

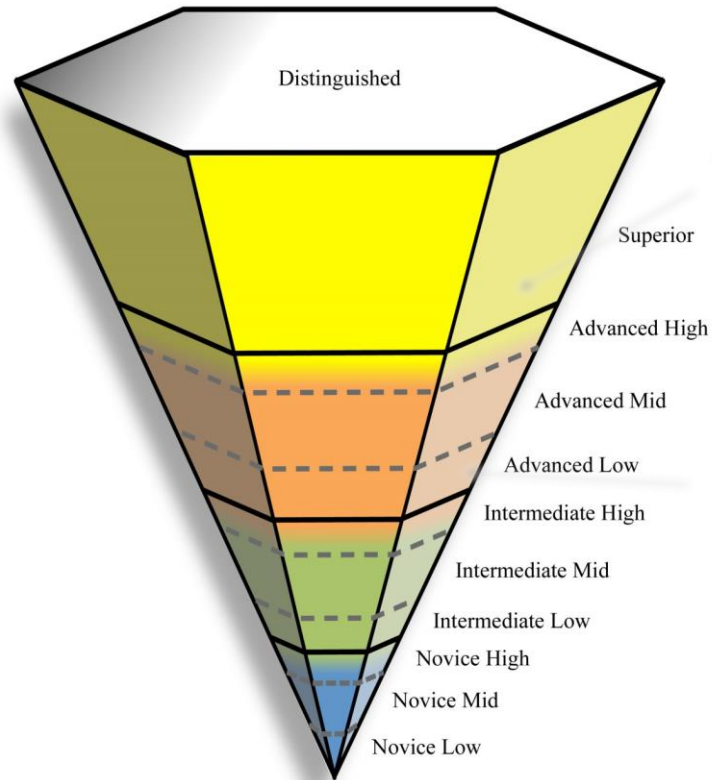
Proficiency attainment of K-16 language students: Implications for language programs

Boston University

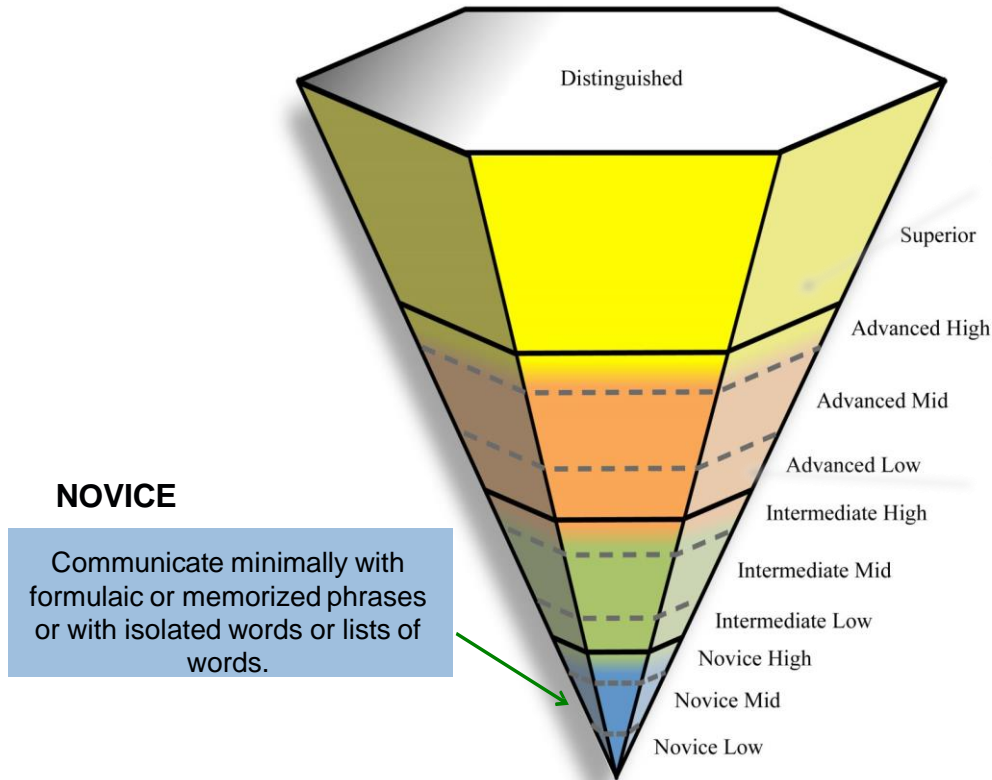
November 11, 2019

Fernando Rubio, University of Utah

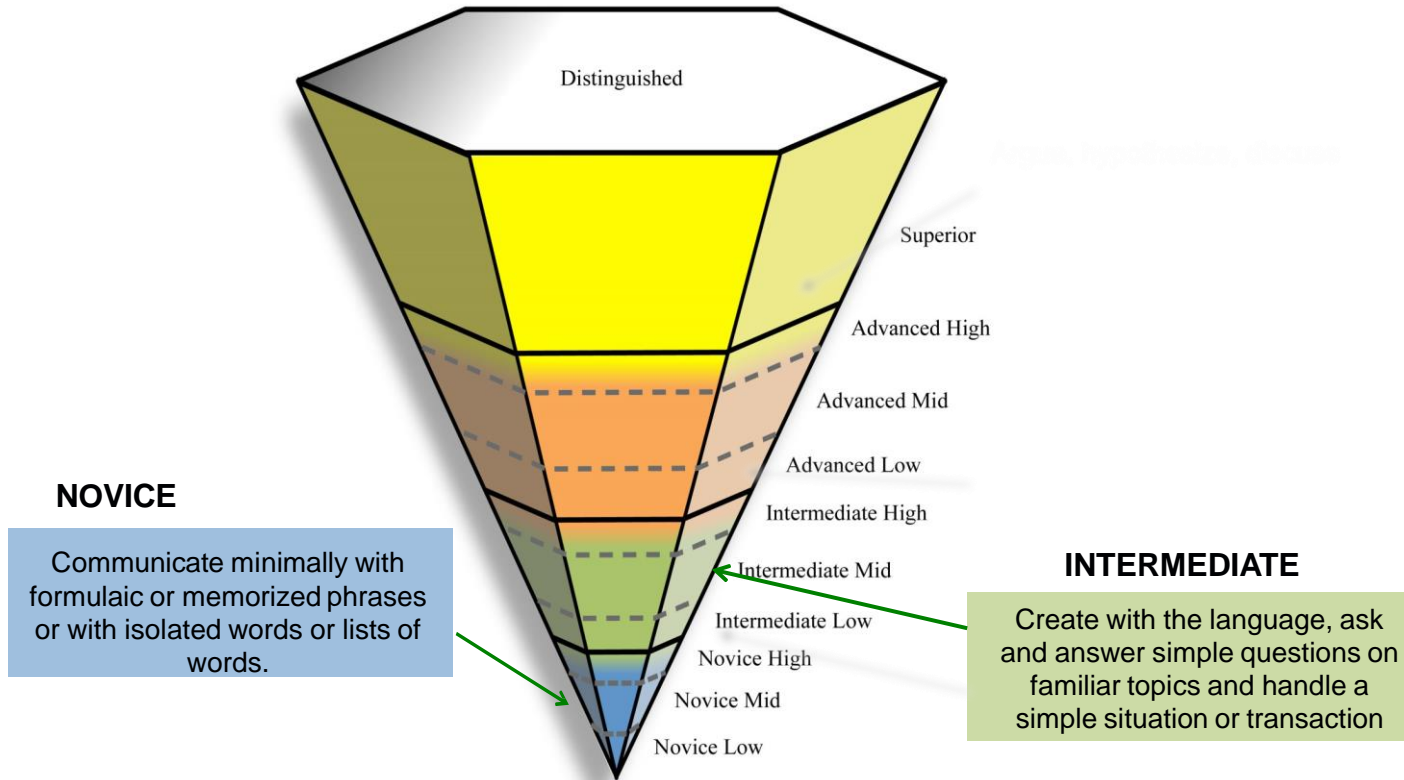
ACTFL levels of proficiency



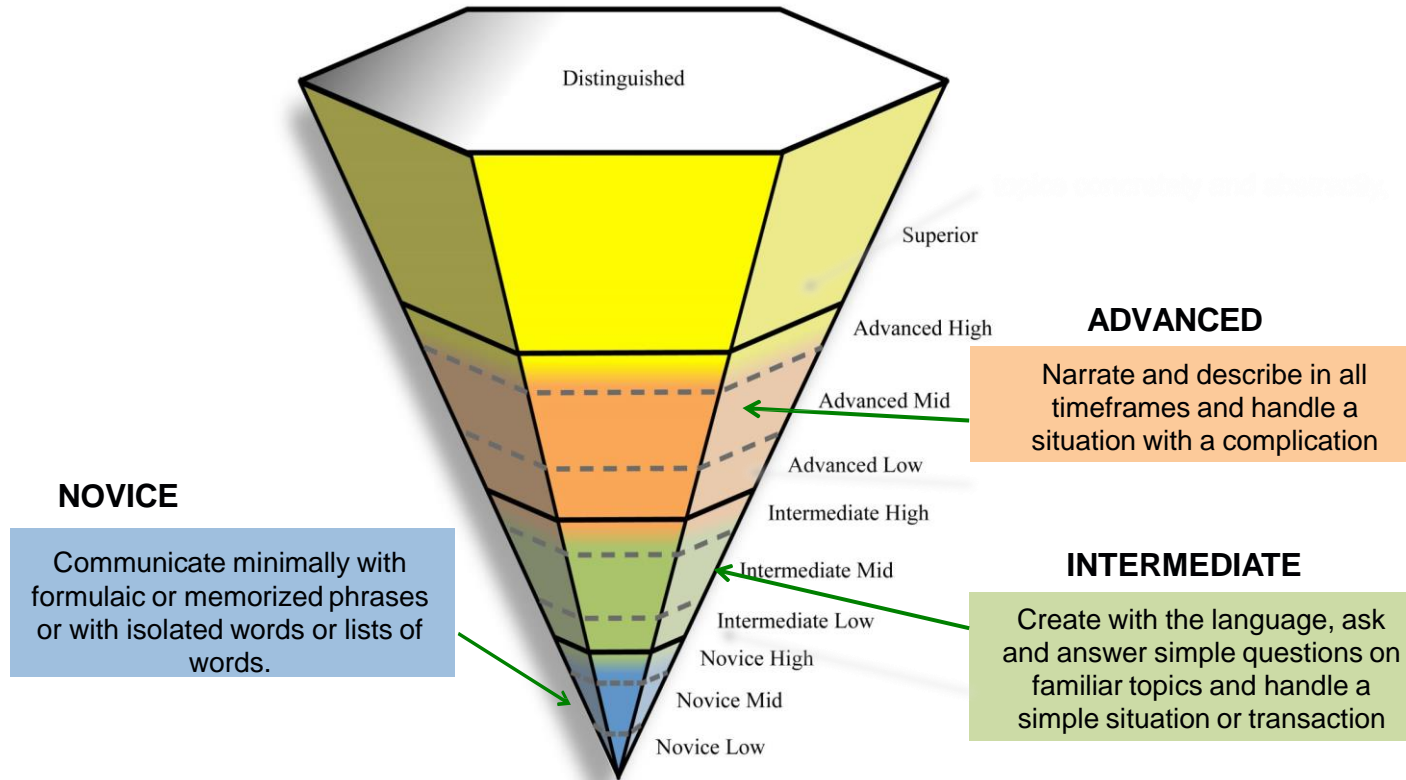
ACTFL levels of proficiency



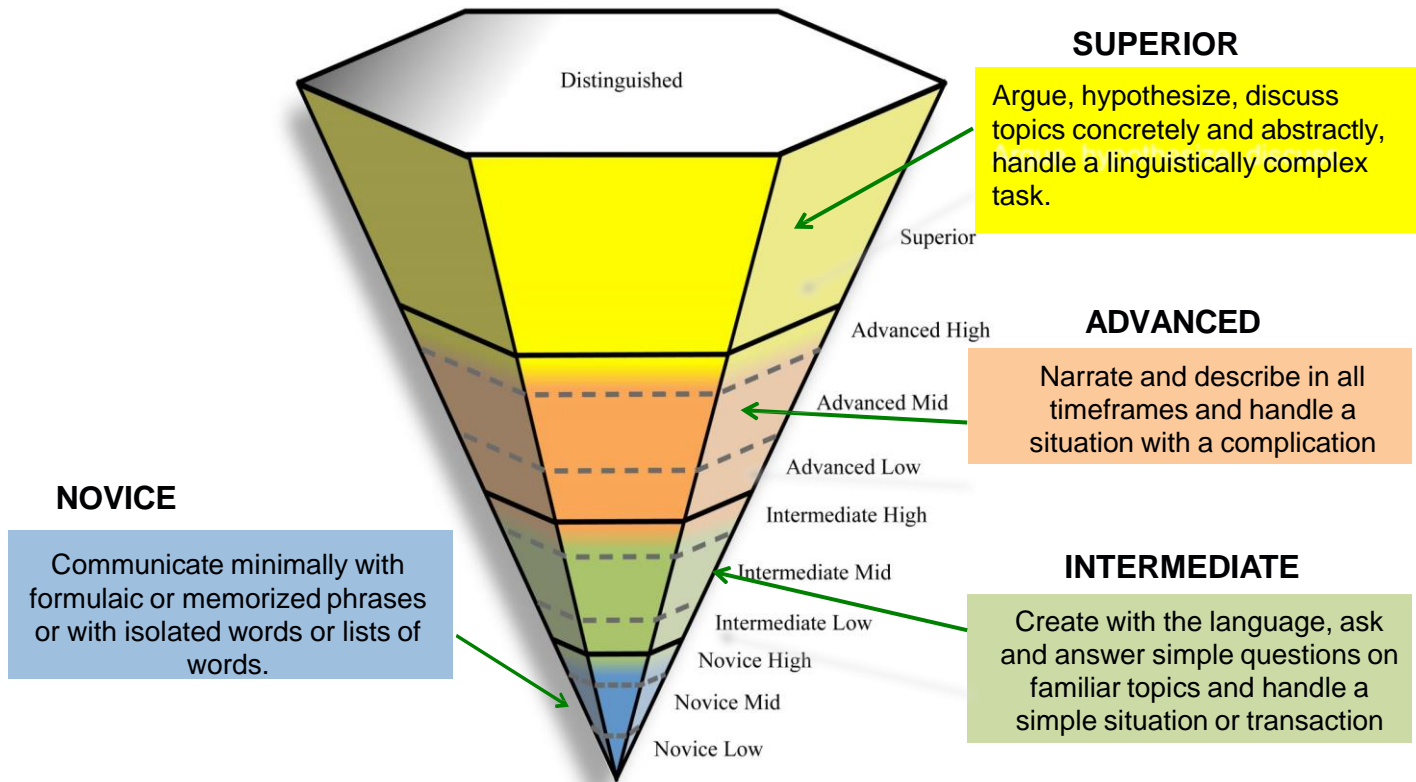
ACTFL levels of proficiency



ACTFL levels of proficiency



ACTFL levels of proficiency

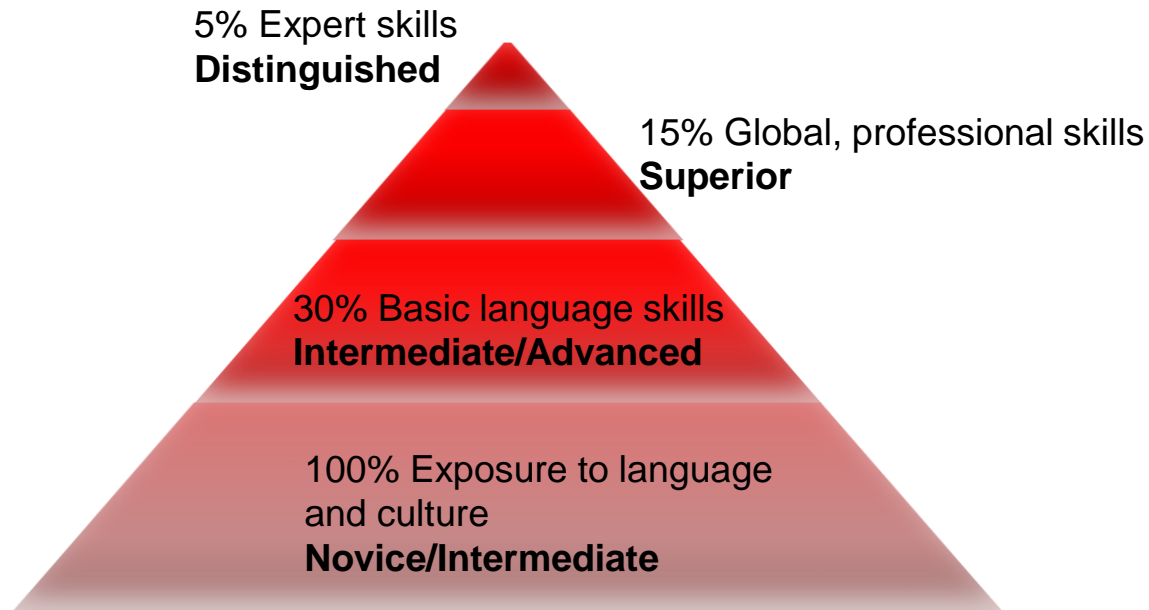


How long does it take?

- An English speaker needs 240+ hours of instruction to reach the Intermediate level in Category I (Romance, Dutch, Norwegian)
- 480+ in Category II (Russian, Vietnamese, Turkish)
- Even longer in Category III (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean)
- Typical university programs provide 180-300 hours of instruction in two years (3-5 hours/week; 30 weeks/year)

“The vast majority of American citizens remain monolingual”
American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2017 (p. viii)

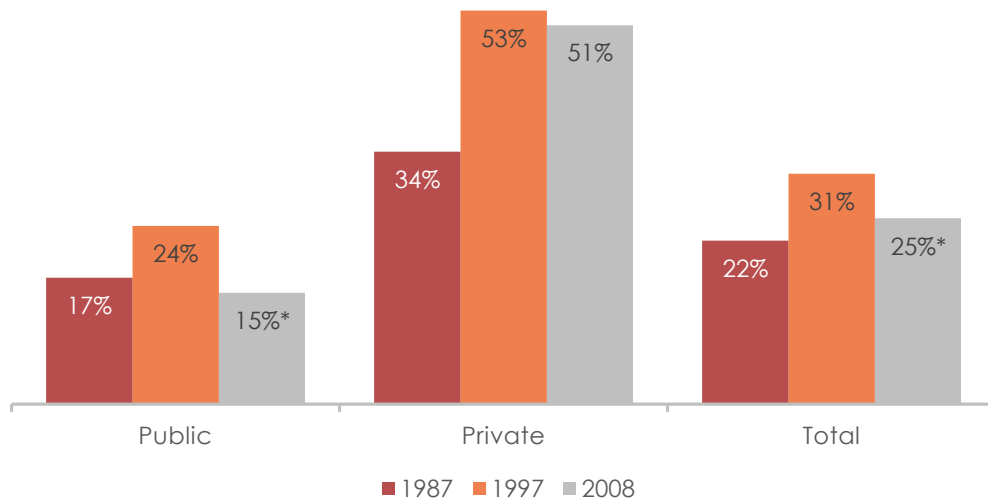
Ideal distribution of the population according to language skills



(Adapted from Abbot et al., 2013)

K-12

Percentage of elementary schools offering world languages in the US

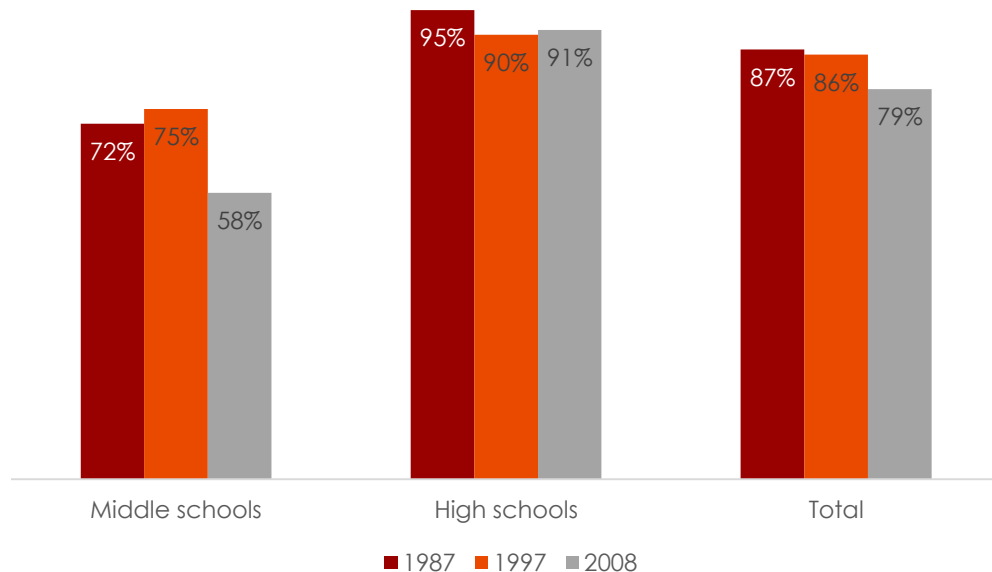


(Adapted from Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011)

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Percentage of secondary schools offering world languages in the US

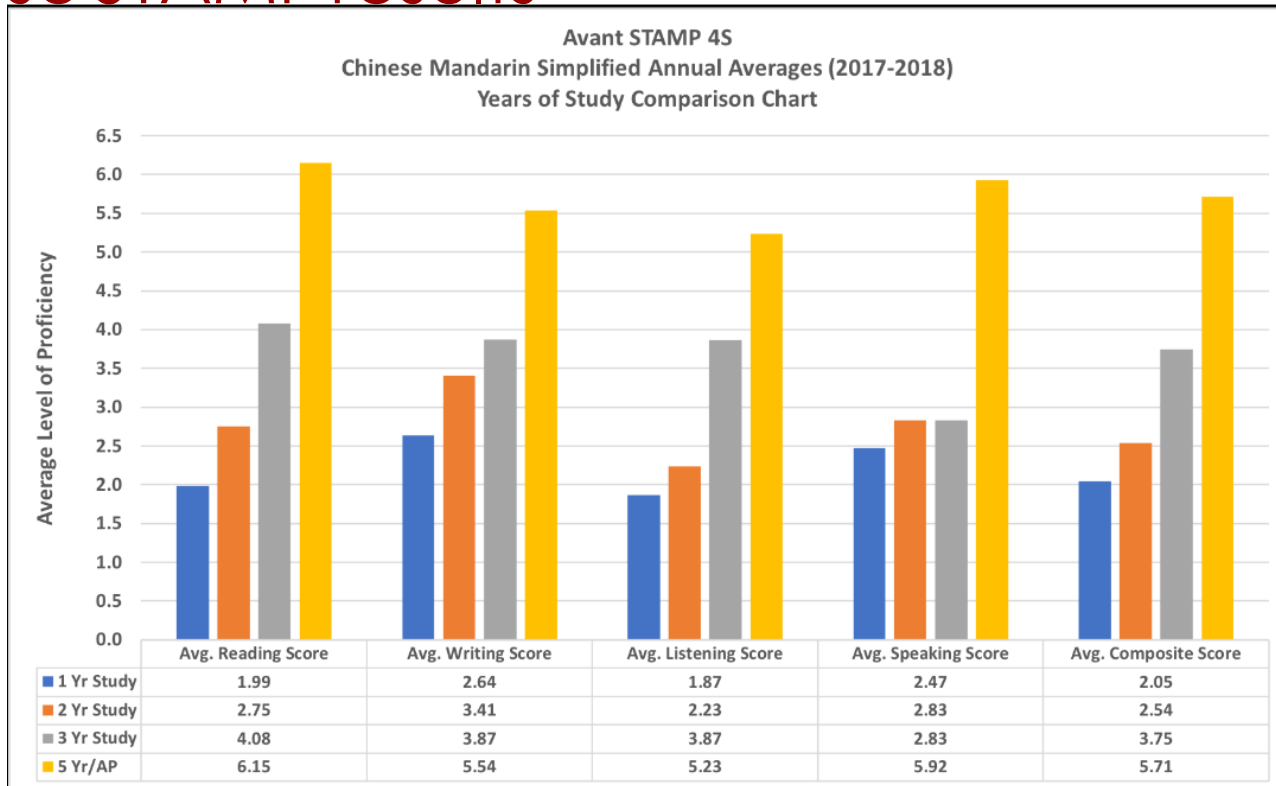


Articulation

- Fewer than 40% of elementary schools reported some form of articulation with middle school.
- 25% of high schools reported that their incoming students had not received foreign language instruction during their middle school years. (Pufhal & Rhodes, 2011, p. 267)
- Only 12 of the 400 K-8 schools surveyed reported having some form of collaboration with other elementary, middle or high schools (American Councils for International Education, 2017, p. 33).

Proficiency in K-12

Chinese STAMP results

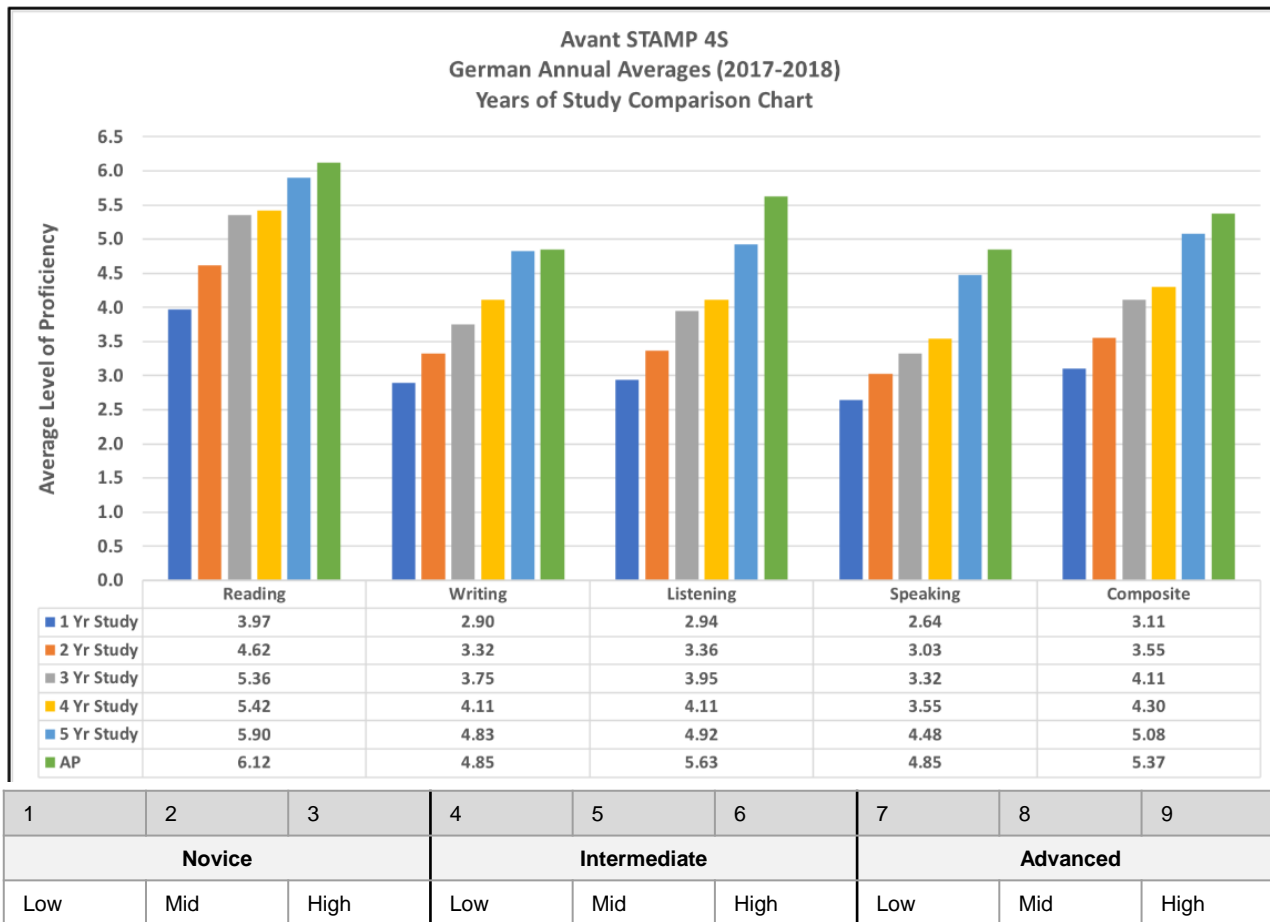


1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Novice			Intermediate			Advanced		
Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High	Low	Mid	High

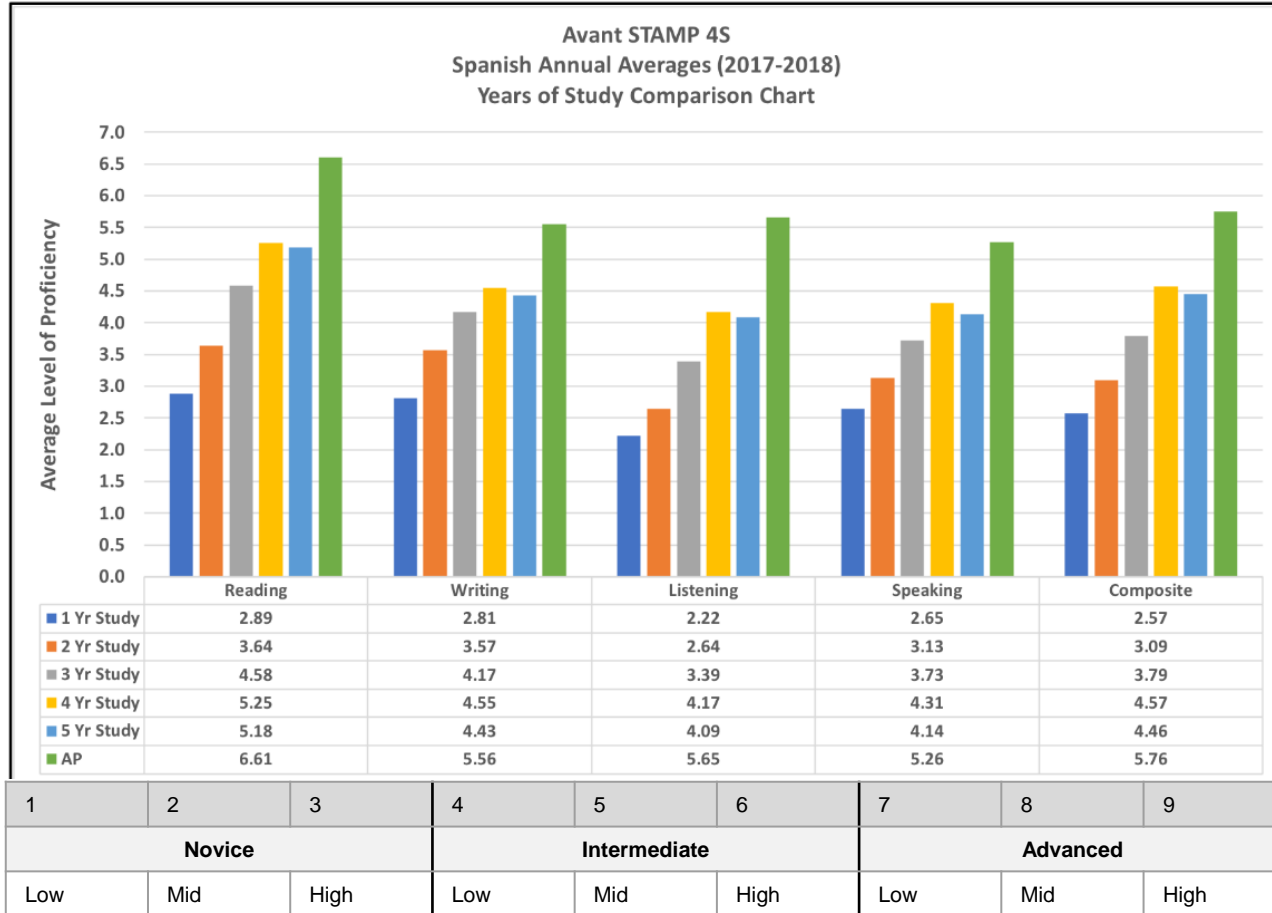
French STAMP results



German STAMP results



Spanish STAMP results



Takeaways

- Even after an extended sequence, most students are still solidly at the Intermediate level.
- Reading tends to be the strongest skill
- Speaking is the weakest
- Except for AP students, WL learners are often still in the Novice range after 3 or even 4 years of instruction

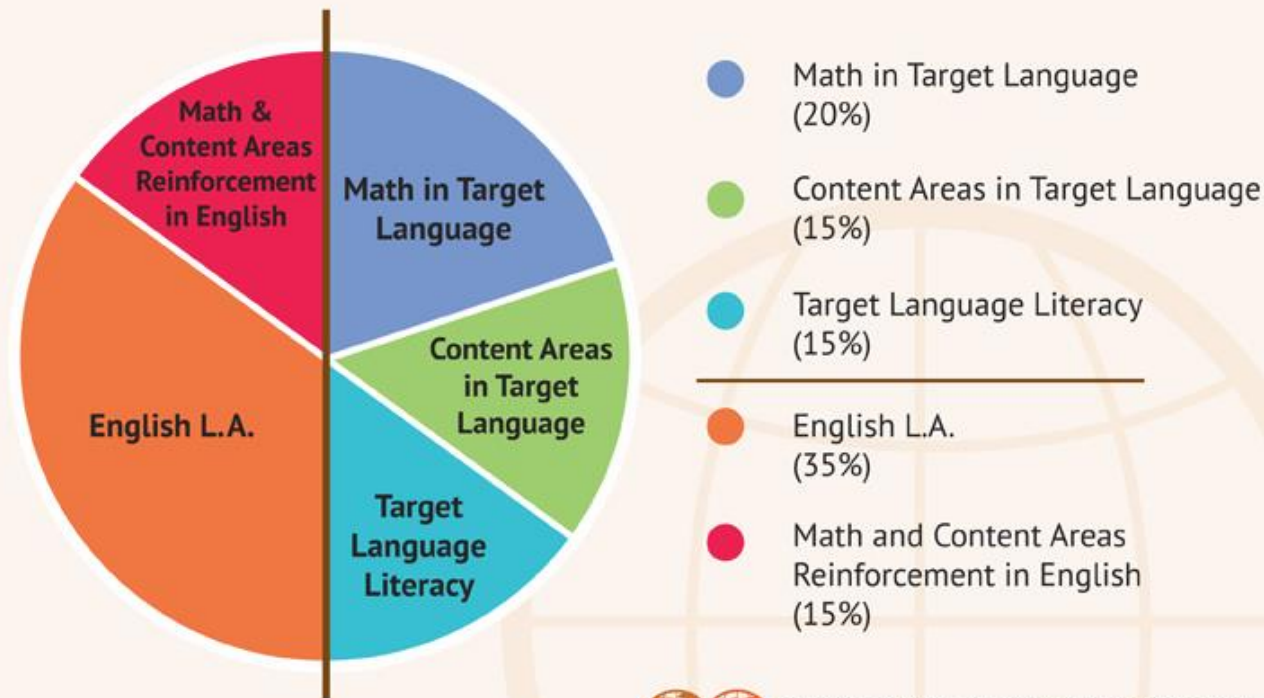
DLI as a potential solution

- Students receive academic instruction in two languages
- Explosive growth:
 - 2000 (260 programs)
 - 2017 (2000 programs)
 - 2019 (3000 programs)
- Different models: 50/50, 90/10, One-way/Two-way
- English learners in DLI programs academically outperform those in other programs (Steele et al., 2017; Watzinger-Tharp et al., 2016)

The Utah model

- Six languages: Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish
- 45,000 students in 2019-2020 year
- 247 schools
- 15 districts

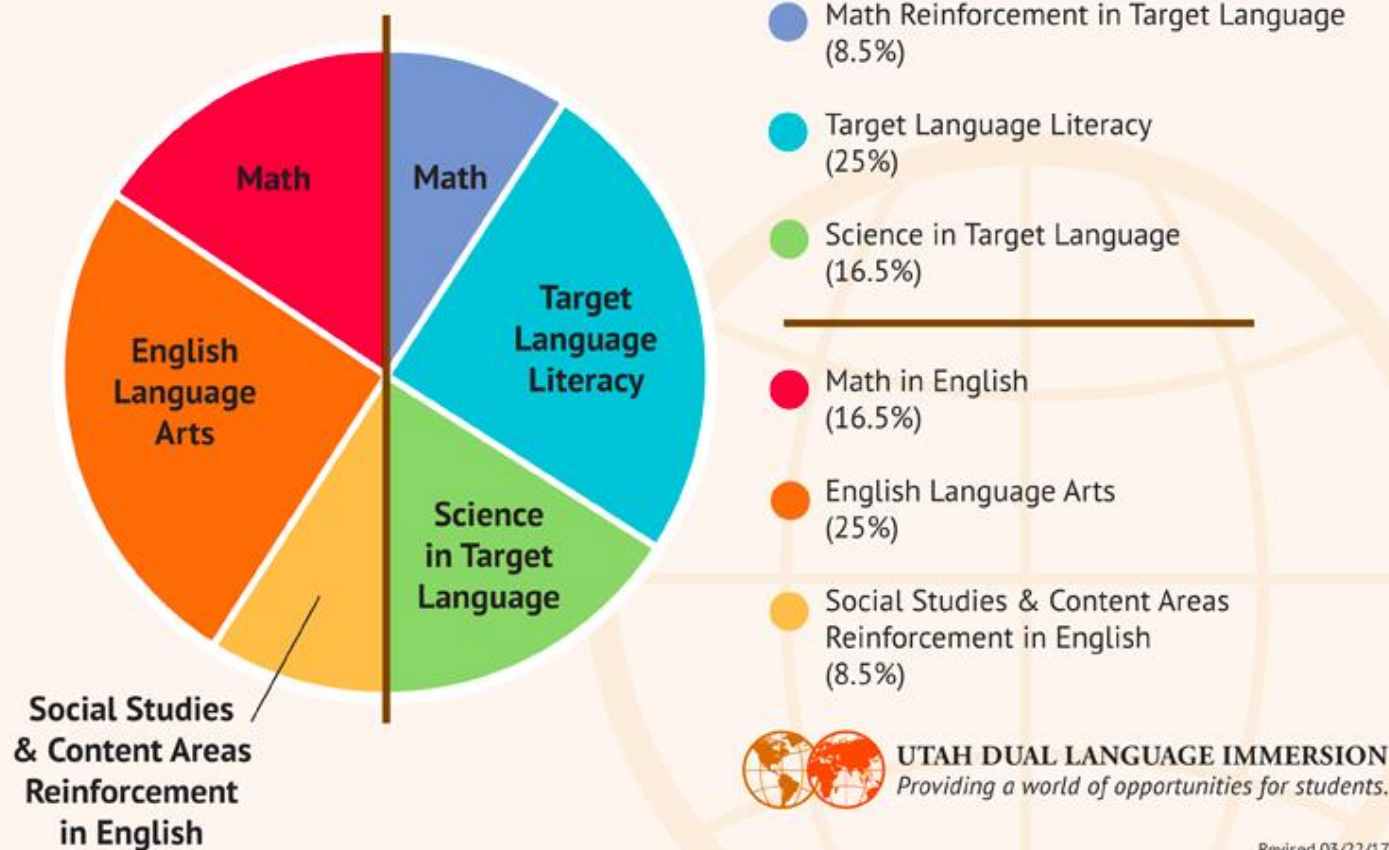
Dual Language Immersion Instructional Time : Grades 1-3



UTAH DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION
Providing a world of opportunities for students.

Dual Language Immersion

Instructional Time : Grades 4-5



AAPPL

- ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)
- Performance (not proficiency) test
- Two forms:
 - Form A: Novice-Intermediate (typically grades 5-8)
 - Form B: Intermediate-Advanced Low (typically grades 9-12)
- Computer-based
- Assesses all three modes of communication
 - Interpretive Listening (IL)
 - Interpretive Reading (IR)
 - Interpersonal Listening and Speaking (speaking component) (ILS)
 - Presentational Writing (PW)

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines	ACTFL Performance Scale	AAPPL Measure Performance Score	Form	
Advanced Low	ADVANCED	A		B
Intermediate High		I-5		
Intermediate Mid		I-4	A	
Intermediate Mid		I-3		
Intermediate Mid		I-2		
Intermediate Low		I-1		
Novice High		N-4		
Novice Mid	NOVICE	N-3		
Novice Mid		N-2		
Novice Low		N-1		

Utah DLI performance benchmarks

	Interpersonal Listening/Speaking		Interpretive Reading		Interpretive Listening		Presentational Writing	
Grade	Alphabetic Languages	Chinese	Alphabetic Languages	Chinese	Alphabetic Languages	Chinese	Alphabetic Languages	Chinese
3	N3	N2						
4			N3-N4	N2-N3	N4-I1	N3-N4	N3-N4	N2-N3
5	N4-I1	N3-N4						
6			I1-I2	N4-I1	I2-I3	I1-I2	I1-I2	N4-I1
7	I2-I3	I1-I2						
8			I3-I4	I2-I3	I4-I5	I3-I4	I3-I4	I2-I3
9	I4-I5	I3-I4						

Proficiency data from Utah DLI (2017-18)

- Students tested: 23,546
- Total number of tests: 42,528
 - ILS: 12,799
 - PW: 9,814
 - IL: 9,952
 - IR: 9,963
- Districts: 26
- Schools: 96

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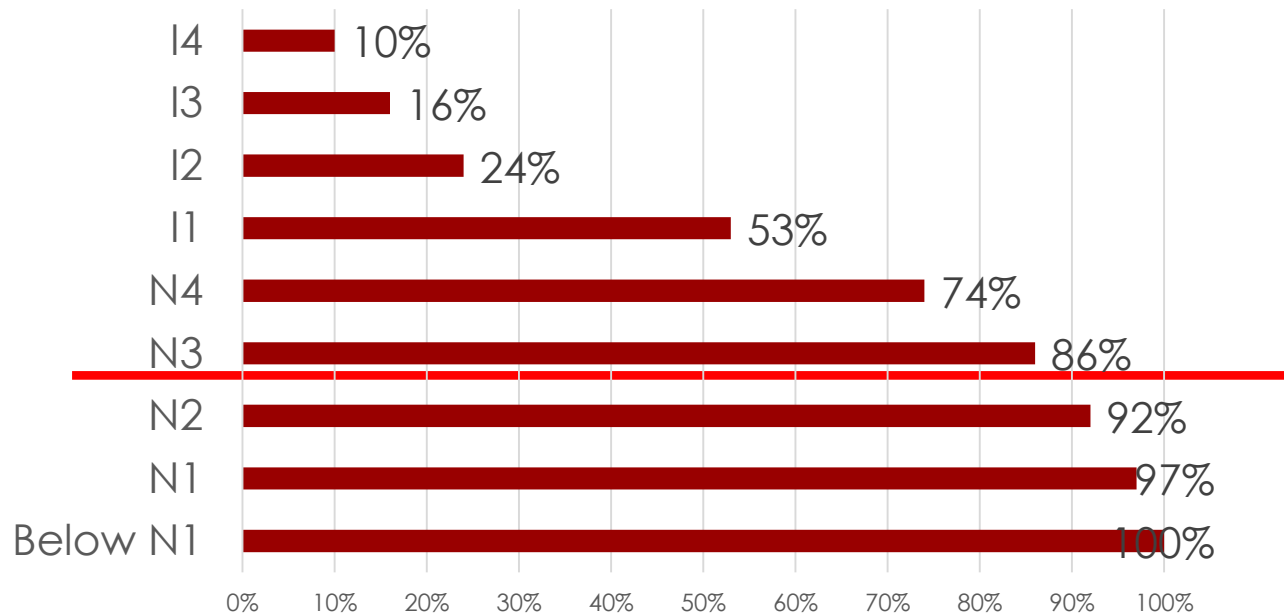
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Spanish data

Spanish ILS-3rd grade

Form A (n=2840)

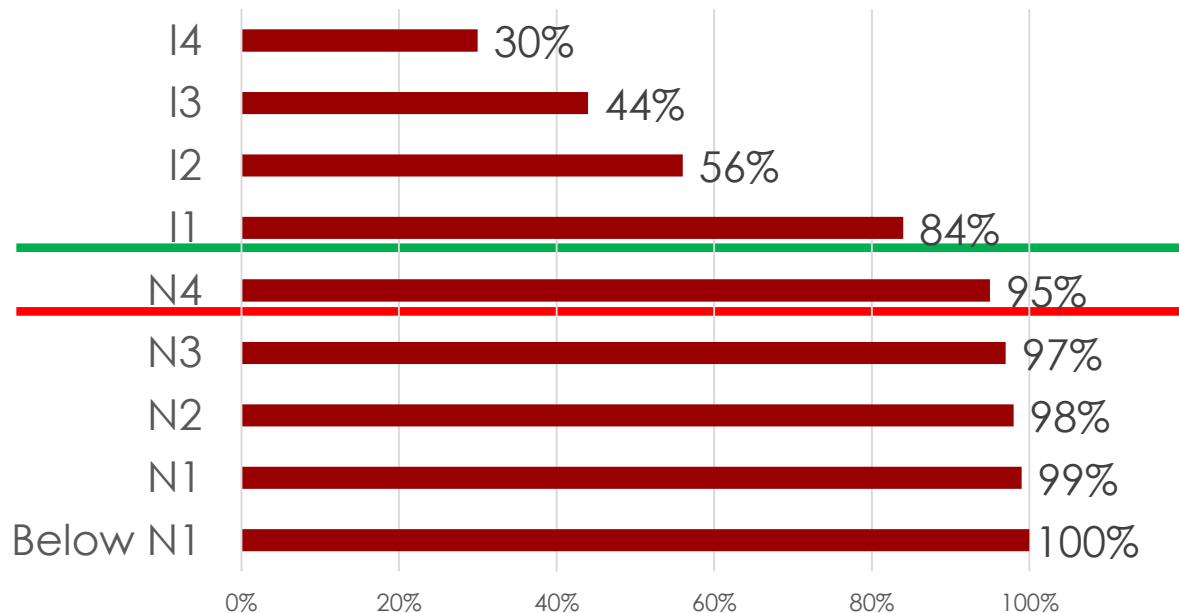
Benchmark: N3



Spanish ILS-5th grade

Form A (n=2168)

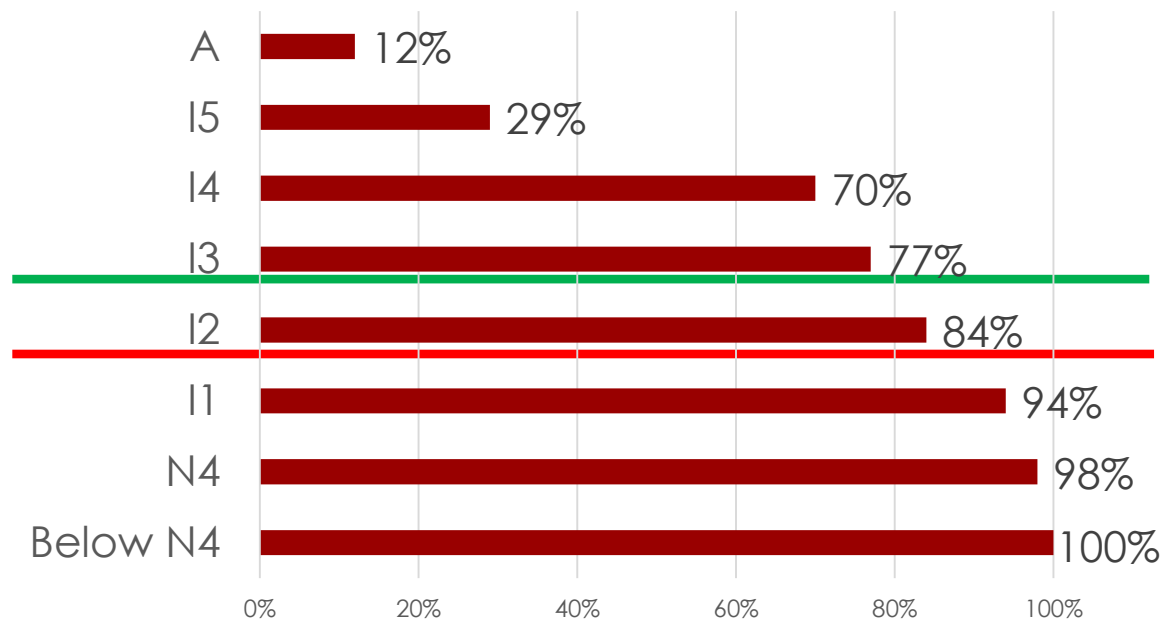
Benchmark: N4-I1



Spanish ILS-7th grade

Form B (n=987)

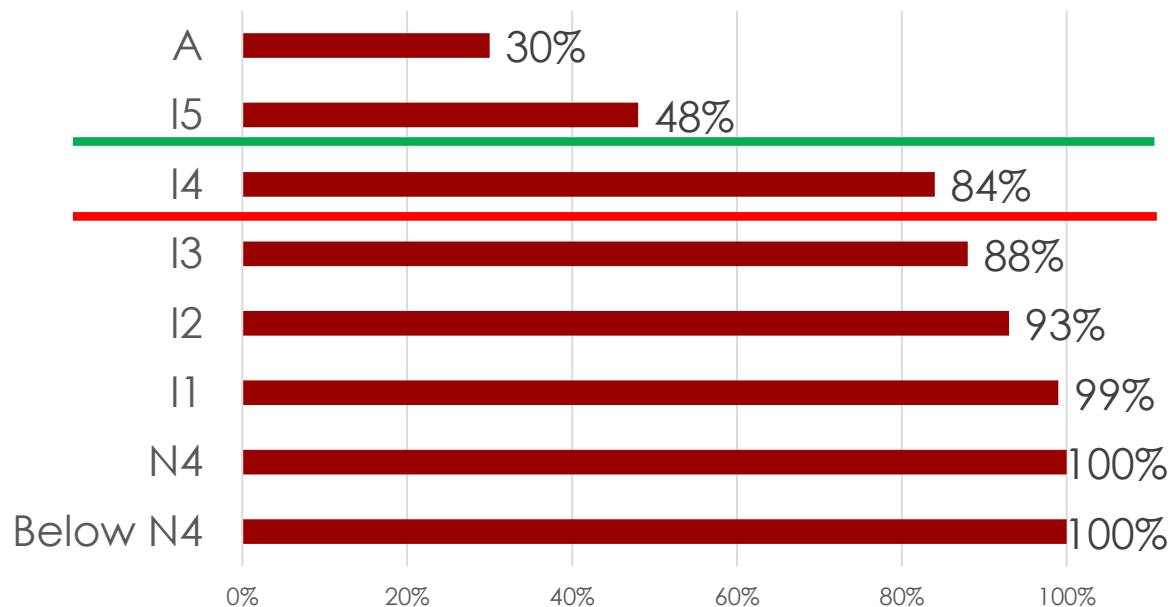
Benchmark: I2-I3



Spanish ILS-9th grade

Form B (n=451)

Benchmark: I4-I5



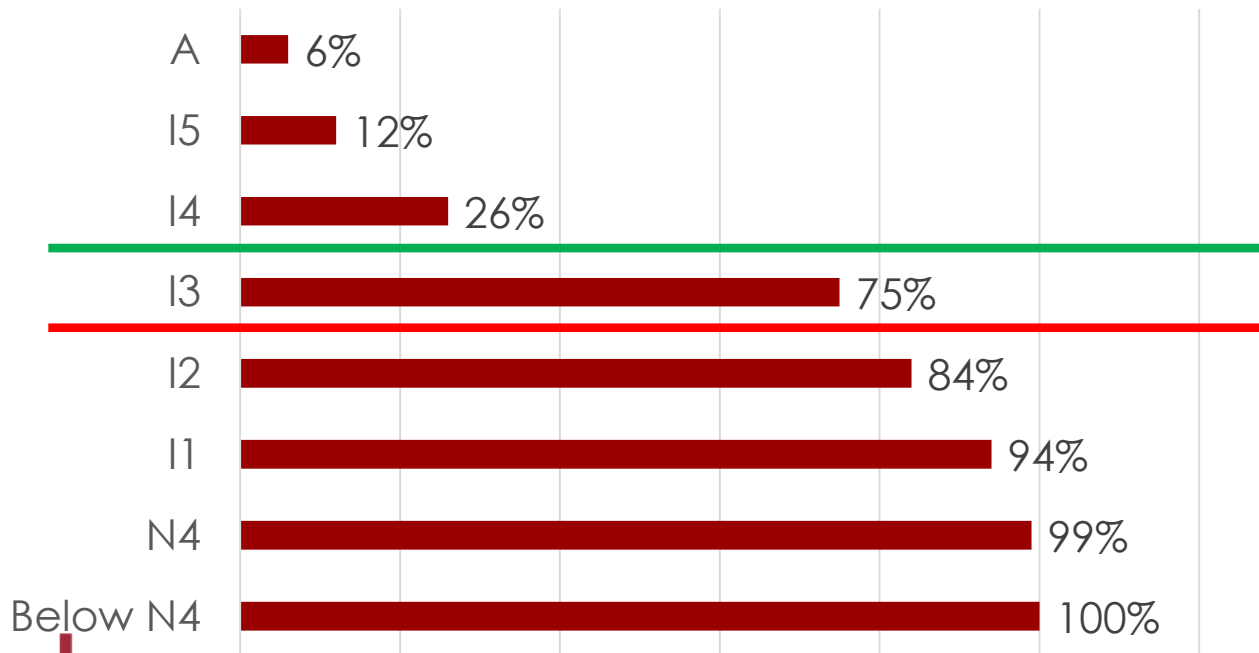
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Spanish PW-8th grade

Form B
(n=722)

Benchmark:
I2-I3



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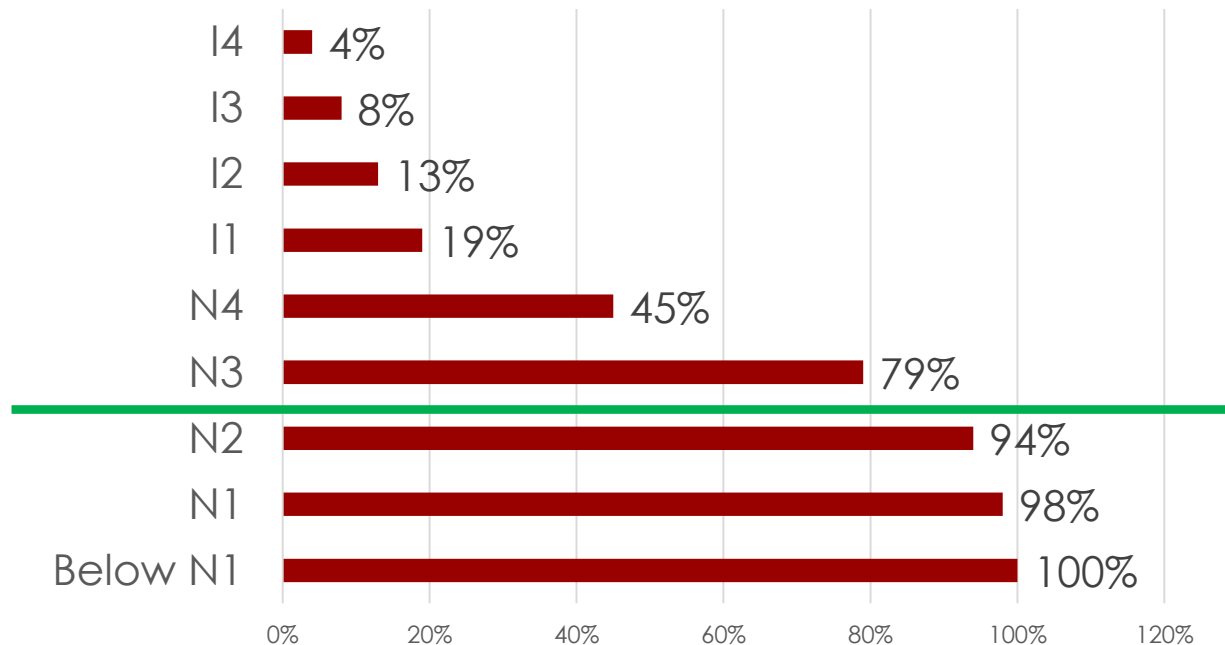
Takeaways from Spanish data

- By 5th grade students are already well into the Intermediate range in speaking
- Most students reach IH/A in speaking by the end of 9th grade
- Writing progresses at a similar rate, with students at IM by 8th grade

French data

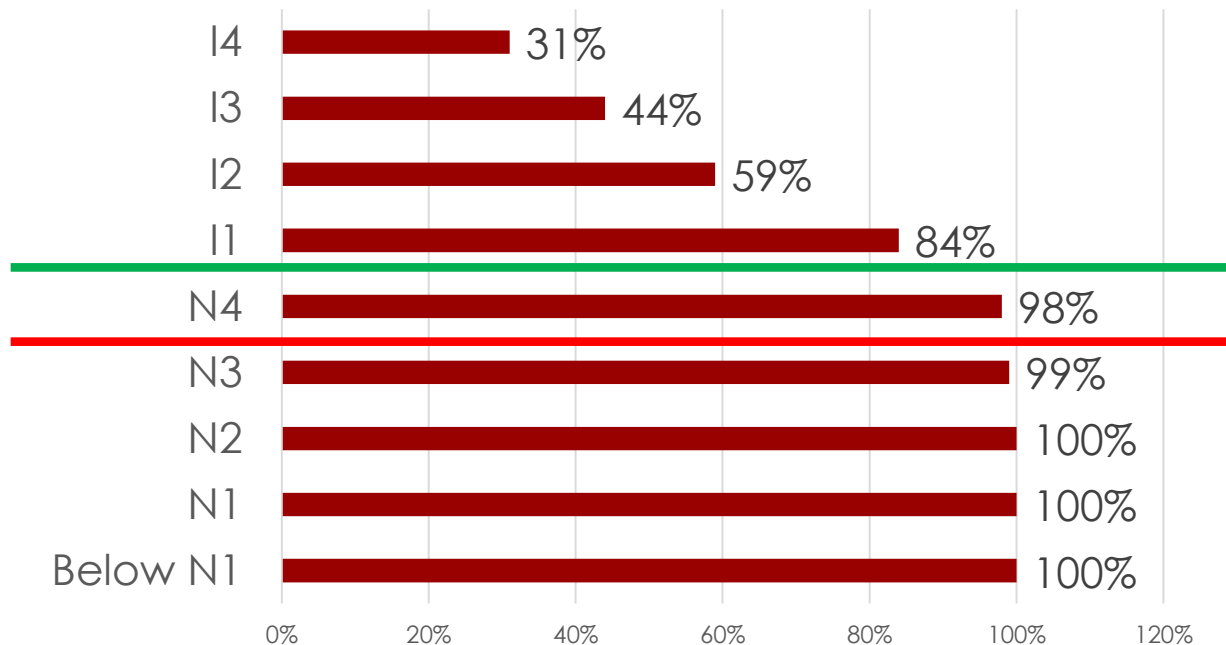
French ILS-3rd grade

Benchmark:
N3



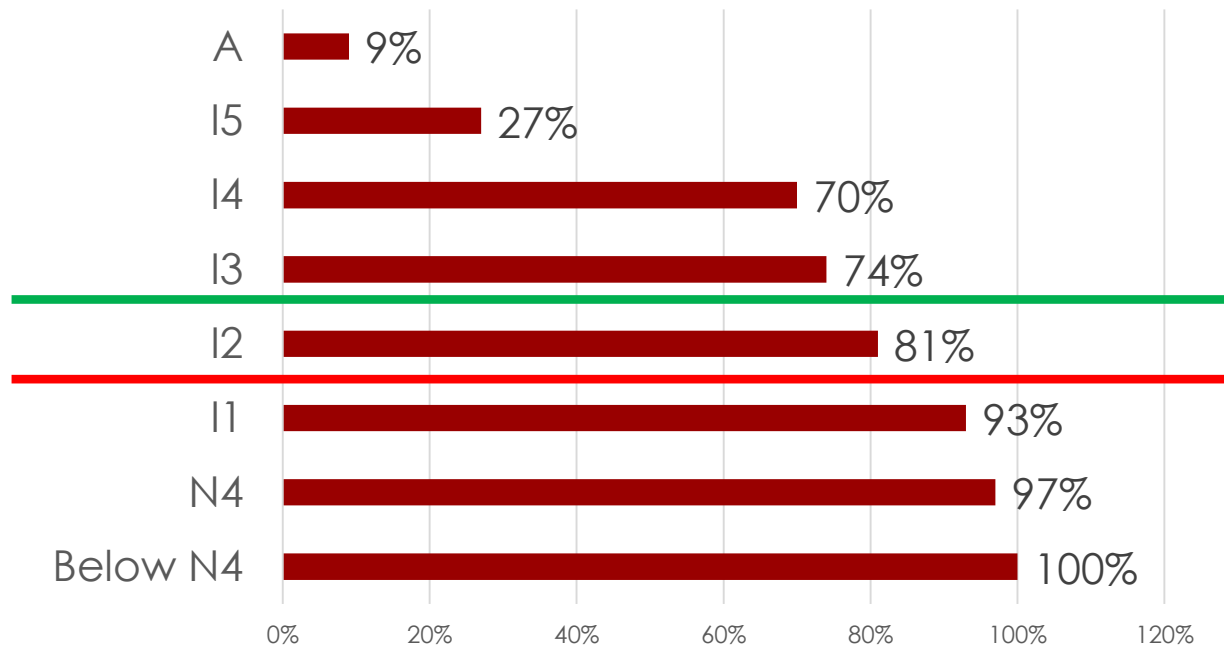
French ILS-5th grade

Benchmark:
N4-I1



French ILS-7th grade

Benchmark:
I2-I3

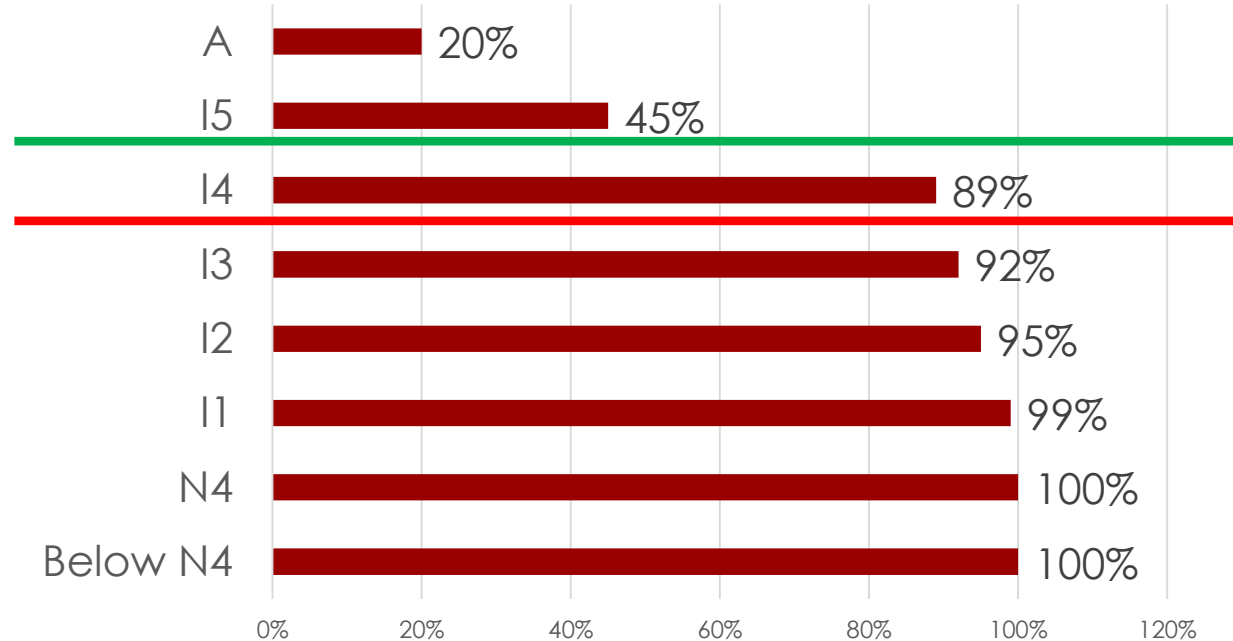


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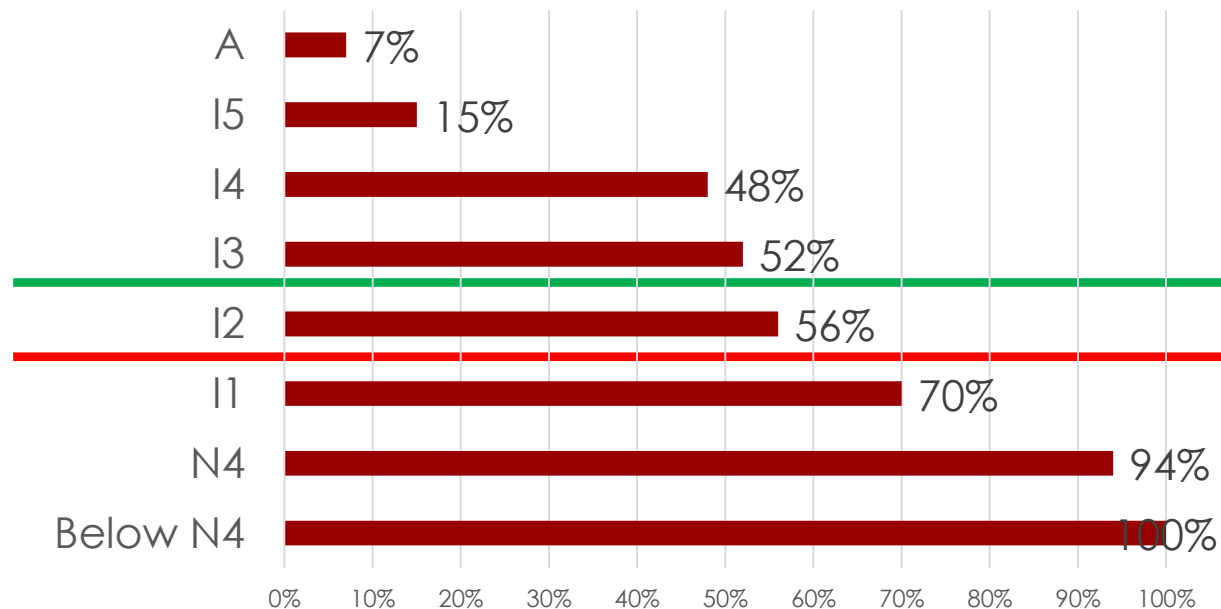
French ILS-9th grade

Benchmark:
I4-I5



French PW-8th grade

Benchmark:
I2-I3



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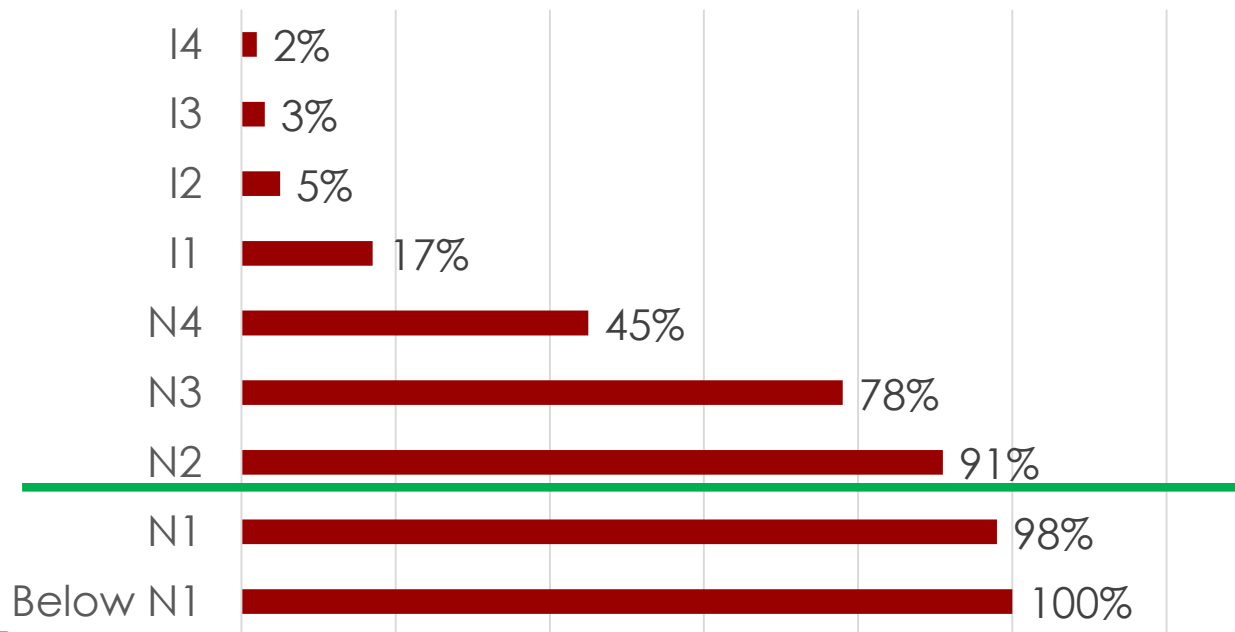
Takeaways from French data

- More than half of the students are IM by 5th grade
- Almost half are IH in 9th grade (20% Advanced)
- Writing progresses at a slower rate but still solidly IM in 8th grade

Chinese data

Chinese ILS-3rd grade

Benchmark:
N2

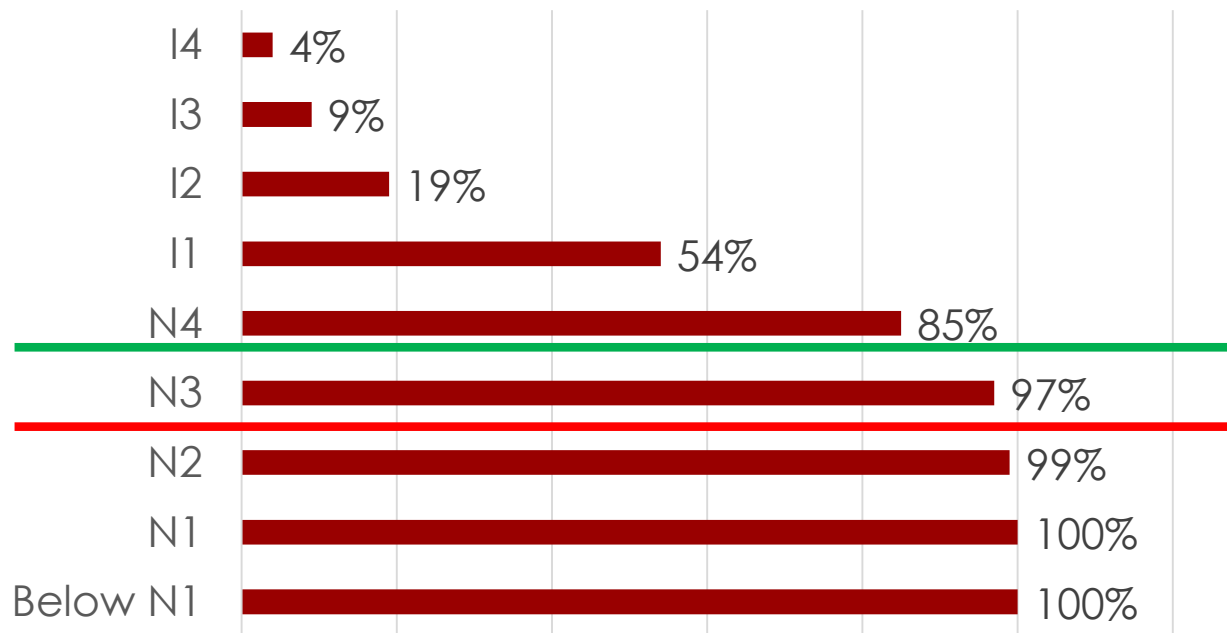


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Chinese ILS-5th grade

Benchmark:
N3-N4

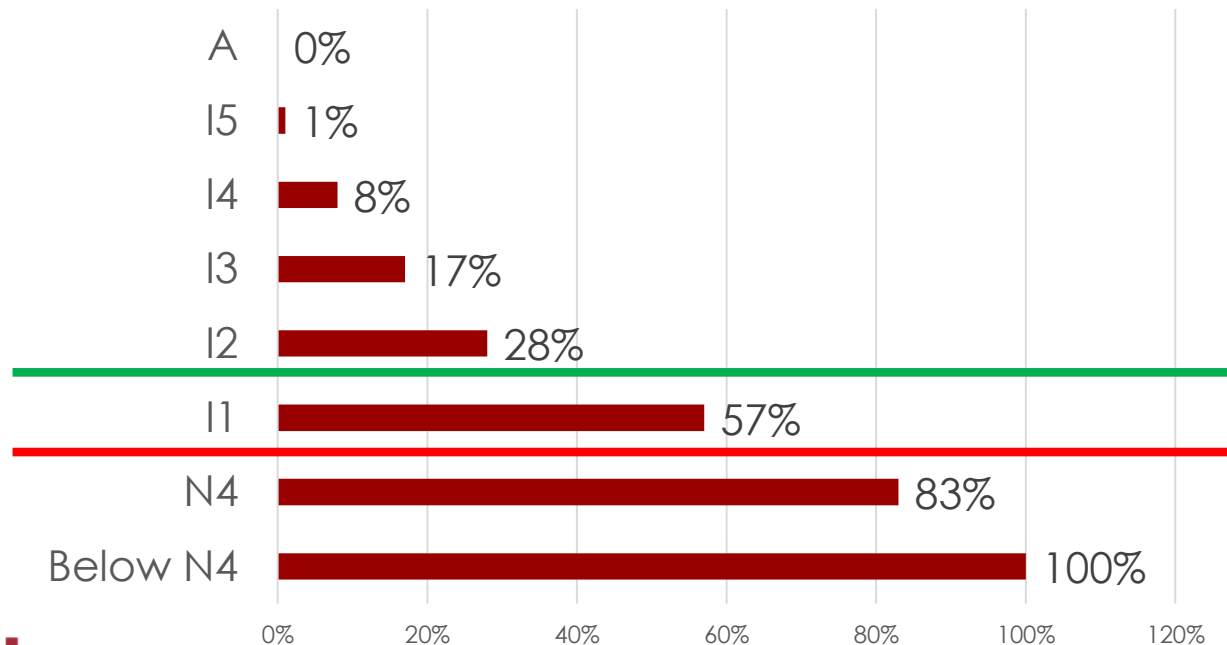


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Chinese ILS-7th grade

Benchmark:
I1-I2

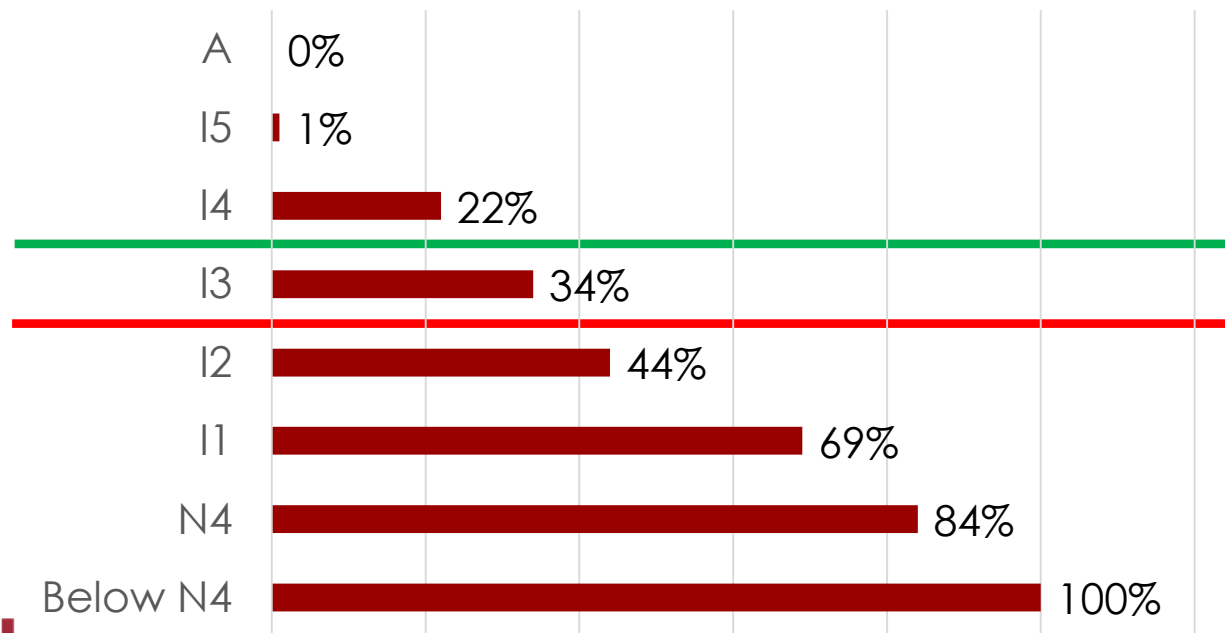


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Chinese ILS-9th grade

Benchmark:
I3-I4

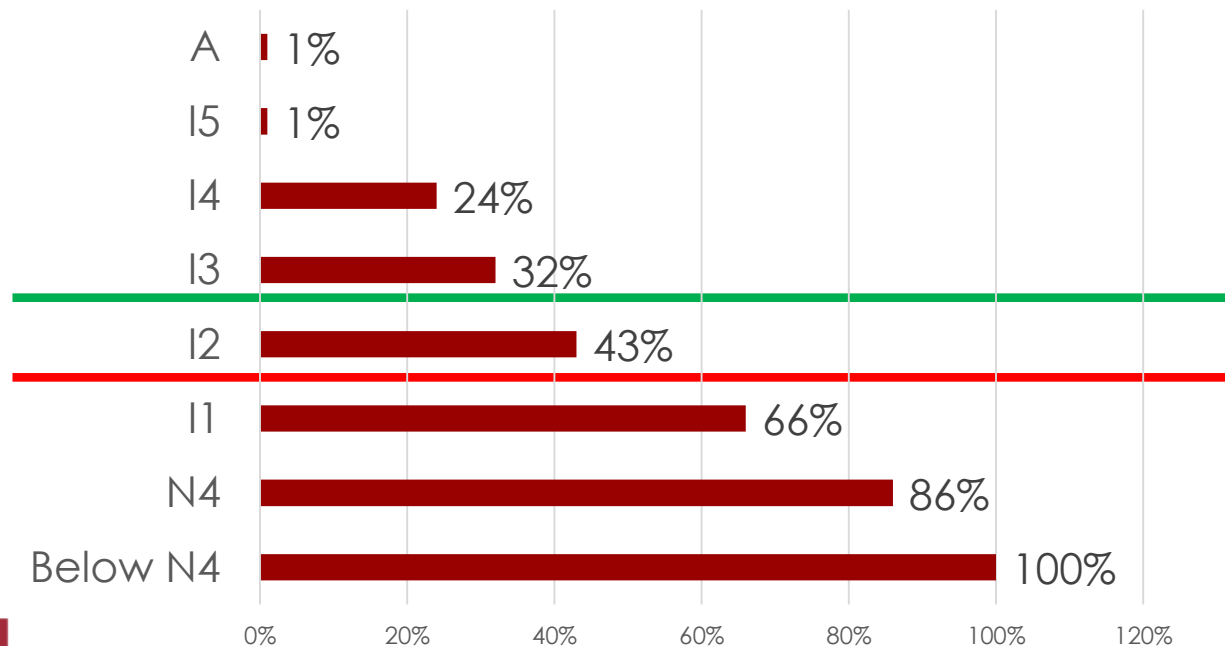


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Chinese PW-8th grade

Benchmark:
I2-I3



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Takeaways from Chinese data

- Slower progress through the Novice level
- By 9th grade, the majority are at the lower end of the Intermediate level in speaking
- Similar growth pattern in writing

Articulation

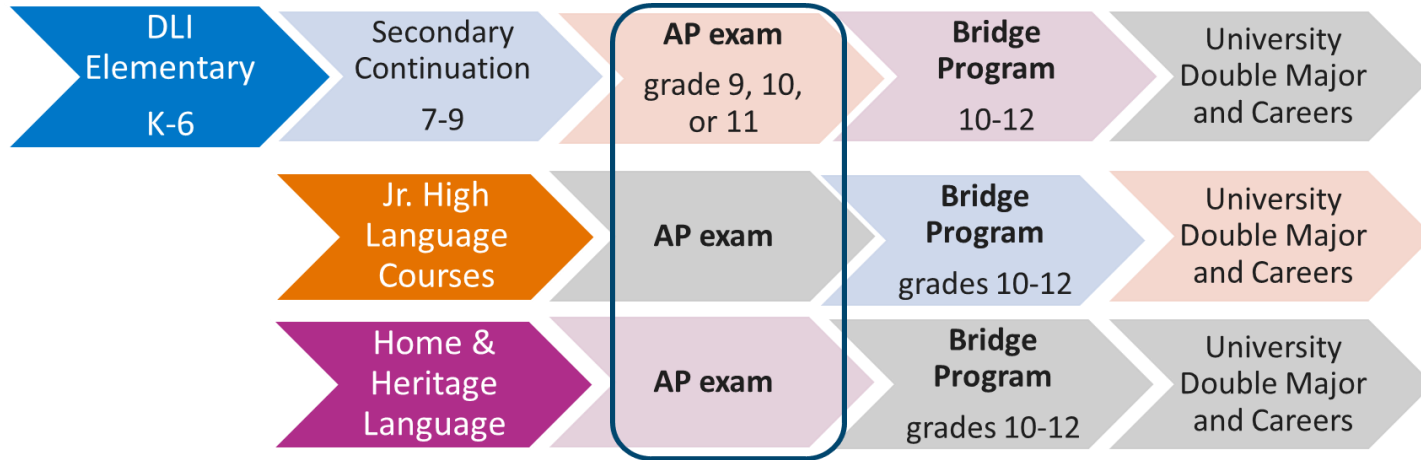


- What happens post-AP?
- The Utah Bridge Program for Advanced Language Learning
- Why take AP early when it's the highest/final language course offered?
- High schools are not prepared to offer language beyond AP
- University programs don't normally articulate well with K-12
- Most of these students are not prototypical language majors

- Advanced language pathway for high school students who have passed the AP Language and Culture exam.
- Partnership between all Utah institutions of higher education and school districts with DLI programs.
- Students can complete one to three Bridge courses while in high school earning both high school and university credit.
- 2018-2019 Bridge numbers:
 - Three languages: Chinese, French, Spanish
 - 1401 Students
 - 39 Schools
 - 61 Sections



Multiple entry points



Post-Secondary

The Flagship Proficiency Initiative



Susan Gass
Paula Winke



Dan Soneson



Jane Hacking
Fernando Rubio

The FPI

- Measure proficiency in speaking, reading and listening in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish
- ACTFL tests: OPIc, RPT, LPT
- Background questionnaire to gauge previous experience and extracurricular language use

Background Information (Institutions)

01

Michigan State University

- Languages tested: Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish
- Number of tests administered 2014-2017: 14,000+

02

University of Minnesota

- Languages tested: Arabic, French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish
- Number of tests administered 2014-2017: 6,952

03

University of Utah

- Languages tested: Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and Russian
- Number of tests administered 2014-2017: 2,772

Results

- Average learner results by language, by year in program for:
 - OPIc (speaking)
 - RPT (reading)
 - LPT (listening)

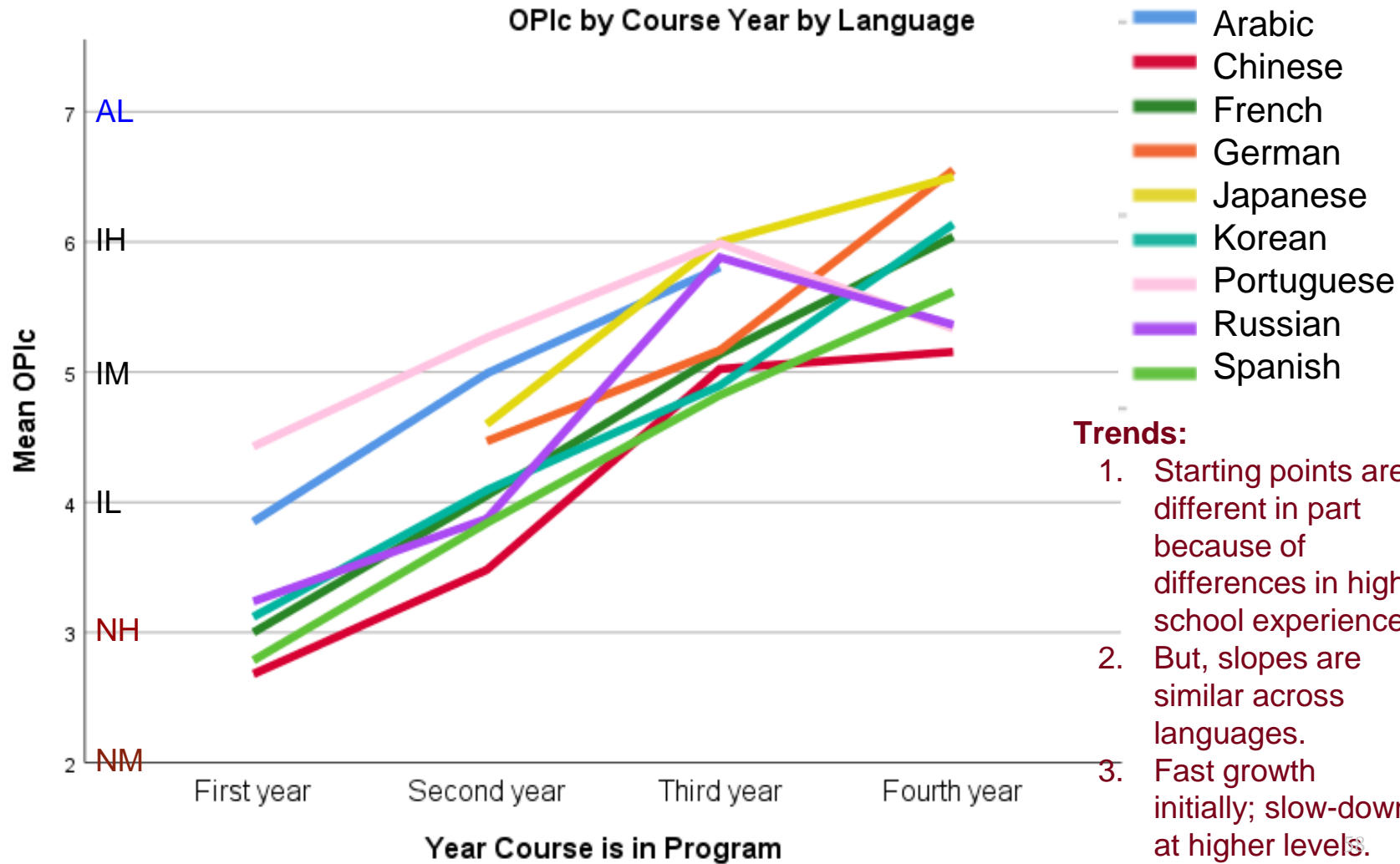
The
#s

<u>Language</u>	<u>1st yr</u>	<u>2nd yr</u>	<u>3rd yr</u>	<u>4th yr</u>	<u>Total</u>
Spanish	587	1339	1447	706	4079
French	364	695	508	275	1842
Chinese	199	263	255	107	824
Russian	209	243	223	63	738
German	-	348	60	70	478
Arabic	191	92	41	-	324
Korean	44	153	78	22	297
Portuguese	25	126	107	13	271
Italian	96	50	11	-	157
Japanese	-	40	5	10	55
Total	1715	3349	2735	1266	9065

Cross-sectional data

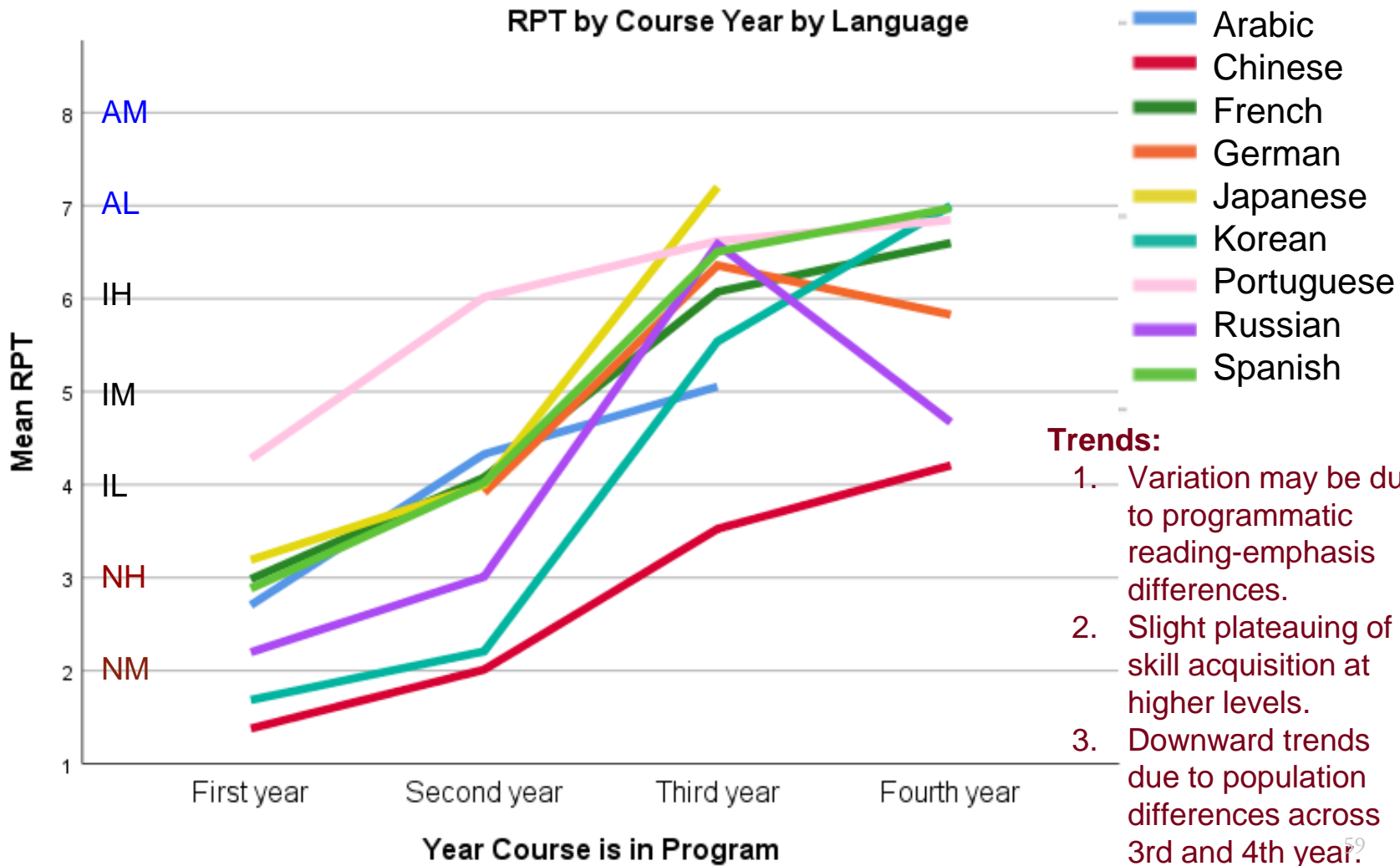
OPIc

Speaking



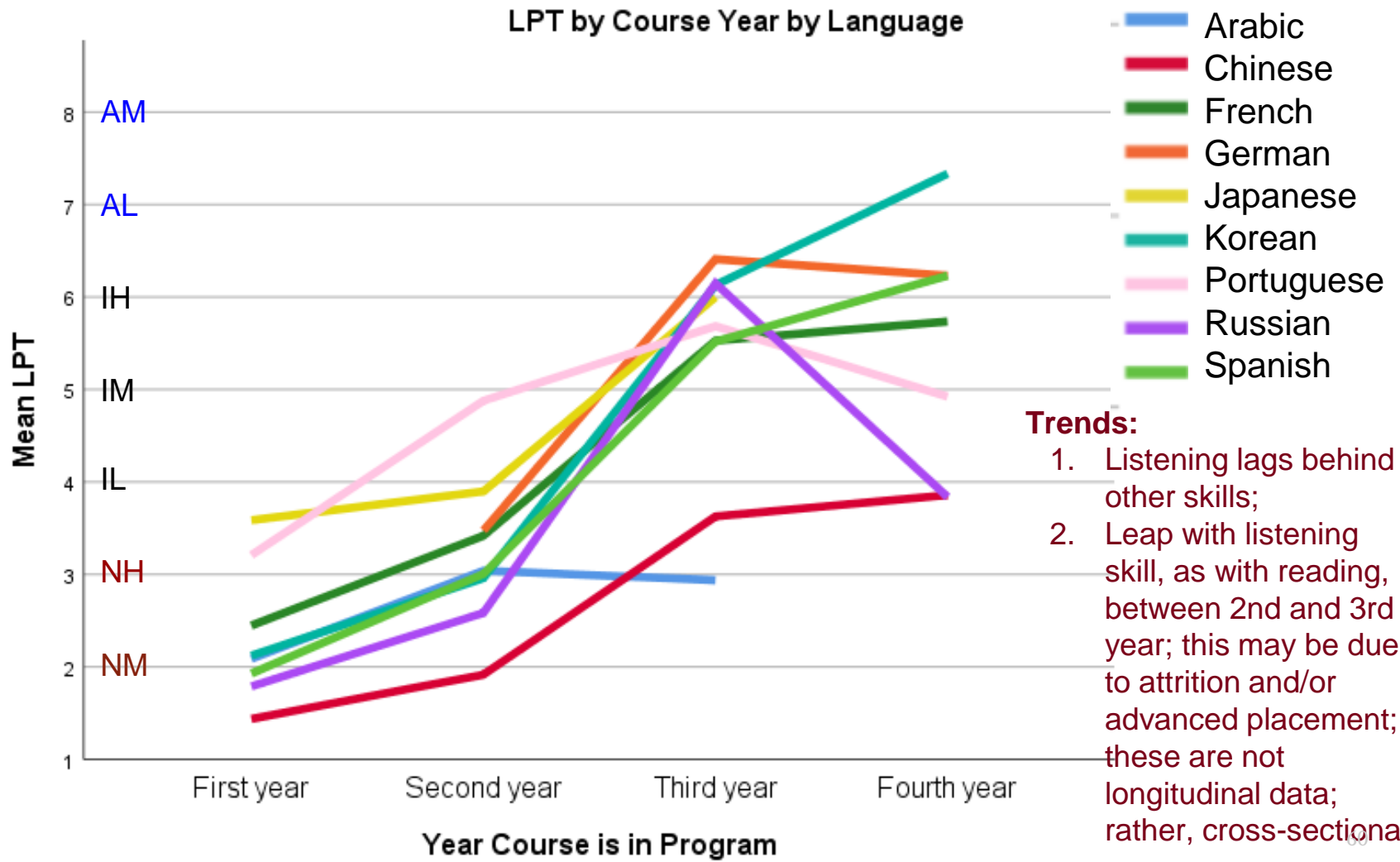
RPT

Reading

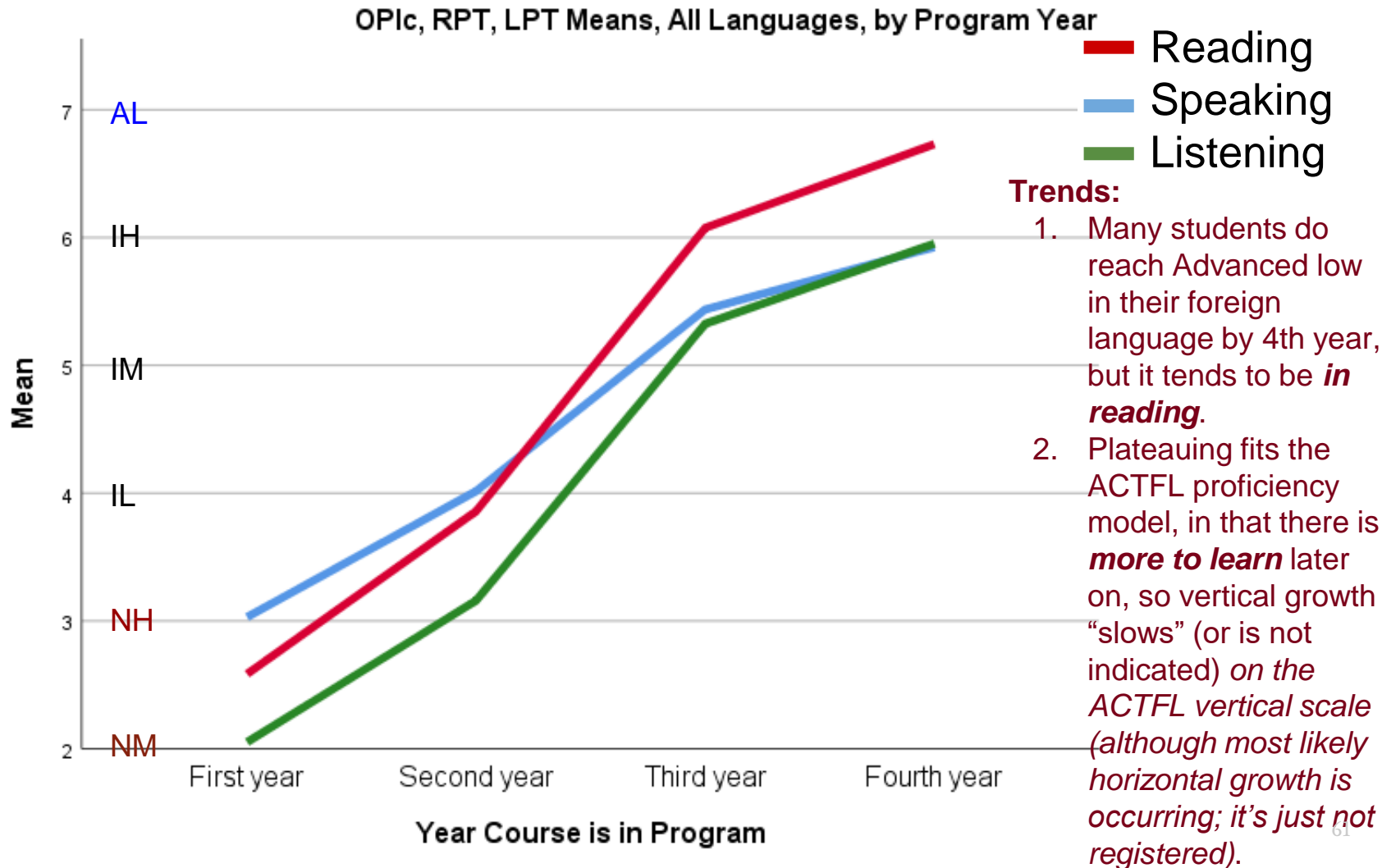


LPT

Listening



Means, All Skills, All Langs.



Correlating assessment data and background information

- Profile of our language majors
- The role of high school experience
- Course grades and proficiency

Background Information Collected (Survey Data)

01	Context of Exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family members• Community• Friends
02	Formal Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior experience with the language before entering tertiary education
03	Abroad Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal study abroad experiences• Other abroad experiences
04	Activities Outside of Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities in the language such as<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ interaction with native speakers◦ using social media◦ playing games
05	Importance of Language Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Likert scale rating importance• Speaking, Reading, Writing, Listening
06	Purpose of Language Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why are they studying the language?<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Complete a graduation requirement, prepare for studying abroad, learn about heritage, travel, fun, etc.

Language major profile (Winke & Gass, 2018)

- **Michigan State** analyzed the results of 884 declared majors enrolled in 3rd or 4th year (Russian 22, French 227, Spanish 635)
 - Spanish: reading (6.49) > listening (5.45) > speaking (5.20)
 - French: reading (6.22) > speaking (5.81) > listening (5.58)
 - Russian: speaking (4.64) > reading (4.50) > listening (3.64)
- They then compared the performance of language-only majors to double (hybrid) majors.

SCORING: S=10, AH=9, AM= 8, AL=7, IH=6, IM=5, IL=4, NH=3, NM=2, NL=1

Majors that reach Advanced level

Group	Language	Count	Speaking	Reading	Listening
Secondary or Dual Major	French	186	27%	48%	32%
	Russian	20	1%	15%	1%
	Spanish	553	11%	55%	25%
	Total	759	15%	52%	26%
Language-only Major	French	41	54%	71%	46%
	Russian	2	0%	0%	0%
	Spanish	82	30%	72%	48%
	Total	125	32%	70%	46%

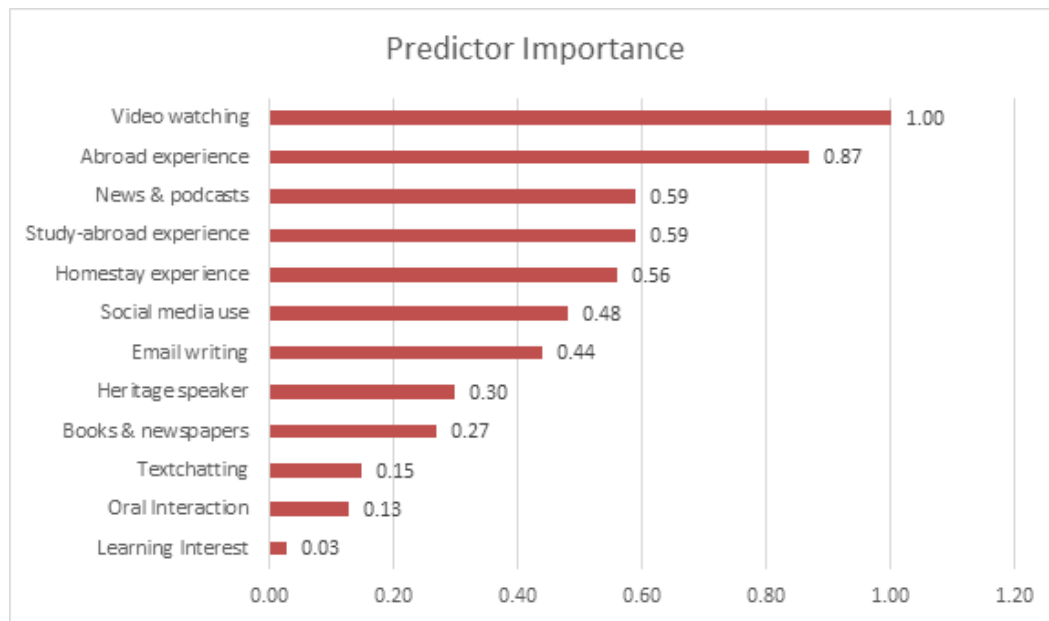
What predicts proficiency?

- Based on responses to the background questionnaire, three types of predictors were identified: study abroad, heritage status and motivation.

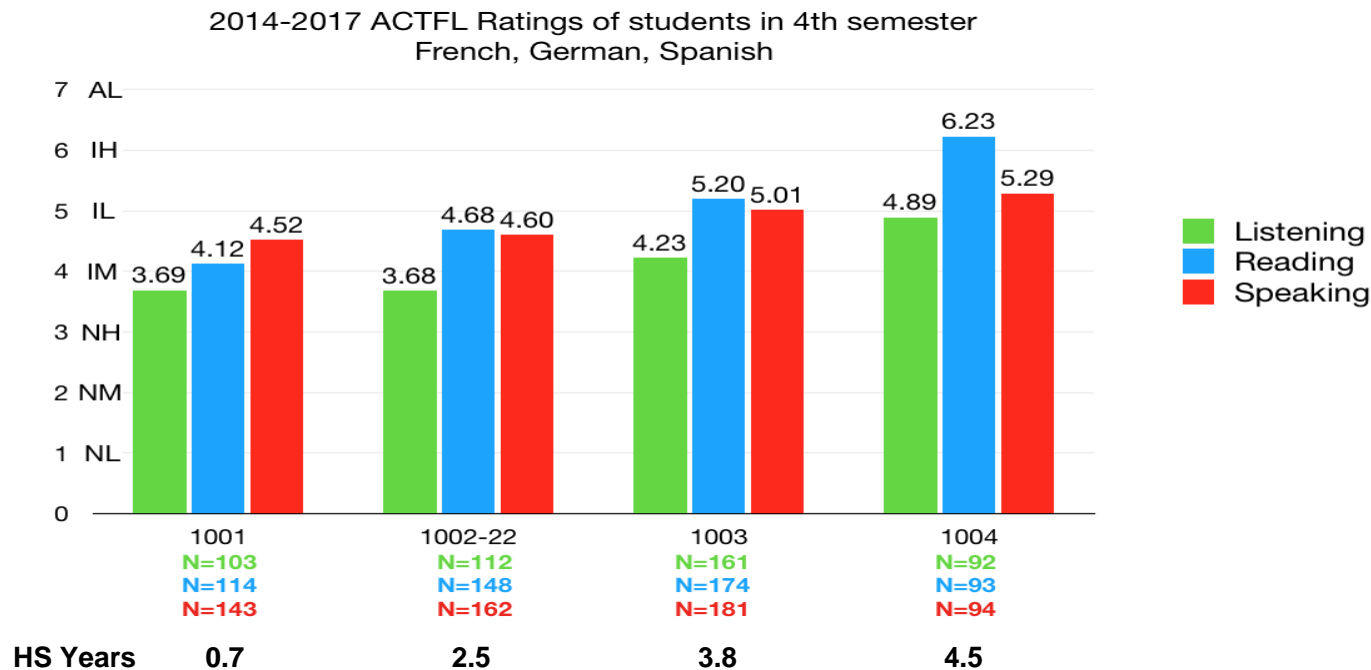
Correlating predictors	Reading	Listening	Speaking
Study abroad	+		+
Heritage level		+	+
Learning language for fun	+	+	
Learning language for travel		+	+
Learning language to satisfy a requirement	--		

The extracurriculars

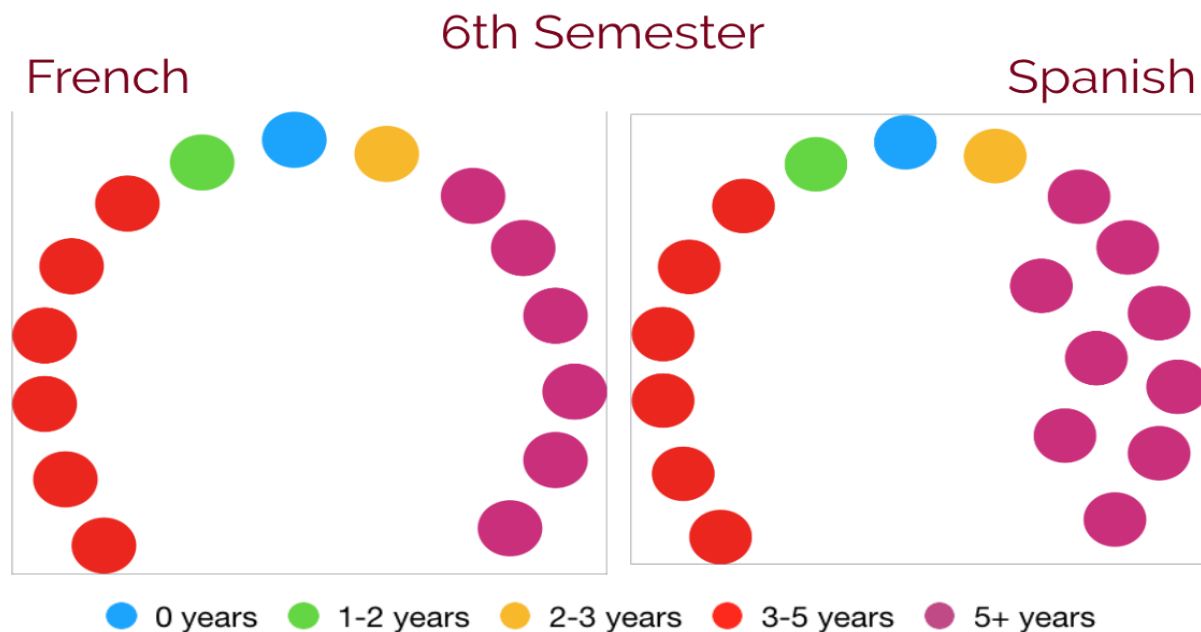
Predictors of Advanced status



Curricular factors (U of Minnesota)



Who are our advanced students?



Pedagogical/curricular implications

- More time on task needed
- Additional opportunities (requirements?) to practice the language outside the classroom:
 - Service-learning opportunities
 - Research opportunities
 - Discussion groups
 - Practical projects
- Articulation
- Emphasis on all 4 skills and modes of communication
- Redesigned curricula that reflect students' goals and interests
 - What do our students want? How do they plan to use their language skills? What do our majors do after they graduate?

Course grades and proficiency

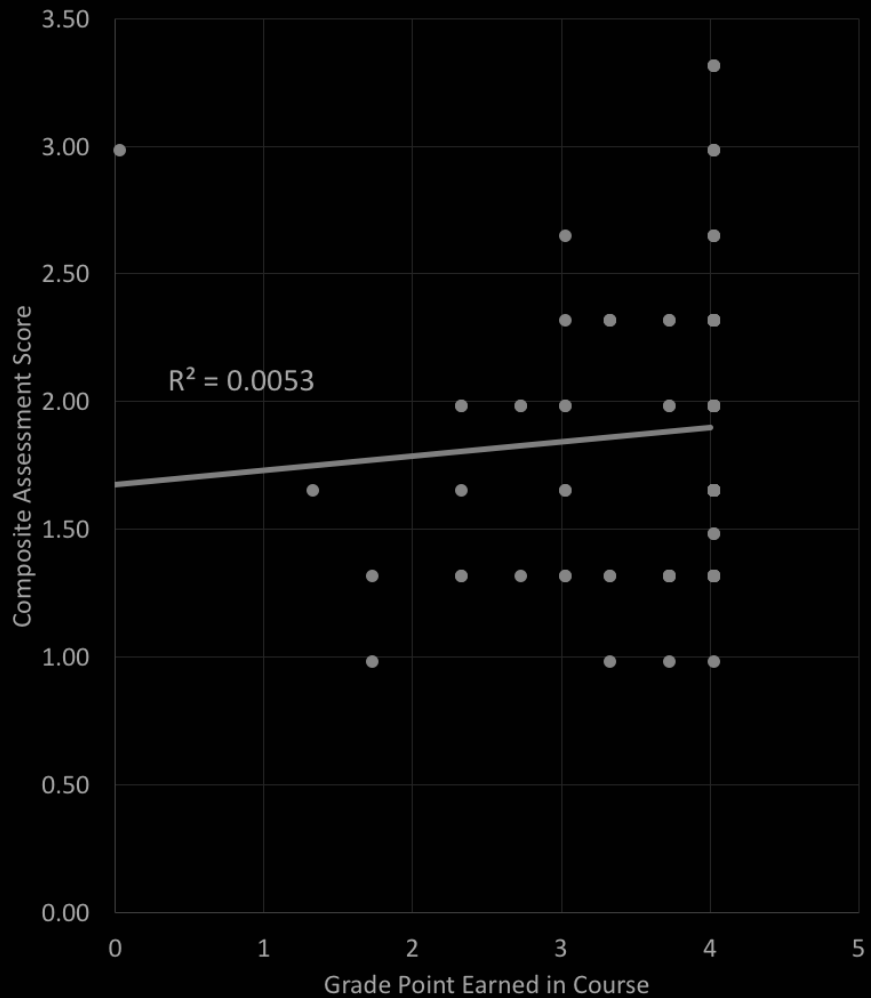
- Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian
- We acquired final course grades for all students tested in 2015-17.
- Letter grades were converted to grade points using the following scale:
 - A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7,
 - D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0, D- = 0.7, E = 0.0
- Assessment scores were converted to numerical scores.
- Composite scores were calculated by averaging speaking, reading, and listening assessments scores. Composite scores were only calculated for students who took all three assessments at the end of a given semester.

Course grades and proficiency

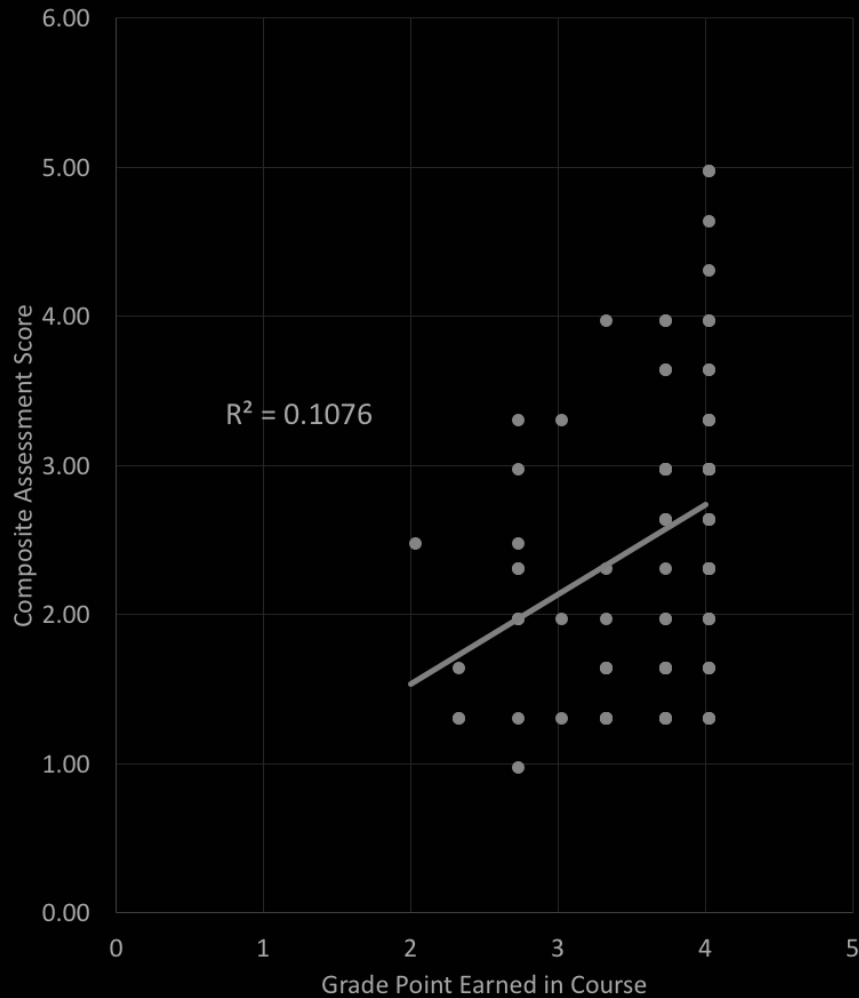
Research questions:

- Are grading practices aligned with proficiency?
- Does the relationship between course grades and proficiency outcomes vary depending on the language or the course level?
- What role does immersion experience play in this relationship?

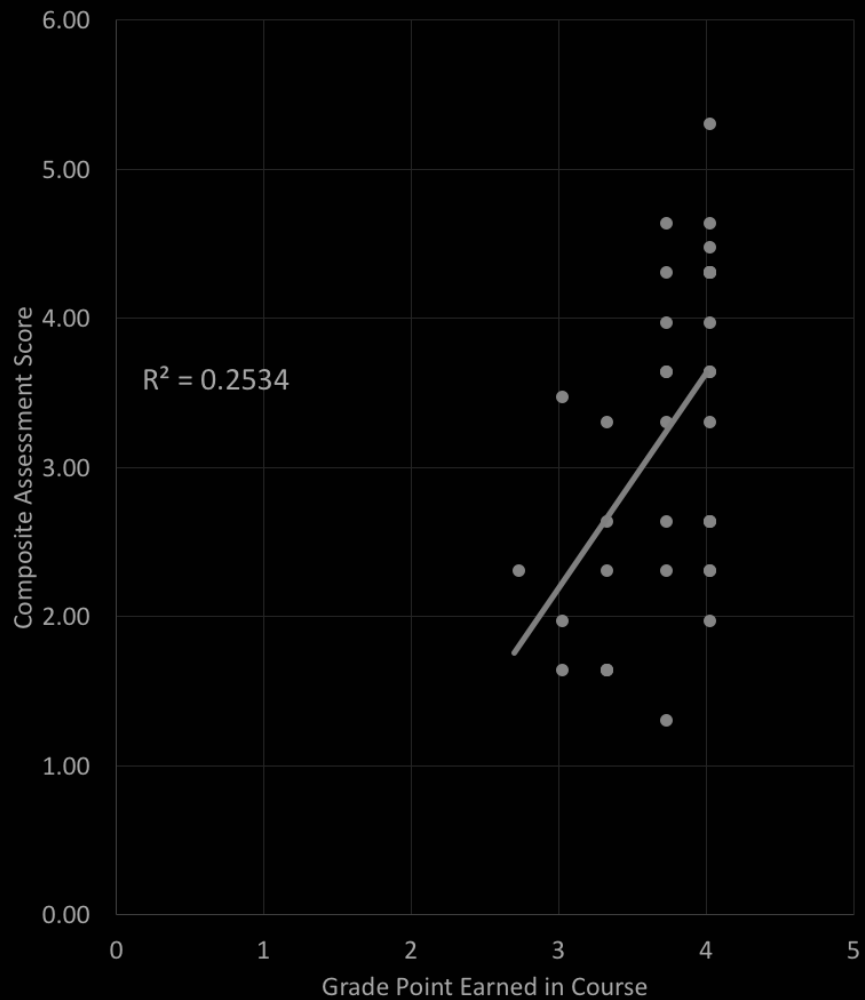
All 1020 Courses



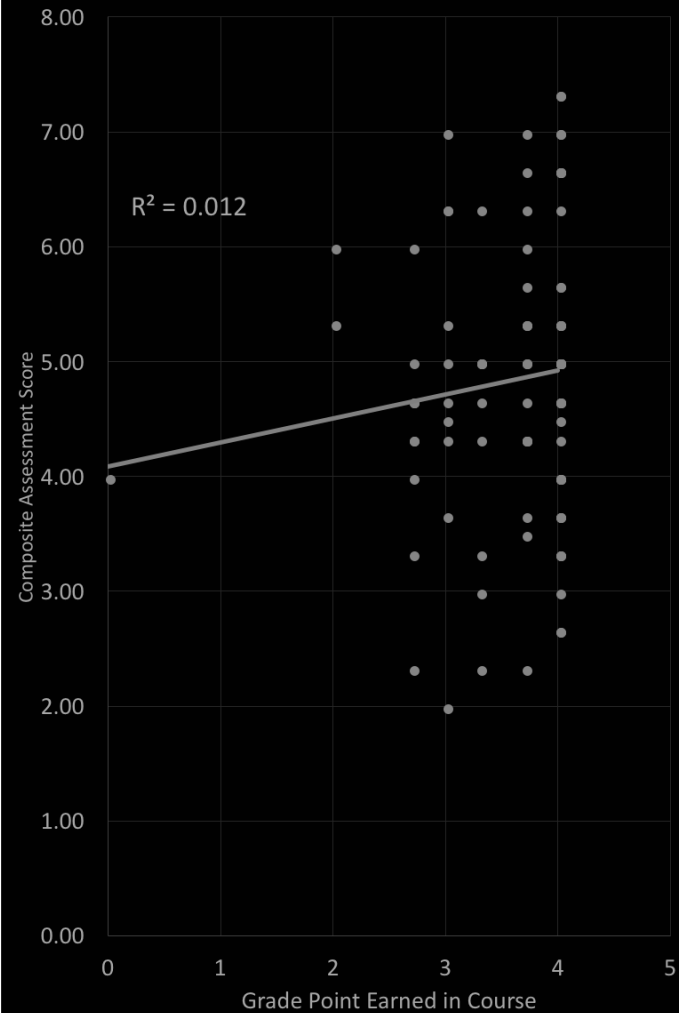
All 2020 Courses



All 3020 Courses



All 3060 Courses



Take-aways

- Grading practices are not clearly aligned with proficiency measures (see also Brown, 2013; Brown et al., 2018).
- This lack of alignment is more evident when students have a non-classroom learning background.
- This may indicate that grading is based to a large extent on classroom-related behaviors (attendance, participation, extra credit, etc.) and other factors that are unrelated to (or separate from) proficiency.

