Introduction
- What factors may affect how individuals approach learning a new language?
  - Motivation
  - Reason for studying the language
  - Personality
  - Previous language experience
  - Use of language learning strategies
  - Types of strategies
    - Cognitive
    - Metacognitive
    - Social/socioaffective

Current Study
- The present study sought to gather normative data on the motivations, attitudes, and strategy use of students learning new languages.
- Do monolinguals differ from multilinguals in their approaches to learning new languages and their use of language learning strategies?
- Do the motivating factors for students relate to the strategies in which they choose to engage?
- What themes emerge from open-ended questions about what makes them more or less successful in their second language?

Method
- Participants
  - 200 undergraduate students at the University at Albany (69 male, 129 female, & 2 other; aged 18-30 years)
  - Previous language experience ranged from very little language experience to fluent multilinguals (104 monolinguals, 96 multilinguals)
  - Languages: English, Spanish, French, Italian, Chinese, Arabic, German, Russian, and others

Materials
- Participants completed a battery of questionnaires including:
  - Demographic Questionnaire
  - Language History Questionnaire (LHQ)
  - Graham's Self-Evaluation Questionnaire
  - Strategy Inventory for Second Language Learning (SILL)
  - Motivation for Second Language Learning

Results
- Graham's Self-Evaluation Questionnaire:
  - When I do well in my second language, it's usually because of...
    - [Bar graph showing frequency of responses]
  - When I don't do well in my second language, it's usually because of...
    - [Bar graph showing frequency of responses]

- Why did you choose to study your second language?
  - [Bar graph showing frequency of responses]

- If I get a good grade for my current second language class, it'll probably be because...
  - [Bar graph showing frequency of responses]

Motivation for Second Language Learning:
- Key differences between Monolinguals and Multilinguals:
  - Multilinguals show more positive attitudes towards their second language (L2), t(196) = 5.02, p < .01
    - Example: "I find learning a second language interesting."
  - Multilinguals view their L2 as more useful, t(196) = 6.04, p < .01
    - Example: "Being able to speak my second language will help me in my future career."
  - Multilinguals also view an L2 as important, t(196) = 4.48, p < .01
    - Example: "People around me think it is important that I learn a second language."

Results (cont.)
- Strategy Inventory for Second Language Learning (SILL):
  - When examining types of strategies used, multilinguals were significantly more likely than monolinguals to report using:
    - Cognitive Strategies, t(197) = 3.15, p < .05
      - Example: "I find the meaning of a word in my second language by dividing it into parts that I understand."
    - Metacognitive Strategies, t(197) = 2.34, p < .05
      - Example: "I preview lessons in my second language to get a general idea of what it is about, how it is organized, and how it relates to what I already know."
  - Items related specifically to language use were more likely to be endorsed by multilinguals than monolinguals.
    - Example: "I read in my second language for pleasure."

Correlations between Motivations and SILL:
- Positive correlations were observed between each of the Motivation subscales (Positive Attitudes, Usefulness, Importance) and each of the SILL subscales (Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, Social).

Discussion
- Participants who described themselves as currently multilingual tend to have more positive views about studying second languages.
- Participants report moderately high strategy use overall, and this was predicted by higher motivation.
- Multilinguals use cognitive and metacognitive strategies more often than monolinguals.
- Plonsky (2011) suggested several populations that are currently understudied, including advanced learners (a population of interest in our ongoing work in this area).

View the Cognition and Language Laboratory Website!

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