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# Second Language Learning Motivation

Reid Anderson

*St. Cloud State University*, reanderson@isd138.org

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**Second Language Learning Motivation**

by

Reid E. Anderson

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Starred Paper Committee:  
Ramon Serrano, Chairperson  
Hsueh-I Lo  
Ming-Chi Own

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Reasons for the Study

For the past 10 years, I have taught beginning to advanced levels of Spanish courses to grades K-12 schools; both in urban and suburban settings where English language speakers were the minority. In my ESL classrooms in a large city, students made every effort to learn English in spite of being in a school where 27 countries were represented. However, the majority of my time has been in schools where it is a struggle to get students to see the value in learning a second language. Why should I learn another language if everyone around you speaks English? This is an example of what some students may think. Many students see learning a language as an extra task they do not care about spending time on it.

I want to instill in students the ideal that second language learning (L2) involves seeing what one could become when achieving mastery of the language, and doing what is necessary to fill the void to get there. Csizér and Dörnyei, (2005) developed a theory related to gaining the aforementioned vision that is called, “The ideal L2 self.” A part of Csizér and Dörnyei’s learning theory called the rooted L2 self involves seeing a connection with the music and history of the country where the language is spoken. Connected to this, is integrative motivation, which involves connecting with the people and culture where the language is used. I believe these are major components necessary to motivate students in learning a second language. Below are examples of what motivated me to learn Spanish: A realization of my language deficit and what was possible after being inspired by teachers, and connecting with the culture, people and geography of the country where the language is spoken.

## **Observations from My Teaching Experience**

It has been my experience that the majority of students have yet to grasp a reason to continue in a foreign language. Despite the benefits of learning another language in today's world, little change is noticeable. In younger grades, students seem more enthusiastic to learn another language. Possibly because they have heightened curiosity. However, by seventh grade, some students have a negative attitude toward Spanish. Taylor and Marsden (2014) would concur with my experience, as they found in England, that students' attitudes greatly affected their view of foreign languages. They claimed that one of the main causes of this negative view on foreign languages is, "English is becoming a global language." (p. 902). I hear students frequently asking, "Why should we have to learn Spanish? We are in America. Everyone speaks English! I can just use Google translate." One of my goals is to break this mentality. I want students to be excited enough about learning a new language all four years in high school and possibly pursue it in college, thereby enhancing their career. It is hard in this community to get students to see the value of learning a language. Robinson, Rivers, and Brecht (2006) and SDA (2012) as cited in Taylor and Marsden (2014) found that, "Foreign language competence is generally low, with only 10% of survey respondents saying they could speak the language well" (p. 903). Students seem closed-minded. Exposure to those who speak another language is limited. Often I have to use extrinsic motivation to get students to buy into the program.

## **Statement of the Problem**

I am interested in conducting this research because some students go into ninth grade having a negative attitude toward language learning, or only wanting to do the minimum of 2 years required by college. Some do not want anything to do with a foreign language. Research

in Britain suggests this has been a growing major concern (Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002). Contributing to the mindset that learning a second language is not necessary comes from how widespread English is around the world argument. Many people in the world are trying to learn our native language. Lee, Mikesell, Dina, Mates, and Schumann (2007) argued many foreigners will switch over to English when you try to speak their language. It is natural to them. They can speak our language better than we can speak theirs. We both will be better understood if this happens.

It is vital to find out what turns students away from language learning reversal can occur in a world that is growing increasingly multilingual. Further highlighting this concern is a report made for the Nuffield Foundation in the United Kingdom, “There is a well-established need for foreign languages in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from a European perspective, from a business view, and because of a greater need to communicate internationally.” The report further suggests that because companies in the UK are not as proficient as their European competitors in linguistic and cultural understanding, and thus they are falling behind. Research proposes that if speakers can identify native speakers of the target language, they will be more motivated to learn the language (Lamb, 2004; Warden & Lin, 2000; Yashima, 2002). I would contend that this is because of the human desire to be a part of a community and feel valued as a person verifies the idea.

In a language learning report by the Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Australia (2007), I found views that I wish were more adopted in our country. The report focused on learning languages other than English. In Europe and Scandinavia, they have a much higher view of second language learning. The European Union

for example has language policies with a trajectory of moving to two second languages being learned at an early age. In Finland, students in their 12<sup>th</sup> year of study take English besides Finnish. More than 40% take German on top of this. They see it as a fundamental skill in these places, whereas nations with English as the dominant language see it as an extra. In the language learning report it also states that there is a way of thinking that can be described as minds with default set to only one language.

Middle school students are an interesting group of young people with a wide range of emotions and attitudes. I want to know what makes students excited to learn a language. Ultimately, it is my goal to increasingly integrate Spanish into the school culture. But how do I make this happen? As part of this project, I hope to gain light into students' motivation, hence inspiring me to be a better teacher. If I am a stronger teacher, this will improve students' drive to learn Spanish, the catalyst for another language. I can share what I learn with others in the foreign language department and try to improve the attitude of students toward other cultures and the languages that surround them. As a result, the research questions I will examine follows.

### **Research Questions**

1. What motivates students to learn a second language?
2. What learning activities are the most beneficial in a second language classroom?
3. What reasons detract students' desire to learn a second language?
4. What are main factors in students continuing in a language throughout high school, and beyond?



To answer these questions, I will review literature on the following language learning motivation theories:

- Integrative motivation
- Socio-educational model
- Autonomy in language learning
- Students' ideal self-images related to language learning
- Dynamic Systems theory

To gather data in my classroom, I will use a google form survey with the following questions for students to answer:

1. What would make you more motivated to learn Spanish?
2. What were the most beneficial learning activities we did?
3. On a scale from 1-5, 1 meaning not at all, and 5 meaning absolutely, rate the following statements: I am looking forward to taking Spanish next year. I am motivated to learn Spanish.

Additionally, I will survey students who are seniors at the high school who are in a language in order to find out what motivated them to pursue it for four years by asking the following questions:

1. What motivated you to take a language this long?
2. Do you want to pursue a language in college? Why or Why not?

My data will be analyzed quantifiably. I will also look at how many similar responses were given in, "What motivates you to learn Spanish," and "What was the most beneficial learning activity we did?"

Based on these findings, I will adapt my teaching to increase the number of students motivated to learn a foreign language. I will look at the findings and expanded my activities to correlate to these findings. In addition to research in my classroom, I will explore the literature on this broad topic, as stated above, to direct my practice.

### **Use of Findings**

The results of this study will be motivating to me. I believe it will make me a better teacher by allowing me to employ methods that were most motivating and contribute to advancing understanding of what motivates students to learn Spanish. I will use this data to influence my teaching so I can employ learning activities that spark interest in my students. I anticipate prompting more awareness of the benefits of the language programs at this rural school district. I feel this research will make my teaching come alive, spending as much time using Spanish at a higher percentage during my lessons. It is my expectation that by this study, I can change students' attitude toward learning foreign languages.

Discussion of this data in my professional learning community (PLC) will be beneficial because it will give other teachers ideas on how to motivate their students. Maybe some teachers are doing activities already that connect to my research. It will be interesting to talk about the findings and see if the same things that enthuse my students inspire their students. We will discuss activities that can be implemented to get them ready for high school. Colleagues can suggest learning activities, and I can adjust them based on my research.

### **Definitions**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms will be defined as:

- Target language: a foreign language that a person is intending to learn.

- L1: the language an individual learned and spoke since infancy
- L2: the non-native language that is being learned
- Integrative motivation: the desire to learn (a language) because they want to get to know a culture or person who speaks that language (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Razavi, 2014).
- Instrumental motivation: the desire to learn (a language) for reasons such as getting in to college, making more money, fulfilling a credit requirement, or because it is required by their employer (Razavi, 2014).
- Motivation 3.0: Motivation as defined by Pink (2009). His definition includes aspects of autonomy, mastery and purpose. This is a new definition about what drives us to accomplish tasks and goals. Humans are motivated by the drive to learn, create, and better the world through finding a purpose.
- Ideal L2 Self: the person we would like to become in terms of a second language speaker.

### **Limitations**

In my study, I used only my students in grades sixth, seventh, and eighth grade for the motivational survey. For the upper level students, only 27 responded to my survey. These are students from my own classes. My town has a population of about 10,160 people based on data from 2014. Students come from families where 66% live in urban areas, and 34% live in rural areas. It would be interesting to compare data from an area that has more racial diversity.

This survey was anonymous so students may not have taken it seriously. I could have gotten students on a bad day, and the data may not reflect their true feelings, but rather how they

were feeling about what happened earlier that day. Middle school emotions are all over the place.

My data will be analyzed quantifiably. I will look at how many similar responses were given in, “What motivates you to learn Spanish,” and “What was the most beneficial learning activity we did?” I will also find similarities in responses to the question to upper level students, “What made you take a language this long?”

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

The purpose of this literature review was to explore what motivates students to learn a foreign language. Many topics deal with motivation and learning a language. Several theories exist and the need for further exploration is required to improve teaching practice in this subject area. The following models or categories and how they relate to second language learning motivation are explored: integrative motivation, autonomy, and the ideal L2 self. There is much research about these topics related to motivation in general, but the majority of this work will focus on how they relate to language learning.

As stated by Dörnyei, (1994):

L2 learning presents a unique situation due to the multifaceted nature and role of language. It is at the same time: a) *a communication coding system*, that can be taught as a school subject, b) an *integral part of an individual's identity* involved in almost all mental activities, and c) the most important *channel of social organization* embedded in the cultural community where it is used. Thus, L2 learning is more complex than simply mastering new information and knowledge. (p. 274)

In light of these assertions, second language teachers need to consider the implications of these factors. They need to go beyond content and develop strategies ensuring these influences are solidly addressed throughout the year. Based on Dörnyei's (1994) statement above, it can be assumed that students need to learn skills to decode the new sounds of the language in order to be effectively understood. Communication is a social activity, and this interaction needs to be experienced positively to avoid frustration and misunderstanding. If students see themselves

identifying with the target culture, where language is used, then they will be more integratively motivated because of a cultural connection.

In a more recent study, Gardner and Koff (2007) additionally asserts a motivated student takes the form of many entities:

Motivation is a very complex phenomenon with many facets...there are many characteristics of the motivated individual. For example, they are goal directed, expend effort, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants) exhibits positive effect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives)...Motivation to learn a second language is not a simple construct. (p. 10)

Given these features of a motivated student, how can teachers ensure our classroom activities promote these attributes? Further reflection needs to occur to guarantee our teaching practice considers these factors. It can be concluded therefore, certain actions will aid in motivating students. For example, objectives should be clear, and students rewarded when they are making progress toward their goal. If one notices a student is animated about a certain language aspect, the instructor could spur on the desires to create a feeling of worth.

Expanding on Gardner's (1985) foundational theory on integrative motivation, Tremblay and Gardner (1995) joined three ideas together that must be a part of the motivational definition: motivational intensity, desire to learn the language, and attitude toward learning the language. Why should these key components be linked together? Gardner stated sentiments that, to most accurately define what is happening in language learning motivation, fusion of these ideas must occur because when everything comes together, this is when the complete picture of achievement appears.

When it comes to learning a language, the subject of motivation in general comes to mind. If an individual is not motivated to do something, that individual is not going to do it. If students are not motivated to learn a language, language acquisition is not going to occur. In a foundational work about motivation (Gardner, 1985) identified four components, that when present in the learner lead to motivation: a recognized goal, the desire to achieve it, a positive attitude, and an asserted effort. For this to happen, the exploration of topics that drive individuals to accomplish these goals must be discussed. In Chapter 1, students' attitudes were discussed. It is believed that if one can find a purpose, achieve mastery, and be self-directed within a task, progress will be made (Pink, 2009).

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, immediate rewards, and rewards in the future, respectively, must also be explored. Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991) found that some people behave in a particular way to avoid negative consequences or get compensated satisfactorily. In contrast, others perform in a certain manner because they are motivated internally. The key is to find a person's interest and cater to the internal motivation. A natural outgrowth of what Deci et al. discovered was that it would be beneficial to ask students at the beginning of the quarter to write down 10 things in which they are interested. Trying to include as many student interests as possible into the classroom curriculum could therefore enhance motivation for learning.

### **Integrative Motivation**

As mentioned in above, foundational work on integrative motivation was largely conducted by Gardner (1985). The context of his study was one in which language learning and use have been of concern for an extended duration in the realms of socio-political arenas and

educational contexts. These concerns also extend to the national and provincial levels (Ushioda, 2017). In 1959, Canadian students in his study wanted to be part of the social community surrounding them. Around 1,000 Anglophone students in grades 7-11 for each grade level make up the sample size. This area of motivation involves a number of factors stemming around the idea of a desire for connection with the culture that speaks the language.

Gardner (1985) asserted that there is an emotional affinity toward a cultural group other than one's own. By this he means that an openness exists in one's mind toward the community that speaks the language being learned. In describing this theory, Gardner and Lambert (1959) indicated that a process of social identification arises when students correlate learning a language with that of an infant learning the language, desiring to connect to its surroundings. The baby attempts to mimic sounds made by the parents. The child looks for affirmations of these correct sounds. Associating this concept to the larger picture of an "ethnolinguistic community" (Dörnyei, 2009). An extended period of motivation is necessary to learn a second language and assimilating to a language community may be the spark required to drive one to this goal. Assuming this, it falls into the socio-educational realm of learning. There will be a positive connection with the language community, and the absence of a closed mind relating to other cultures. There are also categories of language anxiety and instrumental orientation referenced (Gardner, 1985). In summary, the concept of integrative motivation has many layers. There are, as Gardner asserted, a variety of variables that influence this type of motivation. Dörnyei (1998) posited the overarching idea in Gardner's theory as "students' attitudes toward a specific language group likely will influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of



that language.” Again, summarizing why learning a language falls into the socio educational dimension, a historical work by Dewey, Carmichael, and Dewey (1956) argued that:

Language is defined as the medium of expressing thought [...] Language is primarily a social thing, a means by which we give our experiences to others and get theirs in return[...] When the language instinct is appealed to in a social way, there is a continual contact with ability. The result is that the child always has something in mind to talk about, has something to say; h has a thought to express, and a thought is not a thought unless it is one’s own (as cited by Nakata, 2006, p. 49)

Gardner (1985) contended that in a socio-educational model that the learning environment greatly influences the type of motivation implemented. He continued to say that the classroom situation has a lot to do with staying motivated. Students could look forward to going to the class because of the positive connection with peers that occurs in that environment.

Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004) proposed because of all these factors, the integrative model is dynamic. Focused attention regarding several aspects of L2 learning are considered such as integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, motivation, language anxiety, and instrumental orientation. These aspects connect with each other because one could be motivated to learn a language because of success and a positive experience, and that a positive experience can lead to an increased ability to learn the language. The antithesis of an experience stated above could lead to language anxiety, and thus affecting motivation (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993).

In the business context, where it can be important to know the language of your customers, instrumental orientation is usually the motive to learn the language (i.e., knowing the

language to accomplish a task, or specific purpose). A connection to integrative motivation arose in a study by Whyte and Holmberg (1956), showing some overlap to the psychological side of motivation. An industrial company was having trouble connecting with clients in Latin America. Out of four different factors studied, the concept of psychological identification emerged as the most important factor when discovering what will lead to language mastery. Learning the language merely to accomplish the job, results in minimal spurs to go beyond what needs to be communicated. Oppositional to the prior statement, establishing a psychological identification and establishing real bonds with others in the L2 community correlates to mastery. One could conclude by this situation that by combining connection with L2 native speakers and a specific purpose the desire could be multiplied.

To measure motivation in integrative motivation, an assessment instrument referred to as the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was developed. The test asks questions to measure four different areas of motivation: integrativeness, motivation, attitudes toward the learning situation, and attitudes/motivation index. The idea of integrativeness in this context deals with the individual's attitude toward francophones, their aspirations for learning French for connecting with the community, and the overall interest in other languages.

Motivation in the AMTB (Gardner, 1985) deals with three motivational concepts relating to motivation: the effort put into learning, the desire to learn, and affective attitudes toward learning French. Obviously, the attitude toward the learning environment concerns the classroom environment. More specifically Gardner targeted the areas of the French teacher and the French course.

Finally, the attitudes/motivation index combines the three areas from above and considers the component of French classroom anxiety, and instrumental orientation. This composite score is used to produce one number, which incorporates what currently appears to be the major attitudinal/motivational characteristics associated with proficiency in a second language (Gardner, 1985).

Here are a few examples of questions from the AMTB:

- I wish I could speak many foreign languages perfectly.

Strongly disagree / moderately disagree / slightly disagree / slightly agree /  
moderately agree / strongly agree

- I look forward to going to class because my French teacher is so good.

Strongly disagree/moderately disagree/slightly disagree/slightly agree/moderately  
agree/strongly agree

In a year-long study by Gardner et al. (2004), the mean absolute change dominating the results was for attitudes toward the learning situation. The classroom environment is seen as greatly influential on motivation. Because attitudes toward the learning situation are important in regard to motivation, the instructor should keep this in mind when conducting class and strive to make positivity prominent. This is just one area of motivational influence. Furthermore, Bernaus, Masgoret, Gardner, and Reyes (2004) conducted a yearlong study in Spain with students learning English as a foreign language, which indicated course success due to an increase in positive attitudes toward the learning situation. On the bottom of the achievement ladder were those whose perception of the classroom situation deteriorated. Teachers therefore

have the responsibility to create an atmosphere in their classroom in which students want to be a part of the classroom community.

Giving students a positive experience is important. Even in subjects where one is not motivated by the class material, they would want to put in the effort because of the teacher and classroom experience.

Seeming valid at first glance, the components of the integrative theory, have been debated as to its validity as an approach to L2 motivation. Spanning the 1980s, disagreement arose for the possibility of a strong (being able to identify socially and fit in) and weak (feeling and interest) versions of the integrative concept could be made with the community where the language is spoken.

The influential decline of Gardner and Lambert's (1959) theory mounted when explored in the learning English as a foreign language area. With English spreading throughout the world as the *lingua franca*, not having a set community with which to connect, learners' sense of integration fades (Dörnyei, 2009). Another contemplation to consider is with significant importance given to English around the world at a primary level paralleled with math and literacy, being fundamental as these subjects, will integrative motivation have any bearing as a motivational factor? (Graddol, 2006).

Further corroborating a necessary re-evaluation of Gardner's integrative concept, Davidson, Guénette, and Simard (2016) concluded from their study of 68 Francophones, that these findings provide a compelling argument for a reappraisal of the Gardnerian motivation model within the Quebec context. As in previous transcultural validations of the L2 Self System (e.g., Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009), the ideal L2 self was found to be a more reliable

indicator of students' intended effort to learn an L2 than integrativeness. The L2 motivational self-system is a theory in which students see themselves in the future as successful language learners.

### **Autonomy**

Research shows that when employees are allowed to work on their own terms, more is accomplished. Jeff Gunther, CEO of Meddius, a company in Charlottesville, eliminated start and end times and allowed employees to come and go as they please—as long as they got the work done (Pink, 2009). After a test period, Gunther found an increase in productivity and a decrease in stress.

The case above exemplifies the importance of student choice. Perhaps students should be given an end goal. Options of how to accomplish a task such as showing understanding of how verb conjugation works in Spanish has many. Coaching is necessary on how to manage the freedom. If research holds true, levels of motivation will rise. There is more than one way to demonstrate understanding of a skill.

Exploration in motivation finds that self-directed learning increases the drive to complete tasks. Arnold (2007) discovered that those who are regulated by internal factors feel free to follow their own interests and engage in the actions spontaneously and of their own volition. Individuals are finding a greater desire, increasingly higher thoughts of the ability to exceed, enthusiasm in the process, determination to complete the task, an amplified ability to meet the goal, and increased cognizance of the subject matter.

This holds true to classroom learning. The student's ability to pick a topic of interest that relates to them will create more motivation. Seeing a benefit to a career or the ability to share

with others what was learned upon completion will further increase a striving to do the very best work possible. Drudgery does not exist. When having to fulfill a credit obligation, with class content is not of particular interest to students, carrying out of the directives of the professor may not be appealing when students are not enthused with the topic. This can be viewed as a hoop to jump through. An attitude may arise such as, "Completion is all that matters." Importance of quality decreases. Professors with understanding of the power of choice let students pick a topic from a list for their papers. Accommodating the desire of choice makes it easier to complete, but still, the class focuses on a subject area of lower importance in students' minds. Hence, with the decline in motivation comes a decline in quality of work, detracting from the overall learning. When able to pick a topic, one might also be motivated to challenge themselves more.

Ushioda (2014) made a strong statement suggesting that autonomy plays a crucial role in motivation. To drive a sense of autonomy she suggested that we should have goals that stretch us.

The process of setting and working towards optimal challenges not only promotes the development of metacognitive awareness and skills, but can also cultivate feelings of competence and autonomy nurturing motivation. This is because perceived competence and autonomy are theorized to be fundamental 'nutriments' or psychological needs underpinning healthy growth and internalization. (p. 39)

Lamb (2011) followed six learners of French or German over 2 years in a secondary school in England. They focused on the nature and process of language learning, emphasizing the importance of being able to take control of their own learning, and how this enhances

motivation. His study revealed that their identity as learners emerged as significant to the development of autonomy and motivation as well. There was an additional focus on how removing choice constrained progress due to less autonomy. Moreover, Hashemian and Soureshjani (2011) found in a study of students learning Persian as a second language that “there is a significant relationship between autonomy and GPA” (p. 323). Furthermore, they found a positive and significant relationship between motivation and GPA. These results show that students who have a higher sense of autonomy have a greater degree of success. This success in turn can drive motivation.

Motivating Lamb’s (2011) research was an ever-decreasing enrollment in languages once it became an elective. His particular reasoning came from England, where according to (CILT, ALL, & ISMLA, 2010) 14-16-year-olds taking languages dropped to 36% of total schools in England which previously had more than 50% of students enrolling in language courses; contrasted from 2004 when it was 41%. In Yorkshire, the number was only 23%.

Ultimately, autonomy in learning is important, because it drives intrinsic motivation. As previously cited, intrinsic motivation results in increased retention and quality output (Arnold, 2007). Other studies Deci et al. (1991) summarized the importance of developing learner autonomy. In developing a reality of intrinsic motivation, people need to have self-control over what they do, be sufficiently able to do it, and have opportunity to relate it to their lives (Lamb, 2011). As seen here, the connection to autonomy and intrinsic motivation is powerful. Individuals who are motivated intrinsically and are autonomous learners could be an influential influence to others who see them as such. Creating this in a classroom would be ideal.

Lamb (as cited in Ushioda, 2011) elaborated on the thoughts of autonomy of learning. Ushioda suggested that “it is in contexts which foster autonomy in the form of choice, social participation and negotiation that ‘people’s’ motivations and identities develop and emerge as dynamically co-constructed processes” (pp. 21-22).

Autonomy in learning relates a large degree to agency; that is, the process by which learners are able to think on their own. By becoming autonomous in their learning, they can by themselves and carry out an action to completion. To be precise, the power to act becomes realized in the learner. Lamb (2011) also mentioned that the European educational philosophy is shifting to identify more with this concept. It argues that democratic citizenship is a driving force to facilitate autonomy. Democracy surrounding this thought encourages citizens to be involved in making decisions. The realm of education can cause students’ capacities to flourish and create a drive when the choice is given. Autonomy is key to keep empowerment alive (Lamb, 2011).

Therefore, student choice is vitally important. Students who have a voice in their learning will be driven to succeed at a heightened level. To get a clearer example, consider students’ hobbies. Suppose there is an interest in gardening in a youth. The student goes to the library and checks out books on how to start a garden. Parents make available a spot in the yard for the gardens creation to take place. Pouring over the books or websites, an inspiration arises. Putting the learning into practice, the garden thrives. Pride arises in the individual, and a sense of accomplishment takes hold. Since ownership exists in the student, based on research mentioned above, growth will occur in the individual. (Nixon, Martin, McKeown & Ranson, (1996) as cited by Lamb (2011) stated “We learn best when we have a sense of purpose, and



such motivation is best likely to grow out of our active participation in creating the projects which are to shape ourselves as well as the communities in which we live” (pp. vii-viii).

Added could also be the idea that changing our learning community benefits us as well. Altering the learning environment is beneficial, and might lead to something greater. Giving students a purpose outside of the classroom can be powerful, as mentioned by the researchers above.

In the classroom, Lamb’s (2011) study found the following applications for teachers in their classrooms related to autonomy:

- Engagement of learners’ identities as learners by creating learning environments in which learners can have some control over their learning
- Recognition that not all learners’ identities will be conducive to learner autonomy, and therefore to nurture such identities through appropriate forms of learner training; and
- to protect learners’ identities as learners responsible for their learning, by dealing with external constraints (such as examinations) not through increasing teacher control but by engaging their learners’ voices to find collaborative, negotiated solutions. (p. 79)

### **The L2 Motivational Self System**

Autonomous motivation flows into a theory developed by Dörnyei (2005). Dörnyei’s theory stems from previously of “The Possible Self Theory” (Markus & Nurius 1986; Markus & Ruvolo, 1989). Dörnyei (2005) offered a new approach of language learning motivation called, “The Motivational Self System.” He based his theory on recent psychological research on the

self. Human self and human action can be linked to ‘conceivable actuality.’ There is a future possibility of what is possible, what is expected, and what one has trepidation of what might occur if the outcome is not reached (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Dörnyei’s theory stems from this prior mentioned research. This entails three subcomponents: The ideal L2 self, the ought-to self, and the L2 learning experience. In this model, the idea of generating a vision emerges. Creating a positive image of what a learner can eventually become, achieving what is expected of someone, and a positive classroom experience that drives one to succeed.

The ideal L2 self-explores a sense of creating a version of ourselves that is able to speak a second language, and that this is highly desirable. Bridging the gap of who we are, and who we would like to become related to language capability is the driving force in the ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2008). The three selves consist of the actual self, the ought-to self, and the ideal self. He contended that the specificities of realizing the motivational self-system are a work in progress, but the potentiality of success is salient. Future potentiality of what can be attained, from our ability to imagine and fantasize will control what is possible (Singer, 2006). Providing the molding for the ideal L2 self is a theory called the self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987). In this theory people compare themselves to internal self-guides. There is a gap from where they are and where they want to be. The desire to fill this gap drives the motivation.

Davidson et al. (2016) discovered correlations with the ideal L2 self and Gardner’s theory of integrativeness when conducting a study of 68 Francophone students in Quebec who were learning English as a foreign language. The ideal L2 self-model was a reliable measure of the effort that was put forth. This being so, teachers should strive to give students a vision of what is possible with language learning by giving several examples of individuals experiencing success

with the language. This could include college students studying abroad visiting class and giving presentations about their experience. High school students who went on a trip a summer trip with a foreign language teacher could connect via skype with a host family with whom they stayed. Following these experiences, teachers could help students create a vision statement, and then refer back to these throughout the length of the class.

Csizér and Kormos' (2008) studied 623 individuals in Hungary ranging from secondary school students, university students, and adult learners. It was found that in all aged learners, the ideal L2 self, resulted in increased motivation. The idea of an international posture also arose, suggesting that identifying with a certain culture was not highly desired, proving that the concept of integrativeness does not have a strong correlation in this theory in the context of the mentioned study.

Two indications arise in a study by Csizér and Kormos (2008) in terms of the diligence that students display in learning the language. One is the attitude toward learning the language and the other is the ideal L2 self. These were at the top of factors influencing motivation. Given these factors, it is important that teachers make every effort to create a positive feeling about the language in question and the process of learning it. Students who have a negative attitude coming into the learning situation need positive reinforcement to change their motivation toward the language. The teacher one can assume is largely responsible for this. Motivation being a complex topic requires great exploration of what individuals need to sustain this drive.

The ideal L2 self in this situation exhibits itself in the classroom by teachers talking to students about how they see themselves as language learners in the future. Teachers discussing the important role language plays in the world could further enhance the vision of the learners.

## **L2 Learning Experience in the Motivational Self System**

A subcomponent of the ideal L2 self is the *L2 learning experience* in which motivation is drawn from teacher impact, the experience of success, and the group of students that make up the class (Dornyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). A high school student taking French in my district for a college credit made the following statement when asked why they continued in the language this long: “I also love my French class. My professor creates an atmosphere of fun, non-judgement, and great learning experiences. My class is also fantastic, the people are funny, and we all help each other learn the language and build each other up” (personal correspondence, January 14, 2018).

Csizér and Lukács (2010) found further explanation of the validity of the motivational self-system subcomponent of the classroom learning experience. They studied students learning German and English simultaneously. Their comparative analysis of the motivational scales, those for the L2 community, shows “despite the fact that these students study both languages, their motivational attitude and dispositions are significantly higher for English: they have more salient Ideal English selves, their motivated behavior is stronger for English, and they report a more positive learning experiences concerning English” p. 6.

## **Dynamic Systems Theory and SLA**

Language learning is a dynamic multifaceted endeavor. It was therefore explored in the idea of the dynamics system theory (DST). A dynamic system is one in which a set of variables interact over time. Amongst the characteristics of language learning found in the DST are sensitive dependents on initial conditions, complete interconnectedness of subsystems, the emergence of attractor states in development over time, and variation in and among individuals

(De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007). Attention to the tiny details related to language learning motivation, and motivation in general are important considerations. A teacher wants every possible aspect of the classroom to go as planned in order to positively affect students. The more pieces that fall positively together, the more motivation will occur therefor. One or two motivated students can be the catalyst to energize the whole class. Some students base their opinion of the class and teacher not long after the class starts.

When looking at the ideal L2 self Dörnyei (2005), we can see that this can be an important factor in that an ideal L2 self might become a crystalized motivated learning behavior (Csizér & Lukács, 2010). Importance of positive early exposure is a main component in this theory, as in can influence future trajectory. Because the development of some dynamic systems appears to be highly dependent on their initial state, minor differences at the beginning may have dramatic consequences in the end (De Bot et al., 2007). Creating a feeling of success with the basic part of the language can be an important impetus to make a sustained effort in the language. Moving too fast before mastery can lead to frustration.

Therefore, the author can infer that initial classes need to put languages in a positive light, touching on many strategies to motivate learners. The introduction of the concept of possible selves could ignite this journey, and it be developed over time. Teacher training in this area is important in developing this in students. Language learning should be fun, and students given the impression that they are successful. Seeing mistakes as learning opportunities and not a punitive experience is necessary.

The dynamic system theory subsumes a dance metaphor. Minute changes and interactions between dancers ultimately comprise the entire work. In second language

acquisition, language interacts cognitively, socially and environmentally, leading to co-regulated interaction, producing creative communicative behaviors. Multiple instances of input over time ultimately produce output, and that output can change as the input becomes more complex and creative (De Bot et al., 2007). In other words, as in a dance, many parts of a language, such as a decoding system, stress on words, intonation, syntax, pragmatics all come into play to make a complete communication. Once the basic steps are learned, subtle changes can make language come more to life. Lively communication flows out of the well learned dance of language.

### **Chapter 3: Summary of Research and Recommendations**

#### **Summary**

From the studies listed above, it was found that a multitude of variables influence motivation. The importance of using a huge array of techniques to increase enthusiasm in the classroom is necessary. Teachers, materials, and pedagogical methods largely influence how language is perceived in the eyes of students. Csizér and Kormos' (2010) study in Hungary mentioned above, shows that work outside the classroom needs to occur for students to become a highly capable speaker of the language. This is concurrent with my experience as well. Teaching students how to use effective methods for learning outside of class will be beneficial to their language development. Shedding light on advantages of learning opportunities in addition to the classroom need to be emphasized, such as language learning apps and web-based technologies need to be encouraged. Recently in my classroom, I showed students a program called "duo lingo." The next day, a student was using it in class. For some who have the propensity for learning, introduction of a tool is all that is needed to ignite their drive. This resonates with autonomy in learning.

Employing the idea of integrativeness is important for connecting students to the culture of the spoken language. Although the students are in a community largely comprised of their native language, our world is increasingly becoming more global. In the future, students will likely encounter those who speak another language. Students may not become fluent in the language they are learning, but perhaps they will increase their tolerance of other cultures. As mentioned above, their international posture will expand.

Studies above also mention teachers need to be trained in how make students become autonomous learners, and teachers expanding their own abilities to provide these opportunities. Creating situations in which students feel empowered to control their learning is necessary. Incorporating opportunities for students to learn their own way and at their own pace increases motivation. In the classroom, this means differentiating as much as possible. When students have control of their learning, they can feel empowered and successful, increasing confidence.

Additionally, they found it is necessary to educate parents about the importance of language learning. Asking for parent involvement will perhaps help change their own attitude toward language learning and its importance. If students can get influence from those most important in their lives, according to this study, they will be more motivated to learn the language. This relates also to the ought-to self-concept introduced by Dörnyei (2005) and earlier by Higgins (1987).

An additional consideration by Csizér and Kormos (2010) is the Ideal L2 self. Asking students to envision themselves as successful language speakers is important in the learning process. Helping students grasp the idea of what they can become in terms of L2 speakers, creating a vision might move them to create and accomplish a goal. Showing them videos of upper level students using the language, or experiences traveling abroad will help create that vision.

Connecting language to content area emerges in the research. It was found that in the university context (although it could be said the same to secondary education) that insufficient connection to their degrees exists, detracting the motivation. Integration of culture, literature, and language should congeal as one. A way of making students see language exercises more



rigorous is to eliminate them, and instead use literature as the basis of instruction. Finding connections in the literature to learning the grammar can be more challenging, and help students see the process as more relevant to what they are learning. These points connect with the self-determination theory of Ryan and Deci which stresses how material must be stimulating, challenging, and personally motivating (Busse & Walter, 2013).

In my practice, I need to connect what students are learning in other classes by integrating what other teachers are doing in their classes to my classes. I have the advantage of having students in grades six through eight. I can have a day each week that I call, “content day” and pick a different subject each week to teach terms in Spanish. I will give basic concepts from other classes in the target language. Images will be helpful when presenting this content, as students do not have the vocabulary in Spanish for what they are learning.

Finally, Busse, and Walter (2013) made a very poignant statement on how to give much needed value to our subject. It is one of the goals in our World Language department to elevate the status of our program. Consider the following: “...One may assume that a more integrated curriculum and greater use of the target language will enhance the perceived value placed on language learning within the framework of the curriculum and thus the perceived status of language lecturers” (p. 17). Coleman (2005), as cited by Busse and Walter, hypothesized that “the separation of target language use and content teaching through English must tend to devalue the former” (p. 6).

Based on the above statements from the literature, we can assume more time spent speaking in the target language is required. Teachers should make every effort to seek strategies to make this happen in the classroom. In addition to using the target language, the above quote

necessitates the need for collaboration amongst language teachers, and those of other content areas to see how they can work together to integrate their curriculums.

### **Data Findings**

Much of the data I collected on what were the major motivators in language learning fall into the category above of integrativeness (relating to the culture). An area not researched was knowing the language for specific purposes, such as travel emerged. Activities that were most enjoyable were ones in which autonomy and socializing was involved, and working in small groups. Another area ranking high in motivating activities was when students were able to play games with the language.

Nine themes emerged after reviewing my data: purpose, classroom environment and teacher, traveling/living in the country, games, social connection, culture, interactive video, autonomy, and technology-based games. One important observation made was that not one person said worksheets and doing activities in the textbook was a motivating activity. As a profession, we must get out of this methodology as a medium for learning. It may be more work creating activities to teach students, but in the end, it will be worthwhile in that students will be more engaged and learning will increase.

When evaluating the responses from a survey of upper level language learners, themes emerging were a positive classroom experience, instrumental motivations of getting a college credit, and an interest in the culture where the language is spoken.

### **Research Question 1: What Would Make You More Motivated to Learn Spanish?**

**Purpose and relevancy.** Having a purpose to learn the language surfaced as a motivation. Students saw that if they had a reason to learn the language, they would be more motivated to learn. One student replied that the already existing driving motivator was interacting with kids in an orphanage in Guatemala. This student gave a presentation of her trip to the class, showing pictures. I made the suggestion, and she gladly arose to the occasion. This was relevant to the student's life. It relates to integrative motivation as well because this person was able to connect to the people of the target language. A purpose existed beyond the classroom. One person also said they would like to have someone to teach the language to, indicating a specific purpose, to feel value in sharing their knowledge.

Relevancy to the world emerged in a statement that resonates with the self-determination theory. A student wrote a motivating factor would be to take things that are going on today, and learn them in Spanish. I can relate to this student. In high school, my teacher played news broadcasts in Spanish and we talked about the headlines. This resonated with me because I could participate with my parents in talking about the news at dinner. This in turn helped me participate more in class the next day because of what I learned from my parents about the current events.

**Travel.** Learners made a motivating connection with traveling to another country. In their minds this may be the most relevant use of the language. Being in the country where the language is spoken they can see the greatest application. Living in a semi-rural area many do not see the importance of knowing a language, because everyone speaks English. This is not a very

diverse town. There is a small percentage of Latino students in our school community, but of those, all speak English. They do not advertise that they speak the language well, or are embarrassed by it. If they need to make a connection with those students, they can talk English with them. Perhaps if they went home with those students and saw their friends interacting with family, the connection would be more salient.

**Mastery.** A student stated that what motivated her was a feeling of success. She said: “I learned a lot in Spanish this year and mastered things I have been confused about last year.” A feeling of accomplishment is powerful in making us want to learn more. Based on this answer, one can conclude success is a powerful motivator. Celebrating little successes will lead to a more positive language learning experience. Other students said they learned more this year than ever before.

### **Research Question 2: What Was the Most Beneficial Learning Activity We Did in Class?**

**A music connection.** Students also commented that learning songs in Spanish was beneficial. Songs relate to their world because many of them can connect with pop music today. Now via YouTube you can find many English songs in Spanish. Lyrics go along with the song to help see spelling and the video can be paused. A program called Educanon allows teachers to insert questions into the video. I could play some of the song and have students fill in the blanks of the lyrics they just heard. Students can do this at their own pace, increasing autonomy. Students know the tune of songs, so it is easy to remember the melody so all they have to do is memorize the words. In my experience, I learned a song, then later when we learned grammar, I

was reminded of the song lyrics. I saw the connection of how the grammar worked together with the song lyrics.

**Games.** Students enjoyed playing games to practice the language. This was an overwhelming theme coming out of the data. Before the games, there was direct grammar instruction through notes and seeing the grammar in contexts of readings and videos. I assume students liked this because there was an element of fun in the activities. Tripled with the fun are mastery and social interaction. In team games, they interacted with peers. Their correct responses contributed to their team's success. They achieve mastery, which Daniel Pink states is a major motivator. Their teammates were glad to feel capable together. In addition, if an activity is fun, students can be in a more relaxed state, and perhaps not even realize they are learning.

**Technology-based games.** There is no denying the influence of technology on students today. It is not surprising that a significant finding in my data that games using technology comprised a majority of the responses. Many of the games were group quiz based such as Kahoot! and Quizizz. Students are instantly told if they got the answer correct which gives them immediate gratifying feeling of success. In some cases, I allow students to be on teams. They loved interacting with peers to work together toward a goal. In my class, I often get requests to play in team mode.

**Connection with people.** An activity that encompassed multiple motivating areas resulted in many students claiming that it was very motivational. Students each have a flashcard. When instructed, students walk around with their hand raised, indicating they need a partner. When another with a hand raised is seen, students exchange a high-five. They greet each other in Spanish, and then take turns quizzing each other on what is on their card. This could be a

simple one-word translation; a question asked in second person as in “Do you walk to school?” or an open-ended question such as “What do you like to do?” Another activity of this type was one in which students asked 10 students the same question such as “What do you do after school?” Students write the name of the person they asked, and their response. I asked students what they liked about these activities. Some responses were “We got to talk to our friends. We were able to move around the room. We talked to people we wouldn’t normally talk to.” I iterate to students that a primary use of language is to communicate. We will not go up to someone and start reciting a list of words. This is why vocabulary lists can be de-motivating. Language learning should be couched in interactional contexts, as theorists call the socio educational model (Gardner, 1985).

As part of this study upper level language students were surveyed. Based on these findings, a positive classroom experience was a common response, as well as a high view of the teacher. Below is a sample of responses.

**Research Question 3: What Motivated You  
to Take a Language this Long?  
(4 Years in High School)**

It is inspiring to see students motivated by their teacher and a positive experience in the classroom. Several students responded with idea of the instructor making a difference in their motivation.

“I love everything about France, the language, the culture, and the landscapes. I also love my French class. My professor creates an atmosphere of fun, non-judgement, and great learning experiences. My class is also fantastic, the people are funny, and we all help each other learn the language and build each other up” (personal correspondence, January 14, 2018).

“The reason that I have taken French this long is because I like our teacher...” (personal correspondence, January 14, 2018).

“Honestly, one of the main reasons for sticking with French was to impress colleges! But it's made bearable because I have a great teacher who makes it fun and fascinating with cultural lessons as well. I love having an understanding of cultures around the world, and France is now one of my favorite countries” (personal correspondence, January 14, 2018).

Materializing from the above quotes, the teacher of the class has powerful influence that needs to be at the heart of language learning experience. Coupled with strong instruction, this can be the catalyst to a successful language program.

Additionally, adding to motivational factors is the response below. It connects to a work by Pink (2009) affirming mastery as one of the main motivations that drives one to complete a task.

I set the goal of doing all 4 years before I even started Spanish my freshman year. Why? Honestly, just to be able to say I did it and I am a perfectionist/overachiever, so it is all or nothing. As I went through high school though I actually really truly enjoyed Spanish class and even though it is challenging I will complete my goal. It is also nice to be able to communicate with more people. I actually made a friend who speaks 5 languages and I can not only communicate with him in Spanish really well but I can understand a lot of the other languages based on Spanish. So that's cool and it keeps me going, seeing how it impacts my life (personal correspondence, January 24, 2018).

Many themes emerge here. The satisfaction of completing a goal is a drive in many situations. Refreshingly, this exists in a high school student. An integrative connection exists as

well. Desiring to connect with more people correlates to Gardner's (1985) foundational work on the integrative motivation. We can also see that the socio-educational model, also from Gardner, transpire in the above response. The student has a desire to connect with the friend who speaks Spanish. Finally, a desire to speak more languages helps the student see future possibilities.



## Chapter 4: Personal Reflection and Motivation for Language Learning

### Personal Motivations for Learning Languages Relating to Research

In high school, my Spanish teacher also spoke four or five additional languages. I was fascinated by this, and was inspired to be like him. I saw this as a highly desirable skill, and wanted to be multilingual. This kind of motivation is what linguist Dornyei, (2005) called the “Ideal L2 self.” Dornyei, said the ideal L2 (second language) self, concerns a desirable self-image of the kind of L2 user one would prefer to be like in the future (Dornyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). This is a new discovery in the area of language learning motivation research, but 19 years prior, this type of motivation captivated me.

In my experience, I saw someone who could communicate in other languages in addition to Spanish, but how he portrayed Spanish was particularly of interest to me. This was a vision ignited in me by seeing the possibility in others, just as Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie (2017) described.

In another instance, we were listening to a song in Spanish for practice and another Spanish teacher arrived at our classroom door. She was lip-synching to the song we were singing. I was amazed that she could do that. I wanted to be able to do that also. This is another example of the motivational concept, known as the ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2005). I saw myself ideally wanting to possess the skill of knowing songs in Spanish. Kindling my passion were multiple similar experiences, giving me a vision of what was possible. Dörnyei mentioned that multiple instances are needed to maintain the idea of the person one wants to become in the future after studying the language.

Another area of L2 (second language) motivation refers to an integrative concept, integrating with the culture of the language spoken requires this type of drive. Gardner (1985)

developed this foundational view of language learning motivation. Again, I resonate with this type of drive because I was able to make a cultural connection early in my Spanish learning experience. In high school, I went to Culiacán, Mexico, for an exchange program where I fell in love with the culture and people. The integrative concept related to the rooted L2 self, which also ties with a connection to a certain people group. McIntyre, Baker, and Sparling, (2017) defined the concept as the following, “The rooted L2 self is a heritage-oriented concept defined by strong feelings of connection to speakers of the language, which can be tied to specific individuals (such as one’s grandmother) but more generally a defined community” (p. 512).

Elaborating on my experience in Mexico further outlines the role integrative motivation played in developing my language skills. I had learned as much as I could about the Latin American culture, and was motivated to learn more. If I could communicate better with the people surrounding me with whom I made a connection, I would be able to strengthen my connection to them. I want to pass this desire onto students, and help them realize that this is possible. Because this experience was powerful for me, I recommend teachers do as much as possible to encourage opportunities like this for their students.

Meihua’s (2017) study correlates to my experiences. Using 162 questionnaires and 17 semi-structured interviews, findings indicated that contact with the language of the country is crucial in enhancing motivation and competence in the language even in the study abroad context.

The rooted L2 Self is the desire to connect with shared geography, history, and cultural practices of an indigenous community. This relates to another situation of research looked at by

MacIntyre et al. (2017). In their research, they indicate that motivation comes from being close in contexts historically and culturally with what is important to the L2 learner.

The culture in the above study involved the Gaelic language and culture in Cape Breton, Canada. The example below expands on this concept of motivation. If students can particularly identify with the music and history of a region, it motivates them with the desire for learning a foreign language. Therefore, teachers should strive to create authentic connections with the music of a country, and put that music in the context of the history of a region where the language is spoken.

In a province in northern Spain called Asturias in which they speak a dialect called “Asturiano,” there are songs and dances related to this subculture that are particular to that region. I can relate to the findings mentioned above by MacIntyre et al. (2017). The geography and climate of the country invigorated me. I hope students will get excited about a part of the world so much that they will want to learn the language and experience the place and the cultural aspects surrounding it.

If I did not have a second language, my life would not be as rich as it is. I want students to be motivated to continue learning Spanish and/or another foreign language because they see it as a valuable asset to them. Ultimately, it is my desire to see students enthused about this area of their education, because it will greatly affect their lives, for they will be able to communicate in another language, and expectantly reap the benefits as I have.

### **Further Areas to Explore**

For further clarity in what motivates my students, I would give them options in my survey instead of leaving it as a free response question. I would give students choices for

responding related to specific areas of motivation I found in my research. I would ask them to select the most motivating factor in learning a language. I would write statements that harmonized with areas such as integrative, intrinsic, mastery, autonomy, and social connection.

It would be interesting to do a comparative study on motivation with a more diverse population in a larger city compared to the rural area in which this study took place. I would want to know if students in a larger, more diverse city had a different level of motivation to learn a language due to being surrounded by more people who speak the language being taught. Would their integrative motivation be higher because of a more diverse population? It is possible one would want to learn the language of a prevalent culture.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

Twenty years ago, Dörnyei (1998) proposed 10 suggestions to make learners motivated to learn a language. Although not recent, I believe they still apply today. He suggested the following ways to motivate learners:

1. Set a personal example with your own behavior
2. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom
3. Present the tasks properly
4. Develop a relationship with the learners
5. Increase the learner's linguistic self confidence
6. Make the language classes interesting
7. Promote learner autonomy
8. Personalize the learning process
9. Increase the learner's goal-orientedness
10. Familiarize the learner's with the target language (language being learned) culture.

(p. 131)

In my experience, I have found all of these to be true. Even in classes where I was not motivated to learn the subject matter initially, I excelled in the class due to these factors. In contrast, in classes, I was excited to take, that lacked these qualities lacked appeal. If the above qualities are present in the learning situation, growth will likely occur. Using these 10 suggestions along with integrative motivation, creating a classroom environment where autonomy is present, developing a vision of possible language selves, and viewing language as a

dynamic system can unite to create the ideal learning situation. Reflecting on my experiences, and how research ties to them, helps inspire me to motivate students as much as possible.

As stated multiple times in this paper, motivation in L2 learning takes many forms and works together with many variables. It can all work together as a living dynamic entity, as in an ecosystem. I garden with a diverse range of crops and have found this to be more successful method than growing a single crop, because everything interacts with each other. Trees and shrubs form deep roots bringing up nutrients from deep into the soil. Herbs and vegetables can interact with these nutrients now available in the soil. Flowers can attract pollinators necessary for pollination of fruit bushes and vegetables. The smells of certain herbs repel harmful insects. In California, 30% of the world's almonds are grown. This means many trees in one area, and nothing else. During the time of bloom, bee colonies must be brought in to ensure pollination. If the ecosystem were more diverse, with flowers and habitat for pollinators, this extra step would not be necessary (Harris-Pascal, 2014). As this is true in nature, is true in the classroom. A diverse utilization of motivational methods is required for the fruit of language to form.

Going forward, I hope to explore the topic even further to make students' motivation bloom like a garden full of color and bursting with fruit. I want to see the interconnectedness of all the motivational elements so that my practice can flourish. I will strive to make culture and people who speak the language an integral part of my teaching to build a positive connection to those who speak the language. I want to be the teacher who gives students a positive vision of what is possible in the future when they succeed in the language. I want to make my classroom full of autonomy so students are self-driven to accomplish tasks. Putting all of the pieces together, students' capabilities should comprise a dynamic system of communication.

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## Appendix

### Survey

I used two surveys to gather data from students. No names were collected. In the middle school survey, the first two questions were used in this paper. For the upper level survey, the first question was used in this paper.

## Middle School Survey

### SPANISH SURVEY

Survey. Please rate the following statements from 1-5. 1 meaning not at all; 5 meaning absolutely.

\*Required

1. What would make you more motivated to learn Spanish?

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2. What were some of the most beneficial learning activities?

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3. I am an active learner in class.\*  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_\_ 5

4. I am looking forward to Spanish next year. \*If you are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and not taking Spanish next year, do not answer.\*  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_\_ 5

5. I was prepared for tests and quizzes\*  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_\_ 5

6. I am motivated to learn Spanish.\*  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_\_ 5

7. I know a lot more Spanish than when the trimester began.\*  
(Check only one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_\_ 2

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_\_ 5



## Upper Level Survey

I am doing research for a graduate paper about what motivates students to study a foreign language. Please take some time to answer questions about why you have continued this far with your language. Write as much or as little as you want. Gracias! Merci!

\*Required

1. What is your motivation for taking a language this long?

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2. Do you want to pursue the language in college? Why or why not?

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