Investigating the Primary Orientations and Principal Majors of Learners of Less Commonly Taught Languages

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Abstract

This paper reports on an investigation of the primary orientations of learners of less commonly taught languages and their major areas of study. One hundred and eleven students enrolled in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Turkish, and Uzbek courses in a West Texas university were surveyed. A descriptive analysis from SPSS indicated that the primary orientations were for the most part instrumental and language specific, with the most important factor overall being career benefits. A comparison of frequencies also revealed that there was an unequivocal relationship between major fields of study and target languages.

Key Words: Foreign language motivation**,** L2 orientations**,** less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), majors and target languages, primary orientations

Languages: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Turkish, Uzbek

Introduction

Although Spanish continues to be the most popular foreign language studied in the United States as a result of its importance due to the large Hispanic population (Passel & Cohn, 2008), the National Security Education Program (2003) reported that in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there was a rise in the number of students interested in studying other foreign languages and cultures. The Modern Language Association of America (MLA) reported that the most significant increases in enrollment since 2002 have occurred in languages considered critical to America's security and economic future, such as Arabic and Chinese (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2007). According to the report, the biggest increases in enrollments were in Arabic (126.5%) and Chinese (51%). The latest MLA survey report also revealed that from 2006 to 2009, the languages that registered the largest percentage growths included Arabic (46.3%), Korean (19.1%), Chinese (18.2%), and Japanese (10.3%) (Furman, Goldberg & Lusin, 2010).

Government policies have played an important role in enrollment boosts for less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). By less commonly taught languages, we mean all world languages except English, French, German, and Spanish (Janus, 1998). The David L. Boren National Security Education Act was signed into law in 1991 by President George H. W. Bush, for the establishment of the National Security Education Program to offer scholarships and incentives for students to study critical languages. Another government initiative that has further improved the status of these languages is the National Security Language Initiative proposed by President George W. Bush in 2006, for which he requested $114 million to fund the teaching and learning of critical languages (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

Furman, Goldberg and Lusin (2010) also reported that in spite of the increase in enrollments, LCTLs still substantially lag behind the commonly taught languages (CTLs) in U. S. institutions of higher education for two reasons: students do not have a need to use them for communication on a daily basis and they are not offered in many high schools. According to the report, the topmost studied languages other than English on college campuses in fall 2009 were still Spanish, French, German, and American Sign Language.

Furthermore, only a small percentage of the students who study languages in the lower levels continue to take them at the advanced level, which further reduces the number of students who remain in these LCTL programs at the advanced level. In fact, according to the MLA, the ratios of lower-level to advanced-level enrollments for the languages in the present study are: 8:1 for Arabic, 9:1 for Chinese, 5:1 for Japanese, and 8:3 for Russian. No figures were provided for Turkish and Uzbek (Furman, Goldberg & Lusin, 2007, p. 21). These ratios are of significance, especially for the non-cognate languages such as Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese, which, according to Rifkin (2005), take students longer to learn. In fact, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and the Defense Language Institute (DLI) place Arabic and East Asian languages in Category 4, which means they are among the group of languages considered most difficult for English-speaking learners to achieve high levels of speaking proficiency. According to the FSI, for the same level of language proficiency that can be achieved in approximately 650 hours of instruction in a Category 1 language, such as Spanish or French, approximately 2,200 hours of intensive instruction are needed for a Category 4 language (Conway, 2010; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Xiong & Grandin, 2010).

In addition, learners of LCTLs, as compared to learners of CTLs, are usually faced with more challenging tasks, which in general entail a labor-intensive endeavor. In the literature, *linguistic distance* has been used to account for such differences in workload. According to Crystal (1987), the structural closeness of the native language and the foreign language is believed to be an important factor in foreign language learning. Based on this, Chiswick and Miller (2005) designed a quantitative scale to measure the linguistic distance between English and a set of foreign languages, and reported that most LCTLs (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Cantonese)are at the greatest distance from English.

Therefore, if there is any intention of improving enrollments in LCTLs and retaining the students long enough to achieve communicative competence, it is crucial that steps are taken to investigate the initial motivations of the students who study these languages and utilize the information to formulate appropriate recruitment, instructional, and retention strategies.

The basis for our study is threefold. First, as Brown (2009) contended, empirical data gathered from LCTL students themselves relative to their motivations, their academic background, and their identities are conspicuously underrepresented in scholarly research. Even more so are data derived from students' personally-formulated responses instead of investigator-generated responses administered by means of Likert-type questionnaires. Reliance on instructors' perspectives is also questionable as instructors sometimes misunderstand their students' motives for enrolling in the language classes they teach (Pratt, Agnello & Santos, 2009). Another issue clearly absent in the literature is the relationship between students' major fields of study and the LCTLs they choose to study.

Motivated by the need to improve the status of LCTLs (the figures are still not too encouraging and there is a strong need for more empirical studies) and also curious about students' primary motivations for taking languages that are clearly more difficult than the more commonly taught languages (Okada, Oxford & Abo, 1996; Ueno, 2005), our ultimate goal was to gather information that could help develop motivational techniques capitalizing on students' most pressing needs to help enhance LCTL programs in terms of enrollment, retention, and instruction. As Husseinali (2006) suggested, "Practitioners will be better equipped to create a satisfying learning experience if they know their learners' linguistic and communicative needs. A first step in this direction will be to identity our students' orientations and needs" (p. 398). Needless to say, the findings could also provide useful information for the prevention of the attrition which is so rampant in LCTLs (Saito-Abbott & Samimy, 1997; Ueno, 2005). The ability to keep the students motivated would not only be useful for enrollment but also for successful learning. The literature confirms the significance of motivation in successful language learning (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Noels et al., 2000). Specifically, our central questions were:

1. What are the primary orientations (or initial motivations) of LCTL learners?
2. Are there differences in the primary orientations of learners of different languages?
3. Is there a relationship between learners' major fields of study and the languages they are studying?

We hypothesized that there would be differences in the primary orientations of learners of different languages because of the different issues pertaining to the different countries and regions where the languages are spoken, including economic prosperity and political developments. We hypothesized further that there would be clear trends regarding students' major fields of study and the languages they are studying based on the premise that students are in the university primarily to prepare themselves for their future careers, and that their career fields would be important influential factors in their decision making.

Due to the very few students of LCTL ancestry and the intention of the investigators to obtain data pertinent to a normal sample irrespective of their ethnicities, we did not separate heritage learners from non-heritage learners.

Review of the Literature

Gardner and Tremblay (1994) defined second language orientation as "a need for studying an L2" (p. 361). In their seminal work, which involved the study of French as an L2 by English-speaking Canadians, Gardner and Lambert (1959) established the instrumental/integrative dichotomy. The former referred to motivations due to benefits that can be derived from the study of the language such as career benefits, and the latter represented orientations resulting from a desire to become like members of the target community. Their theory that claimed that integratively-based orientations correlated better with L2 achievements sparked an opposition that led to a host of studies and the subsequent expansion of the framework to incorporate new orientations (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Hermann, 1980).

Alternative models that evolved included the intrinsic/extrinsic model based on the Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985), which is based on the learner's internal interest in the activity itself and stems from innate needs of the learner for competence and self-determination, on one hand (intrinsic), and on rewards that are extrinsic to the activity, such as monetary gains, on the other hand (extrinsic). Another model was the resultative hypothesis put forward by Hermann (1980), which claimed that learners who do well are more likely to develop motivational intensity. The expectancy-value theory, which was put forward by Eccles and Wigfield (1995), postulated that achievement behavior is predicted by two constructs: expectancy for success in a given task and the value the individual associates with success in that task. Subsequent studies discovered a variety of orientations in different settings, which led to the conclusion that L2 orientations are influenced by the context and individual differences (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1994; Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

In consonance with that conclusion, studies on LCTL student orientations have produced differing results. This review will focus on studies involving only U. S. college students in an L2 context. In a survey on students' beliefs about learning Arabic, Kuntz, and Belnap (2001) discovered that the students' orientations were mostly intrinsic and integrative (87% for travel to the Arab world, 82.9% for interaction with native speakers, 47% for career purposes, and 12% for degree requirements). Belnap (2006) also found integrative and intrinsic orientations among his subjects (87.4% wanted to interact with speakers of Arabic, 78.6% wanted to travel to the Arab world, 67.5% wanted to be able to read the modern Arabic press, 66% wanted to be able to understand radio and TV broadcasts, and 67% wanted to understand the culture). Similar results were reported by Abuhakemah (2004) whose participants' orientations were mostly integrative and intrinsic also (85% wanted to learn how to socialize in Arabic, and 83% were interested in the politics of the Middle East). Husseinali (2004) reported academic and cultural identity orientations among his subjects, and in a later study (2006), he concluded that the strongest factors among his participants were integrative (90.8% wanted to converse with people, 90% wanted to travel to Arab countries, 81.7% wanted to learn world culture, and 76.6% wanted to understand Middle East politics). Winke and Weger-Guntharp (2006), on the other hand, reported that only 3% of the responses they obtained concerned learning Arabic for political or military reasons.

Yang's (2003) study on East Asian language learners revealed that integrative motivation was more important than instrumental motivation and that Chinese learners were more integratively motivated while Japanese learners were more instrumentally motivated. She therefore suggested that administrators and teachers use different approaches in recruiting students for the different programs. She concluded that in all, East Asian language learners are motivated by communication skills, a finding which confirmed the results of other studies such as Birckbichler et al. (1999) and Jorden & Lambert (1991).

Similarly, Thomas (2010) reported that students chose to study Japanese primarily for communication purposes (travel or live there), while learners of Chinese selected sentimental (interested in the language or culture) and communication reasons as their first and second choices. Yagi (1991), Samimy and Tabuse (1992), and M. Hayashi (2009) also discovered high instrumental motivation among learners of Japanese, a finding which was also confirmed by A. Hayashi (2009) for U. S. colleges from 1989 to 2004. Horwitz's (1999) results also indicated that L2 learners of Japanese have greater instrumental motivation than other LCTL learners and that most of them are motivated by career prospects. Kouritzin, Piquemal, and Renaud (2009) and Thomas (2010), on the other hand, found that Japanese learners chose to learn the language due to their integrative motivation, social value and interest in developing communicative skills in Japanese, as well as "sentimental attitudes such as ancestry and positive past experiences with the language" (p. 546).

Regarding the motivations of students of Russian, Romanov (2000) discovered that the most important orientations were intrinsic and integrative (desire to travel to Russia and communicate with native speakers). Additionally, based on the fact that the majority of the Russian learners surveyed demonstrated the desire to preserve or recapture their Russian cultural heritage, Kagan (2001), Kagan and Dillon (2001, 2006), and Kagan and Friedman (2004) noted that Russian education needs to focus on heritage learners and design curriculum to meet their particular needs.

The literature, therefore, reports mostly integrative and intrinsic orientations among learners of Arabic, Chinese, and Russian and mostly instrumental orientations among learners of Japanese. However, they also report high rankings of career orientations (Abuhakemah, 2004; Belnap, 2006; Horwitz, 1999; Husseinali, 2006; Kuntz and Belnap, 2001; Romanov, 2000; Wen, 1997; Yang, 2003). In Husseinali's (2006) study, 66.5% of the participants indicated that Arabic would help them be more marketable when looking for a job; and Ueno (2005), Wen (1997), and Yang (2003) also found career orientations prevalent among learners of Chinese and Japanese.

Brown (2009) confirmed these findings when the results of his comparative study of LCTLs and CTLs also indicated that, overall, LCTL learners appear to have developed longer-term, intrinsic motivations for acquiring their L2 than CTL learners, who seem to be motivated by short-term, external pressures and requirements. For example, only 13% of CTL students indicated personal interest as their primary motivation for enrolling in their foreign language classes, while more than a third (36%) of LCTL students chose that option, in spite of the greater perceived difficulty of LCTL classes (48% to 31% by CTL students). Also, while 65% of CTL students chose foreign language requirement as the best option to describe their reason for taking their respective foreign language course, only 31% of LCTL students felt the same way. Also of interest to the present study is Brown's (2009) finding that there was a greater percentage of LCTL (16%) than CTL (5%) learners who indicated that their major was their primary motivation for taking the course, which led us to hypothesize that there would be a relationship between majors and target languages.

Method

Participants

The participants for this study were one hundred and eleven undergraduate students enrolled in different levels of LCTL courses in a large university in West Texas (see Table 1). There were 21 (18.9%) in Arabic, 29 (26.1%) in Chinese, 47 (42.3%) in Japanese, 11 (9.9%) in Russian, 2 (1.8%) in Turkish, and 1 (0.9%) in Uzbek. Seventy-two (64.9%) of them were male and 39 (35.1%) were female, and their ages ranged from 18 to 33, with a mean age of 21. The regional background breakdown was one Australian (0.8%), 11 Europeans (9%), 11 Latin Americans (9%), 17 Asians (13.9%), and 82 from the United States and Canada (67.2%). Participants were not selected. They were recruited from all the LCTL classes in the university by their instructors, and participation was voluntary.

Table 1Study Participants

	Arabic	Chinese	Japanese	Russian	Turkish	Uzbek	Total
Number	21	29	47	11	2	1	111
Percentage of Total	18.9%	26.1%	42.3%	9.9%	1.8%	0.9%	100%
Females	9 (8.1%)	8 (7.2%)	19 (17.1%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0%)	39 (35.1%)
Males	12 (10.8%)	21 (18.9%)	28 (25.2%)	9 (8.1%)	1 (0.9%)	1(0.9%)	72 (64.9%)

Procedure

Participants were given questionnaires in class to complete in writing at home and return to the instructors during the next class session. The questionnaire was developed by the investigators for a large-scale study on the study of LCTLs. It consisted of 52 open-ended items divided into two main sections. The first section, Background Information, comprised 9 items covering biological data and language background. The second section, Questionnaire, solicited information about motivations for learning the target language, current course in the target language, plans for continued study of the target language, enhancement activities, study abroad experience, classroom experience, available resources for language study, and major field of study (see Appendix). For the present study, we used items 1, 3, 4, and 5 under Background Information and items 1, 3, 33, 34, 35, and 43 from the second section. The qualitative approach used for this study seemed more appropriate than a quantitative approach as it affords participants the opportunity to express themselves in their own words and also avoids limiting participants to only a particular number of choices that may or may not include the correct responses.

Data Analysis

The guidelines and methods based on the grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (1998) were used for coding and analyzing the qualitative data. Given that this research is data driven, we let the themes emerge from the data. Participants' narrative responses were first examined for naturally occurring "grounded" categories. They were then coded and reviewed to check for consistency. Trustworthiness was established by following the strategies of peer debriefing and member checking (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Creswell explained that member checking is "the process in which the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the account" (2005, p. 252), and, as Lincoln and Guba contended, peer debriefing is "the process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind" (1985, p. 308). By means of team debriefing, a consensus was reached to recode the data by merging closely related themes together. Four of the five investigators constructed the initial coding and collected the survey data while the fifth investigator acted as an expert peer reviewer, reviewing the preliminary and interim themes. As a form of member checking, we presented our initial analysis to a sample of students randomly selected from our participants, soliciting their comments and feedback on the accuracy of the study's report.

The five coders reached a 0.85 agreement concerning the final emerging categories: career orientation, personal interest orientation, integrative orientation, and affective orientation. All responses that made reference to careers and jobs were placed under career orientation (London, 1983); we placed under personal interest orientation responses indicating personal desires (Krapp et al., 1992); integrative orientation consisted of responses that indicated linguistic or cultural integration (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, 1972); and responses involving emotion were categorized as affective (Andress et al., 2002; Russell, 2004; Seo & Ilies, 2009). Once the responses were placed in the four categories, the data were tabulated with the SPSS statistics program. A comparison of ranks was used to determine the results for each language, and descriptive statistics were used to report the rankings. A comparison of frequencies was then used to determine the relationship between major fields of study and target languages. Due to the limited data collected, Turkish and Uzbek were not included in the analysis.

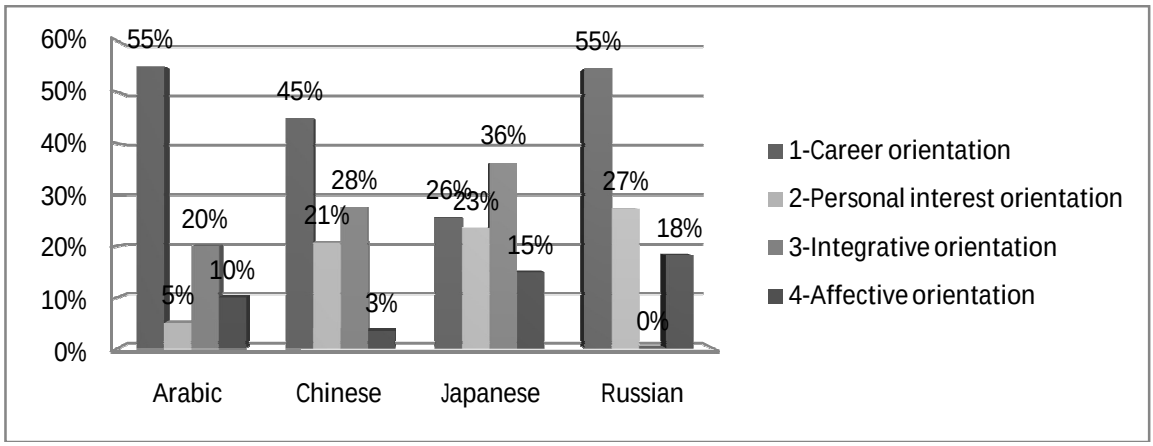
Results and Discussion

The study revealed a total of thirty-two different primary orientations of LCTL learners (see Table 2), which the researchers grouped into four categories: career orientation, personal interest orientation, integrative orientation, and affective orientation. As shown in Figure 1, the most prominent category was career orientation, with 55% of the students of Arabic and Russian, 45% of the students of Chinese, and 26% of the students of Japanese. The second category was integrative orientation, with 36% for Japanese, 28% for Chinese, 20% for Arabic, and 0% for Russian. In third place was personal interest orientation, with 27% for Russian, 23% for Japanese, 21% for Chinese, and 5% for Arabic. The fourth was affective orientation, with 18% for Russian, 15% for Japanese, 10% for Arabic and 3% for Chinese. Thus, the study revealed that primary motivations are, by far, mostly career-driven.

Table 2Summary of Primary Orientations of LCTL Learners

Primary Orientations	Arabic	Chinese	Japanese	Russian	Total
Use in the army	3				3
For career and job	7	9	10	6	32
Self-fulfillment	1		2		3
Relevant to major field of study	1	5	2		8
Want to live in the target country	1		7		8
Want to travel to the place	1		3		4
Communicate with family/relatives and find roots	1	2	1		4
Have lived/ Enjoyed living in the target country			2		2
The language is important		2			2
Want to know the language well/be fluent	2	3	7	1	13
Want to understand/learn more about the culture	1		5		6
Want credit	1			1	2
Like/Love the language	1	2	2	2	7
Learn how to write characters		1	2		3
I like the people		1			1
Be able to read the Quran	1				1
Target country is close to my country		2			2
Growing economic and political strength of target country		1			1
It is fun/I enjoy it	1	1	2	1	5
Expands my knowledge		1	2		3
Personal interest			4	1	5
Did not want to take Spanish			2		2
Learn to write Chinese Kanji			1		1
Want to learn a language that is drastically different from English			1		1
Interested in the history of the target country			1		1
Already proficient in the language			1		1
Fulfill degree requirement			4	1	5
Want to learn a different alphabet			1		1
Want to learn as many languages as possible				1	1
I like languages			1		1

Figure 1Categories of Primary Orientations of LCTL Learners



Note: Due to the limited data collected, Turkish and Uzbek are not included.

This study has discovered that the most prevalent primary orientations among learners of Arabic, Chinese, and Russian are career-driven while the most prevalent for learners of Japanese are integrative. This finding is of significance because, unlike other studies, this study focused on only primary orientations. Winke and Weger-Guntharp (2006) also investigated primary orientations, but they focused solely on Arabic, obtaining similar results, as the most prevalent primary orientation of their participants was also career (26%). The discovery of career orientation as the most prominent factor also comes as no surprise because the globalization of the world economy has increased the need for languages other than English, and the career opportunities that have become available due to both economic and political reasons, especially in recent years, have made it even more imperative to study less commonly taught languages (Husseinali, 2004; Takase & Murota, 2004; US Department of Defense, 2009). The high ranking of integrative orientation corresponds with the literature and is indicative of the learners' desire, not only to learn the target language for utilitarian purposes but to also integrate into the language community. It must be pointed out that since we used only primary orientations, this is not a comprehensive list of LCTL orientations but, rather, the most important orientations. Therefore, this does not rule out other orientations.

Clear differences were found in the primary orientations of learners of the different languages as shown in Figure 1, with each language recording different rankings of the four categories. Career orientation, personal interests, integrative orientation, and affective orientation were ranked 1st, 4th, 2nd, and 3rd, respectively, for Arabic; 1st, 3rd, 2nd, and 4th for Chinese; 2nd, 3rd, 1st, and 4th for Japanese; and 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd for Russian. While career orientation was by far the highest ranked primary orientation of learners of Arabic, Chinese, and Russian with 55%, 45%, and 55%, respectively, the highest ranked primary orientation for Japanese students was integrative.

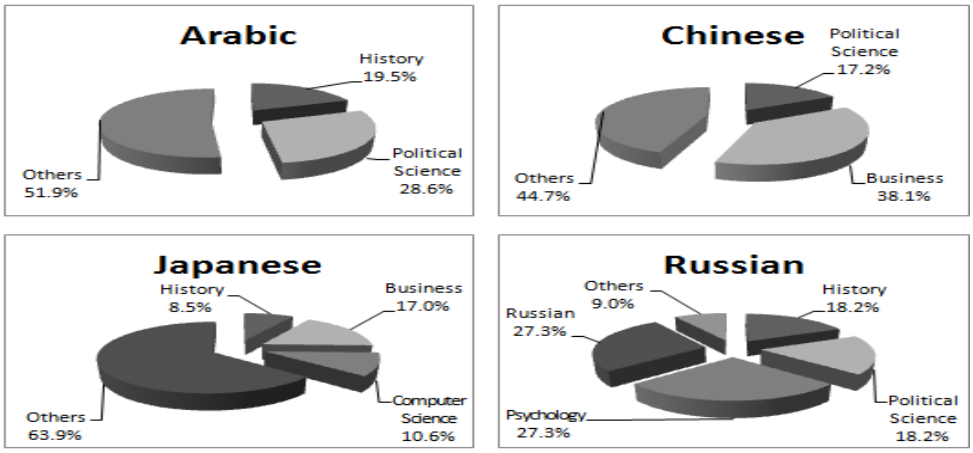
A closer look at the data revealed that the Japanese students' highest ranking of integrative orientation stems from the revelation that a higher percentage of them than any other group also indicated the desire to live in the target country and learn more about the culture. This is consistent with Ueno's (2005) observation that "Cultural interests were especially high among learners of Japanese" (p. 57). The 0% integrative orientation among students of Russian appears to indicate a lack of interest in Russian culture and integration into the Russian society as a primary orientation, while all the other learners indicated a significant integration into the target culture —36% for Japanese, 28% for Chinese, and 20% for Arabic. Ueno (2005) also obtained similar results as the participants showed no interest in the Russian culture and very little interest in social integration. The integrative orientation reported by Romanov (2000) for Russian, therefore, appears to be a secondary orientation.

The highest percentage of personal interest orientation was recorded among learners of Russian (27%), followed by Japanese (23%), Chinese (21%), and Arabic (5%). Personal interest orientation among learners of Japanese has also been reported by Yang (2003) and Ueno (2005).

Incidentally, the highest percentage of affective orientation was also recorded among learners of Russian (18%), followed by Japanese (15%), Arabic (10%), and Chinese (3%), demonstrating further the students' liking for the language and the enjoyment they derive from it, although they appear not to care much about the culture or any form of integration into the Russian society. The data also showed that students of Arabic have the lowest percentage of primary personal interest orientation and that students of Chinese have the lowest percentage of primary affective orientation.

The results revealed an unequivocal relationship between learners' major fields of study and the languages they study (Figure 2). The predominant majors for learners of Arabic were Political Science (28.6%) and History (19.5%). This outcome could be attributed to the interest in the history and politics of Arabic-speaking countries as a result of the recent socio-political developments-- including the events of September 11, 2001, the war in Iraq, and other issues involving Arab-speaking countries-- such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, as affirmed by Abuhakemah (2004), Alim (2005), Freitag (1994), Husseinali (2004, 2006), Kuntz (1996) and Menocal (2004).

Figure 2Major Fields of Study of LCTL Learners



Note: Turkish and Uzbek are not included because of limited data.

The most prominent majors of learners of Chinese were Business (38.1%) and Political Science (17.2%). There has been a tremendous expansion of U.S.-China economic ties over the last three decades. Trade between the two nations has soared at a very fast pace, rising from $2 billion in 1979 to approximately $459 billion in 2010, and China is presently the second-largest U.S. trading partner and its biggest source of imports (Morrison, 2010). Chinese has also been one of the "critical languages" in the United States as determined by the National Security Language Initiative (National Security Education Program, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2008; Wang, 2007). This program was started by George W. Bush in 2006 to develop and increase the foreign language skills of American students, especially in such languages as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, and Persian throughout K-16 because of the current political relationship between the United States and countries that speak these languages. More attention has been given to ensure that college students learn these languages, and the Department of State provides more funding and native speaker instructors for these purposes. For example, ninety-eight percent of the foreign language instructors at the Defense Language Institute (DLI) are native speakers of the languages they teach (US Department of Defense, 2009).

The largest major areas of study among learners of Japanese were Business (17%), Computer Science (10.6%), and History (8.5%). The Japanese economy is growing rapidly, and both Japan and the U.S. have been partners in investing and developing technology that opened a lot of job opportunities for Americans (Milgrom & Roberts, 1994; Takase & Murota, 2004).

The literature also revealed that a quest for knowledge of Japanese culture ranks high among the main motivational factors for American college learners of Japanese (Hasegawa, 2003; Luo, 2004; Narita, 1998), which explains the high number of History majors among learners of Japanese.

With regard to Russian, the principal major areas of study were Psychology (27.3%) and Russian (27.3%). Political Science and History follow, with 18.2% each.
The number of learners for Turkish (2) and Uzbek (1) was too small for us to draw any conclusions.

Further analyses will be conducted to determine the explanations for the relationship between the primary orientations and the major fields of study of the LCTL learners. Follow-up interviews and case studies will also be conducted. The primary social contexts motivating students to learn the languages will also be analyzed to identify the similarities and differences among different languages and major areas of study.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We discovered a total of thirty-two different primary orientations that could be categorized as career orientations, personal interest orientations, integrative orientations, and affective orientations. We also found out that the most prominent category among them was career orientations, followed by integrative, personal, and affective orientations, in that order. Additionally, we discovered that the primary orientations were language specific and that there is an unequivocal relationship between learners' major areas of study and their target languages. The investigators are by no means implying that these results are valid for all samples and contexts.

However, we believe that our findings could be useful for some LCTL programs. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered:

1. LCTL programs should recognize the importance of career, integrative, personal interest, and affective factors to LCTL learners and design their curricula to address their needs, bearing in mind that these orientations are language specific. In agreement with Yang (2003), we suggest that administrators and teachers use different approaches for the different languages. This study provides a lot of useful data that can be utilized for this purpose. This will attract students to the programs and also continue to keep them motivated and performing well, especially because they are more likely to drop out than learners of CTLs due to the stress and anxiety brought on by the challenge of studying such difficult languages (Husseinali, 2006; Ueno, 2005). The difficulty is caused by differences in the alphabets and grammatical systems due to their roots. Arabic, for example, is a Semitic language while English is Indo-European. As Husseinali (2004) affirms, "students' motivation and consequently, their L2 achievement, are better when the L2 learning process supports their language goals" (p. 83).
2. The predominance of career motivation should not be overlooked, as it appears to be the most prominent motivational factor influencing most of the students' decision to study LCTLs. This knowledge could translate into the creation of "language for specific purposes" courses to meet the career needs of the students. The second most prominent factor is integrative motivation, which calls for the inclusion of programs that facilitate the linguistic and cultural integration of students into the target community. These could be in the form of closely-monitored study abroad programs and the inclusion of native speakers and target language community members in classroom and school activities.
3. Based on the finding that there is a relationship between major areas of study and language choice, LCTL departments should partner with other departments to develop customized courses targeting specific content that will provide the most appropriate and required global education for LCTLs. For example, given that learners of Arabic are mostly Political Science and History majors, there should be collaboration between Arabic programs and Political Science and History departments to create customized courses. Likewise, Japanese programs would team up with Business, Computer Science, and History departments. This could facilitate an increase in the number of interdisciplinary team-taught courses and alliances between academic units as proposed by the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages that was convened in 2004 to "counter the isolation and marginalization that language and literature departments often experience on American campuses" (MLA, 2007, p. 240). As Manley (2008) affirmed, this could also help strengthen the programs and engender higher enrollments as it "involves providing students with some context for their linguistic knowledge" (p. 28). While this is vital for the survival of LCTLs, it will undoubtedly also enhance all the programs involved.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Background Information

1. Are you male or female?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your nationality?
4. What is your mother's nationality?
5. What is your father's nationality?
6. If you are married, what is your spouse's nationality?
7. What is your native language?
8. What other languages do you know? Indicate proficiency levels.
9. a. Have you lived abroad before?
   b. Where?

c. For how long?

Questionnaire

1. What language are you studying?
2. How did you find out about this course?
3. What is the most important reason why you are studying this language?
4. What is the next reason why you are studying this language?
5. What is the third reason why you are studying this language?
6. What are the other reasons why you are studying this language?
7. How long have you studied this language?
8. a. Are you considering withdrawing from this course?
   b. Why or why not?

9. Which course in this language are you taking now?
10. a. Do you plan to take the next course next semester?
    b. Why or why not?
11. a. Do you plan to continue studying this language elsewhere next semester?
    b. If yes, where?
    c. Why or why not?
12. a. Are you enhancing your Texas Tech work in this course with other study programs or activities in the same language?
    b. If so, what?
    c. Why or why not?
13. a. Do you plan to participate in a Study Abroad Program?
    b. Why or why not?
    If yes,
    c. Where?
    d. When?
    e. For how long?
14. What is it about this class that motivates you the most?
15. What is the next thing about this class that motivates you?
16. What is the third thing about this class that motivates you?
17. What are other things about this class that motivate you?
18. What is it about this class that discourages you the most?
19. What is the second thing about this class that discourages you?
20. What is the third thing about this class that discourages you?
21. What are other things about this class that discourage you?
22. What do you hope to learn in this class? List them in order of importance to you.
23. Describe in detail the ideal language course you would like to have.
24. Describe in detail the ideal language teacher you would like to have.
25. What do you need in order to study this language well?
26. Do you have everything you need to study this language well?
27. What don't you have?
28. What problems are you encountering taking this course?
29. If you have taken some classes in this language before, what were the positive things about the classes?
30. If you have taken some classes in this language before, what were the negative things about the classes?
31. a. Are you studying this language for a specific purpose?
b. If yes, for what purpose?
32. Which colleges are you in?
33. a. Are you taking this course to satisfy a language requirement?
    b. If yes, what requirement is it?
34. If you have already declared a major, what is it?
35. If you have not yet declared a major, what do you think your major might be?
36. If you have already declared a minor, what is it?
37. If you have not yet declared a minor, what do you think your minor might be?
38. Are you studying Russian? If not, skip to question 40.
39. a. Are you majoring in Russian?
    b. Why or why not?
    Skip to question 41.
40. a. Would you major in the language you are studying if one were available?
    b. Why or why not?
41. If this language is your minor, why?
42. If this language is not your minor, why not?
43. Please share any comments you have about this course with us?