

Language Trends 2013/14

Kathryn Board and Teresa Tinsley

Methodology and responses

England-wide annual survey

415 state secondary schools

96 independent secondary schools

591 primary schools



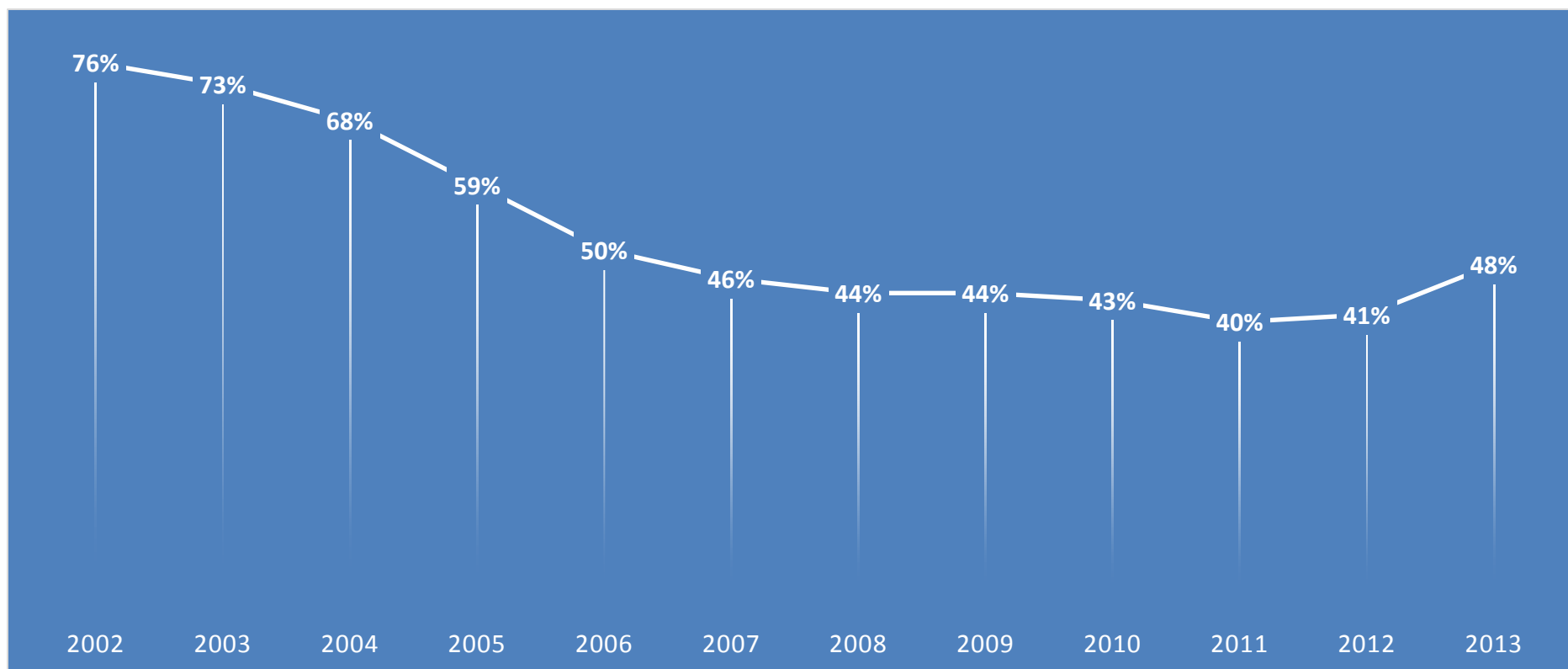
Language Trends 2013/14

The state of language learning in primary
and secondary schools in England

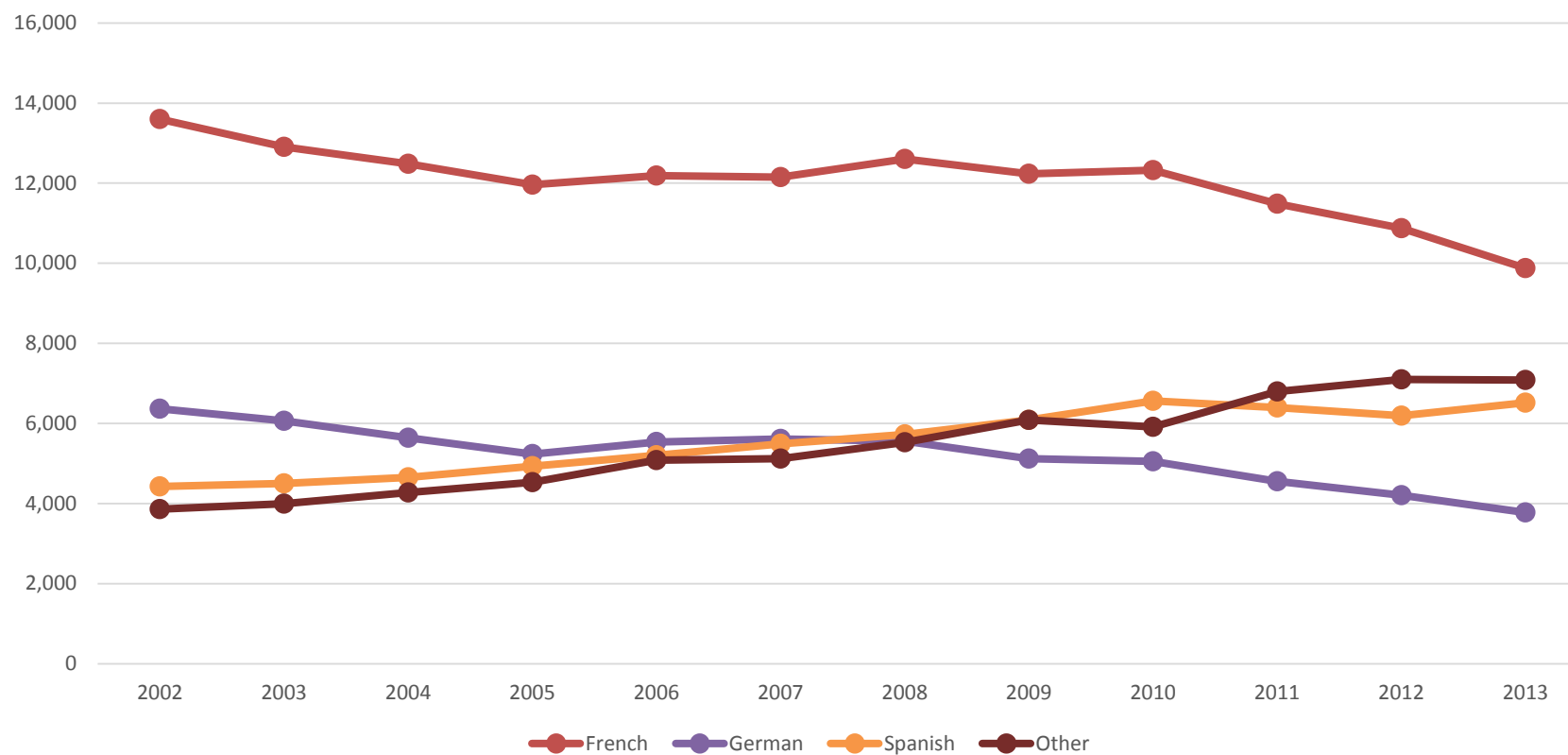
Kathryn Board OBE
Teresa Tinsley

Providing
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Percentage of Key Stage 4 pupils in England taking a GCSE in a language, 2002-2013



Entries for A level languages examinations, 2002-2013



Policy context and key questions

- How prepared are primary schools to teach languages in KS2 from September 2014?
- Is the English Baccalaureate continuing to improve take up of languages at KS4 (and beyond)?
- What are the reasons for the decline in take up at A level?

Primary schools

- 95% say they already teach a language
- 42% say they meet the new National Curriculum requirements
- Three quarters say teaching reading, writing and grammar is challenging
- Low level of engagement with subject specific CPD

Transition from KS2 to KS3

- 46% of primary schools have no contact with secondary
- 11% of secondary schools receive/request data on pupil achievements in languages in KS2
- 27% of secondaries able to ensure all pupils can continue with the same language
- Levels of collaboration declining

Disconnect between primary and secondary

Primary

I was approached by one of our local secondaries for details of our curriculum, which I provided. I have heard nothing else from them.....

Secondary

We have tried to make a link but primary schools are not interested.

...trying to convince our secondary school to teach Spanish and not just French and German

50% of our Key Stage 3 learn German and this is never offered at Key Stage 2

Our fear is that the children will repeat all the work they have done with us when they reach secondary school and lose their enthusiasm for languages through boredom

We are experiencing large numbers of pupils saying that they don't like French before they get to secondary school as the provision is not good enough in primary schools

Primary	Secondary
I am still not sure about writing/grammatical features as I have heard many secondary schools do not welcome primary schools teaching this	We have found that those who have studied a language have very basic knowledge, mainly lists of vocabulary... we therefore see little advantage in their previous knowledge.
It is a difficult time to be introducing a new language with little support	Our staff are all fully deployed so there is no time for outreach

Secondary schools

- Half of schools have seen numbers rise for languages in KS4; a third by more than 10%
- But take up is persistently low (less than 25%) in one in five schools
- An increasing number (27%) of state schools disapply pupils from languages in KS3
- 30% do not make provision for all pupils to study a language in KS4
- Pressures of time and funding affecting teachers' access to CPD

Languages post 16

- The Ebacc is having little impact on take up post 16
- Alarming decline in the independent sector – 43% report recent falls in numbers
- Small numbers threaten viability of courses
- Continuation rates from AS to A2 getting worse
- Little confidence that ‘decoupling’ and move to terminal exam will improve things
- Few students combine languages with STEM subjects

Conclusions

- Positive reception for statutory KS2 languages
- Success of EBacc in halting KS4 decline
- Challenges:
 - Lack of access to CPD (primary and secondary)
 - Disjuncture between primary and secondary
 - Time for language learning
 - Exclusion of pupils
 - Exams and their impact post 16

‘Languages are still perceived as a difficult option
and not an obvious choice for future career
prospects’