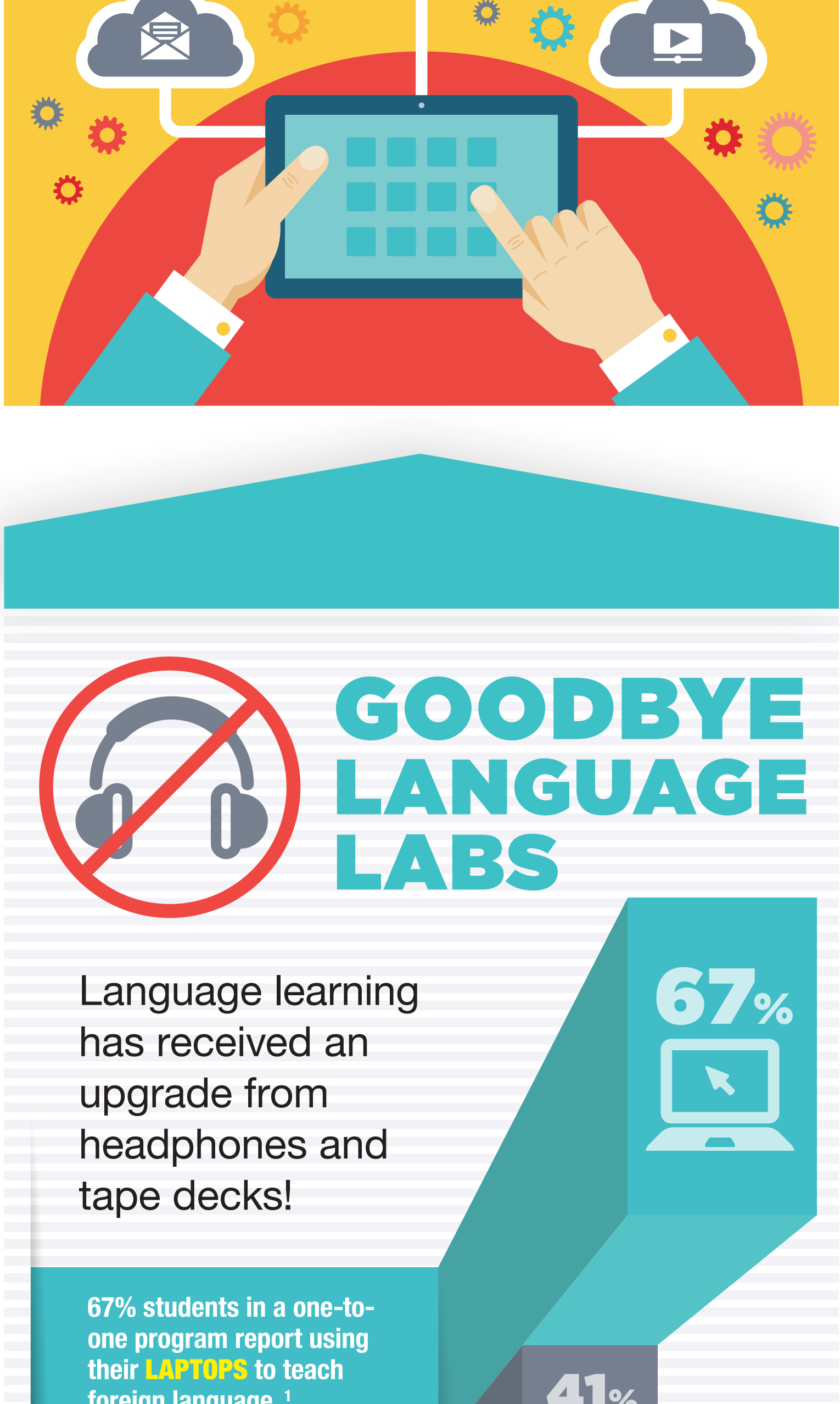


# LANGUAGE LEARNING GOES DIGITAL

How schools are using a suite of 21st century tools to improve second language instruction.



## GOODBYE LANGUAGE LABS

Language learning has received an upgrade from headphones and tape decks!

67% students in a one-to-one program report using their **LAPTOPS** to teach foreign language.<sup>1</sup>

41% of high schoolers use **TABLETS** in foreign language schoolwork.<sup>2</sup>

60% of college-aged foreign language students use **SMARTPHONES** to help them in their studies.<sup>3</sup>

51% of foreign language teachers use **CURRICULUM-BASED SOFTWARE** "sometimes or often."<sup>4</sup>

At least 3 Ivy League universities now use **VIDEOCONFERENCING** to teach less common languages.

67%

41%

60%

51%

3

## BENEFITS OF PLUGGING IN

### VOCABULARY:

Kids learn more words when they hear them from many different sources.<sup>5</sup>

### GRAMMAR:

Seeing correct usage in context can help concepts click.<sup>6</sup>

### ACCESS:

Technology makes it easier to connect with native speakers and authentic learning experiences.<sup>7</sup>

### CREATIVITY:

Technology helps students become content producers.<sup>7</sup>

### MOTIVATION:

Kids get excited by technology and want to use it!<sup>7</sup>

### OWNERSHIP:

Software and apps can help students feel in charge of their learning as they work at their own pace.<sup>7</sup>

### CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE:

Technology can expose students to different aspects of culture.<sup>6</sup>

### PRONUNCIATION:

Some programs, such as Middlebury Interactive, enable students to record words and phrases so they can listen to their pronunciations and receive verbal feedback.

## WHAT EDUCATORS HAVE TO SAY

**“** We've grown from 40 to 400 kids in the program—the [Middlebury Interactive] courses introduce more languages with new, engaging, fun and interactive ways to learn.”  
—Allyson Hudnall, Provo School District

**“** It has been really nice to challenge students with Middlebury Interactive's advanced high school language curricula, which is at a quicker pace. It is one of the ways we are able to ensure they learn something new every day.”  
—LuAnne Kelsey, West Aurora School District

**“** The Middlebury Interactive program has been a wonderful way to challenge kids, give them a choice, and provide them with the skills for the future—something we're not always able to offer in a traditional learning environment.”  
—Julia Esparza, West Aurora School District

## 3 MYTHS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

### MYTH

The goal of interactive language software is to replace teachers with technology.

### MYTH

Students can't learn the rhythms of a language or the feel of a culture from a computer.

### MYTH

Language learning software is all about skill-and-drill vocabulary exercises.

### REALITY

Much of the growth in digital language learning is coming in a blended learning environment, where online curriculum supplements classroom learning.

### REALITY

While it's true that face-to-face conversation is hard to beat, technology can often be the fastest way to bring a Beijing dragon festival or Barcelona dance performance to life.

### REALITY

A good software program shouldn't just be a (very expensive) replacement for flashcards! Look for technology that incorporates authentic texts, conversations and learning experiences.

## 8 WAYS TO MEET YOUR LANGUAGE LEARNING GOALS

### IF YOU WANT TO... develop conversation skills

**TRY...** finding penpals on sites such as ePals or InterPals. Studies show that students pick up language faster when used in an authentic way, such as emailing.

### IF YOU WANT TO... build writing vocabulary

**TRY...** having students create Wordle (wordle.net) that show the vocabulary used in an assignment, then challenging them to expand their word clouds in the second draft.

### IF YOU WANT TO... expose students to a language like Farsi or Thai

**TRY...** recruiting international students or tutors to work with your students via videoconference in exchange for some English practice, too!

### IF YOU WANT TO... challenge advanced learners and support struggling ones

**TRY...** a program like Middlebury Interactive that enables students to work at their individual pace and provides progress and monitoring at all levels.

### IF YOU WANT TO... foster problem solving in the new language

**TRY...** asking students to design an app that would be helpful in visiting a new country.

### IF YOU WANT TO... practice authentic writing

**TRY...** inviting students to respond to tweets that are written in the language you are studying.

### IF YOU WANT TO... strengthen pronunciation

**TRY...** record short how-to videos and post them to a class blog for a group critique.

### IF YOU WANT TO... understand another culture

**TRY...** incorporating authentic materials like videos and local fables and stories into lessons.

*The technology you use impresses no one. The experience you create with it is everything.*  
—Sean Gerety

### SOURCES

<sup>2</sup> Pearson Mobile Device Survey, 2013

<sup>3</sup> University of Colorado, Boulder, 2012

<sup>1</sup> University of Southern Maine, 2011

<sup>4</sup> NCES, 2010

<sup>5</sup> Baltova, 1999

<sup>6</sup> Nutta, 1998

<sup>7</sup> Ketsman, 2012

