The Impact of Learner & Instructor Expectations on L2 Online Motivation

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Abstract

Post-pandemic L2 learning is a landscape of new challenges and opportunities for language learning. One of these challenges is maintaining learner motivation in an online environment. Motivation plays a crucial role in L2 learning success, which requires educators to better understand how to support learner motivation, a focus that had not yet been widely researched for the online environment. This study begins to address this gap in research by examining the relationship between learner and instructor perspectives in online L2 classrooms and learner motivation. Using a survey instrument to measure learner perceptions of four variables: class design, interaction, autonomy, and feedback, which have been the focus of previous motivation and online learning research, this study compared these perceptions with motivation perceptions to better understand relationships between them. The study also investigated potential gaps in instructor and learner perceptions of online learning to explore the possible influence shared perceptions could have on L2 online motivation. Results showed gaps in learner and instructor perceptions for all variables and that the gaps in some cases narrowed over the course of the semester as learners and instructors developed shared understanding. Correlations between motivation and some independent variables (e.g., interaction and autonomy) also showed strong relationships. However, motivation was found to remain stable and even increase despite instances of student-instructor disagreement. Future research to consider how to use this information and negotiate shared perceptions with larger sample sizes is discussed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Motivation is the keystone to successful second language acquisition (SLA). In the last few decades, language acquisition research has found significant connections between learner expectations and learning motivation (e.g., Ushida, 2005; Gabillion,2007, Papi & Teimouri, 2014, Dörnyei,1998, & Dörnyei, 2003). However, sustaining motivation in the emerging learning space of virtual second language (L2) classrooms can prove difficult. In an online learning environment, social cues, and cultural connections (key features of language use and practice) may not be as accessible as in traditional classrooms. Given the recent necessity and demand of online language learning due to the COVID pandemic, it is critical that educators understand which elements of learners' experiences influence their beliefs about online language learning. Wu et al. (2020) suggested that because there is ample evidence of the importance of motivation's central role in language learning, it is therefore crucial that we understand what variables influence motivation, or cause demotivation. This requires a better understanding of what students' needs and expectations are in the virtual classroom. The rushed nature of the move to online learning during the pandemic did not create an ideal approach or reputation for online learning for many teachers and students. The negative association with online learning could be hindering a potentially successful alternative to in-person learning. To this end, the present study will focus on four factors that have been connected to learners' expectations in L2 online learning expectations research: interaction, autonomy, feedback, and responsive class design. This study will examine how expectations differ between learners and their instructors in online L2 instruction, as defined by the factors listed above, and how such differences impact learners' motivation in primarily online language classes. Building on previous research on the impact of motivation on learning outcomes, these results may guide instructors to manage

delivery of online instruction more effectively in ways that have positive impacts on their students' perceptions, increasing their motivation and learning.

The need for more research on student expectations in online L2 instruction is important in light of potential gaps in students' and teachers' expectations, understanding, and preferences for online L2 course delivery. This is particularly important today, as online L2 instruction has become increasingly (and unexpectedly) common in the context of a global pandemic, often with limited time and space to plan for abrupt transitions from face-to-face teaching. From this perspective, online L2 instruction deserves increasing attention as a site of research. There is a body of research that has compared learners' and instructors' beliefs about L2 instruction. For example, Nhapulo (2013) sought to better understand teacher and learner beliefs in an in-person, Mozambican context to better facilitate language instruction via surveying a focus group of learners and teachers. He found that teacher and student expectations differ in significant areas such as guidance in learner autonomy, as students believed the instructors should help them become autonomous learners and facilitate access to teachers outside of class. For example, instructors believed students should be solely responsible for scheduling meetings for assistance, while learners felt there should be established times when they knew they could access their teachers. These mismatches in expectations have the potential to become unforeseen barriers to success for the learners.

Zimmerman et al. (2014) further highlighted gaps such as this on learner and instructor expectations, noting the importance of reducing these gaps to maintain learner motivation. Their study covered multiple disciplines including education, engineering, and physics, and they found that discussions between faculty and learners towards shared understanding increased learner efficiency and feelings of engagement in the class over the term. They noted that discipline

seemed to have no bearing on the importance of shared expectations and the benefits of managing them. Therefore, such gaps coupled with added apprehension towards the new online environment (for many) on the part of both instructors and learners is likely to impact student success and satisfaction significantly if deeper understanding is not cultivated. While the pandemic needs for online learning have receded, the demand for online learning should grow in the future. It is my hope that this present study can help instructors of L2 classes functioning primarily or partially in an online environment to better understand the expectations their students bring to the online classroom and how those expectations impact their learning process. Ideally, the instructors will be able to use the data collected in this study to better understand their students' expectations and help their students understand their own expectations to help mediate their motivational fluctuations throughout the class term.

Potentially, this research trajectory could ultimately help guide online teachers to understand not just what their students are learning but how and why. Teachers could realize new avenues of communication of needs and preferences between teachers and learners while also allowing students greater ownership of their learning process. The aim of this study will be to better understand how student perceptions of common features of online learning interact with their motivation. I hope that these findings, and the methods used in this investigation, can help the development of online L2 courses that support sustained motivation for language learning over the course of a class. Ideally, better understanding of these factors could help practitioners develop an online experience that empowers both students and teachers through shared expectations and decrease concerns about online motivation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Factors That Influence L2 Motivation

Seminal researchers on L2 motivation, such as Gardner and Dörnyei, established a strong argument for a positive relationship between motivation and learning outcomes in L2 instruction (Ushida, 2005). Building upon this study, a wide body of research in this domain has attempted to identify variables that influence motivation and therefore increase the likelihood of positive L2 learning outcomes. Ushida's (2005) study examined motivation for L2 online learning longitudinally to better understand changes over time and the role attitude played in influencing motivational levels. Results indicated that motivation could be maintained and even increased, but it largely depended on the attitude and the course design put forth by the instructor. She also found that students who displayed motivation and positive attitudes toward learning their respective L2s tended to demonstrate positive learning behaviors in their L2 online classes, such as active chat participation. Ushida (2005), along with Abrar-Ul-Hassan (2014) focused on motivation in general rather than online specifically and illustrate how motivation does not stem from nor is maintained by a single influence. Rather, elements of motivation are influenced by the individual student's interests or beliefs coupled with influential factors in their learning environment, such as class design, teacher presence, and guidance on developing self-efficiency.

Abrar-Ul-Hassan (2014) found that students experienced a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations within a class of comparative skill-level. Extrinsic motivation is described as having a source outside of the learner's personal interests, such as parental approval or social currency. Conversely, intrinsic motivation stems from variables that the individual finds personally enjoyable, regardless of job prospects, academic outcome, or social status, for example genuine love of language study (Abrar-Ul-Hassan. 2014). His study argues that the learners' sources of

motivation are complex and varied, even when looking at seemingly distinct variables. For example, “desire to travel the world” was listed as an extrinsic motivation but upon reflection, the author suggested elements of intrinsic motivation were also present in that motivator. Insights such as this, coupled with select participants scoring strongly in both intrinsic and extrinsic variables, led the researcher to suggest that learner motivation results from a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors which can complicate attempts to study and support individual learner motivation. Despite this complicated dual influence, the findings did indicate a stronger impact by extrinsic factors, such as career goals, than intrinsic factors such as learning English made them feel successful (Abrar-Ul-Hassan, 2014). This outcome highlights a major challenge to capitalizing on learner motivation in language learning, with such a complex composition of learner motivational factors. It also demonstrates that learners often have an end-goal such as proficiency gains or job skills.

Online learning has the potential to support many of the influences of learner motivation that Abrar-Ul-Hassan discussed, as well as affective factors common in general language education. For example, Jung et al. (2014) looked at learner perceptions of synchronous learning in a collaborative foreign language classroom setting. They found that the opportunity to interact in real-world exchanges with global speakers understandably influenced learners’ motivation as it was perceived to provide authentic interactions and cultural competency that the learners would not have encountered in a traditional language classroom. However, while the students perceived the cultural benefits of a telecollaboration class, the study did not find the limited language used to be sufficient for them to perceive online learning as beneficial to their language learning. The researchers suggested that this showed the need for instructors to include dedicated form-focus within their overall online design, which influenced my decision to include class

design (e.g. form-focus vs. communicative-focused, hybrid vs. asynchronous, etc.) as a variable (Jung et al., 2019). Wu et al. (2020) noticed an increase in students' sense of autonomy and ownership of their writing when participating in an online flipped L2 writing classroom. They cited intentional attention by the instructors to cultivating learner independence, and the necessities of online learning as factors in this finding. Wu et al. also noted that the flipped classroom allowed for more feedback opportunities from both faculty and peers which students perceived positively in their study. Arispe and Burston (2017) present online language learning tools as a potential solution for limited classroom time and interactions. Their study, which looked at using social media content creation tools to help learners develop personal language learning experiences, highlighted the importance of intentional design, learner autonomy, and structured feedback. Online language learning can be a motivational challenge, but based on these studies, positive impacts may be possible with awareness of class design, feedback, instructor interaction, and learning autonomy.

Learner Perceptions of Online Class Design

Some online language motivation studies have focused on class design, that is, the structure and formatting of online interactions and assignments, due to its potential impact on learner motivation. With the flexibility and the limitations of online classrooms, there are many options for class designs including: synchronous, asynchronous, flipped, ubiquitous, and blended. Increasingly with the current pandemic as well as a growing global language community, classes are delivered through a mix of these approaches to accommodate the target skills and the availability of the participants. It is important then to understand how students perceive these class formats and how those perceptions might impact their motivation. Chen's (2015) study found that a blended class (of both online and in-person meetings) was perceived

by the participants to positively impact their speaking skills compared to entirely in-person classes. This perception was thought to be a result of the online forums and recorded responses, reinforcing, and allowing the students to practice what they had learned in face-to-face class time. It also was perceived that overall speaking and pronunciation benefited the most relative to other skills such as grammatical accuracy and fluency because online, the speakers were faceless, and so the sole focus became listening without in-person distractions. This outcome demonstrates how a perceived weakness of online language learning, lack of in-person speaking, can be perceived as an advantage for some, which users perceive to improve their skills instead. Likewise, Wu et al.(2020) found positive learner responses to a flipped classroom design which they perceived as allowing them to focus on improving their writing because the design provided a less distracting environment in which writing skills could be developed. Jung (2014) also found a positive perception of video-chatting attributed to students' belief that it provided them more opportunities to practice speaking, expand vocabulary, and reinforce grammar. The participants also indicated that these alternative modalities of interaction somewhat replaced the social interactions they would usually expect in a face-to-face course.

Another approach to online class design is ubiquitous learning which is where learning experiences and resources are available to learners at anytime and anywhere the learner may be located, for example class materials accessed via mobile phones. Ubiquitous learning offers students online learning benefits including omnipresence, customizability, and self-directed learning as well as difficulties such as requiring more technological competencies. Jung looked at what characteristics of a ubiquitous class contributed to satisfaction and contrasted these variables with personal learner characteristics such as self-efficacy, motivation, and innovation. Jung found that motivation and computer self-efficacy (the student's ability to confidently

complete a task using the computer) were some of the strongest predictors among learner attributes for a positive learning-satisfaction outcome. Ubiquitous learning aspects such as customizability and omnipresence (the materials are always available, and the medium is accessible or transportable) were rated most influential upon satisfaction. The high level of satisfaction triggered by the ubiquitous characteristics, despite the potential barrier of requiring a higher level of computer-ability, indicated that if mediated correctly, this learning environment can contribute to satisfaction and motivation. Arispe and Burston (2017) supported this notion, finding that approaching ubiquitous learning with a clear, shared purpose and intentional design empowered students and made constructive use of the format. The authors in this study and others identified instructor awareness of student mindsets and intentionality in planning as the key components to success in these online classes.

Convergence of Student-Teacher Beliefs

The instructor's role in the development of shared understanding of expectations within the online classroom was a key element in Arispe and Burston's (2017) study of online L2 learning and learner perceptions. They attributed the success of the program largely to the instructor intentionally building a shared understanding among the students not only of the class expectations, but of how to frame and evaluate their own learning. Rather than telling them how to think or what to expect, the instructor provided them the tools to understand their own learning in the form of rubrics and instructions. This approach allowed them to move forward independently and empowered them to guide their learning based on their personal needs, confident that they were following the same general scaffold as their peers and their teacher. Magnam et al. (2012) had a similar but more formal approach in their study of student goals and how those goals aligned with the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century.

Their study measured teacher and student goal intersection using national level standards created by professionals and not by learners. Results highlighted a large divide in what elements of learning students and teachers found most valuable. In fact, in several cases, the instructors and the students had polar-opposite rankings of goal importance. Likewise, Nhapulo (2013) found a disparity between the students' expectations of the instructors' availability vs. their actual availability. These studies underscore the significant need for faculty to mediate expectations and enable learners to direct goal-formation within online classes. Gironzetti et al. (2020) found a similar issue with online course perceptions. Their results showed that while a majority of the learners found online learning useful, the teachers reported the lowest scores for satisfaction and expressed a belief that the course would have been better in-person, in opposition to their learners' beliefs. Here there is a clear gap in beliefs that must be better understood and resolved for online learning improvement.

Ushida (2005) demonstrated the negative impact on motivation an instructor can have on an online class when they do not connect their learner's goals with the class goals. For example, within the study, one instructor primarily used class time to direct grammar questions to the students and did little to no instruction on how to use the online class environment effectively. This class showed the lowest motivation scores of the three courses observed. The instructor's interpretation of the class was that the students were deficient in motivation, the class was difficult and difficult to teach. The instructor did not perceive the lack of motivation or students' feeling of being overwhelmed by the material to reflect their approach to the class formatting. This correlation between the instructor's lack of awareness in online class implementation and their students' lower motivation and expectations in the class supply further evidence of the impact teacher beliefs can have upon class outcomes.

Feedback Format

Feedback is another component that can easily result in negative L2 learner motivation in online courses either because the learner has a preferred source (i.e. teacher rather than peer), or because the learner has an expectation related to timing of feedback or even the grammatical focus of the feedback (Chen, 2015). While realistic teaching workloads may limit how feedback can be given, the necessity of identifying useful feedback from a student perspective is critical as illustrated by its prominent place in many motivation and expectation studies. For example, Martin and Alvarez-Valdivia (2015) found in their study of L2 online instruction study that the most preferred form of feedback was explicit, where the feedback directly identified the error and offered suggested correction, and immediate instructor feedback focusing on serious grammatical errors. Other studies supported this trend, in particular, the desire for teacher feedback rather than peer sourced. Sherafati et al. (2020) even found that slight personalization of computer-generated feedback via instructor mediation provided the learners with the clarity and human connection to not only maintain their motivation but even increase it in posttests. Chen (2015) noted that a perceived weakness of L2 online instruction often is the lack of peer-peer or instructor-student interaction as well as "failure to receive immediate and individualized feedback"(p. 101). Sherafati et al. (2020) demonstrated that instructors do not need to "reinvent the wheel" to achieve a feeling of connection and timely feedback, rather they need to think creatively and alternatively. Students in the study not only reported satisfaction with online rather than face-to-face feedback when it was personalized to some degree, either via teacher comments or recorded comments, but some students even stated they preferred it to traditional paper feedback because online was more organized and legible.

Learner Autonomy

Providing constructive feedback and thoughtful classroom design are even more crucial in online learning because of their potential contribution to learner autonomy or self-efficacy. Ushida (2003) alluded to the need for learner self-efficacy in their observation that students had more responsibility in online classes to keep track of test times and to log chat sessions rather than a face-to-face class where activities are largely directed by the teacher. Self-efficacy then, in an online environment, is the ability to self-direct one's online learning process to determine the amount of discussion or response in online forums, thus determining the amount of speaking and writing practice the individual receives, the topics discussed, and the ability to clarify assignments without regular face-to-face contact with faculty. Studies where the instructors were transparent with outcomes and intentional in developing shared class expectations, also tended to see higher ratings of student autonomy and independence as well as students' awareness of their own learning process (e.g., Arispe & Burston, 2017). Since expectations and values can vary drastically between instructors and learners, this can cause students to feel insecure about proceeding with projects independently (Magnan & Murphy, 2012). Given that online learning by nature requires more autonomous and self-driven work, understanding student autonomy seems crucial in studying instructional outcomes and learner perceptions in online L2 learning.

Learner Ownership

Tangential to autonomy is flexibility or customization of the learning process. Online learning also potentially allows learners more opportunities for personalizing their assigned work or approaches to learning required skills. Jung's (2014) results on ubiquitous learning showed that customization of a course was one of the strongest contributors to student satisfaction and motivation. Therefore, finding opportunities for students to adapt the online learning process to better fulfill their individual needs can be an important tool for online instructors. Given that

motivation and expectations can fluctuate over the course of a class, utilizing customization and personalization to meet diverse student needs is a promising area of investigation in the efficacy of L2 online instruction. Related to personalization, Jung et al.'s (2014) study of L2 learner perceptions of synchronous online classes, found that the lesson topic (i.e. food, family life, student's choice, etc.) had a significant effect on students' satisfaction as well as their correctly resolved grammatical episodes in response to feedback. The findings acknowledge student choice as a factor in language participation and success. The implication being that if online classes are constructed with communicative activities which allow students to customize toward a topic of interest, such as in the context of script presentation or discussion, then their perceptions of and motivation for the class will be improved, as will their engagement.

The flexibility of online classes to simultaneously support different learning styles, schedules, and communication techniques, is a strength that should be considered alongside learner needs and agency. For instance, the different needs of extroverted vs. introverted language learners in a traditional classroom can be difficult to navigate. However, Chen found that anxiety was reduced in online courses that allowed for non-face-to-face speaking assignments such as voice-recording, chatrooms, and discussion boards. They also noted that online courses offered alternatives not available in traditional face-to-face classes. For example, students who might receive fewer speaking opportunities due to dominating peers were afforded more chances via online recorded assignments than a traditional classroom could afford them. Chen also found that online classes provided learners with tools to guide their own learning process and develop autonomy. Ushida noted that the ability to self-direct was a particularly powerful variable in online language classes due to a greater need for independent work. Procrastination and lack of confidence in directing their own learning process were common

obstacles to online learning satisfaction as a result. The solution in several studies was to provide ample peer examples via recorded assignments in their speaking exercises. Students expressed that these standardized but individualized assignments enabled them to self-address confusion and developed broader ideas by listening to their peers' recordings. Qualitative data also indicated that the opportunity to listen to their assignments and rerecord encouraged them to reflect upon their language usage and self-correct errors.

Utilizing reflection and metacognition can help support the students' autonomy in the online classroom. Faculty took steps to either provide outright instruction on elements of language learning or created assignments that required the students to think intensively upon their own learning process and goals (Arispe & Burston, 2017; Magnan et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2020). As a result, students had a greater awareness of how they specifically learned language. In some cases, the faculty provided rubrics or lessons explaining how improvement in skills such as speaking or writing are measured (Arispe & Burston, 2017). This created a shared understanding of expectations between the learners and the instructors which the student found allowed them to complete assignments with the confidence that they were doing so in a way that supported their own learning best and aligned with their instructor's expectations.

Too often the detriments of online learning are the focus of discussion among teachers and learners (particularly in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic), while the benefits are underrepresented in academia and popular opinion (Peacock, 1998). Instead of looking at the forced move to online learning, brought on by the pandemic, as a loss of quality learning time, we could consider it an opportunity to better understand factors that influence L2 learners' perceptions of online learning. With greater examination of learners' perceptions of these

courses, educators will be better equipped to support their learners' motivation in online L2 course design and delivery.

This study will attempt to answer two research questions:

R1. How do instructor and learner expectations for L2 online instruction compare?

R2. What is the relationship between learners' perceptions of their motivation for their online L2 instruction and their perception of each of the following variables: class design, teacher/peer interaction, autonomy, and feedback?

Chapter 3: Methods

This study examined students' language learning motivation in online L2 courses and investigated the extent to which student perceptions of course features, found in previous research to influence student success in an online learning environment, affected language learning motivation (i.e., autonomy, feedback format, course design, interaction, and instructor-student beliefs). The study used a mixed-method, quasi-experimental design intended to investigate possible relationships between these variables and learner motivation to succeed in their L2 classes and to capture participants' views about their motivation in relation to online language learning. The study also compared learner and instructor perceptions to determine if there are shared expectations or gaps between student and teacher expectations. Additionally, as an exploratory intervention, one instructor was given access to data on their students' perceptions following the initial survey to explore whether their awareness of their learners' expectations influences their online teaching approach in the same semester. The other instructor did not receive such intervention and their classes served as control groups. The study was conducted during the winter semester from the first week the instructors and students met to approximately eight weeks into classes or midterm. For a visual representation of the study timeline, please refer to Table 1.

Table 1 Timeline for Study

Pre-test/1st Survey	Intervention	Post-test/2nd Survey	Interview	Data Analysis
1st week of classes (~early Jan)	wk 3 or 4. (~late Jan/early Feb)	wk 6 or 7 of classes. (~mid Feb/late Feb.)	wk 7 (~late Feb/Early March)	Late Feb-Early March

Participants

Instructor participants were recruited through faculty contacts in the Modern Language department at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) during the winter semester of 2021. A total of five classes under two instructors agreed to participate. Instructor A led three classes. Instructor B led two classes. The target language for all five classes was Spanish. Instructor A's classes included two beginner courses with learners in their second semester of college Spanish, and one class of low intermediate learners in their second year of college Spanish. Instructor B's classes were two sections of the same upper intermediate Spanish course. Instructor A's three classes were entirely online, while instructor B's were hybrid classes which met once a week in-person. All five classes were asked to take a survey (Online L2 Learner Expectation & Motivation Survey) twice over the course of the semester. Response total from all five classes was 32 for the pre-test: with 22 respondents from Instructor B's classes and 12 from Instructor A's classes. With the response ratio in mind, it was decided that Instructor A would receive the intervention, while Instructor B's classes would serve as a control group. The participants' target language experience did vary and was recorded per number of months of study for demographic purposes. However, both classes fit the aim of learners who have at least one semester of language classes already completed. This rationale is based on Abrar-Ul-Hassan (2014), which suggested the motivation of students in their final semesters of language study may be disproportionately influenced by the amount of time already invested in the program. Similarly, it is possible that entry-level learners may display higher levels of anxiety, which may inflate fluctuation in motivation over the course of a semester.

Table 2. Participant Responses per Class and Measurement

Instructor/Group	Pre-test Responses	Post-test Responses	Group Totals
A/Intervention	12 *(19%)*	10 (16%)	**64**
A.1. Class high beginner			20
A.2. Class high beginner			20
A.3. Class high beginner			24
B/Control	22 (58%)	13 (34%)	**38**
B.1. Class Intermediate			18
B.2. Class Intermediate			20

Instrument: **Online L2 Learner Expectation & Motivation Survey**

The instrument comprises a combination of a five-point Likert scale survey followed by two open-ended clarifying questions. The instructors also had a version of the survey, the only difference being they had four open-ended questions rather than two. Hung et al. 's (2011) and Shih's (2010) surveys served as the base model. Hung et al.'s survey focuses on online learner readiness using motivation and self-efficiency as key factors. They developed a five-point scale survey, broken into five dimensions related to online learner readiness, such as self-directed learning, and computer/internet efficiency. I modeled some of my questions using a format similar to their design, i.e. "I feel that [motivated-related example]" (Hung et al., 2011). I have also grouped my questions in line with each variable, assigning an equal number of questions(five) to each independent variable. Shih's instrument guided in the development of the survey question-formatting and approximate survey length (30 questions) as this seems to be a reasonable length for engagement. Shih developed a 30-question survey to measure learners' attitudes toward online learning utilizing Facebook as a tool. Since I want to understand learner

and instructor beliefs or attitudes about their online classes, I used Shih's wording to direct my own questions to this end. Shih's instrument was tested for validity by two unaffiliated faculty members.

Similar to Shih's design, the Likert scale used in the present study ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with 3 designated as neutral. As the dependent variable, motivation is represented with a second set of class-specific motivation questions to both ensure content validity and to acknowledge the diverse forms of motivation that can influence learners (Abrar-Ul-Hassan, 2014). I designed the questions with an even representation of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation items for both general L2 learning motivation and class-specific motivation in the instrument. To obtain a realistic picture of the learner's motivation at the start and conclusion of the study, I provided a mix of motivation-focused questions, accounting for eight general L2 motivation and eight class-specific motivation questions, developed using previous motivation studies as their foundation (Hung et al., 2011; Shih, 2010). The remaining independent variables are equally represented to give a balanced reporting of their influence on motivation with five questions per independent variable (see Table 3). The questions follow a similar format, asking the participants to rate their agreement with a given statement related to their satisfaction/belief. For example, one of the items to measure interaction fulfillment was: *I am satisfied with the degree to which I can get to know my teacher and classmates well using this course's online tools*. Please reference Appendix A for the complete survey instrument.

Table 3. Variable Representation in Survey

Dependent	Dependent	Independent	Ind.	Ind.	Ind.	Ind.
General L2 Learning Motivation	Class-Specific L2 Learning Motivation	Learner Autonomy	Feedback	Interaction	Classroom Design	Open Response
8	8	5	5	5	5	2

The students completed the survey to capture their perceptions of their motivation and of these other four aspects of the class twice: once in the beginning and again midway through the course. The first survey asked the students to respond to the questions with their expectations for the class going forward, as they had not yet engaged actively with many class factors within the first week such as feedback. The second survey asked them to respond to the same questions with their current perspectives at the midpoint in the semester, having experienced feedback, class interactions, etc. at that point. The instructor completed an identical survey at the start of the semester but was asked to answer based on their current understanding of the learner's needs and expectations (or from their understanding of their learners' perspectives). This allowed the teacher's perspective on each variable to be directly compared with the learners' perspectives.

The open-ended questions at the end of the survey were intended to provide qualitative context to the Likert scale responses and to allow the students and instructors to describe variables that influenced their motivation that the study may have overlooked. The students answered two questions, which asked, in their own words, what was the most motivating element of the class and what was the least. The instructors' survey included two additional questions requesting feedback on the survey design for ongoing improvement and information on any changes they made to their perceptions of the class since the start of the semester. An interview was also conducted with the instructors to ensure sufficient qualitative description of their changes and perception of the interventions was captured for data analysis.

Pilot Study Experience

A pilot study was conducted in the winter of 2020 with a smaller participant group and with only one data collection point--the initial pre-test, which allowed for piloting of the instrument. The pilot study consisted of two Japanese language classes with the same instructor

leading both courses. The class and instructor took the survey once at approximately the eight week point in the semester. The results and responses were analyzed and used to develop a revised form of the survey instrument. Data analysis and complete procedures for the pilot study are presented in Appendix B.

Reflecting on the pilot data collection informed the development of the present survey in a few important ways. First, open-ended question two, "what element has motivated you the least in this online class?", which was intended to elicit specific examples related to the independent variables, resulted in a high number of participants responding with general comments about their personal intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Question two was intended to allow participants to share specific examples of class elements which had a positive effect on their motivation from their viewpoint and these responses could potentially then be connected to one of the independent variables if applicable. For example, if a student discussed their instructor's feedback using audio commentary as motivating, then that could be an example supporting the importance of the feedback variable. However, as the responses were too general, they effectively only reiterated the learners' responses from the motivation Likert questions. Therefore, the wording was changed from "What has motivated you the most" to a more focused version, "What elements of this class" or "What actions by your instructor have motivated you the most?".

Procedures

The first Qualtrics survey was emailed by each class's respective faculty using an anonymous link. The emails for participants provided instructions for the survey and highlighted assurances that responses would be anonymous and randomized to allow participants to proceed without fear of academic retaliation. Instructors were provided with instructions, a timeline for

completion, a draft of the email language to be sent to the students and a link to the classes' respective survey. All surveys were identical but recorded via two separate links to allow for later comparison between the control classes and the intervention classes. IRB approval was granted through the Institutional Review Board at GVSU. The instructors were also asked to take the survey during the first week of classes, responding to the questions as if they were students to capture instructor expectations for the class. This pre-test measurement took place during the 1st week of winter semester classes, approximately January 10th to the 17th. The intention was to capture the students' initial motivation levels and perception of the online class before they experienced interactions or assignments that could influence their expectations one way or the other.

Once the initial survey results were collected, class averages for each question were calculated as well as the class average for each variable, i.e. general motivation, feedback, interaction, etc. These numbers were then charted alongside the same data from instructor A's survey response. This data formed the intervention component of the study and was shared with instructor A after the 3rd week of class. The aim was to determine if awareness of learner expectations facilitated changes to the class implementation by the instructor. Also included in the intervention was a summarized version of the qualitative responses from the students, focusing on what they found most and least motivating in the class. This section of data was summarized to prevent identifiable language from potentially exposing the respondents' identities. The intervention was intended to allow the faculty to see how their responses and their learners' responses compared and to determine if there were themes in the learners' open-ended responses. It was the instructors' choice how or if they adjusted the class based on the pre-test feedback in the intervention.

Following the intervention, the classes and instructor A were not contacted between week four and seven, to allow any potential changes by instructor A or influences on the part of the intervention to take effect. All groups, both control and intervention, took a post-test at approximately the midpoint of the semester (eighth week of classes) in late February. This survey was the same as the pre-test survey in both form and distribution. It served as the final motivation and beliefs measurement to compare against the pretest (students' responses at the start of the semester).

During weeks nine and ten, the instructors were interviewed regarding their insights of the class and adjustments to potential adjustments made in their course delivery. The instructors were asked to articulate changes made, if any, to inform the analysis of the quantitative data at the end of the study to provide possible explanation for changes in class perspectives, if any resulted. Instructor B and the control group student participants did not receive feedback after the initial survey so their responses could serve as a baseline to compare typical motivation fluctuations during the semester with the intervention group results. Cognizant that instructor B may have made changes in response to student requests or other factors, they were interviewed, along with the intervention instructor (A) to provide context if the data reflected changes in the students' beliefs that were not explained by the quantitative data. The interview questions used can be found in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Following the data analysis procedures carried out for the pilot study (see Appendix B), instructor and learner responses were averaged for each variable and compared to determine if a gap in their perspectives existed. In this study, the learners' post-test responses for each variable (general motivation, autonomy, feedback, etc.) were also averaged and compared with pre-test

averages for experimental and control groups to evaluate potential changes in variables from the start to the middle of the semester. The addition of an intervention and control group in this study allowed for comparison between the mean scores of the control vs. intervention groups to determine if differences in scores were present between the two groups.

The qualitative data was reviewed and assigned general codes based on the comments or concerns that appeared in the learners' response to the two open-ended questions. Multiple codes were assigned to individual comments depending on their content and depth. The frequency of each code was tallied and charted with the pre- and post-test compared side-by-side. The results were grouped by intervention or control and by question to determine the trends in the learners' beliefs about which were the most positive elements and negative elements of their class at both points in the semester.

Chapter 4: Results

Research Question One: How do instructor and learner expectations for L2 online instruction compare?

To compare the instructor and learners' perceptions of their classes, the instructor variable means were compared with the students' pre-test and post-test averages of the same. The results can be seen in Table 4 compared to the variable scores of the instructors. This comparison was intended to determine if the instructors' perspectives differed from the learners' among the variables and at different points in the semester. The intervention and control group data were kept separate to see if any relevant trends occurred in either group. In Table 4, you can see the mean data across both groups and test periods. It is interesting to note that the instructors' means for each variable were quite different from each other. However, looking at the learners' means across both groups, they share more similarities. For example, most of the student mean responses, regardless of variable, fall approximately in the 3.9 to 4.5 range showing a surprisingly close perspective among the students despite being in different courses.

Table 4. Mean Survey Scores by Group

	Intervention				Control		
	Instructor A perception	Students' Perception (1st Survey)	Students' Perception (2nd Survey)		Instructor B perception	Students' Perceptions (2nd Survey)	Students' Perception (2nd Survey)
General Motivation	5	3.93	4.24		3.75	4.08	4.5
Class-Specific Motivation	5	3.97	4.23		3.13	4.01	4.38
Interaction	5	4.3	4.36		3.6	4.03	4.57
Feedback	4.8	4.37	4.56		3.6	4.09	3.6
Self-Efficiency	4.6	4.15	4.18		3.6	4.03	4.51
Class Design	4.6	4.22	4.28		3.4	3.95	4.09

Looking at how each instructor compares to their specific classes, there are notable differences between the two experimental groups. Chart 1 simply allows for a visual comparison of instructor A's perceptions compared with their learners' during the pre- and post-tests. Chart 2 shows the same for the control instructor B. Instructor A had a higher expectation for the learners' perception values compared to their learners for all the variables. The instructor expected that the students would have the highest scores (meaning they agreed strongly with statements related to the specified variable) in both types of motivation and interaction. They lowered their expectations for agreement among the students when it came to feedback, self-efficacy/autonomy, and class design, which had the lowest score. This pattern actually matched the learners' responses to some degree. They had higher perception of class interaction but lower perceptions of their self-efficacy and the class design. They also saw the greatest difference from their professor's prediction of their perspective in their motivation responses. The learners on average did not agree strongly with statements focusing on their general or class-specific motivation. Conversely, the instructor had predicted both of these variables to have strong agreement responses by the learners. The learners' perspectives for nearly all the variables saw a rise in the mean value (indicating an increase in positive agreement with the survey statements), which brought their perspective close in alignment with instructor B's expectation.

Instructor B's responses indicated they expected a lower degree of agreement with the survey statement compared to their learners ranging with variable scores from 3.1 to 3.75. Since their learners' average responses were around 4 to 4.5, this indicated a gap between instructor B's perception of their learners' beliefs and the learners' actual beliefs. In Chart 2, it can be seen that the gap was greater when instructor B's scores were compared with their learners' second

survey results. The learners increased in their agreement with positive statements relating to motivation, interaction, and self-efficacy, but saw a large drop in their scores for the feedback variable questions. This indicates that the learners agreed less or disagreed with positive statements about the class feedback at the midpoint in the semester, compared with the start of the semester. This indicates a disconnect between the instructor's perception of feedback in the class and the learners' perceptions, as well as an indication of dissatisfaction among the learners in relation to the feedback variable, given their change from the week one survey to the midterm survey.

Chart 1. Mean Survey Scores by Group

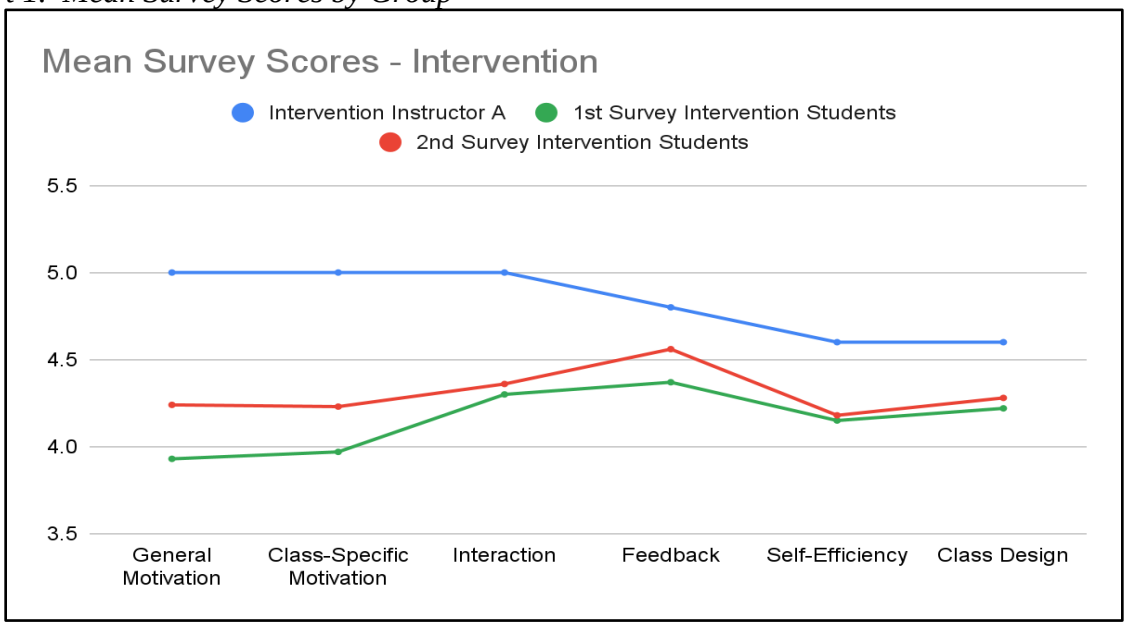
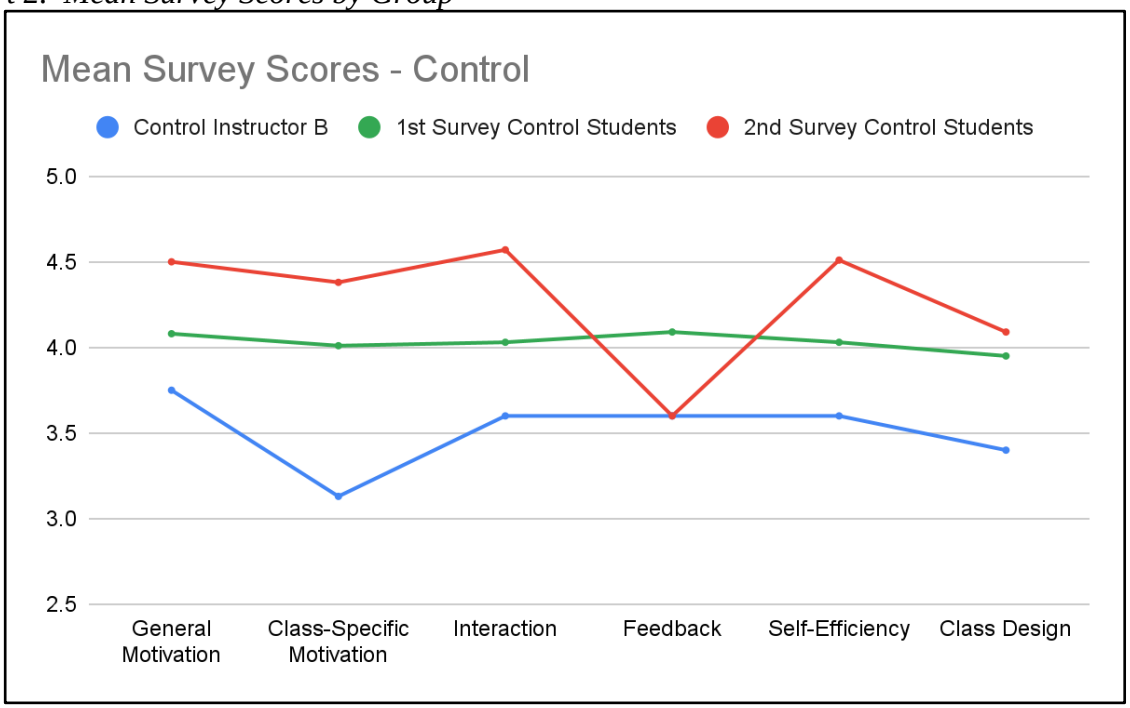


Chart 2. Mean Survey Scores by Group



When comparing the pre-test mean scores of the students with their faculties' responses, there were areas that indicated gaps in expectations and perspectives. Table 5 shows the difference in the initial perspectives between student and faculty. There were differing opinions not just between the classes but also the professors. Similar to the findings in the pilot study, some instructors responded with high expectations for the class, while other instructors had lower expectation responses for their perception values. Instructor A had much higher perceptions scores than their learners at the start of the semester resulting in a negative difference value when compared with the learners' scores (Table 5). The greatest difference was in their perception of motivation which was -1.07 from the faculty expected motivation score to the learners' actual score. Conversely, instructor B had lower perspective scores compared to their learners' initial perceptions, but a slight narrower difference compared with instructor A's difference value. However, in Table 6, the post-test scores showed instructor A's students'

perception had risen to be closer to their instructor's perception. Instructor B's classes did not show the same behavior. Their learners' scores largely continued to increase, apart from their feedback perception which decreased by a large degree.

Table 5. Perception Difference Between Student/Instructor in Pre-test

	Intervention			Control		
	Instructor A Survey	Students' 1st Survey	Instructor/ Student Perception Difference	Instructor B Survey	Students' 1st Survey	Instructor/ Student Perception Difference
General Motivation	5	3.93	-1.07	3.75	4.08	0.33
Class-Specific Motivation	5	3.97	-1.03	3.13	4.01	0.88
Interaction	5	4.3	-0.70	3.6	4.03	0.43
Feedback	4.8	4.37	-0.43	3.6	4.09	0.49
Self-Efficiency	4.6	4.15	-0.45	3.6	4.03	0.43
Class Design	4.6	4.22	-0.38	3.4	3.95	0.55

The greatest difference could be seen in perception of class motivation, although this extreme was due largely to both instructors' responses being outliers compared to all the student responses, regardless of class group. The students from each class had relatively similar initial perceptions for motivation, whether general or class-specific. Instructor A responded with high perceptions for motivation, both general and class. While instructor B had lower expectations compared to their learners and in the case of class motivation, much lower. Both instructors' perceptions of their students' motivation reflected either a much lower or much higher expectation than the students themselves had for the class. This was prior to the students

engaging with the class in a meaningful way and so it is important to look at the comparison between the faculty beliefs and the students' beliefs later in the semester (presented in Table 6).

Table 6. Perception Difference Between Student/Instructor in Post-test

	Intervention			Control		
	Instructor A	Sutdents' 2nd Survey	Instructor/ Student Perception Difference	Instructor B	Students' 2nd Survey	Instructor/ Student Perception Difference
General Motivation	5	4.24	-0.76	3.75	4.5	0.75
Class-Specific Motivation	5	4.23	-0.77	3.13	4.38	1.25
Interaction	5	4.36	-0.64	3.6	4.57	0.97
Feedback	4.8	4.56	-0.24	3.6	3.6	0
Self-Efficiency	4.6	4.18	-0.42	3.6	4.51	0.91
Class Design	4.6	4.28	-0.32	3.4	4.09	0.69

In Table 6, you can see the difference in post-test scores between the instructors and students. The intervention class saw a decrease in the difference between the instructor's initial perspective and the students' midterm perspective. In this case, the faculty started with a very high score for perception of each of the variables, while the students' responses rose to match those scores more closely. In the control class, the gap between instructor and student perspectives increased, but this reflected a positive increase in the students' scores. As the control group faculty member had a more moderate perspective on the class and their students had higher scores, the larger gap showed a positive growth in the learners' views on the class

rather than a growing disagreement. See Table 7 which shows how the gap between instructor and learner perceptions changed from the pre-test to the post-test.

There was a large drop in the control group learners' perception of the feedback they received among the control students. In the pre-test, learners had yet to experience feedback and were expressing their ideal score, in the post-test, they were responding to the actual feedback they perceived they were receiving. It indicated that they agreed less with positive statements related to feedback in the class at the time of the post-test. This drop seemingly narrowed the gap between their perspective and their instructor's, but this indicated a negative outcome rather than a shared understanding between the instructor and students. In Table 7, you can more clearly see how the gaps changed for each variable over the course of the semester. The control classes saw a significant decrease in feedback perception but a slight increase elsewhere. When compared with their instructor's neutral responses, this resulted in an increase in the difference between learner and instructor perspective, even though it indicated positive learner views on of the class. Likewise, the .49 drop in control feedback difference did not indicate positive shared perspectives, rather it shows the learners developed a less positive view of feedback application in class and so matched their instructor's lower expected feedback value. The intervention classes saw slight increases in all categories, which resulted in a decrease in their perception difference compared to the instructor, but the amounts were negligible, never going above .31 in change.

Table 7. Instructor/Student Perception Difference from Pre-test to Post-test

	Intervention			Control		
	Pre-test Perception Difference	Post-Test Perception Difference	Increase/ Decrease Over Time	Pre-test Perception Difference	Post-Test Perception Difference	Increase/ Decrease Over Time

General Motivation	-1.07	-0.76	-0.31	0.33	0.75	0.42
Class-Specific Motivation	-1.03	-0.77	-0.26	0.88	1.25	0.37
Interaction	-0.7	-0.64	-0.06	0.43	0.97	0.54
Feedback	-0.43	-0.24	-0.19	0.49	0	-0.49
Self-Efficiency	-0.45	-0.42	-0.03	0.43	0.91	0.48
Class Design	-0.38	-0.32	-0.06	0.55	0.69	0.14

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between learner perceptions of student motivation and each variable?

To determine if any of the variables indicated a relationship with the learners' motivation, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient formula was used for each variable with both types of motivation (class-specific and general). Correlations Coefficients(r) were calculated for both the control classes and the intervention classes for the pre- and post-test results. The average of each participant's responses for each dependent variable was determined and this was used to correlate with the average of the responses for each independent variable. In Table 8, the resulting correlation coefficients are listed by variable, class, and pre- or post-test. The results showed the presence of some significant correlation between the independent variables and the two types of motivation. However, there were also several instances of low correlation, so the data required further sorting to isolate the significant results.

Table 8. Correlation Between Motivations and Independent Variables

	Time	Survey Correlation (r)	Autonomy	Feedback	Interaction	Design
Control	pre	Class Motivation	0.49	0.61	0.60	0.68
		General Motivation	0.27	0.35	0.27	0.43
	post	Class Motivation	0.64	0.46	0.79	0.62

		General Motivation	0.52	0.43	0.41	0.24
	pre	Class Motivation	0.86	0.57	0.76	0.76
		General Motivation	0.39	0.39	0.29	0.45
	post	Class Motivation	0.73	0.73	0.68	0.85
Intervention		General Motivation	0.17	0.43	0.16	0.40

To see the relationships more clearly by variable, I sorted and separated the combined correlation data into individual variable tables with the coefficients sorted from highest to lowest for each variable. In Table 9, you can see the correlation coefficients for each variable ranked. For the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, .3 to .5 is considered a moderate correlation and .5 to 1 are considered strong correlations. Based on that scale, we can see that autonomy, interaction, and design all had at least four instances where a strong correlation was detected. Feedback only had three instances of a strong correlation. Generally, the class-specific motivation tended to exhibit stronger correlations with the independent variables than general motivation. Therefore, the results in Table 9 focus on the class-specific motivation as it consistently exhibited the strongest instances of correlation with each variable.

Besides highlighting class-specific motivation, correlation analysis did not demonstrate additional trends in the data. The control and intervention groups exhibited strong correlation with individual variables interchangeably. Although, the intervention class did tend to suggest slightly stronger correlations for most variables, excluding interaction, but the difference was not significant compared to the control classes. For example, under autonomy, the intervention class had a coefficient of .73 for the post-test, while the control group had .64 which still could be considered a strong coefficient. Additionally, correlational trends were not found related to the pre-test or post-test. For example, the autonomy variable suggested a strong correlation with class-specific motivation in the pre-test but for both feedback and class design, the strongest

coefficient was the intervention class post-test. Therefore, the correlations with the most significance, suggesting a potential relationship among variables, were those between class-specific motivation and autonomy, design, and interaction, with feedback very close. This indicated that there is a strong enough potential relationship between the variables to warrant further research and additional sample populations to explore these relationships in more detail.

Table 9 Correlation Between Motivation and Independent Variables by Correlation Strength

Survey Correlation	Autonomy
I1 Class Motivation	0.86
I2 Class Motivation	0.73
C2 Class Motivation	0.64
C1 Class Motivation	0.49

Survey Correlation	Interaction
C2 Class Motivation	0.79
I1 Class Motivation	0.76
I2 Class Motivation	0.68
C1 Class Motivation	0.6

Survey Correlation	Feedback
I2 Class Motivation	0.73
I1 Class Motivation	0.61
C1 Class Motivation	0.61
C2 Class Motivation	0.46

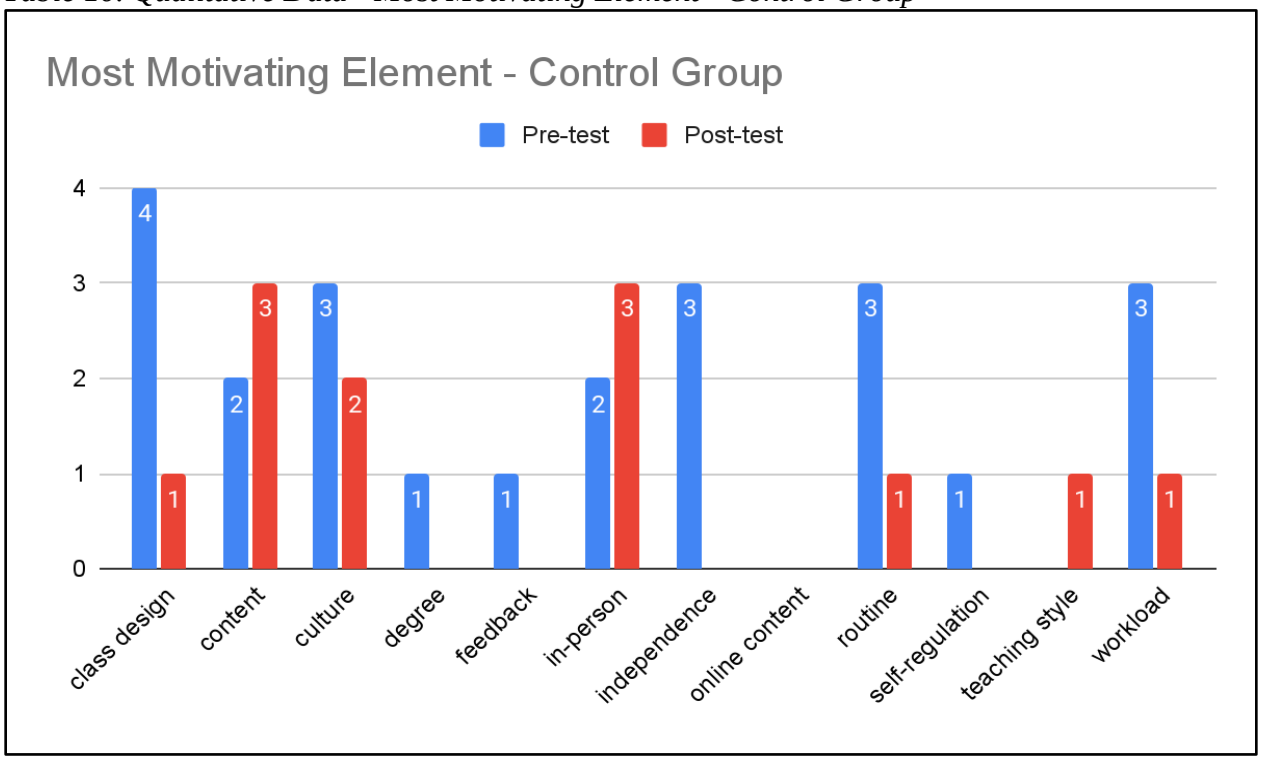
Survey Correlation	Design
I2Class Motivation	0.85
I1 Class Motivation	0.68
C1 Class Motivation	0.68
C2Class Motivation	0.62

Qualitative Data Results

Responses to the qualitative questions were analyzed using a content-analysis approach by tallying frequency of similar responses. The qualitative data was intended to give the learners an opportunity to voice their expectations of online language instruction. The two open-ended questions asked the students to describe the element of the class that motivated them the most and the element that motivated them the least. Table 10 illustrates their coded responses to the question about the most motivating element, by study group (controlled/intervention) and survey (pre- and post-test). The results revealed variables not considered as possible influences on motivation at the start of the study, including workload, and gave insight to how motivating

elements differed depending on the class focus. Additionally, shared motivating or demotivating elements could be seen across classes.

Table 10. Qualitative Data - Most Motivating Element - Control Group

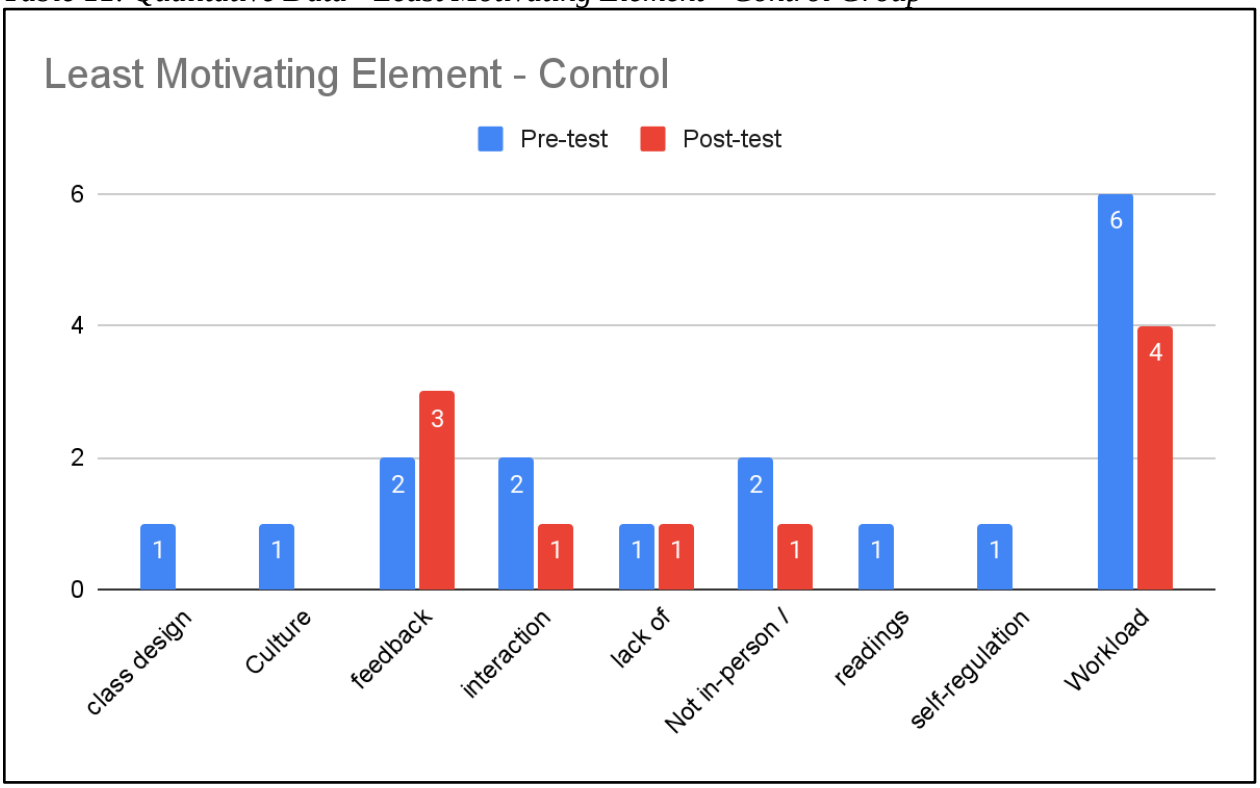


The control group classes were intended as cultural courses utilizing the learners' more advanced language to discuss and write about Spanish-culture topics. Therefore, it is not entirely surprising that culture and content were mentioned often as a focus. One student cited their motivating element to be "A bunch of little assignments being assigned so that I have to stay on top of things", expressing a similar sentiment with a focus on the workload forcing self-regulation habits rather than specifically developing their knowledge on the topic.

However, this perspective was challenged by the responses in the question regarding the least motivating element of class and in the changes between the pre- and post-test responses. follow-up. Table 11 shows the learners' responses for the least motivating element of class using the same layout. It shows that workload also received a large number of negative motivation

responses, exceeding the responses regarding it as a positive motivation. In the pre-test, the control learners mentioned the forthcoming workload most often out of all the classes and factors as the least motivating. While some students saw the workload positively at the start of the semester, many more saw it as a potential negative influence on their motivation. This trend continued into the post-test during the midterm period, where workload continued to be the highest mentioned negative motivator, while it had dropped significantly in its mention as a positive motivator by the midpoint.

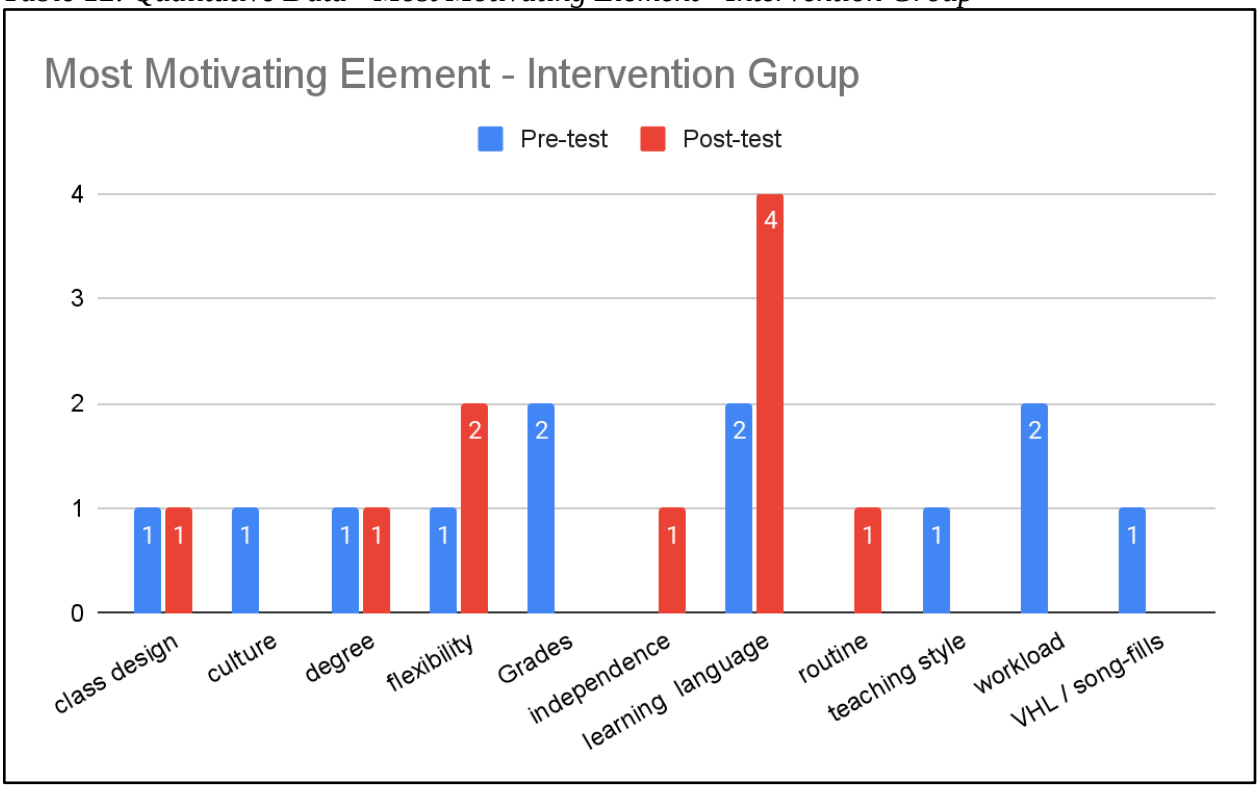
Table 11. Qualitative Data - Least Motivating Element - Control Group



Feedback should be included in this discussion, as it was the next highest mention for negative motivation, next to workload. One student related the workload issue to feedback saying, “I spend 6 hours+ week on this course, I need to see more feedback on my work.” Based on the learners’ comments, the workload led to a higher expectation of equal feedback from the

faculty member. The control students had indicated a high motivational interest in the course design, content, and routine established by instructor B at the start of the semester. They seemed to maintain this satisfaction as the course continued but found issues with the elements of feedback and workload, which would have affected the students' experience of these positive elements. They seemed to enjoy how the class was designed and taught but sought connections to confirm their progress and manageable workload.

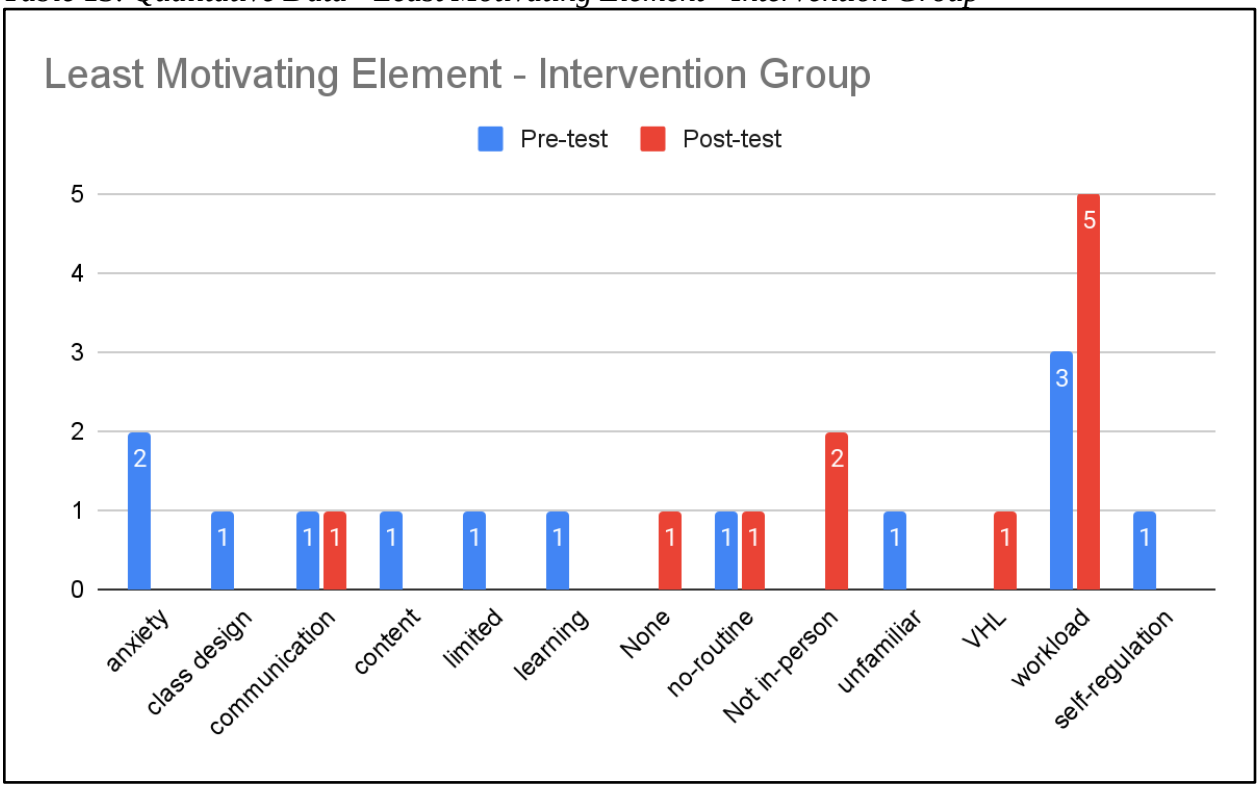
Table 12. Qualitative Data - Most Motivating Element - Intervention Group



The intervention group had a more even spread to their responses for the most motivating element of the class. It is possible that a larger sample size would have produced clearer trends, but this also may reflect the genuinely diverse needs of a lower-level Spanish class. The post-test shows a clearer trend with more responses reporting learning the target language as the most motivating factor. This seemed to be primarily reported by students that intended to use the

language later in their degree or for whom the language was their major. For example, one learner stated, “I think the element of this class that has motivated me the most is the ability to be able to communicate with those who speak Spanish in my future career.” which implied Spanish was integral to their degree. Another learner noted “the prime motivator [was] that this class is required to finally finish up my degree (non-Spanish-related) ...” demonstrating that the students who were taking this class as a requirement for another course often responded with grades or their degree as the prime motivator.

Table 13. Qualitative Data - Least Motivating Element - Intervention Group



The least motivating element for the intervention group showed a similar pattern to the control group. A number of students reported workload as their least motivating element related to class. In the post-test, this response increased as students entered the middle of the semester. It is also interesting that a moderate number of students cited issues with the classwork not being in-person.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Research Question One

In relation to research question one, the results did indicate that there were significant gaps between learner and instructor class expectations throughout the semester. There were also indications that these gaps narrowed as the participants gained experience with the class tasks and each other. Both the intervention group and the control group saw an increase in positive perceptions of some class variables, and all saw maintenance or increase of their perceived motivation despite entering the stressful midterm period of the semester. Another trend, seen both in the pilot and current study, was a tendency for faculty to strongly over or underestimate their learners' motivation for the classwork. The learners' scores suggest they often started the class with moderate to high expectations and motivation and despite strong disagreement with the faculty or frustrations with an element of the class, they tend to remain positive.

There are a few characteristics to note regarding these particular classes. First, the intervention classes were lower-level Spanish courses, which meant they included students who were not intending to pursue Spanish as a degree or were taking the class as a requirement for another discipline. This likely contributed to the lower initial motivation and class averages for this group, since their investment in the language was potentially not as high as other students. Conversely, the control group was a higher-level Spanish course, which meant the learners were all likely invested more deeply in Spanish and produced higher scores of pre-test motivation.

Research Question Two

For research question two, a few variables indicated a strong correlation with learner motivation, including autonomy and interaction. The strength of the relationship between online motivation and autonomy is unsurprising given learner autonomy is more necessary for online

learning (Ushida, 2005). This study supports that relationship with students who reported greater perceptions of online autonomy also reporting higher motivation. Based on this strong correlation, the prominence of students reporting workload to be their least motivating element makes sense, given that learners who struggled to find online autonomy or self-regulate would understandably exhibit lower motivation and report the workload to be less motivating. Likewise, the few students who listed workload as a positive motivator at the start of the semester would be more likely to report higher scores on the autonomy-related questions in the survey. The stronger correlation between motivation and interaction was also shown by the results, highlighting the importance of cultivating positive online interactions with the learners. This was again further supported by the learners' comments on motivating elements of class, where students mentioned humorous comments by the instructor and roleplay interactions with their peers as the most positive elements for them. The importance of positive interaction was also demonstrated by the number of negative comments related to motivation that focused on classes having limited or no in-person periods at all. The learners' focus on this aspect indicates further investigation into how to cultivate positive interactions online will be needed in the future as the relationship between interaction and motivation appears relevant. The focus of this study was the learners' motivation, but it was interesting to see that the motivation of the faculty can also be influenced and should be considered per instructor A's comments during the instructor interview, that awareness of the students' perceptions was a motivation boost for the instructor as well. This is another area that could be explored further in future research.

The low correlation between feedback and motivation was unexpected given the number of students who mentioned feedback in their qualitative comments and the large decrease in the control group feedback scores in the post-test. The low correlation is likely caused by the

motivation scores remaining high while the control feedback score experienced that drop. This outlier may be explained by the other variables influencing the learner's motivation in spite of their feedback concerns. A larger sample size and further testing would be necessary to determine if feedback influences learner motivation.

Exploratory Data

Though beyond the scope of this study, preliminary data was collected to determine if instructor awareness of student perceptions would potentially influence instructional decisions? If so, how did instructor awareness of initial student perceptions influence students' perceptions over time? These exploratory questions were reflected in the treatment of the intervention group, whose instructor received their pre-test scores to see if shared perceptions were influenced by instructor awareness. The results for this research question were largely based on the interviews with the faculty members. When asked if they had made changes to the class based on the pre-test results provided to them during week three, instructor A stated that they had made some small changes to the class, including adding additional oral practice and increasing their feedback. They also made an effort to keep up with grading in response to the students' initial concerns about workload and communication. However, in response to the exploratory questions and awareness of learner beliefs' potential influences on motivation, the pre-test information did not have as large of an impact on the instructor and class design as previously suspected. While some changes were made, broad reaching realizations or changes did not result from the survey findings. Furthermore, the changes in motivation were not significant when compared with the control group from pre-test to post-test, meaning the second exploratory question was inconclusive based on the results. This suggests that the relationship is more complicated and

future research will need to be adjusted to better isolate specific variables or interventions to determine if they can influence learner motivation.

Study Limitations

When discussing the results of this study, the sample size and its influence on the results needs to be acknowledged. Gathering data from participants is always a challenge, especially without incentives and for multiple data measurements. The intervention group for this study produced a smaller number of responses than anticipated, and as a result, the data cannot reliably be said to accurately reflect the classes as a whole. Additionally, correlation typically requires a higher number of participants than are included in this study. Therefore, the study would have been better served with either a larger participant pool or a more focused variable target. This study did provide a nice overview of the interactions between instructors' and learners' perceptions of the variables and their motivational behavior, so it is possible that future research could begin to focus on specific variables with larger participant numbers to gather more information on their relationships.

Another issue was the lack of control survey responses from the learners. When the study was designed, particular attention was paid to keeping the learners' identities private as to prevent their responses from revealing their identity to the faculty, especially given the faculty would be seeing select data prior to grading the class. Therefore, student responses were entirely anonymous, meaning researchers could not be sure if the same students responded each time, or compare their pre- and post-tests directly by individual. While efforts were made in this study to encourage only the learners who responded to the pre-test to also contribute to the post-test, it was realized after data collection that a more controlled survey format that would track the learner identity through the post-test would better serve the study. Learner identity could still be

protected, and researchers could be sure that learners who responded in the pre-tests were also responding in the post-test.

Pedagogical Implications

The results suggest that enough of a gap may exist between learner and instructor expectations in online classes for online instructors to build opportunities for connecting and negotiating expectations with their learners during online courses, throughout a semester and certainly during the initial few weeks. Instructors could employ similar surveys to check in with their learners and establish shared beliefs for the class. They could isolate variables that resonate strongly with their learners, or variables that the instructors themselves are most concerned about and adjust the survey questions to track the class perception of that variable during the semester. By sharing this information with the students, it could not only help the faculty to be aware of and accountable for their beliefs but would help the learners visualize and reflect on what factors are important to them in their online experience and if that importance translates to actual motivation for them in the end.

Future Research

Areas for future research could focus on workload as a new variable and the recruitment could be geared towards those who are new to the field or to online teaching. Workload was a very prominent comment in both this study and the pilot study. It would be interesting to examine both the perception of online workload and the actual measurable workload as viewed by the instructors and learners in a future study. Instructor A used Vista Higher Learning (VHL), which served as a digital platform for language learning, had the added benefit of providing usage data on how long students spend working on assignments and how often they login. The program also allows instructors to set a predicted time commitment for each assignment. Making

use of program functions, such as this, would allow researchers to compare the expected workload from the professor against the learners' perception. It would also allow researchers to track the actual amount of time learners spend on a task. As the current study indicates that there is a relationship between student perceptions and their motivation, and the fact that the learners' themselves pointed to workload as an unexplored variable, it would be interesting to pursue it in future research.

Another potential future research option would be to pursue this study with new online teachers to see if the intervention has a greater influence or benefit for teachers just starting to develop their online classroom management. Such studies would effectively retest research questions three and four with new instructors to see if it helps them develop their online classroom approaches and to determine if learners respond positively to these changes. It could be a useful tool for new instructors to make informed decisions for their online classroom based on the survey responses of their learners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study did support the existence of perception gaps between instructors and learners in online L2 classes. There was also evidence that some variables (e.g. interaction and autonomy) had a stronger correlation with learner class motivation than others. However, the study was not able to establish a relationship between instructor awareness of learner beliefs and change in learner motivation. This may be in part due to the established expertise of the participating instructors and in part due to the limited sample size. The study does support the need for further research into how perceptions of online L2 learning intersects with or influences actions and motivation in online classrooms, workload perception being one example.

Relationships between variables such as autonomy and interaction online provided evidence that deserves further exploration. Next steps for research can explore how to negotiate and improve shared perceptions and experiences of these variables between instructors and learners successfully. Online language instruction plays a larger role in language learning now and for the foreseeable future. It is to the learners' and instructors' benefits that we develop structured ways for them to share and adjust their expectations of these classrooms.

Appendices

Appendix A

Instrument

Online L2 Learner Expectation & Motivation Survey

Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Motivation General (*4 extrinsic; 4 intrinsic)*

In this survey, [language] = the language you are currently studying for this class. i.g. Japanese, Spanish, French*..)*

1. Studying [language] is important because I will need it for my career.
2. I believe it is very important for people to learn additional languages beyond their native.
3. I want to learn [language] so I can travel easily.
4. I enjoy learning [language].
5. Studying [language] is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with international people.
6. Studying [language] is important because I will need it for my degree.
7. Learning [language] makes me feel successful.
8. I want to learn [language] because I like studying foreign languages.

Motivation Class-Specific

1. What I am learning in this class will be useful for my career.
2. What I am learning in this class will help me to learn additional languages beyond my native.
3. What I am learning in this class will allow me to travel to [language]-speaking countries more easily.
4. What I am learning in this class makes me enjoy learning [language].
5. What I am learning in this class will allow me to meet and converse with international people.
6. What I am learning in this class will contribute to my degree.
7. What I am learning in this class makes me feel successful.
8. What I am learning in this class makes me like studying foreign languages.

Learner Autonomy

1. I believe the course is organized in such a way that I can successfully navigate course materials myself.
2. I feel confident that my peers and I can independently schedule and complete recordings or assignments outside of this class.
3. I am aware of how I learn best in this class and use that knowledge when studying.
4. I set short-term personal goals for this class and generally achieve them for this class

5. I communicate with my teachers and peers during the semester, to find out how I am doing with my online learning for this class?

Feedback

1. The feedback format (written, verbal, video meeting) is helpful to me.
2. I use my teacher's feedback to improve assignments or future projects.
3. The feedback I have received helps me understand what my teacher expects from assignments and class.
4. I receive feedback in a timely manner from the teacher (taking pandemic delays into account).
5. I receive sufficient feedback for this course and its assignments.

Interaction

1. The discussions or online interactions help me clarify my understanding (via chat, discussion board, video) in this class.
2. If I have a question, I can satisfactorily communicate with my teacher (by chat, email, or video) for this class.
3. I feel that I can adequately reach my peers if I have a question or just want to talk in this class.
4. I am satisfied with the degree to which I can get to know my teacher and classmates well and feel safe expressing my opinions using this course's online tools in this class.
5. I feel adequately trained to best use tools like chat, discussion boards, and video, to interact and learn successfully in this class.

Classroom Management

1. The synchronous meeting time for this class is organized and used effectively.
2. The class workload is equal or comparable to what I would expect in a face-to-face course.
3. It is clear to me what is expected for assignments and how I can improve.
4. The online discussion & activity management in this class are effective & organized.
5. I usually have a clear understanding of the purpose of each week's class & assignments.

Open Ended Questions:

1. What element of this class has motivated you the most?
2. What element has motivated you the least in this online class?
3. <*Instructor only*> Do you feel that this class has a shared understanding of expectations and outcomes? If so, what do you think made that possible? If not, what if anything, do you think would help create a shared perspective?
4. <*Instructor only*> Please provide any feedback you have regarding the formatting of this survey. Could anything be clearer?

Appendix B

Pilot Study Methods & Results

This study will be looking at language learning motivation in online L2 languages courses and investigating the extent to which student perceptions of the course features found in previous research, to influence student success in the online learning environments(i.e. self-efficacy, feedback format, course design, interaction and instructor role). The study will be a mixed-method, quasi-experimental design intended to investigate possible relationships between these variables and learner motivation to succeed in their L2 class, relationship between learner and instructor perceptions, and to capture how participants talk about motivation in relation to online language learning.

Participants

Participants in this study will be 12-50 university language students at GVSU during the winter semester of 2021, with at least one semester of language classes already complete. Reasoning for selecting mid-level students is based on Abrar-Ul-Hassan's study (year), which suggested the motivation of students in their final semesters of language study may be disproportionately influenced by the amount of time already invested in the program. Similarly, it is possible that entry-level learners may display higher levels of anxiety which may inflate motivational changes regardless of the study's variables. Focusing on students at the midway point in their language study would eliminate the newness of the experience as a contributing factor and more clearly display the learners' specific feelings towards the class. Also, this will be students' second semester with online pandemic courses so they will be familiar with protocol and stresses associated with the current situation.

Ideally, this study would include more than one class to account for different teaching styles and student personalities to result in more generalizable expectations and motivation. For this initial pilot, two small (8 learners) classes taught by the same instructor were used to test the instrument and obtain feedback on the study procedures. Some language classes at GVSU are closer to 12 students so the availability of participating classes will determine the sample size but a larger sample will be expected for post-pilot surveys.. The target language would not necessarily need to be controlled. Age and gender will be recorded for demographic and validity purposes but will not be used in the study's analysis. The instructors will participate along with the students to mark their beliefs and expectations during the study. Per Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019), instructor understanding, and perception of student autonomy can be inconsistent. Collecting corresponding data from the instructors may help to inform our understanding of the relationship between the instructor's beliefs and the learners' for each of the main variables.

Instruments

The instruments will be a combination of Likert scale survey questions and 2-3 open-ended clarifying questions. The survey will be completed mid-way through the winter semester. Hung et al. 's (2011) and Shih's (2010) surveys will serve as the base model for this study's survey. The survey will measure four independent variables and one dependent: motivation(dependent), online interaction, feedback satisfaction, classroom management, and learner autonomy. Shih modified a 5-point Likert scale where learners could rank their satisfaction with each of the study's variables. Their survey was validated by two professors who were not associated with the study for content validity.

As the dependent variable, motivation is represented with a second set of questions to both ensure content validity and to acknowledge the diverse forms motivation can influence

learners (Abrar-Ul-Hassan, 2014). I designed the questions with an even representation of extrinsic or intrinsic motivation in the instrument. To obtain a realistic picture of the learner's motivation at the start and conclusion of the study, I have provided a mix of motivation-focused questions developed using previous motivation studies as their foundation (Hung et al.., 2011; Shih, 2010). The independent variables were equally represented to a lesser extent to give a balanced reporting of their influence on motivation (see Table 1). This ratio was used to ensure that relationships between the dependent variable and independent variable would be clearly and accurately reflected by the participants' responses. The questions follow a similar format, asking the participant to rate their agreement with a given satisfaction/belief statement. For example, *I am satisfied with the degree to which I can get to know my teacher and classmates well using this course's online tools,* would be one measure of interaction fulfillment. Please reference the Appendix for the complete survey instrument.

Table 1. Variable Representation in Survey

General Motivation	Class-Specific Motivation	Learner Autonomy	Feedback	Interaction	Classroom Management	Open Response
8	8	5	5	5	5	2

The students will complete the survey to capture their perceptions and motivation for the class at that stage in the course. The instructor will complete a similar survey but be asked to answer based on their current understanding of the learner's needs and expectations (or from their understanding of the learners' perspective). This will allow the teacher's perspective on each variable to be directly compared with the learners' perspectives.

Procedures

This survey will be completed online via an emailed link, allowing for anonymity and security. Participants will receive an email at the time of the survey start as well as reminder emails. The emails will provide the instructions for the survey but will also highlight assurances that responses will be anonymous and randomized to allow participants to proceed without fear of academic influence. IRB approval will be necessary given the student participants, but likely approval will be granted given participant information and emails will not be associated with the survey and the links will be anonymous.

The instructor will not be privy to the individual results nor will they see any data or trends until after the class and study's completion to avoid influencing grades or classroom methods. However, I will provide the instructors with survey materials prior to the live survey and ask for them to provide feedback as to its validity and relevance for their class. I will also rely on them to promote the survey within the class to optimize participation, possibly through extra credit incentives, but I will leave that decision to the faculty. Willing faculty will be recruited via a probing email explaining the purpose of this study is to determine if there is a gap between student and instructor expectations online and not to measure the instructor's effectiveness. My hope is also that this will prevent the faculty from perceiving the survey as an attack upon their teaching or class design.

The survey timing will be chosen carefully to avoid overwhelming the students or receiving low response completion by avoiding finals and considering additional academic workload. It will likely take place near the last month of class to avoid unrelated end-of-semester anxiety from influencing the results. As motivation can fluctuate especially in the final weeks, this test will be scheduled during regular class sessions before the focus shifts to exams to capture the long-term perceptions in as close to a natural state as possible. The instructor will be

given a few additional open-ended questions, compared to the student survey, to ask if they perceive any gaps in understanding between what their learners expect from the class and what they as the instructor expect. As they will be more actively involved in the survey, their insight and any awareness of mismatched expectations would be relevant.

Data Analysis

The data from a full-scale study will eventually be analyzed at a few different levels. First, I will explore the relationship between the 4 independent variables (feedback, interaction, classroom management, learner autonomy) to the single dependent variable (motivation). This would require at least two periods of surveying to compare changes in motivation and the independent variables. Additionally, I would like to compare the instructor's ratings to the mean students' ratings to determine the extent to which there is a shared perception on some variables or if there are gaps in expectations. For the smaller pilot study, my focus will be testing the validity of the instrument, comparing instructor and learner responses, and improving the survey language.

For the quantitative half of the study (Likert scale), I will be using multiple regression to examine the relationships between these multiple variables and testing periods but for the pilot I will only be analyzing basic correlation. Both Shih (2010) and Hung et al. (2014) used this method, and it is the most common approach I have seen used in motivational studies. Owing to the number of variables and relationships, this will be an effective approach to predicting the potential effect on motivation. Conversely, the quantitative study will be more straight-forward for coding. The quantitative element will likely need to be coded per mention of variables as well as specific mention of the instructor's actions or changes perceived by the participants. Again, in

the smaller pilot study, I will largely be focusing on testing the instrument and the questions rather than coding such limited data.

Potential issues to be aware of will be the instructor's role and directions provided to instructors for discussing the surveys with learners. I want to avoid them altering their classes in response to the survey, so they will not be privy to the results until after completion. I will also emphasize that the study is not targeting teachers or identifying them as a cause for demotivation. Rather, I will focus on the relationship between what the teacher expects and what the students expect and perceive to be satisfactory. This will avoid the instructor feeling scrutinized and will focus on the online class and its interactions instead.

An obvious potential challenge will be getting all the responses completed within the remainder of the semester. As this is an online course, the students will have time and space to consider their responses without observation, which is a positive, but they also will have no set schedule for completing the survey compared to an in-class, face-to-face study where completion can be confirmed in the moment. The reminders are partially meant to address this but also clear, advanced, shared deadlines for both tests will be boldly highlighted in the emails and reminders will be given by the instructor. This will be one of the few occasions where the instructor will be encouraged to remind the students of the study during the class. However, if I can use Qualtrics to format the survey, then auto-reminders will be easy to set up.

Pilot Results

I was relieved to find that the instrument displayed no major obstacles to data collection and provided comparable data. A total of 10 learners and 1 instructor responded which was a little over half the participants approached which indicates that the survey was an appropriate

length and design. I was able to see potential relationships between instructor and learner perceptions as well as begin to see which variables had the highest reporting among the participants. The variables that saw the largest difference between instructor and learners was general motivation and autonomy with the instructor reporting lower levels than the learners (see figure 1 & 2). The numbers for feedback and class design saw the closest numbers to a shared perspective between the two groups. For the qualitative questions, every learner respondent highlighted workload as the least motivating factor of the class. The instructor indicated a similar belief but attributed it more to a need for firmer deadlines. This has encouraged me to investigate online workloads as a potential contributing factor to motivation. I included a related question in the class design variable but given the learner responses and the instructor's partial acknowledgement, I think a deeper look and possibly more weighted questions are warranted in the future. A few relevant responses for the most motivating factor were the ease of accessing an online class without travel, the social interactions with partners, and the design used by the professor to encourage virtual speaking practice. For the pilot results, I averaged the learner responses for each variable and compared the value to the instructor's response for the same variable. For a larger study in the future with more robust data, it is my intention to use multiple-regression or ANOVA to determine if a relationship between motivation and the independent variables exists over time via multiple surveys during the same semester.

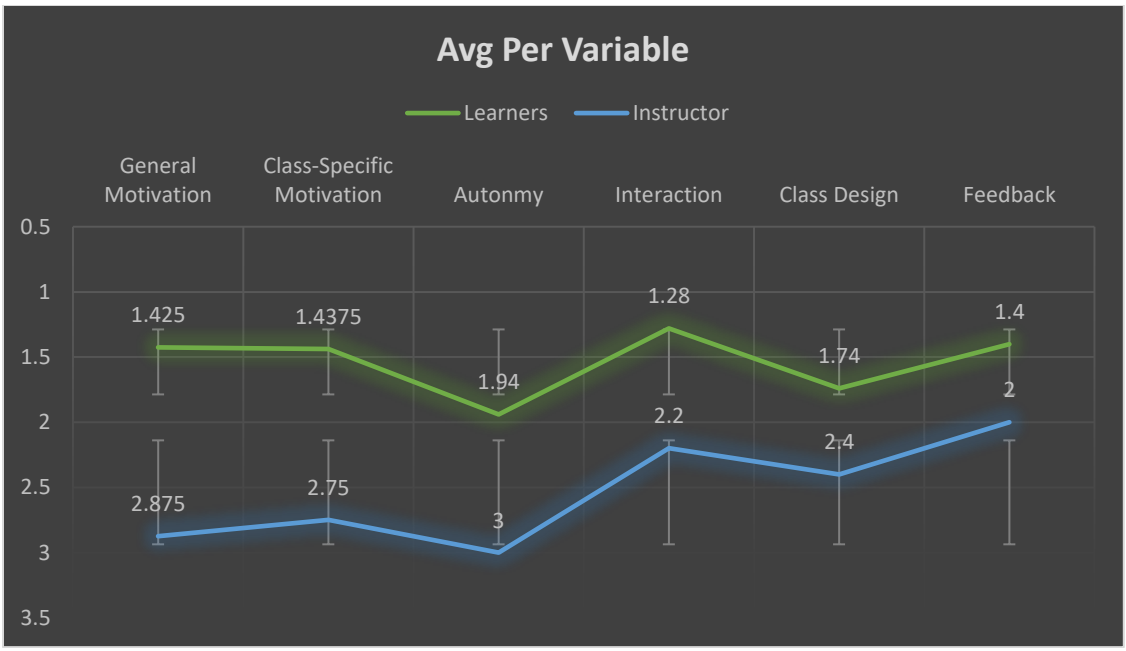


Figure 1 : Learner & Instructor Averages Per Variable

Table 2. Learner & Instructor Averages Per Variable

	General Motivation	Class-Specific Motivation	Autonomy	Interaction	Class Design	Feedback
Learners	1.425	1.4375	1.94	1.28	1.74	1.4
Instructor	2.875	2.75	3	2.2	2.4	2
difference	1.5	1.3	1.06	0.92	0.66	0.6

Limitations & Considerations

No large-scale issues regarding reliability or usability presented during the pilot of the instrument. The response rate was high, so the length and format did not seem to be a barrier to

participants. The faculty provided no feedback regarding the improvement of the survey. A few questions did fail to capture the intended data and will be revised as a result. Question 49, which was intended to capture specific examples related to one of the independent variables, saw a high number of participants responding with their personal intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Therefore, the wording should be changed from "what has motivated you the most" to something more focused such as, "what elements of this class" or "what actions by your instructor have motivated you the most".

A few points to keep in mind regarding this pilot, the size and instructor sample was small. Therefore, I was not able to confidently determine patterns from the results or respond to some of the broader research questions. Another consideration is the only instructor participant has a very solid rapport with their learners and had well developed online activities prior to the pandemic. They also instruct courses that are usually not the students' primary major but is a supplemental language, which may explain the instructor's lower motivation perception when it came to degree-related motivation vs. their students' actual perceptions. Based on the learners' qualitative responses, they could share concerns and feedback about the class with the professor and felt confident that feedback would be implemented. Therefore, their feelings of motivation and support for the class design may have been inflated compared to the average class experience. This all accumulated in what was likely a skewed response pool both from learners who were highly positive about their class and instructor and an instructor that was highly critical/overly realistic about learners' motivations.

My intention moving forward remains to conduct this study with a larger participant pool and more varied instructor sample. This would allow me to average out teaching styles and instructor-learner relationships as there should be a range that will influence results. Given that

many classes may be returning to an in-person design, I also will want to get a larger sample to account for classes that use online learning to different degrees i.e. hybrid, some online assignments, and fully online. I also still intend to expand the motivation testing to at least a 3-stage survey during a given semester. I am beginning to consider measuring motivation via frequent brief check-ins rather than only the motivation questions included in the larger survey. For example, learners could be sent a pop-up link reminder via text each week to check in on their motivation. They could quickly record their current motivation using a smiley face or starred system. Numbers could be assigned to these images and by the end of the semester, I would have 16 weeks of motivation ups and downs, which would allow me to correlate these changes to exams, periods in the semester, or changes made by the instructor. I could then use this more complete picture of the motivational changes along with the larger survey taken at the start, middle, and end of the semester to best understand what variable may share a relationship. I would also be interested to look further into workload and online learning in future surveys since this study saw such a dominant response to that aspect. I am hopeful that more research will be available after the pandemic to help determine if workload changes from in-person to online are a legitimate factor to be studied.

If a relationship between a given variable and motivation is found in a large-scale study, then I would like to use this information to develop online class design improvements and awareness. Depending on the findings, I would like to share the results publicly with instructors to help facilitate a more positive learning experience for online study. For example, if gaps in learner and instructor understanding is shown to be a strong factor, I would recommend future class development that included a discussion of shared expectations at the start of the semester to establish common understanding and goals. Or I might recommend the faculty do a mid-term

survey of their own to check for class direction and motivation. There may be factors that will be similarly beneficial to all online classes or I may find that some classes have different online needs, and my study will help me determine that and make recommendations. The end goal is making active improvements to online language learning by developing a better understanding of online factors' interactions with motivation.

Appendix C

Faculty Interview Questions

1. What did you notice about these specific online classes?
2. Have you changed anything about the class since the start of the semester?
3. Did you make any changes as a result of the first survey results?
4. Have the students provided any feedback outside of the study?
5. Do you feel the students' expectations are similar to your expectations? How do you develop shared expectations?

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