

*Foreign Language Learning for Whom?:
A Look at Race, Access, & Expectations*

Dr. Hannah Baggett

Modern Foreign Language Education:

Community Conversation,

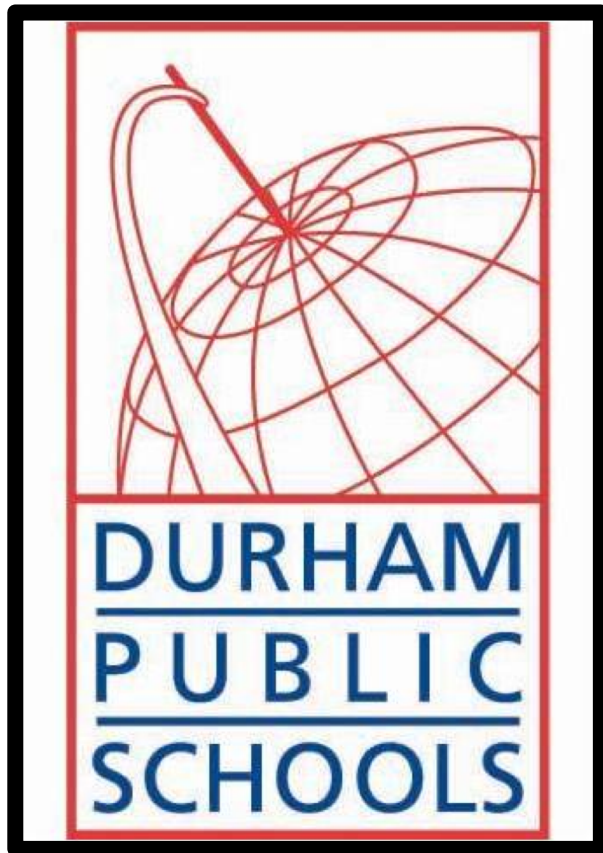
Wheelock College of Education, Boston University

May 2, 2019

Overview of Our Session

- **Personal Trajectory and Interest in the Topic**
- **Context for the Study**
- **Findings from the Current Study**
- **Considering Avenues for Enrollment**
- **Q & A**

My Experience/Positionality



World Languages: Benefits

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WORLD LANGUAGES

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World (Foreign) Language study benefits all students. The study of another language leads to higher scores on standardized tests (reading, math, SAT), greater cognitive development in the areas of mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking and higher-order thinking skills, a broader English vocabulary, a better understanding of one's own language and culture, and enhanced career opportunities.

The North Carolina Second Language Standard



ARDS,
AND
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MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The University of North Carolina minimum admission requirements address three areas: high school courses, high school GPA, and test scores. The minimum requirements for admission are established by the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina. However, admission is a competitive process and individual campuses may have additional requirements beyond the minimums listed in this publication. Meeting these requirements does not guarantee admission to any specific university or program. Please check with each campus for additional information related to their specific admission requirements.

MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Six course units* in language, including

- four units in English emphasizing grammar, composition, and literature, and
- two consecutive units of a language other than English such as Spanish, Latin, or American Sign Language (ASL).

Four course units of mathematics, in any of the following combinations

World Languages: Access

- K– 12 language enrollment increased from 2005– 2006 to 2007– 2008, but only 18.5% of all public school students were enrolled in languages during the 2007– 2008 academic year (ACTFL, 2011, p. 1)
- Students of color appear to be underrepresented in World Languages (Finn, 1998; Glynn & Wassell, 2018; NCES, 2007; Pratt, 2012)
- Students' demographics predict access to curricula (Anyon, 1981; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Kozol, 1991; Oakes, 2005)

Purpose of the Study

(1) to explore world language offerings across different school contexts in four large local education agencies (LEAs) in North Carolina during the 2013–2014 academic year;

(2) to explore world language enrollment patterns for middle and high school students within these LEAs.

High Schools

TABLE 2

High School Characteristics

	Range of number of students	Range of number of languages offered	Range of percentage of students of color
LEA 1	164–2,644	0–9	26.04–95.38%
LEA 2	59–2,032	0–5	25.28–95.93%
LEA 3	137–2,775	1–8	22.08–99.29%
LEA 4	13–2,001	1–7	21.59–99.11%

TABLE 5**Number of Languages Offered at High Schools in Four Large LEAs,
Including Virtual Public School Courses, 2013–2014**

		School demographics		
		>50% white students	50–89% students of color	90–98% students of color
Languages offered		School counts		
1	0	9	3	1
2	0	4	5	0
3	5	12	4	4
4	6	7	3	0
5	6	14	2	0
6	4	4	0	0
7	2	4	0	0
8	1	2	0	0
9	0	1	0	0
Total	24	57	17	5

TABLE 6

Levels of Language Courses Offered at High Schools in Four Large LEAs, Including Virtual Public School Courses, 2013–2014

	School demographics			
	>50% white students	50–89% students of color	90–98% students of color	99–100% students of color
Languages offered	School counts			
Intro (levels 1 and 2)	0	13*	4*	1
Advanced (level 3 and above, honors)	6	24	7	3
Advanced Placement	18	20	6	1
International Baccalaureate Program**	2	13	1	1
Total	24	57	17	5

* In each of these two groups, there was one new school that was only enrolling students through 10th grade during 2013–2014, which may have impacted the levels of language offered at their particular school sites. Those schools are included in the counts.

** Some schools had both AP and IB programming. Totals may not sum because of this overlap.

TABLE 7

Chi-Square Analyses Examining Student Subgroups and World Language Enrollment in High Schools With Differing Levels of Languages

	Levels of languages offered			
	All high schools	Introductory	Introductory and honors	Introductory, honors, and AP
Observed counts of students enrolled in world languages*				
Black male	9,079 (-22.9)**	229 (-4.1)**	2,656 (-7.1)**	6,194 (-20.5)**
Black female	11,146 (-2.4)**	380 (0.0)	3,135 (1.6)	7,631 (-2.6)
Hispanic male	3,515 (-15.3)**	87 (-0.5)	897 (-11.3)**	2,531 (-10.3)**
Hispanic female	4,076 (-4.4)**	128 (2.3)	1,001 (-6.4)**	2,947 (-0.5)
White male	13,652 (2.6)	181 (-2.1)	2,713 (4.3)**	10,758 (-1.5)
White female	15,824 (27.6)**	256 (2.9)	3,012 (12.4)**	12,555 (22.0)**
Asian/PI male	1,839 (3.6)**	40 (-0.9)	298 (0.7)	1,501 (3.4)**
Asian/PI female	2,244 (13.2)**	63 (1.4)	381 (5.1)**	1,800 (12.0)**
Multiracial	1,071 (-1.1)	25 (-0.1)	222 (-0.3)	823 (-0.3)

TABLE 8

Chi-Square Analyses Examining Student Subgroups and World Language Enrollment in High Schools With Differing Student Demographics

	School demographics				
	All high schools	>50% white	50–89% students of color	90–98% students of color	99–100% students of color
	Observed counts of students enrolled in world languages*				
Black male	9,079 (–22.9)**	1,571 (–12.6)**	4,904 (–15.2)**	1,962 (–0.6)	642 (–2.4)
Black female	11,146 (–3.4)**	1,841 (–1.8)	6,200 (–1.3)	2,109 (6.6)**	906 (4.0)**
Hispanic male	3,515 (–15.3)**	1,135 (–4.6)**	1,844 (–10.3)**	464 (–7.3)**	72 (–5.1)**
Hispanic female	(–4.4)**	(2.6)	(–3.2)**	(–2.8)	(–3.4)**
White male	13,652 (2.6)	7,508 (–7.3)**	5,964 (4.6)**	172 (–4.2)**	8 (–0.1)
White female	15,834 (27.6)**	9,046 (13.0)**	6,638 (17.5)**	136 (–0.5)	14 (–0.3)
Asian/PI male	1,659 (3.6)**	762 (2.1)	802 (1.5)	150 (1.7)	45 (2.1)
Asian/PI female	2,244 (13.2)**	922 (7.0)**	1,058 (8.5)**	188 (5.6)**	76 (4.8)**

Middle Schools

TABLE 1

Middle School Characteristics

	Range of number of students	Range of number of languages offered	Range of percentage of students of color
LEA 1	59–1,749	1–3	27.38–85.38%
LEA 2	120–1,252	0–2	25.50–97.93%
LEA 3	233–1,638	0–4	23.09–100%
LEA 4	72–1,196	0–2	14.82–98.8%

TABLE 3**Number of Languages Offered at Middle Schools in Four Large LEAs,
Including Virtual Public School Courses, 2013–2014**

School demographics				
	>50% white students	50–89% students of color	90–98% students of color	99–100% students of color
Languages offered	School counts			
1	9	19	10	5
2	13	16	3	0
3	1	5	0	0
4	1	0	0	0
Total	24	40	13	5

TABLE 4

Chi-Square Analyses Examining Student Subgroups and World Language Enrollment in Middle Schools With Differing Student Demographics

	School demographics				
	All middle schools	>50% white students	50–89% students of color	90–98% students of color	99–100% students of color
Observed counts of students enrolled in world languages*					
Black male	1,430 (−7.3)**	184 (−6.7)**	761 (−3.1)**	301 (−1.6)	184 (−2.2)***
Black female	1,772 (2.6)	238 (−2.6)	755 (4.5)**	354 (2.1)	227 (1.4)
Hispanic male	543 (−8.2)**	114 (−4.4)**	518 (−5.3)**	88 (−3.1)**	23 (0.4)
Hispanic female	642 (−5.1)**	158 (−2.3)	373 (−3.5)**	88 (−2.3)	38 (2.6)***
White male	2,342 (3.8)**	1,401 (4.6)**	895 (−1.6)	43 (2.2)	3 (0.6)
White female	2,288 (8.0)**	1,388 (4.8)**	851 (3.7)**	47 (3.2)**	2 (0.4)
Asian/PI male	277 (−1.0)	100 (−3.5)**	155 (2.8)	14 (−1.9)	8 (−1.0)
Asian/PI female	315 (1.9)	131 (−0.8)	142 (2.5)	35 (3.0)**	7 (−0.9)

Critical Race Theory in Education

- Ethno-racial status continues to be a significant factor in school inequities (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995)
- Rejection of underlying assumptions such as meritocracy, equal opportunity, and color/gender blindness (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004)
- Shift discourses from deficits to systemic issues

How are students enrolled in languages?

- “I’ve never really thought about it.”
- Teacher Recommendation
- Guidance Counselor
- Parent choice
- Determined by student
- Determined by “track”

Implications

- **Points of Access**
 - Exploratory Models (middle schools)
 - Varied offerings by context
 - Teacher Recommendation
- **Professional Development**
- **Teacher Preparation**

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Questions?

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