JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA
AMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94107-3688

Report

TO: Members of the Judicial Council

FROM: Court Interpreters Advisory Panel
Hon. Kathleen E. O'Leary, Chair
Mark Garcia, Supervisor, Court Interpreters Program
Cannon Han, Court Services Analyst,
415-865-8954, cannon.han@jud.ca.gov

DATE: March 10, 2006

SUBJECT: Court Interpreters: *2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study*, Government Code section 68563 (Action Required)

Issue Statement
Under Government Code section 68563 (Attachment A), every five years the Judicial Council of California is required to submit to the Governor and Legislature a study of spoken language need and interpreter use in the trial courts. In accordance with Government Code section 68562, the Judicial Council is responsible for designating languages to include in the Court Interpreter Certification Program (certification program) based on: (1) the findings of the language needs study; (2) the language needs of non-English-speaking persons in the courts; and (3) other information the council deems relevant. Rule 6.51(b) of the California Rules of Court charges the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) with reviewing and making recommendations to the Judicial Council on the findings of the language need and interpreter use study.

Recommendation
The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel recommends that the Judicial Council:

1. Approve the 2005 *Language Need and Interpreter Use Study* (Attachment B) for submission to the Governor and Legislature; and

2. Adopt CIAP's recommendation that no additional language be designated for inclusion in the certification program.

Rationale for Recommendation

The 2005 language study

As required by Government Code section 68563, the Judicial Council conducts a language study every five years to determine the need to designate languages for inclusion in the certification program. Languages in the certification program are categorized as designated or nondesignated. Designated languages are those for which certifying examinations have been developed. Interpreters of designated languages are referred to as certified court interpreters. All other languages, for which state certifying examinations have not been developed, are classified as nondesignated. Interpreters of nondesignated languages are referred to as registered interpreters.

Walter R. McDonald & Associates was commissioned to perform the *2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study* (study). The study was based in large part on data extracted from the Court Interpreter Data Collection System[1] (CIDCS), supplemental interpreter use data provided by courts, immigration trends, enrollment of students in limited English proficiency classes by language, and other factors affecting interpreter need. It provides an assessment of statewide interpreter use, as well as the distribution characteristics of interpreter use by language and county. This approach is consistent with the study methodology utilized in the *2000 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study*. The study fulfills the requirements as set forth in Government Code section 68563.

No need to designate any additional languages

The same three criteria used in the 2000 study were again used to evaluate the need to designate additional languages for certification:

- The court interpreter service days must be substantial;[2]
- Court interpreter use should be stable or increasing; and
- The immigration stream of the language is constant or increasing.

Although Hmong/Mien did not satisfy all three criteria, it was the only nondesignated language that appeared to nearly satisfy at least two of the three criteria.[3] The decision not to recommend designation of Hmong/Mien was based on three factors: (1) Hmong/Mien had a combined 1,824 court interpreter service days, but Hmong and Mien are two distinct languages, and the combined data collected for the study does not reflect the actual lower number of court interpreter service days for each language;[4] (2) immigration streams from countries where Hmong and Mien are spoken are declining, which is an indication that fewer Hmong and Mien speakers are immigrating to

[1] CIDCS is a database of statewide and county court interpreter use that contains data on interpreter use by language, court, and days interpreted. Forty-eight of the 58 counties had reasonably complete information in CIDCS. Both Los Angeles and Orange Counties submitted interpreter use data from their own databases.

[2] The standard adopted by the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel for substantial need is a minimum of 1,400 service days.

[3] Judicial Council of California, *2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study* (February 2006), pp. 4, 55.

[4] Some counties combined court interpreter service days for Hmong and Mien into a single Hmong/Mien category.

California; and (3) decreased enrollment in limited English proficiency courses by Hmong and Mien speakers evidences a decline in the immigration stream of Hmong and Mien speakers.

Based on the analysis of the three criteria in relation to the data collected for the study, none of the nondesignated languages met all of the minimum threshold requirements necessary for inclusion in the certification program.

Alternative Actions Considered
As discussed above, Hmong/Mien was considered for recommendation for designation but did not meet all the criteria.

Comments From Interested Parties
Not applicable.

Implementation Requirements and Costs
Not applicable.

Attachments

Attachment A

Government Code section 68563

The Judicial Council shall conduct a study of language and interpreter use and need in court proceedings, with commentary, and shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and to the Legislature not later than July 1, 1995, and every five years thereafter. The study shall serve as a basis for (1) determining the need to establish interpreter programs and certification examinations, and (2) establishing these programs and examinations through the normal budgetary process. The study shall also serve as a basis for (1) determining ways in which the Judicial Council can make available to the public, through public service announcements and otherwise, information relating to opportunities, requirements, testing, application procedures, and employment opportunities for interpreters, and (2) establishing and evaluating these programs through the normal budgetary process.

Attachment B

2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
FEBRUARY 2006

JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA

2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

FEBRUARY 2006

Prepared by:

Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc.
2720 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 250
Sacramento, CA 95833-4305

Distributed by:

Court Interpreters Program
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

Copyright © 2005 by Judicial Council of California/Administrative Office of the Courts

Except as permitted under the Copyright Act of 1976 and as otherwise expressly provided herein, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including the use of information storage and retrieval systems, without permission in writing from the copyright holder. Permission is hereby granted to nonprofit institutions to reproduce and distribute this publication for educational purposes if the copies credit the copyright holder. Please address inquiries to the address below.

Printed on recycled and recyclable paper

This publication is also available on the California Courts Web site, *www.courtinfo.ca.gov*, under Court Interpreters Program**:** *www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/courtinterpreters/*.
For more information, contact:

Mark Garcia
Supervisor, Court Interpreters Program
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688
415-865-4367

2005 LANGUAGE NEED AND INTERPRETER USE STUDY

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments vii

1. Executive Summary 1
Usage of Interpreter Services 1
Possible Declines in Interpreter Use for Some Designated Languages 2
Indigenous Languages and Dialects 2
Immigrants and Temporary Foreign Residents in California 2
Length of Time Immigrants Take to Learn English 3
Number of Counties Providing Court Interpreter Services for Most Frequently Used Languages 3
Use of "Certified" and "Registered" Interpreters 4
Recommendations 4

2. Introduction and Study Overview 5
The Legal Background for Court Interpreter Services in California 5
The 2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study 6

3. Sources of Data 7

4. Statewide and Regional Use of Court Interpreters for Specific Languages 8
Interpreter Day Usage by Language 8
Interpreter Services by Region, County, and Language 13
Regional Differences in Interpreter Day Usage 14
Designated Languages 15
Nondesignated Languages 16
Number of Counties That Provide Interpreter Services by Language 17
Distribution of Interpreter Services by County 19

5. Use of Certified and Registered Interpreters 41

6. Use of Interpreters for Indigenous Languages and Dialects 43

7. Immigration and Temporary Foreign Residents in California 44
California Immigration Trends 45
Length of Time Immigrants Take to Learn English 46
Native Language Trends Among Limited English Proficient Students 51

8. Possible Declines in Interpreter Use for Some Languages 54

9. Recommended Additional Languages to be Included in State Certification Program 55

Exhibits

4.1 California Court Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages, Fiscal Years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005 9

4.2 Spanish and Total Designated Languages Court Interpreter Service Days for California, Fiscal Years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005 10

4.3 Designated Languages (Excluding Spanish) Court Interpreter Service for California, Fiscal Years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005 11

4.4 Number of California Court Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages, Fiscal Years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005 12

4.5 California Court Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages, Fiscal Years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005 12

4.6 Number of Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 15

4.7 Percent of Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 15

4.8 Number of Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 16

4.9 Percent of Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 16

4.10 Number of Counties Providing Interpreter Services by Designated Languages for California, Fiscal Years 1998–1999 and 2004–2005 17

4.11 Number of Counties Reporting Interpreter Services for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages for California, Fiscal Years 1998–1999 and 2004–2005 18

4.12.0 Number of Languages Requiring Court Interpreter Services by County, 2004–2005 19

4.12.1 Arabic Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 20

4.12.2 Armenian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 21

4.12.3 Cantonese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 22

4.12.4 Japanese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 23

4.12.5 Korean Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 24

4.12.6 Mandarin Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 25

4.12.7 Portuguese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 26

4.12.8 Russian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 27

4.12.9 Spanish Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 28

4.12.10 Tagalog Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 29

4.12.11 Vietnamese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 30
4.12.12 Farsi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 31
4.12.13 Hindi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 32
4.12.14 Hmong Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 33
4.12.15 Ilocano Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 34
4.12.16 Khmer Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 35
4.12.17 Lao Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 36
4.12.18 Punjabi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 37
4.12.19 Romanian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 38
4.12.20 Samoan Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 39
4.12.21 Tongan Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005 40
5.1 Percent of Service Days Provided by Interpreters Who Are Neither Certified Nor Registered for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 41
5.2 Percent of Service Days Provided by Interpreters Who Are Not Registered for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 42
6.1 Number of Interpreter Service Days for Indigenous Languages, Fiscal Year 2004–2005 43
7.1 Population Age 5 and Older by Ability to Speak English “Very Well” by Other Language Spoken, 2000 46
7.2 Percentage of Immigrants Who Speak English “Very Well” by Age at Entry and Years Lived in the United States, California, 2000 47
7.3 Percent of Immigrants Who Speak English “Very Well” by Age at Entry and Years Lived in the United States, California, 1990 47
7.4 California Residents Age 15 or Older Who Did Not Speak English “Very Well” by Native Language, 2000 48
7.5 Trends in Spanish Speaking and Total Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996–2005 51
7.6 Trends in Armenian, Korean, Mandarin, and Russian Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996–2005 52
7.7 Trends in Cantonese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Japanese Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996–2005 53
7.8 Trends in Nondesignated Languages: Hmong, Lao, Punjabi, Farsi (Persian), and Hindi Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996–2005 53

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Walter R. McDonald & Associates (WRMA) project team members who authored this report are John Hedderson, Ph.D., Judy Rothschild, Ph.D., and Lisa Branton, M.S. Many individuals assisted us on this project in designing the research, obtaining data, conducting analyses, and interpreting findings. We especially thank the researchers and program administrators of the Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), who shared their expertise concerning the availability and understanding of court interpreter usage data. Special thanks go to the AOC project managers for this study, Berta Bejarano and Elizabeth Tam. Others who made valuable contributions include Pat Sweeten, Dianne Bolotte, Sherry Goodman, Lisa Werblun, Mark Garcia, Janette Zupnik, Dag MacLeod, and Ron Pi.

We also are particularly grateful to the superior court staff and consultants in Los Angeles and Orange Counties who produced special data extracts. In Los Angeles County these were Shirley Chan and Angie Murphy, and in Orange County, Jeff Todd, Thu Nguyen, and Carol Duensing.

We were greatly assisted by the Walter R. McDonald & Associates support staff, especially Maricela Leyva-Perez, who was in charge of report production, and Jamie Vang, who provided administrative help.

While we appreciate the significant contributions that the above individuals made in carrying out the research and writing of this report, they are not responsible for any remaining errors or omissions.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus of the 2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study is to provide the Judicial Council of California (JCC), Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) with background, data, and analysis to make both short-term and long-term decisions regarding additional languages to include in the certification program for court interpreters. Every five years, the JCC is required by law to conduct a study of spoken language interpreter need and use in the state's courts.[1] Studies were completed in 1995 and 2000,[2] and the current report updates and builds on that research.

In California, there are 12 "designated" languages for which an interpreter can be certified: Arabic, Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.[3] Punjabi and Khmer (Cambodian) are newly designated languages, but the certification exams for these languages have not yet been developed. The certification process entails passing a State Certification Exam (which has both written and oral components), attending a JCC code of ethics workshop, and providing the JCC with proof of continuing education and professional experience.

Usage of Interpreter Services

Of the 58 counties in California, 48 had reasonably complete information in the AOC Court Interpreter Data Collection System (CIDCS) on court interpreter services by language and days of interpreter service use. Two additional counties (Los Angeles and Orange) submitted extracts from their own information systems. The remaining eight missing counties had small populations,[4] and, based on expenditure data, the 50 counties reporting provided 99 percent of court interpreter services.

The top 14 languages by days of interpreter service were Spanish (160,396), Vietnamese (8,477), Korean (3,743), Armenian (3,093), Mandarin (2,439), Khmer (Cambodian) (2,365), Cantonese (2,320), Hmong and Mien (1,824),[5] Russian (1,789), Tagalog (1,215), Farsi (1,072), Punjabi (1,032), Lao (1,011), and Japanese (601).

---

[1] Cal. Gov. Code, § 68563.

[2] *California Interpreter Services in the California Trial Courts: A Report to the Governor and the Legislature, Judicial Council of California*, Administrative Office of the Courts, July 1995; *2000 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study*, Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Sept. 2000.

[3] Data on Western Armenian and Eastern Armenian are not tabulated separately by the Court Interpreter Services Data Collection system, so the exhibits presented in this report only show 11 languages. The term "designated" is used in this study to refer to languages that have a certification process in place.

[4] Alpine, Lake, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Napa, Sierra, and Trinity.

[5] Some counties distinguish between Hmong and Mien interpreter usage, while other counties do not; therefore, data for Hmong and Mien are combined into a single Hmong (Mien) category. In the text of the report and in the exhibits, references to Hmong and to Hmong (Mien) are used interchangeably.

Possible Declines in Interpreter Use for Some Designated Languages

Since the first study of court interpreter services, which contained data for fiscal year 1994–1995,[6] declines reported have been in services for several languages. Between fiscal year 1998–1999 and 2004–2005, reported services declined for: Arabic (-49%), Japanese (-44%), Tagalog (-39%), Cantonese (-29%), Russian (-9%), and Vietnamese (-8%). However, the changes between studies may be affected by data collection methods, as well as actual changes in services. The current report primarily used data from a new statewide management information system, while the fiscal years 1994–1995 and 1998–1999 studies relied on estimates by county court administrators.

A decline in the number of interpreter days for a given language could occur for several reasons. The number of limited English proficient (LEP) immigrants in California who speak the language may decline because of net-migration to other states or net-migration to the country of origin. The proportion of immigrants who are fluent in English may increase because of English acquisition or a higher proportion of new migrants' being fluent in English. The proportion of immigrants involved with trial courts proceedings may decline because of factors such as improved socioeconomic status or changes in the age structure of the population.

Indigenous Languages and Dialects

In this report, indigenous languages and dialects are defined as those that are not the official language of a country or a state within a country. For most of the indigenous languages and dialects, a registered interpreter is difficult to find, especially in the more remote California court locations. Hmong (Mien) with 1,824 days of service and Ilocano with 277 days of service were the indigenous languages requiring the greatest amount of court interpreter services in fiscal year 2004–2005.

Immigrants and Temporary Foreign Residents in California

Of all the states, California has the most foreign-born residents, both numerically and as a percentage of its population. In the 2000 Census, 8.9 million California residents were foreign-born. This was 26 percent of the total California population and 28 percent of all foreign-born persons in the United States.[7]

During the 2001–2003 period, documented immigration into the United States declined from 1.1 million to 705,000, reflecting tightening admission policies because of security concerns. Documented immigration into the United States has shifted over the last several decades, from Europe to Latin America, Asia, and countries in the Pacific.[8] Fifty-three percent of all immigrants were from Europe in the 1950s, which declined to 16.5 percent in 2001 and further declined to 14.3 percent in 2003. Thirty-four percent of all documented immigrants in 2003 were

---

[6] *California Interpreter Services in the California Trial Courts.*
[7] U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P21.
[8] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, *2003 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics,* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., Sept. 2004.

from Asia, 17.5 percent were from Latin America, 6.9 percent were from Africa, and all these regions increased their proportions between 2001 and 2003. In addition to these immigrants, 3.7 million nonimmigrants were admitted to California in 2003 on temporary visas. The largest categories of such admissions were pleasure (2.7 million), business (649,000), students (100,000), and temporary workers (82,000).

As of 2002, there were also an estimated 2.4 million undocumented immigrants in California, which was 26 percent of the nation's 9.3 million undocumented total.[9] About 80 percent of the undocumented immigrants were from Latin America, 10 percent were from Asia, 5 percent from Europe and Canada, and 5 percent from the rest of the world. Each year, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants apply to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to adjust their residential status and become immigrants. Consequently, only about half the immigrants to the United States are "new arrivals," and the rest are residents who are adjusting their official status to immigrant.

Length of Time Immigrants Take to Learn English

Responses to the 2000 Census indicate that less than 31 percent of the foreign-born residents of California who had entered the United States after the age of 25 had learned to speak English "very well," even after 20 years of residence.[10] In contrast, for those immigrants who entered the United States under the age of 5, the percent learning to speak English "very well" after 20 years of residence was 81 percent. These rates of English acquisition indicate that the need for language interpreters in the California trial courts will continue for the life expectancy of current immigrants who entered as adults not fluent in English. This pattern of language acquisition will continue, even if new immigration ceases for non-English fluent members of a language group.

The 2000 Census found that 51 percent of the persons who speak another language at home speak English "very well." The percentage is higher for those who speak Indo-European languages, but still is only 66 percent. In California, the 2000 Census enumerated 6.3 million residents who did not speak English "very well."

Number of Counties Providing Court Interpreter Services for Most Frequently Used Languages

Fifty of California's 58 counties were able to report court interpreter services data by language. For this study, the top 13 languages by number of counties providing interpreter services were Spanish (50), Punjabi (32), Russian (31), Mandarin (29), Vietnamese (28), Lao (27), Cantonese (27), Korean (27), Arabic (27), Hmong (Mien) (26), Tagalog (23), Khmer (Cambodian) (21), and Farsi (15).

---

[9] Jeffrey S. Passel, Randy Capps, and Michael Fix, "Undocumented Immigrants: Facts and Figures," Urban Institute Immigration Studies Program, Washington, D.C., Jan. 12, 2004.

[10] 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P19.

Use of "Certified" and "Registered" Interpreters

Becoming a certified interpreter entails passing a State Certification Exam (which has both written and oral components), attending a JCC code of ethics workshop, and providing the JCC with proof of continuing education and professional experience. Before taking the exam, applicants are encouraged to complete either formal, college-level courses specializing in interpreter training offered at numerous universities and colleges throughout the state, or programs in interpreter training that are provided by private entities.

There is also a process by which interpreters can be "registered" for other, "nondesignated" languages. The requirements for obtaining this status entail passing an English fluency exam that tests knowledge of English, court procedure, and professional ethics; attending a code of ethics workshop; and providing the JCC with proof of continuing education and professional experience twice each year. In addition, interpreters who become "registered" attend a JCC orientation workshop.

Usually there is not a registered interpreter category for languages that have a certification process in place. However, for four languages that have recently established the certification process,[11] fiscal year 2004–2005 was part of a transition period during which registered interpreters for those languages could remain in the registered category. The current data collection system on court interpreter services groups together certified and registered interpreters; consequently, for these four languages we could not learn the numbers in these categories separately, but we could distinguish them from interpreters who were neither certified nor registered. Fifteen percent of the interpreters for the designated languages and 30 percent of the interpreters for the nondesignated languages were neither registered nor certified.

Recommendations

There is no recommendation to designate and certify a new language. This decision is based on the same three criteria used in the 2000 study, which did recommend designating new languages for interpreter certification. First, court interpreter services for the language should be substantial; second, use should be increasing or relatively stable; and third, the use of the language should involve an immigration stream that is likely to continue. Hmong is the only language approaching these criteria that does not already have interpreter certification or a certification process being established. The use of Hmong interpreter services totals approximately 1,800 days of interpreter service annually and is holding at about that level. Immigration, while perhaps declining, appears to be continuing. Hmong immigration data are not directly available, because data on origin are collected by country, not language. One indicator of immigration trends for a language group is its public school enrollment of limited English proficient students. Enrollment of limited English proficient students with Hmong as a native language has decreased from 32,014 students in 1997 to 22,776 students in 2005. The number of court interpreter service days for Hmong is likely to decline over the next 20 years.

[11] Mandarin, Russian, Western Armenian, and Eastern Armenian.

2. INTRODUCTION AND STUDY OVERVIEW

A court interpreter is a person who interprets a civil or criminal court proceeding for a defendant or witness who speaks or understands little or no English. The role of the interpreter is to allow a non-English-speaking defendant or witness to participate in judicial proceedings. Interpreters must render a complete and accurate interpretation, without altering, omitting, or adding anything to what is stated or written.

The Legal Background for Court Interpreter Services in California

The state Constitution guarantees that "a person unable to understand English who is charged with a crime has a right to an interpreter throughout the proceedings."[12] In addition, interpreters are required to interpret for a witness who is unable to understand, or express herself or himself in English, well enough to be "understood directly by counsel, court, and jury."[13]

In California, there are 12 "designated" languages for which an interpreter can be certified: Arabic, Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.[14] Punjabi and Khmer (Cambodian) are newly designated languages, but the certification exams for these languages have not yet been developed. The certification process entails passing a State Certification Exam (which has both written and oral components), attending a JCC code of ethics workshop, and providing the JCC with proof of continuing education and professional experience. Before taking the exam, applicants are encouraged to complete either formal, college-level courses specializing in interpreter training offered at numerous universities and colleges throughout the state, or interpreter training programs provided by private entities.

There is also a process by which interpreters can be "registered" for other, "nondesignated" languages. This status does not require passing an oral translation exam, but does require passing an English fluency exam that tests knowledge of English, court procedure, and professional ethics; attending a JCC code of ethics workshop; and providing the JCC with proof of continuing education and professional experience twice each year. In addition, interpreters who become "registered" attend a JCC orientation workshop.

A recent report by the California Commission on Access to Justice cited language barriers as a threat to the quality of justice in California. The report noted that while the number of immigrants in California who do not speak English "very well" is increasing, the pool of qualified interpreters is decreasing. Among the commission's findings was that specific recommendations for implementing language access should be developed for both court officials and staff.[15]

---

[12] Cal. Const., art. I, § 14.
[13] Cal. Evid. Code, § 752.
[14] Data on Western Armenian and Eastern Armenian are not tabulated separately by the Court Interpreter Data Collection System, therefore the exhibits presented in this report only show 11 languages.
[15] California Commission on Access to Justice, *Language Barriers to Justice in California*, Sept. 2005.

The 2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study

The purpose of this report is to provide the JCC with background, data, and analysis necessary to make decisions regarding additional languages to be included in the State Certification Examination program for court interpreters, and to help project future language interpreting needs for the state's trial courts. The goals of the study are to

- Assess the statewide and regional use of interpreters of specific languages;
- Estimate the level of use of certified and registered interpreters;
- Analyze the use of interpreters for dialects and indigenous languages;
- Describe factors affecting immigration to California;
- Discuss how long it takes non-English-speaking immigrants to become fluent or proficient in English;
- Discuss factors that cause a decline in the use of interpreters in certain languages; and
- Recommend additional languages to be included in the State Certification Program.

3. SOURCES OF DATA

Every five years the JCC is required by law to conduct a study of spoken language interpreter need and use in the state's courts. Studies were completed in 1995 and 2000. These studies used data from surveys of California courts concerning interpreter usage. The 2000 study also included (1) analyses of census and survey data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, (2) analyses of reports from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, and (3) a review of publications and Web sites.

In preparing the current report, data from the following sources were reviewed and analyzed:

- AOC data extracted from the Court Interpreter Data Collection System (CIDCS) for the 12-month period of April 2004–March 2005 to estimate usage for fiscal year 2004–2005. (Data from this 12-month period were utilized rather than data from the traditional fiscal year, because CIDCS data from the last quarter of fiscal year 2004–2005 were incomplete.)[16]
- Supplemental administrative data files on court interpreter usage from Los Angeles and Orange Counties. (These supplementary data were used, since the CIDCS data for these counties were incomplete.)
- 2000 Census Summary File 3 and Public Use Micro Sample.
- California Department of Education reports on Limited English Proficiency Students by home language.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, annual reports on immigration.

Although it is interesting to examine trends across the studies in interpreter services, one must be cautious in reaching conclusions. For each study, data were missing from some of the counties. In the current study, 50 of 58 counties provided data;[17] in the 2000 study, 56 of 58 counties provided data; and in the 1995 study, only 44 of 58 counties provided data. Perhaps more importantly, in 2005 data were extracted from management information systems, while for the first two studies the data came from surveys.

[16] Data from quarterly financial statements for fiscal year 2000–2001 through fiscal year 2004-2005 provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts were examined for trends, but did not yield definitive results.

[17] Alpine, Lake, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Napa, Sierra, and Trinity did not provide data. The 50 counties included in the current study provided 99 percent of total court interpreter services, according to expenditure data.

4. STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL USE OF COURT INTERPRETERS FOR SPECIFIC LANGUAGES

This section explores statewide and regional use of court interpreter utilization for specific languages, as found in the CIDCS. We focus on the 12 designated languages (Arabic, Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese) and the 10 nondesignated languages with the highest total interpreter day usage (Farsi, Hindi, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Lao, Punjabi, Romanian, Samoan, and Tongan). The CIDCS does not separate Western Armenian and Eastern Armenian, therefore their data are combined into a single Armenian category. Similarly, reporting practices differ between counties with respect to interpreter usage for Hmong and Mien. Some counties distinguish between Hmong and Mien interpreter usage, other counties do not; therefore, data for Hmong and Mien are combined into a single Hmong (Mien) category. In the text of the report and in the exhibits, references to Hmong and to Hmong (Mien) are used interchangeably. Our analyses in this section of the report cover the following measures:

- Number of court interpreter service days, by language;
- Regional usage of interpreter service days for designated and selected nondesignated languages; and
- Number of counties that provide court interpreter services, by language.

Interpreter Day Usage by Language

In fiscal year 2004–2005, a total of 185,118 court interpreter service days were provided for the 12 designated languages (see exhibit 4.1). As in past years, Spanish continued to be the primary language requiring interpretive services, constituting 90 percent of all services. Notably, 160,396 court interpreter service days were utilized for interpretive services in Spanish, compared to 8,477 days for Vietnamese, the second-ranking language. The next six languages, Korean, Armenian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian, and Tagalog, used service days in the range of 3,743 to 1,215 days. Arabic, Japanese, and Portuguese used service days ranging from a high of 703 days to a low of 345 days.

Exhibit 4.1
California Court Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages, Fiscal Years 1994–95, 1998–99, and 2004–05

Designated Language	FY 1994–95	FY 1998–99	FY 2004–05	Percent Change FY 1998–99 to FY 2004–05
Spanish	122,484	145,661	160,396	**10%**
Vietnamese	6,528	9,197	8,477	**-8%**
Korean	2,943	3,716	3,743	**1%**
Armenian	1,918	2,730	3,093	**13%**
Mandarin	1,097	2,100	2,439	**16%**
Cantonese	2,066	3,252	2,320	**-29%**
Russian	1,237	1,956	1,789	**-9%**
Tagalog	1,495	1,986	1,215	**-39%**
Arabic	851	1,365	703	**-49%**
Japanese	623	1,080	601	**-44%**
Portuguese	306	311	345	**11%**
Total	**141,548**	**173,354**	**185,118**	**7%**

Although substantial change has been found year to year, the studies for each of the three years employed different data collection methods, and we do not know the extent to which changes in methods caused the differences. Focusing on changes of at least 10 percent and 200 days of service, it appears that interpreter services increased for Mandarin, Armenian, and Spanish, while services for Arabic, Japanese, and Tagalog decreased.

Interpreter day usage for designated languages is presented graphically in exhibits 4.2 and 4.3. Exhibit 4.2 presents these data on Spanish interpretative services in relation to interpretive services for all designated languages for the periods studied in fiscal years 1994–1995, 1998–1999, and 2004–2005. As shown in exhibit 4.2, interpretive services for Spanish consistently account for a substantial portion of all interpretive services, across all time periods studied.

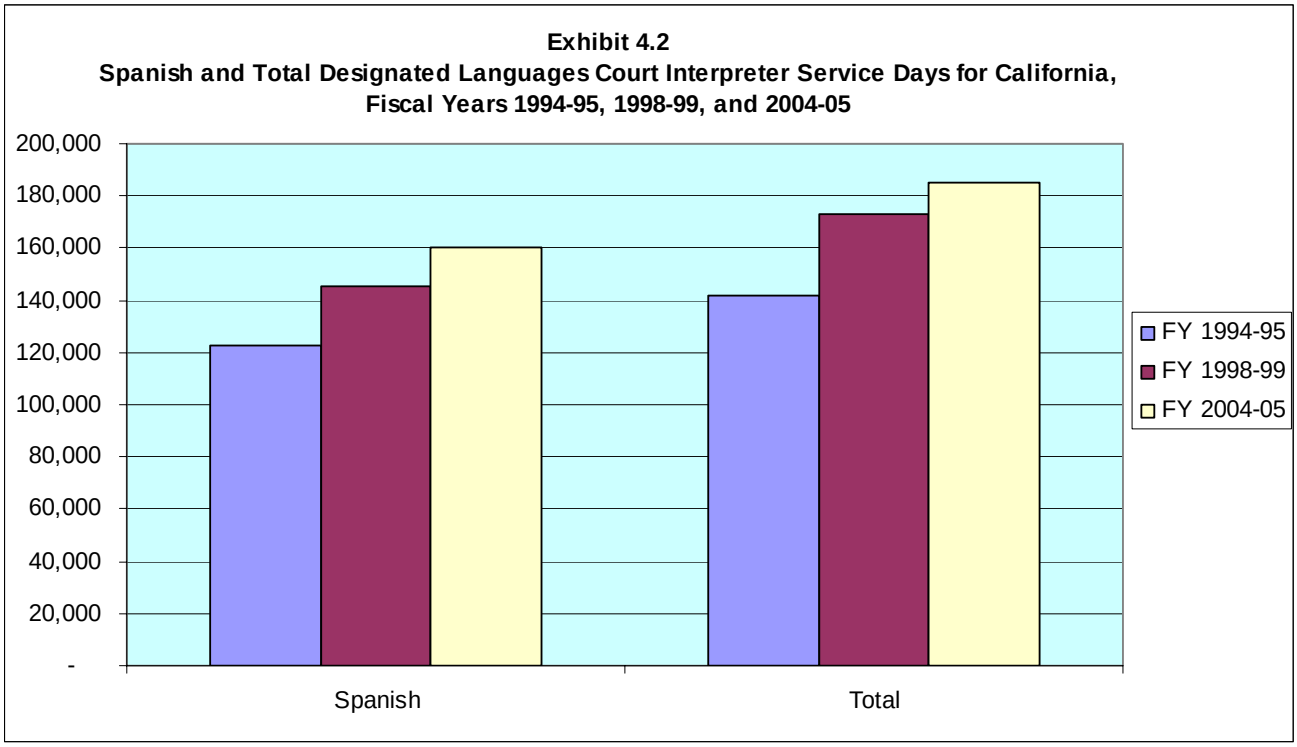
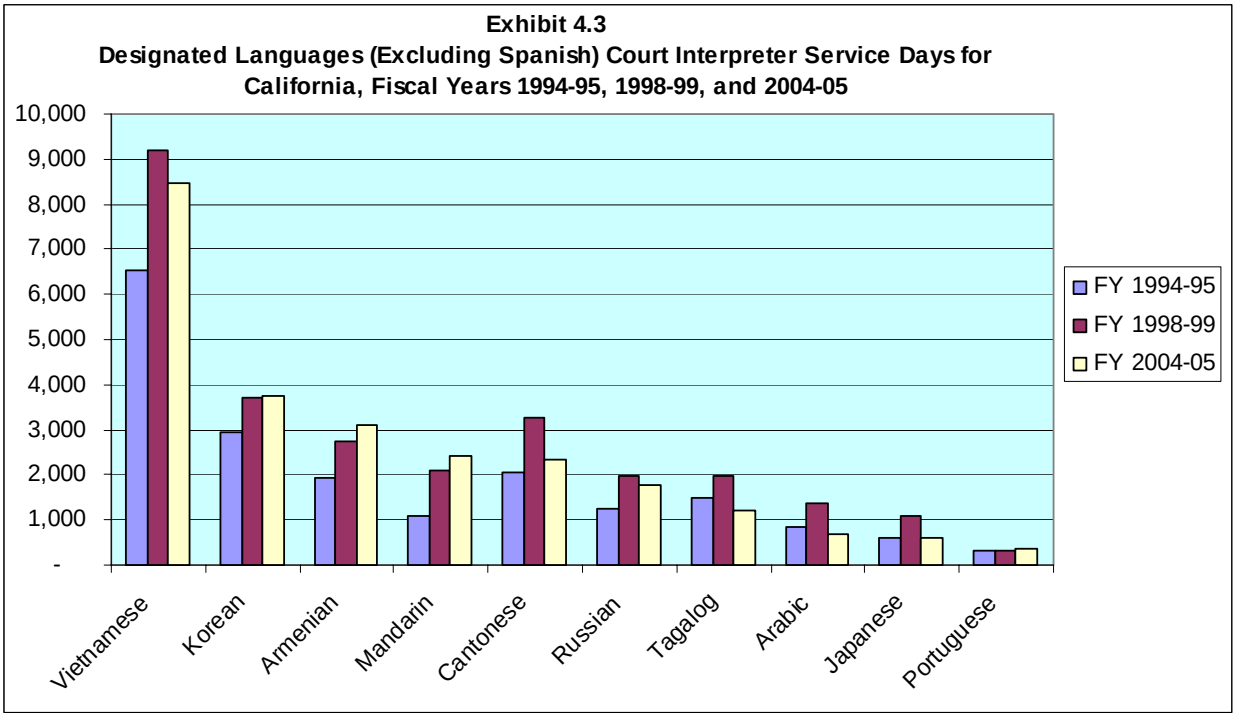


Exhibit 4.3 shows interpretive services for all the designated languages exclusive of Spanish. (Spanish is excluded from this chart because it is an extreme outlier in terms of the number of interpreter days, and as such if included it would distort the chart dramatically.) Vietnamese, Korean, Armenian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian, and Tagalog account for the highest percentage of interpretive services among these designated languages.



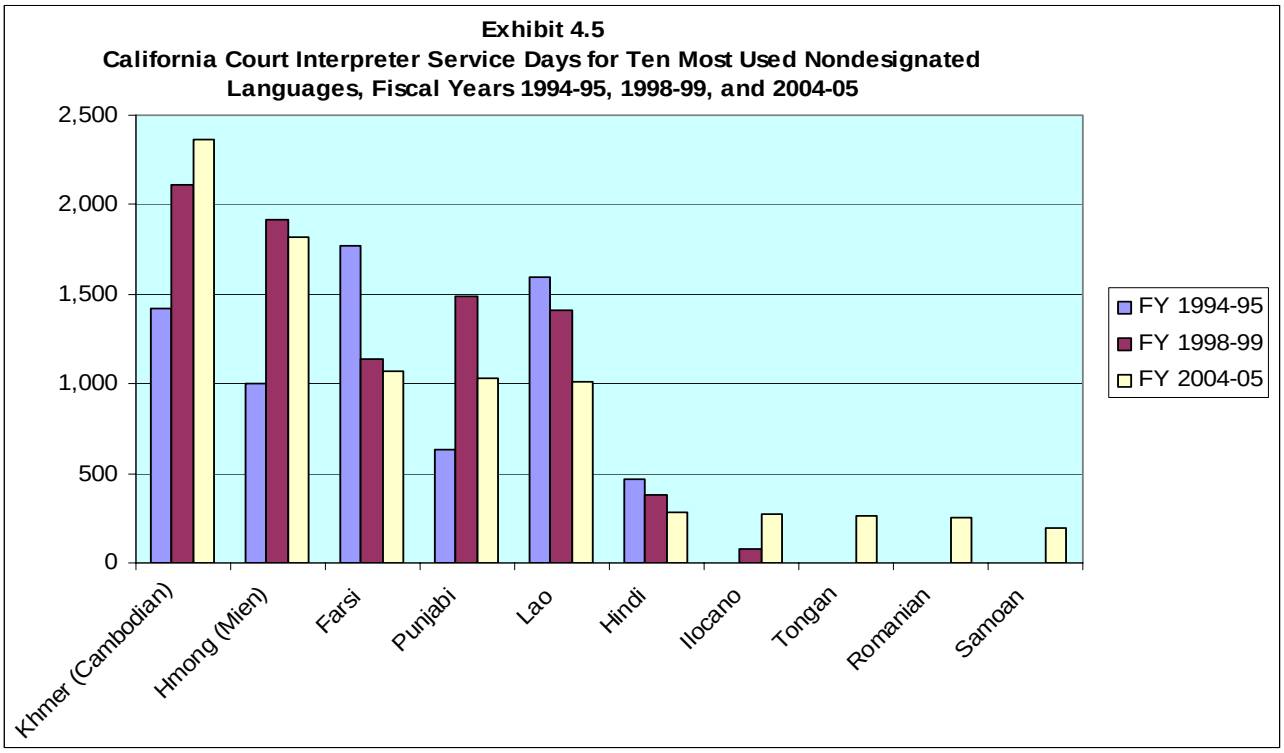
In fiscal year 2004–2005 among nondesignated languages Khmer (2,365) and Hmong (1,824) had the most court interpreter service days, followed by Farsi (1,072), Punjabi (1,032), and Lao (1,011) (see exhibit 4.4). The number of interpreter days for the remaining nondesignated languages ranged from Hindi at 285 days, Ilocano at 277 days, and Romanian at 261 days to Tongan at 251 days and Samoan at 198 days. The prior studies did not report service days for Romanian, Tongan, and Samoan, so the data for these languages are missing from exhibits 4.4 and 4.5.

Focusing on changes of at least 10 percent and 200 days of service, it appears that interpreter services increased between fiscal years 1998–1999 and 2004–2005 for Khmer speakers, while there were decreases in services for Punjabi and Lao.

Exhibit 4.4
Number of California Court Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages, Fiscal Years 1994–95, 1998–99, and 2004–05

Nondesignated Languages	FY 1994–95	FY 1998–99	FY 2004–05	Percent Change FY 1998–99 to FY 2004–05
Khmer (Cambodian)	1,418	2,112	2,365	**12%**
Hmong (Mien)	1,004	1,913	1,824	**-5%**
Farsi	1,766	1,136	1,072	**-6%**
Punjabi	629	1,492	1,032	**-31%**
Lao	1,595	1,407	1,011	**-28%**
Hindi	466	383	285	**-26%**
Ilocano	-	109	277	**154%**
Romanian	-	-	261	-
Tongan	-	-	251	-
Samoan	-	-	198	-

Interpreter day usage for the 10 most-used nondesignated languages is presented graphically in exhibit 4.5. As noted above, the prior studies did not report service days for Romanian, Tongan, and Samoan, so bars for these languages for early years are missing from the exhibit. The five most-used of the nondesignated languages Khmer, Hmong, Farsi, Punjabi, and Lao have substantially higher reported usage of interpreter services than the remaining languages. Of these top five, however, only Khmer had reports indicating increases in usage between fiscal years 1998–1999 and 2004–2005.



Interpreter Services by Region, County, and Language

In this section, we discuss the provision of interpreter services with attention to distinctions by region, county, and language. The list on the following page shows how California's 58 trial courts are divided into four regions for court interpreters. Variation in interpreter usage by region for designated and selected nondesignated languages is discussed, with data supporting this discussion shown in exhibits 4.6 through 4.9. Discussion of interpreter services by the number of counties providing such services for designated and selected nondesignated languages follows, supported by exhibits 4.10 and 4.11. Next, attention focuses on the distribution of interpreter services by number of languages by county (see exhibit 4.12.0). This is followed by discussion and maps that illustrate by language the number of interpreter days of service by county for 2004–2005 (see exhibits 4.12.1–4.12.21).

Regional Differences in Interpreter Day Usage

California's 58 trial courts are divided into the following 4 regions for court interpreters:

Region 1: Southern Region
(4 counties)
Los Angeles
San Luis Obispo
Santa Barbara
Ventura

Region 2: Bay Area/Northern Coastal Region
(16 counties)
Alameda
Contra Costa
Del Norte
Humboldt
Lake
Marin
Mendocino
Monterey
Napa
San Benito
San Francisco
San Mateo
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Solano
Sonoma

Region 3: Northern/Central Region
(32 counties)
Alpine
Amador
Butte
Calaveras
Colusa
El Dorado
Fresno
Glenn
Kern
Kings
Lassen
Madera
Mariposa
Merced
Modoc
Mono
Nevada
Placer
Plumas
Sacramento
San Joaquin
Shasta
Sierra
Siskiyou
Stanislaus
Sutter
Tehama
Trinity
Tulare
Tuolumne
Yolo
Yuba

Region 4: Southern Region (6 counties)
Imperial
Inyo
Orange
Riverside
San Bernardino
San Diego

Designated Languages

As shown in exhibits 4.6 and 4.7, variation occurs in interpreter usage among the four regions, reflecting differences in population size as well cultural linguistic composition. For most of the designated languages the region with the greatest number and percentage of the state's usage of interpreter services is Region 1.

Exhibit 4.6
Number of Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–05

Designated Languages	REGIONS				
	1	2	3	4	Total
Arabic	302	62	79	261	**703**
Armenian	2,719	2	307	65	**3,093**
Cantonese	1,463	643	191	24	**2,320**
Japanese	390	97	14	102	**601**
Korean	2,842	201	157	543	**3,743**
Mandarin	1,604	383	60	392	**2,439**
Portuguese	80	151	89	26	**345**
Russian	763	106	808	113	**1,789**
Spanish	78,746	13,470	21,467	46,714	**160,396**
Tagalog	328	601	65	222	**1,215**
Vietnamese	2,196	1,559	564	4,159	**8,477**
Total	**91,430**	**17,272**	**23,798**	**52,619**	**185,118**

Exhibit 4.7
Percent of Interpreter Service Days for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–05

Designated Languages	REGIONS				
	1	2	3	4	Total
Arabic	43%	9%	11%	37%	**100%**
Armenian	88%	0%	10%	2%	**100%**
Cantonese	63%	28%	8%	1%	**100%**
Japanese	65%	16%	2%	17%	**100%**
Korean	76%	5%	4%	15%	**100%**
Mandarin	66%	16%	2%	16%	**100%**
Portuguese	23%	44%	26%	8%	**100%**
Russian	43%	6%	45%	6%	**100%**
Spanish	49%	8%	13%	29%	**100%**
Tagalog	27%	49%	5%	18%	**100%**
Vietnamese	26%	18%	7%	49%	**100%**
Total	**49%**	**9%**	**13%**	**28%**	**100%**

Nondesignated Languages

With respect to nondesignated languages, the highest usages of Farsi and Khmer were concentrated in Region 1, while Hmong, Lao, Punjabi, and Romanian services were highest in Region 3 (see exhibits 4.8 and 4.9).

Exhibit 4.8
Number of Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004–05

Languages	REGIONS				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Farsi	824	37	30	182	**1,072**
Hindi	175	38	45	28	**285**
Hmong (Mien)	17	72	1,726	10	**1,824**
Ilocano	31	71	150	26	**277**
Khmer (Cambodian)	1,070	166	459	671	**2,365**
Lao	62	104	725	120	**1,011**
Punjabi	163	246	570	53	**1,032**
Romanian	75	3	127	57	**261**
Samoan	44	69	5	81	**198**
Tongan	40	93	93	25	**251**
Total	**2,499**	**897**	**3,928**	**1,246**	**8,570**

Exhibit 4.9
Percent of Interpreter Service Days for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004-05

Languages	REGIONS				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Farsi	77%	3%	3%	17%	**100%**
Hindi	61%	13%	16%	10%	**100%**
Hmong (Mien)	1%	4%	95%	0%	**100%**
Ilocano	11%	26%	54%	9%	**100%**
Khmer (Cambodian)	45%	7%	19%	28%	**100%**
Lao	6%	10%	72%	12%	**100%**
Punjabi	16%	24%	55%	5%	**100%**
Romanian	29%	1%	49%	22%	**100%**
Samoan	22%	35%	3%	41%	**100%**
Tongan	16%	37%	37%	10%	**100%**
Total	**29%**	**10%**	**46%**	**15%**	**100%**

Number of Counties That Provide Interpreter Services by Language

With respect to designated languages, in fiscal year 2004–2005, the number of counties providing interpreter services for these languages ranged from a low of 17 counties for Armenian to a high of 50 counties for Spanish (see exhibit 4.10). The fiscal year 1998–1999 data are from a survey that had 56 of 58 counties reporting, while the fiscal year 2004–2005 are from information systems that had 50 of 58 counties reporting. Therefore, declines of less than 8 counties reporting a language may not actually indicate a downward trend.

Exhibit 4.10
Number of Counties Providing Interpreter Services by Designated Languages for California, Fiscal Years 1998–99 and 2004–05

Designated Language	FY 1998–99	FY 2004–05
Arabic	28	27
Armenian	20	17
Cantonese	32	27
Japanese	25	20
Korean	29	27
Mandarin	25	29
Portuguese	25	23
Russian	31	31
Spanish	56	50
Tagalog	29	23
Vietnamese	34	28

The number of counties providing interpreter services for the 10 most-used nondesignated languages for fiscal year 2004–2005 for which we received data ranged from a low of 10 counties providing interpretive services for Samoan to a high of 32 counties providing such services for Punjabi (see exhibit 4.11).

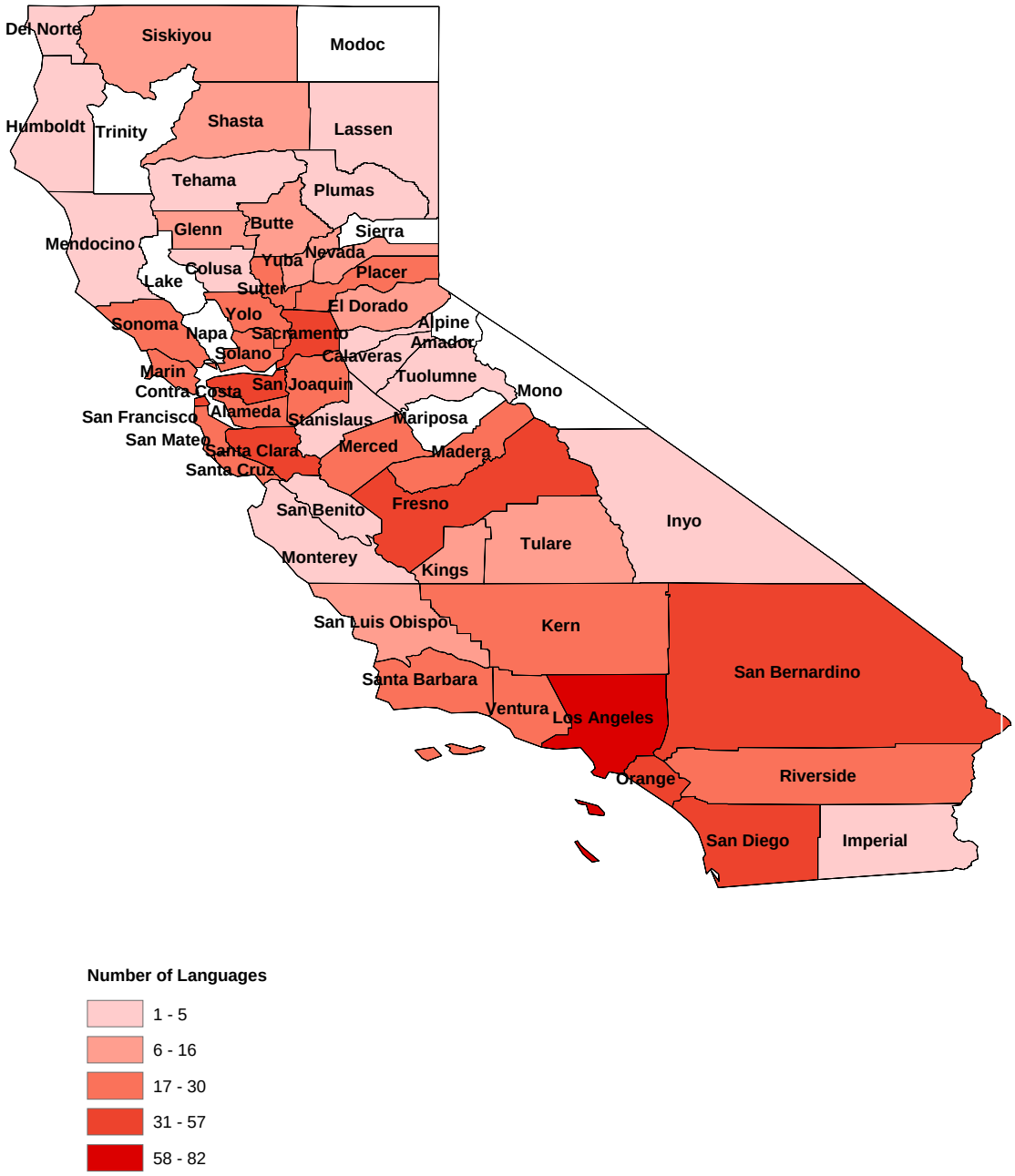
Exhibit 4.11
Number of Counties Reporting Interpreter Services for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages for California, Fiscal Years 1998–99 and 2004–05

Languages	FY 1998–99	FY 2004–05
Farsi	23	15
Hindi	33	20
Hmong (Mien)	26	26
Ilocano	14	18
Khmer (Cambodian)	26	21
Lao	33	27
Punjabi	37	32
Romanian	-	11
Samoan	-	10
Tongan	-	11

Distribution of Interpreter Services by County

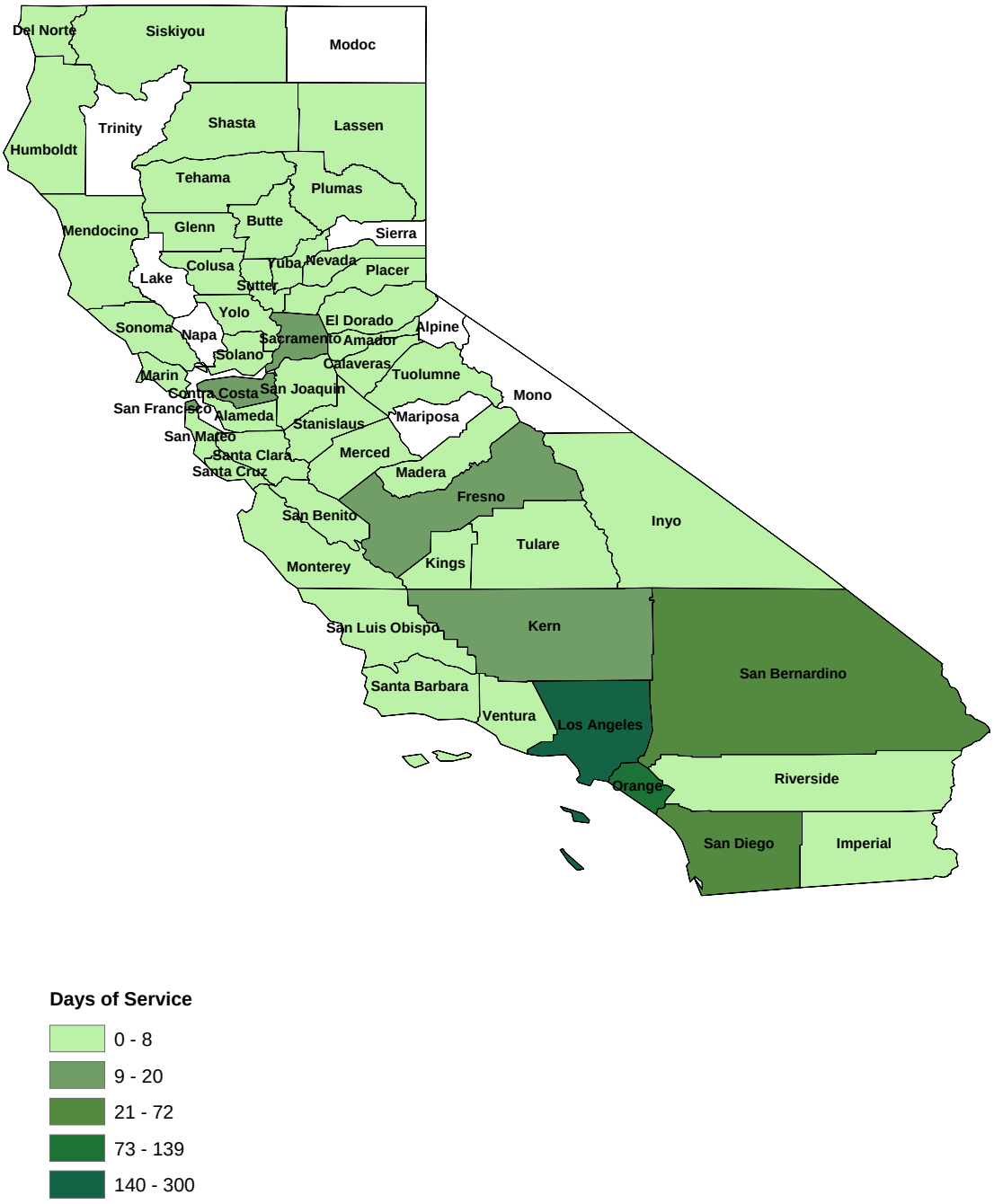
The counties with the greatest number of languages being served by court interpreters were concentrated in the Bay Area and southern regions of the state (see exhibit 4.12.0). For all the maps in this section, counties with a white background did not have data available.

Exhibit 4.12.0 Number of Languages Requiring Court Interpreter Services by County, 2004–2005



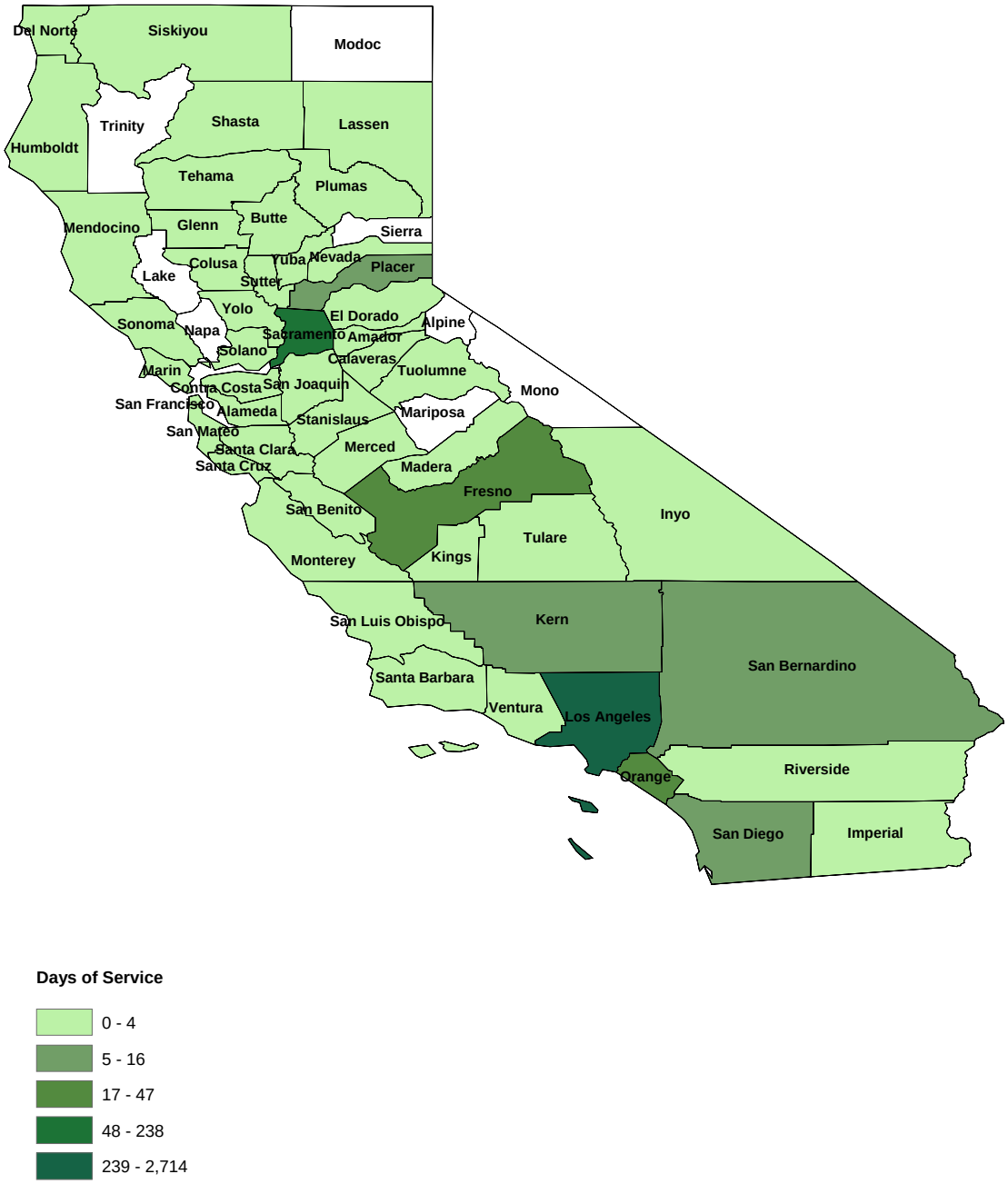
Arabic interpreter usage was concentrated in the southern regions (Regions 1 and 4) (see exhibit 4.12.1). Together, these regions had 562 days of service, totaling 80 percent of all usage. Los Angeles and Orange Counties were the greatest contributors to the concentration of Arabic interpreter usage in the southern regions, having 300 and 139 days of use, respectively.

Exhibit 4.12.1 Arabic Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



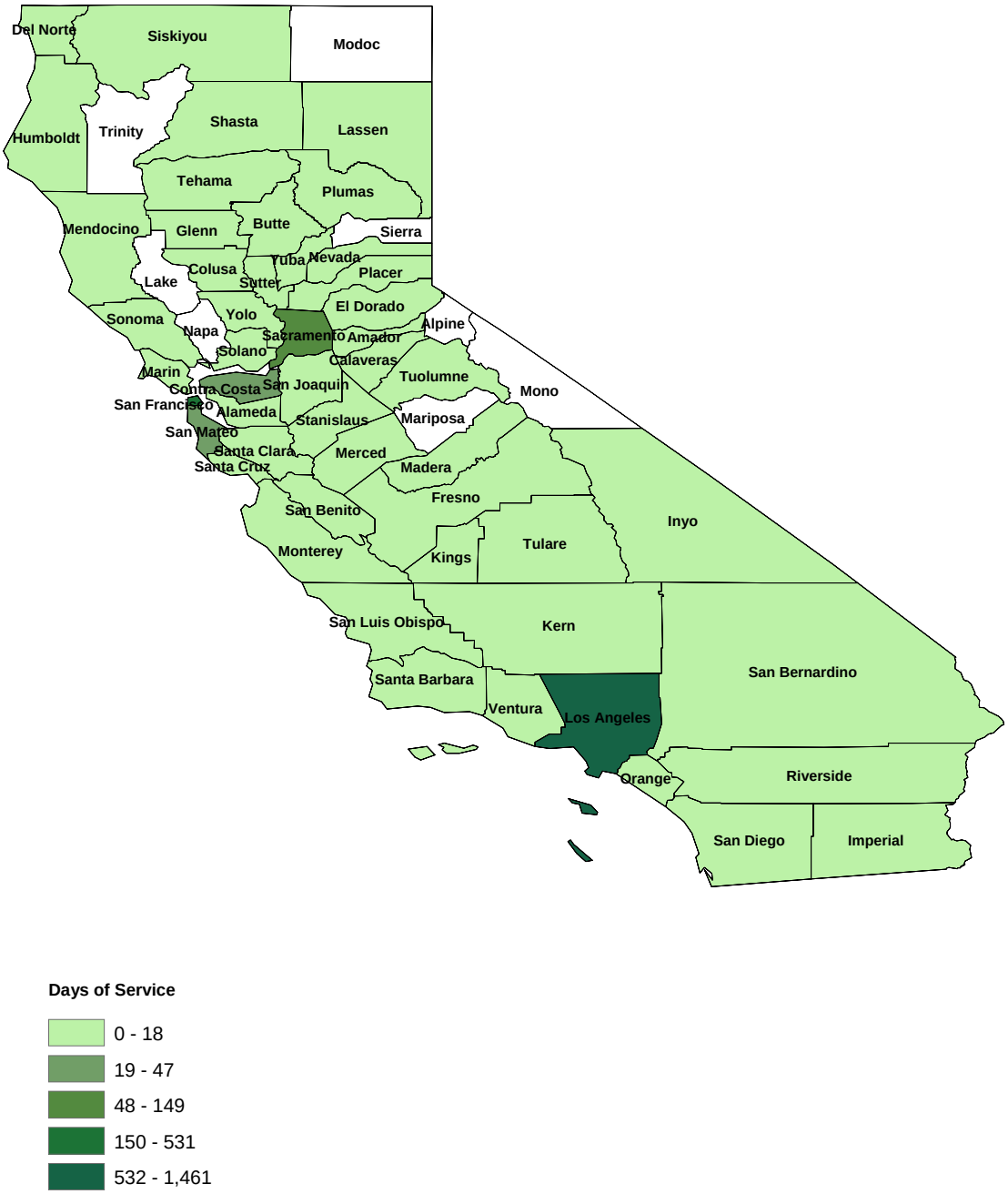
Armenian interpreter usage was concentrated in Region 1 (see exhibit 4.12.2). With 88 percent of all days of service, Region 1 had the greatest concentration due to heavy usage in Los Angeles County (2,714 days of use). Pockets of moderate usage were also found in Region 3, Sacramento and Fresno Counties, with 238 and 38 days of use, respectively.

Exhibit 4.12.2 Armenian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



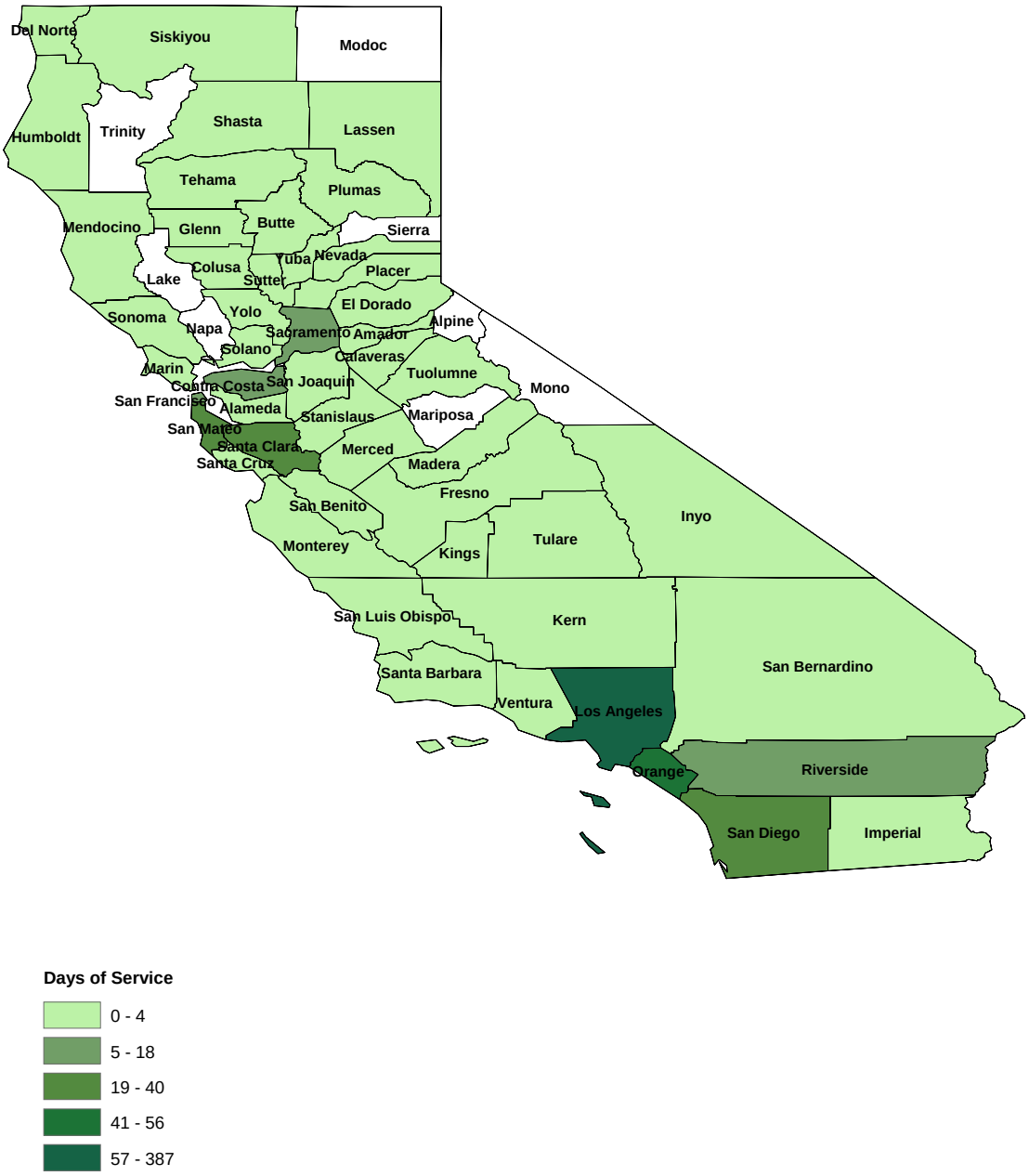
Cantonese interpreter usage was heavily concentrated in Regions 1 and 2 (see exhibit 4.12.3). Together these two regions accounted for 91 percent of the total usage of Cantonese interpreters. The two greatest contributors to the concentration in these two respective regions were Los Angeles County (Region 1) with 1,461 days of service and San Francisco County (Region 2) with 531 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.3 Cantonese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



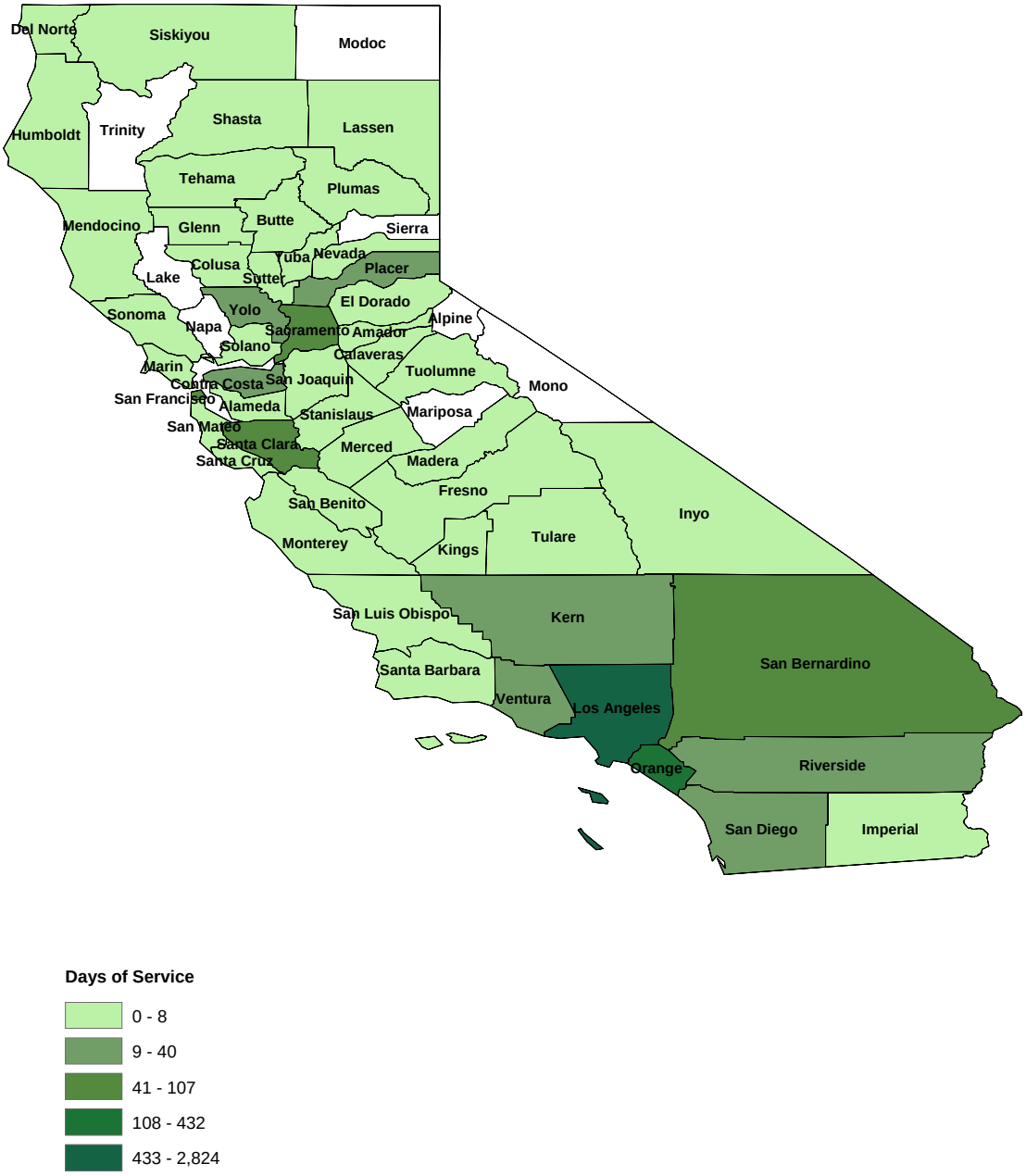
Japanese interpreter usage was concentrated in the southern regions of the state (see exhibit 4.12.4). Los Angeles and Orange Counties were the greatest contributors to this concentration, with 387 and 56 days of service, respectively, accounting for 82 percent of the total usage across the state. Pockets of moderate usage were also found in Region 2, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, with 27 and 40 days of service, respectively.

Exhibit 4.12.4 Japanese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



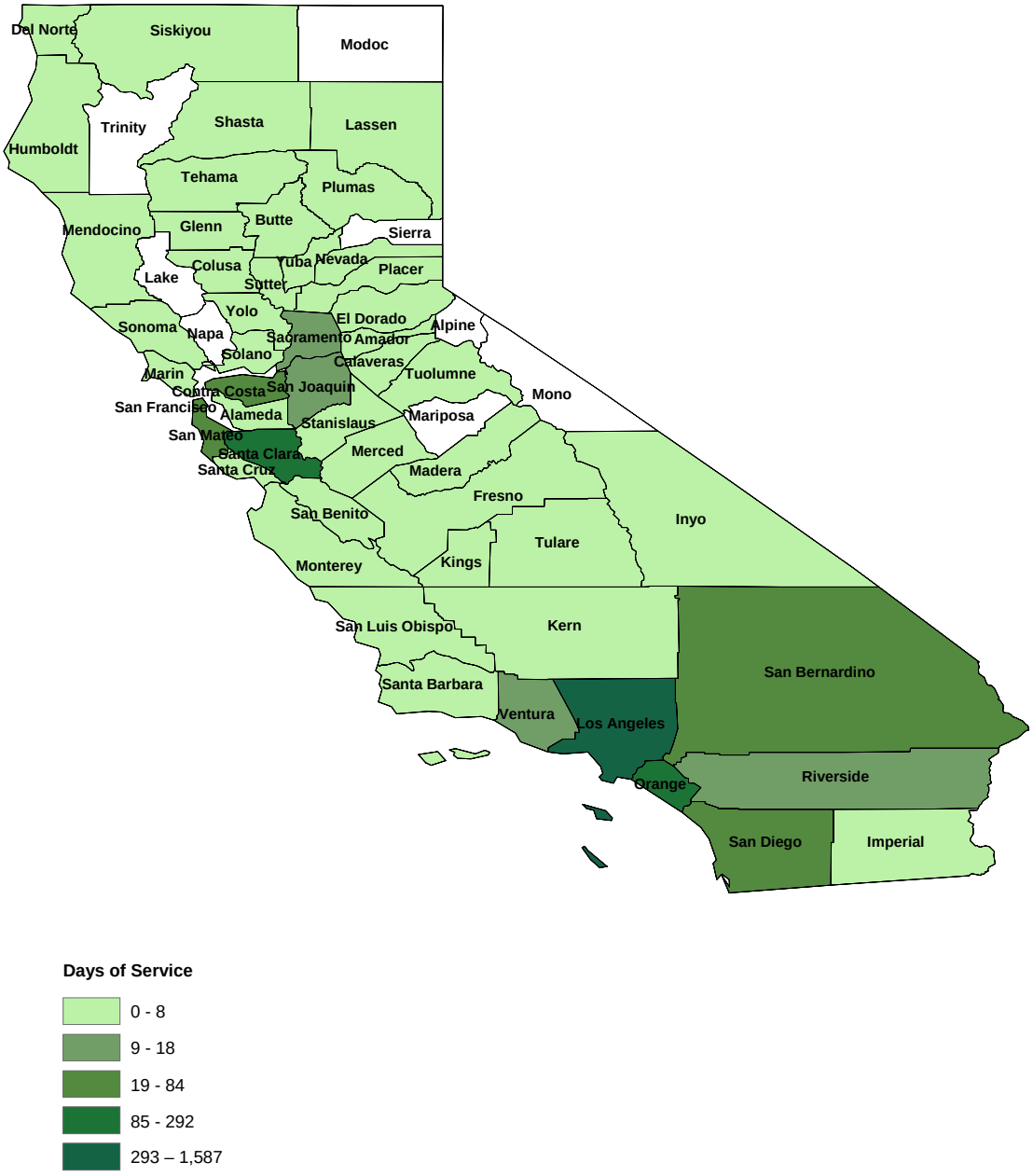
Korean interpreter usage is primarily concentrated in the southern regions (Regions 1 and 4) (see exhibit 4.12.5). Together, these regions had 3,385 days of service, accounting for 91 percent of total usage across the state. Los Angeles and Orange Counties were the greatest contributors to the concentration of Korean interpreter usage in the southern regions, with 2,824 and 432 days of service, respectively—these two counties made up 96 percent of the total days of service for both regions.

Exhibit 4.12.5 Korean Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



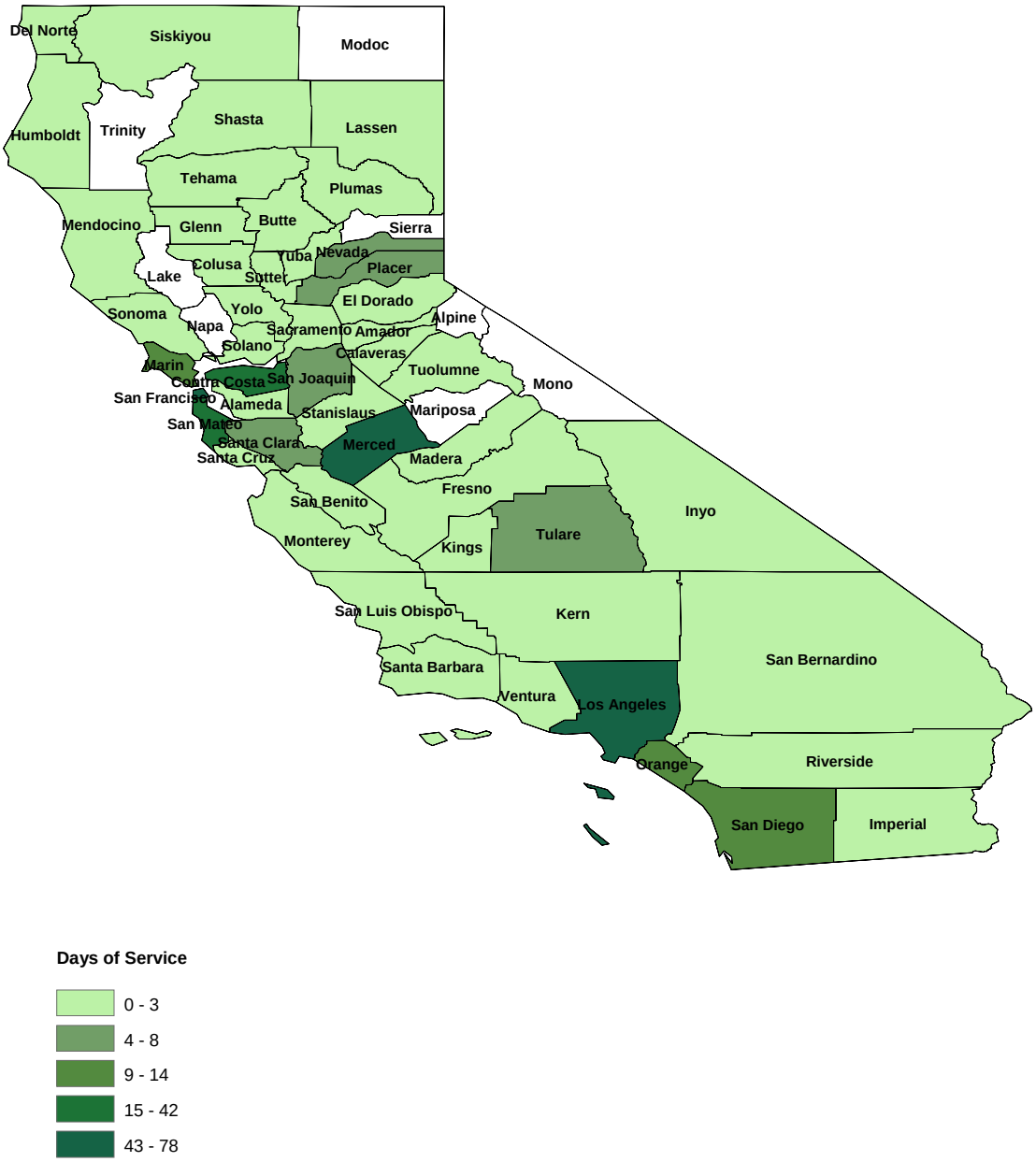
Mandarin interpreter usage was concentrated in the southern regions—with Regions 1 and 4 making up 82 percent (1,996 days of service) of the total usage (see exhibit 4.12.6). Los Angeles and Orange Counties were the greatest contributors to the concentration of usage in the southern regions, with 1,587 and 292 days of service, respectively. Region 2 also had four counties with moderate to heavy usage, accounting for another 16 percent of the total usage.

Exhibit 4.12.6 Mandarin Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



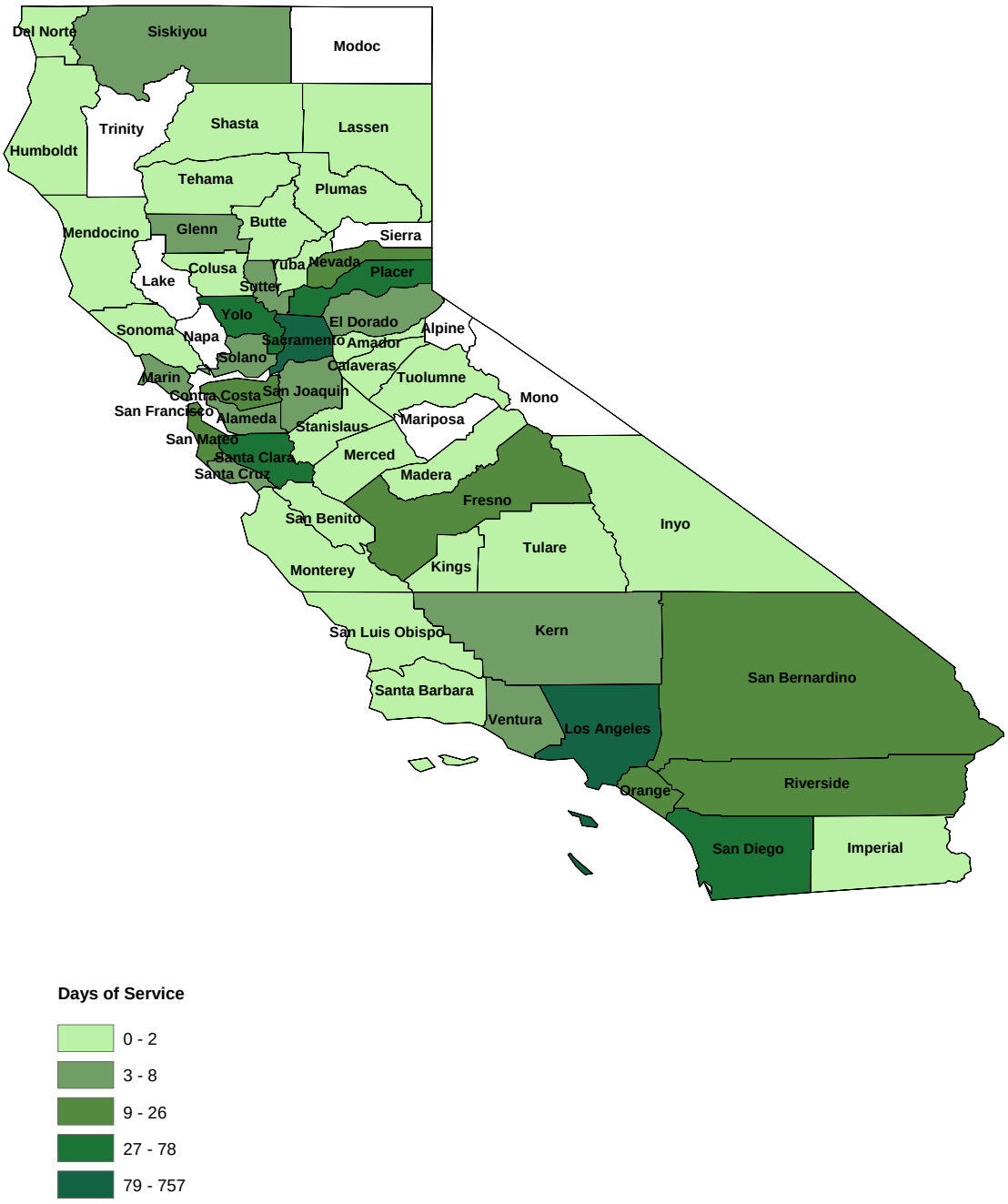
Portuguese interpreter usage was distributed across the state (see exhibit 4.12.7). A number of counties in the Bay Area in Region 2 contributed to the greatest concentration of Portuguese interpreter usage, with 151 days of service, or 44 percent of the total usage. Regions 1, 2, and 3 each had one county that was a heavy user—Los Angeles County with 78 days of service, San Francisco County with 58 days of service, and Merced County with 55 days of service, respectively, contributing to the distribution of usage across regions.

Exhibit 4.12.7 Portuguese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



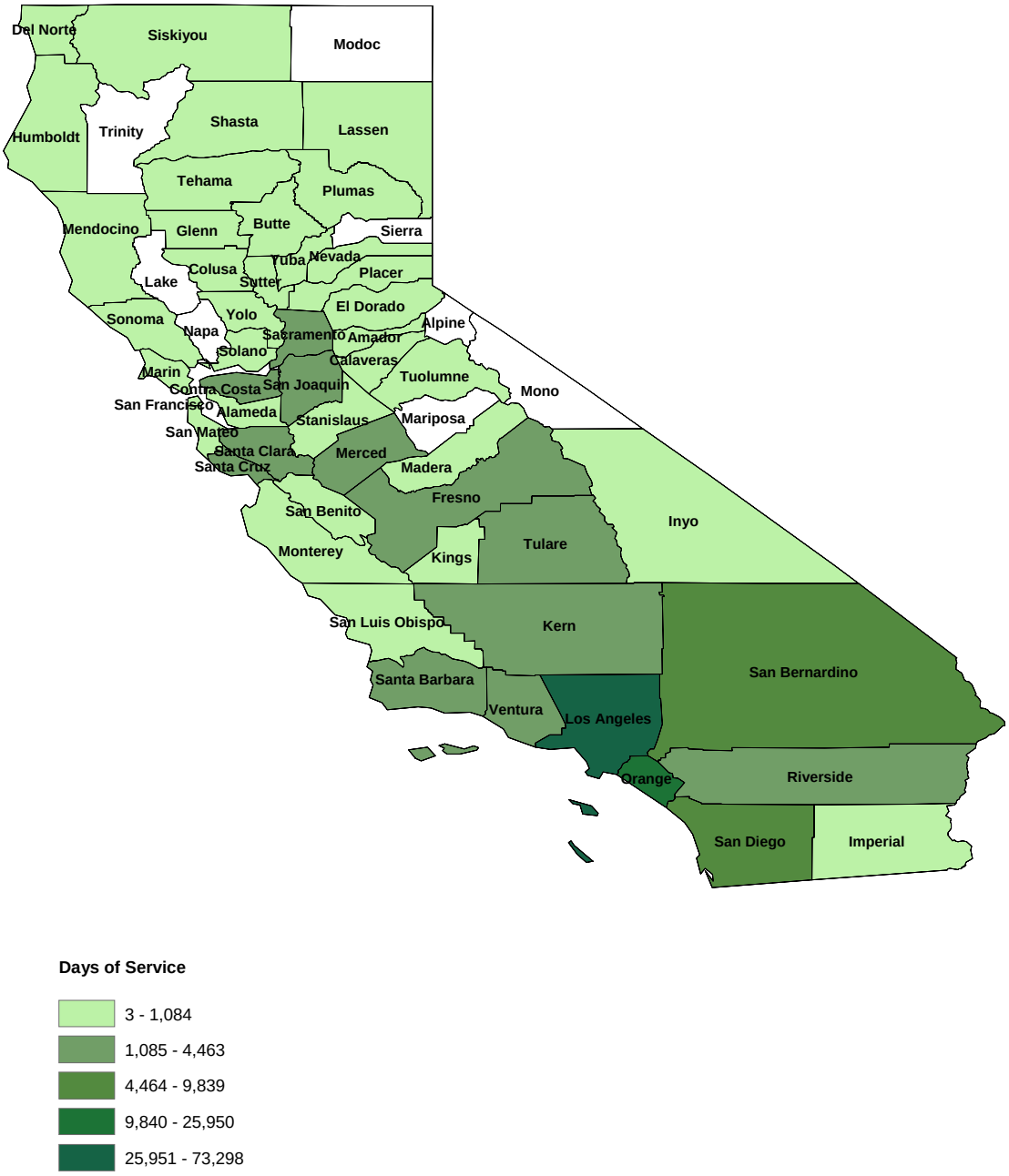
Russian interpreter usage was concentrated in Regions 1 and 3. There was moderate to light usage in other areas (see exhibit 4.12.8). Region 1 (43 percent) and Region 3 (45 percent) accounted for 88 percent of the total usage of Russian interpreters. Los Angeles and Sacramento Counties had 757 and 613 days of service, respectively.

Exhibit 4.12.8 Russian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



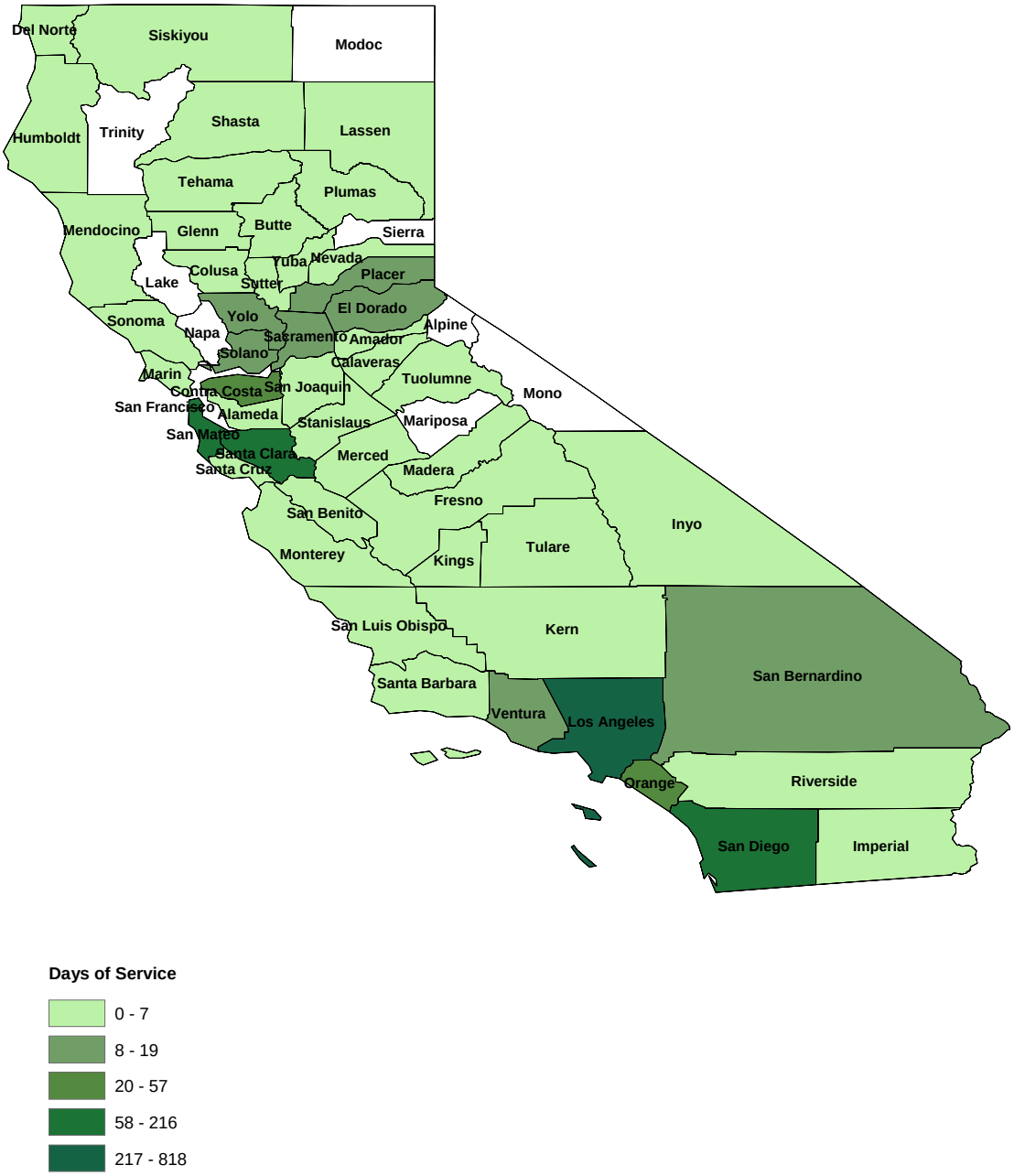
Spanish interpreter usage was concentrated in the southern regions (Regions 1 and 4), and in the Central Valley (Region 3) (see exhibit 4.12.9). Together, Region 1 (49 percent) and Region 4 (38 percent) had 125,460 days of service, totaling 78 percent of total usage. Los Angeles and Orange Counties had the highest rates of usage with 73,298 and 25,950 days of service, respectively. Region 3 had 21,467 days of service, accounting for 13 percent of total usage. Fresno County had the highest usage with 4,463 days of service, followed by Kern County with 3,028 days of service. Usage was fairly evenly distributed across four other counties in this region (Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Tulare), ranging from 1,890 to 2,562 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.9 Spanish Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



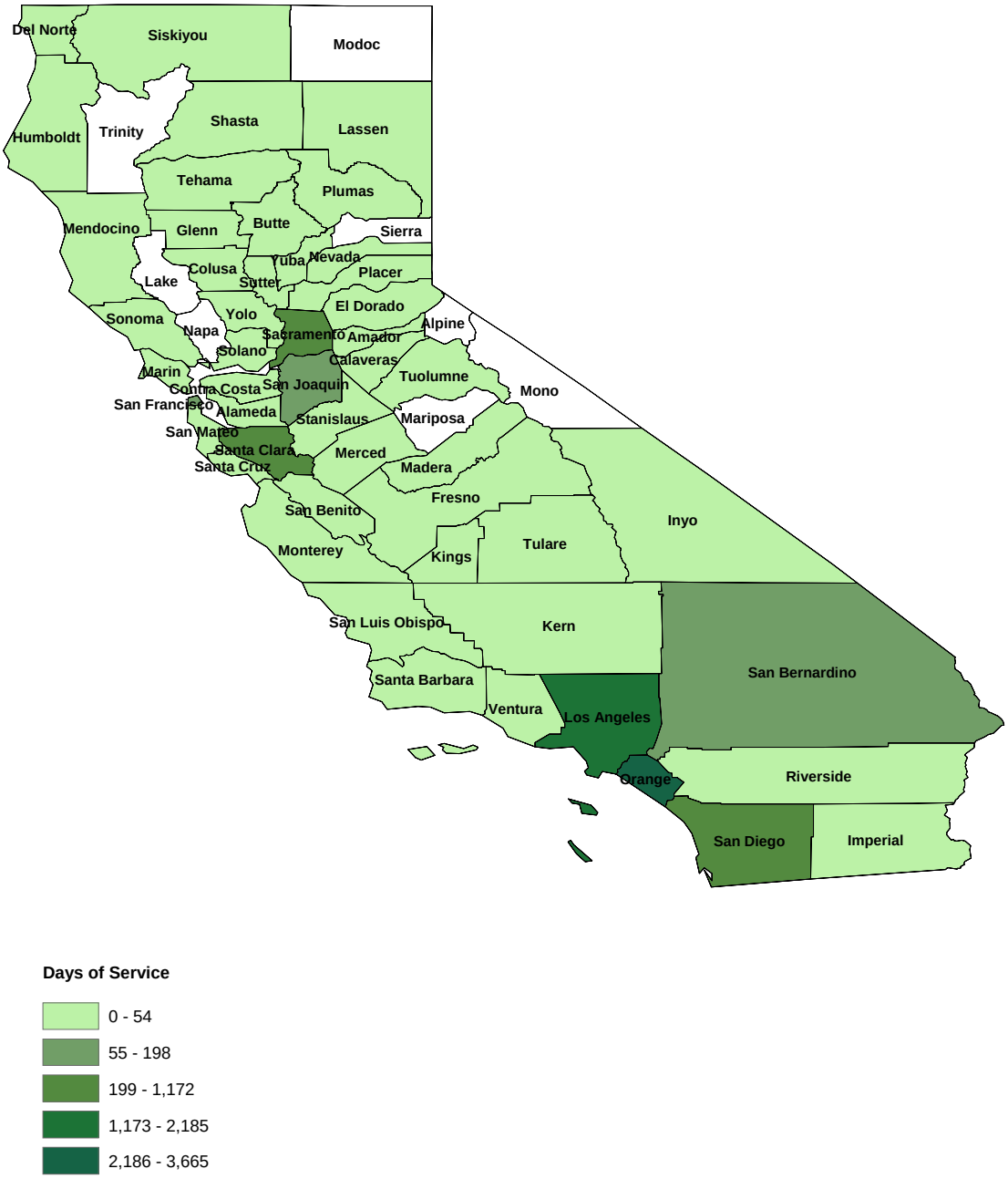
Tagalog interpreter usage was concentrated in Region 2, the Bay Area, although the county with highest usage was Los Angeles County (818 days of service) in Region 1 (see exhibit 4.12.10). The usage in Region 2 was 49 percent of the state total. The counties with the highest usage in Region 2 included San Francisco (216 days of service), San Mateo (164 days of service), and Santa Clara (139 days of service).

Exhibit 4.12.10 Tagalog Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



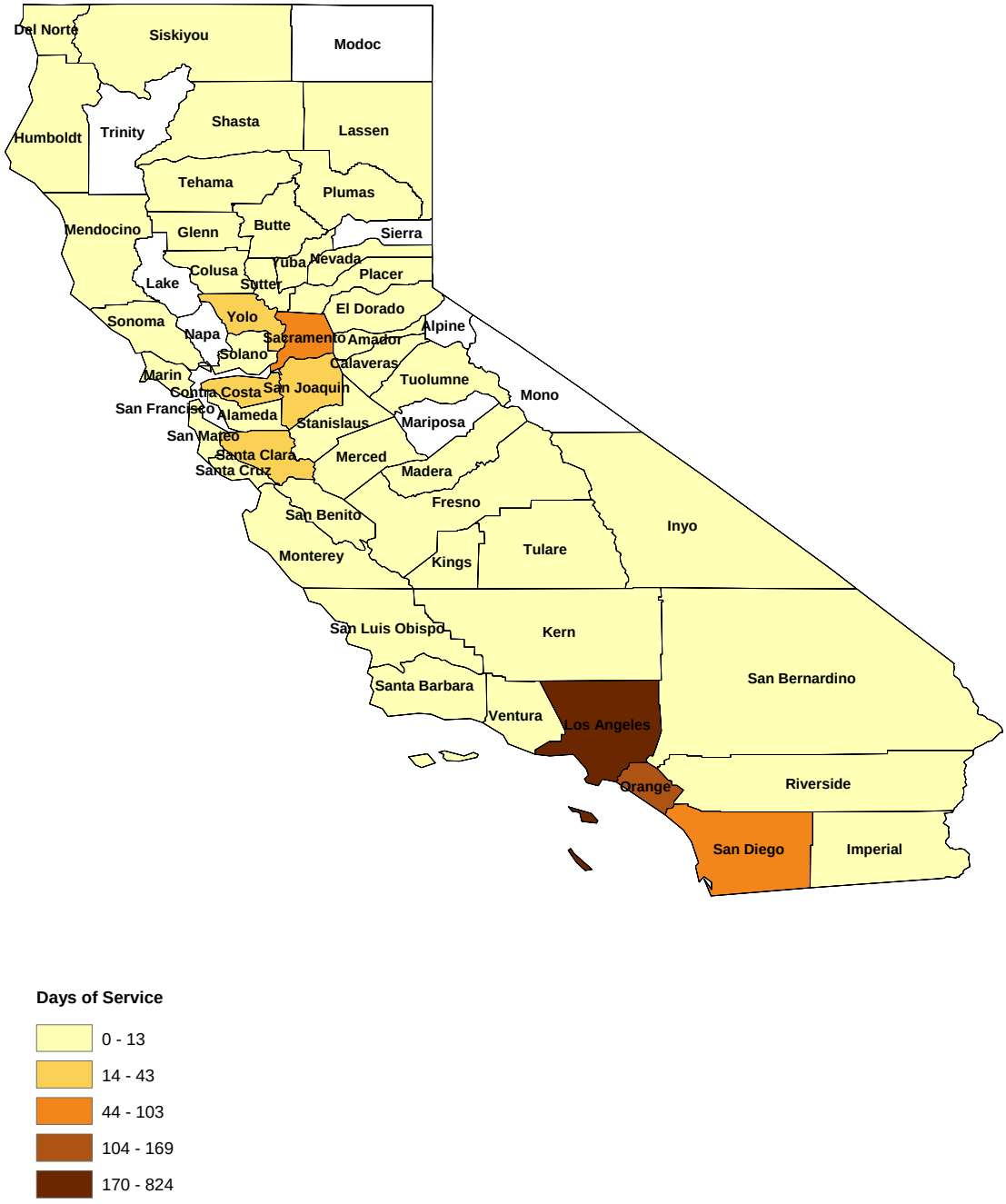
Vietnamese interpreter usage was heaviest in Region 4, with 49 percent of total usage, or 4,159 days of service (see exhibit 4.12.11). The county with the highest usage in the state was Orange County, with 3,665 days of service (88 percent of Region 4's total usage). Region 1 was the second greatest user of Vietnamese interpreters (26 percent), with Los Angeles County accounting for 2,185 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.11 Vietnamese Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



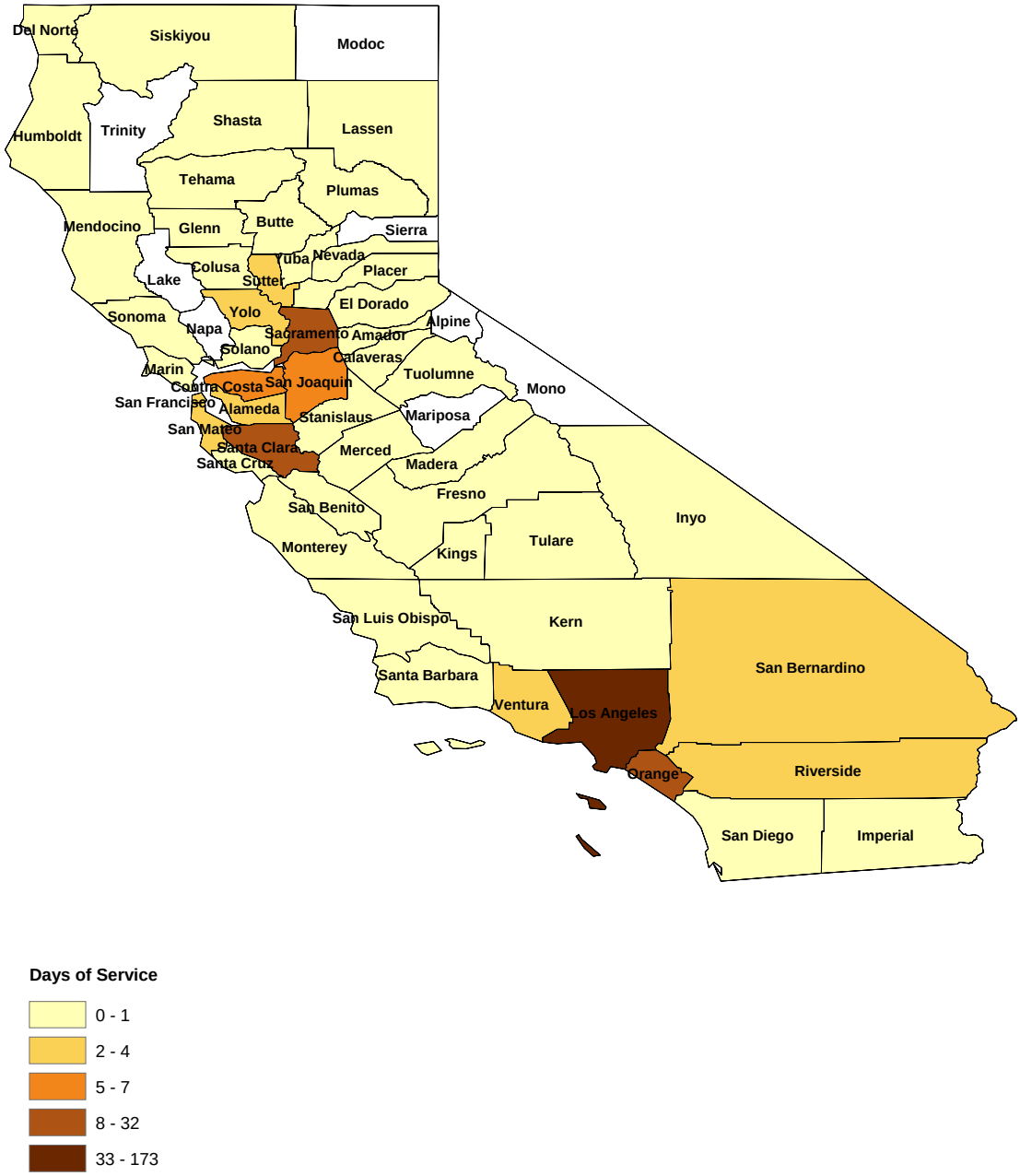
Farsi interpreter usage was primarily concentrated in Region 1 (see exhibit 4.12.12), with 77 percent of the total usage. With 824 days of service, Los Angeles County was the single greatest contributor to this concentration of usage. Region 4 accounted for another 17 percent of the total usage, largely due to the use of Farsi interpreters in Orange County (169 days of service).

Exhibit 4.12.12 Farsi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



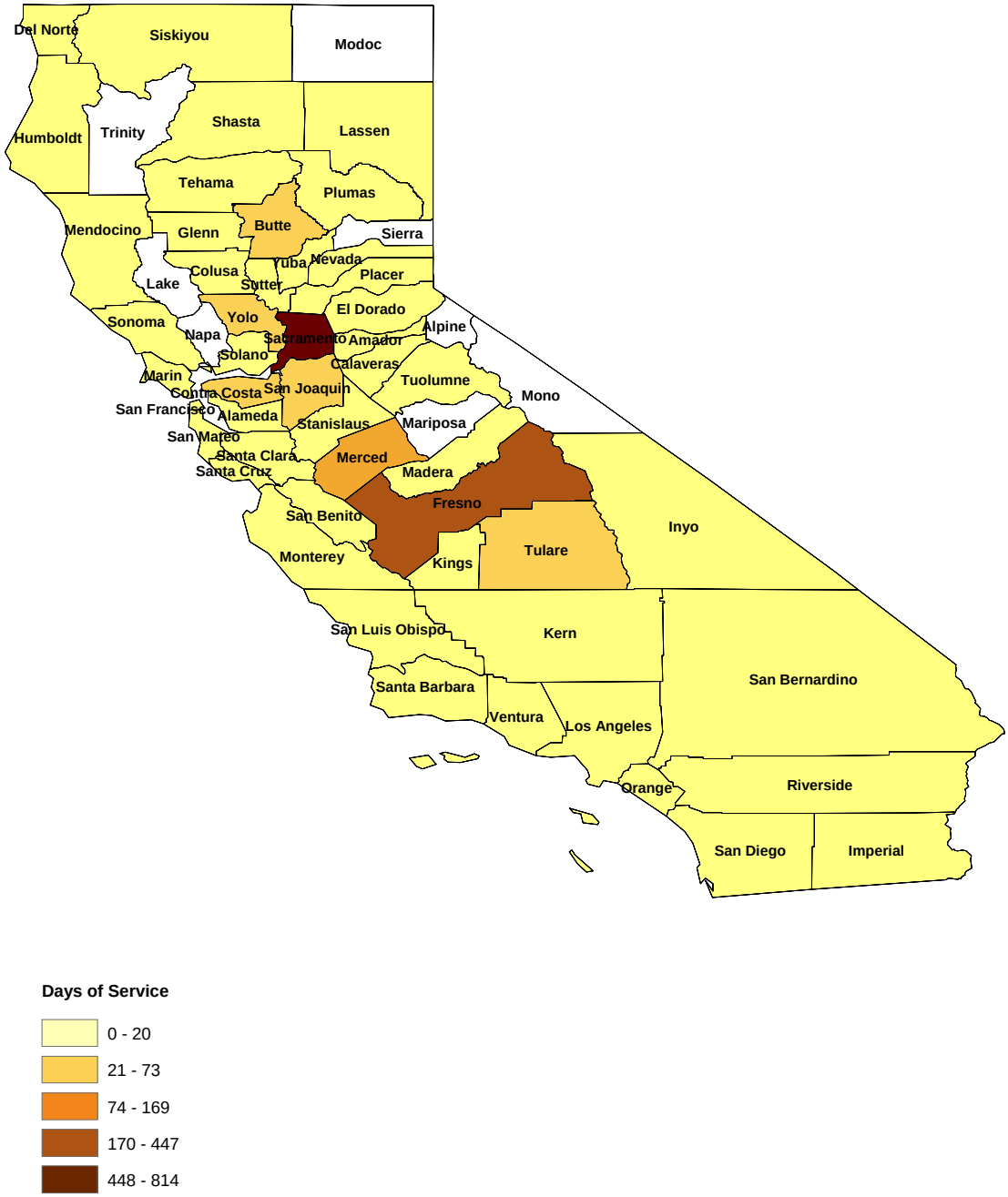
Hindi interpreter usage was concentrated in Region 1 (61 percent) (see exhibit 4.12.13). An additional 29 percent of usage was spread almost evenly between Region 2 (13 percent) and Region 3 (16 percent). The greatest contributor to the concentration of usage in Region 1 was Los Angeles County, with 173 days of service. Counties with the highest usage in the northern regions (Regions 2 and 3) included Sacramento and Santa Clara Counties (32 and 21 days of service, respectively).

Exhibit 4.12.13 Hindi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



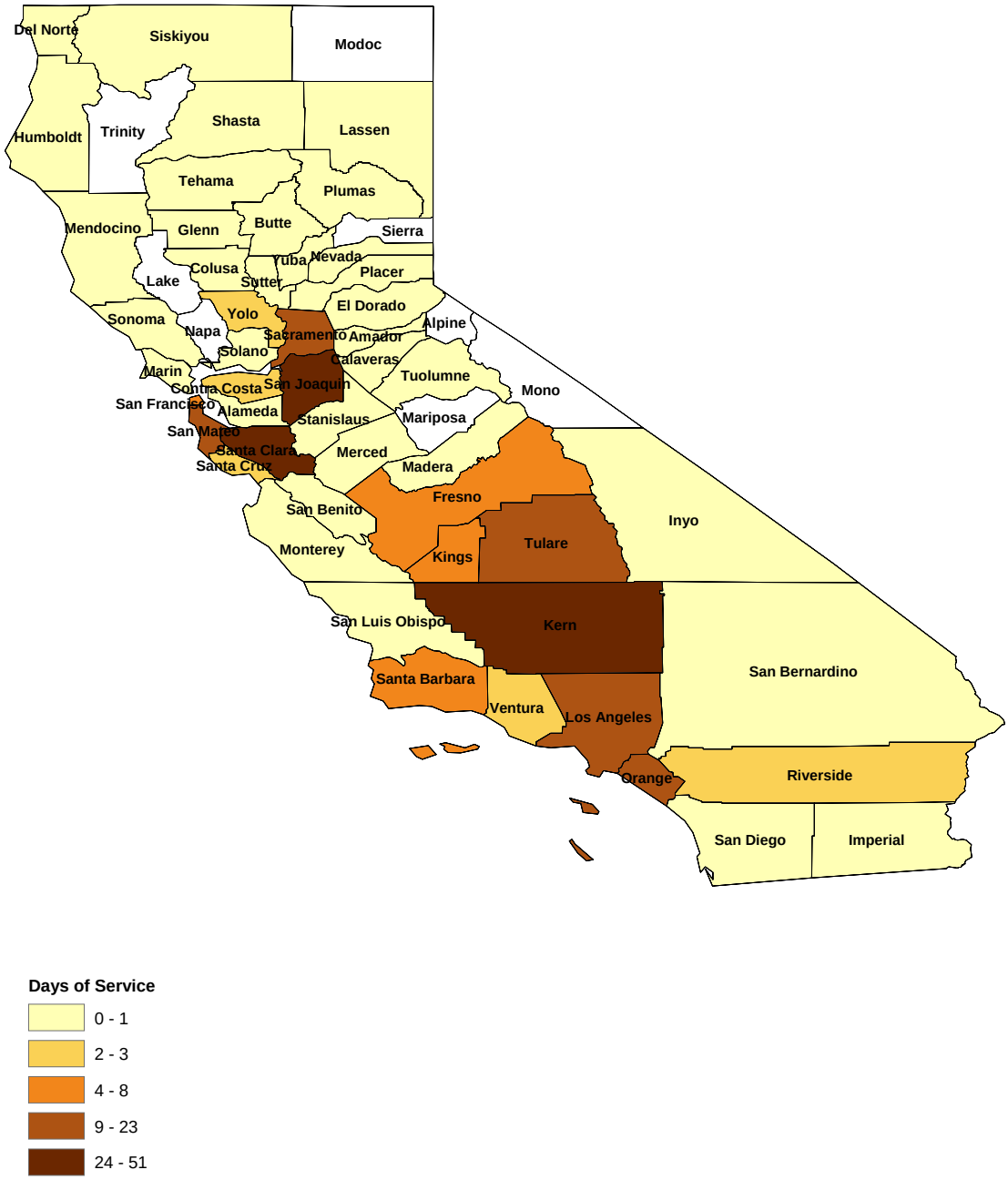
Hmong interpreter usage was overwhelmingly concentrated in Region 3, with 95 percent of total usage (1,726 days of service) (see exhibit 4.12.14). The single greatest contributor to this concentration of usage was Sacramento County, with nearly half the service days in Region 3 (814 days of service). Fresno County was also a high user, with 447 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.14 Hmong Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



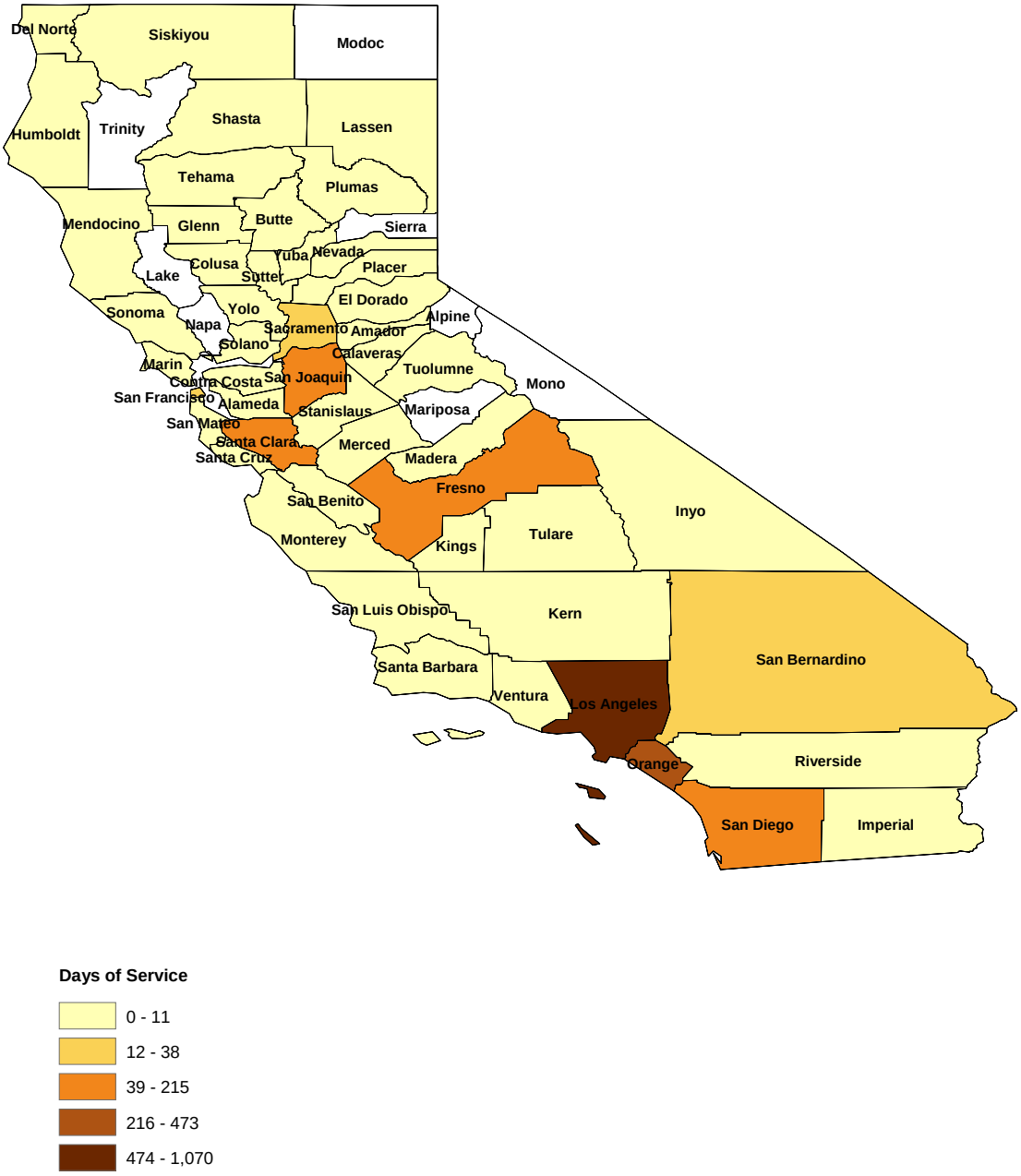
Ilocano interpreter usage was heaviest in the northern regions—Regions 2 and 3—accounting for 80 percent of total usage (see exhibit 4.12.15). Kern, San Joaquin, and Santa Clara Counties were the greatest contributors to the concentration of usage in the northern regions, with 51, 45, and 43 days of service, respectively. In addition, a pattern of usage seemed to be emerging in the more rural areas of the Central Valley (Region 3).

Exhibit 4.12.15 Ilocano Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



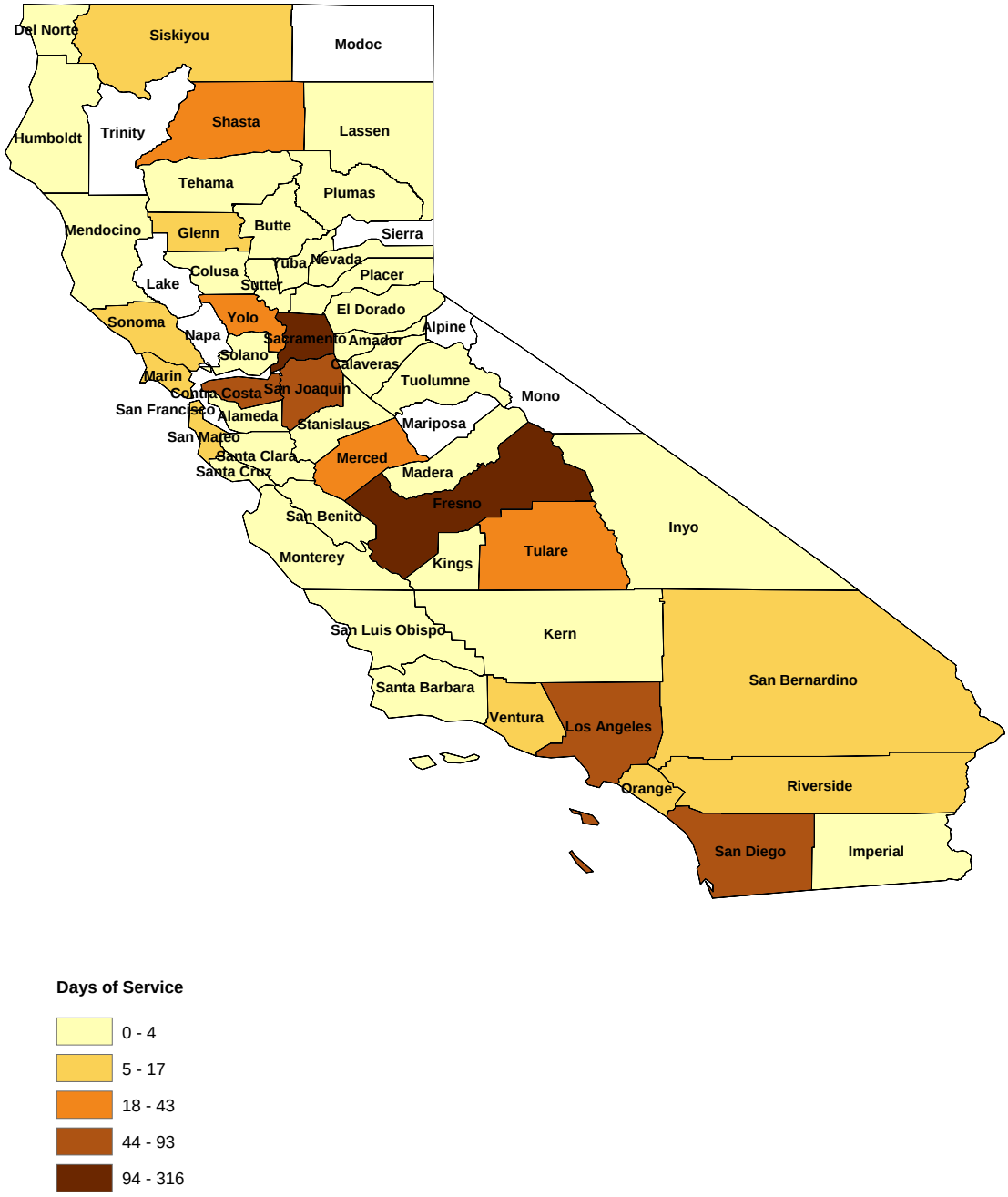
Khmer interpreter usage was concentrated in two southern regions—Regions 1 and 4. Together these regions accounted for 73 percent of the total usage (see exhibit 4.12.16). In Region 1, Los Angeles County had 1,070 days of service. In Region 4, Orange County had 473 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.16 Khmer Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



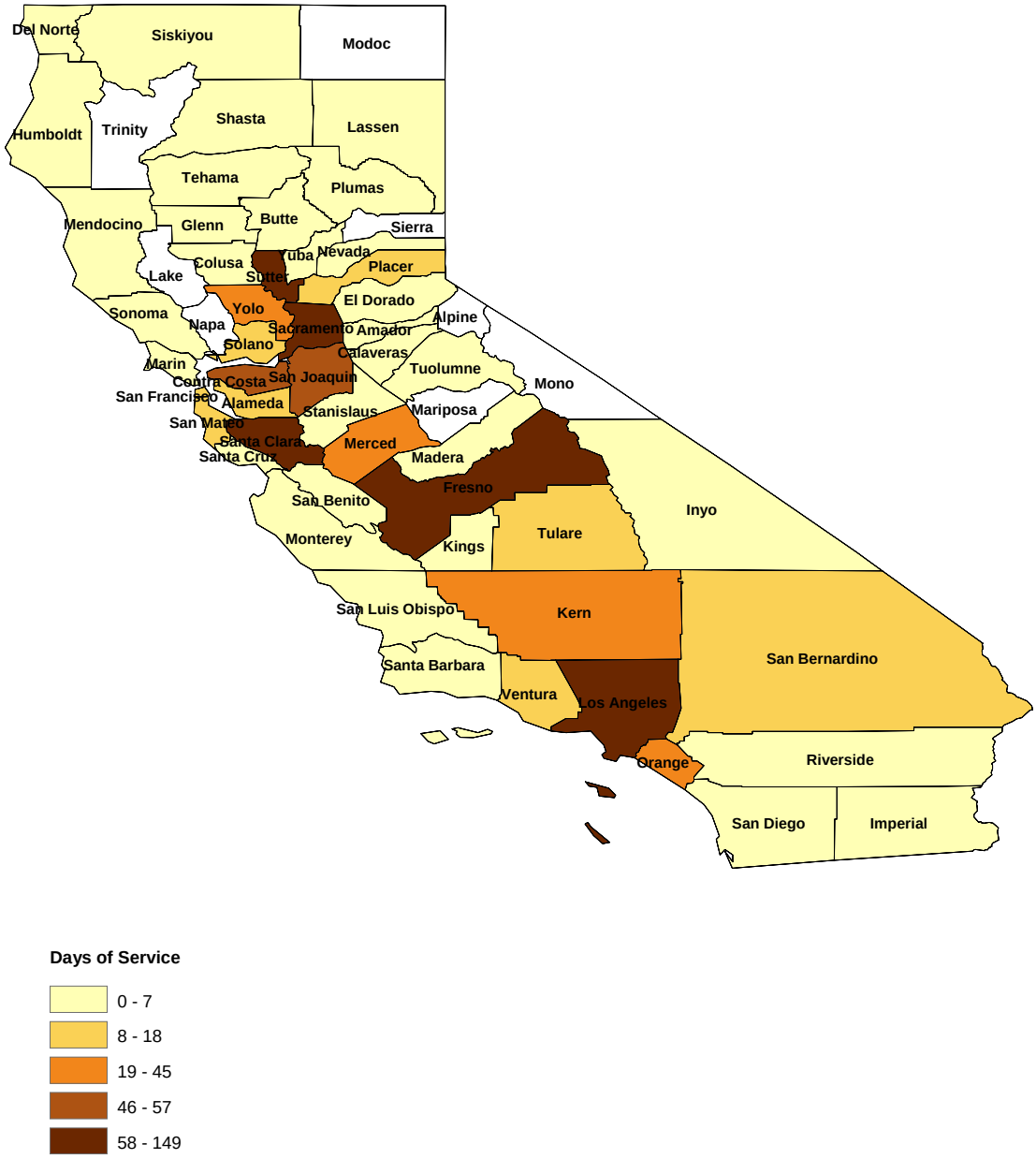
Lao interpreter usage was concentrated in Region 3 with 72 percent of total usage (see exhibit 4.12.17). The greatest contributors to the concentration of usage in that region included Fresno and Sacramento Counties, with 316 and 191 days of service, respectively. Pockets of moderate to light usage were also found in each of the other three regions.

Exhibit 4.12.17 Lao Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



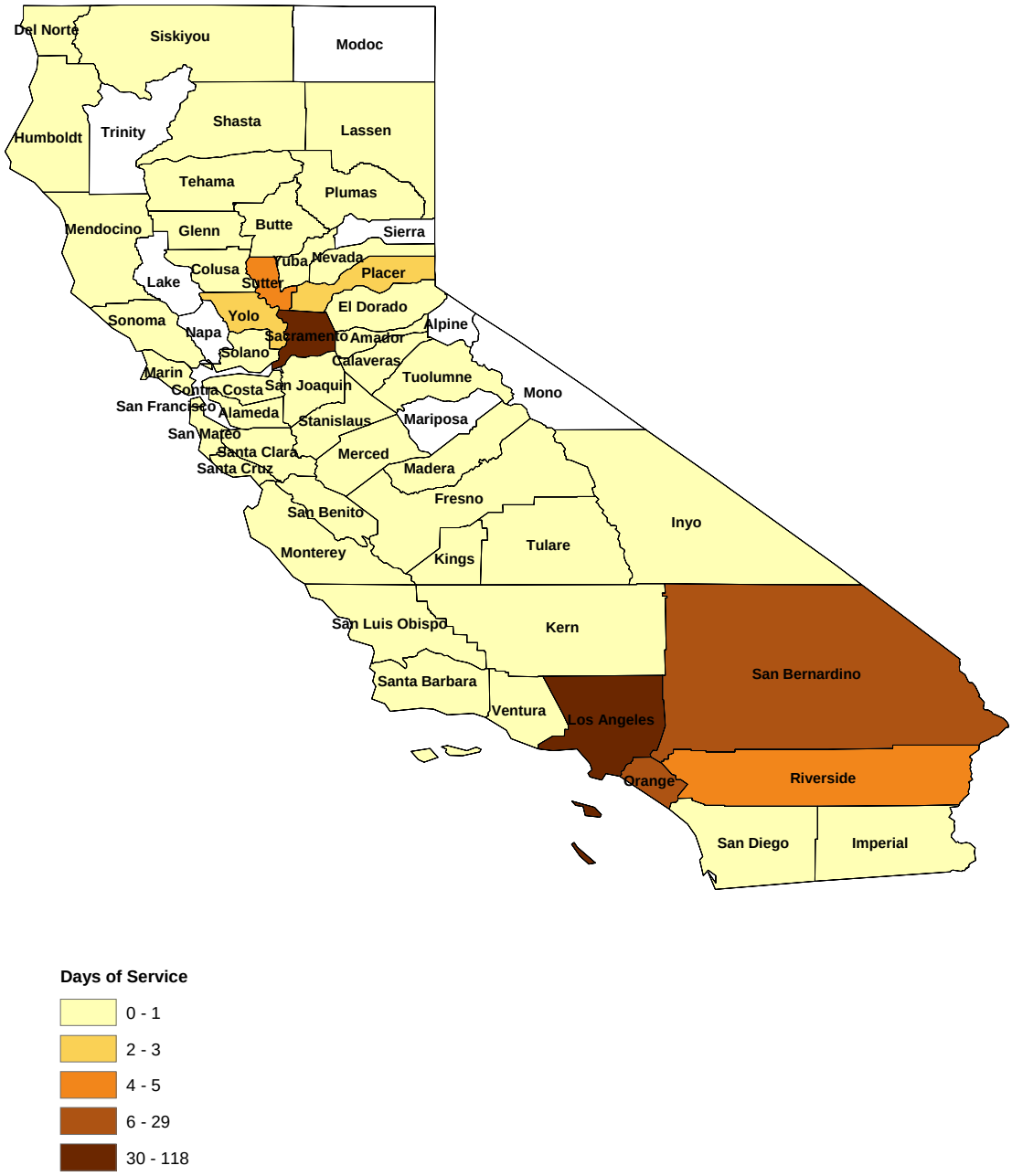
Punjabi interpreter usage was concentrated in the northern regions—Regions 2 and 3—although the highest use overall was in Los Angeles County (Region 1) (see exhibit 4.12.18). With great diversity in number of days of service, Regions 2 and 3 accounted for 79 percent of total usage (816 days of service). The greatest contributors to the concentration of usage in the northern regions were Santa Clara, Sacramento, and Fresno Counties, with 133, 121, and 111 days of service, respectively.

Exhibit 4.12.18 Punjabi Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



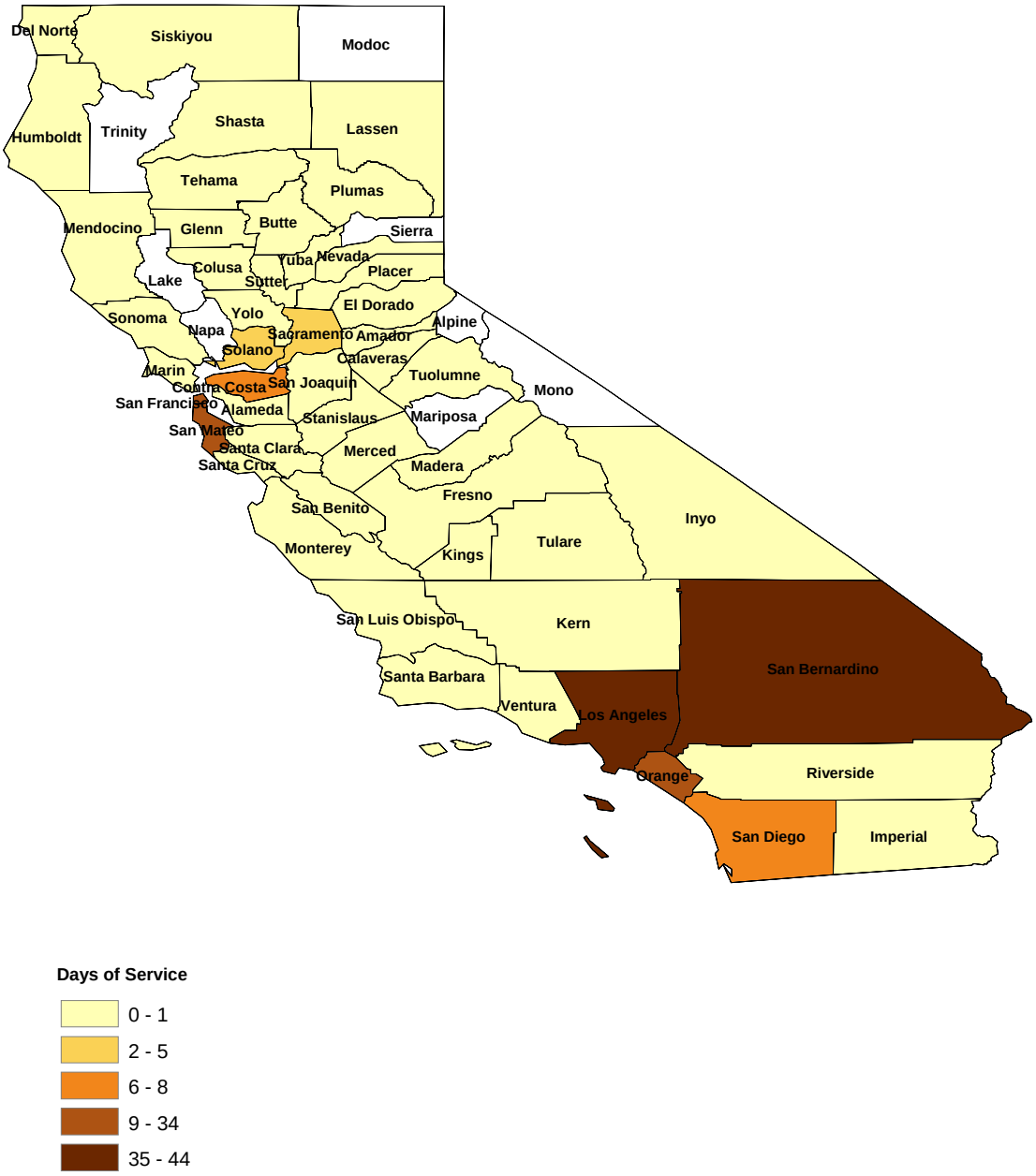
Romanian interpreter usage was primarily concentrated in two counties—Sacramento (Region 3) and Los Angeles (Region 1) (see exhibit 4.12.19). Region 3 made up 49 percent of total usage; Sacramento County was the single heaviest user in the state (118 days of service). Regions 1 and 4 each accounted for approximately a quarter of the total usage of Romanian interpreters.

Exhibit 4.12.19 Romanian Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



Samoan interpreter usage was primarily distributed among three Regions—Regions 1, 2, and 3—with 22 percent, 35 percent, and 40 percent of total usage, respectively (see exhibit 4.12.20). This distribution was largely due to heavy concentration in three counties: San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Of these counties, the single heaviest user was Los Angeles County, with 44 days of service.

Exhibit 4.12.20 Samoan Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005



Tongan interpreter usage was concentrated in the northern regions—Regions 2 and 3—with 74 percent of total usage (see exhibit 4.12.21). This concentration was largely due to the usage of three counties, Sacramento, San Mateo, and Contra Costa, with 84, 44, and 39 days of service, respectively. Light to moderate usage was also found in the southern regions.

Exhibit 4.12.21 Tongan Interpreter Days of Service by County, 2004–2005

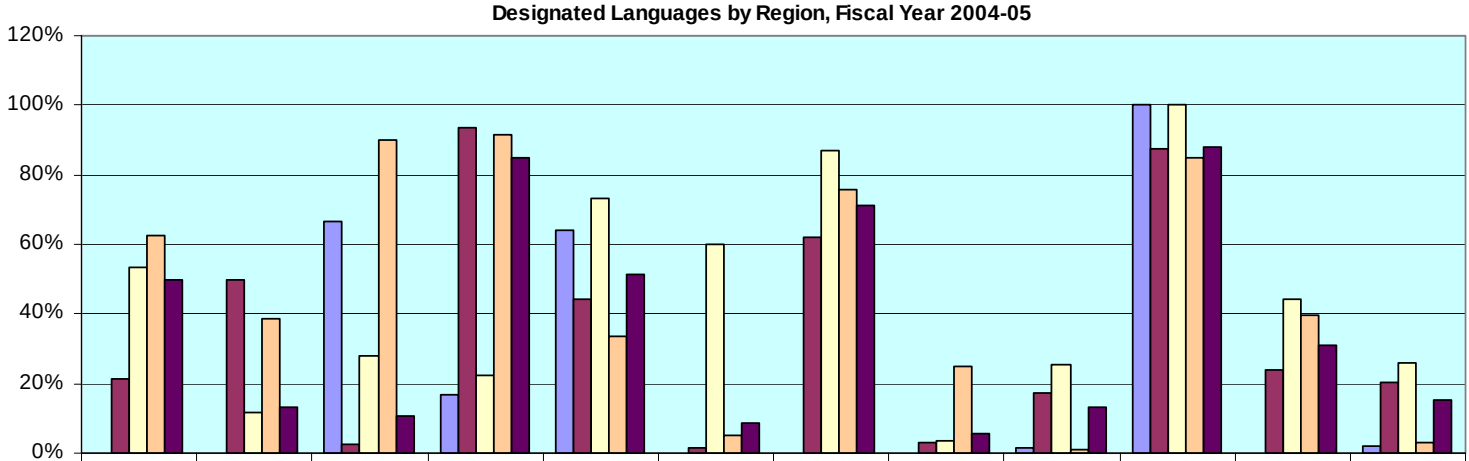
5. USE OF CERTIFIED AND REGISTERED INTERPRETERS

During the period covered by our analyses, certification tests were developed for four designated languages (Mandarin, Russian, Western Armenian, and Eastern Armenian). Usually, there is not a registered interpreter category for languages that have a certification process in place. However, fiscal year 2004–2005 was part of a transition period during which registered interpreters for these languages could temporarily remain in the registered category. The data collection system on court interpreter services grouped together certified and registered interpreters, so we could not learn the numbers in these categories separately, but we *could* distinguish them from interpreters who were neither certified nor registered. Fifteen percent of the interpreters for the designated languages and 35 percent of the interpreters for the 10 most-used nondesignated languages were neither registered nor certified.

Exhibits 5.1 and 5.2 present data on the percent of service days provided by interpreters who were neither certified nor registered for designated languages and the 10 most-used nondesignated languages by region for fiscal year 2004–2005. These data are shown graphically and in tabular form, and demonstrate clear variation between languages and region.

In the state totals for designated languages (exhibit 5.1) the percent of service days provided by interpreters who were neither certified nor registered ranged from 5 percent for Russian to 88 percent for Tagalog. Comparing regional totals, for designated languages the proportion of services by nonregistered or noncertified interpreters ranged from a low of 2 percent (Region 1) to a high of 26 percent (Region 3).

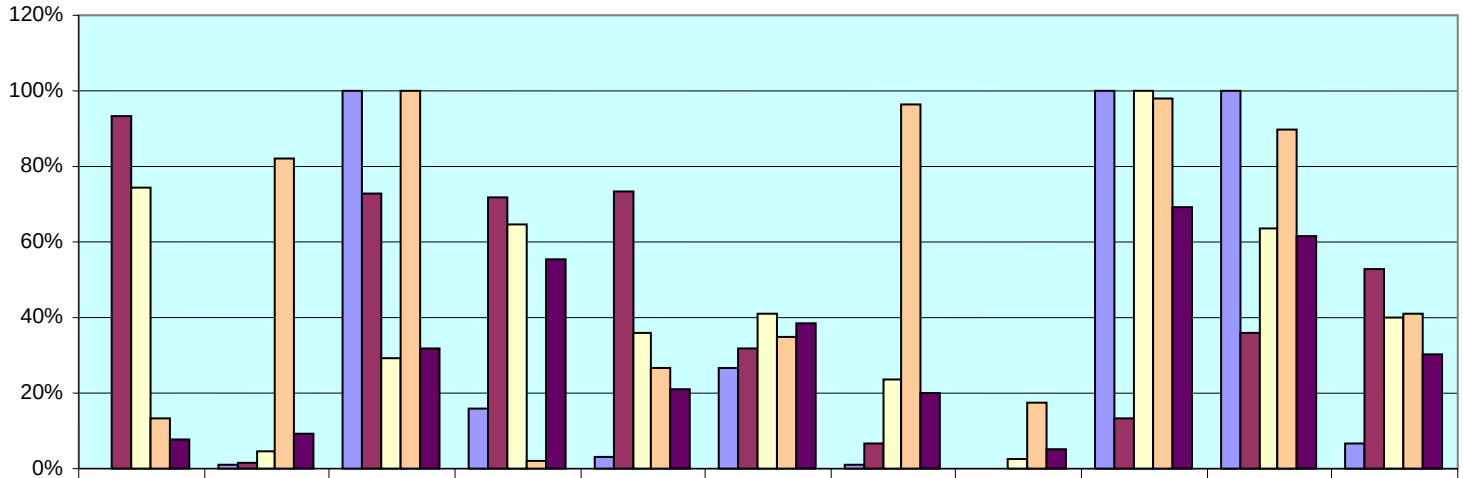
Exhibit 5.1
Percent of Service Days Provided by Interpreters Who Are Neither Certified Nor Registered for Designated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004-05



	Arabic	Armenian	Cantonese	Japanese	Korean	Mandarin	Portuguese	Russian	Spanish	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Total
Region 1	0%	0%	67%	17%	64%	0%	0%	0%	2%	100%	0%	2%
Region 2	21%	50%	3%	93%	44%	2%	62%	3%	17%	87%	24%	20%
Region 3	54%	12%	28%	22%	73%	60%	87%	3%	25%	100%	44%	26%
Region 4	63%	39%	90%	91%	33%	5%	76%	25%	1%	85%	40%	3%
Total	50%	13%	11%	85%	51%	9%	71%	5%	13%	88%	31%	15%

The proportionate use of nonregistered interpreter services for the 10 most-used nondesignated languages (exhibit 5.2) ranged from a low of 5 percent for Romanian to a high of 69 percent for Samoan. Interpreter services for the 10 most-used nondesignated languages ranged by region from a low of 6 percent (Region 1) to a high of 53 percent (Region 2).

Exhibit 5.2
Percent of Service Days Provided by Interpreters Who Are Neither Certified Nor Registered for 10 Most-Used Nondesignated Languages by Region, Fiscal Year 2004-05



	Farsi	Hindi	Hmong	Ilocano	Khmer	Lao	Punjabi	Romanian	Samoan	Tongan	Total
Region 1	0%	1%	100%	16%	3%	27%	1%	0%	100%	100%	6%
Region 2	93%	1%	73%	72%	73%	32%	7%	0%	13%	36%	53%
Region 3	75%	4%	29%	65%	36%	41%	24%	2%	100%	63%	40%
Region 4	13%	82%	100%	2%	26%	35%	96%	18%	98%	90%	41%
Total	8%	9%	32%	55%	21%	39%	20%	5%	69%	62%	30%

6. USE OF INTERPRETERS FOR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS

This section examines California court interpreter services for indigenous languages and dialects. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines dialect as "a regional variety of a spoken language." Indigenous languages are those spoken by natives of areas where other groups have come in and superimposed their own language as part of taking control of an area. For instance, many Guatemalans speak Spanish as a second language, while their first language is Quiche, Mixteco, Zapateco, or some other language. The analysis in this section excludes languages that are the official language of a country or a state within a country—for example, Punjabi and Gujarathi, which are official languages of states within India.

Exhibit 6.1 presents reported court interpreter service days for indigenous languages during fiscal year 2004–2005. Some counties did not distinguish in their reporting between Hmong and Mien, therefore those languages have been grouped together. Except for Hmong and Ilocano, the 2000 court interpreter study survey did not specify any indigenous languages. Although AOC provided that study with additional data on indigenous languages, it was by court interpreter appearances, rather than service days, so trends in these services cannot be analyzed, except for Hmong and Ilocano. Hmong stands out as requiring far more services than the other indigenous languages. Regional court administrators report having difficulty finding interpreters for indigenous languages, especially in remote counties.

Exhibit 6.1
Number of Interpreter Service Days for Indigenous Languages, Fiscal Year 2004–05

Indigenous Language	Region of Origin	FY 2004–05
Hmong (Mien)	Thailand-Laos-Vietnam-China	1,824
Ilocano	Philippines	74
Quiche	Guatemala-Mexico	67
Mixteco	Guatemala-Mexico	61
Tigrinya	Ethiopia	33
Chaldean	Assyria	8
Khmu	Thailand-Vietnam	6
Zapateco	Guatemala-Mexico	1

7. IMMIGRANTS AND TEMPORARY FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN CALIFORNIA

California is the state with the most foreign-born residents both numerically and as a percentage of its population. In the 2000 Census, 8.9 million California residents were foreign-born. This was 26 percent of the total California population and 28 percent of all foreign-born persons in the United States.[18]

From 2001 to 2003, documented immigration into the United States declined from 1.1 million to 705,000, reflecting tightening admission policies because of security concerns. Documented immigration into the United States has shifted in the last several decades, from Europe to Latin America, Asia, and countries in the Pacific.[19] Fifty-three percent of all documented immigrants were from Europe in the 1950s, which declined to 16.5 percent in 2001, and further declined to 14.3 percent in 2003. Thirty-four percent of all documented immigrants in 2003 were from Asia, 17.5 percent from Latin America, 6.9 percent from Africa. Documented immigrants from all these regions increased between 2001 and 2003. In addition to these documented immigrants, 3.7 million nonimmigrants were admitted to California in 2003 on temporary visas. The largest categories of such admissions were pleasure (2.7 million), business (649,000), students (100,000), and temporary workers (82,000).

There were also an estimated 2.4 million undocumented immigrants in California as of 2002, 26 percent of the nation's 9.3 million undocumented total.[20] About 80 percent of the undocumented immigrants are from Latin America, 10 percent are from Asia, 5 percent from Europe and Canada, and 5 percent from the rest of the world.

Carter and Sutch[21] documented large-scale trends in United States immigration that can be extrapolated to California's immigration history. While economic factors play the largest role in Mexican immigration into the United States—largely into California—the influx of Asian immigrants (also largely into California) seems to be attributable to both the "pull" of economic opportunity and the "push" of political and military activity. In a general way, this can be connected with the increased immigration of Filipinos since World War II, of Koreans since the Korean War, and of Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong since the Vietnam War. The outcomes of these conflicts included not only disruption and dislocation of families and political persecution, but also (1) increased exchange of information between people in these countries and the United States regarding each other's cultures and (2) relationships and marriages resulting from U.S. military and other U.S. citizens residing overseas in these areas.

Changes in U.S. immigration laws and commerce that began in 1965 and continued through the 1990s also affected immigration to this country by increasing the number of immigrants allowed

---

[18] 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P21.
[19] *2003 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*.
[20] "Undocumented Immigrants: Facts and Figures."
[21] S. Carter and R. Sutch (1998), "Historical Background to Current Immigrant Issues," pp. 290–366 in J. Smith and B. Edmonston (eds), *The Immigration Debate*, for the National Research Council, Washington, D.C., National Academy Press.

from non–Western European countries and giving preferences (1) to immigrants who are coming to the United States to reunite with family and (2) to immigrants with employment skills needed in the United States. Migration from non-European countries began to rise as preferences were given to those who either possessed vital employment skills needed in the United States or came to be reunited with family members.

Immigration from Mexico and Asia continues to predominate recent immigration, though there is also immigration growth for some groups from Europe, and to a lesser extent from the Middle East and Africa as well. The leading countries of origin indicate areas of the globe where political and economic forces are being felt by residents who choose to migrate to California and other parts of the United States.

California Immigration Trends

Over the last several decades, California has become the leading state of intended residence for documented immigrants entering the United States, particularly from Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific Islands.[22] In 2003, California was the residential destination for 176,000 of the nation's 706,000 immigrants, far outnumbering New York, the second most popular destination, which had 90,000 immigrants.

Looking at 2000–2003 immigration trends into the United States that could affect future court interpreter use for the designated languages, the following trends may be noted:

- Increases in the number of immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries, Central America, Mexico, and Chinese-speaking countries (including immigrants speaking Mandarin). Also, increases in the number of immigrants from India (Hindi and Punjabi), Pakistan (Urdu and Punjabi), and Russia during this period.
- Decreases in the number of immigrants from Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines (where Tagalog is spoken). And decreases in the number of immigrants from Armenia, Afghanistan (Farsi), Iran (Farsi and Armenian), Laos (Lao and Hmong), and Cambodia (Khmer)—all countries with a high utilization of court interpreter services.
- No change in the number of Japanese immigrants.

[22] *2003 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics.*

Length of Time Immigrants Take to Learn English

The statistics in exhibit 7.1 indicate that about half of the persons who speak another language at home speak English "very well."[23] The percentage is higher for those who speak Indo-European and "other" non-English languages, but still is only about two-thirds. The 2000 Census found 6.3 million California residents who did not speak English "very well." These findings are supported by the data discussed below on the number of students who are learning English in California elementary and secondary schools.

Exhibit 7.1
Population Age 5 and Older by Ability to Speak English "Very Well"
by Other Language Spoken, 2000

	Number Who Speak English "Very Well"		Percent Who Speak English "Very Well"	
	United States	California	United States	California
Total population age 5 and older	262,375,000	31,417,000		
Speak only English	215,424,000	19,015,000		
Speak Spanish:	28,101,000	8,106,000		
Speak English "Very Well"	14,350,000	3,802,000	51%	47%
Speak other Indo-European languages:	10,018,000	1,335,000		
Speak English "Very Well"	6,628,000	882,000	66%	66%
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages:	6,960,000	2,709,000		
Speak English "Very Well"	3,370,000	1,271,000	48%	47%
Speak all other non-English languages:	1,872,000	252,000		
Speak English "Very Well"	1,284,000	170,000	69%	67%
Total speaking non-English languages	46,951,000	12,402,000		
Speak English "Very Well"	25,632,000	6,125,000	55%	49%

According to the 1990 Census, 41 percent of immigrants in California who entered the United States after the age of 15 and had lived in the United States between 11 and 15 years had learned to speak English "very well." In comparison, in the 2000 Census (see exhibits 7.2 and 7.3), only 26 percent of this same category of immigrants learned to speak English "very well." This decline of immigrants learning to speak English "very well" is expected to increase the need for court interpreter services throughout California, even if annual immigrant remains constant.

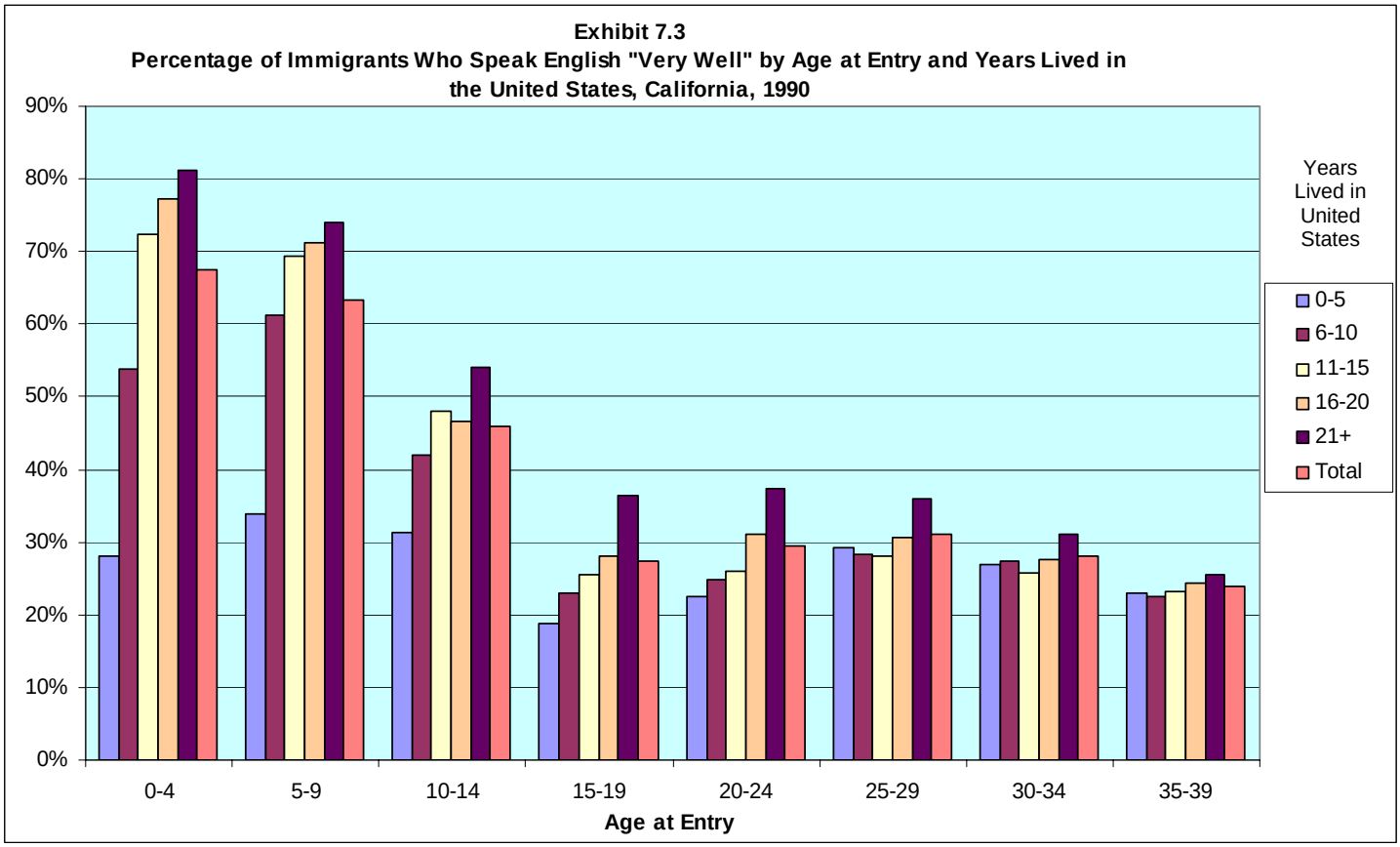
Responses to the 2000 Census indicate that less than half the foreign-born residents of California who entered the United States after the age of 25 learned to speak English "very well," even after 20 years of residence. In contrast, for those immigrants who entered the United States under the age of 5 years, the percent learning to speak English "very well" after 20 years of residence was

[23] 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P19.

81 percent. These rates of English acquisition indicate that the need for language interpreters in the California trial courts will continue for the life expectancy of current immigrants who entered as adults not fluent in English.

Exhibit 7.2
Percentage of Immigrants Who Speak English "Very Well" by Age at Entry and Years Lived in the United States, California, 2000

Age at Entry	Years Lived in the United States					
	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+	Total
0-4	28%	54%	72%	77%	81%	**67%**
5-9	34%	61%	69%	71%	74%	**63%**
10-14	31%	42%	48%	47%	54%	**46%**
15-19	19%	23%	26%	28%	36%	**27%**
20-24	22%	25%	26%	31%	37%	**29%**
25-29	29%	28%	28%	31%	36%	**31%**
30-34	27%	27%	26%	28%	31%	**28%**
35-39	23%	23%	23%	24%	26%	**24%**



One indication of the sizable pool of California residents who might need a court interpreter at some time in their lives is indicated by the persons counted in the 2000 Census who did not speak English "very well" (see exhibit 7.4).[24] The total is 4.8 million persons.

Exhibit 7.4
California Residents Age 15 or Older Who Do Not Speak English "Very Well"
by Native Language, 2000

LANGUAGES	Total Number of Native Speakers	Number Not Speaking English "Very Well"	% Not Speaking English "Very Well"
Spanish	4,192,827	3,134,117	75%
Tagalog/Filipino	529,917	192,382	36%
Chinese/Min	410,732	282,182	69%
Vietnamese	319,239	235,947	74%
Korean	234,493	167,070	71%
Persian/Dari/Farsi/Pushto	122,858	53,584	44%
Armenian	119,910	71,721	60%
Cantonese/Toishan	113,092	80,125	71%
Russian	96,526	63,859	66%
Japanese/Ainu	93,169	61,215	66%
Arabic	78,328	30,389	39%
German/Austrian/Swiss	76,193	14,612	19%
Mandarin	73,991	46,042	62%
Hindi	60,826	15,407	25%
French	57,095	13,905	24%
Panjabi/Punjabi	50,997	26,236	51%
Mon-Khmer/Cambodian/Khmer	48,967	33,047	67%
Portuguese	46,266	22,907	50%
Formosan/Fukien/Hokkien/Min Nan/Taiwanese	34,994	23,340	67%
Thai	31,284	21,890	70%
Miao-Hmong/Hmong	31,093	23,382	75%
Laotian	30,934	20,836	67%
Italian	30,125	12,853	43%
Urdu	26,485	7,788	29%
Gujarathi	26,366	9,445	36%
Dutch/Flemish	20,891	4,425	21%
Hebrew	20,641	5,867	28%
Ilocano/Igorot	18,538	10,120	55%
Indonesian	17,153	8,724	51%
Polish	16,447	6,556	40%

[24] 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P19.

Exhibit 7.4 *(continued)*
California Residents Age 15 or Older Who Do Not Speak English "Very Well"
by Native Language, 2000

LANGUAGES	Total Number of Native Speakers	Number Not Speaking English "Very Well"	% Not Speaking English "Very Well"
Syriac/Aramaic/Assyrian/Chaldean	16,062	8,813	55%
Tamil	15,576	2,323	15%
Rumanian/Romanian	15,568	7,105	46%
Hungarian	14,038	5,419	39%
Amharic/Tigrigna	12,944	4,756	37%
Telugu	12,832	2,514	20%
Kru/Ibo/Yoruba/Akan/Ashanti/Ewe/ Fanti/Ga/Ibo/Igbo/Nigerian/Twi/Yoruba	11,762	1,601	14%
Greek	11,568	4,509	39%
India, N.E.C./Asian Indian/Sanskrit	10,791	3,806	35%
Bengali	10,051	2,892	29%
Ukrainian	9,035	6,894	76%
Miao-Yao/Mien	8,519	6,073	71%
Burmese	8,125	5,563	68%
Turkish	7,876	3,113	40%
Swedish	7,656	1,377	18%
Serbocroatian/Bosnian/Slavic/Yugoslav	7,348	4,024	55%
Marathi/Konkani	6,649	954	14%
Samoan	6,412	2,565	40%
Czech	6,050	2,313	38%
Danish	5,421	543	10%
Croatian	5,355	2,220	41%
Bisayan/Ilongo/Visayan	4,957	2,067	42%
Kannada	4,717	392	8%
Tongan	4,549	2,410	53%
Malayalam	4,137	1,134	27%
Bulgarian	4,059	1,896	47%
Sinhalese/Maldivian	3,432	847	25%
Serbian	3,425	1,687	49%
French Creole/Haitian Creole	3,351	1,273	38%
Norwegian	3,120	384	12%
Finnish	2,595	801	31%
Afrikaans	2,585	183	7%
Bantu/Bembe/Kikuyu/Kinyarwanda/ Luganda/Ndebele/Shona/Tonga/Xhosa/Zulu	2,564	883	34%
Yiddish	2,505	901	36%
Cushite/Oromo/Somali	2,182	1,203	55%
Swahili	2,090	403	19%

Exhibit 7.4 *(continued)*
California Residents Age 15 or Older Who Do Not Speak English "Very Well"
by Native Language, 2000

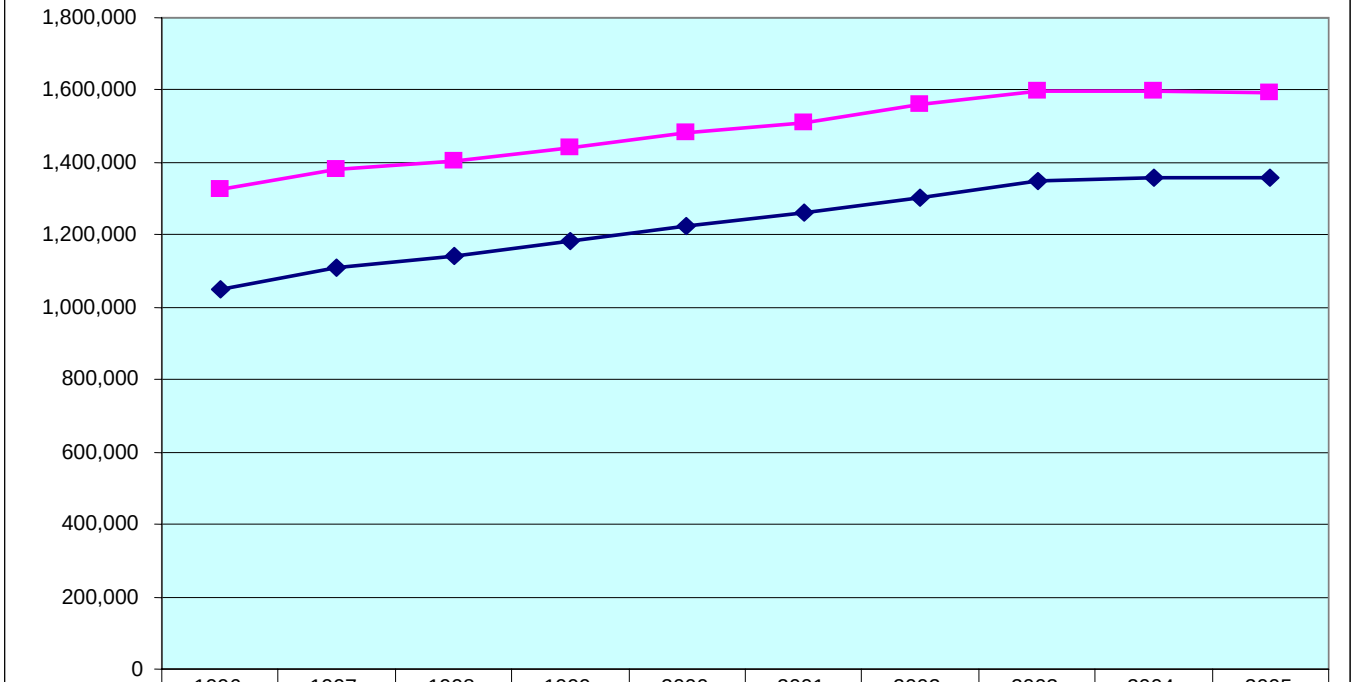
LANGUAGES	Total Number of Native Speakers	Number Not Speaking English "Very Well"	% Not Speaking English "Very Well"
Irish Gaelic	1,779	250	14%
Pakistan N.E.C.	1,777	1,117	63%
Malay/Bahasa	1,570	515	33%
Lithuanian	1,529	722	47%
Albanian	1,367	915	67%
Lettish/Latvian	1,106	426	39%
Slovak	1,021	365	36%
Nepali	795	315	40%
Kurdish	785	533	68%
African, Not Further Specified	618	90	15%
Jamaican Creole/English Creoles Belize/Guyanese	613	155	25%
Macedonian	562	222	40%
Mande/Kpelle/Mandingo/Mende	561	121	22%
Fulani/Temne/Wolof	525	237	45%
Icelandic	486	58	12%
Patois	473	62	13%
Chamorro/Guamanian	362	37	10%
Algonquian	199	32	16%
Navaho/Navajo	63	-	0%
Cajun	61	45	74%
Choctaw/Chickasaw	34	-	0%
Dakota/Assiniboine/Lakota/Oglala/Sioux	24	-	0%
Hawaiian	16	-	0%
Keres/Acoma/Keresan/Laguna/Zia	10	-	0%
Cherokee	8	-	0%
Pennsylvania Dutch	8	-	0%
Other Languages	31,251	16,640	53%
Total	**7,337,886**	**4,818,671**	**66%**

Native Language Trends Among Limited English Proficient Students

Language trends for limited English proficient (LEP) students in California schools are another indicator of trends in the population needing interpreter services. Between the years 1996 and 2005, the number of LEP students in California schools increased almost 20 percent from 1.32 million to 1.59 million.[25] Exhibits 7.5 to 7.8 present data on language trends in California schools from 1996 to 2005 for languages where the number of LEP students is greater than 3,000.

In general, the trends in the number of LEP students speaking a given language largely reflect the immigration patterns of the language's originating country. LEP Spanish-speaking students increased 29 percent between 1996 and 2005 (from 1.05 million to 1.36 million) and are now 86 percent of all LEP students in the state (see exhibit 7.5).

Exhibit 7.5
Trends in Spanish Speaking and Total Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996-2005



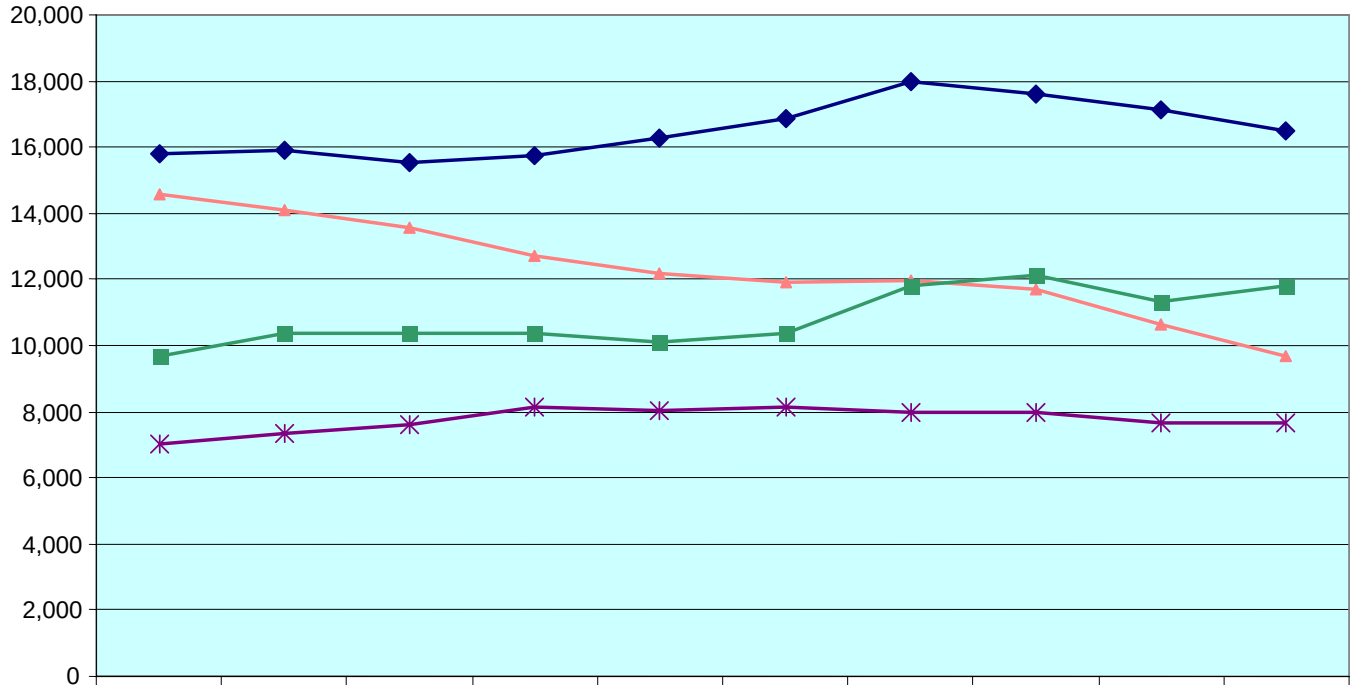
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Spanish	1,051,125	1,107,186	1,140,197	1,181,553	1,222,809	1,259,954	1,302,383	1,348,934	1,359,792	1,357,778
Total	1,323,767	1,381,393	1,406,166	1,442,692	1,480,527	1,511,299	1,559,248	1,599,542	1,598,535	1,591,525

[25] California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office. This section's information on limited English proficient students was accessed August 10, 2005, from the department's Web site: *www.cde.ca.gov/demographics/reports*.

During the 1996–2005 period, there were also significant increases in the numbers of LEP students who spoke Mandarin, Arabic, Punjabi, or Hindi as a native language. The number of Mandarin LEP students increased by 22 percent, from 9,655 to 11,825 (see exhibit 7.6). The number of Arabic LEP students increased by 45 percent from 5,287 to 7,646 (see exhibit 7.7). The number of Punjabi LEP students increased by 68 percent from 5,522 to 9,259, and the number of Hindi LEP students increased by 11 percent from 3,591 to 3,994 students (see exhibit 7.8).

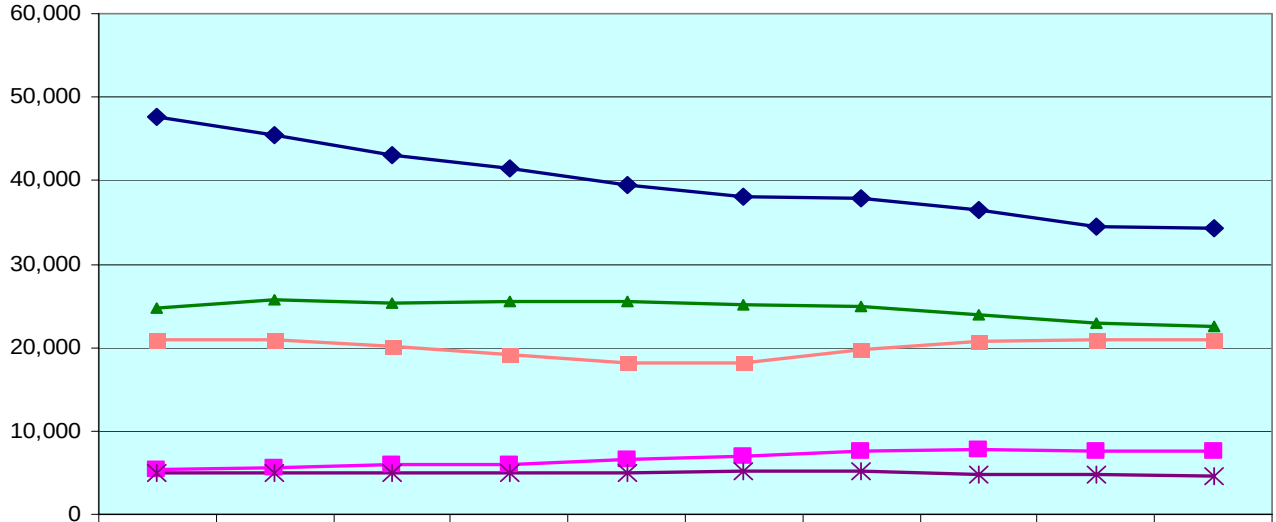
In contrast, during the same period, there were significant decreases in the numbers of LEP students who spoke Armenian, Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Hmong as a native language. Armenian LEP students decreased by 33 percent from 14,572 to 9,698 (see exhibit 7.6). Vietnamese LEP students decreased by 28 percent from 47,663 to 34,333 (see exhibit 7.7). Cantonese LEP students decreased by 9 percent from 24,674 students to 22,475 students (see exhibit 7.7). Hmong LEP students decreased by 27 percent from 31,156 to 22,776 (see exhibit 7.8).

Exhibit 7.6
Trends in Armenian, Korean, Mandarin, and Russian Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996-2005



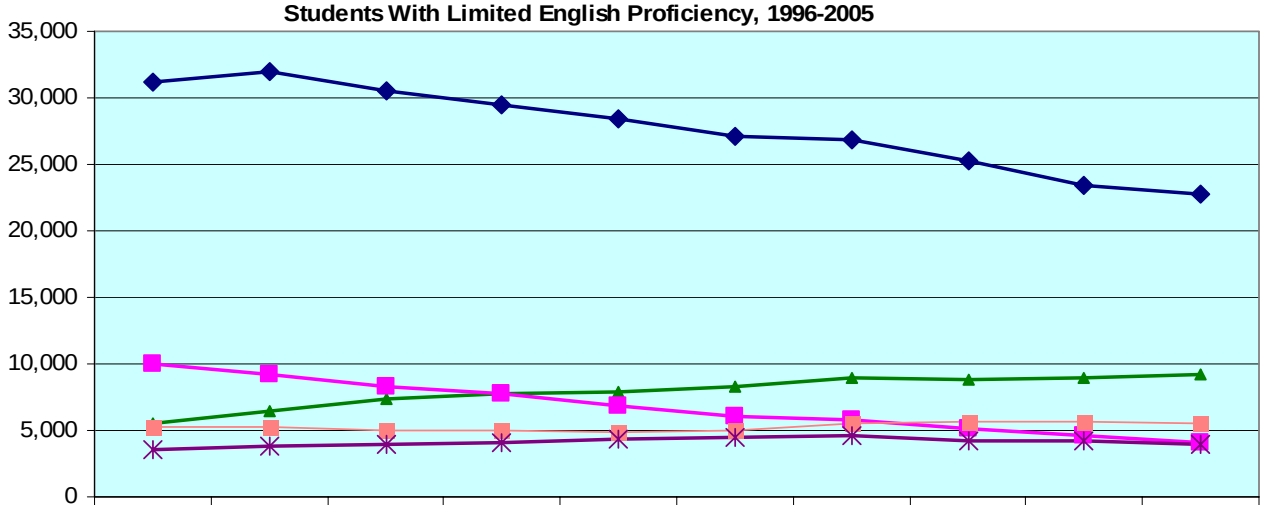
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Korean	15,792	15,884	15,521	15,761	16,279	16,874	18,002	17,627	17,132	16,463
Armenian	14,572	14,088	13,584	12,726	12,155	11,891	11,946	11,727	10,660	9,698
Mandarin	9,655	10,397	10,380	10,388	10,102	10,367	11,793	12,105	11,347	11,825
Russian	7,028	7,328	7,598	8,143	8,029	8,131	7,977	7,980	7,654	7,678

Exhibit 7.7
Trends in Cantonese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Japanese Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996-2005



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Vietnamese	47,663	45,530	43,008	41,456	39,447	37,978	37,797	36,574	34,444	34,333
Cantonese	24,674	25,714	25,360	25,556	25,509	25,089	24,945	24,004	22,867	22,475
Tagalog	20,950	20,844	20,062	19,041	18,193	18,157	19,813	20,650	20,894	20,939
Arabic	5,287	5,642	5,900	6,077	6,564	6,992	7,545	7,751	7,556	7,646
Japanese	5,042	4,970	4,967	4,969	4,927	5,092	5,122	4,814	4,764	4,582

Exhibit 7.8
Trends in Nondesignated Languages: Hmong, Lao, Punjabi, Farsi (Persian), and Hindi Speaking Students With Limited English Proficiency, 1996-2005



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Hmong	31,156	32,014	30,551	29,474	28,374	27,124	26,801	25,199	23,423	22,776
Punjabi	5,522	6,491	7,323	7,762	7,906	8,279	8,914	8,751	8,977	9,259
Lao	10,052	9,212	8,343	7,703	6,901	6,085	5,745	5,120	4,573	4,055
Farsi (Persian)	5,328	5,246	5,028	4,985	4,840	5,036	5,558	5,643	5,650	5,565
Hindi	3,591	3,822	3,964	4,101	4,294	4,411	4,548	4,251	4,172	3,994

8. POSSIBLE DECLINES IN INTERPRETER USE FOR SOME LANGUAGES

Since the first study of court interpreter services, which contained data for fiscal year 1994–1995, there have been declines in reported services for several languages. Between fiscal years 1998–1999 and 2004–2005, reported services declined for Arabic (-49 percent), Japanese (-44 percent), Tagalog (-39 percent), Cantonese (-29 percent), Russian (-9 percent), and Vietnamese (-8 percent). However, the changes between studies may be affected by data collection methods, as well as actual changes in services. The current report primarily used data from a new statewide information system as well as information systems from Los Angeles and Orange Counties. The fiscal year 1998–1999 study surveyed county court administrators and relied on their estimates.

There are several reasons why a decline in the number of interpreter days for a given language could occur. The number of limited English proficient immigrants in California who speak the language may decline because of net-migration to other states or net-migration to the country of origin.[26] The proportion of immigrants who are fluent in English may increase because of English acquisition or a higher proportion of new migrants' being fluent in English. The proportion of immigrants involved with trial court proceedings may decline because of factors such as improved socioeconomic status or changes in the age structure of the population.

[26] The emphasis is on net-migration because typically there are people migrating in both directions. It is the immigration minus the emigration that determines the effect on the pool of immigrants in California.

9. RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES TO BE INCLUDED IN STATE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

There is no recommendation to designate and certify a language based on the stated criteria. Analysis of the data considered in the preparation of this report leads to using three criteria (also used in the 2000 study) to select new languages for the interpreter certification program. First, court interpreter services for the language should be substantial; second, use should be increasing or relatively stable; and third, the use of the language should involve an immigration stream that is likely to continue. Hmong is the only language approaching these criteria that does not already have interpreter certification or a certification process being established. The use of Hmong interpreter services totals approximately 1,800 days of interpreter service annually and is holding at about that level. Immigration, while perhaps declining, appears to be continuing. Hmong immigration data are not directly available, because data on origin are collected by country, not language. One indicator of immigration trends for a language group is its public school enrollment of limited English proficient students. Enrollment of LEP students with Hmong as a native language has decreased from 32,014 students in 1997 to 22,776 students in 2005. The number of court interpreter service days for Hmong is likely to decline over the next 20 years.