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Chapter 7

◆ The Development of L2 Proficiency and Literacy within the Context of the Federally Supported Overseas Language Training Programs for Americans

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A CONSIDERABLE BODY OF research over the past two decades has demonstrated that second language (L2) acquisition in the overseas instructed/immersion environment may contribute greatly to the development of linguistic and cultural competence, provided appropriate program designs and student support conditions are met (Davidson 2010; Kinginger 2008). As the number of US students participating in study abroad learning continues to grow (Open Doors 2013), the community of researchers, educators, and policymakers interested in overseas study has understandably increased attention on the specification of learning outcomes from study abroad, which are understood to affect the development of target language and cultural literacy, intercultural communicative competence, and regional knowledge. Second language proficiency is also closely linked to the development of cross-cultural adaptability, language socialization, identity construction, enhanced cognitive functioning, and critical thinking, to name only the most common themes (Watson et al. 2013; Kinginger 2013; Byrnes 2013).

In 2006, the White House announced a major multiagency initiative designed to “expand dramatically the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages,” known as the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI). The initiative focuses on senior secondary and university-level students. Recipients of the new federal scholarships represent all disciplines and institutional types and are expected to continue their language study beyond the overseas scholarship period. The students are therefore encouraged to apply their critical language skills in their future professional careers. Other components of NSLI, which are not discussed in the present study, address domestic foreign language training and the support of

teachers of the critical languages. None of the new programs include a US government service requirement.

The new overseas language study programs are open on a competitive basis to qualified US secondary school students, undergraduate students, and graduate students engaged in the study of Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu.¹ The present study reports and examines proficiency-based outcomes of the participants in each major program: the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y), the Critical Language Scholarship Summer Institutes (CLS), and the Language Flagship Overseas Capstone Programs (OCP). Taken together, the new programs represent one of the most significant investments in foreign language study for American students in US history. These programs support high school and college-level learners of critical languages at a stage in their education when an intensive summer or year-long overseas immersion program is more readily accommodated and costs far less than comparable training of midcareer or in-service adult learners.

The present study provides the first detailed review of the impact these programs have on the language proficiency of their US participants. It makes use of large-scale ($N = 1,457$) multi-language, multi-institutional data on learning outcomes, which make it possible to consider the effects on L2 gains of a group of factors (independent variables) previously identified as strongly associated with language growth: program durations (summer—eight weeks; academic year—thirty-two weeks), initial L2 levels of (pre-program) proficiency (from Novice Low [NL]/Interagency Language Roundtable [ILR]-0) to Advanced High [AH]/[ILR 2+]), and post-program proficiencies (from Novice High [NH]/[ILR-0+] to Distinguished [ILR-4]). Three distinct participant cohorts are of both research and policy interest: high school learners in the summer and year-long NSLI-Y program ($N = 523$), university-level participants in the CLS immersion program ($N = 620$), and university-level students in the Flagship Capstone programs ($N = 314$). Descriptions of the major curricular and cocurricular interventions utilized at the school-, undergraduate-, and postgraduate-level overseas programs are also included. Finally, the study addresses the issue of language gains within the context of the eight-week summer program model, where program outcomes in the past have been challenging to demonstrate using the existing proficiency scales (Dewey 2004; Dwyer 2004). Reading and listening gains from short-term study, when tested, have focused primarily on students at more advanced levels of study (Davidson 2010). The new summer (short-term) immersion data presented here should contribute to the understanding of the efficacy of this popular format for language and cultural learning.

Research Questions

1. What measurable gains in L2 proficiency are demonstrated by participants in a group of large-scale, federally funded programs for overseas/immersion

- language study? How do language gains in reading, listening, and speaking vary across summer and academic-year program durations for participating students?
2. To what extent does *initial level* of proficiency affect L2 gain in the overseas immersion setting? How does the impact of a summer or year of study for a student with pre-program proficiencies in the Advanced range (ILR skill level 2 in Speaking [S-2]/Reading [R-2]/Listening [L-2]) compare with the same duration of immersion for a student with proficiency in the Novice or Intermediate range (ILR S-1/R-1/L-1)?
 3. To what extent do age and the choice of language affect gain in the study abroad setting?

Subjects, Variables, and Methods

The present analysis is based on data relating to 1,457 students who studied under the previously mentioned federally sponsored summer or academic-year immersion programs, particularly between 2010 and 2012. Participants represented more than 1,500 US schools, community colleges, and universities located in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and US territories. Participants came from public and private institutions, community colleges, and minority-servicing institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), High Hispanic Enrollments (HHE institutions), and Tribal Colleges. Approximately 10 percent of the university students represented in the current study are science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors (See Table 7.1).

The programs recruit and select participants on a competitive basis and in keeping with specific eligibility standards that are outlined in appendices 1, 2, and 3. Evidence of the applicant's motivation, overall academic achievement, cultural

◆ Table 7.1 Student Characteristics, 2010–2012 (Total Student Population [N = 1,457])

NSLI-Y Summer and Academic-Year (AY) Programs (N = 523)			
Length of Program	Age	Gender	Prior Language Study
Summer N = 479	Mean Age 16.6	Female 61.0%	Yes 58.9%
AY N = 44	Mean Age 17.5	Male 39.0%	No 41.1%

CLS/Summer Program (N = 620)			
Educational Level	Age	Gender	Prior Language Study
2/4-year colleges: 70%	Mean Age 21.1	Female 60%	Yes 61%
Graduate: 30%	Mean Age 23.3	Male 40%	No 39%

Flagship Capstone Program (N = 314)			
Educational Level	Age	Gender	Prior Language Study
Undergraduate: 89%	22.9	Female: 52%	Yes 100%
Post-BA: 11%	24.1	Male 48%	No 0%

adaptability, and commitment to future study of the language is taken into consideration by external selection committees within the review process. Except for Flagship Capstone, which requires demonstrated Advanced-level proficiency (ILR-2) in at least two language modalities, selection for the overseas programs is not based on the attainment of a specified level of proficiency in the target language at the time of application. Programs do not make use of foreign language aptitude measures, such as the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB), in assessing candidate qualifications to participate in the program. Some of the programs require academic prerequisites that are expressed in terms of one or two years of prior classroom study of the target language.

The conclusions of the present study, therefore, cannot be generalized with full confidence to every foreign language student who studies abroad. Nevertheless, to the extent that selection criteria are controlled in the analyses, candidates are not prescreened for language aptitude, and all three programs accept students from all fields and from a broad range of institutions. The results may be seen to apply more generally to the population of US students who study abroad.

Primary Curricular and Cocurricular Intervention Strategies

The American Councils for International Education, henceforth referred to as American Councils, serves as the primary (but not sole) administrator of the overseas components of the three federal programs, which are implemented, in close cooperation with local partner universities, schools, or centers in each of the host countries. All three federal programs provide resources for local faculty, classroom, and curriculum-development needs, as well as for the administration and regular evaluation of cocurricular components, including homestays, cultural programs, peer tutoring, and service learning. In reviewing these design components, it is worth noting that, unlike study abroad in the nations of Western Europe, where student mobility and cross-border language training at all levels are well understood and widely institutionalized, the experience of the countries where critical languages are spoken tends to be much more limited. The hosting of foreign students with coordinated homestays, internships, cooperative learning, and volunteer service work is relatively new in these societies. Many of the countries also face considerable physical, cultural, and religious challenges in finding local families and businesses willing and able to play a role in hosting US students.

The structure of the overseas programs administered by the American Councils is summarized here in terms of academic, cocurricular, and student-support components.² Program designs take into consideration the limitations as well as the learning opportunities provided by the host country environment; the challenges of developing the necessary instructional, curricular, and cocurricular mechanisms (and technologies) to optimize L2 learning; and the critical on-program student-support systems for the participants themselves.³ For many participants, the NSLI-Y and CLS programs represent their first sojourn outside the United States. Flagship Capstone participants are expected to have undertaken previous academic study

(minimum summer-length) in the host country prior to applying for the year-long program.

Academic Components (Age Appropriate)

- Predeparture participant orientation
- Intensive language training in small groups (12–15 hours per week)
- Regular twice weekly or daily meetings with peer tutor (4 hours per week)
- Overseas centers based in local schools, centers, or universities
- Direct-enrollment courses or classes

Cocurricular (Age Appropriate)

- Integrated homestay or residential component
- Internships and/or service learning
- Optional discussion groups with native speakers (5–6 times per term)
- Ongoing evaluation (testing, site visits, teacher/tutor reports, portfolio development, regular student self-evaluations)
- Weekly (or Biweekly) Online Language Utilization Reports (where available)

Given the range of proficiency levels represented in the federal programs, immersion learning designs must strike a workable balance between (a) sheltered and unsheltered forms of study, interaction types, and community outreach; (b) maximization of target language to include obligatory L2 use in public places, homes, and local institutions; (c) level-appropriate scaffolding and pedagogical support in the form of small-group language training classes and tutorials (average of fifteen hours per week) led by professional native teachers; (d) full-time American resident director supervision; (e) recurrent diagnostic and formative assessments, including self-assessment; (f) peer tutoring; and (g) service learning and/or internship programs.

Beyond the challenges of learning a language and studying a different culture, for many US students overseas immersion study of this type also represents one of the most sustained encounters with self-managed learning, self-conscious strategy selection, and formative self-diagnosis in their learning careers—skills essential for lifelong learning.

Language Measures

Oral proficiency (pre- and post-program) testing using the standardized Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was performed exclusively by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)—certified OPI testers. Testers are language specialists that are not otherwise involved in the training of the participants. Testers administer telephonic or face-to-face pre-program OPIs to all participants in the days prior to their departure overseas and post-program OPIs at the close of each summer or academic-year program. NSLI-Y and CLS participants with no prior study or family background in the target language are normally

exempted from the pretest. All students are required to take the post-program test. OPIs are recorded for subsequent verification and analysis. Preliminary OPI ratings are then cross-checked by ACTFL and submitted for blind double ratings by other certified testers as a regular part of the assessment process. The overall number of unratable samples remained low.

Pre- and post-program online reading and listening proficiency-based testing was initiated in the overseas Flagship Capstone programs for Arabic, Persian, Russian, and Swahili in 2009 and expanded to the remaining languages between 2011 and 2013. Limited reading and listening proficiency test results for NSLI-Y and CLS are also presented here, making use of the online reading and listening proficiency-referenced test instruments produced and administered at the request of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) by the Language Assessment Division of American Councils. The new-generation online examinations were initially cross-calibrated and equated with the older government-sponsored Educational Testing Service (ETS) reading and listening proficiency tests, used by the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) to measure listening and reading gains for students of Russian for more than fifteen years. In addition, participants in the overseas Portuguese, Russian, and Turkish Flagship Capstone programs are systematically cross-tested for speaking, reading, listening, and writing using the Common European Framework tests. Finally, all Boren Fellows taking part in any Flagship program are additionally tested by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in speaking, reading, and listening using the ILR proficiency scale. These results, in turn, have been analyzed and compared in the final calibration of American Councils testing of the same students. These ongoing collaborations with other testing agencies have helped to ensure the quality and construct validity of the American Councils tests, as well as the reliability and alignment of all the language measures of language proficiency used in this analysis with the ILR scale. Where available, reading and listening proficiency test outcomes are included in the present study in order to provide a fuller sense of participant L2 functional literacy in the target languages and cultures (Bazarova, Lekic, Marshall 2009).

Beginning in 2011, at the request of DLNSEO, final post-program Flagship test results were provided using both the ACTFL and ILR proficiency scales in order to bring these scores into alignment with internal US government reporting requirements. The State Department programs, whose participants are matriculated in high school or college, require score reporting on the ACTFL scale, which is more widely used by US educational institutions.

Note on Examining Proficiency-Based Speaking, Reading, and Listening Scores

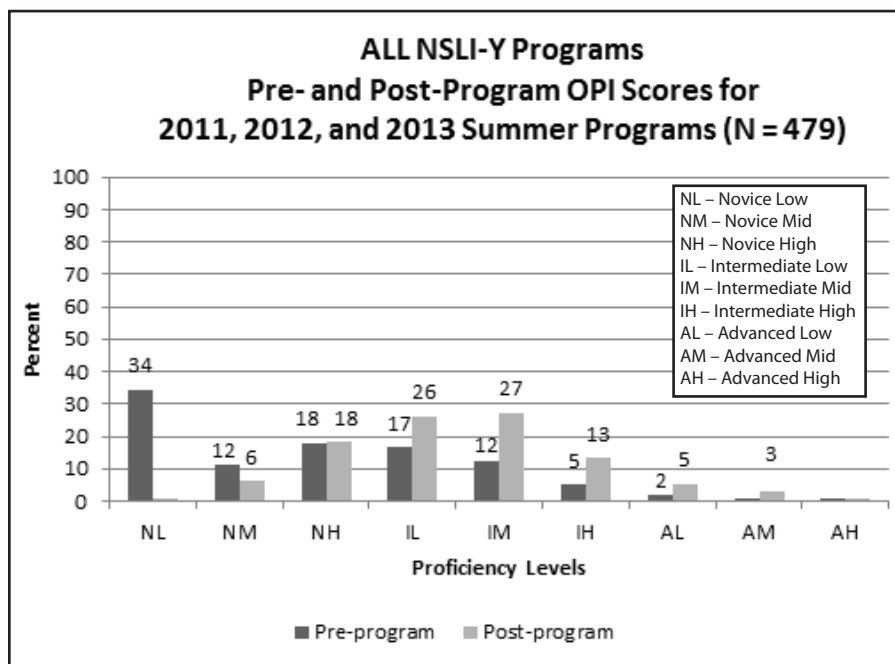
For speaking, listening, and reading skills, *gain* is defined as the difference between pre-program and post-program scores. Given the nature of the proficiency scale, the ratings are treated as ordinal variables, with each level thought of as a grouping of scores on an underlying unobserved scale of proficiency on which variation is more continuous. As first noted in Brecht, Davidson, and Ginsburg (1995), such grouping

actually loses information, in effect introducing a measurement error, in that students with quite different (unobserved) proficiency levels may be assigned the same speaking, reading, or listening proficiency scores.

Novice Low is the default proficiency assigned to all students entering the NSLI-Y program with no prior home experience or study of the target language. Dark bars indicate pre-program oral proficiency test results, while light bars indicate post-program oral proficiency test results for the same population. Both pre- and post-program scores show notable variation typical of most study abroad programs. Figure 7.1, however, indicates that 64 percent of the subject population (N = 479) entered the summer NSLI-Y program at the Novice level; approximately half of this group were absolute beginners. By the conclusion of the program, 66 percent of the population tested in the Intermediate range, and an additional 18 percent tested at Novice High or (ILR 0+), which is a threshold Intermediate score on the ILR/ACTFL scale, not simply a “strong” Novice performance. These results compare favorably with scores typically obtained by university-level students of the same critical languages after two (or more) semesters of regular academic study.

The standard cross-tabulations presented in Table 7.2 provide a more detailed analysis of the impact of the NSLI-Y summer program: post-program outcomes can be viewed in comparison to initial levels of proficiency.

The main diagonal—the cells enclosed in boxes in Table 7.2—represents no gain. Moving to the left of the main diagonal in any row indicates a loss, and moving to



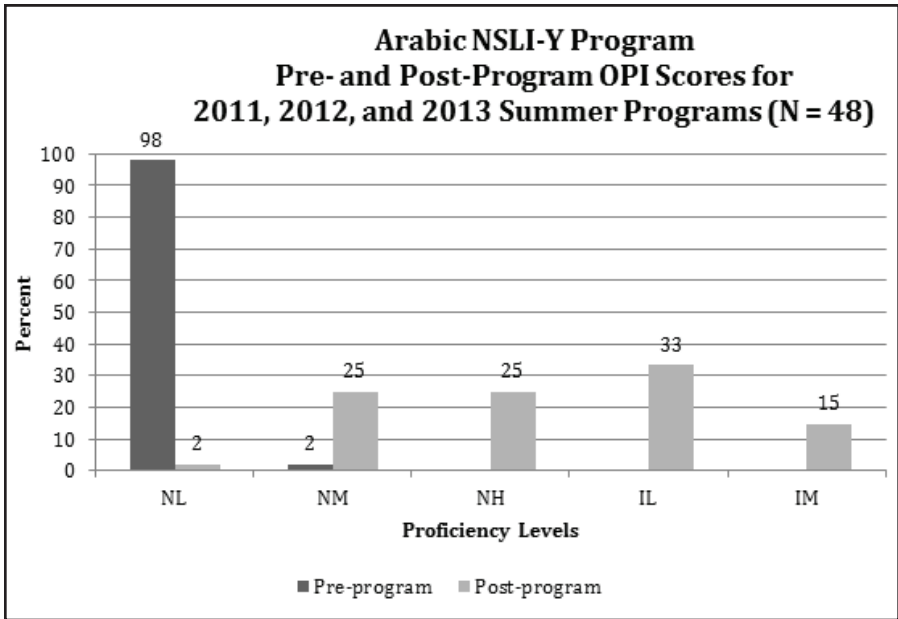
◆ Figure 7.1 All NSLI-Y Programs Pre- and Post-Program OPI Scores for 2011, 2012, and 2013 Summer Programs

the right one column (or two, or three) indicates a gain of a sublevel or threshold on the proficiency scale. Linear models, such as those used here, do not fully capture the three-dimensional nature of the inverted pyramid used by specialists to model the proficiency scale and the reality that L2 gains in the upper ranges of the scale are considerably more difficult to achieve than those at the lower range.

This NSLI-Y data set comprises testing results from seven different language programs hosted in ten nations. Arabic language programs are still rare in US high schools, and, not surprisingly, most NSLI-Y Arabic participants (98 percent) undertook the summer program without prior knowledge of the language (Figure 7.2). The results of their study overseas are comparable to beginning students in the NSLI-Y group as a whole: approximately half (48 percent) of the group reached the Intermediate level during the course of the eight-week program, while another 25 percent attained the Intermediate threshold level (NH). The rest of the group

◆ **Table 7.2** Speaking Proficiency Scores for ALL 2011, 2012, 2013 Summer NSLI-Y Learners (N=479), ALL LANGUAGES, Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level									Total
	NL	NM	NH	IL	IM	IH	AL	AM	AH	
NL	1	27	60	49	18	7	1	0	0	163
%	0.60	16.60	36.80	30.10	11.00	4.30	0.60	0	0	100.00
NM	0	3	22	19	11	0	0	0	0	55
%	0	5.50	40.00	34.50	20.00	0	0	0	0	100.00
NH	0	0	5	39	36	6	0	0	0	86
%	0	0	5.80	45.30	41.90	7.00	0	0	0	100.00
IL	0	0	0	19	41	15	4	1	0	80
%	0	0	0	23.80	51.30	18.80	5.00	1.30	0	100.00
IM	0	0	0	0	25	26	5	3	0	59
%	0	0	0	0	42.40	44.10	8.50	5.10	0	100.00
IH	0	0	0	0	0	9	13	3	0	25
%	0	0	0	0	0	36.00	52.00	12.00	0	100.00
AL	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	1	8
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	37.50	50.00	12.50	100.00
AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100.00
AH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100.00
Total	1	30	87	126	131	63	26	14	1	479
%	0.20	6.30	18.20	26.30	27.30	13.20	5.40	2.90	0.20	100.00



◆ Figure 7.2 Oral Proficiency Outcomes in the Arabic NSLI-Y Summer Programs

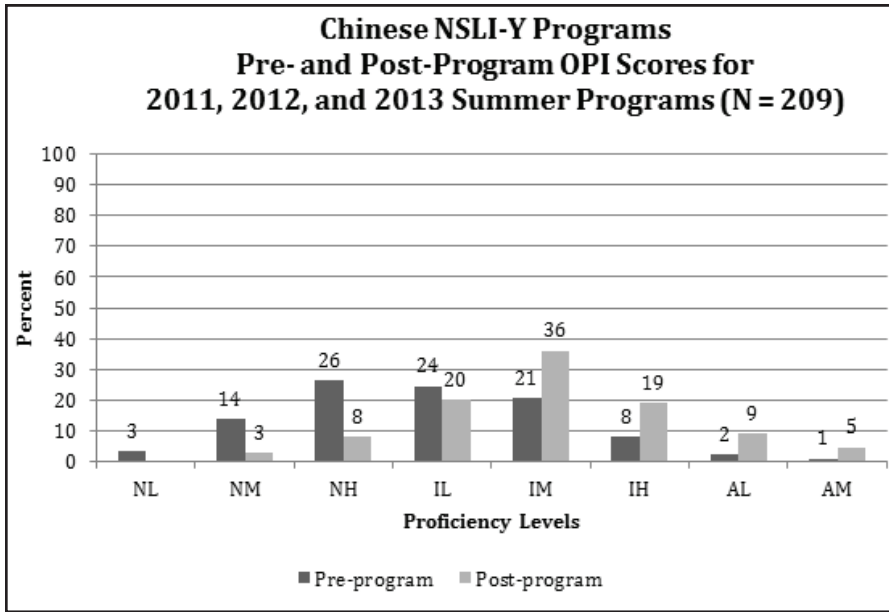
remained in the Novice Mid (NM) range, with only one student failing to register a measurable gain in speaking.

By comparison, fewer than 10 percent of participants in the Chinese NSLI-Y summer-program sample entered the program without prior formal study, with most testing at NH at the outset of the program, while 89 percent completed the program well within the Intermediate range or higher (Figure 7.3).

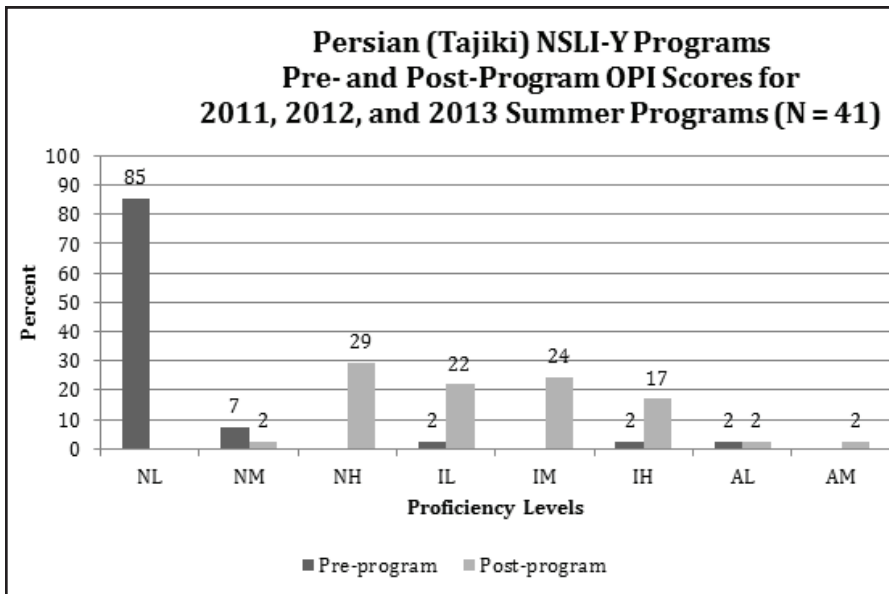
The Chinese NSLI-Y cohort provides a good case for comparing the impact of an eight-week intensive immersion program on language gains for learners progressing through the Intermediate proficiency range (ILR-1). While 77 percent of the group registered either sublevel or threshold gains over the course of the semester, Table 7.3 indicates how the likelihood of achieving measurable gains in proficiency declines somewhat for students as their baseline proficiency increases. As noted, this numerical trend does not necessarily indicate that the more advanced students learned less but is a reflection of the measurement artifact underlying the proficiency scale itself.

Existing and ongoing research regarding time-on-task calculations for attaining advanced levels of proficiency in the critical languages — which are usually languages typologically different from English — indicates progressively longer training and acquisition times required for progression to Levels 2, 3, and above on the ILR scale.

Data on the acquisition of Persian/Tajiki in the NSLI-Y summer program are presented in Figure 7.4. As was the case with Arabic, participants in the Persian/Tajiki program arrived in the host country (Tajikistan) for the most part (85 percent) without prior study of the language. Nonetheless, their gain patterns are



◆ Figure 7.3 Oral Proficiency Outcomes in the Chinese NSLI-Y Summer Programs



◆ Figure 7.4 Oral Proficiency Outcomes in the Persian (Tajiki) NSLI-Y Summer Programs

◆ Table 7.3 Speaking Proficiency Scores for ALL 2011, 2012, 2013 Summer NSLI-Y Learners (N=209), CHINESE, Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level							Total
	NM	NH	IL	IM	IH	AL	AM	
NL	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	7
%	42.90	42.90	0	0	14.30	0	0	100.00
NM	3	11	8	7	0	0	0	29
%	10.30	37.90	27.60	24.10	0	0	0	100.00
NH	0	3	22	24	6	0	0	55
%	0	5.50	40.00	43.60	10.90	0	0	100.00
IL	0	0	12	25	11	3	0	51
%	0	0	23.50	49.00	21.60	5.90	0.00	100.00
IM	0	0	0	19	17	4	3	43
%	0	0	0	44.20	39.50	9.30	7.00	100.00
IH	0	0	0	0	5	9	3	17
%	0	0	0	0	29.40	52.90	17.60	100.00
AL	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5
%	0	0	0	0	0	0.60	40.00	100.00
AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.00	100.00
Total	6	17	42	75	40	19	10	209
%	2.90	8.10	20.10	35.90	19.10	9.10	4.80	100.00

consistent with those of the NSLI-Y population as a whole, and prepared participants to continue their study of the language at the second- or third-year level. Two-thirds of the group completed the summer program at the Intermediate level or higher, and 29 percent tested at NH—the Intermediate threshold level. Only one student remained in the novice range at the conclusion of the program.

The Russian NSLI-Y summer programs (Figure 7.5) reflect a mixed population of absolute beginners (41 percent) and students with prior formal study of the language, a pattern consistent with the distributions of high school Russian study programs across the United States (Davidson and Garas 2009).

The impact of the eight-week NSLI-Y Russian summer programs on both the beginning-level students and those with prior study is consistent with the pattern noted previously for the Chinese program and for the NSLI-Y program overall. Two-thirds of the cohort completed their respective programs in the Intermediate range or higher, while 25 percent tested at NH, the Intermediate threshold. Eleven participants out of 181 (6.1 percent) reached the NM level. Movement out of the



◆ Figure 7.5 Oral Proficiency Outcomes in the Russian NSLI-Y Summer Programs

Intermediate range into the Advanced range requires considerable time, as is evident from the rising values of null-gain figures in Table 7.4 for IL, IM, and IH. Nonetheless, a majority of students at these levels (75 percent, 67 percent, and 57.1 percent, respectively) did register measureable sublevel or threshold gains.

Reading and Listening Comprehension Results for NSLI-Y Summer

Reading and listening data have not yet been collected systematically across all NSLI-Y programs, even though reading, listening, and writing are included in the overseas curricula for all seven NSLI-Y languages. Initial piloting of reading and listening proficiency outcomes for Russian was undertaken beginning in 2011 and has now reached a reportable level. Those results are reproduced in Figures 7.6 and 7.7.

Group-level gains in reading are evident, with 79 percent of the entering group testing in the Novice range and 70 percent of the same group testing in the Intermediate range by the conclusion of the program. Final reading scores do not differ substantially from final speaking test scores, although it may be noted that students with prior formal training in Russian in the United States entered the program with somewhat higher reading scores than speaking scores. This is consistent with previous findings on the comparison of speaking and reading scores of US-trained students of Russian (Davidson 2007).

Listening-comprehension testing is distinct from the integrated testing of listening comprehension that takes place in the course of the OPI in that it is not

◆ Table 7.4 Speaking Proficiency Scores for ALL 2011, 2012, 2013 Summer NSLI-Y Learners (N=181), RUSSIAN, Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level								Total
	NM	NH	IL	IM	IH	AL	AM	AH	
NL	11	35	26	1	1	0	0	0	74
%	14.90	47.30	35.10	1.40	1.40	0	0	0	100.00
NM	0	9	9	4	0	0	0	0	22
%	0	40.90	40.90	18.20	0	0	0	0	100.00
NH	0	2	17	12	0	0	0	0	31
%	0	6.50	54.80	38.70	0	0	0	0	100.00
IL	0	0	7	16	3	1	1	0	28
%	0	0	25.00	57.10	10.70	3.60	3.60	0	100.00
IM	0	0	0	6	9	1	0	0	16
%	0	0	0	37.50	56.30	6.30	0	0	100.00
IH	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	7
%	0	0	0	0	42.90	57.10	0	0	100.00
AL	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	50.00	50.00	100.00
AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
AH	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100.00
Total	11	46	59	39	16	6	3	1	181
%	6.10	25.40	32.60	21.50	8.80	3.30	1.70	0.60	100.00

interactive and requires the processing of both interpersonal as well as interpretive texts on the part of the candidate. The higher the level of testing, the greater the emphasis on interpretive modes of listening and texts of greater length and complexity, such as radio broadcasts, talk show interviews, or public lectures. For that reason, listening comprehension is tested separately and reported here.

Listening gains for the Russian NSLI-Y groups present a pattern similar to those of reading and speaking; however, the alignment with speaking and reading scores is slightly weaker: 59 percent of participants have a post-program score in the Intermediate range, while 33 percent test at NH, the Intermediate threshold. Null gain was observed in 20.7 percent of the cohort in listening.



◆ Figure 7.6 Pre- and Post-Program Reading Scores for NSLI-Y, Summer 2011, 2012, and 2013



◆ Figure 7.7 Pre- and Post-Program Listening Scores for NSLI-Y, Summer 2011, 2012, and 2013

Proficiency Outcomes in the NSLI-Y Academic-Year Programs

The NSLI-Y academic-year programs induct a much smaller number of students annually than do the summer programs (see Appendix I for enumeration, eligibility, and conditions). Most students in this program enter with prior training and with proficiencies in the NM/NH range. Typically, only one-third of the participants begin the year of overseas study without any prior study of the language.

The typical post-program-measured oral proficiency is Advanced Low (AL) (48 percent), Intermediate High (IH) (27 percent), and Advanced Mid (AM) (16 percent). Because of the still-small N-sizes within this data set, results for Chinese and Russian are presented in figure 7.8. Similar results were also observed for smaller groups in Arabic and Korean. Of the 44 students participating in the above two programs, 28 students completed the year with oral proficiency scores in the Advanced range, while an additional 12 students were rated IH, the threshold of the Advanced range. Four students completed the program at the IM level.

Reading and listening proficiency testing was piloted in the NSLI-Y academic-year Russian programs beginning in 2012–13 and will be expanded to other languages in the near future. Preliminary results from the pilot year reflect a strong degree of correlation between both pre- and post-program outcomes for reading and listening. Cross-skill correlation of reading and listening with speaking is also notable, although aggregate outcomes in reading and listening are lower by one sublevel than those for speaking: 57 percent of the cohort scored at the Advanced threshold (IH) at the end of the program, 14 percent at AL for reading, and 21 percent at AL for listening. Further research will be required to confirm whether these differences can be accounted for in terms of the emphasis on interpretive reading and listening of the Advanced-level test or by other factors.

Measured proficiencies in the IH/AL levels across modalities are typical of the language levels attained by college juniors and seniors in the less commonly taught languages at many US universities. Alumni of the NSLI-Y academic-year program should have little difficulty placing into advanced-level courses taught in the target languages upon their return to the United States and should be strongly encouraged to seek out colleges and universities where their high levels of language and cultural skills can be fully utilized in their education.

Pre- and Post-Program Proficiency Outcomes: The CLS Summer Institutes

American education has witnessed some broadening of foreign languages offered for the K–12 system over the past half century with the introduction of Russian in the immediate post-Sputnik era in the 1960s, the introduction of Japanese in the 1980s, the introduction of Chinese in the 1990s, and some expansion of Arabic and other major world languages in the post-9/11 decade. For the majority of American students, however, access to non-European languages has been possible only at the college level. The CLS program is intended to provide college students as well as

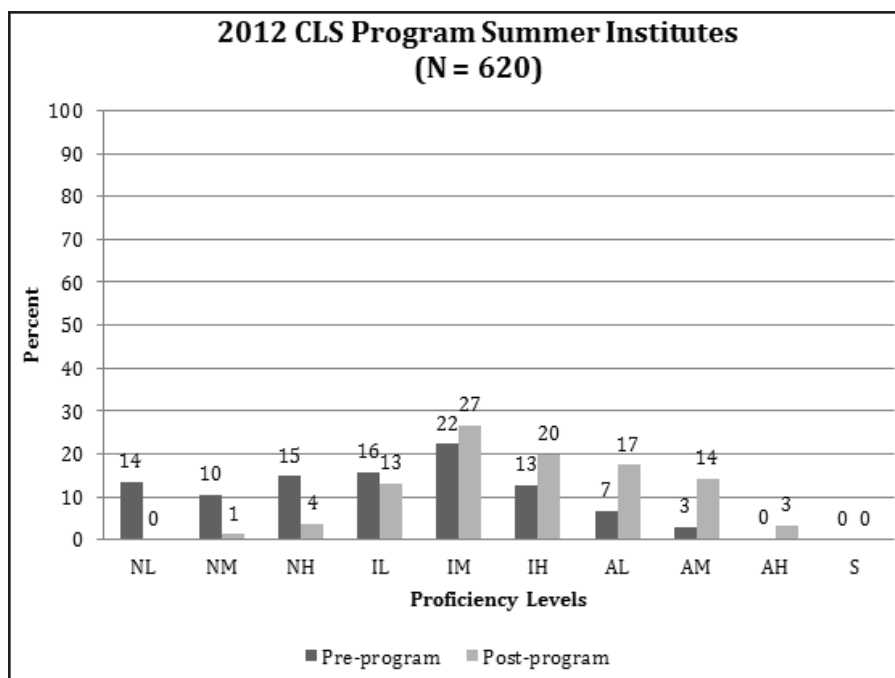


◆ Figure 7.8 Pre- and Post-Program Proficiency Test Results for Chinese and Russian

graduate students with the opportunity to undertake or continue study of one of thirteen critical languages (see Appendix 2 for enumeration, eligibility, and conditions) at a structured overseas language and cultural immersion program or summer institute. The program, as noted previously, is competitive, admitting 620 students annually, or approximately one in six applicants. The competition rates for certain high-demand languages may be considerably higher. The report on program outcomes across all languages is presented in figure 7.9.

The dark bars reflect the percentage of the total number of students entering the program at this level of speaking proficiency, while the light bars reflect the percentage of students completing the program at the stated score. Over one-third of the total cohort began the CLS program in the Novice range, including 87 students without any prior exposure to the target languages. Close to half (46 percent) of the total cohort entered the CLS program in the Intermediate range of proficiency, a level typical for US college students with two to six prior semesters of formal study of a critical language. The remaining 10 percent of the 2012 CLS population tested at the AL or AM levels at the outset of the program. By the end of the CLS program, 34 percent of the total population had reached the Advanced level of proficiency in speaking, while 60 percent scored in the Intermediate range, and 4 percent were measured at NH, the threshold level for Intermediate.

As has been noted previously in connection with the analysis of the NSLI-Y summer program, movement across the Intermediate-level “plateau” presupposes sustained and effortful L2 learning and several hundred hours of time-on-task.⁴ Comparison of pre- and post-program OPI recordings of students whose measured



◆ Figure 7.9 CLS Pre- and Post-Program Oral Proficiency Score Comparisons

proficiency scores remained at the Intermediate level throughout the program typically reveal a remarkable range of differences in the latter, including more native-like fluency, sociopragmatic skills, cultural referencing, and a considerably expanded vocabulary evident in the speech production in the post-program learner (Davidson 1982; Magnan and Back 2007; Martinsen 2010).

Table 7.5 presents a cross-tabulation of language-gain data comparing pre- and post-program OPI scores by participant numbers and percentages (N = 620). Measured gain for each entering level of L2 proficiency can be gauged by the distribution of scores to the right (positive gain) or left (negative gain) of the diagonal.

Measureable language gain in the overseas immersion setting is never a guarantee for the L2 learner. Moreover, the more advanced the learner, the more effort (and time) is required to reach the next threshold. CLS 2012 language-gain reports are summarized in aggregate form in Table 7.6 and Figure 7.10, with sublevel changes included.

The change reports presented here reflect a substantial percentage (57.4 percent) of threshold-level gains produced by the CLS summer program across all thirteen critical languages: 212 of 241 novices achieved Intermediate-level proficiency over the course of the summer program, while an additional 199 students with prior study of the language achieved the Advanced level (see also Figure 7.5, page 128). One Advanced-level student of Chinese reached the Superior level (ILR-3) over the course of the summer.

◆ **Table 7.5** Speaking Proficiency Scores for 2012 CLS Program Summer Institutes (N = 620), ALL LANGUAGES, Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level										
	NL	NM	NH	IL	IM	IH	AL	AM	AH	S	Total
NL	0	7	16	39	19	3	0	0	0	0	84
%	0	8.3	19.0	46.4	22.6	3.6	0	0	0	0	100.00
NM	0	1	6	20	29	8	0	1	0	0	65
%	0	1.5	9.2	30.8	44.6	12.3	0	1.5	0	0	100.00
NH	0	0	1	17	46	18	9	1	0	0	92
%	0	0	1.1	18.5	50.0	19.6	9.8	1.1	0	0	100.00
IL	0	0	0	6	41	28	18	5	0	0	98
%	0	0	0	6.1	41.8	28.6	18.4	5.1	0	0	100.00
IM	0	0	0	0	30	47	39	22	1	0	139
%	0	0	0	0	21.6	33.8	28.1	15.8	0.7	0	100.00
IH	0	0	0	0	0	19	32	22	6	0	79
%	0	0	0	0	0	24.1	40.5	27.8	7.6	0	100.00
AL	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	28	6	0	42
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	19.0	66.7	14.3	0	100.00
AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	6	1	19
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.5	52.6	31.6	5.3	100.00
AH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	0	100.00
Total	0	8	23	82	165	123	108	89	21	1	620
%	0	1.3	3.7	13.2	26.6	19.8	17.4	14.4	3.4	0.2	100.00

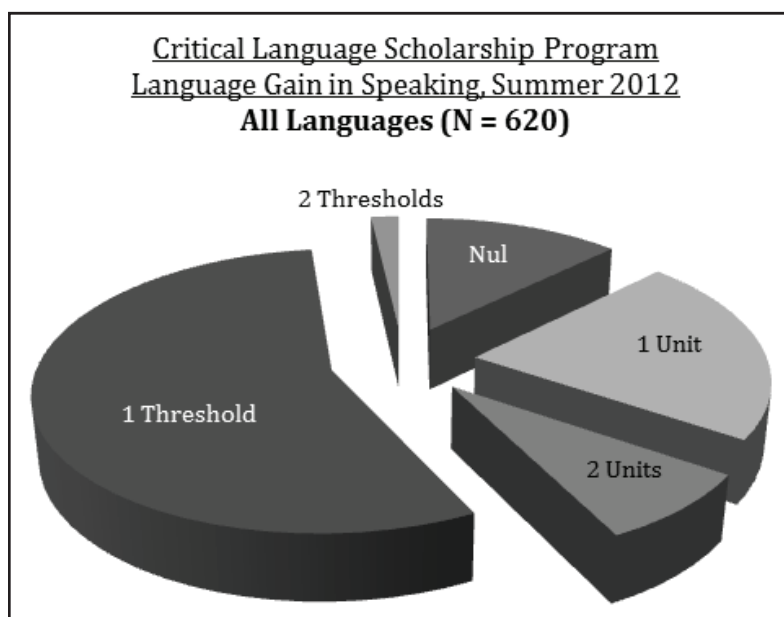
Pre- and Post-Testing Results: The Overseas Flagship Capstone Program

Within the triumvirate of new federal programs supporting the development of US understanding and expertise in major world languages and cultures, the Overseas Flagship Capstone programs (OFC) occupy a special position. Their task is to produce Level-3 speakers in ten critical languages who are well-grounded in language, culture, and regional knowledge of the host country and can function at a professional level in business, government, research, academia, or other sectors of the economy upon completion of the overseas year. The OFC programs accept only those students who have achieved a demonstrated Advanced level (ILR-2) in at least two skills at the time of application and provide a diversified in-country training

experience that draws in varying degrees, depending on the host country, on the full range of intervention strategies and support systems outlined previously. The OFCs emphasize small-group language training and individual tutorials but place increased stress on direct enrollment in courses at the overseas university as well as professional-level internships. The OFC places a special emphasis on in-class and public presentational or project work.

◆ Table 7.6 2012 CLS Test Scores

All Languages	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Loss	2	0.3	0.3	0.3
Null	77	12.4	12.4	12.7
Null	79	12.7	12.7	12.7
1 unit	135	21.8	21.8	34.5
2 units	50	8.1	8.1	42.6
1 threshold	345	55.6	55.6	98.2
2 thresholds	11	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	620	100.0	100.0	



◆ Figure 7.10 CLS Gain Categories

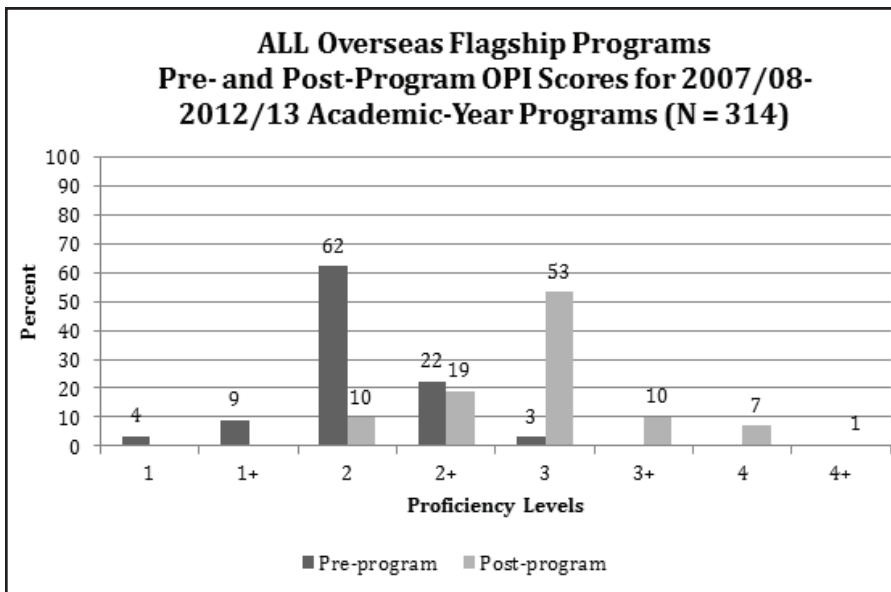
Figure 7.11 presents the pre- and post-program OPI score reports for the several multi-institutional OFC programs. The time period reflected in these data is six years: 2007–2012.

The dark bars reflect measured entering oral proficiency of Flagship students, while the light bars reflect the distribution of post-program OPI scores. It should be noted that in the earlier years of the program, the requirement of 2-level OPI proficiency was not uniformly enforced across all programs. As with other forms of performance-based testing, candidates who have previously scored at target level on an OPI may score lower (or higher) on the same test on a given day, due to fatigue, stress, or other factors.

Overall, 71 percent of all OFC students completed the year-long program at the Superior level (ILR-3) or higher, while an additional 19 percent of the population finished the program at AH (ILR 2+), the threshold of Level 3.

The Advanced-level plateau is well described in the literature, giving rise in the early days of the proficiency movement in the United States to the concept of the “terminal 2” (Higgs and Clifford 1983). Previous research has characterized the likelihood of a US student of Russian moving from Level 2 to Level 3 in the course of a nine-month academic-year program in-country as approximately one in three (Davidson 2010). The likelihood of reaching 2+ or remaining a 2 was also one in three. Taking the OFC model as a whole, the odds of a US student reaching the Superior level (ILR-3) in speaking have improved considerably (see Table 7.7). Currently, 71 percent of all OFC students attain that level or higher.

Reading proficiency outcomes for the same population are presented in Table 7.8.



◆ Figure 7.11 Pre- and Post-Program OPI Score Comparisons: Arabic, Chinese, Persian, and Russian

◆ Table 7.7 Pre- and Post-Program Speaking Scores for NSLI-Y, Summer 2011, 2012, and 2013

Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level						Total
	2	2+	3	3+	4	4+	
I	7	3	1	0	0	0	11
%	63.60	27.30	9	0	0	0	100.00
I+	9	7	12	0	0	0	28
%	32.10	25.00	42.90	0	0	0	100.00
2	12	41	106	22	13	1	195
%	6.20	21.00	54.40	11.30	6.70	0.50	100.00
2+	3	8	41	9	8	1	70
%	4.30	11.40	58.60	12.90	11.40	1.40	100.00
3	0	1	7	1	1	0	10
%	0	10.00	70.00	10.00	10.00	0	100.00
Total	31	60	167	32	22	2	314
%	9.90	19.10	53.20	10.20	7.00	0.60	100.00

◆ Table 7.8 Overseas Flagship Programs: Reading Proficiency Scores for All Learners (N = 238), Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

Pre-Program Reading Proficiency Level	Post-Program Reading Proficiency Level						Total
	1+	2	2+	3	3+	4	
I	1	2	1	0	0	0	4
%	25.00	50.00	25.00	0	0	0	100.00
I+	0	10	16	8	0	0	34
%	0	29.40	47.10	23.50	0	0	100.00
2	0	8	47	50	18	3	126
%	0	6.30	37.30	39.70	14.30	2.40	100.00
2+	0	0	11	41	6	2	60
%	0	0	18.30	68.30	10.00	3.30	100.00
3	0	0	1	4	9	0	14
%	0	0	7.10	28.60	64.30	0	100.00
Total	1	20	76	103	33	5	238
%	0.40	8.40	31.90	43.30	13.90	2.10	100.00

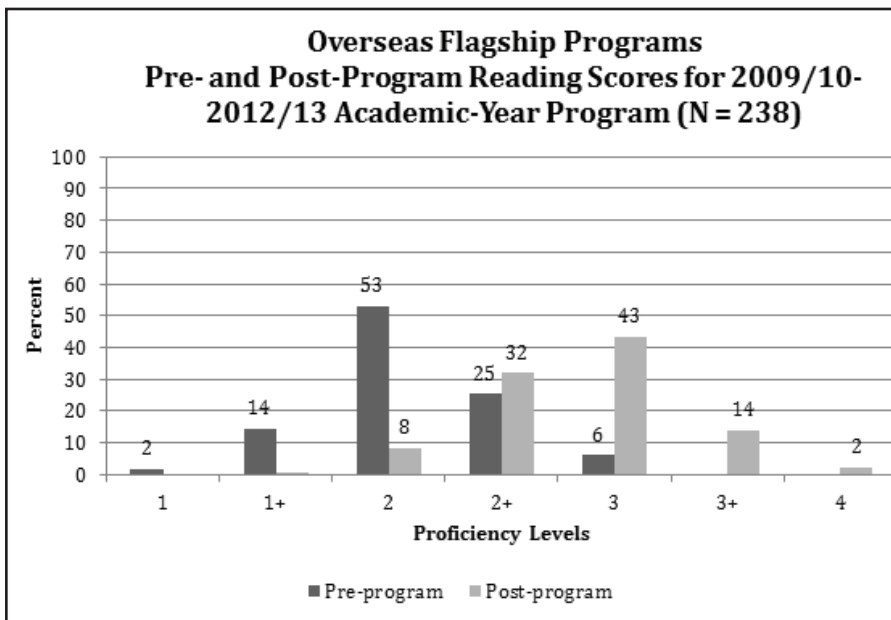
As noted previously, reading and listening proficiency testing of OFC was introduced beginning in 2009, so the N-value in Figure 7.12 is lower than in the OPI report. The pre- and post-testing reading proficiency results present a pattern similar to the OPI speaking inputs and outcomes. A slightly larger concentration (32 percent) of scores at the 2+ threshold level is noted for this modality in comparison to speaking (19 percent). The percentage of OFC students with scores of 3+ or higher in speaking and reading is 18 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

A total of 59.9 percent of all OFC students achieved Level-3 or higher scores in reading proficiency, including a group of 11 (18.3 percent) students who entered the program with Level 2+-proficiency in reading.

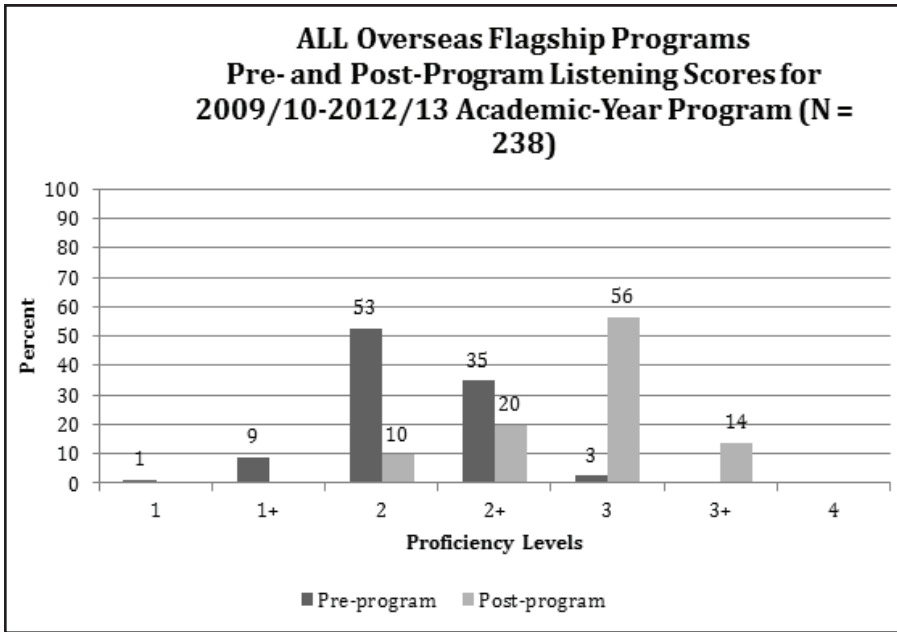
Listening proficiency outcomes for all OFC programs are presented in Figure 7.13.

Listening proficiency outcomes for the OFC groups as a whole parallel OPI outcomes to a very high degree—much more closely, in fact, than was the case with reading. A total of 70.6 percent of OFC participants completed the program at Level 3 or higher in listening (compared to 71.0 percent in speaking and 59.9 percent in reading). As reported previously (Davidson 2010), listening comprehension is strongly correlated with oral-proficiency gain at Level 2 and above.

Approximately 8 percent of all students entering the OFC program with 2- or 2+-level listening skills failed to register measureable improvement in their proficiency over the course of the programs. A total of 34 participants (14.3 percent) achieved 3+-level proficiency or higher.



◆ Figure 7.12 Reading Proficiency Outcomes: Overseas Flagship Capstone Programs



◆ Figure 7.13 Pre- and Post-Program Listening Proficiency Outcomes: OFC

Given the considerable differences in local linguistic and cultural conditions across the major OFCs, breakout data for the Russian OFCs are only provided in Figures 7.14–7.16.

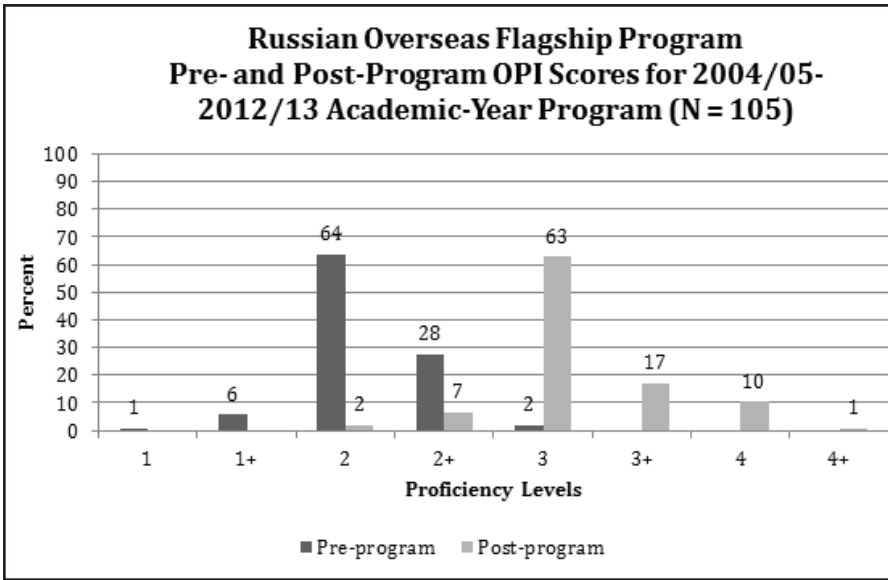
The cross-tabulations here present the input and output rates of the Russian OFC since its inception. The program currently has a null-gain rate of 8.57 percent, with production rates of 62.86 percent for Level 3 and 27.63 percent for 3+ and above (see Table 7.9).

Reading and listening proficiency results in the Russian OFC generally exceed those for speaking, with 38 percent of the group achieving 3+ or higher results in listening and 54 percent achieving 3+ or higher in reading.

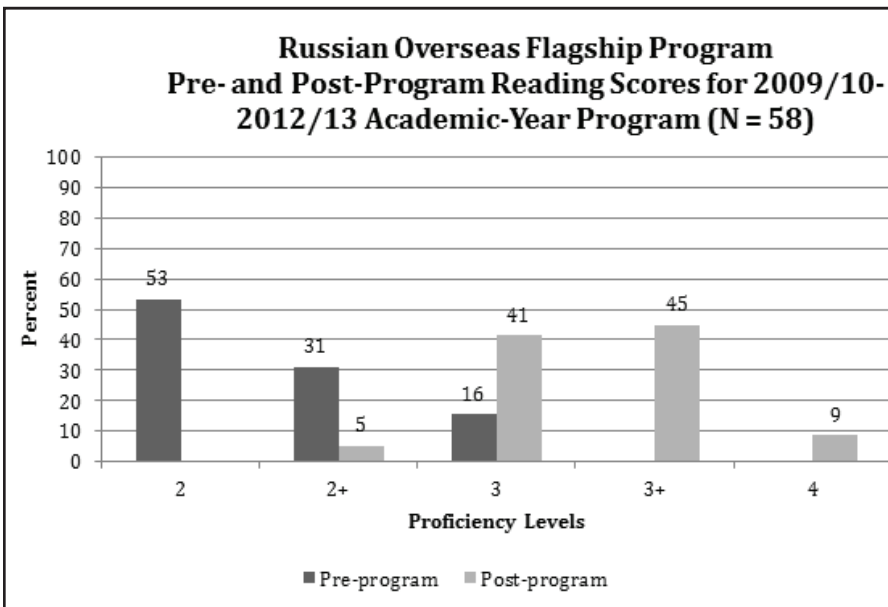
The Arabic OFC pre-/post-program oral proficiency test results are presented in Figure 7.17. Over the past six years, 84 percent of students have entered the program with OPIs in the Advanced-level (ILR-2) range, while 71 percent of all participants have completed the Arabic OFC at Level 3 or higher in speaking. An additional 19 percent of the group has completed the program at 2+ in speaking, the threshold of Level 3.

Null gains for students entering with the requisite 2-levels of speaking proficiency represent 8.7 percent of the total participants. On the other end of the scale, 18 percent of participants completed the program at the 3+ level or higher.

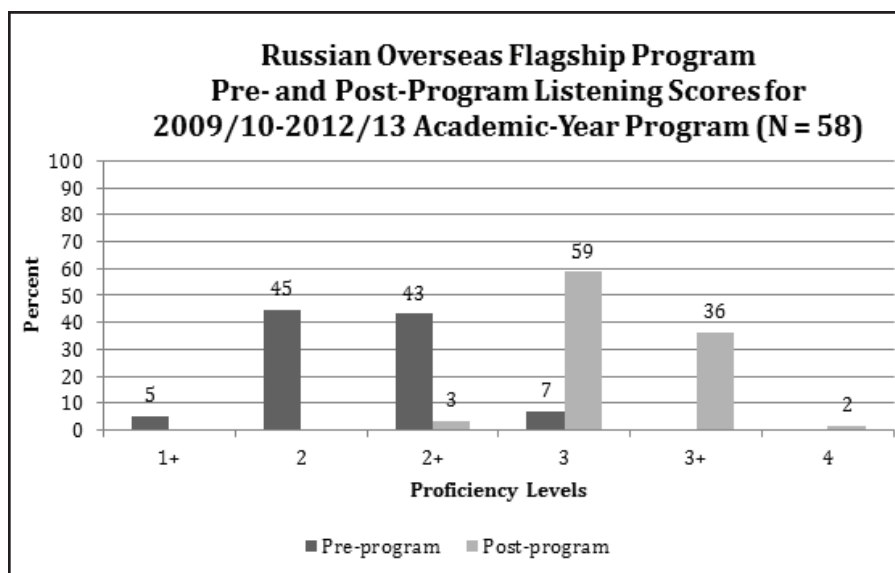
An asymmetry in outcomes is noted between the Arabic OFC reading scores and the speaking and listening scores (compare Figures 7.17–7.19). Speaking and listening outcomes at Level 3 or higher in the Arabic programs are essentially identical:



◆ Figure 7.14 Russian Overseas Flagship, 2004–2012



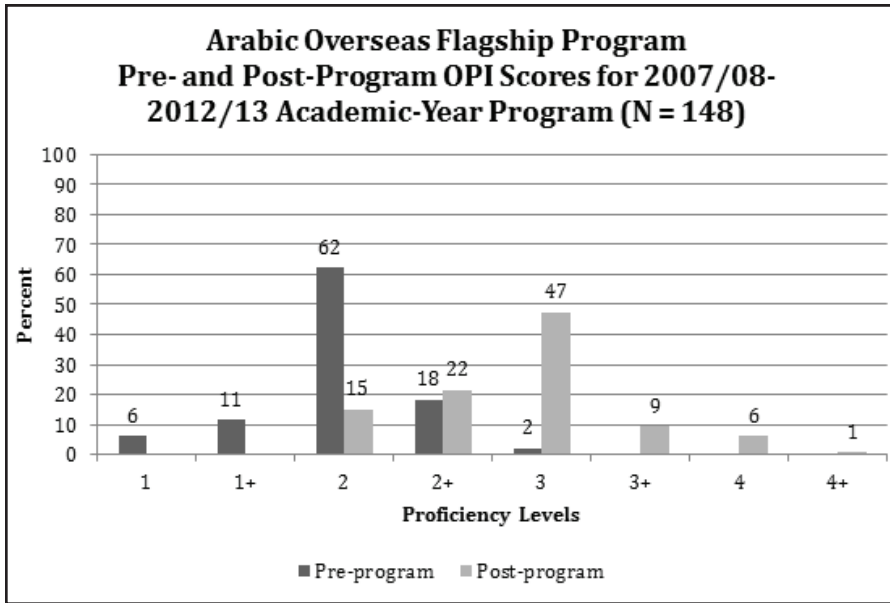
◆ Figure 7.15 Pre- and Post-Program Reading Proficiencies: Russian OFC



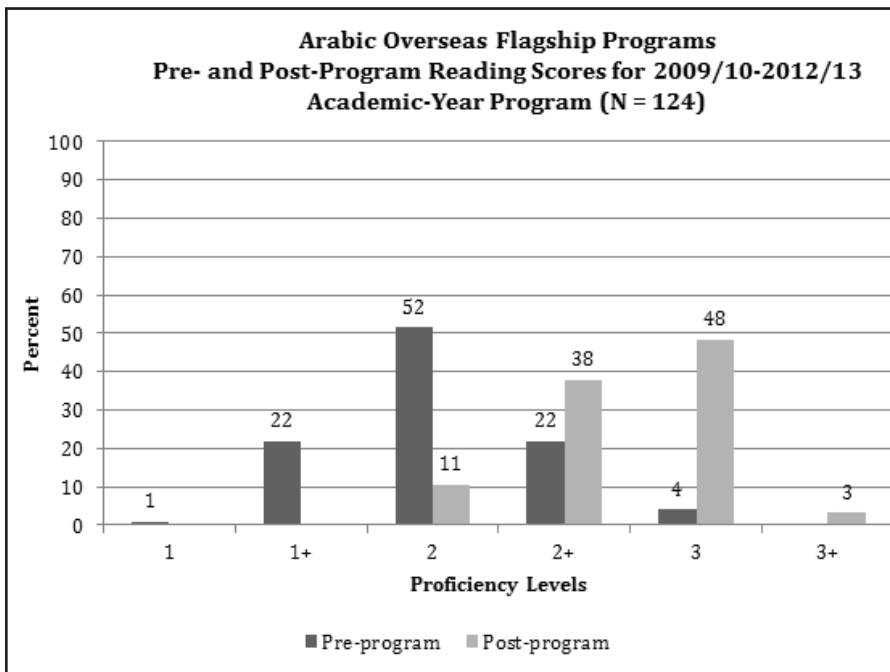
◆ Figure 7.16 Pre-and Post-Program Listening Proficiencies: Russian OFC

◆ Table 7.9 Russian Overseas Flagship Speaking Proficiency Scores for All Learners (N = 105), Pre- and Post-Program (Count/Row Percent)

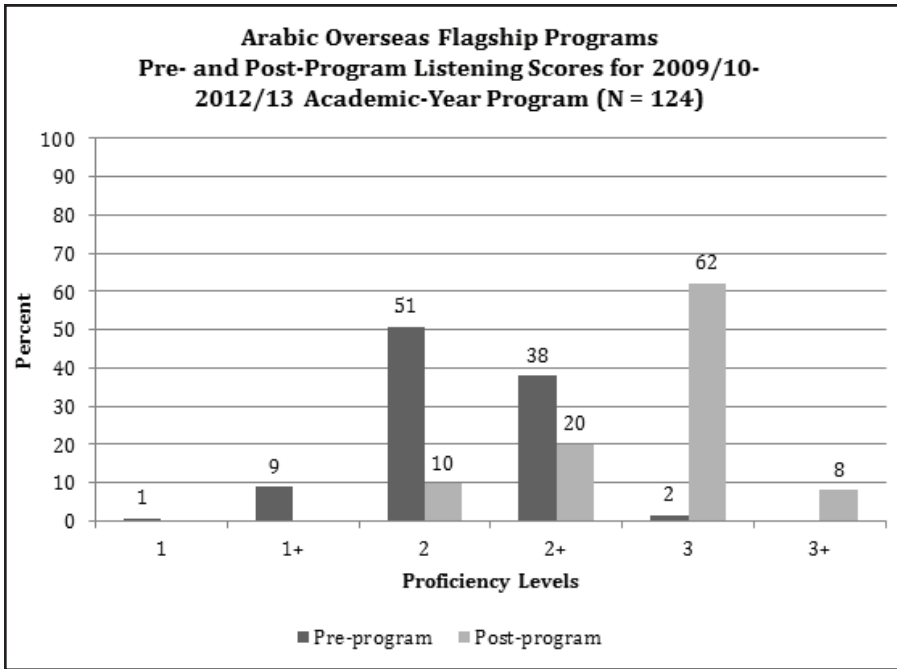
Pre-Program Speaking Proficiency Level	Post-Program Speaking Proficiency Level						Total
	2	2+	3	3+	4	4+	
I	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
%	0	1.00	0	0	0	0	100.00
I+	2	1	3	0	0	0	6
%	33.33	16.67	50.00	0	0	0	100.00
2	0	5	43	12	6	1	67
%	0	7.46	64.18	17.91	8.96	1.49	100.00
2+	0	0	19	5	5	0	29
%	0	0	65.52	17.24	17.24	0	100.00
3	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
%	0	0	50.00	50.00	0	0	100.00
Total	2	7	66	18	11	1	105
%	1.90	6.67	62.86	17.14	10.48	0.01	100.00



◆ Figure 7.17 Pre- and Post-Program Oral Proficiencies: Arabic OFC



◆ Figure 7.18 Reading Proficiencies: Arabic OFC



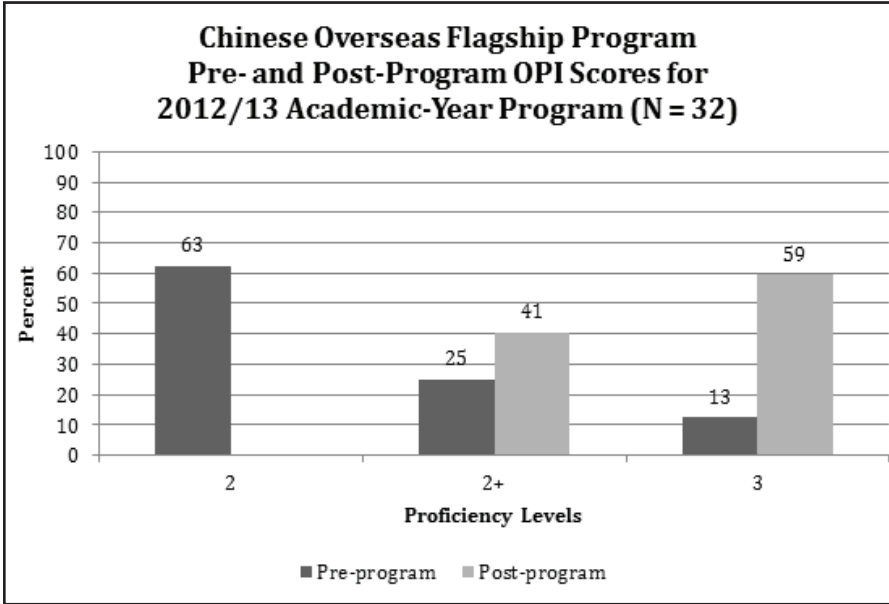
◆ Figure 7.19 Listening Proficiencies: Arabic OFC

71 percent of the group achieved the Professional level in speaking, and 70 percent achieved the Professional level in listening comprehension. In comparison, 51 percent achieved the Professional level in reading, while 38 percent tested at Level 2+. The teaching and testing of Arabic reflects both the diglossic and, in some cases, bidialectal nature of the host country sites where Flagship students are placed. These complexities are reflected in the testing environment for Arabic as well.

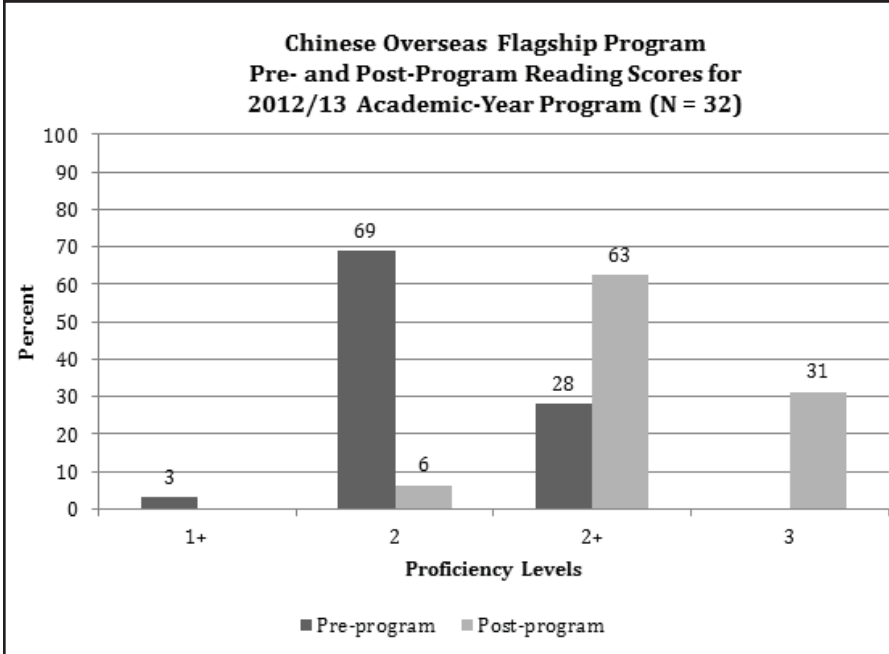
Results of the Chinese OFC are presented next; however, for technical reasons, only one year of program data is available at this time: 2012–2013.

While the proficiency measurements of entering Chinese OFC students were relatively strong in comparison to all other OFCs, the production of Level-3 speakers (and above) was somewhat lower than both the Arabic and the Russian programs. On the other hand, no participant in the Chinese OFC scored lower than 2+ in speaking at the close of the program (see Figure 7.20).

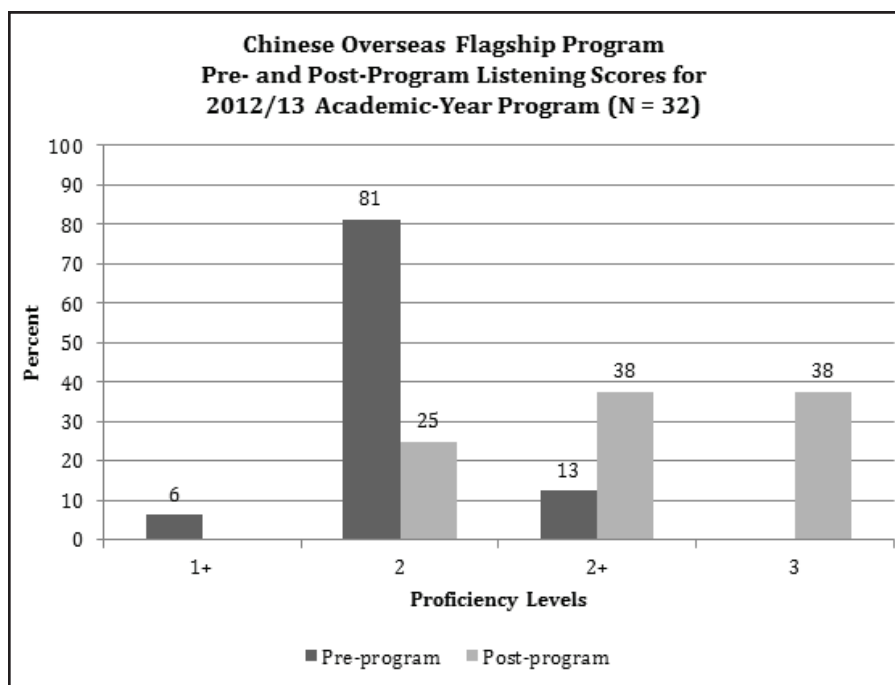
Reading and listening proficiency ratings for Chinese OFC students show that 31 percent of the cohort attained Level-3 proficiency in reading, while 38 percent achieved that level in listening comprehension (see Figures 7.21 and 7.22). Entering levels for both modalities were primarily at 2. A majority of participants in the program were rated at 2+ on the post-program test in reading, while program-final listening tests also included a cohort of 25 percent of the learners who scored at Level 2. Seven out of thirty-two students registered null gain in listening. Speaking scores exceeded reading or listening scores for the group as a whole by more than twenty



◆ Figure 7.20 Pre- and Post-Program Oral Proficiencies: Chinese OFC



◆ Figure 7.21 Pre- and Post-Program Reading Proficiencies: Chinese OFC



◆ Figure 7.22 Pre- and Post-Program Listening Proficiencies: Chinese OFC

percentage points. It should be noted that the testing of reading at Level 2+ and above requires knowledge of both traditional and simplified characters.

Discussion

The data presented here and elsewhere in this volume make clear that the pathway to professional-level competencies in the major world languages is open and available to Americans with the motivation and support to engage the necessary mechanisms of immersion study and domestic learning. The foregoing report demonstrates that access to high-quality overseas immersion programs, such as those supported by the US government through NSLI-Y, CLS, and the Language Flagship, can affect proficiency growth across skills at every stage of the language learning career, from absolute novices to professionals working at Levels 3, 3+, and 4. Overseas immersion learning is not the only pathway for language acquisition, but where the less commonly taught languages are concerned, it is difficult to construct a comprehensive curricular model within our existing educational system without recourse to one or more immersion models.

Returning then to the research questions with which this study began:

1. We have seen that threshold gains at the Novice-to-Intermediate levels and across sublevels within the Intermediate range are a clear effect of the eight-week

intensive summer immersion model, implemented by the NSLI-Y programs for seven major world languages. We have seen that the NSLI-Y academic-year program is producing L2 speakers who test at the Advanced level, a level of language mastery typical of upperclassmen and graduating seniors at many of our major universities. We have seen the summer CLS program for university students providing a similar opportunity for achieving threshold gains to the Intermediate or Advanced level for students of a wide range of language-study backgrounds across thirteen languages. A 50+ percent success rate in producing Intermediate-level speakers from Novices, and Advanced-level speakers from Intermediates, is a notable achievement in second language acquisition in the context of a summer program, a time frame that has not previously been regarded as sufficient for threshold-level gains. Finally, in response to the need to produce greater numbers of Americans capable of functioning as “global professionals,” we have observed that it is possible to reach Level 3 and above on a systematic basis, year after year, with US undergraduate students who have attained Level 2 at the time of their participation in the program in the year-long OFC model.

2. We have also seen that reading and listening gains generally align with the acquisition of speaking skills in all three federal programs. In some cases, interpretive listening and reading appear to lag slightly behind the corresponding interpersonal listening and reading functions. In other cases, such as the Russian OFC, reading actually exceeded speaking-skills production at Level 3 and above. The actual variation of speaking, reading, and listening skills across summer and academic-year programs is presented in detail for both aggregate and single-language groups in the foregoing report, in the course of which both program duration and initial levels of participants are identified and discussed.

The study has identified no differences (positive or negative) in terms of an age or gender effect for language gain in the present data. Nor have we identified sufficient basis in these data to identify any one of the critical languages as objectively more difficult to acquire than other NSLI languages in terms of time-on-task. Further research will be needed to assess the potential effects of the diglossic, and, in some cases, bidialectal environment of the acquisition and assessment of Arabic at Level 3 and above. The data on the Chinese programs are still insufficient to confirm whether issues regarding the dual writing systems in contemporary Chinese affect the acquisition and assessment of reading at Level 3; further research is needed here as well.

Conclusion

A recent international conference, “Languages for All? The Anglophone Challenge,” brought together a distinguished group of language education and policy experts from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada to envision the L2 needs of our respective societies in the context of the interconnected and highly competitive world of the twenty-first century. Conference organizer

Richard D. Brecht (2013, 4) summarized the views of the conference, starting with the assumption that all Americans should have access to L2 training and that the country as a whole will require persons of differing levels of proficiency, depending on their roles in society and the economy. Among other recommendations, the conference report envisions a multilingual American population in the not-too-distant future in which

- Level 1: 50 percent have some exposure to international perspectives, culture, and/or language in order to inform lifelong decisions about work and learning and to support language and international efforts broadly in society;
- Level 2: 30 percent have some basic language skills in order to work, for example, in the service industry and to travel freely;
- Level 3: 15 percent have global professional skills in order to practice their work successfully at a high level internationally;
- Level 4: 5 percent have expert skills in order to perform necessary research and design and implement language education and training.

The federally supported overseas immersion programs provide a model, and also a proof of concept, that the United States has the capability to produce the multiple levels of language proficiencies across the major world languages needed by the nation well into the twenty-first century. The responsibility of policymakers and educators is to expand these and other successful models now in place and move forward with the preparation of a new generation of citizens that possess the full range of linguistic, cultural, and regional skills essential for success in the global economy.

Appendix 1

NSLI for Youth Programs

www.nsliforyouth.org

The National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) programs offer intensive language immersion in a variety of locations around the world. Scholarships are available for students wanting to learn the following languages: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Korean, Persian (Tajiki), Russian, and Turkish.

Programs may take place in the following locations: China, India, Jordan, Korea, Morocco, Oman, Russia, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and other locations around the world.

Eligibility Requirements:

- US citizen
- Grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent
- 15–18 years of age at start of program
- Enrolled in high school (including home school)
- Not an immediate family member of an employee of the US Department of State who works in the Youth Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational

and Cultural Affairs (ECA) or an employee at an NSLI-Y administering organization whose duties involve the NSLI-Y program

- Have not previously traveled outside the United States on a long-term (more than eight weeks) program sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State
- Previous NSLI-Y *summer* program participants or participants of ECA-funded short-term programs are only eligible to apply for a NSLI-Y academic-year program.

Previous language study is not a requirement. Students of all levels of language ability are encouraged to apply.

The NSLI-Y program seeks applicants who represent the diversity of the United States. Students of all racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds are encouraged to apply, as are students with disabilities.

Appendix 2

Critical Language Scholarship Program

www.clscholarship.org

Overview and reference to funding and cooperating agencies (from the website)

A program of the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program offers intensive summer language institutes in thirteen critical foreign languages. The selection process is administered by the American Councils for International Education, with awards approved by the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The CLS program is administered by the American Councils and Ohio State University/Ohio University.

Summary of Key Eligibility Requirements:

Applicants to the Critical Language Scholarship program must be US citizens and enrolled in an accredited degree program in the United States at the undergraduate (associate's or bachelor's degree) or graduate level (master's or doctoral degree). Participants must be at least eighteen years of age by the beginning of the program. Language proficiency requirements vary across programs.

Those applying for the Chinese, Japanese, or Russian programs must demonstrate the equivalent of at least two years of college-level study, while those applying for the Arabic or Persian programs must demonstrate the equivalent of at least one year of college-level study by the start of the program. There are no minimum language-proficiency requirements for applicants to Azerbaijani, Bangla, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Punjabi, Turkish or Urdu.

Appendix 3

The Language Flagship Capstone Program

www.thelanguageflagship.org

The Language Flagship Capstone full-year immersion program is open to all undergraduate students who are committed to attaining Professional- or Superior-level language proficiency through an intensive language training program tailored to their professional interests and academic specialization. It may occur during the third, fourth, or fifth year of a student's undergraduate program. The model also assumes that, in addition to full-year study, some students will require additional periods of immersion overseas to accelerate their language learning and to accommodate academic schedules. The program also accepts applications from part-time, non-degree-seeking students.

Applicants should have a strong academic record, a demonstrated interest in advancing their Arabic, Russian, Persian, Chinese, Hindi/Urdu, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, and Turkish skills and using these languages in their future career, and a desire to share their understanding of this language and culture within the larger community.

Undergraduate Program

All students who are enrolled at one of the Domestic Programs and reach the required proficiency level ILR-2 in their language are accepted to the Overseas Program, upon recommendation of the Overseas Academic Council.

Post-BA Program

This program accepts applicants who did not participate in a Domestic Flagship program and already have a bachelor's degree. The participants are selected on the basis of their language skills, academic merits, work experience, and ability to demonstrate how advanced Russian skills are going to help their career plans. Applicants to the Flagship Post-BA program must either possess a BA degree or expect to receive one before starting the program. Successful applicants who are not heritage speakers must have completed at least three years of the language at a college level.

Notes

1. Overseas language offerings vary among the three federal programs, although all support training in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Persian, Russian, and Turkish. The US Department of State funds the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) program for high school students, the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) program funds the overseas summer institutes for university students and graduate students, and the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) funds the Language Overseas Flagship Capstone programs.
2. In order to ensure consistency in the presentation and reporting of program designs and program data, only those overseas NSLI-Y, CLS, and Flagship programs administered by the American Councils have been included in the present study.

3. This schema is adapted from a more detailed discussion of overseas language immersion models for traditional and heritage learners (Davidson and Lekic 2012).

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