

# Teachers of Critical Languages Program 2013-2014 Year in Review

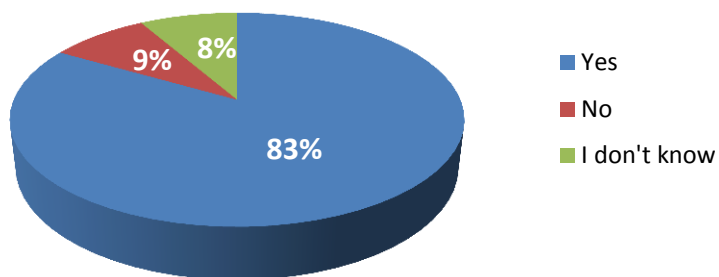
At the conclusion of the 2013-2014 school year, TCLP staff calculated statistics from all teachers over the course of their year-long exchange in order to gauge the impact of the program as a whole across all levels and geographies. Monitoring and evaluation data came from monthly exchange teacher surveys were also distributed to students and parents at TCLP host schools throughout the United States, providing valuable insight into the individual experiences that students had while studying the Arabic and Chinese languages. These statistics are used to measure the impact of the 2013-2014 teachers and make informed decisions about the monitoring and evaluation of TCLP for future years.

Collectively, the 2013 cohort of exchange teachers taught over 2,200 students in their classes and spent over 7,050 planning lessons and designing Mandarin/Arabic curriculum. This year's teachers garnered an impressive 2,565 hours of professional development and participated in a total of 555 hours of outreach in their respective communities and schools, reaching out to community members and building bridges of mutual understanding.

The feedback received from host schools was overwhelmingly positive; in addition to paving

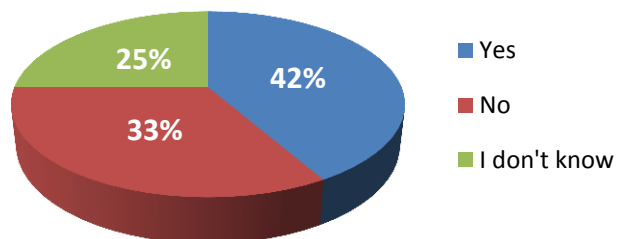
the way for the expansion of K-12 critical language programs in schools, TCLP is also making a tremendous difference in the lives of its U.S., Chinese, and Egyptian participants. Seventy percent of all 2013-2014 TCLP mentor teachers

**As a result of participating in TCLP this year, does your school have increased motivation to further develop its Arabic/Chinese language program?**



completed a post-program survey, in which they provided substantial evidence that TCLP is enabling many schools to expand their Arabic and Mandarin language programs in long-term, sustainable ways. Of mentor teachers surveyed, a very strong majority of 83% said their school now has increased motivation to develop its Arabic or Mandarin language program as a result of participating in TCLP (see chart above). Many schools followed intentions with action, as 42% of schools – a plurality of respondents – reported that their school plans to hire an additional Arabic or Chinese teacher (see chart at left). These two figures emphasize TCLP's primary goal: increasing the teaching and

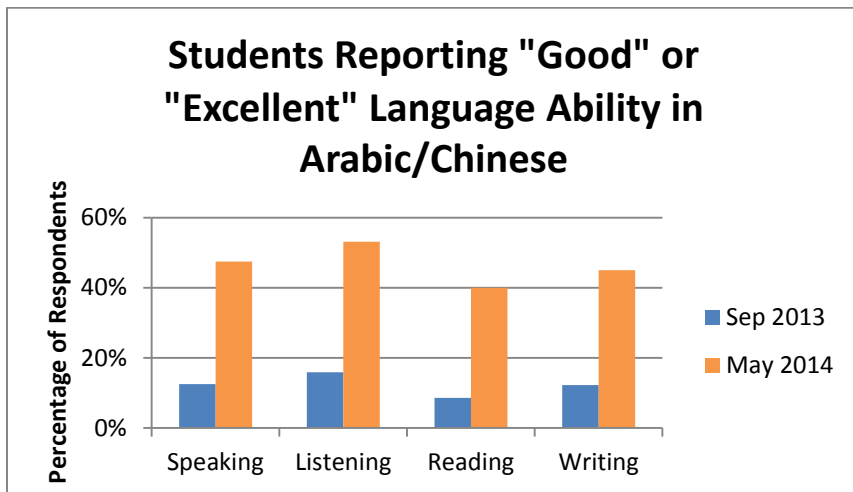
**After your year with TCLP, does your school plan to hire an additional Arabic/Chinese teacher?**



learning of critical languages in K-12 schools across the United States. For many of these schools, the 2013 school year was the first year of their Arabic/Chinese program and a critical period in which success was far from certain. Yet, seven out of eight respondents (excluding those who didn't know) said that their school would continue to offer Arabic or Mandarin classes in the coming school year.

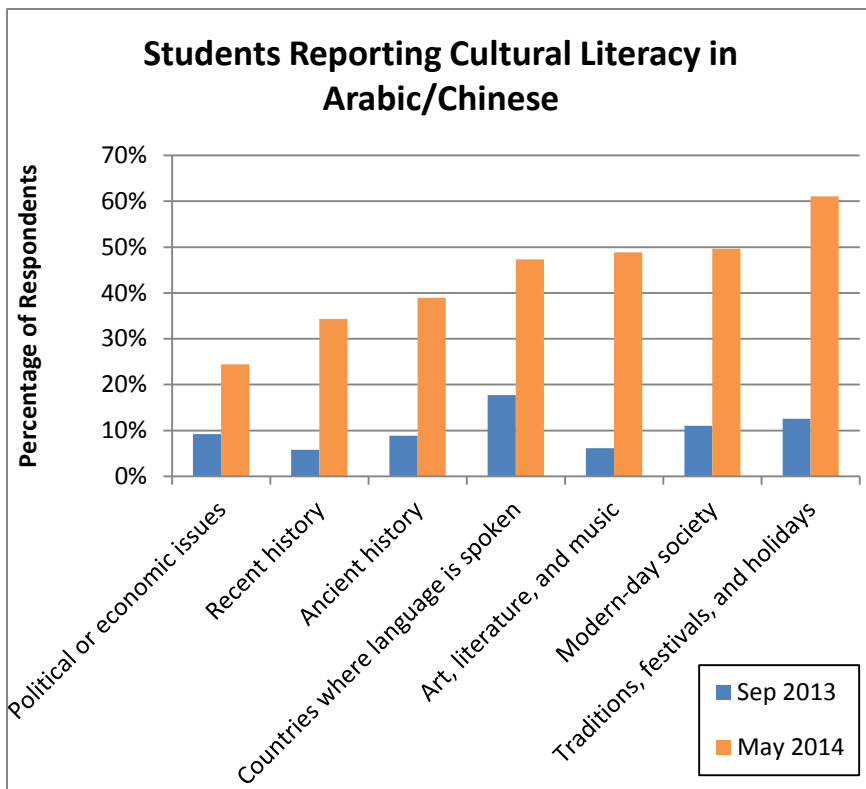
Finally, in order to quantify the sustainability of the 2013 program year, mentors were asked how many new students they anticipated enrolling in 2014 Arabic/Chinese classes as a result of the school's year with TCLP. Host schools expected to enroll on average 106 students in Arabic or Chinese next year thanks to TCLP. In other words, almost as many students will benefit from TCLP the year *after* the exchange as during the program year itself.

In a separate survey given in May 2014, students were asked to rate their own Arabic and Chinese abilities in the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). The results were compared to answers that students gave in a baseline survey at the beginning of the school year. As shown in the chart (below), students reported dramatic gains in their command of the target languages. Across all areas, these data suggest high teacher effectiveness.



Students also rated their own knowledge about various areas of Arabic and Chinese culture. The survey at the beginning of the school year revealed a relatively low baseline, with most first-year language students saying they knew “nothing” about areas of Arabic and Chinese culture. Students reported the biggest jump in their knowledge of traditions, festivals, and holidays; art, literature, and music; and modern-day society (see chart below).

Students were also asked about how their attitudes toward Arabic and Chinese language learning were affected by TCLP teachers. Student satisfaction at the end of the 2013 school year was measured through



## What Students Are Saying

“Honestly, just being able to speak Arabic has been a fabulous experience. I often go home and tell my mom and her boyfriend things that we learn in class that day. For instance, when we were learning clothes and colors I would go home and tell my mom everything she was wearing that day. I am now seriously thinking about trying to study abroad for a semester in an Arab country while in college. I want to learn more about the Arab-speaking world as well as continue my Arabic language education.”

– Student, age 17, Massachusetts

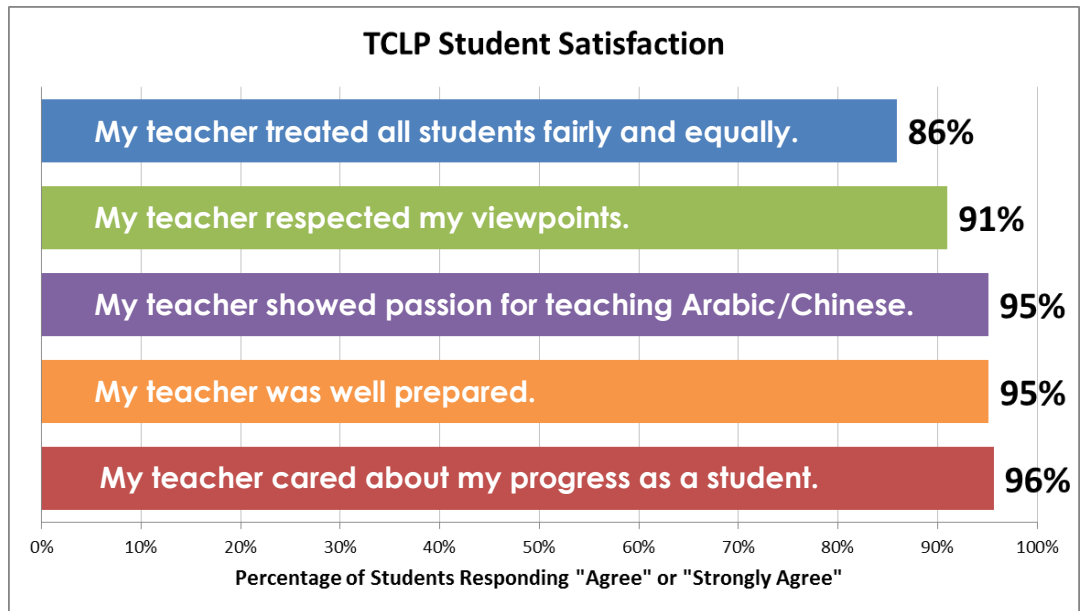
“I must admit, I was very skeptical of this program. I now see the importance of this program. It has helped my child to realize that all human beings are created equally. My child now sees past all the old stigmas and attitudes of others. I would recommend other school districts in the area participating in this program.”

– Parent of 13-year-old, Wisconsin

“My teacher is more interesting and very motivating. I feel like I can accomplish more things in her class... It is harder than all of my courses but math; however I find it much more enjoyable than any other class I take. There are lots of different activities like games, songs, and poems all designed to help with learning. It is easier to learn and more fun than the other foreign languages I have taken.”

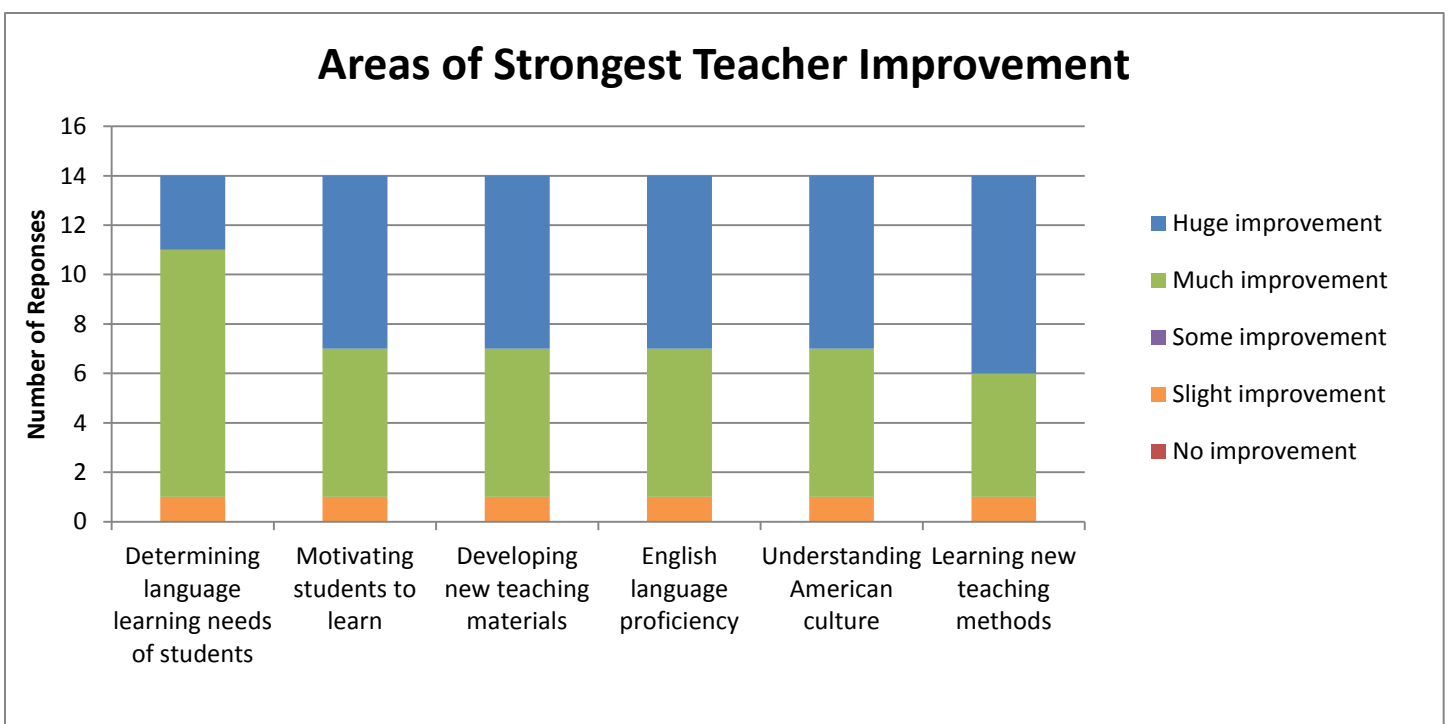
–Student, age 16, Georgia

both direct and indirect means. When asked directly “How satisfied have you been with the TCLP Chinese teacher’s class overall this year?” 80% of students answered that they were “very satisfied” (47%) or “satisfied” (33%). Solid majorities of students also reported that their teacher treated all students fairly, respected student viewpoints, cared about student progress, and



exhibited both passion and preparation for language teaching (see chart above). As students ended the school year with such positive attitudes towards the study of Arabic and Chinese overall, there was a corresponding confidence among exchange teachers that their host schools’ critical language programs would continue. Among exchange teacher survey respondents, 58% said that their host school was planning to hire a full-time Arabic or Chinese language teacher for the next school year (excluding five teachers who did not know). Additionally, 86% of exchange teachers had worked on developing a curriculum that their host school will be able to use in future years.

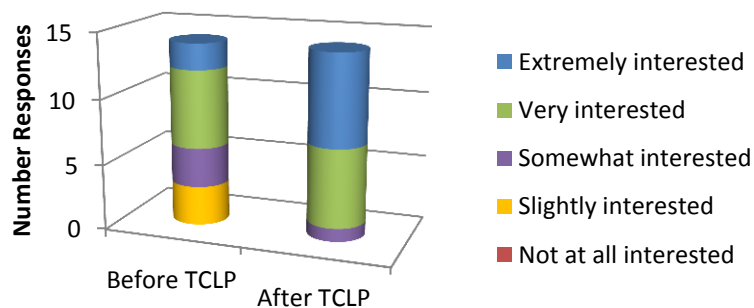
Students and language programs were not the only beneficiaries of TCLP; the post-program survey for exchange teachers (completed by 14 out of 17 participants) asked them to what extent they had improved in 30 professional skills related to K-12 language teaching in the United States. One-hundred percent of exchange teacher respondents improved in 26 out of 30 areas covered, with very large majorities of teachers improving in the other four areas. A remarkable 71% of exchange teacher respondents improved in every skill surveyed. Areas of notable improvement included determining the language learning needs of students, learning new teaching methods, motivating students to learn, and developing new teaching materials (see the chart below for detailed results).



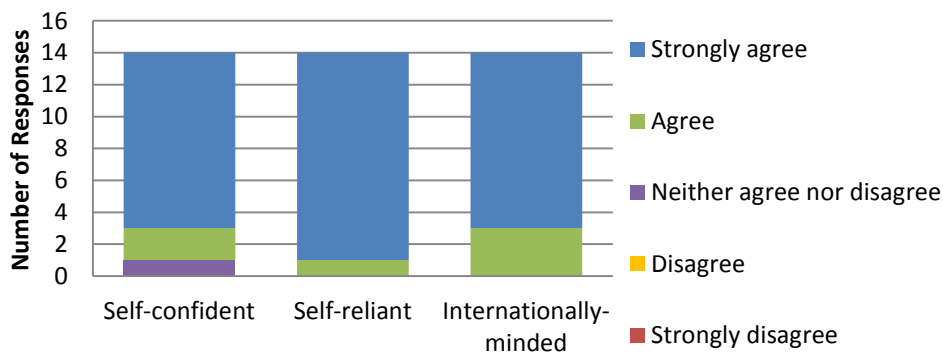
Outside the skills that are directly relevant to teaching critical languages, exchange teachers also reported growth in cultural and interpersonal areas. More than three-quarters of all teachers surveyed also said that during their program they had shared new resources and ideas with colleagues in their TCLP cohort, in their host school, and back home in China or Egypt. Of all respondents whose level of interest in global affairs changed during their program in the U.S., 100% of them increased (see chart at top right). Thirteen out of fourteen teachers surveyed reported being more self-confident, self-reliant, and internationally-minded by the end of their exchange (see chart at top-right), and 100% of respondents said that upon returning to their home countries, they were likely to implement more globally-focused activities in their classroom, school, and community.

Participant feedback surveys additionally provided evidence that TCLP is accomplishing its greater mission. Fully 100% of exchange teacher respondents said that their

## Exchange Teacher Interest in Global Affairs Before and After TCLP Experience



## As a result of TCLP, I am more...



## Exchange Teachers Share Their Future Plans

“IB is a great theory to improve a school's overall teaching and learning environment. I would love to introduce this idea to my home school. And if possible, I am hoping that I can set up a drama club and collaborate online with my host school’s drama teacher to direct some authentic plays.” – **Chinese Exchange Teacher**

“I plan to make my class more fun by using different kinds of teaching methods, activities, more technology, and different types of assessment. Over the next 5 years, I want to convince the administration to focus more on learning, not only giving exams, but giving more care to individuals and after school activities.”

– **Arabic Exchange Teacher**

“I will help my home school set up an international department during my first year back home... I will set up an English club, in which students will have opportunity to video and talk with American students. I will help my home school and host school start a sister-school relationship.” – **Chinese Exchange Teacher**

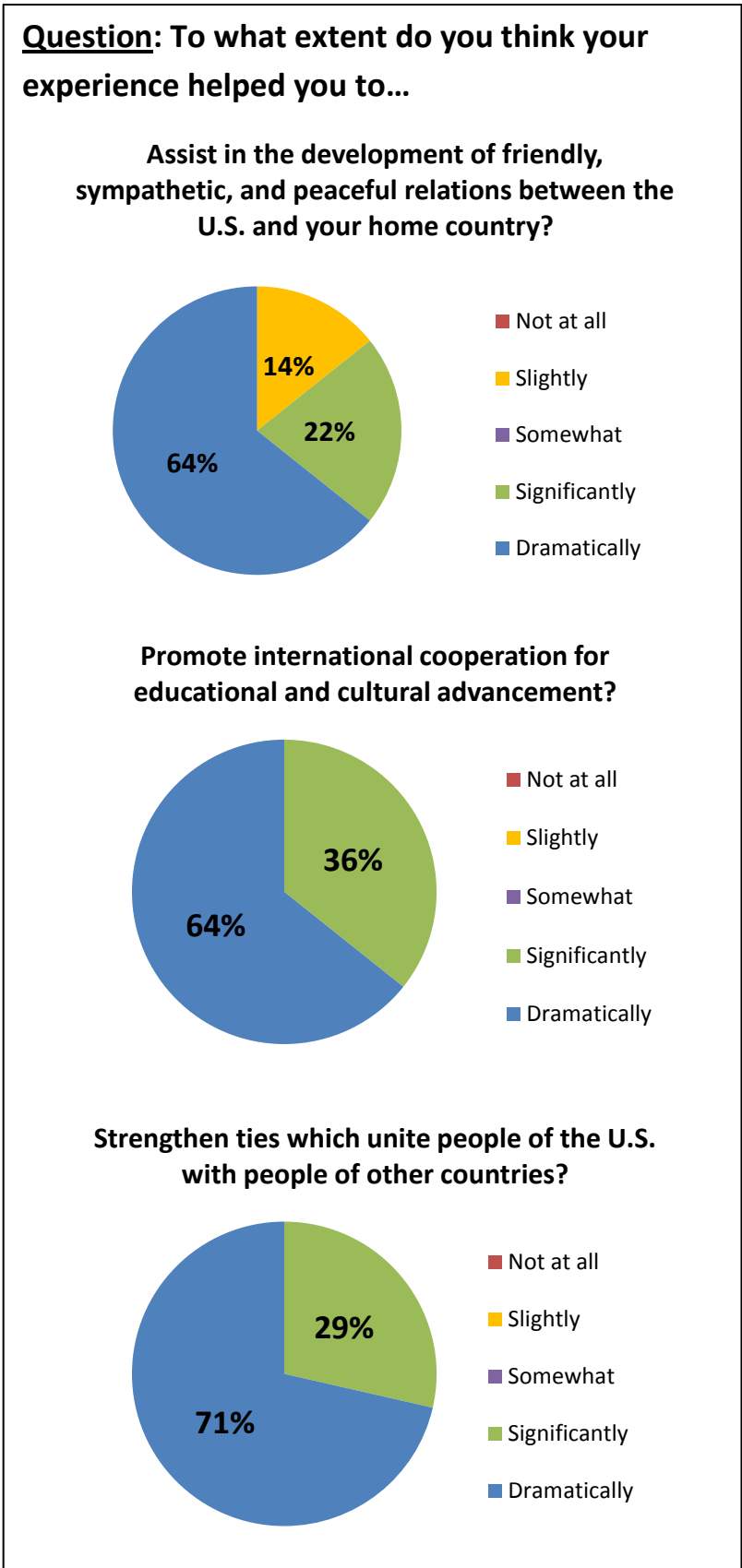
“I'll introduce a project-based learning system and counselor system to our school. Also, I will make a change to our school elective courses system and provide students more choices for future study. I'd like to build a sister-school relationship with my host school in the next 5 years. Also I want to create more programs in our school to raise the cultural awareness of students in our home school. – **Chinese Exchange Teacher**

experience helped them to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the U.S. and their home country (China or Egypt), promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement, and strengthen ties between the people of the United States with people of other countries. Almost every respondent felt that their exchange had made dramatic or significant contributions to these program goals (see charts below for full results).

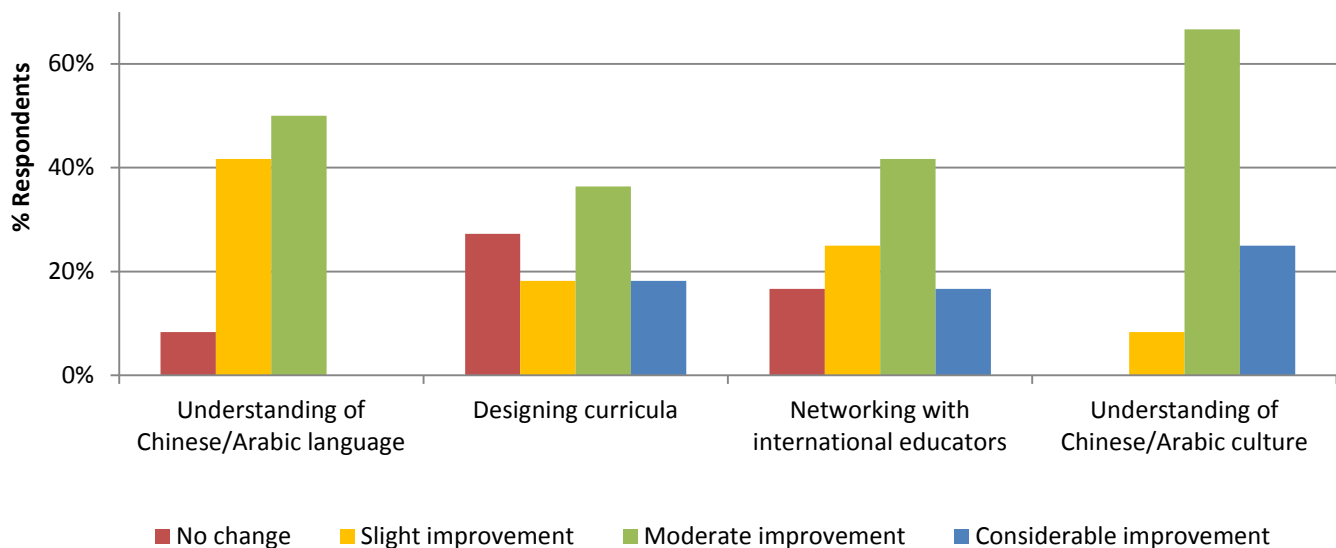
Mentor teachers also claimed to have grown through TCLP, with a majority saying that they had improved in 11 different skills asked about in their post-program survey. The greatest improvement was found in the areas of networking with fellow educators and understanding a different culture. However, mentor teacher respondents also developed professionally in areas beyond those typically related to international education. For example, a majority of mentor teachers said that as a result of their relationship with a TCLP exchange teacher, they had “considerable” or “moderate” improvement in curriculum development (see chart at top of following page).

More than any statistics can measure, many TCLP mentors formed close working relationships with their exchange teachers. Said one U.S. mentor: “My teacher and I worked well. There was reciprocal respect and expectations were set out clearly and followed throughout the year. Being a mentor is for me essentially sharing the vision and having buy-in from the teacher. The exchange teacher we had was a born teacher who truly believed in the mission of our school. A mentor is first and foremost a teacher who sees the gift and talent of the guest teacher even if in the beginning the teacher is reticent about the expectations we have for the students. Our teacher’s work with the students was great.”

Additional remarks about TCLP from exchange teachers and mentor teachers can be found on the following page.



## As a result of your relationship with the exchange teacher, how were your skills in the following areas affected?



### Feedback from TCLP Exchange Teachers and Mentor Teachers

“As a TCLP participant, I learned a lot this year through all kinds of professional development. The most important aspects I have explored were designing lesson plans, new teaching methods, and assessments like TPR and backward design... Last but not least, cultural communication and understanding is also a big part in my professional development. I will apply all the new technology, teacher's evaluation system and new teaching methods and planning methods to my home school and train our teachers to be more international and professional.” – **TCLP Exchange Teacher**

“The entire opportunity was certainly a learning experience where not only the exchange teacher grew, but I grew as a teacher/mentor and our school staff grew as a community.” – **TCLP Mentor Teacher**

“The best thing [about TCLP] is the idea of the TCLP family. I feel so passionate about TCLP as we are all one family not just people working on a program.” – **TCLP Exchange Teacher**

“The best part [about TCLP] is definitely being able to foster a relationship with someone from another culture. The worst part is seeing her leave! It feels like we are losing a member of our family!” – **TCLP Mentor Teacher**

“This is a fantastic program. Even if it's hard and challenging to teachers who first had to live and work in a new environment, we still love this experience that lets us grow and develop! Thank you TCLP, thanks for the support from program staff. This year is the most special and important one to me!” – **TCLP Exchange Teacher**

“[We] intend to continue to share materials and communicate via e-mail, WeChat and Skype. In the future, we hope to implement some distance-learning opportunities for both schools.” – **TCLP Mentor Teacher**

“Big thanks. This program gives me the chance to do what I want to do, teach what I want to teach, and learn what I want to learn, and cultivates me to write proposals and apply for grants. The most important thing is that it helps me open another amazing world. All those connections I made here will help me in the future. I have faith and am stronger in mind than before.” – **TCLP Exchange Teacher**