channeling individuals who speak languages that have been identified as critical to the nation's security and economic priorities and inspire them to pursue teaching careers in the field of World Language education. The key components of this program are standards-based curriculum design, communicative teaching methods, proficiency-oriented assessment tasks, classroom management and mentoring. When the STARTALK participants reflect on their experiences, they report that the program elements that were of most value to them were the opportunities to engage in micro-teaching and to observe master teachers in actual classrooms, the blending of theory and practice featuring concrete examples of applied linguistics and the networking and collaborating with colleagues (STARTALK Teacher Survey, 2008). Several California public and private colleges and universities (San Francisco and San Diego State, UC Berkeley, UCLA, Loyola Marymount, Occidental College and Stanford University among others) have been awarded grants to implement these professional development programs that provide an excellent entry into the field of World Language education and could play a key role in supplying schools with individuals to teach the languages and cultures that are in high demand in our society today.

Over the next decade, the most vibrant innovations in learning are likely to take place outside of the traditional educational institutions which now face a critical dilemma: how to reconcile bottom-up development in education with the traditional top-down hierarchy that has historically governed teacher preparation programs. This process has the potential to transform the U.S. education landscape from a World of Schooling to a World of Learning with the goal of involving potential World Language educators in identifying shared interests, challenges, and strategies so as to create transformative solutions regarding the preparation of a highly effective World Language teaching force for America's future. **X**

### References

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