



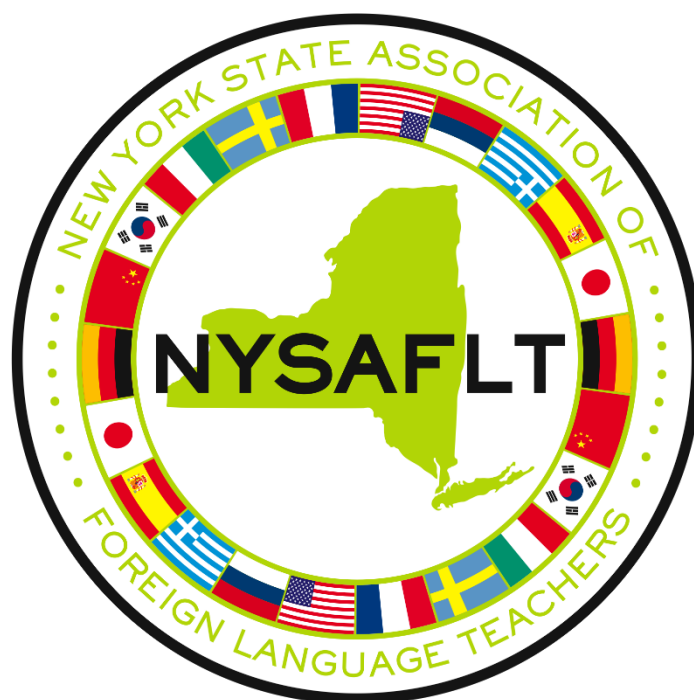
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Letter from the Editor



Dear Colleagues,

Another school year has begun and we as language educators are in full swing! I hope you were able to join us at the NYSAFLT convention in Saratoga Springs in the beginning of November. I know I was reenergized and excited by the innovative work in our field. In particular, I was privileged to have a session to discuss submitting to the language journal. Spoiler: We have some exciting ideas being worked into articles for upcoming editions! Why don't you get in on the fun?

In this edition, we explore the pervasive problem of teacher shortages and its impact on world languages. Dr. Erin Kearney provides a detailed analysis of the problem and how we as language educators can work to recruit and retain the next generation of language educators. (Hint: They are sitting in your classroom right now! Talk with them, invite them into the profession). Our journal then moves into an exploration of the Voltairian Philosophical Tale. Dr. Kathryn Fredericks discusses Voltaire and how to better situate his works when discussing in your language learning environment. We hope these two pieces will give you some things to think about during winter break and inspire you to share your own work with our Language Association Journal!

Wishing you and yours a wonderful holiday season,

Mary Caitlin

Call for Papers

The Language Association Journal is the official peer-reviewed journal of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT). The audience for this journal includes world language educators at all levels, teacher educators, administrators, and others who are interested in world language education. To address the diverse interests, focuses, and needs of this audience, each issue of the Language Association Journal allows for three submission types—scholarly articles, reports, and teacher-to-teacher articles—across multiple categories that are organized by key words, including, but not limited to: advocacy, assessment, culture, curriculum, FLES, instruction, issues in the profession, language development, literacy development, methods, policy, professional development, teacher preparation, technology. While previously the journal was thematic, we now welcome submissions from a range of topics for each edition. The Language Association Journal is published two times per year.

Submission Guidelines

- Publication Status
 - Your manuscript must not be previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- Language
 - Write your manuscript in English.
 - You may include examples written in languages other than English. Italicize these and include the English translation.
- Content
 - Your manuscript may be a scholarly article, a report, or a teacher-to-teacher article.
 - Graphic content such as tables, charts, and photographs, should enhance your written content.
 - Key word categories: advocacy, assessment, culture, curriculum, FLES, instruction, issues in the profession, language development, literacy development, methods, policy, professional development, teacher preparation, technology.
 - Present content that is appropriate for the audience of the Language Association Journal; that is accurate, timely and relevant; that extends or deepens what is currently known on the topic; that represents innovation or new ways of thinking; and that bridges theory and practice.
- Length
 - Limit scholarly articles to no more than 8,000 words.
 - Limit reports to no more than 5,000 words.
 - Limit teacher-to-teacher articles to no more than 3,000 words.
- Writing and Style
 - Write in active voice and with language that can be understood by all audiences of this journal. Define terms that may be unfamiliar to readers.
 - Include only and all works cited in the reference section.

- Use style guidelines outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition* (2009). See <http://www.apastyle.org> for style support.
- Replace all references that would reveal your identity in the manuscript with generic terms such as *Author X* or *School X*.
- Proof-read your manuscript to ensure that it is error free.
- Technical Considerations
 - Prepare the manuscript in a word document (.doc or .docx) using Times New Roman font size 12, double-spaced.
 - Assure that any external links included or hyperlinked in the manuscript are active at the time of submission.
 - Indicate the placement of any graphics (e.g., charts, tables, illustrations, student work) or photographs, within the word document. (You will submit these in separate files.)
 - Remove any evidence of tracked changes that were used in the writing of the manuscript.
- Permissions
 - Photographs
 - Your photographs must have high resolution and in a standard file format (e.g., .jpeg) and be the property of the author.
 - Obtain written consent for publication from anyone recognizable in your photographs. (You will submit this in a separate file.)
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Manuscript Submission Guidelines

- Submit your manuscript and any additional files (e.g., graphics, photographs, consent forms) that have been prepared according to the above guidelines through the submission form on the NYSAFLT webpage.
- In your manuscript submission, provide a brief biography to include at the end of your article or report if it is published.
- Upon receipt of your manuscript submission, the Editor will send you an acknowledgement email and an approximate timeline for review of your submission.

Manuscript Review

- After the Editor has received your manuscript and completed on-line information form, he or she will do an initial review to assure that your submission abides by the stated guidelines.
- If the submission abides by the guidelines, the Editor will forward the manuscripts to one or two members of the Editorial Board for anonymous evaluation and publishing recommendation. If the submission does not abide by the guidelines, the Editor will communicate this information to you.
- When all reviews are returned to the Editor from the Editorial Board, the Editor will make the final decision regarding the manuscript's publication and will notify you about the submission's status.
- All manuscripts accepted for publication are subject to editing.

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Data and Insights on World Language Teacher Shortage in New York State: A Report

Erin Kearney

Abstract: This report presents and synthesizes existing research and data on world language teacher shortage, first at a national level and then more specifically at the state level. New York State data align with national trends in notable ways; however, available state-level data reveal a more nuanced picture. Gathering data on shortage and retention can begin to clarify the sources and scope of world language teacher shortage in localities, like New York State, but the report suggests that several additional forms of data would be desirable in order to generate potential initiatives aimed at addressing shortage.

Keywords: Advocacy, Issues in the Profession, Teacher Preparation

No matter which corner of the profession we work in as world language educators, increasingly we hear stories of teacher shortage. Programs closing when qualified teachers are nowhere to be found, vacancies remaining unfilled for long stretches of time after veteran teachers retire, schools scrambling at the start of each new year to fill positions, sometimes being forced to do so with uncertified teachers or those certified in an area other than world languages. These are common plotlines, ones also supported by the stories we hear in media reporting. A June 2017 remark from Yonkers School Superintendent, Edwin Quedaza, is a familiar refrain: “Foreign languages, it’s almost impossible to find certified teachers -- math and science, still continues to be very difficult” (www.nbcnewyork.com). Teacher educators have stories about shortage too; especially in summer months but continuing well into the academic year, they field numerous requests to recommend recent program graduates who might staff world language positions. But enrollments in teacher preparation programs have declined drastically in recent years, and often, these higher education professionals will tell you that they have few candidates to recommend compared to the volume of inquiries they receive. We are all feeling world language educator shortages in our local contexts, and we routinely share these stories when we get together at professional meetings and conferences. Our individual experiences seem to form a broader narrative of shortage and we get the sense that the problems we perceive in our own settings are perhaps shared across our state, region, and maybe more widely. While the issue of shortage has been examined by scholars and various educational agencies in recent decades, the picture is complex and dynamic, and the finer details of individual states’ situations are not always clearly understood or shared. How bigger picture insights connect to state or local contexts has not been discussed in depth either.

In this report, I first present the broad picture of teacher shortage in the United States as it stands in most recent years. Against this backdrop, I then share data and insights drawn based on these data for the particular case of world languages education, first at the national level and then

in the specific case of New York State (NYS). It is essential to understand the scope of world language teacher shortage on the national stage so that states can gauge the severity of their own shortfalls; information from national study of teacher shortage is also informative for guiding state-level considerations of what might be at the source of shortage in addition to potential avenues for addressing and reversing shortage.

While this report gathers in one place national and NYS data, it is clear that especially at the state level, more systematic record keeping and further research employing qualitative methods would go a long way in illuminating the causes underlying shortage, which are essential to understand for a range of stakeholders in world languages education as they devise strategies for advocacy, planning, and policy.

Data: Scope and sources of teacher shortage

Teacher Shortage on the National Scale.

A thorough review of the research literature reveals that, on the question of teacher shortage, Richard Ingersoll's long-term study of teaching as a profession is a comprehensive resource. Specifically, this scholarship focuses on reasons for turnover, patterns in recruitment and attrition, and variation in teachers' job satisfaction levels (Ingersoll, n.d.; 2001; 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; Ingersoll & May, 2016; Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2014; Ingersoll & Perda, 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). His research, which is based largely on large-scale national data sets collected by the federal government's National Center for Educational Statistics, notably the National Teacher and Principal Survey (formerly named the Schools and Staffing Survey and the Teacher Follow-up Survey), takes into account geographic location, subject area specialty of teachers, and comparison with non-teaching professions. What this work has yielded is a set of insights about teacher shortage on the national scale, which I present in summary form and with accompanying figures and data drawn from Ingersoll's and other scholars' related work:

1. Teaching is a very large profession, with around 4 million total teachers from pre-K through higher education (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). It is therefore notable that at 30% lost over a six-year period, **it has a higher than average turnover rate when compared to other lines of work** (Figure 1). A more typical turnover rate, for nursing or law professions for example, falls at about 19% over the same timeframe.

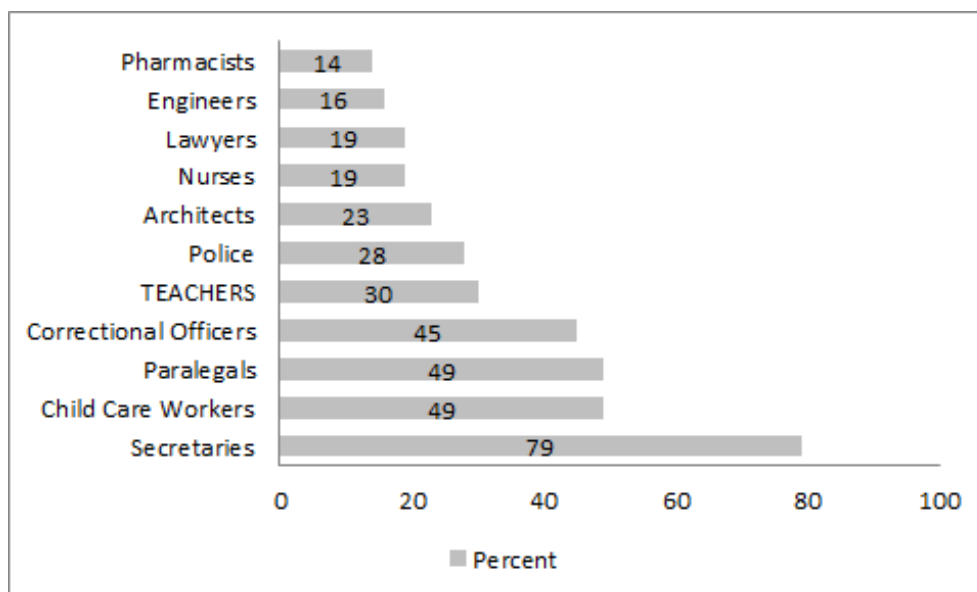


Figure 1. Turnover in a range of professions, including teaching, over a 6-year period, from Ingersoll (2017)

2. **On an annual basis, then, on average the U.S. loses about 16% of the teaching workforce.** Some of these teachers leave their building and others leave the profession entirely. Roughly half of the 16% move to another school while the other half leave teaching altogether (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014).
3. **Demand for teachers in general is on the rise** as baby boomer retirements loom and a more positive economic picture bolsters the teacher labor market. Furthermore, the public school-going population is growing. Husser and Bailey (2014), on behalf of the National Center for Educational Statistics, report a projected national average growth of 7% growth in public elementary and secondary school students between 2011 and 2022 (see Figure 2).

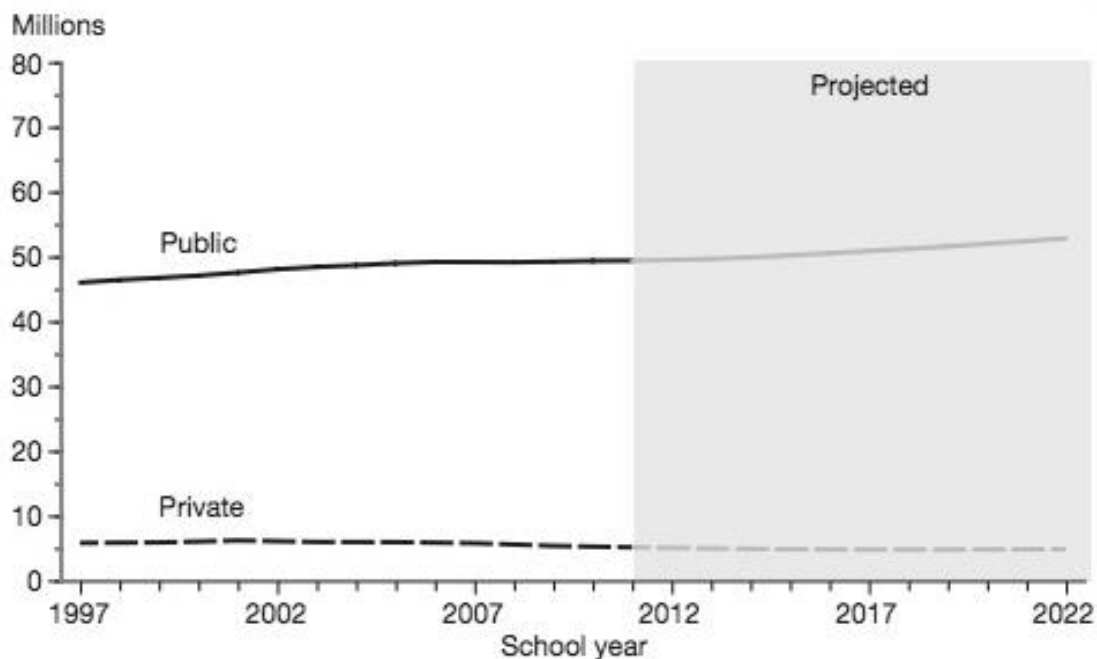


Figure 2. Growth in the school-going population, Husser & Bailey (2014)

4. **Teacher supply, however, is low.** When the economic recession hit in 2008 and in the several years following that, fewer people enrolled in teacher certification programs nationwide. Over a five-year period, Long (2016) reports a 35% nationwide decline in enrollment in teacher preparation programs. Even as the economy rebounds and programs and positions that were eliminated return, there are not enough certified teachers to staff them.
5. **While clearly a supply and demand issue, teacher shortage is also significantly, and perhaps more importantly, an attrition issue.** That is to say that efforts to attract more new teachers and to increase supply to meet demand will only go so far, especially if so many teachers routinely leave the profession every year. Working to attract new teachers *and* working to keep teachers in their positions, especially in early years when they are most likely to leave, is a more reasoned and likely effective approach (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop & Darling-Hammond, 2016).
6. Addressing retention relies on a deep understanding what reasons teachers have for leaving the profession. Ingersoll's work shows that **when teachers leave their positions, it is usually for more than one reason, but at the top of the list among reasons cited is dissatisfaction with working conditions** (not retirement, pursuing other types of work, family/personal reasons or a school's decision to eliminate the position). (See Figure 3).

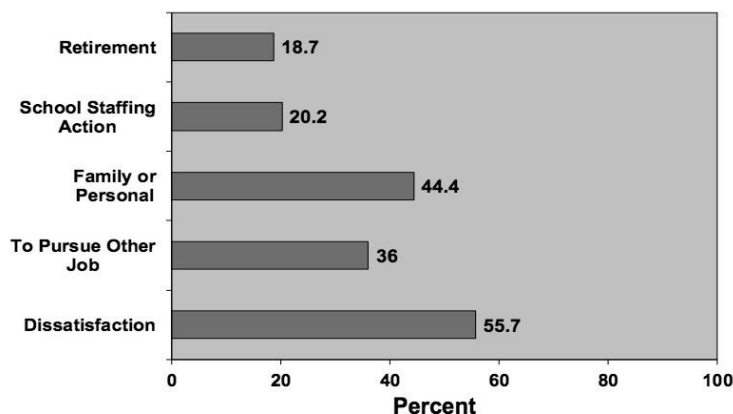


Figure 3. “Job dissatisfaction a leading factor behind teacher turnover Percent public school teachers reporting that various reasons were important for their turnover, 2012-2013,” from Ingersoll (n.d)

7. More specifically, **when teachers leave their positions, they are dissatisfied with relationships with administration, accountability/testing pressures, a lack of autonomy and decision-making authority and classroom intrusions** (See Figure 4).

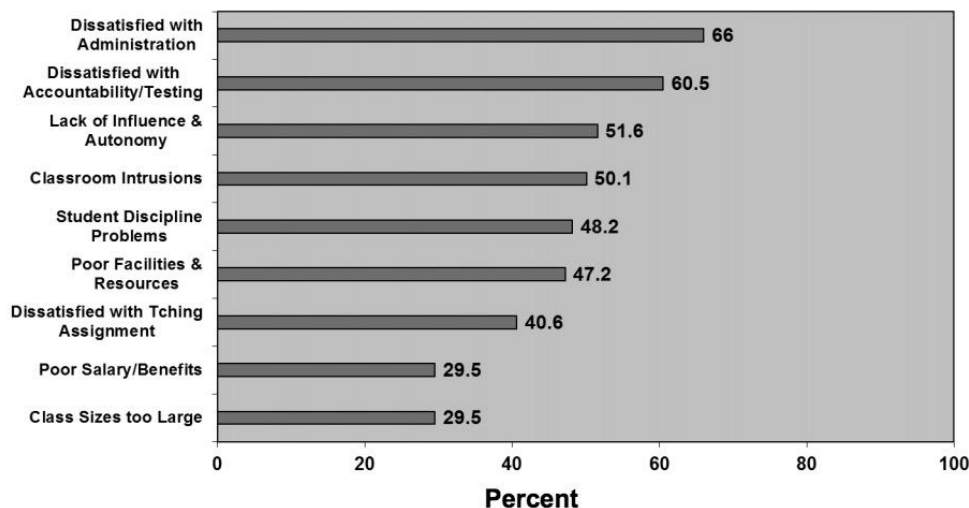


Figure 4. “Teachers’ working conditions are important for turnover: Of those public school teachers who moved or left their school, percent reporting particular sources of dissatisfaction, 2012-2013,” from Ingersoll (n.d.)

8. Attrition among teachers is not uniform across groups. **Teachers in their first years of teaching, in certain content areas, with fewer credentials and in certain under-resourced, high poverty schools are likely to leave at higher rates than other teachers** (Kukla-Acevedo, 2010; Sutchter, Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas, 2016; see Figure 5). Importantly, it is not student demographics (high poverty, higher

percentages of students of color) that drive these higher attrition rates; rather it is how well a school manages the challenges of few resources, high poverty, and strife in the lives of students that shapes whether teachers stay or not (Ingersoll, 2018).

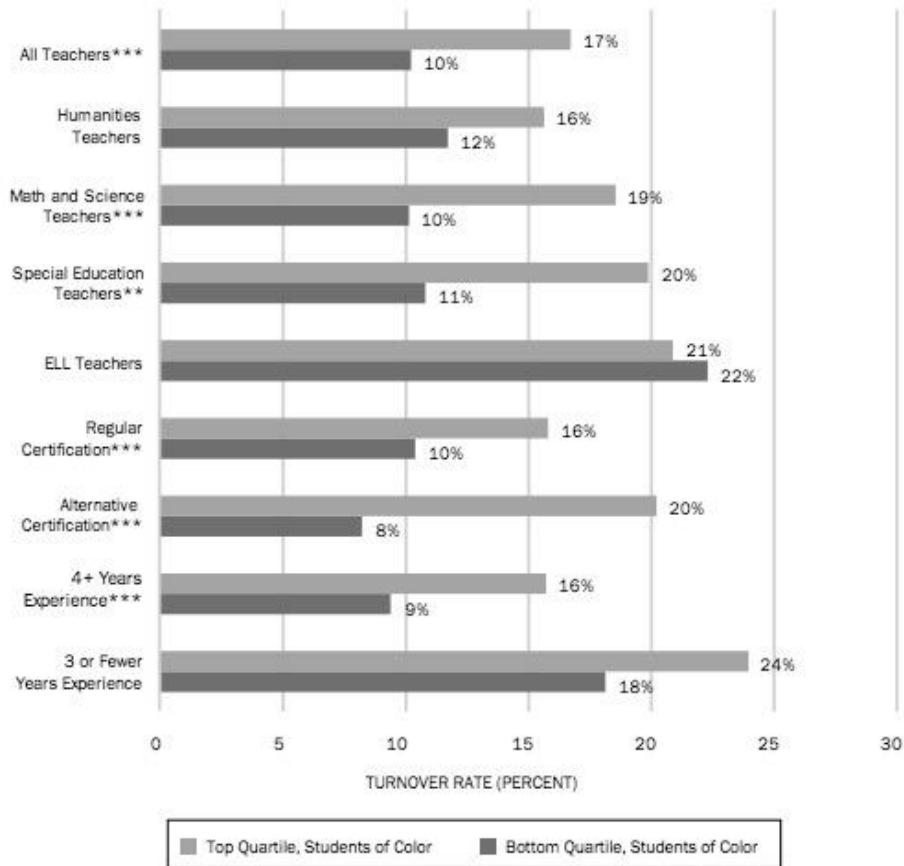


Figure 5. “Teacher turnover by teacher characteristics,” from Sutchter, Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas (2016: 46).

9. There are, of course, **numerous and quite heavy costs associated with the problem of teacher shortage**. Hiring costs time and money (Milanowski & Odden, 2007; Levy et al., 2012; Barnes et al., 2007) and the frequent coming and going of teachers can negatively impact school cohesion (Keesler & Schneider, 2010) as well as any reform efforts and initiatives underway (Smylie & Wenzel, 2003). Teacher shortage can also adversely impact student achievement (Ronfeldt, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2013; Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2014) and additional workload can fall on the shoulders of those teachers who choose to stay (Guin, 2004).
10. While teacher shortage remains a serious challenge, **research uncovering the reasons why teachers leave the profession has produced several promising paths for reversing shortage and better retaining teachers**. Among these are well-designed and implemented teacher induction programs as well as ongoing support (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011). Induction might include activities such as “orientation sessions, faculty collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra

classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and especially, mentoring” (Ingersoll & Strong, 2001: 203). Offering high quality, ongoing professional development opportunities (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2014) and commitments to developing teacher autonomy and decision-making leadership in the school (Guarino, Santibañez, & Daley, 2006; Ingersoll, 2001) also show promise for better retaining teachers.

World Language Teacher Shortage on the National Scale.

Given this national situation of teacher shortage, we might well ask how world language educators fare more specifically. Of the nation’s approximately four million teachers, about 100,000 are world language educators (Ingersoll, 2017). Based on an analysis Ingersoll prepared for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as well as other public national data, the following insights can be drawn with regard to world language educator shortage on the national scale:

1. There is indeed a shortage of world language educators, with 46 of 56 states and territories reporting an official shortage to the Department of Education in 2017. **The scope of shortage then is considerable, and lack of teachers is felt across most of the United States.**
2. **The annual turnover rate for world language educators of roughly 15% is similar to the rate for all teachers.** What this amounts to on a yearly basis is that 15,000 new world language educators enter the profession while another 15,000 teachers either leave their school or leave the profession entirely. (See Figure 6).

Schools Suffer from a Revolving Door of Foreign Language Teachers

(Numbers of Public School Foreign Language Teachers in Transition Into and Out of Schools Before and After 2011-12 School Year)

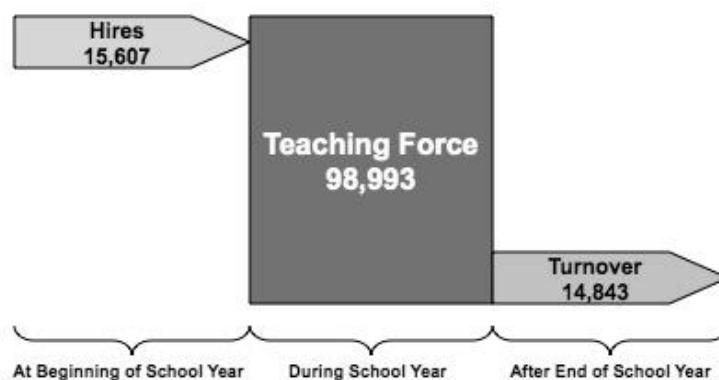


Figure 6. Revolving door of world language educators (Ingersoll, 2017)

3. Recent analysis of the School and Staffing Survey data (Ingersoll, 2018) shows that, **similar to other teachers, the most cited reason for leaving a position or the profession was dissatisfaction** as opposed to retirement, personal reasons, the desire to pursue other work or other reasons. A bit more distinctively from the whole group of

teachers, world language educators also cited salaries and benefits, then classroom intrusions and interruptions and then, with less frequency, lack of influence and autonomy, dissatisfaction with accountability and testing as reasons for leaving their positions. Research also has shed further light on possible factors motivating teachers' choice to leave the world languages education profession. Swanson (2008, 2010, 2012a, 2012b), for instance, has identified a relationship between teachers' low self-efficacy and attrition. More precisely, he found that teachers lacked confidence when it came to addressing culture in the language classroom in particular as well as their ability to handle classroom management.

World language teacher shortage is similar in scope and is rooted in similar sources as shortage in other disciplinary areas. In the face of national shortage, Swanson and Mason (2018) encourage active strategies that go farther than just drawing attention to the shortage issue. Their recommendations are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Strategies suggested by Swanson and Mason (2018) for addressing world language teacher shortage

Stakeholder	Suggested Strategies for Addressing World Language Teacher Shortage
World language teachers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. identifying the most capable students (Darling-Hammond, 2017) with a love of and a propensity for language learning, the first step to recruitment; 2. providing those students with information on becoming a WL teacher and/or putting them in contact with a WL teacher program coordinator in higher education; 3. mentoring preservice teachers to enable them to experience the challenges and opportunities of being a WL teacher firsthand; 4. serving as a volunteer mentor to provide moral and practical support (e.g., resources, advice) to other teachers in the field, particularly those at the early stages of their careers or those who might be struggling and considering leaving the field; and 5. advocating for better working and program conditions that will help WL teaching become a more attractive career option.
Administrators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. systematically developing ways to increase teachers' salaries for high-needs areas such as WLs and attract high-quality applicants; 2. ensuring that WL programs, as a core subject as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), are given the time, resources, and space to facilitate effective teaching and learning; 3. ensuring that WL teachers are given sufficient time to plan effective lessons, including removing burdensome administrative requirements; 4. providing more specialized professional development and networking opportunities for WL teachers instead of generic offerings; and 5. recognizing the efforts of great WL teachers and providing opportunities for them to take on leadership roles in schools and districts.
Parents and community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. advocating for sustained increases in teachers' salaries and improved resources and funding for language teaching; 2. asking school administrators about the details of WL programs and holding them accountable for program quality; 3. creating an advocacy group of like-minded parents, with CPF (2017) providing an example of successful parent-led advocacy; and 4. developing a repository of resources and templates for parents to use in their advocacy efforts

Teacher education providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. providing dedicated training for WL teachers that integrates second language acquisition research and pedagogy and strong language proficiency; 2. providing in-field experiences with quality and qualified WL teachers so that teachers have multiple opportunities to apply their developing skills and knowledge; 3. encouraging the selection of WL teacher education applicants who have a vocational personality pattern that is associated with efficacious teaching (Swanson, 2013); 4. developing more proactive initiatives for the recruitment of appropriate candidates to WL education courses; and 5. encouraging preservice teachers to engage with local and national teachers' associations so that they can build a support network before they enter the field.
Professional associations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. providing induction to potential secondary students, such as through the ACTFL/Educators Rising initiative or by offering extracurricular activities such as college visits where secondary students can visit classes and talk with program faculty firsthand about becoming a teacher; 2. developing materials for WL teachers to disseminate and share information with secondary school students who show interest and promise in language teaching; 3. keeping a database of WL teachers with different areas of expertise who can contact each other for support and advice; 4. inviting high school students who have a love and a passion for the language to the state, regional, and national conferences; 5. allowing free membership and conference registration to preservice teachers to encourage future membership and engagement with the wider WL education community; and 6. promoting WL education through the media, and particularly the issue of teacher supply, which at present is represented in a superficial manner in international media (Mason & PoyatosMatas, 2016a)
Policymakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. seeking ways to decrease the cost of becoming a teacher; e.g., the cost is more than \$800 in Georgia (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), of which most is for testing—which does not correlate to teacher effectiveness. 2. funding longitudinal studies and programs that aim to add to the research base and build the supply of WL teachers; 3. looking to other countries and jurisdictions for models of success; 4. making explicit demands of schools in terms of how they implement, fund, and manage WL programs; 5. providing bonuses or subsidies to teachers with the relevant skills and knowledge to move into WL teaching positions; and 6. providing WL teachers with the time to engage in professional development and networking

World Language Teacher Shortage in New York State.

While national data and analyses are informative and state-level shortages are likely to mirror many of the national trends, regional and local factors play an important role in defining the scope and nature of, and eventually responses to, teacher shortage. What a review of data and information about world language teacher shortage in NYS reveals right away is that the type of information available at the state-level differs from national data sets. From state-to-state it is likely that researchers and other interested parties will first need to ascertain what data are routinely collected and piece together the picture of shortage using available resources. In the case of NYS, data collected by the State Department of Education, the teacher's union (NYSUT), the Board of Regents, and news outlets all shed light on the world language teacher shortage situation and yield the following insights:

1. Considering demand for world languages teachers in NYS, **a wave of retirements in conjunction with a growing student population are both likely to drive up demand for new teachers in coming years.** NYSUT's (2017) analysis of state data suggests that

32% of all NYS teachers may retire within the next five years (see Figure 7). While somewhat lower than the projected rate of national average growth in the school-going population, a National Center for Education Statistics 2014 report estimates an increase of about 2% projected between 2011 and 2022 in overall public school enrollments in NYS.

THE IMPACT OF RETIREMENTS

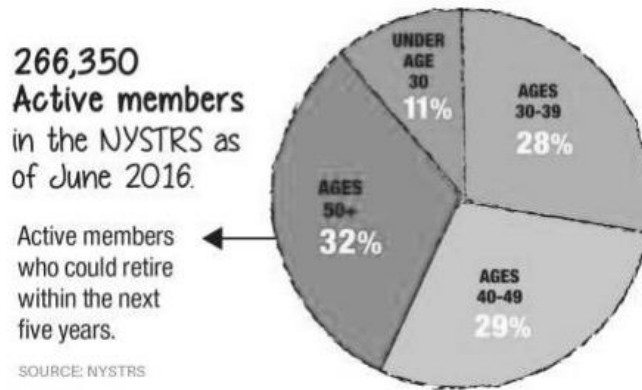


Figure 7. Projected retirements in New York State (NYSUT, 2017)

2. On the question of supply, NYS has faced considerable challenges since the 2008 economic recession. The national average decline in enrollment in teaching preparation programs over the past five years reached 35%. In the State University of New York system, however, enrollment in teacher education programs fell 40% over five years, according to a review of records conducted by USA Today Network's Albany Bureau (www.wgrz.com). The Rockefeller Institute of Government (Gais et al., 2018) reports **overall statewide enrollment in teacher preparation programs in NYS down 49% between 2010 and 2015. NYS, therefore, has shown deeper declines in teacher education program enrollments than other states** and may face a steeper climb in restoring supply.
3. As noted above, **teacher shortage is uneven** across a range of factors. In NYS, one way we can see this unevenness in teacher shortage is in the types of certification that are common versus those areas for which there is persistent shortage. A NYS School Boards Association (2017) report, for instance reveals that overall the state overproduces elementary education certified teachers but under-produces in the areas of bilingual education, career and technical education, and special education. When it comes to world languages education, an unevenness of shortage is also apparent across regions. New York City (NYC), which significantly enrolls 40% of the state's students, shows higher rates of teacher shortage overall and higher percentages of uncertified teachers filling positions when schools attempt to fill gaps. The range of high demand areas is broad in NYC, with arts, bilingual education, English, health education, world languages, reading/literacy, sciences and special education all making the list of shortage areas reported to the U.S. Department of Education for the 2016-2017 year. The "Big Four" areas of the state – Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers – show pronounced shortages in career and technical education, bilingual education, and special education. A NYS School Boards Association report (2017) illuminates further regional particularities

when it comes to world language teacher shortages. Six hundred thirty superintendents across the state received a survey in 2017, 275 completed it (response rate of 44%) and these responses led to creation of the map below in Figure 8. Each region's top five shortage areas as reported by the superintendents are represented. While the map shows differences from region to region when it comes to shortage, some challenges are common. Notably, all but two of the regions reported shortage of world language teachers, and 39% of superintendents statewide report a shortage of world language teachers in their district. (Note: NYC did not respond to this survey so no data were collected for NYC). These range from 22% of superintendents reporting a world language teacher shortage in their districts in Nassau county to a high of 73% in the Genesee-Finger Lakes region.

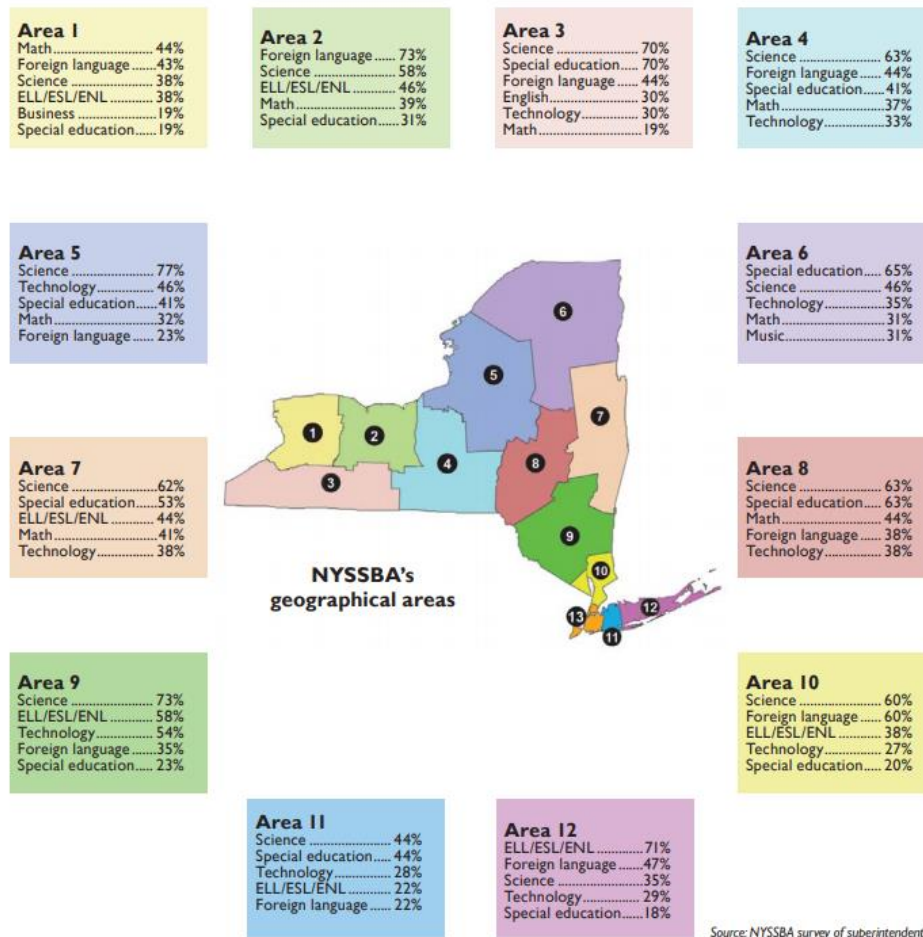


Figure 8. Superintendents' reports of teacher shortage by New York State region and by subject area (Heiser & Bennett, 2017)

- Data on placement rates within two years of completing a preparation program and becoming certified in NYS are revealing indicators of shortage and high demand for world language educators. A 2013 Board of Regents report demonstrates that **world languages showed the highest percentage of placement in the subject area of**

certification for program completers among all subject areas in NYS, contrasted with areas like primary school teaching where there appears to be much more supply than demand. Although languages other than English appears in the second to last column overall in the chart below, 63% of certified program completers are assigned within world languages within two years, whereas the far right bar representing English as a New Language program completers shows only 59% overall assignment to a position in the area of certification because these teachers are more frequently assigned outside of their certification area.

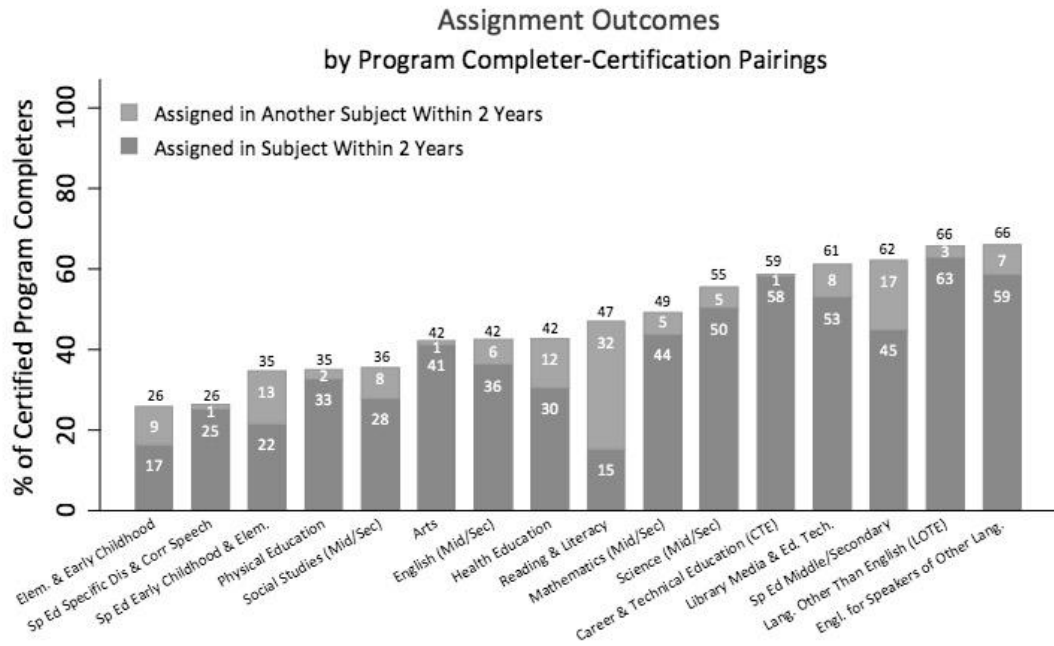


Figure 9. Placement of teachers by certification area (New York State Board of Regents, 2013)

On the whole, existing data point to relatively high demand and low supply of world language educators in NYS, and certain regions show especially pronounced shortage based on reports from superintendents. These would seem to be useful data points as we strategize about how to build capacity, engage in conversation with prospective pre-service teachers about career outlook and as we plan local partnerships between districts and university teacher preparation programs, for example. What the available data are less clear on are trends in retention. We do not know, for example, if NYS world language educators leave their positions and/or the profession at rates mirroring the national average Ingersoll found or if retention is more or less significant of an issue. We do know from NYS Department of Education data on the State Report Card website that between the 2014-15 and the 2015-16 year, there was a 21% turnover rate among teachers with fewer than five years of experience and an 11% turnover rate among all teachers. These annual rates are higher than national annual average turnover that research reports, but these figures only provide information about overall attrition in NYS. They do not clarify the situation of world language teacher attrition specifically.

Furthermore, we know little about whether attrition may vary regionally and locally for world language educators in NYS or by teacher characteristic (certification route, years in the profession, types of available support, etc.). We also know little about what leads world language teachers to stay in or leave their positions. Survey, focus group, and possibly other data would

illuminate these important dimensions further and could productively inform advocacy efforts as well as enhance teacher preparation and ongoing learning and support initiatives led by professional organizations like NYSAFLT.

What next?

As we consider deepening our knowledge of world language educator shortage in NYS through continued data-gathering and more qualitative designs, especially to understand experiences underlying retention and attrition, it is important to draw on the data and insights we currently have at our disposal. Dissemination within the profession – through NYSAFLT meetings, those of local chapters and world language teacher preparation programs and events – is one potentially fruitful avenue as is sharing data and insights with school-, district- and state-level policymakers. Such data can inform planning efforts around teacher preparation experiences, induction initiatives and mentoring for early-career teachers as well as ongoing professional development and support for world language teachers. Notably, sharing shortage data with prospective teachers in high school world languages classrooms, enrolled in language majors at colleges and potential career-changers can clarify what prospects exist.

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Situating the Text: The Place of the Voltairian Philosophical Tale

Kathryn E. Fredericks

Abstract: François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694–1778) is regarded as one of the most prominent writers and philosophers throughout history. Most students will read what is considered to be Voltaire’s *magnum opus*, *Candide, ou l’Optimisme* (1759) (*Candide, or Optimism*) before attending university. Frequently, students will revisit the text in college seminars in different subject areas and courses, such as English, History, Civilization, Humanities, Political Science, and Foreign Languages. Students of French almost always study Voltaire at length at some point in their academic careers, often reading *Candide* in its entirety in the original version in advanced courses, and selections of the original version in intermediate and even introductory courses. *Candide* is considered to be a conte philosophique [philosophical tale]—a literary genre that developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly during the Age of Enlightenment. Neither the text nor the genre were well known in Voltaire’s time, which begs the question: Why is Voltaire’s fame linked specifically to *Candide* and to the conte philosophique, and not to the plethora of other writings spanning multiple genres produced by the great philosophe [philosopher]? Through a close reading of Voltaire and the philosophical tale, this article aims to provide a framework for students embarking on an in-depth study of texts in their versions originales [original versions] by taking the example of Voltaire. Situating the genre in its linguistic, literary, historical, and critical capacities is a valuable approach in mastering the overall comprehension of the text.

Keywords: French Language, French Literature, Enlightenment, Voltaire, Travel

The Enlightenment conceived itself as a critique aimed at changing la façon commune de penser [the common way of thinking], as Diderot (1755) wrote in the article “Encyclopédie” of his *Dictionnaire raisonné*. That purpose was not limited to Europe but spanned several continents. It is thus considered to be “an international movement that included French, English, Scottish, American, German, Italian, Spanish, and even Russian schools” (Kramnick, 1995, p. x). In this connection, Crépon (1996) explored the history of what he called la diversité humaine [human diversity] (p. 23), the diversity existing among people’s customs, languages, and religions, beginning in the context of German and French philosophers, specifically in the eighteenth century with Leibniz and continuing until Hegel. Many studies on modern history commence with a study of the Enlightenment, for it is best known as a revolution of ideas that opened avenues to new forms of knowledge.

Special attention must be paid to the philosophe François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694–1778), for as Leigh (1999) remarked:

Voltaire is the author most responsible for guiding the eighteenth century out of the seventeenth, for giving it new directions while embodying its propensity to look back. Like many of his contemporaries, Voltaire often appreciated the methods of his illustrious predecessors without approving of the conclusions to which those methods led. (Leigh, 1999, pp. 15–16)

Voltaire is often considered as the philosophe most representative of the period, even being referred to as an “apotheosis of the personification of the Enlightenment” (O’Brien, 1997, p. 21). Along with his contemporaries he wrote extensively on politics, religion, science, art, and literature, and used critical reason in his interpretations as a way of fighting what he perceived to be an excessive reliance on religious dogma and superstition. In Voltaire’s opinion, the acceptance of theological inferences in the political sphere had only led to much suffering and injustice throughout history, thus truly inhibiting the advancement of mankind. Hence, he wanted knowledge itself, along with other notions such as happiness and well-being, to be considered chiefly for the purpose of serving the betterment of humanity.

Voltaire’s works have been studied from a variety of perspectives, mostly by literary scholars who focused on his texts in themselves or in comparison with those of his contemporaries, but also by historians of ideas and of philosophy. During his life, Voltaire was mostly celebrated as a magnificent writer of plays and poetry¹. Critics often point out that Voltaire’s *Romans et Contes* [*Novels and Tales*] were not the part of the repertoire that defined him as a great writer and as a philosophe during the Enlightenment, whereas today *Candide, ou l’Optimisme* (1759) is deemed by most critics as Voltaire’s magnum opus. The philosophical tale can be considered a legacy of the Enlightenment, Voltaire being a major (if not the major) contributor to this legacy. As Keener (1983) noted, “It is the best literary gift to posterity of which *Candide* must be the most renowned example” (p. 3). How can we classify the philosophical tale, or the Voltairian philosophical tale? The goal of this paper, then, is to provide a framework for how students could explore original versions of philosophical tales through the lens of space and time. We will use Voltaire as an example of this framework and explore what previous investigations have said of his work. Finally, a set of questions and topics are provided to support educators aiming to explore *Candide* with students.

Increasingly, critics have drawn attention to space as an integral part of the make-up of a fictional story, arguing that “Territorial and topographical aspects of literature have received renewed academic attention within the last decades (also labeled as the ‘spatial turn’ in humanities)” (Piatti, Bär, Reuschel, Hurni, & Cartwright, 2009, p. 3). Brewer (2004) discussed how the eighteenth century, or “the past,” can be thought of as “spatialized.” This is due in part to “an eighteenth century produced in the twenty-first” (p. 175). According to Brewer:

. . . this object of the past is always inseparably linked to a present, through complex operations that allow us to cast our glance back to an anterior moment and another place. It is an object, moreover, that increasingly has become spatialized, and not only because certain kinds of texts have been more privileged over others (travel narratives, for instance, over tragedy). (Brewer, 2004, p. 175)

¹ Some of Voltaire’s more famous tragedies include *Oedipe* (1718), *Zaïre* (1732), *Alzire ou les Américains* (1736), *Le Fanatisme ou Mahomet* (1736), *La Mort de César* (1743), *La Princesse de Navarre* (1745), *L’Orphelin de la Chine* (1755), and *Les Scythes* (1767); and some of his major poems are *La Henriade* (1723), *Le Temple du goût* (1731), *Le Temple de l’amitié* (1732), *Le Poème de Fontenoy* (1745), *La Pucelle d’Orléans* (1755), *Le Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne* (1756), along with his many *Épîtres*, *Stances*, and *Odes*.

Brewer said that at present one must spatialize the Enlightenment and its literature: “the question of knowing the eighteenth century cannot be dissociated from reflection on the particular way we know it, and increasingly we know that object according to a dialectic involving an historical space and a spatializing historical practice” (p. 176). In addition to Brewer’s mention of travel narratives, one can also consider the philosophical tale, and Voltaire’s in particular, as a type of text that spatializes the eighteenth century. It is the human experience that gives a place its meaning:

Evocative descriptions of geographical places by novelists enable the essences of sense of place to be felt strongly by the reader. Places are more than the sum of their physical components; they take on a deeper significance which cannot easily be quantified. They may well be associated with attitudes and values which are best captured by novelists who are “more interested in revealing the nature of human experience than in explaining and predicting human behavior.” They bring about a “more creative description of landscape than could be reached by a more objective orientation.” (Mallory & Simpson-Housley, 1987, p. xi)

Thus, a reader can relate to the “sense” of a place—the meaning or memory the “lived space” evokes—and not merely its “physical” description.

There were efforts to define the philosophical tale in the eighteenth century because it defied classification. In the *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, published between 1751 and 1772 under the direction of Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, we find two separate entries for Conte [Tale]. The first, by Diderot, was simply entitled Conte, and was listed under the heading Belles-Lettres [Literature]:

* CONTE, s. m. (*Belles-Lettres.*) c’est un récit fabuleux en prose ou en vers, dont le mérite principal—consiste dans la variété & la vérité des peintures, la finesse de la plaisanterie, la vivacité & la convenance du style, le contraste piquant des événemens. Il y a cette différence entre le *conte* & la *fable*, que la *fable* ne contient qu’un seul & unique fait, renfermé dans un certain espace déterminé, & achevé dans un seul tems, dont la fin est d’amener quelque axiome de morale, & d’en rendre la vérité sensible; au lieu qu’il n’y a dans le *conte* ni unité de tems, ni unité d’action, ni unité de lieu, & que son but est moins d’instruire que d’amuser. La fable est souvent un monologue ou une scene de comédie; le *conte* est une suite de comédies enchaînées les unes aux autres. Lafontaine excelle dans les deux genres, quoiqu’il ait quelques fables de trop, & quelques contes trop longs. (“Conte”)

[TALE is a fictional story in prose or in verse. It is distinguished primarily by the variety and vividness of description, subtlety of humor, liveliness and appropriateness of style, and striking contrast of events. The difference between a *tale* and a *fable* is that a *fable* includes just one single event that occurs within a given place and time, with the aim of conveying a moral axiom and making the truth of it clear; on the other hand, in a *tale* there is no unity of time, unity of action, or unity of place, and its aim is less to instruct than to entertain. A *fable* is often a monologue or an amusing scene; a *tale* is a series of amusing scenes linked to one another. La Fontaine excels in the two genres, though he has a few too many fables, and a few tales that are too long. (“Tale”)]

Diderot compared the tale with the classical fable, which followed Nicolas Boileau’s (1674) “trois unités” (“three unities”). In *l’Art Poétique*, Boileau gave the rules of classical aesthetics, which included that plays were required to respect les trois unités [the three unities]:

Que le lieu de la scène y soit fixé et marqué . . .
Mais nous, que la raison à ses règles engage,
Nous voulons qu'avec art l'action se ménage;
Qu'en un lieu, qu'en un jour, un seul fait accompli
Tienne jusqu'à la fin le théâtre rempli.
(Chant III, v. 38-46)

[That the place of the scene is fixed and marked. . .
But we, that the reason to its rules engages,
We want that with art the action takes care of itself;
What in one place, in one day, a single fait accompli
Hold up the completed theater until the end.]

Even though Diderot touched on fables and not plays, he retained from Boileau the classical rules about time, space, and plot, explaining that the plot should take place in one given time, in one determined space, and should avoid subplots. Boileau also underscored that plays had to be in conformity with two expectations: *vraisemblance* [truth, likelihood], which is credible truth, and *bienséance* [propriety], which avoids what is offensive to the eyes of polite society, or in opposition to the norms of social propriety:

Jamais au spectateur n'offrez rien d'incroyable:
Le vrai peut quelquefois n'être pas vraisemblable.
Une merveille absurde est pour moi sans appas:
L'esprit n'est point ému de ce qu'il ne croit pas.
Ce qu'on ne doit point voir, qu'un récit nous l'expose:
Les yeux en le voyant saisiraient mieux la chose;
Mais il est des objets que l'art judicieux
Doit offrir à l'oreille et reculer des yeux.
(Chant III, v. 47-54)

[Never to the spectator offer anything incredible:
The truth can sometimes be improbable.
An absurd wonder is for me without charms:
The mind is not moved by what it does not believe.
What we must not see, a story tells us:
The eyes on seeing him would seize the thing better;
But it is objects that the judicious art
Must offer to the ear and roll back eyes.]

Diderot, in his discussion of fables, also noted that the purpose of a fable was its moral lesson, “the moral of the story,” even though a fable, as Jean le Rond d’Alembert noted in his own entry on the tale, is not necessarily credible, for instance, because of its characters (talking animals). Instead, the story makes the instruction or the truth of the moral lesson more palatable (“d’en rendre la vérité sensible”).

The conte, on the other hand, does not follow any of the *trois unités*. There is no unity of time, unity of action, or unity of place. The tale is inscribing a difference in classicism, as Diderot showed, with its aim “less to instruct than to entertain.” (“son but est moins d’instruire que d’amuser.”) Finally, while the fable does contain some comedy, the “conte” is a chain of comedy, where comedic scenes follow each other. Diderot ended by naming La Fontaine as a master of “the two genres.” Diderot’s entry considered both the fable and the tale as “classical,”

but stressed that the tale played with or defied the rules of classicism both in its form and in its overall purpose.

The second entry for conte, by Jean le Rond d'Alembert, is entitled Conte, Fable, Roman [Tale, Fable, Novel] and is listed under the heading Grammaire [Grammar], as compared to Diderot's Belles-Lettres [Literature]:

CONTE, FABLE, ROMAN, syn. (*Gramm.*) désignent des récits qui ne sont pas vrais: avec cette différence que *fable* est un récit dont le but est moral, & dont la fausseté est souvent sensible, comme lorsqu'on fait parler les animaux ou les arbres; que *conte* est une histoire fausse & courte qui n'a rien d'impossible, ou une *fable* sans but moral; & *roman* un long *conte*. On dit les *fables* de Lafontaine, les *contes* du même auteur, les *contes* de madame d'Aunoy, le *roman* de la princesse de Cleves. *Conte* se dit aussi des histoires plaisantes, vraies ou fausses, que l'on fait dans la conversation. *Fable*, d'un fait historique donné pour vrai, & reconnu pour faux; & *roman*, d'une suite d'aventures singulieres réellement arrivées à quelqu'un. ("Conte, Fable, Roman")

[TALE, FABLE, NOVEL, synonyms, designate stories that are not true: the difference is that a fable is a story with a moral, and the fictitious nature is often noticeable, as when animals or trees are made to speak; that a tale is a short fiction that could very well be true, or a fable without the moral purpose; and a novel is a long tale. One speaks of the fables of La Fontaine, the tales of the same author, the tales of Madame d'Aunoy, and the novel of the Princesse de Clèves. Tale also refers to an amusing story, true or false, that comes up in conversation; fable, to a historical event given as true but known to be otherwise; and novel, a series of singular adventures that really happened to someone. ("Tale, Fable, Novel")]

According to d'Alembert just as for Diderot, what opposed the fable to the tale is its moral intention. When discussing the relation of the tale to truth, d'Alembert was more moderate than Diderot, for whom "la vérité des peintures" ("vividness of description") was characteristic of the tale. D'Alembert rather insisted on its verisimilitude ("qui n'a rien d'impossible") ("that could very well be true"), but did so in order to oppose it to the fable, "dont la fausseté est souvent sensible" ("and the fictitious nature is often noticeable.") Just as d'Alembert emphasized the excessive distance of fables from truth, Voltaire wanted to remedy the lack of truthfulness of fables by contributing to another kind—fables written by philosophers, or philosophical tales.

Writing the entry for Conte under the heading Grammaire allowed d'Alembert to define the word tale as it was used in common language. The conte in colloquial language can mean something different than in the literary definition. In that case, telling a tale means telling a funny story ("plaisante") and one, moreover, which may be a true story ("vraie ou fausse"), in contradiction, therefore with the definition of the tale as a literary piece, which, though it may be verisimilar, is not a real story. In the same vein, d'Alembert mentioned the meanings that fable and roman have in ordinary language. In every case, what is at stake is the status of a reported story in connection with truth or an event purported to be real: in colloquial language, "it is a fable" means that the story is "historically given as true" and should be given as an actual fact or given as historically true; and roman indicates "a series of astonishing adventures that really happened to someone." D'Alembert here complicated the relationship of truth to fiction or to the real.

Iotti (2009) labeled the Voltairian philosophical tale as "the quest for truth" (p. 112). He mentioned the philosophical problems that Voltaire treated in the tales, namely "the limits of human knowledge (*Micromégas*), fate (*Zadig*), the problem of evil (*Candide*)," and "social and

historical problems” such as “the link between nature and civilization, and the question of toleration in the reign of Louis XIV (*l’Ingénu*)” (p. 112). Iotti also explained the central notion in the Voltairian tale: “But at the heart of the Voltairian *conte* lies always the intractable confrontation between characters and the truths of the world, the problem of exercising virtue which, in the humanist tradition, ought to coincide with the acquisition of knowledge” (p. 112). The difficult nature of linking truth to fiction / the real as was presented by D’Alembert, is emphasized here in considering Voltaire’s tale.

Pearson (1993) noted that, of “the twenty-six stories which are traditionally seen as constituting the corpus of Voltaire’s *contes philosophiques*, the majority were written over a thirty-year span, between 1740 and 1770” (p. 6). Pearson explained that “the term *conte philosophique*”, convenient as it now is, was rarely used by Voltaire himself, rather he referred to his stories either simply as ‘histoires’ (‘stories’) and ‘petits ouvrages’ (‘small works’)². This can be explained by the fact that Voltaire’s tales were not classical in the sense recalled by Diderot in the *Encyclopédie*. Unlike a large part of Voltaire’s corpus, namely his numerous poems and plays, the tales did not fit well into the classical style. Thus, by minimizing the tales as “petits ouvrages” we can say that Voltaire was showing that he did not want to admit to them, or appear to grant them any value, perhaps wanting to distance himself from producing something that was considered to be non-canonical.

A spatial reading of ‘Candide’ presents a modern critical framework highlighting diversity, sociability, and the importance of implementing the Enlightenment ideal of continued education.

Vartanian (1989) gave an intelligent theoretical assessment of the tale and made such a specificity explicit. Concerning the place of the philosophical tale at this point in history, Vartanian stated that “the *conte philosophique* was widely known and appreciated at the time (in France during the 18th century under the stimulus of the Enlightenment) in a variety of subgenres” (p. 470). He noted “the tale of love; oriental tales reminiscent of *The Thousand and One Nights*; the didactic *conte moral*; fairy tales; erotic tales; folkloric *contes*; and still others” (p. 470) as examples. Vartanian stated that “all these kinds of tale” were somewhat philosophical tales, as they “could, and often did, contain material that mirrored the ‘philosophical’ tendencies of the age” (p. 470). However, it is Voltaire’s philosophical tale that, “drawing on various features of a rich literary background, achieved a form that was unique” (p. 471). This is unique in that Voltaire’s philosophical tale “may be defined as an episodic narrative, more imaginary than realistic, structured by frequent changes of scene resulting from travel, and controlled by a central theme—optimism, destiny, providence, progress, relativism, natural law—that involves the problem of evil,” of which “the unfolding of the plot confirms, undermines, or otherwise qualifies the idea under consideration by testing it against a series of concrete experiences and observations in the world at large” (p. 471).

Also unique to the Voltairian philosophical tale is “the relationship between fiction and the philosophical lesson” (Cotoni, 2003, p. 233). As Cotoni explained, “Si Voltaire a fait entrer la philosophie dans la fiction, il est donc tout aussi vrai qu’il a fait entrer la fiction dans la

² For a complete listing of Voltaire’s philosophical tales, see R. Pearson’s *The fables of reason: A study of Voltaire’s “Contes philosophiques.”* (1993).

philosophie, non constamment mais fréquemment” [If Voltaire brought philosophy into fiction, then it is equally true that he brought fiction into philosophy, not constantly but frequently] (p. 249). Vartanian (1989) labeled Voltaire’s conte philosophique as “a sui generis hybrid of fiction and philosophy,” the fusion of which is “a product that differs from either taken separately” (p. 469). Vartanian stated that:

the philosophical component, in being fictionalized, is freed from the necessity for analytic examination and logical proof of what it asserts, as well as from the necessity of weighing objections and avoiding inconsistencies. It is content to argue its case and disarm criticism by essentially rhetorical strategies, such as illustration, fabulation, wordplay, wit, irony, and satire. (Vartanian, 1989, p. 469)

Then,

conversely, the fictional component, by being philosophized, also loses some of its usual qualities. One decisive result is the abandonment of verisimilitude. The literary development of an idea or theme through generalization and a testing of its limits causes the narrative (in *Candide*) to be not only unrealistic but at times fantastic. (Vartanian, 1989, p. 469)

Vartanian (1989) mentioned (along with *Candide*) “*Zadig ou la destinée, l’Ingénu, Micromégas*” as some of “Voltaire’s other *contes philosophiques*” that “conform in varying degrees to the paradigm”, while other of his tales only “bear some resemblance to those works but can more accurately be called parables; for, though they deal with some point of moral truth or common wisdom, they do not pose any recognizable problem of philosophy” (p. 471).

There are different considerations of Voltaire’s philosophical tale. The *doxa*, Barthes’ (1975) term for “opinion” (p. 18), of the philosophical tale, and Voltaire’s in particular, has been that of *Bildungsroman* or of *roman d’apprentissage*. This is because travel was assessed as educational in itself in the century. In the *Encyclopédie*, we find three entries for Voyage [Travel]: *Grammaire, Commerce, and Education*. The entry under *Education* was written by Louis de Jaucourt in 1765:

“VOYAGE, (*Education*.) Les grands hommes de l’antiquité ont jugé qu’il n’y avoit de meilleure école de la vie que celle des *voyages*; école où l’on apprend la diversité de tant d’autres vies, où l’on trouve sans cesse quelque nouvelle leçon dans ce grand livre du monde; & où le changement d’air avec l’exercice sont profitables au corps & à l’esprit.

Aujourd’hui les *voyages* dans les états policés de l’Europe (car il ne s’agit point ici des *voyages* de long cours), sont au jugement des personnes éclairées, une partie des plus importantes de l’éducation dans la jeunesse, & une partie de l’expérience dans les vieillards. Choses égales, toute nation où regne la bonté du gouvernement, & dont la noblesse & les gens aisés voyagent, a des grands avantages sur celle où cette branche de l’éducation n’a pas lieu. Les *voyages* étendent l’esprit, l’élèvent, l’enrichissent de connoissances, & le guérissent des préjugés nationaux. C’est un genre d’étude auquel on ne supplée point par les livres, & par le rapport d’autrui; il faut soi-même juger des hommes, des lieux, & des objets.

Ainsi le principal but qu’on doit se proposer dans ses *voyages*, est sans contredit d’examiner les moeurs, les coutumes, le génie des autres nations, leur goût dominant, leurs arts, leurs sciences, leurs manufactures & leur commerce.
 (“Voyage”)

[TRAVEL. The great men of antiquity considered that there was no better school for life than travel: in this school one learns endlessly about so many other lives; again and again one reads a new lesson in this great book of the world. Besides, the change of air benefits body and mind.

Today travels to all the civilized countries of Europe—for we do not speak of sea travel—are considered by enlightened persons to be the most essential ingredient in the education of the young and in the wisdom of the old. All things being equal, any nation that has a good government and where the nobility and the well-to-do travel has an advantage over a nation where this branch of education does not exist. Travelers develop and raise the level of the mind, enrich it through knowledge, and cure it of national prejudices. Such study cannot be replaced by books or by the tales told by others. Men, places, and things one has to judge by oneself.

Thus, without doubt, the principal aim that one should pursue when traveling is the examination of the manners, customs, and genius of nations, their dominant tastes, their arts, their sciences, their manufactures, their commerce. (“Travel”)]

The beginning phrases showed that travel benefited both “the body and the mind.” Jaucourt wrote that to travel is important for people of all ages, and it is beneficial for all nations. Van Den Abbeele (1992) pointed out that “the profits to be gained from travel are as corporeal as they are intellectual or commercial,” and that “if travel posits the risk and anxiety of death (and of potential loss of profit), it also signals the way to health, wealth, and wisdom” (p. xvi).

Travel has also been perceived as a major component of the philosophical tale. The spaces in the narratives of the eighteenth century are often very closely (or directly) related to travel. Travel in French literature was popular well before the eighteenth century. As Henry (1977) noted, “[t]he theme of travel in French literature goes all the way back to the jongleurs of the Middle Ages and is frequently, as in Marguerite de Navarre, a literary pretext for the narration of a series of tales” (p. 193). This popularity was directly tied to the history of the time, to voyages of discovery: “At times of great exploration and discovery of new worlds, the theme of travel appears frequently” (p. 193). For example: “in the sixteenth century, Gargantua and Pantagruel voyage to worlds old and new, real and imaginary. Montaigne too utilizes tales of travelers for philosophical purposes. Later, picaresque novels examine a particular country and criticize contemporary manners, customs, and morals” (p. 193). It is during the Enlightenment, however, that “the theme of travel reached its apogee in the eighteenth century, where one frequently finds in philosophically oriented literature a device for juxtaposing nature and convention, the most famous first example of the century being Montesquieu’s *Lettres persanes* (1721)” (p. 193).³ Gilroy (1985) concurred with this view and emphasized the multifaceted transformation undergone by characters in philosophical tales, explaining “The educative process that takes place in the *conte philosophique* is one where the hero *becomes* something he was not as yet at the beginning of his career. The main purpose of the tale is to show how he reaches greater

³ Some examples of French “travel literature” from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century: (1) the Middle Ages: *La Chanson de Roland*; (2) the sixteenth century: *Gargantua et Pantagruel* (François Rabelais); (3) the seventeenth century: *Voyage dans la lune* (Cyrano de Bergerac), *Les Contes de Fée* (Charles Perrault); (4) the eighteenth century (works other than Voltaire): *Lettres persanes* (Montesquieu), *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* (Denis Diderot); (5) the nineteenth century: *Indiana* (George Sand), *Voyage en Orient* (Gérard de Nerval); (6) the twentieth century: *La condition humaine* (André Malraux), *Les bouts de bois de Dieu* (Ousmane Sembène), *l’Aventure ambiguë* (Cheikh Hamidou Kane).

wisdom” (p. 582); and “the progress and growth illustrated in the tale are epistemological as well as moral and psychological” (pp. 582–583).

Barthes (1975) gave the *paradoxa*, his term for “dispute” (p. 18), of the philosophical tale in “The Last Happy Writer” (1972). Barthes proposed another sort of analysis, that of the “immobility of the hero,” in Voltaire’s philosophical tales. Barthes did not simply treat travel and the voyage in Voltaire’s philosophical tales, but rather discussed how space functioned in the tales, and to a larger extent, in the works of Voltaire. Barthes (1972) placed Voltaire in time and in space:

We might assume that the relativist lesson of the past is at least replaced in Voltaire, as in his entire age, by that of space. At first glance, this is what occurs: the eighteenth century is not only a great age of travel, the age in which modern capitalism, then preponderantly British, definitively organizes its world market from China to South America. (Barthes, 1972, pp. 86–87)

However, for Barthes, “it is above all the age when travel accedes to literature and engages a philosophy” (p. 87). Barthes stated that exoticism was central to this, that the eighteenth century “produced a veritable typology of exotic man,” for example, “the Egyptian Sage, the Mohammedan Arab, the Turk, the Chinese, the Siamese, and most prestigious of all, the Persian” (p. 87). As concerns the philosophical tales, Barthes wrote that “just when Voltaire begins writing his Tales, which owe a great deal to Oriental folklore, the century has already elaborated a veritable rhetoric of exoticism,” and Voltaire would continue to implement this rhetoric, since “for him, as indeed for any of his contemporaries, the Oriental is not the object, the term of a genuine consideration, but simply a cipher, a convenient sign of communication” (p. 87). Therefore, Barthes (1972), argued “the Voltairian journey has no density”, or, more explicitly, “the space Voltaire covers so obsessively (we do nothing but travel in his Tales) is not an explorer’s space, it is a surveyor’s space” (p. 87). For Barthes, “the Voltairian journey is not realistic”; neither is it “an operation of knowledge, but merely of affirmation” (p. 88). This idea radically revised the understanding of the Voltairian tale as a narrative of progress and development of the self:

For such is the paradox of Voltairian travel: to manifest an immobility. There are of course other manners, other laws, other moralities than ours, and this is what the journey teaches; but this diversity belongs to the human essence and consequently finds its point of equilibrium very rapidly; it is enough to acknowledge it in order to be done with it: let man (that is, Occidental man) multiply himself a little, let the European philosopher be doubled by the Chinese Sage, the ingenious Huron, and universal man will be created. To aggrandize oneself in order to confirm, not in order to transform oneself—such is the meaning of the Voltairian voyage. (Barthes, 1972, p. 88)

By stating that there is an immobility in Voltaire’s tales, Barthes was saying that there was no transformation of the self, here going against the *doxa* according to which the Voltairian hero becomes something else at the end of the tale. Barthes showed that the hero finds himself or confirms himself throughout the tale, through the voyage, a reading that could productively be linked to other postcolonial studies of the Enlightenment, such as Pratt’s (1992) *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. As Brewer (2004) also noted, “[t]hanks to work on travel literature, and more generally on what I would call ‘space writing,’ we have learned to see how the constitution of ‘home’ is dependent on imaginary encounters with the foreign, the exotic, the other” (p. 180). For Barthes, although the hero’s experiences through the voyage confront him to

diversity, the diversity in question confirms an inner contradiction in the character, not that others are fundamentally different from us.

Conclusion

Sociability in fiction imagines other modes of intersubjectivity that are not merely reproducing those we can witness every day. In such fictions there is safety in preserving the socio-political space, with the hope to produce real effects through the presentation of an imaginary space. A thorough understanding of essential eighteenth-century texts as well as a modern critical framework provides an understanding of Voltaire's philosophical tales as writing such a "social space," little known during the Age of Enlightenment, but widely studied ever since, and forever relevant to our continued pursuit of knowledge.

It is in this context that the study of Voltaire's works, and *Candide* in particular, holds a continual place as a timeless topic in world language education. Because of *Candide*'s enormous popularity throughout the centuries and its widespread availability – in the original French text, in translation, in hard copy bound books, in paperback versions, and in various multimedia platforms: audiobooks, as well as interactive websites and apps – it is both a rational and an exciting choice by instructors to include this work in their survey of French literature courses or in their AP French classes.

Students will benefit greatly by first situating *Candide* in its place and time. In this sense, the following set of chronological questions and topics can be used as a course of study for the text:

- (1) What was the Age of Enlightenment / l'Âge des Lumières? Where did it take place? Discuss specifics of the European / French Enlightenment: history, philosophical / cultural movements, authors, literary genres;
- (2) Who was Voltaire? What are the major highlights of Voltaire's biography in reference to his influential role as a *philosophe*? What are Voltaire's most famous works?
- (3) *Candide* (1759) is considered today to be Voltaire's best-known work. This was not true in the eighteenth century because the *conte philosophique* was developing as a new genre, thanks in large part to Voltaire. What do the entries for "Conte" in Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* (1751-1772) teach us about the philosophical tale?;⁴
- (4) Many modern critics have discussed different interpretations of the *conte philosophique voltairien*. The work of Roland Barthes is particularly interesting in this respect, for it challenges the long-standing opinion that the philosophical tale is a *Bildungsroman* or a *roman d'apprentissage*. In his essay, "The Last Happy Writer" (1972), Barthes proposes examining the "immobility of the hero", an analysis which extends beyond the focus of the theme of travel ("Voyage") in Voltaire's philosophical tales. According to Barthes, the hero / Candide does not change or "become" something different by the end of the tale, but rather remains or confirms himself throughout different social encounters.

⁴ In addition, the Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL), based out of the University of Chicago, has a current project entitled "TOUT VOLTAIRE", sponsored by the Voltaire Foundation, Oxford University. TOUT VOLTAIRE is dedicated to bringing the complete works of Voltaire to their online database. The ARTFL Project can be found here: <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/> and TOUT VOLTAIRE here: <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/tout-voltaire>. There is also the ARTFL *Encyclopédie*: <https://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>. Translations are cited from the University of Michigan's *Encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert's Collaborative Translation Project*: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/did/>.

This reading of *Candide* provides students and scholars alike with essential knowledge of eighteenth-century French history, culture, and literature, while also presenting a modern critical framework highlighting diversity, sociability, and the importance of implementing the Enlightenment ideal of continued education.

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