

5-2023

Language Experience: The Perception of Foreign Language Acquisition Among University Adults

Lileth A. Stricklin

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Language Experience: The Perception of Foreign Language Acquisition Among
University Adults

by

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A Thesis
Submitted to the Honors College of
The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment
of Honors Requirements

May 2023

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ABSTRACT

While bilingualism has always existed within the history of the U.S. and is the global norm, mainstream approaches to learning have traditionally been monolingually centered and fail to employ approaches that produce sustainable motivation towards foreign language acquisition in students. This study sought to investigate the perceptions adult individuals display towards acquiring foreign language skills, emphasizing distinctions exhibited between monolinguals and their multilingual counterparts. A mixed-method approach in the analysis of 506 survey responses yielded results that suggest that university adults generally display positive perceptions towards foreign language learning. Distinctions in perception between monolinguals and multilinguals were very few with main ones centering on differences in the intensity of sentiments felt for positive, neutral, and negative statements on foreign language; differences in lived experiences from which anecdotal evidence is drawn; and expressions of regret and/or unrealized desire. Findings also support the existing theory found in Masgoret & Gardner (2003), that suggests that level of motivation remains the determinant factor of whether one is likely to be persistent in the learning process to achieve success. This study intends to contribute to the discussion of how to create better educational curricula and social initiatives that encourage openness to acquiring and utilizing languages other than English within the U.S.

Keywords: Foreign language acquisition, monolingual, multilingual, perception, qualitative, mixed method

DEDICATION

This thesis is in dedication to those in my life who have invested in me and my education and fostered my curiosity for Spanish.

It is due to your nourishing efforts that I have become the well-formed scholar and person that I am today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the Honors College at The University of Southern Mississippi for providing me with a holistic educational experience and supporting me in all my undergraduate endeavors. For every challenge and dream that I had, I knew that I could always turn to them for help. I also want to give special thanks to Dr. Sabine Heinhorst for being a great and understanding professor of HON 300 & 301 when she taught it, and for being a great Interim Dean of the Honors College.

Dr. Michelle McLeese must be recognized for her willingness to help me navigate qualitative analysis software when I didn't quite know what I was doing, and for lending me her book to use while I powered through the laborious process. Her weekly Pilates class at the Payne Center was a perfect outlet for releasing my frustrations when they arose.

My greatest thanks goes to Dr. Carmen Carracelas-Juncal, who served as my Spanish advisor, thesis advisor, and professor over the last three years. It has been under her direction that I have been further exposed to the world of Spanish beyond what I could have ever imagined. Not only has she been a knowledgeable and passionate professor I could always turn to, but she was the one who pushed me to take advantage of opportunities outside the classroom such as studying abroad in Spain, interning in Washington, D.C., and applying to take a gap year abroad post-graduation. Even though the thesis process was arduous at times, Dr. C's guidance and reassurance provided me with the confidence needed to complete my first grand project. To her, I express deep gratitude.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELL	English Language Learners
ESL	English as a Second Language
ICC	Intercultural Communication
L2	Second Language

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This project investigates the perceptions adult university students display towards acquiring foreign language skills with an emphasis on distinctions exhibited between monolinguals and their bilingual/multilingual counterparts. For a long time now, it has been in the interest of institutions to promote language learning in some form, whether it be teaching students, helping non-native speakers assimilate to their country of residence, conducting diplomatic transactions, community organizing, etc. While bilingualism has always existed within the history of the United States and is the global norm, mainstream approaches to learning have traditionally been monolingually centered, emphasizing and considering factors of monolingual learners rather than those who already exhibit characteristics of multilingual ability. It is very probable that multilingual individuals present different perceptions on the importance of language learning from their monolingual counterparts, or if not, reasoning behind their purported perceptions do. There has not been adequate qualitative investigation of factors that influence how we regard something as important as language learning, and while more work is required to collect and study material that is inherently subjective, there is much value in information that may be more psychological and personal in nature.

It is the intention of this investigation to better understand existing incentives, deterrents, and general perceptions regarding learning a foreign language as reported by participants. Findings may help contribute to the creation of better educational curricula or promotional campaigns that encourage openness to acquiring and utilizing another language other than English. It is likely that inquiries from this study into people's reported postures may reveal a plethora of other considerable factors contributing

towards the general adult perception of language. To address concerns that this investigation is too duplicative in nature to other previously conducted self-report survey studies, it is important to consider that demographics in the United States are continuously in flux, and measurement of public opinion and perception must be updated to effectively create models that align and address these realities. Therefore, this research aims to help provide more updated analyses of attitudes towards language acquisition among adults that emphasize qualitative aspects adding to existing literature within the field.

While *multilingual* is typically used to refer to those who speak more than two languages, the researcher for this study has chosen to incorporate those who speak two languages (bilinguals) or more under the label *multilingual* and will be used as such throughout this study. The next chapter will provide a review of literature that highlights key ideas found in previous studies pertaining to language learning and the impact globalization has had on the demand, or lack thereof, for linguistic diversity. Following the review of literature, the next chapters will discuss the methodology, results, discussion of results, and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Independent from its setting, language acquisition often seems to be a matter of motivation and is determined by perceived necessity and/or desire to learn such language by each individual. Qualitative inquiry is best suited to reveal descriptive insight into the motives that either drive or dissuade one from partaking in this endeavor. This chapter will examine key findings from previous research on attitudes and motivation pertaining to language learning. Additionally, trends of globalization and its impact on foreign language demands will also be discussed.

Previous studies on second language have largely focused on established correlational trends among school-age test populations and are often conducted within pedagogical contexts (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Merisuo-Storm, 2007; Acheson, Nelson, & Luna, 2015; Russel & Kuriscak, 2015; Byers-Heinlein, Behrend, Said, Giris, & Poulin-Doubois, 2017). Distinct groups are often emphasized in research to produce further insight into characteristics displayed by such groups and to provide material for comparison: native versus heritage speakers, monolinguals versus bilinguals, anglophones versus others, control group versus experimental, etc. (Acheson et al., 2015; Byers-Heinlein et al., 2017; Merisuo-Storm, 2007; Russel & Kuriscak, 2015). Among such studies, a quantitative research approach is the typical method employed with variables being operationalized in such a manner that allows for statistical analysis and interpretation by researchers. Quantitative inquiry has come to have an important place within the social sciences and is difficult for many to completely abandon with ease; however, overreliance on its methods and interpretive approach can

pose problems for inquiry into issues centered around elements of perception, values, beliefs, and attitudes that largely require a qualitative approach.

While quantitative evidence may serve to enhance credibility of declared hypotheses and interpretation of outcomes, lack of qualitative procedures leaves a gap in material used for evaluative interpretation by researchers. As Saldaña (2003) notes, classic quantitative instruments used to measure “values, attitudes, and beliefs about selected subjects” tend to use scales that “assume direction and intensity [...] necessitating a fixed linear *continuum* of response (e.g., less to more, strongly agree to strongly disagree) rather than a three-dimensional *ocean* allowing for diverse responses and varying levels of depth” (pp. 91–92 as cited in 2016, p. 135). Saldaña (2016) summarizes the role of qualitative inquiry as “provid[ing] richer opportunities for gathering and assessing, in language-based meanings, what the participant values, believes, thinks, and feels about social life” (p. 135). Acheson et al. (2015) note that further qualitative measures would need to be implemented in future research “to provide language educators with a deeper understanding of such things as learners’ motivation to study another language, their personal values and orientations, or the extent of their interactions with speakers of other languages” (p. 212). Researchers’ inferences are inadequate in providing insight into the causes and rationale behind participants’ behaviors without some form of qualitative data. Such inference of interpretation between data and conclusions provide opportunities for the creation of studies in which participants may offer elaboration of their own explicit beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that helps supplement existing quantitative research as will be discussed next.

Research on Orientation/Attitude and Motivation

Studies on language learning traditionally center on measuring some aspect of motivation, attitude, or orientation using foundations derived from R. C. Gardner's socioeducational model comprised of five interrelated variables: *integrativeness*, *attitudes toward the learning situation*, *motivation*, *integrative orientation*, and *instrumental orientation* (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). As research in the field has progressed, the conceptualization and names of these variables have evolved to include several interpretations of how such criteria may be observed among diverse test populations in differing contexts. Nevertheless, Gardner's framework on motivation/attitude has remained the foundational basis for research on language learning and motivation (Ushioda, 2017, pp. 474–475; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Among all variables of Gardner's socioeducational model, *motivation* and its factors of *integrativeness*, *instrumentality*, and their respective orientations have been proposed to be the most influential in determining success in second language learning, as will be discussed below (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

Instrumentality is a characterization of motivation concerned with “the pragmatic incentives” that exist around language learning and acquisition (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 21). According to Cook (2001), “instrumental motivation means learning the language for an ulterior motive unrelated to its use by native speakers—to pass an examination, to get a certain kind of job, and so on” (p. 115). Traditionally, instrumentality has been defined by its utilitarian aspect that is typically generated by extrinsic motives. *Integrativeness*, on the other hand, has traditionally been defined as “an openness to identify, at least in part, with another language community” (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003,

p. 172) that generally reflects a positive association with the target language and a desire to engage in its culture (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 20; Cook, 2001, p. 114). Both instrumentality and integrativeness can easily and mistakenly be regarded as distinct and mutually exclusive concepts; however, as will be discussed later in this section, the two overlap considerably when forming motivation.

Two main issues that have arisen from traditional notions of instrumental/integrative classification among researchers are the conflation between *motivation* and *orientation*, and the inability to clearly distinguish when participant data is either instrumental or integrative due to limited theoretical scope. According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003), *motivation* is a “goal-directed behavior (cf. Heckhausen, 1991)” (p. 173) that presents several features within an individual:

The motivated individual expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals, desires, and aspirations, enjoys the activity, experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure, makes attributions concerning success and/or failure, is aroused, and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals. That is, the motivated individual exhibits many behaviors, feelings, cognitions, etc., that the individual who is unmotivated does not. (p.173)

Orientation, on the other hand, has a closer likeness to *attitude* which is more likely to reflect one’s mental disposition or posture towards a particular concept. As Gardner makes clear throughout his research, orientation and motivation do tend to display a positive correlation with one another; however, motivation is not necessarily always a reflection of orientation and therefore cannot be considered equal (Masgoret & Gardner,

2003, pp. 175–177). Masgoret and Gardner (2003) provide the following example to illustrate this distinction:

Noels and Clément (1989), for example, demonstrated that some orientations are associated with motivation and some are not. That is, one might profess an integrative orientation in language study but still may or may not be motivated to learn the language. Similarly, one might profess an instrumental orientation, and either be motivated or not to learn the language. (p. 175)

Success in language learning seems to be primarily determined by motivation more than any other factor in the socio-educational model. Therefore, it does not necessarily matter whether one displays either an integrative or instrumental orientation/attitude, so much as whether they possess a strong enough motivation capable of driving an individual to achieve their goal regardless of how the motivation is characterized (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 175). With that being said, the socio-educational model does propose that motivation itself can be influenced by other variables such as integrativeness, instrumentality, and orientation, and therefore can have an indirect effect on outcomes generated *from* motivation (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 205). Of all tested variables, integrative motivation has displayed the highest correlation with outcomes of success and is generally thought to be the most important factor in contributing to achievement in second language acquisition (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 201). Gardner's model is foundational in the study of language learning as it pertains to attitude and motivation; however, certain difficulties arise when considering how to apply such theoretical concepts in a practical fashion.

Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) remark on how the popularized concept of *integrativeness* has led to its incorporation into “several theoretical constructs of L2 motivation” despite its exact nature remaining obscure (pp. 20–21). Simply put, nuance and complexities found within people’s reasonings behind language learning make it difficult to easily identify and classify what qualifies as being integrative or not; this same issue can be extended to *instrumentality*. To illustrate this difficulty, Dörnyei (1994, 2002) points out how things traditionally considered as utilitarian benefits (e.g., obtaining employment; entrance admissions, etc.) might not be as relevant to certain participant groups as other things not normally considered under this label such as traveling, making friendships, understanding foreign media for pleasure, etc. Moreover, the characterization of instrumentality and integrativeness as “antagonistic counterparts” has never been endorsed by Gardner, but rather have always been acknowledged as being complementary, with Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) going as far as to propose that instrumentality can in fact feed into integrativeness as a “primary contributor” (p. 27). Such extensive amounts of overlap between instrumentality, integrativeness and the ambiguity contained within each warrants an expansion of what is understood to classify under the instrumental category while also reconceptualizing the idea of *integrativeness* itself.

To reconceptualize existing ideas within literature, it is often helpful to look to other fields of study for inspiration. Building off the “*possible selves*” framework of Markus and Nurius (1986), Csizér and Dörnyei propose Higgin’s (1987, 1996) concepts of the “*ideal self*” and “*ought self*” as a better alternative to integrativeness (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 29). The *ideal self* is a representation of “attributes a person would like

to possess” and contains a “promotion focus, concerned with hopes, aspirations, advancement, growth, and accomplishments”, while the “*ought self*” represents “attributes people believe they ought to possess” and has a “prevention focus, regulating the absence or presence of negative outcomes, concerned with safety, responsibilities, and obligations” (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 29). Moreover, they propose that instrumentality can be divided into two distinct classes “depending on the extent of internalization of the extrinsic motive” that make up the concept (2005, p. 29). Less internalization will produce increased association with the *ought self*, while increased internalization produces increased association with the *ideal self*/*Ideal L2 Self* (Markus & Nurius, 1986 as cited in Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, pp. 22; 29–30). Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) ultimately propose that the “*Ideal L2 Self*” replace the traditional label of *integrativeness* as it is more expansive in the interpretation of the concept and better accommodates aspects of motivation and attitude together (p. 30). Regardless of how one chooses to characterize the concepts, integrativeness and instrumentality are the two most common descriptions of orientation and motivation used in the study of language learning and will likely continue to be so. In addition to the characterization of motives and motivation, exposure also plays a notable role in influencing attitudes formed in language learners as will be discussed below.

Levels and types of exposure to foreign languages and their respective cultural groups have great potential to shape attitudes towards learning. Because attitude/orientation is positively correlated with motivation, negative attitudes are likely to reduce learner motivation whereas the opposite is true for positive attitudes (Merisuo-Storm, 2007, p. 228). Some researchers of bilingual education suggest that foreign

language as a medium of communication through which one receives new information increases the likelihood of a learner developing more positive attitudes towards the language overall (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 207; Curtain & Martinez, 1990 as cited in Merisuo-Storm, 2006, p. 227). Not only is it imperative that students be exposed to foreign language in some substantial form, but it must be ensured that such exposure must itself be positive and highlight the importance of cross-cultural exchange and communication (Kubota, 2016). Acheson et al. (2015) suggest intercultural communication (ICC) instruction as an instructional approach used to foster positive attitudes toward languages and cultures by serving as a supplement to standard language curriculum that addresses “the practices, products, and perspectives of culture that emphasize[s] the development of intercultural competence” (pp. 204–206). Similar sentiments are expressed by Kubota (2016) who proposes that “dispositional competence” must be addressed by language professionals to cultivate individuals who display increased willingness to communicate, accommodate, learn, and respect other languages, cultures, and people (p. 477). In sum, to create positive attitudes towards foreign languages and L2 cultures, increased positive exposure that facilitates cultural exchange and mutual respect is necessary to cultivate competent communicators.

To summarize, attitude and motivation are integrally tied together as each one influences the other and are shaped by similar factors. Instrumentality is largely concerned with utilitarian incentives for language learning, while integrative incentives can be characterized by a view of promotion that involves unifying an aspect of oneself with that of a target language and/or its culture. Neither is mutually exclusive and both factors can shape the nature of one’s motivational posture. Additionally, levels and types

of exposure have been shown to correlate with the type of attitude one holds towards a target language and its speakers. Current trends of socio-cultural and economic globalization have caused researchers to consider how increasingly extrinsic forces will influence motivation of language learners, particularly monolinguals. In terms of the demand for certain languages and its necessity for certain demographics, researchers offer a variety of predictions for what they believe will be the future of language learning further discussed in the next section.

Globalization and Shifting Trends—Their Significance and Implications

Interaction with foreign language and its related byproducts has increased in recent times due to globalization and widespread commercialization. The process of globalization has increased in its “intensity, scope, and scale” with its sheer magnitude and depth threatening the traditional notion of “one nation—one language” ideology along with its “nationing” mechanism (Fishman 1972, as cited in Lo Bianco, 2014, p. 313). Expanded forms and characteristics of human movement in recent decades have resulted in plurilingual societies, particularly for countries that serve as immigration destinations such as the U.S. (Budiman, 2020, para. 1 & 11). As Kubota (2016) points out, competency in English is extremely useful “for socio-economic mobility” in today’s globalized society where proficiency in another language helps “to develop a competitive edge” over others in seeking global career opportunities (pp. 467–468). English has been predicted to “become commonplace in the world’s labor markets” as proficiency in the language continues to grow globally (Ushioda, 2017, p. 470). Monolinguals and even bilinguals are expected to lose out to their multilingual counterparts over time, thereby

losing their competitive advantage in the global marketplace (Ushioda, 2017, p. 470). As eloquently stated by Graddol (2007) in his *English Next* review for the British Council,

The competitive advantage which English has historically provided its acquirers (personally, organizationally, and nationally) will ebb away as English becomes a near-universal basic skill. The need to maintain the advantage by moving beyond English will be felt more acutely. (Lo Bianco, 2014, p. 322)

One would think that if multilinguals are to develop a greater competitive advantage in the global market, there would be more incentive for individuals (particularly monolingual anglophones) to further develop language skills under an instrumental motivation/utility basis; however, current research has shown mixed results regarding this assumption. Some research suggests that the spread of global English *negatively* affects motivation to learn other languages for anglophones despite increasingly pluralist and diverse societies continuing to grow (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Németh, 2006; Taylor & Marsden, 2014 as cited in Ushioda, 2017, p. 470). With conflicting predictions and research on global trends and language demands present, one must more closely analyze other factors outside the linguistic scope to perhaps acquire a better understanding of existing incentives and deterrents.

Why is it then that in an increasingly globalized society, the proliferation and dominance of English persists? Lo Bianco (2014) proposes *economic* globalization as a principal factor determining the selection of languages taught in education systems and beyond (pp. 316–317). To reflect this trend, there has traditionally been a high demand for English in non-English-speaking countries, and a low demand for foreign language in English-speaking ones (Lo Bianco, 2014, p. 317). This emphasis on developing English

as a skill demonstrates the common practice of human capital investment and is a development process that stems from utilitarian motivation (Kubota, 2016, p. 469 as cited in Ushioda, 2017, p. 472). Lo Bianco (2014) argues that such hyper-demand for English often removes utilitarian reasoning for foreign languages in countries that speak English (p. 317). However, he also notes an exception to this low-utilitarian demand for foreign language in the U.S. caused by “continually replenished Spanish-speaking migration” that produces a need for Spanish proficiency (p. 317). As more multilinguals learn and utilize the established dominant language of a cultural setting, it is very reasonable to suggest that monolinguals will eventually lose out to their counterparts who hold greater competitive advantage.

Ushioda (2017) argues that an instrumentalist approach driving language learning policies is detrimental to deeper, long-term promotion of languages since it essentially pits economic interests against more holistic approaches to learning, stating that:

current ideologies and discourses shaping language education policy and curriculum [...] is often explicitly linked to factors such as economic and utility value, employability, social prestige, necessity, or global and national security. While such factors may help explain growth in uptake of certain languages accorded important global or critical status [...] this instrumentalist view would seem to communicate a rather narrow rationale for learning languages that may not resonate with the motivations and priorities of everyone. (pp. 471, 479)

Ushioda (2017) suggests the promotion of an approach embodying “ideal multilingual selves” serves as a better alternative to help individuals who may be uninterested and disengaged from linguistic plurality and overall language learning (pp. 478–479). This

suggestion would seem to be in line with Csizér and Dörnyei's (2005) suggestion of the "*Ideal L2 Self*" being the most important factor shaping motivated behavior in language learning rather than the standard instrumentalist approach (pp. 22 & 29). The decision of how to frame and teach languages in educational curricula is primarily dependent on whether an institution or person views the task as an instrumentalist or integrative endeavor.

To conclude, personal postures or perceptions people hold towards a particular phenomenon are greatly influenced by factors of motivation and attitude. While there is much interplay between variables that determine motivation and attitude as discussed in the prior section, it is known that characterization of such variables as being either integrative, instrumental, or both are key in predicting long-term motivation and learning outcomes. Moreover, increased globalization and its effects on the socio-cultural and economic dynamics of countries has given researchers reason to believe there will arise a shift in the demand for foreign language learning, hitting monolingual speakers the hardest. An integrative approach is suggested to be most effective for language instruction and could be used to better serve students and those traditionally disengaged from languages as a whole. The context of this study takes place among a population that is primarily monolingual in English, therefore it would be expected to observe a number of the trends listed in the review of literature among the results. The next chapter will discuss the methodology of this study and describe its research questions, participant population, research design, data collection and analysis procedures, and limitations.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

As discussed in the previous chapter, motivation and attitude are important factors influencing success in language acquisition. Competitive advantages stemming from multilingual ability are predicted to rise as global markets continue growing. This trend suggests that monolinguals would increasingly view foreign language ability as either a necessary or desirable trait to possess. A qualitative approach to research has great potential to descriptively detail reasonings behind why both monolinguals and multilinguals either seek to engage in language learning or not. The focus of this investigation will be centered on insights offered by participants on the study of foreign language with the expectation that findings will reflect ideas discussed in Chapter II.

In their study, Russell and Kuriscak (2015) found it reasonable to expect multilingual adults to attribute more value and display more positive attitudes towards foreign language learning than their monolingual peers. This hypothesis can be inferred on the assumption that multilingual individuals have experienced more exposure and positive utilization of foreign language(s) than their monolingual counterparts. However, it is also possible that monolingual adults who have had sufficient positive interaction with other languages and their respective cultural groups display similar positivity despite *not* speaking the language. Equally, there exists the possibility that neither monolingualism nor multilingualism has any significant influence on one's personal stance towards language, but rather a set of other unforeseen factors that may not be measurable in this study and therefore would remain a topic for further research.

Research Questions

Due to this study being exploratory in nature, a qualitative approach was deemed to be best for investigating the opinions that adult individuals hold towards foreign language acquisition. Due to the context of this study being situated in higher education, the overarching question of this study centers on the perceptions of university adults on foreign language, while the second question narrows the scope to two specific groups to provide for comparison. The research questions are as follows:

- What perceptions do adult university students display towards foreign language acquisition?
- Are there any distinctions exhibited in the perceptions between monolinguals and multilinguals?

Participants

To generate a large enough sample size to provide enough data for adequate comparison, the participants of this study only need be self-selected adult individuals willing to complete an online survey. To fulfill the “adult” context of this study, all participating individuals must be 18 years or older—the only requirement for participation. It was the hope of the researcher that naturally, a substantial number of people would answer the survey who would either by default be monolingual or *happen* to be multilingual, thereby offering enough data for comparison between the two. To distribute the survey most efficiently, a mailing list of all enrolled undergraduate and graduate students at The University of Southern Mississippi was used.

Research Design

A mixed-methods approach was selected as the most appropriate design for this study's investigation. Although the purpose of this study heavily centers on the qualitative aspects of collected results, quantitative metrics are useful in being able to help identify potential trends observed within the qualitative analysis of the data set. A series of questions and Likert scales were employed to collect information pertaining to participants' demographic and linguistic background, as well as their attitudes/orientations toward foreign language acquisition. Results were then tabulated and exported for further analysis in MAXQDA.

Qualitative Design and Analysis

Qualitative research can have several variations in its implementation, however a traditional approach commonly “consists of preparing and organizing the data [...] for analysis; then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or discussion” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 183). This study follows the “data analysis spiral” approach illustrated by Creswell and Poth (2018), and consists of five main steps (pp. 185–198):

- Managing and organizing data
- Reading and memoing emergent ideas
- Describing and classifying codes into themes
- Developing and assessing interpretations
- Representing and visualizing data

Effective storage, organization, and management of data is imperative for increased ease of analysis conducted by the researcher. Once organizational methods are

decided upon, one can begin to engage in the analysis process by becoming familiar with the dataset through preliminary reading and scanning of text that allows the researcher to “build a sense of the data as a whole without getting caught up in the details of coding” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.188). In the meanwhile, it is suggested to create and prioritize “memoing” throughout the entire analytic process to help keep track of the development of ideas that may emerge within the researcher that may guide adjustments made in the classification and/or interpretation phase (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 189). The next step in the data spiral approach is to engage in coding procedure that will provide a foundation for later thematic analysis.

Coding allows for the identification and interpretation of prevalent ideas among the dataset that should allow for later classification into themes by the researcher. A common way to approach coding is to begin with *detailed description* or descriptive coding that summarizes what the researcher clearly observes among the text (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 189; Saldaña, 2016, p. 102). Working in tandem with description, “prefigured” coding, also known as “provisional coding,” stems from preparatory investigation and can be “revised, modified, deleted, or expanded to include new codes” as data continues to be analyzed (Saldaña, 2016, p. 168). While the number and types of codes one chooses to use can vary and should be best suited to what the researcher intends to measure, Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest “lean coding” that later “expands as review and re-review of the database continues” (p. 190). This approach is meant to make the proceeding process of theme classification easier and engage in the practice of actively “winnowing” data to reduce review and use of redundant answers (Wolcott, 1994 as cited in Creswell and Poth, 2018, p. 190). Once adequate application of codes

has been completed after several rounds of review, one can begin the classification of information contained in codes into broader themes.

Classification of themes requires aggregating several codes into a common idea with the intent of generating several themes (or categories) that characterize the entire dataset (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 194). From grouping codes into themes and themes into larger units of categorization, a researcher may begin to engage in abstracting beyond what is simply stated in codes and themes to find “the larger meaning of the data” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 195). As Creswell and Poth (2018) discuss in greater detail, approaches through which interpretation of data takes place depend on the form and interpretative framework the researcher chooses to employ. The two main outcomes they propose should arise from this assessment phase of the analytic spiral process are (p. 187):

- Contextual understandings and diagrams
- Theories and propositions

Lastly, it is up to the researcher to choose an appropriate method to represent findings produced from this final phase of assessment and interpretation.

Theoretical Issues

Several issues arise when determining how to approach coding qualitative data, of which Creswell and Poth (2018) highlight four main ones: the question of whether codes should be counted (numerically), the use of preexisting codes, origin of code names, and the type of information a researcher codes (pp. 192–194). The ability of preliminary counts and code frequencies to be reported by researchers is something of a debatable topic regarding how relevant it should be in qualitative research. Many see reporting code

frequency as inconsequential to a qualitative study, meanwhile Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest taking into consideration code counts but not reporting it in the final study due to them viewing numerical emphasis as being “contrary to qualitative research,” conveying the ideas that all codes are equal, and disregarding the possibility that coded passages could in actuality “represent contradictory views” (pp. 192–193). As discussed previously, this study produces code lists that contain provisional, as well as “emergent” elements; however, over-reliance on prefigured codes has the danger of limiting analysis to content contained in previous literature rather than emphasizing what the data may reveal itself (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 193). Codes can be named in a variety of ways based on the approach and perspective of the researcher and therefore must be carefully determined to reflect accurate and credible interpretation of data. As Saldaña (2016) notes in his explanation of Values Coding, a “researcher is challenged to code [a] statement any number of ways depending on the researcher’s own systems values, attitudes, and beliefs” (p. 135); therefore, great care must be taken to mitigate any extreme biases a researcher may carry when participating in the analysis process. Lastly, there are several data analysis strategies one could utilize when reviewing qualitative data that may tend to highlight one type of content while overlooking another based on what the researcher is looking to code. Examples Creswell and Poth (2018) provide reference data material pertaining to different research types such as narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study (p. 193).

Validation and reliability are two important quality criteria that have traditionally been the standard all quantitative research must meet to be considered legitimate; however, the way these criteria translate in qualitative research is different from

quantitative contexts and has several proposed perspectives for what such criteria should be (Creswell & Poth, 2018, pp. 254–259). Creswell and Poth (2018) highlight *intercoder agreement* as a method of ensuring reliability that requires multiple individuals to code and analyze the same data sets with the goal of meeting a certain threshold of agreement (pp. 264–266). Due to the nature of this research project being an undergraduate honors thesis, such intercoder and other triangulation methods were neither available nor feasible for the researcher to employ in this study. Therefore, it should be known that the creation, classification, and interpretation of all codes and themes in this study was at the complete discretion of the single researcher. Coupled with lack of triangulation methods, a single coder, analyzer, and interpreter inherently increases the element of researcher bias in this study. To combat this, disclosure of researcher bias and increased reflexivity provides for increased transparency that may bolster trust in the researcher as an actor with integrity (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 261). Such disclosure will be provided in the following section.

It should be known that the researcher of this study is an undergraduate world language (Spanish) student who is bilingual. The researcher acknowledges her positive disposition towards foreign languages and generally perceives the benefits of foreign language learning, proficiency, exposure, exchange, etc. to outweigh its costs in most respects. Due to being considered bilingual herself, the researcher expects overlap between beliefs/opinions expressed by multilingual respondents of this study and her own to be present. She is aware of the increased likelihood of being able to more easily identify elements of respondents' answers that confirm her preconceived notions of each lingual group based on information from previous research literature combined with her

own personal experience. Aware of this bias, the researcher was purposeful in formulating the focus of this study and its research questions to be more descriptive in nature rather than explanatory, although certain interpretations will be proposed only as considerations in Chapter IV. Moreover, none of the statements utilized in the survey stem from the researcher's own beliefs, but rather were taken either from pre-existing items of literature or created with the intent to measure an aspect of perception based on general findings in previous research literature.

Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized an electronic survey created through Qualtrics and was estimated to take at least 15 minutes to complete. Skip-logic was used in the design of the survey to allow for seamless and efficient presentation of relevant prompts to the user. The survey was mass distributed through university email to all undergraduate and graduate students who attend the University of Southern Mississippi. The survey was published and actively open online for a period of one week between July 8th, 2022–July 15th, 2022. Consent to participation was implied by completion of the survey. Those who did not wish to participate were instructed not to proceed with the survey and close their browser. All participants who completed the survey remained anonymous and the use of direct quotes does not contain personal identifiers. All data from the survey was tabulated, visualized, and exported from Qualtrics as either a default report or to Microsoft Excel for data cleaning. After data was organized, it was then imported to MAXQDA for coding and thematic analysis.

Instrument

An electronic survey consisting of a questionnaire and prompts was employed to collect a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents.

Demographic Collection. The survey begins with a Demographic Collection question set that asks participants to identify their age group, sex, race/ethnicity, Hispanic/Latino/Spanish origin, education level, and status of familiarity within the United States. It was preferred that people select the age group to which they belonged to rather than explicitly list their age as a matter of expediency, and to address the fact that many participants may have felt discouraged from participating in the questionnaire had they been required to list their age. The status of familiarity within the U.S. for each participant refers to the extent one was born and raised in or outside the U.S.; this was done to later be able to distinguish between those who are native and foreign-born within both monolingual and multilingual groups and provide categories for potential comparison. Specific demographic questions can be referenced in Appendix A.

Language Probe. This question set is designed to collect background information on which languages a participant and their parents speak and whether they have engaged in language learning either in the past or present. The question set distinguishes whether participants and their parents are monolingual or multilingual, languages spoken by both the participant and parents, the participant's first language(s), and whether they are learning a foreign language (or have in the past). A language menu was provided for participants to select which languages applied to their answers, with an "other" text box offering text input for languages not listed. Data collected from this question set was used to classify participants as either monolinguals or multilinguals for analysis and

comparison. Additionally, this question set is purposed to gather information to help determine the extent of exposure a participant has had to other language usage and environments since correlation between exposure and attitude has been suggested to be important in determining overall perception. For specific questions see Appendix A.

Likert Scales. Adult perception towards foreign language in this study focuses on the measurement of attitude/orientation, coupled with opinions and beliefs held by participants. Likert scales are a common instrument used in surveys and questionnaires to measure distinct grades of attitude and hence, were incorporated into this survey to offer quantitative data on attitude/orientation. To avoid participants from defaulting to an indifferent response in the survey, the common “neutral” scale option was removed, and instead a six-degree ascending scale was used ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. It was the intention that the removal of a “neutral” option would cause participants to consider their sentiments more carefully when responding and prevent excessive inconclusiveness. Likert responses were scored with the lowest degree of favorability option given a value of 1 and the highest degree of favorability option given a value of 6. A total of three Likert scale sets were used that provided prompts based on categorizations of *positive*, *neutral*, and *negative*. Statements are classified under category types based on their emotional characterization regarding languages and language learning. All sets were scored 1–6 with “strongly disagree” given a value of 1 and “strongly agree” given a value of 6 in ascending order. The *positive* set contained a total of five statements, the *neutral* set contained two statements, and the *negative* set contained a total of four statements. The mean and standard deviation were calculated for each Likert statement for the entire data set, and then separately for monolinguals and

multilinguals for comparison. Several statements from the Revised Attitude and Motivational Battery Items List found in the Appendix of the Acheson, et al. study (2015) were included and are identified in Appendix A of this study. Specific Likert statements can be referenced in Appendix A.

Extended Response. The survey concludes with an extended response section designed to collect all qualitative responses from participants and is the focus of this study. This section includes three selected statements from previous Likert scale sets (*positive, neutral, negative*), along with a newly generated fourth, to which an extended response box was provided for the participant to “elaborate and respond fully to each statement as [they] wish” (see Appendix A). Statements selected were chosen with the intention that they would slightly provoke participants’ emotional dispositions. It was the researcher’s intent that the somewhat biased nature of several extended response statements, combined with limited choice to express attitude in the previous Likert scale section, would encourage participants to take advantage of the opportunity to fully express their thoughts as accurately and extensively as they felt needed. The expectation was that participants’ answers would reflect elements of concepts such as value, motivation, priority, confidence, and instrumentality as they pertained to foreign language acquisition, and monolinguals v. multilinguals that could be descriptively identified and thematically analyzed. The set concludes with an optional portion where participants may express any remaining thoughts or opinions regarding foreign language based on questions and prompts shown to them in the survey, or their own experiences.

Data and Analysis

Data organization for this study was done through storage and preliminary analysis offered in Qualtrics. A default report was generated and exported for the reporting of information from the demographic collection and language probe question sets. Data collected from Likert scales was used to calculate the mean and standard deviation of every Likert scale item for all respondents, all monolinguals, and all multilinguals. The mean and standard deviation were used to compare averages and dispersion of sentiments between each group. The statistical significance for each item of these groups was not calculated and used for analysis since this study prioritizes focus on its qualitative findings. All survey information was then exported to Microsoft Excel for data cleaning to later be exported to MAXQDA. Data cleaning consisted in eliminating respondents who were not able to complete the survey (those younger than 18 years), those who did not answer any extended response prompts (“N/A,” invalid text, etc.), and redundant variable information. After cleaning, the respondents’ survey information was imported into MAXQDA, where the analysis focus was centered on the last five extended response statements of the survey for each respondent.

The next step was to briefly review all extended response statements to allow the researcher to familiarize herself with the data set and begin the coding process. Answers that yielded little to no descriptive information such as “yes,” “no,” “agree,” “I guess” were moved to a miscellaneous folder to reduce the reading load and direct attention to answers that contained more detail from respondents. Quick scanning allowed for the identification of common ideas prevalent among responses and aided in generating a preliminary list of codes for each prompt used in later rounds of coding beginning with

descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2016, p. 102). All responses for the first prompt were read and assigned a descriptive code from the preliminary list that matched its content. If upon reading through responses, other ideas not found on the preliminary list emerged, a new code was generated and applied to all applicable answers upon the next round of review. This process of using both “prefigured” and “emergent” codes upon several rounds of review allowed for the identification of themes inspired from previous research literature (“prefigured”), while still providing room for views of participants to be reflected (“emergent”) (Crabtree & Miller, 1992 as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 193). The use of “memoing” was useful in helping track the development of other concepts outside the focus of the study that could potentially be explored for further research. From “memoing,” other codes were generated that were either added or replaced those created on the preliminary list. Preliminary codes that were originally created upon initial review but later proved to be redundant were also removed. As rounds of analysis continued, code lists were steadily revised until all answers for every prompt had been reviewed and most descriptively coded.

The next step was to identify common criteria for which codes could begin to be categorized into themes for each prompt. The categorization process was identical for all five prompts with some codes being categorized under others to become sub-codes and main codes being grouped together based on some commonality in their topic and/or content to create main themes. The ideas contained within each theme were thoroughly explained, in addition to the reasons why codes and themes were categorized as they were by the researcher. After several rounds of classification, all themes created were then analyzed and categorized once more to produce four master themes that would be

used to summarize and characterize the content of the entire extended response data set. These four themes were then arranged to create a theoretical model the researcher believed was most appropriate for illustrating the thought process of respondents regarding how they perceive and produce conclusions about foreign language learning and acquisition. This theoretical model and content contained within themes and their codes seeks to answer the first main research question of this study:

- What perceptions do adult university students display towards foreign language acquisition?

However, to adequately answer the second research question regarding whether any distinctions exist between monolinguals and multilinguals, further qualitative comparison had to be conducted.

Crosstabulation and Interactive Quote Matrix functions in MAXQDA were utilized by the researcher to effectively separate and compare extended response data of monolinguals and multilinguals. Crosstabulation allows for the comparison of code frequencies between selected groups activated by document variables. The researcher chose to compare code frequencies between the two groups by percentage to be able to identify whether there were any descriptive concepts mentioned significantly more by one group than the other in proportion to their total number of codes assigned. Codes with significant percentage differences between the two groups were flagged so that the researcher could then utilize the Interactive Quote Matrix to individually review answers provided by monolinguals and multilinguals in a side-by-side comparison. Despite reviewing flagged codes, only some contained notable differences in content provided by the two groups while others did not. Regardless, a final side-by-side review and

comparison for every code from all extended response answers was conducted using the Interactive Quote Matrix function. When respondents from both the monolingual and multilingual groups expressed by majority the same types of ideas for a particular (code), the researcher would note this sameness in a master chart. However, when either group's answers revealed significant nuances or notable differences from the other, such observation was noted and a summary developed for the specific code and group in the master chart as well.

The final stage in the analytic process was to compare findings from the qualitative and quantitative methods employed in this study to evaluate whether they either corroborate or contradict observations found in the other. Corroboration by quantitative findings would provide strong suggestion of accurate qualitative analysis and interpretation by the researcher. Contradiction, on the other hand, would not necessarily disprove qualitative observation and interpretation of data, but instead might highlight potential variables not accounted for by the study's research design and analysis methods. Such variance may provide for discussion on strengths and weaknesses of each research method, potential variables not considered, and suggestions for further research to help clarify and improve potential shortcomings of this study.

Limitations of the study

Aside from theoretical limitations revealed in the research design of this study, several other limitations arose during the preparation and execution of this investigation that warrant address. The first is that the population from which the data set of this study is derived is only a sample representative of mostly a university demographic. Therefore, results from this investigation only provide description for the several hundred who

participated in the survey but are not necessarily representative of adult populations from other university groups and potentially even less so from other geographic areas (Hattiesburg, MS versus other U.S. locations). In terms of reliance on the method of self-reporting, a common limitation is that social desirability bias may influence the level of honesty participants are willing to offer and result in inconsistencies between what is internally felt and externally reported by participants despite guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality (Dörnyei, 1994; Wesely, 2012 as cited in Acheson et al., 2015, p. 212). While numerous challenges exist in attempting to accurately measure attitude, this study simply did not have the tools to account for all controls and is something that further research could account for in its research design.

One great challenge of qualitative research is determining the best method(s) to obtain the best type of information suited for the study's research question and whether such methods are feasible for the researcher to execute. This investigation was originally designed to allow for follow-up with respondents who consented to a brief interview for elaboration on their survey responses. Interviewing participants would have allowed for more insight into respondents' answers and overall perspective. Moreover, it would have added an interpersonal element to a study that, for the most part, is removed from human interaction. Due to time constraints and lack of clear criteria for participant selection by the researcher, it was determined that the interview element of the study was to be eliminated if the project timeline was to be maintained and enough attention given to extended response answers provided in the survey.

In sum, theoretical issues of this study that have been addressed include subjectivity of qualitative coding, lack of triangulation methods, researcher bias,

generalizability limits, time constraints, and the potential effect of social desirability bias on participants. Subjectivity of both participant and researcher is bound to manifest itself in some form in the research process; however, measures can be taken to increase transparency in procedures, analysis, and interpretation through qualitative forms of validity and reliability strategies. Time constraints were the greatest challenge for the researcher to handle when engaging in data collection, organization, management, and analysis. Nonetheless, procedures were able to be adjusted to accommodate for changes in timeline that still fit within the intended mixed-method framework. The next chapter will present survey results beginning with quantitative collection and then transition to the main qualitative portion.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The electronic survey designed for this study recorded data from 514 respondents, of which 506 successfully completed the survey. All demographic data collected was exported from Qualtrics as a default report and is presented in Table sets 1–3. Table items with an asterisk indicate that multiple answer selection was applicable for the question. For specific survey details, see Appendix A.

Quantitative Analysis

Demographic Information

Age categories as reported by participants show 18–24-year-olds making up the largest percentage (43%), with 32–38-year-olds the second largest group (16%), followed by 25–31-year-olds (15%), 39–45-year-olds (12%), and those between 46–50 and over being the smallest age categories (6% & 9%). Respondents were overwhelmingly women (70.75%), white (62.85%), and non-Hispanic/non-Latino (93.87%), with most born and raised in the United States (91.11%). It is not surprising that the educational background of participants reflects that of a university sample since this is the context in which the study takes place with a majority of respondents either completing or having completed a bachelor’s degree (37.94%), master’s degree (23.32%), or doctoral degree (17.19%) as the top three categories.

Table 1.1. Demographic Information of Respondents

Category	Percentage	Frequency
Age Group		
18-24	43%	216
25-31	15%	76

Table 1.1. (continued)

32-38	16%	80
39-45	12%	60
46-50	6%	28
Over 50	9%	46
Sex		
Male	27.47%	139
Female	70.75%	358
Prefer not to say	0.79%	4
Other	0.99%	5
Race		
White	62.85%	318
Black	26.28%	133
Asian	1.78%	9
Native-American	0.59%	3
Mixed Race	5.34%	27
Prefer not to say	1.19%	6
Other	1.98%	10
Hispanic/Latino Origin		
Hispanic/Latino	5.34%	27
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	93.87%	475
Prefer not to say	0.79%	4
Educational Background		
High School GED	1.19%	6
High School Diploma	12.65%	64
Bachelor's Degree	37.94%	192
Master's Degree	23.32%	118
Doctorate Degree/PhD	17.19%	87
Other	7.71%	39
U.S. Status		
I was born and raised in the U.S.	91.11%	461
I was born and raised outside the U.S.	5.14%	26
I was born outside the U.S. but raised in the U.S.	1.98%	10
I was born in the U.S. but raised outside the U.S.	0.40%	2
Other	1.38%	7

Over three-fourths of respondents are monolingual (77.08%), while 22.92% of respondents identified themselves as individuals who speak two or more languages. Because this survey is only offered in English, it was assumed that anyone who could understand this survey and is monolingual would naturally be a monolingual anglophone; this assumption was proven correct in 100% of monolingual respondents reporting English as the only language they speak for which there is not a table to reflect this information. Meanwhile, multilinguals reported a diverse array of languages spoken, with English (40.88%) Spanish (22.99%), French (11.31%) as the top three. Other languages listed by multilinguals not originally included were Japanese, Thai, Bicolano, Nepali, Farsi, Yoruba, Igbo, Twi, Ga, Akan, Farsi, Swahili, Mandinka, Romanian, Bulgarian, Polish, Yiddish, and Kiowa. American Sign Language was another language mentioned by several not originally considered by the researcher. Of languages learned first by multilinguals, English (68.22%) was by far the most selected answer with Spanish (13.95%) following as the second most selected choice.

Table 1.2. Language Background of Respondents

Category	Percentage	Frequency
Monolingual & Multilingual Count		
One	77.08%	390
Two or more	22.92%	116
All Participants Currently Learning a Foreign Language		
Yes	26.09%	132
No	73.91%	374
All Participants Who Have Attempted to Learn a Foreign Language in the Past		
Yes	93.03%	347
No	6.97%	26

Table 1.2. (continued)

Languages Spoken by Multilinguals*		
English	40.88%	112
Spanish	22.99%	63
French	11.31%	31
Tagalog	1.46%	4
Mandarin	1.09%	3
Vietnamese	0.73%	2
Arabic	1.46%	4
Korean	1.09%	3
Russian	0.73%	2
German	2.29%	8
Italian	1.46%	4
Portuguese	2.19%	6
Other	11.68%	32
Order of Languages Learned for Multilinguals*		
English	68.22%	88
Spanish	13.95%	18
French	2.33%	3
Tagalog	1.55%	2
Arabic	1.55%	2
Russian	0.78%	1
German	1.55%	2
Italian	0.78%	1
Other	9.30%	12

An overwhelming majority of respondents selected their parents as being monolingual (85.88%) while only 14.12% described their parents as speaking two or more languages. English was the dominant language spoken by monolingual parents (97.19%) while less than 3% of monolingual parents speak languages other than English. Of languages spoken by multilingual parents, English (35.81%) and Spanish (21.62%) were the most common answers. Other languages listed by as spoken by multilingual parents not originally included were Japanese, Bicolano, Nepali, Igbo, Yoruba, Twi,

Akan, Farsi, Cajun French/Creole, Patwa, Kiowa, Dutch, Romanian, Latvian, Serbian, Latin, and American Sign Language.

Table 1.3. Language Background of Respondents' Parents

Category	Percentage	Frequency
Monolingual & Multilingual Parents as Reported by Participants		
Parents Who Speak One Language	85.88%	432
Parents Who Speak Two or More Languages	14.12%	71
Language Spoken by Monolingual Parents as Reported by Participants		
English	97.19%	415
Spanish	1.41%	6
French	0.23%	1
German	0.23%	1
Other	0.94%	4
Languages Spoken by Multilingual Parents as Reported by Participants*		
English	35.81%	53
Spanish	21.62%	32
French	8.78%	13
Tagalog	2.70%	4
Mandarin	0.68%	1
Vietnamese	0.68%	1
Arabic	2.70%	4
Korean	0.68%	1
German	6.08%	9
Italian	2.03%	3
Portuguese	0.68%	1
Other	17.57%	26

Likert Scales

Results from all Likert scale sets were tabulated and distinguished by three groups: all respondents, monolinguals, and multilinguals.

Positive Likert Statements. The positive Likert set is meant to propose statements that frame foreign language in “positive” terms, such as suggesting benefits of increased utility, enhanced status, self-development, cross-cultural understanding, etc. Agreement among both groups for all prompts in the positive Likert set was the clear consensus; however, comparison of means shows that multilinguals tend to display greater levels of agreement than monolinguals with every statement. Both groups agreed the least with Statement 1 (“People will respect me more if I know a foreign language”); while Statement 2 (“Learning a foreign language is important for understanding a culture”) displayed the largest gap in agreement between both groups. Multilinguals are generally more clustered toward the higher end of the Likert scale and displayed a greater tendency to select the “strongly agree” option than their counterpart group for all prompts, thereby demonstrating higher degree of positive attitude. One could propose that while both groups acknowledge and affirm potential benefits that come from foreign language, multilinguals tend to positively regard foreign language and its benefits more intensely than monolinguals. They attribute particular importance to foreign language in contexts requiring cultural understanding and it is reasonable to infer that a cause behind more positive regard for languages likely stems from them having experienced its benefits more than monolinguals. For visualization of Likert results between monolinguals and multilinguals, see Appendix B.

Table 2.1. Positive Likert Statements (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree: 1–6 Point Scale)

		Mean	Std Deviation
All Respondents			
1	People will respect me more if I know a foreign language	3.99	1.35
2	Learning a foreign language is important for understanding a culture	4.98	1.12
3	Studying a foreign language will make me more knowledgeable	5.13	0.93
4	Studying/knowing a foreign language will me more useful	5.13	1.03
5	More opportunities are available to those who study/know foreign languages	5.13	1.04
Monolinguals			
1	People will respect me more if I know a foreign language	3.89	1.37
2	Learning a foreign language is important for understanding a culture	4.83	1.13
3	Studying a foreign language will make me more knowledgeable	5.04	0.95
4	Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful	5.04	1.05
5	More opportunities are available to those who study/know foreign languages	5.04	1.08
Multilinguals			
1	People will respect me more if I know a foreign language	4.33	1.19
2	Learning a foreign language is important for understanding a culture	5.48	0.95
3	Studying a foreign language will make me more knowledgeable	5.43	0.80
4	Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful	5.43	0.87
5	More opportunities are available to those who study/know foreign languages	5.43	0.84

Neutral Likert Statements. Statements included in the neutral Likert set are not centered on foreign language as the subject, but rather the respondents themselves. Both items included in this set are meant to reflect how confident participants are in both themselves and others when faced with the prospect of learning a language. Statement 1 (“I have capabilities for learning a foreign language”) is meant to measure levels of self-

confidence respondents display, while Statement 2 (“Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to”) measures levels of confidence respondents have in others’ abilities. Similar to the positive Likert set, results between monolinguals and multilinguals generally mirror one another with both groups showing more agreement with Statement 1 than Statement 2. More agreement with Statement 1 would indicate that both monolinguals and multilinguals display higher levels of confidence in their own abilities to learn a foreign language than in others’ abilities to learn a language. However, a comparison of mean and standard deviation in Statement 1 between monolingual and multilingual groups shows a higher level of agreement that is more clustered together for multilinguals, indicating greater self-confidence among multilinguals than their counterparts. Moreover, because the highest average with the smallest deviation is displayed under Statement 1 for multilinguals (multilingual self-confidence) among all other statements for all groups, it can be said that the most confidence in learning languages is displayed among multilinguals. This observation is a reasonable expectation since achievement often reinforces confidence and motivation, which in turn reinforces achievement. It is likely that by virtue of being multilingual (someone who has L2 proficiency or more), confidence in their own abilities has already been reinforced by their achievement in L2 proficiency. This increased confidence through achievement of L2 proficiency contrasts with monolinguals who, by virtue of being monolingual (someone who only speaks one language), have not experienced achievement of L2 proficiency either through not having attempted it, or having attempted and failed.

Table 2.2. Neutral Likert Statements (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree: 1–6 Point Scale)

		Mean	Std Deviation
	All Respondents		
1	I have capabilities for learning a foreign language	4.97	1.01
2	Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to	4.58	1.16
	Monolinguals		
1	I have capabilities for learning a foreign language	4.82	1.02
2	Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to	4.45	1.19
	Multilinguals		
1	I have capabilities for learning a foreign language	5.47	0.80
2	Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to	4.99	0.98

Negative Likert Statements. Negative Likert statements are meant to frame the study of language more “negatively” by minimizing its importance and inciting emotion (likely negative) that would arise from the suggestion associating status with language ability (Statement 4). Because items in this set are valued on an ascending 1–6 scale, yet statements 1–3 imply a more negative view of language, interpretation of numerical Likert values is reversed for these three items:

- Higher numerical value = more agreement = less priority given to language, language learning, etc.
- Lower numerical value = less agreement = more priority given to language, language learning, etc.

Statement 4 highlighted in Table 2.3 is the only exception to this reversed interpretation.

Numerical values in Statement 4 should be interpreted as one would interpret the positive

or neutral sets, with higher numerical values equating to more positive sentiments toward multilingualism and a lower scale value the opposite.

As expected, both groups' levels of agreement were reflected inversely from what was previously shown in the positive and neutral sets, with all respondents disagreeing with most statements (exception for monolinguals in Statement 3) and multilinguals disagreeing more than monolinguals for all items (exception in Statement 4).

Multilinguals show the most disagreement with Statement 2 ("I would not study a foreign language if it was not an academic requirement"), while monolinguals show the most disagreement with Statement 4 ("People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one"). The greatest gap between both groups is found in Statement 3 ("Knowing a foreign language is not necessary for the type of lifestyle I live") with monolinguals agreeing more with this statement whereas multilinguals disagree more and at higher levels.

Statement 4 assigns superior status to language ability and is meant to "pit" both groups against the other by slightly antagonizing the monolingual group while validating the multilingual one. Both groups disagreed with the statement by majority; however, multilinguals were shown to disagree with this idea less than monolinguals. Framed another way, monolinguals disagree with this statement slightly more and are more clustered together than their counterparts and disagree the most with this statement out of all in the set. Interpretations that could be derived from this set's data would suggest that because foreign language is not deemed necessary by more monolinguals than their counterparts, it would inform why they express more agreement with ideas that

minimizes its priority in exchange for another option. Also, regarding the question of superior status to those who speak two or more languages, it would make sense that monolinguals would disagree with this idea since it essentially casts them as inferior. Moreover, to the extent that multilinguals disagree with their “superiority” statement less than monolinguals could be suggestive of some multilinguals actually believing in some aspect of the idea despite not agreeing/liking the sentiment behind it.

Table 2.3. Negative Likert Statement (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree: 1–6 Point Scale)

		Mean	Std Deviation
	All Respondents		
1	I would rather spend my time on subjects other than languages	3.66	1.21
2	I would not study a foreign language if it was not an academic requirement	2.77	1.44
3	Knowing a foreign language is not necessary for the type of lifestyle I live	3.50	1.44
4	<i>People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one</i>	2.48	1.35
	Monolinguals		
1	I would rather spend my time on subjects other than languages	3.82	1.21
2	I would not study a foreign language if it was not an academic requirement	2.96	1.46
3	Knowing a foreign language is not necessary for the type of lifestyle I live	3.76	1.37
4	<i>People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one</i>	2.39	1.30
	Multilinguals		
1	I would rather spend my time on subjects other than languages	3.12	1.03
2	I would not study a foreign language if it was not an academic requirement	2.11	1.18
3	Knowing a foreign language is not necessary for the type of lifestyle I live	2.66	1.36
4	<i>People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one</i>	2.76	1.47

Qualitative Analysis

Descriptive and thematic analysis of respondents' extended response answers required several extensive rounds of review to produce individual code lists for each prompt. Each code list contains specific code labels (key words) applied to the text of respondents' answers where specific ideas emerged. Such codes/key words will appear italicized when cited in this analysis and full code lists can be found in Appendix C. Several more rounds of review were also required in the revising of each list as analysis continued, categorizing codes into themes, categorizing themes into master themes, and comparing responses between the monolingual and multilingual groups. Table 3.1 illustrates the early process of generating code lists for each extended response prompt. Statements selected as prompts were taken from items found in the positive, neutral, and negative Likert sets (one item selected from each) with a newly generated fourth prompt. Prompt 1 is purely inciteful and meant to capture respondents' emotional reaction to the statement's idea that language ability is associated with status. Prompt 2 was selected with the intention of gathering respondents' views on what levels of ability and motivation are required to learn a foreign language. Prompt 3 captures which types of instrumentality respondents attribute to foreign language. Prompt 4 was created to evaluate how much value and priority respondents assign to foreign language as a social initiative. The last prompt simply provides an opportunity for respondents to express anything else they would like that was not addressed prior in the survey.

Table 3.1. Prompt to Code List

	Prompt	Reviewed Answers	
1	People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one.	494 responses	→ Code list 1
2	Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to.	494 responses	→ Code list 2
3	Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful.	494 responses	→ Code list 3
4	Every person should know more than one language.	494 responses	→ Code list 4
5	(Optional): Based on the types of prompts you have encountered today, are there any other thoughts and/or opinions you would like to express regarding foreign language?	301 responses	→ Code list 5

There arose several categories within each code list that were developed into themes and are summarized below. All themes were analyzed and eventually classified by the researcher to produce master themes that would inform the creation of a theoretical model. Before delving into a review of themes produced, there are several points that should be considered:

- Respondents' answers often contain multiple codes that are categorized and split across multiple themes. Therefore, respondents should not be thought of as fitting exclusively under one particular thematic categorization based on their answers. Rather, themes reflect the multiple ideas contained within respondents' answers that, when put together, reflect nuanced thoughts and opinions of the participants.

- Motivation: As demonstrated in previous literature, motivation contains several facets that could each separately be considered, but when put together constitute the motivation of an individual. Aspects that would fall under motivation include dedication, effort, desire, will, drive, commitment, time, patience, discipline, and more. Anything that either explicitly mentioned motivation or any of its aspects was assigned a specific code and grouped together. For specific codes see Appendix C.
- Unless otherwise noted, it should be assumed that all ideas mentioned under themes are shared by both monolingual and multilingual respondents.

Prompt 1: People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one.

Most respondents do not think that knowing more than one language makes someone better than another but do acknowledge certain factors that distinguish those who do know more than one language from those who do not. Many expressed feeling uncomfortable with “making value judgements” on people based on their abilities. Even those who did choose to acknowledge advantage (whether implicitly or explicitly) were against any notion of multilingual superiority over monolinguals. Themes 1 and 3 contrast most in their characterization since Theme 1 contains ideas that traditionally fit under an integrative category, while the ideas under Theme 3 are instrumental and particularly utilitarian. Motivation is acknowledged as the differentiating factor between those who have achieved multilingualism versus those who have not, with many leaving the impression that language learning is either a matter of circumstance, necessity, or privilege.

Theme 1: Attributes. Respondents tended to make more observational statements distinguishing between those who learn or know more than one language as being different from those who do not by using phrasing such as “people who know more than one language tend to...,” “they are more...,” and “they tend to be more... .” Of the distinctions made, the idea of being more knowledgeable, either by possessing more knowledge or having more potential access to it, was one of the most cited descriptions for those who can succeed in learning another language:

I do not think they are better people for knowing more than one language, but I do think that they have a higher chance to have more knowledge and be more well-rounded than those who only know one. (RESP129)

Coinciding with knowledgeability was the view that languages are key to understanding and engaging with other cultures in a manner that increases one’s tendency to be more empathetic. It was believed that with increased exposure to other groups and ways of thinking through language, one becomes more “open-minded”, culturally “aware” or “adept,” and appreciative. Such ideas are exemplified in this individual’s response, “people who speak multiple languages tend to have more cultural appreciation and understanding and are better equipped to function within different groups and societies” (RESP048). Aside from descriptive traits, compliments of increased intelligence, better “brain function,” and expanded forms of critical thinking were expressed towards those who operate with more than one language.

Theme 2: Motivation. The mention of motivation is characterized by two distinct foci: those who acknowledge others who learn another language as having displayed high

motivational traits, and those who emphasize lack of motivational traits as reasons for not learning another language. It was shown that respondents' answers typically contain elements of both types of aspects, where one would acknowledge or praise those who display high motivational factors and then diverge to highlight how such motivation is not present in everyone and whether such was admissible in their eyes. Most did not make any value judgements on whether presence or absence of motivation was a good or bad thing and therefore did not make associations with those who possess more motivation with being "better" as the prompt suggests. For those who chose to expound upon the absence of motivation, aspects of desire and necessity were components emphasized as needed in order for an individual to choose to learn a language. Some attribute multilingual ability as being a matter of circumstance and necessity (individuals raised that way, work and lifestyle requirements, constant exposure, etc.) and others go so far as to affirm that where there lies a lack of necessity, one need not learn another language. Additionally, language learning was viewed by some as being the result of access to resources and/or opportunities to learn. In sum, ideas of necessity, circumstance, and access generally characterize language learning as being either a matter of need or privilege in some respect.

Theme 3: Instrumentality. An overwhelming majority of respondents deem knowing another language as being potentially helpful, useful, or beneficial in certain circumstances. Some were able to refer to personal experiences of when their knowledge of another language proved useful, or when they wished they would have had such abilities to aid other language speakers in a particular instance. Overall, many felt it was more accurate to modify the prompt's statement from "People who know more than one

language are *better* than ..." to "more *useful*" or "*knowledgeable*" (as mentioned in Theme 1); however, even such suggestions were conditional as some did not agree with this assessment and qualified that usefulness depends on circumstance. More opportunities were stated as being the overall benefit of knowing another language. Most opportunities were classified in the professional sense, but a significant portion also referred to more individualized, personal opportunities. A considerable number of people chose to define multilingual ability as being a skill that adds to one's skillset that likely makes someone an asset depending on the demand of a given circumstance (e.g., employability, versatility, helping others, translation, addressing clients, etc.). There were only a handful of respondents that explicitly characterized knowing another language as an advantage over knowing only one, but they make it clear that they do not agree with the sentiment behind one being "better than" the other. It can be implicitly interpreted from respondents' acknowledgement of increased opportunities resulting from language knowledge (both professional and personal) that knowing another language is an advantage in circumstances where needed, but that such advantage does not equate to any sort of superiority over those who are monolingual, and some even deemed unnecessary:

I don't feel as if anyone who knows more than one language is better than the next person. In my opinion, there is no serious need for a second language. Of course, it could be a good quality in certain situations, but there is no urgent need for it. (RESP312)

There were others who emphasized the usefulness of multilingual ability growing as societies continue to become multi-lingual and multi-cultural:

As American culture becomes more culturally diverse, those who are able to communicate in various formats will be stronger assets in the workforce and society. Those who are already bilingual, or trilingual, are already ahead. There will always be a need for an individual to express thoughts from one language to another. (RESP067)

Others acknowledged usefulness in such settings, but then made the caveat that such situations are the *only* times when knowing another language would be useful. Answers that fit under this categorization limited utility of multilingualism to only settings where people don't speak the same language.

Prompt 2: Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to.

Answers to this prompt contain much more ambiguity than one would expect due to several interpretations of commonly used terms such as “motivation,” “barriers,” “disability,” and “resources”. Nevertheless, the researcher believes she was able to draw a clear conclusion from meanings derived from all responses despite imprecise definitions and is presented as follows:

- Everyone has the capabilities to learn a foreign language (default) → unless they have a disability (exception).
- If everyone has capabilities to learn a foreign language (default), then to learn it is either a matter of some motivational factor AND/OR access (resources/circumstance).
- Learning will either be “easier” or “harder” for each person.

There was no explicitly clear explanation of what makes language learning either *easier* or *harder* for individuals. At best, the researcher would associate items contained within examples found in answers for what she believed respondents were referring to when citing topics of *motivation*, *barriers*, *disability*, and *resources* in particular. The conclusion was that language learning being either “easier” or “harder” can be attributed to two causes that are not mutually exclusive: external conditions and internal conditions. Motivation is characterized as an internal condition while access and its associated items are characterized as external conditions. It is unclear whether these conditional factors are considered within a person’s control or not. Moreover, respondents vary in what they consider necessary to meet conditions of sufficient motivation and access, regardless of whether they are or are not in the person’s control.

Theme 1: External Conditions. Items categorized under external conditions mainly refer to concepts of exposure, *resources*, and *barriers*. The researcher intended this theme to encompass factors she considered to be generally outside the immediate control of an individual but acknowledges this category’s criteria is especially susceptible to debate. Such an example is the classification of *disability*. When mentioning barriers, disability was the most cited exception to the default standard that anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to, yet a large problem for the researcher remained in the ambiguity of what respondents were actually referring to. Some mention cognitive barriers/limited mental capabilities that both explicitly included disability and did not. Additionally, there was a lack of specificity on what kinds of disabilities hindered one from being able to engage in language learning. Another item categorized as a potential impediment to language learning was *age*, of which everyone who mentioned it was

under the impression that language learning becomes more difficult as one progresses with age. Both disability and age, while inherently a characteristic personal to each individual, were framed as factors that could hinder a person's learning process even if a strong desire is present. This conveyed meaning was perceived to be two sorts of limitations outside one's control, hence why they are classified under external conditions.

Respondents are in consensus that the best way to learn and maintain a language is through immersion in an environment of the target language or having contact with others who speak the target language to practice with, otherwise, it is difficult to maintain foreign language skills. "Resources" was often used to refer to various things such as education, money, time, and technology, as well as more specific things such as books, internet, courses/classes, apps, and other instructional material. A "lack of resources" was a phrase often used that in several instances either referred to lack of time to learn a language, lack of money to acquire necessary materials and instruction, lack of access to a quality education, etc. Answers addressing education were diverse, with some referring to it as a resource that people do or do not have access to that impacts one's ability to learn another language. Others stress the role an education system plays in helping prioritize language learning, while some mentioned that increased access to other free tools (public libraries, internet, apps, books, tapes, YouTube, etc.) serves as an alternative to relying on a traditional education system for instruction. Drawing from these descriptions, the researcher concluded that there arise two distinct ways that respondents characterize the role *resources* play in language learning. The first characterization is that language learning should be easier to partake in due to increased access to a variety of resources that do not necessarily rely on traditional methods such as formal class and

instructional materials. The second characterization is that language learning is largely dependent on access to resources which is something not everyone has, causing them to either be unable to or have a harder time learning:

Learning a foreign language requires resources that some people may not be able to access due to monetary costs or lack of free time. It can also be very difficult for some people to learn another language even if they have access to all the resources they need. (RESP230)

Regardless, the main takeaway from answers under this theme is that respondents generally would like to suggest that anyone has the capacity to learn a foreign language but feel compelled to consider why such might not be a reality for many.

Theme 2: Internal Conditions. Motivation is the sole item classified as being a factor of internal condition; however, several codes highlighting different aspects of the concept were included to reflect the word choice of respondents more closely. While different words may highlight distinct components of motivation that hold different definitions, they also work in tandem with one another. For example, it is inferred that *discipline* and *dedication* would require some degree of *effort* sustained over *time*, however, one could put forth a great amount of *effort* due to having a large *desire*, but not be able to apply it over *time*, causing the *effort* to be short lived. The conclusive message gathered from respondents was that anyone can achieve what it is they wish if motivation is present and significant barriers are absent. *Time* is particularly broad since it was distinguished as either being a condition required in the sustained application of effort to achieve an end as part of sustained motivation (“with enough time and effort” one can...),

or as a constraining factor on language learning (“lack of time” as cited in Theme 1). With these two types of characterizations, the researcher determined *time* to be both an internal and external condition, recognizing that its interpretation is largely dependent on how each respondent thinks of the concept. Only a handful of respondents mentioned factors of *patience, discipline, dedication, and commitment* that are normally required in learning and require a greater amount of effort. For the few who did, they insisted that such factors are arguably more important than other factors of motivation such as *desire* if successful outcomes are to be reached: “Everyone does not possess the patience and time required to learn a foreign language. Even if he/she wanted to learn a foreign language, some would give up due to frustration” (RESP023). Despite the suggestion that desire is all that is required for someone to engage in language learning, a number of respondents also state that motivation is simply not present in some individuals like others causing them not to attempt pursuing learning another language. It is unclear, however, if lack of motivation is due to lack of motives and whether motivation itself is something that is more intrinsically part of certain people than it is others.

Comparison. Both monolinguals and multilinguals describe the same ideas of various technological options serving as language learning resources that increase accessibility under Theme 1. However, monolinguals were more likely to mention and emphasize barriers to technological resources than multilinguals, claiming that while there are numerous technological options, people may not have access to them. Both groups often provided anecdotal accounts of their successes or failures at learning and/or retaining another language that seemed to inform their stance regarding the prompt’s suggestion e.g. “I learned a language while living in Alabama and northern Florida,

anybody can do it!” (RESP167). Respondents’ personal experiences and opinions at times aligned (*anyone can learn because I did*), while other times they did not (*anyone can learn, even though I didn’t*).

Prompt 3: Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful.

Theme 1: Instrumental Benefits (Context). This category is defined by the environment in which one operates that determines the necessity of knowing another foreign language and its level of utility. Codes listed under this theme were *globalization/global factor* and *diversity & demographics*, to characterize social environment as being either geographically or demographically based. Respondents whose answers contained elements found under this theme note how the importance of language can potentially be determined by the demands of a particular setting or “age” (e.g., “global age”) and with society becoming ever more diverse and globally connected, language can be a useful tool. However, there were other respondents who emphasized the circumstantial aspect of language utility suggesting that if a circumstance where foreign language is needed does not arise, then foreign language does not remain as useful.

Theme 2: Instrumental Benefits (Manner). Elements categorized under this theme were based on their common characteristics that demonstrate how foreign language can be or has been useful to individuals in various manners. Once again, the most cited advantage of knowing a foreign language was the benefit of increased opportunities, mostly in the professional sense: “Being bilingual is a great asset in many workplace” (RESP363). Commonly mentioned was the suggestion that knowing another language

makes one more marketable and/or versatile in many contexts (mainly professional), with a few outright stating that multilinguals have a clear advantage over monolinguals in conditions where a demand for language is present. The language that was mentioned by the most respondents as being in high demand, the most important to know, or the most useful was Spanish. A significant number of respondents disclosed themselves as educators who stress the importance and need for Spanish to adequately communicate with their ESL/ELL students and parents. Additionally, many respondents revealed working in or entering the *medical/healthcare* field and cite the same need for Spanish and other languages to address patients who do not speak English. Reflecting on the potential benefits Spanish could have afforded them:

I am going into the medical field and I wish I spoke Spanish fluently in order to communicate more efficiently than I can now. I could do more to help others if I spoke another language. (RESP158)

It would have been very useful to know Spanish at my position that I held for 13 years in the medical field. (RESP042)

Of those who mentioned their personal experiences in their field of work, it was apparent that more listed wishing to have continued learning (or are currently in the process of learning) a foreign language after having experienced the inability to communicate with their target population (cliente, patients, students, etc.). The mention of translators and interpreters was split between those who seem fine with delegating the task of foreign language communication to others (therefore creating an increased demand for

translators/interpreters) and those who would prefer directly communicating with others to eliminate the need for these mediators.

Comparison. Both monolinguals and multilinguals acknowledge the various instrumental benefits knowing another language provides with the only consistent difference between the two being that multilinguals can provide more personal examples of when they were required to utilize their language skills for some benefit compared to monolinguals who could not. This difference is most apparent in the discussion of translators. Both groups were in agreement about their utility in several professional fields, but only multilinguals were able to provide personal accounts (anecdotal examples) of when they acted as translators in either professional or social situations, whereas no monolingual was able to do such thing.

Prompt 4: Every person should know more than one language.

Upon review, the researcher was not able to distinguish any notable differences between content contained in monolingual and multilingual responses to this prompt. Therefore, themes for this prompt derive from respondent opinion that includes both monolinguals and multilinguals together. The following themes summarize what both monolinguals and multilinguals think in response to Prompt 4.

Theme 1: Benefits (Recognition). Theme 1 is characterized as the Recognition portion of Prompt 4. This theme contains all positive benefits that result from knowing or learning another language as cited by respondents that generally repeat those mentioned in previous sections of the survey (see Themes 1 and 3 under Prompt 1; see Theme under Prompt 3). While not mutually exclusive, benefits listed overall can be distinguished as

being either more oriented towards an integrative, “*ideal L2 self*” (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005) framework or a more utilitarian, instrumental one. Answers of respondents generally contain elements of both orientations with most acknowledging in some fashion the diversification of society and its increasingly globalized nature.

Theme 2: Situated Context (Evaluation). Theme 2 is characterized as the Evaluation portion of Prompt 4. This theme includes elements of respondents’ answers that point out and describe the given context in which they find themselves situated in terms of country, demographics of social environment, education system, and career that, when considered together, create current demands, or lack thereof, for foreign language and language learning. For simplicity, the researcher has taken all codes listed under this theme and provided her narrative summary for all content mentioned most by respondents:

The United States of America has been and remains a largely monolingual country that speaks English. However, this nation also contains a diverse population that speak languages other than English. Some manage to retain their lingual heritage, but many either by compulsion or choice, have learned English for easier integration into U.S. society. The U.S. education system and culture generally does a poor job at prioritizing foreign language learning for its students and citizens; however, a double standard exists for monolingual anglophones and monolinguals of other languages, with others being "forced" to learn English (through ELL and ESL programs), while monolingual anglophones are not forced to learn any other language. Given the increased and unceasing migration of

Spanish-speaking populations to the U.S., Spanish has become an in-demand language in various fields that the U.S. is not and has not been prepared to meet (particularly in the fields of education and healthcare).

Theme 3: Ultimate Decision (Conclusion). Theme 3 is characterized as the Conclusion portion of Prompt 4. It is interesting to note that the statement to this prompt does not specify what is implied by the word “should,” but that respondents understood it to equate to languages being mandatory, forced, required, or compulsory in nature. The majority consensus among respondents is that language learning should be optional for each individual and not a requirement. On one hand, many do not deem knowing foreign languages as necessary for their lives and therefore do not want a “mandate” because “some people’s lifestyles would not ever require them to know a second language” (RESP457). On the other hand, those who view language learning most favorably acknowledge the benefits languages would bring to individuals and agree with the suggestion of learning them; however, they do not go as far as to support any compulsory aspect of language learning. As best phrased by one respondent, languages may be beneficial but not beneficial for everyone and so it should be left up to individual choice:

While it would be nice if everyone did know more than one language, to say that people “should” seems to suggest that it is beneficial to every single person. Maybe I'm reading into this too much, but while I do think knowing multiple languages is useful in general to either a society or the person learning it themselves, I don't think it is useful for every single person, and while anyone can

learn a language, it does take time, focus, and effort that for some may best be applied somewhere else. (RESP444)

Also mentioned by respondents was the suggestion that enforcing increased language learning is logistically unrealistic in the context of the U.S. Only a handful of individuals were willing enough to be completely aligned in all their sentiments to express either full agreement or disagreement with the prompt's suggestion. E.g., "No, most people wouldn't have any use for a second language" (RESP308). Those in complete disagreement would often cite how language learning is not an interest for everyone, is not necessary, and should not be pushed no matter how useful. Those in complete agreement supported everyone learning a foreign language due to the plethora of benefits it offers (both integrative and/or instrumental) to both the individual and society.

Comparison. Both groups generally express the same ideas in themes contained under this prompt with the only slight difference being that monolinguals have a greater tendency to emphasize sentiments against making language learning mandatory or a requirement more than multilinguals. Codes under which this is most apparent are *culture* and *communication & connection*, where both recognize the benefits language provides to cultural understanding and exchange, but multilinguals express more commitment in supporting the "should" element of the prompt's statement while monolinguals express more hesitancy and are more willing to make concessions to those who advocate against learning languages. Phrased in a different manner, monolinguals are not as willing to say "yes" to the prompt, even while acknowledging the same benefits as multilinguals who are more committed. This is not to say that *all* multilinguals believe that everyone should

learn a foreign language, but rather there are proportionately less likely to disagree with the prompt than those who are monolingual.

Prompt 5: (Optional): Based on the type of prompts you have encountered today, are there any other thoughts and/or opinions you would like to express regarding foreign language?

Although there were 301 recorded responses for this optional prompt, most answers consisted in answering the question in the negative rather than providing descriptive information. After filtering, only 77 responses were usable for analysis, with 23 belonging to multilinguals and 54 to monolinguals. Therefore, while different topics were mentioned that resulted in the creation of codes, no themes were able to be formed from this prompt. The following codes are topics addressed by both monolinguals and multilinguals that are discussed in further detail in the following section: *English in the U.S., personal connection, early exposure, education/early education, judgement, and “I wish” statements.*

Comparison. Monolinguals overwhelmingly and exclusively expressed regret or unrealized desire regarding language learning that multilinguals do not. Commonly mentioned were wishes to have studied languages more while in school or younger, wanting increased accessibility to learning languages, wanting language learning to have been introduced at an earlier stage in life/education (particularly as part of the U.S. education system), or wishing for more variety of languages to be offered other than those traditionally taught (Spanish and French). The only multilingual respondent who expressed a wish desired only for others to know and understand the “social and health

benefits” knowing other languages produces. In addition to earlier introduction to languages in the U.S. education system, monolinguals also suggested a greater push for Spanish and programming that utilized an immersive approach. Several respondents used this section to provide a personal anecdote or two about their experience with languages. Multilinguals’ reflections were generally more positive and complete, detailing all they have been able to accomplish through language, while monolingual reflections were more varied. The most prevalent experiences detailed by monolinguals were that some studied language but were never able to maintain it or become conversant, others wished to have learned, some having learned and then forgotten the language, and some clarifying that they know some foreign language, but not enough to classify themselves as bilingual.

One of the most interesting codes that caught the researcher’s attention was *judgment*. Monolinguals under this code provided a variety of reflections and opinions that generally express displeasure with negative judgments predicated on whether someone is fluent in more than one language or not. While not explicitly stated, the researcher inferred that such displeasure with negative judgments was more a result of judgement against those who only speak one language, rather than those who speak several. One respondent openly discussed her frustration with low views on Americans for not being multilingual when they have no need to be:

I spoke with my husband today about how lots of children in Europe are required to learn English as a second language. At least that is what my foreign friends told me. I find that interesting. People like to make fun of Americans for not knowing multiple languages and being stupid. The way a lot of people feel about that is

“what’s the point?” Why would Americans learn multiple languages when everyone else is learning to speak ours. Obviously these are generalizing statements, but you get my point. I don’t believe the number of languages one knows is directly linked to their intelligence. [...] I just get frustrated when people associate the number of languages you speak with your intelligence or level of education. I could go on and on. (RESP217)

Other ideas mentioned by monolinguals were that foreign languages and language learning are “romanticized” concepts that only add pressure to one when deciding whether or not to attempt the endeavor and the double standards that exist between the view of low versus high income language learners.

Multilinguals, on the other hand, are more concerned with social and cultural perceptions of those who speak languages other than English or who are multilingual in general:

It is unbelievable how we are in 2022, and most un-educated or unknowledgeable people see the ability to speak two or more languages as a weakness and discriminate against it. People assume that an accent defines your level of education, but they do not stop to think that perhaps that accent means that person can speak more than one language. Possibly their education level could be outstanding. (RESP384)

They often described these views on their group as frustrating, problematic, and hypocritical, citing the idea of how people look down on those who speak non-English

languages, stereotypes, and expectations of assimilating into the English language (while no push for monolingual anglophones to learn other languages):

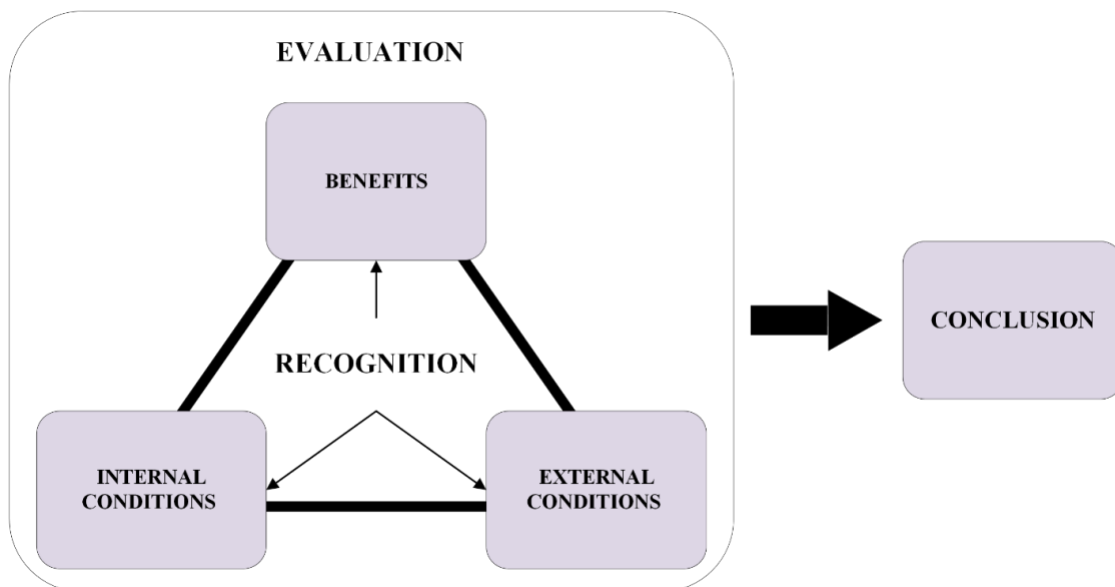
I just think it is worth noting that foreigners are expected to learn English and it is never expected for native English speakers to learn another language. I believe if more English speakers sought out learning another language, it would greatly benefit society in America. (RESP469)

Overall, multilinguals who participated in this survey did not disregard the importance of knowing English with some even citing it as the only language necessary to learn, but the majority seem to disagree with the sentiment behind the idea of English conformity and exclusivity.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Each extended response prompt was meant to reveal information on respondents' beliefs and/or opinions on languages and language learning in the categories of value, utility, motivation, and capability/confidence. Analysis of all themes and their contents resulted in an interpretation and classification of four master themes that characterize the nature of the entire data set as a process—*benefits, internal conditions, external conditions, and conclusion*. This model reflects respondents' answers as an integrated form rather than isolated concepts. Deriving her understanding from data results and intensive interaction with extended responses, the researcher understood most participants to arrive at some conclusive stance on foreign language acquisition by considering three main interrelated factors relating to self (benefits, internal conditions, and external conditions) as illustrated and described below (Figure 1):

Figure 1. Theoretical Model for Thematic Data Results



- *Benefits*: Benefits that either knowing or studying a foreign language can afford to an individual (can be instrumental and/or integrative).
- *Internal Conditions*: Tendencies and characteristics of an individual that may or may not make him/her more inclined towards foreign language acquisition (personality, interest, motivation, etc.).
- *External Conditions*: Elements of an environment or social context that may either reinforce or suppress elements of an individual's internal condition.
- *Conclusion*: Interaction between all three aforementioned factors that determine an individual's outlook and behavior towards foreign language learning.

Explanation of the process behind this theoretical model is best explained by Prompt 4's theme descriptions (Recognition, Evaluation, and Conclusion) that are essentially a summary of answers provided by respondents as to whether foreign language is something that should be learned. Among all answers, respondents are clearly able to identify and define all benefits that foreign language provides to its learners. Most then begin to consider other conditions (either internal or external) that may influence whether language learning is deemed worth the effort. The identification and acknowledgment of language benefits, internal conditions, and external conditions constitute Recognition. Internal conditions pertain more to one's dispositions, whereas external conditions are what one is exposed to and can include social circles, societal expectations, educational systems, work environments, and cross-cultural contact. Depending on what the characterizations of the internal and external conditions are, the extent to which they are either positive or negative can determine whether these conditions themselves become barriers or aids to language learning and its benefits—this

process of consideration and assessment is the Evaluation portion of the theoretical process. Finally, after considering each factor against the other, a determination is made as to whether foreign language acquisition is an endeavor worth partaking in and decisive action is either taken or not by the individual, thereby constituting the Conclusion portion of the theoretical process.

The conclusive stage of the theoretical model assumes the final formation of attitude/orientation and motivation, which as previously stated, are not equal in producing “goal-directed behavior” (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 173). For the sake of simplicity, attitude can be characterized as an outlook that has the potential to influence motivation pertaining to some goal. However, one’s outlook in and of itself is not enough to determine whether one will act towards achieving said goal—that is instead the role of motivation (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Therefore, it is possible that one may deem foreign language as worth learning yet not proceed with taking actionable steps towards engaging in the learning process. Conversely, someone may also conclude that a foreign language is worth learning and follow through with behavior that engages in the learning process. Based on answers reviewed in their entirety, the researcher believes that both types of individuals were present in this survey and that this finding was able to be distinguished through a monolingual and multilingual comparison.

As stated in Masgoret and Gardner (2003), even though orientation and motivation are not equal in producing “goal-directed behavior,” orientation can still influence and even express itself in motivation and therefore be considered a secondary factor (pp. 169–170; 173). The researcher believes that findings of this study align with

Gardner's argument that orientation types (instrumental, integrative, etc.) do not matter as much as the level of motivation that coincides with these orientations (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). In this study, both groups expressed similar positive opinions on foreign language in the extended response portion of the survey. Moreover, Likert results consistently showed that both groups generally displayed a positive orientation towards foreign language learning and acquisition. The only consistent difference most apparent between the two groups was the intensity of sentiment behind expressed ideas as shown in the Likert results. Therefore, if general perceptions between both monolinguals and multilinguals is the same with the only difference between the two being the intensities of sentiment behind the same beliefs (a factor of motivation), then it can be proposed that a motivational difference (or some aspect of motivation) is likely a distinguishing factor between those who have achieved foreign language proficiency (multilinguals) and those who have not (monolinguals) in the context of this particular study. Gardner's (2003) argument is also manifested in this study's high acknowledgement of foreign language but frequent statements of low and/or lacking motivation by respondents. Such discrepancy could potentially prove as an explanation as to why the majority of respondents were able to praise the benefits of foreign language acquisition while not supporting its insistence on being something everyone should learn.

Another concept encountered was the variance in code meanings previously discussed as a theoretical limitation of methodology. As Creswell and Poth (2018) make clear, code counts convey the message that all codes are equal when in reality they disregard "that the passages coded may actually represent contradictory views," or as was found in this study, ambiguous ones (pp. 192–193). Such was the case with codes such as

resources, disability, and easier/harder where overgeneralization and lack of specificity often required that the researcher infer the message implied by respondents' answers. Other codes such as *opportunities* and *communication & connection* were commonly cited, yet upon closer review it became apparent their use often referred to various ideas differing in characterization (e.g., *communication & connection* for strictly utilitarian purposes versus integrative ones). Overemphasis on statistical dimensions of a study does little to inform researchers of the substance and meaning of what is being suggested by participants. For this reason, it is important that qualitative methods be implemented to ensure a full picture is being provided for a data set. Thankfully, a mixed-methods approach allowed for additional verification on findings revealed through either the quantitative or qualitative portions of this study.

An observation worth addressing is the reflections offered by respondents that contained similar ideas to those coded under *judgement* found under Optional Prompt 5. Both monolinguals and multilinguals expressed frustrations with judgements made based on how many or what languages one speaks. Both groups cite double standards that exist for non-English speakers and monolingual anglophones, where the former are pushed with more urgency to learn English while the latter are not expected to learn other languages in similar earnest. Some monolinguals expressed displeasure with the notion that their lack of L2 proficiency indicates in any sense a lack of intellect or effort, but rather stress that they are products of circumstances that never emphasized or required that foreign language be seriously considered and treated as a worthwhile endeavor in the same manner other countries treat English. Those in favor of foreign language acquisition generally expressed a desire for a greater embrace of diversity and an abandonment of

sentiments that inspire the antiquated notion of English superiority. While it seemed to be the common belief among respondents that foreign language acquisition would naturally lead to increased *communication & connection* between people and cultures, developing language skills in and of itself may not be enough to facilitate positive communication as one desires. In his examination of neoliberal ideology and language learning, Kubota (2016) argues that learning and operating in one common language (English, or any other) does not necessarily lead to “constructive interaction” or “mutual respect and understanding,” but rather is dependent on a “willingness to communicate constructively” particularly with others distinct from us (pp. 468–470). It is his suggestion that educators “address dispositional competence, such as willingness to communicate, willingness to develop cultural and historical knowledge, mutual accommodation, and non-prejudiced or anti-racist attitudes, in order to foster more sustainable relationships with Others”; this is his potential solution to problems that arise when such values are not present in curriculum (Kubota, 2016, p. 477).

Something that aroused suspicion in the researcher was the apparent frequency of similar terminology used by respondents in their extended response answers to that of Likert items presented to them prior in the survey. It could be a coincidence that the same terms as presented by survey items were most used by respondents in answers that are supposed to reflect their own opinions since most ideas expressed are commonly associated with language learning. However, the possibility cannot be ruled out that processes like cued recall took place when respondents were answering prompts that were repeated survey items. Such might explain why several of the most coded words in respondents’ answers are words contained in Likert items such as

understand/understanding, culture, knowledgeable, useful, opportunities, capabilities, necessary/not necessary, and lifestyle. Regardless of whether such suspicion can be confirmed or not, it is the suggestion of the researcher that open-ended questions be presented prior to any Likert scale items to decrease the chance of cued association and increase organic elements of originality. Moreover, interviews as part of a study's data collection methods may offer both the researcher and participant the opportunity for further clarification and elaboration of answers collected.

In sum, results from this study suggest that most university adults display a positive perception towards foreign language acquisition, with multilinguals displaying greater levels of positive disposition towards foreign language than their monolingual counterparts. These findings somewhat corroborate the researcher's hypothesis that multilinguals would display more positive perceptions toward foreign language than their monolingual counterparts; however, this was only able to be proven through data collected from the Likert scale portion of the study (quantitative), rather than observed in the content of respondents' extended responses (qualitative). Thematic analysis of respondents' extended responses found that most opinions and beliefs regarding foreign language are nuanced and that both monolinguals and multilinguals generally hold the same thoughts, although there were slight differences in the characterization of their answers. Therefore, it can be said that there is not much difference in what monolingual and multilingual adults think, but rather in the intensity of sentiment that powers such thoughts. These results would support findings from Masgoret & Gardner (2003) that suggest that motivation (as it is influenced by attitude/orientation) is the distinguishing factor in determining success in foreign language learning, rather than the types of ideas

one holds about the concept (instrumental versus integrative). This study differs slightly from previous ones due to its centralized focus on qualitative findings rather than purely quantitative results from Likert scales. By using a mixed-method approach, the researcher was able to validate whether any significant trends shown in the Likert portion of the survey coincided with any notable observations in the qualitative analysis portion of the study.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the perceptions that adult university students may hold towards foreign language acquisition with an emphasis on distinctions between monolinguals and multilinguals. Findings from this study corroborate existing theories on attitude and motivation as they pertain to language learning among university adults. Distinctions in perception between monolinguals and multilinguals were very few with main ones centering on differences in the intensity of sentiments felt for positive, neutral, and negative statements on foreign language; differences in lived experiences from which anecdotal evidence is drawn; and expressions of regret and/or unrealized desire by monolinguals. Opinions, attitudes, and beliefs on foreign language acquisition of university adults were positive with extended response answers containing elements of both instrumental and integrative aspects. Despite positive perceptions of foreign language acquisition, most respondents were insistent on leaving language learning as a matter of choice to each individual and were therefore not in favor of any compulsory measure to promote foreign languages. Several themes were able to be generated from a descriptive coding process to produce a master theoretical model incorporating the processes of Recognition, Evaluation, and Conclusion through three key factors of Benefits, Internal Conditions, and External Conditions. Through this model it was revealed that, while foreign language learning and acquisition evaluated on its own merits is considered a beneficial endeavor to partake in for both the individual and society by most, the concept generally requires that benefits outweigh costs as a pre-requisite for deciding to engage in the learning process. Additionally, level of motivation remains the suggested determinant factor of whether one is likely to be persistent in the learning

process to achieve success: “Motivation is KEY, and having a growth mindset” (RESP210).

Results from thematic analysis of this investigation suggest that the largest deterrents for learning a foreign language according to respondents are lack of resources, lack of motivation, and lack of necessity. While respondents were able to list potential benefits of knowing a foreign language, information was not conclusive enough to determine what the greatest incentives were for learning a foreign language that would result in motivated behavior. A suggestion for further research would be to evaluate and compare results between different demographic groups that were not the focus of this study. As expressed by respondent one, “It would also be interesting to see people’s outlooks on hearing languages they don’t understand, and how that relates to their personal feelings towards learning foreign languages” (RESP255). Inquiry with underrepresented groups such as recent immigrants, non-English speaking immigrants and/or citizens, expatriates, etc., could serve to continue addressing gaps in literature as it pertains to perceptions societal groups hold.

To conclude, data gathered from university adults on their perceptions towards foreign language acquisition demonstrates a positive regard for foreign languages. While a plethora of benefits from foreign language acquisition were provided by survey respondents, the researcher does not believe there was enough conclusive evidence to determine existing incentives for respondents that actually resulted in actionable measures being taken to engage in the learning process. In contrast, existing deterrents to language learning are reported as lack of necessity, lack of motivation, and lack of resources, particularly by monolinguals who disclosed drawing from experience. The

greatest challenge derived from this study is the consideration of how to generate increased sustainable motivation in individuals who do not demonstrate a propensity to be highly motivated toward language learning, and whether such can even be achieved by any teaching approach whether it be utilitarian or based in the ideal self (Higgins 1987, 1996 as cited in Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). Moreover, can more earnest promotion of language be executed effectively while still honoring the aspect of individual choice as is seen to be paramount to an almost unanimous majority? It seems unlikely that increased and earlier promotion of foreign languages in the U.S. educational system could take place without some level of institutional imposition. It is difficult to determine whether strong sentiment against the imposition of language learning is a by-product of some American cultural aspect, but one must imagine it as a possibility. The essence of sentiments expressed by most respondents is best captured by the following:

I don't think it is necessary for everyone to know more than one language. Would it be nice? Of course. I think most of us Americans could use some knowledge of other languages and cultures outside of our own. I think the most important thing would be that everyone should know how to respectfully communicate with someone no matter what language they speak. I think that if you're an individual who is frequently part of a community or group that speaks a language different from your own that you should put some effort into learning that language. For some people, that isn't their reality, so learning a new language isn't so practical. I really think it's a person to person decision. For some, it is probably best to know more than one language. For others, it simply is irrelevant. (RESP217)

It was the intention of this study to capture thoughts such as this one to provide further insight into the rationale and motives of adult individuals regarding foreign language acquisition. The biggest suggestion the researcher has for those who wish to conduct further study in this line of inquiry is that they spend more time conducting thorough analysis of respondents' answers to better reflect the nuance that is so inherent in human thought.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY

*All coding commands omitted

Demographic Collection

Instruction: Please answer each question as it pertains to you.

How old are you?

- 18-24
- 25-31
- 32-38
- 39-45
- 46-50
- Over 50

Sex

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

Race/Ethnicity

- White
- Black
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- Native-American
- Mixed race
- Other:
- Prefer not to say

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Highest level of education achieved/completed

- High school GED
- High School Diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate/PhD

- Other:
- Prefer not to say

Please select what most accurately applies to you (to the greatest extent):

- I was born and raised in the U.S.
- I was born and raised outside the U.S.
- I was born outside the U.S. but raised in the U.S.
- I was born in the U.S. but raised outside the U.S.
- Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to say

Language Probe

How many languages do you speak?

- One
- Two or more

Which language do you speak?

- English
- Spanish
- French
- Tagalog
- Mandarin
- Vietnamese
- Cantonese
- Arabic
- Korean
- Russian
- German
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Other:

Which language(s) did you learn first?

Are you currently learning a foreign language?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever learned or attempted to learn a foreign language in the past?

- Yes
- No

Do your parents/guardians speak more than one language?

- Yes
- No

Which language do they speak? (For two or more selection: Which languages do they speak Select all that apply)

- English
- Spanish
- French
- Tagalog
- Mandarin
- Vietnamese
- Cantonese
- Arabic
- Korean
- Russian
- German
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Other:

Likert scales (6 answer options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)

Positive

- People will respect me more if I know a foreign language. (Prompt #26 from Acheson, et al., 2015, p. 217)
- Learning a foreign language is important for understanding a culture.
- Studying a foreign language will make me more knowledgeable. (Prompt #45 from Acheson, et al., 2015, p. 217)
- Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful.
- More opportunities are available to those who study/know foreign languages.

Neutral

- I have capabilities for learning a foreign language.
- Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to.

Negative

- I would rather spend my time on subjects other than languages. (Prompt #28 from Acheson, et al., 2015, p. 217)
- I would not study a foreign language if it was not an academic or professional requirement. (Prompt #36 from Acheson, et al., 2015, p. 217)
- Knowing a foreign language is not necessary for the type of lifestyle I live.

- People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one.

Extended response [open box response answers]

Instructions

You will now see prior prompts to which you previously responded. You will have the opportunity to elaborate and respond fully to each statement as you wish. Remember, all answers are anonymous and/or confidential, therefore be sure to respond truthfully stating what you think, any experiences, suggestions, etc. There will be a total of four statements.

- People who know more than one language are better than those who only know one (value; multilingual vs. monolingual)
- Anyone could learn a foreign language if they wanted to (ability/motivation)
- Studying/knowing a foreign language will make me more useful (utility)
- Every person should know more than one language (value)

Optional:

Based on the type of prompt you have encountered today, are there any other thoughts and/or opinions you would like to express regarding foreign language?

Interview

OPTIONAL

If you are willing to be available for a potential interview asking to elaborate on your responses, please consent below and provide the following contact information. Your answers and information will remain **confidential**. Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis and should not last longer than 15-30 minutes.

*Selection is based on the discretion of the researcher. An interview is **not guaranteed**, and you will not be obligated to participate if you do not wish.

- Yes, I would like to be interviewed about my answers
 - Name:
 - Phone number:
 - Email:
- No, I do not want to be interviewed about my answers

APPENDIX B: LIKERT SCALE RESULT VISUALIZATIONS

Figure 2.1. Positive Likert Items—Monolingual

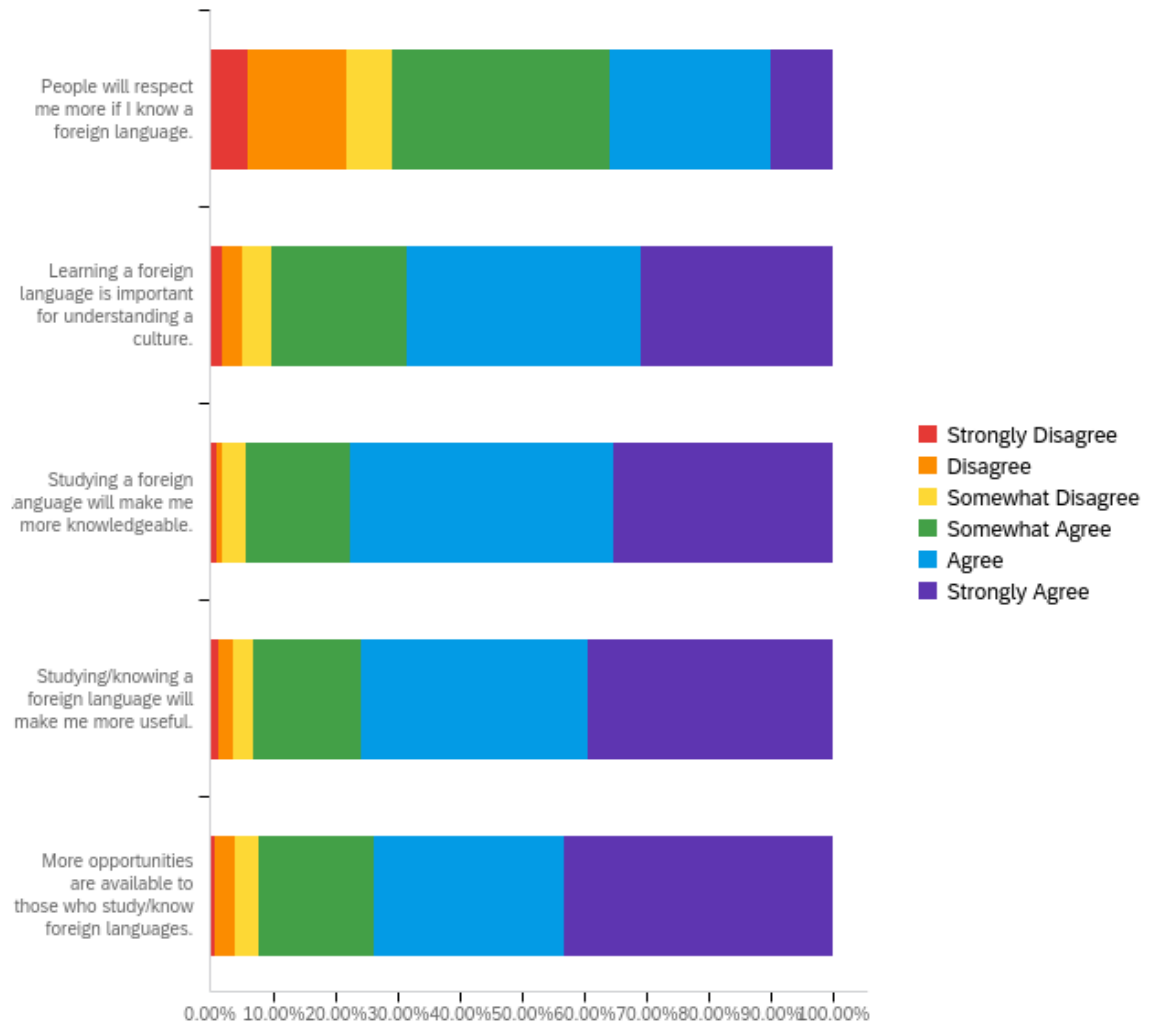


Figure 2.2. Positive Likert Items—Multilinguals

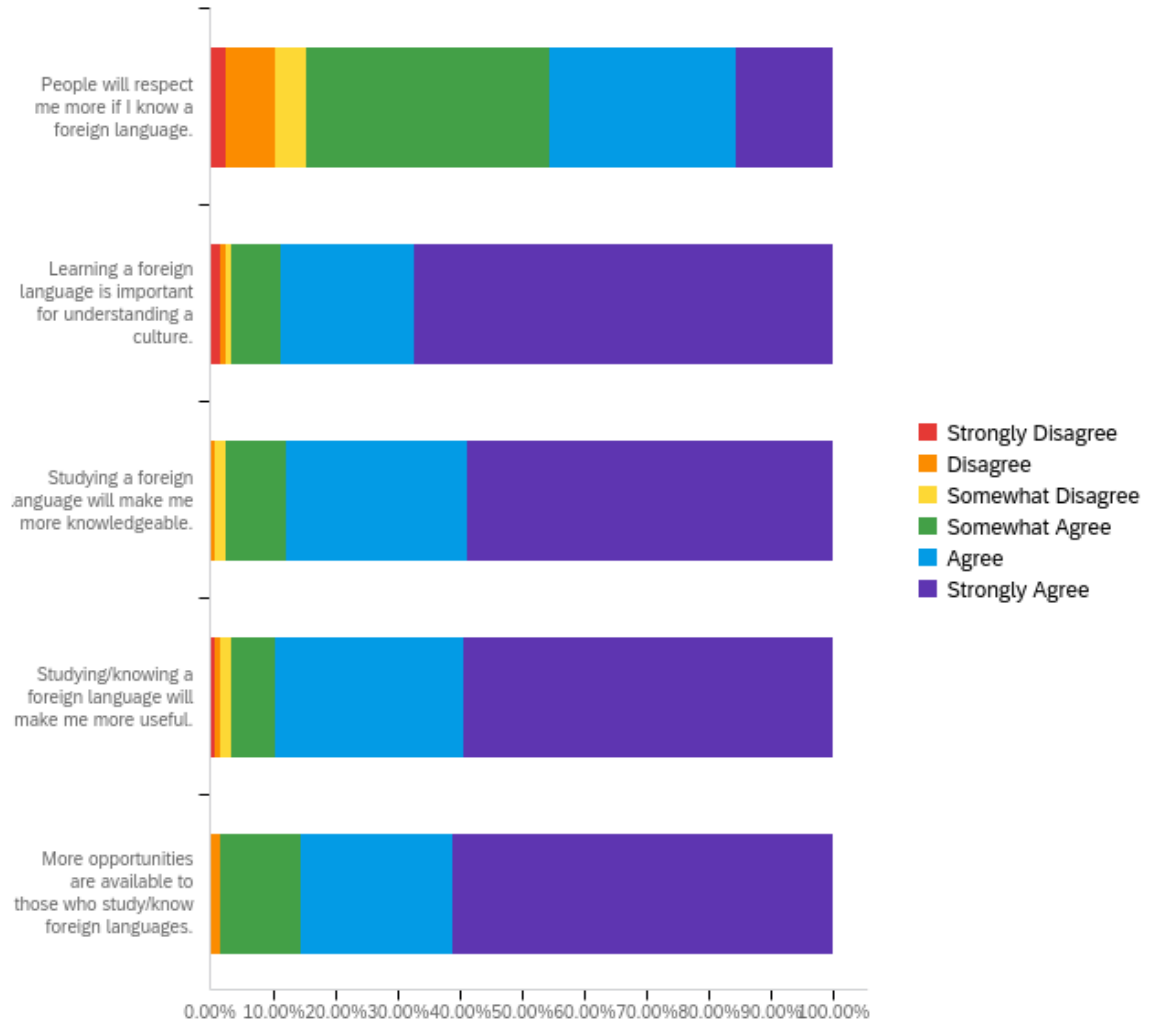


Figure 2.3. Neutral Likert Items—Monolingual

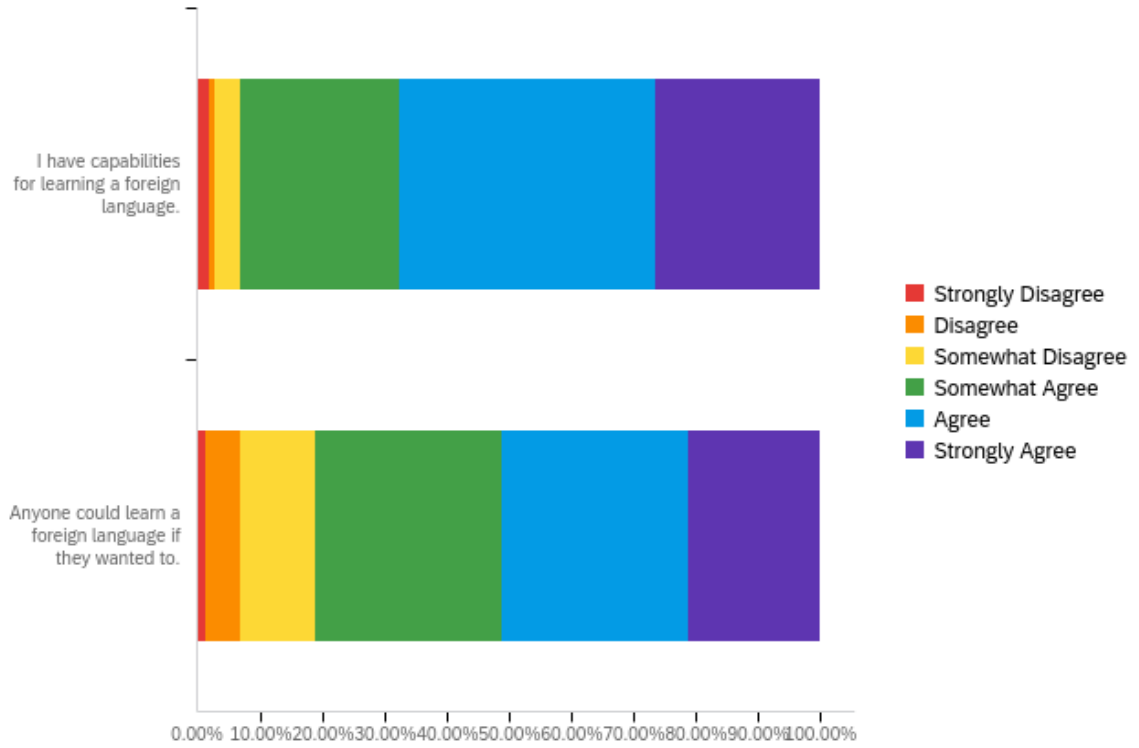


Figure 2.4. Neutral Likert Items—Multilinguals

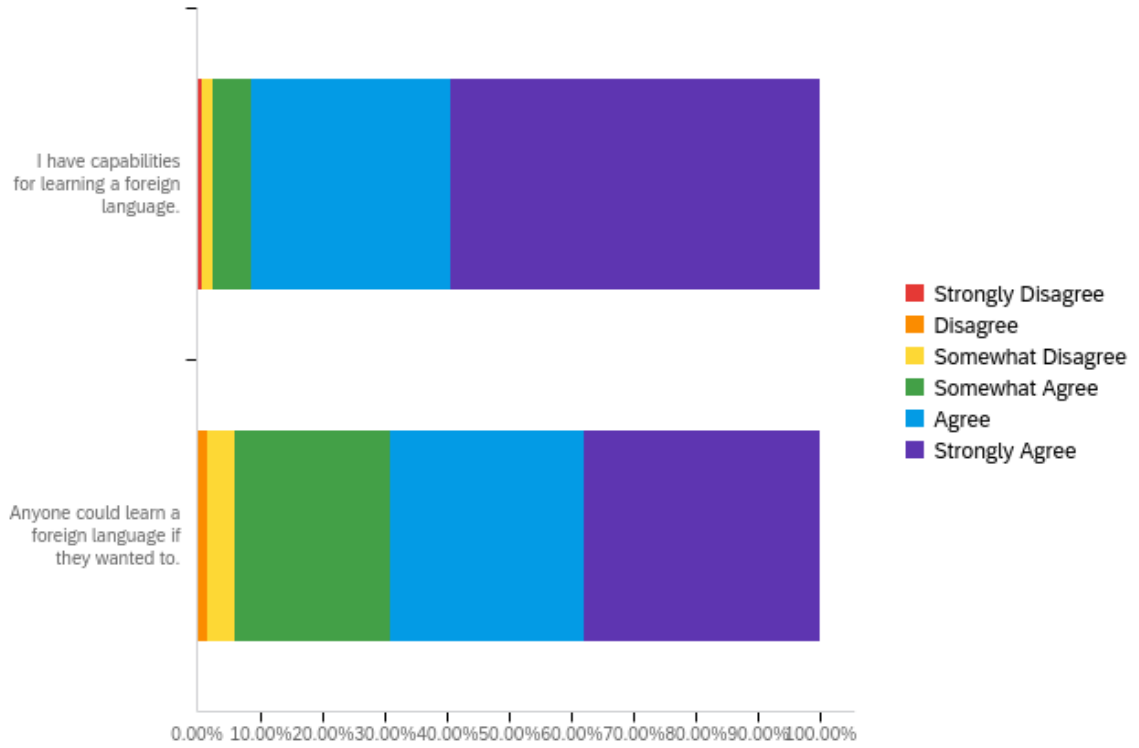


Figure 2.5. Negative Likert Items—Monolinguals

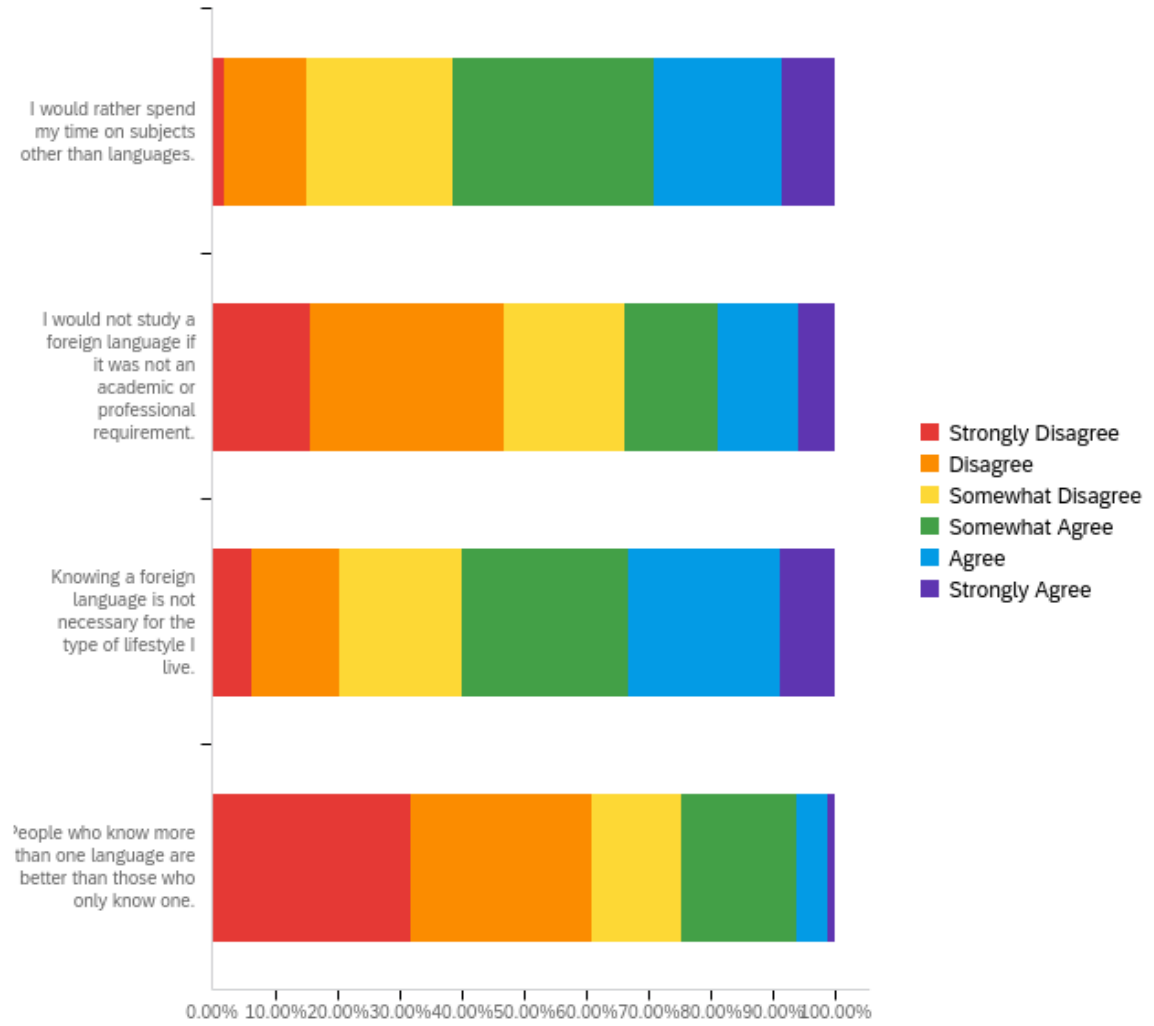
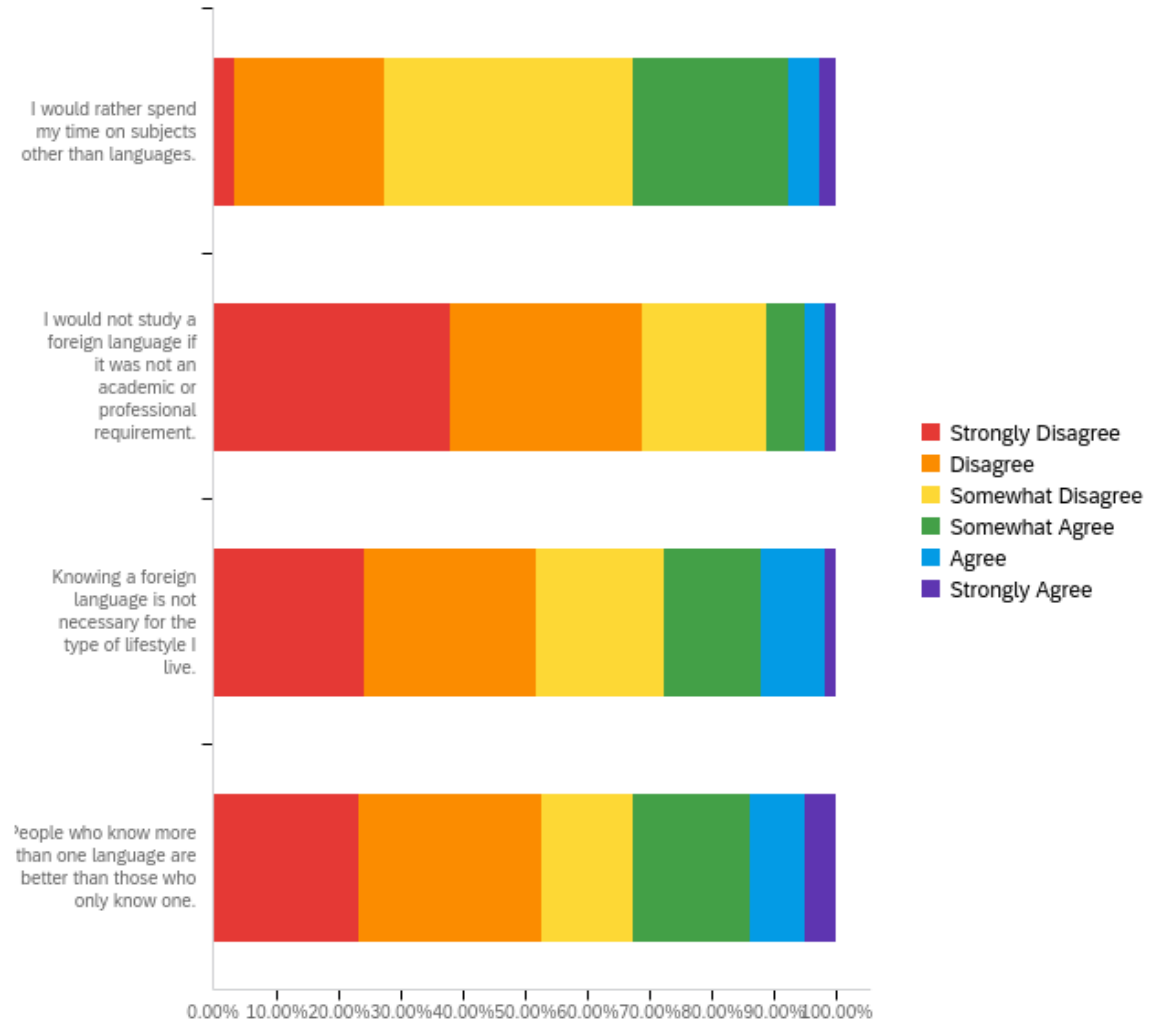


Figure 2.6. Negative Likert Items—Multilinguals



APPENDIX C: CODE LISTS

1 "I Wish" Statements

Code List 1: S1MoreLanguageBetterThan

- 2.1 *Theme #1: Attributive Distinction/Attributes*
 - 2.1.1 Cognitive Function
 - 2.1.2 Understanding/Empathy
 - 2.1.2.1 Openness
 - 2.1.2.2 Appreciation
 - 2.1.3 Knowledge/Knowledgeable
- 2.2 *Theme #2: Motivation/Motivational distinctions*
 - 2.2.1 Necessity/Circumstance
 - 2.2.1.1 Resources
- 2.3 *Theme #3: Instrumental Aspect/Instrumentality*
 - 2.3.1 Helpful/Beneficial/Useful
 - 2.3.1.1 Opportunities
 - 2.3.1.1.1 Career Opportunities/Work-Related
 - 2.3.1.1.2 Advantage
 - 2.3.1.2 Travel
 - 2.3.1.3 Skill/Skillset
 - 2.3.1.4 Diversity Setting
 - 2.4 Connection/Communication

Code List 2: S2AnyoneLearnLanguage

- 3.1 Statement 2 Personal Examples from Respondents
- 3.2 *Theme #1: External Conditions*
 - 3.2.1 Environment
 - 3.2.1.1 Application & Practice
 - 3.2.2 Easier/Harder
 - 3.2.2.1 Resources
 - 3.2.2.1.1 Education
 - 3.2.2.1.2 Technology
 - 3.2.2.1.2.1 Internet/Online
 - 3.2.2.1.2.1.1 Apps/(Duolingo)
 - 3.2.2.2 Barriers
 - 3.2.2.2.1 Disability
 - 3.2.2.3 Age
- 3.3 *Theme #2: Internal Conditions*

- 3.3.1 Motivation
 - 3.3.1.1 Patience
 - 3.3.1.2 "Setting/Putting Your Mind/Body To"
 - 3.3.1.3 Willingness/Openness
 - 3.3.1.4 Desire
 - 3.3.1.5 effort
 - 3.3.1.6 discipline/commitment/dedication
 - 3.3.1.7 time

Code List 3: S3LanguageMakesMeUseful

- 4.1 *Theme: Instrumental Benefits*
 - 4.1.1 Communication & Connection
 - 4.1.2 Helpful/Beneficial/Useful
 - 4.1.2.1 Convenience
 - 4.1.2.1.1 Travel
 - 4.1.3 *Process*
 - 4.1.3.1 Career/Work-Related
 - 4.1.3.1.1 Translators/Interpreters
 - 4.1.3.1.1.1 Spanish
 - 4.1.3.1.1.1.1 Medical/Healthcare
 - 4.1.3.1.1.1.2 Educator/Education
 - 4.1.3.1.1.1.2.1 EsI/Ell
 - 4.1.3.1.1.2 Business
 - 4.1.3.1.2 Marketability & Versatility
 - 4.1.3.1.3 Opportunities
 - 4.1.3.1.4 Advantage
 - 4.1.4 *Context/Setting*
 - 4.1.4.1 Diversity & Demographics
 - 4.1.4.2 Globalization/Global Factor
- 4.2 Statement 3 Personal Examples Respondents Mention

Code List 4: S4EveryoneShouldKnowLanguage

- 5.1 *Theme #1: Benefits*
 - 5.1.1 Self-Development & Improvement
 - 5.1.2 Jobs/Career/Opportunities
 - 5.1.3 Culture
 - 5.1.4 Global/Globalization
 - 5.1.5 Communication & Connection
- 5.2 *Theme #2: Situated Context (of sample population)*
 - 5.2.1 America/U.S./American

- 5.2.2 Education/Education System
- 5.2.3 Spanish & Asl

5.3 *Theme #3: Ultimate Decision/Reality (Conclusion)*

- 5.3.1 Conditional, "But" And "If" Statement
 - 5.3.2 Helpful/Beneficial/Useful
 - 5.3.3 Choice
 - 5.3.4 Unlikely/Unrealistic
 - 5.3.5 Ideal
 - 5.3.6 No Mandate/Not Necessary/Etc.
- 5.4 Statement 4 Personal Connection

Code List 5: Q5FreeReponseOptional

- 6.1 Other Languages/Special Languages
- 6.2 English In The U.S
- 6.3 The Future
- 6.4 Personal Connection
- 6.5 Early Exposure/Exposure
 - 6.5.1 Education/Early Education
- 6.6 Judgement

APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Office of Research Integrity



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NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident submission on InfoEd IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 21-375
PROJECT TITLE: Language Experience: The Adult Perception of Foreign Language
SCHOOL/PROGRAM: World Languages
RESEARCHERS: PI: Lileth Stricklin
Investigators: Stricklin, Lileth~Carracelas-Juncal, Carmen~
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Exempt Category
APPROVAL STARTING: 28-Feb-2022

Donald Sacco

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chairperson

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