

# PENNSYLVANIA LANGUAGE FORUM



Pennsylvania State Modern  
Language Association

# PSMLA Exemplary Program Award 2018 PEP Schools



## GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS

**Abington Senior High School**, Abington S.D., Abington, 2013-18

**Academy of Notre Dame**, Villanova, 2005-18

**Carlynton Jr./Sr. High School**, Carlynton S.D., Carnegie, 2015-16 2017-18

**Chartiers Valley High School**, Chartiers Valley S.D., Bridgeville, 2014-15 2017-18

**Fairview High School**, Fairview S.D., Fairview, 2017-18

**Merion Mercy Academy**, Lower Marion S.D., Merion Station, 2005-06 2015-18

**Owen J. Roberts High School**, Owen J. Roberts S.D., Pottstown, 2013-18

**Penncrest High School**, Rosetree Media S.D., Media, 2005-06 2012-13 2014-19

**Pequea Valley High School**, Pequea Valley S.D., Kinzers, 2017-18

**Pittsburgh Alderdice High School**, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh, 2005-06 2007-18

**Pittsburgh Brashear High School**, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh, 2016-19

**Strath Haven High School**, Wallingford-Swarthmore S.D., Wallingford, 2015-18

**Upper Moreland High School**, Upper Moreland Township S.D., Willow Grove, 2009-18

**William Penn Charter School**, Philadelphia, 2017-18



## SILVER GLOBE AWARDS

**Boiling Springs High School**, South Middleton S.D., Boiling Springs, 2012-13 2014-15 2017-18

**Cumberland Valley H. S.**, Cumberland Valley S.D., Mechanicsburg, 2013-14 2015-18

**Gateway High School**, Gateway S.D., Monroeville, 2010-11 2012-13 2014-15 2016-17 2018-19

**North Hills Senior High School**, North Hills S.D., Ross Twp., 2014-15 2016-19

**Plymouth Whitmarsh High School**, Colonial S.D., Plymouth Meeting, 2017-18



## BRONZE GLOBE AWARDS

**Gettysburg Area High School**, Gettysburg Area S.D., Gettysburg, 2015-18

**J.P McCaskey High School Campus**, S.D. of Lancaster, Lancaster, 2014-19

**Mt. Pleasant Area High School**, Mt. Pleasant Area S.D., Mt. Pleasant, 2018-19



## GLOBE AWARDS

**Delaware Valley High School**, Delaware Valley S.D., Milford, 2015-18

**Hanover High School**, Hanover Public S.D., Hanover, 2017-18

**Hempfield Area High School**, Hempfield Area S.D., Greensburg, 2018-19

**Milton Hershey School – Senior Hall**, 2018-19

**Pine-Richland High School**, Pine-Richland S.D., Gibsonia, 2018-19

**Phoenixville Area High School**, Phoenixville S.D., Phoenixville, 2018-19

**Titusville Area High School**, Titusville Area S.D. Titusville, 2017-18

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About PLF, Submissions and Contact.....	2
Message from the President .....	3
Message from the Editor .....	3
How I Utilize Available Resources for Peer Learning, Encouraging Socialization, and Building Global Perspectives .....	4
Russian Culture Lesson Plan: Geography.....	6
Russian Vocabulary Lesson Plan: Clothes .....	10
A Model For Attracting Students To College-Level Language Study: Juniata’s Community-Engaged Collaborations .....	13
Pennsylvania Language Proficiency Requirements for Teacher Candidates: The Disconnect between PDE and ACTFL/CAEP on the OPI and WPT.....	20

## ABOUT

*Pennsylvania Language Forum* (PLF) is the annual publication of the *Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association*. It features articles on teaching strategies, lesson plans, project ideas, and research by and for world language teachers in Pennsylvania.

PSMLA Members will receive a printed copy mailed to their address on file as well as online access through the Members Only page of the website. A digital archive of previous issues is also available online for members. Visit [www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org) to access PLF online.

## SUBMISSIONS

Article submissions are accepted on a rolling basis but must be received by June 1 to be considered for publication in the fall issue of PLF.

### Submission Guidelines

- PSMLA members may submit **titled** articles related to teaching and language education.
- All submissions must be written in English, though examples of lessons or student work may be in the target language.
- All articles must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document or a Google Doc, formatted using Times New Roman 12-point font and be double-spaced. PDF article submissions will not be considered for publication.
- Scanned documents and photographs that accompany the article submission must be clearly identified and labeled. They must be submitted as a JPG or PNG.
- All documents of the submission must include the following information:
  - Name(s) of author(s)
  - Affiliation(s)
  - Language(s) taught
  - Intended levels, when relevant
  - Release Form (available at [www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org))

Send submission materials in a **single email** to [PALanguageForum@psmla.org](mailto:PALanguageForum@psmla.org). The subject line of the email should list the last name of the primary **author(s)** and the title of the article/submission. *Example: Smith & Doe - Cultural Comparisons*. Include only **one** submission per email.

All authors and any co-authors must be current PSMLA members. PSMLA members whose work is chosen for publication will be notified via email and receive \$10 "PSMLA Bucks" which are redeemable for PSMLA membership renewal or registration at a PSMLA-sponsored workshop or event. PSMLA Bucks expire one year from the date of issue and are non-transferrable.

## Contact PLF

Companies and organizations that wish to advertise in PLF, which reaches hundreds of world language educators annually in print and online, should visit the Advertising Manager's page on the PSMLA website ([www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org)).

Questions may be directed to Megan Flinchbaugh, Editor of PLF, at [PALanguageForum@psmla.org](mailto:PALanguageForum@psmla.org).

**Mina Levenson**  
**President**  
**Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association**

What a crisis!

According to the Pew Research Center, only 20% of United States students study a foreign language. Why is this? What is the problem? How will this affect our students' preparation moving forward? How will this affect the economic competitiveness of the US in the future? Even in the European countries with the overall lowest scores (Belgium, 64%; Portugal, 69%), between 90-98% of the secondary students study at least 1, if not 2 foreign languages. If students are not exposed to and do not develop skills in foreign languages at the K-12 level, how can we create interest and, consequently, prepare them to become linguistically competent?

There exists an obvious need for learning languages. Each language manifests the thoughts and actions of a particular society, and by its nature, facilitates respect, understanding, and a plethora of interactions. What a powerful platform we have!

On a more personal level, take a moment to contemplate the successes, both large and small, that you as a teacher have effected. Perhaps it was a smile from a normally reticent student, a "5" on the AP Exam, an "aha" moment, or a communication from a former student who actively uses the language in his or her daily work. Regardless, each of us has made the language come alive for our students and has provided a new connective framework to expand their world.

This year's conference, "**Get to the Point-Languages Matter**", will offer sessions on varied aspects of language learning and application. We at Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA) are dedicated to supporting you and your efforts to demonstrate that "languages DO matter".

Please accept my best wishes for a peaceful and productive school year. Be well.

**Megan Flinchbaugh**  
**Editor**  
**Pennsylvania Language Forum**  
**Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association**



*Pennsylvania Language Forum* (PLF) is a collection of articles from world language teachers and college professors about successful lesson plans and projects, trends in language education, and research relevant to the profession. We strive to bring you articles that can give you new insights and help you improve or enhance your classroom practice.

With this volume of PLF, we invite you to review creative lesson plans, reflect on the future of language education, and explore ways to engage students in language and culture outside the walls of the classroom. As you read the research, articles, and lesson plans, consider how they are applicable to your own classroom. How can the lesson plans be adapted to meet the needs of your students? Can you partner with a local university to encourage continued language study among your students? Are there activities you can adopt in your school to engage students in cultural activities outside of class? What other take-aways will you find in this issue of PLF?

This year's online materials are additional materials from the PLF lesson plans for the Russian classroom, by V. Porechnaia. To access the appendices and the entire PDF version of the journal, visit [www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org), and click on Publications. There you will find individual links to the online materials related to print articles. You will also find this and other PLF volumes.

As Editor of PLF I am pleased to work with educators in the role of author. I hope you will consider sharing your own expertise, research, experience, and ideas with the readers of PLF, your colleagues in the field of world language education. All submissions received by June 1, 2019 will be considered for possible publication in the Fall 2019 issue of PLF. For more details, including how to submit an article, visit [www.psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum](http://www.psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum).



# **How I Utilize Available Resources for Peer Learning, Encouraging Socialization, and Building Global Perspectives**

Y. Ming Rui

Teacher, Mandarin Chinese  
Dean of International Student Affairs  
Winchester Thurston School  
ruiy@winchesterthurston.org

I teach high school Mandarin Chinese and serve as the Dean of International Student Affairs in the Winchester Thurston School (WT). When I transitioned from teaching in the Middle School to the Upper School, I noticed the following:

- WT students need more exposure to other cultures and perspectives.
- More collaboration is needed across the board.
- Many excellent teachers and students have expertise beyond the subjects they teach and study.
- The international students from China need to integrate into the school environment quickly.

To address the first three of these realizations, I started the International Club of Cultures (the Club) to encourage cultural exchanges and learning. The Club has invited many teachers and students to introduce their topics of expertise and provide opportunities for discussions. The following are some of the topics presented by staff, current and former students, and community members who have personal experience with the subject:

- Diverse religious holidays
- Volunteer opportunities;
- College life;
- International family life;
- Brazilian culture;
- Lebanese foods and culture;
- Funny tattoos in Chinese characters;
- African American music;
- Japanese cultures;
- Korean K-Pop music;
- Asian identities and prejudice.

Along with the presentations, the Club has cultural activities that bring together the WT community to celebrate the Chinese New Year and actively participate in Earth Day, International Heritage Day, and many school events. Finally, the club collaborated with an art class to design logos. The Club members then voted for their favorite logo (pictured).

Intentional collaboration can happen across all subjects and student organizations using the resources already available within a school.

Logo designed by art students and chosen by the Club members.



The Lower School student tries to write the Chinese New Year greetings with a Chinese brush. An international parent volunteer and student are monitoring the activity.



An international student club leader is monitoring the table for the Earth Day celebration.



In order to address the final realization that Chinese students need to more quickly integrate into the school environment and in order to maximize peer learning, native Chinese speakers pair with students who are learning Chinese as a second language. It is an effective way for students to learn languages, and it also provides opportunities for native Chinese students to socialize and integrate. Designing interview projects that involve international students for Chinese language classes has produced amazing learning opportunities.

An international student and a student who is learning Chinese in a learning exchange meeting.



The following is a part of the project done by a Chinese 2 student:

木东文, 中文2, 10年级, 2016年1月15号

“Harrison的中文名字是孔XX。他要英文名字因为大多数美国人不会说他的中国名字。他十六岁。他的生日是三月二十三日。他比大多十年级学生老。在中国他住在山东青岛海边。他喜欢中国因为他的爸爸妈妈和好朋友住在中国，一切都熟悉。在中国他喜欢吃川菜。川菜辣。他想中国。在中国他喜欢圣诞节。.....”

# Russian Culture Lesson Plan: Geography

Viktoriia Porechnaia

Instructor, Russian

Juniata College, Huntingdon, PA

*Mentor: Elena Petukhova, Associate Professor, English as a Second Language  
Kursk State University, Kursk, Russia*

**Students' level:** Russian I

**Prerequisite skills / Knowledge needed:**

Constructions: There is/There are, he is/she is + job, is/are situated

Basic vocabulary

## WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES:

### Communication

*Interpersonal communication:* Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed or written conversations to share information, reactions feelings and options

### Culture

*Relating cultural products to perspectives:* Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.

### Comparisons

*Cultural comparisons:* Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own. (In this plan students compare cultures in L1)

### Connections

*Making connections:* Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.

## BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES.

**By the end of the class the students will be able to...**

- Recognize, show and name 8 Russian cities (Moscow, Murmansk, Yaroslavl, Kaliningrad, Vladivostok, Kutak, Sochi, Saint-Petersburg);
- Recognize, show and name 4 Russian regions (Yakutia, Siberia, Chukotka, Central Russia);
- Recognize, show and name 4 other Russian geographical objects (Baikal Lake, Obskaya Guba, Tatarskiy Proliv);
- Spell all the geographical objects' names in Russian;
- Tell what cities are in Russia using the structure **in Russia there is/are...**;
- Explain in what Russian region a city is situated using the structure **...is situated in...**
- Explain in Russian what there **is/are** in some Russian regions (for example, **in Yakutia there are diamonds**, etc.)
- Say who Michail Lomonosov and Michail Kutusov are.
- Compare Russian and American administrative division, geographical objects in English.
- Make comparisons between some events and people in Russian and American history.



## TEACHING PROCEDURES/SEQUENCE:

### Anticipatory Set:

Estimated Time	Organization	Description
2 min	Whole group	Greet the students. Ask them about the date and day of the week. Open a PowerPoint presentation. Show the first slide with a Russian flag. Ask the students what colors are on the flag ( <i>Какие цвета есть на русском флаге?</i> ) Using gestures ask them about the possible topic of the class ( <i>Какая у нас тема?</i> ).
3 min	Whole group	Open the next slide and name the topic (Russian Geography). Show a blank world map. Ask one of the students to come up and draw Russia's borders. Ask the rest of the students if they agree or not ( <i>Вы согласны?</i> ). If necessary, correct the student's work and draw the real Russian borders.
4 min	Pair Work	Show a blank Russian map. Distribute worksheets. Ask the students to brainstorm in pairs and write Russian cities/regions/geographical objects they know. The students ask each other "What is there in Russia?" ( <i>Что есть в России?</i> ) and answer "In Russia there is..." ( <i>В России есть...</i> ) They are familiar with the structure but may forget and need guidance; write it on the board.
5 minutes	Whole Group	Ask the students to share the information they came up with. Ask the students not only to answer the question they ask each other but also to come to the board, mark on the map and write down the city/region/geographical objects they named. Do not correct anything; they are going to do so by themselves after watching the video.

Estimated Time	Organization	Description
15 min	Whole group	<p>Show the pictures of a very famous Russian comedian Pavel Volia. (<i>Павел Воля</i>). Ask the students to guess his job. They use the structure, “He is a...” (<i>Он ...</i>) in Russian. Show more pictures and say that he is stand-up comic and a teacher of Russian and Russian literature. He is going to speak about Russian geography. Their goal is to listen and try to catch all the geographical objects he speaks about and shows on the map of Russia.</p> <p>The video is 7:45 minutes long. Divide it into 3 parts (approx. 2/3/2:45 minutes). After watching each part, pause the video and first ask, “What is there in Russia?” (<i>Что есть в России?</i>) As they answer, write geographical names on the board. When they come across not a region but, for example, a lake ask another question “Where is...situated?” (<i>Где ... находится?</i>) Write down all the objects and regions’ names on the board for visual support.</p> <p>At some moment in the video they will come across the names of Lomonosov and Kutuzov; they will also come across the Patriotic War of 1812. Using language, gestures and pictures, explain the people’s jobs. Tell briefly about the Patriotic War in English.</p>
3 min	Whole group	<p>After watching the last part of the video, come back to the map of Russia where students marked some geographical names. Ask them to come to the board and correct their mistakes.</p>
4 min	Whole group	<p>Name the geographical objects from the video and discussed. Ask to come up to the board again, mark and write down the appropriate name. Answer the question, “Where is... situated?” (<i>Где находится...?</i>) If it is something that was discussed in the video, ask, “What is there in...?” (<i>Что есть в...?</i>) If the students make mistakes, ask their peer students to correct mistakes.</p>

8 min	Whole group	<p>Open the US map. Ask the students in English:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the difference between the Russian and American administrative divisions?</li> <li>2) Now you are familiar with some Russian geographical objects. Compare them with American ones. Is there anything similar? What is unique about American/ Russian geographical objects?</li> <li>3) In the video, you came across the Patriotic War of 1812. This was a very important part of Russian history, the moment when our people showed their national character. Can you think about some similar events in your history? Are they connected with some specific parts of your country?</li> <li>4) You are also familiar with two outstanding Russian people (Lomonosov and Kutuzov). They had a great impact on Russian history. What outstanding American people played an important part in the history of your country? Give some examples.</li> </ol> <p>At the end of the conversation, thank the students.</p>
-------	-------------	---

<b>Estimated Time</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>
3 min	Whole group	Conduct an informal formative assessment through an online tool like Kahoot. The quiz is based on the video content.
2 min	Whole group	Congratulate the winner. Thank everyone for their participation.
1 min	Whole group	Say goodbye to students.

# Russian Vocabulary Lesson Plan: Clothes

Viktoriia Porechnaia

Instructor, Russian

Juniata College, Huntingdon, PA

*Mentor: Elena Petukhova, Associate Professor, English as a Second Language*

*Kursk State University, Russia*

**Students' level:** Russian I

## **PREREQUISITE SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE NEEDED FOR THIS LESSON:**

- Gender of nouns and adjectives, plural form of adjectives and nouns
- Constructions I have/she has/he has; I like ... because...
- Colors
- Question "What is it?"

## **WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES:**

### **Communication**

#### *Interpretive communication*

Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.

In this lesson students engage in interpretive communication when they listen to the song and name colors they see. They also engage in interpretive communication when they watch a video and tick clothes they see/fill in the blanks with the correct colors.

#### *Interpersonal communication*

Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.

In this lesson it takes place when students work in pairs and create Lisa's outfit for an occasion. They negotiate the meaning of clothing items while working together and asking the questions, "What is it?" and "What does she have?"

## **Cultures**

### *Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives*

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.

In this lesson, using very simple phrases they know, students compare Colombian, Russian, and French styles in clothes saying, for example, "In Colombia they like...but in Russia they like...."

### **Comparisons**

#### *Cultural comparisons*

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.

In this lesson students compare different styles in clothes.

## **BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE(S):**

Students will:

- Review colors.
- Recognize and name items of clothing introduced by the teacher.
- Describe the girl's outfits for different occasions.
- Demonstrate understanding of color and clothes vocabulary when doing listening tasks.
- Compare different clothing styles.

## TEACHING PROCEDURES/SEQUENCE:

### Anticipatory Set:

Estimated Time	Organization	Description
2 min	Whole group	Greet the students. Ask them about the date and day of the week. Show them today's topic (clothes). Tell them that before talking about clothes we are going to review our previous topic (colors).
3 min	Whole group	Sing "Oranzhevaya song". Because there are many colors in it, students sing and review them.
3 min	Whole group	Show different colors in a PowerPoint presentation. Ask students to name each of them. (Use animation.)

### Development:

Estimate d Time	Organization	Description
3 min	Whole group	Tell students that the teacher has a friend whose name is Lisa. She likes different colors, and she wants to be trendy. In her wardrobe one can find different clothes. Show Lisa in the PowerPoint presentation. Items of clothing are animated. Teacher pronounces items of clothing, they move, their names appear.
2 min	Whole group	Show students different items of clothing individually. Ask students to name them. (Use animation. The clothes move on the first click, the names appear on the second click)
2 min	Whole group	Play "What is missing?": Show pictures with clothes. One item is always missing. Ask the students to name it. Use animation to make the missing item appear after the students name it. Play several rounds with several different outfits.
6 min	Whole group	Tell students that Lisa is now going to a party. Ask them what she is supposed to wear. Students see the girl in the presentation. Have a picture of the girl and different items of clothing. Students raise their hands. Ask one of them to take any item and "dress up" the girl. Another student comes up, chooses and sticks the name of the item chosen by the previous students. When the picture is complete, ask what the girl is wearing. (Print out and crop 3 pictures of the girl and 3 slides with clothes and words to dress up the girl 3 times)



6 min	Pair work	Distribute similar worksheets. Each pair of students gets a picture with the place where the girl is going to go (party, café, work). They are to choose the proper outfit asking each other, “What is it” ( <i>Что это?</i> ) and sticking the names of items of clothing they chose asking each other, “What does she have?” ( <i>Что у неё есть?</i> )
5 min	Whole group	The students summarize their discussions. They show their pictures of Lisa and describe to the whole class what the girl is. Ask them about colors. For example, say “what a nice dress she has! What color is it?” ( <i>Какое красивое платье! Какого оно цвета?</i> ) They are familiar with gender and appropriate endings. Start giving their descriptions with color adjectives. Help with their sentences if needed.
5 min	Whole group	Tell the students that Lisa has 3 friends from 3 different countries. They have different styles and also like clothes of different colors. Distribute worksheets. Ask to listen and tick clothes for each of the girls. They check their answers afterwards.
3 min	Whole group	Show the video clip “Yellow boots”. Distribute worksheets with lyrics. The students are to fill in the blanks with the correct color adjective depending on the gender of nouns. The video shows Russian style. Check student answers afterwards.

### Closure:

Estimated Time	Organization	Description
4 min	Whole group	Voting for the best style (Colombian, French, Irish, Russian). Students say whose style they like: “I like ...style because she has....” ( <i>Мне нравится ... стиль потому что у неё есть....</i> )
4 min	Whole group	Briefly summarize peculiarities of Colombian/French/Russian styles. Say, “In Colombia they like...” ( <i>В Колумбии им нравится...</i> ), “In France they like...” ( <i>Во Франции им нравится...</i> ), “In Russia they like...” ( <i>В России им нравится...</i> ). Ask students what clothes they like in the USA. Ask students to draw/find their friend’s picture, tell about her/his clothes and style: “I like ...style because she/he has...”.
1 min	Whole group	Say goodbye to students.

# **A Model For Attracting Students To College-Level Language Study: Juniata's Community-Engaged Collaborations**

Judith G. Benz, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, German  
*benz@juniata.edu*

Amy Frazier-Yoder, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Spanish  
*frazier@juniata.edu*

Deborah W. Roney, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, English and Director of Language in Motion Juniata College  
*roneyd@juniata.edu*

## **Introduction**

High school language teachers and college language faculty alike often share a similar desire, that high school language students will choose to continue their language studies, either in the same language and/or by starting a new language, in college. College faculty are also interested in showcasing the great work they do with their current students, enhancing learning for those students, and attracting new students to the college's language programs. Providing opportunities for current college students to serve as role models for high school students can help meet all these goals and meet high school teachers' expressed interest in engaging their students with college faculty and students on their campuses.

Juniata College, a small liberal arts college in rural central Pennsylvania, strongly supports both community-engaged learning for its students and collaborations with community partners in all disciplines. For the World Languages and Cultures Department, such engagement comes primarily through Language in Motion, Juniata's PaCIE-award-winning community-engagement program in languages and cultures, through which international students, study-abroad returnees, heritage speakers, and upper-level language students present in K-12 classrooms.

In addition, Language in Motion and faculty in World Languages and Cultures collaborate to offer periodic on-campus events to which upper-level high-school language students and teachers from several schools are invited. These events provide opportunities for the college students to learn through giving to others. As George Kuh (2008) noted, "giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and . . . working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life."

In addition to allowing for practice of the target language and participation in activities informed by the target cultures, such events show the high school students that there are

others interested in languages and cultures and allow them to experience the college community and college learning environment in a way that is not usually accessible to them as part of a traditional campus visit. Meanwhile, high school teachers and faculty in the same field have a chance to network. College host students model for the high school visitors their own increased language fluency and cultural learning, excitement about combining language study with other academic interests, and enthusiasm for attending college.

Two events that have been particularly successful at Juniata and hosted multiple times are German Opportunities Day and Language in Motion Spanish Language Immersion Day. They are popular with high-school attendees, and teachers often vie for spots for their students. Language in Motion provides connections to schools and teachers, logistical and organizational support, and some presenters. Significantly, though, the language faculty, their students, and other volunteers provide the appropriate language and culture content. Overall, careful planning and well-chosen collaborations are key to success.

Although at Juniata these events are coordinated at the college for high school students to help address the learning needs of both student groups, this model is highly adaptable to different institutional settings. For example, such events could be hosted by a collaboration of high school teachers of one language, either within one school or across nearby districts. Alternatively, collaborating language faculty at multiple institutions of higher education could host an event for students with similar proficiency levels.

Below is a brief explanation of these events and how to host something similar, including a planning calendar, planning considerations, information about volunteers and contributors, event ideas, and benefits for the hosting students.

## Considerations for the Planning Calendar

These events involve high school students, teachers, administrators, college students, professors, and administrators, as well as personnel from the event-planning office and from facilities services. Because of the various participants and stakeholders, it is important to allow plenty of time for the planning process. Below are some suggestions for planning an event with numerous collaborators; see also Figure 1: Planning Calendar, Part One.

<b>Planning Calendar (1):</b>	
<b>Long Term:</b>	<b>Short Term:</b>
Date selection	Practice
Room bookings	Review
Invitations	Feedback
Syllabi	Adaptations
Volunteer recruiting	Materials collection
Purchases	
Agenda	

Figure 1. Planning Calendar, Part One

- Start early. Consider integrating the event into your syllabi and plan accordingly.
- To include high schools, at least two months' notice is required for teachers to get approval from the school board to make the trip. Teachers should know the tentative agenda early so they can evaluate how the event can support curricular goals and make the case to the administration.
- For college/university faculty planning this type of event, it is crucial to consult the relevant high school calendar(s) and gauge teachers' interest before scheduling the event. Be aware of testing, in-service days, and other major scheduling conflicts at your target school(s).
- Collaborate with your institution's event-planning office, if you have one, for room reservations, room setup, and signage.
- Enlist faculty volunteers from affiliated departments and programs.
- Depending on the availability of funds and the scope of the event, a "save-the-date" mailing or postings through state-level professional organizations' free advertising channels can be great resources to attract visitors from farther afield.

- Consider establishing a social media presence for the event and/or using existing institutional media outlets to promote the event.
- Send an official email announcement or event invitation. Invitations should contain detailed registration information and deadlines, a tentative agenda, recommended preparatory work or readings (if applicable), and a list of what to bring and wear (students tend to come overdressed).
- Make arrangements for media coverage of the event as desired.
- If your state requires criminal and child-abuse clearances for volunteers interacting with high school students, find out how long that process will take and how much they will cost. In Pennsylvania, volunteer clearances are free but can sometimes take several weeks to process.
- Find out whether your college and district(s) require special permission slips. If so, distribute these forms to the teachers at least two weeks ahead since parents/legal guardians must sign and return them.
- Ask teachers whether any accommodations will be needed (dietary, transportation, accessibility, etc.) and make sure these are in place.
- If you are planning to take photos of the event, ask whether all students coming may have their photo taken and publicized.
- Organize prizes for competitions.
- Consider serving a culturally appropriate snack early in the day.
- Make arrangements for lunch: Place the food order, arrange for and print meal vouchers, or organize meal-prep demonstration stations.
- Stay in touch with the teachers for updates on headcounts and permission slips.
- Find out about the schools' transportation plans and make provisions for parking. Send directions, parking information, and a campus map to the teachers.
- Divide the visiting students into groups using index cards or coded name tags that tell each student where to go throughout the day's events. For instance, groups might be based on proficiency level and/or designed to mix students from different schools.
- Finalize and print the agenda, name tags, and signs for recycling, moving students from room to room, etc.
- Locate, organize, and bag all supplies needed for each separate part of the event.
- Collect all required forms at registration.

See also Figure 2: Planning Calendar, Part Two.

<b>Planning Calendar (2):</b>	
<b>2 Days Prior:</b>	<b>1 Day Prior:</b>
<b>Reminders</b>	<b>Final printing</b>
<b>Technology</b>	<b>Food</b>
<b>Folders and</b>	
<b>supply bags</b>	

Figure 2. Planning Calendar, Part Two

### Volunteers and Contributors

The language immersion day's events can be organized and hosted by college students to the degree that works for your program, the proficiency levels of your students, the types of activities you hope to offer throughout the day, the appropriateness of using preparation for and participation in the event as a class assignment, and the availability of students during the event schedule.

Facilitators should consider designing activities to align with the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. In preparing materials, hosting activities for the events described here, and communicating with the visiting students in the target language, host students practice interpersonal, interpretive, and/or presentational communication along with relating cultural products and practices to perspectives (National Standards Collaborative Board 2015). Taking part in the day's events thus provides leadership opportunities and an occasion to interact with the target language and the target cultures even for learners at the Novice level (ACTFL 2012).

In general, the Spanish Language Immersion event relies heavily upon students who are enrolled in Spanish classes at Juniata and volunteers, though about half of the day's events are organized by the professor. German Opportunities Day, in contrast, relies more heavily upon professor-organized events, with about 20 percent of activities organized or led by students.

Students with little or no target language experience can contribute with campus tours and with organizational tasks. Even students taking classes at the introductory level are brought in to help with games and crafts. They practice these immersion day activities in class prior to the event and then participate alongside visiting students as group leaders. Host students at the Intermediate Low through Advanced Low proficiency levels, as defined by the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012, are invited to present projects that they have created for class, such as short films, games, songs, and elevator-pitch speeches, or to join in as group leaders. Students at the Intermediate High and Advanced Low proficiency levels prepare and host activity stations

or present on areas of expertise using materials that they have previously presented for a 300- or 400-level class. Before doing so, they conference with the professor, revise as needed, and practice. In some cases, every student in the class must present. In others, students with superior presentations participate by invitation.

Participation in the event can be assigned as homework or as a graded presentation, but language students and additional volunteers often participate out of love for the target language: language club members, residents of Juniata's Global Village living and learning community, and students who have studied abroad tend to be heavily involved. Additionally, Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, faculty and staff colleagues, alumni, and students who are native speakers also contribute to the day's events. Finally, institutional offices such as admissions can be helpful allies because they can provide financial support and/or additional manpower. As the calendar section of this paper emphasizes, early and repeated contact with collaborators and volunteers is critical.

### Events

No German Opportunities Day or Spanish Language Immersion Day event is ever the same. Though a fixed, repeating agenda might work, the day's events tend to be based on a target-culture theme, to come out of course content being offered that year, and/or to depend heavily upon what volunteers decide to present. Event themes and topics have included popular culture and poetry, fairy tales, cultural icons, holiday traditions, the FIFA soccer World Cup, foods and beverages, dances, famous historical figures, and traditional medicines and beliefs regarding health. A core component, however, is extensive use of the target language: All participants are asked to use the target language, and the activities are designed to encourage that use. They are scaffolded so that students begin the day with relatively simple language tasks and progress to more demanding ones.

Juniata's language immersion days often start with an icebreaker activity in which students mingle with host-student volunteers and with students from other visiting high schools speaking in the target language (see Figures 3 and 4). Participants may be given a simple task such as finding out three things they have in common with others in a group of six students, discovering who or what they are in a game of headbands, or finding their student match in an info gap activity. Faculty volunteers from departments and programs other than World Languages are often asked to contribute by participating in an informal "meet and greet" activity; they share with small groups of visiting and Juniata students how foreign-language study, international experiences, and related professional connections have shaped their careers. To make sure that a dialogue takes place, students have to gather specific pieces of information that are part of a later scavenger hunt. The day continues with a more active game such as "A cold wind blows" or "Human knot."



**JUNIATA COLLEGE  
GERMAN OPPORTUNITIES DAY  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2013  
9:00 A.M. – 1:35 P.M.  
INTRAMURAL (IM) GYM AND ELLIS BALLROOM**

**AGENDA  
(AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

- 9:00 A.M.      REGISTRATION OPENS: LOBBY, KENNEDY SPORTS & RECREATION CENTER**
- Register
  - Enjoy a snack
  - German game
- 9:15 A.M.      KAFFEKLATSCH WITH FACULTY: LOBBY, KENNEDY SPORTS & RECREATION CENTER**
- Explore where German can take you: Converse with Juniata faculty
  - Collect information from each faculty members
- 9:50 A.M.      INTRODUCTION TO THE REST OF THE DAY: LOBBY, KENNEDY SPORTS & RECREATION CENTER**
- 10:00 A.M.      ACTIVITY SESSIONS: IM GYM, LOBBY, KENNEDY SPORTS & RECREATION CENTER**
- FOR TEACHERS:**
- Cooperative designing of a lesson plan for German soccer culture
  - Resources of *Language in Motion*
  - Roundtable discussion: The Joys and Challenges of Teaching German
- FOR STUDENTS (GROUPS ROTATE THROUGH ALL ACTIVITIES):**
- German Jeopardy
  - *Language in Motion* presentations by students from Germany
  - German at Juniata and Beyond: Study abroad, scholarships, and opportunities after graduation
  - Get Your Game On and Your Creative Juices Flowing: *Torwandschiessen* and design your dream-team logo, uniform, or fan gear
- 11:20 A.M.      CAMPUS TOURS: START AT KENNEDY SPORTS & RECREATION CENTER**
- Practice your German: Tours for different proficiency levels, including one for teachers and other advanced speakers
  - Scavenger hunt
- 12:20 P.M.      LUNCH WITH STADIUM FOOD: ELLIS BALLROOM**
- Students eat with Juniata students; teachers eat with faculty and staff
  - Group photo
  - Prizes
- 1:35 P.M.      DEPARTURE**

Figure 3. German Opportunities Day Sample Agenda





**Spanish Immersion Day at Juniata College**

Schedule for Advanced Spanish Students' Visit

**March 23, 2017**

**8:45 Arrival and icebreaker in Sill Boardroom of Von Liebig**

A brief icebreaker game with students from Pop Culture and Poetry

**9:15 Latin American Culture**

After a brief introduction to the day by Deb Roney and Amy Frazier-Yoder, go to the station you are assigned.

■ **Station A: Poets José Martí and Gloria Fuertes**, Sill Boardroom, by screen

■ **Station B: Poet Gabriela Mistral**, Pheasant Lounge/Overlook

■ **Station C: Tangos VLB 2011**

■ **Station D: Poet Antonio Machado**, Sill Boardroom, by windows

**10:20 Break (bathroom, snacks in Sill, and conversations in Spanish)**

**10:30 Traditional Drinks, Cultural Craft, Game**

■ **Station 1: Chocolate/ Mate VLB 2011**

■ **Station 2: Mal de Ojo Bracelets VLB 1022**

■ **Station 3: Juegos Sill Board Room**

**11:40 Return to Sill for tickets for Almuerzo from Eagle's Landing. Ballroom**

Please choose one "meal-exchange" lunch item and one fountain drink.

**12:15 Presentation by Terri Bollman-Dalansky, Enrollment, Ballroom**

**12:30 Tour of Campus and Búsqueda de Tesoros**

**1:00 Dominican Merengue with Yanibel Collado**

**1:30 Evaluations and Closing**

Figure 4. Spanish Language Immersion Day Sample Agenda

Interactive presentations of student research and other student-led activities follow. Visiting students cycle through presentation and activities stations, which may include attending interactive talks (see Figure 5), participating in food preparation demonstrations, trying their hand at a craft such as painting an alebrije or tin nicho (see Figure 6), making a mal de ojo bracelet, decorating cookies, designing a holiday card or soccer jersey, or talking with alumni about opportunities to use the language in various fields after graduation. They also participate in small skits or poetry writing, compete in a game of Jeopardy in the target language, or try to score points in a soccer-target game.

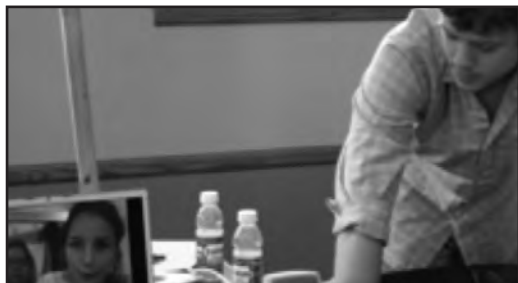


Figure 5. Student and Alumna Presentation



Figure 6. Decorated Tin Nichos

During the day, often just before lunch, students participate in a campus tour that takes them to sites that emphasize the college's strong international offerings. Depending on proficiency levels, these activities are conducted in the target language or in English. During the tour, the information scavenger hunt takes place: Students must learn information about the college and locate and learn about event-related artifacts; this knowledge is tested on their return to the meeting room, where they answer prepared questions for a team prize. Together with Juniata students and faculty, they then either get lunch at their choice of the campus food stations or eat a meal inspired by the

target culture that they or campus catering have prepared. The day wraps up with dance lessons, a sing-along, a craft, or the awarding of prizes, followed by assessment of the day's events and a group photo.

## Benefits

As noted above, participants at all levels of interaction benefit from these collaborative events, but here the focus is on how the college-student participants profit: They practice and model language skills; study, rehearse, and then share what they've learned with high school students; take on leadership roles; and connect with and serve the surrounding community, thereby increasing the visibility of the language program and the college.

Because interactive presentations are practiced in class, discussed with the professor, and then delivered again to the visiting students, the event provides a valuable opportunity to practice and hone presentational skills in the target language. College students are especially motivated to improve and invest in their work when it will be publicly presented. Some benefits, reflected in the host-student comments quoted here, are in the sustained use of the target language ("Simply the fact that I spoke German" and "Learning new words"), the motivation to learn more deeply about the culture ("I learned] more in-depth [knowledge] about Christmas in other countries"), the pride they take in having been successful leaders ("Having to present in front of a larger group of people than usual is a good learning experience"), and the connection they gain with members of the surrounding community ("Understanding the situation and mood of the surrounding student-learning community for Spanish language [was most valuable]"). After the event, student presenters are asked to reflect upon how they could have done better. They said they learned valuable lessons about preparation ("Better preparation" and "Practice more"), time management ("Work on the time management"), and how to deliver content in another language ("I would've facilitated more discussion during the game" and "I would maybe incorporate more examples") and gained greater awareness of their own proficiency levels ("I need to] speak more Spanish"). In many cases, the host students noted: "Presenting is fun" and "We really enjoyed our presentations! We had a lot of fun with it."

We believe in the value of these events for all participants, whether they are hosted across or within educational levels. If you would like to know more about these events or other opportunities through Language in Motion, please contact us.

## References

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. (2012). American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. 3rd ed. Retrieved from [https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf).

Kuh, George D. (2008). High-Impact Educational Practices: A Brief Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>.

The National Standards Collaborative Board. (2015). *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*. 4th ed. Alexandria, VA. Retrieved from <https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/publications/standards/World-ReadinessStandardsforLearningLanguages.pdf>.

**PSMLA wants to connect with you.**

Keep up-to-date with language news,  
PSMLA events, and more.

**Visit us at [www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org)**

**Find us on Facebook:**

Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA)

**Follow us on Twitter: @PSMLA1**

# **Pennsylvania Language Proficiency Requirements for Teacher Candidates: The Disconnect between PDE and ACTFL/CAEP on the OPI and WPT**

Junko Yamamoto, Ed.D.  
Methods Instructor and Student Teacher Supervisor  
Associate Professor  
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania  
Slippery Rock, PA

Keith Corbitt, Ph.D.  
Methods Instructor and Student Teacher Supervisor  
Associate Professor  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA

**Abstract:** In Pennsylvania, teacher candidates must earn a satisfactory score on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview and the ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test in order to be recommended for a teaching certificate from an accredited institution. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has set a minimum score of Intermediate High for both tests. However, ACTFL/CAEP mandates that certification programs set a minimum score of Advanced Low. Borne out of discussions had during the Teacher Educator Roundtable at the 2016 PSMLA Annual Conference, the researchers investigated teacher candidate, teacher, teacher educator and administrator perceptions regarding the diverging minimum proficiency requirements. Data were collected via a Likert-scale survey and an open-ended questionnaire. Findings suggest that while most participants believe that PDE should raise the requirement to Advanced Low, some participants warn that such a move may negatively impact teacher recruitment.

## **Context for World Language Teacher Education**

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in conjunction with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) has created standards for accrediting institutions with world language certification programs. Standard 1, Language Proficiency, mandates that the institutions require teacher candidates of French, German, and Spanish be able to speak in the interpersonal mode at the minimum level of “Advanced Low” on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) by the completion of the program. The minimum rating of “Advanced Low” is also required for the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) (ACTFL, 2015). Advanced speakers are expected to be able to narrate and describe in all major time frames and be capable of communicating using paragraph-length discourse. Likewise, advanced writers are able to narrate and describe in all major time frames (ACTFL, 2012).

The rationale for the “Advanced Low” requirement is that the teachers’ learners need quality input for language acquisition to occur. Teachers who do not have an “Advanced Low” rating or higher have difficulty facilitating spontaneous communication and, concomitantly, tend to depend exclusively on textbook materials and answer keys (ACTFL, n.d.). Teachers with an Intermediate High proficiency level can comfortably speak at the sentence level in present tense; however, their language production breaks down when they need to converse in a situation with compilation. Specifically, grammatical errors are prevalent when these teachers speak in the past or future tenses. Moreover, teachers who cannot speak at the advanced level are not effective in planning, teaching and assessing in all three modes of communication (Glisan, Swender, & Surface, 2013). While the “Advanced Low” rating is required for all Romance Languages and German, a rating of “Intermediate High” on the ACTFL OPI and WPT is the minimum requirement for Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Korean (ACTFL, 2015), because it takes more time to develop proficiency in these languages for native speakers of English.

## **Literature Review**

Glisan, Swender, & Surface (2013) analyzed the OPI data among 2,890 teacher candidates between 2006 and 2012. They coded candidates who tested Advanced Low or higher in French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish as “Met Standard.” In accordance with ACTFL policy, teacher candidates of Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean who scored Intermediate High or higher were coded as “Met Standard.” For French, 64% of the teacher candidates met the standard. For Spanish, 50.7% of the candidates met the standard. The study also compared five different programs. The percentages of the candidates meeting the standards were 48.6%, 29.4%, 87.6%, 22.1%, and 37.1% respectively. This result implies that oral proficiency development can differ greatly across institutions.



ACTFL collected data from 300+ world language teacher certification programs and determined that successful institutions emphasize oral communication development and that they offer upper-level courses taught in the target language. Moreover, successful programs administer ongoing formative assessment of candidates in terms of achieving the required oral proficiency level (ACTFL, 2015). ACTFL recommends that a teacher education program of commonly taught languages assess its students at the entry point, mid-point, and at a semester prior to student teaching. ACTFL also suggests that culture and literature courses provide plenty of opportunities to interpret texts intended for native speakers, and to produce advanced-level discourse. Furthermore, offering opportunities to interact in the target language outside of classroom, including study abroad, is encouraged (ACTFL, n.d.).

These guidelines help ensure teacher education programs meet the ACTFL/CAEP accreditation requirement of Advanced Low or higher on the OPI and WPT. However, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there is a disparity between the ACTFL/CAEP mandate and what PDE is willing to accept for certification, which is only Intermediate High (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2018). This discrepancy can restrain world language programs who seek to change curriculum, course content, and program requirements so as to facilitate a score of Advanced Low for all Teacher Candidates. This article reports survey data collected from teacher candidates, teachers, teacher educators, and administrators, and it seeks to unearth the degree to which the PDE/ACTFL divide is impacting teacher candidate preparation and student learning. Research questions follow:

### Research Questions

1. Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that student teachers need to reach Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL OPI? And, if so, by when: by the beginning of student teaching or by the completion of student teaching?
2. Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that student teachers need to reach Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL WPT? And, if so, by when: by the beginning of student teaching or by the completion of student teaching?
3. Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) should raise the required score for the ACTFL OPI and WPT for teaching certification from Intermediate High to Advanced Low?
4. Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree with the ACTFL recommendation that classroom target language usage for teacher candidates be no less than 90%?

### Methods

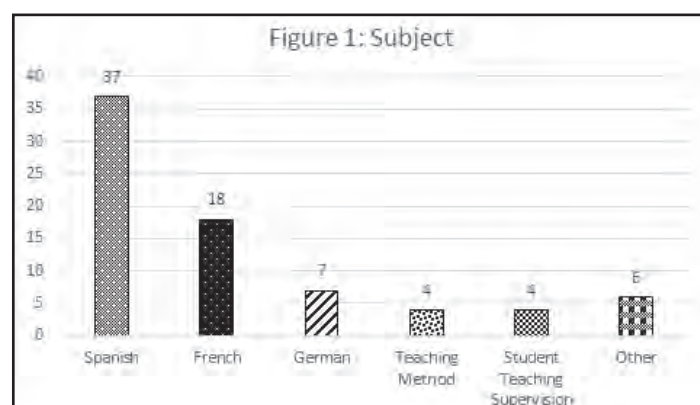
Data were collected via a Likert-scale survey with an open-ended component that analyzed participant beliefs regarding the OPI and WPT. For each question, the re-

search participants selected strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The first recruiting attempt was conducted through the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association's LISTSERV in February and March of 2017. Eighteen participants participated in the initial survey. Additional data were collected via direct emailing. The final number of participants was sixty. Unfortunately, small sample sizes across different participant groups precluded statistical analysis. However, the descriptive statistics are informative in that they shed light on the various participant group beliefs regarding the ACTFL OPI and WPT.

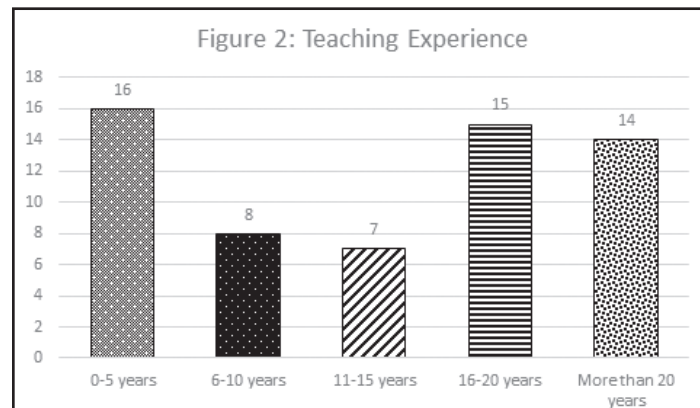
### Results

#### Demographic Information

Thirty-seven of the sixty participants taught Spanish, eighteen taught French, seven taught German, and four taught foreign/second language pedagogy. Four supervised student teachers, and six selected "other." Some participants selected more than one answer. See Figure 1 for more information.



Regarding school setting, forty-nine participants selected public school, K-12. Four selected private school, K-12. Eight chose higher education, and 1 answered "other." There were two participants who selected multiple answers. For years of teaching experience, sixteen participants taught 0-5 years; eight taught 6-10 years; 7 taught 11-15 years; 15 taught 16-20 years, and 14 taught more than 20 years. See Figure 2 for more information.



Thirty-two participants served as a cooperating teacher for a teacher candidate.



**Research question 1: Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that student teachers need to reach Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL OPI? And, if so, by when: by the beginning of student teaching or by the completion of student teaching?**

Forty participants (68%) answered that teacher candidates should score Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) by the beginning of student teaching while 6 (10%) disagreed with the statement. Fifty participants (85%) agreed or strongly agreed that teacher candidates should reach a level of Advanced Low or higher on the OPI by the end of student teaching. Four participants (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that teacher candidates should reach a level of Advanced Low or higher in OPI by the end of student teaching.

Table 1. Response to “Teacher candidates should score Advanced Low or higher on the OPI”

	By the beginning of student teaching	By the end of student teaching
Strongly disagree	2	3
Disagree	4	1
Neither agree nor disagree	13	5
Agree	22	32
Strongly agree	18	18

**Research question 2: Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that student teachers need to reach Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL WPT? And, if so, by when: by the beginning of student teaching or by the completion of student teaching?**

Thirty-six participants (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that teacher candidates should score Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL WPT by the start of student teaching, while four participants (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Fifty-four (92%) of the research participants agreed or strongly agreed that teacher candidates should score Advanced Low or higher in WPT by the end of student teaching, while three (5%) disagreed with the statement. See Table 2 for further information.

Table 2. Response to “Teacher candidates should score Advanced Low or higher on the WPT”

	By the beginning of student teaching	By the end of student teaching
Strongly disagree	2	3
Disagree	2	0
Neither agree nor disagree	9	2
Agree	28	18
Strongly agree	18	16

**Research question 3: Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree that the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) should raise the required score for the ACTFL OPI and WPT for teaching certification from Intermediate High to Advanced Low?**

For oral proficiency, thirty-five participants (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that PDE should require Advanced Low or higher on the ACTFL OPI. Twelve participants (20%) disagreed. Regarding writing proficiency, thirty-eight participants (76%) either agreed or strongly agreed that PDE should require Advanced Low or higher for the ACTFL WPT. Ten participants (20%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. See Table 3 for more information.

Table 3. Response to “PDE should raise the required score to Advanced Low”

	OPI	WPT
Strongly disagree	2	2
Disagree	10	8
Neither agree nor disagree	12	11
Agree	19	23
Strongly agree	16	15

**Research question 4: Do world language educators in Pennsylvania agree or disagree with the ACTFL recommendation that classroom target language usage for teacher candidates be no less than 90%?**

Thirty-three participants (56%) either agreed or strongly agreed that teacher candidates should speak the target language at least 90% of the time. Eleven (19%) disagreed with the statement. See Table 4 for more information.

Table 4. Response to “Teacher candidates should speak TL 90% or more.”

	TL 90% or more
Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	8
Neither agree nor disagree	15
Agree	19
Strongly agree	14

### Comments Regarding Advanced Low or Higher

To help triangulate the quantitative data collected via the Likert-scale survey, several open-ended questions were asked of each participant. The following is a list of their responses as it relates to the aforementioned research questions.

"Young teachers and student teachers need to be at a higher proficiency level than the high school students. When high school students reach intermediate high, they benefit very little from a college student teacher (or certified teacher) who is not an advanced speaker."

"It has been difficult to demand the use of all three modes of communication when the teachers do not have the skills."

"Teachers should be proficient in the language to teach above lower level courses."

"While I feel that raising standards is crucial for preparing qualified WL teachers, I recognize that we are currently in a crisis when it comes to finding qualified teachers in a time when such high standards are not in place."

"The biggest concern in our regional high schools, which are in small towns or rural areas, is the hiring practices of school administrators. Most of them are completely unaware of the national standards in our discipline. ...I have seen many teachers hired in foreign languages at real high schools who are not actually proficient in the target language."

"I am a department head/teacher/trainer/facilitator for my district for the implementation of pedagogical and 21st century skills in the WL department. Unfortunately, most of our teachers are not Intermediate High in their language skills. It's been difficult to demand the use of all three modes of communication when the teachers do not have the skills. The problem, I believe, is that some universities are dissuading students from majoring in a language. Some colleges will not allow it without a business or teaching connection. Most new teaching candidates have only spent one semester abroad studying the language, because they could not graduate on time if they were to stay longer."

"Some students (teacher candidates) cannot study abroad, which is how they approach an Advanced Low rating. My experience suggests that in high school classrooms the target language is used very little, so despite years of seat time, skills do not advance accordingly."

## Conclusion

This study sought to investigate teacher candidate, teacher, teacher educator and administrator beliefs regarding the ACTFL OPI and WPT, with a specific focus on the incongruence between the PDE requirement and the ACTFL/CAEP requirement. Most of the research participants believed that world language teachers need to be advanced or superior speakers and writers of their target language. Comments, although limited in numbers, implied that the participants believe that K-12 students can gain very little from teachers who are only capable of producing language at the Intermediate High level. However, some participants believe, while Advanced Low is ideal, if PDE were to raise the minimum score needed for certification from Intermediate High to Advanced Low, it may exacerbate the lack of certified teachers in the Commonwealth.

In recent years, there have been two periods of consistent teacher shortages in Pennsylvania: 2006-2012 and 2014-2017 (U. S. Department of Education, 2017). During his keynote speech at the 2017 PSMLA Annual Conference, PA Secretary of Education, Pedro A. Rivera, stated that 40% of the world language teaching positions across the commonwealth are vacant (personal communication, October 6, 2017). While school districts may seek candidates with Advanced Low abilities, applicant shortages may force school districts to hire those with Intermediate High - the PDE requirement. The question, therefore, becomes: would PDE be doing the Commonwealth a disservice by raising the requirements for certification, would it be adding to the current shortage? As Supervisors of Teacher Education, the authors believe the answer to be, not necessarily. In order to maintain their ACTFL/CAEP National Recognition, teacher education programs would be incentivized to take the necessary steps to ensure that no-less-than 80% of their teacher candidates meet the new PDE requirement of Advanced Low. As it is, for ACTFL/CAEP National Recognition, teacher education programs need only demonstrate that 80% of their program completers meet the state requirement, which is Intermediate High.

## Limitations

When the various groups were teased apart, it created very small sample sizes, which precluded the ability to compare means across groups via statistical analysis. For example, the authors were not able to compare higher education and PK-12 participant responses, because there were only five higher-education research participants. Another limitation of this study is the lack of PA post-secondary ACTFL OPI and WPT teacher candidate data. While aggregated national data were presented in the literature review, no PA data were presented. These data would have indicated the degree to which teacher education programs are already meeting the national requirement.

## An Aside:

In 2016, the authors presided over the first annual Teacher Educator Roundtable at the PSMLA Annual Conference in Erie, PA. In establishing the Roundtable, the authors hoped to create a mechanism through which teacher candidates, teachers, teacher educators, and administrators could investigate common issues of concern and, concomitantly, discuss ways to address those issues together. The 2016 Roundtable discussions informed the data collection project from whence the data herein reported came. The data and findings were presented at the 2017 Teacher Educator Roundtable. Because those data and findings only represented a small subset of all the data that were collected, the authors will be presenting the rest of the survey findings at the 2018 PSMLA Conference in Pittsburgh. Hope to see everyone there, and many thanks to all who participated in the survey.

## References

- ACTFL. (2012). ACTFL proficiency guidelines 2012. Retrieved from [http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf)
- ACTFL (2015). ACTFL/CAEP program standards for the preparation of foreign language teachers. Retrieved from [https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/CAEP/ACTFLCAEPStandards2013\\_v2015.pdf](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/CAEP/ACTFLCAEPStandards2013_v2015.pdf)
- ACTFL. (n.d.) CAEP FAQs. Retrieved from <http://www.actfl.org/assessment-professional-development/actflcaep/caep-faqs>
- Glisan, W. G., Swender, E., & Surface, E. A. (2013). Oral proficiency standards and foreign language teacher candidates: Current findings and future research directions. *Foreign Language Annals*, 26(2), 264-289. doi:10.1111/flan.12030
- Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2018). Certification testing. Retrieved from <http://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/CertTestingRequirements/Pages/default.aspx>
- U. S. Department of Education. (2017). Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing 1990-1991 through 2017-2018. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oep/pol/tsa.html#list>

---

## PSMLA 2018

### Pre-Conference Workshop: Digital Games for Language Learning with Silvina Orsatti

**When:** Thursday, October 11, 2018

**Where:** The Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square

***Bring your own technology!***

#### **Description:**

Currently, digital games are being recognized as new contexts, spaces, and means for language learning. When deciding to use digital games in the classroom, we most often think of the learners playing the game. Strategically-designed 'wrap-around' activities can be useful for making gameplay meaningful and relevant to the language learning process. In addition, designing our own games with specific goals and authentic contexts can also motivate our students and become powerful language learning tools. During the workshop, participants will explore commercial and educational games for language learning that are aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy. In addition, participants will play social impact games about real-world issues, design a simple game with free digital tools, and brainstorm ideas for gamifying a lesson, a unit, or an entire curriculum. After the workshop, participants will head to Duolingo Headquarters to learn about Duolingo's offering for educators. They will explore the Duolingo curriculum and the educator platform Duolingo for Schools. They will also get sneak peeks at some of Duolingo's newest projects such as Duolingo Stories. The afternoon will conclude with small group sessions in which participants will have the opportunity to share feedback with the Duolingo team and hear tips about using Duolingo in the classroom from fellow educators.



---

## PSMLA 2018

### Keynote Speaker: Luis von Ahn

**When:** Friday, October 12, 2018

**Where:** The Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square

Luis von Ahn is an entrepreneur and computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon University who is considered one of the pioneers of crowdsourcing. He is known for co-inventing CAPTCHAs, being a MacArthur Fellow and selling two companies to Google in his 20s.

He is currently the co-founder and CEO of Duolingo, a language-learning platform created to bring free language education to the world. With over 200 million users, it is now the most popular language-learning platform and the most downloaded app in the Education category worldwide on both iTunes and Google Play.

Luis has been named one of the 10 Most Brilliant Scientists by Popular Science Magazine, one of the 50 Best Brains in Science by Discover, one of the Top Young Innovators Under 35 by MIT Technology Review, and one of the 100 Most Innovative People in Business by Fast Company Magazine.





Pennsylvania State Modern  
Language Association

**P. Rzodkiewicz**

5410 Gardner Drive  
Erie, PA 16509