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INITIAL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Initial Motivational Factors in Foreign Language Learning

Synopsis:

This research paper investigates students' motivational factors to start learning a foreign language. To involve students in learning a foreign language, most non-English speaking countries have made the subject matter compulsory. One or even two foreign language courses are indispensable for academic advancement and career development.

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MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Abstract

This research paper investigates students' motivational factors to learn a foreign language. Research questions were: What are the factors that contribute to students' interest/disinterest in starting a foreign language? What is students' attitude in learning a foreign language? How do parental values and significant others influence one's decision to learn a foreign language? Will language requirement promote students to learning a language? A questionnaire scored on a five-point Likert scale was developed. The variables were: self-efficacy, enjoyment, heritage language, linguistic identity, perceived social values, perceived opportunities, course requirement, cost-benefit calculation, and environmental support/hindrance. Results were: motivation was related to participants' personal enjoyment, attainment values, self-efficacy, course requirement and school policy, heritage language, community values, significant others, and cost-effect calculation.

Key words: motivational factors, language requirement, foreign language interest, significant others, attitude and enjoyment.

Introduction

This research paper investigates students' motivational factors to start learning a foreign language. To involve students in learning a foreign language, most non-English speaking countries have made the subject matter compulsory. One or even two foreign language courses are indispensable for academic advancement and career development. However, many people in the United States seem to be unwilling to break away from the notion that English is the lingua franca, and thus believe that learning a foreign language is unnecessary.

According to Gardner (1998), "language belongs to a person's whole social being: it is part of one's identity, and it is used to convey [that] identity to other people." In addition to learning skills or grammatical rules, learning a foreign language also implies "an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviors and ways of being, and therefore, has a significant impact on the social

nature of the learner.” (William, 1994, p. 77) As the world becomes more and more connected, communication requires not just words, but also concepts of cultural perspectives, practices and products, which must be learned in a foreign language class.

Seeing the importance of foreign language skills, foreign language educators on college campuses have been enthusiastic about promoting foreign language education. Their goal is not simply aiming at motivating language learners to succeed and continue studying the target languages, but also at inspiring more students to become interested and involved in language classes.

Regardless the calling for foreign language learning, the 2009 survey on enrollments in foreign languages in 2,694 United States institutions of higher education (Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, 2010) reported that 180 universities had no enrollments in foreign languages. Of the remaining 2,514 institutes that responded to the survey, only 8.6% of college students enrolled in a foreign language class, same as the results found in the 2006 survey (Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, 2006). These statistics are quite shocking, given the amount of federal funding allocated to foreign language programs in public schools and colleges and the general acknowledgement that language communication with different nations is vital in national security concerns as well as in global economic competition.

But for what reasons are American students in general not motivated to learn a foreign language? Is it simply because American students in general conceptualize that English is the one language? Or do they believe that they are intrinsically unable to learn a foreign language? Is it because, as Thomas Matussek (2009) speculated on enrollment decrease in foreign language courses at UK, there is a lack of language learning requirements? Or is there a general lack of interest in learning a foreign language? Do university policies, gender, family background, and significant others play a role in encouraging or discouraging foreign language learning? Without an understanding of what exactly learners’ beliefs are, it is difficult to overcome these counterproductive attitudes towards foreign language learning. Any efforts to improve pedagogical practices, to implement government policies, or to develop language

programs will eventually end in disappointment. This research study intended to investigate the factors that influenced students' decisions in taking a foreign language course.

Literature Review

Gardner's definition of language, "Language belongs to a person's whole social being: it is part of one's identity, and it is used to convey this identity to other people. The learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviors and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner." (William, 1994, p.77). As the world becomes flat, communication requires not only words, but also concept of cultural perspectives, practices, and products, which must be learned in a foreign language class.

"Motivation may be construed as a state of cognitive and emotional arousal which leads to a conscious to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal or goals." (Dornyei, Language Teaching, 1998, p.126) Dornyei, 1998 "attempted to achieve a synthesis of the static and dynamic conceptions of motivation by defining it as a process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play....., or until the planned outcome has been reached." p. 118

Beliefs that learners have about themselves is called self-efficacy or "the judgments students hold about their capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to master academic tasks" (Mills, et.al, 2007, p. 417). Self-efficacy means confidence that students have in completing specific tasks (Mills et al., 2006). "Self-efficacy theory refers to people's judgment of their capabilities to carry out certain specific tasks and their sense of efficacy will determine their choice of the activities attempted, as well as the level of their aspirations, the amount of effort exerted, and the persistence displayed" Dornyei, 1998, p. 119. Most common reason for not learning a foreign language is related to

students' self-efficacy. However, self-efficacy can be a false alarm and may change overtime.

Performance success generally raises the sense of personal efficacy, while failure lowers it (Fantuzoo and McWayne, 2002, Klassen 2004, Hampton 1998, Lent Brown and Larkin 1984).

Learner perceptions may include both perceptions of oneself, and perceptions of the learning situation. Perceptions of oneself are defined as how students understand and make sense of themselves and their own learning, that is related to self-efficacy (Liskin-Gasparro 1998, Williams and Burden, 1999).

“Value: valence, incentive value, attainment value, task value, achievement task value. Attainment value (or importance), intrinsic value (or interest), extrinsic utility value, and cost.” (Eccles and Wigfield, 1995, p.215-25). “Attainment value refers to the subjective importance of doing well on a task with reference to one’s basic personal values and the needs”. Intrinsic interest value is the enjoyment or pleasure that task engagement brings about. Extrinsic utility value refers to the usefulness of the task in reaching future goals. ...Cost constitutes the negative valence of a task, involving factors such as expended efforts and time, and emotional costs.” (eg. anxiety, fear of failure) (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 120).

Attitudes may refer to two things, attitudes towards the learning situation (Gardner 2005) and attitudes toward the target community (Yashima, 2009). The construct may also relate to attitude to how students see themselves as “connected to the international community” p.146. Attitudes may be changed due to significant others, living communities, heritage and job opportunities.

Research Questions

- What are the factors that contribute to students' interest/disinterest in starting a foreign language?
- What is students' attitude in learning a foreign language?
- How do parental values and significant others influence one's decision to learn or not learn a foreign language?
- Will language requirement promote students to learning a language?

Research Method

Research Instrument

In order to understand students' motivation to initiate or not to initiate foreign language learning, a questionnaire of 30 statements scored on a five-point Likert scale was developed. The motivational scale was developed mainly on the basis of Dornyei's process-oriented theory (Dornyei, 1998; Dornyei, 2002). It also took into consideration additional motivational factors proposed in research of the past two decades (Humphreys, G., & Spratt, M., 2008; Dornyei, 1998). According to Dornyei (2002), students will consciously or subconsciously consider various dimensions (See Table 1) before they start a foreign language course. To have a comprehensive measure of their action-initiating motivation, it is necessary to have items assessing each one of these variables. However, it is also necessary to consider the limited time that one can get access to the students. To compromise the situation, the variables were combined into nine categories (see Table 2).

I. Perceived values	Heritage Integrative motives Instrumental/pragmatic motives Academic advancement
II. Macro context	External environmental stimuli Social norms and values Significant others Geographical location, SES
III. Perceived potency; Relevance and cost-benefit calculation	Self-efficacy Perceived goal difficult Fear of failure/Expectancy of success Priorities set for different goals Perceived Time and efforts to implement
IV. Personal attitudes	Interest in foreign language Attitude toward foreign language learning Attitude toward foreign language speakers
V. Goal-related dimension:	Goal proximity Goal harmony/conflict

VI. Educational context	Course Requirements Time conflicts Academic advancement
VII. Personal attributes:	Gender Previous language learning experience Major

Table 1 Motivation orientations of foreign language learners at the pre-actional stage (Dorniey. 2002)

Construct	Abbreviation	Definition
1. Self-efficacy/	SE	Perceived ability and confidence in achieving the goal of learning a foreign language.
2. Enjoyment	EJ	Pleasure of learning a foreign language and willingness to accept the challenge.
3. Heritage language	HL	Home languages or languages spoken by relatives.
4. Linguistic Identity	LI	Desire to identify with a linguistic community.
5. Perceived social values	PSV	Values or attitudes of one's community or social circles towards foreign language learning.
6. Perceived opportunities	PO	Perceived educational/career/ other potential opportunities closely related to language learning
7. Course Requirement	CR	Required course work to complete a degree.
8. Cost-benefit calculation	CBC	Time and efforts needed to achieve a goal.
9. environmental support/hindrance	SS&H	The persuasion or dissuasion of significant others Consideration of time, efforts, and conflicts when learning a foreign language (i.e. parents, friends, teachers, employers); support/hindrance of the socio-cultural environment (i.e. school, work)

Table 2 motivational categories, abbreviations, and definitions.

In order to ensure that the instrument included appropriate psychometric properties, the items from established motivation questionnaires, including Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (Gardener, 19850 and others (Coleman, J. A., Galaczi, A., & Astruc, L., ; Dornyei, Z., & Clement, R., 2001; Humphreys, G., & Spratt, M., 2008; Piquemal, N & Renaud, R. 2006; 2007), were compared and modified to fit this purpose of study. Additional questions were also developed based on interviews with college students and teachers. Initially, forty-two items were included.

To verify the construct in the questionnaire, the 42 items were subjected to a two-stage sorting procedure described in Agarwal (2011). The first stage was an “unstructured sorting” procedure, during which five foreign language professionals were invited to sort the items into “unrestricted” categories. The agreement of the categories ranged from 35% to 100%. Items that were ambiguous or did not fit well with others were either altered to remove ambiguity or deleted due to unfitness. After the first stage sorting, 32 items were kept.

The second stage of sorting was a “structured sorting”. Five language professors volunteered to sort the 32 items based on the categories given. The agreement rate was 93%. Again, for items that were placed in the wrong categories were changed or reworded.

The final version of the survey scales consists of 30 items (See appendix 1), assessing the nine dimensions of motivation at the beginning stage of foreign language learning. For purposes of statistical analysis, other questions such as gender and language learning experiences were used.

Subjects

Three hundred and five students from a small university in the Mid-West participated in the study. The survey questionnaire was administered in class at the beginning of the fall semester (2014). Respondents to the questionnaires included 109 males, 192 females, and four students whose gender was not declared. Regarding ethnicity, there were 200 Caucasian, 11 African American, 29 Hispanic, 6 Asian, and 25 foreign students. Five students stated having different ethnicity, and 25 stated they had mixed ethnicity.

Among these 305 students, 152 declared that they could speak another language. Two-hundred and nineteen students reported not having a foreign language course requirement and 147 said they were currently learning a foreign language.

Statistical Analysis

Of the 305 questionnaires administered, 26 were answered by international students. Since international students were not the focus of this research interest, those data were eliminated from this analysis. Of the remaining 279 responses, 31 returned questionnaires contained missing data. Therefore, the listwise deletion method was chosen before the factor analysis was conducted to ensure correct analysis.

To understand what motivated participants to enroll in a foreign language class, an overall Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted, using varimax rotation procedure, with the cut-off eigenvalue ≥ 1 . Additionally, items loading less than .40 were suppressed in the output for simpler interpretation. Separate PCAs were also conducted to see if there was any difference in motivation between groups of students with different foreign language learning experiences and between male and female students. Following the overall analysis, separate t-tests were run to compare differences between groups on each factor.

Results and Discussion:

The overall PCA showed that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .888 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 3589.494$, $df = 435$). The tests indicated that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. The following Varimax rotation resulted in seven factors, while the Scree Plot (Cattell, 1966) suggested five factors. On examining the variances explained, except the first factor, the variances explained by the rest factors distributed equally, ranged from eight to five percent. Also, each factor had at least three loadings. Therefore, it was decided to retain all seven factors, which all together accounted for 63.7% of the variance (See Table 1 & Table 2).

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.806	22.688	22.688
2	2.437	8.122	30.809
3	2.160	7.199	38.009
4	2.093	6.978	44.986
5	2.013	6.709	51.695
6	1.850	6.167	57.862
7	1.748	5.826	63.688

Table. 1 Total Variance Explained (all participants included except international students)

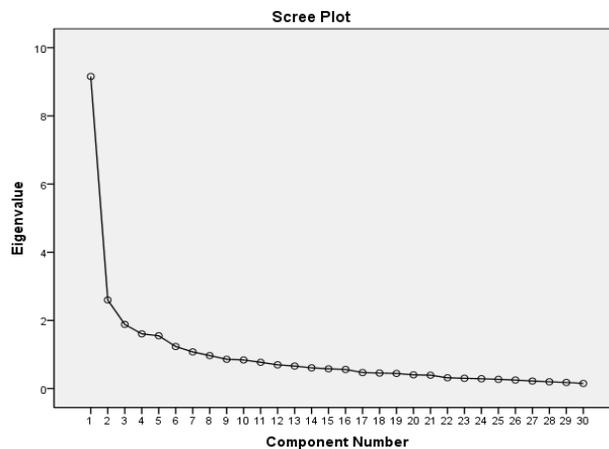


Table 2. Scree Plot (all participants included except international students)

Table 3 shows the items loaded on each factor. For simple interpretation, only items loaded larger than .40 were retained. Factor One, which explained 22% of the variances, seemed to be clearly related to participants' personal enjoyment and attainment values, either intrinsic or instrumental. Specially, participants seemed to take personal enjoyment as the most important motivating factor. College students' motivations to learn a foreign language were also found to be related to self-efficacy (factor 2), course requirement and school policy (factor 3), heritage language (factor 4), community values (factor 5), significant others (factor 6), and cost-effect calculation (factor 7). (see Table 3 Component Matrix)

Principal Component Analysis

Questions		Component						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I am always fascinated with learning a foreign language.	.864						
1	I really enjoy learning foreign languages.	.839						
6	I don't like to learn foreign languages at all.	-.803						
23	Foreign people and cultures have always fascinated me.	.748						
11	Studying a foreign language is important to me because it will allow me to meet and talk with a variety of people.	.736						
8	I would rather spend my time studying my core courses rather than learning a foreign language.	-.700						
26	I will take a foreign language course only if it is required.	-.689						
30	Knowing a foreign language isn't really an important goal in my college life.	-.655						
3	I should speak only one language and be indifferent to other languages.	-.635						
5	I believe I can learn a language if I work hard at it.	.630						
16	Knowing a foreign language opens up a wide range of opportunities for my future.	.602						
17	I am afraid I do not have time to learn a foreign language		.753					
28	I always find foreign languages to be difficult.		.668					
18	I don't have much ability to learn a foreign language.		.667					
19	I am learning a foreign language to complete my required course work.			.831				
12	Foreign language is not required for my major.			-.782				
27	There are school policies that encourage students to take foreign language courses.			.550				
21	Learning my parents' language will help me connect with my extended family.				.893			
25	I want to learn a foreign language so that I can communicate with my relatives who speak a language other than English.				.820			
14	I have always wanted to understand my heritage language.				.580			
9	American people are becoming aware of the importance of foreign language learning.					.667		
7	People in my community generally think it is good to know a foreign language.					.645		
24	People around me in general believe that learning a foreign language is just a normal part of life.					.485		
4	I take foreign language classes because my parents/spouse/supervisors encourage me to.						.789	
2	My parents/teachers/friends have always stressed the importance of learning a foreign language.						.635	
15	My teacher/advisor strongly suggested that I learn a foreign language.						.486	
13	I usually find time conflicts when trying to enroll in a foreign language course.							-.588
20	Learning a foreign language has nothing to do with my career development in the long run.							-.526
29	People who can use more than one language have more educational opportunities than those who do not.							.495

Table 3 Component Matrix

In order to understand whether students with different foreign language learning experiences would rate motivation differently, PCAs were run on those who were taking an FL class (G1), and on those

who were not (G2) at the time the questionnaires were filled. The PCAs indicated nine factors for G1 and seven factors for G2 with 66.4% & 65.6% of variances explained. Some students who did not take a foreign language claimed that they already knew a foreign language. It seemed to be reasonable to find out what factors demotivated those who absolutely had no foreign language experience and did not wish to learn a foreign language (G3). Therefore, a third PCA was conducted with only these students included in the analysis (G3). For this group, PCA also extracted seven factors. Table 4 shows the factors extracted for each group and the variances explained by each factor. (Details of PCA outputs can be found in the appended documents: Component Matrix_FL & Component Matrix_Taking FL.)

Factor	Taking FL=G1	Variances Explained	Not Taking FL =G2	Variances Explained	FL Exp.=G3	Variance Explained
1	Enjoyment/ Attainment values	12.126	Enjoyment/ Attainment values	19.474	Enjoyment/ Attainment values	16.115
2	Attitudes	8.665	Self-Efficacy	8.783	Course Requirement	9.842
3	Course Requirement	7.431	Community Values	8.467	Perceived Opportunities	9.128
4	Significant others	7.182	Perceived Opportunities	8.069	Self-Efficacy	8.501
5	Perceived Opportunities	7.150	Heritage Language	7.618	Community Values	8.278
6	Heritage Language	6.753	Course Requirement	6.956	Heritage Language	7.419
7	Cost-benefit Calculation.	6.523	Significant Others	6.267	Significant Others	5.925
		55.83		65.63		69.98

Table 4 Factors and variances explained for students who took (G1) and did not take (G2) FL classes

Although the Scree Plot suggested fewer factors for G1, and G2. Upon examining the Scree Plot and explained variances, and for comparison purposes, seven factors for all groups were retained, with 55.83%, 65.63%, and 69.98% of the variances explained.

Comparing the three outputs, it is interesting to find that regardless of foreign language learning experience, C However, for those who did not take an FL class, regardless their foreign language backgrounds, self-efficacy and community values seemed to play an important role in their decision to take a foreign language. On the other hand, students who were taking a foreign language class considered cost-benefit calculation an important factor.

In order to see if each factor was significantly different between G1 and G2, a series of t-tests between the two groups were conducted. Items loaded on each factor from the overall factor analysis were added and served as the basis for comparison. It was found that G1 and G2 were significantly different in their view of Significant Others ($t(273) = 2.865, p = .004$) and Self-Efficacy ($t(273) = -7.084, p = .000$), and Perceived Opportunities ($t(271) = 3.321, p = .000$). Those who were not taking foreign languages, were more concerned about their ability in learning a foreign language successfully. Secondly, parents, teachers, and significant others played an important role in students' decision of taking a foreign language. Although, PCA failed to extract perceived opportunities as an important factor in G1, the t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between G1 and G2 (Table 5, 6, & 7).

Taking FL		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self Efficacy	G1	127	7.2992	2.47628	.21973
	G2	148	9.4595	2.55917	.21036
t-test for Equality of Means					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Self Efficacy	Equal variances assumed	-7.084	273	.000	-2.16025
	Equal variances not assumed	-7.101	269.071	.000	-2.16025

Table_5: t-test between G1 and G2 on differences in Self-Efficacy

Taking FL		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Significant Others	1	126	9.2381	2.47363	.22037
	2	149	8.4228	2.24265	.18372
t-test for Equality of Means					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Significant Others	Equal variances assumed	2.865	273	.004	.81528
	Equal variances not assumed	2.842	255.077	.005	.81528

Table6 : t-test between G1 and G2 on differences in Significant Others

Taking FL		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perceived Opportunities	1	125	14.4400	1.79336	.16040
	2	148	13.6419	2.12215	.17444
		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Perceived Opportunities	Equal variances assumed	3.321	271	.001	.79811
	Equal variances not assumed	3.368	271.000	.001	.79811

Table7 : t-test between G1 and G2 on differences in Perceived Opportunities

Gender differences have been observed in many studies. Female students were reported to be more willing to learn a foreign language than male students (Table 5). In order to understand what motivates male and female to study an FL, two separate PCAs were run on these two groups. The PCA extracted nine factors on male participants and seven factors on female participants. After examining the Scree Plots and explained variances, seven factors from each analysis were retained.

Table 8 shows factors extracted from these two analyses. Enjoyment and attainment values were rated as the most important factor that dominated their decision to learn an FL. Both male and female participants viewed Perceived Opportunities, Self-Efficacy, Heritage Language, and Significant Others as important factors that affected their willingness to take a foreign language. However, female students would take into consideration the Cost-Benefit Calculation factor when deciding to study an FL, whereas male students would take Community Values into consideration. In order to see if these differences are in fact statistically significant, separate t-tests were conducted on Course Requirement, Community Values, and Cost-Benefit Calculation.

Factor	Female	Variances Explained	Male	Variances Explained
1	Enjoyment/ Attainment values	22.435	Enjoyment/ Attainment values	18.912

2	Perceived Opportunities	8.514	Self-Efficacy	8.729
3	Self-Efficacy	8.288	Course Requirement	8.072
4	Heritage Language	7.706	Heritage Language	7.938
5	Cost-benefit Calculation	6.805	Perceived Opportunities	6.659
6	Significant others	6.236	Community Values	6.616
7	Course Requirement	6.212	Significant Others	6.354
		66.19		63.28

Table 8. Factors and variances explained for female and male students.

First, T-tests on Course Requirement revealed that there was a significant difference in the rating for male (M=9.2626, SD= 1.34) and female (M=8.9143, SD= 1.43), $t(272)=1.975$, $P=.049$. These results suggested that though both male and female students considered course requirement important in their decision making when enrolling in an FL class, males would weigh this factor as more important than female students.

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Course Requirement	Male	99	9.2626	1.34457	.13513
	Female	175	8.9143	1.43382	.10839
t-test for Equality of Means					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Course Requirement	Equal variances assumed	1.975	272	.049	.34834

Table 9. T-test subjects on Course Requirement between male and female.

Second, the t-test comparing ratings on Community Values between male (M=9.57, SD=2.117) and female students (M=10.397, SD=2.111) showed significant differences ($t(269)=-3.082$, $p=.002$). These

results demonstrate that male students are more likely to be influenced by community values than female students.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Community Values	Male	95	9.5684	2.11707	.21721
	Female	176	10.3977	2.11141	.15915

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Community Values	Equal variances assumed	-3.082	269	.002	-.82931
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.080	192.263	.002	-.82931

Table 10. T-test on Community Values between female and male students.

Although the PCA on female students extracted Cost-Benefit Calculation as an important factor, but not on male students, the t-test on the variable between the two groups did not indicate significant differences ($t(271)=1.685, p=.093$).

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Cost Benefit Calculation	1	98	9.5612	1.71750	.17349
	2	175	9.2114	1.60312	.12118

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Cost Benefit Calculation	Equal variances assumed	1.685	271	.093	.34980
	Equal variances not assumed	1.653	189.583	.100	.34980

Table 11. T-test on Cost-Benefit Calculation between genders.

Pedagogical Implications and Conclusions

For recruitment and retention, instructors need to make their course enjoyable in a non-threatening atmosphere. On campus and off campus activities are essential to attract and keep students interested in the target language. Also, foreign language clubs are crucial to make students realize how important it is to know a foreign language.

Instructors need to think of ways to make the foreign language class attractive to students. For instance, it is important to include different kinds of activities that make students engage in meaningful conversations with peers. These dialogs must be authentic or they must mimic real situations as if they were in the foreign country. When drill is necessary, physical activities can be used to motivate repetition.

Self-efficacy is a very important factor; therefore, instructors need to help students be successful and constructive feedback is essential. Instructors must understand that students have multiple intelligences; therefore, different modes of learning should be used. On the other hand, when assessing students, teachers should tag on multiple intelligences to help students succeed in learning a foreign language.

Course requirement and community values together shared 14% of the total variances. In other words, to encourage students to take a foreign language, school administrators should take measures to create a foreign language learning atmosphere or community on campus. For instance, cultural activities should be emphasized during academic semesters. Also, they should make students understand the importance of foreign languages in the global community and that it is essential to their future career development.

Regarding gender differences, male students were more concerned about course requirements and female students gave more importance to community values. In other words, males are more practical and females are more socially oriented. Based on these results, different recruitment and retention strategies must be used.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to one Midwestern small university. Students mostly came from rural areas, many of whom are first generation university students. Due to programs accreditation assessments, many faculty members are concerned about students deviating from taking both, their major courses and foreign language courses. Consequently, results may not be generalized to explain motivations of urban areas student bodies.

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Appendix

Survey questionnaire

Questionnaire on Foreign Language Learning

Code: _____

The statements in this questionnaire describe some attitudes towards foreign language learning. For each statement, please put a “√” mark to indicate whether you “strongly agree”, “agree”, are “neutral”, “disagree”, or “strongly disagree”.

	Strongly Disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
1. I really enjoy learning foreign languages.					
2. My parents/teachers/friends have always stressed the importance of learning a foreign language.					
3. I should speak only one language and be indifferent to other languages.					
4. I take foreign language classes because my parents/spouse/supervisors encourage me to.					
5. I believe I can learn a language if I work hard at it.					
6. I don't like to learn foreign languages at all.					
7. People in my community generally think it is good to know a foreign language.					
8. I would rather spend my time studying my core courses rather than learning a foreign language.					

9. American people are becoming aware of the importance of foreign language learning.					
10. I am always fascinated with learning a foreign language.					
11. Studying a foreign language is important to me because it will allow me to meet and talk with a variety of people.					
12. Foreign language is not required for my major.					
13. I usually find time conflicts when trying to enroll in a foreign language course.					
14. I have always wanted to understand my heritage language.					
15. My teacher/advisor strongly suggested that I learn a foreign language.					
16. Knowing a foreign language opens up a wide range of opportunities for my future.					
17. I am afraid I do not have time to learn a foreign language					
18. I don't have much ability to learn a foreign language.					
19. I am learning a foreign language to complete my required course work.					
20. Learning a foreign language has nothing to do with my career development in the long run.					
21. Learning my parents' language will help me connect with my extended family.					
22. Learning a foreign language is necessary to get a good job.					
23. Foreign people and cultures have always fascinated me.					
24. People around me in general believe that learning a foreign language is just a normal part of life.					
25. I want to learn a foreign language so that I can communicate with my relatives who speak a language other than English.					
26. I will take a foreign language course only if it is required.					
27. There are school policies that encourage students to take foreign language courses.					

28. I always find foreign languages to be difficult.					
29. People who can use more than one language have more educational opportunities than those who do not.					
30. Knowing a foreign language isn't really an important goal in my college life.					

Continue to the next page.

Please complete the following information.

1. Hometown: _____, _____.
(City) (State)
2. Gender: M F
3. Name of School: _____
4. Major: _____ Year at College: Fr So Ju Se
5. Ethnicity : Caucasian African American Hispanic/Latino
 Asian Other Foreign Student
6. I speak a language other than English: yes no

If Yes, check the boxes that are most appropriate.

- Which language other than English have you learned?
Spanish German French Chinese
Japanese Arabic Other: _____.
- How did you learn the target language?
 It is my parent's language.
 I learned the language at high school.
 I am learning/have learned the language at college.

7. Foreign language is a required course for my major. yes no
8. I am currently learning a foreign language. Yes no

If Yes, answer the following question:

- I am learning the same foreign language I learned at high school.
Yes no

If No, Check the appropriate box/boxes.

- I am not learning a foreign language because I have already learned one.
- I am not learning a foreign language because it is not required.
- I plan to learn a foreign language later in my college years.

---Thank you very much for your participation---

