

FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN A
HIGH SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE
DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE:
THE CASE OF "GERMAN
BY SATELLITE"

By

SABINE LEWIS

Bachelor of Science

University of Hamburg

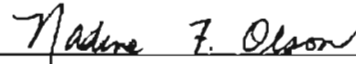
Hamburg, Germany

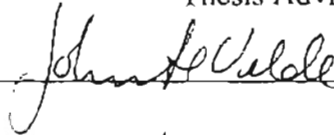
1971


Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
August, 2001


FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN A
HIGH SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE
DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE:
THE CASE OF "GERMAN
BY SATELLITE"

Thesis Approved:


Thesis Advisor






Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my advisor, Dr. Nadine Olson, for her supervision, instructive guidance, inspiration and friendship. My sincere appreciation extends to my other committee members, Dr. Sally Carter and Dr. John TeVelde, for their support and encouragement.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Robert Brown, for his help and suggestions. Finally, I would like to thank my children, Lisa, Ryan, and Lori, for their patience and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Problem	1
	Purpose of the Study	2
	Objectives of the Study	2
	Significance of the Study	3
	Assumptions	3
	Limitations	4
	Definition of Terms	5
	Summary	6
II.	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH	7
	Introduction	7
	Foreign Language Instruction in the United States	7
	Historical Development of Foreign Language Instruction	7
	Enrollment History for Foreign Language Courses	18
	Factors Influencing Student Enrollment	21
	Summary - Foreign Language Instruction in the United States	23
	German Language Instruction in the United States	25
	Historical Development of German Language Instruction	25
	Enrollment History for German Language Courses	26
	Factors Influencing Enrollment in German Language	29
	Summary - German Language Instruction	33
	Distance Learning Courses	33
	Historical Development of Distance Learning Courses	33
	Enrollment History for Distance Learning Instruction	40
	Factors Influencing Student Enrollment in Distance Learning ..	46
	Summary - Distance Learning	47

Chapter	Page
III. SURVEY- METHODOLOGY	49
Introduction	49
Purpose of the Study	50
Participants of the Survey	50
Survey Instruments	53
Introduction	53
Administrators' Questionnaire	53
Teachers' Questionnaire	55
Students' Questionnaire	55
Second Questionnaire	56
Former Schools' Questionnaire	57
Method of Analysis	58
IV. SURVEY - FINDINGS	59
First Questionnaire	59
Administrators	59
Teachers	62
Students	63
Summary - First Questionnaire	65
Second Questionnaire	67
Teachers	67
Students	70
Summary - Second Questionnaire	73
Questionnaire - Former Schools	74
Administrators	74
Teachers	75
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	76
Summary	76
Conclusions	80
Recommendations	82
BIBLIOGRAPHY	85
NOTES	88

Chapter	Page
APPENDIXES	89
APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE 1, ADMINISTRATOR'S	90
APPENDIX B - QUESTIONNAIRE 1, TEACHERS	93
APPENDIX C - QUESTIONNAIRE 1, STUDENTS	96
APPENDIX D - QUESTIONNAIRE, FORMER SCHOOLS, ADMINISTRATORS	99
APPENDIX E - QUESTIONNAIRE, FORMER SCHOOLS, TEACHERS ..	102
APPENDIX F - QUESTIONNAIRE 2, TEACHERS	105
APPENDIX G - QUESTIONNAIRE 2, STUDENTS	107
APPENDIX H - FLYER LISTING CHANGES TO THE GERMAN ONLINE PROGRAM	109
APPENDIX I- INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM	111

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Foreign Language Enrollment in American Public High Schools Shown in Percent of Total High School Enrollment	19
2. Foreign Language Enrollment in American High Schools in 1994 Shown in Percent of Total High School Enrollment	20
3. Reasons Given by Students for Enrolling in a High School Foreign Language course, 1957, Illinois	22
4. Reasons Given by Students for Enrolling in a High School Foreign Course, 1993, Iowa	22
5. German Enrollment in Oklahoma (Without German by Satellite), Grades 7-12	28
6. Reasons for Enrolling in a German Course Given on the 2000 AATG Survey	31
7. Enrollment History of German by Satellite, Number of Students	42
8. Administrators; Reasons for Offering German	60
9. Administrators: Reasons for Choosing a Distance Learning Rather Than a Traditional Course	61
10. Students' Reasons for Enrolling in the German by Satellite Course	64
11. Students' Expectations for the German by Satellite Course	65
12. Teachers: General Opinion of the German by Satellite Course	68
13. Teachers' Rating of Course Components	69

Table	Page
14. Students: General Judgment About the German by Satellite Course	71
15. Students: Rating of Course Components	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. German High School Enrollment as Percentage of Total High School Enrollment	27
2. German by Satellite Student Enrollment, 1985 to 2000	43
3. Student Enrollment for Kentucky Educational Television, German I and II, 1990 TO 2000	43
4. Enrollment in the Irasshai Japanese Distance Learning Program, 1995 to 2000	44

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

In 1984, the Arts and Sciences Extension Department of Oklahoma State University responded to the request by a small high school in the Oklahoma Panhandle by creating the distance learning course "German by Satellite." Enrollment in this program increased from 39 schools in 1985, the first year of the program, to 234 schools in 1990, an increase of 500 %. However, starting in 1991, the number of schools enrolled in the program started to decline. For the past 10 years, enrollment in the "German by Satellite" course has dropped by an average of 20 schools per year. If the current downward trend in enrollment continues, the program will not be able to support itself financially any longer and the survival of German by Satellite will be questionable.

The university instructors and administrators involved in designing and teaching the program were puzzled by this development. There was not an obvious explanation for this reversal of the initial success. The program and its director and main instructor, Dr. Harry Wohler, had received numerous awards (1) and were praised by the Oklahoma State Department, by an independent evaluation team from the University of New Mexico, and by administrators and teachers of participating schools for a well-designed and effective course. There was little or no criticism of the course structure itself. If asked why they were not continuing to subscribe to the course, many schools said that they had hired a full-time foreign language teacher, in most cases for Spanish. Based on this anecdotal evidence it was assumed by the instructors of the course that the drop in enrollment was due to a general decline in enrollment for German courses with a corresponding gain for Spanish enrollment. Since this assumption blames the declining enrollment for the "German by Satellite" program on general causes which were not controllable by the instructors and

administrators of the program, no systematic research into possible causes for the decline in enrollment was undertaken.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study was to identify factors which influence or determine the downward enrollment trend in the "German by Satellite" course. Enrollment factors were examined in three areas: foreign language courses in general, German courses, and distance education through a study of the extant literature and research. Factors influencing enrollment in the German by Satellite course were examined through a survey of schools currently or formerly enrolled in the program. In addition, the survey tried to determine why students choose to enroll in this course. The study examined possible causes for the decreasing enrollment in the "German by Satellite" course for the purpose of suggesting measures to increase enrollment.

Objectives of the Study

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Which factors influence enrollment in foreign language courses in the United States?
2. Which factors influence enrollment in German courses?
3. How does the enrollment history of "German by Satellite" compare to the enrollment in German language courses in general?
4. Which factors influence the enrollment in distance learning courses?
5. Which factors influence schools to subscribe to the "German by Satellite" program or not to continue subscription?

6. Which factors influence students to enroll in the "German by Satellite" distance learning course or to discontinue participation?

Significance of the Study

Of those distance learning courses which utilize modern technology such as satellite broadcasts and the Internet to teach high school students, "German by Satellite" is one of the oldest and longest-running in the country. By examining factors for enrollment in this course and deducing causes for the declining enrollment it may be possible to arrive at some guidelines for distance learning courses in general. This is especially valuable in light of the fact that there is not much data available concerning enrollment factors for distance learning courses. Given the current increase in courses being offered through distance learning and the political and administrative pressure being exerted on instructors to develop online courses, this study may be able to arrive at some factors to be considered for the development of successful distance learning courses in general, especially on the high school level.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for this study:

1. Distance learning provides a feasible and valuable alternative to regular classroom instruction, especially when regular classroom instruction is not possible, e.g. in small, isolated schools or for subjects where qualified teachers are difficult to find.
2. The "German by Satellite" course provides instruction which would not otherwise be available to the subscribing schools. A continuance of the "German by Satellite" course is therefore desirable.

Limitations

1. There are numerous factors influencing the success of a distance learning course. This study concentrates on those factors which influence students' and administrators' decisions to enroll in one particular course.

2. The particular circumstances of this course - e.g. the fact that the subject taught is German and that this course is intended for high school students - limit the general application of the enrollment factors examined.

3. The size of the sample for the study was fairly small: questionnaires were received from 25 administrators, 29 teachers and 46 students from 29 schools which were enrolled in the current 2000/2001 school year. Especially disappointing was the low return rate of questionnaires mailed to schools formerly but not currently enrolled in the program: questionnaires were received from only nine schools.

4. The study was conducted by the coordinator of the course who is also one of the instructors. Even though the study was completely anonymous, affective factors may have influenced the answers given by teachers and students on the questionnaires.

5. The fact that the researcher is personally involved with the "German by Satellite" course as coordinator and instructor is a limiting factor for the objectivity of the study.

6. Personal observation in the classroom was not done by the researcher for the following reason: personal interaction between the instructor (who in this case is also the researcher) and the students is a rare commodity in a distance learning course. In the past, the instructor/researcher had visited some of the students in order to provide some of this interaction. These visits were always limited by time and financial restraints. It was deemed by the researcher that students would have certain expectations for a visit from the instructor, which would not be conducive to detached classroom observation.

Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions of terms relevant to this study:

1. Distance Learning - is instruction where the instructor and the student(s) are separated in space and possibly in time. There may also be separation between students or groups of students.

2. Foreign Language - denotes a language other than a student's native language. Other terms for a foreign language are "Second Language" or "Target Language."

3. Vernacular - is the standard native language of a country or locality.

4. Native Language - is the language of the community into which a person is born. A person's native language is the first language acquired as a child.

5. German by Satellite - is the name of a distance learning program developed and taught by Dr. and Mrs. Wohler at Oklahoma State University beginning in 1984. The program utilized live satellite broadcasts from 1985 to 1999. The name of the program was changed to "German Online" when satellite broadcasts were discontinued in 1999 and the course material was moved to the Internet. For the purpose of this study, the program will be called "German by Satellite." The term "German by Satellite" as used in this study always refers to Oklahoma State University's distance learning program, which is being examined in this study.

6. Online Course - describes a distance learning course which utilizes the Internet for the majority of instruction and learning activities.

7. Communicative Competence - is the ability of a speaker to know "how, when, and why, to say what to whom" (National Standards, 1996). This knowledge includes grammar ("how") and vocabulary ("what") in addition to sociolinguistic and cultural aspects ("when", "why", and "to whom").

Summary

In view of the current proliferation of distance learning courses and the nationwide push to put both college and high school courses online, it will be beneficial to examine the development and history of one of the longest-running satellite and online distance learning courses in the country. The fact that this course - after substantial initial success - has been suffering from declining enrollment for the past ten years provides the background for the purpose of this study, namely to examine factors which influence school subscription to and student enrollment in this particular program. The desired outcome of this study is to outline possible causes for the declining enrollment in the "German by Satellite" course and to suggest a course of action which would reverse this trend. Even though this study focuses on one particular distance learning course, some generalizations about the specific constraints and peculiarities of the distance learning situation will be possible and should be helpful to those designing and teaching other distance learning courses. This will be particularly important considering that there is very little data on the effectiveness of this kind of instructional mode.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

There are several areas of significance related to this study. The "German by Satellite" course needs to be seen in the context of foreign language instruction in general, German language instruction in particular, and distance learning. Each of these fields has its own dynamic and conditions which taken together provide a framework for the course being studied. For the purposes of this study, the historical development, enrollment history, and enrollment factors will be examined in each of these three areas. Since the German by Satellite program consists mainly of high school courses, this study will focus on this age group.

Foreign Language Instruction in the United States

Historical Development of Foreign Language Instruction

Introduction

In order to gain a perspective of the history of foreign language instruction in the United States, it is helpful to assume a dichotomy of two views concerning the goals of education: on the one hand education can be seen as a means to shape the character and sharpen the mind of the student with the aim of "cultivating the mind and the soul" (Marsh and Willis, 1999, p. 54). From the other point of view, education is a means to train the individual in particular skills for specific tasks. In order to distinguish the two views of

education, the author decided to call the former the "academic" view of education and the latter the "vocational/utilitarian" view.

Both academic and vocational education are directed at the individual, the subject matter and society: academic education is concerned with shaping the individual into a well-rounded, fulfilled and virtuous being. Subject matter plays an important part in this kind of instruction, because some subjects are deemed to be more useful in achieving this goal than others. Latin and Greek, for instance, were considered very beneficial for teaching logical thinking and for enabling students to read the Holy Scriptures and classical writers in the original in order to study their thoughts on virtuous living. Academic education is seen to benefit society also, because its purpose is to produce persons who will be worthy and beneficial members of the community.

Vocational education - training in skills needed to perform certain tasks or to enter a profession - is also concerned with the individual, subject matter and society. Through the acquisition of marketable skills the individual is enabled to be gainfully employed and to lead a more satisfying life. Subjects to be taught in schools are offered according to their practical usefulness, e.g. bookkeeping or woodworking. Equipping students with skills needed by the society is also a goal of vocational education.

If this dichotomy of academic versus utilitarian schooling is adopted, then the history of education in general and of foreign language instruction in particular in the United States can be seen as a conflict between these two viewpoints with sometimes one and sometimes the other gaining the upper hand.

There are two additional general factors which have influenced the history of foreign language instruction. The first one of these is that teaching is not an exact science. Every student in a teacher training program will recognize sooner or later that there is no one method, no failure-proof procedures to follow in the daily routine of the classroom. Successful teaching depends as much on the personality of the teacher as on teaching methods, and the most important factor in instruction might well be the desire of the teacher

to see his or her students succeed. The number of variables present in the classroom are infinite. Every teacher knows that no two classes, no two groups of students are the same, and what works well with one class might be a total failure in another. Given this enormous diversity, it becomes obvious that there are severe limits to the application of general guidelines and theories, and that the ability of the teacher to adapt his or her instructional methods to the individual teaching situation becomes of prime importance. (2)

The second factor is that we do not really know how language acquisition works. To date no satisfactory explanation has been found for what actually occurs when language learning takes place (Wisconsin Guide to Curriculum Planning, cited by Grittner, 1990, p. 38). Of the two major theories on the topic in the last fifty years, behaviorism and generative grammar, the first one does not take into account the fact that native speakers of a language produce and understand utterances they have never heard before, and that language is creative rather than a predictable response to a given stimulus. The generative grammar approach, on the other hand, assumes that humans have an innate ability for language learning. Generative grammarians try to create formulas for what they assume happens subconsciously in the brain when language is generated. This theory has resulted in many fascinating findings about language, but the approach that this theory suggests does not readily lend itself to an application in everyday teaching practice.

These two factors, the limited applicability of general theories and methods to the particular classroom situation, and the fact that we have not found a satisfactory answer to what happens in language acquisition, are largely responsible for the erratic development of foreign language instruction. Another reason for the lack of a unified linear development of foreign language instruction is the fact that the United States - contrary to most other Western civilizations - do not have a national agency which prescribes the methods and objectives of instruction. As a result, developments in the field seem to move in cycles, with new theories (or old ones slightly altered) being advanced depending on whether the academic or the vocational viewpoint of the purpose of education is taken. After examining

methods of language teaching over 25 centuries, Kelly (1969) comes to a similar conclusion:

The total corpus of ideas accessible to language teachers has not changed basically in 2,000 years. What have been in constant change are the ways of building methods from them, and the part of the corpus that is accepted varies from generation to generation, ... (p. 363).

Colonial Era and 18th Century

During the colonial era the academic view of education prevailed. Foreign language studies consisted mostly of instruction in the classical languages - Latin, Greek, and occasionally Hebrew. The purpose of this instruction was to enable students to read the Holy Scriptures and some works by classical authors as a means to sharpen the minds and to shape the characters of the students (Marsh & Willis, 1999). Since the classical languages were not "living" languages, i.e. they were no longer native languages acquired by a group of speakers for the purpose of day-to-day communication, speaking and listening skills were negligible. The emphasis in these classes was on reading and understanding written texts. To achieve these purposes, a thorough understanding of grammar and the ability to translate these texts into the vernacular were needed (Zeydel, 1961). Grammar instruction consisted of the presentation and memorization of grammatical rules and tables, which were practiced through exercises of unrelated sentences. Vocabulary was acquired through the memorization of lists of words in the classical language together with the meanings in the vernacular. In order to ensure the understanding of the texts covered, translation into the vernacular was practiced. This grammar-translation method was chosen not only because this seemed to be the most effective way to ensure understanding of written texts, but also because the study of grammar itself - especially Latin grammar - was assumed to train the logical faculties of the student and lead to perseverance. Kelly (1969) observed that "the discipline required to

plow through the aridity of the first stages of language study was looked on, not as the result of bad teaching, but as desirable in the formation of character" (p. 374). Since the grammar-translation method was suited to the academic view of instruction, this method was being advocated whenever the academic view gained the upper hand. Skill-oriented training, on the other hand, in colonial times was seen not as a task for formal education in schools but as something to be accomplished at home and in the community. Training at home was mostly gender-oriented: boys learned skills such as farming from their fathers whereas girls received instruction in skills such as cooking and sewing from their mothers. Trades were learned mostly through apprenticeships with skilled craftsmen in the community.

Character formation and the training of the mind in order to achieve godliness and virtue for the privileged few remained the main objective of formal schooling until the beginning of the 19th century (Marsh and Willis, 1999). Modern languages were considered to be "too easy and too utilitarian to serve the high purpose of developing intellectual faculties" (Grittner, 1969, p. 6). However, from the middle of the 18th century there were voices which called for a more practical purpose of schooling and with it for a teaching of modern languages. Benjamin Franklin, for instance, recommended the acquisition of modern languages especially for merchants. For the "Public Academy and College" founded in 1749 Franklin postulated the teaching of French, German and Spanish (Zeydel, 1961). At William and Mary College, Jefferson introduced modern languages in 1779.

However, even though modern languages slowly made their way into the curriculum of American schools in the wake of a more vocational/utilitarian view of education, they were generally regarded as academically inferior since they were thought to have little influence on the training of mind and character. Teaching methods in the modern languages were patterned after the grammar-translation approach used in the classical languages, partly in order to counteract the stigma of inferiority of the subject matter and

partly because of the lack of teachers' training in the instruction of foreign languages. Often foreign language teachers were native speakers who had little or no experience in teaching (Zeydel, 1961). On the other hand, by using the grammar-translation method "skill in handling the language itself was no longer required of the teacher" (Kelly, 1969, p. 386).

Immigration and Education for the Masses

The 19th century brought some far-reaching changes to the American educational system. Large waves of immigrants began to populate the country. With the increasing population came the idea that the government of the country was not a matter of the educated few but that the base for political participation should be broadened according to democratic ideals. The middle class - small land owners, merchants and other businessmen - obtained political power through the right to vote. In order for a democracy to function its citizens must be able to make informed decisions. This realization resulted in the founding of a number of academies which opened up education "for a growing number of Americans, particularly the middle class" (Marsh and Willis, 1999, p. 57). These academies had a more practical orientation than traditional institutions of learning, teaching both "academic and commercial subjects" (ibid.). As a result of a more utilitarian view of education, foreign languages were frequently included in the curriculum.

In the first half of the 19th century, people such as Horace Mann advocated the idea of education for the masses through "Common Schools." However, schooling for the masses did not become a reality until increasing industrialization in the second half of the 19th century required a large workforce with basic skills. Public elementary schools were established in the cities, and laws were passed which made elementary school attendance compulsory. Instruction in these schools was targeted mainly at rudimentary knowledge and skills - reading, writing, and arithmetic - rather than the propagation of virtuous character which had been the goal of education a century before. Instruction in foreign

languages sometimes became a necessity when large communities of immigrants required schools that would teach their children in their native language. Grittner (1969) found that the large number of German immigrants "resulted in the existence of many communities and sections of larger cities in which German was the native tongue; English the foreign language" (p. 7). Consequently, in areas with a large German population such as Ohio, the Dakotas, Minnesota and Missouri, German was used as the language of instruction in some public elementary schools for at least part of the day.

Towards the end of the 19th century, elementary school attendance (through 8th grade) was mandatory, but only ten percent of the students went on to high school, usually the ones who wanted to go on to college (Marsh and Willis, 1999). College entry requirements differed substantially, and partly because of this problem the Committee of Ten was formed by the National Education Association, the professional organization of instructors and administrators. Although in its 1893 report the committee clearly supported the academic view of education, this was not seen as the sole purpose of education. "Utilitarian" subjects such as French and German, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic and hygiene had been admitted into the curriculum. But these "vocational" areas of the curriculum were still considered to be inferior to the "academic" subjects such as Latin, Greek or physics (Marsh and Willis, 1999). The report influenced foreign language instruction also in another area: although modern language study was generally recommended for four years, the 1893 report also provided for a two-year modern language course in conjunction with four years of Latin. Even though this was only "an expedient suggested for exceptional cases" (Zeydel, 1961, p. 295), the report created the erroneous impression with people outside of the foreign language profession that a modern language can be learned in two years.

The 1896 report of the Committee of Fifteen, which had been appointed mainly to develop curriculum for the elementary schools, had less influence on the teaching of modern languages. It did, however, stress the value of grammar for "training the faculties

of the mind" (Marsh and Willis, 1999, p. 64) and supported the academic view of education.

More influence on foreign language teaching was exerted by the 1899 report of the Committee of Twelve, which had also been appointed by the National Education Association. The report described methods then practiced in the teaching of modern languages, such as "the grammar, natural, psychological, phonetic and reading methods" (Bagster-Collins as quoted in Zeydel, 1961, p. 296). Since there was little material dealing with the teaching of languages, the report was widely read and discussed and used as a handbook of method (Zeydel, 1961). The fact that methods other than the traditional grammar-translation method were being used at this time indicates that improving the mind of the students was not the sole goal of modern language teaching anymore - methods such as the natural method (i.e. "surrounding" the students with large amounts of the target language in context-rich settings, much as a child born into a community learns his or her native language) were aiming at developing the kind of communicative competence in the student which would approach the ability of a native speaker.

The report of the Committee of Twelve mainly outlined the first two years of language teaching with little emphasis given to any further years, which strengthened the opinion that two years were enough to study a foreign language successfully.

The 20th Century

The beginning of the 20th century brought a more pronounced shift in emphasis from an academic to a more vocational/utilitarian view of education and with it a moving away from the grammar-centered approach of language teaching. The grammar-translation approach was not effective in teaching students a language as a usable skill. An approach which gained popularity among language teachers in the first quarter of the century was the Direct Method. Even though the method advocated the teaching of all four language skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking - it relied heavily on the latter two (Grittner, 1990).

Students were to deal directly with the foreign language without the use of translation into the vernacular. Through the almost exclusive use of the foreign language in the classroom the student was to "discover the grammatical system and to develop a 'feel' for how the new language works" (ibid., p. 20). New vocabulary and grammar, rather than being taught as discrete items, were to be acquired through a meaningful context. This context could be provided through question-and-answer drills, drama, physical movement, visuals or realia.

In 1878 the first Berlitz school was founded. The express purpose of these schools was communicative competence in the foreign language, a goal which was to be achieved through total immersion in the language and intensive study. Around the same time the audiolingual method was developed. This method stressed speaking and listening and relied on oral drill to teach grammatical functions: students were to memorize and repeat certain phrases in the foreign language when prompted by the instructor.

The Direct Method and other efforts to make the actual acquisition of a foreign language more effective suffered a severe blow with America's entrance into World War I in 1917. The war caused a rise in nationalism and national pride with a corresponding negative development in attitude towards foreign languages. This attitude was not limited to German, the language of the enemy, but spilled over to other European languages as well. Grittner (1969) observes that "everything 'foreign' was held in contempt" (p. 14). Not only was the speaking and teaching of German forbidden in 22 states (Zeydel, 1961), but some states "attempted to ban the teaching of all foreign languages" (Simon, 1980, p. 14). America's involvement in the war dealt a devastating blow to foreign language teaching and started a downward trend in enrollment which lasted 40 years. America's turning away from anything foreign - including foreign language - led to attitudes which Paul Simon (1980) in his book "The Tongue-Tied American" describes as "linguistic parochialism" (p. 28), "cultural arrogance" (p. 31), "increasing provincialism" (p. 37) and "international illiteracy" (p. 60).

The Direct Method, which had been largely embraced in the first quarter of the century, suffered not only from the general change in attitude towards foreign language, but also from the fact that it did not achieve the desired results. Teachers had been looking for methods other than the grammar-based approach when the goal of foreign language instruction had shifted from a general academic shaping of the mind to language proficiency as a practical skill. But the Direct Method failed to produce students who could speak the target language fluently, partly because most students studied a foreign language for only two years (Grittner, 1990). A more obtainable result was seen in the development of reading ability in a foreign language, and as a result teachers turned back to the grammar - translation method.

The goal of language proficiency was revived through a source outside of the teaching profession: during World War II the military needed personnel who were able to communicate in foreign languages. The army established special training programs to achieve language proficiency quickly. These programs utilized methods which had been developed at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The "Army Method" involved intensive training, mostly in speaking and listening skills, through drills in certain responses to given clues. This method did produce proficient speakers of the target language. As the "audio-lingual" method it was widely introduced in classrooms after the "Sputnik Shock" of 1957. Suddenly, proficiency in foreign languages became a matter of national interest and security, leading to a broad-based government-directed program through which one-third of all foreign language teachers received training in the new method in summer schools organized by the National Defense Education Act Institutes (Phillips, 1990).

However, the audio-lingual method did not transfer well from army camps to public schools. Whereas the army had received good results with hand-picked, highly motivated adults, high school students did not achieve the hoped-for language proficiency. The endless drills employed by the method soon disenchanted both teachers and students.

Students were "conditioned" to respond to certain cues, but they were not able to transfer those skills to new situations (Grittner, 1990).

When the audio-lingual method did not produce the desired results, the majority of language teachers reverted to the grammar-based method, even though this method was more suited to the reading and translating of texts. The grammar-translation method was not successful in developing communicative competence, which by this time was seen as the primary goal of foreign language instruction.

Foreign language classes, which in 1982 experienced a record low enrollment, received a boost through several government reports and studies. Among those were the President's Commission on Foreign Language's report "Strength through wisdom" (1979), Senator Paul Simon's book "The tongue-tied American" (1980) and the report "A nation at risk" (1983). With the renewed emphasis on foreign language instruction there were numerous instructional methods advocated during this time. Krashen and Terrell (1983) based their "natural approach" to foreign language teaching on the assumption that the ability to learn a language is innate to the human species and that a foreign language is best learned by imitating the way a first language is acquired. According to Krashen a language needs to be presented in a meaningful context. Students should be surrounded by the target language which is made comprehensible through gestures, examples, illustrations, experiences or simplified language. Based on Krashen and Terrell's natural approach Blaine Ray (1997) developed the "Total Physical Response Storytelling" (TPRS) approach which uses gestures and sign language extensively.

Even though the grammar-based approach was obviously ill-suited to accomplish the practical goals of acquiring communicative skills in a language, many teachers continued (and continue) to use this method. There may be several reasons for this: methods like the Natural Approach or TPRS require a great deal of effort and energy on the part of the teacher. Given the demands of classroom instruction, teachers may feel more comfortable falling back on the method with which they were taught. Also, new methods

being advocated sometimes have not been tried and researched sufficiently and often eventually do not achieve the desired results.

Enrollment History for Foreign Language Courses

Since the German by Satellite course under consideration in this study is a high school course, the following analysis will be limited to the foreign language enrollment in public high schools. What follows is a summary of some of the data from a survey undertaken by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Draper et al., 1996). Total enrollment figures for foreign languages, Latin, and modern languages are shown as percentages of total student enrollment in public high schools. Modern languages shown in the original table consisted of German and French from 1890 to 1905; German, French and Spanish from 1910 to 1948; with Italian and Russian shown from 1958 to the present and Japanese added in 1982. The figures for total foreign language enrollment, Latin enrollment, and modern foreign languages enrollment are shown as percentages of total high school enrollment in Table 1.

From 1890, the first year for which these data are available, the enrollment in foreign languages continued to climb until it reached a peak in 1905. At that time, almost 90 percent of all students enrolled in public high schools were studying a foreign language. Two-thirds of these students were studying Latin, which is understandable considering the facts that most colleges still required several years of Latin as an entrance requirement and that Latin belonged to the core curriculum in high schools (Marsh and Willis, 1999). Two parts of the remaining students studied German, the rest French. Spanish does not appear in the table as a measurable subject until 1910 at which time it made up less than 1 percent.

Table 1

Foreign Language Enrollment in American Public High Schools Shown in Percent of Total High School Enrollment

Year	FL Enrollment	Latin Enrollment	Modern FL Enrollmt
1890	51%	35%	16%
1905	89%	56%	33%
1915	73%	37%	36%
1922	55%	28%	27%
1934	36%	16%	20%
1948	22%	8%	14%
1963	32%	6%	26%
1982	23%	1%	21%
1990	38%	2%	37%
1994	42%	2%	41%

In 1915 the overall percentage of students taking a foreign language had dropped, mostly because of a substantial decline in Latin, which was still the largest group, followed by German, French and Spanish. There is a further decline in foreign language enrollment in 1922, with the most drastic drop in German - from almost a quarter of all high school students to less than 1 percent. This change is mostly due to America's involvement in World War I in 1917 with a rise in nationalism and an aversion to anything foreign. The enrollment in the modern foreign languages almost equaled the enrollment in Latin, with about one quarter of all high school students taking each. By 1934 the enrollment in all foreign languages had declined, with only about one third of all high school students still taking any foreign language. For the first time, the combined enrollment in French, Spanish and German was larger than the enrollment in Latin.

In 1948 foreign language enrollment had arrived at an all-time low: only about one-fifth of all high school students were studying any foreign language. For the first time, Spanish had a larger enrollment than any other foreign language with about 8 percent. As a result of World War II both French and German enrollments had suffered. From about 1958 to 1963 the enrollment in modern foreign languages experienced a boost through the enthusiasm and excitement created by the propagation of the audio-lingual method through the NDEA summer institutes. This increase continued through 1968, when disillusionment with the method started to affect enrollment. The ensuing decline continued until 1982, when it reached a new low for modern languages. Since then, foreign language enrollments have increased slowly but steadily, with small gains in French, German and Latin and substantial increases in Spanish. This increase followed the publication of several government reports and books and the efforts of the profession to base foreign language instruction on the concepts of language proficiency and communicative competence.

Table 2 shows the situation in 1994, with by far the largest enrollment in Spanish, followed by French, German, Latin, Japanese and Russian.

Table 2

Foreign Language Enrollment in American High Schools in 1994

Shown in Percent of Total High School Enrollment

Total FL	Spanish	French	German	Latin	Italian	Japanese	Russian
42.2%	27.2%	9.3%	2.8%	1.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%

Factors Influencing Student Enrollment

Of the numerous factors influencing student enrollment in foreign languages the most important one is the fact that ever since Latin ceased to be a requirement for college attendance in the last century, foreign languages have not been part of the core curriculum. Simon (1980) states that, regrettably, foreign languages are regarded as "a luxury, not a fundamental" (p. 96). As a result and because of budget restraints, high schools limit the amount of foreign language courses they offer and sometimes choose to cut an existing program. An additional factor is the limited availability of foreign language teachers. Often schools can offer foreign languages only if they can find a teacher, and occasionally an existing program is cut because a teacher leaves and cannot be replaced. Clearly, the offerings and requirements of schools influence student enrollment in foreign language courses. Most high schools do not have a foreign language requirement for graduation (Finn, 1998). On the other hand, a lot of colleges and universities have an entrance requirement of two years of a foreign language. Consequently, enrollment in a foreign language is often limited to college-bound students.

Since foreign languages in high schools are electives, student interest becomes an important factor for enrollment. Outside factors such as college entry requirements and advice from parents, friends and siblings influence student decisions to enroll in a foreign language course much more than intrinsic factors like interest in the culture and language. In a 1957 survey of Illinois high schools quoted by Simon (1980, p. 93) 562 students named the following reasons for enrolling in a foreign language course (multiple answers were possible):

Table 3

Reasons Given By Students For Enrolling in a High School Foreign Language Course
1957, Illinois

College entrance requirements	53.3%
Wishes of parents	52.6%
Influence of homeroom and other teachers	19.6%
Advice of school counselors	18.3%
Influence of principals	13.9%
Miscellaneous	3.7%

It is interesting that these students did not name interest in the language or culture as a motivating factor. Almost 40 years later, college requirements and advice by parents are still the two most frequently named factors, as shown by a survey done by Watzke (1994, p.5). He asked 815 students at a large high school in Iowa towards the end of the 1992/93 school year why they had chosen to study a foreign language. These students gave the following answers as their first choices:

Table 4

Reasons Given By Students For Enrolling in a High School Foreign Language Course
1993, Iowa

College entrance requirements	39%
Advice from others (parents, friends, siblings, counselors)	15%
Interest in the culture	12%
Future job/career	9%
Positive experience w/native speaker, travel	8%

Watzke itemizes the different groups he has lumped together under "Advice from others," and it is interesting to note that whereas parents, friends and siblings have quite a bit of influence on student decisions, only 1% named "Advice from counselors" as a determining factor for enrolling in a foreign language course. Watzke concluded that the influence of school counselors on student decisions is "very low" (Watzke, 1994, p. 16), but it is also possible that school counselors do not encourage students to take foreign languages and therefore are not cited by students as a determining factor.

Watzke also asked students of other foreign languages why they did not take Russian, which was offered at that school. One response was that students wanted to continue a language they had started in Middle School (where Russian was not offered). Again, school offerings become an important factor, not only influencing whether students enroll in a foreign language at all, but also which language they are studying.

Summary - Foreign Language Instruction in the United States

There seem to be two major views of the basic purpose of schooling: on the one hand, education as a means to produce certain character qualities and virtues in the student, and on the other hand education as training in marketable skills. These views are not mutually exclusive, but it seems that the former was prevalent in American education from colonial times until the last part of the 19th century. Around that time the second view gained the upper hand, in part caused by industrialization and by increasing population through immigration towards the end of the 19th century. This "vocational/utilitarian" view of education has been prevalent from that time to the present. Occasionally there are voices calling for a return to a more "academic" view of education (3), but on the whole present-day education seems to be geared towards training for specific tasks.

Modern foreign language instruction has been seen as deficient from both views: in the past, foreign languages were deemed not to be well-suited towards disciplining the

mind and shaping the character of the student. From the viewpoint of vocational/utilitarian education foreign languages also fell short of the mark, because in most cases students did not gain any advanced proficiency in the language. Of the numerous reasons for the inefficiency of foreign language instruction in present-day America the two most prominent ones are the insufficient length of study and the lack of a method of instruction whose efficiency has been proven through research.

The enrollment history for foreign languages in American high schools shows the drastic impact of the two world wars: whereas almost 90% of all high school students were enrolled in some foreign language before World War I, less than a quarter were still studying any foreign language in 1948. After some gains in the 1960s, mostly due to government-subsidized programs promoting the audio-lingual method, and another decline lasting up to the mid-1980s, high school foreign language enrollment has made slow gains through the 1990s. Most of the increase has been in Spanish classes, with French and German enrollments substantially lower, and enrollments in Latin, Japanese, Italian and Russian hovering around one percent.

Factors influencing high school student enrollment in foreign languages are both extrinsic and intrinsic in nature. Extrinsic factors include the shortage of teachers and the fact that foreign languages are not part of the core curriculum. Students are influenced in their decision to take a foreign language mostly by college entry or high school graduation requirements and by advice from parents, friends and siblings. Interest in the language or culture are secondary factors.

German Language Instruction in the United States

Historical Development of German Language Instruction

Although German language instruction was influenced by the development of foreign language instruction in general, there are some factors which are peculiar to the teaching of this language. One of these is the fact that Germans have been the largest group of immigrants since the end of the 19th century. Zeydel (1961) gives an estimate of 6 million German immigrants between 1820 and 1910. On the 1990 census report, 58 million Americans (or 20% of reported ancestries) are claiming German ancestry, followed by 38 million Irish and 33 million English ancestry. By comparison, 22 million Americans are of Hispanic origin.

In 1870 the U.S. Commissioner of Education reported that "the German language has actually become the second language of our Republic, and a knowledge of German is now considered essential to a finished education" (as quoted in Zeydel, 1961, p. 294). As a result, in states with a large concentration of German immigrants, the children of Germans were taught in German in some elementary schools, for instance in Ohio. The Cincinnati annual public school report of 1914 as quoted by Zeydel (1961, p. 293) describes these early immersion programs:

In the lower grades of the larger schools two teachers were assigned to two classes, one teaching German and the other English to both classes alternately, the German teacher in addition taking charge of such branches as drawing, music, and primary occupation work.

German was still the most commonly taught foreign language in 1917 with an enrollment of 28% of the students in public and private high schools (Zeydel, 1961, p. 299), when America entered World War I. American propaganda against Germany also included the language and literature. "Groups of vigilantes visited the libraries and

removed German books" (Zeydel, 1961, p. 298) and 22 states forbade the teaching of German through laws which were later held to be unconstitutional (ibid.). As a result, German language courses were virtually wiped out. In 1922, only 0.6% of all high school students were still taking German. This disastrous collapse of German language instruction had a lasting impact, and recovery for German has been slow and minimal. In 1994, 42% of all high school students were enrolled in a foreign language course, with a total of only 2.8% taking German.

The slow recovery of German language instruction suffered another setback in 1941 when America entered World War II. Again, propaganda against Germany affected the general attitude towards everything German. Several thousand German-Americans and Germans were interned in American prison camps for the duration of the war and beyond (Krammer, 1997). Being and speaking German became a matter of shame, and consequently there was a tendency by German-Americans to assimilate into American culture as much as possible and not to display their German heritage. As a result, even though about one-fifth of all Americans are of German descent according to the 1990 Census, German heritage is not as visible in this country as that of other cultural groups.

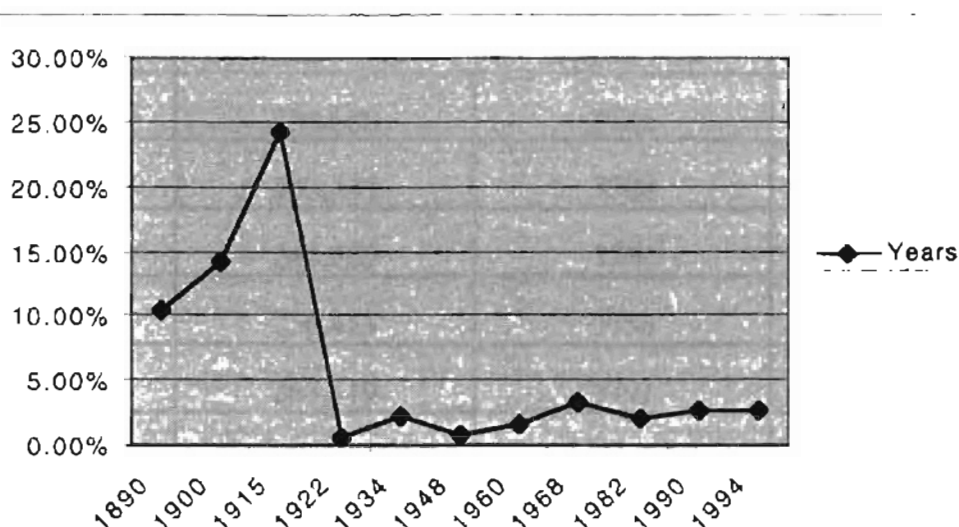
Whereas 86% of American high schools had a foreign language program in 1997, less than 21% offered German, down from 22% in 1987 (Rhodes, 1998). Even though enrollment in modern languages is at an all-time high, this development is concentrated on one foreign language, namely Spanish, with other languages, including German, at levels lower than in 1968.

Enrollment History for German Language Courses

The following chart shows the development of German enrollment in public high schools from 1890 to 1994, based on the ACTFL Summary Report.

Figure 1

German high school enrollment as percentage of total high school enrollment



From 1890 until 1917, enrollment in German courses in public high schools rose steadily. With America's entry into World War I, the enrollment dropped sharply: from 24.4% in 1915 to 0.6% in 1922. The enrollment rose very slightly until 1934 (2.4%) and dropped again as a result of World War II, to 0.8% in 1948. German enrollment inclined again slightly in the 1960s, probably as a result of the audio-lingual method being promoted in the 1960s through government funding (Phillips, 1990). From 1968 to 1982, enrollment declined again. From 1983, the publication year of "A Nation at Risk," there was a slight increase in enrollment which lasted through 1994, the last year for which these figures are available.

The following is a closer look at the enrollment in German courses for grades 7 - 12 in the state of Oklahoma. Figures obtained from the Oklahoma State Department of Education were divided into the following categories: total student enrollment in grades 7-12, German enrollment without the German by Satellite courses and German enrollment (without German by Satellite) as percentage of the total student enrollment.

Table 5

German Enrollment in Oklahoma (without German by Satellite), Grades 7-12

School Year	Total Enrollment Grades 7-12	German Enrollment Grades 7-12	German Enrollment as % of Total Enroll.
1990-91	239,630	3166	1.32%
1991-92	243,447	3308	1.36%
1992-93	248,525	3764	1.51%
1993-94	256,454	3756	1.46%
1994-95	263,119	3791	1.44%
1995-96	268,803	3835	1.42%
1996-97	272,470	3830	1.41%
1997-98	274,598	3890	1.41%
1998-99	275,431	3693	1.34%
1999-00	273,224	3707	1.36%

German enrollment in Oklahoma has been fairly stable over the last ten years, with a slight drop in the last two years. The percentage of German student enrollment is lower than the national level of 2.8% in 1994 (if the students taking German by Satellite in 1994/95 are added to the figure, the percentage of Oklahoma students taking German amounts to 1.67% of total high school enrollment). This may be caused by the fact that German is offered at only a fraction of Oklahoma high schools.

German enrollment in Oklahoma has been influenced by program cuts (as, for instance, in Norman, Oklahoma, where a program of around 100 students was cut when the German teacher retired in 1995) and the inability of schools to find a replacement for German teachers who are retiring or leaving for other reasons. An example for the latter is the German program at Putnam City North, which has been without a teacher after the German instructor retired at the end of the 1999/2000 school year. The drop shown in the

1998/99 school year might also be due to the fact that German enrollment at Adair Middle School and High School and at Carver Middle School in Tulsa were not included in the State Department report for that year.

Factors Influencing Enrollment in German Language Courses

There are only two nation-wide studies on factors influencing German course enrollment: a study done by Minert in 1992 and a survey by the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) in 2000. Only preliminary findings from the AATG study have been published (Tatlock, 2000), but the data from the survey were made available for this study. Minert surveyed 2,473 foreign language students at 133 high schools. Of these students, 372 were or had been taking German. He found that an average of between 3 and 4 years of German were offered at these schools. With an average of 86 students, German ranked third behind Spanish and French in the number of students enrolled. More than 90% of the surveyed schools offered at least three foreign languages.

The reasons for enrolling in a German course most often named by students on Minert's survey were (in descending order): the desire to be able to communicate in the language, the desire to travel to German-speaking countries, fulfilling college entry or high school graduation requirements, and having German ancestry. Interestingly, although students indicated that friends and siblings had influenced their decision, teachers and counselors were not named among the top fifteen reasons. Fulfilling college requirements ranked third, not first as in the surveys asking why students chose a foreign language. It stands to reason that college requirements would be more important for students to choose a foreign language in general, but of lesser importance for choosing a particular language.

Minert concludes that German teachers need to consider their students' desire to gain communicative skills - students "will be disappointed in any methodology that neglects the development of oral communicative competence" (ibid., p. 182). He also notes that the

average proportion of students enrolled in German in the surveyed schools was 5.9%, roughly twice the national average. One possible reason for this may be the fact that German was available at these schools: the national average might be this high if more schools provided German instruction.

The AATG 2000 survey was sent to teachers who had been randomly selected from the list of those teachers whose students participated in level IV of the national AATG test. These teachers were asked to distribute the questionnaire to the juniors and seniors in their upper-level classes, since the main purpose of the survey was to find out what motivates students to continue their German studies beyond high school and into college.

Questionnaires were received from 4711 students. In the first part of the survey, students were asked to indicate what motivated them to enroll in their first German class. Each of the 14 categories was to be marked "not important," "somewhat important," "important" or "very important." Table 6 shows the 14 categories ranked by the number of students marking these as "very important."

The students participating in the AATG survey were limited to the 14 categories shown in Table 6; there was not an item "other." The "desire to communicate" which had been the most important factor on Minert's survey was not an item on this part of the AATG questionnaire. However, when asked what they would like to do in German courses at college/university, students in the AATG survey overwhelmingly chose "speaking" as the most important category. Also not shown as a choice in the first part of the AATG survey was "Desire to travel" which had been the second-most often given reason on Minert's survey. However, "Opportunities to live, work, visit or study in a German-speaking country" was most often named as a "very important" reason by the students on the AATG study to continue their German studies in college.

Table 6

Reasons for enrolling in a German course given on the 2000 AATG survey

Category	No. of students marking this answer "very important"	Percentage of total students (4711)
Seemed interesting	1192	25.3%
Liking for the German language	1082	23.0%
College entrance requirement	906	19.2%
Reputation of German teacher	892	18.9%
Seemed like fun	891	18.9%
Family background	715	15.2%
Career benefits	604	12.8%
Reputation of German program	485	10.3%
(Grand)parents spoke German	435	9.2%
Previous visit to German-speaking country	426	9.0%
Siblings taking German	365	7.7%
Friends planning to take German	326	6.9%
(Grand)parents' recommendation	249	5.3%
Recommendation of guidance counselor	64	1.4%

The students participating in the AATG study named two intrinsic factors - general interest and a liking for the German language - as their most important reasons to enroll in a German course. This must be seen in light of the fact that the respondents were mostly students who had continued in the German program for four or more years. It seems that students who are intrinsically motivated stay in the program longer than students who enrolled based on extrinsic factors such as college requirements or the advice of others. The German teacher's reputation also ranked a lot higher (4th place) with these students than the ones from Minert's survey, where "I heard that the teacher(s) of this language in

our school is/are very good" had been ranked 8th. Again, the selection of the sample on the AATG test could have influenced this answer: participants in the survey were chosen from teachers whose students were taking the national AATG test. It could be argued that teachers who let their students take a national test have enough confidence in their teaching not to shy away from a national comparison. If the categories "Siblings taking German," "Friends planning to take German" and "(Grand)parents' recommendation" were lumped together as "Advice from others," this category would rank third. Again, guidance counselors' advice was ranked fairly low on the AATG survey, possibly because counselors do not often recommend German.

Of those students on the AATG survey who did not think they would continue German in college, 21% ranked "Difficulty of German" as "very important" for their decision. The perceived difficulty of the language was also the primary reason not to study German for 701 students of other foreign languages in Tennessee high schools surveyed by Love (1985). The assumption that German is harder for English speakers to learn than French or Spanish is supported by the fact that according to records of the Foreign Service Institute it takes English speakers with average language learning aptitude twice as long (480 hours as opposed to 240 hours) to reach an intermediate level of proficiency as it does to reach this level in French and Spanish (Omaggio, 1993).

When comparing Watzke's 1994 survey of foreign language students and the 1992 and 2000 surveys of German students, the following picture emerges: high school students enroll in a foreign language course mainly for extrinsic factors, i.e. to satisfy college entrance requirements or the advice of others. They choose German in particular out of intrinsic motivation, such as a desire to communicate in the language or to travel, general interest in the language or a specific liking for German. Ranked fairly low for both foreign languages in general and German in particular is the advice from guidance counselors.

Summary - German Language Instruction

The history of German language instruction in the United States has been influenced by two main factors: the amount of German immigration to the United States and Germany's involvement in the two world wars. Into the 20th century, Germans were the largest group of immigrants, and to this day between 20% and 25% of American citizens claim German ancestry. Until 1917, German was the most commonly taught modern language in American high schools. After World War I, less than one percent of all high school students were taking German. Enrollment has remained low to the present day with less than three percent of all high school students enrolled in German in 1994. Enrollment figures for Oklahoma show that German enrollment has been fairly steady over the last decade.

As could be expected, students enroll in German because of a general interest in the language and culture and - to a lesser degree - to fulfill college entry requirements. German heritage, the recommendation of others, and the reputation of the German program at their school also influence students to take German.

Distance Learning Courses

Historical Development of Distance Learning Courses

Distance Learning Courses in General

Perraton (1981) defined distance learning as "an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner" (p.13). Historically, the need for distance education was seen for adults who were not able to attend a traditional educational institution because of

"occupational, social and family commitments" (Schlosser and Anderson, 1994, p. 4) and who wanted to further their education or acquire a specific skill. Providers were mostly colleges and universities but also private enterprises. Subjects offered ranged from vocational skills like shorthand, mining, and farming to academic achievements such as bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees (ibid.). From its inception, distance learning provided the advantages of flexibility in space and time - students were not forced to attend classes at a certain location and - within the limits of the deadlines set by a particular course - they could choose when to study.

From its beginnings around 1830 until the 1920s, distance learning consisted of correspondence study for adult students, with the postal service as the means to bridge the distance. In the 1920s, the first correspondence courses were offered in Michigan and by the University of Nebraska for high school students (Schlosser and Anderson, 1994). Around the same time, radio became an important medium for distance learning, and in the 1950s the first college credit courses were offered through broadcast television. Satellite technology took distance education a step further in the 1980s, with both state- and privately-owned networks of providers (ibid.).

Whereas traditional distance learning courses have been targeted at adults who are not able to attend regular classes, the reasons for utilizing distance education in public schools are different: distance education is seen as a feasible solution for small schools in remote areas to include courses in their curriculum which they could not otherwise offer - either because low enrollments would not warrant hiring a teacher (Hobbs, 1990), because a qualified teacher cannot be found (Kubota, 1999; Reid, 1961) or a teacher cannot be hired for financial reasons (Glisan, Dudi, and Howe, 1998; Reid, 1961). Even though as early as 1961 voices were heard who urged members of the teaching profession to see distance learning not just as a stopgap measure but as a "revolution in teaching techniques" (Reid, 1961, p. 198) most schools turn to distance learning as a means to offer courses which would otherwise not be available. Consequently, the kind of courses offered through

distance learning are not core or general courses but instead classes in subjects such as advanced math or science and foreign languages. Distance learning is seen as a means to "even the score," to come closer to the democratic ideal of giving every student the same chance of a quality education. Perraton (1981) speaks of this "egalitarian" aspect of distance education, and Davis (1988) sees "the empowerment of all learners" as "the promise of distance education" (p. 550).

Perraton (1981) points out that the "ways in which distance teaching is used are, of course, politically and culturally determined" (p. 15). The fact that distance learning programs, as any other aspects of education, reflect changes and trends in society can be seen by the development of programs using television for teaching foreign languages in elementary schools (FLES) in the early 1960s. Reid (1961) lists 125 such courses for the 1960/61 school year in Spanish, French and German. The proliferation of these courses followed the "Sputnik Shock" of 1957 and the National Defense Education Act of 1958, through which a number of the FLES television courses were financed. Another factor arising from outside of the profession was the use of television for educational purposes beginning in the 1950s. Reid states that "TV is the occasion of an explosive expansion of FLES instruction" (p. 200). Most of these programs were using the pattern drill characteristic of the audio-lingual method, and following the general disillusionment with the method by the end of the decade, a lot of these television programs disappeared also.

Another factor contributing to the demise of the majority of these FLES TV programs was the fact that recommendations of the Modern Language Association (MLA) for FLES programs, whether through distance or traditional education, were not heeded in a lot of cases. The MLA named the following points as absolutely necessary for a successful elementary foreign language program: "(1) providing qualified teachers, (2) giving it serious attention in the curriculum, and (3) providing for continuity through grade 12" (Reid, p. 206). Especially on the first point many programs fell short, because the influence of an important factor in distance learning, the local teacher/coordinator of the

course, had not been taken into consideration. Reid cites anecdotal evidence for the harm insufficiently trained local teachers were perceived to be doing when they were trying to provide review and follow-up activities for their elementary students.

Reid's (1961) assessment of distance learning is in many points still accurate today, especially pertaining to the video component of a course. A positive effect he observed during broadcast lessons in many classrooms was the fact that when the instructor in a televised course looks into the camera, it appears that s/he is addressing the viewer directly, giving the student the feeling of a private lesson. As a consequence, Reid observed, students concentrate more than in a regular classroom. He saw "rapt attention" (p. 198) to the televised program not only in elementary-age students but also with older viewers. It is interesting to note that this effect is lost when a program is filmed in an existing classroom or with a live audience in the studio. In this case, the remote students feel like passive spectators, and consequently are not drawn into the televised program to the same degree. This effect was observed by Kubota (1999) who recorded that high school students learning Japanese through distance education were "generally inattentive" during broadcasts (p. 335) when the television instructor communicated with other classes. The same problem was communicated to the author by an elementary school teacher who observed repeatedly that her third grade students were not as attentive to broadcasts of the German by Satellite program when the instructors communicated with a host school who was hooked up to the studio through a telephone connection.

Another problem Reid points out is the difficulty in obtaining data about existing distance learning courses. The lack of available data, especially on the effect of distance learning on foreign language instruction, is pointed out by researchers 40 years after Reid observed the same problem (Kubota, 1999; Glisan, et al., 1998). Data has to be gathered by contacting individual providers who usually know very little of each other. Reid's warning of the duplication of effort, "each project working in something of a vacuum, ..., and oblivious to developments elsewhere" (p. 202) still applies today. Also still applicable

is his assumption that "a certain amount of 'empire building'" (p. 202) may be a reason for this lack of communication between projects. Another reason for the lack of communication and cooperation between distance learning providers may be the fact that there is a commercial aspect to these courses: developing and distributing a distance learning program is costly. The expenses for these programs are usually covered through fees paid by the subscribing schools, as is the case for German by Satellite. To the extent that a distance learning program is not supported through federal or state grants, the survival of the program is dependent on the number of subscribing schools. As a result, distance learning providers are in competition with each other for a limited market. The advantage of this situation is that providers are striving to develop effective programs, which becomes a matter of survival. The disadvantage is a lack of willingness to share experiences and insights.

Distance Education in Foreign Language Instruction

Recent developments, including the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and the development of national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* have resulted in a renewed emphasis on offering foreign languages to all students, including those in elementary schools. Since the realization of this goal is problematic, given the shortage of qualified teachers and budget restraints for most public schools, distance learning has received renewed attention as a means to teach foreign languages. With the emphasis of contemporary foreign language instruction on the development of communicative competence, the fact that there is limited teacher-student interaction in distance learning needs special attention.

A teacher-student dialogue is as important for education in general as it is for distance learning. Without dialogue, Perraton (1981) observes, "education changes to indoctrination: dialogue is here seen as a necessary condition of an education which

respects the humanity of student and teacher" (p. 15). Clifford (1990) cites "Live interaction between the instructor and the students during the course" (p. 2) as one of the key ingredients of a successful distance learning program. Davis (1988) suggests that this immediate, individualized feedback can be incorporated into a distance learning situation through the use of the telephone or video conferencing. Another possibility for this kind of interaction would be a web-based chat room which would support both writing and speaking. Less immediate dialogue could also be sustained in writing, for instance through e-mail or an electronic message board.

Dr. Harry Wohler (1992), the founder of the German by Satellite program, contended that there is very little individual interaction between teacher and student in a traditional foreign language classroom. This assumption is corroborated by Davis (1988) who cites examples for "transactional distance" (p. 548) between teacher and students which does not necessarily coincide with physical distance - students in a large lecture hall could have less contact with the instructor than students in a two-way distance learning situation. Wohler concluded that a distance learning program could actually provide more feedback and "mental involvement of each student" (p.6) than regular instruction. In the German by Satellite program this feedback and interaction was incorporated into the course not through personal interaction between instructor and student but through several computer programs for vocabulary and pronunciation practice using voice recognition, and through grammar, listening and writing exercises on the computer.

Wohler designed the German by Satellite course based on the assumption that student involvement and feedback can be provided through computers rather than through regular student-instructor interaction. Other distance learning courses are providing for this kind of interaction through regular telephone sessions or through two-way video/audio. In this connection, the results of research done by Hobbs and Osburn (1988, 1989) and Hobbs (1990) are especially interesting. Hobbs and Osburn examined the implementation of Oklahoma State University's German by Satellite program in Missouri and North Dakota

during the 1987-88 school year, and Hobbs compared three forms of distance education, satellite broadcasts (including German by Satellite), two-way interactive television and audiographic tele-learning (a method using audio instruction with still-frame computer graphics or video pictures), in North Dakota in 1990. In this latter comparison of 23 courses offered by five different providers through three types of distance learning, Hobbs (1990) found that the courses provided by Oklahoma State University, German by Satellite and Advanced Economics, ranked last in measures of student success such as perceived amount learned by the students, willingness of students to enroll in another distance learning course, and national test scores. Hobbs points out that the German by Satellite program was the only one of the courses which included several computer programs. She cautions that the ranking may be caused by the fact that several schools were not using all of the computer components. However, the OSU courses also stand out in the amount of teacher-student interaction: 97% of the students taking the OSU courses reported no or rare interactions with the instructors during class time, whereas between 26% and 100% of the students in all other courses had regular contact with their instructors at least once per week.

In addition to live teacher-student interaction, the other aspect most often named as crucial to a successful distance learning program is the local teacher/coordinator (Clifford, 1990; Glisan et al., 1998; Reid, 1961; Wohler, 1992). Clifford, Hobbs (1990) and Reid suggest that it is helpful if the local instructor learns along with the students. Wohler stated that "Without the enthusiastic involvement of the [local] teacher, the course is in great danger of failing" (p. 5). Considering the importance of live student-teacher interaction and the enthusiasm and involvement of the local teacher for a successful distance learning program, Glisan, Dudt, and Howe (1998) note that "what really matters ... is the 'human' component, regardless of the medium of instruction" (p. 59).

All researchers studied agreed that distance education is a feasible option for foreign language instruction. Advantages of distance learning were not only seen in

extrinsic factors such as a solution to teacher shortage and an opportunity for providing equal access to foreign languages especially to students in small, remote schools, but also intrinsic factors: the comparative isolation of the student in a distance learning situation can lower anxiety and increase attention, and the visual component of a distance learning course provides a context for comprehensible input - a prerequisite for language learning according to Krashen (1983). However, the expansion of distance learning education will depend not only on the medium itself but also on political and social factors, such as society's attitude towards foreign languages and use of technology in education.

Enrollment History for Distance Learning Instruction

Data for the enrollment history of distance education is scarce. Reid (1961) mentions an estimated figure for 1960-61 of "3.5 million students at 7500 schools receiving part of their instruction by TV, and an additional quarter million college and university students in 250 institutions receiving credit for ITV courses" (p. 197). Reid surveyed 154 foreign language television courses in 1961. 125 of those were elementary level, 8 secondary and 21 college courses. However, by the end of the decade most of the elementary foreign language programs had been discontinued because the expected results had not been achieved (Grittner, 1990). This lack of success can be partially ascribed to the audio-lingual method being used at that time, but since a majority of these course were taught through distance programs, factors such as insufficient training of the local classroom coordinators and lack of communication between distance learning providers could also have contributed to this development.

Currently there is renewed interest in teaching foreign languages in elementary schools through distance learning (Glisan, Dudt, and Howe, 1998). Glisan et al. also state that "According to survey data, almost every state has established distance learning programs for some subject areas" (p. 49).

German by Satellite, which in 1989 was described as "the forerunner of all other instruction by Satellite secondary courses in the country" (Hobbs and Osburn, 1989, p. 4) started in 1985 with one course, German I, at 39 public schools with a student enrollment of 333 students. By the fall of the next year, German II and AP Physics by Satellite were added and the enrollment jumped to 924. For the 1989/90 school year, the Arts & Sciences Extension department at Oklahoma State University offered ten distance learning courses for high schools through satellite broadcasts: German I, German II, Russian, AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Calculus, Trigonometry/Analytic Geometry, Applied Economics, AP American Government, Basic English and Reading. For the 1991/92 school year, 210 schools were enrolled in the two German courses alone, with a total of 2308 students.

Nine years later, for the 2000/2001 school year, of the original ten distance learning courses only the German courses and AP Calculus had survived because of insufficient enrollment in the other courses. The enrollment in all German courses for the 2000/2001 school year (German I, II, III, IV and AP) had dropped to 45 schools with a total of 501 students, which represents a decline of almost 80% from the 1991 figures. The enrollment history of German by Satellite is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

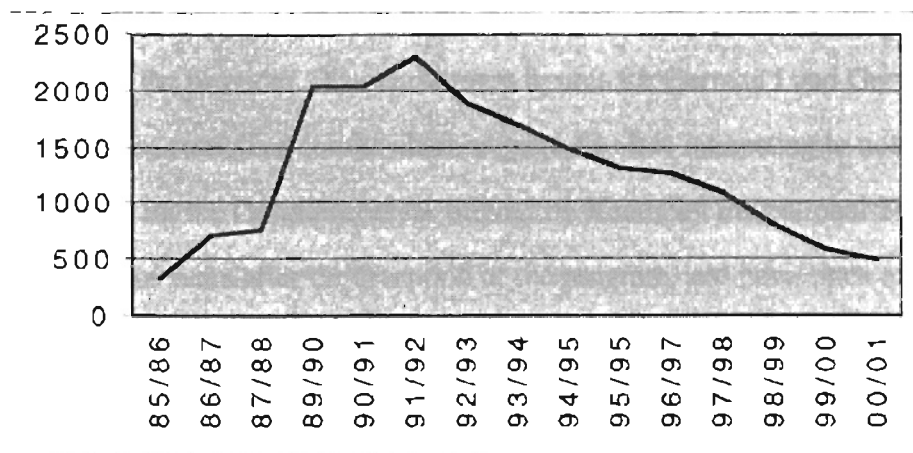
Enrollment history of German by Satellite, number of students

School Year	German I	German II	German III,IV, AP	Total No. of Students
1985/86	333			333
1986/87	683	46		729
1987/88	734	39		773
1988/89	figures not	available		
1989/90	1885	158		2043
1990/91	1702	331		2033
1991/92	1954	354		2308
1992/93	1485	417		1902
1993/94	1260	422	18	1700
1994/95	1074	401	19	1494
1995/96	895	405	22	1322
1996/97	829	430	14	1273
1997/98	704	379	22	1105
1998/99	460	315	34	809
1999/00	357	214	27	598
2000/01	280	196	25	501

The initial increases and subsequent decline in enrollment become even more obvious when viewed as a graph:

Figure 2

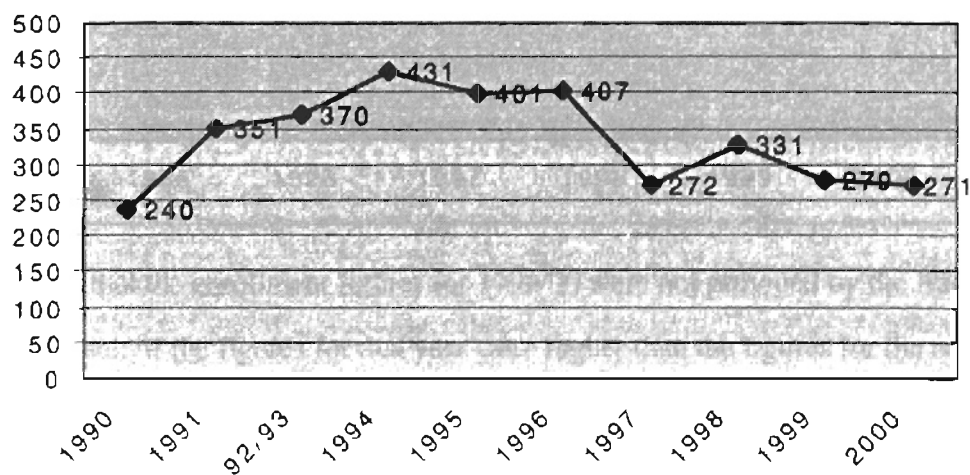
German by Satellite Student Enrollment, 1985 to 2000



By comparison, the enrollment history for two other high school foreign language distance learning courses is shown below. The figures for the German I and II courses offered by Kentucky Educational Television were supplied by Ruth Styles, the instructor. Figures for the Irasshai program, a Japanese program offered by Georgia Public Broadcasting, were supplied by the Irasshai staff.

Figure 3

Student enrollment for Kentucky Educational Television German I and German II
1990 to 2000

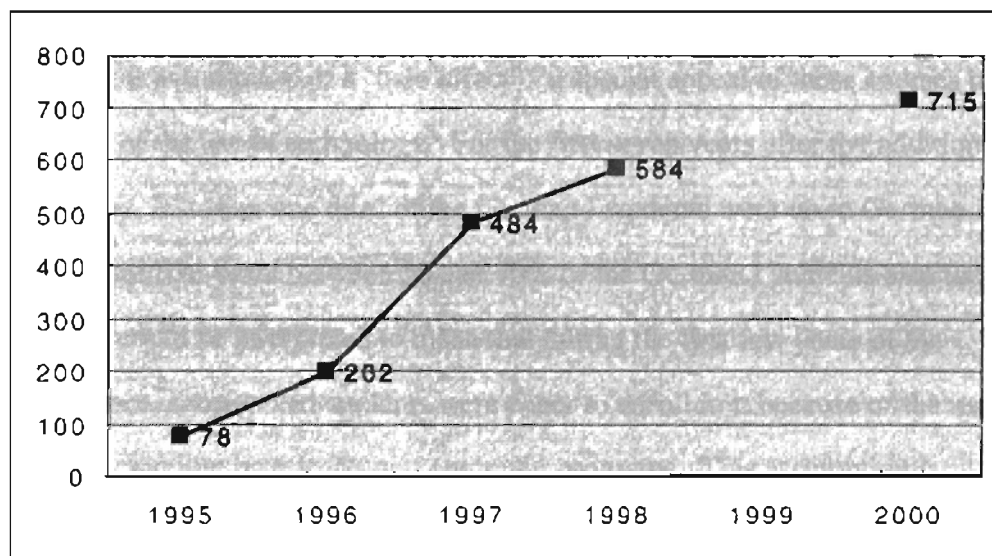


The following facts should be noted about the enrollment figures for the Kentucky Educational Television courses shown in Figure 3: in 1990 and 1993, only German I was offered, and in 1992, only German II. In all other years, both German I and German II were broadcast by the provider. The enrollment figures for German I and German II in 1992 and 1993 were combined for the chart on page 43. It is interesting to note that the enrollment figures for the German courses offered by Kentucky Educational Television peaked in 1994, five years after the inception of the program, and have since experienced a slight downward trend.

Figures for the Irasshai program are shown in Figure 4. The program has been in existence for six years and has shown a steady increase in student enrollment. It should be noted that figures for the 1999-2000 school year were not available.

Figure 4

Enrollment in the Irasshai Japanese Distance Learning Program 1995 to 2000



The fact that the enrollment figures for 1999/00 were not provided by the Irasshai staff is unfortunate: if the figures for that year were higher than the figures for the current school year, the enrollment trend for this program would show the same phenomenon (decline after initial gains) as the German by Satellite and the Kentucky programs. If the figures for 1999/00 were lower than for the current year, but higher than those for

1998/99, it would mean that the Japanese program is not experiencing this effect, and it would be interesting to research possible reasons for the difference.

In general, it seems that enrollment in distance learning does not follow a straight line, as can be seen from the development in elementary foreign language distance learning courses in the 1960s, which experienced a drastic expansion in the early years with a subsequent drop and a renewed interest in the late 1990s. Similarly, the enrollment for the German by Satellite and the Kentucky Educational Television courses follow a curve rather than a line. Beginning gains in enrollment might well be caused by the appeal of the new technology as Reid (1961) suspected and Hobbs and Osburn (1988) found in their survey of administrators (p. 3). This might be another incident of what Grittner (1990) described as the "bandwagon" effect in foreign language learning: "evangelistic movements that suddenly emerge, capture the attention of many teachers, cause an upheaval in methods and materials, and then - just as suddenly - fade from view." (p. 9)

The attrition rates between German I and II in the German by Satellite program also seem to support the assumption of a "halo effect" - a special appeal of these courses to students because of the use of technology. For the first seven years after the addition of the German II courses, less than one third of the German I students went on to German II, whereas for the last five years between 50 and 70% of the German I students also took German II. This could be interpreted to mean that during the first few years of the program's existence, schools and students were eager to enroll in it because of the use of new technology - satellite broadcasts and computer programs. This assumption is supported by the result of Hobbs' and Osburn's (1988) survey of Missouri schools subscribing to the German by Satellite broadcasts where the most often named reason by school administrators for choosing a distance learning course was "The use of technology was appealing" (p. 3). The higher attrition rates between German I and II in the beginning years of the German by Satellite program might be another indication for the halo effect of the use of technology in distance learning.

There are several differences between the German by Satellite and the Kentucky German courses which could possibly account for the different enrollment histories of the two programs: the Kentucky program uses a high school textbook whereas the German by Satellite program was developed from a college course and has retained the same features, including the college textbook; the Kentucky program elicits feedback on course components and the course in general from its students and teachers through an annual questionnaire, which the German by Satellite program has not done until this year; and part of the Kentucky program are weekly phone sessions between the students and tutors. Weekly phone sessions are also part of the Japanese Irasshai program, whereas regular sessions between the students and instructor have not been incorporated into the German by Satellite program.

Factors Influencing Student Enrollment in Distance Learning

Data on why students enroll in distance learning courses is scarce. As with foreign languages in general, student enrollment in distance learning courses is in part determined by external factors like the availability of such courses. Schools offer distance learning courses to expand their curriculum, because they cannot find a teacher for the subject, or for financial reasons. Hobbs (1990) also found that schools in North Dakota subscribed to distance learning courses because grant funds were available, and that administrators found the use of the technology in these courses appealing (Hobbs and Osburn, 1988).

Hobbs (1990) found that 275 students enrolled in various distance learning courses in North Dakota had chosen these courses because they were interested in the subject, the course sounded exciting, the desired course was only offered through distance learning, and/or because they needed the particular course for college. Seventy-nine percent of these students preferred regular classes over distance learning classes, a finding that corresponds to conclusions by Schlosser and Anderson (1994) and Imel (1998) who also found that in

general, students prefer traditional classes over distance education. In their 1987 survey, Hobbs and Osburn (1988) asked students if they would have enrolled in the course if it had been offered as a regular class. Eleven percent of the students "indicated that they were attracted to the course only because of the technology involved" (p. 32), a fact that seems to support the assumption of a "halo effect" for distance education.

When asking for reasons why individual students dropped the German by Satellite courses offered at 14 schools in Missouri in 1988, Hobbs and Osburn (1989) found that students were concerned that the classes would lower their grade point average, that they were not motivated to learn or that they felt that the courses expected too much from them.

Since there is not much data available on factors influencing student enrollment in distance learning courses, the author decided to survey the administrators, teachers and students enrolled in the German by Satellite courses during the 2000/2001 school year.

Summary - Distance Learning

Distance learning has been around for about 170 years. Until the 1920s, distance learning consisted of correspondence courses offered both by universities and private providers and aimed mostly at adults. This form of education is characterized by the separation of instructor and student in time and space, making personal interaction less frequent and less immediate. The advantage of distance learning is seen in the relative independence from space and time, giving a student more flexibility in choosing when and where to study.

In public schools, distance education is used mainly by small, remote schools for elective courses where teachers cannot be found or cannot be hired because of low student enrollment and/or for financial reasons. Here distance education is seen as a means to provide instruction which would not otherwise be available and thus to support the

democratic ideal of an equal chance for quality education for all students, regardless of location and financial resources.

In general, data on the implementation, effects, enrollment history and enrollment factors for distance education is scarce. From the existing research two factors emerge as crucial aspects for the success of a distance learning program: live, immediate interaction between instructor and students and the involvement and qualification of the local course facilitator.

Even though foreign language instruction is a subject which places more emphasis on communication and interaction, both between instructor and student and between student and student, and although this kind of interaction is difficult to achieve in a distance learning environment, distance learning is seen as a viable solution for foreign language instruction when a qualified teacher is not available or cannot be hired because of small class sizes. Even limited interaction, such as weekly phone sessions or two-way video/audio instruction in conjunction with other course components can enable students to learn a foreign language effectively.

Historical data, especially on enrollment trends, are scarce for distance education. The enrollment history for the elementary foreign language programs of the 1960s and for the German by Satellite and Kentucky Television programs seem to indicate that there is a certain initial appeal of the use of the technology in distance education. The fact that in spite of the use of appealing technology such as computers and television these courses require a substantial amount of effort from the student causes some students to drop these courses.

In general, students enroll in distance learning courses because they are interested in the subject offered and because the course is only available as a distance learning course. Most students see this as an emergency measure: they would prefer regular classroom instruction with a local teacher to distance education.

CHAPTER 3

SURVEY - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The most logical approach to find an explanation for the declining enrollment in Oklahoma State University's German by Satellite course would be to ask administrators, teachers and students of formerly enrolled schools why the course was dropped. However, this approach met with some difficulties. Most students enroll in the German by Satellite course in their last two years of high school, which means that after two years these students would have left school and would be difficult to locate. Former teacher-facilitators are also often difficult to contact: in informal surveys conducted by the German by Satellite staff it was often found that a teacher had retired or relocated. Teachers which could be contacted often stated that they had not been the ones making the decision to discontinue the program at their school. Administrators of former schools often seemed to be reluctant to talk to the German by Satellite staff and to explain their decision.

A questionnaire was sent as part of the current study to teachers and administrators at former schools, but the return rate was very low. As a result, the researcher decided to concentrate on currently enrolled schools and to ask for reasons why these schools subscribed to the distance learning program. A comparison of those reasons with the course itself could show whether the program was meeting those needs. Principals, teachers and students of currently enrolled schools were also asked about their expectations for the course at the beginning of the school year. A second questionnaire at the end of the school year asked if those expectations had been met. It was deemed that a discrepancy between expectations at the beginning of the year and actual experiences with the course throughout the year could be a reason for a school to discontinue the program.

Purpose of the Survey

The objectives for this study had been to find factors influencing enrollment in foreign language courses in general and German courses in particular; to find how the enrollment history of German by Satellite compared to enrollment in German language courses; to find factors which influence schools to subscribe or unsubscribe to the German by Satellite program; and to find why students enroll in or drop German by Satellite classes. This study attempted to find answers to the first three of these questions - the factors influencing enrollment in foreign language and German courses and the comparison of German by Satellite's enrollment history with that of German courses in general - through a review of the existing research and literature. The last two questions dealing specifically with enrollment factors for the German by Satellite course were addressed through a survey of currently enrolled and former schools.

Participants of the Survey

Most schools subscribing to the German by Satellite program are small, with a total of 50 to 500 students enrolled in grades 9-12. Only occasionally does a school subscribing to the program have more than 1000 students. These larger schools usually use the German by Satellite program as an emergency measure when they lose the teacher for an existing German program.

Local teachers do not have to know any German in order to facilitate the distance learning courses. The background of these teachers varies greatly: some are foreign language teachers, e.g. for Spanish or Japanese, who teach their subject in a regular classroom in addition to working with the distance learning students. In several schools the media person/librarian takes on the role of distance learning facilitator, since these

teachers have some familiarity with the technology. Some schools or school districts have a designated distance learning coordinator for several distance learning courses, whereas others choose a teacher's aide or a coach to take on the role of facilitator. Not all schools treat the distance learning class as a course in its own right: one teacher during the 2000/2001 school year regretted that he had very little time for his German students since he was teaching driver's education and one other subject at the same time as he had to supervise the distance learning students.

The majority of students taking a foreign language are college-bound, since many colleges and universities have an entrance requirement of two years of a foreign language. In the past, some schools have made a certain grade-point average a prerequisite for enrolling in a distance learning course, and a few schools offer the German by Satellite course as an honor's course or as part of the gifted and talented program. For these reasons, students enrolled in the German by Satellite course are usually higher achievers than the students in a regular classroom.

For the 2000/2001 school year, a total of 46 schools had subscribed to the German by Satellite program offered by Oklahoma State University. Three of these schools had only one student each enrolled in German III, IV or AP. Since the researcher was interested in collecting data about enrollment reasons and expectations from beginning students, these three schools were not included in the study. Also not included were two schools with one student each in German I. For both of these students, the parents were the driving force behind enrollment of their children in the German course. In both cases the parents, rather than the schools, were paying the enrollment fees. These parents had convinced the schools after considerable discussion to allow their children to enroll in this course. Since these two cases were not considered to present typical enrollment situations, these two schools were also not included in the study. To the remaining 41 schools, questionnaires were mailed in November 2000 and in March 2001. These schools were located in Oklahoma (10 schools), Missouri (6), Louisiana (5), Kansas (4), Oregon (4),

Washington (3), Indiana (2), Mississippi (2), Texas (2), Arkansas (1), Idaho (1) and Pennsylvania (1).

There were three kinds of questionnaires: one for the principal at each school, one for the coordinating local teacher, and a student questionnaire for two students at each school (4). The questionnaires were mailed as a packet to the principal at each school with the request to pass these on to the local teacher and to two students randomly selected by the principal or the teacher. The survey was kept anonymous - the questionnaires were returned in provided postage-paid business reply envelopes by each individual participant. Questionnaires were returned by 25 administrators (61%), 29 teachers (71%), and 46 students (58%).

A second questionnaire was mailed in March 2001 to the same 41 schools, but this time only to the teacher and to two students at each school. The purpose of the questionnaire was mainly to find out whether expectations for the course had been met, and it was deemed by the researcher that since the school year was not over yet, teachers and students would be better equipped to answer this question than administrators. Questionnaires were returned by 22 teachers (54%) and 35 students (43%).

A third set of questionnaires was mailed to the principals and local teacher-coordinators of 26 schools which had been enrolled in the German by Satellite program in previous years but were not enrolled for the 2000/2001 school year. There was not a student questionnaire included in this set since most students take the German by Satellite course during their last two years of school and would not be available at those formerly enrolled schools. The return rate for this third questionnaire was very small - only six principals and five teachers returned the questionnaires, a return rate of 23% and 19%, respectively.

Survey Instruments

Introduction

There were a total of seven different questionnaires: the first set sent in November 2000 in the first part of the school year included a questionnaire for administrators, one for teachers, and one for students. Also in November a set of two questionnaires, one for administrators and one for teachers, was sent to formerly enrolled schools. Two more questionnaires, one for teachers and one for students, were mailed in March 2001, after both teachers and students had several months' experience with the course. Blank questionnaires are attached in the Appendixes of this thesis.

Administrators' Questionnaire

Of the first set of three questionnaires sent at the beginning of the school year, both the administrators' and the teachers' questionnaires contained some general questions about school size, grades included in the school and foreign languages offered. The purpose of these questions was to see whether the data would bear out the assumption that most schools enrolling in the German by Satellite program are small. The researcher also wanted to see whether German through distance learning was the only foreign language offered.

Since the purpose of the questionnaire was to find out why schools subscribed to the German by Satellite course for the purpose of drawing conclusions about why schools drop the course, the first two questions on the administrators' questionnaire asked for reasons why the schools wanted to offer German and why they had chosen a distance learning rather than a traditional course. The choices for question 1 (why German?) addressed curriculum concerns (wanted to offer a foreign language or increase course offerings), interest in the language by students, parents, or community, and appreciation

for the subject on the part of the school (German is an important language to learn). The choices for question 2 (why a distance learning course?) listed reasons given to the researcher in informal conversations. Question 3 asked whether the school was offering any other distance learning courses in addition to the German by Satellite program. It was deemed by the researcher that offering other distance learning courses would show a certain commitment on the part of the school to this mode of education, and that a school with several such courses would have more experience with distance learning than a school which offered only the German by Satellite program. Question 4 inquired why the school had chosen the German by Satellite rather than another German distance learning program. To the researcher's knowledge, there are two other German high school programs offered through distance learning. However, this question did not ascertain whether the administrators were aware of these other programs, which was an oversight on the part of the researcher.

Question 5 inquired where the school had received the information about the German by Satellite program. One of the ways to increase enrollment in the program would be to make sure that schools which have a need for this kind of education are aware of the distance learning alternative. Question 5 was intended to provide information about the effectiveness of different ways used by the German by Satellite program to disseminate information about the course, e.g. mailing brochures, putting information on a website, exhibiting at conferences, etc.

The last question asked for administrators' expectations for the program, since the researcher assumed that a possible reason for a school to drop the distance learning course could be that the school's expectations were not met by the course. This question and question 2 (why distance learning rather than traditional education?) were also asked on the teachers' and the students' questionnaires. With the exception of question 3 ("Are there other distance learning courses currently offered at your school?") all questions had a write-in category "other." This option was deemed important by the researcher since this survey

was the first of its kind for the German by Satellite course, and the choices offered as possible answers to the questions were based on anecdotal evidence. Multiple answers were possible for questions 1, 2, 4, and 6. Administrators were asked to number multiple answers in order of their importance to them with "1" being the most important.

Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers were asked who had decided that the teacher should facilitate the distance learning course (question 1), whether they had facilitated other distance learning courses before (question 2) and what their opinion was about distance learning in general (question 3). The purpose of these questions was to see whether the answers to these questions had any correlation to the attitude of the teachers towards the German by Satellite course. Questions 4 and 6 were asking for the school's reason to choose a distance learning course and for the teachers' expectations for the program. These questions were identical to questions 2 and 6, respectively, on the administrators' questionnaire. Question 5 asked whether the teachers enjoyed being a facilitator for the program. It also contained a write-in item asking for aspects that the teachers did or did not enjoy about the program.

Multiple answers were possible for questions 3, 4, and 6. Teachers were asked to number multiple answers for questions 4 and 6 (reason for school choosing distance learning and the teachers' expectations for the course) in order of their importance to them with "1" being the most important.

Students' Questionnaire

Students were asked why they had enrolled in the course. The choices given were based on anecdotal evidence gathered from informal conversations by the researcher with the students. A choice that had inadvertently been left off was the students' German

heritage/ancestry/living family (German relatives). This answer was given by some students as a write-in under the item "other." Question 2 asked whether students had taken a distance learning course before. It was assumed that prior experience with another distance learning class would influence students' expectations for the course. This was the only question which did not have a write-in choice of "other." Students were asked about the school's reason for choosing a distance learning course (identical to the question on the teachers' and administrators' questionnaires) and the students' expectations for the course. The students were given different choices for this latter question than the teachers and administrators: several possible answers addressed the difference of the distance learning course as compared to a regular classroom course ("more difficult," "more impersonal," "more computer work"). Multiple answers were possible for questions 3 and 4. Students were asked to number multiple answers to question 3 (reasons for school choosing a distance learning course) in order of their importance to them with "1" being the most important.

Second Questionnaire

The second questionnaire was sent in March 2001 only to teachers and students, since the researcher was mainly interested in the participants' opinion about the course and its individual components. Both questionnaires were kept short on purpose: each contained only three questions since the researcher assumed that a shorter questionnaire might improve the return rate and might prompt more thorough answers. Both teachers and students were asked for their opinion of the distance learning course. There were several choices given, with an additional write-in item "other." The possible answers given were identical to the choices to the question about expectations from the first questionnaire for students. Teachers had some of the same choices as on the first questionnaire, but in addition they were asked if they thought that the course had been successful for their

students. If "not successful" was chosen, teachers were asked to write in a reason for their opinion.

The second question asked teachers and students to judge the course components: videotapes, textbook, instructors, and computer exercises, and - on the students' questionnaire - also the local teacher. These were open write-in answers, but in the instructions several examples had been given ("helpful/not helpful, boring/interesting, good/bad, could be better"). The third question asked what teachers and students would change about the course. This question required a write-in answer with no additional instructions given.

Former Schools' Questionnaire

Two questionnaires were sent in November 2000 to former schools, one for teachers and one for administrators. There was not a questionnaire for students in this set since most students take the German by Satellite course in their last two years of school and would be difficult to locate two to three years later.

The questionnaires asked for the same information about school size, grades and foreign languages offered as the first administrators' and teachers' questionnaires. This information served to compare schools that had dropped the German by Satellite program to those that were still enrolled in it.

Following were seven questions which were identical for teachers and administrators. The first three questions asked why the schools wanted to offer German, why they had chosen a distance learning course, and what their expectations had been for the program. These questions were identical to questions 1, 2 and 6 on the first administrators' questionnaire. Question 4 requested information on which expectations had not been met. This was a write-in answer with no choices given. This question assumed that the administrators and teachers had had certain expectations for the course which had

not been met and that consequently the course had been dropped. Question 5 asked why the German by Satellite course had been discontinued. There were six answers given as choices, which had been based on informal conversations with administrators and teachers from former schools. The seventh item was the write-in choice "other." Question 6 asked whether German was currently offered at the school, in order to find out whether a German teacher had been hired or the school had chosen another distance learning program. The last question was designed to find out whether there were any other distance learning courses offered and in which subjects.

Method of Analysis

As questionnaires were received, answers were counted and tabulated. For questions where multiple answers were possible and had been ranked, the first, second and third choices were shown. For the tables in this study, answers were shown as percentages since the relation of the number to the total is immediately visible with this method. A disadvantage of percentages is that they obscure the fact that the number of participants in the survey was fairly small.

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY - FINDINGS

First Questionnaire

Administrators

Most schools taking the German by Satellite distance learning courses are small, with an average school size of 291 students in grades 9-12 or occasionally in grades 7-12. 52% of the schools subscribing to the German program also offered Spanish, either as a regular class or - in five cases - as another distance learning course. Whereas Spanish and French were mostly taught by classroom teachers, there were other distance learning courses for the lesser taught languages, such as Russian and Japanese. Three schools offered German through distance learning as the only foreign language. The schools were almost evenly split between those for whom German by Satellite was the only distance learning course and those which also offered other courses through distance learning. The other subjects named were all electives, some of which were on an advanced level which would require special qualification on the part of the teacher, e.g. advanced placement courses.

Administrators were asked why they wanted to offer German at their school. Multiple answers were possible. If multiple answers were given, participants were asked to rank their answers in order of their importance to them, with "1" being the most important. "Other" was an open category where write-in answers were solicited. Twelve of the 25 participants gave as the main reason the desire to increase course offerings. This is borne out by the fact that for most of these schools German was a second or third language. Seven administrators named the desire to offer some foreign language as the most important reason, possibly in response to a state mandate for foreign language instruction, as in Oklahoma. These two reasons rank considerably higher than student,

parent or community interest in German. It seems that curriculum-related considerations carried more weight with these administrators than interest in the language itself. This is supported by the fact that "German is an important language to learn" was named only as a secondary or third choice, and only by three administrators. The answers given in the order of their frequency are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Administrators: Reasons for offering German

(Multiple answers were possible. Administrators were asked to number their choices, with "1" being the most important and "3" being the least important)

	1	2	3
Increase course offerings	48%	20%	
Offer some foreign language	28%		
Student interest	8%	16%	12%
Parent interest			16%
Community interest	4%	4%	
German is an important language to learn		8%	4%

The second question asked why these schools chose a distance learning rather than a regular course. Almost half of the schools cited difficulties in finding a classroom teacher as the main reason for choosing the German by Satellite program. This would imply that these schools made some effort to find a teacher and then chose distance learning as an alternative/emergency solution. Another important issue was the number of students interested in taking German. Since German is an elective and since most of these schools are very small, there may be only a handful of students at each school interested in learning the language. For the 2000-01 school year, the average class size in the German by Satellite program was nine in German I and seven in German II. At some schools there are only one or two students in a class. For classes this small it would not be financially

feasible to hire a classroom teacher. The answers given in the order of their frequency are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Administrators: Reason for choosing a distance learning rather than a traditional course

(Multiple answers were possible. Administrators were asked to number their choices, with "1" being the most important and "3" being the least important)

	1	2	3
Could not find teacher	48%	4%	
Not enough student interest	32%	8%	4%
Best financial solution	8%	40%	
Put technology to use	8%		16%

It is interesting to note how these answers compare to those given on Hobbs' and Osburn's 1988 survey of 14 Missouri high schools who had subscribed to the same German by Satellite course in 1987/88. In Hobbs' and Osburn's survey, administrators had stated that they had chosen to implement a satellite distance learning course because they found the use of the technology appealing and because German by Satellite seemed to be the only way to offer a foreign language. Financial reasons and the inability to find a teacher were named as the third and fourth reasons, respectively. However, the current survey indicates almost the opposite: the inability of finding a classroom teacher was the primary reason for choosing a distance learning course.

The most frequent reasons given by the administrators for choosing the German by Satellite rather than another distance learning program were the fact that the program was "readily available" (44%) and that it met the school's needs (32%). The main expectation for the program was that it would provide instruction not otherwise available (92%). It is interesting to note that none of the administrators expected the program to require "extra effort" by teachers and students. This may be a questionable opinion, considering that the

job of the local facilitator for a distance learning course includes both technical aspects such as operating and trouble-shooting equipment; traditional aspects of classroom teaching such as keeping students on task, taking attendance and offering praise; and tasks specific to distance learning such as conducting review in a subject where the facilitator is not the expert, and hopefully learning along with the students (Glisan, Dudt, and Howe, 1998). The distance learning situation also presents a special challenge for students: on the positive side it encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning, but that also means that it requires a certain maturity level from students. Those who are not willing or not able or have not learned to monitor their own progress are more apt to fail in a distance learning course than in a regular classroom.

Teachers

The majority of the teachers were appointed to their role of distance learning facilitator by their principal or other superiors. Only 14% made this decision themselves. Two-thirds of these teachers had not worked as facilitators before. Most of them agreed that the quality of distance learning courses varies greatly. Whereas 41% of the teachers saw distance learning as an emergency measure, almost as many considered them to be a future trend and/or as good as regular classroom instruction. Ten percent felt that these courses cause additional stress for teachers and students. Also, 10% of the teachers wrote in under "other" that only good students succeed in distance learning courses. Seventeen percent of the teachers did not know why their school had chosen the distance learning program. Ninety percent of the teachers enjoyed facilitating the German course "very much" or "most of the time." When asked to list what they did or did not like about the program, some of the same aspects showed up on both sides: 14% of the teachers were ill at ease in a classroom where they knew little about the subject matter, whereas some enjoyed teaching something different (3%); some teachers liked the videos (3%), others did not (3%). Limited Internet access, which was required for some of the student exercises

and activities, was named as a negative factor by 10%. Other complaints were: not enough speaking and listening practice for the students (7%), conflicts with other duties, and scheduling conflicts.

Students

For the majority of the students, this was their first experience with a distance learning course. Asked why they decided to enroll in the German by Satellite course, more than half chose "I wanted to learn German." Even though this answer establishes interest in the language as the main motivating factor for students to choose the course, it does not give any information about what this interest was based on or how this interest was aroused. More than a third of the students gave the desire to fulfill a college requirement as a reason. The ranking of these top two items follows the findings of the AATG study described on page 30 of this paper: general interest in the language is the main factor for students to enroll in a German course, with college entrance requirements named as a (not very close) second. The fact that more than a quarter of the students chose the answer "I thought it would be something different" supports the assumption that a course which relies heavily on technology such as computers and videos is seen as a break from the regular classroom routine and as such has a certain appeal to students - what Glisan, Dudt and Howe (1998) called the "halo effect" of distance education.

Twice as many students were influenced in their decision by other students (15%) than by counselors' recommendation. In addition to showing peer influence, this finding also could indicate that counselors' advice does not influence student decisions to a great degree, as Watzke (1994) assumed, or that counselors do not commonly recommend foreign languages such as German. Students' reasons for enrolling in the course are detailed in Table 10.

Almost a third of the students assumed that the difficulty in finding a teacher was the main reason for their school to choose a distance learning course. This was also the

main reason given by administrators and teachers. A quarter of the students did not know the reason (compared to 17% of the teachers) - maybe either nobody had asked or told them, or they were not interested in finding out.

Table 10

Students' reasons for enrolling in the German by Satellite course (multiple answers were possible)

Wanted to learn German	56%
Fulfill college requirement	35%
Thought it would be something different	26%
Other students' recommendation	15%
German family ties/ancestry	15%
Likes computers	9%
Dislikes Spanish	9%
Counselor recommendation	7%

Most of the students had positive expectations for the course. Two-thirds assumed that the course would be a "valuable experience" and 43% expected that they would enjoy the course. Almost 40% thought that this course would require no more effort than a regular classroom course or that the course would be "easy." This may not be a realistic expectation, especially considering the fact that this was the first experience with a distance learning course for most of these students. Student expectations are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Students' expectations for the German by Satellite course (multiple answers were possible)

Valuable experience	63%
Enjoy course	43%
More difficult than regular class	32%
Require same effort as regular class	26%
More impersonal	24%
More computer work	21%
Course will be easy	13%
Gain knowledge of language/culture	7%

Summary - First Questionnaire

Administrators, teachers and students named the difficulties in finding a teacher as the main reason for choosing the German distance learning course. This answer points to the different purpose of distance education for adults and for public schools: while distance education offers the advantage of flexible location and time schedule for older students, for public schools this type of education can alleviate problems like the shortage of qualified teachers. The average school size of under 300 students in grades 9 through 12 points to the fact that distance learning is especially attractive for schools which cannot hire teachers for electives because of low student numbers in these courses or because of financial constraints.

Student interest was another important factor named in the survey. On the part of the students, interest in the language was named as the main reason for enrolling in German. Administrators, on the other hand, cited the lack of sufficient numbers of interested students enrolling in a German class as a reason for choosing a distance learning

course: small enrollment numbers would not make it financially feasible to hire a classroom teacher. Some factors influencing student interest were German heritage and other students' recommendation. Whereas the first of these is extrinsic to the course and cannot be influenced by the course developers, the second factor is dependent on how well students liked the course, which in turn should be directly related to how well the course was designed and taught.

Both administrators and teachers cited as their main expectation that the program would provide instruction not otherwise available. Whereas there have been voices urging the consideration of distance education as a valuable method in its own right (Reid, 1961), it seems that in public schools this kind of education is mostly considered a stop-gap or emergency measure when traditional education cannot be provided. Student expectations were mostly positive: students expected the course to be a valuable and enjoyable experience. Anecdotal evidence from former students of the German by Satellite program indicates that distance learning can help students develop learning skills which are especially valuable for college, since the comparative isolation from the instructor and peers in a distance course forces students to take more responsibility for their own learning than they would have to in a regular classroom. About one third of the students expected that the course would require more effort than a regular course, but they were outnumbered by students who thought the course would be easy or require about the same amount of effort. In order to find out if their experiences matched their expectations and if students had judged the amount of effort required in a distance learning situation realistically, students were given the same choices to describe their experience with the course in the second questionnaire towards the end of the school year.

Several teachers expressed discomfort at being in a classroom where they knew little about the subject and did not have much control over teaching material and activities. Thorough instruction for both teachers and students at the beginning of a distance learning course about what to expect and about the differences likely to be encountered in a distance

learning course would probably do much to make local teacher/facilitators more comfortable in their role.

Second Questionnaire

Teachers

The second questionnaire was only sent to teachers and students, since the researcher was mostly interested in finding out whether the experiences of these two groups would match their expectations expressed in the first questionnaire. Teachers and students were also asked to comment on the different components of the course and to suggest changes.

The first item on this second questionnaire asked teachers to give their general opinion about the German by Satellite course. Most teachers stated that the program had been successful for their students. Only three felt that it had not been successful, for various reasons: one felt that s/he did not do an effective job as a facilitator since s/he did not have sufficient training in that role; one teacher felt that the students would have learned more with a regular classroom teacher; and one teacher stated that it was hard to maintain the students' interest. Two of these are concerns that can be addressed by revising the existing course: a training component for local facilitators built into the beginning of the course could serve to increase the teacher's comfort level with that role. There may also be several possible strategies to enhance students' interest. Individual course components such as the video tapes, which were 40 minutes long, could be shortened and could provide a greater variety of elements, including activities that would require the active participation of the students. More age-appropriate topics could be included in the course - since the German by Satellite course had been developed from a college course and was using a

college textbook, elements such as the dialogues and cultural topics were geared toward college students.

Teachers also felt that the program used sound instructional methods - this had been named as an expectation by 58% of the teachers on the first questionnaire and was stated by 70% on the second. Almost 40% of the teachers felt that the program required extra effort by teachers and students, and only slightly more than a third felt that students had learned as much as in a regular classroom. This last answer taken together with the fact that most teachers felt the course was successful and used sound instructional methods could indicate that teachers have lower expectations for a distance learning course. It could also mean that teachers do not necessarily see a causal relationship between teaching methods and effectiveness of instruction. The results for this question are listed in Table 12.

Table 12

Teachers: General opinion of the German by Satellite course

Successful for students	78%
Program used sound methods	70%
Required extra effort	39%
Students learned as much as in regular class	35%
Somewhat impersonal atmosphere	22%
Course was not successful for students	13%

In the second question, teachers were asked to describe four of the course components: the videos, textbook, instructors and computer exercises. These were open-ended questions, but several adjectives (helpful/not helpful, boring/interesting, good/bad, could be better) had been listed as examples and were mostly used by both teachers and students. When the questionnaire was evaluated, these descriptions were summarized and divided into positive and negative aspects. Positive aspects named by the teachers were: "(very) helpful," "(very) good," "interesting," "o.k.," "excellent." Negative aspects

included: "could be better," "increase pace (video tapes)," "need to be updated (video tapes)," "boring," "confusing" (textbook, computer exercises), "not helpful," "need to be more in-depth" (computer exercises). Percentages for the textbook and computer exercises did not add up to 100, since some teachers had left these categories blank. The following picture emerged:

Table 13

Teachers: Rating of course components

	Positive	Negative
Instructors	100%	
Textbook	78%	17%
Video tapes	74%	26%
Computer Exercises	70%	26%

The largely positive response to the textbook came as a surprise to the researcher, since this is a college textbook with topics geared towards college students. Grammar is introduced in this book through rules and tables and practiced through exercises consisting of unrelated sentences. The researcher had expected a more critical attitude towards the textbook, since it is not age-appropriate for high school students, and since a grammar-based approach such as the one used by this textbook is not effective in teaching students how to communicate well. Omaggio (1993) describes the grammar-translation method as "strenuous and boring" (p. 91), which would negatively affect student interest. It is possible that teachers liked the book because it is highly structured and requires little engagement on the part of the teacher (since students do a lot of the exercises individually and in writing). Zeydel (1961) had pointed out that throughout the history of foreign language teaching, the profession repeatedly reverted to the grammar-translation method because it is easier for teachers to work with.

The video tapes used by the German by Satellite program were unedited recordings of live broadcasts from the 1998/99 school year. Several teachers stated in the next question on the survey that they felt the video tapes needed to be updated and needed to capture student interest better. Computer exercises were sometimes seen as confusing and needing more explanations and hints for students.

The last question on the survey asked for teacher input on changes for the course. This was an open-ended question with no guidelines, and the answers were almost as varied as the number of participants. The only item mentioned more than twice was "nothing," given by 30% of the teachers. Several teachers addressed the video tapes and suggested that the tapes needed to be updated, shortened, give more practice examples, needed more variety or should be more interesting, should be replaced by live broadcasts, and that instructors needed to talk to the students on their level rather than treat them like grade school students. Several teachers asked for more live interaction between students and instructors either over the phone, through site visits by the instructor or through two-way video interaction. Other changes mentioned were training for facilitators, modifications to the course for block schedule schools and improvement of online quizzes.

Students

In the first question, students were asked to describe their feelings about the course. The majority stated that they enjoyed the course and that it had been a valuable experience for them. Opinions about the effort required for the course were divided: a little more than half felt that the course required about the same effort as a regular classroom course, whereas over forty percent judged the course to be more difficult. Answers to this question are detailed in Table 14.

Table 14

Students: General judgment about the German by Satellite course (multiple answers were possible)

Enjoyed the course	78%
Valuable experience	68%
Required about the same effort as regular class	54%
Course was more difficult	43%
More impersonal	30%
Worked more with computers	30%
Course was easy	14%
Did not enjoy	11%

Compared with the expectations the students had at the beginning of the course, the percentage of those who actually enjoyed the course was higher (78%) than those who expected to enjoy it (43%). The percentage of students who found the course more difficult than a regular classroom course (43%) was higher than the percentage of those who at the beginning of the school year had expected it to be more difficult (32%). More than half found it to require about the same amount of effort. Roughly the same number of students expected the course to be easy and actually found it so (13% and 14%, respectively).

The second question asked students to describe five of the course components: the videos, textbook, instructors, local teacher, and computer exercises. These were write-in answers, but several adjectives (helpful/not helpful, boring/interesting, good/bad, could be better) had been listed as examples and were mostly used by the students. As with the teachers' survey, for evaluation purposes the items were summarized and divided into positive and negative aspects. Positive aspects named were: "(very) helpful," "good," "interesting" (video tapes), "alright," "easy" (textbook). Negative aspects included: "could

be better," "could be more interesting" (video tapes), "not helpful," "hard to understand" (computer exercises), "boring," "does not know German" (local teacher), "confusing" (textbook), "bad" (local teacher), "hard to find certain items" (video tapes). Percentages for the local teacher, textbook and computer exercises did not add up to 100, since some students had not written an answer for these categories. Table 16 shows the division of categories.

It is interesting to note that the "human components" of the course, the instructors and local teacher, are rated higher by the students than the technology (computer exercises and video tapes). In general, students were more critical of all course components than the teachers had been: positive percentages are lower and negative ones higher on all categories than in the teachers' survey (5). The most obvious difference appears in the students' rating of the video tapes: whereas about three quarters of the teachers had rated the tapes as positive and one quarter as negative, the students' rating approached an even split, with only a slight advantage on the positive side. Again, the textbook was not judged to be as bad as the researcher had expected. Some students asked for clearer instructions and hints on the computer exercises. Based on the answers to this question, major revisions of the video component are advisable.

Table 15

Students: Rating of course components

	Positive	Negative
Instructors	86%	14%
Local Teacher	76%	19%
Textbook	70%	27%
Computer Exercises	62%	30%
Video Tapes	54%	46%

As the last item on the survey, students were asked what they would change about the course. This was an open-ended question with no guidelines, and as on the teachers' survey, the answers were almost as varied as the number of participants. Only a few items were mentioned more than once: 16% of the students answered "Nothing," 14% asked for more interaction with the instructors, and 8% would like to see changes in the textbook. Several students felt that the video component needed changes: the videos should be more interesting, explain exercises, and address students on their level. Different students wished for more emphasis on various skills: more speaking, more writing, more grammar, more review, more explanations. Students pointed out that the Internet components had some glitches which needed to be worked out, and that the computer exercises would benefit from more hints for students. Other suggestions were: do field trips, or watch American movies dubbed in German.

Summary - Second Questionnaire

Overall, the program was rated positive by both teachers and students: teachers felt that the course had been successful for students, and the majority of students had enjoyed the course. There were no major discrepancies between expectations and experiences. Of some concern is the fact that only about a third of the teachers thought that students had learned as much as in a regular class. Even though the claim of some researchers that students are able to learn as much through distance education as they can through regular classroom instruction (Glisan, Dudt, and Howe, 1998) may be questionable, it should be possible to raise this percentage through improvements in the course.

The course components mostly seen in need of improvement by both teachers and students were the video tapes and computer exercises. The video clips should be shorter, more interesting, and should require more active participation from the students. The

computer exercises need to have clearer instructions, should in some cases be simplified and should incorporate "hints" to help students find correct answers.

Although a number of both teachers and students felt that nothing should be changed in the course, there were numerous suggestions for improvements: more interaction between instructors and students, better training for local teachers, improvement of online quizzes, more speaking practice. The request for field trips and American movies dubbed in German might indicate a desire for more practical experiences with the language and culture.

Questionnaire - Former Schools

Administrators

The number of returned questionnaires was not sufficient to make up a representative sample - only six administrators actually participated in the survey, a return rate of 21%. The average size of these schools with 162 students was smaller than that of the currently enrolled schools. Whereas the desire to increase course offerings had been the main reason for currently enrolled schools to choose the German by Satellite course, three of the six administrators of former schools named student interest as the main reason to enroll. These administrators mainly expected the German by Satellite program to offer instruction not otherwise available and five stated that none of their expectations had not been met. As a reason for discontinuing the program, five administrators named the lack of student interest, one hired a foreign language teacher (not for German), one cited parent and another student interest in Spanish for discontinuing German. None of the six schools offered German through some other means after discontinuing the distance learning program.

It appears that student interest played an important role at these schools, both for initially enrolling in the program and for dropping it. It should also be noted that these schools were very small, which would make it harder to find enough students interested in any elective.

Teachers

As with the administrators, the number of teachers of former schools was too small to make up a representative sample - only five teachers returned the questionnaire. It is interesting to note that three of these were from schools larger than those described by the six administrators, making the average school size for the teachers' questionnaire 451. Four of the five teachers cited student interest as decisive factor for enrolling in the German by Satellite program, and all five named lack of student interest as the reason for discontinuing it. Only two teachers named an expectation that had not been met by the program: one stated that students did not put forth the required extra effort, and the other wrote that students were not able to converse in German.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study has been to identify factors influencing or determining the declining enrollment for the German by Satellite course and to suggest courses of action which would reverse the downward trend in student numbers. As a foreign language course, a German class and a distance learning program, German by Satellite is influenced by factors pertaining to all three of these areas.

The first objective of this study was to identify factors which influence enrollment in foreign language courses in the United States. A major factor determining enrollment in any foreign language is the fact that in this country foreign languages are not part of the core curriculum. A review of the literature pointed to several historical reasons why foreign languages are not considered essentials in American education. As Grittner (1969) pointed out, modern languages were thought to have little value for either the development of the intellect or for being able to read character-building literature. Since these were the primary goals of education until the end of the 19th century, modern languages were either not offered or they were regarded as frills and delegated to the sidelines of education. When the goal of education shifted to a training in practical skills around the turn of the century, modern languages were also not seen as valuable, mainly for two reasons: as a result of the two world wars America had emerged as an economical and political superpower, and - according to Grittner (1969), Simon (1980), and Zeydel (1961) - anything foreign was seen as inferior, including the languages.

Another reason for opposing foreign languages as a school subject was the fact that most students were not successful in achieving any fluency in the language they were

studying. This latter fact is caused both by the insufficient length of study and by the widespread use of methods that are not conducive to acquiring communicative skills.

Since as a German course the German by Satellite program is subject to influences and developments peculiar to the teaching of this language in the United States, the second objective of this study was to identify factors which influence enrollment in German courses. According to Zeydel (1961) and the figures collected by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Draper, 1996) German was the most commonly taught modern language until 1917, the year of America's entry into World War I. Subsequently, speaking and teaching German were declared to be illegal in some states, and as a result, German as a subject in American high schools very nearly ceased to exist. After World War II, German experienced some minor gains in enrollment, but basically the enrollment in German courses in American high schools has not changed significantly in the last 50 years.

The instructors of the German by Satellite program had assumed that the drop in enrollment was due to an increasing disinterest and resulting decline in German language studies in general. However, this assumption had been based on anecdotal evidence and had never been researched by the instructors. In order to test this assumption, the third objective for this study was to compare the enrollment history of German by Satellite with the enrollment of German high school language courses in general. From 1985, the first year of the German by Satellite program, to 1994 there were small gains in German enrollment in regular high school classes according to the ACTFL report. A survey of the enrollment in Oklahoma high school German classes as part of this study showed only a minimal fluctuation in student numbers over the past ten years. The substantial increase in enrollment for the German by Satellite program from 1985 to 1992 with a steady decline in student numbers from 1992 to the present is not representative of the enrollment development for German high school courses in general.

A fourth objective of this study was to examine enrollment factors for distance learning in general. Public schools turn to distance education in order to include courses in their curriculum which they would not otherwise be able to offer - because of low enrollment, problems finding a teacher, or financial constraints. Distance learning is seen by those schools as an alternative when regular classroom instruction is not possible. Whereas schools make every effort to provide traditional instruction for their core curriculum, distance learning is sometimes chosen for elective courses, such as foreign languages, art, and advanced math and science courses. Another factor influencing a school's decision to enroll in a distance learning course was described by Hobbs and Osburn (1988) who found that the use of technology appealed to a majority of school administrators in their survey. This attractiveness of the novel, technologically exciting approach had been described as the "halo effect" of distance learning by Glisan, Dudt, and Howe (1998).

Political and cultural factors also influence a school's decision to choose distance learning, as Perraton (1981) pointed out. An example is the proliferation of foreign language distance learning courses for elementary schools in the early 1960s described by Reid (1961). The implementation of these courses followed the impact of the Soviet Union's launching of the Sputnik satellite, which caused the United States to examine their position as a global superpower. Reid also pointed out a factor which caused schools to drop enrollment in these elementary school programs: in their eagerness and enthusiasm for the new technology and urged on by the political pressure put into words in the National Education Defense Act of 1958, distance learning program developers did not heed basic pedagogical principles for elementary foreign language programs. They ignored the postulates for qualified teachers, for support of the program as part of a school's curriculum, and for continuity of a foreign language program through grade 12.

The fifth objective for this study was to find factors which influence schools to subscribe to German by Satellite and which cause schools to drop the program. In the

researcher's survey of schools currently enrolled in the German by Satellite program, the main reason named by administrators, teachers and students for subscribing to the distance learning course was the difficulty in finding a teacher. Lack of student interest was another factor named - low enrollment numbers for German courses at these schools made it financially problematic to hire a classroom teacher. Putting existing technology to use was another consideration; however, this last factor was named by only two administrators as the primary reason for the school's enrollment in the course. The role of technology, then, was not as important in this survey as it had been in 1988 when Hobbs and Osburn recorded that 13 of the 20 participating schools had enrolled in the same German by Satellite course because they found the technology appealing.

The survey of schools currently enrolled in the German by Satellite course did not yield sufficient indications why schools drop the program, as the researcher had hoped. There was no significant difference between expectations for the course voiced by administrators and teachers in the first questionnaire and experiences with the course reported in the second instrument. The few questionnaires received from schools that had dropped the course provided some insights into the reasons for discontinuing the course. Difficulty in finding a teacher had been named by these schools as a major reason for choosing the distance learning program, but none of the formerly enrolled schools had hired a German teacher or had subscribed to a German course offered by another provider. In other words, the main reasons for subscribing to the German by Satellite program had not changed for those schools that had discontinued the program. The administrators and teachers from nine former schools which returned the questionnaire indicated that the German by Satellite course had met their expectations. However, they also stated that lack of student interest was the main reason for dropping the course. Since student interest was one of the reasons why schools adopted the program, the course apparently was not meeting the students' expectations. Lack of student interest seemed to be the decisive factor for discontinuing enrollment in the program.

Finding out why students enroll in the German by Satellite course and why they drop it was the sixth and last objective for this study. There is very little data available on why students take distance learning courses in general. The main reason seems to be that a subject which a student is interested in or needs for college is offered only as a distance learning course (Hobbs 1990). Hobbs and Osburn (1988) also found some evidence for a "halo effect" of distance education for students - they were attracted to distance learning courses because of the use of technology. Although distance learning appeals to students because of the technology involved, Hobbs (1990) and others found that the majority of students prefer regular classroom instruction to a distance learning course.

The researcher found that students enrolled in the German by Satellite course because of a general interest in the language and to fulfill college requirements. Some students were attracted by the novelty of the program ("something different"). Recommendation by others - especially other students - and German family ties or ancestry were also named as factors in this survey. The reasons for dropping the course given by students in Hobbs' and Osburn's 1989 survey of the German by Satellite course - concern about lowered grade point averages, or the feeling that the course expected too much from them - seem to indicate that the course is more difficult than students expected. In the author's survey, a substantial number of students stated on the second questionnaire that they had found the course more difficult than a regular classroom course. However, on the whole, the comparison between students' expectations and experiences did not result in clear indications why students would drop the course, as the researcher had hoped.

Conclusions

There is not a single answer to the problem of why the enrollment in the German by Satellite course has been decreasing steadily over the last ten years. As a foreign language, German is always an elective, never part of the core curriculum. As such, enrollment in the

course depends largely on student interest. The subject matter of the program - German - also contributes to enrollment factors: German as a subject in high schools suffered drastically through the two world wars. These two factors, being an elective and being a subject which is not generally popular with students, also explain why German would be offered as a distance learning course. Instruction per distance is usually seen by public schools as a measure appropriate for an elective when there is not enough student interest to warrant hiring a full-time teacher or where qualified teachers are difficult to find.

There is another aspect of distance learning which has possibly influenced the enrollment history of the German by Satellite program. As a course which extensively uses modern technology such as satellite broadcasts and computer software, the German by Satellite program appeals to students and to school administrators. A certain "halo effect" caused by the use of this kind of technology could be an explanation for the initial substantial increases in enrollment in the German by Satellite program. Obviously, the program failed to sustain the initial student interest.

There are several possible reasons for this failure and the subsequent drop in enrollment. The German by Satellite program was based on the assumption that interaction and feedback could be provided to students through the extensive use of computer programs. As a result, student-instructor interaction was minimal. This lack of live interaction was documented by Hobbs and Osburn's (1988) research, who found that, when compared to other distance learning providers, the German by Satellite course was last in both the amount of student-instructor interaction and the amount of student satisfaction and achievement. The importance of the "human component" of a distance learning course over the technology used can also be seen in the students' evaluation of different components of the German by Satellite course in the researcher's survey. Students expressed less satisfaction with the technological components of the program such as computer exercises and video tapes than with the instructors and the local teachers.

The review of existing research together with the results of the researcher's survey have yielded some guidelines for action which hopefully will result in a reversal of the German by Satellite program's decreasing enrollment trend. Whether the steps taken on the basis of these guidelines will be successful can be tested through a longitudinal study of the participant's perception of the course, student achievement, and the actual future enrollment figures.

Recommendations

Based on the existing research on distance learning and the results of the author's survey, the following changes are recommended for the German by Satellite courses:

To improve the "human component" of the program:

- Weekly student-instructor interaction will be built into the course, either through the telephone, video conferencing or Internet chat sessions.
- Local teachers will receive thorough instruction in how to facilitate this distance learning course.

To counteract the "halo effect" of the technology used in the course:

- At the beginning of the course students will receive instruction on the special elements of distance education and the higher demands it places on student responsibility and autonomy. In order to set realistic expectations, students will also be shown at the beginning of the course what kind of proficiency levels can be achieved in a foreign language in a certain time frame.

To build and sustain student interest:

- The video component will be revised and shortened. The content of the clips will incorporate information and activities on the students' level.

- The computer exercises will be revised and will include clear instructions and hints to help students find answers.
- In order to give students a sense of success and achievement, the course will put more emphasis on teaching students how to communicate in certain situations.
- Student interest will be maintained through texts and materials which deal with subjects of interest to this age group, rather than using a textbook geared towards college-level learners. Elements of surprise, suspense and humor will also serve to arouse and maintain interest. Students will be encouraged to contribute to the course material by creating skits, stories, visuals, games or other materials, and student-made elements will be incorporated in the course.
- The possibility of using Total Physical Response Storytelling, a method which reportedly results in high student interest and achievement, will be explored.

To make the course more financially attractive to schools:

- Since satellite broadcasts are expensive to produce and to receive, and two-way video requires either special networks which are limited in extension (e.g. fiber optics) or are expensive to implement (commercial video conferencing), other possibilities for the delivery of the distance instruction will be explored. This will include streamed video over the Internet, and video clips which can be downloaded or be available on CD and which can be watched by individual students on a computer or as a class through a TV monitor connected to the computer.

Some of these changes are outlined in a letter to schools currently enrolled in the German by Satellite program, which has been included in Appendix H. Ongoing research will be necessary to find if these changes will result in increased student interest and

achievement. It is advisable to conduct surveys of teachers and students at the beginning and at the end of each school year to gauge expectations and experiences. This future research should include classroom observations and interviews in addition to the surveys. Student achievement will be measured using a national German test. It is advisable to conduct this research over a number of years in order to gain data for distance education from a longitudinal study.

Distance education has great potential, both for increasing course offerings at smaller schools and for subjects such as the lesser-taught languages. Strategies which address the difficulties the German by Satellite course is experiencing can lead to greater insights into the workings of a promising mode of education. If the recommendations outlined above result in a greater student interest and achievement and in increased enrollment for the German by Satellite course, a number of guidelines for successful distance learning programs in general can be developed. If this is the case, then in the interest of a mode of education which until now is still characterized by a certain amount of territoriality, these findings and guidelines should be made accessible to the public.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chastain, K. (1988). Developing second-language skills: Theory and practice. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Clifford, R. C. (1990). Foreign languages and distance learning: The next best thing to being there. (Report No. EDO-FL-90-08). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 327066).

Davis, J. N. (1988). Distance education and foreign language education: Towards a coherent approach. Foreign Language Annals, 21, 547-550.

Draper, J. B., et al. (1996). Foreign language enrollments in United States institutions of higher education: Fall 1994 summary report. Foreign Language Annals, 29, 303-306.

Finn, J. D. (1998). Taking foreign languages in high school. Foreign Language Annals, 31, 295-299.

Glisan, E. W., Dudt, K. P., and Howe, M. S. (1998). Teaching Spanish through distance education: Implications of a pilot study. Foreign Language Annals, 31, 48-66.

Grittner, F. M. (1969). Teaching foreign languages. New York: Harper & Row.

Grittner, F. M. (1990). Bandwagons revisited: A perspective on movements in foreign language education. In D. W. Birckbichler (Ed.), New perspectives and new directions in foreign language education (pp. 9-42). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

Hobbs, V. M., and Osburn, D. E. (1988). Distance learning evaluation study, phase I. A study of North Dakota and Missouri schools implementing German I by Satellite. Denver: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory.

Hobbs, V. M., and Osburn, D. E. (1989). Distance learning evaluation study, report II: An inter- and intra-state comparison. A study of North Dakota and Missouri

schools implementing German I by Satellite. Denver: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory

Hobbs, V. M. (1990). Distance learning in North Dakota: A cross-technology study of the schools, administrators, coordinators, instructors, and students. Two-way interactive television, audiographic tele-learning, and instruction by satellite. Denver: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Lab., Inc.

Imel, S. (1998). Distance learning: Myth and realities. Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 426 213).

Kelly, L. G. (1969). 25 centuries of language teaching. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Krammer, A. (1997). Undue process: The untold story of America's German alien internees. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Krashen, S. D. & Terrell, T. (1983). The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom. Hayward, CA: Alemany Press.

Kubota, R. (1999). Learning Japanese via satellite in an American high school: a case study. Foreign Language Annals, 32, 329-341.

Love, J.F. (1985). A study of why foreign language students do not take German in schools where it is offered in Tennessee (Doctoral dissertation, Tennessee State University, 1985). Dissertation Abstracts International, 48, 2798A.

Marsh, C. J. & Willis, G. (1999). Curriculum. Alternative approaches, ongoing issues. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Minert, R. P. (1992). Factors Influencing Enrollment in Public High School German Courses: Results of a National Survey. Unterrichtspraxis, 25, 173-183.

National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (1996). Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21st Century. Lawrence, Kansas: Allen Press.

Omaggio Hadley, A. (1993). Teaching language in context. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Perraton, H. (1981). A theory for distance education. Prospects, XI, 13-24.

Phillips, J. K. (1990). Language instruction in the United States: Policy and planning. In D. W. Birckbichler (Ed.), New perspectives and new directions in foreign language education (pp. 45-75). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

Ray, B., and Seely, C. (1997). Fluency through TPR Storytelling. Berkeley, CA: Command Performance Language Institute.

Reid, J. R. (1961). An exploratory survey of foreign language teaching by television in the United States. In Modern Language Association of America (Eds.), Reports of surveys and studies in the teaching of modern foreign languages (pp. 197-212). New York.

Rhodes, N.C., and Branaman, L.E. (1999). Foreign language instruction in the United States: A national survey of elementary and secondary schools. Language in Education: Theory and Practice, 93. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 434532).

Schlosser, C. A., and Anderson, M. L. (1994). Distance education: Review of the literature. Washington: Association for Educational Communications and Technology.

Simon, P. (1980). The tongue-tied American. New York: Continuum.

Tatlock, L. (2000). Maintaining the momentum: The transition from high school to college. AATG Newsletter, 36, 9.

Watzke, J. (1994). Why don't students study Russian? (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, November 18-20, 1994) (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 378 812)

Wohlert, H., and Wohlert, H. (1992). German by Satellite: Equal access to quality education. Education Satellite Network 1992 Program Guide, 5-7. Columbia, MO: ESN Star Schools Clearinghouse.

Zeydel, E. H. (1961). The teaching of German in the United States from colonial times to the present. In Modern Language Association of America (Eds.), Reports of surveys and studies in the teaching of modern foreign languages (pp. 285-308). New York.

NOTES

(1) For instance, in 1987 Dr. Wohler received the "National Exemplary Award in Education Technology" awarded by the National Rural and Small School Consortium; in 1990 he was the first inductee in the TeleConference Magazine's Hall of Fame; and in 1997 he was honored with the Life-Time Achievement Award by the United States Distance Learning Association.

(2) That is not to say that teaching should solely rely on intuition or other individual factors. Every teacher whose prime objective it is to make learning a successful experience for his or her students will want to know as much as possible about theory and research in the field in order to have a large repertoire with which specific situations can be met.

(3) An recent example is Stanley Aronowitz' guest lecture "Creating True Higher Education" at Oklahoma State University in March 2001.

(4) Questionnaires were not mailed to all 501 students enrolled because of the cost factor - mailing the questionnaires and providing a business reply envelope for each to be mailed back anonymously.

(5) This may be due to the fact that in general, students are more critical of school than teachers.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE 1 - ADMINISTRATORS

Questionnaire 1 - Administrators

Research Project: Strengths and Weaknesses of the German Online Distance Learning Program
I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

A. What is your position at the school? _____

B. How many students attend your school? _____

C. Which grades are offered at your school? _____

D. Which foreign languages are offered? _____

1. Why did/do you want to offer German at your school?

If you mark more than one reason please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ We wanted to offer some foreign language.
- ☐ We wanted to increase our course offerings.
- ☐ There were some students interested in studying German.
- ☐ There was some interest among parents.
- ☐ We wanted to offer German because of some special interest in our community (heritage, German business, tourism, etc.).
- ☐ We felt that German is an important language to learn.
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Why did you choose a distance learning course rather than a traditional classroom course?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our school had difficulties finding a classroom teacher for German.
- ☐ There were not enough students interested in German to warrant hiring a teacher.
- ☐ Distance learning courses offer better quality instruction than traditional classroom courses.
- ☐ We had the technology available and wanted to put it to use.
- ☐ This was the best solution from a financial standpoint.
- ☐ Other: _____

3. Are there other distance learning courses currently offered at your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in which subjects? _____

4. What were your reasons for choosing the German Online program over other distance learning providers?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ The program had been recommended to us by _____.
 - ☐ The program was readily available.
 - ☐ The program had been around for a number of years.
 - ☐ The program sounded like it would meet our needs.
 - ☐ We knew of another school which was using the program.
 - ☐ Other: _____
-

5. Where did you get information about the program?

- ☐ from a brochure or other written material.
 - ☐ through the Internet.
 - ☐ from someone who was using the program.
 - ☐ at a conference.
 - ☐ other: _____
-

6. What are your expectations for the German Online program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ The program will provide instruction which we would not otherwise be able to offer.
 - ☐ The program will create as little stress as possible for our teachers and students.
 - ☐ The program will use sound instructional methods.
 - ☐ Our students will learn as much with this program as with a regular classroom teacher.
 - ☐ Students will like this program because of the use of computers and the Internet.
 - ☐ The program will require extra effort by teachers and students.
 - ☐ The program will be appreciated by parents.
 - ☐ The distance learning situation will create a somewhat impersonal atmosphere.
 - ☐ Other: _____
-

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE 1 - TEACHERS

Questionnaire 1- Teacher/Facilitators

I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

A. How many students attend your school? _____

B. Which grades are offered at your school? _____

C. Which foreign languages are offered? _____

1. Who made the decision that you would be the teacher-facilitator for the German Online course?

☐ I did

☐ the principal

☐ the superintendent

☐ the school board

☐ Other: _____

2. Have you worked as a teacher-facilitator for a distance learning course before?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, for what subject(s)? _____

3. What is your opinion of distance learning courses in general?

Please mark all answers which you think apply.

☐ They are an emergency measure when a regular classroom teacher cannot be hired.

☐ They are a trend of the future: eventually most instruction will be done through distance learning.

☐ They cause additional stress for teachers and students.

☐ The quality of instruction offered by distance learning courses is as good as that of a regular classroom instruction.

☐ The quality of different distance learning courses varies greatly.

☐ Other: _____

4. What do you think were the main reasons for your school to choose a distance learning program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

☐ Our school had difficulties finding a classroom teacher for this subject.

☐ There were not enough students interested in this subject to warrant hiring a teacher.

☐ We had the technology available and wanted to put it to use.

☐ This was the best solution from a financial standpoint.

☐ I do not know.

☐ Other: _____

5. Do you enjoy being a teacher-facilitator for this program?

- ☐ No, not really.
- ☐ Occasionally.
- ☐ Most of the time.
- ☐ Yes, very much.

What are some aspects you do or do not like about the program?

6. What are your expectations for the *German Online* program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ The program will provide instruction which we would not otherwise be able to offer.
- ☐ The program will create as little stress as possible for our teachers and students.
- ☐ The program will use sound instructional methods.
- ☐ Our students will learn as much with this program as with a regular classroom teacher.
- ☐ Students will like this program because of the use of computers and the Internet.
- ☐ The program will require extra effort by teachers and students.
- ☐ The program will be appreciated by parents.
- ☐ The distance learning situation will create a somewhat impersonal atmosphere.
- ☐ Other: _____

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE 1 - STUDENTS

Questionnaire 1 - Students

Research Project: Strengths and Weaknesses of the German Online Distance Learning Program

I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. My decision to participate or not to participate will not affect my grade for this course in any way. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

1. Why did you decide to enroll in the German Online course?

You can mark more than one answer.

- ☐ I thought it would be something different.
- ☐ I like working with computers and the Internet.
- ☐ I wanted to learn German.
- ☐ My friend enrolled in the program.
- ☐ Our counsellor recommended it.
- ☐ I know someone who had taken this course before and he/she liked it.
- ☐ I wanted to fulfill a language requirement for college.
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Have you taken any other distance learning course before?

Yes

No

☐☐

If yes, for what subject(s)? _____

3. What do you think were the main reasons for your school to choose a distance learning program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our school had difficulties finding a classroom teacher for this subject.
- ☐ There were not enough students interested in this subject to warrant hiring a teacher.
- ☐ Distance learning courses offer better quality instruction than traditional classroom courses.
- ☐ We had the technology available and wanted to put it to use.
- ☐ This was the best solution from a financial standpoint.
- ☐ I do not know.
- ☐ Other: _____

4. What are your expectations for the German Online program?

You can mark more than one answer.

- ☐ We will work more with computers than in a regular classroom.
- ☐ The course will be more difficult than regular courses with a classroom teacher.
- ☐ This course will require about the same amount of effort from me as a regular course with a classroom teacher.
- ☐ I am going to enjoy this course.
- ☐ This course is going to be easy.
- ☐ This will be a valuable experience for me.
- ☐ This course will be more impersonal than a regular classroom course.

Other: _____

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE
FORMER SCHOOLS, ADMINISTRATORS

Questionnaire - Former Schools, Administrators

Research Project: Strengths and Weaknesses of the German Online Distance Learning Program
I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

A. What is your position at the school? _____

B. How many students attend your school? _____

C. Which grades are offered at your school? _____

D. Which foreign languages are offered? _____

1. Why did you want to offer German at your school?

If you mark more than one reason please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ We wanted to offer some foreign language.
- ☐ We wanted to increase our course offerings.
- ☐ There were some students interested in studying German.
- ☐ There was some interest among parents.
- ☐ We wanted to offer German because of some special interest in our community (heritage, German business, tourism, etc.).
- ☐ We felt that German is an important language to learn.

Other: _____

2. Why did you choose a distance learning course rather than a traditional classroom course?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our school had difficulties finding a classroom teacher for German.
- ☐ There were not enough students interested in German to warrant hiring a teacher.
- ☐ Distance learning courses offer better quality instruction than traditional classroom courses.
- ☐ We had the technology available and wanted to put it to use.
- ☐ This was the best solution from a financial standpoint.

Other: _____

3. What were your expectations for the German Online program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ The program would provide instruction which we would not otherwise be able to offer.
- ☐ The program would create as little stress as possible for our teachers and students.
- ☐ The program would use sound instructional methods.
- ☐ Our students would learn as much with this program as with a regular classroom teacher.
- ☐ Students would like this program because of the use of computers and the Internet.
- ☐ The program would require extra effort by teachers and students.
- ☐ The program would be appreciated by parents.
- ☐ The distance learning situation would create a somewhat impersonal atmosphere.
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Which of your expectations were not met through the German Online/German by Satellite program?

5. What were your reasons for discontinuing the German Online/German by Satellite program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our students did not like it.
- ☐ It put too much stress on our teachers.
- ☐ We had the opportunity to hire a classroom foreign language teacher.
- ☐ There was not enough interest in German among our students.
- ☐ Parents requested that we teach Spanish rather than German.
- ☐ The program did not fulfill our expectations.
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Is German currently taught at your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Are there any distance learning courses currently offered at your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in which subjects? _____

APPENDIX E
QUESTIONNAIRE
FORMER SCHOOLS, TEACHERS

Questionnaire - Former Schools, Teachers

Research Project: Strengths and Weaknesses of the German Online Distance Learning Program
I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

A. How many students attend your school? _____

B. Which grades are offered at your school? _____

C. Which foreign languages are offered? _____

1. Why did you want to offer German at your school?

If you mark more than one reason please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ We wanted to offer some foreign language.
- ☐ We wanted to increase our course offerings.
- ☐ There were some students interested in studying German.
- ☐ There was some interest among parents.
- ☐ We wanted to offer German because of some special interest in our community (heritage, German business, tourism, etc.).
- ☐ We felt that German is an important language to learn.
- ☐ I do not know.

Other: _____

2. Why did your school choose a distance learning course rather than a traditional classroom course?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our school had difficulties finding a classroom teacher for German.
- ☐ There were not enough students interested in German to warrant hiring a teacher.
- ☐ Distance learning courses offer better quality instruction than traditional classroom courses.
- ☐ We had the technology available and wanted to put it to use.
- ☐ This was the best solution from a financial standpoint.
- ☐ I do not know.

Other: _____

3. What were your expectations for the German Online program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ The program would provide instruction which we would not otherwise be able to offer.
- ☐ The program would create as little stress as possible for our teachers and students.
- ☐ The program would use sound instructional methods.
- ☐ Our students would learn as much with this program as with a regular classroom teacher.
- ☐ Students would like this program because of the use of computers and the Internet.
- ☐ The program would require extra effort by teachers and students.
- ☐ The program would be appreciated by parents.
- ☐ The distance learning situation would create a somewhat impersonal atmosphere.
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Which of your expectations were not met through the German Online/German by Satellite program?

5. What were your school's reasons for discontinuing the German Online/German by Satellite program?

If you mark more than one answer please number the items in order of their importance to you with "1" being the most important.

- ☐ Our students did not like it.
- ☐ It put too much stress on our teachers.
- ☐ We had the opportunity to hire a classroom foreign language teacher.
- ☐ There was not enough interest in German among our students.
- ☐ Parents requested that we teach Spanish rather than German.
- ☐ The program did not fulfill our expectations.
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Is German currently taught at your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Are there any distance learning courses currently offered at your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in which subjects? _____

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE 2 - TEACHERS

Questionnaire 2- Teacher/Facilitators

I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

1. After working with this program for almost a year, what is your opinion of the *German Online program*?

You can mark more than one answer.

- ☐ The program was successful for our students.
 - ☐ The program was not successful for our students, because _____
 - ☐ The program used sound instructional methods.
 - ☐ Our students have learned as much with this program as in a regular class.
 - ☐ The program required extra effort by teachers and students.
 - ☐ The distance learning situation created a somewhat impersonal atmosphere.
- Other: _____

2. How do you feel about some of the components of the course? (Helpful/not helpful, boring/interesting, good/bad, could be better ...)

The Videotapes	_____
The Textbook	_____
The Instructors	_____
The Computer Exercises	_____

3. What would you change about the course?

APPENDIX G
QUESTIONNAIRE 2 - STUDENTS

Questionnaire 2 - Students

Research Project: Strengths and Weaknesses of the German Online Distance Learning Program

I have read the accompanying letter and understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. My decision to participate or not to participate will not affect my grade for this course in any way. By filling out this questionnaire I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Today's Date: _____

1. After having taken almost a year of the *German Online* class, what are your feelings about the course?

You can mark more than one answer.

- ☐ We worked more with computers than in a regular classroom.
- ☐ The course was more difficult than a regular course with a classroom teacher.
- ☐ This course required about the same amount of effort from me as a regular course with a classroom teacher.
- ☐ I enjoyed this course.
- ☐ I did not enjoy this course.
- ☐ This course was easy.
- ☐ This was a valuable experience for me.
- ☐ This course was more impersonal than a regular classroom course.

Other: _____

2. How do you feel about some of the components of the course? (Helpful/not helpful, boring/interesting, good/bad, could be better ...)

The Videotapes _____

The Textbook _____

The Instructors _____

The Local Teacher _____

The Computer Exercises _____

3. What would you change about the course?

APPENDIX H

FLYER LISTING CHANGES

TO THE GERMAN ONLINE PROGRAM

Getting ready for a new school year!

Based on the questionnaires we sent out during this last school year, we are making the following changes to our course:

- ⊗ There will be a short training course for the local teacher/facilitator available as part of the program. This component will give teachers some information about the structure of the course, their tasks and responsibilities, help provided through the German Online office, and a basic introduction to the German language.
- ⊗ The main objective of our course will be to enable students to communicate in the language. For this purpose, the material will focus on speaking situations and communicative skills.
- ⊗ Regularly scheduled weekly phone sessions with groups of five to six students will be a fixed component of our course. During these sessions students will practice with one of the instructors over a speaker phone.
- ⊗ Students will receive some general instruction at the beginning of the course on the special elements of distance education and the higher demands it places on student responsibility and autonomy. In order to set realistic expectations, students will also learn at the beginning of the course what proficiency levels can be achieved in a foreign language in what time frame.
- ⊗ The video component will be revised: we will offer short video clips with information and activities on the students' interest level which can be viewed over the Internet or on a CD.
- ⊗ We will use texts and materials which deal with subjects of interest to this age group, incorporating elements of surprise, suspense and humor.
- ⊗ Students will be encouraged to contribute to the course material by creating stories, visuals, games and other materials, and student-made elements will be incorporated in the course.

Please let us know if you have any questions.
We thank you for your contribution to a successful school year and look forward to working with you again in the fall.



APPENDIX I
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 11/6/01

Date: Tuesday, November 07, 2000

IRB Application No. ED0138

Proposal Title: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM
"GERMAN BY SATELLITE/GERMAN ONLINE" AS SEEN BY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Principal
Investigator(s):

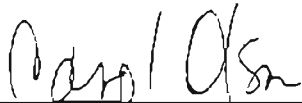
Sabine Lewis
302 Gunderson
Stillwater, OK 74078

Nadine Olson
228 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Expedited (Spec Pop)

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature



Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

Tuesday November 07 2000

Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.



Sabine Lewis

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN A HIGH SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE: THE CASE OF "GERMAN BY SATELLITE"

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Westerland, Germany, on July 31, 1952.

Education: Graduated from *Gymnasium Sylt*, Westerland, in May 1971; received *Staatsexamen für das Höhere Lehramt* (degree required to teach at the upper levels of a German college-preparatory school) from Hamburg University in March 1976; completed studies required for teacher certification at University of Central Oklahoma in June 1994. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Curriculum and Instruction at Oklahoma State University in June 2001.

Experience: Teaching Assistant to Professor Borck, Hamburg University, 1974 to 1976; tax accountant for City of Slaton, Texas, 1977 to 1984; staff accountant at law offices 1985 to 1989; self-employed accountant 1989 to 1992; bookkeeper, 1992 to 1995; adjunct professor for German at Oklahoma City Community College, 1994 to 1995; specialist for satellite instruction, German by Satellite program at Oklahoma State University, 1995 to 1999; coordinator of German by Satellite program, 1999 to present.

Professional Memberships: Oklahoma Foreign Language Teachers' Association (Secretary, 1999 to present), Oklahoma Chapter of American Association of Teachers of German (President, 2000 to present).

