



No One Else Understands What We're Talking About Autonomy and Collaboration for Teacher Development

PRESENTERS: MARY ELLEN RUTEMEYER & AMANDA LANIER

MIWLA 2023

No One Else Understands What We're Talking About

Autonomy and Collaboration for Teacher Development

Michigan World Languages Association Conference, October 2023

Presenters:

Mary Ellen Rutemeyer

German Program, Department of Linguistics, Languages and Cultures at Michigan State University

Amanda Lanier

Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching (MAFLT) at Michigan State University

Description:

How is your world language program investing in your effectiveness and continuing growth? Many teachers report frustration with irrelevant in-service training and limited time for peer-led collaborative learning. This interactive session will use cases from research on German programs to guide discussions on strategies applicable to any language.

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<https://maflt.cal.msu.edu>

Learning to Teach while Teaching

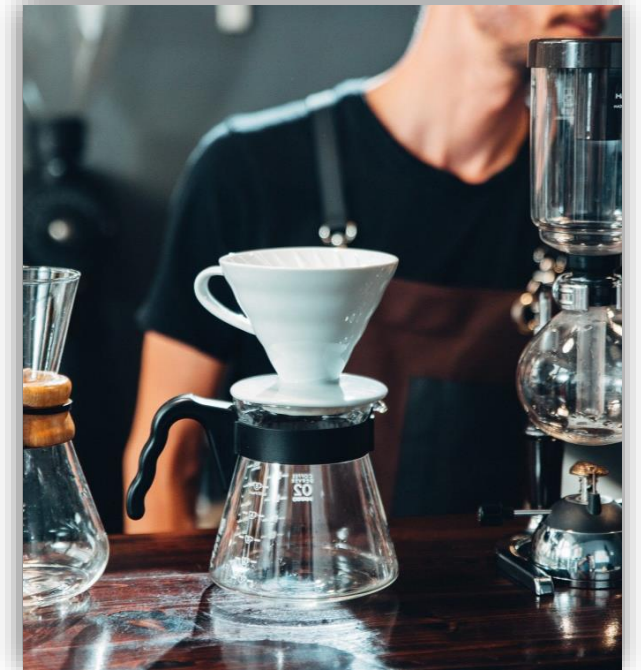
When you started teaching, were you fully prepared to become a master teacher?



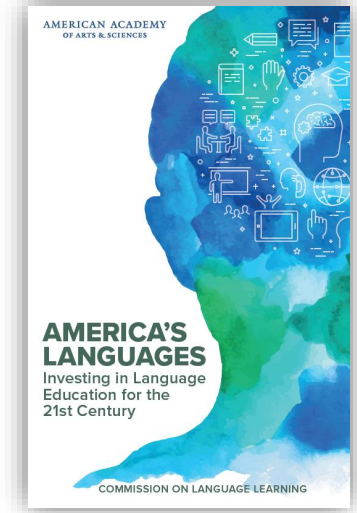
Are you confident that you are a master teacher now?



Who is investing in your development as a master teacher, and how?



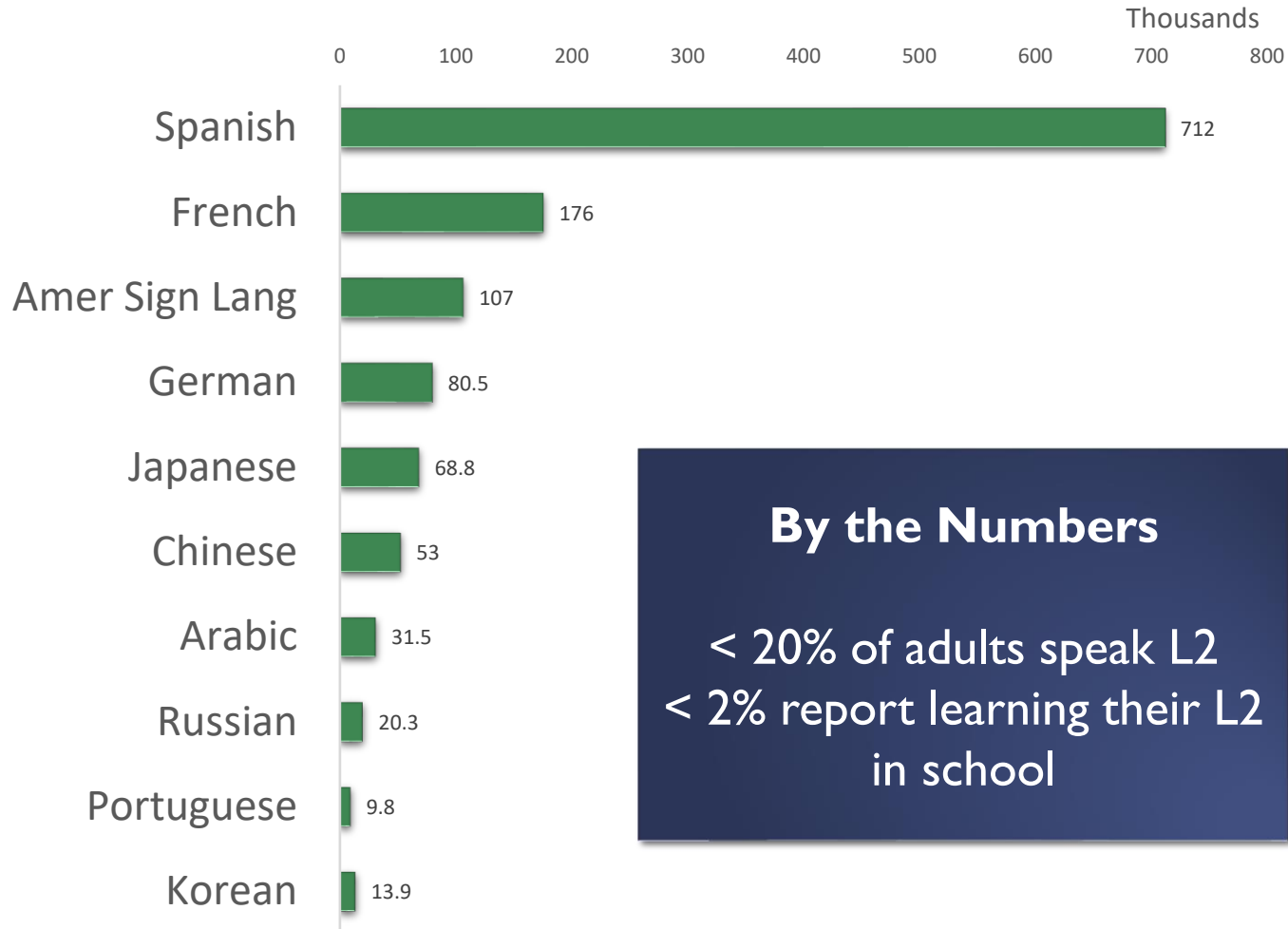
The State of World Language Teaching



TEACHER RETENTION, REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
AND TEACHERS' NEEDS

State of the Field

The Landscape of WL in the U.S.



By the Numbers

< 20% of adults speak L2
< 2% report learning their L2 in school

Foreign Languages in the U.S.
MLA Report (2016)

Numbers of learners decreasing

Teaching involves high commitment and relatively low pay

Decreases in funding and other support

Serious shortages of qualified teachers

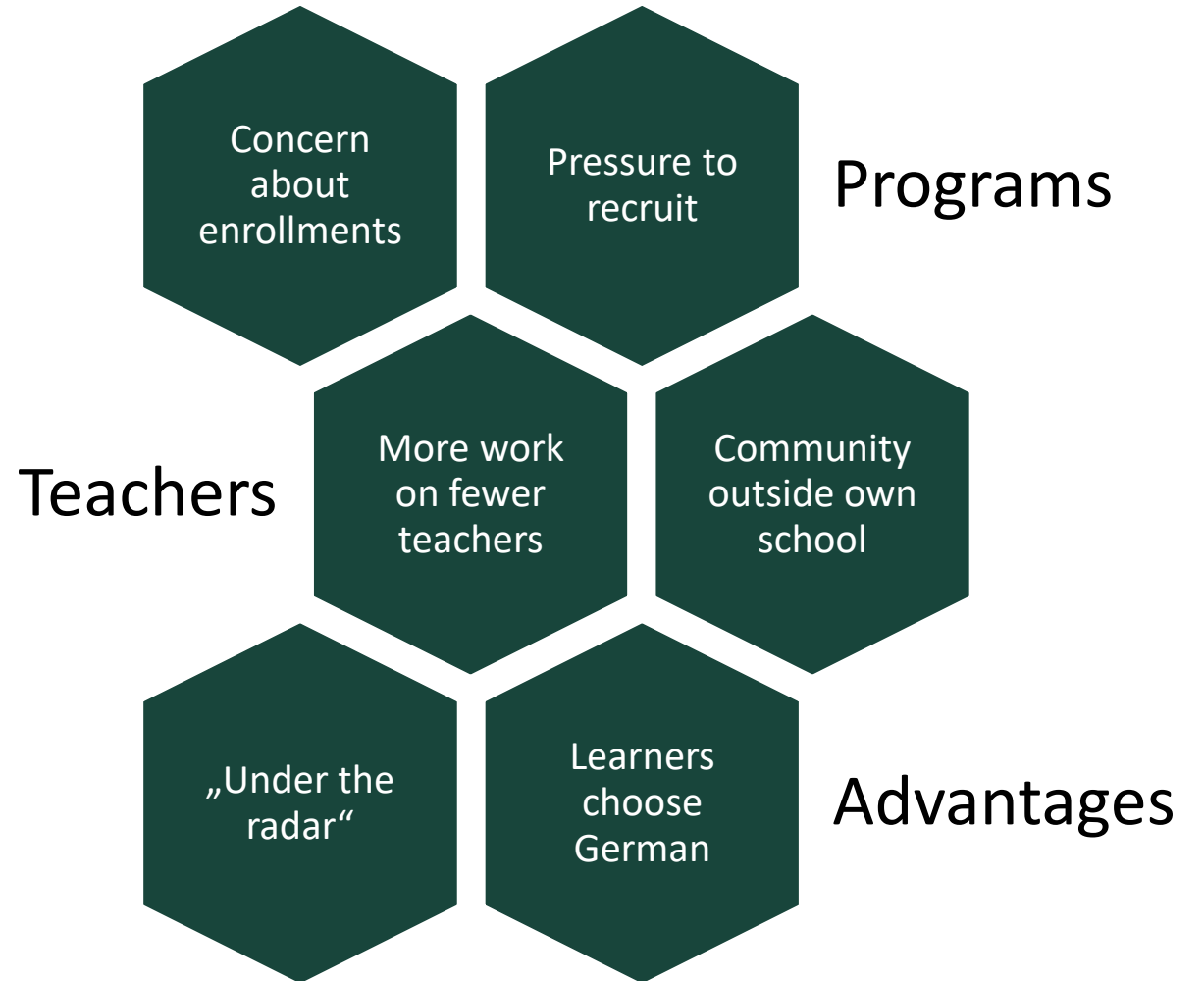
German Programs Relative to Others

National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report
American Councils for International Education (2017)

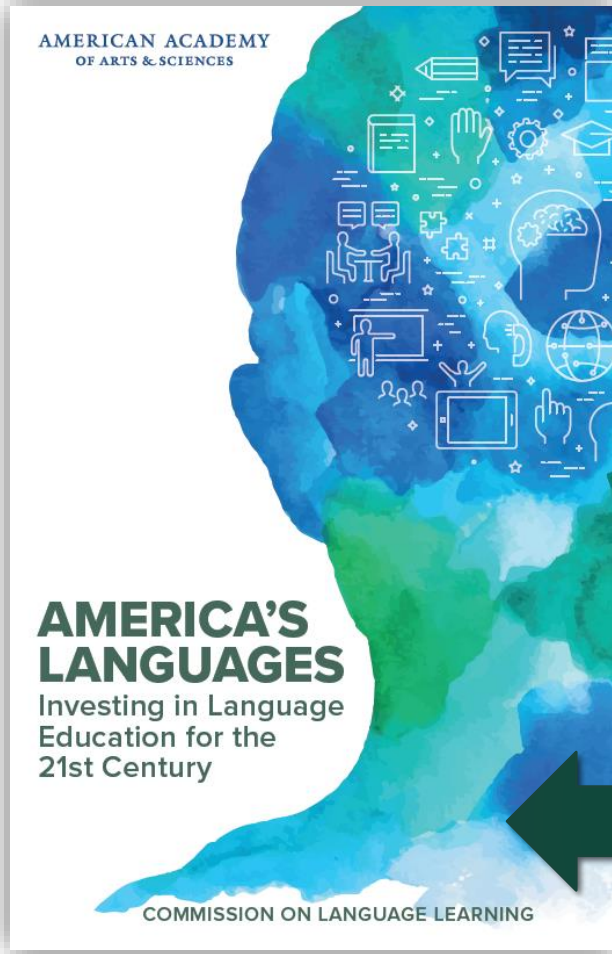
German represented 8.71% of HS programs nationwide

74 out of 660 programs in Michigan (11.21%)

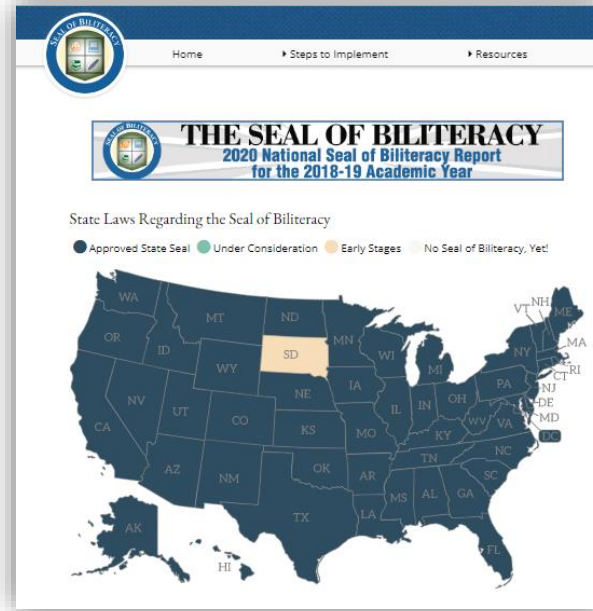
Projected program losses, small decline of -0.32%



State of the Field



2017 report
commissioned by the
American Academy of
Arts & Letters



Making
Languages Our
Business
2019 report by ACTFL
and Language Testing
International



State of the Field

WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (World LEAP) ACT, H.R. 5603

Introduced by Congressman Jimmy Panetta (D-CA)



WWW.LANGUAGEPOLICY.ORG

@JNCLINFO

World LEAP Act introduced Sept. 20, 2023:
<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/118/hr5603>

Much more on the MAFLT Advocacy page
maflt.cal.msu.edu/advocacy



Professional Development for World Language Teachers

Teachers say PD is rarely specific to language teachers



- Certification Requirements – SCECH hours, university credit hours
- Onboarding and Mentoring Procedures
- Evaluation Procedures
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Conferences and Organization Events
- Self-Directed Learning



Required for public school teachers - private or community-based may not receive any PD

The screenshot shows the Michigan Department of Education website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Department of Education' and a search icon. Below the navigation bar are links for 'About Us', 'Services', 'Resources', 'News & Info', and 'Contact Us'. The main heading is 'Educator Certification'. Below this, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Services > Educator Services > Educator Certification'. Underneath, there is a section titled 'Certification Information' with a sub-section 'Currently Available Endorsement Areas'. This section contains three cards: 'Approved Educator Preparation Programs Searchable Database' (with a globe icon), 'Certification Guidance' (with a computer monitor icon), and 'Educator Forms' (with a document icon).

<https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/ed-serv/ed-cert>

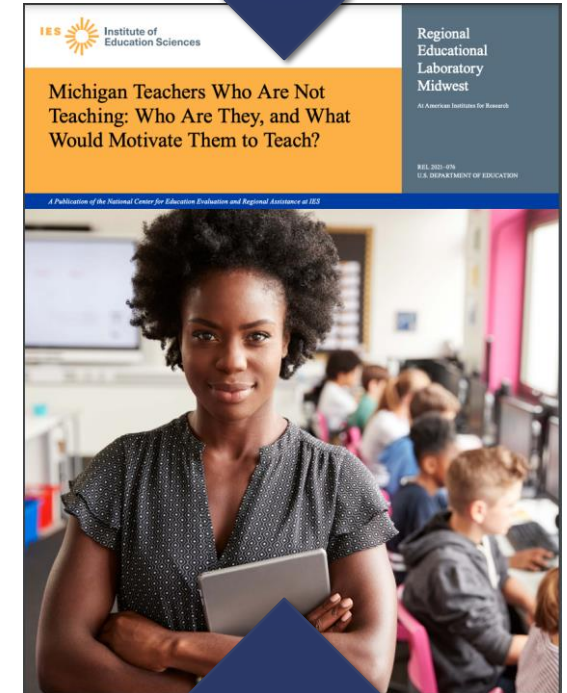
Retention and Attrition of World Language Teachers

Language teacher shortages in more than 90% of U.S. states

Salary and benefits are important, but not the biggest influence for everyone

“A lower sense of [self] efficacy leads teachers to exert less effort and give up more easily, which leads to poor teaching outcomes, decreased efficacy, and ultimately **to teachers leaving the profession.**” (Swanson, 2012, p. 96)

2021 Institute of Educational Sciences report on MI teacher attrition



- MI teachers on why they left the classroom
- to become an administrator (22.3 %)
 - wanted to grow their careers (15.8%)
 - to take ed-related courses (11.0%)

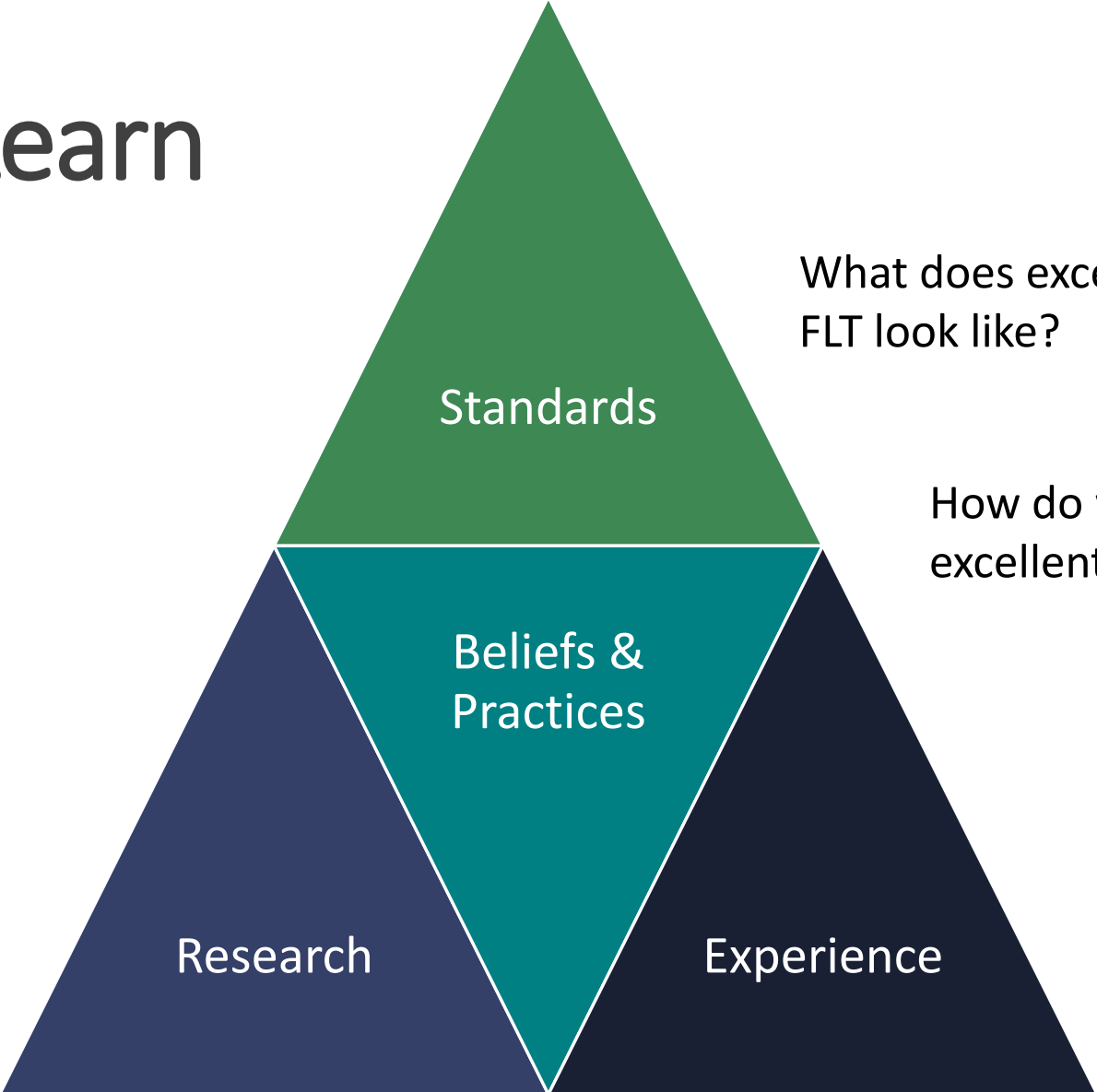


How Teachers Learn

How Teachers Learn

Influences On Teacher Development

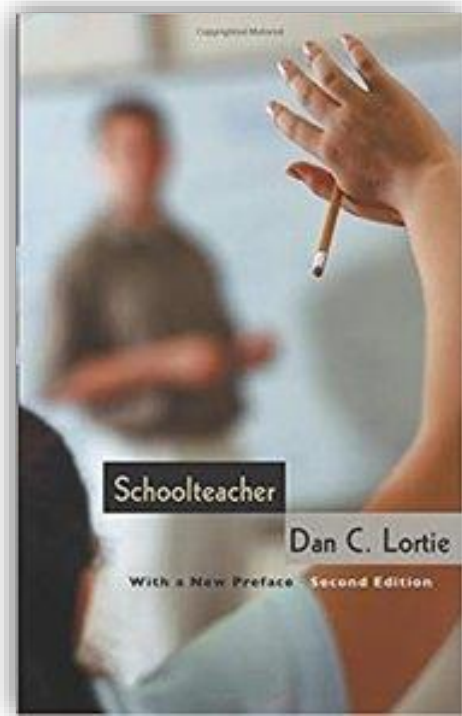
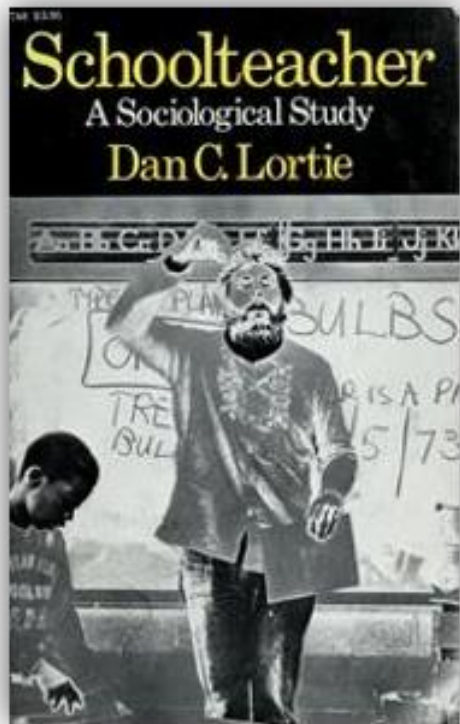
How much did you learn about teaching in school?



What does excellent FLT look like?

How do we become excellent teachers?

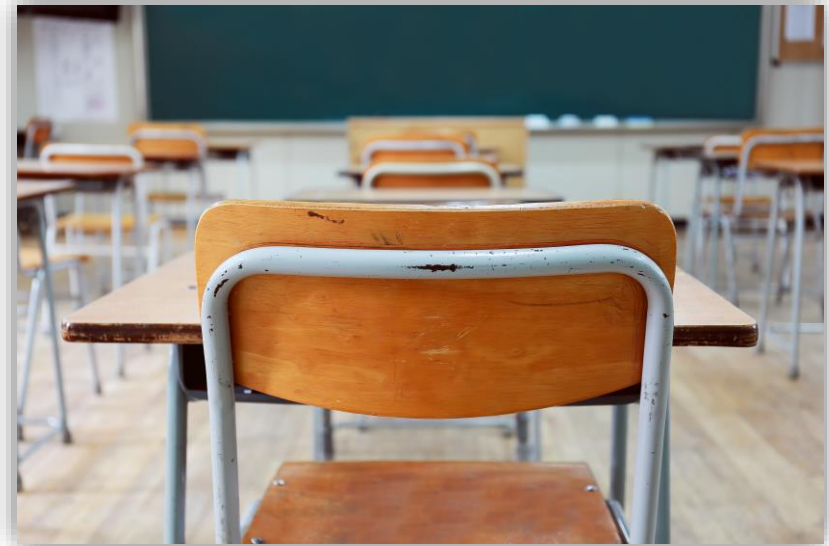
How Teachers Learn



Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Apprenticeship of Observation

Most of us teach the same way that we were taught.



How Teachers Learn

“The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) that investigated **the apprenticeship model** of learning showed that, rather than the novice apprentice learning from the master craftsman, learning took place through a complex set of social relationships...

a whole community supports the development of a new practitioner.”

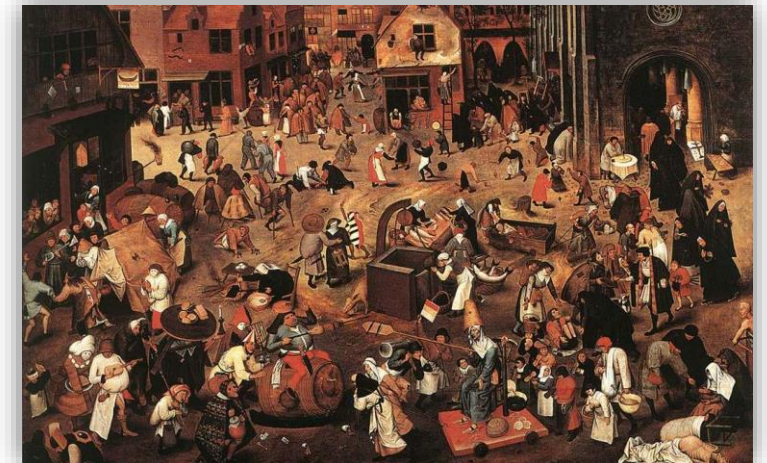
(Cox & McDonald, 2017, p. 52-53)

A Novice Apprentice



[source](#)

A Whole Community

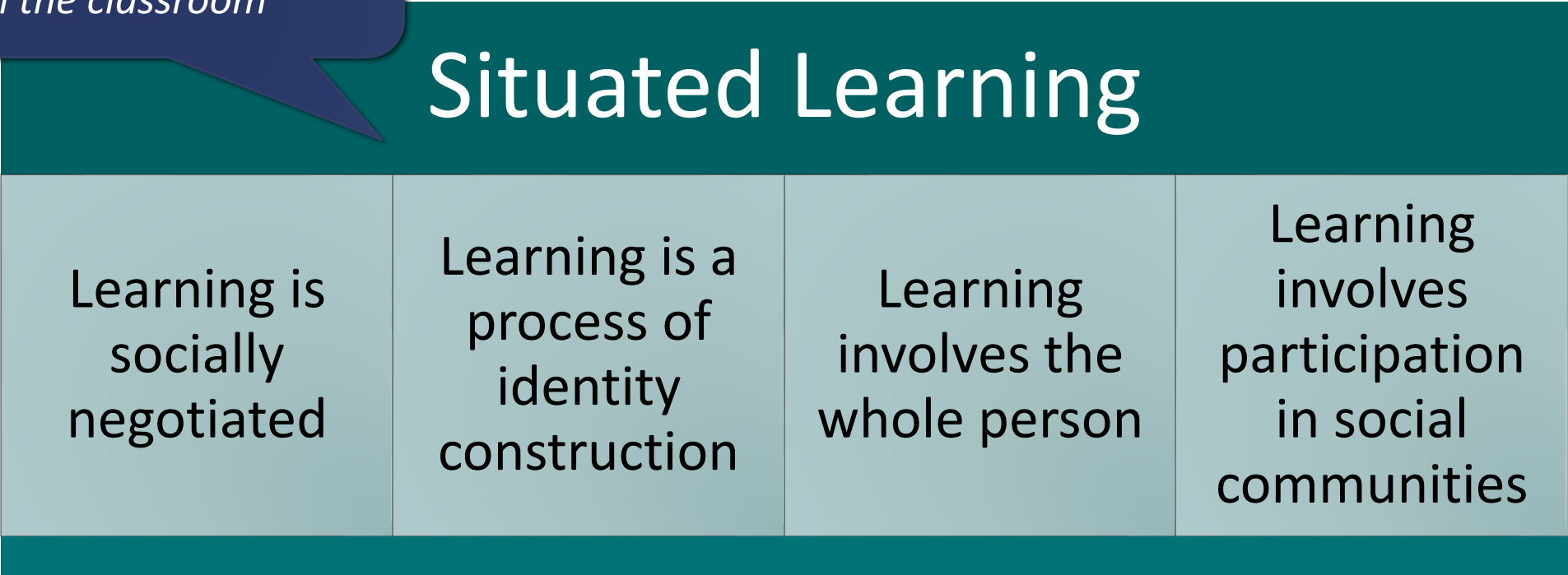


[source](#)

How Teachers Learn

*Communities of Practice
(Wenger, 1998)*

*So learning really happens
AFTER you are "situated"
in the classroom*



(Lave & Wenger, 1991)



Teacher Inquiry on Teacher Development

ONGOING AND INTERCONNECTED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Program Development

THE PROGRAM DIARIES: EXPLORING FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER COLLABORATION IN CONTEXT

Primary Investigator:	Dr. Amanda Lanier Director of Graduate Programs in Foreign Language Teaching (Online)
Student Investigators:	Graduate students in the MAFLT Program at MSU https://maflt.cal.msu.edu/students
Department and Institution:	Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) College of Arts & Letters, Michigan State University
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Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching | maflt.cal.msu.edu



Related Sessions on Collaboration and Advocacy



Ecology and Vitality of Language Programs
ADVOCATING FOR JAPANESE FLT



OPENING THE SILOS: HOW TO COORDINATE
PLANNING AND PD ACROSS LANGUAGES

Amanda Lanier and Grant Castner
Extempore PD Extravaganza 2022



MAKE
VIRTUAL COMMUNITY
A REALITY:
STRATEGIES FOR
TEACHER NETWORKING

MIWLA 2022 | THURSDAY

PRESENTERS:
DR. AMANDA LANIER, BETTY BROWN,
TERYN HENDERSON, & TAMMY SCHMIDT

MSU FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING GRADUATE PROGRAMS | MAFLT.CAL.MSU.EDU



Department
of One:
How Isolated
Teachers Connect
and Collaborate

Presenters
Jaime Danks (danksjal@msu.edu)
Amanda Lanier (alanier@msu.edu)
CSCTFL 2022

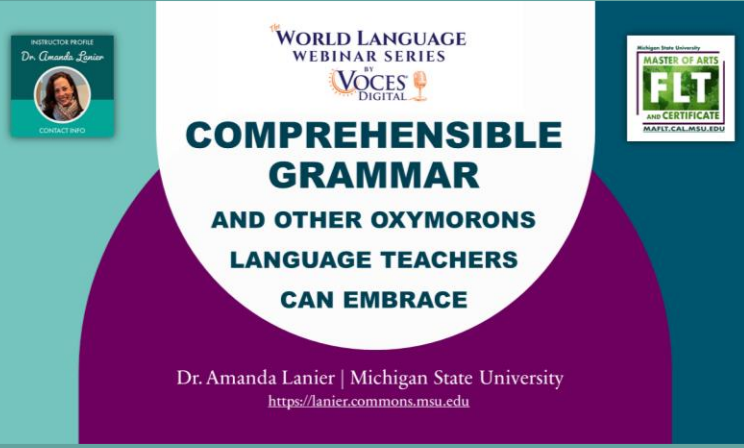


CSCTFL 2022 | March 3-5

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Related Sessions

Department of One

CHALLENGES

How do you manage...

ONBOARDING?

COLLABORATING?

EVALUATING?

DEVELOPING FURTHER?



Department of One:
How Isolated Teachers Connect and Collaborate

Presenters

Jaime Danks (danksjai@msu.edu)

Amanda Lanier (alanier@msu.edu)

CSCTFL 2022

Isolation is not conducive to growth

Narratives of German Teacher Development



THE CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECT

German Teacher Case Studies

James	Julianne	Lance	Luke	Martha	Sandra
Experienced	Novice	Experienced	Mid-Experienced	Experienced	Mid-Experienced
Post-Secondary	Public HS	Public MS	Public HS	Public HS	Private HS

Novice = 1-5 years of experience

Mid-Experienced = 6-10 years of experience


Experienced = 10+ years of experience

Narratives of Teacher Development

TEACHER INTERVIEWS

- Peer interviews conducted by language teachers engaging in program reviews
- Multiple purposes
 - insight into program,
 - research on teacher collaboration,
 - incentive to meet and discuss

Research approved by
MSU Institutional Review Board, with
informed consent from all participants



DISCUSSION FORUM REFLECTIONS

- Prompts intended to connect course content to teacher experience
- Elicited reflections on teacher development:
 - Your path into and through the field
 - Onboarding - your experience
 - Supervision - your experience
 - Collaboration and change

Research Questions



What are these teachers' experiences of PD?

What factors do these teachers believe are conducive to growth at various points in their careers?

What factors hinder teacher development?

What are their perspectives on their greatest needs for PD?

Our Perspectives

“researcher identity impacts research, and research impacts researcher identity”
(Norton & Early, 2011)



Amanda

Teacher educator and applied linguist with 20+ years of experience in language teaching

Researches the role of identity and culture in language learning and teaching



Mary Ellen

Teaching German for 9+ years in postsecondary, community settings

Multi-directional learning between K-12 and other educators

**Onboarding
and
Apprenticeship**

**Supervision
and
Evaluation**

**Collaboration
and
Community**

How does each of these aspects impact
teacher development?

Onboarding and Apprenticeship



(Lord, 2014)

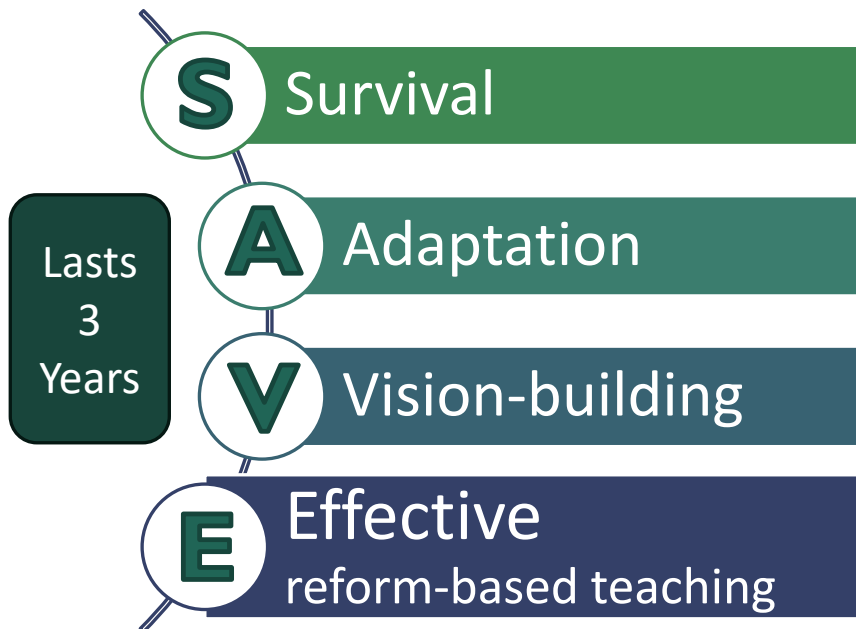
Did you have a practicum and student teaching experience?

Did you go through an induction process? How long was it?

Were you assigned a mentor teacher? How much did you interact with them?

How often were you observed? Did you get useful feedback from your observers?

Recommended



Corriero & Romeo (2011) from *Breaking the Mold*



Onboarding and Apprenticeship

Michigan Department of Education

Mentoring and Induction Supports – FAQs

What are the requirements for new teacher induction and professional learning?

The law states that teachers within their first three years of teaching shall receive 15 days of intensive professional development induction into teaching during the three year period. The professional learning induction should be based on a professional development plan and include classroom management and instructional delivery.

How many professional learning hours are required for new teachers?

MCL 380.1526 requires at least 15 days of additional professional learning over a teacher's first three years of employment. Per [Michigan Department of Education \(MDE\) guidance](#), this equates to a total of 90 hours over the three years.

Recommended

Onboarding and Apprenticeship

Many teachers never experience onboarding, much less apprenticeship

Sandra:

"My **supervisor and colleagues helped very little** to adjust to the new school and teaching responsibilities.

...

I also bemoan the fact that the **previous teacher did not leave my any teaching materials, files, lesson plans etc.** - she even went so far as to **wipe the computer clean**. In essence, I was handed a set of very outdated textbooks and was told to teach.

...

I very much felt as if **I was thrown into the 'deep-end.'** I also felt that there was a lack of supervision / guidance during the first couple years of my teaching. I also do not recall having been given statements of expectations for the job." (Discussion Post, October 2021)

Reality



Onboarding and Apprenticeship

Sometimes the apprentice is also the master, and vice versa

Martha:

I told [my colleague] I have never used a textbook, **that's not something, you know, that we really, they taught us how to do** [in my university courses], so I've kind of always just done my thing. And you know, I base a lot of [what I do now] off of the textbook that she had. So she was like, “Great, do it, okay fine, whatever.” And she loved it and actually was really open to it...

[Years later] she says, “because of you I do all these things now!” You know what, I really believe she was still really great on her own, that had nothing to do with me...

She always felt like the textbook was the smart one... and I was like, “Girl, what? You know German, like, you know what your students need!” ... So **I helped her break out of that**, I guess, and we had a lot of fun with that. (Interview, October 2020)

Reality





Supervision and Evaluation

Observations are important because teachers need feedback – but how often? When? With what structure? How much feedback?

Do instructors really want to be observed?

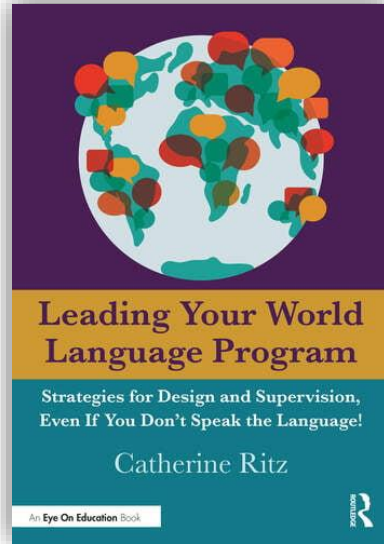
“At my last school, they never came into my room, so I knew they really hadn’t a clue as to what I did or how I was doing. I felt that they really didn’t value me at all. – Lucie”
(informant quote from Hoerr, 2005, p. 99)

“Instructors tend to think the purpose of these observations is to judge and criticize, when in reality the intention is to assess what is working and what could use improvement and, crucially, offer guidance in that respect” (Lord, 2014, p. 118)

What is the reason for most observations?

Recommended

Supervision and Evaluation



- “Supervisor” may be world language chair or someone with no world language experience or expertise – see *Leading Your World Language Program* (Ritz, 2021)
- Evaluation is only one small part of supervision, and mentoring is not the same
- Supervisor can coordinate team collaboration – but what if there is no shared planning time?

Recommended

From Eva Prionas, Stanford University – she uses the form to scaffold frequent reflective conversations, not to evaluate

American Association of Teachers of Modern Greek Community-based Greek Heritage Schools Teacher’s Monthly Self-Reflection Form						
School:		Grade/Age Group:		Date:		
Teacher’s Name (optional)			Years of Teaching:			
Reflection Areas	Yes	No	To some extent	Plans to improve my preparation <i>before class</i> -Give specific examples	Plans to improve my work <i>during class</i> -Give specific examples	Plans to improve work <i>after class</i> - Give specific examples
Classroom Management						
Instruction						
Materials/Media						
Feedback/Assessment						

Supervision and Evaluation

Evaluation is rarely associated with growth - useful supervision and feedback are rare

Sandra: My direct supervisor the department chair of the world languages department did the majority of the observations. These observations were usually announced in advanced, **but results were never discussed with me.**

...

Once a teacher has been teaching for 4 years at our school, the observations and evaluation go down drastically in number. Now, I am only observed once per year...

...

This performance review will then be followed up with a personal informal sit down interview...**I do enjoy being able to discuss things with the principle** but sometimes it feels as if this is just **another thing that she has to check off a list and then nothing gets ever changed or done about it.** (Teacher Interview, 2021)

Reality



Supervision and Evaluation

Supervision that is too heavy-handed prevents autonomy

Martha: But then the school districts tend to, like, regulate how everyone's classes look. So we, the last couple years in our department, have had a lot of rough patches.

...

It's been difficult. Because the Spanish department **wants everything lockstep**. Everybody does everything the same....And **in German, we've always just kind of like, you do you, I do me, and the kids are learning German**, and we're feeling great about it.

(Program Team Interview, 2020)

Lance: I think **the leadership at the top, our supervisor, is probably most influential** on team dynamics, on what we're doing, **on the buy-in of what we're doing... if your supervisor's heavy-handed, it doesn't matter what kind of team you've assembled. You all have to march like soldiers**. If the supervisor is a bit more liberal in his or her approach to how we do it, then you're going to see more of our personalities come through.

(Program Team Interview, 2021)

Reality



Collaboration and Community

When do you interact with other teachers?

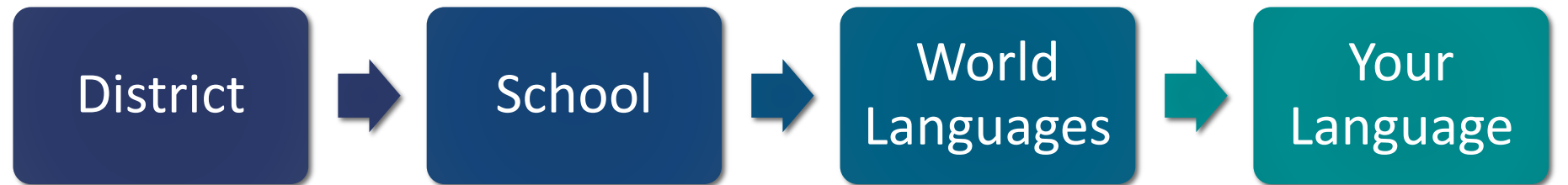
- Faculty meetings
- Curriculum documents and pacing guides
- Exchanging materials
- PLC – may or may not overlap with faculty meeting
- District trainings and curriculum days

Meeting together
does not equal
learning together

Which teachers?

How often?

Same Grade
Level



Recommended

Collaboration and Community

Recommended

A classroom can resemble a cave unless teachers have an opportunity to collaborate, commiserate, and contemplate with one another. Teaching is so much about human interaction, that the “other kind” of interaction, adult to adult, is critical to a teacher’s feeling whole. ~Kathy

(p. 24)

1

- Form a book group

2

- Make collegiality a goal

3

- Develop curriculum as colleagues

4

- Meet to share ideas

5

- Address collegiality on teaching evaluations

6

- Involve teachers in hiring decisions

Hoerr (2005)

Collaboration and Community

Time, physical proximity, and scheduled opportunities are crucial

Julianne:

"I'm close to the world language wing of the school so **I was able to wander over, you know, during lunch periods during my planning period or after school...**" (Program Team Interview, 2021)

Lance:

"So, historically, **we used to meet more as a, as a county department, years ago but that's been culled down to a couple days and it's unfortunate** because some of the some of the **good stuff that was distributed to teachers came through those moments** but there's very few of them and often now that we meet, it has a very focused lesson plan." (Program Team Interview, 2021)

Reality



Collaboration and Community

Given the opportunity, peers can be a source for camaraderie *and* development

Julianne:

We have a coffee hour once a month so that we can just kind of do a **pulse check and see how everyone's doing**, like if anyone needs any help. **I can always reach out** via phone, email, text message, whatever it may be even a Teams chat **to anyone in my world language department** (Program Team Interview, 2021)

Martha:

We also have a lot of control in my district. We are like a **teacher-led kind of group**, you know, so there's, I mean, we have principals and stuff, they're leading, but like, I have, I'm part of a lot of different committees that we do every Wednesday. We have professional development. The students come to school a little bit later, and we have meetings... **we develop, we read things together**, you know, and **not a lot of districts, I guess, do that, which is really weird.** (Teacher Interview, 2020)

Reality



Collaboration and Community

German programs' relatively small size has impacts on collaboration

Lance: in German, it's unfortunate, we'd like to have the [enrollment] numbers, but we don't, but the other side of that coin is, **we can just simply have a Teams meeting at any given time, and get the take the pulse of the entire group.** And so when we make a decision, it's often not the decision of a handful of people, it's the decision of the group (Teacher Interview, 2021)

Martha: [As a German teacher] most of the time, wherever you are, **you're not on anyone's radar, really. So you can create whatever you want.** It's gotten me in a little bit of trouble, I'd say. I am very much the type of person that wants to do things the way that I feel that they're best done. And so we've always kind of, **the German teachers, we've just, we do what we wanted to, you know, and it's always worked out.** (Teacher Interview, 2020)

Reality



**Onboarding
and
Apprenticeship**

**Supervision
and
Evaluation**

**Collaboration
and
Community**

What about you? How have these aspects impacted your teacher development?

Investment that Leads to Teacher Growth

WHAT WORKS, WHAT WE WISH FOR

Connection and Autonomy

Contact with another person is a basic biological need; loneliness is a form of starvation. Even as adults, connection nourishes us in a literal, physiological way... We literally sicken and die without connection...

And it is also true that the lifelong development of autonomy is as innate to human nature as the drive to connect. We need both connection and autonomy.

From *Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle*
(Nagoski & Nagoski, 2019, p. 134-135)

Empowering Autonomy

Luke: „I copied [my mentors'] styles and it seemed successful with their students, so I felt successful...It wasn't until a few years into teaching that I began to discover my own teaching identity as I explored new methods and approaches.“ (Discussion Forum Reflection, 2021)

Too much control diminishes autonomy and reduces motivation

Apprenticeship lays the foundation for autonomy and growth

Lance: „I would like the autonomy to execute the kind of lessons I feel my students need in the classroom.“ (Program Team Interview, 2021)

Scaffolding Collaboration

“Though the reasons for our decisions and actions as teachers are within us, it is **often difficult to articulate how we know what we do** when we teach...

Collaboration is a powerful vehicle for exposing and developing knowledge of teaching...”

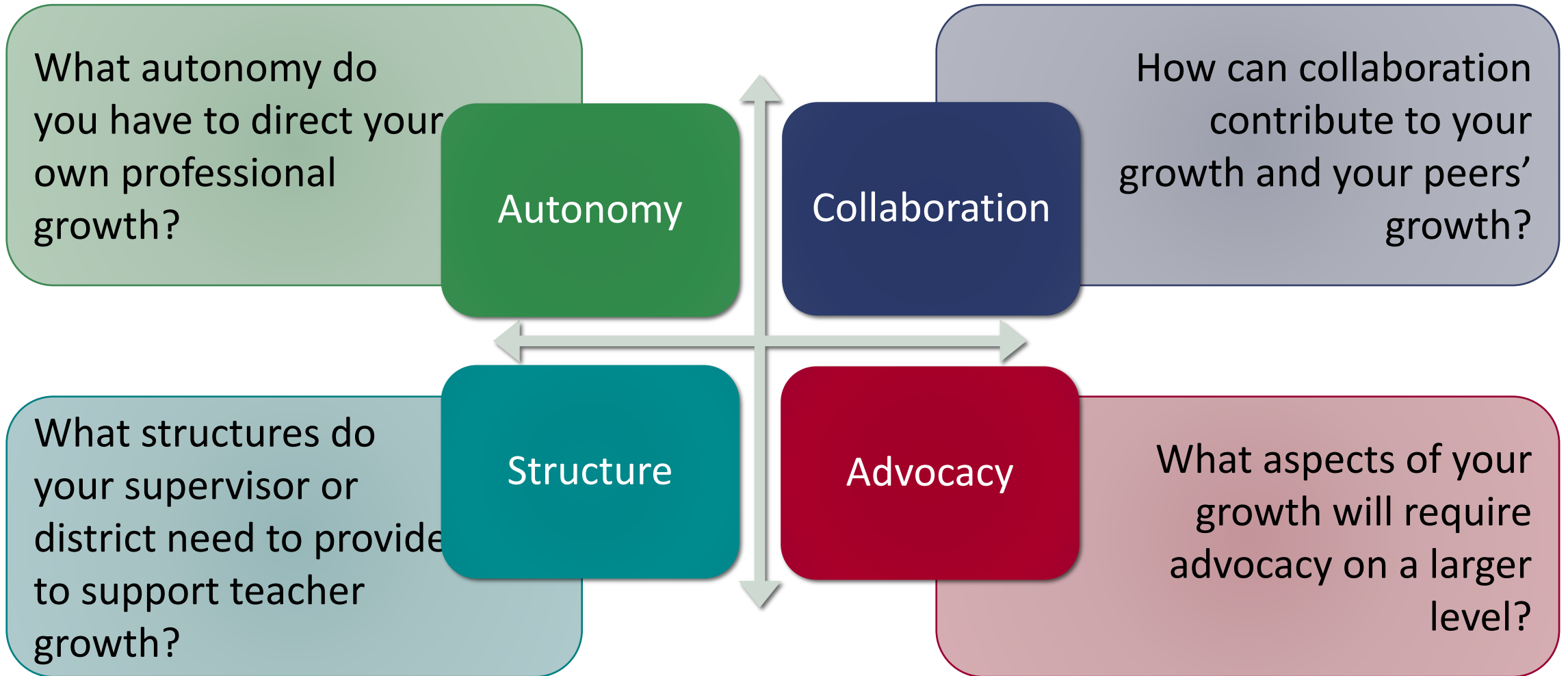
(Knezevic & Scholl, 1996, p. 79)

Lance: "I think that our program has really profited from being small, you know, being lithe, and **having those scheduled opportunities to work together**. And I know not everyone has that opportunity but **we do and we take advantage of it.**" (Program Team Interview, 2021)

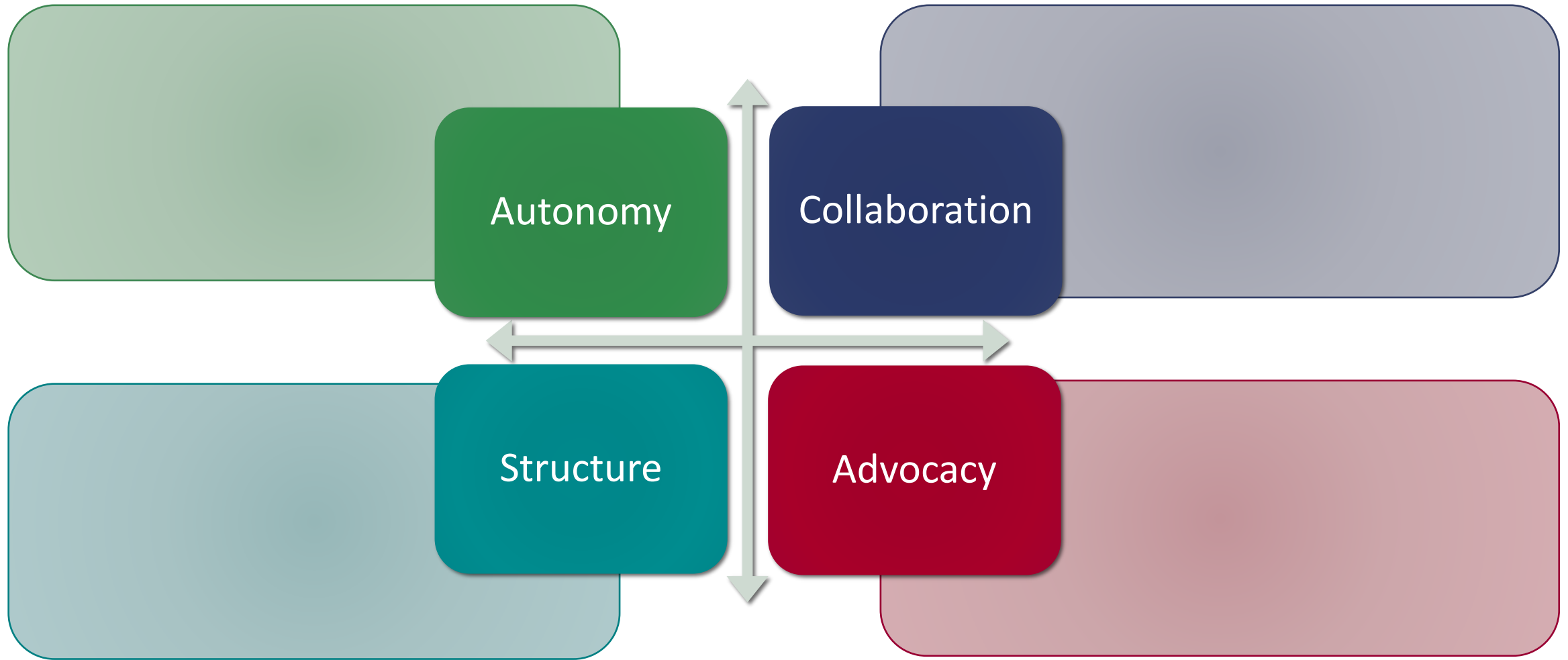
Sandra: "Administrations need to **release the peer mentor from classroom teaching responsibilities in order to have the time to be able to observe, evaluate, and support other teachers on staff.** " (Discussion Forum Reflection, 2021)

Collaborate and Advocate Starting Here and Now

Cultivating Teacher Growth: Next Steps



Your Next Steps to PD



Thank You

for Participating

Keep connecting!



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References and Resources

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Please complete session
& conference evaluations
using the Qs codes below.

VALUING A

MULTILINGUAL

SOCIETY

MIWLA 2023

Session evaluation:



2023 Conference
Evaluation:



SCECHs Form:



These codes as well as
clickable links are also
found on p. 3 of the
program



Additional Resources

Recommendations

Cultivate Your Team

- Make the most of time you have
- Share materials and open doors - think about where and how you are giving each other access to your plans, tech tools, etc.
- Use the expertise around you
 - Informal observation - listen to the teacher down the hall
 - Ongoing exchange of ideas in meetings, text messages, etc.
 - Structured opportunities for peer teaching can be helpful even if you are out of alignment in some of your beliefs and practices

Advocate for Affordances

- Seek PD within and beyond your local context (see advocacy resources and requests for grant money to fund going to conferences and bringing in PD)
- If you can enhance your local CoP, do – work across languages, talk to your supervisor, try to carve out time to include learning when you meet for other tasks

Reach for More

- Petition administrators to allow FL-specific training instead of DPPD to meet requirements
- Establish a community of practice through your district or virtual community
- Seek support through larger organizations or networks for thorny problems – competition, isolation, zero funding, enrollments down, etc. – MIWLA, AATG, Goethe Institut, etc.

Recommendations

PD and engagement in day-to-day work don't have to be separate – e.g., if there is a mandated curriculum change, you can collaborate on that and engage in learning together in order to address that problem, and even advocate to your district to make that time possible for you to work together

If you can enhance your local CoP, do – work across languages, talk to your supervisor, try to carve out time to include learning when you meet for other tasks

Seek PD within and beyond your local context (see advocacy resources and requests for grant money to fund going to conferences and bringing in PD)

Over time, cultivate good collegiality and collaboration – it is not automatic

Empowering Teachers

Encourage teachers to set professional goals –
use predictable guides and templates

Review the goals –
provide formative and summative feedback

PROFESSIONAL
GROWTH

It takes time – so make time!
Team teaching, finding subs, make videos to share,
etc.

Make sure teachers keep control
of their own development

Heller (2004)



Educator Retention Supports



Educator Evaluation



Professional Learning



Mentoring and Induction



Professional Learning and
Educator Evaluation Audit
Resources



Educator Workforce Research



Diversity and Equity in the
Education Workforce



Recognition Programs



Teacher Certification



Loan Forgiveness

Anything specific for
world languages?

What about career
changers?

How Teachers Learn

Communities of Practice
(Wenger, 1998)

Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP)

Peripheral
Learners gain expertise, negotiate legitimacy, and move to the center

Novice

Novice

Master Teacher
Skilled and accepted member of the community

Marginal
Learners do NOT move toward mastery, due to a lack of legitimacy or a lack of participation

(Wenger, 1998)

Defining Your Communities of Practice

Domain

Joint enterprise

- Purpose or interest that binds

Community

Mutual engagement

- Interactions, interdependence

Practice

Shared repertoire

- Terms, stories, experiences, ways of doing

[Introduction to communities of practice | Wenger-Trayner](#)

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Examples:

- *a tribe learning to survive,*
- *a band of artists seeking new forms of expression,*
- *a group of engineers working on similar problems,*
- *a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school,*
- *a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques,*
- *a gathering of first-time managers helping each other cope.*



Reflection

What resonated with you?

Individual

Team

Supervisor

Advocacy (Policy)