

Student Focus Groups on Foreign Language Learning
Demographic Information

n=19

Ages: 18 (16%), 19 (32%), 20 (26%), 21 (5%), 22 (21%)

Race/Ethnicity: White (95%), Black (5%)

Registered with Disability Services: Yes (42%), No (58%)

Current LU academic standing: Freshman (36%), Sophomore (21%), Junior (16%), Senior(36%)

Major:

Liberal Studies (2)- one changing to Physical Education and Health

Liberal Studies-SPED

Business

Communications

Business marketing

Biology

German

Communication studies (2)

Political Science

Criminal Justice (2)

Music

Chemistry and Biology

Economics

Anthropology

Psychology

History-Secondary Education

In high school:

What language did you study? French (37%), Spanish (58%), German (5%)

How many years did you take? ½ (5%), 2 (26%), 3 (42%), 4 (16%), 6 (11%)

Level of challenge:

Not hard at all (16%), Somewhat challenging (53%), Challenging (32%)

Extremely hard (0)

At Longwood:

What language did you study? (more than 1 response)

German (11%), French (37%), Spanish (58%)

Why did you select that particular language? (more than 1 response)

Usefulness (42%), Quality of Instructor (5%), Friends (5%) Background (42%),

Other (11%), No Response (5%),

Comments: Quality of instructor (rate my professor) and background (past experience)

Because it was different from Spanish!

My sister took it

Number of semesters of language taken: 1 (26%), 2 (47%), 3 (21%), 7 (5%)

Student Focus Groups

Results, Observations

February 2008

Sally Scott

Wade Edwards

What's unique for FL

Group 1

(Students w/disabilities)

Group 1 + 2

Amount of interaction

Engagement, talking

FL is a new subject in h.s.

Requires specific articulation

Group 2

(No disabilities)

Gets easier over time

Materials: prereading,
on-line workbooks

Best FL Course

Group 1

Group 1 + 2

Multisensory

Active (food, reading, interviewing,
making commercial, journals)

Humor

Group 2

Culture/literature

Multimedia

(films, YouTube, music videos)

Importance of

Instructor qualities

(work with individual)

(encouraging)

(allowed small errors)

(knew what to expect in the class)
student confidence)

105: intensive

experience

group projects, if (organized)
matched with

someone at same skill (gave the
level)

Oral tests

Individual testing for spoken component
write question before responding
tape multiple times

Oral tests

Oral exams with Opportunity to
partners, but with Listening to
individual grades

Study abroad- good way to complete 201

Barriers

On-line workbook

Study Abroad anxiety

of nightly workbook pages in
105

Study abroad—expanded

Because more students had taken

difficulty with pace of language abroad,

immersion experience- felt ostracized by locals,

expectations for being autonomous in a different culture

didn't feel language skill was sufficient to navigate independently

Oral pronunciation, when pronunciation
English

Oral exams: focus on is difficult in
memory, difficult

with students who

Homework is assigned but not reviewed in class

“don't care”

Advice to new teachers

Be encouraging and supportive
of individual strengths

Rethink Quia

-expensive

- difficult to log onto

-no credit for effort

-not student friendly

flashcards

Study guides

Advice about

Powerpoints

Repetition

Grading suggestions (don't get behind on grading, be consistent, don't make competitive)

Pacing (recycle and review; don't rush)

Light atmosphere

Know the audience