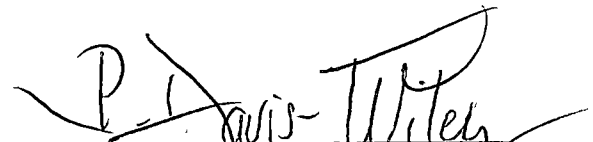
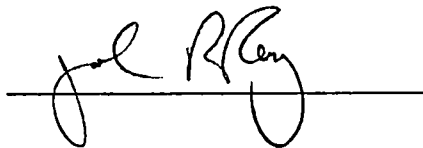


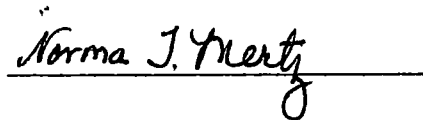
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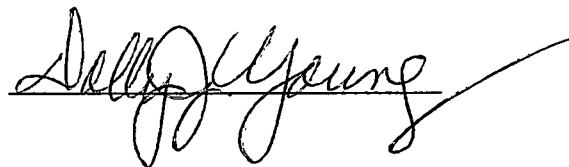
I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Mark K. Warford entitled "Foreign Language Teacher Educators and the Diffusion of Innovations." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.


Patricia Davis-Wiley, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:







Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

Foreign Language Teacher Educators and
The Diffusion of Educational Innovations

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Mark K. Warford

August, 2000

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated foreign language (FL) teacher educators in the Southeast with regard to their approach to educational innovations, particularly with regard to an innovation known as the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines. A model was constructed based on diffusion of innovations research in order to guide the construction of a questionnaire. This Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model (DEIM) outlines key diffusion variables from antecedents to consequences of adoption. The survey targeted the following population: all southeastern FL teacher educators who instruct future elementary and or secondary foreign language (FL) teachers in the teaching of FLs. The population was assessed and censused through three directories, the World Wide Web, and phone / e-mail verification. Out of a total of 83 possible responses, 60 valid returns were received (72.3%).

Results of data analysis produced several findings. With regard to *antecedent* variables, about half of the respondents who reported having obtained a doctorate were prepared in an education-related area; the other half had obtained their doctorate in a FL and or literature. Most reported working in a language department as opposed to a college of education. In terms of their socio-organizational behavior, most prefer consulting work colleagues (whom they rate as the most innovative and open to change among those in their socio-organizational context), professional contacts outside their area, the professional literature, and professional conferences about educational innovations. Preferred professional organizations for these respondents include the state FLTA (foreign language teaching association) and ACTFL.

Of all the innovations ACTFL has sponsored, respondents were most familiar with the Guidelines, the majority having implemented and or promoted them. Initial trials of this innovation often involved integration with curriculum and assessment in FL education or FL teacher education. Most report having integrated the Guidelines into the methods course and the assessment of FL majors and or teacher education candidates. Overall, respondents report that the Guidelines have had an impact on the profession in their local area. However, they appear skeptical of the Guidelines' impact on the K-12 FL teaching sphere due to constraints on these teachers' ability to implement the Guidelines, as well as the cost and complexity of implementing them. With regard to the *DEIM*, professional and contextual variables, including population base, support of innovation and openness to change within the socio-organizational context, and whether respondents work in a language department or college of education, failed to show meaningful differences. Also, it appears that respondents' views on proficiency-oriented instruction do not appear to be idiosyncratic as the model predicts for principles-based innovations. However, with regard to comparisons calculated on Florida—the only state on record as mandating the Guidelines as a curriculum framework—vs. other southeastern states with regard to the Guidelines' impact, Florida's ratings were found to be significantly lower than other states' with regard to in-service FL teachers and district FL supervisors. This contradicts the direction predicted in the model. The model was found to be correct in predicting that knowledge of an innovation is positively associated with adoption and implementation. Finally, professional variables, as predicted by the model, appear to be related to adoption and implementation as FL teacher educators with more overall professional experience were less likely to test candidates for proficiency.

Based on the findings, the researcher has advanced several conclusions: the Guidelines have made an empirically significant impact on FL teacher education and FL education, in general, within the social system under study, though this impact appears to be somewhat less in the K-12 sphere; and also, that the typical FL teacher educator played an active role in facilitating the diffusion, adoption, and implementation of the Guidelines. Several implications of the study and recommendations for further research are also advanced.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The importance of participating in professional organizations has a loyal following in the educational research literature. Colombotos (1962) concludes that "a distinguishing characteristic of a profession is a formal, active professional organization" (p. 9). In addition to the existence of professional organization, he argues that a relatively long period of study is another distinguishing feature of a professional occupation. Given the relatively short length of the academic and professional preparation of K-12 teachers, Colombotos argues that teachers must settle for semi-professional status.

Participation in a professional organization has also been advocated as a component of teacher education. Fennick (1992) advocates the encouragement of both pre- and inservice teacher participation in the professional organizations representing their respective disciplines as a way of invigorating them against early burnout. The literature of the foreign language profession has echoed this sentiment (Grosse, 1993; Wing, 1993).

By their very nature, discipline-specific professional organizations represent a font of professional development, a clearinghouse for the design and dissemination of new ideas and practices in education or *educational innovations*. In math education, the NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989) has promoted its national standards to their profession. In language education, ACTFL (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) has pioneered and shared many similar educational innovations with the language teaching profession such as the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines (1986), which gave the profession the notion of proficiency-oriented instruction, as well as the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, a model for a new way of assessing language learning. More recently, ACTFL introduced The National Standards for K-12 Foreign Language Learning (1996), a new framework for elementary and secondary level foreign language or *FL* curricula.

Traditionally, such organizations also have influenced the nature of teacher preparation (Earley, 1993). In order to assess the success of such campaigns on teacher preparation, it is important to first consider the evolution of both discipline-specific professional organizations and teacher education programs.

The origins of FL teacher education have long been linked to the growth of FL professional organizations. Strasheim (1991) places the beginning of what are now regarded as formal preparation programs in FL teaching in the 1940s, a response to growing sentiment for specialized training of teachers. Along with the advent of content-area specific teacher education came the introduction of the FL methods course (Strasheim, 1991). The Modern Language Association (MLA) watched over FL teacher education programs as they got underway (Lange, 1983). Two decades later, discipline-oriented professional organizations like MLA were charged with two missions: 1) The design of 'teaching majors and minors' and 2) 'professional preparation' via 'methods courses in schools of education' (Strasheim, 1991, p.101).

Requirements of FL teacher education programs have evolved over the years. In 1942, 19 states required only two years of FL study and 10 required about three years; often, it was assumed that high school study could be included as satisfying such a requirement (Strasheim, 1991). A parallel development was the call for FL competency

testing of future teachers. Freeman (1966, in Strasheim, 1991), of the MLA, called for oral and written testing of prospective FL teachers. According to Strasheim (1991) the call for teacher competency testing in the 40s was stepped up in the 60s as part of the *Audiolingual Revolution*, though related efforts, including the promising MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests for Teachers and Advanced Students which failed to take hold of the language profession. (This may be recorded as the first failed attempt of a discipline-specific professional organization at communicating an innovation to its constituency.) The Guidelines for teacher education programs in modern foreign languages (Paquette, 1966, in Lange 1983), also associated with MLA, likewise appear to have had little, if any impact on the foreign language teaching profession.

The 60s also witnessed the creation of a spin-off organization dedicated to FL teaching, ACTFL, which tried its hand at its own set of guidelines for the profession, based on the principle of communicative proficiency. Though the resulting ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (1986) were not designed to be prescriptive, its proponents are quick to admit that they entail certain implications for FL instruction (Lange, 1988; Omaggio, 1983; 1984; 1986). Somewhere in the gray area between principle and method, the Guidelines inspired a performance based oral assessment tool called the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), as well as an innovation in FL pedagogy, *proficiency-oriented instruction*. Teaching language in context (1986; 1993), a widely adopted FL methods text (Grosse, 1993), is guided by this pedagogical approach. At the present time, there is little, if any empirical verification of the impact of the educational innovation known as the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on FL teacher preparation. There is also a dearth of research on the effectiveness of professional organizations such

as ACTFL in promoting innovations.

The Problem: Lack of Research and Social Contextual Issues

Bernhardt and Hammadou's (1987) review of the research on FL teacher education, concludes that a foundation for FL teacher education is limited by: "overly simple solutions," a "naive view of teaching," a lack of streamlined standards for certification and solid supervision, "problems in undergraduate liberal education" (in particular, the methods course), "inadequate professional education" which neglects proficiency development of preservice teachers, and the "lack of demonstration sites" (p. 296). In general, the authors assess the 78 articles they retrieved as overly prescriptive and atheoretical, as well as lacking data on "effective teacher education programs" (referring to the Holmes Group, 1986). Several years later, Hammadou (1993) reports that a paucity of empirical research on FL teacher education persists.

The apparent failure of the FL profession to lead the preparation of its teachers may be a symptom of a deeper problem. FL professional organizations, as is the case with professional organizations, in general, have repeatedly developed innovations without the benefit of a field of inquiry that may have predicted and planned for barriers in the process of communicating such innovations both at the preservice and inservice level. Diffusion of innovations or *DOI* theory presents a way of explaining and predicting the adoption or rejection of new ideas and practices. Though it has many precedents in the field of education (Carlson, 1965; 1968; Miles, 1969; Mort & Cornell, 1941; Rogers & Jain, 1968) and recently, language education (Henrichsen, 1989; Markee, 1993; 1997), the dismal history of reform efforts might be a sign that DOI has yet to be

fully utilized by those who design and/or disseminate educational innovations.

The current approach to promoting educational innovations may be in need of adjustment. As Hansen (1981) puts it, "One of the unique features of curriculum development in the U.S. is the apparently mindless and uncontrolled fashion whereby what is to be learned by students is implemented" (p. 16), and later, "Many notable enterprises in curricular innovation are obviously deficient in stating their purposes, goals, objectives, and justifications" (p. 18). Hall (1992) calls this the *development / implementation* imbalance in American educational reform. According to Hall, practitioners, bombarded by innovations and beleaguered by a sense of low status have fostered resistance to change, a gridlock due, in part, to ignorance of the practitioners' systemic context (Carlson, 1965; 1968; Miles, 1969; Rogers & Jain, 1968; Rogers, 1995; Sarason, 1990). In short, American education's appetite for innovation has undermined the consideration of *planning* for implementation (Henrichsen, 1989); innovations are foisted upon schools with little thought to the impact on the local context. Several studies have studied this neglect in the context of FL teaching innovations like Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools or *FLES* education (Heining-Boynton, 1990; Rosenbusch, 1991) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings (Henrichsen, 1989).

Given the tendency to neglect of the local impact of educational innovations on adopting social systems, it is not surprising that educational researchers are declaring the Reform Movement of the 80s a failed effort. Why did it fail? The SERVE (South Eastern Regional Vision for Education, 1994) research project argues that the impact of the movement on student achievement was thwarted by a lack of "non-voluntary national goals and standards for education" (1994, p. 7). They suggest that the "tradition of states'

rights" (p. 7) may complicate the streamlining of reform on a national level. Pesola and Curtain (1988) validate this factor when they argue that a major obstacle to the diffusion and adoption of FLES in the U.S., is the reality that there is "no national policy on elementary school foreign languages" (p. 186), meaning that FLES policy is largely up to each state and its appraisal of the various national level initiatives to reform FLES education. Teacher education's long history of criticism, particularly in terms of its relative slowness in adapting to the latest developments in educational innovations (Mort & Cornell, 1941), may be due to the growth of state control over teacher education programs over the course of their development in the 20th Century (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1992; Earley, 1993; Strasheim, 1991, citing Kelly, 1969). Earley (1993) reports that this trend undermines the autonomy of institutions of higher learning. According to Earley (1993), teacher education reform has been addressed on a national level despite the fact that the tradition of states' rights raise doubts regarding the effectiveness of this strategy.

This *laissez-faire* arrangement between the federal and state legislatures undermines the efforts of national level, discipline-specific professional organizations in their efforts to disseminate educational innovations (Earley, 1993; Schrier, 1993). Pesola and Curtain (1988) argue that FL teacher education has not rallied around FLES (promoted by organizations like National Network on Elementary Language Learning or *NNELL*) because increasing state control over their policies may restrict their freedom to adopt innovations that have not been widely established. Earley (1993) relates how the NCTM's K-12 mathematics curriculum standards faced serious impediments to local implementation. She asks, "Given the amount of state control over teacher education

programs, to what extent can institutional pressures result in systemic change?" (p. 21).

In summary, progress in FL teacher education appears to be undermined by a lack of attention in the professional literature. The purported failure of efforts to reform FL teacher education may be symptomatic of deeper systemic problems inherent in educational reform, namely: an apparent neglect of DOI research; a development-implementation imbalance; and a states' rights tradition in education that may undermine efforts of professional organizations to lead reforms on a national level.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gather information about FL teacher educators in the southeastern United States concerning their approach to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations. An innovation of particular focus in the study was that of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (1986).

Significance of the Study

Wong and Wong (1998) report that teacher education does little to facilitate the induction of preservice teachers into the profession. Some have advocated the early and active involvement of preservice teachers in professional organizations as a remedy (Wing, 1993; Wong & Wong, 1998). Earley (1993) cites Hawley's (1990) assertion that the following groups significantly affect the direction of teacher education: "foundations, ad hoc/semiformal study groups, professional organizations, business groups, and accrediting bodies" (p. 14). Given the paucity of research on the effects of professional organizations such as ACTFL on teacher education, there is little, if any, empirical

verification of any impact. If the status of an occupation as a *profession* depends on the health of its related professional organization (Colombotos, 1962), then there may be profit in investigating whether the potentially useful innovations these organizations offer are reaching future teachers *before* they are socialized by the local field context.

Considering that prolonged exposure to the local school system correlates with conformity to the *status quo* (Funk, Hoffman, Keithley, & Long, 1978; Kuehl, 1984; Lange, 1983; Shen, 1995, on the mentor teacher's uncritical approach to supervision; Wong & Wong, 1998), the methods course may be the only chance many future FL teachers will have to learn about educational innovations. This study is a modest start in measuring the degree to which this is happening or not in FL teacher education.

This study also represents a systemic perspective on FL reform that considers the social and organizational variables that inhibit or help FL teacher educators to facilitate the diffusion and adoption of innovations in education (Carlson, 1968; Markee, 1997; Rogers & Jain, 1968; Rogers, 1995). Such a notion merits empirical verification. Rogers (1995) reports on the potential benefits of research on educational diffusion:

An exciting potential contribution could be made by the education research tradition, stemming from the fact that organizations are involved, in one way or another, in the adoption of educational innovations...organizational structures are inevitably involved in educational adoption decisions. (p. 63)

In ESL education, Henrichsen (1989) took the first step in a cross-cultural, case study approach to diffusion research in an educational setting. Though the study offers a promising model that may be adapted to survey research on FL teacher education, no such study has been attempted.

A further advantage of the present study is that it may help correct the current lack of FL teacher education research. In Guntermann's (1993) collection of articles on FL teacher education, Hammadou reports that, seven years after her review of the literature with Bernhardt (1987), there continues to be a paucity of research on FL teacher education: "any and all" areas of inquiry are welcome (p. 98).

Finally, ACTFL has followed up its Proficiency Guidelines campaign with three other innovative platforms: The ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education (1988), The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1993, with the collaboration of language-specific professional organizations such as: AATG, AATF, & AATSP), and now the Performance Guidelines (1998). It is hoped that the current study, informed by DOI research, can steer professional organizations toward more effective dissemination campaigns that lead to lasting reform. It is also hoped that ACTFL and other change agents in education will find empirical proof that better planning for implementation may deepen the impact of their educational innovations.

To summarize, the present study is significant for four reasons:

- 1) It investigates the potential of professional organizations as partners in the induction of preservice teachers into a profession.
- 2) It brings a systemic perspective to the diffusion of educational innovations.
- 3) It begins to augment the current paucity of research on FL teacher education.
- 4) It may assist in the dissemination of more recent and future educational initiatives introduced by ACTFL and other professional organizations.

Assumptions

1) Since the Guidelines have been disseminated now for over 14 years, it was assumed that each respondent would have at least a superficial grasp of the innovation's content and implications. Mort and Cornell (1941) set the cycle for educational innovations at around 50 years; thus, it is probable that the study captures the Guidelines at the mid-point of diffusion.

2) This study assumes that the ACTFL Guidelines represent an innovation in FL education with implications for substantial changes in pedagogical wisdom. This innovation has two components: proficiency-oriented instruction, a *principles-based* innovation, and the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), representing a more concrete innovation.

3) The subjects of the present study are FL teacher educators, defined by the investigator as higher education faculty (not adjunct) whose job includes instructing preservice elementary and or secondary level teachers in the teaching of FLs.

Definition of terms

AATs: language specific professional organizations: The American Association of Teachers of Spanish & Portuguese (AATSP), The American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), and The American Association of Teachers of German (AATG).

ACTFL: The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview: An interview adapted from the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines that involves: a warm-up phase to make the interviewee

comfortable, level checks and probes designed to assess the floor and ceiling of the interviewee's level of proficiency, and a wind-down.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: A framework that represents proficiency indicators from *Novice* to *Superior* weighed against three criteria: function, content/context, and accuracy. There are guidelines for all four modalities and culture. As an educational innovation, the Proficiency Guidelines have essentially two manifestations: the Oral Proficiency Interview and certain implications for curriculum and instruction, often referred to as 'proficiency-oriented instruction.'

The ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education Programs: Submitted in 1988, these guidelines outline standards for FL teacher education programs. Unlike the Proficiency Guidelines, the provisional status has not been lifted, indicating that they have not received final approval from ACTFL.

DEIM: The Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model- a model that was organized to serve as a framework for this survey study.

DOI: Short for "Diffusion of Innovations," a field of research concerned with explaining and predicting the process of communicating new ideas and practices.

Diffusion and Adoption: Carlson (1968): "When the word adoption is used, it ordinarily refers to a decision to use a new idea or practice. Diffusion is used to the spread of a new practice to potential users" (pp. 4-5). According to Rogers (1995), "diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system...communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. (p. 6). While the present study is primarily an adoption study

concerned with the adoption behavior of FL teacher educators, it also investigates how the ACTFL Guidelines were communicated and whether FL teacher educators played a role in that process. Thus, this study also concerns itself with diffusion variables.

FLED: Foreign Language Education

FLTE: Foreign Language Teacher Education

FLES: Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools.

Innovations: Ideas / practice(s) perceived as new by a potential adopter.

Innovations are usually concrete or ideas/principles-based; the latter are more difficult to trace.

Language Nomenclature (L2/SL, TL, FL): L2/SL (second language), TL (target language, the language of study), FL (foreign language- refers to contexts where second language is not the home language, as in the case of SL).

Proficiency: A measure of one's ability to communicate in another language.

Proficiency-Oriented Instruction: Instruction based on the implications of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

Research Questions

In studying southeastern FL teacher educators' approaches to educational innovations, as well as their roles in and perceptions of the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Guidelines, the following three central questions guided the investigation:

RQ1: *What personal, social systemic, and organizational variables might factor into FL teacher educators' approach to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations?*

RQ2: *How do FL teacher educators perceive the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in their area and their role in that process?*

RQ3: *How effective is the model developed by the researcher for the purpose of investigating the diffusion of educational innovations, in explaining the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?* This is divided into seven sub questions:

- RQ3A: As a principles-based innovation, do the Guidelines yield, as predicted by the model, low scores on scale item measurements of the following perceived characteristics: relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability and high ratings for complexity?¹ Also, will adoption, measured by integration in the methods course and other aspects of FL teacher education, as well as definitions of proficiency-oriented instruction, be idiosyncratic?²
- RQ3B: Will respondents from states which have incorporated the Proficiency Guidelines as part of their educational policy (Louisiana, North Carolina, Florida) or curriculum framework (Georgia and South Carolina) or both (Florida) be more likely to adopt the Guidelines and report that their acceptance and institutionalization in their area?
- RQ3C: How will knowledge of the Guidelines and other ACTFL innovations correlate with adoption and integration by FL teacher educators?³
- RQ3D: Are professional factors such as: length of tenure as teacher educator, overall experience in FL teaching, and level of involvement in FL professional organizations

¹ Rogers, 1995.

² Leithwood and Montgomery, 1980.

³ Wolf and Riordan (1991) suggest just the opposite.

positively related to the Guidelines' adoption and implementation?⁴

- RQ3E: As population (urbanization) increases, does the likelihood of adoption and implementation of the Guidelines also increase?
- RQ3F: Is there a relationship between the innovativeness and openness to change of the socio-organizational context of adopters and variables of adoption and implementation?
- RQ3G: Is adoption and implementation of the Guidelines significantly higher and earlier among FL teacher educators housed in modern language departments than their counterparts in colleges of education, as suggested in the literature?

Limitations

Though the study contains some open-ended questions, it represents a quantitative approach to inquiry; therefore, results do not fully convey in-depth the nature of the FL teacher role in the diffusion and adoption of the Guidelines.

1) The data in this study were based on self-report. As such, their validity is subject to the honesty and sharpness of memory of its respondents. Carlson (1968) asserts that "pinpointing the time of adoption" is an elusive undertaking (p. 8-9).

2) While the population under study included college or university faculty members whose job description includes the preparation of future elementary and or secondary level FL teachers in the teaching of FLs, it cannot be assumed that this is their sole job description or that they are exclusively full-time tenured faculty members

⁴ Wolf and Riordan (1991) predict this correlation.

(though steps were taken to ensure that adjunct faculty were not included as subjects in the study). Neither may it be assumed that their instruction in FL methodology is exclusively or even mainly directed toward those seeking elementary and or secondary level certification, though steps were also taken to insure that those TA trainers who exclusively directed their instruction to college-level FL teaching were not among the final census. Any comparison of this study with others involving FL teacher educators need note this limitation.

3) A final limitation of the study was the datedness and lack of theoretical basis within educational DOI research (Rogers, 1995); DOI inquiry in education appears to be fragmented. For example, while Ellis and Fouts (1997) argue that a solid research foundation is necessary for successful diffusion, Rogers (1995) and Carlson (1968) and Earley (1993) argue the opposite. Though Markee (1993; 1997) and Henrichsen (1988) have found Rogers' (1983) DOI model to be a useful theoretical foundation for the context of language education, solid empirical studies are needed.

Organization of the study

This study is divided into five chapters. A reference list and appendices follow. Chapter I, the introduction, begins with some background on the phenomena under study and then the Problem, Purpose, Significance, Assumptions, Definition of Terms, Research Questions, and Limitations of the present study are addressed. This chapter concludes with the Organization of the Study. Chapter II includes the Review of the Literature on topics key to the study: Background on ACTFL and the Proficiency Movement, FL Teacher Education, the FL methods course, Diffusion of Innovations, and

The ACTFL Guidelines' adoption and implementation in the Southeast. Chapter III focuses on the methods and procedures used in the following processes: subject selection, model and instrument creation, administration of the survey questionnaire, and data analysis. Chapter IV details procedures used in analyzing the results and discusses the results of the study. Chapter V includes a summary of the study, discussion of its findings, conclusions, and implications for research and pedagogy, as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In preparation for this study of FL teacher educators and their approach to educational innovations, the researcher conducted a search of the ERIC database (1969-1999). In order to chart a more regionalized, comprehensive portrait of the progress of ACTFL innovations in the region than ERIC would allow, the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Language website (2000) was consulted as a link to FL frameworks of all states included in the study. This provided a basis for comparing the states according to their implementation of the Proficiency Guidelines, as well as a more recent ACTFL initiative, the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1996).

Five topic areas of interest to the study were identified as foci for key word searches: the origins of ACTFL and the Proficiency Guidelines, FL teacher education, the FL methods course (the defining milieu of the teacher educator), the Southeast, and the diffusion of educational innovations. The review of the literature that was constructed from database research of these variables has been divided into the following five sections: the first section traces the origins of ACTFL and the proficiency movement, two developments that led to the design and dissemination of the Guidelines; the next section discusses the evolution of FL teacher education; the following section then considers the FL methods course; the fourth section presents the anchor theory of this study, diffusion of innovations- its following in educational research and its implications for investigating the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Guidelines; finally, the last

section on the Southeast, discusses what is known about this region as a site for educational reform, as well as the diffusion of the Proficiency Guidelines in the area.

Background on ACTFL and the Proficiency Movement

The educational innovation that is the focus of the present study is the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines. In order to understand how the Guidelines came to be, it is important to consider the discipline-specific professional organization that carried out their development and dissemination, ACTFL. In 1966, ACTFL, the first professional organization to represent FL teachers, was created through a combined MLA and Rockefeller foundation grant (Dunham, 1971). By 1971, it claimed over 9,300 members (Dunham, 1971). In 1975, it weaned itself off the MLA to become an autonomous professional organization (Grittner, 1975). Dunham (1971) argues that the integrity of the FL profession depends on a tight network among the various levels: "If it (ACTFL) fails, the AAT's fail, ACTFL fails, and MLA fails" (p. 4). The 70s were a difficult, splintered time for the profession. As then President Grittner put it:

The other disciplines are less fragmented than we are; less tied up in the concept of the teacher as dispenser of a particular body of knowledge. Perhaps because of the enormous effort required to gain a minimal working knowledge of a second language, we tend to emphasize content rather than student needs. (1975, p. 17)

It was the confusion that facilitated the development of the proficiency movement- a need for an *organizing principle* to help teachers navigate the maze of methods in circulation. Warriner (1978) measures the impact of the 'eclectic period' in FL instruction in

articulation issues; the emphasis of quantity over quality in delivery of instruction; low teacher morale; discouraged students who found it difficult to keep pace or found discrepancies between levels in district curricular designs; doubled materials expenses; and teachers who found themselves robbed of creativity, “enslaved to texts” (p. 6). She describes how ACTFL confronted a confusing array of FL methods, each advanced as *The approach*, this after the audiolingual movement had already, by that time, institutionalized the addition of listening and speaking to the traditional focus on reading and writing. FL teachers were overtaxed and losing faith in the professional leadership.

During the 70s, the Proficiency Movement, a response to growing sentiment for competency-based instruction (Omaggio, 1986), worked to transcend the method wars and develop consensus around the goal of proficiency in the target language (TL). Omaggio (1986) recounts the commencement the following year (1979) of several national initiatives, including the Carter Commission document, Strength through wisdom, which encouraged the discussion of the relative lack of language proficiency attainment in the United States. One of the recommendations to grow out of such initiatives was the President’s Commission’s “National Criteria and Assessment Program” which initiated, among other things, the development of a language proficiency assessment tool. Concurrently, ETS (Educational Testing Service) had already begun the process of developing a definition of proficiency in academic contexts under the Common Yardstick Project. Under a federal grant, ACTFL linked up with ETS and a model for proficiency was developed that followed a non-linear progression as students increase breadth and depth of mastery over language content, function and accuracy. It was based on the already existent Foreign Service Institute’s Interagency Language

proficiency levels from *Novice* to *Superior* along three performance criteria: content/context, function, and accuracy along the four modalities: reading, writing, listening, and speaking ⁵ (Appendix A) They were accompanied by an evaluation counterpart, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). This innovation in FL education was first introduced in provisional form in 1982.

Planning for Proficiency

In advance of the Guidelines' introduction, an ACTFL Executive Council meeting in 1980 planned for their dissemination, calling for the use of the Guidelines across levels and professional settings. In addition to discussing questions regarding teacher education that consider: the impact of the proficiency guidelines, research needs, facilitating dialogue between "state and federal initiatives" (1982, p. 411), ACTFL executives also discussed plans for an extensive survey of member attitudes toward the Guidelines.

Paul (1981) reports on the resulting ACTFL membership survey. Out of 400 programs solicited for participation, only 35% returned questionnaires. Favorability towards the Guidelines was reported as equivalent and high across the groups, with particular enthusiasm among local coordinators. All agree the greatest impact of the Guidelines would be on curriculum design, articulation, and communication concerns. Teachers further requested assistance in adapting teaching methods. Despite the low return rate, ACTFL published the Guidelines that same year (Hiple, 1982).

⁵ In addition to the skill modalities, culture was also a consideration when the Guidelines were first proposed in 1982 (Hiple, 1982). However, in presenting the latest revisions to the Guidelines at the November, 1999 ACTFL Convention, Ed Scebold indicates that widespread controversy caused the cultural guidelines to be taken out of the 1986 draft that was officially introduced to the profession. Emily Spinelli, in discussing revisions to the oral proficiency guidelines, indicates that text type has been added to the criteria of function, content/context, and accuracy; also the Advanced level was subdivided into sublevels. Changes to the writing, reading, and listening guidelines, according to Spinelli, are pending.

Communicating the Guidelines to the Profession

The revelation of the Guidelines soon gave rise to a new philosophy of FL (Omaggio, 1983; 1984), eventually developing into the framework for one of the most widely developed methods texts in circulation, Teaching language in context (1986; 1993), which relates five hypotheses of proficiency-oriented instruction. These hypotheses extrapolate instructional implications of the guidelines (Figure 1).

While Omaggio's framework is perhaps the most widely accepted definition of teaching based on the Proficiency Guidelines, it is by no means the only one that has been advanced. Lange (1988) also offers some additional insights into the Proficiency Guidelines' "vague framework" (p. 41) for FL pedagogy. Cognizant that the Guidelines offer *implications*, not *prescriptions*, the author raises questions about the appropriateness of ACTFL's curricular workshops, which he suggests were inclined toward the latter approach. After attending the University of Minnesota Proficiency Workshop, Lange and colleagues developed a nine-item list of implications for instruction inherent in the Proficiency Guidelines. Themes include: balancing function, content, and accuracy; maintaining a grammar consideration with regard to function; incorporating authentic materials; balancing achievement and proficiency approaches to assessment; considering how modalities will be separated, integrated in instruction; incorporating more student-to-student communicative activities such as paired, group work; considering the time issue in proficiency attainment; studying TL culture early on in instruction; remembering that there is no proficiency *method*; focusing on receptive prior to the productive modalities; and making instruction learner-centered. Dissemination of the Guidelines during the first years of their existence was

Hypothesis I. Opportunities must be provided for students to practice using language in a range of contexts likely to be encountered in the target culture.

Corollary 1. Students should be encouraged to express their own meaning as early as possible after productive skills have been introduced in the course of instruction.

Corollary 2. Opportunities must be provided for active communicative interaction among students.

Corollary 3. Creative language practice (as opposed to exclusively manipulative or convergent practice) must be encouraged in the proficiency oriented classroom.

Corollary 4. Authentic language should be used in instruction wherever possible.

Hypothesis II. Opportunities should be provided for students to carry out a range of functions (tasks) likely to be necessary in dealing with others in the target culture.

Hypothesis III. The development of accuracy should be encouraged in proficiency-oriented instruction. As learners produce language, various forms of instruction and evaluative feedback can be useful in facilitating the progression of their skills toward more precise and coherent language use.

Hypothesis IV. Instruction should be responsive to the affective as well as the cognitive needs of students, and their different personalities, preferences, and learning styles should be taken into account.

Hypothesis V. Cultural understanding must be promoted in various ways so that students are sensitive to other cultures and prepared to live more harmoniously in the target-language community.

Figure 1: Five Hypotheses of Proficiency-Oriented Instruction
(Hadley, A. O. (1993). Teaching language in context. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, p. 77)

complicated by two factors: one being criticism of the OPI and ACTFL spokespeople's portrayal of the Guidelines' pedagogical implications, the other being the relative lack of response from textbook publishers in adjusting their materials around the new organizing principle. Much of the criticism of the Guidelines stemmed from questions concerning the integrity of the Oral Proficiency Interview. Bachman and Savignon (1986), while supportive of the notion of a unifying principle in the profession based on the outcome of real life language ability, expressed disappointment in the lack or recognition of the communicative competence movement. They also raise validity issues surrounding *content* assessment in the OPI. They call for the incorporation of a Communicative Language Proficiency definition that considers: grammar, discourse and sociolinguistics.

Lowe (1986) expresses a similar guarded optimism about the OPI, advocating changes at the intermediate high / advanced border to a single, general rating. Bachman (1988), though generally supportive of the OPI as the best possible proficiency measurement available, raises validity issues with regard to a potential test method vs. ability blur. Lantolf and Frawley (1985), a bit harsher in their commentary on the OPI, expound on the problematic nature of the *native speaker* which constitutes the benchmark of the OPI scale.

Another side of the critical commentary on the Guidelines stems from their alleged pedagogical implications. Bachman and Savignon (1986) argue against the notion of *proficiency*-based instruction, noting considerable variation surrounding the definition of proficiency and which methods best serve the goals of a proficiency in a FL. Schulz (1986) suggests that the Guidelines' notion of global proficiency is inappropriate in a classroom setting, given the varying needs of foreign language students (p. 375). Lowe (1986) advocates abandoning the problematic proficiency principle for the burgeoning European pedagogical notion of *interactional competence*. Both VanPatten (1986, 1987) and Schulz (1986) question Higgs' and Liskin-Gasparro's emphasis on formal grammar in their discussion of proficiency-oriented instruction as disturbing (in Higgs, 1984). Similarly, Kalivoda (1990) is critical of Teaching language in context's (Omaggio 1986) espousal of falling back on L1 to explain target language grammar rules, suggesting that it sabotages the objective of using the target language as the medium of instruction (Hypothesis 1.4, in Omaggio, 1984). These are just several illustrations of the sort of resistance proficiency-oriented instruction encountered among leaders in the profession, resistance that might have undermined the proliferation of the Guidelines.

Though the ACTFL leadership has historically maintained connections with FL textbook companies (ACTFL, 1982; Warriner, 1978), the literature suggests that they might not have anticipated just how far the publishing world would lag behind the new focus on proficiency. There was a tendency for textbook publishers to window-dress a proficiency orientation that bore little resemblance to the guidelines or their implications for pedagogy (Mosher & Resch, 1986). Young and Oxford (1993) describe how, in student surveys, a textbook associated with the proficiency movement was judged less effective than an alternative text and eventually dropped. Rogers (1995) argues that principles-based innovations are the hardest to diffuse and subject to the greatest variation in adoption and implementation behavior. The textbook experience lends credence to that assertion.

Summary of the Literature on ACTFL, the Proficiency Movement

As it is portrayed in the literature, ACTFL and the Proficiency Movement had promising beginnings in terms of fulfilling a leadership gap in the FL teaching profession, as well as providing a unifying principle based on the outcome of real language ability. However, early questions surrounding the Oral Proficiency Interview assessment tool that accompanied the Guidelines, as well as disagreement and ambiguity surrounding the Guidelines' implications may have undermined the diffusion and adoption of the Guidelines. Another factor that may inhibit the diffusion and adoption of the Guidelines was the lack of texts and materials to complement the implementation of this innovation in language education.

Foreign Language Teacher Education

The first and only exhaustive review of the research on FL teacher education was advanced by Bernhardt and Hammadou (1987), an undertaking inspired by the reform movement. Themes were categorized according to various areas of need in FL teacher education. Under the first theme, *global position statements*, the authors find the following related themes in the literature: training/development orientation, program models, *current state of...* articles, or articles that describe the ideal content of the FL teacher education curriculum. All lacked connection to the "wider framework of teacher education research" (p. 291). On teacher behaviors, future teachers' TL proficiency and base of teaching competencies were commonly discussed. According to the authors:

Of concern within these articles is their failure to consider teaching as an activity, which is both cognitive and affective, product- and process-based. In general, they are characterized by a behaviorist approach which focuses on discrete aspects in a day in the life of a teacher without considering the full context within which the act of teaching takes place. (p. 291)

On the training of TAs, the TA literature was limited by a "Here's what I did" approach that the authors determined to be "unsophisticated and inefficient" (p. 292). A review of the literature on university professors' training revealed a "lack of direction and recommendations" (p. 292). Research on inservice training reflected similar limitations. On supervision in FL teacher education, the authors cite Knop's (1980) assertion "that a philosophy or theory of supervision is lacking in the FL education profession" (p. 292).

ACTFL's Stake in FL Teacher Education Reform

The Guidelines, as previously mentioned, were purported to have implications for

teacher education. According to Strasheim (1991), the OPI raised the issue of *instructional validity* which questions teacher education's effectiveness in fostering conversationally competent teachers, "The 'language' courses in the teaching major and minors show a heavy preponderance of linguistics, phonetics, structure, and composition offerings with few, if any, conversation courses required and little or no reference to skills development" (p. 102). Instructional validity also raised the question of teacher education's ability to prepare students for "the 'real' world of the schools" (p. 102). A further implication of instructional validity is that this "organizing principle" (Higgs, 1984) of proficiency indirectly questions the validity of FL instruction that does not meet the goal of communicative competence. According to van Lier (1989), the OPI added impact to the communicative competence movement in its "battle with outdated testing procedures, which are seen as one reason for a continuing traditionalism in classrooms" (p. 491).

As the 1980 Executive Council meeting indicates, ACTFL has had a stake in FL teacher education, one that grew concurrently with the development and diffusion of the Guidelines in the 1980s. At that meeting, the Executive Council proposed: increasing ACTFL's impact on pre-service teachers and the discovery of model teacher preparation programs, as well as consultation with teacher educators (ACTFL, 1982, p. 411).

The first known response to the 1980 call to action in research on model FL programs comes from Mellgren, Walker, and Lange (1988) who describe an innovative program in L2 teacher education. The program, as described by the authors, addresses the call for the elimination of undergraduate teacher education and the establishment of national standards and career ladders. The authors incorporated ACTFL's Proficiency

~~Guidelines espousing "a proficiency-based orientation to classroom teaching" that~~
encourages students to "use the language" (p. 122). The 15-month program features candidate screening based on: measures of language proficiency adapted from the Guidelines, analysis of cultural awareness, and TL experience.

Toward the end of the 80s, ACTFL published the Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education (ACTFL, 1988), the result of the efforts of a 1987-8 ACTFL Task Force's (Knop, 1991) efforts. These guidelines were coordinated with efforts by the AAT's (language-specific organizations) to develop standards for FL teacher education, including the AATF's "The Teaching of French: A Syllabus of Competence" (1989), which describes two competency levels, *Basic* and *Superior*, in areas including language proficiency, culture, literature, applied linguistics, methodology and FLES (Knop, 1991). At the present time, over a decade later, that provisional status remains. ACTFL also decided to renew its commitment with the organization of a special seminar on "Teacher Education in the '90s" (Knop, 1991). Both ACTFL President, Lynn Sanstedt, and Executive Secretary, Ed Scebold, declared FL teacher education as a major focus for the organization's future efforts. In particular, the need for better recruitment and program standards was identified as areas of focus. Attendees proposed 10 recommendations for the improvement of teacher education which included: the identification and dissemination of information about *effective* FL teacher education programs; more attention to the culture element in language teaching, and the establishment of experience abroad in the TL country as a certification standard. As the meeting concluded, Gail Guntermann was asked to prepare a special ACTFL publication on teacher education.

Guntermann's book, Developing language teachers for a changing world: Prospects for progress, was published the following year (1993). In her introduction, she cites some positive trends in FL teacher education, including Jarvis and Taylor's (1990) finding that, "teacher educators in the institutions that graduate large numbers of teachers now tend to hold advanced degrees in language education" (p. 1).

Earley's (1993) contribution details the systemic context of teacher education, noting the tensions between national and state control and the role of professional organizations in shaping teacher education reform. Schrier's chapter (1993), discusses barriers to the professionalization of FL teaching, echoing Earley's concerns:

The state departments of education have fundamentally undermined the presumption that all professionals holding the same job share common knowledge and commitments. This compromising situation needs to be addressed energetically in the foreign language teaching community, for it allows states to implicitly set minimal requirements for licensure, thus rendering less effective efforts by any recognized professional organization (e.g. ACTFL) to specify professional standards. (p. 108)

Other themes are more relevant to the proficiency movement. Tedick, Walker, Lange, Paige, and Jorstad (1993), working from a socio-cognitive perspective, argue for a language as *subject* rather than the traditional modernist view of language as *object* that pervades linguistic research (p. 53). They also warn colleagues of a technicist view of language as *object* usurping the progress of the proficiency movement.⁶

⁶ Though the authors offer no empirical or even anecdotal evidence to back this claim, there are precedents in the literature that specifically address how a technicist view of language pedagogy has pervaded the

Schrier's contribution to the volume (1993) refers to a study that suggests another concern regarding the impact of the Guidelines on the language profession. She relates a study by Wolf and Riordan (1991) which found that FL teachers were less likely to implement proficiency-oriented instruction after becoming aware of "teaching for proficiency concepts" (Wolf & Riordan, p. 477).

Finally, Lafayette (1993) discusses elements of content preparation for future FL teachers. According to Lafayette, lack of knowledge of the TL results in poor pedagogy: "In the foreign language classroom, lack of proficiency often signals the use of English as the vehicle of instruction, with practice in the FL limited to textbook exercises" (p. 127). Lafayette presents guidelines advanced by the AAT's and ACTFL, all of which support Advanced to Advanced High proficiency in the TL for future teachers (higher for French). The impact of the Proficiency Movement, according to Lafayette, is illustrated by increased travel abroad opportunities and OPI screenings such as the TOPT (Texas Oral Proficiency Test).

Empirical Research on FL Teacher Education: Two Important Studies

The review of the literature uncovered only two empirical research studies that illuminate the state of FL teacher education. Grosse (1990) reports on the preparation of a directory of FL education programs. The study she conducted toward that end represents the first significant empirical research studies conducted on FL teacher education from the program's perspective. The contents of the directory would include state-approved FL programs, characteristics of their program and certification process,

views of the Guidelines principal change agents. For Example, VanPatten (1986), Kalivoda (1990), and Schulz (1986) find fault with the advocacy of native language grammar explanation they find within the writings of the Guidelines' principal proponents.

and also their consistency “with the ACTFL Provisional Guidelines on the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers” (p. 7). At the time the study was reported, 773 institutions (representing complete information for 38 states) had responded. The states that reported the most state-approved FL teacher training programs included (in order): New York, Pennsylvania, California, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Virginia, North Carolina, Missouri, and Iowa. Grosse also found that, at that reporting, eight states had reported implementing ACTFL OPI testing requirements for teachers. Louisiana and North Carolina, two states represented in the present study, were among those listed. Florida, another state represented, was reported to be considering “oral tests for both students and teachers in order to decide which will (would) be approved for use by the school districts” (p. 12). Only 12 out of the 38 states reported requiring a FL methods course. A major concern, based on preliminary findings, was the need for more streamlined certification requirements in order to ease the shortage of qualified K-12 FL teachers.

For her dissertation, Schrier (1989, cited in Hammadou, 1993) conducted a nationwide survey of FL teacher education programs within small colleges (2,500 students or fewer). Programs were selected from a proportional, random, stratified sample. The response rate was 70%. Most (84%) of the responding programs did not require that their candidates study abroad in A TL country. Around 57% indicated screening candidates based on some type of proficiency exam. The most popular choice was a derivative of the ACTFL OPI, the second choice was the MLA Cooperative Exam. Schrier’s study also profiles FL teacher educators’ academic preparation. The majority of teacher educators (81.05%) obtained their highest degree in a FL.

Summary of the Literature on FL Teacher Education

As depicted in the introduction of this study, there has been a struggle during the latter half of the last century to evolve the system of preparing future FL teachers led by professional organizations such as MLA and more recently, ACTFL. Toward this end, Guntermann's Developing foreign language teachers for a changing world (1993) is a significant document in the history of such efforts, representing a mature language teaching profession striving for a detached awareness of itself in the larger educational research and reform community. Though articles such as those contained in the volume continue to be outside of the mainstream of professional publication, there is an emerging trend toward the study of teacher thinking in FL education research that reflects a broadening awareness that may transform the FL methods course. Though only two empirical studies were uncovered in the literature, they offer some evidence of the adoption and implementation of the Guidelines in FL teacher education programs.

The FL Methods Course: From Prescription to Post-Modernism

Perhaps the first opportunity a preservice teacher will have to learn about educational innovations such as the ACTFL Guidelines is in the context of the FL methods course. However, as reported in the previous section, this has not necessarily been the norm in the preparation of FL teachers. The literature on FL methods course curricula, according to Bernhardt and Hammadou (1987), is very sparse, reflecting what they allege to be the poor state of the methods curriculum. Strasheim (1991) discusses the evolution of the FL methods course. She illustrates how, before the 70s, FL teacher education was, for all intents and purposes, methods coursework on a program level; that

is, whatever the dominant method of the day determined the focus and content of the program. In contrast, she describes how the eclectic approach of the 70s changed this conception. The 'eclectic' approach to FLs, with an emphasis on "professional decision-making" (p. 104) over indoctrination in the method of the day paved the way for an emphasis on the teacher's "belief system" (p. 105). Strasheim describes this approach:

The purpose is not to indoctrinate or convert anyone to any single methodology; it is rather to help each individual to develop his or her own teaching style, one that will certainly be eclectic, but hopefully, one that will also be a logical and coherent whole contributing to students' cognitive-affective-creative growth. (p. 105)

The early stage of the eclectic period of the FL methods course underscores a pragmatic, positivist view of the curriculum. De Lorenzo (1973) describes an efficient, partially programmed approach to the methods course that reflects an individualized approach typical of the 'eclectic' period in teacher education. He designed the approach to address the needs of students for practical, relevant, and individualized instruction. The result is a methods course centered on developing various performance skills.

A shift from eclecticism to integration, according to Strasheim, led to the design of individual-oriented methods courses that give prospective teachers the wherewithal to evolve their own personal belief systems and teaching styles and experienced teachers opportunities to refine and expand theirs (1991, p. 106). Over the years, this approach has evolved a constructivist epistemology of FL teaching. According to Horwitz (1985): "The foreign language methods class pursues an ambiguous goal: to initiate a group of prospective teachers into the theory and practice of teaching a foreign language in the course of a single semester" (p. 333). In response, she proposes a FL methods course

design that challenges prospective teachers' preconceptions and beliefs about what it means to learn and teach a FL. A decade later, Horwitz and four students (1997) describe the shift in discourse on methods to "What is the best language teaching method?" to "What is the best language teaching method for a particular type of student?" and now to "How best can we best promote learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom?" (p. 518). The authors argue that the collaborative approach is not widely discussed in FL teacher education and students rarely get opportunities for firsthand experience.

Kinginger (1997), representing a more post-modern wing of constructivism, makes a case for abolishing the notion of a methods course, altogether, arguing for discourse analysis of teachers' written reflections as a worthy direction for FL teacher education. Orienting research on teaching around the method, she argues, as it has come to be associated with an applied science view of teaching, undermines the active role of the practitioner in the teaching process (citing Pennycook, 1989), and is consequently outdated. Kinginger argues that we have abstracted the term method to the level of the approach (Richards & Rogers, 1986), focusing on how teachers construe theory in practice. Kinginger argues for a grounding of the term *theory* in the question of how teachers take these elements and weave a *coherence system* (citing Linde, 1993).

The Proficiency Guidelines & the FL Methods Course: In Search of a Connection

To some degree, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were introduced into dialogue on the direction of FL methodology. Hadley (1993) suggests that, instead of discussing which method is the most effective, the profession should ask itself how FL educators are advancing the proficiency of their students: "This shift from methodology to measurement questions marks a significant change in direction for the profession" (p.

75). Aside from the fact that Hadley's proficiency-oriented methods text, Teaching language in context (1986; 1993), is perhaps the most widely-adopted of its kind (Grosse, 1993; Schrier, 1989), there is very little discussion in the research literature regarding the influence of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on the FL methods course. Bacon and Humbach's (1989) portrayal of the FL methods course as "evolv[ing] to reflect meaningful, communicative, functional proficiency, and even integrative language goals" (p. 1071) appears to speak to the Guidelines' influence, though they might also have been referring to the growing popularity of communicative approaches in FL pedagogy that preceded or were concurrent with the dissemination of the Guidelines.

Muyskens (1984) was perhaps the first to offer a design for a proficiency-based methods course. This plan essentially follows three stages: familiarization with concepts, application, and then materials construction. The content of her curriculum includes: teaching for proficient pronunciation (in context); functional and contextual vocabulary instruction; grammar presented deductively or inductively but always in a communicative context; and teaching across the modalities along the criteria of function, context and accuracy (weighed toward oral proficiency). Muyskens also offers some suggestions for lesson planning for proficiency: warm-up activities; TL classroom communication; vocabulary and grammar in context; contextualized and meaningful exercises; meaningful and/or contextualized reading and writing practice; role-play and small group activities; cultural functions presented in context; and helpful correction. Other considerations include: detailed guidelines for evaluating texts for a proficiency-orientation, the supplementation of authentic materials, TL-medium classroom communication as a management and motivation tool; the design of an advanced conversation course

designed around increasing one's proficiency level; and oral proficiency, as well as "contextualized achievement" testing (p. 194). Finally, she suggests that mentor teachers be oriented to the Guidelines and implications for curriculum and evaluation.

***Schrier and Grosse on the FL Methods Course
and its Instructor, the Foreign Language Teacher Educator***

Whether or not the educational innovation called the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines has had a significant impact on FL teacher preparation is a matter that has yet to be fully researched. As alluded to earlier, Schrier and Grosse offer the only significant empirical analyses of the FL methods course to-date. Schrier (1989) found that only 71.74% of the respondents reported both a general and a FL-specific methods course offering in their program. Omaggio's Teaching language in context (1986) was the most widely adopted FL methods textbook (19.56%), with Allen and Valette's Methods of teaching a foreign or second language (1977) a close second (17.93%). The most common assessment method reported was the OPI, illustrating the impact of the Guidelines.

Grosse (1993), in a study of FL methods course syllabi (157 collected, representing 144 colleges and universities) analyzed and compared results with a similar prior study on the TESOL methods course (1991). In reviewing the literature on the FL methods course, she distinguishes two types: "studies of specific or generic methods courses" and "the present and future curriculum for preparing FL teachers" (p. 303). Though many programs did not specify whether they targeted primary or secondary level teachers, of the ones that did, K-12 geared programs outnumbered FLES methods courses two to one (12 FLES vs. 24 K-12). The course goals revealed a greater emphasis than

their TESOL counterparts on the topics of “cultural knowledge and professional development”, assessment, reflection, FL advocacy, and program building (p. 304). Instructional materials analysis revealed, as in the case of the Schrier study, that Omaggio’s Teaching language in context (1986) was the dominant text (79 syllabi cited), with the Allen and Valette text (1977, cited in 55 syllabi) a close second. The table of contents of Language in context appeared to influence the order of topics on a number of the syllabi reviewed. Several states, including North Carolina, included a state curriculum guide among required readings, indicating a growing concern for real-life practical considerations. Course content indicated the following topics in order of frequency: Culture, Testing, Methods, Oral Proficiency Development, Lesson Planning, Language Learning Theory, Writing, Listening, Grammar, and finally, Reading (p. 306).

On Course Requirements (130 syllabi), Grosse notes the following rank order with regard to frequency: Exams, Curriculum development, Peer teaching, Participation, Reading-focused activities, and Classroom observations. Overall, Course requirements indicated a more practical than theoretical emphasis. Evaluation, representing “the most heavily weighted” (p. 309) course requirement, averaged about 30-40% of the grade. Weight of grading was ranked in the following order: Exams, Materials evaluation, Field experience, Curriculum development, Teaching demonstrations, Reading-focused activities, Papers, Observations, and Participation.

Grosse concludes with recommendations for reforming the FL methods course: more emphasis on technological innovations for the FL classroom, “greater linkage between schools and universities,” “less emphasis on traditional exams,” more journal use, and “more involvement with professional organizations and conferences” (p. 310).

Concluding Thoughts on the Literature Concerning the FL Methods Course

According to the research literature, the evolution of the FL methods course essentially began with a myopic focus around training in whatever happened to be the dominant method of the day. However, in the 70s a more individualized, eclectic approach ushered in a more integrative perspective, which puts teacher decision-making at the heart of methods instruction. This constructivist view of language teaching led to the questioning of the primacy of the *method* as a focus of teacher development. The new way of conceptualizing the *methods* course appears to be rooted in teacher thinking and a focus on the FL learner. With regard to the impact of the Proficiency Guidelines on the methods course curriculum only one source was encountered that attempts to extrapolate implications of the Guidelines for teaching the FL methods course. Only two significant empirical studies were encountered in the literature on the FL methods course, both of which suggest at least some impact of the Proficiency Guidelines on the methods curriculum via the adoption of Omaggio's Teaching language in context (1986).

Diffusion of Innovations Research and Education: Developing a Connection

As stated in the Introduction, the Diffusion of Innovations, a field of research inquiry that seeks to understand the process of developing and communicating new ideas or practices, guides this study. The earliest traces of a DOI research tradition lead us to Europe. According to Rogers (1995), French social scientist, Gabriel Tarde (1903), discovered an S-shaped curve in studying the rate of *invention and imitation* (p. 40) which starts slow as an invention is introduced, then sharply accelerates toward the middle and finally tapers off at the end as the invention reaches the remaining few who

have not adopted it. In agricultural studies, Ryan and Gross (1943, in Rogers, 1995) also encountered a similar phenomenon in farmers' use of a cutting-edge hybrid seed corn and adopted the model as diffusion of *innovations*. Over the years, diffusion studies have been conducted in the behavioral sciences (p. 45).

Foundations of the Diffusion of Educational Innovations

The earliest traces of DOI research in educational settings take us back to 1941, when Paul Mort and his graduate assistant, Francis Cornell published their study of the diffusion of educational innovations, or as he called them, *adaptations*, in Pennsylvania. This study led the researchers to conclude "the succeeding waves of *reform* which have come and passed in this century have left discouragingly little mark" (1941, p. 3). At that time, DOI was still relatively new: "We have placed our faith in diffusion to a very high extent upon the initiation of individual communities and here given but little attention to the problem of how diffusion comes about" (Mort & Cornell, 1941, p. 25).

A major contribution of research in educational innovation is an understanding of diffusion and adoption at the school district level. Carlson (1965), taking an administrative perspective, notes three barriers to change in the US school districts: *the absence of a change agent, a weak knowledge base, and the 'domestication' of public schools by virtue of their guaranteed survival under current fiscal arrangement*. Under such conditions, Carlson argues, "the necessity for change is reduced" (p. 7).

Miles (1969) also helped lay the foundation for a DOI perspective in education. Unlike Carlson, Miles expresses a more optimistic view of educational organizations' ability to critically confront its own tacit norms, norms that might impede educational innovation. In presenting a model for the development of innovation in school settings,

Miles advances a system of interrelated processes, which are divided into several clusters. Cluster one involves seven processes: *setting educational goals, forecasting, and assessing* (processes common to research and development groups), *diagnosing problems, inventing and scanning* solutions and new ideas, and *initiating*. Steps 8 and 9 involve *developing* and *adapting*. Step 10 involves evaluation. Steps 11 and 12 involve *trying out* and *support* of implementation of the innovation, processes that Miles characterizes as adaptive. Step 13 involves *deciding* to adopt the innovation as a routine or to discontinue its use. If the innovation is adopted, the institution goes to Step 14, *informing*, and Step 14, *training*. Step 16, *maintaining*, denotes the process of routinizing toward durable installation of the innovation.

The Four Major Elements in the Diffusion of Innovations

In general, DOI research has considered four major elements in the study of diffusion: the innovation, the communication channels that diffuse it, the time factor involved in the diffusion process, and the social systemic context in which that innovation is either adopted or rejected (Rogers, 1995). In educational settings, however, there are additional considerations. Rogers and Jain (1968) argue that educational organizations represent an important, overlooked aspect of the social system element that needs to be addressed in studies of educational innovations. Both Rogers (1995) and Rogers and Jain (1968) also underscore the importance of considering the implementation of innovations that follows the adoption decision. Because educational innovations often involve ideas and practices that are often highly interpretable and difficult to reproduce exactly, implementation has been added as an important element in its own right both in this review of the literature, as well as a proposed *Diffusion of*

Educational Innovations Model (DEIM) that will be introduced in Chapter III.

The Innovation

In early applications of DOI research to the field of education, Mort and Cornell (1941), as mentioned earlier, referred to innovations as *adaptations* (1941). This appears to have died out in the 60s. For example, Carlson (1968) defines an *innovation* as “a new idea or practice” (p. 10). Carlson notes the distinction between ideas and practices-based innovations, the former being more difficult to implement. Rogers (1995) makes the further distinction between *idea-* and *principles-based* innovations, the latter being more difficult to implement. Markee offers a definition of innovation that fits language education: “proposals for qualitative change in pedagogical materials, approaches, and values that are perceived as new by individuals who comprise a formal (language) education system” (1993, p. 28). Components of language teaching innovations include: the systemic context, the production of real changes in pedagogical values that eventually becomes institutionalized; and finally, an innovation is deliberately designed to improve practice (Markee, 1997, p. 232). In this study, the innovation in question is the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Components of the innovation include the Oral Proficiency Interview and its derivatives used in assessing proficiency, as well as proficiency-oriented instruction, which may be interpreted as a principles-based innovation. Whereas the former came with concrete support materials and clear parameters, the latter is a classic illustration of a principles-based innovation.

While the foundation of proficiency as a principle seems straightforward on the surface, the reality is quite the contrary. Schulz (1986) describes how, at the Language Proficiency Assessment Symposium of 1981, participants, over 70 definitions came to

light. Lowe (1986), in his response to the ACTFL Guidelines, suggests using the European notion of *interactional competence* in defining proficiency. Needless to say, this term has a long, complex history. Omaggio (1986), in Teaching language in context, traces the term back to Chomsky's (1965) distinction between competence and performance. A pedagogical assumption behind the distinction suggested by Chomsky is that "it was methodologically necessary to study and describe language through idealized abstractions rather than through records of natural speech, in which deviation from the rules was common" (Chomsky, 1965, p. 3, in Omaggio, 1986, p. 144). This view, according to Omaggio, was later challenged by linguists such as Hymes (1972) who argued for a more social, contextual view of language learning beyond the limited focus of grammar accuracy. Those who wished to preserve an emphasis on grammar rule absolutisms, in turn, challenged the negotiative nature of a communicative approach.

Eventually, according to Omaggio (1986), Canale and Swain (1980) came to view a middle ground that recognized both aspects of language learning as a tenable definition of language competence. A review of the relevant research led them to propose a four-part definition of linguistic competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The Proficiency Guidelines' construct of proficiency, as designed and promoted by ACTFL, was adapted from the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)'s newly revised definition of the criteria for knowing a language: function, content / context, and accuracy (Omaggio, 1983). Whether or not ACTFL's standardization of the proficiency principle had a substantial impact on the FL profession remains to be fully investigated. The same holds true for its pedagogical derivative, *proficiency-oriented instruction*. The debate over this

approach extrapolated from the Guidelines, illustrates the issues inherent in developing a teaching innovation based on an elusive principle such as proficiency. What proficiency-oriented instruction means to the FL teacher educator, their interns, or practicing FL teachers is still awaiting empirical verification. Based on Rogers' (1995) prediction, one would expect that the diffusion and adoption of this innovation would be compromised by the ambiguity and controversy surrounding the issue of how to define and facilitate proficiency in another language.

One of the most important elements in diffusion research and one of Rogers' (1995) three areas recommended for further study is that of the innovation's perceived characteristics. He defines an innovation as: "an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (p. 11). Important component variables of an innovation include it's: relative advantage (over previous practice), compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (p. 21). Due, in part, to the increasing number of international diffusion studies, cultural variables have been determined to play a major role in determining an innovation's compatibility: "An important factor in the adoption rate of an innovation is its compatibility with the values, beliefs, and past experiences of individuals in the social system" (Rogers, 1995, p. 4).

Other important characteristics include: its price tag (Mort, 1941), the amount of support materials required (Emrick & Peterson, 1977, cite a negative correlation with diffusion); whether an innovation is of an optional, collective, or authority variety⁷.

Among the Southeastern states, three have produced authority innovations derived from

⁷ Rogers, 1995, p. 29, authority decisions diffuse the fastest, though they are limited in: participation, discussion of alternatives, innovation, competition, and experimentation; broad conception- citing Gittel & Hollander, 1968, p. 197.

the Guidelines: North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. Whether such an approach has a facilitative or inhibiting effect on the diffusion and adoption of the Guidelines in those states remains to be seen. There is also a social dimension that characterizes innovations. According to Rogers (1995), many innovations are aimed at high social status homophilous social groups (p. 5). Homophily denotes similarity among adopters; heterophily, on the contrary, denotes dissimilarity among adopting groups (Rogers, 1995). Markee (1993) seems to echo this socially-constructed aspect of innovations when he defines innovations in FL teaching as: "proposals for qualitative change in pedagogical materials, approaches, and values that are perceived as new by individuals who comprise a formal (language) education system" (p. 231). Homophily and heterophily also play an important role in communication channels.

Communication Channels

Communication channels, another important element in DOI, go hand in hand with their adopting social system. According to Rogers (1995) "there have been relatively few studies of how the social or communicative structure affects the diffusion or adoption of innovations in a system" (p. 25). Communication channels may include: mass media, interpersonal networks that may be homophilous or heterophilous, as well as "localite" or "cosmopolite" (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 11) networks. Within the communication structure there may also be certain cliques and chains that affect the diffusion process. Some cliques, for example, act as gatekeepers who restrict the diffusion of information regarding an innovation (Rogers & Jain, 1968, citing Mortimore, 1968). Mort and Cornell (1941) found that administrators restrict the communication of diffusions; one factor was that they tend to be "swayed by political influence" (p. 210).

Change agents, who act to facilitate the communication of an innovation, affect diffusion depending on how actively and effectively they work with the adopting system's communication structure (Rogers, 1995, p. 28; p. 206). Change agents should be aware of points of resistance, master the "interpersonal dimension of leadership" (p. 112), and include adopters in the process (Hunkins & Ornstein, 1989). Though it has been argued that *all* involved in education are change agents (Fullan, 1993), DOI has determined that the utilization of opinion leaders within the adopter social system (Rogers, 1995) represents a more effective strategy. Because opinion leaders are homophilous with the adopting system than change agents, they are more "able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way" (p. 27).

Geography may also play a role in determining communication channels: "The research has shown that the extent to which one seeks information outside his immediate geographical area is related to rate of adoption" (Carlson, 1968, p. 22). In analyzing the rate of the adoption of the ACTFL Guidelines in the Southeast, one might find evidence of a state-to-state spread. Regional FL professional organizations, such as SCOLT may also play a significant role in facilitating the diffusion of innovations in FL education.

In developing a research methodology for studying diffusion and adoption in educational settings, communication channel considerations have led to the identification of sociometric survey items as crucial in survey design (Rogers & Jain, 1968). Examples of such relational questions include: "Who first told you about...?" or "who convinced you to adopt...?" (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 7). Such relational analysis can help clarify the communication structure within the organization and deepen our understanding, for example, the role of heterophily / homophily in communicating innovations.

Time

A limitation in diffusion research is the difficulty of measuring the time of adoption. Carlson (1968) argues that “far more care needs to be exercised in pinpointing the time of adoption if diffusion studies are to provide a firm knowledge base” (p. 9). With regard to the time it takes to see an innovation through to adoption, Rogers (1995) emphasizes the adoption decision timeline: knowledge, persuasion, decision to adopt / reject, implementation, and confirmation. Also, the innovativeness of potential adopters—ranging from innovators, to early adopters, to early majority adopter, to late majority adopters, and ending with laggards (1995, see p. 89) influences the time it takes for an innovation to be adopted. Rate of adoption in DOI theory, as mentioned earlier, is represented in an *S*-shaped curve. Whereas *innovators* inhabit the low point of the *S* (the early stage of diffusion), *laggards* explain the point at the top of the *S* that represents the point at which the last few holdouts decide to jump on the bandwagon. The leveling off of the *S* also represents the point at which an innovation becomes institutionalized; its diffusion rate stabilizes, having been fully integrated into the adopting system.

The question of *who* adopts plays a part in determining the diffusion rate. In addition to the *early / late* adopter distinction, Rogers (1995) has identified the following socio-economic and personality traits of earlier adopters as having a positive impact on the time it takes to diffuse an innovation through to adoption. Socio-economic characteristics include high degrees of: formal education, literacy, social status, upward mobility, and identification with larger (as opposed to local) social units. Personality traits that affect diffusion rates include: empathy, open-mindedness, good abstract reasoning, a rational outlook, and intelligence (1995).

Teacher innovativeness and attitudes toward the innovation may also enhance the diffusion rate (Rogers & Jain, 1968). Mort and Cornell's (1941) study denotes three categories of adopting teachers: followers, supporters, and neutrals (p. 29). Sometimes patterns among teachers' "personality, communication behavior, and attitudes" can affect the diffusion process (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 8). If "precise goals of the new program being suggested—that is, have not planned adequately" (p. 111), the status quo will reassert itself. Teachers tend to resist change due to: the perception that it is simply added work, that it comes too fast, or simple "ignorance of the facts" (p. 111). How innovative are FL teacher educators? ...their colleagues at the university? ...their counterparts in the local schools? Such factors may impact the diffusion process. Thus, the time factor in educational diffusion needs to be addressed on a *socio-organizational* level.

Adopting Social Systems and Organizations

Over the years, diffusion research has confronted the "social change" (Rogers, 1995, p. 6) dimension of DOI, a consideration borrowed from social learning theory (p. 334). According to Rogers (1995): "There have been relatively few studies of how the social or communicative structure affects the diffusion or adoption of innovations in a system" (p. 25). The social system concept, as it has been applied to DOI, has been defined as: "...a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal" (Rogers, 1995, p. 23). A social system can be subdivided into the following component variables: its social structure and the communication structure that has already been discussed under the heading "Communication channels," an element already discussed. An impetus behind increased attention to social variables

has been criticism stemming from an excessively individualistic emphasis in diffusion survey design that tends to have a *pro-innovation* bias and tends to neglect what an innovation means to an adopting social system (Rogers, 1995, p. 100). Social systems may vary in openness to change (Rogers, 1995, p. 295). Mort (1941) found community variables to be important in the diffusion process. Higher populations and concentration of citizens with a higher cultural level, tax leeway, wealth, and urbanness are just a few component variables associated with the community factor. An assumption of DOI is that social system variables exist within "the individual's personality, communication behavior, and attitudes" (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 8).

Within social systems, organizational factors present an important dimension of inquiry into the diffusion of educational innovations. Rogers (1995) defines an organization as: "a stable system of individuals who work together to achieve common goals through a hierarchy of ranks and a division of labor" (p. 403). In research on educational innovations, Rogers and Jain (1968) argue that it is vital to consider organizational variables within a given social structure, a neglected factor in a field of study largely based on the adoption behavior of individual farmers:

Teachers do work in organizational settings like schools, even if farmers do not.

And the organizational environment does have an important influence on teachers' innovative behavior. (p. 2)

Rogers states that research on the organizational variable in educational diffusion studies is "an exciting potential contribution [that] could be made by the education research tradition," (1995, p. 63).

Rogers and Jain (1968) describe this trend in diffusion research: "Organizational

theory, systems analysis, structural effects, and matrix multiplication," once "beyond the pale," have been drawn into the mainstream of DOI research (p. 3). As Rogers puts it: "One assumption is that there is theoretical profit in bringing such divergent approaches into the diffusion fold" (p. 3). Carlson (1969) notes staff characteristics like social cohesiveness and morale are important in tracing diffusion in educational organizations.

One criticism of DOI research is the burden placed on individual adopters in determining the success or failure of an innovation (Rogers, 1995). The National Diffusion Network (Emrick & Peterson, 1977), in promoting the adoption of selected educational innovations, has chosen to approach educational innovations from an organizational vantage point. This perspective not only recognizes adopting organizational variables, but also considers the effectiveness of the change agent in promoting and implementing their innovations on the local level.⁸

An important aspect of an educator's organizations is that of "the makeup and norms of his school" (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 8). For example, schools that are more traditional may differ from non-traditional schools in terms of diffusion (Rogers & Jain, p. 5). Leadership style, which plays a part in the time of adoption, is also a relevant variable here, as "degrees of concentration or its authoritarianism" (p. 11), or centralization in the decision-making structure are negatively correlated with organizational norms that inhibit the adoption of educational innovations. On the contrary, a more open style of leadership based on the "principle of supportive relationships" (Likert, 1961, p. 103,

⁸ 1. Change agent (staff size, experience, support)

2. Adopter [target] (urbanism, need, morale, intended vs. actual)

3. Organizational (parts, coordination, accessibility)

4. Initiation stage (outreach, secondary awareness, training)

5. Implementation stage (assistance, follow-up)

6. Diffusion tactics (targets, volumes, methods)

(from Emrick & Peterson, 1977, p. 19)

in Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 22) tends to facilitate "full and efficient" diffusion (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 22). In a later work, Rogers (1995) echoes these earlier sentiments, arguing that more *convergent-style* leadership results in better diffusion (p. 370). The presence of adaptive units in an organization has been also correlated with more efficient DOI (p. 24). According to Rogers (1995), the size of the educational organization may also be a significant factor: "Larger organizations are more innovative" (Rogers, 1995, p. 379). In addition to organizational variables advanced by Rogers and Jain (1968), The National Diffusion Network offers three additional component variables that pertain to the structure of an educational organization: parts, coordination, accessibility (Emrick & Peterson, 1977). The adoption decision-making process in educational organizations advanced by Rogers (1995) shows some influence of Miles (1969); it is marked by two initiation stages: agenda setting and matching (Rogers, 1995, p. 403).

The L2 (second language) literature has addressed social systemic variables in the diffusion of language teaching innovations (Markee, 1997; White, 1993). However, the researcher encountered only one study in an educational context that incorporates the organizational perspective. White (1993) explores organizational factors in the context of the diffusion of language teaching innovations citing Nunan's (1989) research on the Australian Adult Migrant Education Program, which reported that center-periphery models are usually "widely adopted but poorly-implemented," limited by the "relative remoteness of change agents" (White, 1993, p. 252, citing Nunan, 1989); however, funding agencies tend to prefer this approach. On the contrary, localized models show greater teacher support and the development of teacher innovativeness.

The analysis of social system and organizational variables is an important next

step in researching the diffusion of educational innovations. As Rogers and Jain (1968) put it: "Such investigation will lead to theoretical understandings about the role of social structure on individual behavior, as well as to practical insight about how to organize education in order to facilitate change" (p. 10).

Before discussing the literature on the adoption and implementation of the Guidelines in the Southeast, it is important to consider the region within the general socio-organizational context of educational reform. The Southeastern Regional Vision for Education Special Report (1994) describes a research effort undertaken by the Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), a federally-funded program launched in 1991 representing: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The goal was to research perceived barriers to school reform, which included: "inadequate resources, centralized decision-making and lack of innovation" (p. 5). The consortium began with a review of "state rules and regulations regarding funding, flexibility and accountability" (p. 5) but decided a more grounded, empirical view of the problem was needed. For each state represented by SERVE, the researchers conducted long interviews with: educational business leaders, political leaders, legislative leaders and their staffs, state superintendents ("or their deputies"), advisors to governors, teacher organization representatives, school boards, and business representatives.

Three of the poorest areas of the Southeast, the Mississippi Delta, Southern Georgia, and the Carolinas' coastal plains were designated for focus group interviews. In North Carolina, a total of 10 focus groups were conducted across three school districts selected along the following criteria: "all have dynamic, innovative leaders as superintendents; a reputation for innovation and risk taking; and are largely rural, with

lower than average tax wealth" (p. 10). Participants included principals, teachers, staff from central office, and local superintendents. Findings included (verbatim):

- 1.) Instability of political leadership
- 2.) Poor economic conditions
- 3.) Stop and start reforms
- 4.) Inability to reach consensus on goals
- 5.) Under-investment in training, and
- 6.) Lack of trust. (SERVE, 1994, p. 9)

Interpreting results of the SERVE Project study must be approached with caution for two reasons. One is that the authors recognize that there is little to support the isolation of the Southeast as a region that is at variance with the rest of the country when it comes to its approach to education. Also, though it appears there is extreme variation within this social system, the approach used by the authors was mainly qualitative. In that sense, it is to be interpreted as a *nature of study* and has not necessarily produced convincing support for allegations of regionally bound extremes.

With the socio-organizational context of FL teacher educators, this adopter category is perhaps unique in the sense that they may wear a variety of hats: as college of education or modern foreign languages department faculty, as liaisons to mentor teachers and FL supervisors in the local school district, or as officials in professional organizations. They are also, to an extent, beholden to or are to at least some degree, employees of the state, a factor that might have significant bearing on their adopting behavior. Whether or not FL teacher educators are active within the vast network of FL professional organizations (AAT's, state, regional, and national FL organizations) may

affect what, why and how they adopt. Also, whether they function more as change agents working from without the local social system or as opinion leaders with connections to community school officials remains to be empirically verified.

A 5th Element in the Diffusion of *Educational* Innovations: Implementation

Because educational innovations can be difficult to put into practice, their implementation may constitute a crucial fifth element in considering DOI in educational settings. Rogers and Jain (1968, p. 25) call for more attention to the outcomes of adopting and implementing educational innovations: "What improvements in educational productivity or quality result from the adoption of each innovation?" The authors argue, "diffusion research has largely been a tool on the side of sources, not receivers of innovation diffusion" (p. 1). Thus, it is not surprising that researchers have overlooked DOI where attention matters most, the phase of adoption where the *rubber hits the road*. In order to enhance the implementation of educational innovations, more attention has been drawn to the systemic context of adopters. According to Markee (1997), "the likelihood of an innovation being adopted is...contingent on its ecological appropriateness in a specific context of implementation" (p. 84). For reasons such as these, this element, implementation has been added as a separate fifth element in considering the DOI in an educational context. Warnings about overlooking the implementation of an innovation date back to Mort and Cornell (1941) who, in their study of the diffusion of a number of educational innovations in the state of Pennsylvania, note: "Communities were rather liberally credited when adaptations of the barest rudiments were in evidence" (p. 29). Carlson (1968) states "school people seem quite prone to modify new practices in the process of adopting them. For example, what is called team teaching in one system is

very different from what is called team teaching in another system” (p. 12).

Rogers and Jain (1968) draw a distinction between two dimensions of adopting and implementing an innovation: diffusion effects and consequences variables (p. 27).

The former refers to intermediate, process variables, whereas the latter refers to ultimate consequences variables that truly measure implementation.⁹ Component variables of

implementation include *flexibility* and *principles knowledge* (Rogers, 1995, p. 210,166).

Greater flexibility has been associated with high levels of diffusion and adoption

(Hunkins & Ornstein, 1989; Rogers, 1995), as well as increased amount of re-invention

(Rogers, 1995). Re-invention often occurs because "adopters often feel that they know of relevant information about their local situation that the external change agent may not

know or understand” (Rogers, p. 108). On the contrary, innovations that are principles

knowledge-intensive often impede the spread of adoption because adoptees have

difficulty with its vagueness and/or abstraction. As a principles-based innovation, an

important question to answer is whether or not the Guidelines’ implementation in the

Southeast was, in fact, undermined by this characteristic.

Other variables that may affect implementation include: knowledge and understanding; attitudes toward an innovation and innovation dissonance (with the

⁹ Knupfer, Robinson, and Erdman (1992) in an investigation of the impact of "Channel One" developed survey questions that illustrate the distinction between these two variables:

Diffusion effects variables:

"How have students used this information?"

"What has been the reaction of the participants?"

"What advantages and disadvantages are seen?"

Consequences of diffusion variables:

"What will influence project success?"

"Will the project be continued?"

(p. 4)

These examples show how diffusion effects and consequences items can be integrated into a survey. However, the question, "What will influence the success of this project" might be re-phrased as 'success or failure of this project?' to avoid a pro-innovation bias.

adopting system); internalization; and quality of use (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 11). The National Diffusion Network (Emrick & Peterson, 1977) has developed its own taxonomy of diffusion effects / consequences of innovation adoption. The researcher has taken the liberty of dividing component factors into Rogers' categories of diffusion effects and consequences: Diffusion effects, referring to the temporary vestiges of trying out an innovation include: scale magnitude, fidelity, complexity, and secondary diffusion. Consequences variables, which refer to permanent changes in an adopting social system as a result of confirmed adoption (Rogers, 1995) include success and valuation. One important consideration of the NDN model overlooked in the models advanced by Rogers and Jain (1968) and Rogers (1995) is the notion of fidelity. Clearly the fidelity of implementation is worth considering, given the many failures of educational innovations. This may come down to the quality of adoptees' depth of knowledge regarding the innovation. As Rogers and Jain put it: "the extent of knowledge and understanding of the innovation is another useful dependent variable" (Rogers & Jain, p. 15). If, as Rogers and Jain (1968) argue, quality of use is an important variable, then it follows that fidelity to the original intent of the innovation is a component of this criterion. In response to a tendency for DOI research to blame the adopter for lack of adoption, the emphasis has shifted to the change agent accountability for planning implementation, as they share responsibility for the fidelity of implementation to original intent (Emrick & Peterson, 1977; Rogers & Jain, 1968) or both (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1980).

In the program innovation literature, Leithwood and Montgomery (1980) relate a plan for implementation that outlines procedures necessary for assessing "the nature and degree of implementation of program innovations" (p 193) with the hope of better

informed “accountability and management decisions” and “research and development” (p. 194). Three considerations went into the consideration of implementation evaluation procedures: the function of the evaluation, the nature of the program, and the nature of the implementation. In addition, one must specify the intentions of the original policy and adequately describe the actual practice. There are essentially three procedures to follow in assessing implementation: reviewing the original policy, reviewing the actual practice, and then identifying discrepancies: “Optimally, the outcome should be a profile of the innovation as it is intended to be used along with some indication of the range of variations of use acceptable to those with a stake in the outcomes of evaluation” (p. 205).

In order to reduce the risk of dissonance between change agents and adopters, Leithwood and Montgomery (1980) call for measuring implementation in levels or stages (citing Hall, George, and Rutherford, 1977). Their approach to evaluating implementation involves: identifying dimensions, which considers compatibility with the perspective of the implementer and parameters of divergence need to be set in order to establish practices that will reconcile the original intent of the innovation with adjustment needs; as well as identifying sources of information, including the classroom teacher. Direct observation is recommended as the best source for data collection. As Leithwood and Montgomery’s (1980) model suggests, some allowance for adopter adaptation must be factored in the assessment of implementation. When meaning disparities develop between a change agent and the adopting unit, this disequilibrium often stems from a lack of consideration of *indigenous knowledge systems* (Rogers, 1995, p. 241), the norms and values that color ways of seeing within a given social system.

Rogers (1995), in his approach to assessing implementation, advances six

categories of consequences variables: desirable/ undesirable; direct/indirect; anticipated/ unanticipated (p. 30-31). Other variables include: productivity or quality, efficiency, morale, and self-renewal (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 11) and three later stages of implementation: redefining/restructuring, clarifying, and routinizing (Rogers, 1995, p. 403).

Summary of the Literature on Diffusion of Innovations Research

Within the general field of diffusion of innovations, Mort, Cornell, and Miles have laid the foundation for an educational perspective. In language teaching, Markee and White have made further adaptations to a language educational context. Generally speaking, diffusion research can be divided into four main elements: the innovation, communication channels, time, and the social systemic and organizational context. However, increasing attention to the social context of innovation has given rise to a deeper consideration of diffusion effects and consequences variables relevant to the implementation stage of the process.

Certain aspects of an innovation may impact its diffusion and adoption. Characteristics of particular interest in DOI research include: relative advantage, complexity, compatibility, trialability, and observability. With regard to the Proficiency Guidelines, the fact that they are at least partially principles-based, may also be a major trait of interest, one that might have undermined its diffusion and adoption.

The communication channels that diffuse an innovation may be heterophilous (between groups) or homophilous (within groups). While the former may take longer, it usually leads to wider adoption. Channels also may be subdivided into *localite* and *cosmopolite* varieties. The relational dynamics of organizations involved in the diffusion process are crucial; the coordination of change agents and opinion leaders in communi-

cating an innovation may determine the success or failure of adoption. Communication dynamics have yet to be investigated in the context of the Proficiency Guidelines.

The timeline of the diffusion of an innovation follows several stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. The time it takes for an innovation to be diffused and adopted correlates with adopter characteristics, particularly how innovative they are. Also the quality of planning and depth of commitment by the change agent organization to working with its adopting counterparts may affect the outcome. Though the literature discusses ACTFL's planning of the Guidelines' dissemination in some detail, up-close details of how it was communicated remain to be scrutinized.

A major development in diffusion research is the recognition of the important role played by the adopting unit's social system in determining the quality of the diffusion and adoption of an innovation. Within educational contexts, organizational variables may come into play. The literature on language teaching innovations has recognized supremacy of such variables in the diffusion and adoption process.

The implementation of an *educational* innovation is also meriting more attention in diffusion research as researchers have recognized that implementation is a complex process that involves a variety of considerations. Implementation has been measured in consequences which, in turn, are distinguished from diffusion effects associated with 'test driving' the innovation. Intervening factors include: flexibility, principles knowledge, and fidelity. Such considerations need to be carefully planned for by the change agent and must prepare for the fact that that innovation may be redefined and implemented contrary to expectations by the indigenous knowledge system. So far, we have little

empirical data on the extent and quality of the Guidelines' implementation in the Southeast.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines' Adoption and Implementation in the Southeast

Applying a DOI approach to the context of this study, the investigator conducted a selective review of the literature on the ERIC Database beginning with the year that the Guidelines were published in provisional form, continuing to the present (1980-1999). This search focused on any evidence in the literature of the Guidelines' adoption and implementation in the Southeast. This search produced presentations delivered at annual meetings of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching, articles produced in nationally-recognized journals of the profession, as well as various state curriculum frameworks. Because the latter category appeared only partially represented, an additional, comprehensive review of on-line FL curriculum frameworks was conducted.

SCOLT and The Guidelines

In back-to-back conferences, the Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT) made the ACTFL Guidelines the focus of professional discussion. One theme that emerges from both proceedings is the issue of grammar vs. communication emphases under the auspices of proficiency-oriented instruction (Bradley, 1986; Di Donato, 1987; Garretón & Medley, 1986). In the conference of 1986 (Fryer & Medley, 1987), the theme for SCOLT was "Planning for proficiency," perhaps responding to the lifting of the provisional limitation on the Guidelines. Two papers directly address the conference theme, discussing the reform process in policymaking (Duncan, 1986; Saylor, 1986). Generally speaking, SCOLT's proceedings portray issues of implementation in a higher

education context.¹⁰

A majority of the papers presented at the 1984 through 1986 SCOLT conferences focused on building proficiency in the modalities; however, connection with the ACTFL Guidelines is more implied than directly stated. Hansen (1986) develops a hierarchy of writing assignments from *Novice* to *Superior*, as specified in the Guidelines. Listening is perhaps best represented in the proceedings (Bryan, 1986; Di Orio, 1987; Harris & Jendrezewski, 1987; Kalivoda, 1987; Lynch, 1986). Curiously, only one paper discusses the need to integrate modality instruction. Evans (1987), an instructor at the University of Florida's International Language Institute, reports on her work with language minority students. She describes modality-integrated lessons offering "a more natural and realistic approach to language learning" (p. 87), while assuring that no one skill area gets neglected. Fryer (1986) discusses business units as a proficiency-oriented approach for both K-12 and undergraduate contexts. His paper represents one of the few representing K-12 implementation of the Guidelines. Generally, the SCOLT proceedings suggest that adoption of the Guidelines was first modality-centered and that adoption behavior was mostly concentrated in higher education settings (rather than K-12 settings).

ACTFL Guidelines' incorporation in the FL Frameworks of Southeastern States

The researcher also searched the ERIC database (1977-1999) for literature on the Guidelines' impact on the FL frameworks of Southeast (Appendix B). Except for Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi, the rest of the states have published extensive FL curricular guidelines on ERIC (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North

¹⁰ Armstrong (1986) indicates a lack of trained OPI testers; Camara-Norman, Davis, and Wallace (1987) underscore training issues; Mosher and Resch (1986) discuss inadequate texts, ancillaries.

Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia). Following is a discussion of some features of the frameworks that have been advanced in the context of the Guidelines, though the analysis makes no pretensions of being exhaustive or rigorously scientific.

The frameworks were compared along a list of criteria that might illuminate the Guidelines' impact on a particular state: the modalities, culture, support of an early start (correlated with the proficiency movement), reference to the Guidelines, proficiency testing, and proficiency-oriented instruction. The amount of variation is impressive, suggesting that the SERVE project's general characterization of the Southeast as a region of extremes may be an apt one. While North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana report policy innovations based on the ACTFL Guidelines in the form of OPI testing, only Florida is on-record as having at least attempted to mandate a Guidelines-based curriculum (Valdes, 1986; 1987). South Carolina and Georgia (particularly Georgia) opted to carefully integrate a series of suggestions for FL teachers based on the Guidelines. Other frameworks either pre-date the proficiency movement (Alabama and Arkansas), or show no evidence of a framework (Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi).

The researcher also consulted the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Language web site (NCSSFL, 1999) which links to the most current drafts of state FL curricular frameworks, all available on-line. States were inductively compared along the following predominant categories: National Standards of FL Learning, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, Proficiency-oriented instruction, proficiency assessment, and support of an early start (Appendix C). Except for Arkansas and Kentucky, all of the states included in the present study have constructed their FL frameworks around the Five C's of the Foreign Language Standards: Preparing for the 21st Century (1994, p. 9):

Communication, Culture, Connection, Comparison, & Communities). Some form of proficiency-oriented instruction was incorporated in each of the frameworks emphasizing either one or both of the following: communication-based instruction and authentic contexts. Also, all of the states now appear to advocate FLES instruction, an indication that the Guidelines have successfully made the case for the time demand of true progress in FL proficiency. Only four of the states—North Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama—emphasize proficiency-based assessment. Though the review of frameworks available on-line provides a more valid and reliable review of the Proficiency Guidelines' impact on the southeastern FL frameworks, a thorough document analysis of the evolution of each framework from the introduction of the Guidelines through to the present is needed to assess their diffusion and adoption by state departments of education. Such analysis is beyond the parameters of the current study.

In the refereed journals of the language teaching professions, there are examples of articles that reflect the Southeast's response to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Gutierrez (1987), a Virginia-based FL educator, articulates a recipe for organizing the methods, materials and curricula that have grown out of the proficiency movement, advancing several tenets of proficiency-oriented testing. After alluding to his state's adoption of the Guidelines in its then current framework, he suggests that teachers need to be educated as to how to reconcile their current practice with the general principles the Guidelines espouse. In order to do this, he suggests the technique of preparing situation cards that "will aid in the elicitation of the content and function of the ACTFL ETS scale" (p. 918; Appendix A). In evaluating the resulting skits, Gutierrez suggests the use of a 1-5 scale measuring: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Adoption of these

strategies, according to the author, eases the transition to the proficiency approach, one that he insists would be best completed by formal training.

While Gutierrez' work reflects the Oral Proficiency Interview as an instructional focus, another example adapts Omaggio's (1986) articulation of proficiency-oriented instruction. Kentucky-based community college instructor, Hendrickson, (1992) offers a series of guidelines for developing a proficiency-oriented classroom based on Omaggio (1986). He begins by suggesting teachers consult their students for a hierarchy of functions that are relative to their personal or professional needs. In designing curricula, suggestions can be worked into a battery of thematic contexts, operating from a more contextual approach (citing Omaggio, 1986). Once such a curriculum is in place, the author advocates cooperative, personalized, and communicative practice activities moving from low to high output. Higher proficiency students might be encouraged to share opinions. Language practice should also be creative, encouraging "divergent activities that tap into their imagination" (p. 203) such as ink blot commentary or dramatic role-play. His next emphasis is on accuracy, focusing on the educative aspects of errors in terms of feedback on the learning process. He also stresses careful screening of authentic materials for appropriateness to the learner's level of proficiency. Cross-cultural learning is also emphasized, focusing on questioning student assumptions about their culture and the culture under study. Like Lange (1988) and Omaggio (1986), he argues for a spiral approach to language learning and sensitivity to the affective needs of language learners.

The previous articles are mostly illustrative and anecdotal. To date, only one empirical study of the adoption and implementation of the ACTFL Guidelines was found

in the professional literature. Grosse (1988), in studying the impact of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in Florida, conducted a survey of district FL supervisors. Results, though limited by small sample size and lack of connection to diffusion research, reports that implementation was undermined by the prohibitive cost of training. A similar lack of access to training was also reported by Wolf and Riordan (1991) in their random sample survey of members of a state FL organization. Finally, the complexity of implementing proficiency testing in K-12 schools resulted in varied implementation.

Returning to the general findings of the SERVE research report, it would appear that economic constraints might negatively impact the diffusion of educational innovations. With regard to state intervention in FL education, this is reflected by a potential disparity in investment running the gamut from the blank check approach of Florida, a state that demonstrates financial support of innovations, to no evidence of investment in many other states (Valdes, 1987). The inability to reach consensus noted in the report is contradicted by evidence in many of the frameworks of extensive discussion and agreement as all of the frameworks, with the exception of Kentucky, offer extensive, focused discussion behind the FL frameworks. Still, whether this consensus extends from paper to the classroom remains to be investigated.

Summary of Research on the ACTFL Guidelines'

Adoption and Implementation in the Southeast

A review of the SCOLT conference proceedings suggests that adoption of the Guidelines was first modality-centered and that adoption behavior was mostly concentrated in higher education settings (rather than K-12 settings); however, this information is anecdotal and in need of empirical verification. The SERVE Project

(1994) describes the Southeast as a region of extremes (i.e. rich-poor, urban-rural). The available state FL frameworks exhibit a tremendous amount of variation in the various states' experience of adopting and implementing the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. An interesting tendency of the rest of the states, the ones that reflect adoption of the ACTFL Guidelines, is that states like South Carolina and Georgia, which do not mandate adoption, offer more detailed discussions of the Guidelines and their implications than states that have integrated the Guidelines into mandates such as teacher certification (North Carolina and Louisiana) and curriculum and evaluation (Florida); still other frameworks appear to have, at least until very recently, ignored the ACTFL Guidelines (Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee). Whether or not state leadership in FL curricular innovations such as the Guidelines actually impacts FL teaching and teacher preparation remains to be seen.

Summary of the Chapter II

The first section reviewed the proficiency movement and the growth of ACTFL. Certain issues regarding the foundation of the proficiency movement and the resulting proficiency guidelines stem from debates over their validity as a tool of curriculum and evaluation, confusion over their implications for curriculum and evaluation, as well as textbook and materials development. Next, a review of the literature on FL teacher education recounts the long history of unsuccessful reform and a paucity of solid research. This section was followed by a discussion of the evolution of the FL methods course that follows its growth from focus on the dominant method at a given time to a constructivist perspective that emphasizes teacher decision-making and the particular

needs of FL learners. A review of the literature on DOI discusses the origins of this field and its adaptations to the context of education and FL teaching. Four main elements of diffusion theory were introduced: the innovation, communication channels, time, and the social system. Variables surrounding the implementation of innovations were also examined. Turning to the impact of the ACTFL Guidelines on the southeast, an analysis of the proceedings of SCOLT meetings that were framed around the then newly-introduced ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This section concluded with an analysis of states that have published FL program frameworks for evidence of the Guidelines' impact. The review of these frameworks and the SCOLT Conference proceedings reveal tremendous variation in adoption and implementation.

Following this chapter is Chapter III which will present the methods and procedures followed in this study

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The goal of this study was to assess the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines within the context of Southeastern FL teacher education. A special model for DOI in an educational setting was developed by the principal investigator from prior models and integrated with insights from the review of the literature on DOI. This model served as a template for the development of a survey tool designed to gauge southeastern FL teacher educators' perspectives on the diffusion of the ACTFL Guidelines within their particular social system.

Subjects

In selecting subjects for the present study, the researcher followed a survey research approach that involved drawing a census from an entire population, that of southeastern FL teacher educators involved in the preparation of future elementary and or secondary level FL teachers. Mort and Cornell (1941) followed a similar *case survey* approach that focuses, for example, on surveying intact school districts within a particular state. Likewise, Rogers and Jain (1968) call for the "sampling of intact groups or sub-systems" (p. 5). The targeted subjects of the current study are the entire population (subsystem) of FL teacher educators, defined as college or university faculty participating in the instruction of aspiring elementary and or secondary level FL teachers in the teaching of FLs. Their regional social system is a conglomeration of 11 southeastern

states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, & Virginia). FL teacher educators (N=83) were selected as a target population because of their linkage to many facets of the regional social and organizational systemic context, including: the foreign language department, the college of education, the area schools, and the professional organizations that represent FL education. Eventually, however, the study will need to be repeated with state and district FL supervisors and random, stratified samples of regional K-12 educators in order to develop a more comprehensive, conclusive portrait of the ACTFL Guidelines' impact on the region. The Southeast was selected under the assumption that it represents a generally accepted intact social system with a relatively common historical heritage. States such as Texas, and West Virginia may have also been included but were omitted for two reasons: 1) that they might have generally weaker ties to this regional identity and 2) as a matter of convenience since the collection of frameworks and the compilation of a valid listing of certified K-12 FL teacher education programs was a laborious process. Due to the relatively small number of the population under study, sampling was not necessary; instead a census was drawn from the entire population. Details regarding the steps followed to determine the total population of FL teacher educators in the Southeast will be detailed later in the Procedures section.

Model

Before constructing the survey instrument, the researcher first developed a theoretical model (Figure 2) for the diffusion of educational innovations based on Henrichsen's (1989, Appendix D), which, in turn, was derived from an earlier model constructed by

(ANTECEDENT) → (PROCESS) → (CONSEQUENCES)

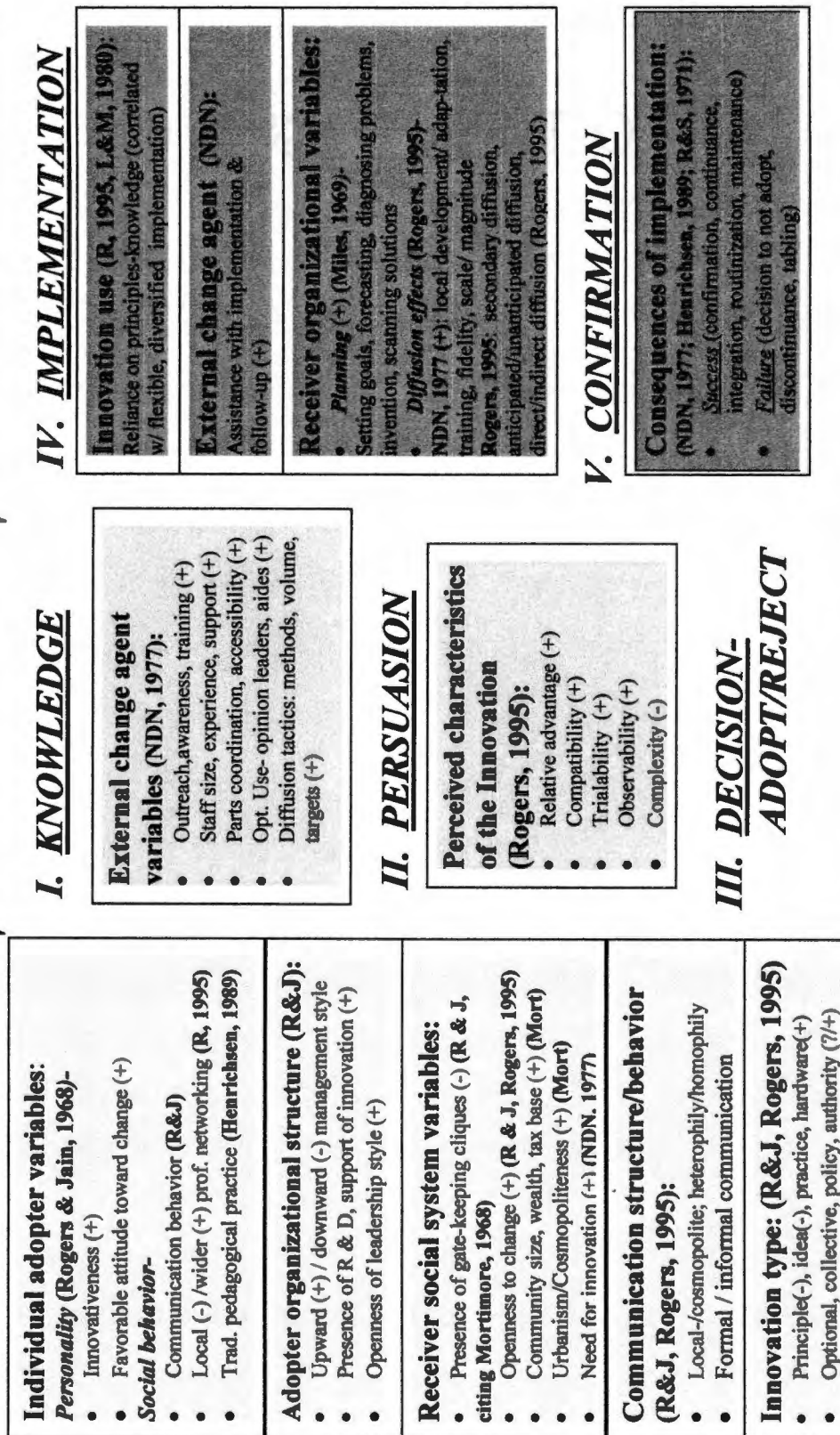


Figure 2: THE DIFFUSION OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS MODEL (adapted from Henrichsen, 1989; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) Legend: (+) factors favorable to process/consequences; (-) indicates suggestion of the reverse effect.

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971, Appendix E). Rogers and Shoemaker's model essentially was developed for explaining and predicting the communication of innovations across cultures. Henrichsen (1989) molded the model to fit the consequence of cross-cultural communication of *educational* innovations, one that gives more prominence to implementation factors. The present model borrows a framework used in both of the previous versions, following the adoption decision process from knowledge to confirmation and grouping factors of interest around *antecedent*, *process*, and *consequences* variables. However, the purpose of the model was to provide a research-based framework for investigating the diffusion of educational innovations in general, not just innovations in language teaching. Between the antecedent and consequences variables, factors culled from the literature on educational innovations (i.e. Emrick & Peterson, 1977; Miles, 1969; Mort & Cornell, 1941; Rogers & Jain, 1968) were integrated. An important innovation of the present model is increased attention to the organizational context of adoption and a broader range of consequences variables that have arisen in educational contexts.

Henrichsen (1989), in his study on the diffusion of the Oral Approach in Japan, relates four considerations that go into the construction of an adequate model that are appropriate for the purposes of this study: a *coherent framework (showing a cohesive process)*, *abstractness*, *completeness*, and *predictability*. According to Henrichsen (1989), a truly *coherent* model considers "not only the forces that affect the change process but also the process itself" (p. 69). In order to make the model more cohesive and coherent, the researcher adopted Henrichsen's arrangement of the three major variables (antecedents, process, and consequences) in a linear fashion along the

chronology of the adoption decision-making process from background factors that are likely to influence the process through confirmed adoption. Rogers' (1995) model recently added implementation as a separate category. Given the complexity of implementing educational innovations (Carlson, 1968; Hall, 1992; Henrichsen, 1989; Hunkins & Ornstein, 1989; Mort & Cornell, 1941), this would appear to be a necessary addition. A major component of coherence is the depiction of a cohesive process. The current model is cohesive in that it bonds the central elements of diffusion through a sequential framework; empirical testing of the model will no doubt uncover some useful, new connections between the various variables under study that are, as of yet, not accounted for in the present model.

The adapted model has essentially one major problem with regard to *coherence*. Distinctions between community, organizational, and social system variables, though clearly necessary considerations in an educational setting, as previously discussed in the review of the literature, may be rather arbitrary, particularly with regard to the teacher educator's context. Though based in a university department, the teacher also is part of a larger system that includes the local school district, the state, as well as local and national branches of his or her discipline-specific professional organization. Also, overlap between the adoption decision-making process and implementation that may be confusing. Given what has already been discussed in the review of the literature, when can one say that an educational innovation has been officially adopted and implemented into the adopting system? According to Rogers (1995), it is when an innovation has been *institutionalized* that it no longer carries the status of *innovation*.

The balance of *abstractness* and *completeness* is a tricky one. In order to be a

complete account of educational innovation diffusion, Rogers' (1995) and Rogers and Jain's (1968) elements of diffusion (the innovation, communication channels, time, social system, effects and consequences) needed to be arranged in a way that reflects the innovation process from inception to institutionalization. In terms of the tension between abstractness and completeness, relevant features culled from a thorough review of the literature on educational innovations were carefully categorized according to one of the four elements and then sorted into one of the three groups of variables (antecedents, process, and consequences). This process is not as clear-cut as it might seem. For example, in some cases, a given variable might cross into another category. This occurs rarely in the new model, though it may be judged to compromise somewhat the coherence of the framework. Such considerations as those just mentioned are not guaranteed depth of treatment in any one diffusion model the researcher has investigated. Thus, this model appears to satisfy the balance between completeness and abstraction.

Instrument

In order to develop a survey instrument to capture the subjects' perceptions of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines' impact on the Southeast, a grid (Appendix F) was developed from the adapted model in order to ensure that the model was adequately represented in the questionnaire items. In DOI research, the survey has been a source of innovation bias as important social systemic and organizational variables that affect an individual's decision (i.e. teacher educator) to adopt innovations, have been overlooked (Rogers & Jain, 1968). Interviews with adopters, or reviews of the adopting system's documentation have been employed in educational research, perhaps as a way to

counteract such biases (Emrick & Peterson, 1977). Such qualitative techniques are particularly helpful in measuring the consequences of adopting and implementing an innovation (Rogers, 1995). Still, when employed judiciously, "survey methods...are often essential to gathering large-scale amounts of data as a basis for generalization" (Rogers & Jain, 1968, p. 4). In constructing the survey, several items were either partially (#3, #4, #6, #7, #9-#11, #15, and #20), or completely open-ended (#11, #12, #16-18, #21, #23, #26, and #28-30); however, this study makes no claims of capturing the *nature* of FL educators' approaches to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations, but rather it is also hoped that the focus on one regional social system (Southeast) and reviews of FL frameworks offer a more qualitative, case aspect to the study that might counterbalance any pro-innovation bias inherent in the survey.

In addition to the previously mentioned open-ended items, the core of the survey consists of a series of three to four-point Likert scale items (#7, #8, #13, #24, #25, #27, and #28), alternate response (#16-23 and #26), multiple response items (#1-5, #9, and #14-16), and rank items (#6 and #10). It has divided into three distinct sections, following the framework of antecedent, process, and consequences variables. The first part contains items that ask the respondents for background information regarding their social systemic and organizational context (antecedent variables). The survey then proceeds with a series of items that elicit the respondents' experiences with the process of diffusing the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines from their first knowledge of it to the decision to adopt them (process variables). The final section asks respondents about the impact of the Guidelines on their organizational/social systemic context.

Prior to being mailed out, *The Foreign Language Teacher Educator Survey*

(Appendix G) was reviewed by five FL teacher educators and or experts in FL pedagogy, two of which also served as respondents. Adjustments were made to the survey based on their comments and suggestions, including the substitution of *implement* (#16) and *integrate* (#26) for *adoption* as some of the reviewers had difficulty isolating an adoption decision from its implementation/integration.

The survey instrument was limited by the following factors:

- The model that it is derived from lacks empirical verification.
- Several items related to the leadership style (Rogers & Jain, 1968) in FL teachers' organizational contexts were omitted because they were judged too controversial. The matter of how to address such information in a survey tool remains to be addressed in future tests of the model.
- The criteria of *cost of implementation* item in #24 and #25 might have caused some confusion. Whereas a high rating (1-4, 1 being the highest) under that criterion was meant to suggest *high cost* respondents appear to have interpreted a high rating as highly *affordable*. This is suggested by a group of write-in comments under item #30 to the effect that the Guidelines were costly to implement. Chapter IV will detail this matter further.
- In the *...first learn of...?* and *...first implemented...?* items, the year grouping '96-'98 was accidentally left out of the final draft of the survey. However, given that no more than three respondents fit into a post- '96 category, this was not deemed significant enough to undermine the results. Since this data was analyzed along a median split of all of the ranges, this printing error was deemed insignificant.

Procedures

Data Collection

On Saturday, February 5, the *Foreign Language Teacher Educator Survey* was mailed out. Each survey booklet contained a cover letter informing potential respondents of the purpose and significance of the study, as well as their rights as survey subjects. The procedures followed in administering the survey were adapted from Rea and Parker's (1997) guidelines for mail-out surveys and conducted in accordance with Form A approval from the Human Subjects Committee (Appendix H). The population of FL teacher educators in the Southeast involved in the instruction of future elementary and or secondary level teachers in the teaching of FLs was determined principally through two directories of FL teacher preparation programs: the latest draft of Christine Uber Grosse's U.S. Directory of Foreign Language Teacher Education Programs in the United States (2000) and The Peterson's Guide to Graduate Programs (Author, 1999). In addition, several Research I and II institutions left out of these directories were consulted in order to make sure that no potential candidate was overlooked. When information was not readily accessible via an on-line home page, the institution was contacted in order to verify the correctness of the information in the directories and to verify the names and addresses of the FL teacher educator currently serving at each institution. Several programs had been cancelled and one was in the process of being drawn up and implemented; these were subsequently dropped from the mailing list. If no information regarding the current foreign language teacher educator was obtained, "...or Current Foreign Language Methods Course Instructor" was added to the address.

At the first mailing, Saturday, February 5th, 2000, a total of 73 potential

respondents were mailed number-coded copies of *The Foreign Language Teacher Educator Survey*. The survey booklet was bound and mailed in an attractive, color-coordinated package designed to increase the response rate. In each package, a stamped, self-addressed envelope was placed in order to expedite receipt of the completed surveys. On Tuesday, February 15th, a reminder card (Appendix I) was mailed out to those who had not already returned the survey booklet (N=65), in advance of the day by which the completed questionnaire was requested to be postmarked (Monday, February 21, 2000). This reminder card, in addition to calling attention to the postmark due date, also encouraged potential respondents to let the researcher know if anyone at their institution had been overlooked as a potential subject in the study.

In order to boost the response rate and to locate potential subjects who might have been overlooked in the directories consulted, the researcher attended the annual meeting of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT) on Saturday, February 26, 2000, in order to reach subjects that might be present at the meeting. Permission to post a reminder flyer was obtained from David Alley, SCOLT's Executive Director. The trip to SCOLT led to the addition of four more qualifying respondents who had been overlooked in the directories, thus bringing the total population to 77. The total number of responses obtained from the first mailing (N=45) included several obtained at this Annual Meeting of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching.

A response rate of less than 70% was considered sufficient reason to conduct a follow-up mailing (Rea & Parker, 1997). In the follow-up, non-respondents were informed of the then current response rate and that their participation in the study, though voluntary, remained crucial to its success (Appendix J). The e-mail / phone call

concluded with an offer to mail out an additional copy of the survey to the subjects. This process led to two requests for replacements copies of the survey to be mailed out. In addition, the researcher discovered The College Blue Book (Author, 1998), a directory of U.S. undergraduate programs, that indicated a total of 13 more potential respondents (N=90). Due to the difficulty in reaching FL teacher educators who were sporadically hired on an adjunct basis (n=3), potential respondents identified as serving in this capacity were excluded from the study, leveling the population at 87. Prior to the mailing, several e-mails and telephone calls were received indicating that there was no one currently serving as a FL teacher educator at a particular institution (n=6). This produced a potential population of 81 around the time of the second mailing on March 11, 2000. The same procedure, including reminder card and follow-up e-mails, was followed for the second mailing. During the first week of April, the researcher received several additional leads for potential respondents (n=4) who were mailed copies of the survey on April 10th and 11th, bringing the total potential population to 85. Again, the same follow-up protocol was observed. By April 28th, 2000 a total of 63 responses were received. Three responses among the returns either did not currently offer FL teacher certification or did not have a full-time faculty member who at least leads a methods course taken by FL certification candidates. Since two had not been accounted for in establishing the total population, the final population was determined to be 83. A review of the returns also revealed two respondents who had checked *TA* exclusively under the item that asks about their methods course students and another who was not sure how to approach the survey item. One of the respondents who checked off *TA* exclusively had been referred by the department chair as serving students preparing for elementary and or

secondary level FL teaching certification and was consequently recognized as part of the census. The other indicated through e-mail correspondence that this particular respondent's job description had been and continued to be exclusively directed toward those preparing for college level FL teaching and thus was dropped as a potential outlier. The third respondent, through e-mail correspondence, reported service in the FL methods instruction of students seeking elementary and or secondary level FL certification and thus remained in the final census. The final count of usable returns was determined to be 60. Because a response rate of 72.3% had been achieved, the census was deemed substantial enough to conduct meaningful statistical analyses.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis of the data was conducted in order to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: *What personal, social systemic, and organizational variables might factor into FL teacher educators' approach to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations?*

RQ2: *How do FL teacher educators perceive the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in their area and their role in that process?*

RQ3: *How effective is the model developed by the researcher for the purpose of investigating the diffusion of educational innovations, in explaining the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?* This is divided into seven sub questions:

- RQ3A: As a principles-based innovation, do the Guidelines yield, as predicted by the model, low scores on scale item measurements of the following perceived characteristics: relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability and high ratings

for complexity? Also, will adoption, measured by integration in the methods course and other aspects of FL teacher education, as well as definitions of proficiency-oriented instruction, be idiosyncratic?

- RQ3B: Will respondents from states which have incorporated the Proficiency Guidelines as part of their educational policy (Louisiana, North Carolina, Florida) or curriculum framework (Georgia) or both (Florida) be more likely to adopt the Guidelines and report that their acceptance and institutionalization in their area?
- RQ3C: How will knowledge of the Guidelines and other ACTFL innovations correlate with adoption and integration by FL teacher educators?
- RQ3D: Are professional factors such as: length of tenure as teacher educator, overall experience in FL teaching, and level of involvement in FL professional organizations positively related to the Guidelines' adoption and implementation?
- RQ3E: As population (urbanization) increases, does the likelihood of adoption and implementation of the Guidelines also increase?
- RQ3F: Is there a relationship between the innovativeness and openness to change of the socio-organizational context of adopters and variables of adoption and implementation?
- RQ3G: Is adoption and implementation of the Guidelines significantly higher and earlier among FL teacher educators housed in modern language departments than their counterparts in colleges of education, as suggested in the literature?

In analyzing the results of RQ 1 (Section I: #1-11), RQ 2 (Section II: 12-30), and RQ 3, RQ3A(#10, 12, 24, 25), descriptive statistical analyses was run on the survey item responses using SPSS 10 for Windows, including percentage distributions, measures of

means and standard deviations. Also, open-ended items #11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 26, 28, 29 and 30 were coded into categories and arranged into frequency distribution tables (Rea & Parker, 1997). A Mann-Whitney statistical operation was run on rank item #6 looking at the communication behavior of FL teacher educators housed in colleges or departments of education and foreign or modern language departments. A mean ranks test was conducted for both #6 and #10. For sub questions RQ3 (B-G), SPSS 10 for Windows was used to calculate inferential statistical measures to investigate potential relationships between various groupings of responses against factors identified in the test items related to adoption and implementation.

In spite of the fact that this was a census and not a sample (thus not subject to sampling error), the usual significance level of .05 set in SPSS 10 for Windows was deemed appropriate in determining whether differences between groupings of data were significant. Though this was a rather restrictive alpha given the size of the census, it was decided that erring on the side of committing a Type I error (rejecting the alternative hypothesis when it actually was correct) was preferable to a Type II error (rejecting the null hypothesis when it actually was correct) that might be committed with a higher alpha, such as .10. Testing significance against a .05 significance level also increases confidence that a significant difference might actually hold true in the larger, national population of FL teacher educators.

- RQ3B: Survey code ID measured against #27 & 28 using a t-test to measure means for Florida against the rest of the states. If overall differences are significant, then an ANOVA will be run state by state.

- RQ3C: Survey item # 13 will be compare levels of familiarity (1-3) against categorical items related to adoption and implementation (16, 18-23, 26) using Chi Square tests.
- RQ3D: Survey items #1-3 measured against items related to adoption and implementation (16, 18-23, 26) using Chi Square tests.
- RQ3E: Survey item #5 will be measured against items related to adoption and implementation. Chi Square tests will be run for #16, 18-23, 26; t-tests will be run for items #27-28.
- RQ3F: Survey item #8 will be measured against items related to adoption and implementation (16, 18-23, 26) using the ANOVA statistical test.
- RQ3G: Survey item #4 will be divided into two: colleges of education and FL departments, and compared on items #13-15 using a Chi Square test.

Summary of Chapter III

This chapter detailed the methods and procedures observed in studying FL teacher educators' approach to educational innovations. First, the rationale for subject selection was detailed. Second, the following section described the process of designing the Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model (DEIM). This model served as the basis for constructing a survey instrument, which was then discussed in terms of how it was constructed and its limitations. Finally, the procedures followed in the study were related from data collection to data analysis.

Chapter IV will report the results of analysis conducted on data collected from survey responses

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from respondents to the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators*, a questionnaire that was administered with the goal of investigating how foreign language teacher educators approach the diffusion of educational innovations, with special emphasis on the educational innovation known as the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Out of a possible total population of 83, a total of 60 usable responses (72.3%) was received. As indicated in Table 1, the return rate for each of the states was between 50 % and 100% with the exception of Kentucky (37.5%). Therefore, results of this survey study may not necessarily speak for this state.

Table 1: Comparison of Survey Return Rate State-by-State

State	Possible # Of returns	Actual # Of returns	Response Rate %
Alabama	6	5	83.33%
Arkansas	4	4	100%
Florida	7	5	71.43%
Georgia	9	8	88.89%
Kentucky	8	3	37.5%
Louisiana	6	3	50%
Mississippi	2	2	100%
North Carolina	12	9	75%
South Carolina	6	6	100%
Tennessee	9	7	77.78%
Virginia	14	8	57.14%
Total = 11	Total = 83	Total = 60	Avg. = 72.3%

Following the research questions already detailed in previous chapters, this chapter will detail the results of descriptive and inferential statistics calculated on the data collected.

RQ1: What personal, social systemic, and organizational variables might factor into FL teacher educators' approach to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations?

Antecedent Variables

Survey items in Part I of the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators*, #1-11, seek to uncover information regarding the question of what background factors might influence a foreign language teacher educator's approach to educational innovations. Based on the review of the literature on the diffusion of educational innovations, it was determined that individual (personal) factors, as well as factors relating to the social and organizational systemic factors encountered by foreign language teacher educators might aid in presenting the broadest possible range of antecedent variables that might influence their behavior with regard to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations.

Professional and Academic Background

Table Two details the professional background of the southeastern foreign language teachers surveyed in this study. The median length of service in a teacher education capacity is around 15 years (median split between the 11-15 and 16-20 years of service ranges), whereas the median length of service in foreign language profession is around 25 (median split between the 21-25 and 26-30 years of service ranges). With regard to academic preparation, most of the FL teacher educators surveyed received a

Table 2: Professional Experience of FL Teacher Educators

Experience in FL Teacher Education

Experience in FLTE	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 36+	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
31-35	4	6.7	6.7	8.3
26-30	11	18.3	18.3	26.7
21-25	4	6.7	6.7	33.3
16-20	7	11.7	11.7	45.0
11-15	10	16.7	16.7	61.7
6-10	13	21.7	21.7	83.3
5-	10	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Experience in FL Education, Overall

Experience in FLED	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 36+	6	10.0	10.2	10.2
31-35	6	10.0	10.2	20.3
26-30	16	26.7	27.1	47.5
21-25	8	13.3	13.6	61.0
16-20	8	13.3	13.6	74.6
11-15	11	18.3	18.6	93.2
6-10	4	6.7	6.8	100.0
Total	59	98.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.7		
Total	60	100.0		

foreign language or literature doctoral degree (25). The next largest group is represented by those who received a doctorate of philosophy in education (20). Combining the latter group with six other respondents who received Ed.D.s, the split between the degree preparation areas is roughly even. Only five respondents reported a Masters as the highest degree obtained.

Work Context

The work context of the majority of respondents is the department of modern (foreign) languages (37). Thirteen work exclusively in a college or department of education. Six respondents indicated that they work in a joint appointment capacity for both a college or department of education and a department of modern (foreign) languages. Other respondents indicated that they work in either a humanities or FL department plus another department. Respondents were also asked to comment on the geographic location of their work environment. A majority (48) reported living in either a city of more than 100,000 people (27) or less than 100,000 people (21). Only four reported working in a rural environment; three indicated that they worked in the suburbs. The remaining six responses were disregarded because more than one item was checked.

Communication Behavior

In order to determine the communication behavior of southeastern foreign language teacher educators, respondents were asked to select and rank a top five from a list of possible contacts that they might communicate with regarding educational innovations within their organizational systemic context (Table 3). With regard to frequency, a majority of the respondents reported professional conferences or workshops (50), professional literature (48), colleagues (38), and professional contacts outside their

Table 3: Communication Behavior of FL Teacher Educators with Regard to Consulting About Educational Innovations

Source of consultation:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Communication with state department of education...	12	3.9167	1.1645
Communication with state FL supervisor...	15	3.8667	1.0601
Via the WWW	20	3.6500	1.1367
Communication with mentor teachers...	10	3.6000	1.2649
Communication with local inservice FL teachers...	20	3.3500	1.2258
Communication with professional contacts outside the city where I live...	38	3.2368	1.4784
Communication with preservice FL teachers...	13	3.0769	1.5525
Communication with graduate assistants...	6	3.0000	1.6733
Via conference presentations / workshops	50	2.7600	1.2707
Communication with dean / department chair...	19	2.5263	1.0733
Via through professional journals	48	2.3333	1.3101
Communication with colleagues about innovations	38	2.1053	1.3313

Frequency of First Place Votes

Source for Consultation About Educational Innovations	Total # of First Place Votes
Professional literature	19
Colleagues	18
Professional contacts outside of respondent's area	8
Conference workshops/presentations	8

city (38) as sources they consult regarding educational innovations. With regard to frequency ranks, professional journals (19 first place votes) and colleagues (18 first place votes) received the most first place votes. Closest behind were professional contacts and conference presentations, each receiving a total of eight first place votes. A calculation of the mean ranks revealed that respondents tend to consult the professional literature slightly more frequently than their colleagues with regard to educational innovations ($\bar{x} = 2.11$ for colleagues, $\bar{x} = 2.33$ for professional journals). A Mann-Whitney test was conducted dividing the respondents into two groups: those with Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees and those with doctorates in foreign languages or literatures. There were no significant differences found between these groups with regard to communication channels used in finding out about educational innovations. The small size of the data sets and relatively small differences in mean ranks made closer investigation of the differences unnecessary.

Support of Innovation and Openness to Change Within the Socio-Organizational Context

Respondents were also given the opportunity to rate various people in their organizational context according to their support of innovations and openness to change (Table 4) along the following four-point scale:

- *Extremely supportive* of innovations and *open* to change (1)
- *Somewhat supportive* of innovations and *open* to change (2)
- *Somewhat skeptical* of innovations and *resistant* to change (3)
- *Extremely skeptical* of educational innovations and *resistant* to change (4).

While reserving for themselves the highest marks on this scale ($\bar{x} = 1.24$), as well as their preservice FL teachers ($\bar{x} = 1.69$) and colleagues ($x = 1.72$), the FL teacher educators who responded to the survey gave the lowest marks to the local community ($\bar{x} = 2.56$),

Table 4: FL Teacher Educators' Ratings of Various Entities According to Their Innovativeness and Openness to Change (1=highest rating; 4=lowest)

Rated variables:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Community's innovativeness	55	2.5636	.8336
Principals' innovativeness	48	2.5417	.8241
Superintendent's innovativeness	46	2.3913	.8294
State DOEd's innovativeness	56	2.3036	.9326
Mentor teachers' innovativeness	52	2.0385	.6556
Inservice teachers' innovativeness	51	1.9020	.7001
District FL supervisor's innovativeness	43	1.8372	.7847
State FL supervisor's innovativeness	47	1.7872	.9074
Colleagues' innovativeness	58	1.7241	.8943
Preservice teachers' innovativeness	52	1.6923	.6116
Respondents' innovativeness	59	1.2373	.4675

the area principals ($\bar{x} = 2.54$), both of whom scored just inside the *somewhat skeptical* and *resistant* to change range. Mentor teachers working with FL interns ($\bar{x} = 2.03$), local inservice teachers ($\bar{x} = 1.90$), the district supervisor of FL instruction ($\bar{x} = 1.84$), and their state level counterparts ($\bar{x} = 1.79$) scored around the *somewhat supportive* of innovations and *open* to change range.

Activity in Professional Organizations

Respondents were asked to indicate, along a scale from very active (1) to relative non-involvement (4), their activity in professional organizations (Table 5). An analysis of the means for each organization indicates that most tend to be somewhat actively

Table 5: FL Teacher Educators' Activity in Professional Organizations

(1 indicates very active; 4= relative non-involvement)

Professional activity:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Activity in MLA	49	3.3469	.7786
Activity in SCOLT	49	2.6327	1.1849
Activity in language specific organization (AAT...)	58	2.2931	.9553
Activity in ACTFL	54	2.0741	.9081
Activity in state FLTA	58	1.9483	1.0500
Activity in TESOL	5	1.6000	.5477
Activity in local FL-related professional organization	3	1.0000	.0000

involved ($\bar{x} = 1.95$) in their respective state's foreign language teaching association (FLTA) or ACTFL ($\bar{x} = 2.07$), followed by language-specific professional organizations (AAT, 2.29). Relatively low measures of professional activity were reported with regard to the Modern Language Association (MLA), which received an average score of 3.35. This suggests that foreign language teacher educators in the Southeast rarely participate in this organization. Given the opportunity to write in additional professional organizations, several other professional organizations were reported. Five respondents indicated that they were *very* to *somewhat* actively involved in TESOL ($\bar{x} = 1.6$) and three others reported being very actively involved in a local FL association ($\bar{x} = 1$). Additional professional organizations cited include: The Central States and Northeast Conferences on Language Teaching (2 each), and two educational research associations, AERA (American Educational Research Association) and MSERA (the Mid-South Educational Research Association).

Teaching Context

The survey also asks questions about the respondents' teaching context. With regard to the question of *whom* they teach, a majority of the survey respondents described their target group as students preparing for K-12 FL certification (19) or secondary level certification only (9) or both (10). Along a base of students preparing for either K-12 or secondary level certification, respondents also included students pursuing ESL licensure (9), a TA (teaching assistantship, 9), or FLES / FLEX education (4).

With regard to course text selection (Table 6), Teaching language in context (Omaggio, 1986; Hadley, 1993) is the most widely-adopted text (41). The second most popular text cited is the state FL framework (26) which lends some credence to Earley's (1993) argument that states are playing an increasing role in educational policy. Grosse (1993), in her analysis of methods course syllabi, found that five states mandated their FL framework as required reading. North Carolina, a state included in the present study, was one of those states. A total of six out of the nine North Carolinian FL teacher educators indicated their state's framework as among the class readings. Teacher's handbook (Shrum & Glisan, 1994) received 14 mentions while Pesola and Curtain's Languages and children: Making the match (1988; 1994) followed close behind with 13. Classroom techniques (Allen & Valette, 1977), which figured prominently in earlier studies (Schrier, 1989; Grosse, 1993), was reported by 10 respondents.

FL Methods Course Curriculum: Selected and Ranked Topics for Inclusion

With regard to the curriculum for the FL methods course, respondents were asked to select and rank their top five topics for inclusion (Table 7). *Teaching Methods* was most frequently cited (40) as a topic, followed closely by *Second Language Acquisition*

Table 6: Rankings of Texts Cited as Used in the FL Methods Course Curriculum

	Schrier (1989)	Grosse (1993)	Warford (2000)
1	Omaggio (1986) <u>Teaching language in context</u>	Omaggio (1986) <u>Teaching language in context</u>	Omaggio (1986) <u>Teaching language in context</u>
2	Allen & Valette (1977) <u>Classroom techniques</u>	Allen & Valette (1977) <u>Classroom techniques</u>	State curriculum framework.
3	Rivers (1975) <u>A practical guide to the teaching of French/German/Spanish</u>	Curtain & Pesola (1988) <u>Languages & Children: Making the match</u>	Shrum & Glisan (1997), <u>Teacher's Handbook</u>
4	Chastain (1976) <u>Developing second language skills</u>	Chastain (1976) <u>Developing second language skills</u>	Curtain & Pesola (1988) <u>Languages & Children: Making the match</u>
5	Richards & Rogers (1986) <u>Approaches & methods in language teaching</u>	Rivers (1975) <u>A practical guide to the teaching of French/German/Spanish</u>	Allen & Valette (1977) <u>Classroom techniques</u>

Table 7: Frequency Ranking of FL Methods Course Topics

	Grosse (1993)	Warford (2000)
1	Culture	Teaching methods (40)
2	Testing	Second language acquisition (36)
3	Methods	The National standards for FL learning & Lesson / unit planning (tie) (35 each)
4	Developing oral proficiency	ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (21)
5	Planning lessons	Teaching speaking / developing a Philosophy of FL teaching (tie) (18 each)

(36), the *National Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (35) and *Lesson / Unit Planning* (35). The least frequently cited topics included: The *ACTFL OPI* (5) and *Participation in Professional Organizations* (3). The low frequency of the former may be explained by the presence of *Assessment / Test Design* as a category. The poor showing for professional organizations as a topic worthy of focus in the FL methods course, may be due to the restrictiveness of assigning a top five rank. With regard to the innovation that is the focus of this study, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were reported by roughly one-third (21) of the respondents as a topic worthy of inclusion in the methods course. In a comparison with Grosse's (1993) findings, it appears that lesson

and unit planning, as well as teaching methods and proficiency continue to be the most common topical areas. Culture, which was most often cited in Grosse's study as a topic area in the methods course, may be reflected in the high ranking of the National Standards, in which culture figures prominently, integrated with the additional areas of: communication, comparison, community, and communication. With regard to assessment, another item missing from the top five of the current study, it is probable that the high ranking of the Guidelines is related to their applications in proficiency testing.

With regard to frequency of first place votes, *Teaching Methods* received the most first place votes (18), followed by *Second Language Acquisition* (11) and *The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning*. With regard to mean ranks, only one topic emerged with mean rank in the First to Second range: *Teaching Methods* ($\bar{x} = 1.92$).

Section I of the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators* concludes with a series of two questions that directly pertain to what educational innovations foreign language teacher educators have determined to be important enough to pass on to future foreign language teachers and what made them important. In an inductive analysis of the responses, *Communicative Language Teaching or Derivative* was determined to be the most frequently cited innovation of significance to the respondents (8), followed by the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (7) and Proficiency-Oriented Instruction (6). Other categories, each of which were mentioned a total of four times, include: Innovations in Technology, the World Wide Web, Comprehensible Input-based Methods, The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, and innovations stemming from a social constructivist approach (found in such phrases as "Vygotskian or ZPD").

The researcher also coded respondents' reasons for citing a particular educational

innovation as important. This produced a list of eight criteria that could be discerned.

Most respondents described the worth of their favorite innovation in terms of:

- the facilitative/integrative effect they perceived it to have on instruction (13)
- its benefit to students (11)
- its positive impact on teachers (including methods students) and teaching (8)
- or the way it reinforced a theory or ideology the respondent favors (7).

Other reasons why respondents selected an innovation to share with students include:

bringing focus to an allegedly neglected area of FL pedagogy (5), getting results or being proven to have an impact (4), and improving the learning process (3).

RQ2: How do FL Teacher Educators Perceive the Diffusion and Adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in Their Area and Their Role in that Process?

In investigating the answers to RQ2, data collected on the survey items included in Part II of the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators* was analyzed in order to illuminate the process of communicating the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in the Southeast as well as factors relating to their implementation. Whereas questions in the first half of the survey are concerned with the *antecedent* variables called for in the DEIM, these latter questions deal with process and consequences variables following diffusion from first knowledge through adoption, and implementation of the Guidelines.

Diffusion Process Variables

Respondents were asked about their level of familiarity with four educational innovations that have been introduced to the profession over the years along a three-point Likert scale from *Very Familiar (1)* to *Somewhat Familiar (2)*, and finally, *Not Familiar*

(3). As indicated in Table Eight, the highest mean on this scale (lower score indicating higher familiarity) belongs to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines ($\bar{x} = 1.22$). The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning received the next highest mean ($\bar{x} = 1.45$), followed by the recently published ACTFL Performance Guidelines ($\bar{x} = 1.67$). The ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher education received a mean score of 1.81, indicating that southeastern FL teacher educators, overall, are only *somewhat* familiar with this educational innovation. Since these guidelines were published prior to the Performance Guidelines and the National Standards, it appears there is no simple, linear relationship between length of time in dissemination and level of familiarity with regard to this census.

**Table 8: Mean Scores on Indicators of Familiarity with
Four ACTFL-Sponsored Educational Innovations**

ACTFL Ed.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for FLTE	58	1.8103	.7364
ACTFL Performance Guidelines	58	1.6724	.7583
National Standards FL Learning	58	1.4483	.6535
ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines	58	1.2241	.4971

The majority of the respondents (75.9%) appear to have first become familiar with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines during the first decade of their existence (1982-1990). Given that four of the respondents were probably not working in the profession at that time, this is an impressive number, suggesting that most of the FL teacher educators in the Southeast were among the innovators and early adopters of the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines. Most of the respondents learned about the Guidelines from a conference presentation or workshop (27), from a college or university course (19), or from a department faculty member (13). Others learned from the professional literature or mailed materials (6) or from their OPI training (3). When asked about their knowledge of any ACTFL representative activity related to promoting the Guidelines in their area, very few responded affirmatively (13). However, more than half of the respondents (37) cited themselves as local promoters of the Guidelines. Within this group there are four major categories of promotion:

- 17 indicated they used the methods course or contact with students to promote the Guidelines
- 9 reported consulting with or conducting workshops for area FL teachers
- 6 promoted the Guidelines within their FL departments, and
- 5 promoted the Guidelines through conference workshops, presentations, or publications.

Part II of the survey also asked respondents to evaluate the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview* and *Proficiency-Oriented Instruction* based on Rogers' criteria for an innovation that either persuade or dissuade adopters from accepting an innovation: *compatibility, trialability, observability of results, flexibility, and complexity*. Cost of implementation was also added as a criterion since it has been raised as an issue in the dissemination of the Proficiency Guidelines. On a scale of one to four, with four being the lowest rating in a particular category and one being the highest, respondents were asked to rate both innovations based on the criteria just mentioned.

As indicated in Table Nine, while most of the ACTFL OPI ratings were in the 2

Table 9: Respondents' Ratings of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview and Proficiency-Oriented Instruction (1=lowest; 4=highest rating in given category)

The Oral Proficiency Interview

Innovation characteristic:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The ACTFL OPI's cost of implementation	41	2.6829	1.2736
The ACTFL OPI's compatability with FL instruction in the local area	49	2.5510	.7089
The ACTFL OPI's trialability (how easy is it to 'try out'?)	44	2.5455	.6973
The ACTFL OPI's complexity	46	2.3696	1.0189
The ACTFL OPI's flexibility	47	2.2766	.8773
The ACTFL OPI's observability with regard to results	47	2.0213	.7937
The ACTFL OPI's relative advantage over traditional assessment methods	48	1.8542	.7987

Proficiency-Oriented Instruction

Innovation characteristic:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
POI's cost of implementation	44	2.5455	1.1300
POI's compatability with FL instruction in my local area	52	2.3077	.7286
POI's complexity	50	2.1800	.8254
POI's trialability (how easy is it to 'try out'?)	51	2.1373	.6639
POI's observability with regard to results	51	1.9804	.7613
POI's flexibility	52	1.9423	.8498
Proficiency-Oriented Instruction's relative advantage over traditional FL instruction	53	1.5283	.6681

range, it received an average rating of 1.8 for relative advantage over traditional assessment methods. The lowest scores it received were in the categories of cost of implementation (2.68) and trialability (2.55). Proficiency-Oriented Instruction also received mostly ratings in the 2 range. Like its counterpart, the OPI, it also received its best marks (1.53) for advantage over the traditional approach (in this case, traditional FL instruction). It also received low marks (2.55) for cost of implementation. The similar low standing for cost of implementation suggests that respondents feel that these innovations were not favorable (i.e. too expensive) in this regard. Again, these results need to be interpreted with caution since it might be that they were indicating low cost with a low score. In fact, several respondents indicated that they were not sure of the direction of the scale with regard to this item. The high standard deviations for both POI and OPI in this category ($\sigma=1.13$ and $\sigma=1.27$, respectively) are further evidence of potential confusion.

Consequences Variables

With regard to respondents' *initial* implementation of the Guidelines, 70% (42) of the respondents indicated that they had implemented the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The majority (80.5%) had done so within the first 10 years of the Guidelines ('82-'92) diffusion. The most common initial implementation was through integration with the FL course curriculum (14), methods course curriculum (9), or through OPI-based assessment of an unspecified group of students (9). Seven respondents indicated they used the Guidelines to assess their FL majors and another six indicated they integrated the guidelines into an unspecified course. Only one respondent indicated using the Guidelines in the assessment of FL teacher education (FLTE) program candidates.

With regard to integrating the Guidelines into the FL methods course, 73.3% (44) responded affirmatively. Thirteen respondents indicated this was achieved through incorporating OPI-based assessment into the curriculum through such activities as interview case study analysis, listening to and rating interviews (often followed by discussion), and self-rating. A total of 11 respondents indicated integrating the Guidelines into the areas of designing instruction from approach to activities. Nine respondents indicated simply discussing or lecturing on the topic. Six respondents indicated that readings based on the Guidelines were incorporated into the methods curriculum. Finally, six respondents indicated tying the Guidelines in with other topics such as the National Standards for FL Learning or state FL framework.

With regard to ACTFL OPI implementation, specifically, slightly more than one-third (23) reported having received training in the use of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. Of this group, a total of six reported having obtained ACTFL certification as an OPI reviewer-rater. Only one member of this group still retains certification. Four reported that time was a major factor preventing them from maintaining their certification status while two reported financial constraints as a hindering factor. Slightly more than half of those who responded to this item (29) reported testing the proficiency of their FL teacher education program candidates which is fairly close to Schrier's (1989) finding of 57%. The same frequency was also reported for the testing of FL majors. When asked about whether or not FL teacher education students are encouraged to continue developing their FL proficiency, 48 respondents responded affirmatively. Only seven respondents indicated that their program does not proficiency test either FL teacher

education candidates or FL majors. Two others indicated not proficiency-testing FL majors while leaving the item related to teacher education student testing blank.

Respondents also evaluated the impact of the ACTFL Guidelines on their local socio-organizational context by assigning a score to the Guidelines' impact on various entities along a 4-point Likert scale from 1 (extensive impact) to 4 (minimal impact). The mean responses were between 2.02 and 2.83 (Table 10). The highest mean (2.02) corresponds to the Guidelines' impact on the state FL framework / Guidelines. The lowest scores (indicating *some impact*) were assigned to the state's inservice FL teachers (2.84) and the mentor teachers assigned to the institution's FL teaching interns (2.67). In addition to these discrete items, respondents gave a global score to the impact of the Guidelines on their respective areas. The goal of this item was to determine whether or not, in the minds of FL teacher educators, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines had achieved what Rogers (1995) refers to as the status of being *institutionalized*, that is losing their status of being an innovation and gaining the *status quo*. In response to the statement: "ACTFL's Proficiency Guidelines have become and will endure as a standard of professional practice among foreign language teachers in my area" respondents were asked to check either *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, or *strongly disagree*. With a mean response of $\bar{x} = 2.11$, FL teacher educators in the Southeast appear to agree with the statement, at least to some extent.

Section II concludes with an item that asks respondents to list up to two factors that may have facilitated and up to two factors that might have limited the impact of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. An inductive analysis of the responses indicates that ACTFL promotion and publicity (13), coupled with existing trends [four mention global

**Table 10: FL Teacher Educators' Ratings of the Guidelines' Impact
on Various Entities (1=*extensive impact*; 4=*minimal impact*)**

Impact variable:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on local K-12 FL teachers	49	2.8367	.8502
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on mentor teachers working w/ FL interns	48	2.6667	.7532
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on local FL supervisor	41	2.5366	1.0024
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on this institution's FL faculty	52	2.5192	1.0192
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on local FL curriculum guidelines	47	2.4255	.9028
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on the state FL supervisor	46	2.1957	1.0027
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on preservice FL teachers at this institution	48	2.1667	.9302
Impact of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on the state FL framework/guidelines	52	2.0192	1.0192

interdependence; 10 indicate (pre-existing) support within the profession] were most frequently mentioned as factors that might have facilitated the Guidelines' impact. FL (7) and FLTE (7) faculty advocacy were also advanced as having a facilitating effect on the impact of the Guidelines. Other facilitative factors included: textbook/materials support (5) state support (4), the advocacy of experts in the profession (2), and government support (2). The factor most frequently mentioned as undermining the Guidelines' impact was the issue of money and the cost of implementing them (14). Constraints on teachers was another reason FL teacher educators advanced why the Guidelines' might not achieve their full potential as an innovation (11). Constraints included: lack teacher proficiency, as well as lack of access to professional organizations that might facilitate their access to educational innovations. The complexity of implementing the Guidelines (9) was also cited as a hindrance to the Guidelines' impact, as was the resilience of traditional (grammar-based) FL instruction (8). Other factors included: local and state educational administrations (8), and lack of time (7).

RQ3: How effective is the model developed by the researcher for the purpose of investigating the diffusion of educational innovations, in explaining the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?

In testing the model, the researcher advanced seven subquestions. An analysis of the results of data analysis for each of these subquestions will be detailed in the following section.

RQ3A: As a principles-based innovation, do the Guidelines yield, as predicted by the model, low scores on scale item measurements of the following perceived characteristics: relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability and high ratings for complexity?

On a scale of 1-4, with a one indicating the *highest* degree of complexity and 4, the *lowest*, respondents rated Proficiency-Oriented Instruction 2.18, overall. This suggests that respondents view this innovation as at least somewhat complex. With regard to the other categories, Proficiency-Oriented Instruction was rated rather favorably, particularly, as mentioned earlier, with regard to relative advantage over traditional instruction.

...also, will adoption, measured by integration in the methods course and other aspects of FL teacher education, as well as definitions of proficiency-oriented instruction, be idiosyncratic?¹¹

Responses to the question, "How would you define proficiency-oriented instruction?" Nineteen respondents constructed their definition around the Guidelines as a developmental framework for POI, an approach to assessment and instruction that factors in what students are capable of at a given level. Two respondents within this developmental framework-based definition emphasize that the Guidelines are experientially, rather than theoretically-derived (Omaggio, 1983). Among those who responded to this question, 17 respondents stressed POI as guided by the goal of communicative competence (ability), defined often as *using* or *doing* with the language. Other definitions stressed POI as communicative, TL-immersed, or encouraging student communication in the target language (7). Six respondents indicated that they thought of

¹¹ Leithwood and Montgomery, 1980.

POI as less explicitly focused on the grammatical structures of the target language (6). The rest of the definitions included elements of the following: focus on the modalities (4), focus on (real life) contexts, themes, or functions (4), the use of authentic materials (3), some emphasis on structural accuracy (2), and finally, the goal of FL proficiency (2).

The criteria cited by FL teacher educators participating in this survey are either inherent aspects of the Guidelines (i.e. the emphasis on a developmental framework, modalities) or Omaggio Hadley's and Lange's writings on the pedagogical implications of the Guidelines (i.e. emphasis on real / contextual communication, authentic materials). Thus, they would appear to be perfectly valid extrapolations of the original message about proficiency-oriented instruction that are readily available in the professional literature. It is interesting that six respondents de-emphasize grammar while two other respondents insist on its importance in POI. As discussed earlier in the review of the literature, the role of grammar within the Guidelines represents one area of the Guidelines' implications for instruction that has never quite been resolved. Overall, FL teacher educators in the Southeast voice a definition of POI that is consonant with the intentions of its originators (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1981) within its given parameters in the Guidelines themselves and within the literature on POI; therefore, it appears that the tendency for principles-based innovations to be randomly implemented does not hold true for the case of Proficiency-Oriented Instruction, at least where FL teacher educators in the Southeast are concerned.

RQ3B: Will respondents from states which have incorporated the Proficiency Guidelines as part of their educational policy (Louisiana, North Carolina, Florida) or curriculum framework (Georgia) or both (Florida) be more likely to adopt the Guidelines and report that their acceptance and institutionalization in their area?

Analysis based on this question began with an Independent Samples T-test (Table 11). It was determined that if Florida, the only state where the Guidelines had been mandated as a curriculum framework, did not show many significantly different means on measures of the Guidelines' impact from the rest of the states, then further comparisons would not be necessary. Indeed, many of the measures showed no significant differences in mean ratings of the Guidelines' impact; however, two impact variables: the local FL supervisor and K-12 FL teachers, in particular, did reveal significantly lower measures of the Guidelines' impact. While some suggest that innovations backed by policy mandates are expected to show a higher rate of adoption (Rogers, 1995), these results show exactly the opposite, suggesting that curricular mandates, such as Florida's (derived from the Guidelines) may have had a negative effect on the impact of the Guidelines on K-12 FL education in that state. However, though the comparison of means did pass the Equal Variances Test, it is difficult to say that the five people (out of a possible total of seven) can definitively speak for the impact of the Guidelines on K-12 education in the entire state of Florida. Because only two of the nine possible measures of the Guidelines' impact revealed significant differences, no further data analysis was conducted with regard to this research question based on other groupings of states along the state framework incorporation variable.

Table 11: Results of t-test for Independent Samples Comparing Florida with Other States' Average Scale Measures of the ACTFL Guidelines' Impact (Equal variances assumed)

Impact variable:	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Impact of ACTFL Guidelines on local FL supervisor	-2.146	39	.038
Impact of ACTFL Guidelines on local K-12 FL teachers	-2.202	47	.033

RQ3C: How will knowledge of the Guidelines and other ACTFL innovations correlate with adoption and integration by FL teacher educators?

Because the *Somewhat familiar with...* and *Not familiar with...* categories were seldom checked, these categories were collapsed for data analysis purposes into two categories: *Very Familiar with...* and *Somewhat to Not Familiar with...* Only responses regarding familiarity with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were used for the test. In Chi Square analyses, familiarity was cross-tabulated with survey items #16, and #18-23 which include a series of dual response items asking the following questions:

- Have you implemented the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?
- Have you integrated the Proficiency Guidelines into your FL methods course?
- Have you played a role in promoting the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?
- Have you received training in use of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview?
- Have you obtained official ACTFL OPI interviewer / rater status?
- Does your FLTE program test the oral proficiency of its candidates?
- Does your university/college's language department conduct exit OPIs for major?

and finally,

- Does your FLTE program encourage teaching interns to continue to develop their proficiency?

Only the first three questions produced a response that was significantly different when paired with those who were very familiar with the Guidelines (Appendix K). Though several rather low cell counts were noted, results suggest that those who were very familiar with the Guidelines were more likely to be among those who claim to have promoted, implemented them or integrated them into their FL methods course. This is in contrast to Wolf and Riordan's (1991) finding that suggested a negative dynamic between knowledge and implementation of the Guidelines.

RQ3D: Are professional factors such as: length of tenure as teacher educator, overall experience in FL teaching, and level of involvement in FL professional organizations positively related to the Guidelines' adoption and implementation?

Because the intervals used for grouping lengths of experience in FLTE and FLED produced groups that were too small for statistical comparison by range, a median split was conducted which bisected the FLTE group into 11-15 years of experience and below and 16-20 years of experience and above. The FLED group was divided into 21-25 years of experience and below and 26-30 years of experience and above. These groups were then compared using a Chi Square test along the same items for RQ3C. Results (Table 12) show significant difference between expected and observed results, suggesting that FL teacher educators with the lesser overall amount of experience were more likely to be among those testing proficiency levels of candidates. Because professional organizational activity was consistently strong across respondents, no meaningful

**Table 12: Results of Chi Square Test of Variables of Adoption and Implementation
vs. Professional Background Factors**

Note: 1.00= FL teacher educators with 16 or more years of FLTE experience
2.00= FL teacher educators with less than 16 years of FLTE experience

Grouping by experience in FLTE		Does your FLTE program test the oral proficiency of its candidates?		Total
		Yes	No	
1.00	Count	9	15	24
	Expected Count	12.7	11.3	24.0
2.00	Count	20	11	31
	Expected Count	16.3	14.7	31.0
Total	Count	29	26	55
	Expected Count	29.0	26.0	55.0

Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.961 ^b	1	.047	.060	.043
Continuity Correction ^a	2.951	1	.086		
Likelihood Ratio	4.003	1	.045		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.889	1	.049		
N of Valid Cases	55				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.35.

statistical analysis could be conducted in that category.

Because there was a nearly perfectly balanced representation of FL teacher educators with language and or literature doctorates and those with doctorates in education, an additional Chi Square analysis was calculated to see if such a professional background factor might influence the adoption and implementation of the Guidelines for FL teacher educators. Results showed a difference just short of significant (.002 points)

with regard to promotion of the Guidelines. This would have suggested that those with an education degree were less likely to be among those promoting the Guidelines.

RQ3E: As population (urbanization) increases, does the likelihood of adoption and implementation of the Guidelines also increase?

Because very few respondents indicated a rural or suburban work context, the categories of location were collapsed into *City over 100,000* and the rest of the respondents who checked off either *City of under 100,000*, *suburban*, or *rural*. Respondents who checked off more than one response to this item were eliminated from this statistical test, leaving two equal groups of 26. In cross-tabulating location and items related to adoption and implementation, no significant differences were found between observed and expected results. A t-test of the impact means (#27-28) of the two population groups likewise showed no significant factor for population grouping. This may suggest that urbanization (Mort & Cornell, 1941; Rogers, 1995) is overrated as a variable for this particular category of adopter and educational innovation. It is also possible that a more significant rural representation might have produced different results.

RQ3F: Is there a relationship between the innovativeness and openness to change of the socio-organizational context of adopters and variables of adoption and implementation?

The ANOVA statistical operation was used to compare individual means of *support of innovation and openness to change* against measures of adoption and implementation (Appendix L). The following significant results were noted (Note: a lower number indicates a higher rating along the scale):

- Respondents who reported having promoted the Guidelines rated their support of innovations and openness to change significantly higher than those who did not ($\bar{x} = 1.04$ vs. $\bar{x} = 1.50$); they also rated their communities' support of innovations and openness to change significantly lower than counter parts who had not promoted the Guidelines ($\bar{x} = 2.72$ to $\bar{x} = 1.87$).
- Respondents who indicated that they had implemented the Guidelines rated their support of innovations and acceptance of change significantly higher ($\bar{x} = \text{all "1s"}$) than those who had not ($\bar{x} = 1.66$).
- Respondents who reported having received OPI training rated their State Department of Education significantly lower on the support of innovation and openness to change scale than counterparts who did not ($\bar{x} = 2.58$ vs. $\bar{x} = 1.90$).
- Among those respondents who indicated having earned OPI rater / interviewer certification status, these FL teacher educators tended to rate superintendents significantly higher ($\bar{x} = 1.5$ vs. $\bar{x} = 2.55$) and mentor teachers significantly lower ($\bar{x} = 2.75$ vs. $\bar{x} = 1.97$) on the support of innovations and openness to change scale than counterparts who had not earned OPI certification.
- Respondents who indicated that they encourage FL teacher education candidates to continue to develop their proficiency rated their departmental colleagues higher on the scale of support of innovations and openness to change than colleagues who indicated that they did not ($\bar{x} = .161$ vs. 2.40).
- Finally, with regard to respondents who indicated OPI testing of FL majors, these respondents were more likely to rate their superintendents higher than

those who indicated that they did not ($\bar{x} = 2.07$ vs. 2.72).

Taken discretely, it is difficult to form a meaningful interpretation of results of these tests. Given that there were a total of 11 variables along the scale questions about support of innovations and openness to change, and six variables to indicate adoption and implementation of the Guidelines, it is not surprising that so many would turn out to show significant relationships. However, there is a pattern in the responses that indicates that adoption of the Guidelines by FL teacher educators may be associated with a tendency to regard more localite socio-organizational variables (community, state departments of education, and mentor teachers) as less supportive of innovations and less open to change than non-adopting colleagues. Undermining this potential relationship is the fact that among two of the adoption and implementation groups—those who obtained rater status and those who reported conducting exit OPIs for FL majors—reported higher ratings for their superintendents' support of innovation and openness to change than counterparts who had not implemented those derivatives of the Guidelines innovation. Therefore, these results are inconclusive.

RQ3G: Is adoption and implementation of the Guidelines significantly higher and earlier among FL teacher educators housed in modern language departments than their counterparts in colleges of education, as suggested in the literature?

Respondents hailing from colleges or departments of education and those from language departments were selected for a Chi Square analysis. No significant differences were found between these groups when referenced by responses to survey items related to adoption and implementation. Due to the fact that many respondents reported preparation in colleges of education and work in language departments and vice-versa, it

was determined that an analysis of the time of implementation along the work context factor would not yield meaningful statistical analyses.

Discussion of the Findings

In this census of southeastern foreign language teacher educators, it appears that many of them were FL teacher educators around the time the *provisional* tag on the Guidelines was lifted (1986). If this group can be said to be representative of the status of FLTE, the foreign or modern languages department continues to be the dominant host of foreign language teacher education (Schrier, 1991). It also appears that the trend toward FL teacher educators with education backgrounds is also reflected in this region (Jarvis & Taylor, 1990), superceding language and literature degrees as the dominant doctorates in the educational background of FL teacher educators.

Change agents hoping to reach FL teacher educators with the latest innovations would perhaps do well to reach them at professional conferences or workshops, for these, as well as the professional literature, are the channels this category of adopter consults the most often regarding educational innovations. They will perhaps most commonly be found at either their state's FLTA conference or at an ACTFL-sponsored event.

Departmental colleagues as well as professional contacts outside of the area are the most likely human sources of consultation about innovations this category of adopter will approach. Given that they rate themselves, their colleagues and their interns rather highly in terms of support of innovations and openness to change, they are most likely homophilous with these two groups. This suggests that an innovation passed on to a FL teacher educator would likely be, in turn, passed on to these other potential adopters.

Given that they give their communities and area principles on this dependent variable, one might expect them to be *heterophilous* with these groups.

The entry of Shrum and Glisan's Teachers' handbook (1994) among the list of the most widely-adopted methods course texts suggests that the trend toward a post-method (Kinging, 1997) is taking hold of the profession, at least where the Southeast is concerned. The text represents a shift away from theories, approaches, and methods toward the context of teacher *development* as a focus, a shift that reflects the rise of social constructivism, an innovation cited by several respondents as one of the most significant that they have shared with their students (i.e. "Vygotskian," "Constructivist," "ZPD" and critical reflection). Shrum and Gliasan's (1994) text is replete with opportunities for those studying the teaching of FLs to conduct written reflection on the ideas presented. As they put it in the preface to this FL methods text:

...the entire [written reflection] process leads teachers to develop their own problem-solving abilities while preparing them to reflect on their own teaching and classroom situations. (p. 5)

Combining these results with the popularity of *Developing a philosophy of FL teaching* as a topic for inclusion in the methods course, there would be further illustration there of support of a shift in emphasis from technical knowledge (methods) to the FL teacher's ability to make sound pedagogical decisions with that knowledge.

Another new element in the FL teacher education curriculum that also was reported as a significant educational innovation is the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. This document has, as of late, found its way into every FL curriculum framework currently in use among the southeastern states represented in this

study. Overall, out of all of the educational innovations that they have encountered, FL teacher educators appear to favor either the Guidelines or related innovations such as communicative language teaching and proficiency-oriented instruction. Though generally, all three are associated with the Guidelines, the most popular innovation, communicative language teaching, may or may not be credited to the Guidelines, as Savignon (1986), a methodologist associated with this teaching approach, suggests. With regard to what FL teacher educators look for in an educational innovation, it appears that they favor those innovations that facilitate or integrate within an instructional context. They also favor those that benefit students or teachers or those that mirror their own beliefs about teaching and learning.

In the process of communicating the educational innovation known as the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, it is not surprising to see that FL teachers report that they are most familiar with this ACTFL-sponsored innovation. It comes as some surprise, however, that they are least familiar with the ACTFL innovation that perhaps most directly impacts them: the Provisional Guidelines for FL Teacher Education. This may be a factor of the lingering *provisional* status of this innovation. Most FL teacher educators found out about the Guidelines during the 80s, most likely through a conference presentation or workshop or a college or university course. Many decided to promote the Guidelines either through their methods course or through consultation with area inservice teachers. Overall, they appear satisfied with both the OPI and POI applications of the Guidelines, though the OPI might have been somewhat costly and difficult to try out and or implement, as some respondents pointed out in item #30 (Please list up to two factors that might have limited the impact of the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines). POI was perhaps not only somewhat costly to implement but also somewhat complex in nature. Still, overall, FL teacher educators appear to find both derivatives of the Guidelines innovation to be relatively advantageous over traditional alternatives.

Most of the FL teacher educators who responded to the survey first used the Guidelines through OPI-based approaches to student assessment, many of them having received training in the use of the OPI; they also revised language course curricula. Most of this initial implementation activity occurred within the first 10 years of the Guidelines' dissemination. At the present time, most FL teacher educators report that the majority of FL majors and or teacher education students are tested for proficiency and that the latter group is often encouraged to continue developing proficiency in the L2.

The Guidelines have had a formidable impact on the profession, as reported by southeastern FL teacher educators, with its greatest impact being on state FL frameworks. Inservice FL teachers and mentor teachers reflected the least impact of the Proficiency Guidelines. Overall, FL teacher educators agree, at least to a certain extent, that the Guidelines have become institutionalized among FL professionals, suggesting that this educational innovation may be close to losing its status as an innovation; it is no longer a *new idea or practice*. ACTFL promotion, helped along by some encouraging global trends, as well as supportive sentiment in the FL profession, appears to be aiding this process. The greatest obstacles to establishing the Guidelines as part and parcel of the FL profession is the issue of the high cost of adoption and implementation, as well as the constraints experienced by K-12 teachers that prevent them from access to these innovations. Complexity is another major factor that respondents reported as negatively affecting the Guidelines' impact.

With regard to the *Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model* (DEIM) and the criteria suggested by Rogers (1995), only *complexity* appears to reflect the predicted direction, at least with respect to the Guidelines as a principles-based innovation POI (Proficiency-oriented instruction). The conveyance of POI to FL teacher educators in the Southeast appears to have gone smoothly, closely reflecting the professional literature's portrayal of the Guidelines' pedagogical implications. Given that the majority of FL teacher educators in the region are closely connected with the professional literature and conferences, this is not surprising. Contrary to initial indications in DOI research (Rogers, 1995), a state-mandated curricular innovation based on the Guidelines did not confer any advantage for adoption; in fact, it might have even sabotaged its dissemination within public school districts. Grosse's (1988) and Valdes' (1987) depictions of the early stages of carrying out the implementation of the Guidelines in Florida schools paint a dim picture of the prospects of this approach. A more in-depth case history of this process may be warranted in order to obtain a more conclusive picture of the Guidelines'-based curriculum mandate on FLED in Florida. In terms of the relationship between knowledge of (or familiarity with) an innovation, the DEIM correctly predicted that knowledge of an innovation does appear to be closely associated with its adoption and implementation (Rogers, 1995); this contradicts an earlier finding (Wolf & Riordan, 1991).

Overall, the study did not find any professional background variables (Carlson, 1965; Mort & Cornell, 1941) that significantly affect the quality of adoption and implementation of the Guidelines. However, it may be that there was little in this particular census that supported the comparison of extremely variable levels of professional preparation and activity. Urbanization (Mort & Cornell, 1941), likewise, is

another variable in the model that is lacking in a body of data that might lend itself to the sort of variance that might produce more significant comparisons. That is, had there been more extremes between the population bases of the respondents, the model might have found some significant results to validate this variable.

Innovativeness of the socio-organizational context appears to have limited value as a factor in the model, based on the findings of the study, as the innovativeness of those around FL teacher educators did not seem to have any connection with whether or not and to what extent they implemented the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The same holds true for considering the variegated workplace contexts of working in a college or department of education or a department of foreign or modern languages. Overall, though, the DEIM appears to provide a useful framework for describing the diffusion and adoption of an educational innovation (RQ1 and RQ2); however its usefulness in explaining and predicting such phenomenon remains to be empirically verified.

Summary of Chapter IV

This chapter presented the results of the analysis of survey data collected from 60 southeastern FL teacher educators (involved in the preparation of future elementary and or secondary level FL teachers) which investigated their approach to educational innovations. An innovation of particular focus in the survey was that of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This chapter was divided into three sections, following a model upon which the survey was constructed. This *Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model* (DEIM) considers the following major categories of variables (in order): *antecedents*, *process* variables, and *consequences* variables. The first group of variables was reflected

in the survey in the form of data collected on FL teacher educators' background variables (personal, organizational, and social). The second and third groups of variables were reflected in the second part of the survey, which focused on the process of communicating and implementing the Guidelines. In addition, a series of seven subquestions were developed to answer the question of how effective the DEIM was in explaining the diffusion of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, as reported by FL teacher educators. After presenting these designations of the analysis of the results of the survey, the findings were examined further in a discussion section which presented the general portrait of FL teacher educators as adopters of educational innovations, an overview of their experiences in the diffusion of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, and an evaluation of the DEIM, in light of the findings.

Following this section, Chapter V will report the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research based on the analysis of results from this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into the following four sections: a summary of the purpose, procedures, and findings of the study; conclusions based on the findings; implications of the study; and recommendations for further research.

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate FL teacher educators' approach to educational innovations, particularly the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. To do so, the investigator constructed the *Diffusion of Educational Innovations Model* (DEIM) based on two prior models and a review of the related literature. This model became the basis for the construction of the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators*, which was mailed out to the known population of FL teacher educators in the Southeast. The goal of administering the census survey was to collect and analyze data according to the following three research questions:

- **RQ1:** *What personal, social systemic, and organizational variables might factor into FL teacher educators' approach to the diffusion and adoption of educational innovations?*

- **RQ2:** *How do FL teacher educators perceive the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in their area and their role in that process?*
- **RQ3:** *How effective is the model developed by the researcher for the purpose of investigating the diffusion of educational innovations, in explaining the diffusion and adoption of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?*

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature was conducted on the following topics deemed significant to the study: ACTFL and the Proficiency Movement; FL Teacher Education; the FL Methods Course; the literature on the diffusion of educational innovations; and ACTFL Guidelines diffusion and adoption in the Southeast.

ACTFL, a professional organization that was evolved to represent FL teachers on a national level, advanced an educational innovation known as the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. In addition to serving as a framework for FL curriculum design, it also came with an assessment tool component, the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Controversy surrounding the OPI, as well as disagreement over the Guidelines' implications for FL pedagogy may have undermined their impact. An additional obstacle to the diffusion and adoption of the Guidelines appears to be a lack of pedagogical texts and support materials to facilitate their implementation.

ACTFL, in addition to its predecessor, the MLA, have long established a stake in FL teacher education reform. At this writing, ACTFL has advanced two significant documents toward the goal of improving the education of future FL teachers: The ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education (1988) and Developing foreign language teachers for a changing world (1993). The latter offers a

variety of perspectives on teacher education reform, borrowing from diverse disciplines such as constructivist / social critical theory and educational policy research. Just two empirical studies were uncovered in the literature on FL teacher education; they offer some evidence of the impact of the Guidelines in FL teacher education programs.

The evolution of the FL methods course, as it is portrayed in the literature, essentially evolved from training in the popular method of the day to an eclectic approach that necessitated a new focus around teacher decision-making as the basis for methods instruction. A review of the literature regarding the impact of the Guidelines on the methods course curriculum produced one prescriptive article and two empirical studies. Both studies suggest at least some impact of the Proficiency Guidelines on the methods curriculum through the adoption of Omaggio Hadley's Teaching language in context (1986; 1993).

Because the focus of this study was the diffusion of an educational innovation, a review of the research of diffusion of innovations (DOI) and its applications in the education and FL teaching fields was conducted. Carlson (1965; 1968), Mort and Cornell (1941), and Miles (1969) have laid the foundation for an educational perspective, and in language teaching, Markee (1993; 1997), Henrichsen (1989), and White (1993) have made further adaptations to a language educational context. Diffusion studies generally focus on four elements: the innovation, communication channels, time, and the social systemic and or organizational context. Increased attention to the social context of diffusion and adoption suggests that the implementation stage of the process represents a crucial fifth element where educational diffusion studies are concerned.

In order to find out what is already known about the impact of the Guidelines on

the social systemic context of the study, the Southeast, the researcher reviewed the literature on this particular topic. This search led to a review of proceedings of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching's (SCOLT) annual meetings around the time the Guidelines were officially introduced to the profession without the provisional status limitation (1986-1987). A review of the proceedings suggests that the Guidelines' implementation was first modality-focused and found to be occurring more in higher education settings than in K-12 settings, though this information is strictly illustrative and anecdotal. A review of state FL frameworks accessible through the ERIC database and links provided by the NCSSFL website exhibit variation with regard to the states' experience of adopting and implementing the Guidelines. Whether or not mandating curricular innovations, such as the Guidelines, positively impacts FL teaching and teacher preparation remains to be investigated.

Research Design

This study was essentially a diffusion of innovations-based survey of an entire population of 83 foreign language teacher educators in the Southeast U.S., including: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. A mailing list containing the addresses of the known population of FL teacher educators serving in these states was compiled from several sources. Procedures for the administration of the survey were based on the guidelines of Rea and Parker (1997) and consisted primarily of a first mailing followed by two follow up mailings of the survey. A total of 60 usable responses were received, producing an overall response rate of 72.23% of the total known population.

Preparation for the survey began with the construction of a *Model for the*

Diffusion of Educational Innovations, adapted by permission from two earlier models advanced in the field of diffusion of innovations. This model includes variables culled from the research literature which served as the foundation for constructing survey items. Five experts in FL pedagogy and or FL teacher preparation, were given copies of the instrument, entitled the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators*, for critiquing purposes; changes were subsequently made per their suggestions. Essentially, this survey instrument is divided into two sections. The first section consists of 11 questions related to antecedent variables of the diffusion of educational innovations. Part II contains questions related to the process of communicating the innovation under study, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, as well as those pertaining to the Guidelines' consequences on the profession, as reported by the FL teacher educators surveyed.

Data were analyzed using SPSS 10 for Windows, with mainly descriptive statistics calculated for Research Questions I and II. Research Question III and its seven subquestions which consider the integrity of the DEIM as a tool for explaining and or predicting the diffusion of the Guidelines, were analyzed using inferential statistics. Where categorical variables were calculated against other categorical variables, Chi Square tests were used; where categorical and continuous variables were compared, the T-test or Univariate Analysis of Variance were used, as appropriate.

Findings

Findings may be classified under the three variables of interest in the Model for the *Diffusion of Educational Innovations*: antecedent, process, and consequences. With regard to the antecedent (or background) variables, the results of the survey construct a portrait of FL teacher educators in the Southeast. Based on the results, the typical

southeastern FL teacher educator has been in the business of preparing FL teachers since the Guidelines were officially disseminated in 1986 and is likely to work in a department of foreign languages. He or she may also be found in a college or department of education. There is about as likely a chance of the southeastern FL teacher educator's holding a doctorate in education as a doctorate in foreign languages or literatures. Also, this FL teacher educator tends to be very active in his or her professional organizational activities, particularly those pertaining to their state's FLTA or ACTFL compared to others that FL teacher educators tend to be involved in. Generally, he or she has more in common with colleagues and FL interns who are perceived as more homophilous than others in their organizational (i.e. principals) and or social systemic (i.e. community) context in terms of innovativeness and openness to change.

A more social constructivistic approach appears to be entering the thinking of southeastern FL teacher educators, given the following results uncovered in the analysis of the data: the popularity of Teachers' handbook (1994); the fact that several respondents indicated that they felt the (social) constructivist approach represents the most important educational innovation they have shared with students. With regard to educational innovations, in general, respondents expressed the highest regard for those associated with the Guidelines. Generally, southeastern FL teacher educators appear to favor those educational innovations that: facilitate or integrate instruction, benefit students or teachers, or complement their beliefs about teaching and learning.

With regard to disseminating the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, out of four ACTFL-sponsored educational innovations, respondents were most familiar with the Guidelines; they are least familiar with the Provisional Guidelines for FL Teacher

Education. Most first encountered the Guidelines during the 80s either through a conference or a college or university course. Many went on to promote this educational innovation through their methods course or through work with area FL teachers. Overall, they have responded favorably to both the OPI and POI; both derivatives of the Guidelines were found to be relatively advantageous over traditional alternatives.

Initial implementation of the Guidelines, for FL teacher educators, came in the form of OPI-based student assessment and the revision language course curricula. At present, most report that FL majors and or teacher education students are proficiency-tested; the latter group is generally encouraged to further develop TL proficiency. Most of the respondents also reported having integrated the Guidelines into their FL methods course.

The Guidelines' greatest impact on FL education in the Southeast, as reported by respondents, has been on state FL frameworks. On the contrary, their impact on inservice FL teachers and mentor teacher appears to be weaker. Many respondents believe that certain constraints on these teachers have prevented them from implementing the Guidelines, thus undermining the impact of this innovation. Many also agree that the Guidelines, at least to some extent, have become institutionalized among area FL professionals. ACTFL's promotion, the trend toward globalization, as well as supportive sentiment in the FL profession were reported as the major factors facilitating the Guidelines' impact. The greatest obstacle was reported to be the high cost of implementation. Also, complexity is a factor reported as undermining the Guidelines' impact. Both of the aforementioned factors were reported as undermining K-12 teacher access to this educational innovation.

While results suggest that the DEIM may be an appropriate framework for the selection and organization of survey items in educational diffusion studies, its ability to explain and predict such phenomena is in doubt. Of Rogers' (1995) criteria for innovations, only *complexity* reflected the predicted direction for a principles-based innovation (POI). POI's dissemination among FL teacher educators closely reflects the literature's portrayal of the Guidelines' implications for instruction. Contrary to the model's prediction, a state-mandated innovation based on the Guidelines did not facilitate adoption and might have had just the opposite effect on FL instruction. The model fared better in predicting that knowledge of an innovation is associated with greater adoption and implementation, contradicting an earlier finding. Professional variables did not, as predicted by the model, significantly affect the adoption and implementation of the Guidelines; nor did urbanization, though a lack of even distribution across population bases make this finding inconclusive. Innovativeness in the socio-organizational context, contrary to the model's prediction, did not appear to impact adoption.

Conclusions

The research findings build a portrait of the personal, social and organizational factors relevant to FL teacher educators in the Southeast. They also reconstruct the process and consequences of disseminating the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and FL teacher educators' role in that experience. In addition, the findings also offer some feedback on a previously untested model of the Diffusion of Educational Innovations. Following are some specific conclusions based on each category of diffusion variables:

Antecedent variables relevant to FL teacher educators' approach to the adoption

of educational innovations:

1. Though southeastern FL teacher educators are just as likely to have received their doctorate in an education-related field as well as in a foreign language and literature field, they are more likely to have found work in a department of foreign languages.
2. Overall, southeastern FL teacher educators are most homophilous with departmental colleagues whom they most often consult regarding educational innovations (in addition to professional contacts outside the city where they live, the professional literature, and professional conferences). These colleagues, of all whom they live and work with, are, overall, judged to best match FL teacher educators in their innovativeness and openness to change.
3. FL teacher educators tend to have high regard for educational innovations that have a facilitative or integrative effect on instructional practice.
4. Given the prominence of the ACTFL Guidelines, the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, and state FL frameworks in the present study, one might conclude that FL teacher educators are, overall, cognizant and supportive of state and national leadership in FL pedagogy.

Variables relevant to the process of communicating and implementing the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines:

1. Overall, FL teacher educators appear to be among the early adopters and in many cases, promoters, of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, to which they were introduced by either a colleague or at a conference presentation or workshop.
2. Two derivatives of the Guidelines, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

and Proficiency-Oriented Instruction (POI) were judged, overall, to be relatively more advantageous than more traditional alternatives.

3. Initial implementation was mainly manifested in language course curriculum and assessment. Now, OPI-based assessment of FL majors and teacher educators is fairly widespread. Though many have received OPI training, only one has both pursued and maintained certification status.

4. At present, these adopters have implemented the Guidelines in their teacher education program either through their inclusion in the methods course or by encouraging preservice teachers to continue pursuing TL proficiency or both. Early stages of implementation or *diffusion effects* (Rogers, 1995) included using the Guidelines in the instruction and assessment of FL majors.

5. Overall, FL teacher educators in the Southeast appear to agree that the Guidelines have had a somewhat significant impact on FL education in their respective geographical areas, though they feel less confident of the Guidelines' impact on K-12 level FL instruction.

6. According to the respondents, the Guidelines were helped along by the trend toward globalization and the general support of its tenets among the profession. If they have not fulfilled their potential as an educational innovation, this may be (according to the respondents) a factor of the expense of their implementation, their complexity, and personal or socio-organizational variables that might inhibit K-12 teachers' access to them.

Implications

The goal of this study was to examine FL teacher educators' approach to educational innovations, as well as their experience in the dissemination of an educational innovation called the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This was carried out through the construction of a model for the Diffusion of Educational Innovations which served as a template for the construction of the *Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators*. Based on the results of this survey, several implications may be advanced:

1. FL teacher educators in the Southeast appear to be important vehicles for the communication of educational innovations. In addition to being adopters, they appear to play a vital role as change agents educating people in the use of educational innovations and acting as liaisons to FL professionals in the local community. As such, designers of FL teaching innovations would do well to give them prominent placement in any campaign to promote their innovation. Knowledge of their preferred innovations and standards for educational innovations inferred from the survey responses may help these designers design innovations that have the best potential for promoting effective and positive pedagogical change.

2. While the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines appear to have had a major impact on FL education in the Southeast, there is a lingering concern, based on this study, that ACTFL might want to participate more actively in educating K-12 instructors regarding this educational innovation. Perhaps this could be done in the context of promoting the Standards, since the two innovations are complementary.

3. The FL methods course in the Southeast reflects the trend in the literature which depicts a transition from focusing on what FL teachers need to have in order to

adequately prepare for a career in teaching to teaching them to be reflective decision-makers in the classroom.

4. The fact that the FL teacher educators surveyed were least familiar with the ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for FL Teacher Education (of all of the educational innovations ACTFL has advanced) should give the ACTFL leadership pause to review and revise its current strategies for developing and disseminating this educational innovation.

5. While the DEIM is still lacking in empirical verification, it has provided a useful framework for investigating the diffusion and adoption of an educational innovation within a given social system. Knowledge and implementation of educational innovations may be very difficult to measure, however, and the technical language of theoretical research is not always appropriate for surveys.

Recommendations

This study of FL teacher educators' approach to the diffusion of educational innovations, in particular the ACTFL Guidelines, is the first of its kind. It also is the first test of a *Model for the Diffusion of Educational Innovations*. Thus, many additional studies applying the model and survey to other settings need to be conducted. Following is a list of recommendations for further study:

1. Because results of this survey may only be generalized to the southeastern states included in the study, the study should be replicated via a nation-wide sample of FL teacher educators. The survey should also be adapted for administration to other categories of potential adopters of the Proficiency Guidelines including: elementary and

or secondary level FL teachers, as well as district and state supervisors of FL instruction. Given the concerns expressed by FL teacher educators regarding inservice FL teachers' access to FL innovations such as the Guidelines, it might be advantageous to start with this group.

2. Given that the Guidelines appear to be gaining status as an institution in the profession, self-report studies can only decline in validity and reliability; respondents are bound to be less clear in recollecting their experiences of the adoption and diffusion of an educational innovation as time marches on. How much time is left to adequately measure the Guidelines' impact through self-report surveys is subject to debate. Mort (1941) holds that an educational innovation can take decades to be fully adopted and implemented. (At this writing, the Guidelines have been in circulation for around 18 years). Rogers (1995) expresses a preference for studying the diffusion of innovations while or even before they are introduced. That being the case, now would appear to be a good time to conduct diffusion studies of some of more recent ACTFL innovations such as the National Standards for FL Learning and the Performance Guidelines.

3. The *Survey of FL Teacher Educators* can profit from respondents' answers to the open-ended items through the introduction of answer sets where once an item was open-ended. While open-ended items may lend a qualitative element to the survey study, they tend to be passed over by respondents. Thus, having an answer set that anticipates a range of possible responses in advance may speed up the time it takes to complete the survey, thus potentially enhancing its return rate. Future surveys designed from this model will need to take greater care in making sure that DOI terminology is rendered accessible to survey respondents. A draft of a revised version of the *Survey of FL*

Teacher Educators based on the previous recommendations can be found in Appendix K.

4. In order to truly understand the nature of FL teacher educators' approach to educational innovations, qualitative studies, perhaps in the form of long interviews (McCracken, 1988), should be conducted. Such studies can help illuminate the ways this category of adopter evaluates the educational innovations he or she screens for adoption and implementation.

5. A response to a concern expressed in implication four regarding the measurement of knowledge and implementation of educational innovations might be to conduct educational diffusion studies that are preceded by consultation with panels of designers and implementers of educational innovations (i.e. Leithwood & Montgomery, 1980). Between the two groups, parameters for fidelity of usage could be developed. This would best be approached through the use of qualitative methods such as long or focus group interviews, in order to give participants the best possible chance to express an emic understanding of the innovation and its applications. This grounded approach would aid in the construction of more comprehensible, and thus, more reliable survey items as well as a standardized rubric to process responses into a valid measure of implementation.

6. Other educational innovations advanced by discipline-specific professional organizations still await significant empirical investigations. The *Survey of FL teacher educators* needs to be adapted to other discipline settings in order to determine if the findings of the current study are indeed constant across the academic areas or simply idiosyncratic to a particular educational innovation within a specific discipline setting. Given the concern regarding the implementation of the National

Council of Teachers of Math's National Standards for K-12 Mathematics (1989), alluded to in Chapter I, this would appear to be a natural choice for such a purpose.

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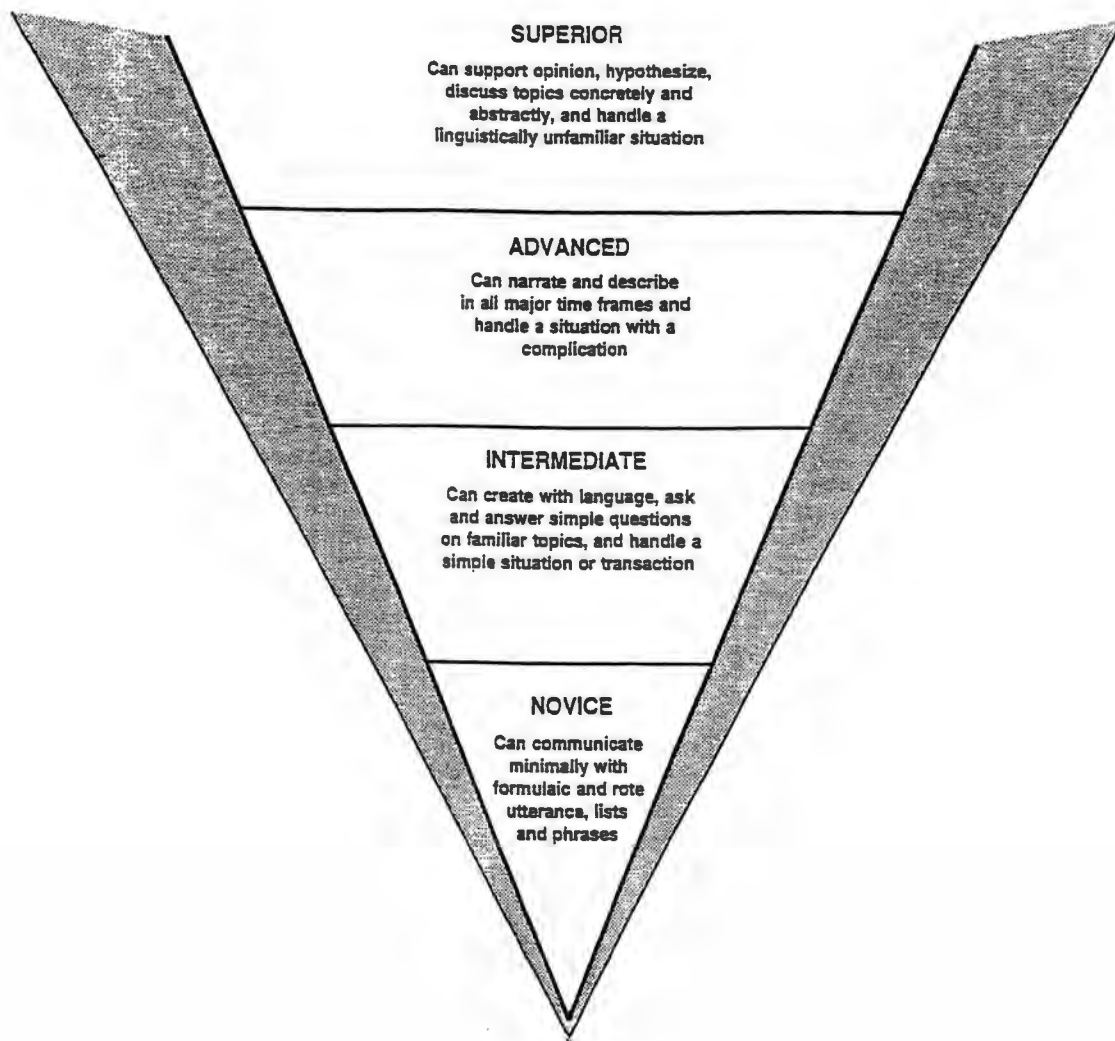
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 1999)



[Reprinted from the ACTFL OPI Tester's Manual (1999) with permission]

Appendix B: Analysis of southeastern FL frameworks found in ERIC search.¹²

	<i>Modalities</i>	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Support of early start</i>	<i>ACTFL Guidelines</i>	<i>Proficiency Testing</i>	<i>Proficiency-Oriented Instruction</i>
A L	Extensive Guidance	Some Guidance	Some mention	Pre-dates	Achievement-based, traditional	Pre-dates
A R	Extensive Guidance	Little Guidance	Some mention	Pre-dates	Achievement-based, traditional	Still reflects 'eclectic' orientation
F L	Very little	Little	None discussed	Extensive Integration; mandated in curriculum	Actively advocates; OPI certification	Open-ended curriculum framework considers rudimentary elements
G A	Extensive	Extensive	Extensive	Extensive	Enthusiastically embraced, detailed	Most extensive discussion of all states
L A	Some Guidance	Extensive Guidance	Mandated	Extensive Integration	OPI certification	Extensive Discussion
N C	Extensive	Extensive	Mandated	Some guidance; appear in appendix	Balanced; mandatory OPI certification	Extensive discussion; includes instrument to test 'proficiency-orientation' of texts
S C	Some Guidance	Some Guidance	Extensive	Extensive Guidance	...balanced with achievement testing. Ends w/ q's re: placement, credit-awarding, articulation.	Extensive Discussion
V A	Some Guidance	Some Guidance	Some mention	Pre-dates	Achievement-based, traditional	Pre-dates

¹² Sources of and actual frameworks include: Alabama State Department of Education (1978); Arkansas Department of Education (1983); Georgia State Department of Education (1992); Louisiana State Department of Education Foreign Language Section (1993); North Carolina State Department of Education (1997); South Carolina State Department of Education (1993); Valdes (1986; 1987); Virginia State Department of Education (1983). No FL frameworks were found for Kentucky, Tennessee, or Mississippi.

Appendix C: Analysis of Southeastern FL frameworks on-line (NI=not indicated).¹³

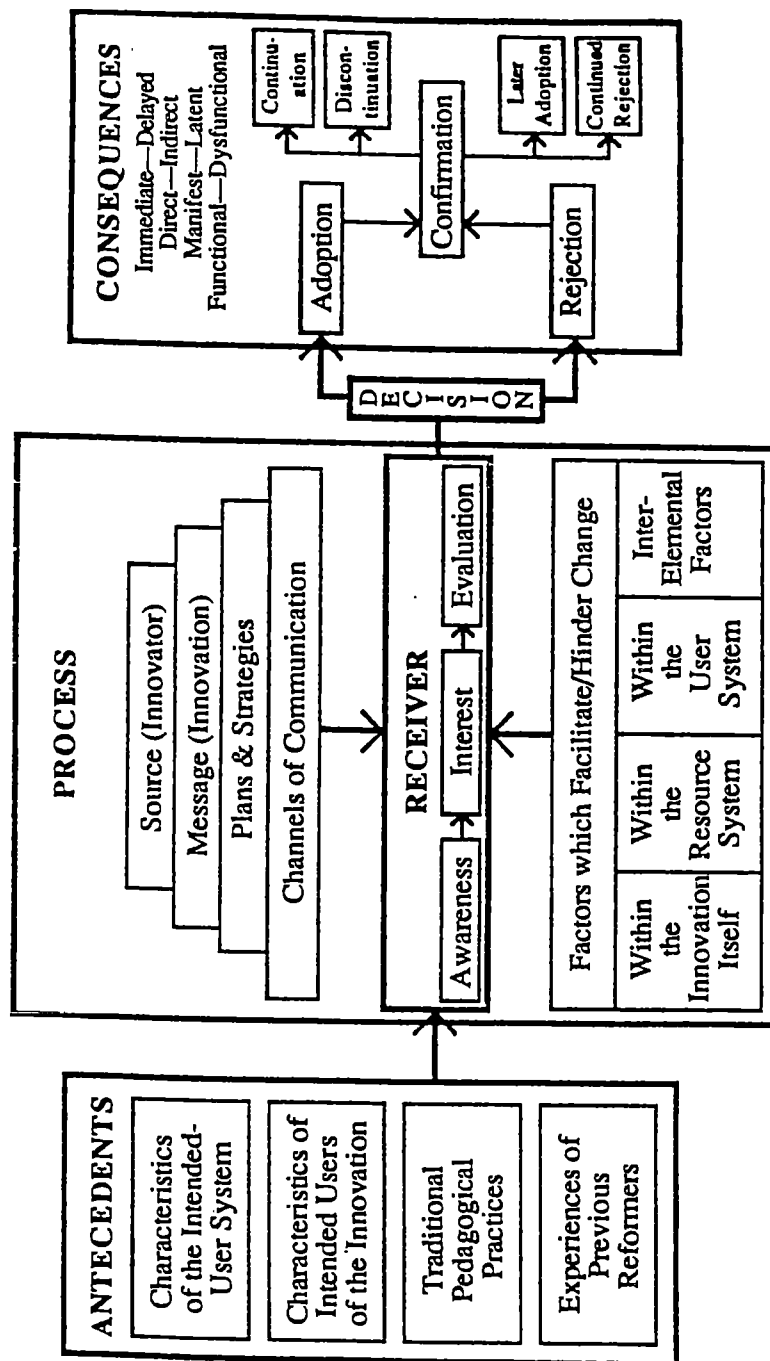
	National Standards:K-12 FL Learning	ACTFL Guidelines	Proficiency-oriented instruction	Proficiency assessment	Support of early start
A L	5 Cs depicted as more useful than modalities / criteria base of Guidelines. 2 C's worded differently, content. Same	Proficiency levels were considered; outcomes reflect balance of function, content/context, & accuracy reflected	Emphasizes importance of "opportunities to communicate in a FL" (p. 3), "authentic written & oral texts" (p. 4), & "communicative practice" (p. 18); meaningful TL use; creation w/ language; T as facilitator of students' proficiency development.	Emphasizes "communica-tive testing" (p. 12) & three P's	Makes case; guidance
A R	NI	NI. Based on modalities/ culture Across levels	References to student creation w/ lang. & references to <i>authentic communicative functions</i> , contexts may reflect.	NI	Mandated FLEX guidance
F L	Built around 5 C's. "Communities" now "Experiences"; content same	NI; Guidelines-based curriculum; unclear whether outline still exists.	Reflects function, content/context, accuracy focus;	NI	Depicted around 5 C's
G A	Included, but not established as framework until after the survey was mailed.	Included in Appendix;	Advocates spiraling, recycling; relegation of grammar to support of prof. Lang. use across modalities; advocates immersion-approach; paired, group activities; integrated with 3 P's in 'Communication'; goal of learning is proficiency; latest version includes detail on teaching for proficiency- i.e. authentic materials, technology	Advocates Guidelines; warns ag. Discrete pt. Assessment; latest version offers guide to oral assessment in appendix.	Makes case; Guidance Provided by Georgia Elementary School
K Y	Five C's appear in paraphrased form	NI	NI	NI	Advocated
L A	5 C's w/ beginning, developing, & expanding div's	NI	Emphasizes making instruction relevant to students, presentation of meaning in context emphasized.	NI	Mand. FLES Guidance
M S	5 C's: "Standards" changed to Competencies	Reflects balance of function, content/context, & accuracy	Promotes communication, interaction among language learners	OPI, perform. Assessment	Makes case; guidance
N C	Included, w/ 3 subcategories for Communication stand alone for total of 7	Continue to be the <i>organizing principle</i> behind framework; in appendix	Depicted as integrating grammar, vocabulary, & culture into meaningful communicative contexts; discourages "grammar for its own sake" (p. 8). Goal of FL learning is communicative proficiency.	Prof. levels guide out-comes; inc. 3 P's- Commun.	Mandated FLES; in framework- no C's

¹³ The following on-line FL frameworks were accessed through the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages (2000). Alabama State Department of Education (1998); Arkansas State Department of Education (2000); Florida Department of Education (2000); Georgia Department of Education (2000); Kentucky Department of Education (2000); Louisiana Department of Education (2000); Mississippi Department of Education (2000); North Carolina State Department of Education (2000); South Carolina Department of Education (2000); Tennessee Department of Education (2000); Virginia State Department of Education (2000).

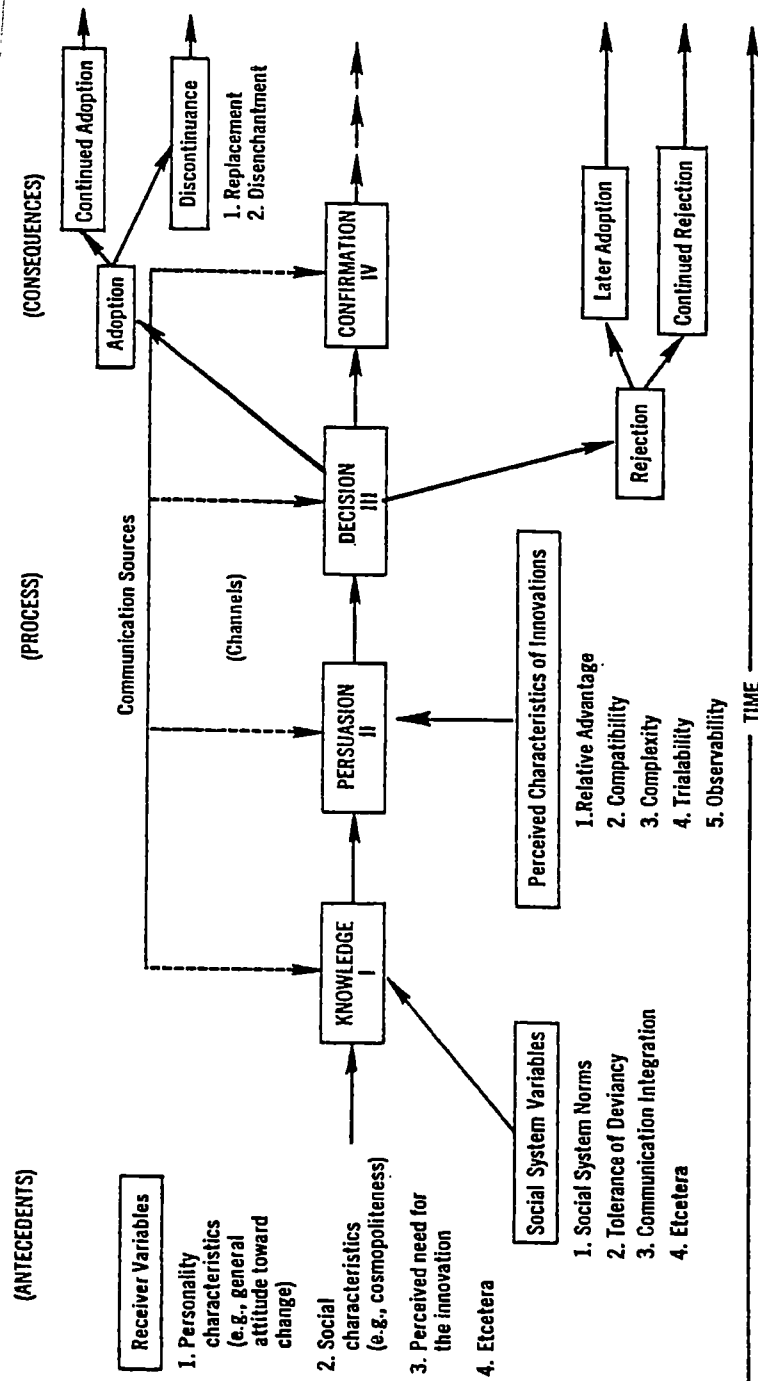
	National Standards:K-12 FL Learning	ACTFL Guidelines	Proficiency-oriented instruction	Proficiency assessment	Support of early start
S C	Built around C's w/ beginning, developing, & ex-panding divisions; develops 3 P's of Culture; suggested for teacher ed. Curriculum	Proficiency is yardstick of instruction at each level; demands proficiency of instructors,ongoing development	Many 'Standards-driven', references; reference to Hadley text re: meaningful language use. Equates authentic materials, spiraling/recycling, communi-cative, student-centered classroom w/ cognitive psych. Grammar de-emphasized (5 C's).	NI	Advocates early start; some guidelines
T N	5 C's: w/ begining, emerging, & expanding distinctions	Reflects balance of function, content / context, & accuracy	Goals emphasize use of authentic materials, contexts.	NI	Some guidelines
V A	Communication divided into written/ oral & person-person;'listening & reading for understanding' added; Culture, Connections, Communities represented	References to developmental levels for proficiency.	Refers to 'culturally authentic materials; spiraling	Depicts performance objectives for each level: 'The student will..."	Many separate documents published by state on this topic*

Appendix D: Henrichsen's (1989) Model for Cross Cultural Diffusion of Innovations
 (p. 80, Copyright © Lynn Henrichsen. Used with author's permission)

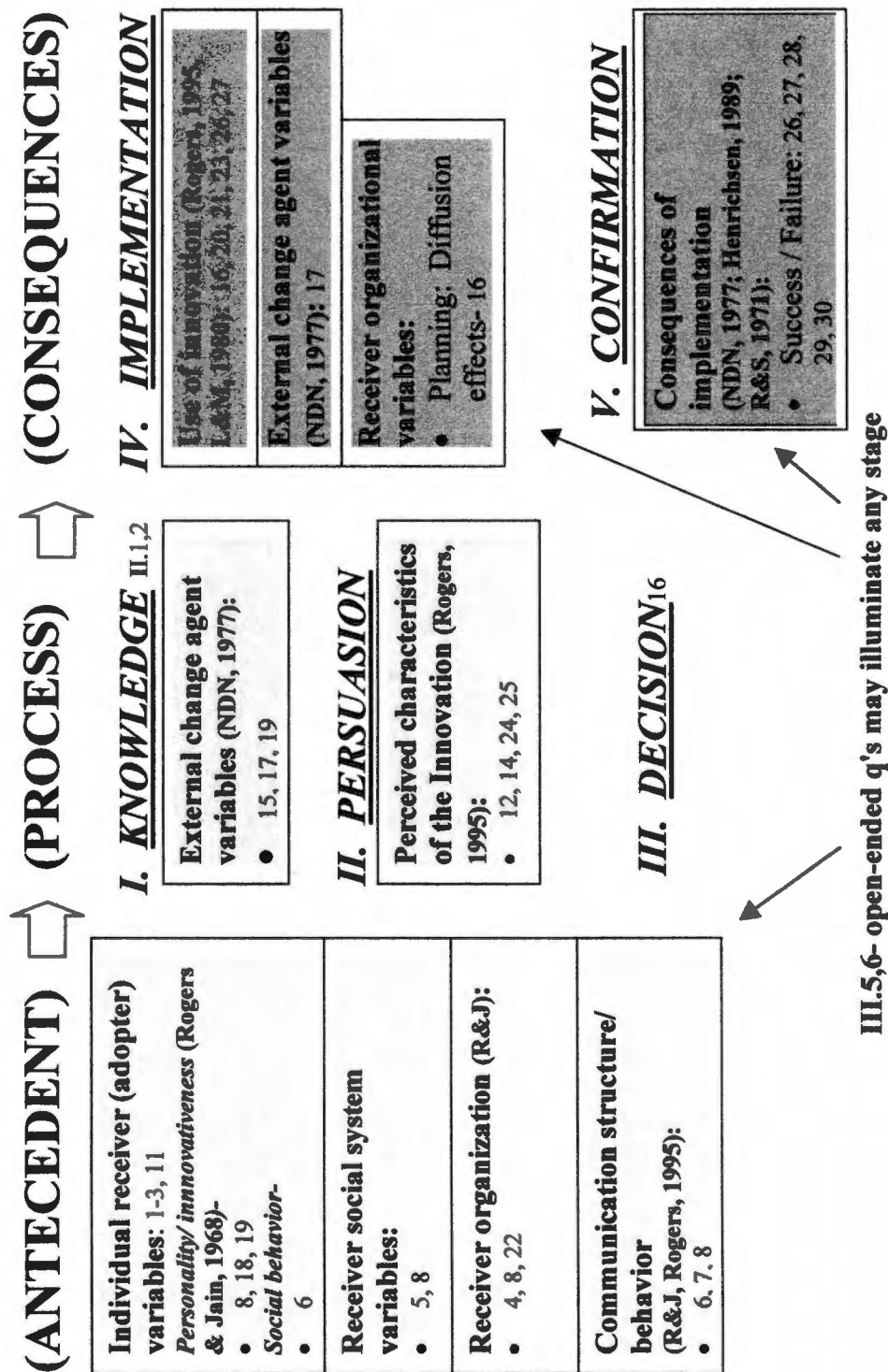
The Hybrid Model



Appendix E: Rogers & Shoemaker's (1971) Model for the Communication of Innovations **(p. 102, used with authors' permission)**



Appendix F: Survey Grid Based on the Diffusion of Educational Innvoations Model (DEIM)



Appendix G: The Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators

Cover letter preceding survey (on UT letterhead stationery, p. 1 of booklet)

Dear Fellow Foreign Language Teacher Educator:

Nearly fourteen years ago, ACTFL (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) officially unveiled its *Proficiency Guidelines* to the profession. Though the term *proficiency* appears to have caught on over the years as a catch phrase, the fact is, very little is known about the impact of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines on foreign language education. As a Ph.D. Candidate in Foreign Language / ESL Education, I am conducting a study to examine the extent to which this particular innovation in foreign language education has been disseminated and implemented.

As a FL teacher educator, you have evaluated a number of educational innovations in terms of their overall value for the teachers whom you induct into the profession. In addition to asking for your assessment of the Proficiency Guidelines' impact on language education and language teacher preparation, the enclosed survey also seeks to understand how you approach the process of finding and screening educational innovations to pass on to future foreign language teachers.

The enclosed questionnaire should require approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Given the relatively small number of foreign language teacher educators here in the Southeast (around 100), your response is vital, and consequently, greatly appreciated. Though your participation is important to the success of the study, it is strictly voluntary; you may withdraw from the study at any time for whatever reason. Your responses will be confidential; individual identification will only be used for the purpose of conducting follow-up mailings to those who do not respond. As there are no correct or incorrect answers, please respond as candidly as possible. Return of this survey indicates your willingness to participate in the study. Please place the completed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope and place it in the mail by **February 14, 2000**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (865) 974-6163 or mwarford@utk.edu. If requested, I would be happy to forward you an executive summary of the results of this survey upon completion of the study.

Thanks, in advance, for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Warford, Ph.D. Candidate, Foreign Language / ESL Education

Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators

The following survey is divided into three sections. The first section asks for some background information. The second section focuses on what you might know about the process of disseminating the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The final section asks information regarding their adoption and implementation.

I. BACKGROUND

1. Approximately how long have you served as a foreign language teacher educator?

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

2. For approximately how long have you served in the foreign language profession, in general?

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

3. Please indicate the degree(s) you have obtained since college:

☐ Master of Arts in: _____

☐ Master of Science in: _____

☐ Specialist Degree in: _____

☐ Ph.D. in: _____

☐ Ed.D. in: _____

☐ Other: _____

4. Please check the best description of your work context:

☐ Dept. of Modern Lang. ☐ College/Dept. of Ed.

☐ Other (Please describe): _____

5. The area where I teach can best be described as... (please check only one)

☐ a city of over 100,000. ☐ a city under 100,000. ☐ suburban. ☐ rural.

6. Please rank order the **top five** of the following in terms of frequency of consultation regarding educational innovations (i.e. 1= person/group you consult with most often regarding educational innovations; 5= person/group that ranks fifth in list of top five...).

☐ Your departmental / college colleagues
☐ Your dean / department chair
☐ The local principals
☐ The local school district superintendent
☐ The district foreign language supervisor
☐ The State Department of Ed.
☐ The State FL supervisor
☐ Mentor teachers assigned to your interns
☐ Local inservice FL teachers
☐ Your FL teaching interns
☐ Your graduate teaching assistants
☐ Professional contacts outside of city/town where I live
☐ The World Wide Web (please describe): _____
☐ Conference presentations / workshops (please describe): _____
☐ Professional journal(s) / newsletter(s) (please name): _____
☐ Other(s) (please describe): _____

7. Please check those professional organizations with which you have participated, then check the box out to the side that best describes your level of involvement.

1=Very active as a member (VA): i.e. "consistently publishing, presenting/serving as officer"
2=somewhat active member (SA): i.e. "attending conferences at least semi-annually"
3=inactive member (IM): i.e. "attending conferences at least once every couple of years"
4=not a member at present time (NM): i.e. "rarely, if ever participating in any capacity"

	VA	SA	IM	NM
☐ My state's foreign language teaching organization	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ One of the AAT's (e.g. The American Association of Teachers of French)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ The Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ The American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ The Modern Language Association (MLA)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ Other(s) (Please identify): _____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

8. Please rate the following in terms of support of innovations and openness to change

- 1=*Extremely supportive of innovations and open to change*
 2=*Somewhat supportive of innovations and open to change*
 3=*Somewhat skeptical of innovations and resistant to change*
 4=*Extremely skeptical of innovations and resistant to change*

Your departmental/college colleagues: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 The local community: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 Local principals: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 The local school district superintendent: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 The district foreign language supervisor: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 The State Department of Ed: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 The State FL supervisor: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 Mentor teachers assigned to your interns: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 Local inservice FL teachers: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 Your FL interns: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4
 Yourself: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

9. "Our program's foreign language methods course(s) serve students pursuing..." (check all that apply):

___ K-12 FL certification ___ secondary certification
 ___ FLEX / FLES certification ___ ESL certification ___ a Teaching Assistantship
 ___ We don't offer a FL methods course

If your program offers (the) FL methods courses, which texts are assigned?

___ Teaching Language in Context ___ State framework for foreign languages
 ___ Classroom techniques: Foreign languages & English as a second language
 ___ Other(s) (Please list): _____

10. Please rank your **top five** most important topics for inclusion in the foreign language methods course curriculum (i.e. 1=**Most important**; 5=**5th most important**):

___ L1 theories of language learning	___ Participation in professional organizations
___ Second language acquisition theory & research	___ Developing a philosophy of FL teaching
___ teaching methods	___ History of teaching foreign languages
___ teaching reading	___ Assessment/Test design
___ teaching writing	___ The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview
___ teaching listening	___ Lesson planning/Unit planning
___ teaching speaking	___ State guidelines
___ Nat'l Standards for FL learning	___ ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines
___ Technology in the FL classroom	___ Analyzing textbooks / materials for proficiency-orientation
___ Other(s) (Please describe & rank): _____	

11. In your experience as a foreign language teacher educator, what has been the most important language teaching innovation you have passed on to your students? _____.

What made it important? _____

II. ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES DISSEMINATION

12. How would you define '*proficiency-oriented instruction*' (FL instruction derived from the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*)?: _____

13. How familiar are you with...? (1=Very familiar; 2=Somewhat familiar; 3=Not familiar):

	VF	SF	NF
ACTFL <i>Proficiency Guidelines</i> (1982, 1986)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for <i>FL Teacher Education Programs</i> (1993)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (K-12) (1996)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
ACTFL <i>Performance Guidelines</i> (1998)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3

14. As best you can remember, when did you first learn of the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* ('82, '86)? ___ '82-'84 ___ '84-'86 ___ '86-'88 ___ '88-'90 ___ '90-'92 ___ '92-'94 ___ '94-'96 ___ '98-'99

___ I'm really not at all familiar with the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*
(If you check this item, feel free to skip any of the following items which do not apply.)

15. How did you **first** become familiar with the *Proficiency Guidelines*? **Check all that apply:** _____

___ Through a colleague at work.

___ At a conference workshop / presentation on _____

___ Through a college/university course

___ Other. Please describe: _____

16. Have you implemented the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*? ___ Yes. ___ No.

If 'Yes', approximately when did you first put them into practice?

___ '82-'84 ___ '84-'86 ___ '86-'88 ___ '88-'90 ___ '90-'92 ___ '92-'94 ___ '94-'96 ___ '98-'99

___ Haven't put them into practice. (If checked, please skip any items that don't apply.)

How did you first implement the ACTFL *Proficiency* Guidelines? _____

17. Are you aware of activity of ACTFL representatives related to promoting the ACTFL *Proficiency* Guidelines in your area? ____ Yes ____ No

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe: _____

18. Have you played a role in promoting the ACTFL *Proficiency* Guidelines? ____ Yes. ____ No.

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe your role: _____

19. Have you received training in use of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview? ____ Yes ____ No

20. Have you obtained official certification as an ACTFL OPI interviewer/rater? ____ Yes ____ No
If 'Yes,' and you have allowed your certification to lapse, why? (*Check all that apply*)

____ Lack of time ____ Financial reasons ____ Other (please describe): _____

21. Do you test the oral proficiency of your foreign language teacher education program candidates? ____ Yes ____ No

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe how: _____

22. Does your university/college's language department perform exit oral proficiency tests for their majors? ____ Yes ____ No ____ Don't know

23. Does your foreign language teacher education program encourage teaching interns to continue to develop their proficiency? ____ Yes ____ No

If you answered 'yes,' please describe how this is done: _____

24. Please rate the ACTFL *Oral Proficiency Interview* (OPI) according to the following criteria:
1 indicates the highest rating in the given category, 4 indicates the lowest

Relative advantage over traditional assessment methods: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Compatibility with FL instruction in my area: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Trialability: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Observability of results: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Flexibility: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Complexity: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Cost of implementation: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

25. Please rate your impressions of *proficiency-oriented instruction* along the following criteria:
1 indicates the highest rating in the given category, 4 indicates the lowest:

Relative advantage over traditional FL Instruction: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Compatibility with FL instruction in my area: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Trialability: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Observability of results: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Flexibility: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Complexity: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Cost of implementation: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

III. IMPLEMENTING THE ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES

26. Have the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* been integrated into your program's FL methods course? ___Yes ___No

If you answered 'Yes' please describe how: _____

27. Please indicate your assessment of the extent of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines' implementation on the following according to the scale below.

1=extensive impact, 2=significant impact, 3=some impact, 4=minimal impact

The state foreign language framework / guidelines	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
The state foreign language supervisor	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
The local foreign language curriculum guidelines	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
The local foreign language supervisor	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
Local foreign language teachers	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
Mentor teachers who work with interns	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___
Interns enrolled in this program	___1___	___2___	___3___	___4___

28. Please indicate your response to the statement: "ACTFL's Proficiency Guidelines have become and will endure as a standard of professional practice among foreign language teachers in my area."

___Strongly Agree___ ___Agree___ ___Disagree___ ___Strongly Disagree___

Comments: _____

29. Please list up to **two** factors you think have *facilitated* the impact of the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines: 1. _____

2. _____

30. Please list up to **two** factors that you think may have *limited* the impact of the ACTFL

Guidelines: 1. _____

2. _____

Thanks so much for taking the time to complete this survey!
Please deposit in the mail no later than February 20, 2000.
Questions? Call: (865) 974-6163 or e-mail: mwarford@utk.edu

Appendix H: Human Subjects Approval

Appendix I: Reminder Card Templates

Template for first mailing



Just a friendly reminder...

Please place your completed "Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators" booklet in the mail by the requested date: Monday, February 21st.

To those of you who have already mailed the survey back, please accept my deepest thanks for volunteering your valuable time and cooperation. I look forward to receiving your response.

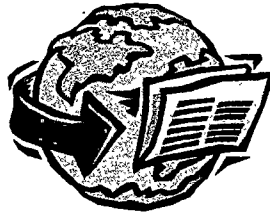
In the event that your survey package has been lost, please don't hesitate to contact me at the phone number/ e-mail address below. I will gladly place another copy of the survey in the mail right away. Your response remains crucial to the success of this study.

If your institution does not currently instruct future elementary and/or secondary teachers in the teaching of foreign languages, I would be grateful if you could note that in your returned response. It is possible that there are colleagues at our school who may have been overlooked as candidates for the survey. If so, I would very much appreciate your bringing such an oversight to my attention.

Respectfully yours,

*Mark K. Warford, Ph.D. Candidate, Foreign Language/ESL Education
The University of Tennessee, (865) 974-6163 / mwarford@utk.edu*

Template for successive mailings:



Just a friendly reminder...

Please place your completed Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators booklet in the mail as soon after the receipt of this card as possible.

If you have already mailed back the survey, please accept my deepest thanks for volunteering your valuable time and cooperation. I look forward to receiving your response.

In the event that your survey package has been lost, please contact me at the phone number/ e-mail address below; I will gladly place another copy of the survey in the mail right away. With the response rate still at _____, your participation remains vital to the successful completion of this dissertation study.

If your institution does not currently instruct future elementary and/or secondary teachers in the teaching of foreign languages, I would be grateful if you could note that in your returned response. It is possible that there are colleagues at our school who may have been overlooked as candidates for the survey. If so, I would very much appreciate your bringing that to my attention.

Respectfully yours,

*Mark K. Warford, Ph.D. Candidate, Foreign Language/ESL Education
The University of Tennessee, (865) 974-6163 / mwarford@utk.edu*

Appendix J Template for e-mail / phone follow-up:

Subject: follow up
Date: Mar 2000
From: Mark Warford <warford@esper.com>
To: jdoe@seu.edu

Dear Dr: _____,

So far, _____ of the "Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators" questionnaire booklets have been returned. Your response is still vital to the successful completion of this dissertation study.

If you have already placed a completed booklet in the mail by the time you receive this message, please accept my warmest thanks. In the event that the survey has been lost, please contact me at the phone number / e-mail address below and I will gladly mail out an additional copy of the survey as soon as possible.

Thanks, in advance, for volunteering your valuable time and cooperation in assisting with the study.

Very truly yours,

Mark K. Warford
Ph.D. Candidate, Foreign Language/ESL Ed.
The University of Tennessee
College of Education
Claxton Addition 5
Knoxville, TN 37996-3400
(865) 974-6163 / mwarford@utk.edu

Appendix K: Chi Square Analysis of Familiarity

and Adoption / Implementation Groupings

Q: Have you implemented the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?

Division by familiarity		Have you implemented the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?		Total
		Yes	No	
1.00	Count	39	8	47
	Expected Count	34.0	13.0	47.0
2.00	Count	3	8	11
	Expected Count	8.0	3.0	11.0
Total	Count	42	16	58
	Expected Count	42.0	16.0	58.0

Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.847 ^a	1	.000	.001	.001
Continuity Correction ^b	11.199	1	.001		
Likelihood Ratio	12.548	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.608	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	58				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.03.

Q: Have you played a role in promoting the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?

Division by familiarity		Respondents' activity related to promoting the Guidelines		Total
		Yes	No	
1.00	Count	36	10	46
	Expected Count	29.9	16.1	46.0
2.00	Count	1	10	11
	Expected Count	7.1	3.9	11.0
Total	Count	37	20	57
	Expected Count	37.0	20.0	57.0

Have you played a role in promoting the Guidelines?

Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.648 ^b	1	.000	.000	.000
Continuity Correction ^a	15.735	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	18.999	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	18.321	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	57				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.86.

Q: Have you integrated the Guidelines into your program's FL methods course?

Division by familiarity		Have the ACTFL Guidelines been integrated into your program's FL methods course?		Total
		Yes	No	
1.00	Count	41	4	45
	Expected Count	36.0	9.0	45.0
2.00	Count	3	7	10
	Expected Count	8.0	2.0	10.0
Total	Count	44	11	55
	Expected Count	44.0	11.0	55.0

Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.097 ^b	1	.000	.000	.000
Continuity Correction ^a	15.469	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	15.831	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	18.750	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	55				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

Appendix L: Results of Analysis of Variance Test on Variables of Adoption and Implementation Compared with Ratings of Socio-Organizational Groups Along a Scale of *Support of Innovations and Openness to Change*

(1 = highest rating; 4 = lowest).

Q: Have you played a role in promoting the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?

Dependent Variable: Support of innovation, openness to change	Type III Sum Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Community	4.327	1	4.327	6.121	.019
Respondent	1.282	1	1.282	8.015	.008

Q: Have you received training in use of the OPI?

Dependent Variable: Support of innovation, openness to change	Type III Sum Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
State Dept. of Ed.	3.516	1	3.516	4.408	.044

Q: Have you obtained official OPI rater / interviewer status?

Dependent Variable: Support of innovation, openness to change	Type III Sum Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Superintendent	3.888	1	3.888	5.975	.020
Mentor teachers	2.163	1	2.163	6.903	.013

Q: Does your FL teacher education program encourage teaching interns to continue to develop their proficiency?

Dependent Variable: Support of innovation, openness to change	Type III Sum Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Colleagues	2.667	1	2.667	4.159	.050

Does your FL Department perform exit oral proficiency tests for majors?

Dependent Variable: Support of innovation, openness to change	Type III Sum Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Superintendent	3.516	1	3.516	5.306	.028

Appendix M: Revised Survey

Survey of Foreign Language Teacher Educators

The following survey is divided into three sections. The first section asks for some background information. The second section focuses on what you might know about the process of disseminating the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The final section asks information regarding their adoption and implementation.

I. BACKGROUND

1. Approximately how long have you served as a foreign language teacher educator?

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

3. About how long have you served in other aspects of the profession? (Check *all* that apply)

...as a K-8 foreign language teacher in the public / private schools:

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

...as a high school foreign language teacher in the public / private schools:

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

...as a professor of foreign languages and or literature in higher education:

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

...in other service to the foreign language profession (please describe):

☐ 36 years/more ☐ 31-35 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 5/less

5. Please indicate the *highest* degree you have obtained since college:

☐ Master of Arts in: _____

☐ Master of Science in: _____

☐ Specialist Degree in: _____

☐ Ph.D. in: _____

☐ Ed.D. in: _____

☐ Other: _____

6. Please check the best description of your work context (choose *one*):

☐ Dept. of Modern (Foreign) Languages ☐ College/Department of Ed.

☐ Other (Please describe): _____

5. The area where I teach can *best* be described as... (Check only *one*.)

☐ a city of over 100,000. ☐ a city under 100,000. ☐ suburban. ☐ rural

7. Please rank order the **top SEVEN** of the following in terms of frequency of consultation regarding educational innovations (i.e. 1= person/group you consult with most often regarding educational innovations; 7= person/group that ranks seventh in list of top seven...).

- ___ Your departmental / college colleagues
- ___ Your dean / department chair
- ___ The district foreign language supervisor
- ___ The State Department of Ed.
- ___ The State FL supervisor
- ___ Mentor teachers assigned to your interns
- ___ Local inservice FL teachers
- ___ Your FL teaching interns
- ___ Your graduate teaching assistants
- ___ Professional contacts outside of city/town where I live
- ___ The World Wide Web (please describe): _____
- ___ Conference presentations / workshops (please describe): _____
- ___ Professional journal(s) / newsletter(s) (please name): _____
- ___ Other(s) (please describe): _____

7. Please check those professional organizations with which you have participated, then check the box out to the side that best describes your level of involvement.

1=Very active as a member (VA) i.e. "consistently publishing, presenting serving as an officer"

2=somewhat active member (SA) i.e. "attending conferences at least semi-annually"

3=inactive member (IM) i.e. "attending conferences at least once every couple of years"

4=not a member at present time (NM) i.e. "rarely, if ever participating in any capacity"

	VA	SA	IM	NM
___ My state's foreign language teaching organization	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ One of the AAT's (e.g. The American Association of Teachers of French)	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ The Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ The American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ The Modern Language Association (MLA)	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	___1	___2	___3	___4
___ Other(s) (Please identify): _____	___1	___2	___3	___4
_____	___1	___2	___3	___4

8. Please rate the following in terms of support of innovations and openness to change

1=Extremely supportive of innovations and open to change

2=Somewhat supportive of innovations and open to change

3=Somewhat skeptical of innovations and resistant to change

4=Extremely skeptical of innovations and resistant to change

Your departmental/college colleagues:	___1	___2	___3	___4
The local community:	___1	___2	___3	___4
Local principals:	___1	___2	___3	___4
The local school district superintendent:	___1	___2	___3	___4
The district foreign language supervisor:	___1	___2	___3	___4
The State Department of Ed:	___1	___2	___3	___4
The State FL supervisor:	___1	___2	___3	___4
Mentor teachers assigned to your interns:	___1	___2	___3	___4
Local inservice FL teachers:	___1	___2	___3	___4
Your FL interns:	___1	___2	___3	___4
Yourself:	___1	___2	___3	___4

9. "Our program's foreign language methods course(s) serve students pursuing..."

(check ALL that apply): ☐ K-12 FL certification ☐ secondary certification
☐ FLEX / FLES certification ☐ ESL certification ☐ a Teaching Assistantship
☐ We don't offer a FL methods course ..

If your program offers (the) FL methods courses, which texts are assigned?

(Check all that apply)

☐ Teaching Language in Context ☐ State framework for foreign languages
☐ Classroom techniques: Foreign languages & English as a second language
☐ Teacher's Handbook
☐ Other(s) (please list): _____

12. Please rank your **top SEVEN** most important topics for inclusion in the foreign language methods course curriculum (i.e. 1=Most important; 7= 7th most important):

☐ L1 theories of language learning	☐ Participation in professional organizations
☐ Second language acquisition	☐ Developing a philosophy of FL teaching
☐ theory & research	☐ History of teaching foreign languages
☐ teaching methods	☐ Assessment/Test design
☐ teaching reading	☐ The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview
☐ teaching writing	☐ Lesson planning/Unit planning
☐ teaching listening	☐ State guidelines
☐ teaching speaking	☐ ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines
☐ Nat'l Standards for FL learning	☐ Analyzing textbooks / materials for
☐ Technology in the FL classroom	☐ proficiency-orientation
☐ Other(s) (please describe & rank): _____	

13. In your experience as a foreign language teacher educator, what has been the most important language teaching innovation you have passed on to your students? _____.

What made it important? _____

II. ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES DISSEMINATION

12. How would you define '*proficiency-oriented instruction*' (FL instruction derived from the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*)?: _____

13. How familiar are you with...? (1=*Very familiar*; 2=*Somewhat familiar*; 3=*Not familiar*):

	VF	SF	NF
ACTFL <i>Proficiency Guidelines</i> (1982, 1986)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
ACTFL Provisional Guidelines for <i>FL Teacher Education Programs</i> (1993)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (K-12) (1996)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3
ACTFL <i>Performance Guidelines</i> (1998)	___ 1	___ 2	___ 3

14. As best you can remember, when did you first learn of the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* ('82, '86)? ___ '82-'84 ___ '84-'86 ___ '86-'88 ___ '88-'90 ___ '90-'92 ___ '92-'94 ___ '94-'96
___ '96-'98 ___ '98-'00

___ I'm really not at all familiar with the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*
(If you check this item, feel free to skip any of the following items which do not apply)

15. How did you **first** become familiar with the *Proficiency Guidelines*? **Check all that apply:**

- ___ Through a colleague at work.
___ At a conference workshop / presentation on _____
___ Through a college/university course
___ Other. Please describe: _____

16. Have you implemented the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*? ___ Yes. ___ No.

If 'Yes', approximately when did you first put them into practice?

___ '82-'84 ___ '84-'86 ___ '86-'88 ___ '88-'90 ___ '90-'92 ___ '92-'94 ___ '94-'96 ___ '96-'98
___ '98-'00 ___ Haven't put them into practice (if checked, please skip items that don't apply.)

How did you **first** implement the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*?

- ___ By proficiency-testing students in my language classes
___ By re-designing my language course syllabi around the Guidelines
___ By proficiency-testing FL teacher education program candidates
___ By integrating them into FL methods course syllabi. Please describe: _____

17. Are you aware of activity of ACTFL representatives related to promoting the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* in your area? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe: _____

18. Have you played a role in promoting the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines*? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe your role: _____

19. Have you received training in use of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Have you obtained official certification as an ACTFL OPI interviewer/rater? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If 'Yes,' and you have allowed your certification to lapse, why? (*Check all that apply*)

☐ Lack of time ☐ Financial reasons ☐ Other (please describe): _____

22. Do you test the oral proficiency of your foreign language teacher education program candidates? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered 'Yes,' please describe how: _____

22. Does your university/college's language department perform exit oral proficiency tests for their majors? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

23. Does your foreign language teacher education program encourage teaching interns to continue to develop their proficiency? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered 'yes' to 22, please describe how this is done: _____

24. Please rate the ACTFL *Oral Proficiency Interview* (OPI) according to the following criteria:
1 indicates the **highest** rating in the given category, 4 indicates the **lowest**

Relative advantage over traditional assessment methods: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Compatibility with FL instruction in my area: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Triability (how easy is it to test out?): ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Observability of results: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Flexibility: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Complexity (1=highly complex; 4=not at all complex): ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

25. Please rate your impressions of *proficiency-oriented instruction* along the following criteria:
1 indicates the highest rating in the given category, 4 indicates the lowest:

Relative advantage over traditional FL Instruction: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Compatibility with FL instruction in my area: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Trialability (how easy is it to test out?): ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Observability of results: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Flexibility: ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Complexity (1=*highly complex*; 4=*not at all complex*): ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

IV. IMPLEMENTING THE ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES

26. Are the ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* currently integrated into your program's FL methods course? ___Yes ___No

If you answered 'Yes' please describe how: _____

27. Please indicate your assessment of the extent of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines' implementation on the following according to the scale below.

1=*extensive impact*, 2=*significant impact*, 3=*some impact*, 4=*minimal impact*

The state foreign language framework / guidelines ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

The state foreign language supervisor ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

The local foreign language curriculum guidelines ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

The local foreign language supervisor ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Local foreign language teachers ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Mentor teachers who work with interns ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

Interns enrolled in this program ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4

28. Please indicate your response to the statement: "ACTFL's Proficiency Guidelines have become and will endure as a standard of professional practice among foreign language teachers in my area."

___Strongly Agree ___Agree ___Disagree ___Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

29. Please check all of the following factors you think have *facilitated* the impact of the ACTFL *Proficiency* Guidelines:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ ACTFL promotion / publicity | ☐ The trend toward globalization |
| ☐ Adoption by state FL frameworks | ☐ Integration into FL textbooks / materials |
| ☐ General professional support for a communicative approach | |
| ☐ Advocacy by foreign language teacher educators | |
| ☐ Advocacy within departments of modern (foreign) Languages | |
| ☐ Other(s): _____ | |

30. Please check all of the following factors that you think may have *limited* the impact of the ACTFL *Proficiency* Guidelines:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ The preference for traditional approaches | ☐ Local ed. administrations |
| ☐ Price tag of implementing them | ☐ State Departments of ed. |
| ☐ Their complexity | ☐ Inservice K-12 teachers |
| ☐ Other(s): _____ | |

Thanks so much for taking the time to complete this survey!
Please deposit in the mail no later than February 20, 2000.
Questions? Call: (865) 974-6163 or e-mail: mwarford@utk.edu

VITA

Mark Kellison Warford was born in Hanover, New Hampshire on August 1, 1967. He attended both public and private schools in New York and Missouri. In 1989 he graduated *cum laude* from Kenyon College where he passed his senior exercise in English with a grade of *Distinction*. He also attended the Brown University teacher education program and received a Master of Arts in Teaching of English and Spanish in 1990. After returning from a year of teaching in Oviedo, Spain, Warford gained several years of experience teaching Spanish language at the secondary level.

As a Graduate Teaching Assistant at The University of Tennessee College of Education, Warford served as both as an instructor and supervisor of teaching interns. In April 2000, he was presented the *Outstanding Ph.D. Student in Foreign Language / ESL Education* award. At this writing, he is now preparing for a career as a foreign language teacher educator at Buffalo State College.

Warford is a member of two education honor societies: Pi Lambda Theta and Phi Delta Kappa. He is also a member of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.