

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction: The need for culturally responsive teaching

Scott Kissau, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

Lan Quach Kolano, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

Chuang Wang, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

Abstract

Despite recent evidence suggesting that Black students in the United States continue to lack motivation to pursue foreign language (L2) studies in comparison with their peers of other races, very little research has been conducted related to this topic in the past ten years. The purpose of this study was to provide a more current analysis of the motivation of young Black students to learn Spanish at one large inner-city high school in the United States. Building upon Gardner's (1985) model of L2 motivation, a mixed methodology was employed to investigate differences in motivational factors among racial groups at a diverse high school in the southeastern

Scott Kissau (PhD., University of Windsor) is an Assistant Professor of Second Language Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he is the Coordinator of the Master's of Arts and Teaching Foreign Languages program. His research relates to gender and language learning, online language instruction, and the beliefs of effective foreign language teachers.

Lan Quach Kolano (PhD., University of North Carolina) is an Associate Professor of Second Language Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is the Coordinator of the Master's of Arts and Teaching English as a Second Language Programs. Her research relates to multicultural teacher education, second language acquisition/identity development and heritage language retention.

Chuang Wang (PhD., Ohio State University) is an Associate Professor of Educational Research at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he teaches educational research courses. His research interests include self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning behaviors of students learning English as a second /foreign language.

United States. Fifty-seven students studying Level I Spanish participated in the study by completing a questionnaire at two different times in the semester. Individual interviews were conducted with select students to further examine racial differences in motivation to learn Spanish. Although the findings indicated that Black students are no less motivated to study Spanish than their peers, the results also showed that perceived lack of cultural relevance among some Black students may jeopardize their motivation to pursue learning the language. To respond to some of the findings, the researchers suggest that L2 teachers adopt a more culturally responsive approach to teaching foreign languages to engage all students in the language learning classroom.

There are many benefits associated with the study of a foreign language (L2).

There are many benefits associated with the study of a foreign language (L2). A study by the National Education Association (NEA) found that L2 study offers students cognitive, cultural, and economic advantages (2007). Results indicated that L2 study helps students make academic progress in other subjects, improve basic skills development, and increase higher order, abstract, and creative thinking. Additionally, it was reported that the study of an L2 enhances students' sense of achievement, increases their standardized test scores, and improves their chances of college acceptance. In terms of cultural benefits, L2 study was found to result in increased understanding and respect of other cultures, thus creating a greater tolerance of the differences among people. In its study, the NEA (2007) also reported that in an era of an increasingly global marketplace, L2 study enhances career opportunities for students.

Despite the advantages of learning another language, evidence continues to suggest that many American youth lack interest in L2 studies. Studies spread out over the past 30 years have demonstrated that Black students, in particular, are under-represented in L2 programs in the United States (Brigman & Jacobs, 1981; Hodges & Welch, 1992; Moore, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Brigman and Jacobs (1981) conducted a study exploring the participation and success of minority students in L2 programs. The researchers noted that at the high school level, fewer Black students (52%) than White students (72%) studied an L2 for one or more years. More than 10 years after this study, Hodges and Welch (1992) reported that the increased interest in L2 learning in the United States has not translated into more Black youth participating in L2 programs.

More recent reports suggest that the lack of interest among Black students in L2 studies extends beyond secondary school. In an article describing the celebration of National Foreign Language Week at one of the largest Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the United States, Farfan-Cobb and Lassiter (2003) reported that although a large number of their students take an L2 class, very few decide to pursue a major or minor in L2 studies. Further, a large-scale survey conducted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2007) revealed that Black students in the United States represent the racial group least likely to continue the study of an L2 after high school.

Fewer Black students pursuing post-secondary L2 studies translate into fewer Black students receiving L2 teacher training. Moore (2005) noted that between January

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

1994 and December 2003, of the over 300 students enrolled in an L2 teacher training program at the University of Texas at Austin, only six were Black. Few Black students pursuing L2 teacher training, ultimately, results in few Black L2 teachers. Farfan-Cobb and Lassiter (2003) reported that at the HBCU involved in their research, only three out of 10 L2 faculty members were “people of color” (p. 398).

Given what we know about the benefits of L2 learning, more research is needed that explores why Black students in the United States continue to be under-represented in L2 programs. The fact that many of the studies that have investigated this important topic are dated underscores the need for such research. The following research study responds to this need by examining quantitative and qualitative data collected from both students and teachers at one large urban high school in the southeastern region of the United States.

...more research is needed that explores why Black students in the United States continue to be under-represented in L2 programs. [...] The following study responds to this need by examining quantitative and qualitative data collected from both students and teachers at one large urban high school in the southeastern region of the United States.

Review of the Literature

Reasons for lack of interest

A variety of reasons have been suggested for the lack of participation among Black students in L2 studies. Researchers have attempted to explain the lack of interest or motivation of Black students with theories of linguistic deficits, cultural relevance and resistance theories, pedagogical deficiencies, and lack of preparation and exposure to L2 studies.

Linguistic Deficits. One particularly controversial explanation relates to the existence of linguistic deficiencies among Black students in the United States. Orr (1987) argued that the language differences between standard English and Black English vernacular may be impeding Black students’ success in school. The findings of a more recent study by Kubota, Austin, and Saito-Abbott (2003) add additional credence to the controversial argument that weak English skills are discouraging many Black students from studying another language. In the study, when asked why so few of her Black peers pursue L2 studies, a female Black student commented, “I think a lot of times, they are discouraged, just in general. They don’t want to learn foreign language when a lot of them have trouble with English” (Kubota et al., 2003, p. 20).

Cultural Relevance. Other explanations for the under-representation of Black students in L2 programs in the United States have focused on social and cultural distance theories. According to Schumann’s Acculturation Theory (1976), students who experience little similarity between the first and L2 cultures, often referred to as social distance, will struggle with the language learning process, and may lack motivation as a result. Guillaume (1994) asserted that the failure to connect language learning with Black students’ hopes and concerns for the future is another cause for lack of enrollment. He proposed that Black students hold a false view that foreign languages are for majority groups.

To reduce the social distance that Black students may experience in L2 classrooms, Davis (1992) and others (Clark, 1980, 1982; Dathorne, 1974) have suggested making the curriculum and materials more appealing, more appropriate, and more relevant to Black students. Clark (1982) found that Black students in elementary language courses often cannot relate to the course material and find it culturally irrelevant. On a similar note, Clowney and Legge (1979) suggested implementing a more inclusive L2 curriculum that includes materials written by Black authors to diminish Black students' feelings of indifference and irrelevance.

Other research, however, seems to reject the notion that Black students are seeking greater cultural relevance in L2 programs. In the course of writing his dissertation that focused on assessing attitudes and opinions of first and second year L2 students enrolled at HBCUs, Davis (1990) noticed a discrepancy between students' expressed interests and the courses for which they actually registered. Davis (1990) found that while many Black students indicated a preference to learn African languages, enrollment in these courses was generally low. He indicated that although many Black students in the United States believe they should want to learn an African language, they are also struggling to be part of the mainstream American college experience, which often equates with studying a European language (Davis, 1990).

Resistance. More recent research suggests that Black students may steer away from advanced-level L2 classes not because of their lack of cultural relevance, but rather to avoid the "burden of acting White" (Tyson, Darity, & Castellino, 2005, p. 585). While not specific to the study of foreign languages, studies over the past 25 years investigating the under-achievement and under-representation of Black students in advanced-level courses have made reference to an "oppositional culture hypothesis" (Downey & Ainsworth-Darnell, 2002; Farkas, Lleras, & Maczuga, 2002). According to this hypothesis, high achieving Black students and those who participate in courses traditionally populated by White students face criticism and ridicule from their Black peers for acting White.

In a study by Tyson et al. (2005) investigating the under-representation of Black high school students in advanced placement and honors courses, the researchers reported that while the burden of acting White was not pervasive among 85 high school students in North Carolina high schools, it did exist among a small minority. In only one of the participating eight high schools did the researchers find evidence of Black students being ridiculed for acting White by their Black peers because of their academic success and behavior. A more common explanation given in the study for the under-representation of Black students in these classes is their fear of failure and isolation from their Black peers. The researchers went on to suggest that the burden of acting White is influenced by socioeconomics and that it is more likely to exist in schools with large populations of both Black and White students and where there are large socioeconomic differences between the two groups.

Pedagogical Deficiencies and Lack of Preparation and Exposure. Specific to L2 classrooms, Davis and Markham (1991) have pointed to other explanations outside the realm of social distance and oppositional culture theories for the under-representation of Black students in L2 programs in the United States. In their study, it was reported that students at HBCUs held positive attitudes toward L2 study. The students' complaints

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

and dissatisfaction generally had to do with pedagogical deficiencies. Of the 340 student-participants, 71% wanted to speak more of the language in the classroom, 55% wished their teachers had been more understanding of individual differences, and 54% wanted to know more about the culture of the L2.

Another explanation for the under-representation of Blacks in L2 programs has focused on inadequate high school preparation. Hodges and Welch (1992) noted that transition programs, aimed at nurturing potential talent among Black students in high school, have traditionally focused on strengthening English, math, and science competencies. Rarely have such programs emphasized L2 studies (Hodges & Welch, 1992). The researchers contend that one explanation for the lack of participation of Black students in L2 studies is that the high schools they attend often only offer two-year L2 programs and as a result do not emphasize the importance of L2 learning. According to Moore (2005), these brief two-year experiences are not enough to encourage the continuation of L2 study in college. Echoing a claim made 30 years earlier by Hubbard (1975), Moore (2005) reported that racial minority students in American high schools are not being encouraged to pursue foreign languages. Far from being encouraged to learn another language, Hubbard (1975) and later Tedick, Walker, Lange, Paige, and Jorstad (1993) argued that Black students in American high schools are often counseled out of L2 studies.

Need for Research. In addition to being contradictory in nature, many of the previously mentioned studies are dated. More current research needs to be done to better understand why so many Black students lack interest in learning an L2. This need is even greater with respect to the study of Spanish, a language that represents close to 70% of all L2 enrollment in the United States (Draper & Hicks, 2000). In a study investigating diversity in L2 classrooms, Kubota et al. (2003) reported that a lack of racial diversity is more dramatic in Spanish classes than in other language classrooms.

While the various reasons mentioned above may account for the under-representation of Black students in L2 programs in the United States, there is a growing body of research that indicates that the L2 teaching community can be more pro-active at meeting the needs of all students, including those who are Black. Connell and Wellborn (1991), for example, stress that teachers who wish to engage their students must first meet their psychological needs in the classroom. The researchers assert that students who feel they belong in the classroom, who feel they are competent, and who feel they have some control over their success will be engaged in the learning process (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). More recently Baskerville (2008) showed that there is a positive correlation between teacher practices and student engagement.

To meet the diverse psychological needs of their students, teachers must first understand those needs. Focusing specifically on this study, L2 teachers need to have a better understanding of their Black students and why many lack the motivation to pursue L2 studies. Based on the various explanations proposed in the literature there is currently no clear understanding of the reason for this lack of motivation. What

...there is a growing body of research that indicates that the L2 teaching community can be more pro-active at meeting the needs of all students, including those who are Black.

is clear is that without knowledge of an L2, Black students may be limited in their choice of academic programs and degrees, and ultimately in their choice of profession (Brigman & Jacobs, 1981, Farfan-Cobb & Lassiter, 2003). With these concerns in mind, the researchers set out to better understand the current state of motivation among Black students to learn Spanish at one American high school. Using data from a larger research study that focused on gender differences in motivation to learn Spanish (see Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010), this article explores motivational differences between Black students and their Non-Black peers in a Level I Spanish classroom.

Model of L2 Motivation

As was described in the earlier work by Kissau et al. (2009, 2010), the current study was framed using Gardner's (1985) model of L2 motivation. Second language motivation, as described in this model, is composed of three sub-constructs: (1) Motivation (motivational intensity, desire and attitudes toward the L2); (2) Language Learning Orientation (integrative and instrumental orientations); and (3) Attitudes toward the Learning Situation (evaluations of the teacher, the course, and the teacher's competence). When choosing Gardner's model the researchers took into consideration criticism the model has previously received. Several researchers have argued that Gardner's model does not account for the changing nature of motivation (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000). Peirce (1995), for example, criticized Gardner's model for portraying L2 motivation as a fixed trait. This weakness in the model, however, has been addressed in this study. By using Gardner's model to measure student motivation at two distinct points in time, the researchers will be able to detect changes in motivation over time. For a more detailed description of each motivational factor included in the model see Kissau et al. (2009, 2010).

Method

Using a mixed method design, the researchers explored possible motivational differences between Black¹ and Non-Black² students at the beginning and end of their first semester studying Spanish. In addition to the quantitative data collected from students via pre- and post-surveys, individual interviews were conducted to explore racial differences in motivation to learn Spanish. Surveys were administered at the beginning and end of the course (see Appendix). Next, the survey data were analyzed to look for differences between the responses of Black students and those of their peers. The researchers used these data to create a set of follow-up, open-ended interview questions for the participants to guide each semi-structured interview. Using both student and teacher interviews as additional data, the researchers examined and compared both the quantitative and qualitative data to identify emerging themes.

Participants

One high school located in an urban setting in the southeastern United States was the research site. The school's population consisted of over 2100 students of diverse races. All students at the participating high school who were enrolled in Level I Spanish in the spring of 2008, as well as their Level I Spanish teachers, were invited to participate

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

in the study. Approximately 57% of the students enrolled in the four different Level I Spanish classes completed the survey. However, of these 60 participants, only 57 surveys were included in the final data analysis due to incomplete data. In other words, three students did not respond to several of the items on the survey. Of these 57 student-participants, 33 (58%) reported to be Black and 24 were Non-Black (42%). Twenty-six of the participating students were male (43%) and 34 (57%) were female.

From the 57 student-participants who completed the questionnaire, a total of 16 were chosen to participate in follow-up interviews. Due to limited time, availability of space at the school, and conflicts in class schedules, the researchers were unable to interview the entire sample. Instead, purposeful random sampling was used to ensure that students from each racial group were represented. In other words, Black and Non-Black students were randomly selected to ensure that both racial groups represented in the survey analysis were also represented in the interview process. Half of the 16 students interviewed identified themselves as Black. The remaining eight students were Non-Black. For a more detailed description of the 16 students³ interviewed see Table 1.

Table 1. *Student Demographics*

Pseudonym	Sex	Race	Age	Previous Spanish Course	Plans to study Spanish beyond 2-yr. requirement
Chris	Male	Non-Black	15	Yes	Unsure
Carlos	Male	Non-Black	18	No	Yes
Tiffany	Female	Black	15	No	Yes
Heather	Female	Non-Black	15	No	Yes
Katie	Female	Non-Black	15	No	Yes
Mike	Male	Non-Black	16	No	Yes
Angela	Female	Black	15	No	Yes
Anna	Female	Non-Black	15	No	Unsure
James	Male	Black	18	No	No
Tim	Male	Black	16	No	Yes
Beth	Female	Black	15	Yes	Unsure
Lucy	Female	Non-Black	16	No	Yes
Alex	Male	Black	18	No	No
Ginger	Female	Black	15	No	Unsure
Jon	Male	Non-Black	17	Yes (failed)	No
Ronnie	Male	Black	16	Yes	Unsure

The two teachers⁴ who taught Level I Spanish at the participating school also took part in separate, follow-up interviews. Although Mr. Hernandez was a native-speaker of Spanish from Mexico and Ms. Smith was a Black female, born and raised in the United

States, they exhibited many similarities. Both teachers were in their early thirties and had been teaching Spanish for less than five years. They also had similar classroom management and teaching styles. Mr. Hernandez taught three Level I Spanish classes, and Ms. Smith taught one Level I class as well as two higher-level Spanish classes.

Questionnaire

Quantitative data were collected from the student-participants through questionnaires. Students were instructed to circle a number on a seven-point Likert scale that best represented their response to statements pertaining to the motivational factors (7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). Items included in the questionnaire were drawn primarily from the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) designed by Gardner, Clément, Smythe, and Smythe (1979). The various measures from the AMTB included in the survey, along with their internal consistencies (in brackets), include Motivational Intensity (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82), Desire (Cronbach's alpha = 0.89), Attitudes toward the L2 (Cronbach's alpha = 0.94), Integrative Orientation (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86), Instrumental Orientation (Cronbach's alpha = 0.83), Teacher Evaluation (Cronbach's alpha = 0.92), Course Evaluation (Cronbach's alpha = 0.88), and Teacher Competence (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86). To assist readers in understanding the items used to measure each motivational sub-construct, the survey items are grouped in the Appendix according to their respective measure.

Student and Teacher Interviews

Qualitative data were gathered from students and teachers via semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted individually by the researchers and lasted 15 to 30 minutes each. During the interviews students were asked to describe their own personal degree of motivation to learn Spanish as well as the reasons why they are studying the language. Similarly, the teacher-participants were asked to describe the motivation of their students and why they felt their students were or were not motivated to learn the language. Both students and teachers were also asked during interviews if they noticed any motivational differences between the racial groups represented in their Spanish classrooms.

Data Analysis

The average rating of all items was used as an indicator of the total L2 motivation. Each sub-construct (Motivational Intensity, Desire, Attitudes toward the L2, Integrative Orientation, Instrumental Orientation, Teacher Evaluation, Course Evaluation, and Teacher Competence) was measured by the average rating of the corresponding items (see Appendix). Descriptive statistics of these constructs were reported using SPSS 16. Repeated measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to examine

Box's test of equality of covariance matrices suggested that the assumption that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables were equal between Blacks and Non-Blacks was held, $F(3, 216792) = 0.39, p = .76$. No interaction between the variable to represent time (pre and post surveys) and student race (Blacks versus Non-Blacks) was noticed, $F(1, 55) = 0.40, p = .53$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. The non-significant interaction suggested that both Black and Non-Blacks experienced the same trend of

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

changes of motivation from the beginning to the end of semester. That is, an overall decrease was noticed for total L2 motivation for both Black and Non-Black students, $F(1, 55) = 17.85, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .25$.

differences between Black and Non-Black students' total L2 motivation at the beginning and the end of the semester and the trend of changes from the beginning to the end of the semester. A doubly multivariate repeated measures ANOVA was used to examine the same differences and trend of changes for the combination of all sub-constructs of L2 motivation. Effect size (partial η^2) was reported for each inferential statistics result. According to Cohen (1988), an effect size of .01 is considered small, .06 is considered medium, and .14 is considered large.

Results

Survey Results

Descriptive statistics of all constructs are presented in Table 2 (next page).

Similarly, no significant time and race interaction was found from the multivariate tests, $F(8, 48) = 0.36, p = .94, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .06$. In other words, the trend of change for each racial group was the same from pre-test to post-test. Overall, the Black and Non-Black students had experienced a significant drop in all sub-constructs of L2 motivation, $F(8, 48) = 3.37, p = .004, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .36$. Specifically, all participants in this study reported decreased motivation at the end of the semester in comparison to the beginning of the semester with respect to Motivational Intensity, $F(1, 55) = 5.23, p = .03, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .09$; Desire, $F(1, 55) = 6.88, p = .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .11$; Attitudes toward the L2, $F(1, 55) = 10.03, p = .003, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .15$; Integrative Orientation, $F(1, 55) = 13.20, p = .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .19$; Instrumental Orientation, $F(1, 55) = 8.51, p = .005, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .13$; Teacher Evaluation, $F(1, 55) = 17.62, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .24$; Course Evaluation, $F(1, 55) = 10.13, p = .002, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .16$; and Teacher Competence, $F(1, 55) = 5.79, p = .02, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .10$.

Although the trend of changes is uniform between Black and Non-Black students in the sample, the average level of Black students' Motivational Intensity was statistically significantly lower than that of Non-Black students, $F(1, 55) = 6.98, p = .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .11$. A closer look at the drop of Motivational Intensity within Blacks and Non-Blacks showed that the drop within Non-Black students was not statistically significantly different from zero, $F(1, 23) = 0.24, p = .63, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$, whereas the drop within Black students was statistically significantly different from zero, $F(1, 32) = 9.31, p = .005, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .23$. This result suggested that the Black students suffered a significantly greater decrease in their Motivational Intensity than did the Non-Black students from the beginning to the end of the semester. Tests of between-subjects effects did not reveal any statistically significant differences between Black and Non-Black students on other sub-constructs: Desire, $F(1, 55) = 0.55, p = .46, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$; Attitudes toward the L2, $F(1, 55) = 1.56, p = .22, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$; Integrative Orientation, $F(1, 55) = 0.22, p = .64, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .004$; Instrumental Orientation, $F(1, 55) = 0.08, p = .78, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$; Teacher Evaluation, $F(1, 55) = 0.001, p = .98, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .001$; Course

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) of Motivation by Race

	Total	MI	Desire	Attitudes	IntO	InsO	TE	CE	TC	
Non-Blacks (n = 24)	Pre	5.37 (0.76)	5.40 (0.75)	5.47 (1.17)	5.61 (0.95)	5.55 (1.15)	5.24 (0.95)	5.23 (1.55)	5.36 (1.01)	5.45 (1.30)
	Post	5.07 (0.86)	5.33 (0.86)	5.19 (1.43)	5.35 (1.08)	5.09 (1.32)	4.92 (0.97)	4.70 (1.61)	4.88 (1.23)	5.14 (1.47)
Blacks (n = 33)	Pre	5.21 (0.87)	4.95 (0.95)	5.24 (1.26)	5.29 (1.37)	5.39 (1.43)	5.41 (1.10)	5.33 (1.28)	5.22 (0.98)	5.41 (1.16)
	Post	4.81 (0.99)	4.60 (0.96)	4.94 (1.18)	4.86 (1.49)	4.93 (1.54)	4.89 (1.36)	4.58 (1.48)	4.82 (1.06)	4.96 (1.41)

Note. Total = Total L2 Motivation; MI = Motivational Intensity; Attitudes = Attitudes toward L2; IntO = Integrative Orientation; InsO = Instrumental Orientation; TE = Teacher Evaluation; CE = Course Evaluation; and TC = Teacher Competence. A higher score indicates a more positive response.

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

Evaluation, $F(1, 55) = 0.17, p = .68$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$; and Teacher Competence, $F(1, 55) = 0.11, p = .74$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$.

Interview Results

Three main themes emerged during the analysis of the interview data. Comments made by students and teachers that specifically addressed the topic of race and motivation to learn Spanish emphasized the positive nature of student attitudes toward the study of Spanish, their reasons for studying the language, and reasons why Black students may be less motivated to learn Spanish.

Attitudes toward Studying Spanish. The students interviewed had positive attitudes toward the study of Spanish. All 16, including the eight Black students, reported to be interested in learning Spanish and thought Spanish to be an important subject in high school. In fact, when asked if he liked learning Spanish, Tim, a 16-year-old Black student, responded emphatically that he loved learning the language and intended to study Spanish throughout high school. In total, eight of the 16 students planned to take more than the mandatory two years of Spanish in high school. Of these eight students, three were Black and five were Non-Black. Five students had not yet decided if they planned to continue studying Spanish throughout high school (3 Black and 2 Non-Black), and the remaining three students were not planning to study Spanish after completing Level II (Two Black students and one Non-Black student).

Reasons for Studying Spanish. While all students reported in the interviews to be motivated to learn Spanish, an interesting difference was noticed in the reasons behind their interest in studying the language. All eight Black students reported instrumental or practical reasons for studying Spanish. For example, Angela thought learning to speak Spanish would benefit her future career as a lawyer. James had plans to open up a restaurant in the future and thought it would be helpful to be able to speak in Spanish to his Latino customers, and Alex and Ronnie were taking Spanish specifically to fulfill graduation requirements and get accepted into university.

Only two of the eight Black students, both females, mentioned studying Spanish for integrative reasons in addition to instrumental or practical reasons. Tiffany and Ginger reported to be interested in learning Spanish in order to communicate with Spanish-speaking people or to better understand the Latino culture. Ginger, a 15-year-old Black student expressed the following reason for her interest in studying Spanish:

Because like with so many people like immigrants coming over and stuff, you want to communicate with them and sometimes you may not know what they're talking about and you feel left out or whatever, so I think it's good to like know a different language also cuz it may help you in the future. Cuz you never know what you end up doing or what job you may have.

While all students reported in the interviews to be motivated to learn Spanish, an interesting difference was noticed in the reasons behind their interest in studying the language. All eight Black students reported instrumental or practical reasons for studying Spanish.

In contrast to their Black counterparts, a greater number of the eight Non-Black students reported to be integratively oriented to learn Spanish. Half of the Non-Black students stated they were integratively oriented. In other words, they claimed to be learning Spanish for communication and cultural purposes. The remaining half of the Non-Black students reported career-related or instrumental objectives. When asked why he was studying Spanish, Mike, a 16-year-old White student replied, “Well, I mean, a bunch of people speak Spanish here, and in the world in general. You know, it’d be cool to learn to talk to them and not just sit there wondering what they’re saying all the time.”

Reasons for Lack of Interest. Both Spanish teachers felt that socioeconomic status played a role in student motivation to learn Spanish. The male Spanish teacher, Mr. Hernandez, explained that he has several Black, White, and Asian students who are highly motivated in his classes and who are doing very well. He added, however, that these are the students who come from good homes, who have access to books and technology, and who have someone at home who ensures that they do their homework. He hypothesized that the high rate of poverty among Black students at this particular school might be responsible for the unmotivated behaviors exhibited by some Black students.

The female Spanish teacher, Ms. Smith, also believed that poverty had a negative impact upon student motivation to learn Spanish, but made the point that the line between socioeconomic status and race is often blurred. Ms. Smith explained that by excelling in school or taking a course like foreign languages, which is stereotypically viewed by many Black people as consisting of primarily middle-class White students, Black students run the risk of being perceived as trying to climb the social ladder and trying to “act White.” She explained that many Black students steer clear of courses like Spanish and French or attempt to avoid being perceived as a high achiever in order to avoid resentment and ostracism from their peers. It is interesting to note, however, that social repercussions for “acting White” were not mentioned by any of the Black students as a reason why they might shy away from L2 studies. In fact, only one teacher made mention of Black students avoiding L2 classes so as not to be perceived as “acting White.”

The fact that very few of the students at the participating high school had previous exposure to Spanish-speaking Black people also appeared to contribute to the notion that L2 learning may not be culturally relevant behavior for Black students. This was made obvious during conversations with Ms. Smith, the Black teacher. She stated, “A girl made a comment, one of my students, she said, ‘That’s just weird that you know Spanish.’ She said there’s not many of us that speak more than one language.” The impact of having a Black Spanish teacher on the motivation of Black students was made clear by the following comment from Tiffany:

I’m like, as an African American woman teaching me how to speak Spanish, I’m like, “What?” Like, “How, what?” And she speaks it like extremely good. And I’m like, “Wow, you’re teaching me how to speak Spanish, and you’re African American, and I’m African American, you’re not Hispanic?” it’s like, “Hmm, wow, that’s interesting.” It’s positive for me, I don’t know about

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

other people, but it's positive for me. To know that she's African American and she speaks fluent Spanish. I could be African American and could speak fluent Spanish.

The issue of cultural relevance was also raised by Ms. Smith during an informal conversation that ensued following the interview with a French teacher colleague. While discussing the growing number of Black students from Haiti and West Africa at the participating school, a distinction was drawn between these newly arrived Black students and their Black peers whose families have lived for generations in the United States. The teachers felt that Black students in L2 classrooms who recently arrived in this country and who have direct lineage to a country where the L2 is spoken as an official language have a personal and cultural connection to the language and are, as a result, more motivated to learn it in school. Black students, on the other hand, who have lived their whole lives in the United States, were believed by Ms. Smith to see little cultural relevance to learning an L2. This perception was not unique to L2 teachers. Angela, a Black student, stated, "They don't need to learn [Spanish] cuz they're Americans so they should speak English. That's the only language they have to learn." This notion that L2 learning is culturally irrelevant to many Black students, particularly those from lower socioeconomic echelons, was further bolstered by Tiffany, a 15-year-old Black student. When asked if she saw a use for Spanish in her community, she responded with a simple, yet powerful comment: "No. I mean, not what we're learning. No. Not where we're from. No. Here, no."

Discussion

The quantitative data gathered in the study indicated that Black students do have positive attitudes toward the study of Spanish and are not less motivated to study the language than their Non-Black peers. This finding represents a significant change from previous related research that indicated that Black students in the United States lack motivation to learn foreign languages in comparison with their peers of other races (Brigman & Jacobs, 1981; Hodges & Welch, 1992; American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2007). That

Black students do have positive attitudes toward the study of Spanish and are not less motivated to study the language than their Non-Black peers.

being said, the survey results suggested that the Black students in the study suffered a significantly greater decrease than did their Non-Black peers in their Motivational Intensity from the beginning to the end of the semester. In other words, the Black students reported a greater decrease in the amount of effort they put forth to learn Spanish than did their counterparts of other races.

In support of previously mentioned research (Clark, 1982; Davis, 1992; Guillaume, 1994), qualitative data collected in the study suggested that lack of cultural relevance may be one reason for the decrease in Motivational Intensity, or effort, to learn Spanish among Black students. Although initially interested in learning the language and eager to work hard, as the semester progressed the Black students struggled to see the relevance of Spanish to their daily lives.

Further evidence of the perceived cultural irrelevance of learning Spanish among Black students was reported in the interviews. While the eight Black students

interviewed were aware of the employment-related benefits of L2 learning, they did not recognize the cultural and communicative benefits of learning Spanish, or at least not to the same extent as did their Non-Black peers. While no significant differences were reported in the survey analysis with respect to Integrative and Instrumental orientations, it is worth noting that only two of the eight Black students interviewed mentioned integrative or communication and cultural reasons for studying Spanish, in comparison with half of the Non-Black students.

The notion that Black students in the United States may be less integratively and more instrumentally oriented than their peers could shed some light on why they tend to be under-represented in advanced-level L2 programs.

The notion that Black students in the United States may be less integratively and more instrumentally oriented than their peers could shed some light on why they tend to be under-represented in advanced-level L2 programs. In a study by Gardner, Smythe, Clément, and Glikzman (1976), the researchers found integrative orientation to be especially important in L2 classrooms. The researchers reported that students who dropped out of L2 programs often lacked an integrative orientation. These findings were later supported by the work of Clément, Gardner, and Smythe (1980), who suggested that individuals who possess an integrative orientation are more likely to speak with L2 users, which in

turn would improve their self-confidence, and ultimately increase their motivation to learn the L2.

Although the issue of “acting White” was raised in the study by one Spanish teacher as a possible factor behind the lack of Black participation in advanced-level L2 classes, student comments did not lend support to this hypothesis. Similar to the findings of the research conducted by Tyson et al. (2005) involving the under-representation of Black students in advanced placement and honors courses in high school, in the present study there was some evidence to suggest that enrollment in L2 classes and high academic achievement in general is not perceived by Black students as “acting White” per se, but rather as pretending to enjoy a higher socioeconomic status than what is actually the case.

Limitations of the Study

A variety of factors prevent the results of this study from being generalized to all schools and to all Black students. The study was conducted in only one large, inner-city school. Its results may not, therefore, be applicable to all high schools in the United States. The high rate of poverty at the participating school also prevents the study's results from being generalized. Research has shown that socioeconomics can influence L2 motivation (Carr & Pauwels, 2006). The high rate of poverty among the Black population at the school may have had a negative impact upon the motivation of Black students to study Spanish. Furthermore, the study's data were collected only in Spanish I classes and from a relatively small sample of students. It is impossible, for example, to make generalizations based on only 16 student interviews. To address these concerns, similar studies should be conducted involving a larger number of students in both urban and rural schools. Future related studies should also involve a variety of levels of Spanish instruction and schools that represent various socioeconomic echelons.

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

According to Tyson et al. (2005), the phenomenon of Black students avoiding certain courses for fear of “acting White” is more likely to exist in schools with large populations of both Black and White students and where there are large socioeconomic differences between the two groups. Due to the large population of Black students (approximately 70%) and the high rate of poverty among all racial groups attending the participating school, the researchers in the present study were unable to test this hypothesis.

Implications and Applications

More needs to be done to maintain and even build upon the interest in learning Spanish that was expressed by the Black students in the study. One way to accomplish this goal is to make L2 learning more culturally relevant. To do so, L2 teachers must teach in a more culturally responsive manner (see Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). In support of earlier claims made by Guillaume (1994) and Clark (1982) that many Black students are unable to connect L2 learning with their daily lives, Tiffany felt that the Spanish she and her classmates were learning was not relevant to their lives and could not be used in their community. To be more culturally responsive L2 teachers need to depart from

More needs to be done to maintain and even build upon the interest in learning Spanish that was expressed by the Black students in the study. One way to accomplish this goal is to make L2 learning more culturally relevant.

the topics traditionally found in their introductory level L2 textbooks, often related to domesticity and international travel (Callaghan, 1998), and infuse more culturally relevant topics. For example, had the students been taught common expressions in Spanish used by their Spanish-speaking peers in the neighborhood as opposed to more formal Spanish, perhaps the language would have seemed more applicable to their daily lives. Had the students discussed topics that were more relevant to their lived experiences, perhaps they may have seen Spanish as more meaningful. By making L2 instruction more relevant to the daily lives of their Black students L2 teachers are responding to what Connell and Wellborn (1991) refer to as the students’ need for relatedness. Teachers need to show their students that they belong in the classroom. Discussing relevant and meaningful topics is one way L2 teachers can show their Black students that they do belong in the L2 classroom.

Culturally responsive teaching also includes discussion of the similarities between first and L2 cultures and not just the differences. Although Standard 4.2 of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards, 2006) clearly states that students are to explore both similarities and differences between first and L2 cultures, experience supervising and working with L2 teachers for many years has demonstrated to the researchers that L2 teachers often emphasize differences between cultures and tend to neglect all that is similar. While the emphasis on differences may be intriguing to some students, it can lead to stereotypes and to an increase in the social distance between cultures (Schumann, 1976). If L2 teachers were to devote more time and energy to pointing out the similarities between the cultures in the L2 classroom, perhaps the Black students in the study would not have perceived the study of Spanish to be as foreign or as irrelevant to their own personal culture. Highlighting the cultural

similarities that exist between Black students and Spanish-speakers may motivate Black students to learn the L2 for integrative reasons.

To make learning Spanish more culturally relevant and not be viewed as behavior exclusive to White people, Black students must also be exposed to L2 speakers who share their racial and cultural backgrounds. The limited number of teachers of color, particularly in the field of L2 education, must be addressed. As previously mentioned, Moore (2005) found Black students to be significantly under-represented in his L2 teacher certification program. The absence of Black L2 teachers does not come without consequence. It is likely to reinforce the perception among Black students that L2 learning is not culturally relevant which, of course, contributes to the under-representation of Black students in L2 studies. As was made evident in an earlier quote from Tiffany, having a Black Spanish teacher shows Black students that they too can learn the language. Such a realization contributes to a sense of autonomy and competence. Competence and autonomy are two psychological needs that Connell and Wellborn (1991) believe to be crucial in engaging students. Further, seeing models of L2 speakers who share their racial and cultural backgrounds shows Black students that they too can be successful and that they too have control over their success in Spanish class. Given the scarcity of Black teacher-candidates in L2 teacher certification programs, school districts should take greater advantage of such organizations as Visiting International Faculty (VIF) to hire more Black L2 teachers from countries such as the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, school districts, colleges of education, post-secondary L2 departments, and state L2 associations should do more to promote the possibility of a career teaching foreign languages to Black L2 students in high school and university.

In addition to providing more Black Spanish-speaking role models, the importance of studying an L2 must also be emphasized among Black students. As mentioned earlier, Hodges and Welch (1991) reported that many high schools attended by Black students only offer two year L2 programs. Such brief exposure to L2 learning tends to undermine the importance of learning another language and does not adequately prepare students to continue L2 studies at the post-secondary level. A logical step in promoting the study of Spanish and other foreign languages among all young students, including those who are Black, is to offer four-year sequential L2 programs in American high schools.

Conclusion

The under-representation of Black students in advanced-level L2 classes in the United States has spawned a plethora of research over the past 40 years. While the issue was recently brought to the forefront once again via a survey conducted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2007), very little recent research has been conducted on this topic. Furthermore, the majority of the research that has been conducted offered a pessimistic portrayal of the state of motivation among Black students to study foreign languages and suggested inconsistent reasons behind this lack of L2 motivation.

The present study begins to fill this void in the research. Almost 30 years after the study by Brigman and Jacobs (1981) brought to national attention the under-

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

representation of Black students in American L2 programs, the present study paints a more optimistic picture. The participating Black students had positive attitudes toward the study of Spanish and thought it to be an important subject in high school.

That being said, the study did reveal evidence to suggest that the perceived lack of cultural relevance among many Black students to study Spanish may be jeopardizing their motivation to pursue learning the language beyond the mandatory years of instruction in high school. As demonstrated in the study, after completing one semester of Spanish some Black students did not see the cultural benefits of learning Spanish and thought the language to be irrelevant and inapplicable to their daily lives. This lack of cultural relevance may explain why the Black students in the study experienced a greater decrease during the semester in the amount of effort they reported to put forth to learn the language than did their Non-Black peers.

... the study did reveal evidence to suggest that the perceived lack of cultural relevance among many Black students to study Spanish may be jeopardizing their motivation to pursue learning the language beyond the mandatory years of instruction in high school.

In response to such concerns L2 teachers need to adopt a more culturally responsive approach to L2 teaching. Reinforcing the earlier findings of Clark (1982) and Guillaume (1994) and building upon the seminal work of Schumann (1976), the study's results have indicated that L2 teachers, particularly those in urban schools with large Black populations, need to bridge the cultural gap between Black students and the culture of the L2 community. Instead of emphasizing cultural differences between first and L2 cultures, L2 teachers need to draw their students' attention to similarities between cultures. Foreign language teachers should integrate resources and teach L2 concepts and skills that are viewed by both young Black students and their peers as applicable to their daily lives. Furthermore, L2 teachers need ongoing professional development opportunities to learn new strategies and techniques to meet the needs of all of their students, regardless of their race.

The researchers argue that culturally responsive teaching in the L2 classroom also includes providing Black students with role models who speak the L2. Clearly, teachers, university professors, and school administrators must do more to increase the presence of Black L2 teachers in schools.

Were the above-mentioned suggestions to be implemented, fewer Black students may view the study of foreign languages as too irrelevant to pursue. Inclusive and culturally responsive teaching, of course, benefits more than just Black students. As previously mentioned, there is a significant correlation between teacher practices and student engagement (Baskerville, 2008). Teaching practices that address the needs of students are more likely to engage all students, regardless of race. Foreign language teachers must get to know their Black students, just as they must get to know all their other students in order to meet their diverse needs. By doing so, they improve the instruction for all.

The important role played by L2 teachers in engaging their students, draws attention to the previously mentioned work of Connell and Wellborn (1991) that also emphasizes the influence of the teacher in student engagement. Teaching practices

that make learners feel as though they are competent and that they belong and have a voice in the classroom are more likely to engage all students, regardless of skin color (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Building upon this notion, it could be argued that had the students involved in this study been exposed to culturally responsive, best teaching practices, their motivation may have remained strong throughout the semester.

Admittedly, this study represents only a snapshot of the state of motivation of Black students to learn Spanish at one particular high school. While there are definitely limitations associated with such a narrow view of the issue, the results are nevertheless interesting, worthy of consideration, and represent a starting point for future research into a topic that has been largely ignored over the past 30 years.

To clarify, the researchers underscore that the goal of this study was not to portray Black students as apathetic and unmotivated L2 learners. The researchers have taught, observed, and interacted with highly motivated and successful Black L2 learners at both the K-12 and post-secondary levels. The researchers hope that the findings and suggestions that have emerged from the data will prove useful in opening the doors of L2 classrooms to a more diverse group of students, so that more Black students and students of all races have the opportunity to share in the benefits of language learning.

Notes

1. According to the 5th edition of the American Psychological Association (2005), the term Black is to be used when describing race. The term Black is used in the study to refer to the participants who self-identified in the survey as Black/African-American.
2. The term Non-Black is used to describe all students who self-identified in the survey as White, Asian, or Other.
3. To protect the anonymity of the student-participants pseudonyms are used.
4. To protect the anonymity of the teacher-participants pseudonyms are used.

References

- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language. (2007, Fall). 2008 ACTFL student survey report. Available at: www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFL_Final_2008_completeLOW.pdf
- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington DC: Author.
- Baskerville, J. (2008). What is the relationship between teacher practices centering on the provision of involvement, structure, and autonomy support and student engagement? Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.
- Brigman, S. L. & Jacobs, L. C. (1981). Participation and success of minority students in university foreign language programs. *Modern Language Journal*, 65, 371-76.
- Callaghan, M. (1998). An investigation into the causes of boys' underachievement in French. *Language Learning Journal*, 17, pp. 2-7.

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

- Carr, J. and A. Pauwels. (2006). *Boys and foreign language learning: Real boys don't do languages*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Clark, B. (1980). An experiment in ethnicity and foreign language in a black college. *Foreign Language Annals*, 13, 411-14.
- Clark, B. (1982). The infusion of African cultural elements in language learning: A modular approach. *Foreign Language Annals*, 15, 23-28.
- Clément, R., Gardner, R., & Smythe, P. (1980). Social and individual factors in second language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science*, 12 (4), 293 – 301.
- Clowney, E. D., & Legge, J. M. (1979). The status of foreign languages in predominantly Black colleges: An attitudinal and statistical study. *CLA Journal*, 22, 2.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Connell, J. P., & Wellborn, J. G. (1991). Competence, autonomy and relatedness: A motivational analysis of self-system processes. In M. R. Gunnar, & L. A. Sroufe (Eds.), *Self processes and development: The Minnesota Symposia on Child Development*, vol. 23 (pp. 43–78). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum
- Dathorne, O. (1974). Literary studies in a broader context. In G.A. Jarvis (Ed.), *Responding to new realities* (pp. 189-217). Skokie, IL: National Textbook Co.
- Davis, J. (1990). *A study of student attitudes toward foreign language programs and study at historically Black institutions*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Davis, J. (1992). African-American students and foreign language learning. *ERIC Digest*, 3-4 (EDO-FL-91-08).
- Davis, J., & Markham, P.L. (1991). Student attitudes toward foreign language study at historically and predominantly Black institutions. *Foreign Language Annals*, 24, 227-237.
- Downey, D., & Ainsworth-Darnell, J. (2002). The search for oppositional culture among black students. *American Sociological Review*, 67, 156-164.
- Draper, J., & Hicks, J. (2000). *Foreign language enrollment in public secondary schools*. Available at: <http://www.actfl.org/files/public/Enroll2000.pdf>
- Farfan-Cobb, I., & Lassiter, L. (2003). How Foreign Language Week promotes cultural awareness at a Historically Black University. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36, 397-402.
- Farkas, G., Lleras, C., & Maczuga, S. (2002). Does oppositional culture exist in minority and poverty peer groups? *American Sociological Review*, 67, 148-155.
- Gardner, R. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd.
- Gardner, R., Clément, R., Smythe, P. C., & Smythe, C. (1979). Attitude Motivation Test Battery Revised. *Research Bulletin No. 15*, Language Research Group, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada.
- Gardner, R., Smythe, P., Clément, R., & Glikzman, L. (1976). Second-language learning: a social-psychological perspective. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 32, 198 - 213.
- Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, & Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Guillaume, A. (1994). Whose language is it anyway? Minority participation within our reach. *ADFL Bulletin* 25, 65-68.
- Hodges, C. R., & Welch, O. M. (1992). Academic achievement of college-bound minority students and the foreign language imperative: A strategy for change. *Die Unterrichtspraxis / Teaching German*, 25 (2), 158-16.
- Hubbard, L. (1975). Foreign language study and the Black student. *CLA Journal*, 18, 563-569.
- Kissau, S., Kolano, L., & Wang, C. (2010). Perceptions of gender differences in high school students' motivation to learn Spanish. *Foreign Language Annals*, 43 (4), 703-721
- Kissau, S., Quach, L., & Wang, C. (2009). The impact of single-sex instruction on student motivation to learn Spanish. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12 (2), 54-78.
- Kubota, R., Austin, T., & Saito-Abbott, Y. (2003). Diversity and inclusion of sociopolitical issues in foreign language classrooms: An exploratory study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36 (1), 12-24.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34 (3), 159-165.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31 (2), 132-141.
- Moore, Z. (2005). African-American students' opinion about foreign language study: An exploratory study of low enrollments at the college level. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38 (2), 191-199.
- National Education Association (2007). *The benefits of second language study*. Available at: <http://www.ncssfl.org/papers/BenefitsSecondLanguageStudyNEA.pdf>
- National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project. (2006). *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning*. Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Orr, E. W. (1987, November 1). Does Black English hinder learning mathematics? *The Washington Post*, pp.26-27.
- Peirce, N. (1995). Social identity and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29 (1), 9-31.
- Schumann, J. (1976). Social distance as a factor in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 26, 135-143.
- Tedick, D. J., Walker, C. L., Lange, D. L., Paige, R. M., & Jorstad, H. L. (1993). Second language education in tomorrow's schools. In G. Guntermann (Ed.), *Developing language teachers for a changing world* (pp. 43-75). Lincolnwood, IL: National textbook Company.
- Tyson, K., Darity, W., & Castellino, D. (2005). It's not "a black thing": Understanding the burden of acting white and other dilemmas of high achievement. *American Sociological Review*, 70, 582-605.

Motivation, race, and foreign language instruction

- U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2006). 2004-2005 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2004. *Bachelor's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by sex, race/ethnicity, and major field of study: 2004-05*. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/tables/dt06_268.asp

Appendix

Motivational Intensity

1. When I am studying in Spanish, I ignore distractions and stay on task.
2. I don't bother trying to understand the complex aspects of Spanish.
3. I really work hard to learn Spanish.
4. I tend to approach my Spanish homework in a random and unplanned manner.
5. I don't pay too much attention to the feedback I get in Spanish class.
6. When I have a problem understanding something we are learning in my Spanish class, I always ask the teacher for help.
7. I tend to give up when a Spanish lesson gets off track.
8. I don't bother checking my corrected assignments in Spanish class.
9. I make a point of trying to understand all the Spanish I see and hear.
10. I keep up to date with Spanish by working on it almost every day.

Desire

1. I wish I had begun studying Spanish at an early age.
2. Knowing Spanish isn't really an important goal in my life.
3. I wish I were fluent in Spanish.
4. I want to learn Spanish so well that it becomes second nature to me.
5. As I get older, I find I'm losing any desire I had in knowing Spanish.
6. I don't care to learn more than the basics of Spanish.
7. I would like to learn as much Spanish as possible.
8. I sometimes daydream about dropping Spanish.
9. If it were up to me, I would spend all my time learning Spanish.
10. To be honest, I really have little desire to learn Spanish.

Attitudes toward the L2

1. Learning Spanish is really great.
2. I really enjoy learning Spanish.
3. I hate Spanish.
4. I would rather spend my time on subjects other than Spanish.
5. I plan to learn as much Spanish as possible.
6. Learning Spanish is a waste of time.
7. I love learning Spanish.
8. Spanish is an important part of the school program.
9. I think that learning Spanish is dull.
10. When I leave school, I shall give up the study of Spanish entirely because I am not interested in it.