Student Motivation Profiles: Ukrainian Studies at the Postsecondary Level in Canada

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Abstract: The study investigates postsecondary student motivation and demotivation for studying Ukrainian language, culture, folklore, literature, linguistics, and history. Four groups of students from one Canadian postsecondary institution are studied: (i) students taking Ukrainian language courses; (ii) those in Ukrainian content courses; (iii) students who took a language course at the postsecondary level in the past but did not continue; and (iv) students active in the Ukrainian community who have never taken any Ukrainian studies courses at the postsecondary level but are potentially interested in Ukrainian studies.

The analysis is grounded in Dörnyei's motivational framework, which categorizes L2 motivation into three levels: the language level (in this study, 'subject area'), the learner level, and the learning situation level ("Motivation"). The subject area level deals with reasons to learn certain subjects: instrumental and integrative motivation. The learner level focuses on learners' personality traits and cognition. The learning situation level relates to learning environment. Dörnyei's framework is employed to develop a motivational questionnaire, used as an instrument. The results are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data are elicited through participant responses to close-ended questions, showing the distribution and significance of various motivational factors in different groups of students under study. The qualitative analysis is based on participant responses to open-ended questions, allowing us to analyze both responses and perspectives on how their motivation relates to learning experience and the learning process overall. The combination of the two methods of analysis contributes to a multi-faceted understanding of motivational factors and yields pedagogical implications. The article concludes with a list of recommendations that stem from these analyses.

Keywords: Ukrainian studies, postsecondary students, student motivation, student demotivation, motivational framework, Ukrainian language.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the present article we ask the question: Who is today's student of Ukrainian studies at the postsecondary level? Specifically, we seek to learn about our current and prospective students through the prism of motivational framework. The focus is on analyzing postsecondary student motivation and de-motivation for studying Ukrainian subjects: language,

culture, folklore, literature, linguistics, and history. Our attention is on motivation because we see it as the driving mechanism for action, as the core of learning, and ultimately as the essence of success. Motivation is an "academic enabler" (Linnernbrink and Pintrich 314) that is "often seen as the key learner variable because without it, nothing much happens" (Cohen and Dörnyei 172).

The scholarly field on postsecondary student motivation and learning is quite rich and diverse, with numerous models, perspectives, and approaches. Principally, it has been educators and psychologists who have long studied the role of motivation in the following areas: student learning (Grahan and Weiner); student achievement (Rahman et al.) and academic success (Linnenbrink and Pintrich); student learning and performance based on their ability to sustain and increase willingness to engage in a learning process (Wolters); understanding relationships between motivational factors and effective instructional design (Tallent-Runnels et al.); studying students' goals for learning in relation to their learning preferences (Ames); analyzing student self-efficacy in learning (Bandura) and their strategies for learning (Pintrich et al.); and studying student beliefs and learning strategies that influence their choice of learning environment, be it online, hybrid, or traditional (Clayton), among other critical topics.

With respect to motivation in an L2 or foreign language classroom, Gardner and Lambert have been credited for pioneering a social psychological framework that inspired many studies on L2/foreign language motivation ("Motivational Variables," *Attitudes and Motivation*). They introduced two core concepts that have been applied in L2 motivation research: integrativeness and instrumentality. These two concepts refer to distinct reasons for learning an L2. *Integrative motivation* relates to the favourable disposition or attitude of a learner toward a particular cultural group or community that speaks the language. An *instrumental motivation* stems from the pragmatic benefits of learning an L2 for the purpose of professional development, career betterment, and, ultimately, higher earnings (Gardner and Lambert, "Motivational variables," *Attitudes and Motivation*). As noted by Dörnyei, Gardner, and Lambert, the introduction of a set of standardized assessment techniques and instruments brought L2 motivation research to maturity ("Motivation," 273). Another influential framework in L2 cognitively oriented motivational research was developed by Noels, the core of which is conceptualization of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. In this model, *intrinsic motivation* relates to pleasure and satisfaction tied to learning an L2 (Noels 45), and *extrinsic motivation* stems from a desire to achieve certain goals which go beyond the learning of an L2 (Noels 46). An influential framework by Dörnyei ("Motivation"), as well as other models of the 1990s, came as a response to Gardner and Lambert

("Motivational Variables," *Attitudes and Motivation*). This framework is grounded in an educational perspective and conceptualizes a number of L2 motivational components in a multi-level L2 motivational construct. In his construct, Dörnyei establishes three levels of L2 motivation: the *language* level, the *learner* level, and the *learning situation* level, which "reflect the three basic constituents of the L2 learning process: the L2, the L2 learner, and the L2 learning environment" ("Motivation" 279; see more details of this framework below).

Overall, a number of applied linguistics studies on motivational factors in an L2 or foreign language classroom have been carried out, many using the theoretical models mentioned above. Several studies underscore motivation as one of the most crucial and influential variables influencing an individual learner in second or foreign language learning (Gardner; Dörnyei, "Motivation," *Attitudes, Psychology*; Dörnyei and Ushioda; Ushioda, *Motivation and Language*, *Person-in-Context*). A number of strategies to motivate students in an L2 classroom have been identified (Dörnyei, *Teaching*), and factors that demotivate L2 students have also been discussed (Dörnyei, *Teaching*; Kikuchi; Tsang). Other issues that have been studied include learners' goals and their primary motivation for studying a foreign language in relation to curricular designs (Rifkin), relevance of motivation to L2 proficiency development (Cho), changes in student motivational patterns based on levels of instruction (Kondo-Brown), the influence of age on motivation of L2 learners (Ghenghesh), and gender differences (Kissau), as well as studying motivation in the context of the self and one's identity, how language instructors should connect the motivation, interests, and identities of students (Ushioda, "Language Learning"), and the autonomy perspective in motivating the person instead of the learner (Ushioda, *Motivating Learners*), among other research angles.

In the field of Slavic studies, we are aware of only a few research works that study motivation in an L2 classroom at the postsecondary level, and these deal with the learners of Russian only. Motivation was one of the questions in a study by Brecht and others, which focused on Russian language studies in the United States. According to them, beginner students of Russian identified three main reasons for taking the language: "(1) to satisfy curiosity and for challenge, because Russian is fun and different; (2) the general interest in languages; and (3) the USSR's importance in the world" (Brecht et. al., qtd. in Romanov 147). A later study by Romanov specifically focused on student motivation for studying Russian. In his study, Romanov examined patterns in Russian language learners' motivation based on student surveys, and questioned whether students' motivation is tied to their perception of various learning activities with which they are presented in a Russian language classroom. Romanov also analyzed students' ranking

of classroom and extracurricular activities. He demonstrated that there is a correlation between student motivation to study Russian and their perceptions of learning activities, and concluded with a call for future studies on how student experiences in a Russian classroom have an impact on their motivational patterns (Romanov 158). Kagan and Dillon conducted a survey of heritage speakers of Russian in the US, and with respect to motivational factors reported that integrative motivation prevails for Russian heritage learners (Kagan and Dillon). Geisherik studied issues of motivation of heritage and non-heritage learners of Russian and showed that heritage learners enroll in Russian language classes predominantly for integrative motivational reasons, while non-heritage learners seek instrumental application of language learning. Interestingly, the comparison of heritage and non-heritage learners also revealed that heritage learners display a stronger motivation overall for studying the language (Geisherik).

Notably, the majority of L2 motivational studies are quantitative (Engin; Gardner and MacIntyre; Noels et al.). These studies measure motivational factors, relating motivational variables in a systematic way, and provide statistical information about variables and factors. But such results show differences in degree only and speak very little about the qualitative factors.

The present study is designed to address motivational factors of students or potential students of Ukrainian studies from both the quantitative and qualitative perspectives, in order to compare the results from two different points of view. The quantitative analysis will show the distribution and significance of various motivational factors of different groups of students studied, while qualitative data will allow us to analyze the students' voices and their perspectives on how their motivation relates to learning experience and the learning process overall. The two methods of analysis will contribute to a multi-faceted understanding of motivational factors and yields pedagogical implications.

The objectives of this study are the following: (i) investigate four different groups of students, including those not enrolled in Ukrainian studies; (ii) quantitatively measure the motivational factors for the four groups of students; (iii) study the students' responses from all four groups qualitatively and establish motivational factors based on the actual data itself; and (iv) discuss the results of both quantitative and qualitative analyses and demonstrate motivational profiles of current or potential Ukrainian studies students at three levels of analysis: the subject area level ("language-specific" in Dörnyei's framework; "Motivation"), the learner level, and the learning situation level.

To our knowledge, no other study has explored these avenues, especially for postsecondary levels of Ukrainian studies. In addition, we are investigating not only students enrolled in Ukrainian studies but also those

who decided to discontinue such studies and those who have never taken any Ukrainian studies courses before, thus reaching out for potential students. Overall, given the importance of motivation in the learning process, the present study offers an initial look at factors that motivate or demotivate university students to enroll in Ukrainian studies, what influences the retention or loss of students in the program, and which aspects may attract students to Ukrainian studies. The results will aid us in understanding the dynamics we are currently witnessing, with enrollments in Ukrainian studies courses on the decline in recent years. Because we study students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their learning experience, analyzing also their wishes for successful learning, the outcomes will aid in the design or redesign of curricula to meet the learners' needs, making the programs more attractive and appealing to existing and prospective students. With respect to the field of Slavic languages, and Ukrainian in particular, the study will enable us to understand our students and see the learning experience from their perspective. The study will also contribute to the growing body of research on learner motivation, not only in the language classroom but also beyond.

2.0. METHODOLOGY

2.1 TERMINOLOGY

In our study, we use the term *motivation* to mean a stimulating force driven by a series of factors that contribute to students' interest, desire, willingness, and ambition to engage with a particular subject in the learning process. Similarly, the term *demotivation* means a force driven by a series of factors that obstruct students' interest, desire, willingness, and ambition to engage with a particular subject in the learning process. Also, the terms *motivator* and *demotivator* refer to any factors that contribute to motivation or demotivation.

2.2 PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study are 60 students, 42 female and 18 male, from a Canadian postsecondary institution. Four groups of students are studied: (i) students taking Ukrainian language courses (Group 1: language enrolled, 38 participants); (ii) those in Ukrainian content courses (Group 2: content enrolled, 12 participants); (iii) students who took a language course at the postsecondary level in the past but did not continue (Group 3: previously

language enrolled, 5 participants); and (iv) students active in the Ukrainian community who have never taken any Ukrainian studies courses at the postsecondary level but are potentially interested in Ukrainian studies (Group 4: never enrolled, 5 participants).

Out of all the participants, 93% are students of Ukrainian descent. Most respondents (33%) are in various Humanities programs, 23% are in Sciences, and 20% have not yet defined their major. The remaining respondents are enrolled in studies at the Faculty of Education (13%), in Medical School (7%), and in the School of Business (3%) (see Appendix A). All necessary ethics approvals have been obtained from the relevant agency, and guidelines, including the informed consent process, have been strictly followed.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to investigate the research objectives initially posed and to establish an instrument for data collection and analysis, Dörnyei's L2 motivational framework is utilized as the main theoretical foundation of the study. As noted above, in his original motivational L2 framework[1] Dörnyei ("Motivation") conceptualizes motivation at three levels: (i) the language level; (ii) the learner level; and (iii) the learning situation level. In this study, we replace the term "language level" with "subject area level," since we use this framework to investigate motivational patterns of students in content courses as well.

The *subject area level* deals with the orientations or reasons to learn certain subjects, and consists of two motivational orientations: instrumental and integrative (concepts originally proposed by Gardner and Lambert; "Motivation Variables," *Attitudes and Motivation*). Instrumental motivation "consists of well-internalised extrinsic motives" (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 279) and stresses pragmatic gains for learners, such as getting a better job or higher salary, that is, acceleration on the socio-economic ladder. The

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[1] In his later research, Dörnyei (*Psychology*) proposed an L2 Motivational Self System, in which he focuses on an ideal L2 self as a mechanism for explaining complex and dynamic process of L2 learning. In this more recent framework Dörnyei studies learners of English, which leads to a departure from the concept of integrativeness in an L2 motivational system. In this newer framework that focuses on the global nature of English as an L2 in today's globalized world, the identification with L2 community is not relevant.

integrative motivation relates to learners' positive attitude toward the L2 community and their desire to interact with members of that community (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 274). This integrative motivational system "is centred around the individual's L2-related affective predispositions, including social, cultural, and ethnolinguistic components, as well as a general interest in foreignness and foreign languages" (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 279).

The *learner level* involves "a complex of affects and cognitions that form fairly stable personality traits" (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 279), with specific emphasis on the learners themselves. At this level, the motivational components focus on learners' need for achievement as well as their self-confidence, including "various aspects of language anxiety, perceived L2 competence, attributions about past experiences, and self-efficacy" (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 279).

The *learning situation level* deals with the learning environment and is further subdivided into course-specific, instructor-specific, and group-specific categories. The course-specific motivational components are: organizational tools such as the syllabus, the teaching resources and textbooks, and the teaching and learning methodology. The instructor-specific motivation concerns instructors' personalities, teaching styles, feedback and grading, and relationship with their students. The group-specific motivation relates to the learning group's structure, its cohesion and atmosphere in it, as well as the relationship among peers, that is, the overall dynamic among learners (Dörnyei, "Motivation" 277-80).

In the present study, we use Dörnyei's motivational framework ("Motivation," *Attitudes*) rather than other models, as it allows for an analysis of student motivation in a specific learning environment at all three levels of learning experience. This framework also enables us to investigate motivational and demotivational factors at a micro rather than macro (cognitive models) level. The micro-level analysis encompasses many aspects of the learning environment at the subject area, learner, and learning situation levels. Factors established using this model, both internal and external to the student, offer applied implications of the analysis, useful for understanding the motivational profiles of our students, ultimately enabling us to better assist them in learning.

2.4 INSTRUMENT

A two-part motivational questionnaire was designed. Part A of the questionnaire contains questions aimed at eliciting information about students' demographics: their age, gender, cultural background, and courses in Ukrainian studies, which a) they are currently taking, b) have taken before, or c) would like to take. Part B of the questionnaire is designed primarily using the motivational framework by Dörnyei ("Motivation," *Attitudes*), with certain elements adopted from Wong and Tsang.

 Part B of the survey contains two types of questions: open- and close-ended, which aim at eliciting data on students' motivational factors for enrolling, continuing in, or not taking Ukrainian studies courses. With respect to close-ended questions, students are asked to rank them on a 4-point Linkert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The close-ended questions are organized according to the three levels of the motivational framework. The focus of these questions is provided in Table 1:

Table 1. Close-ended Questions (adapted from Dörnyei, "Motivation"; n signifies number of questions with a particular focus)

Motivational Components	Motivational Level
	Set 1: Subject Area Level
Integrative	individual's identity (n=1) being part of the community (n=1) travel and living in the target culture (n=1) interest in the target culture (n=1) communication purposes with L2 community members (n=1)
Instrumental	degree requirements (n=2) academic success (n=2) career (n=1)
	Set 2: Learner Level
Learner-specific	satisfaction with the progress (n=1) need for achievement (n=1) self-efficacy (n=1) perceived L2 competence (n=1) anxiety (n=1)
	Set 3: Learning Situation Level
Group-specific	goal-orientedness (n=1) norm system (n=2) group cohesion (n=2)
Course-specific	satisfaction with the teaching materials (n=1) relevance of teaching materials (n=1)

	relevance of technology and facilities (n=1) satisfaction with the course load (n=1) satisfaction with the course organization (n=1)
Instructor-specific	instructor's personality (n=1) teaching style (n=1) instructions/explanation of course objectives (n=1) feedback (n=1) grading system (n=1)

As can be seen from Table 1, each set is comprised of five close-ended questions, adhering to the components of Dörnyei's motivational framework discussed above. Please also note that the close-ended questions in the questionnaires addressed to students who are currently taking courses (Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled) are worded affirmatively. These same close-ended questions administered to students not taking courses (Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled) are worded in the negative, and the data are analyzed accordingly.

At the end of each set of close-ended questions, students are prompted to answer open-ended questions on the factors that influence their decision to enroll in Ukrainian studies. Specifically, after completing the set of close-ended questions related to the subject area level, participants comment on why they would or would not like to take Ukrainian courses in the university. The open-ended questions pertaining to the learner level request information on the participants' perceptions of their progress in Ukrainian course(s) that they are taking, have taken earlier, or could potentially take. With regard to the learning situation level, participants are invited to note how the following factors affect, or can possibly affect, their learning process: (a) class environment (group-specific component); (b) course organization, materials, and facilities (course-specific component); and (c) instructor's personality, teaching style, and feedback and grading systems (instructor-specific component).

2.5 PROCEDURES

The administration of the survey took place during two semesters: the winter terms of 2014 and 2015. In order to reach the participants who take courses in Ukrainian studies (Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled), the researcher visited classes and asked students to fill in our paper-based questionnaires (15-minute procedure). Many participants from these two groups also expressed their willingness to complete the survey online.

Electronic distribution of questionnaires was used to collect data for Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled. For Group 3, the researcher contacted instructors of Ukrainian studies with a request to send their former students invitations to fill in on-line questionnaires. Identifying and contacting participants for Group 4, that is, those not affiliated with Ukrainian studies courses, was more challenging. These were reached through student societies and networks, allowing for the inclusion of participants who may be potentially interested in Ukrainian studies.

3.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

3.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative data are elicited through participants' responses to close-ended questions. Each answer to a close-ended question ("strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," or "strongly disagree") is assigned 1 point. Further, the scores for the four levels of answers are organized into two groups. The "strongly agree" and "agree" answers to affirmatively worded close-ended questions in Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled contribute to determining the factors described in the questions as "motivating," while "disagree" and "strongly disagree" answers contribute to the "demotivating" scores. For Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled, whose questionnaires have close-ended questions worded in the negative, the procedure is the opposite: "strongly agree" and "agree" answers contribute to the level of participants' demotivation, and "disagree" and "strongly disagree" answers yield "motivating" scores. Finally, the total score and percentage are calculated for the answers determining focal factors as motivating or demotivating across each set of close-ended questions. The analysis focuses on whether the focal factors are considered by learners as motivating or demotivating in each of the four groups of participants.

3.1.1 The Subject Area Level

At the subject area level, the analysis of participant responses to the first set of close-ended questions reveals that integrative motivation prevails in the responses of participants in all four groups. Consider Figure 1:
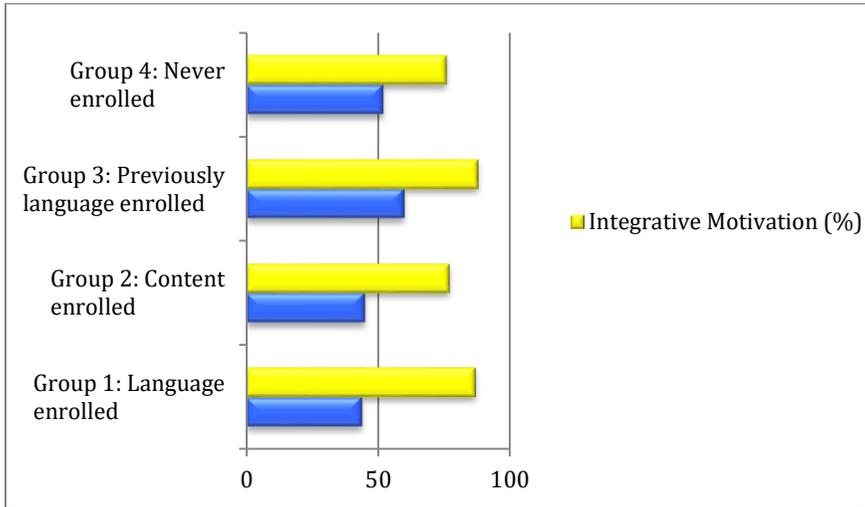
Figure 1. The Subject Area Level

Figure 1 demonstrates that the highest level of integrative motivation is in Group 3: previously language enrolled (88%) and Group 1: language enrolled (87%), followed by Group 2: content enrolled (77%) and Group 4: never enrolled (76%). Importantly, the factors that contribute most to participants' integrative motivation vary across the four groups. Specifically, the highest level of integrative motivation is attested to participants' desire to: (a) integrate into the Ukrainian community (20%, equally in both Groups 3 and 4); (b) better understand Ukrainian culture, history, literature, music, and the like (20%, in Group 2); (c) be successful in communication with Ukrainian native-speakers (19% in Group 1 and 15% in Group 2); and (d) learn about one's heritage (18% in Group 1 and 15% in Group 2).

Figure 1 also shows that the instrumental factors are less influential than the integrative ones on participants' decision to enroll or not in Ukrainian studies. The highest level of instrumental motivation is observed in Group 3: previously language enrolled (60%). Participants in other groups show also, but to a lesser extent, recognition of instrumental factors as important for their choice of Ukrainian courses: 52% in Group 4: never enrolled, 45% in Group 2: content enrolled, and 44% in Group 1: language enrolled. Among the factors contributing most to participants' instrumental motivation are prospects for getting good grades, future career gains, and program requirements. Specifically, in Group 1 the majority of responses associated with instrumentality pertain to the possibility of getting good grades and better jobs in the future, while in Group 2 instrumental motivation also

extends to degree requirements. In Group 3, all the participants indicate that their decision not to continue at another language level is not associated with their inability to get good grades. And in Group 4, all the participants unanimously indicate "getting good grades" as a reason for possible enrollment in Ukrainian studies courses.

3.1.2 The Learner Level

The second set of close-ended questions focuses on motivation associated with the learner level. The analysis of responses indicates a high level of participants' self-confidence in all four groups, as illustrated in Figure 2:
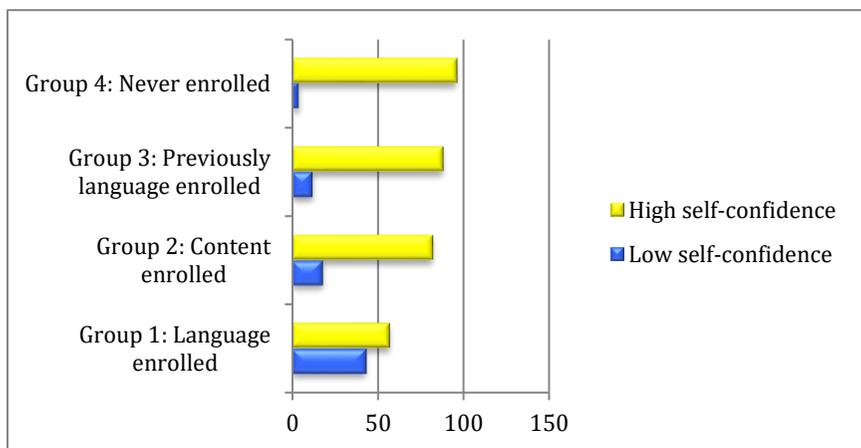
Figure 2. The Learner Level

Figure 2 shows that the highest level of self-confidence is recorded in Group 4: never enrolled (96%), Group 3: previously language enrolled (86%), and Group 2: content enrolled (82%), while in Group 1: language enrolled it is significantly lower (57%). The results of the questionnaires also show that low self-confidence of participants in Group 1 may be linked to the relatively higher level of anxiety of the learners in this group (60%) when compared with other groups: 25% in Group 2, 20% in Group 3, and 0% in Group 4.

3.1.3 The Learning Situation Level

The learning situation level analysis focuses on the following components: group-specific, course-specific, and instructor-specific. With respect to the group-specific subset, the quantitative analysis clearly shows that the participants in all four groups believe that the atmosphere in the Ukrainian courses is, or probably is, conducive to learning, as demonstrated in Figure 3a:

Figure 3a. The Learning Situation Level: Group-Specific Component
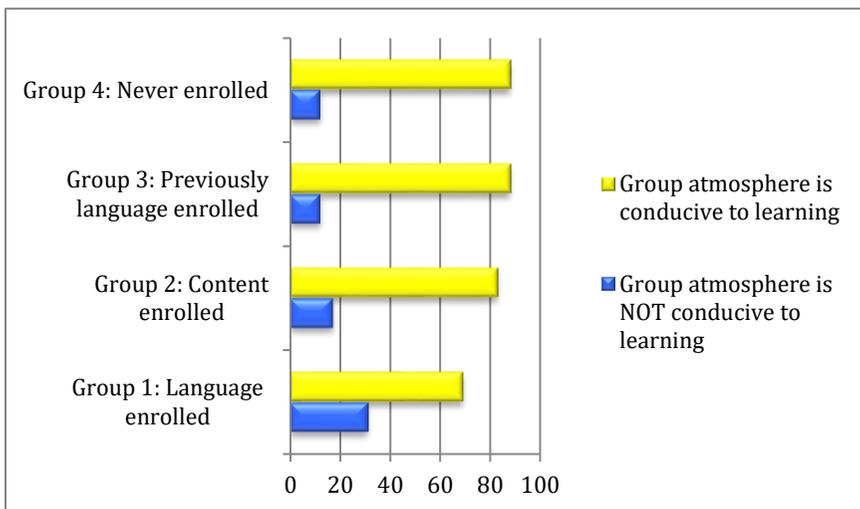
The highest level of positive perception of group atmosphere is found in Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled (both 88%); it is somewhat lower in Group 2: content enrolled (83%) and relatively lower in Group 1: language enrolled (69%). The possible reason for the relatively lower results in Group 1 is revealed through a more detailed examination of participant responses: 74% of the participants express concerns about the difference in language proficiency among the learners in this group, which, in turn, might result in increased anxiety levels of students, making them feel less comfortable in the classroom.

Regarding the course-specific component of the learning situation level, the results indicate that the respondents in all four groups predominantly evaluate course organization and teaching materials as contributing to a successful learning process. Consider Figure 3b:

Figure 3b. The Learning Situation Level: Course-Specific Component
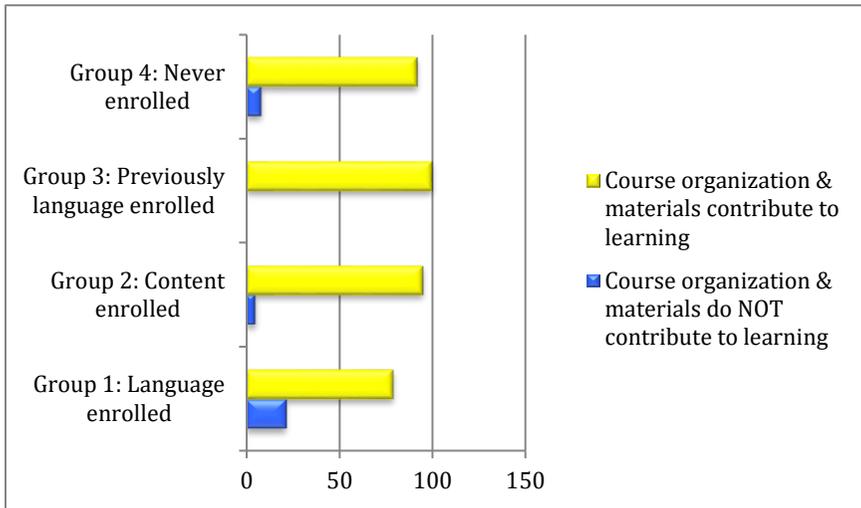
As shown in Figure 3b, the highest results are found in Group 3: previously language enrolled (100%), Group 2: content enrolled (95%), and Group 4: never enrolled (92%), with somewhat lower results in Group 1: language enrolled (79%). Closer reading of participants' responses in Group 1 reveals their concerns about the course load and relevance of the teaching materials. Specifically, 29% of the participants in this group are not satisfied with the course load and 26% of the respondents feel that the teaching materials do not quite prepare learners for communication in real-life situations (discussed further below).

With respect to the instructor's component, the survey results indicate the students' level of satisfaction with their instructors, including the instructors' personalities, teaching methods, and quality of feedback, as well as grading system, which are presented in Figure 3c:
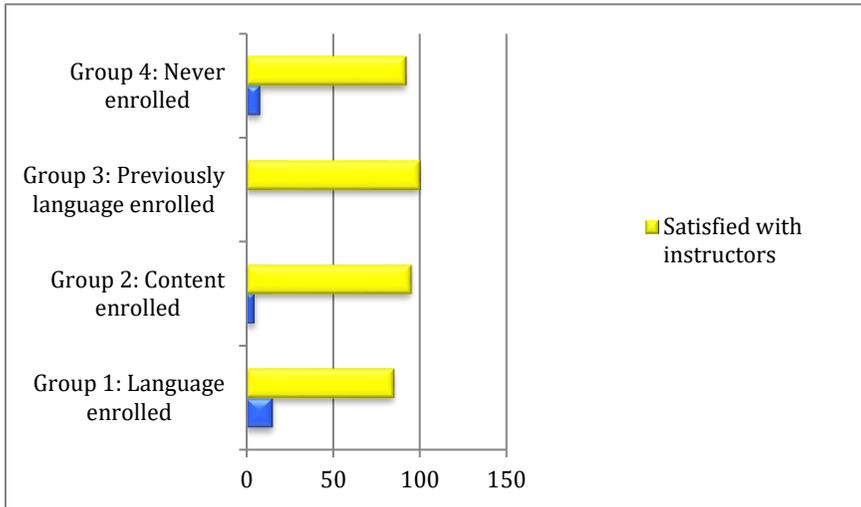
Figure 3c. The Learning Situation Level: Instructor-Specific Component

Figure 3c demonstrates that the highest results are found in Group 3: previously language enrolled, where 100% of participants show their unequivocal approval of their instructors, teaching style, quality of feedback, and grading system, indicating clearly that the instructor-specific factors are not the demotivators for them in not continuing with Ukrainian studies. In Group 2: content enrolled, most participants (95%) are satisfied with the instructors, their teaching style, quality of feedback, and grading. For an insignificant number of participants (3%), the factor of unclear instructions contributes to dissatisfaction at this level of analysis. In Group 4: never enrolled, 92% of participants believe that if they took courses in Ukrainian studies, they would be satisfied with the instructors, their teaching methods, quality of feedback, and grading. In this group, 4% of the students note that the teaching style might not make learning stimulating and enjoyable, and 4% of the participants have concerns about the fairness of the grading system. As shown in Figure 3c, the lowest results with respect to instructor-specific motivational component are found in Group 1: language enrolled, in which 85% of participants are satisfied with their instructors, their teaching approach, quality of feedback, and grading system. The aspects with which the participants are most dissatisfied are teaching approach (4%); unclarity of instructions (4%); and unfairness of the grading system (3%).

Overall, based on the results of the quantitative analysis, we learn that the integrative motivation prevails over the instrumental one in all four groups. The highest level of integrative motivation is found in Group 3:

previously language enrolled, with the lowest in Group 4: never enrolled. The most motivating factors that stand out are participants' desire to integrate into the Ukrainian community (Groups 3 and 4), better understanding of Ukrainian culture, history, literature, music, etc. (Group 2: content enrolled), and success in communicating with Ukrainian native speakers (Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled), and learning about one's heritage (Groups 1 and 2). The analysis also shows that the highest instrumental orientation is in Group 3, with the lowest in Group 1. The factors that contribute most to instrumental motivation are the possibility of earning good grades (all four groups), future career gains (Groups 1 and 2), and degree requirements (Group 2). Analysis of the learner and learning situation levels demonstrates that in all four groups participants display high self-confidence and satisfaction with course organization, teaching materials, and instructors. Importantly, in all these categories, Group 1 stands out and shows the lowest satisfaction results in comparison to other groups studied, which warrants elaboration (see below).

3.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis allows us to learn and further explore the quantitative results by focusing on students' perspectives and how their motivation is influenced or impacted within a particular learning space and time. As mentioned in the foregoing, the qualitative data are elicited through participants' responses to open-ended questions. Data analysis begins with identifying the emerging themes in the data set. Further, in accordance with the stages of qualitative data analysis described by Huberman and Miles, matrices are constructed in order to reduce the number of emerging themes and display the data in a more organized manner. Importantly, those responses in which several themes were mentioned within one context were counted in several categories. Based on the analysis that has been carried out, twenty-two themes are identified, pertaining to three motivation levels cited throughout the present study. These themes are discussed below.

3.2.1 The Subject Area Level

With respect to the subject area level, the qualitative analysis yields ten main motivators and demotivators across the four groups of participants. The motivators are: (i) the importance of preserving one's heritage, being part of the Ukrainian community, and supporting Ukrainian studies; (ii) the importance of language and culture for communication purposes; (iii) travel; (iv) further education and career; (v) enjoyment; and (vi) academic gains and

rewards. The demotivators are: (vii) accomplished goals; and (viii) misconceptions and lack of knowledge about course offering/opportunities/requirements. Either motivators or demotivators are: (ix) interest in Humanities (including Ukrainian); and (x) degree requirement, scheduling, and course offering particulars.

All the respondents in Group 1: language enrolled, as well as some respondents in Group 2: content enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled, indicate that preserving their cultural heritage and being part of the Ukrainian community are among the main reasons for taking Ukrainian courses, as illustrated in examples 1 and 2:

1. I love learning about the Ukrainian culture. Being of Ukrainian descent, it is very important for me to preserve our traditions and language, as well as pass them on to future generations.

2. I want to be able to communicate/participate at a higher level within the Ukrainian community (Plast, SUM, etc.).

Interestingly, one respondent in Group 1 considers taking Ukrainian courses as a means of sustaining the Ukrainian program at the given university, as shown in example 3:

3. I am taking the [Ukrainian language] course to help the program stay alive.

Specifically, in Group 3: previously language enrolled, the factors of preserving one's cultural heritage and being part of the Ukrainian community are noted as neither motivational nor demotivational, which warrants further investigation.

In Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled, the factor of learning the language and culture for communication purposes is considered as a strong motivator by a prevailing number of participants. Most of them indicate that they are taking courses in Ukrainian studies in order to communicate with native speakers, specifically, family members and friends. In contrast, the participants in Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled do not focus on this factor.

Interestingly, only the participants in Group 1: language enrolled note that they are planning to travel to Ukraine in the future, and that knowledge of Ukrainian would be a major asset. A few respondents point out that they are taking language courses because it brings them enjoyment, which fits neither the instrumental nor integrative group of factors within Dörnyei's ("Motivation") framework.

With respect to instrumental motivation, a number of the participants in Group 1: language enrolled stress the importance of learning Ukrainian for pursuing academic and career goals, as shown in examples 4 and 5:

4. I want to learn a language to aid future research.

5. I'm learning the language to find better job opportunities.

Other instrumental purposes, such as seeking academic gains and rewards, are also prominent in the comments of both Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled students. These are presented in examples 6 and 7:

6. I want to take an Arts course that I can get a good grade to boost GPA.

7. By taking a Ukrainian course, I can qualify for a scholarship.

In all four groups, the demotivators, factors that discourage students from taking courses in Ukrainian studies, are students' perceptions of already accomplished goals, as well as misconceptions and lack of knowledge about course offerings, existing opportunities, and program or degree requirements. Interestingly, the factor of "accomplished goals" appears to be the most prominent of the above and is found mainly in the comments by participants from Group 4: never enrolled, as illustrated in example 8:

8. I already have a strong background on the topics provided in each course.

The factors of misconceptions and lack of knowledge about course offerings, existing opportunities, and program or degree requirements, as demotivators, are evident in all four groups, but are not significant.

Factors that appear as either motivating or demotivating are interest in Humanities and degree requirements, scheduling, and course offerings. For Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled, interest in Humanities, including Ukrainian studies, figures as a strong motivator, as shown in example 9:

9. I am really interested in Ukrainian culture, although I didn't know any Ukrainians in the first three years of my university life. After I took an Eastern European History class, I was amazed by Kievan Rus, and ended up taking as many Ukraine-related classes as possible.

In Group 4: never enrolled, responses are mixed and represent students who are willing to enroll in Ukrainian courses but are not able to do so due to their degree requirements or time conflicts, as well as those students whose interest in Ukrainian studies has diminished and they want to focus on something new. This point of view is illustrated in example 10:

10. I want to take courses that are brand new to me, such as philosophy/psychology/sociology/politicalscience/other languages.

The factors of degree requirements, scheduling, and course offerings are noted as both motivational and demotivational. The prevailing majority of the respondents, particularly in Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled, indicate that they are willing to enroll in Ukrainian studies, but their degree requirements, frequent time conflicts, and/or a lack of courses in which they are interested prevent them from enrolling. These factors are illustrated in examples 11-13:

11. A Ukrainian language course cannot be used for my degree. With a full course load I would strain myself with taking an extra course (If I could use a Ukrainian course as an engineering option I would!).

12. All the Ukrainian courses I have been interested in conflicted with courses required for my major.

13. I was really interested in taking the course [name of the course], but it is not being offered in the school year of 2014/2015.

Examples 11-13 clearly demonstrate respondents' genuine interest in Ukrainian courses and make it evident that if there were no degree limitations placed by curriculum policies of certain faculties, the number of students in Ukrainian studies could be higher. In this case, degree requirements, scheduling, and course offerings appear to be obstructions rather than demotivators. In our data set, the respondents show a high level of motivation, but are unable to take courses due to external factors over which they have no control. On the contrary, for some respondents the degree requirements and scheduling serve as motivating factors that prompt students to take Ukrainian courses, as illustrated in examples 14-16:

14. I needed the courses to complete my degree.

15. I needed to fulfill my Other than English Language Requirement.

16. It fit with my schedule.

The comments in examples 14-16 are made only by participants in Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled, and are outweighed by those in examples 11-13, viewed as obstacles.

Overall, at the subject area level, the qualitative analysis echoes the quantitative results, showing that integrative orientation prevails. The most frequently mentioned integrative factors in Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2: content enrolled, and Group 4: never enrolled are preserving cultural heritage and being part of the Ukrainian community. In Groups 1 and 2, the theme of learning the language and culture for communication

purposes appears as a prominent integrative motivator. The most important instrumental motivators are pursuing academic and career goals (Group 1), and seeking academic gains and rewards (Groups 1 and 2). In Group 3: previously language enrolled, no motivators (integrative or instrumental) have been observed at the subject area level. In all four groups, the most important factors that discourage students from taking courses in Ukrainian studies are students' perceptions of already accomplished goals and desire to study something new, degree requirements, and time conflicts. It is also worth mentioning that a few respondents in Groups 1 and 2 point out that they are taking the language courses because it brings them enjoyment, which may be attributed to neither the instrumental nor the integrative group of factors within Dörnyei's ("Motivation") framework.

3.2.2 The Learner Level

At the learner level, one theme specific to Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2: content enrolled, and Group 3: previously language enrolled is established: the perception of one's confidence and progress in the learning process (note that only 32% of participants responded in this set of questions). As our data indicate, the perception of one's confidence and progress in the learning process in Groups 2 and 3 is positive. Results from Group 1 reveal both a positive and negative stand towards self-confidence and progress (with positive attitude slightly higher). Consider example 17:

> 17. I feel as though I would be more successful if there was a larger oral component.

Example 17 demonstrates student's wish for more opportunities for the development of oral communication skills. If presented with such, students would potentially feel more confident and more satisfied with their progress, thereby more motivated. Also in Group 1, while some respondents are satisfied with their progress, they express a strong desire for more conversational practice, as shown in example 18:

> 18. Making good progress. Nevertheless, would like to practice and improve my oral ability more.

Example 18 presents an overall positive disposition of a student toward his/her progress in a particular course, but also demonstrates the student's wishes for more conversational practice as a desirable factor.

The analysis of participants' comments about the learner level demonstrates that in Groups 2 and 3, participants' perceptions of their confidence and progress are positive. In Group 1, the responses are mixed and display also negative perceptions of progress and ability to succeed.

Importantly, in Group 1, the participants strongly associate their confidence level and progress with their abilities to communicate in the target language.

3.2.3 The Learning Situation Level

At the learning situation level we analyze group-specific, course-specific, and instructor-specific components. With respect to the group-specific component, two themes emerge: the atmosphere in the group and the perception of a gap in student proficiency levels. The group atmosphere theme is mostly observable in Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2: content enrolled, and Group 4: never enrolled, with the majority of comments made by the respondents from Group 1. Most participants view the group atmosphere positively, with negative comments being insignificant. Consider examples 19 and 20:

19. It was engaging. Because it was a small class, everyone worked together and helped one another out.

20. The students are friendly, cooperative, and helpful.

Both examples 19 and 20 show that students consider the group atmosphere as positive and conducive to learning.

The perception of a gap in student proficiency levels emerges as a significant theme in our data set. Although in all four groups this gap is presented as a serious obstruction to the learning process and success, in Group 1 this theme is particularly visible and commented upon, as illustrated in examples 21-23:

21. There are people who are fluent, and people who cannot speak/understand the language. Makes learning difficult, because one approach works for those who do know the language, while another approach works for those who do not know the language.

22. Huge differences of proficiency in the class that can become quite challenging for all.

23. Difficulty level, to cater to such great differences in proficiency, makes far less challenging and therefore, less stimulating learning environment.

As examples 21-23 demonstrate, participants' motivation is influenced by differences in students' language proficiency. The results show that if the gap in proficiency levels is particularly significant, lower-proficiency students feel unable to catch up with their peers, becoming frustrated and discouraged. Meanwhile, high-proficiency students comment on the lack of challenge, which leads to their loss of interest. Overall, in this situation

learners eventually become demotivated and unwilling to continue at another language level.

On the course-specific plane, we identify four major themes: technology use, course content, course organization, and course materials, including course load. Use of technology is observable only in Group 1: language enrolled. In general, students are satisfied with the technology used in their courses, but mention only e-mails, e-class, PowerPoint presentations, and YouTube videos. Such comments indicate that the exposure to technology may be limited and learners are not aware of the ways technology can be incorporated into the learning process. Importantly, a few respondents express a desire for more technology integrated into the coursework, such as computer labs to practice pronunciation, language games, and online interactive components to foster development of communicative skills. In their comments, while viewing technology as a tool for additional practice, students show their striving for more activities that can prepare them for real-life interactions.

With respect to course content, the comments are numerous and varied in nature in all four groups. Although there are a significant number of positive comments, dissatisfaction with the course content is a concerning demotivator, especially in Group 1: language enrolled, Group 3: previously language enrolled, and Group 4: never enrolled. For example, in their comments, students from Group 1 voice their desire to be able to communicate in the target language, as in examples 24-26:

24. More vocabulary for everyday conversation would be good.

25. I am a person that learns by doing, thus the more grammar done in the context of conversation, the better for me.

26. Subject matter occasionally does not match one's personal needs for communication.

Examples 24-26 stress the need for more communication-focused tools and relevance of these tools to the personal needs of the students.

Students also indicate that the course content may not always match their expectations and could lead to demotivation for language learners, as shown in example 27:

27. I have also put the courses off because I began noticing a disconnect between the Ukrainian I spoke, and the new vocabulary being taught in schools… I learned Ukrainian from my parents, who learned from their parents, who immigrated to Canada between 1930 and 1945. I understand the language has changed; however I believe the various vocabulary variants should be acknowledged.

Example 27 demonstrates concerns voiced by students with respect to the variant of Ukrainian being taught, and perhaps a lack of appropriate attention in course content towards language variants to which students may have been exposed in their experience.

With respect to course organization and course materials, many learners in Group 1: language enrolled express their wish for more conversational practice, as in example 28:

> 28.   … I want to be able to be conversant, understand people, etc., not to focus on what case the verb is in in a given text. Not useful.

Example 28 indicates participants voicing their desire for teaching materials that are more communicatively and functionally focused, in order for them to reach their learning goals of being conversant in the language and able to understand native speakers.

The participants in Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2; content enrolled, and Group 3: previously language enrolled consider the course workload as both realistic and too challenging, depending on the course. Importantly, the dissatisfaction with the course load is focused on the lack of communication practice and interaction in the classroom.

Regarding the instructor-specific components of the study, three themes emerge: instructor's personality, teaching approach, as well as feedback and grading systems. The majority of the comments made by the participants refer to the instructor's personality. In Group 3: previously language enrolled and Group 4: never enrolled, perception of the instructors is exclusively positive. In Group 1: language enrolled and Group 2: content enrolled, such perceptions are mixed, with positive attitudes significantly prevailing. The source of learners' positive perception of the instructors stems from instructors' approachability, as in examples 29 and 30:

> 29.   The instructor is always willing to help and provide support in any ways that the students need. This availability makes the students feel more at ease with learning the language, and the students do not feel intimidated or scared to make mistakes. The instructor makes it clear that we are all learning and making mistakes is a natural part of this process.

> 30.   One of my biggest motivations for continuing in Ukrainian studies was the quality of the professors. [Professor's name] continually astounded me in [his/her] knowledge of linguistic nuance. Likewise, I hold the utmost respect for [professor's name] whose vast knowledge of seemingly everything Ukrainian is always available to those who ask.

Example 29 shows that when an instructor is supportive and approachable, it positively affects the quality of interaction between the

instructor and the student, and creates a positive learning environment in the class, which in turn may significantly contribute to learners' motivation, as shown in example 30.

Participants from Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2: content enrolled, and Group 3: previously language enrolled identify teaching approach as an influential motivating factor. A teaching approach geared towards learning that is interesting, relevant, and applicable to real-life situations is noted by many as encouraging and motivating. The need to be prepared for communication in the target language in an authentic environment is again highlighted by several participants in their comments with respect to teaching approach and the importance of promoting such learning. Alongside predominantly positive perceptions about teaching approach, the respondents raised certain concerns. In some respondents' view, the lack of contemporary and engaging learning materials acts as a demotivating factor, signalling also the unwillingness of some to continue with their studies.

Some participants also point out the importance of feedback and fair grading systems for staying motivated, but this theme is the least represented in the data set. A positive perception of feedback and grading prevails, and specifically refers to timeliness and constructiveness. Some participants voice a few concerns about the grading system, as to its fairness in particular. Importantly, participants relate their perception of unfairness to different levels of student proficiency and background knowledge in a single class. Students suggest devising a system that reflects each individual student's progress in the course.[2]

In summary, a number of themes have been identified that pertain to the learning situation level. For the group-specific component of this level, the atmosphere in the group and the perception of a gap in student proficiency levels have been identified as major themes. In Group 1: language enrolled, Group 2: content enrolled, and Group 4: never enrolled, the group atmosphere is viewed as positive and conducive to learning. Particularly in Group 1, the perception of a gap in student proficiency levels is presented as

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[2] These concerns are sound and reflect today's challenging classroom in Ukrainian studies as well as other less commonly taught languages and cultures, in which students of different levels of language proficiency or different background knowledge and preparation levels are thrown together due to imposed quotas on minimum enrollments. As one reviewer of this article aptly noted, in such circumstances "we (instructors of LCTLs) are more compelled to accommodate the widest possible range of learning styles, motivations, and interests […] in order to maintain and grow enrollments."

a serious obstruction to the learning process and success. At the course-specific sub-level, which involves students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the use of technology, course content, organization, materials, and course load, Group 1 stands out, although all four groups provide comments in this respect. Interestingly, in Group 1, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with course-specific components relate to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these components in satisfying learners' needs—specifically, regarding their ability to communicate in the target language. This theme reinforces findings from the subject area level, stressing the importance of language and culture for communication purposes, classified here as *integrative motivation*. With respect to instructor's personality, teaching approach, feedback, and grading systems, most comments are favourable in all four groups. Perceptions of concern relate to applicability of learning materials and knowledge gained to real-life scenarios. Some concerns are also voiced with respect to different levels of learners' language proficiency and background knowledge, which in some participants' view influence teaching approach and student assessment.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The analyses presented in the foregoing allow us to discuss motivators and demotivators for our current or potential students at various levels of study. The results of the quantitative analysis highlighted that with respect to both integrative and instrumental motivational factors, all four groups show more or less similar results. With respect to the integrative side, the most-motivating factors were participants' desire to integrate into the community, gain a better understanding of culture, history, literature, music, and the like, be successful in communication with native speakers, and learn about one's heritage. Regarding the instrumental orientations, the factors of good grades, future career gains, and degree requirements were the most prominent. Interestingly, Group 3 students who took language classes but did not continue showed the highest results with respect to both integrative and instrumental factors, in comparison to other groups. This suggests that students with the highest motivation may nevertheless choose to opt out of Ukrainian studies, suggesting the need to discuss the situation, in search of possible factors that influence students' educational choices. Moreover, the quantitative study also demonstrated that at the learner-specific level, current language learners, that is, Group 1: language enrolled, showed the lowest self-confidence and the highest level of anxiety, which also merits discussion. Overall, at the learning-situation level, all four groups reported positively on the atmosphere, course load, teaching materials, and

instructor's teaching approaches and personalities. However, Group 1 raised the most flags with respect to demotivators in the categories discussed.

A qualitative look at the results allowed us to study the data from students' perspectives and assisted in answering some of the questions raised above, thus strengthening the analysis. At the subject area level, among the demotivators student reported their lack of knowledge about course offerings and course relevance to students' degrees, as preventing or discouraging them from enrolling in Ukrainian studies.

At the learner level, students' comments reinforced their answers in the quantitative study and demonstrated that Group 1: language enrolled respondents, albeit mostly positively oriented, are least confident in their learning process, viewing their progress as unsatisfactory. These results suggest that these students' learning expectations were not fully met, and in future these students will most likely shift to the category of Group 3: previously language enrolled. In Group 3, prominent comments were also about the perception of accomplished goals; that is, students did not see any need to enroll in Ukrainian classes at the postsecondary level, as they viewed them as neither new nor challenging. In the students' view, Ukrainian studies courses at the postsecondary level would only duplicate what they already know from either home or secondary school experiences. The analysis at the learning situation level allowed us to pinpoint that although overall students were satisfied with the group atmosphere, differences in students' proficiency levels figured as prominent demotivators. Factors of course load, and particularly the topic of relevance and quality of teaching materials, were flagged by some participants. Particularly in Group 1: language enrolled, many participants commented on the need for materials to be communicatively oriented and applicable to real-life situations, as well as technologically enhanced. Additionally, an important comment in Group 1, which served as a demotivator for one student, was about the variant of language taught—specifically, a lack of acknowledgment of existing variants of the language (in this case, the variant student uses in his/her home).

Needless to say, the present study does not answer all the questions we may have with respect to the motivational considerations of students and their learning experiences in Ukrainian studies at the postsecondary level. The analysis was based on data from only one postsecondary institution in Canada. In addition, we were only able to solicit a limited number of participants for the four groups studied. Therefore, our current data, particularly the quantitative component, are of a suggestive rather than conclusive nature. And in future, the study may include a larger data sample from other existing programs in Ukrainian studies, thus increasing the generalizability of the results to larger populations. It would also be valuable to compare the motivations of learners of other Slavic languages as well as of

more commonly taught languages, and see how they may correlate with our findings.[3] An important aspect is also to study instructors' perspectives and how they compare to the student voices. This angle of research may demonstrate dissimilarities that may have an influence on students' motivations. For language learners, it may be worthwhile to also study the correlation between motivational levels of learners and their language proficiency levels. These are just some non-limiting directions in which the present research work could be explored further.

As noted in the foregoing, we see our study as having practical values and applications. Therefore, we would like to end with some recommendations that stem directly from the above analyses.

1. First of all, informing students about course offerings and how these courses are relevant and applicable to their degrees and possible careers needs to be done explicitly in the form of marketing campaigns and student outreach activities.
2. Students need to be better educated about course content in order to be better judges of what they have already accomplished and what new knowledge a particular course could bring to their overall educational and professional experience.
3. With respect to teaching materials, the desire and need are for new, contemporary, technologically enhanced materials that are relevant to students, allowing them to apply their gained knowledge in real-life situations. For language specific classrooms, students' clear wishes are for an ability to function and communicate in the language. Thus, the learning and teaching materials need to reflect such desires and needs.
4. Regarding a variant(s) of the language taught, in our view contemporary Ukrainian as spoken in Ukraine is to be taught at the

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[3] For instance, our findings notably depart from data obtained by Rifkin's survey of 880 students from postsecondary institutions who are learners of fifteen different foreign languages (Ukrainian is not one of them). One question in this survey deals with learners' primary motivation for studying the language in which they are currently enrolled. The results show that the greatest reasons are "To use this language professionally in a nonteaching position (applied language mission) [39%]" and "To broaden myself (general education mission) [34%]" (Rifkin 75). Less important motivational factors are "To better understand my heritage (heritage mission) [11%]," "To teach this language (language specialist mission) [6%]," and other factors (Rifkin 75).

postsecondary level. Importantly, teaching awareness about language variants, fostering tolerance towards different language varieties (to which some students may be very sensitive), and promoting inclusivity are to be seriously considered and implemented in the learning process.

5. About instructors, students require clarity of instruction, an outline of course objectives, clearly communicated expectations, as well as the establishment of a fair grading system.

6. Different levels of student proficiency proved to be one of the highest demotivators, which influenced the perception of group atmosphere, grading, self-efficacy, and perception of student progress. This factor requires thoughtful attention. Assessment techniques need to be developed accordingly. Appropriate placement tests are strongly advisable.

7. Recommendations 3-6 above will contribute to a relevant and enjoyable learning environment and will most likely lower student anxiety levels and raise their self-confidence, thus ensuring a successful learning environment and outcomes.

Some of these recommendations are not claimed to be new, but nevertheless they deserve attention and special consideration, particularly at times when enrollment numbers in less commonly taught languages, Slavic languages among them, are often not on the rise. Currently, we are witnessing certain shifts in the humanities overall, and our study is a first step to understanding what may be shifting and how these shifts may be questioned and approached. With our initial study, we cast an inquiry into changes in the landscape of less commonly taught languages and cultures, raising awareness about certain factors of the learning and teaching processes that should be studied in greater detail. These are timetabling, program requirements, relevance of courses and programs to students' professional experiences and students' perception of this relevance, teaching and learning materials and their connection to what students view as relevant, and sensitivity towards different proficiencies and levels of students' knowledge, as well as students' perception of their knowledge of the subject matter and, perhaps, of humanities overall. Thus, with this study we hope to motivate Ukrainianists, Slavists, and educators in general to study ourselves as instructors, and also our students, their wishes, and needs, in order to understand our academic being and continue improving the educational process for all.

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APPENDIX A

Demographic Information

		Group 1: language enrolled		Group 2: content enrolled		Group 3: previously language enrolled		Group 4: never enrolled	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Ukrainian background		15	21	2	8	0	5	1	4
Ukrainian courses taken before university		6	13	0	5	0	1		
Program	Bachelor's	14	22	2	6	0	4	1	4
	Master's	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
	PhD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Honour's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Open Studies	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0
Specialization	Sciences	2	6	0	1	0	2	1	2
	Humanities	4	3	2	8	0	2	0	1
	Education	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Business	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Medical	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
	N/A	4	6	0	1	0	1	0	0