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This newsletter article claims that Professor Taylor's foreign-language program at Jones University is a model of foreign language instruction. This conclusion is based on a study in which foreign language tests were given to students at 25 other universities. The study shows that first-year language students at Jones speak more fluently after just 10 to 20 weeks in the program than do 90 percent of foreign-language majors at other colleges at graduation. Despite these impressive statistics, I am unconvinced by this argument for two reasons. To begin with, the assumption here is that students from Professor Taylor's program have learned more than foreign language students at other universities. However, we are not given enough information about the study to be sure that this comparison is reliable. For example, the article does not tell us whether the foreign language students at Jones were given the tests. It only reports that the tests in question were "given to students at 25 other colleges." If Jones students were not tested, then no basis exists for comparing them to students at the other universities. In addition, the article does not indicate whether students at all the universities, including Jones, were given the same tests. If not, then again no basis exists for the comparison.

Furthermore, we cannot tell from this article whether the universities in the study, or their students, are comparable in other ways. For instance, Jones might be a prestigious university that draws its

students from the top echelon of high school graduates, while the other universities are lower-ranked schools with more lenient admission requirements. In this event, the study wouldnt tell us much about Professor Taylors program, for the proficiency of his students might be a function of their superior talent and intelligence. In conclusion, the statistics cited in the article offer little support for the claim about Taylors program. To strengthen the argument, the author must show that the universities in the study, including Jones, were comparable in other ways, that their foreign language students were tested identically, and that Taylors program was the only important difference between students tested at Jones and those tested at the other universities. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com