

Chinese, French, German, Korean, Russian, and Spanish Enrollments (1990-2007): Language, Year, Re-enrollments, and Academic Field

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Although Japanese and English are the primary languages of instruction at ICU, what will in this paper be labeled “Other Languages” have also been taught, and some for several decades: Chinese, French, German, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. This is the first paper to appear in the *LRB* since its inception in 1986 that has dealt with the Other Languages as a group. The focus here is on student enrollments in relation to four variables: (a) language (e.g., Korean vs. Russian), (b) year (e.g., 1990 vs. 2007), (c) academic division or field (e.g., Humanities vs. Education), and (d) re-enrollment (e.g., enrollments in Spanish 2 after Spanish 1). The purpose here was not to interpret or discuss the results, but to retrieve, organize, and present data in a form that others might conveniently refer to, interpret, and discuss when reflecting on the histories and possible futures of Other Languages at ICU.

Japanese and English are the two main media of instruction at ICU, although other languages are taught every term as subjects and in a few cases have been used as media of instruction. These other languages—Chinese, French, German, Korean, Russian, and Spanish—in this paper will be referred to as “Other Languages.” Based on official ICU enrollments from 1990 to 2007 period, the following four general questions about Other Languages are addressed:

1. To what degree did students enroll in some languages more than others?
2. To what degree did enrollments change over the years?
3. To what degree did enrollments change from one term (or level) to the next?
4. To what degree were enrollments in particular languages related to students divisions, majors, or fields of study?

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Later in this paper these questions will be referred to by their key words or concepts, which might be viewed as four important factors or variables related to language enrollments. These four variables will sometimes be referred to below in their short form as “language,” “year,” “re-enrollment,” and “division or academic field.”

We know of no previous studies of ICU Other Languages as a group. The *LRB* is one of the most likely places for such a study to appear, but past issues of the *LRB* (beginning with Volume 1 in 1986) do not include a single study that addresses Other Languages (under “foreign languages” or any other label) as a group. The majority of the articles in the *LRB* deal with some aspect of English, and a minority of articles deal with Japanese. Previous issues of the *LRB* have involved to some degree five of the six Other Languages, or at least aspects of their related countries, cultures, or literatures. This previous work, which should be acknowledged, includes the following: Chinese in Li (1999, 2000, 2002) and Shi (2002); French in Bésiat (1997, 1998, 2001), Miho (1992), Sagaz (2005, 2007), and Sagaz, Koulayan, and Detey (2004); German in Yanai (1995, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2006), Russian in Bannai (2000, 2007), and Spanish in Bedell (1994). To date, no *LRB* paper about Korean has been published.

The four numbered questions that appear at the beginning of this paper involve four variables: year, language, re-enrollment, and division (or academic field and major). The purpose of the paper is to investigate the relationship between each of these variables and student enrollments. These four variables will now be defined and explained more precisely.

Language is the first variable. “Other Languages” refer to, as a group, Chinese, French, German, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. “Language” refers to any one of the six. Excluded from this group are the two languages most widely used as medium of instruction at ICU, English and Japanese. Also excluded are languages that have been studied at ICU but not as living, spoken languages: such as earlier (“classical”) varieties of Greek, Latin, Chinese and Japanese. Among the six Other Languages, French was the only one to be offered as a major. French included two types of “French courses,” some of which were “language” courses (e.g., emphasizing learning how to speak or read French) and others were “content” courses. The content courses were taken as part of the “French major” and included course titles such as “French Linguistics” and “The History of the French language.” For this paper, the enrollment data for the first three terms of French language courses were included. Excluded were French language courses beyond the third term and all French content courses.

The second variable, academic year (or “year”), as used here refers to the Japanese school year, beginning in April and ending in March. The 1995 academic year at ICU, for example, began in April of 1995, ended in March of 1996, and included three academic terms: spring, autumn, and winter terms.

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This paper examines consecutive academic years from April 1990 through March 2007. A long period of time is involved because it is assumed that language enrollments may rise or fall over time, sometimes in response to contextual (e.g., social, political, local, or global) changes and perceptions of the implications that such changes have for language study and enrollments. Attempting to identify what contextual factors might have affected enrollments over time, however, was not a purpose of this study. The data presented here stop at the year 2007 because that is the most recent data that we could gather and have time to meet the deadline for Volume 23 of the *LRB*. The year 2007, however, was a special year in that it marked a turning point at ICU: 2007 was the year before which, in 2008, ICU underwent a major restructuring from 6 divisions to more than 14 departments, one of which is now called World Languages, and which includes the teaching of the six languages whose data is reported here. In some cases there is a close relationship between the majors offered by some of the divisions prior to 2008 and some of the departments after 2008. In such cases, what is reported here may have implications for those departments.

In this paper, “re-enrollment,” the third variable, refers to the number of enrollments in a language during the second or third term (or level). The basic measure of re-enrollment is the number of terms (or levels) that students enroll in a course: 1, 2, or 3. Re-enrollment is measured in academic semesters or terms. At ICU languages are taught during three academic terms: spring, autumn, and winter. Although spring is normally considered the first term of the academic year, the spring term is not always the first term that an Other Language was taught during the 1990-2007 period. For this reason terms here will be labeled: Term 1, Term 2, and Term 3, referring to the first, second, and third term any Other Language was taught. During the 1990-2007 period, in almost every case, Other Languages were taught for at least 3 terms and levels of instruction per year. Some Other Languages, however, involved additional levels (e.g., “Level 4” or “Level 5”). The current study, however, counted only the first three levels because, with two exceptions, these were the only levels that all six languages shared for much of this 1990-2007 time period. Two exceptions that we are aware of involved Korean and Russian. Russian offered only Russian 1 and Russian 2 from 1990 to 2001; before 2001, if Russian 1 was offered in spring, Russian 2 was offered in autumn, and then Russian 1 in winter and Russian 2 in the spring of the following year, and so on. After 2001, Russian 3 was introduced, and Russian 1, 2, and 3 was taught every year. Korean was not taught at ICU at all until 1996, at which point it was offered for three terms a year.

The fourth variable, “Division” (related to academic field or major), refers to the academic division that students were enrolled in. In 1990 ICU had

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5 administrative academic divisions: Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Languages, and Education (H, SS, NS, L and E); beginning in 1991 ICU began its sixth division: International Studies (IS). Each division was responsible for certain fields or “majorable areas” for students to concentrate in. Humanities, for example, offered majors in Art, Religion, and History, among others. One motive of this paper was to provide data that might reveal to what extent students of certain divisions (i.e., academic fields and majors) tended to enroll in languages in general and in certain languages in particular.

Above the four main variables for this study—language, year, re-enrollment, and division (academic field or major) have been explained. Below, what might be regarded as the dependent variable of this study, “enrollment units” (referred to below, for short, as enrollments) will be defined and explained.

The unit of comparison of Other Languages for this paper and that was used in the 20 figures that follow is what might be called an “enrollment unit” or (for short) “enrollment.” One “enrollment” refers to one student enrolled in one language for one academic term. If, for example, the same student takes Korean 1, Korean 2, and Korean 3 for three academic terms (e.g., spring, autumn, winter) that counts as three enrollments for Korean. If three different students take Korean 3 during the same term, that also counts as 3 enrollments for Korean. All enrollment units reported here as numbers are based on information provided electronically in Excel files to the authors by members of the ICU administration (who are acknowledged at the end of this paper).

Because the focus was on the undergraduate College of Liberal Arts (CLA), all CLA students were included (including those who entered ICU in September), and all graduate students were excluded from the results reported below.

It is important to note that not all enrollment units were based on the same number of classroom hours or academic credits. During 2007, for example, four languages (Chinese, French, German, Spanish) were taught for 6 periods a week for three academic terms. French, Chinese, and Spanish all had a similar pattern of 6-6-6 or 6 units across three academic terms. German is treated in this paper as also having a 6-6-6 pattern, although in German each “6” was comprised of two 3-unit courses per term, across three terms.

What about Korean and Russian in 2007? Korean and Russian had a different pattern of units, 4-4-4, across three academic terms: 4 in Term 1, 4 in Term 2, and 4 in Term 3.

Thus, enrollments in some languages were more demanding than in others. In 2007 four languages involved 420 minutes (6 periods x 70 minutes) per week and two languages involved only 280 minutes (4 x 70) per week. Across a 10 week term, this difference in time and effort would add up. Both

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types of language courses, with 4 classes a week and with 6 classes a week, were counted here as “one course” and one enrollment. This way of counting may have been an advantage for Russian and Korean because, in the figures that follow, their size, relative to that of Chinese, French, German, and Spanish is larger than it would have been if the unit of measure had been the credit or classroom hour rather than the “course.” (Our rationale for counting enrollment units the way we did was that doing it our way was possible. We would not have been able to complete this study had we tried to account for all changes of units of all language courses across all years—which for us would have been an impossible task.)

Before viewing and interpreting our findings below, the reader should remember five points about “counting enrollments” that we have explained above: (a) The International Studies division did not begin until 1991. (b) Korean did not begin until 1996. (c) Russian did not begin “Russian 3” until 2000; (d) two linked German “3-3-3 + 3-3-3” course sequences were counted the same as one 6-6-6 sequence for Chinese, French, and Spanish, and (e) enrollment a 4-4-4 course (Russian or Korean) was also counted the same as enrollments in a 6-6-6 course (Chinese, French, German, or Spanish), even though the 6-6-6 involved more academic credits and classroom hours per week.

The findings of this paper are summarized in 20 figures that appear in the Appendix. As we return to and address the four questions posed at the beginning of this paper, the reader will want to refer to those figures.

Question 1 was “To what degree did students enroll in some languages more than others?” Question 1 is globally addressed by Figure 1, which collapses three variables (year, re-enrollment, and division). In Figure 1 one sees that French, for example, had the highest percentage of the total, followed by Spanish, German, Chinese, Korean, and Russian. Figure 1 shows large differences in enrollments between some languages (e.g., French and Korean) but small differences between others (e.g., Korean and Russian).

Question 2 was “To what degree did enrollments change over the years?” Question 2 is addressed by Figures 2 and 3. In Figure 2, one sees that the number of students in the CLA steadily increased from slightly more than 2000 in 1990 to almost 3000 in 2007; one also sees, however, that the number of Other Language enrollments did not increase during this same time period but remained within the range of 500 to 1000. Thus, the number of enrollments in Other Languages, relative to total students’ enrollment at ICU, gradually decreased over time. In other words, in 2007 the average ICU student had fewer enrollments in Other Languages than the average student in 1990. Figure 3 shows, for each language and each year, the percentage or proportion of enrollments held by that language. Here one can see, for example, that Russian and Korean had their largest percentiles of total Other Language enrollments in

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1991 and 2004, respectively. One can also see in Figure 3 that when Korean was introduced in 1996, the enrollments of one or more Other Languages were affected. Finally, it is possible to infer from Figure 3, that the size (or proportion) of some enrollments gradually increase and decrease over time, whereas others may fluctuate back and forth without really changing.

Question 3 was “To what degree did enrollments change from one term (or level) to the next?” Question 3 is addressed by Figures 4 to 10. Figure 4 shows (when all other variables are collapsed) that there is a relatively small decrease between Term 1 and Term 2, and a relatively large decrease between Term 2 and Term 3. One might infer from Figure 4 (e.g., in French, Spanish, and German) that the larger the enrollment was in Term 1, the more the enrollment dropped in Term 2. It is possible to interpret the relationship between Term 2 and Term 3 in a similar manner. Figure 5 shows, for example, that although Russian had the lowest average enrollment for Term 1, it did not have the lowest enrollment for Term 3. (It was pointed out above that Term 3 and Russian 3 first began in the year 2000; thus Term 3 is based on the 2000-2007 period.) Figures 6 through 11 show the enrollments for each term for each language separately.

Question 4 was “To what degree were enrollments in particular languages related to students divisions, majors, or fields of study?” Question 4 is addressed by Figures 12 through 20. Figure 12 shows the percentage and number of enrollments from each division in descending order, beginning with the Language Division and ending with the Natural Science Division. In interpreting this figure and some others, the reader should keep in mind that the sizes of the Divisions varied greatly, and one might expect that smaller divisions, if all other things are equal, would have smaller enrollments.

On the basis of Figure 14 one might infer there to be some relationships between division (i.e., academic field and major) and language. One can see, for example, that the Humanities Division, compared to most other divisions, had relatively high enrollments in German and relatively low enrollments in Spanish.

Figures 14 through 20 show the year by year results for each division individually. In Figure 20, one sees that Natural Sciences had extremely small enrollments, never more than 18 enrollments a year in any one language. In order to make the results for Natural Sciences more visible to the reader, in Figure 20 the y-axis was reduced to 20 from 120, which was used in Figures 15 through 19, for all other divisions..

Some problems and limitations in tabulating the data in these 20 figures have been acknowledged above. There are additional variables, not included in this study, that could have affected enrollments. In brief, these include the following: (a) student gender, (b) teacher pedagogy or methodology, (c) skill (e.g., speaking vs. reading); (d) class grade point average (e.g., “easy” vs.

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“hard”); and (e) the number of students who were placed in a language at level 2 or 3, without ever taking level 1.

There is much more that one could say about enrollment variations related to language, year, re-enrollment, and division. Our purpose here, however, has been to put the data into a form that others might interpret.

Note

At a Language Division meeting in the autumn of 2007 the second author of this paper (T. Riney) suggested that there was a need, during a time of reform and in planning for the future, for enrollment data to be gathered about Other Languages at ICU. He invited anyone in the Language Division who was interested in this topic to join in the effort to gather these data and participate in the writing of this paper. Because the first author (J.-P. Bésiat) was the only one who expressed an interest, these two authors were jointly and solely responsible for all decisions made in this paper. Some decisions were not easy; enrollment conditions for Other Languages changed over time in a number of ways, some known, and others not. Despite its limitations, this paper may provide a useful point of reference when thinking about class enrollments in Other Languages at ICU in the future.

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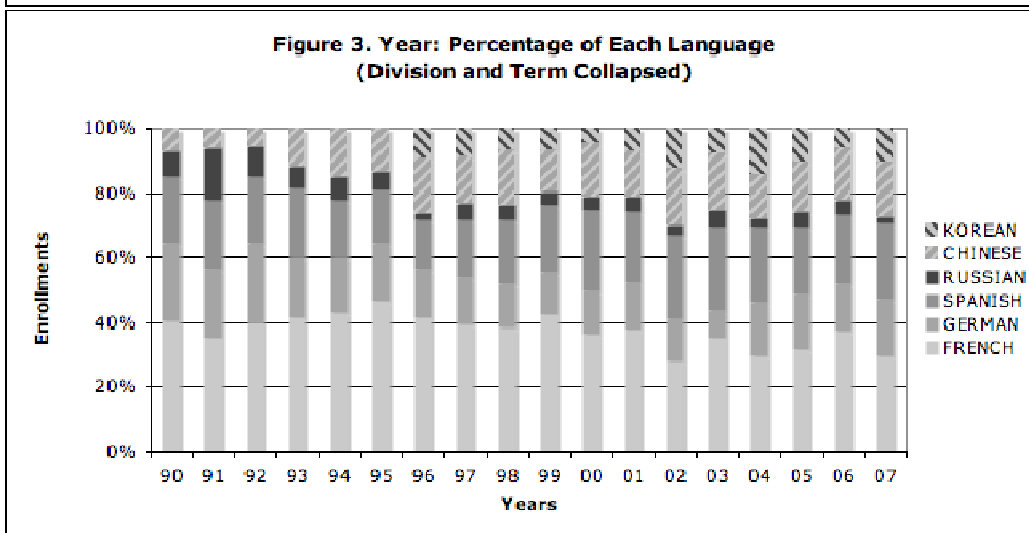
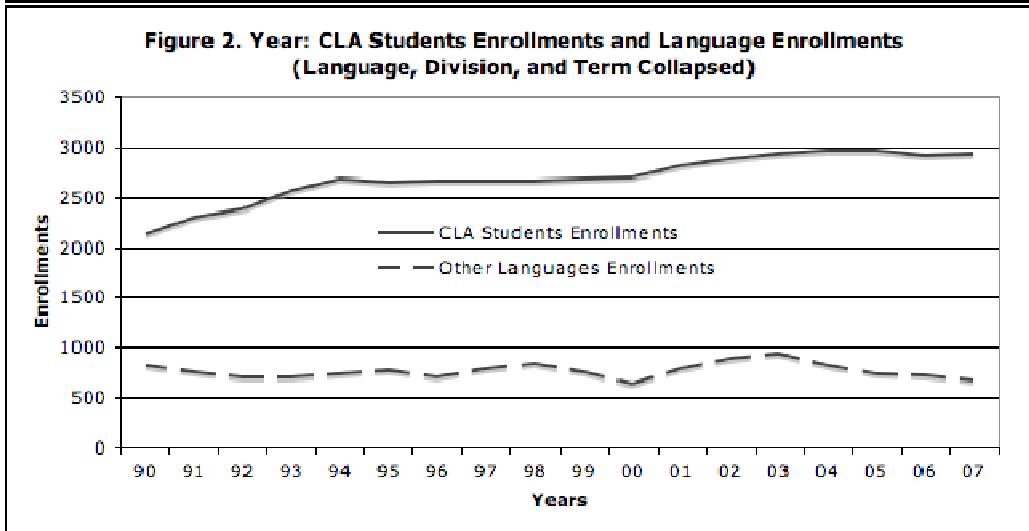
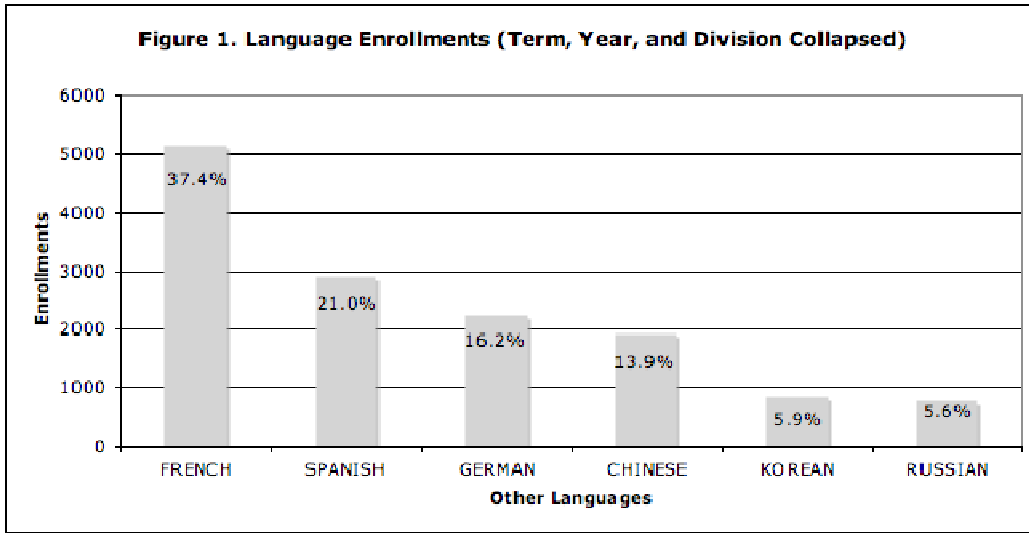
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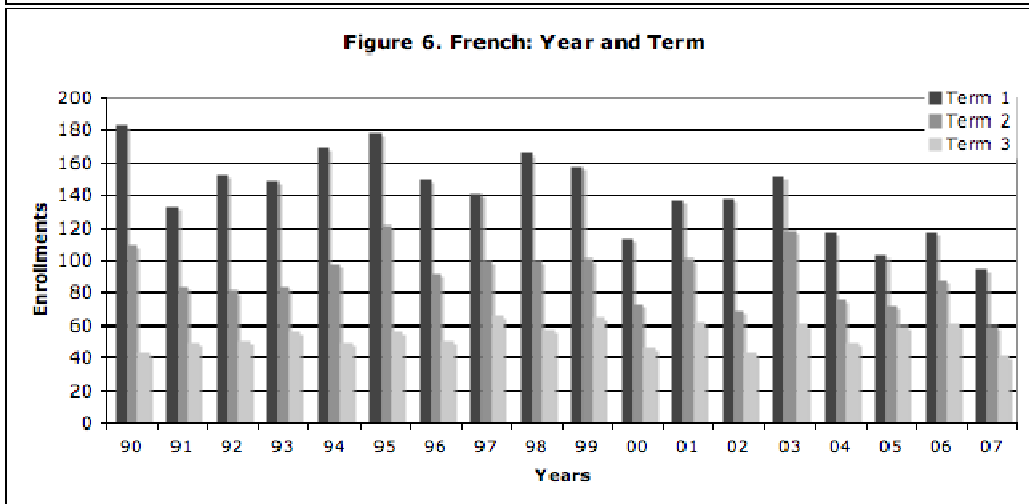
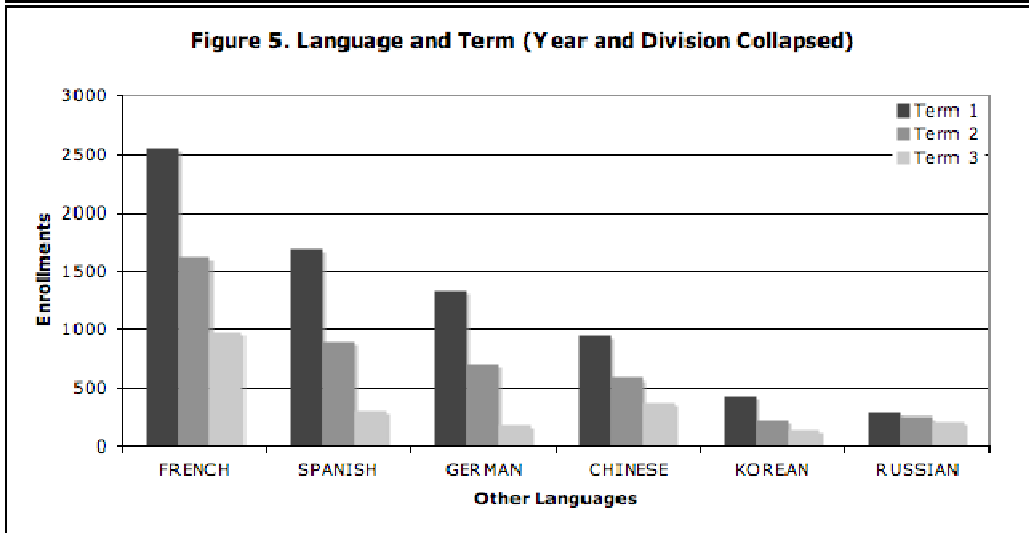
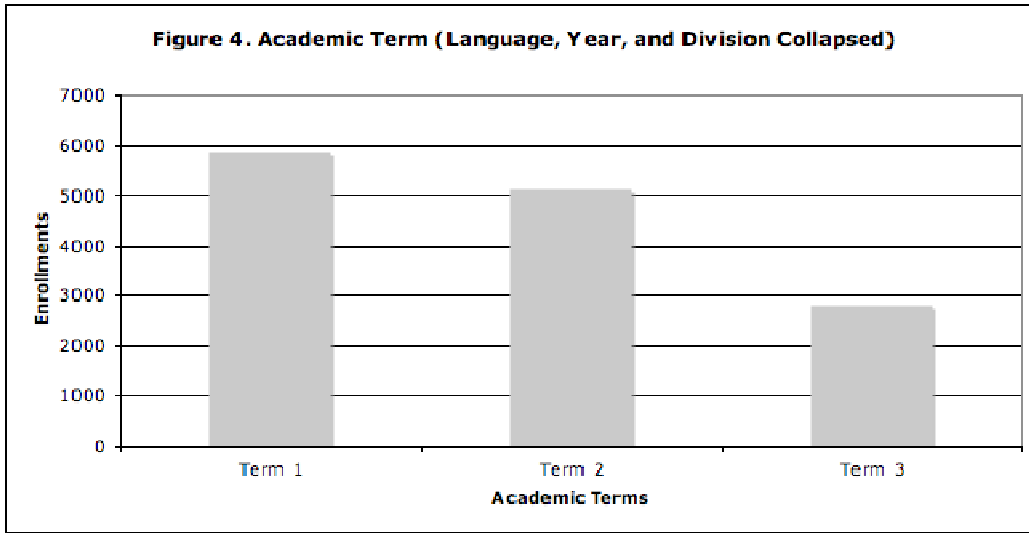
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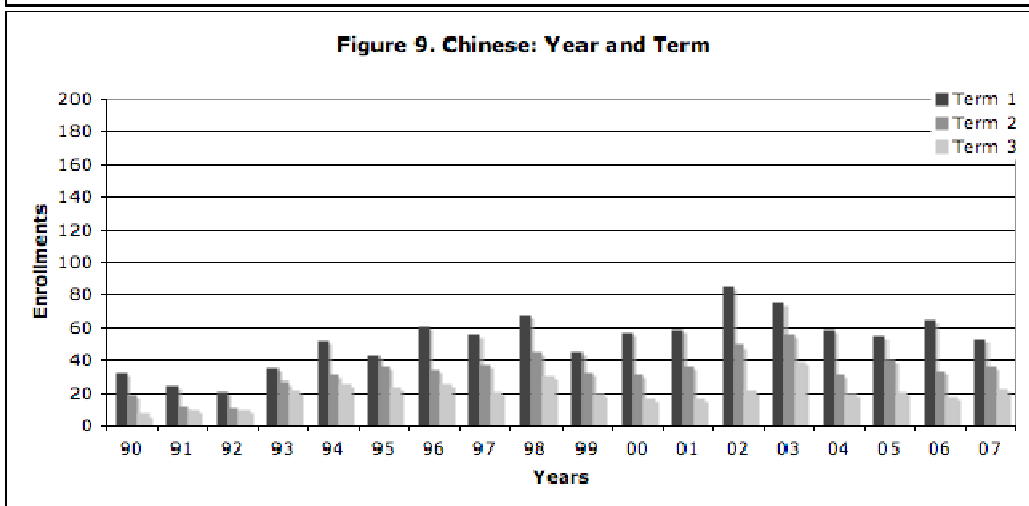
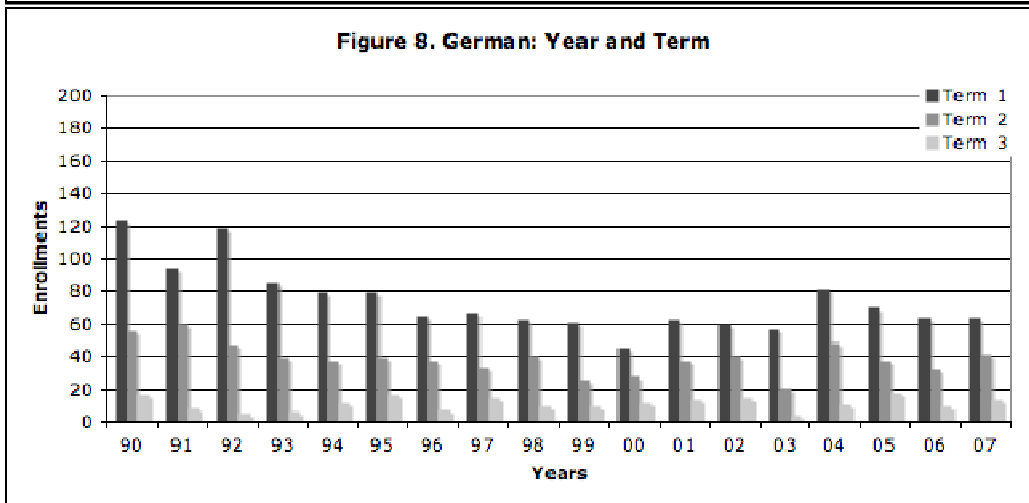
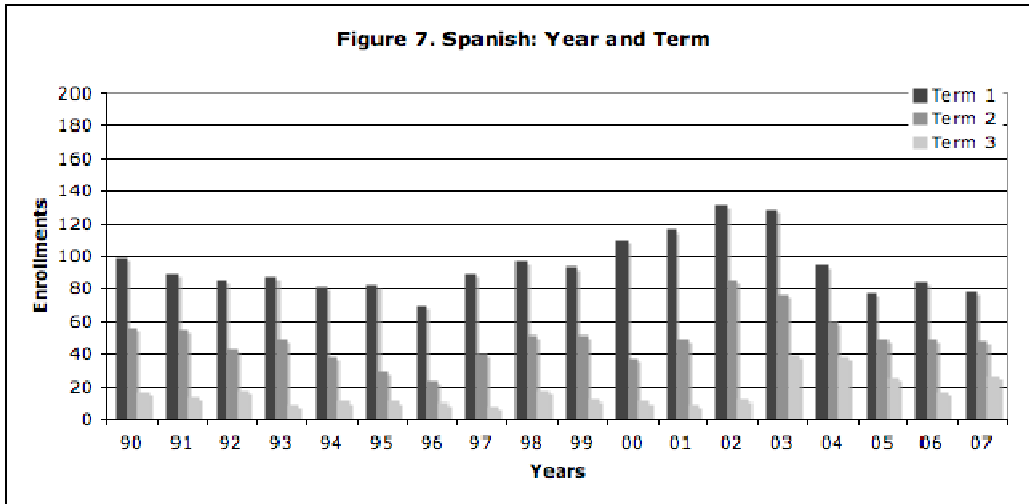
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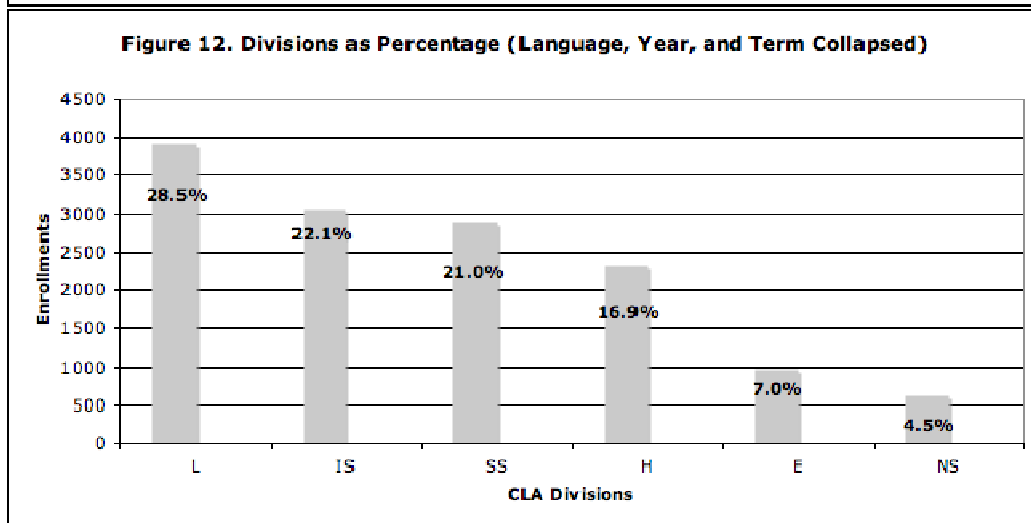
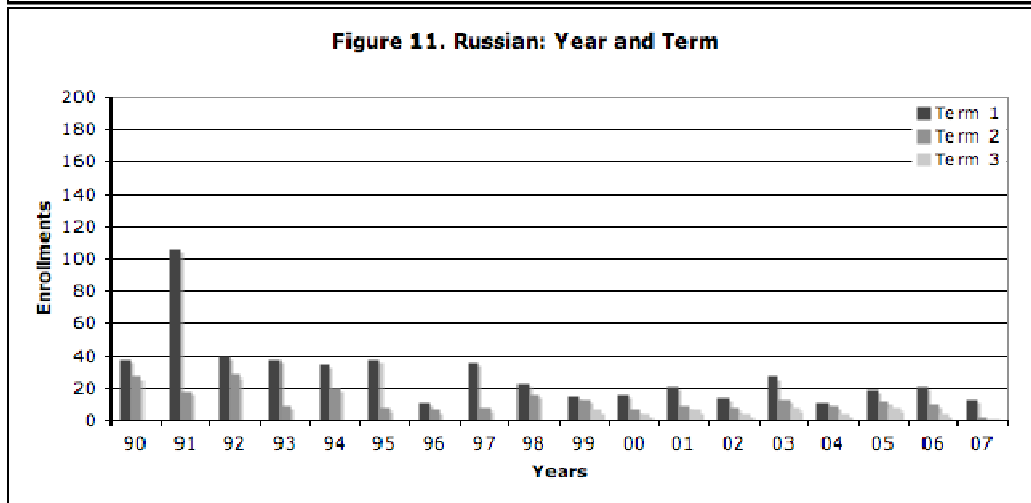
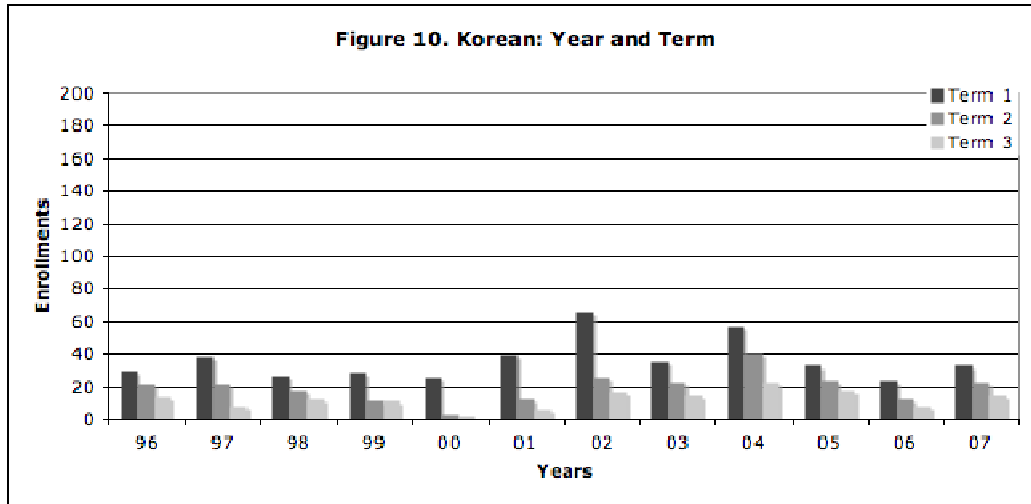
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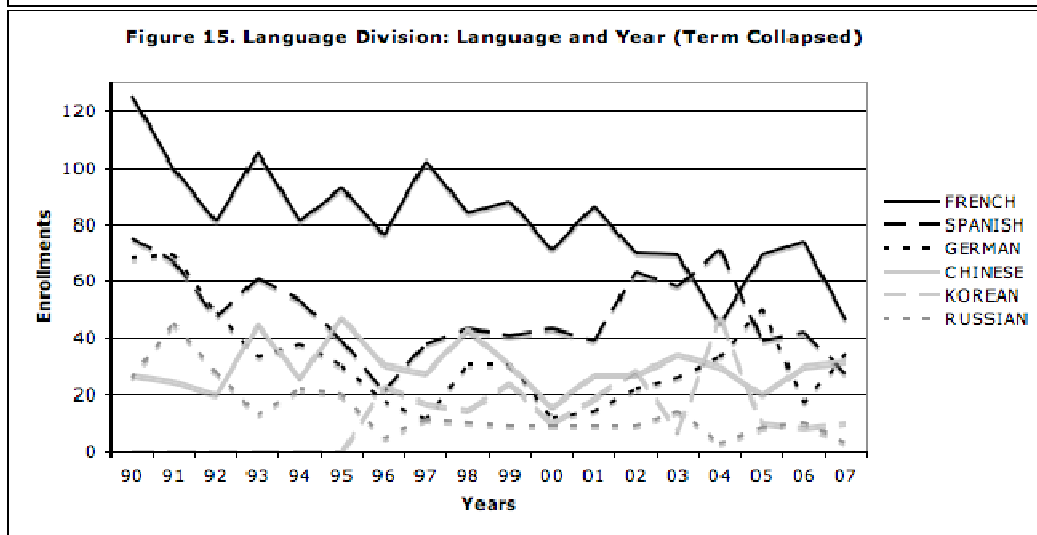
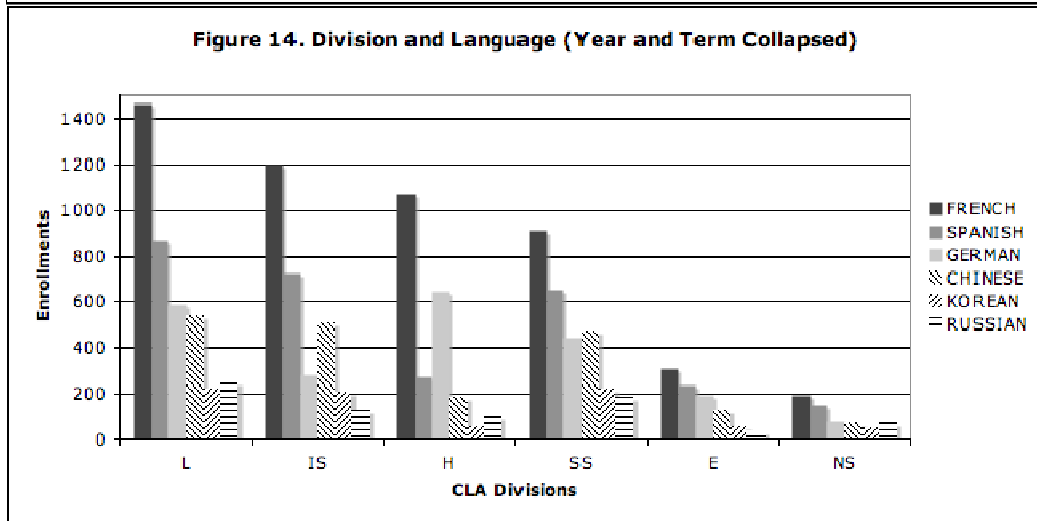
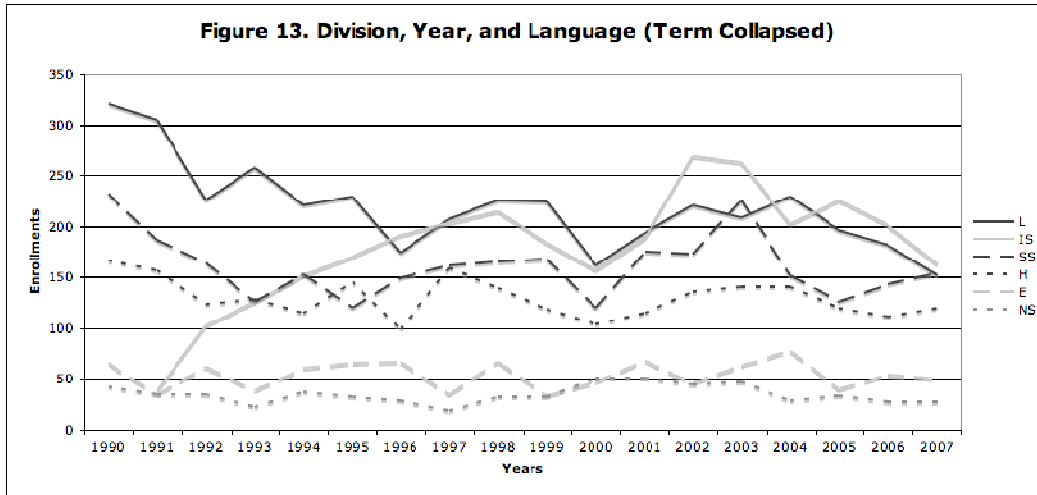
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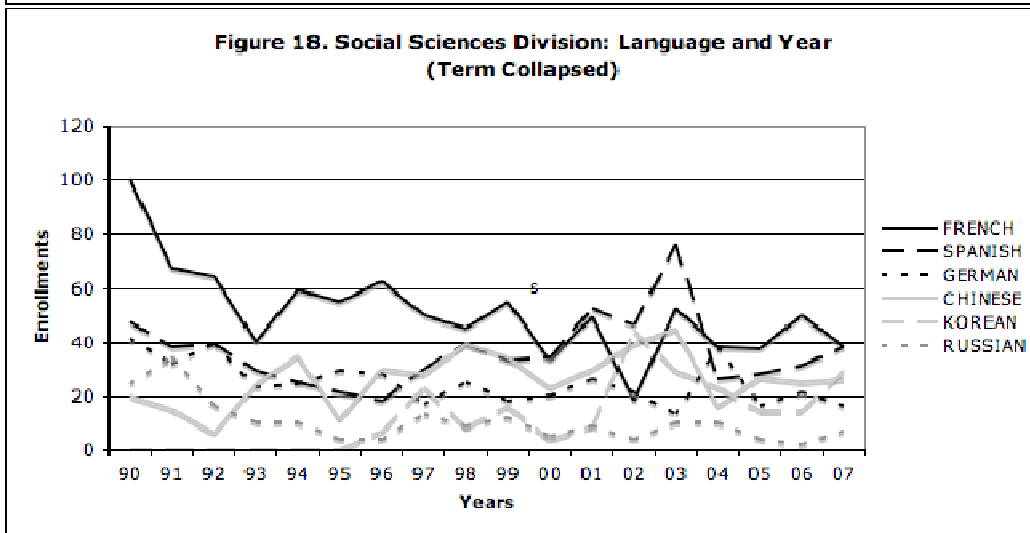
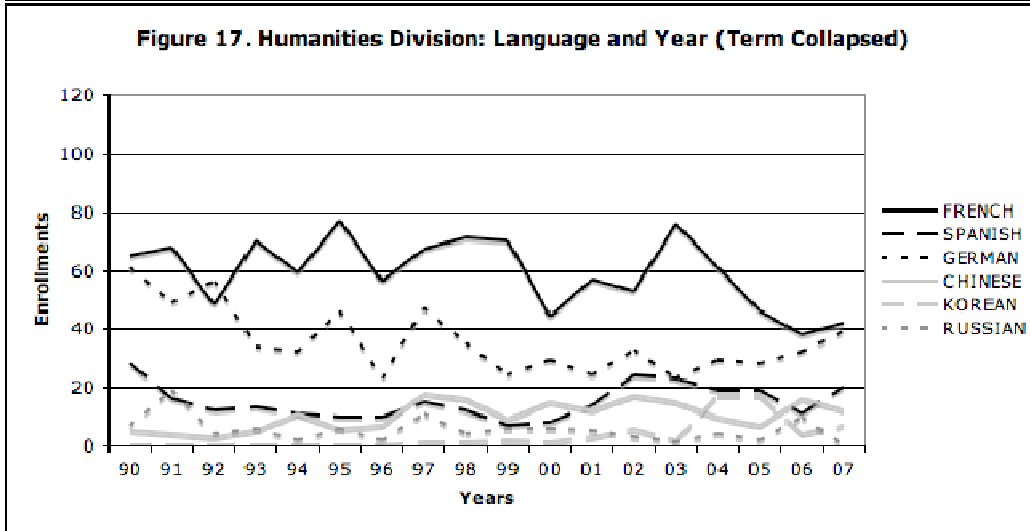
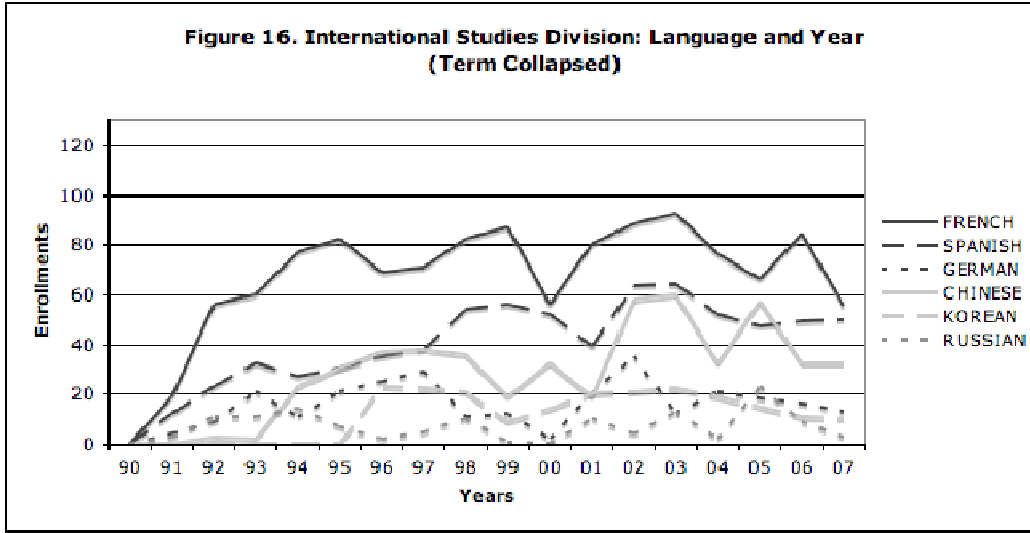
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