

# Training the Online Language Teacher



*Elizabeth Plummer, Ph.D.*  
*elizabethplummer00@gmail.com*

*2018 CALICO Conference*  
*June 1, 2018*

# BACKGROUND



“The growth of distance enrollments has been relentless.  
(Seaman, 2018)

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE COURSES - 2012-2015



Relatively little is known about  
online language educators  
training and experiences.  
(Murphy-Judy & Johnshoy, 2017, White, 2014)

Instructors are critical for the  
success of online language  
programs.  
(Guan & Stanford, 2016)



(Allen & Seaman, 2017)

# Purpose



Background

Experiences

Training

Challenges

Recommendations





# METHOD

- 40 item online survey
- Comprehensive criterion sampling
  - All grade levels
  - All languages
  - Current online language teacher
- Posted on listserves and direct emails
- N=264





# DEMOGRAPHICS

## ● All grade levels

- 63.7% Higher education
- 36.3% preK-12

## ● 20 languages

- 82.9% commonly taught languages
- 17.1% LCTL

## ● 20 countries

- 88% from the U.S.

## ● 90.4% master's degree+

## ● 50.8% 11+ years of teaching experience

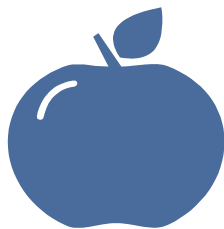
- 59.8% 5 or less years of online teaching experience



# ONLINE LANGUAGE TEACHING PRACTICE AREAS

adapted from Zweig et al. (2015)

1. Technology
2. Facilitation
3. Online course development
4. Onlinecourse customization
5. Assessment and data use
6. Managing course



7. Assistive technology
8. Digital etiquette
9. Professional practice
10. Online pedagogy
11. Online language pedagogy

# CHALLENGES

## TECHNOLOGY

- Navigating the technology (63.8%)
- Using multiple forms of media (67.1%)
- Using collaboration tools (69.4%)
- Helping students with technology (76.8%)
- Keeping up with changing technology (74.2%)

## ONLINE LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

Understanding best practices for teaching language online (75.7%)

## MANAGING COURSE

Getting students to complete assignments (77.1%)





# TRAINING TO HELP WITH CHALLENGES

to a great extent



structured training

to some extent



unstructured training

online language pedagogy



structured training



# Training Recommendations



# SKILL AREAS

## During Formal Education

- Online language pedagogy (68.3%)
- Online pedagogy (66.5%)
- Technology (62.4%)

## After formal education but prior to teaching online

- Online course development (61.9%)
- Online course customization (58.7%)

## While teaching online

- All areas between 35% and 45%





*We receive many opportunities for online professional development [at my institution], but you brought up a good point about receiving online “language” instruction. That would be a great course and PD to offer.*

*Application of language teaching skills in a classroom is incredibly different to that of an online space, yet only a fraction of time is allocated to the latter.*

*I wish I had more formal training on this teaching style [online language pedagogy] during my teaching education program.*

# CONCLUSIONS



**Include in formal  
training programs**

“[Instructors]...should have the experience of online learning, through a course of some sort that employs best practices (and perhaps more helpfully, another one that DOES NOT). It would be eye opening”

**TECHNOLOGY  
(FOR ONLINE  
TEACHING)**

**ONLINE  
(LANGUAGE)  
PEDAGOGY**



# Johnshoy, TLO CARLA Technology Project

Provide a variety of training opportunities that meet the needs of the target audience.



“It’s a little embarrassing that I have neither received nor sought out comprehensive training by now. It is always my intention to attend online teaching workshops and the semester gets away from me...”



Mariene Johnshoy  
CARLA Technology Project





# FULL STUDY

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (~end June):  
[www.proquest.com/](http://www.proquest.com/)

Open source Iowa Research Online (~mid July):  
<http://ir.uiowa.edu/>

Author: Elizabeth Plummer (2018)  
Email: [elizabethplummer00@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethplummer00@gmail.com)