

Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable Heritage Languages in the United States

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Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable **HLS** in the United States

(Letter to author, Stamford, CT, December 2009)

After World War II the economy throughout Europe was in shambles. In 1953 my grandfather had the opportunity to come to the US ...

... Swiss it is an important part of my identity, and I have passed it on to my children.

.... As someone who works in the education industry on an international scale, it is also important to mention that learning German is also practical from a business standpoint ...

Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable **HL S** in the United States

If immigrant groups want to maintain their homeland languages in the US, where English is dominant, they (themselves) must assist in creating

Capacity/Ability – Opportunity --Desire/Attitude
to secure intergenerational survival for their
now marginal HL

Their efforts deserve credit and support.

German in the USA

(a case study)

Germans were some of the first (since 1609),
most numerous immigrants to the US.

German-speaking immigrants of the past escaped
their homelands.

German-speaking newcomers of today keep in
regular contact with their homelands.

Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable **German** in the United States

Decade	Total Immigration	German immigration	% of total Adams (1993)
1820 – 1829	128,502	5,753	4.5
1830 – 1839	538.381	124,726	23.2
1840 – 1849	1,427.337	385,434	27.0
1850 – 1859	2,814,554	976,072	34.7
1860 – 1869	2,081,261	723,734	34.8
1870 – 1879	2,742,137	751,769	37.4
1880 – 1889	5,248,568	1,445,181	27.5
1890 – 1899	3,694,294	579.072	15.7
1900 - 1909	8,202,388	328,722	4.0
1910- 1919	6,347,380	174,227	2.7
1920- 1929	4,295,510	386,634	9.0
1930- 1939	699,375	119,107	17.0
1940- 1949	856,608	117,506	14.0
1950- 1959	2,499,268	576,905	23.1
1960 - 1969	3,213,749	209,616	6.5
1971- 1980	4,493,000	66,000	1.5
1981- 1988	4,711,000	55,800	1.2
Total	49,753.412	7,028.258	14.1

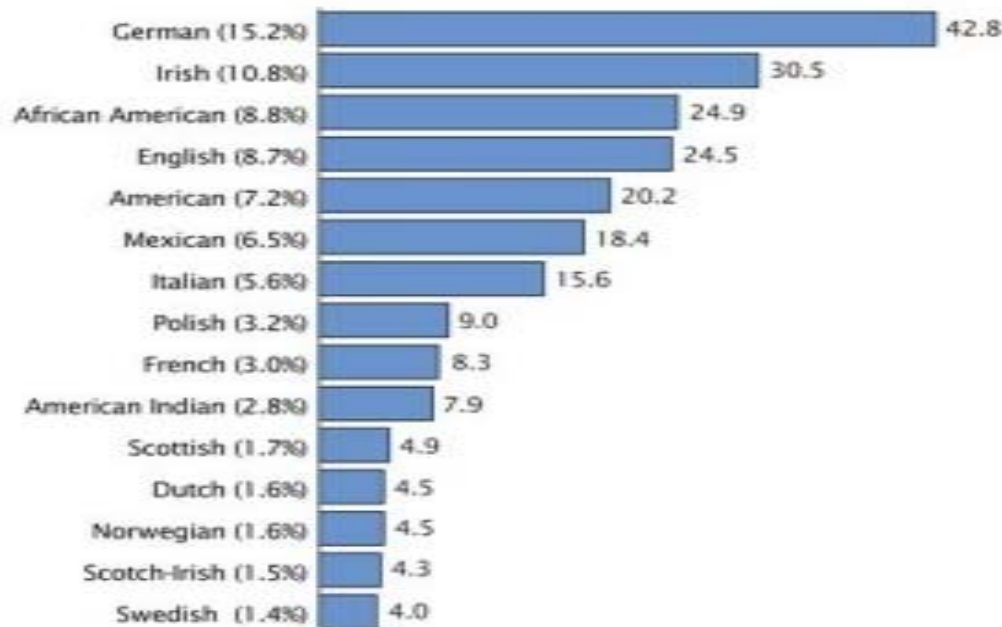
Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable German in the United States

2000 Census: Germans largest ancestry

Figure 2.

Fifteen Largest Ancestries: 2000

(In millions. Percent of total population in parentheses.
Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection,
sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see
www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 special tabulation.

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Census 2000: Languages spoken at home

Ranking	% change 1990 to 2000	Ranking	% change 1990 to 2000
1. Spanish	+ 62%	6. Vietnamese	+ 99%
2. Chinese	+ 53%	7. Italian	- 23%
3. French	- 3%	8. Korean	+ 43%
4. German	-11%	9. Russian	+191%
5. Tagalog	+36%	10. Polish	- 8%

German Communities

1914 World War I

1916 National Council of Defense

Forced abandonment of the use of German in public and private life, closure of schools, newspapers, social centers, associations, clubs

\$25.00 fine for the use of German in the streets

“Patriotic” book burnings, windows smashing, persecution of citizens

German Communities

Freie Presse, Neu Ulm, Jan. 1, 1921

Up to then, 17,903 arrested because of use of German in public. 5,720 convicted and sentenced, 2,924 released without sufficient evidence. Remaining cases had not yet come to trial
(Rippley, 1976)

Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable **German** in the United States

German School Programs

Year	HS Enrollment	Modern FL Enrollment Latin not included	%	HS German Enrollment	%
1890	202.963	33.089	16.3	21.311	10.5
1895	350.099	62.685	17.9	39.911	11.4
1900	519.251	114.765	22.1	74.252	14.3
1905	609.702	199.153	32.7	173.299	22.5
1910	915.061	313.890	34.3	216.869	23.7
1915	1,328.984	477.110	35.9	324.272	2.4
1922	2,230.000	611.025	27.4	13,385	0.6
1928	3,354.000	845.338	25.2	60,381	1.8
1934	5,620.626	1,096.022	19.5	134.897	2.4
1948	5,399,452	7400.800	13.7	43.195	0.8
1958	7,897,232	1,295.944	16.4	93.054	1.2
1961	9,246,925	2,192.207	23.7	184.820	2.0
1965	11,611.197	3.067.613	26.4	328.028	2.8
1970	13.301.883	3.514.053	26.4	410.535	3.1
1976	13.952.058	3.023.495	21.7	352.690	2.5
1985	12.466.506	3.852.030	30.9	312.162	2.6
1994	11.847.469	4.813.031	40.6	325.964	2.8
2000	13.457.780	5.720.661	42.5	283.301	2.1

The German language in the German communities and the enrollment in the schools have never recovered.

The new Germans in the US today, since WW 2, contributed greatly to a revival and the intergenerational survival of their language and, therefore, to the high German language use statistics.



Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable **German** in the United States

New Germans in the US today

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Today's German-speaking newcomers to the US
are in regular contact with their homelands

Having (mostly) come to terms with their history-
induced problematic/negative attitudes toward
their cultural and linguistic identity

Linkage into the ideological, social, cultural
creations of older generations (GIDS 7,6),
go forward/upward again

Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Boston 1874 (Saturday School of Boston, oldest PGLS)

New York 1892

Most PGLSs after WW2

New PGLSs continue to be established

75 PGLSs listed with German Embassy

Most PGLSs members of the

German Language School Conference (1977)

www.germanschools.org



Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Parents create the PGLSs and have 2 desires

1) HL + HC (heritage culture) maintenance

*(...) is an important part of my identity and
have passed it on to my children*

2) German: practicality, occupational
opportunities

*(...) important to mention that learning German
is very practical from a business standpoint...*



Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Parents create and maintain the PGLSs

(incorporated, tax exempt, non-profit)

- Pay tuition, give donations, raise funds
- Volunteer for all administrative positions and tasks
- Drive children on Saturday mornings, up to 1-2 hours
 - Reinforce and support school activities
 - Have their children spend summers in German-speaking Europe



Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Parents want service from their PGLSs

- Continuous professional PreK – 8/12 instruction
(adult education)
 - If possible, two tracks
- Acquisition/maintenance of oral + literacy skills
 - Culture classes, cultural activities
 - Accountability

Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Parents want testing/assessment

- NY schools Regents accredited since 1911
 - AATG high school tests (2-4)
 - APs and SATs
 - Deutsches Sprachdiplom I – II
(language entry requirement for German universities)

No achievement statistics for AP's /SAT's

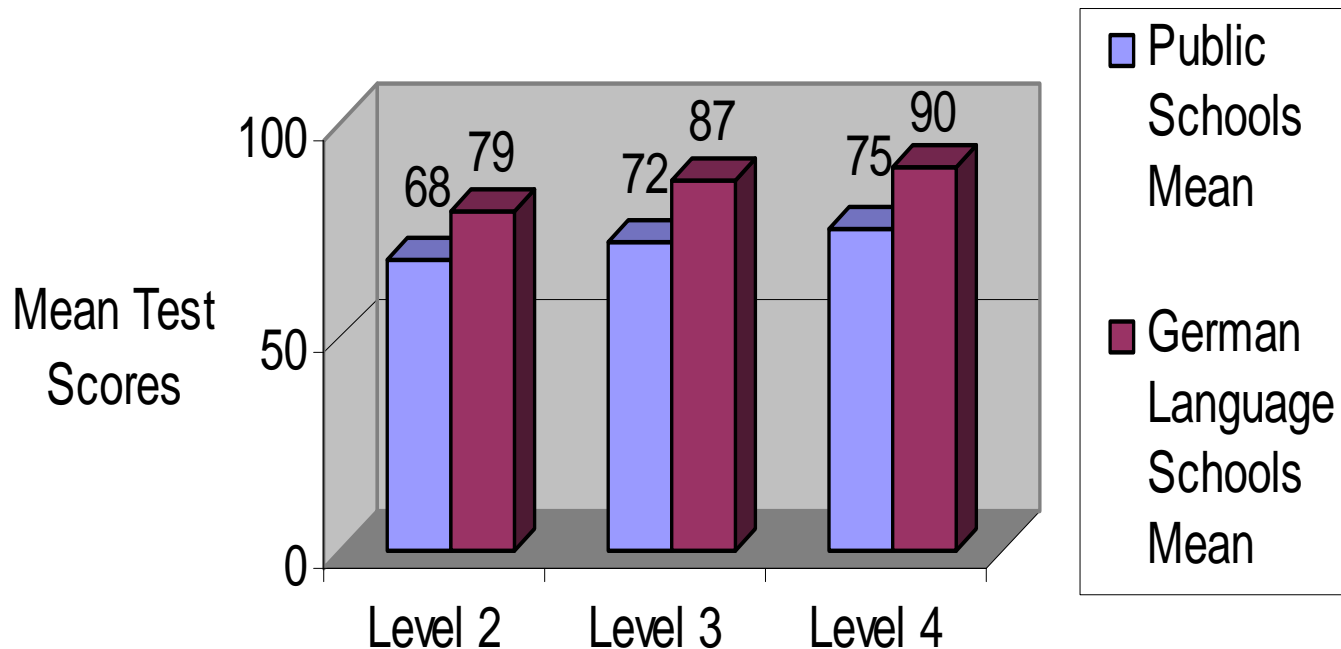
Achievement statistics for AATG's exist

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2008 Testing Program for High School Students

Test Scores of American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)

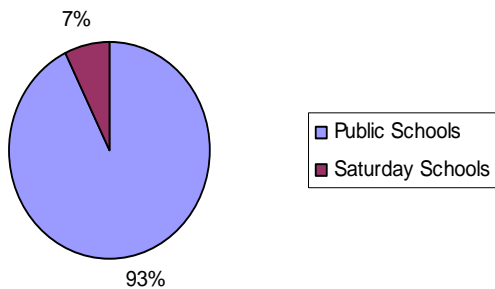
Public Schools versus German Language Schools



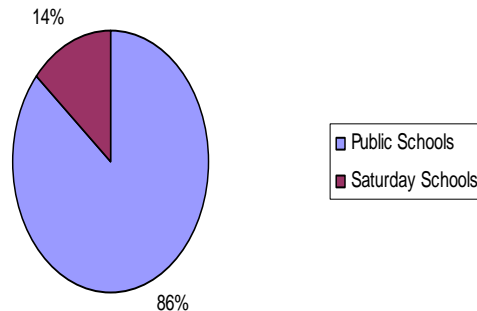
AATG 2008

Comparison of Quantity of Test Takers Public Schools – vs. German Language Schools

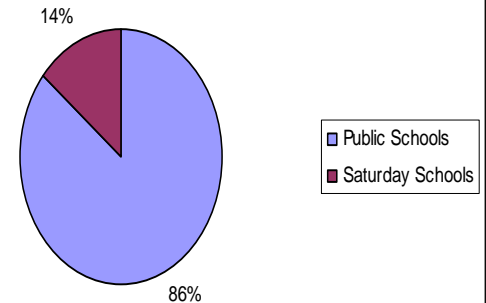
Level 2 Students



Level 3 Students



Level 4 Students



Private German Language Schools (PGLS)

Looking to the Past – Looking Forward

Parents take pride in their schools

German Consul General and President of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, Germany, present Award of Excellence to a PGLS



Private German Language Schools (PGLSs)

Looking to the Past, Looking Forward

Parents support /invigorate PGLSs/
create PGLS microcosm

PGLS microcosm in turn
invigorates the **parents**
strengthens the **PGLS community (Gemeinschaft)**

The German newcomers to the US and their PGLSs have significantly assisted in creating

Capacity

(family -- private education system)

Opportunity, Desire

(contact with the homelands -- success of economy, etc.)

to secure their HL and the intergenerational survival of their marginal L in the US

Yet:

“Little attention, scholarly or popular, has ever been paid to these schools, and it is high time to correct this oversight.”

...Saturday Schools *“may be more effective than has been anticipated and by and large more effective than the schools in the public sector.”*

Ethnic schools/their students *“... not counted”.*

“Overlooking the Elephant in the Zoo”

(i.e. the ECMTSs, 75 % of which are supplementary)

Joshua Fishman et al. (1985)



Neither enrollment nor achievement data appear in national statistics or in academic or professional discussions.

Today, 25 years later, not much has changed.

Conclusion and Suggestions

☐ Recognition of the **Elephant in the Zoo**

☐ Coherent US vision for LM

INCLUDING the Cb-HLSs (*ECMTSSs*)

☐ Targeted new data/statistics regarding LM

INCLUDING the Cb-HLSs (*ECMTSSs*)

☐ Cooperation, partnerships, articulation

INCLUDING the Cb-HLSs (*ECMTSSs*)

☐ Allocation of funds for LM

INCLUDING the Cb-HLSs (*ECMTSSs*)





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Final Recommendation

Most Cb-HLSs (*ECMTSs*) are excluded from the reward system of mainstream schools
i.e. students receive no credits for their academic achievements.
That needs to change as well.

**Developing and Maintaining Vital, Sustainable Heritage
Languages in the United States**

Private German Language Schools (PGLS)

Looking to the Past – Looking Forward