



What do Students Expect to Learn? The Role of Learner Expectancies, Beliefs, and Attributions for Success and Failure in Student Motivation

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This study uses the foreign language classroom to examine students' beliefs about learning, perceptions of goal attainment, and motivation to continue language study. Survey and interview results indicated students' attributions for success and failure and their expectations for certain subjects' learnability played a role in the relationship between goal attainment and volition. It appears that over-effaciousness negatively affected student motivation. For other students who felt they were "bad at languages," their negative beliefs increased their motivation to study. Suggestions for how these results apply to other disciplines and interventions for increasing student motivation are offered.

Introduction

"Life is largely a matter of expectation." Horace (65 BC-8 BC)

Over the past decade, second language acquisition researchers have added greatly to their understanding of motivation. Their discoveries are often relevant to educational disciplines outside language learning, but are rarely mentioned in academic journals or texts for more general education. The present study looks specifically at language student expectation and motivation to see how student expectations relate to their motivation for continued language study. This paper examines several affective aspects of expectancy. These include students' attributions for success and failure as well as students' self-efficacy - defined as "assurance of capabilities" (Bandura, 1994). These aspects were chosen because they are under the learners' control and can therefore be changed through interventions (Weinstein, 1994).

The relationship between expectations and motivation is relevant for educators in disciplines other than language learning, particularly for instructors or researchers of mathematics. In studying language, much like studying math, students come to the class with preconceived notions of their abilities to succeed. Just as students of math "tend

to see themselves as either mathematically inclined or disinclined" (Watson-Acosta, 2003), language students tend to decide early in their studies whether or not they have the "special gift" of language learning ability (Horwitz, 1989). A brief history of motivational theories is offered, followed by the study's significance to current literature.

Theoretical Framework Value-Expectancy Theories

Most relevant to this study is the social-cognitive approach to motivation, a theory generally used by educational psychologists. It emphasizes the influence that students' beliefs and interpretations of their experiences have on cognitive processes (Weiner, 1986 in Pintrich et al, 1993). The decisions involved in goal setting are influenced by the degree to which individuals expect their goals will be met and by their beliefs about the importance of effort and abilities. Described formulaically, the attraction to a certain subject or task equals the value the person places on it "times the apparent probability it will be attained" (Klinger, 1977, p. 303). Value levels affect both initial and continued motivation. Learners' reactions to difficulties faced throughout the goal attainment process are influenced by whether or not they feel what is gained from their efforts is *worthwhile*-- meaning, is the effort put forth moving

them in the direction they want to go (helping them make a certain grade, giving them a sense of accomplishment, etc.) (Noels, 1999).

The importance a task holds for an individual relates to what goal theorists term "goal orientation." Orientation involves the reasons affecting students' initial choice, the degree and direction of effort, and whether or not students persist in that activity (Nam Yung, 1996). Individuals may be oriented towards learning goals (also called mastery goals) or performance goals (Covington, 2000). Students with learning goals demonstrate an incremental belief about ability, wherein ability level is perceived as changeable, not fixed. They acknowledge the possibility for growth and focus their attention on mastery instead of just trying to get by. Those with performance goals, conversely, demonstrate an entity belief about ability, wherein ability is fixed and not affected by increased effort. They tend to avoid difficult tasks for fear of failure. Learning orientations have been shown to affect motivation and student achievement. Mastery goals have been shown to lead to more active engagement in learning than performance goals (Pintrich, 2000). Students who are less cognitively engaged employ fewer learning strategies and self-regulatory practices which in turn affect their achievement (Covington, 2000). Schommer (1990) sees a direct link between beliefs and achievement. Her study found college students who perceived knowledge as "fixed" demonstrated less appropriate, overly-simplistic writing styles compared to students who saw learning as more incremental and multi-dimensional (Schommer, 1990 in Mori, 1997). This is perhaps because those self-regulating strategies that help students try multiple solutions to challenges are the same strategies used in the complex thought of writing tasks (Diener & Dweck, 1980).

Self-Efficacy and Attribution

The connection between student beliefs and volition has received little attention in language learning motivation research. Further investigation could aid instructors and program developers in determining how to best meet students' needs.

Albert Bandura's work in aptitude beliefs is the cornerstone of self-efficacy research. He asserts that highly efficacious students see difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered, not threats to be avoided: "Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities" (Bandura, 1994, p. 73). Self-efficacious students employ more strategic planning towards accomplishing their goals (Oxford, 1994). Efficacy levels also affect the type of linguistic information they choose to pay attention to, which in turn affects proficiency (Mori, 1997).

Student efficacy often comes from vicarious experiences (Schunk, 1991). For example, students may assess their language learning ability based on 'myths' propagated by classmates or on advertisers' promises of quick success. Many university students expect to be fluent after one or two years of study (Horwitz, 1989). They

become frustrated when they do not progress that quickly and often discontinue study of the language when their expectations go unmet (Horwitz, 1989; Altman, 1985). Bandura (1994) argues that the resulting frustration lowers self-efficacy and makes students "slacken their efforts and give up quickly in the face of difficulties" (Bandura, 1994, p. 8).

This frustration is not unique to language study. The negative stereotype about women and math, for example, affects students' efficacy. Female students are so averse to reinforcing the stereotype that they become overly anxious in math courses, impairing their performance (Oswald & Harvey, 2003). Their lowered self-efficacy makes them use fewer autonomous learning behaviors necessary for achievement (Greene et al, 1999) and causes attrition in future math-related courses (Oswald & Harvey, 2003).

Clearly, however, not all students desist when faced with challenges. To explain this variability, researchers in educational psychology point to student attributions, defined as perceived causes for success or failure (Schunk, 1991). "Locus of control," a generalized control over outcomes, describes how individuals perceive success or failure as either independent of their own actions and thus "externally controlled" or dependent on the way they behave and thus "internally controlled" (Rotter, 1966 in Schunk, 1991). An attribution such as "motivation" or "effort" would most likely be considered "controllable," whereas "luck" or task difficulty would be considered uncontrollable (Weiner et al., 1983 in Schunk, 1991). Whether students believe they have control over learning outcomes affects how much effort they expend in learning and how long they persist in their efforts (Oxford, 1994). According to Dolinger's (2000) study of college students' locus of control, students who feel they have internal control may be more successful learners because they are more perceptive of their environments: "Internals more readily acquire and utilize information that is relevant to their goal situation" (Dolinger, 2000, p. 1). Other studies show that students with internal attributions of control demonstrate higher achievement because they are better at planning how to complete academic tasks (Biggs, 1987 in Hall, 2001). Conversely, attributions of low ability negatively affect long-term success and student retention, as students desist in the face of lower self-esteem and a sense of helplessness (Graham, 1990 in Tse, 2000)

In recent years, these causal attributions have been more frequently mentioned in interpreting results of foreign language studies (Nam Yung, 1996; Wen, 1997). Yet few foreign language researchers have included attributional theories in the *design* of their studies. The present study operationalizes the concept of attributions within the context of the foreign language classroom.

Significance and Objectives

This study will examine university students of Portuguese, a population chosen for two reasons.

What do Students Expect to Learn?

Portuguese is the world's eighth most widely spoken language (Family Education Network, 2003) and is considered a "critical language" for the federal government. Survey figures, however, show Portuguese language programs in U.S. universities are not keeping up with other language programs in terms of growth (National Security Education Program, 2001; Silva, 2000).

Students of Portuguese were also chosen as participants for examining expectancies and attributions since changes in beliefs may be most needed for students of languages that are less commonly taught (LCTLs). Over-enthusiasm has been shown to be problematic for students of more commonly taught languages such as French and Spanish (Horwitz, 1989). It can be even more problematic for students of lesser commonly taught languages because they have generally had less exposure to the language before its introduction in the classroom. They therefore have less real world experience on which to base their assumptions. Of the limited studies on LCTL students, several found that students were not aware of the level of difficulty of the language; the ensuing over-enthusiasm proved a barrier to continued motivation (Wen 1997, p. 236). In fact, two years of instruction, the amount required in most universities, leaves the LCTL student at only the very beginning stages of the language (McGinnis, 1994). In the case of Portuguese students, many already know a bit of Spanish and therefore may hold unrealistically high expectations of reaching advanced levels of Portuguese within a short amount of time.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions to see how students' expectations, attributions, and beliefs about learning affect their motivation and their decisions to continue or discontinue formal study of the language:

1. What are students' expectations for goal attainment?
2. What are students' attributions for success and failure in meeting their language learning goals? What are their beliefs about language learning?
3. What role, if any, might students' perceived goal attainment play in students' motivation and their decision to continue studying the language?

Methodology and Procedures

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to survey a large pool of participants while also obtaining more in-depth data from open-ended questions and interviews. If we consider qualitative and quantitative research as two ends of a continuum rather than two completely distinct methods, this study would fall closer to the qualitative end of the spectrum. The study is therefore more exploratory than confirmatory. It offers a new perspective on this student group, but avoids the causal "certainties" that purely quantitative data pursues.

The various types of data in this exploration worked together. Numerical survey data (Appendices A and B) gave general background information on students and an overview of their goals, expectations and motivations. It also helped determine which students to interview (a full description of this decision process is found in the "Participants" section of this work). The more qualitative open-ended survey items added details to responses to the more numerical survey questions. They also pointed out key informants to interview and helped guide interview questions. For example, several students mentioned an advisor who had told them how easy it was to learn Portuguese. I therefore interviewed this advisor to find out more about her interaction with students.

Post-survey interviews asked students to elaborate on their survey responses and thus obtained a more in-depth picture of students' beliefs and motivations. These measures were developed through a series of pilot studies.

Measurements and Pilot studies

Several pilot studies at the University of Texas at Austin (U.T.), where the actual study would be performed, elicited information about students' motivations. This information helped formulate interview questions and modify previously used survey instruments to fit this specific population. In the first pilot study, the researcher observed 30 class hours at the University of Texas to become familiar with the Portuguese classroom setting. Opening and closing interviews were performed to see how students would articulate concepts like goals and goal attainment.

The next pilot used three Portuguese classes as its subjects. Students were given an open-ended questionnaire that asked them to brainstorm their reasons for taking Portuguese and their goals for their class. They then circled their three most important reasons and goals. The reasons students gave were coded and used to modify the motivational survey "Reasons for Studying Spanish" (Ely, 1986), which after further pilot testing became the survey section "Reasons for Taking Portuguese" (Appendix A Part II). Similarly, the goals students mentioned were used to modify a goals survey previously used with students of French and Spanish (Harlow & Muyskens, 1994). At the close of the semester, students completed Speiller's (1988) questionnaire "Factors Influencing Students to Continue or Discontinue Language Study" and were asked to comment on any confusing or non-applicable parts of the study. Based on students' comments, the survey was broken down into two separate surveys, one for continuers and one for discontinuers.

The third pilot study administered the revised surveys to students in two other Portuguese classes. Results indicated the importance of students' expectations to their perceived goal attainment. Though no specific hypotheses were made based solely on pilot data, some preliminary assumptions served as a skeleton for examining patterns,

testing the conditions of various relationships, and building theories.

To gain richer data and ensure that students' individual responses would be elicited, the open-ended questions were added to the surveys. To test this combination of open-ended and Likert scale items, the modified surveys were piloted. The actual study would begin soon, so this version of the surveys was given to a group of Spanish students at another Texas university to avoid having students see the surveys in both the pilot and in the actual study.

This pilot was helpful in ensuring that students would understand the survey's breakdown of cultural items. Cultural items were broken down into four elements, as recommended by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The council notes that the culture taught in the classroom is not just one entity. Instead, it consists of both *products* distinct to different countries and cultural *patterns* as well as the actual understanding (*perspectives*) of those products and patterns of behavior. In the surveys, the breakdown was described as follows:

- country's **products** (e.g. books, art, music, political systems, etc.);
- cultural **perspectives** on those **products** (attitudes explaining why certain products exist and are valued);
- cultural **practices** (how people use cultural products; patterns of behavior such as how people celebrate, dress, etc.); and
- cultural **perspectives** on those **practices** (i.e. the attitudes and ideas that explain why people behave as they do) (National Standards in Foreign Language, 1999).

This breakdown is important to avoid problems faced in previous research on foreign language goals. A prime example is found in Alalou's (2001)'s questionnaire on students' perceived needs in foreign language courses. As Alalou admits, since the term "culture" was not defined, results were difficult to interpret:

Although in this study, 'culture' is understood in its broad sense, referring to both high and popular culture,..we know very little about students' definition of 'culture' because students in this study were not asked to provide a specific definition of the term (Alalou, 2001, p. 461).

In concluding this description of measure development, it should be noted that before beginning the actual study, the researcher realized the limitations of using self-report measures. One could argue, for example, that students may say that in the next few weeks they plan to register for another Portuguese class and continue their studies, when in fact they may not actually register for that class when the time comes. This study examines students' motivations, however, as opposed to all the many factors that affect course registration (illness, finances, etc.). As

such, self-report measures appear to reveal the data necessary to better understand what encourages students to want to learn more.

Participants

Participants in this study included 101 lower-division Portuguese students at U.T. Austin, their instructors, and four student advisors. The research was reviewed and passed by the university's Human Subjects Review Board. Before any surveys or interviews were completed, the subjects received a consent form discussing the purpose of the research, their anonymity as subjects, and that their participation/non-participation would not be discussed with their instructors or otherwise affect their standing in the department.

Information on individual student participants was gathered through the background questions completed by eighty-four students- forty-three females and forty-one males. Most students were undergraduates (71.3%) with most of those sophomores or seniors, 26.2% were graduate students, and two students had already graduated. Nearly half were humanities majors with the remaining students studying sciences or registered as 'undeclared.' Well over half of the students were Caucasian (63.1%). A large percentage were Hispanic (29.8%). Other students described their ethnicity as Asian-American, African-American, or "other." Most spoke English as a first language though over half of all respondents had studied Spanish formally for over two years. Twenty percent spoke Spanish as a first language. Just over half were taking the Portuguese to fulfill a requirement.

Data collection

Data sources included surveys and interviews with students, instructors and advisors. In the actual study, the first week of class, the researcher administered the first survey on students' backgrounds, initial motivations, goals, and expectations (See Appendix A). The second survey, administered the antepenultimate week of class, examined students' perceived goal attainment and reasons for (dis)continuing formal study (Appendix B).

Telephone interviews were conducted with the following student groups: seven of the eight students who dropped the class before the end of the semester; all six students who were auditing courses; and five 'extra' students whose survey responses merited further inquiry. In addition, thirty students taking the course for a grade were selected to do both opening and closing interviews (See Appendices C and D). These thirty subjects were selected using a stratified purposeful sampling technique (Mertens, 1997) based on students' goal values and expectations ratings. Groups were formed by coding goal value and expectation sections from the first surveys (Appendix A Part III C and D). Using EXCEL, students were divided into four groups: those with a tendency to have low-valued goals paired with low expectations, those with low-valued goals paired with high expectations, etc. Participants were separated into level (beginner, intermediate, etc.). Each

What do Students Expect to Learn?

class was separated into the four groups and participants names were then randomly chosen from each group. To follow up on students' responses, the researcher interviewed four teachers and four administrators whom students mentioned as having influenced their decision to study the language.

Data was also collected at Tulane University to compare their students' motivations for taking Portuguese with University of Texas students. Tulane was chosen because it is a small private university (12,000 students) compared to the University of Texas, a large public institution (49,000 students). The purpose of Tulane's inclusion was not to show that results from the University of Texas study are transferable to *all* other universities. Instead, by comparing U.T.'s data to a different university, it was useful in giving thicker description of U.T.'s population and environment. This may aid readers in deciding the degree of transferability this study has to their own situations. Survey and interview measures and selection procedures were identical to those used with the University of Texas sample, except that the second survey was not administered to the Tulane population. Thirty-five participants from Tulane took part in the study. Judging from non-participant observation, course descriptions and syllabi, and instructors' and students' comments, U.T. and Tulane's first and second semester courses seemed fairly similar in content. One Tulane course, a Portuguese literature class with five students, was not offered to U.T. undergraduates, and was therefore not included in the results.

Data Analysis

Survey data analysis used the statistical software SPSS and included frequencies, means, and standard deviations, and factor analysis of Likert scale responses. These figures and the reliability for each scale are found in the results section of this work.

Qualitative analysis used the qualitative research program "QSR NUD*IST" (Qualitative Solutions and Research Pty Ltd.'s Non-numerical Unstructured Data: Indexing, Searching, and Theorizing). It is a code-based theory-building program useful in forming and describing categories, making connections between categories, constructing theories, and validating or rejecting theories about categorical relationships. Its flexible searching features were helpful in working with large amounts of text and coding. Its compatibility with SPSS helped link the quantitative and qualitative data.

As the data were collected, I transcribed interviews and employed a grounded theory approach for analysis and for analysis of the qualitative survey responses. I used Strauss and Corbin's (1990) analysis method: a "systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, p. 24). Grounded theory involves going into a research situation (in this case, a college classroom) and finding out

what is taking place and how the people relate to that situation.

The first stage of procedures involved the "open-coding" of interview data, defined as "breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data." (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 61). All 60 transcripts from the thirty main interviewees, along with those from the seven "drop" and the five "extra" interviews, were read for emerging commonalities and patterns. I used a line-by-line approach analyzing each sentence and separating data into categories relevant to students' motivation. Categories were given descriptive names like "Beliefs about learning culture," and the categories were described in memos. Throughout the coding process, I reread category names, their descriptions, and their coded information to ensure new information fit the categories. Often times these re-readings, coupled with the constant addition of new data, prompted the collapse of two similar categories into one. Or the addition of new data prompted the expansion of one category into several, for a richer description of the phenomenon. For example, at first I had only one category for students' beliefs. Later, however, this category was expanded into two categories: one for "Beliefs-about-language-learning" (with subcategories for beliefs about "Natural ability," the importance of "Early exposure", etc.) and one for "Beliefs about learning *culture*" (with students' comments about how culture was learned separately from the language, how teaching culture was laden with bias etc.). The split was made as it became obvious, in analyzing student responses, that patterns emerged differently under those two categories.

The next step involved "axial coding" in which connections were formed among the categories found in open coding. A tree-like structure contained each category, with "motivation" as the root from which branches (categories) and limbs (sub-categories) emerged. The tree diagram was modified as I worked and reworked the connections among categories, confirming relationships with data from other sources such as teachers' and administrators' interview data or responses to open-ended survey items. There was a constant interplay between the interview data and responses to questionnaire items to validate and refine relationships among categories. The tree sketches were helpful when interpreting and confirming quantitative findings. For example, I was not surprised when, during factor analysis, a survey item about students' desire to "Translate Portuguese" clustered with less practical items such as "Enjoy myself" and "Improve my accent." Interview data had similarly shown that many students whose goals fell into a "Hobby/fun" category also had more "Practical goals" and wanted to put Portuguese to work-related use.

Data analysis took place both *during* and after data collection, in line with Creswell's (1998) emphasis on a zigzag approach between data gathering and its analysis. It was essential that the analysis begin during data collection

because the patterns, commonalities and differences that emerged early in the collection process could then be examined in further detail in later interviews, follow-up emails or extra interviews.

Results

Research Question 1: Student Expectations Reasons for taking the class: Initial Motivation

To give a better idea of students' expectations for goal attainment, it is important to examine why students initially decided to take the class. The "Reasons for studying Portuguese" section consisted of thirty items, including an "other" item; each item was ranked in importance ranging from 0-3. Rankings of the top 10 means for responses for the "Reasons for studying Portuguese" section appear in descending order in Table 1 below.

The scale was subjected to an internal consistency reliability analysis. Very few students responded to the "other" item so it was not included in determining internal consistency. The Cronbach Alpha was .73 which is somewhat low, suggesting multidimensionality within the survey items. As such, some clusters of items may tend to vary together more than others, bound by an underlying commonality (SPSS, 1999). A factor analysis was performed (Tables 2-7) to show the underlying factors that link certain survey items.

Factor analysis was chosen over principal components analysis since it is recommended in cases where items are correlated. In fact, items did appear to be correlated as shown by the .718 Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure sampling adequacy. Maximum Likelihood extraction method with a Promax rotation was used as it is suggested for use in cases where items are correlated (Rennie, 1997). There were nine eigenvalues greater than 1.0. I decided to set the number of factors at six rather than nine since, judging from the scree plots, there appeared to be a leveling off after six factors, indicating that six factors were sufficient to account for the variance. Values lower than .3 were suppressed. It is questionable in a confirmatory factor analysis to include variables whose correlations with the other variables are below .4 in absolute value (Hedderston, 1993, p. 174). However, since this was an exploratory factor analysis and since the two variables with loadings just under .4 appear to fit conceptually, I felt the information gained from including the two variables outweighed any reservations about relatively low values.

Six factors accounted for 45.4% of the total variance and the factor correlation matrix showed a low correlation of .28, indicating that the six factors, or clusters, were distinct. These groupings of items were helpful in interpreting survey responses because items clustering together could be considered part of the same underlying concept. For example, the first factor to emerge was labeled "Cultural interests" since it housed items related to students' interests in the target countries' cultures, including their history and their importance among other countries in the world. Table 2 illustrates the questionnaire items that form

this cluster and the factor loadings. This cluster accounted for 17.81% of the total variance and the Cronbach alpha for this factor was .87.

The second cluster of items that emerged was labeled "Career/academic advancement." The total variance explained by this cluster was 7.96% and the Cronbach alpha for this factor was .73. The items and loadings for this cluster are listed in table below.

Though it may appear that the "Portuguese-speaking friends" item is illogically grouped among more practical motivations, interviews with students revealed that this cluster is not purely pragmatic in nature. The following student quotes show how work and pleasure cannot be so easily divided.

The future career wasn't at all important at first. I was just interested in being able to understand what my (Brazilian) girlfriend was thinking. But the sounds, I always liked..the cultural items came up later. Then after taking the language, I started moving in the company towards Latin American and then became interested..in Latin American and Brazil.

(The main reason I am taking Portuguese is that) I wanted to learn another language and have covered the western hemisphere with English and Spanish.I never considered the job part. The job part I didn't think of until later when it was like, 'If I keep doing this, I could put it on my resume.'

I'm a Spanish speaker and I inherently love the (Portuguese) language and there's a trilingual fascination because of business which grew out of my love for Spanish and Brazil. So it (*my reason for studying Portuguese*) does have to do with love of other cultures and Brazilian friends, so I love to sell Brazil.

The third cluster, "Requirement motivation," had a Cronbach alpha of .37 and accounted for 7.55% of the total variance. The "travel for pleasure" item loaded positively for "Requirement motivation" while other variables loaded negatively. The sign difference indicates that as interest in "travel for pleasure" increased, interest in "requirement" and "scheduling" decreased and vice versa.

The fourth cluster, "Language as hobby," accounted for 4.99% of the total variance and its Cronbach alpha was .71. Its items were characterized by a love of language study due to ease, experience, and intrinsic interest.

The fifth cluster, "Fun," accounted for 3.98% of the total variance and its Cronbach alpha was .73. Items in this cluster described students' desire to enjoy learning Portuguese due to its interesting sounds and to the fact that is less commonly taught than Spanish or French.

Table 1: Top 10 Students' Ranking for Reasons for Studying Portuguese

Survey Item: Reasons for Studying Portuguese	Mean	Standard Deviation
9. because I feel it may be helpful in my future career	2.27	.97
1. because I want to use Portuguese when I travel for pleasure to a Portuguese-speaking country	2.21	.88
27. because I thought it might be fun	1.92	.92
7. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies') cultural practicess (how people use cultural products; patterns of behavior like how people celebrate, dress, etc.)	1.90	.91
3. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country/countries' history	1.80	.98
8. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's (ies') cultural perspectives on those practices (i.e. the attitudes and ideas that explain why people behave as they do)	1.76	.90
2. because I want to able to converse with Portuguese-speakers in the U.S.	1.76	.90
5. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies') products (e.g. books, art, music, political systems, etc.)	1.75	1.07
6. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's (ies') cultural perspectives on those products (attitudes explaining why certain products exist and are valued)	1.65	1.10
15. because it may make me a more competitive job candidate or graduate school candidate	1.64	1.23

Table 2: Factor Loadings for the "Cultural Interests" Cluster (for Tables 2-9, see Appendix A Part II for full survey items)

Cultural Interests	Loading
6. perspectives on products	0.904
7. cultural practices	0.881
8. perspectives on practices	0.828
5. cultural products	0.723
3. history	0.549
19. study in subject involving Portuguese	0.487
17. important language in the world	0.396

Table 3: Factor Loadings for the "Career/academic Advancement" Cluster

Career/academic advancement	Loading
10. study or business abroad	0.697
9. future career	0.56
15. competitive job/grad school candidate	0.529
21. connection to major	0.503
11. Portuguese-speaking friends	0.475

Table 4: Factor Loadings for the "Requirement Motivation " Cluster

Requirement motivation	Loading
12. requirement university	-0.658
4. requirement major. minor scholarship	-0.631
18. scheduling	-0.472
1. travel for pleasure	0.457
26. dissatisfied with study of another language	-0.347

Table 5: Factor Loadings for the "Language as Hobby" Cluster

Language as hobby	Loading
24. languages come easy	0.872
23. love languages	0.734
25. easier given my background in Spanish	0.523

Table 6: Factor Loadings for the "Fun" Cluster

Fun	Loading
27. fun	0.765
20. sounds of Portuguese	0.64
22. something different	0.558

Table 7: Factor Loadings for the "Heritage" Cluster

Heritage	Loading
17. communicate with relatives	0.751
13. heritage	0.614

What do Students Expect to Learn?

The final cluster, "Heritage," accounted for 3.08% of the total variance and its Cronbach alpha was .62. (See Table 6.)

These results indicate that students were taking Portuguese for a variety of reasons, in particular future career and travel-for-pleasure plans; cultural reasons were also frequently mentioned. (See Table 7.)

Tulane University's Results for Initial Motivation

In comparing Tulane's results of the Reasons section of the survey, independent sample t-tests found that only eight of the twenty-nine reasons were significantly different, and all eight were related either to language requirements, language-as hobby-items, or cultural items. The table that follows compares the ranking of means of U.T. and Tulane students' reasons for enrolling, with the statistically significant reasons highlighted for the university with the higher mean.

The table shows that Tulane students placed less emphasis on the language requirement than U.T. students. Interviews with administrators at the University of Texas and with professors at Tulane suggested that U.T. students use Portuguese to fulfill the language requirement more than Tulane students. This is most likely due to larger U.T. enrollments which cause Spanish classes to fill up early. Students therefore turn to Portuguese as a viable option for meeting their requirements. Since Tulane is a smaller, private university, it has fewer problems with students' demands exceeding course openings. U.T. also has a longer language requirement of 4 semesters where Tulane's is three.

Tulane students' ranking of "Easier given Spanish background," "Love languages, and "Languages come easy" as higher than U.T. students may owe to differences in language backgrounds of the two populations. Table 9's background survey results show that with the exception of the "over 2 year" category, Tulane students tended towards greater exposure to Spanish language than U.T. students.

The background section of the survey also showed that Tulane students had spent more time in a wider variety of Spanish-speaking countries than U.T. students. Perhaps differences in experience with Spanish, be it formal study or travel/work abroad, could account for the higher number of Tulane students noting that Portuguese and language in general come easily to them.

Survey responses showed a general tendency for a broader range of responses from the University of Texas population. Results from the independent sample t-tests of the "Reasons for studying Portuguese" section showed higher standard deviations for U.T. than for Tulane responses. Examination of boxplots of responses from both populations indicated that this range of response from U.T. was not caused by outliers. These results could indicate that Tulane is a more homogeneous sample. It could be argued, therefore, that the University of Texas sample, with its wider dispersion of responses, gives a broader cross section of the larger

population of Portuguese students. Though the nature of this study as a whole is exploratory, these results are helpful for researchers interested in conducting more confirmatory type analyses and for readers deciding how this study's results transfer to their own situations. They indicate that U.T.'s population gives evidence of being a somewhat representative sample, offering diversity of responses that may be found in other university settings.

Goals for the course

On the Goals section of the survey (Appendix A Part III), students ranked each goal item from 0-3. The scale was subjected to an internal consistency reliability analysis. The Cronbach Alpha was found to be .85. Rankings of the top 10 goals are listed below.

To have a clearer picture of patterns emerging from students' responses, survey items underwent a factor analysis. I used a Principal Axis Factoring extraction method with a Direct Oblimin rotation. This extraction and rotation are recommended in cases where the items are correlated. There were only three eigenvalues greater than 1.0. I decided to set the number of factors at four rather than three, however, since scree plots showed more of a leveling off after four factors than after three. Values lower than .3 were suppressed.

Four factors accounted for 56.2% of the total variance. Again, clusters were labeled according to the underlying factor they appeared to represent. Each factors' percentage of the total variance (PTV) is listed in each table along with its Cronbach alpha.

It was obvious from survey results that several students' goals followed from their reasons for taking the course. The four skills of "Speaking," "Listening," "Writing," and "Reading" ranked as the most important goal categories. This fits logically with the highly ranked reasons for studying Portuguese "Future career" and "Travel for pleasure." Meeting goals within the four skills categories would facilitate work-related contact with native speakers and travel to Portuguese-speaking countries. It makes sense that the goal category "Enjoy myself" ranked highly given the high ranking of "Fun" as a reason for taking Portuguese.

It is important to note, however, that in many cases, students' reasons for taking Portuguese were different from their goals. The most marked difference was that of culture, ranked as an important reason for taking the class, but not ranked as highly as an actual goal for the course.

Expectations and Perceived Goal Attainment

Results from the second survey indicated students felt most of their objectives were met except those involving speaking and cultural goals. The rankings for the top 10 goals attained are found in Table 15. Using a scale from one to ten, students ranked the degree to which they felt their goals for the semester were met.

Table 8: Reasons and Tulane Reasons Rankings (SD=Standard Deviation)

U.T. Rankings	Mean	SD	Tulane	Mean	SD
Future career	2.35	0.97	Future career	2.57	0.65
Travel for pleasure	2.2	0.87	Travel for pleasure	2.43	0.61
Cultural practices	1.91	0.91	Cultural practices	2.29	0.79
Fun	1.78	0.96	Love languages	2.23	0.91
Cultural products	1.78	1.07	Perspectives on practices	2.23	0.88
Competitive job/grad school candidate	1.76	1.2	Competitive job/grad school candidate	2.2	1.08
Perspectives on practices	1.76	0.98	Easier given Spanish background	2.17	0.92
Perspectives on products	1.75	1.04	Fun	2.06	0.87
History	1.75	1	Cultural products	1.97	1.07
Love languages	1.65	1.09	Converse with speakers in U.S.	1.94	1.03
Requirement-major/minor/scholarship	1.62	1.45	Perspectives on products	1.91	1.04
Converse with speakers in U.S.	1.6	0.89	History	1.91	1.01
Portuguese-speaking friends	1.56	1.08	Sounds of Portuguese	1.8	0.99
Sounds of Portuguese	1.55	1.09	Portuguese-speaking friends	1.77	1.17
Study or business abroad	1.49	1.3	Connection to major	1.77	1.19
Important language in the world	1.45	0.86	Important language in the world	1.77	0.77
Easier given Spanish background	1.44	1.13	Languages come easy	1.74	0.98
Connection to major	1.42	1.32	Study or business abroad	1.71	1.3
Something different	1.22	1.03	Study in subject involving Portuguese	1.43	1.2
Requirement-university	1.16	1.42	Something different	1.11	1.02
Languages come easy	1.05	1.03	Requirement-major/minor/scholarship	0.97	1.18
Study in subject involving Portuguese	0.76	1.1	Requirement-university	0.49	0.92
Scheduling	0.42	0.88	Faculty encouraged me	0.32	0.73
Communicate with relatives	0.33	0.9	Advisor encouraged me	0.26	0.79
Classes less demanding	0.31	0.69	Communicate with relatives	0.26	0.78
Dissatisfied with study of another language	0.29	0.71	Heritage	0.17	0.57
Advisor encouraged me	0.25	0.75	Scheduling	0.14	0.6
Faculty encouraged me	0.22	0.71	Classes less demanding	0.11	0.53
Heritage	0.18	0.58	Dissatisfied with study of another language	8.57E-02	0.28

What do Students Expect to Learn?

Table 9: U.T. (in comparable classes to Tulane participants) and Tulane Participants' Formal Study of Spanish

Formal Spanish Study	Percentages of U.T. participants*	Percentages of Tulane participants
Native Spanish-speaker	25.90%	42.90%
over 2 years	61.10%	48.50%
2 years or less	1.8%	8.50%
no previous study	11.10%	0%

Table 10: Students' Top 10 Goal Value Rankings

Goal Category	Mean	Std. Deviation
4. Speaking	2.44	0.96
2. Listening	2.24	1.04
1. Writing	2.23	1.01
3. Reading	2	1.2
13. Enjoy myself	1.81	1.28
12. Grade	1.71	1.34
5. Cultural Products	1.39	1.18
10. Accent	1.25	1.26
11. Translating	1.23	1.24
14. Language Requirement	1.19	1.41

Table 11: Factor Loadings for the "Four Skills" Cluster

Four Skills	PTV 46.05%	Cronbach alpha .86	Loading
Writing			0.778
Listening			0.809
Reading			0.374
Speaking			0.929

Table 12: Factor Loadings for the "Culture" Cluster

Culture	PTV 11.2%	Cronbach alpha .84	Loading
Cultural products			0.605
Perspectives on products			0.818
Cultural practices			0.605
Perspectives on practices			0.837

Table 13: Factor Loadings for the "Requirement" Cluster

Requirement	PTV 5.4%	Cronbach alpha .52	Loading
Grade			0.754
Language Requirement			0.45

Table 14: Factor Loadings for the "Linguistic Hobby" Cluster

Linguistic Hobby	PTV 3.5%	Cronbach alpha .73	Loading
Compare Portuguese			-0.463
Accent			-0.619
Translating			-0.666
Enjoy myself			-0.534

Table 15: Rankings for Students' Perceived Goal Attainment

Item	N	Minimum response	Maximum response	Mean	Standard Deviation
Language Requirement	26	4	10	9	1.62
Grade	45	0	10	8.27	2.58
Enjoy myself	50	2	10	7.72	2.42
Compare Portuguese	28	0	10	7.64	2.67
Reading	52	0	10	7.08	2.33
Listening	58	0	10	6.38	2.44
Writing	58	0	10	6.17	2.44
Translating	37	0	10	6.11	2.16
Speaking	61	0	10	5.93	2.68
Accent	38	0	10	5.89	2.71

What do Students Expect to Learn?

Ranking relatively low were goals of speaking (ranking 9th), accent (10th), and the four cultural items (ranking 11th-14th). Students interviewed were asked about these specific items. Responses indicated that they either lowered their expectations as the semester progressed- especially with respect to speaking goals- or they held low expectations for these goals from the outset- particularly for meeting cultural objectives. These trends in expectations deserved further inquiry.

Speaking Goals

Interview results showed that Portuguese students, like students of more commonly taught languages, believed it is best to learn how to speak the language "naturally" in the target country rather than by taking classes (Wenden, 1987). Instructors of other disciplines may find that students hold similar beliefs about subjects such as art, music, social studies, etc. Students may come to the class with preconceived notions that such topics lend themselves only to "learning in the real world" and thus may not see them as learnable in the classroom.

One might assume that after actually spending time in class, students would come to see the classroom as a workshop for experiential learning. They would thereby increase their expectations for meeting goals they had previously thought were incompatible with the classroom setting. Yet students in this study often times held even lower expectations for meeting speaking goals as the class progressed. This was due to not getting many opportunities to speak the language in class and not finding native speaker contacts to practice with outside of class. Instructor interviews indicated teachers felt they were giving students the chance to practice and the opportunity to have a hand in their own learning. The activities teachers cited as practice, however, were often seen by students as rote, time-wasting exercises. For example, one teacher gave a biweekly answering machine assignment that he felt "motivated students to work on their own". However, several students described the activity as "silly," and one student said she felt "it wasn't really applying.. it was more like putting the words together from the vocabulary list".

Nearly half of the students interviewed felt that Portuguese pronunciation itself and their speaking goals in general were more difficult than expected. Surprisingly, many of these students spoke Spanish. The following citations are only a few examples of comments that demonstrate how Spanish slowed students' learning.

It's a little more difficult for Spanish speakers because the accent is tough for Spanish speakers to grasp. (*Researcher: That's interesting because you thought a Spanish background would make it easier to learn Portuguese.*) Right, the grammar, the reading is not hard but the actual speaking is difficult.

It's more difficult than I expected. The Spanish helped with sentence structure but the pronunciation is hard whereas in Spanish, when you read it, every letter is the same as it is written.

It's strange because it seems it should be easier than it is, but phonetically it is a challenge. It still amazes me the differences (in Spanish and Portuguese) and it's difficult.

With non-native Spanish speakers it's brand new but we (native Spanish speakers) have a lot of problems. To us, it's not right. I have to say it over and over and unteach myself (the Spanish way) to say it in Portuguese.

Interestingly, students in this study mentioned that university advisors- instead of helping them make more realistic expectations about learning to speak Portuguese, had instead overstated the ease with which they would learn the language. One undergraduate advisor was interviewed because her name in particular was mentioned as having suggested Portuguese as an "easier" alternative to Spanish. In the interview, the advisor said that she recommended Portuguese to students for "practical reasons," explaining that the structure of Portuguese is very similar to Spanish, that the vocabulary is 70-85% identical to Spanish, and that Portuguese grammar was "easier than Spanish grammar". Based on these comments alone, students may come to Portuguese class with the idea that Spanish will be more helpful than it actually is, and they may set goals that are not attainable within the time frame they expect.

Another reason behind some students' difficulty in learning to speak was their anxiety. Spanish-speaking students in particular mentioned anxiety as a stumbling block. Students who acquired Spanish at home felt that they did not have the language learning tools that other students had. Their comments below were revealing:

They (non-native Spanish speakers) learn.. with like "predicate" yada, yada, yada and I learned it by.. hearing people and knowing that's the way you say it whereas in a language class, they teach you "this person," "that person," structurally, I guess so I learn it different..I don't know how to get into that.

From my standpoint, I've never had to learn a new language.. so it's completely new to me..so it's actually more difficult than I expected. I find myself being very frustrated at times.

Cultural goals

Interview responses on expectations for cultural goals revealed that many did not expect to learn culture in the classroom:

I was going into the course understanding that if you're not in the society or with the group of people, you're not going to really learn much.

You can only learn so much about cultural aspects before you go. You have to live there for awhile.

Importantly, students' expectations of what is learnable in the classroom had obvious effects on the degree to which they valued certain goals:

I'm interested in learning, but I haven't kicked in..My attitude's not in the mood to learn. It's hard because I have the mentality that in a classroom, it's more difficult to learn the language than in the country because that's how I always saw it.

Only one of the four Portuguese teachers interviewed mentioned culture in his response to the question, "What are your goals for this Portuguese class?" After discussing his goals of communication, he added, "Also I like to teach a lot of culture and have them teach each other culture, so every Friday we had cultural presentation". Though the teacher's intent was to help students know more about Brazilian culture, the "Friday's only" nature of its inclusion only reinforced the idea that learning culture is not integral to learning the language. As one student said, learning culture is "extra" and as another noted, it can be learned "secondary to learning the language."

When students who had listed low expectations for meeting cultural goals were asked about their low ratings, many said they felt classroom instruction on culture would be biased:

With somebody teaching about cultural issues, they're going to filter it through their point of view so it's gonna be like a little biased on how they're presenting things.

You really have to be in the society in order to really get a good perspective of the whole culture..It could be in some way biased by the beliefs of that one person.

Students mentioned native Portuguese-speaking teachers as giving a "better cultural perspective" than non-native speakers. As one student put it, "You pick up a lot

from observing a culture, but you know a lot more when you participate in it". Another student explained how it is more difficult for non-native speakers to teach about cultural perspectives since "you won't learn those things if you're not in direct contact with people of the actual culture".

Research Question 2: Student Attributions

Learners attribute success or failure to effort, ability, luck or task difficulty (Schunk, 1991). Open-ended survey and interview responses as to why students did or did not achieve their goals revealed a combination of these attributions at work. The following categories emerged as reasons students felt they *attained* their goals: 'Self' (including effort and attendance), 'Teacher,' 'Class itself' (the curriculum and the structure of the class), and 'Peers' (enthusiasm and participation of classmates). Students who met their objectives described themselves as self-motivated, felt they worked hard, and said they were constantly exposing themselves to the language.

As to attributions for failure, two categories emerged: 'Class' (not enough time in class to practice speaking/listening or to focus on culture or reading) and 'Self' (lack of motivation and work, lack of attendance). Over half of the attributions fell into the latter category with comments such as "I figured I would have more time, but it's turned out to be a really tough semester" or "I needed to put more time in it myself".

Interviewees often mentioned not being good at learning languages, but it was rarely blamed as the cause for not meeting their language goals. To further understand why it wasn't considered a cause, twenty-nine of the thirty selected interviewees and four of the early drop students were asked, "Are some people inherently good at learning languages?" Four categories of students' beliefs about language learning emerged, with some students falling in more than one category: 'Natural ability,' 'Early exposure to the language' (such as growing up with a parent who spoke a second language), 'General exposure to other languages' (learning a second language after childhood), and 'Motivation.'

Twenty-two of the total thirty-three students asked this question in interviews felt that some learners were better due to natural ability. They made comments such as "The language side of the brain is where some are talented so it's inherent without a doubt", or "Some people just naturally pick it up faster for no other reason-- even if they study, some people can't pick it up as fast". Only six students were in the 'Early exposure' group. They felt that some learned languages better than others because they had exposure to a second language as a child. Ten felt 'Motivation' made some individuals better language learners than others because their mindset pushed them to succeed: "It's more of a psychological attitude.. all people can learn if they open their mind to it". and "It (natural ability) has a little to do with it- it's how open-minded you

What do Students Expect to Learn?

are about learning and how much you think it'll benefit you later on."

If grouped along the lines drawn by goal theorists, 'Motivation' and 'General exposure' attributions are incrementally oriented, in that students feel they have some control over their learning. The 'Natural ability' and 'Early exposure' attributions display an entity or 'learning-is-fixed' view. Particularly interesting, however, was the crossover of students who felt both natural ability and motivation were at work. Two examples of mixed attributions responses are as follows:

There may be a genetic predisposition to learning languages but also there's differences in motivation.

I have a step brother who can be in any country and in two months pick up the language..it's a freak of nature, but for most people I know, the ability to learn the language is dependent on motivation and that's it..Interest determines aptitude in that aspect.

It appears these students have *one* set of beliefs about learning languages that is more entity-oriented--believing that some people are born with a language learning "gene". They have another set of beliefs they hold for *general* learning that is more incrementally oriented--believing that success is still possible through hard work. Their motivation-is-key beliefs about general learning may to some degree temper their 'fixed aptitude' beliefs about language learning. This would explain why many students whose beliefs fell into the 'Natural ability' category still took the credit for their success and the blame for their failures.

To explore this possibility, interviewees were asked "How do you see yourself as a language learner?" Of the twenty-five students responding, sixteen felt they were "not good" or "average", two felt they were "somewhat good" but had to work very hard, while only seven felt they were good at learning languages. One student who felt he was "not good" at learning languages felt he had to "go through the motions, prodding ahead". Interestingly, he added, "While others have an inherent ability, I'm highly motivated so I overcome my lack of ability". Similarly, another student said he was "certainly not" good at languages, adding, "I'm inherently very interested, but not inherently talented. I have to work- it doesn't come naturally".

Research Question 3: Goal Attainment

Responses to survey items and to subsequent interview questions offered insight into whether or not students' perceived goal attainment during the semester influenced their decision to continue or discontinue studying Portuguese. One might assume that students would continue or discontinue taking courses based on decisions

made before the present course. In fact, according to first and second survey background questions about students' intentions for subsequent semesters, 42% of students changed their minds about continuing or discontinuing over the course of the semester.

The 'Continuance/Discontinuance' section of the second survey asked students what factors affected their decisions to continue or discontinue taking Portuguese (Appendix C). Forty-five students completed the 'Continuance Section' of the second survey while 19 students completed the 'Discontinuance Section.' The rank order of the top 10 reasons students offered for continuing Portuguese are given in Table 16 below.

According to Likert scale items on progress and goal attainment, nearly half of the continuing students were continuing *because* of their low level of progress and just over a third noted that "goals *not* being attained" influenced their decision to *continue*. Interview follow-up questions concerning these counter-intuitive responses pointed out the importance of *why* students felt their goals were not met. Students whose surveys were coded as "low perceived goal attainment" were asked directly how they felt about not meeting those specific goals. Those who had decided to continue echoed comments like the following: "That (*achieving objectives in Portuguese*) is just gonna take a lot of time and whether they're met or not won't mean I'm frustrated because I know they're gonna take awhile and I would need to work on it." This student did not let his lack of goal attainment influence him to discontinue. Instead he was continuing because he credited that lack of success both to his own effort and to the difficulty of learning a language. Another student's response to the same questions was as follows: "You can't give up so easily. Language is sometimes a question of practice. You have to keep trying." She attributed not meeting her speaking goal to not having sufficient time in a one-hour class to practice enough each day. Her later comment, "Yet, Joshua (*Portuguese teacher*) did a very good job," coupled with her assertion that language learning is a question of practice, showed that she attributed her lack of success to the very nature of learning a language.

Table 17 shows the rankings by descending means of the reasons students felt influenced their decisions to discontinue taking Portuguese.

The most mentioned reason, "Graduating", leaves little room for intervention. The second reason- "Language learned better in Portuguese-speaking country" - deserves further attention, however, and will be examined further in the Discussion section of this work. Over half of the discontinuers noted the influence of this belief in their decision to discontinue.

Another interesting item in the second survey's top reasons for discontinuing Portuguese was "Goals attained". As one student put it, "A little more (in the area of writing skills) wouldn't hurt, but I feel like I have adequate knowledge to do what I want to do right now". His rationale

Table 16: Top 10 Reasons for Continuing (for full survey items, see Appendix B, Part III)

Continuance Scale items n=45	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Travel for pleasure	2.4	0.99
14. Future Career	2	1.09
14. Requirement-major/minor/scholarship	1.98	1.31
30. Connection to major	1.82	1.32
29. Sounds of Portuguese	1.8	1.1
36. Fun	1.78	1.13
22. Important language in the world	1.76	0.98
3. History	1.71	1.04
26. Satisfaction with class	1.71	1.08
7. Cultural practices	1.71	1.01

Table 17: Top 10 Reasons for Discontinuing (for complete survey items, see Appendix B, Part IV)

Discontinuance Scale items n=19	Min-imum	Max-imum	Mean	Standard Deviation
8. I'm graduating this semester	0	3	1.58	1.54
11. Language learned better in Portuguese-speaking country	0	3	1.16	1.26
2. Fulfilled language requirement-major/minor/or scholarship	0	3	1.11	1.49
12. Classload full	0	3	0.89	1.33
1. Fulfilled language requirement-university	0	3	0.79	1.36
19. Goals attained	0	3	0.58	1.02
7. Level not fitting (too easy/difficult)	0	3	0.58	0.96
18. Goals not attained	0	3	0.32	0.82
4. Dissatisfied with Teacher	0	2	0.26	0.65
15. Other students at a different level	0	2	0.21	0.54

is indicative of a general trend among students whose goals were met "to the extent" they felt they needed, so they were not continuing their studies. Some students who had already *learned* Spanish as a second language-- as opposed to those who acquired Spanish from childhood-- had the advantage of having already learned a language. They

sometimes found that after one or two semesters, they could communicate enough to be understood and were satisfied with their level of proficiency. This reason for discontinuing may be shared by students of other disciplines (courses in computer skills or photography, for example) in which an introduction to the topic may be all

What do Students Expect to Learn?

students feel is necessary, since prior knowledge helps fill in the gaps.

Survey data indicated that a greater majority of students who decided to discontinue language study, however, were influenced by a more negative factor: not meeting their goals for reasons they felt were out of their control. For example, the survey reason "Level not fitting" had half its respondents ticking the "Level too high" option. The item, "Other students at a different level" had all its respondents ticking the "Other students at a *higher* level" option (See Appendix B Part IV numbers 7 and 15 for full survey items).

The textbook appeared to be a major reason why these students were not able to bridge the gap between their knowledge and other students' knowledge. One student berated the texts' lack of "communicative activities" and "non user-friendly" nature, while another said she had to "fumble through the homework" with no helpful explanations. A particularly frustrated student called it "a rotten book", and several others said they had to have the teacher's help to grasp text material. One teacher described the text as "horrible" and the other three teachers expressed similar disappointment. It simply did not allow for self-help.

Another external attribution for failure emerging from the data was the 'Dissatisfaction with the teacher,' ranking as ninth out of twenty in importance in the surveys and mentioned at length in interviews. Interviewees said the dissatisfaction stemmed from not seeing the relevance of the activities teachers chose. Again, complaints about the Friday culture reports were mentioned. One of several students who complained said he skipped Fridays to avoid hearing other students' "bad Portuguese". Another student hated that the teacher kept showing "cheesy telenovelas" that were too difficult to understand: "They're just annoying!"

Discussion and Recommendations

Many students in this study appeared to have two types of beliefs: one for general learning in which they felt their actions affected outcomes and another belief for language learning, in which people either have or don't have a natural ability to learn languages. Some students demonstrated, however, a crossover of these beliefs. They felt that with hard work, lack of "natural ability" could be overcome. Similarly, Mori's (1997) study with university students of Japanese found that in some cases "knowledge beliefs in general were transferred into the domain of language learning" (Mori, 1997, p. 14). However, general learning and language learning are "independent constructs, which indicates the existence of domain specific belief dimensions" (Mori, 1997, p. 14).

Interestingly, students in this study who felt they did not have the language learning "gift" did not let that lower their motivation-- quite the contrary. Students were perhaps demonstrating a strategy that Garcia (1995) describes as defensive pessimism, wherein students

envision the worst case scenario- not attaining their goal of a higher grade for example, and use the anxiety the negative image evokes to fuel them to work harder. Instead of feeling empowered by a *higher* sense of self-efficacy, many of these students "gain some degree of control over the riskiness of evaluative situations" by becoming "emotionally prepared in the event they do actually do *poorly*" (Garcia, 1995, p. 30). For students who attribute success not only to ability but also to motivation, this volitional strategy may buffer the blow of non-attainment of goals, diffusing frustrations that could have otherwise lead to decreased motivation. Kuhl (1986) explains this phenomenon by saying that volition is metamotivational, meaning that it deals with students' "wanting to want" to reach a goal and thereby helps students focus their energy on attaining goals they feel are difficult to reach (Kuhl, 1986 in Corno, 1993, p. 16). These forces would not be necessary if goals were easy to attain (Corno, 1993). Yet, students with lower self-efficacy, in noting their "deficiency in language learning", make goal attainment a carrot that is difficult to reach, thereby rallying their motivational forces to attain the goal.

As concerns student attributions for success and failure and continued motivation, over a third of continuing students said they decided to continue because they did not attain certain goals. They recognized their objectives were not accomplished because they failed to engage motivational strategies to get the work done. Therefore, they did not blame the teacher or the course for not attaining their goals. These students continued to have high expectations for meeting their goals, noting that if they tried harder in future courses, they could reach them.

Concerning student motivation and the reasons students listed as affecting their decision to discontinue taking Portuguese, many showed a decrease in their motivation to continue taking Portuguese when they felt other students were at a higher level than they were. Rosenthal and Bandura (1978) would argue that these students are "gauging their own efficacy through knowledge of how other students are performing in the class" (Rosenthal and Bandura, 1978 in Schunk, 1991, p. 123). Classroom practices such as grading on a curve or playing highly competitive games overemphasize the varying levels of different students. Teachers should instead "instill in students that they are still acquiring knowledge and skills" such that the gap in abilities at the outset of the class may level out throughout the course (Rosenthal and Bandura, 1978 in Schunk, 1991, p. 123). Teachers might consider, for example, implementing portfolio assessment to encourage students to see how far they have come. This will emphasize the "self-comparison of progress" rather than comparison with other students (Bandura, 1993, p. 125).

Students also felt frustrated that the textbook did not enable them to "catch up" to other students because it did not help them learn on their own. Self-efficacy specialists would argue that without this control providing

"a major cognitive mechanism to sustain motivation", students may feel helpless, become frustrated, and desist (Bandura, 1994, p. 7). An obvious solution is for teachers and students to dialogue about in-class and homework materials to ensure any problems are solved early on. Students should also be made aware of resources other than the textbook that would help them attain their goals. These might include language tutors or student mentors in higher-level classes, online language resources, or supplementary texts. Also beneficial are group study sessions before exams or quizzes. An in-class discussion of any such sessions should take place once students receive test results to determine if the session was helpful. Such meta-analysis helps students connect their efforts to the outcomes as opposed to feeling predestined for success or failure.

Students also suffered a decrease in volition when their goals were not attained due to perceptions that class activities- namely cultural and speaking activities- were "time-consuming and of little practical benefit", (Verlie and Rosenthal, 1981 in Woloshin 1983, p. 356). Such results fit with the literature on more commonly taught languages. One of students' top complaints about language courses was the mismatch between their objectives and the activities chosen by the instructor (Harlowe and Muyskens, 1994). This "mismatch" involves three issues that have implications for educators, administrators, and teacher trainers.

The first deals with teachers having difficulty knowing what students' goals are. This study showed that students ranked culture as an important *reason* for taking the class, but did not rank it highly as an actual *goal* for the class. It is common practice, early in the semester, for teachers to ask students why they have decided to take a university course. It may be difficult, however, for this method of inquiry to determine students' objectives; reasons for taking a class may help formulate objectives, but they cannot be considered the goals themselves. Asking more specific questions about students' short term goals- similar to those asked in the goals section of surveys used in this work- could better determine student objectives.

Also important for curriculum planners was the interesting *mix* of responses for reasons why students were taking the course. In the "Career Advancement" factor analysis cluster of students' reasons for taking Portuguese, students demonstrated a blurred line between work and pleasure. If educators hand out note cards asking students for their majors and why they are taking the course, they may only receive the "socially acceptable" career-oriented responses (Copa, 1991). Course content may thus fail to target students' hobby-like interests, losing valuable motivating aspects of the curriculum.

The second issue deals with knowing how to tailor the class to meet the objectives of the students. This tendency to "miss the mark" with targeting the activity to the students is particularly difficult for new language teachers (Copa, 1991). Yet even experienced instructors

may have trouble deciding on activities- the difficulty being that just because a certain task should help students meet their objective does not mean that it is an activity that will be well received by that student group. For example, Harlow and Muyskens' (1994) study of university students of intermediate French and Spanish found students rated speaking as one of their top three goals in the foreign language class, yet rated two types of speaking activities (partner conversations and presentations to the class) at the bottom of their list of preferred activities. University students in Tse's (2000) study said that they wanted to focus on oral communication, yet they strongly disliked certain speaking activities such as having to speak in front of the class (Tse, 2000, p. 80). Oftentimes teacher training programs themselves are at fault for not preparing prospective teachers to meet these individual "quirks" among student populations. Instead, teaching approaches and activities are presented as universally applicable and do not take into account the diversity of the classrooms teachers will enter (Schlepppegrell, 1997). Teacher education courses should include hands-on training to help teachers learn how to adapt teaching methodologies and customize classroom activities. Instead of having student teachers do an internship at only one location, for example, training might include a rotation system to expose future teachers to a variety of student groups.

The third issue deals with not communicating to students how the activities of the classroom meet student objectives. Previous research indicates that adult language learners often "do not connect the goal to the activities of the language classroom" (Bassano, 1986, p. 17) and are frustrated by what they see as purposelessness activities. For example, students in this study ranked tasks like the answering machine activity or watching telenovelas as "silly" and "irrelevant", while the instructor perceived these tasks as quite beneficial. Regardless of how well instructors think a task meets students' goals, it is ultimately how students perceive the tasks that affects motivation. Though most teacher training courses emphasize the importance of knowing what objectives a class period will try to meet, many fail to train teachers how to clearly *show* students the connection between activities and objectives. Teachers must learn how to include "meta-discussions" on how certain tasks meet specific needs. Research shows that underscoring this relationship is imperative. Otherwise, students may highly value and feel very motivated toward certain goals, but the utility value may be low for certain tasks, resulting in less cognitive engagement (Pintrich, 1993) and lower motivation.

Results of students' beliefs and expectations for learning culture show how their perceptions of the teacher influenced their motivation to learn culture. This included not only their perceptions of the teachers' expertise on the topic, but also how much they felt teachers emphasized culture in the classroom. Many students held expectations that native speakers would be better teachers of culture

What do Students Expect to Learn?

because native teachers do not "filter" cultural aspects through their own perspectives. This view fits with previous research on teaching culture wherein students were concerned over the differences in "objectivity" of native and non-native teachers, demonstrating apprehension with having the culture filtered through a non-native teacher's perspective (Jernigan & Moore, 1997). As such, it appears that some students view learning culture as the teacher imparting information that is either accurate or inaccurate. Perry (1968) found that students, as they first enter college, tend to see knowledge as absolute and handed down by some higher authority. As students learn more about a certain topic, they perceive that there are a variety of opinions and that learning is relative to context (Perry, 1968 in Mori, 1997). To help students make this leap in perspective, instructors must emphasize that cultural information, whether it be in print or from the lips of a native speaker, is loaded with the "biases" of the speaker and then perceived through the listener's cultural paradigm. Students should discuss how to critically view culture and how to recognize the ubiquitous nature of the cultural "filter".

From many students' perspective, teachers did not make culture a focus in the classroom. When it was included, it was an adjunct "Friday-Culture Day" activity, and not an integral part of the course. This only reinforced many students' view that culture is not learnable in the classroom setting. Both this study and previous work on learning culture (Root, 2003; Jernigan and Moore, 1997) indicate that teaching culture in the language classroom is challenging. Every educational discipline has its challenging aspects, and instructors must be aware that the "sin of omission" may be sending students unintended messages about certain concept's learnability.

In contrast with students' low expectations for learning culture were their high expectations for learning to speak Portuguese. Results showed that several Spanish-speaking students' felt frustrated because they held higher expectations for their learning than they were able meet. Educators must be aware that prior knowledge may actually confuse students and should take care not to push students into goals that are out of their reach. Past researchers in other disciplines such as math have found that over-rating ones ability can lead to decreased effort (Greene, 1999, p. 14). Schunk (1991) notes that "challenging but attainable goals raise motivation and efficacy better than easy or hard goal (Schunk, 1991, p. 120)". By helping students make realistic objectives, teachers are pre-empting future disappointment and lowered motivation.

In this study, it was unfortunate to see that over-effaciousness was sometimes caused by student advisor's misrepresentation of courses. It is ineffective advertising for administrators to represent a course as "easy" if it leads to student frustration and decreased motivation. Communication between instructors and student advisors concerning class descriptions is essential if incoming

students are to be presented with accurate information on which to base their expectations.

Students in this study who grew up bilingual from birth found themselves feeling anxious in class because they had never really learned, but had rather acquired, another language. Instructors must be cognizant of the fact that though it may appear students have prior experience in a certain context, they may still feel anxious in the *learning* situation. They may be even more anxious than other students, as they may feel expectations for their fast progress are higher. In a variety of disciplines, anxiety has been shown to interfere with processing of information, inhibiting performance (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2001). Lowering anxiety in the foreign language classroom aids acquisition by allowing students to actually focus on language input (Tse, 2000). Implementing relaxation techniques or using group work have been suggested as ways to release tension and help students feel less alienated and more supported in the classroom (Higbee & Thomas, 1999).

One final reason why students decided to discontinue formal study was that they felt languages are better learned in a Portuguese speaking country- not within the artificial confines of the classroom. One could argue that the classroom did not offer them a feeling of "real world" learning. Similar research in other disciplines like math and statistics notes that students avoided or dreaded courses because they did not feel coursework was relevant to everyday life (Gal & Ginsburg, 1994). This points to the need for the classroom to be structured in such a way that students feel they are gaining experience applicable in the outside world. In the case of language courses, bringing in native speakers to the classroom and linking students to native speakers outside the classroom in coffee houses or online chat sessions could help students see their learning as experiential. This focus on relevance and authenticity is essential to motivation in all disciplines. Teachers should continually brainstorm with their students, with other teachers, and with administrators over how to expand the four walls of the classroom.

Limitations

The results of the study should be understood in light of several limitations. Self-report measures should be interpreted with caution. In many cases, verbal reports for students' reasons for their motivational decisions were given after the actual decisions were made. Students are having to rely on their memory to report their reasons. Students may also be giving motivations they feel are logical instead of reporting their true motivations.

In addition, goals and motivation are complex constructs that students may have trouble defining, much less describing in interviews or rating on surveys. Just one example would be that students were asked about "short term goals for the semester", but separating short from long term goals is a complex task that will hold individual differences among students.

Finally, the current study is limited in that its scope is only exploratory, not confirmatory. Further research is needed to determine causal relationships among the complex phenomena of students' expectations, attributions, and continuing motivation.

Future Directions

As concerns other recommendations for future research, this study encourages us to see how language students' expectations compare to students of other disciplines. Many of us know from our own experiences that it is not uncommon for a student to assume, "I flunked that test!" only to receive an "A". It would be particularly interesting to see if students of other disciplines use "defensive pessimism" to increase their volition and protect themselves from the threat of failure.

This study opens the door for future research comparing language learning to the learning of math- two topics with tendencies for lower student motivation and higher student anxiety. Language learning research has claimed that higher anxiety is due to student identity and self-expression being more closely tied to language than to other academic subjects:

The importance of the disparity between the 'true' self as known to the language learner and the more limited self as can be presented at any given moment in the foreign language would seem to distinguish foreign language..Probably no other field of study implicates self-concept to the degree that language study does. (Horwitz, 1986, p. 28).

Yet research in topics such as statistics and engineering that are gender stereotyped with respect to perceived ability has shown similar identity issues with students' perceptions of self-concept and self-efficacy (Clark, 1999; Gal & Ginsberg, 1994). Women experiencing "stereotype threat" in math-related courses, for example, are said to "disidentify with math in order to protect the self" from fulfilling the stereotype of girls not being good at math (Oswald, 2003, p. 139). Opening a dialogue between these disciplines may increase possibilities for helpful interventions as regards student motivation.

Finally, the students of this study were asked to consider their goals for the current semester, but these may be inextricably linked to their *future* goals. Distant goals such a career opportunities are often contingent upon completing certain courses but are not contingent on actual performance of the tasks in the course (Greene et al, 1999). Some evidence has been provided that a positive relationship exists between these future goals and students' monitoring of their own learning, which may then affect performance (Miller et al, 1996). Future investigation is needed to determine specifically how future goals interact with short-range goals and how they affect students' motivation and achievement in the classroom.

Notes

¹ For the full background section of either survey or any other survey details, please contact the author at christinejernigan@yahoo.com

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Appendix A: First Survey

Part I: Background Information 1

Part II: Reasons for Studying Portuguese

Please rate the degree of importance to you of the following reasons for studying Portuguese. Circle your rating using the following scale.

	<u>Not important</u>	<u>Slightly</u>	<u>Moderately</u>	<u>Highly important</u>
1. because I want to use Portuguese when I travel for pleasure to a Portuguese-speaking country	Not	Slight	Mod	High
2. because I want to be able to converse with Portuguese-speakers in the U.S.	Not	Slight	Mod	High
3. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country/countries' history	Not	Slight	Mod	High
4. because I need to study a foreign language as a major, minor or other specific degree requirement (including graduate degrees and scholarship or fellowship requirements)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
5. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies)' products (e.g. books, art, music, political systems, etc.)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
6. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's (ies)' cultural perspectives on those products (attitudes explaining why certain products exist and are valued)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
7. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies)' cultural practices (<u>how</u> people use cultural products; patterns of behavior like how people celebrate, dress, etc.)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
8. because I am interested in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's (ies)' cultural perspectives on those practices (i.e. the attitudes and ideas that explain why people behave as they do)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
9. because I feel it may be helpful in my future career	Not	Slight	Mod	High
10. because I need it for study abroad, research or business travel in a Portuguese-speaking country	Not	Slight	Mod	High
11. because I want to be able to use it with Portuguese-speaking friends	Not	Slight	Mod	High
12. because I need it to fulfill the university foreign language requirement	Not	Slight	Mod	High
13. because of interest in my own heritage (Portuguese-speaking country)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
14. because I feel the classes are less demanding than other foreign language courses at this same level	Not	Slight	Mod	High
15. because it may make me a more competitive job candidate or graduate School candidate	Not	Slight	Mod	High
16. because I want to communicate with relatives (including spouses, in-laws, etc.) in Portuguese	Not	Slight	Mod	High
17. because I feel Portuguese is an important language in the world	Not	Slight	Mod	High
18. because Portuguese better fit my schedule than another language class	Not	Slight	Mod	High
19. because I wanted to study in some other subject that involves Portuguese	Not	Slight	Mod	High
20. because I like the sounds of Portuguese	Not	Slight	Mod	High
21. because it has a connection to my major or area of concentration	Not	Slight	Mod	High
22. because I wanted something different	Not	Slight	Mod	High
23. because I love languages	Not	Slight	Mod	High
24. because languages come easy to me	Not	Slight	Mod	High
25. because I thought Portuguese would be easier for me given my background in Spanish	Not	Slight	Mod	High
26. because I was dissatisfied with my study of another language	Not	Slight	Mod	High
27. because I thought it might be fun	Not	Slight	Mod	High
28. because my advisor encouraged me. (If you responded with slight, mod, or high, please explain their rationale for encouraging you: <i>(space provided)</i>)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
29. because a member of the faculty other than my advisor encouraged me. (If you responded with slight, mod, or high, please explain their rationale for encouraging you: <i>(space provided)</i>)	Not	Slight	Mod	High
30. Please list any other reason not listed above (and rate): <i>(space provided)</i>	Not	Slight	Mod	High

Part III: Your Goals in this Class

A. What are your goals for this semester of Portuguese? Though you may also have long-range goals that differ from those you plan to accomplish in this class, please consider only your goals for the current semester. (*space provided*)

B. The first column below contains categories of goals that some Portuguese students have mentioned as important for them. If the goal category in Column 1 is an important area you want to work on in your Portuguese class this semester, write what specifically you hope to accomplish in that area on the blanks in Column 2. You may write more than one specific goal if you like (see example). If the goal category in Column 1 is not something that is your goal this semester, write "none" on the blank in Column 2.

What do Students Expect to Learn?

Example Example Example Example Example:

Column 1: Goal Category	Column 2: <u>Specific goals you hope to accomplish this semester</u>
Writing	<u>write e-mails to friends, write business letters</u>
To compare Portuguese to other languages I know	(To which language(s)?) <u>none</u>
To enjoy myself	(What does this mean to you?) <u>to meet people with my same interests, have fun in class</u>

*Please complete only Column 2 below-- Column 3 requires further instructions.

Column 1: Goal Category	Column 2: <u>Specific goals you hope to accomplish this semester</u>	Column 3
1. Writing	_____	N S M H
2. Listening	_____	N S M H
3. Reading	_____	N S M H
4. Speaking	_____	N S M H
5. Cultural products (e.g. books, art, music, political systems, etc.)	(specifically...) _____	N S M H
6. Cultural perspectives on those products (attitudes explaining why certain products exist and are valued)	(specifically...) _____	N S M H
7. Cultural practices (how people use cultural products; patterns of behavior like how people celebrate, dress, etc.)	(specifically...) _____	N S M H
8. Cultural perspectives on those practices (i.e. the attitudes and ideas that explain why people behave as they do)	(specifically...) _____	N S M H
9. To compare Portuguese to another language I know	(To which language(s)?) _____	N S M H
10. Accent	_____	N S M H
11. Translating	(To and from which languages and what would you like to translate?) _____	N S M H
12. Earn a certain	(What grade?) _____	N S M H
13. To enjoy myself	(What does this mean to you?) _____	N S M H
14. To complete a language requirement	(Which requirement?) _____	N S M H
15. Other	(Describe goals not under mentioned categories) _____	N S M H

C. Please look back over Column 2 in Part B. If you wrote more than one specific goal for a category, circle the one that is most important to you. An example is given at the bottom of this page.

D. Look back again to Part B and rate your estimate of the importance for each specific goal you wrote. Circle your rating in Column 3 using the scale below (put "N" for "Not important" if you put "none" in Column 2). If you had more than one specific goal for a certain category, do your rating for the goal you circled. An example is given below.

Not important Slightly important Moderately important Highly important
 Example Example Example Example Example:

Column 1: Goal Category	Column 2: <u>Specific</u> goals you hope to accomplish this semester	Column 3
Writing	<u>write e-mails to friends, write business letters</u>	N S <u>M</u> H
To compare Portuguese to other languages I know	(To which language(s)?) <u>none</u>	<u>N</u> S M H

E. What would you estimate is the probability that during the course of this semester you will achieve your specific goals you rated as slight, moderately, or highly important in Part D? Below are written only the goal categories ("Writing," for example) but please answer based on the specific goals you listed for each category in Column 2. If you listed more than one specific goal for a category, do your probability rating for the one you circled. Circle the expected probability for each outcome. (Please circle only one number per item.)

	no probability 0%						100% probability				
1. Writing	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
2. Listening	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
3. Reading	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
4. Speaking	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

(Items 5-15, including one "Other" item, were listed below in original survey¹)

What do Students Expect to Learn?

Appendix B: Second Survey

Part I: Background Information 1

Part II: Goal Attainment this Semester

A. Goal Attainment Ratings

Below are handwritten the specific goals you listed on the first survey. (If you listed more than one goal per box, only your circled goal appears below). In Column 4, please rate the degree to which you feel your **specific goal in Column 2** was attained this semester.

0% not at all 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
 attained attained attained attained attained completely
 attained attained attained attained attained attained

•You will use Column 3 in Part B only.

Column 1: Goal Categories	Column 2: <u>Specific</u> Goals you hope to accomplish this semester	Column 3	Column 4: Percentage of Goal Attainment: 0%= not at all attained 100%= completely attained
1. Writing	<i>(The specific goals students entered in the First Survey were handwritten here and the ratings for goal value were handwritten in column 3->)</i>	<i>H</i>	0 20 40 60 80 100
2. Listening			0 20 40 60 80 100
3. Reading			0 20 40 60 80 100

(Items 4-15 were listed below in original survey See Appendix A Part III for full survey items)

16. For goals you feel were **attained**, to what do you attribute the success? (space provided)

17. For goals you feel were **not** attained or were attained **to a lesser degree**, to what do you attribute that lack of success? (space provided)

B. Goal Modifications

Refer to Columns 2 and 3 in Part A above. In your first survey, you rated your specific goals for the semester as:

Not important (N) Slightly important (S) Moderately important (M) Highly important (H)

If any of your specific goals become **more or less important to you** as the semester progressed,

•circle any goals that have become more important to you (in Column 2 Part A above)

•underline any that have become less important (in Column 2 Part A above)

Example	Example	Example	Example	Example:
1. Writing	<u>to write formal business letters in Portuguese</u>	S	0 20 (40) 60 80 100	
2. Listening	<u>to understand movies in Portuguese</u>	M	0 20 (40) 60 80 100	

What do Students Expect to Learn?

C. Continuing or Discontinuing Portuguese Study

1. Do you definitely plan to take another Portuguese class (meaning a class where the language spoken is Portuguese). Please check yes or no. Then check any applicable letter(s) below your response.

<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no (if none below are applicable, skip to number 2)
<input type="checkbox"/> a language course	<input type="checkbox"/> but I will continue studying on my own
<input type="checkbox"/> a culture course	<input type="checkbox"/> but I will be living in a Portuguese-speaking country (though <u>not</u> studying formally)
<input type="checkbox"/> a literature course	<input type="checkbox"/> but I would continue were I not graduating
<input type="checkbox"/> I will <u>study</u> in a Portuguese-speaking country	
<input type="checkbox"/> yes, but in the more distant future	
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

2. If you answered yes above, continue to Part III and respond as a "continuing student." If you answered no above, please skip to Part IV and respond as a "discontinuing" student.

Part III: Factors Influencing Continuance of Portuguese Study

A. 1. What in particular do you feel has influenced your decision to continue taking Portuguese? (*space provided*)

B. Please rate each factor as to the **amount of influence** it had on your decision to **continue** taking Portuguese.

What do Students Expect to Learn?

1. had no influence on my decision to continue	2. had little influence on my decision to continue	3. influenced somewhat my decision to continue	4. highly influenced my decision to continue
1. my desire use Portuguese when I travel to Portuguese-speaking country	no	little	somewhat highly
2. my desire to be able to converse with Portuguese-speakers in the U.S.	no	little	somewhat highly
3. my interest in (a) Portuguese-speaking country/countries' history	no	little	somewhat highly
4. I need to study a foreign language as a major, minor or other specific degree requirement (like graduate degrees and scholarship/fellowship requirements)	no	little	somewhat highly
5. my interest in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies) products (e.g. books, art, music, political systems, etc.)	no	little	somewhat highly
6. my interest in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies) cultural perspectives on those products (attitudes explaining why certain products exist/are valued)	no	little	somewhat highly
7. my interest in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies) cultural practices (<u>how</u> people use cultural products; patterns of behavior like how people celebrate, dress, etc.)	no	little	somewhat highly
8. my interest in (a) Portuguese-speaking country's(ies) cultural perspectives on those practices (i.e. the attitudes and ideas that explain why people behave as they do)	no	little	somewhat highly
9. the relationship that exists between students and teachers	no	little	somewhat highly
10. the high level of progress I am making this semester	no	little	somewhat highly
11. the low level of progress I am making this semester (therefore I feel I need to continue taking classes)	no	little	somewhat highly
12. what I hear about the level of difficulty of the next course in the sequence. Please explain: (space provided)	no	little	somewhat highly
13. the enthusiasm of students in the class and the rapport among classmates	no	little	somewhat highly
14. I feel it may be helpful in my future career	no	little	somewhat highly
15. I need it for study abroad, research or business travel in a Portuguese-speaking country	no	little	somewhat highly
16. I want to be able to use it with Portuguese-speaking friends	no	little	somewhat highly
17. I need it to fulfill the university foreign language requirement	no	little	somewhat highly
18. my interest in my own heritage (Portuguese-speaking country)	no	little	somewhat highly
19. I feel the classes are less demanding than other foreign language courses at this same level	no	little	somewhat highly
20. it may make me a more competitive job/graduate school candidate	no	little	somewhat highly
21. I want to communicate with relatives/spouse/in-laws in Portuguese	no	little	somewhat highly
22. I feel Portuguese is an important language in the world	no	little	somewhat highly
23. Portuguese will fit my schedule better than another language class	no	little	somewhat highly
24. I wanted to further study in some other subject that involves Portuguese	no	little	somewhat highly
25. I like the sounds of Portuguese	no	little	somewhat highly
26. my general satisfaction level with the class I am taking now	no	little	somewhat highly
27. the small class size of the Portuguese classes	no	little	somewhat highly
28. The fact that I feel my goals for this semester were attained	no	little	somewhat highly
29. The fact that I feel my goals for this semester were not attained (and therefore, I feel I need to continue taking classes)	no	little	somewhat highly
30. it has a connection to my major or area of concentration	no	little	somewhat highly
31. I wanted something different	no	little	somewhat highly
32. I love languages	no	little	somewhat highly
33. languages come easy to me	no	little	somewhat highly
34. I think Portuguese will be easier for me to learn given my background in Spanish	no	little	somewhat highly
35. I was dissatisfied with my study of another language	no	little	somewhat highly
36. I think it might be fun	no	little	somewhat highly
37. friends, family or other students encouraged me to continue Portuguese. If "little," "somewhat," or "highly," please explain why they encouraged you: (<i>space</i>)	no	little	somewhat highly
38. members of the faculty encouraged me to continue Portuguese. If "little," "somewhat," or "highly," please explain why they encouraged you: (<i>space provided</i>)	no	little	somewhat highly
39. Other factor that influenced me to continue (please describe and rate) (<i>space provided</i>)	no	little	somewhat highly

Since you are a continuing student, please do not answer the last section, Part IV. Thank you so much for participating!

Appendix C: First Interview Questions (30 Selected Students)

1. I appreciated so much your responses on the survey about why you've decided to study Portuguese but I'm also curious as to what you would say is the *main* reason(s) for taking Portuguese?

2. On your survey you listed as goals for the Portuguese class you're taking as ____ (*list goals the student mentioned on survey*). Have you modified these goals in any way?

(*If yes*) How have they changed? In what ways specifically have these goals changed?

(*If yes*) What was the impetus for this change?

3. Have your interests changed throughout the semester?

(*If yes*) In what ways specifically?

(*If yes*) What would you say are the reasons behind your increased interest in ____?

a. Thus far in the semester, do you feel your goals of ____ are being met?

b. (*For goals student said were met*) To what do you attribute the success with meeting your goals of ____?

c. (*For goals not met*) To what do you attribute the lack of success in meeting your goals of ____?

4. Do you feel your goals of ____ are similar to or different from teacher's?

5. (*If have previous Portuguese and/or Spanish experience-First Survey background section numbers 11 and 12*) You listed on your survey that you had previous Portuguese experience in ____ (*list class or country visited*) and Spanish experience in ____ (*list class or country visited*). I'm curious if you also have experience in other languages besides Spanish or Portuguese? (*Ask specifics for each: high school including number of years, university, travel/living abroad, native speaker exposure and their relation to the interviewee, other*)

6. (*If had previous language classes- First Survey background section numbers 11 and 12*) a. In your past language classes, did you feel they met your expectations?

b. Do you have an overall positive or negative impression from your past language classes?

7. a. You said in your survey you're a _____ major (*list their major from First Survey background section number 11*). When you were in the process of deciding your major, would you have considered majoring in Portuguese?

(*If they're a Portuguese major*) What factors went into this decision?

(*If not*) What would you say were the reasons for not considering being a Portuguese major?

(*If considered, but decided to not major in Portuguese*) Could you describe the process behind your decision?

b. Would you have considered majoring in another language?

8. a. Do you feel some people are inherently good at language learning?

What do Students Expect to Learn?

b. Where would you say you fit in with that?

c. Why would you say more students don't take Portuguese?

9. How motivated do you feel at this point? I'll give you a five point scale to choose from:

___ not at all ___ not very ___ somewhat ___ very ___ extremely

(If rating has changed since first survey, mention their previous rating and ask them how they might account for the increase or decrease, or if it's just coincidental.)

10. How do you feel about the class so far?

a. Has the class been what you expected... or more... or less... than what you expected?

b. Is there anything you would like to change about the class?

11. How would you rate your level of satisfaction at this point in the semester, on a five-point scale

___very dissatisfied __dissatisfied __somewhat satisfied __ satisfied __ very satisfied

12. Are you planning to take a Portuguese class next semester?

(If yes) Which? When?

13. a. Is Portuguese about the level of difficulty you expected it to be?

b. If it's more or less, what would you say you'd based your previous assumptions on?

c. You'd said on the survey you thought you should study ___ hours and that you planned to study ___ hours (First Survey background question numbers 22 and 23¹?). Have you had to study about ___ hours as you thought?

*Questions 14-19 are for only for students with specific responses on their surveys.

*14. On your survey you described Portuguese as "different"

a. Could you explain how you felt it would be different?

b. Has it proved so far to indeed be something different?

*15. (For students who have already taken a semester of Portuguese) You listed the following reasons for taking Portuguese this semester: _____, _____, _____ . . . (list reasons student gave on the survey). Would you say that the reasons you had for taking this semester are the same as those you had for taking Portuguese your first semester--when you were just starting-- or were some of your reasons different then?

*16. You'd listed as a reason for taking Portuguese that you were dissatisfied with another language course. In what way(s) did the other language course not meet your expectations?

*17. You'd mentioned as a reason for taking Portuguese that it might help with your future career. In what

ways specifically might Portuguese be an advantage in your area?

*18. a. Your expectations for ___ were relatively high compared to your other expectations. To what do you attribute this higher response? *(If there were several items, go through them separately.)*

b. Your expectations for ___ were relatively low compared to your other expectations. To what do you attribute this lower response? *(If there were several items, go through them separately.)*

*19. You'd listed as a reason for taking Portuguese that you thought it might be fun. Fun in what respect? *(Try to see if they meant the language, the culture, language classes in general, etc.)*

20. Is there anything else that I didn't ask, anything you would like to add or discuss in further detail?

Closing Statements: Thank you so much for you time and your thoughtful responses. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me...*(Give contact phone/email information.)*

Appendix D: Second Interview Questions (30 Selected Students)

1. Motivation Type

Some say there are basically 4 types of motivation when it comes to learning languages. I'd like to read the 4 types and then ask if you feel you fit into one or more of these groups or if your motivation does not fit in any of these groups. I'll repeat the names and main ideas of the 4 groups at the end so don't feel you have to remember the specific names. The first is called an...

integrative motivation based on a personal interest in the people and culture of the country

external (instrumental), meaning you're motivated by the practical value to learning the language or by financial advantages or with greater future opportunities like getting into grad school or securing a job.

internal (intrinsic) motivation that comes from inside you--love of the language, the sounds, internal curiosity that is learning just for learning's sake

resulting from success (resultative) motivation is a result of the success you're had in learning the language

(After the student has had time to think, repeat "the first, integrative...meaning a love of the culture," the second, "external which is more practical," the third, "internal, a love of the language," and the fourth, a result of your success.)

2. Goal Modification

a. I touched on this question in the first interview but more time has passed so I'll ask it again. Would you say that since the beginning of the semester you have any new goals or interests?

b. *(If they've modified their goals)* How would you account for the change in your goal/interest?

3. Additional Questions for Specific Students

*3. *(For apparent instrumental motivates) Parrot student's response from the First Survey "Reason's" section for the following items: Career item number 9, study item 10, study a subject involving Portuguese item 19, grad/job candidate item 15. Then ask the following:*

a. This question is purposefully vague to avoid asking a more direct, leading-type question. When asked about your motivations for taking Portuguese, you responded that you were interested in _____ *(cite the career they mentioned)*. Yet if I went back one more step and asked why it is you are motivated to pursue this career in _____, what would be your reason?

b. *(If response to question "a" is practical/instrumentally leaning, do a member check and continue to number 4. If a's response appears rather intrinsic, ask)* Would it safe to say then that though your motivations of _____ *(cite career again)* for taking Portuguese appear rather practical and external to yourself, that in fact you have a more intrinsic motivation for doing _____ *(cite career)*?

*4. *If student was a continuer and some goals were unmet (Second Survey Continue Section item A17), but student's attributions were not due to own effort, ask:*

a. Your goals of _____ were not met to a very high degree this semester. How do you feel about that?

b. It has not made you decide to discontinue. Why did this shortcoming not affect your decision to continue?

c. Do you feel the goals were realistic?

d. Some of your goals this semester went unmet. Some argue that students of a lesser commonly taught language like Portuguese are more frustrated if the class differs from what they expect because students of less commonly taught languages come in with specific things they want to accomplish. (*pause because they may have a comment already.*) Others argue they are more flexible as far as not being frustrated if the class differs from what they expect. Which, if either, would you say is a truer picture of you as a Portuguese student?

*5. If had any exposure to Portuguese previously (First Survey background section number 11), ask:

You mentioned in your survey that you had had exposure to Portuguese in _____. Did this exposure help you have more realistic expectations or was it misleading as far as expectations?

*6. *If student is a discontinuer and gave as a reasons that Portuguese is time-consuming (Second Survey Discontinue Section 9) or that their class load was too full (Second Survey Discontinue Section 12), ask:*

Some argue that lack of time, be it due to course load or other reasons, is somehow indicative of a lack of interest. In your particular situation, how would your respond to this.

*7. (*If Portuguese is not a requirement according to First Survey item 17*) Will you have to stay in school any longer because you took Portuguese?

*8. *For students who on the first survey or in the first interview described Portuguese as "More difficult" than they had expected or said they had to study more than had thought (First Survey 23/ Second Survey 5/ First Interview number 13)*

You mentioned on your survey that Portuguese was more difficult than you expected. So how, if at all, did you have to modify? In other words, did you change your study habits to meet the higher level of difficulty? (*Ask for specifics of those changes, if any.*)

*9. *If goals were modified (Second Survey Second Section)*

a. I noticed on your surveys that your goal(s) of _____ increased as the semester went on. Why would you say that is the case?

Prompt: What would you say was the source of these new interests or increased interest?

b. *If the following are true:*

- *if student's goals were modified*
- *if, in the first interview, the student gave a clear idea of what they felt the teacher's goals were*
- *and if on the second survey goals section, the goals that increased in importance were those they felt the teacher emphasized, (look at First Interview question number 4 and Second Survey Second Section -see if similar to Teacher's), then ask:*

I noticed there was a similarity in the increased importance of your goal(s) of _____. This goal is the same one you mentioned as a goal the teacher had for the class. How would you account for that-- is it just a coincidence?

What do Students Expect to Learn?

4. Representative

Do you consider yourself representative of your classmates? In other words are you similar to the other students or would you say you are different from them?

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