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A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

By

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDES CONCERNING
THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT
IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

By

David G. Hamilton

The researcher sought in this study to see if 1) there is indeed a trend to restore the foreign language degree requirement for undergraduates, 2) there is a difference of opinion concerning the foreign language requirement between foreign language professionals and some other group of academic professionals in post-secondary institutions, 3) there is support for some of the traditional reasons given to defend such a modern language requirement, and 4) there might be a difference in what language skills and what languages would be emphasized in the future.

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This study's population was composed of the academic deans and the language chairpersons of all the liberal arts colleges of upstate New York.

The researcher using a guided interview sought a definition of what these participants believed to be the mission of the liberal arts college and the role of the modern languages within this liberal arts context. Each participant was then asked whether he favored an institution-wide modern language requirement for the bachelor's degree and how much time would be required for the average student to attain a minimum proficiency in a foreign language.

In addition a Modern Language Requirement Questionnaire with a Likert scale was administered to each participant.

The major conclusions of this study were as follows:

1) Overall, there is not a large difference between the attitudes of the deans as a group and the language chairpersons in regard to the importance of the modern language instruction and its requirement in these liberal arts college.

2) The principal rationale for the inclusion of language instruction in the liberal arts curriculum closely matches the primary mission statements of liberal arts colleges in this population.

3) There is strong support among these deans and languages chairpersons for a modern language requirement extending to include intermediate-level instruction.

4) French, German, and Spanish will remain the dominant languages taught in these liberal arts colleges for the foreseeable future.

5) Although there is a strong conviction that modern languages will become more and more important for business interests, there is little

support for the notion that the primary purpose for language instruction should be of a pragmatic nature.

6) There is widespread support in both groups in this population for the notion that there is a significant and measurable trend in American higher education to encourage, in general, requirements in the curriculum and the modern language requirement in particular.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, the Reverend and Mrs. Glenn Hamilton, who early encouraged me to strive for excellence. It is also dedicated to my wife, Carolee, and my children, Mark and Laura Beth, as well as my wife's parents, Dr. and Mrs. Ellwood Voller, because of their great support throughout this project.

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I would like to acknowledge my friend Carole Rose who served as my typist through many drafts of this dissertation. She and her friends whom she "drafted" from Rochester Institute of Technology were invaluable in the printing of this dissertation. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to my advisor and chairman, Dr. Eldon Nonnamaker, who patiently answered myriad questions and who offered such sage advice.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

A mother mouse was taking her family for a walk one day. Sensing no imminent danger, she accompanied the tiny mice beyond the normal boundary for the family outings. Rounding a corner, the mice encountered a waiting cat. Knowing that unless she thought quickly of a means of escape her family would be surely annihilated, the mother came up with an idea. Clearing her throat she, in the sternest voice she could muster, bellowed, "Wuff, Wuff". In the face of such canine sounds the startled cat fled. Turning to her disbelieving children the mother uttered, "See how important it is to know a second language." (Chastain, p.3)

Eddy, in a survey conducted by the University of Michigan Research Center in 1979, found wide public support for the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies but did not find a correspondingly high commitment to requirement of foreign language study at the baccalaureate level. (Eddy, p.58)

In a January, 1983, issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education the matter of whether or not a foreign language

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should be required for graduation from American institutions of higher education was again forcefully raised. The author attacked what he felt to be clichés often unreflectively offered for the importance of the foreign language requirement. (Brewer, p.72)

Some years ago in an education journal a dean at the University of Virginia was quoted concerning the foreign language as a degree requirement for undergraduates. It was his contention that "no other academic issue so polarizes a faculty or evokes so much irrational argument as does this one." (Scully, p.1) If what Scully asserts is true, what is currently happening at the traditional trend-setters like Harvard and Yale might indeed stir such controversy. Harvard recently required that, beginning with the freshmen entering in 1982, all students must demonstrate foreign language competence in order to graduate from that institution. Yale's recent insistence on a two-year language requirement for the baccalaureate leaves only one Ivy League School which has not reinstated a foreign language requirement. The possibility exists that a reversal of the trend that saw widespread abolishment of the foreign language requirement in the late 1960s and early 1970s might be about to occur.

William Riley Parker, a major force in the mid-twentieth-century modern languages movement, held that it is often the nation's secondary schools that dictate the curriculum in America's colleges and universities. (Parker, p.131) There are others who insist that the high-school

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curriculum is established by a kind of "filtering down" process from the nation's institutions of higher education.

Whether one holds with one theory or the other, there is no mistaking the stirrings within the nation's secondary school system in regard to requirements. The recent report given to Secretary of Education Bell by the National Commission on Excellence in Education strongly urged a return to more requirements in American high schools. Foreign languages were singled out for commentary. The report stated: "For the college-bound, two years of foreign languages in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier." (National Commission, p. 14) The report continues in the same vein:

> Achieving proficiency in a foreign language ordinarily requires four to six years of study and should therefore be started in the elementary grades. We believe it is desirable that students achieve such proficiency, because study of a foreign language introduces students to non-English speaking cultures, heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue, and serves the nation's needs in commerce, diplomacy, defense, and education. (National Commission, p.15)

Even before the release of the report of the National Commission on Academic Excellence, educational leaders saw a trend to restore requirements. Dr. Edward Q. Moulton, chairman of the Ohio Board of Regents, speaking of the pendulum movement asserted: "To succeed at reasonable levels on a wide range of programs, students really should have four years of English, three years of math, three years of social

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science, two years of science, and two years of foreign language." (Kerezy, p.34)

At this point it is difficult to assess what effect the National Commission's report of 1983 will have on the curriculum of the nation's secondary schools. It is even harder to assess what effects, if any, such a report will have on the nation's colleges and universities. Yet even a brief review of the literature does reveal that there are concurrent calls within the collegiate community for more requirements. William Graves, associate dean of general education at University of North Carolina reports: "We should tighten up our own requirements first to send a message to the high schools." (Kerezy, p.38) It is ironic, say some, that such a movement is gaining momentum at a time when the vocational aspect of education is paramount and declining enrollments in post-secondary institutions ought supposedly to lead to less stringent requirements in order to attract students. Yet Gaff, director of curriculum development of the Association of American Colleges disagrees: "Students are not like a generation ago when they wanted more individual freedom and less structure. Now they look to colleges and universities to tell them what is important for them to know and to be able to do." (Kerezy, p. 38)

A review of the literature in regard to the modern language degree requirement for undergraduates at once reveals several concerns. For one, nearly all articles written in recent years in defense of the foreign language

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requirements have been written by members of foreign language departments. The charge could be made that language professionals are often too defensive. Further, most articles have been written as a reflection of personal opinion with little or no backing of careful research. At times, sweeping generalizations are based on what appear to be hunches, and at times arguments used to defend such modern language requirements border on the naïve.

Where in the last ten years research has been conducted concerning such a requirement, the results have been possibly skewed by relying too much on foreign language personnel to assess the situation. The Klayman studies are cases in point. (Klayman, 1975, p.173 and 1978, p.238)

As the foreign language requirement, as well as other requirements, came under heavy attack in the late 1960s, a host of articles appeared in the professional journals and monographs both defending and opposing such projected curricular changes. The articles were often emotionally charged. (Some even characterized the situation as a cause for panic.)

After much of the furor had died down, until just recently few articles appeared in professional journals concerning the modern foreign language as a requirement for the baccalaureate degree. Some interest in the matter was rekindled when the Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies released its findings to President Carter in 1979. The report called for reinstatement of the modern

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language requirement in those colleges which had dropped such a requirement. Some held that the committee's concern for foreign language study, rather than being a call for such study in a traditional sense, was perhaps more a response to a hidden agenda. The latter might include such considerations as the serious slipping of American economic interests in international markets where the use of foreign language might become increasingly more important in trade negotiations.

A. Bartlett Giamatti, Yale's outspoken president whom some call the "national spokesman for education," is adamant in his view that Yale's mission is "not to make one technically proficient, but to instill some sense of the love of learning for its own sake." (Geist, p.42) Regarding his successful campaign to reinstate the foreign language requirement to Yale's curriculum Giamatti stresses: "It is not enough to offer a smorgasboard of courses. We must insure the students are not just eating at one end of the table." (Geist, p.56)

In addition, Dr. John Crecine, dean of the College of Humanities and Social Studies at Carnegie-Mellon University in a recent interview in the New York Times takes to task the liberal arts programs of many of America's institutions of higher education. On one hand he warns that if the student does not receive enough exposure to the liberal arts, he may become a one-dimensional technocrat. Yet he insists, on the other hand, that the liberal arts curriculum have

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secure moorings within the pragmatic. To him the ideal student should "have a portfolio of skills, not just a single flashy marketable skill such as offered by technically trained people." In assessing the importance of learning a foreign language in this search for a balanced curriculum he adds:

> A good grasp of a foreign language or two can also help as a job-getter, especially French and German, because so many of the multinational companies are European-based or have major operations in Europe. Other languages that can translate into corporate jobs include Japanese and Spanish (Fowler, Section D, p.17)

Others dismiss such contentions by asserting that English is the lingua franca of international trade, and that even if the nation's colleges were to reinstitute the degree requirement in modern languages, students having pursued such a course of study would not necessarily have the needed proficiency for even minimum competency in the international arena.

Statement of the Problem

Although a review of the literature required a broad reading in regard to the undergraduate modern language requirement (for both entry and graduate), this study of necessity has a limited scope. The researcher has chosen the liberal arts college as the focus for the study.

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Traditionally, colleges patterned after the English model have had languages, if not as the core, near the core of their curriculum. To be sure, the model adopted by the Harvard of old stressed the ancient languages; the modern languages were not, strictly speaking, a part of the traditional liberal arts curriculum. This study sought to explore the current rationale for languages within the liberal arts context.

Further, the researcher saw the need to compare the reactions of foreign language personnel regarding the importance of the foreign language requirement with some other defined body representing a wide variety of disciplines within the academic community. Such a comparison might or might not show an over-defensive posture on the part of foreign language personnel regarding the modern language requirement and the cluster of issues surrounding it. The need for a standardized procedure of inquiry was apparent.

Thus, there seemed to be need for a study to see if 1) there is indeed a trend to restore the foreign language degree requirement for undergraduates, 2) there is a difference of opinion concerning foreign language requirements between foreign language professionals and other professionals in post-secondary institutions, 3) there is merit in some of the reasons offered to defend the modern foreign language requirement, and 4) if there might be a shift in the future away from the traditional concerns of language study and away from the traditional languages offered in the

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curriculum. The researcher wanted to study some of these reasons (some might hold certain of these to be clichés) given for encouraging language study.

Although one might assume that the terms used thus far in delimiting the scope of the problem are somewhat self-explanatory, the researcher has defined each briefly for the sake of clarity. By modern language he means a language currently spoken by some ethnic or cultural group. Although French, Spanish, and German have traditionally been the most common languages studied in liberal arts colleges, they were not necessarily the only modern languages envisioned in this study. By requirement is meant that the student must take a course or a sequence of courses (or possibly a placement examination) to satisfy certain minimum standards as defined by a given institution. One could also look at entrance requirements (i.e. two years of study of a foreign language in a high school) as a part of this study, but such a consideration received only passing attention. Here, for the most part, requirement has meant baccalaureate degree requirement.

To be certain, various institutions could widely vary in their definition of a liberal arts college. By liberal arts this researcher meant to identify those colleges which claim prominently somewhere in their literature (mission statement, goals, institutional standards) to be a liberal arts college.

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Statement of Objectives

Since the study was descriptive and somewhat exploratory in nature, it was best to state objectives rather than hypotheses. Some of the objectives of this study were:

1) To see the current status of the modern language requirement in selected liberal arts colleges.

2) To see if significant differences in attitudes toward foreign language study exist between modern language professionals and other academic professionals.

3) To compare the reactions of the participants to statements given as rationale for foreign language study (good mental exercise, good vocational preparation, broadening experience).

Population

The academic deans and heads of language departments of all upstate liberal arts colleges in western New York State, from and including Albany, New York, to the western border of New York State served as the population. This study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. By using a narrow population the researcher was not able to draw generalizations to a wider population. Further studies using a sample of a larger population would need to be done at some future

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time, so that results could be generalized for a larger population.

Technique

Since the researcher was, in large measure, assessing attitudes, an attitude test was needed. A four-point Likert scale was used (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The researcher using the review of the literature formulated questions and subjected such questions to a pilot study.

Included with the letter asking participation in the research was a form seeking both biographical and institutional data. In return the researcher received such information as the interviewee's academic background (i.e. undergraduate and graduate majors, date of degrees), present and past institutional foreign language course requirements as well as anticipated future course requirements. These data were sent back to the researcher along with the letter confirming the time and place of the interview. Collection of these data prior to the interview saved time during the actual interview. Some of the data were used for further comparisons.

Along with closed-ended questions, open-ended questions were used in a guided interview format. The researcher was not only interested in "what is" but was also seeking clues

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as to "why it is." Each interview lasted approximately forty-five minutes to one hour and was tape recorded.

The interview allowed for some in-depth questioning. This study was meant to be indicative but not necessarily predictive for another population. Further research would be necessary in a later study for such predictive qualities to be realized.

The Interview

Smith has referred to the interview as "a conversation with a purpose." (Smith, p.199) Although a well designed questionnaire mailed to a carefully selected random sample can yield valuable data, the chances of receiving in-depth rationale for opinions stated are not very good on such a written instrument.

Van Dalen holds that "many people are more willing to communicate information verbally than in writing and, therefore, will provide data more readily and fully in an interview than on a questionnaire." (Van Dalen, p.258) There is, of course, the possibility that the person interviewed may not indicate his true opinion on a certain question. Hopefully through multiple questions on a key concept and through some probing, the researcher sought to find something close to true opinions.

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The researcher had to be careful at all times during the interview to avoid loaded questions, since non-deliberate bias might ensue.

Analysis of Data

The researcher, in consultation with the members of his committee, gave considerable attention to the question of the best method for exploring the topic of this dissertation. Although a random sampling of a large national population could have yielded data that could have been generalized by inference to such a broad population, the group felt that the data might be somewhat shallow and that the guided interview woud offer a better means of allowing some depth in some of the responses.

Having decided to use the guided interview, the researcher realized that constraints of time and geography dictated a narrow population. As was previously indicated the population chosen for the study included all the liberal arts colleges in upstate New York.

This exploratory study used descriptive rather than inferential statistics. As such, the study did not call for a null hypothesis and a corresponding alternative hypothesis and level of statistical significance. Nor was the size of the group studied so significant as would be the case where

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inference was being considered. The data collected were true for the population studied to the extent that the interviewed expressed their true opinons on the questions. The size of the group was somewhat important to the extent that the answers of about forty respondents could indicate trends, where fewer than ten might not so easily.

There were several independent variables that might have a bearing on the dependent variable (the attitudes toward the modern foreign language requirement at liberal arts colleges). The major comparison however was between the academic deans whose personal educational backgrounds might possibly represent a wide range of disciplines and chairpersons of foreign language departments (or departments of which foreign languages are a part).

A statistician consulted indicated that the data would probably be linear and that the best method of correlation was the Pearson Product Moment.

The mean and standard deviation were formulated for many responses where quantification was possible, as in the case of the Likert scale. It was believed that percentage of respondents in a given category might also prove useful. For instance, if ninety percent of all respondents were to agree strongly that a foreign language be required of all those pursuing a baccalaureate degree, that would represent a strong indication. If on the other hand only twenty percent of the deans agreed with such a requirement, whereas ninety percent of the chairpersons of foreign lanugage

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departments called for such requirements, this fact would be telling concerning this given population.

One of the difficulties of analysis was found in the data collected from open-ended questions. Where the closed-ended questions could at once be quantified, such was not the case with the open-ended questions or in the follow-up of some closed-ended questions. The answers to the open-ended questions were summarized and where possible were coded so that trends might be quantified. For instance, if the interviewee were to disagree strongly with a degree requirement of foreign language, a follow-up question might be; "What are your major reasons for objecting to such a degree requirement?" If a large majority of such interviewees were to indicate that one of their reasons for such a strongly negative response was that there simply was not enough space in the students' schedules for such course requirements, such a trend would be coded and reported.

Overview

Chapter one of this dissertation was an attempt to put the problem in context and to establish definitions and objectives. More specific concerns are addressed in future chapters.

Chapter two includes a background of how the modern foreign languages became a part of the curriculum of American higher education. Considerable attention was given

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to the historic battle between the ancient languages so long held as central in American higher education, and the modern languages (mostly French and German), which were for centuries considered inferior to the former in terms of mental exercise. The review of the literature also includes more recent events having a bearing on the foreign language requirement such as the effects on foreign language study of the launching of Sputnik and the widespread abolishment of requirements partially as a result of student unrest in the 1960s.

Chapter three expatiates on the advantages and the limitations of using the guided interview in research design. The colleges represented by their deans and chairpersons are also more specifically profiled. There is more elaboration in regard to the statistical tools to be used.

Chapter four is an analysis of data gathered in October-December 1983. Careful attention has been given not to color the data to fit any projected outcomes. Although a careful review of pertinent literature would seem to presage some findings, the researcher, in consultation with an expert in statistical design, made every attempt to conduct the research and analyze the data as ojectively as possible. To be certain, the guided interview might allow for some leading of the interviewee, but, as has previously been asserted, the interviewer attempted to avoid this bias. Since this was an exploratory study, it was difficult to be committed to exact procedures until the data were gathered.

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Chapter five is a summary of the findings and includes recommendations. Since this study was limited in scope, further studies involving a sampling of a much broader population would no doubt be needed concerning the modern foreign language requirement in liberal arts colleges. It is hoped that this study will be helpful as a context for the conducting of such future research.

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CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Without some background on the conflict that existed in time past between languages such as French, German, and Spanish and the ancient languages (Latin and Greek, mostly) one cannot adequately assess the place of modern languages in the college curriculum. It is important to give a background of the two-century struggle of the modern languages to gain equal status with Latin and Greek, which had served as the core of the traditional curriculum. French was the first language to challenge the ancient languages; German would emerge in the nineteenth century, and Spanish had to wait until the twentieth century to figure in college curricula to any significant degree.

Just a century before French would first appear in the curriculum of higher education, a battle was raging over whether the French language was worthy of comparison with a classical language like Latin.

Peletier du Mans in the fifteenth century succinctly caught the spirit of the struggle in a short poem in which he wrote:

> J'écris en langue maternelle
> Et tâche de la mettre en valeur
> Afin de la rendre éternelle
> Comme les vieux ont fait la leur (Caput, p.107)

(I write in my mother tongue and am trying to put it in a position of worth in order to make it eternal as the ancients did theirs).

Montaigne, the famous sixteenth-century essayist, concerned about the mutability of his native tongue, stated:

> I am writing my book to few people and it will be legible for only a few years. Had I wanted my material to last, I would have committed it to a more established language. (Latin) According to the continual variation that is the nature of our language, who can hope that this present form will still be in existence in fifty years? (Caput, pp.124-125)

Further, Jean DuBellay in his famous Defense and Illustration of the French Language wrote of a language that was seeking to establish itself in competition with Latin and Greek. Consider some of the chapter titles of his treatise written in 1549:

> -That French Must Not Be Considered Barbaric

-Why the French Language Is Not So Rich As Greek and Latin
-That The French Language Is Not So Poor As Many Estimate
-On Amplifying the French Language Through Imitation of the Greek and Roman Authors
-That It is Impossible to Equal the Ancients and Their Languages
-Exhortation to the French to Write in their Language; with Praise of France

Not all shared DuBellay's enthusiasm for the French language. Jacques DuBois openly referred to French as "deformed Latin" and stated that as such, French should be led back to its Latin origins to achieve respectability. The twin guardians of the Latin language, the Church and University, fought any attempts to allow modern languages into their domains. In 1599 the University of Paris decreed (in Latin of course) that "no scholar in this college may speak in the vernacular; he should become familiar in the use of Latin."

However, the seventeenth century would bring about monumental changes in the acceptance of modern languages. Writers such as Malherbe and Vaugelas had much to say about "bon usage" in the French language. Wrote Malherbe: "That which is not clear, is not French." Here there is none of the apologetic tone concerning the value of the modern languages. In fact after a century that had witnessed the reign of the Sun King and the establishment of the French

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Academy, the French language was now held up as a model of perfection that others would do well to emulate. Ariste would ask: "How could such a noble language have come from such humble origins--part Latin, part Germanic, and part Celtic?" (Caput, p.307)

What then was the role of modern languages in American higher education in the seventeenth century? When Harvard University was founded as a temple of piety and intellect in the backwoods of the New World, its models were to be Oxford and Cambridge with their fixed classical curriculum for the elite gentleman. There appeared to be little room here for modern languages.

Bernard Faÿ in his book la Langue française à Harvard commemorating the three-hundreth anniversary of the founding of Harvard University, writes that when the Pilgrims landed in New England, their thoughts were hardly turned toward France; and, if ever they were , it was not to bless the nation that represented the monarchy and Catholicism. (Faÿ, p.154) The glories that were Versailles, the literature of the Age of Glory, the power of the French military-none of these could compensate in the minds of these Puritans for what they considered faulty doctrine.

Maurice Le Breton pointedly asserts that "the main obstacle to a development of French culture in New England was

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religious in character. Neither the Catholicism of the France of Louis XIV nor the deism of the later days could escape the censure of the Puritans. The word "French" with them was too closely allied to extreme narrowness of views or loose morals and often both. So, while quite willing to learn the language because it was so 'useful' and so 'distinguishing' they were not at all disposed to let French ideas be preached to them in spite of such possible advantages." (Le Breton, p.19) As early as 1687 the records show a student taking French. Henry Newman writing to a friend some years later writes about the policies of his French tutor John Leverett (a future president of Harvard).

Perhaps one of the means by which French made its way into the curriculum at Harvard was through the writings of John Calvin, who having orignally written his Institutions of Christian Faith in Latin had later translated them into French. Howard Mumford Jones writes in America and French Culture:

> In seventeenth-century New England these French theologians (Calvin, deBèze, du Plessis-Mornay, Viret) were exciting to read. Clearly here is the first great intellectual impact of French thinking upon the New World--this great system of Protestant thought as framed by French thinkers into the doctrine of Geneva. (Jones, p.356)

Cotton Mather, who several times was considered for the presidency of Harvard, wrote at least one tract in French.

In Manductio ad Ministerium written in 1726, he advised Puritan scholars to know the French language. (Watts, p.15) Jones continues: "The fact that Calvin and his disciples wrote in French tended to make French the secondary modern foreign language among the Puritan divines." (Jones, p.175)

During much of the first part of the seventeenth century, many viewed as dangerous the teaching of French at Harvard. Yet many young men opted to take French in addition to the required Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. When the students from Cambridge wandered down to the port in Boston in 1700, they certainly could have heard French spoken. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, many Huguenots fleeing from France were arriving at the ports of New England. Along with these Huguenots were French fishermen and no doubt sailors from nearby New France (Canada). Yet Faÿ suggests that some of these young, often rowdy, Puritan rebels may have been studying French, because its study was by so many considered shocking.

> These Harvard students gave in to the pleasure of violating the third, the seventh, the eighth, and the ninth commandments...They were ready deep down to serve God, but also desirous of knowing at least from a distance the demon and of seeing the flames that he spread. Thus French for them was a way of encountering the demon. (Faÿ, p.162)

In 1733, for the first time, students were permitted to meet with a tutor on campus at Harvard to learn French "if

they had the consent of their parents, and if they did not pursue their studies of French during time allotted for other courses." However the tutor Langoiserie started to have visions which revealed that the officials of Harvard were evil. Needless to say students were forbidden to take any more French from Langoiserie either on or off campus, and French fell into great disfavor. (Faÿ p.163)

Although the study of German in American colleges was not pursued significantly until after the Revolutionary War, there is some evidence that German was becoming popular, for early in the eighteenth century Increase and Cotton Mather expressed such an interest. (Zeydel, p.286) In addition, numerous German-speaking immigrants settled in Southeastern Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century. In the 1750s German could "be studied at leisure hours" at the Academy and College of Pennsylvania (later University of Pennsylvania) founded by Benjamin Franklin. (Montgomery, p.368) Franklin, who had visited Göttingen a half a century before Ticknor was to attend this prestigious German university, was much impressed with what he found.

Franklin, who had begun to teach himself modern languages at the age of twenty-seven, felt that all those who desired should be able to learn French, German, or Spanish,

but that "all should not be compelled to learn Latin, Greek, or the modern languages." His attacks on the pre-eminence of the ancient languages as required parts of the curricula were novel indeed. He fired some of the opening volleys in a battle that would extend into the late nineteenth century when he wrote:

> We are told that it is proper to begin first, and, having acquired that, it will be easy to attain those modern languages which are derived from it; and yet we do not begin with Greek in order more easily to acquire Latin....I would therefore offer to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having any great proficiency, it would not have been better to have begun with French, proceding to Italian etc. for tho' after spending the same time, they should quit the study of language and never arrive at Latin, they would however have acquired another tongue or two that being modern, use might be serviceable to them in common life. (Liedke p.12)

At the College of New Jersey (Princeton) records show that French was studied as early as 1753. Joseph Shippen, writing to his parents, indicated that his studies of the classics were taking so much of his time "that he had time scarcely to look over his French." (Watts, p.64)

We are told of another Princeton student's experience with the French language. James Madison, the "only French scholar" at Princeton was called upon to help interpret for

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a French visitor to the campus. Madison "listening with all his might, was able to catch a few words ... a glimmering of what the Frenchman was saying." The frustrated Madison in recounting his attempts at speaking to the visitor in French said, "I might as well have been talking kickapoo to him." (Spurlin, p.85)

One might ask at this point why Yale has not yet been mentioned in this glimpse of how modern languages entered into the curriculum of each of the early American colleges. The answer quite simply is that modern languages were not allowed at this center of conservative puritanical dogma. Silas Deane recommended to President Stiles in 1778 after a most frustrating experience in his attempts to make himself understood during a European trip, that French be introduced into the curriculum. Said Deane, "the French language is spoken in great purity in most of the Swiss Cantons, particularly so at Geneva, whence a Professor might be obtained, whose principles as well as manners could not fail of being agreeable." Response was made in President Stiles' diary "...violently against because of Popery--others doubtful." (Spurlin, p.86) French was given no official recognition until 1825 and no professorship until 1864!

Even Thomas Jefferson, who had been known as an outstanding French scholar at William and Mary and who had

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expressed enthusiasm about the ideas of the philosophes, expressed some reservations about sending young Americans to France for study of French. He feared that "while learning the language in France a young man's morals, health, and fortune are more irresistibly endangered than in any other country in the universe." (Spurlin, p.86)

The Revolutionary War proved to be a boon for the study of French and a disaster for the study of German in American colleges. The involvement of the Hessians with the British cause made study of German in academic communities nearly impossible for a generation. However the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States in 1778, and the considerable aid given the colonial cause by the Bourbon government increased greatly the popularity of French in the United States. There were so many French in Boston at times that one might have thought oneself in some French port. The problem was that there were so few bilinguals that conversation often had to be conducted in Latin! (Le Breton, p.21) In 1779 with Jefferson's strong influence evident, William and Mary College became the first to establish a modern-language department; and in 1782 Harvard students were allowed to substitute French for the Hebrew requirement.

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Another of the Founding Fathers, Benjamin Rush, was an outspoken proponent of modern languages. In a letter to John Adams, this noted physician wrote, "I have found much more benefit from the French than I ever found from the Latin or Greek in my profession." (Butterfield, p.531) Rush felt that American males should learn French and German. In the essay On the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic (1798), he indicated "that a college degree should not be conferred upon a young man who could not speak or translate them." (Butterfield, p.495)

The idea that the study of modern languages should be reserved for men was somewhat widespread as reflected in the following article appearing in American Magazine in May, 1788:

> In America, female education should have for its object what is useful. Young ladies should be taught to speak and write their own studied by those whose attention is not employed about more important concerns. (Seybolt, p.376)

By 1787 Harvard established its first professorship of French. (Until that time tutors had taught French at the New England institution.) Joseph Nancrède filled the professorship with distinction. He also edited l'Abeille, which which had 84 subscribers, among whom were John Hancock, John Quincy Adams, James Lowell, and Elisha Ticknor (father of the future founder of the Department of Modern

Languages at Harvard) and "tout le beau monde de Boston." (Faÿ, p.178)

After the Revolutionary War new colleges not quite so tightly tied to the old English model were established in the young republic. Williams College in 1793 required French, along with Latin and Greek, of its freshmen, and Union College (founded in 1795) allowed students, upon payment of a supplemental fee, to substitute French for the Greek requirement. (Spurlin, p. 68-69) The commonly required payment of the supplemental fee was to remain a widespread stigma on modern languages until well into the nineteenth century.

Enthusiasm for modern languages, French in particular, was keen indeed as the nineteenth century approached. College students even addressed each other by nicknames such as Voltaire and Rousseau. But as has so often been the case in the study of modern languages in the history of American higher education, political factors, more than the intrinsic value of the language, affected the popularity of the study of a given language. The Jay Treaty between the United States and the Great Britain and the ensuing XYZ Affair made ardent federalists of many Harvard students who just months earlier had extolled the virtues of the French revolutionary spirit.

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Reflecting this sudden shift in public sentiment, Harvard, which had had orations in French at its commencements since the early eighteenth century, cancelled the oration in 1798 for fear that the sound of the French language might cause an uproar. Professor Wood addressing the commencement intoned:

> Behold France converted by (the effects of infidel philosophy) into one great theatre of falsehood and perjury, of cruelty and ferocity, of robbery and piracy, of anarchy and despotism, of fornication and adultery and of course reduced to a state of unspeakable degradation and misery. (Liedke, p. 15)

As a result, the study of French at Harvard and at many American colleges was severely diminished if not abolished. A petition by the Harvard freshmen in 1806 to re-introduce French as substitution for the Hebrew requirement, since French would prove more practical for them in the future than the Hebrew, was rejected by the Harvard overseers. But French was re-introduced into the curriculum on probationary status. Such trimester-by-trimester evaluation of French instruction continued until 1816.

The name Abiel Smith would have remained unknown in the future, claims Faÿ, had it not been for his generous bequest in 1815 of $20,000 to Harvard for the founding of a chair in French and Spanish. In 1816 it was decided that the first professor of the Smith chair would be George Ticknor, who at

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the time was a student at the University of Gottingen. After his appointment this young scholar spent three additional years in Europe where he worked diligently on his language skills.

Faÿ contends that Ticknor, perhaps more than any young American of his times, had the unique qualifications "to bring Europe to the United States." He had chatted with Jefferson at Monticello and with John Adams at Qunicy, with Goethe at Weimar and Lord Byron in London. He had spent considerable time with Schlegel, and Mme.de Stael considered him as her son. La Fayette listened to his advice and Talleyrand recounted to him some of his outstanding adventures in life. He had had a papal audience, and had received warm advice from Sir Walter Scott. The famed Metternich had taken him into his confidence. Yet this young man remained humble. (Faÿ, p.188)

From all accounts Harvard was very firmly committed to a curriculum based on Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. To students at Harvard "it seemed...that nothing was being taught of intellectual value." (Faÿ, p.190) "It was obvious in this young republic that the most active and creative minds were being given an education as boring and sleep-producing as one could imagine." (Faÿ, p.191)

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Morison, in his book Three Centuries of Harvard shows to what extent Ticknor attracted the intelligensia of his day. Says Morison, "Ticknor soon became the center of a cultivated circle which gave Boston the name 'the Athens of America.'" (Morison, p.230)

Indeed some of the reforms that Ticknor envisioned for Harvard were introduced. However radical institutional reform would have to await further movements arising later in the nineteenth century. Yet, as Watts contends, Ticknor's impact, although incomplete, was nonetheless noteworthy.

It was a distinct concession on the part of the authorities to allow Freshman to elect modern languages in place of one-half the prescribed work in Latin and Greek at a time when the ancient languages were considered of prime importance. In reality, however, the other faculty members and the administration held modern language study to be of little importance and hardly more than "a substitute for minds incapable of mastering Hebrew, Chemistry, and Calculus." (Watts, p.78)

This was a time when the Yale Report was to reaffirm that the true role of the classical educational curriculum was for "the discipline and furniture" of the mind.

> The student who has limited himself to French, Italian, and Spanish is very imperfectly prepared to commence a course for either divinity of law. He knows less of the

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> literature of his own country than if he had been educated in the old method; the faculties of his mind have been brought into less vigorous exercise. (Yale Report p.38)

Yet, like a prophet, Ticknor foresaw the founding of new colleges in which time-honored educational values would be openly challenged. Ticknor spoke of this when he said:

> Our high places of education may easily accomodate themselves more wisely to the spirit and wants of the times in which we live. New institutions are springing up which in the flexibility of their youth will easily take the forms that are required of them, while the older establishments if they suffer themselves to grow harder and harder in their ancient habits and systems will be only the first victims of the spirit of improvement. (Ticknor, p.45)

Reference is made to the modern languages in the President's 1828-1829 annual Harvard report, where one can read: "The principles that regulate the modern languages are these; no student is compelled to study any of them. A student choosing to study either is compelled to perservere. He is not permitted to quit the study until he has learned the languages." (Fourth Annual Report of the President at Harvard for 1828-1829 p. XXXIII)

Faÿ suggests two major reasons for the failing of Ticknor's reforms. First, he claims that the faculty, long-accustomed to a comfortable way of operating refused to allow changes (even though one could have demonstrated the

desirablility of such changes), because such changes threatened their academic "power." Further, many students who had grown intellectually lazy resisted reforms that would make them more personally responsible for their academic endeavors. (Faÿ, p. 193)

An obviously frustrated Ticknor was later to utter that "either the modern language was wrong or else the university was following the wrong path." (Faÿ, p. 200) With such a statement the battle lines had been drawn. The overseers at Harvard decided to remain firm in their position, and there seemed no other alternative for Ticknor but to leave Harvard. Thus in 1835 Ticknor did leave, and Harvard was faced with the monumental task of replacing this modern language teacher who many felt was, more than any other single individual, the father of modern language instruction in American higher education.

In remarks made in 1825 Ticknor had referred to other new colleges that were springing up in America. One such institution was Amherst, where Professor Jacob Abbot, who, like Ticknor, was a kind of "voice crying in the wilderness" devised a plan of parallel courses of instruction (the traditional one and one which allowed for one based on reform). The Board of Trustees accepted his proposals stating:

> In consequence of the demand which is at the present time made by a large portion of the public for the means of an elevated and liberal education without the necessity of devoting so much time to the study of the ancient languages, the trustees have authorized the establishment of two parallel courses of study, in one of which, Ancient and in the other Modern Languages and Literature receive particular attention. (Watts, p. 76)

Abbot's attempts to reform the time-honored curriculum proved short-lived, but from that time on French was a part of the Amherst curriculum.

At Washington College (now Washington and Lee) students were permitted to substitute French for the Greek requirement, but the president cast a dissenting vote when he claimed that "to substitute French for Greek was a mistake, not because French was generally of less practicality than the Greek, but... because the study of it does not so well exercise the mental faculties of a youth." (Watts, p. 72)

Thomas Jefferson, who from his youth had been a proponent of the modern languages, late in his life as the founder of Virginia, gave the German language a great boost when he contended:

> The German now stands in a line with that of the most learned nations in richness of condition and advances in the sciences. It is too of common descent with the language of our own country, a branch of the same original Gothic stock, and furnishes valuable illustrations for us. (Zeydel, p. 291)

At Harvard the Smith Chair of Modern Languages vacated by Ticknor was filled in 1835 by the appointment of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who had been appointed professor of modern languages at Bowdoin College at the age of nineteen. Like Ticknor he had spent three years in Europe in language preparation for his duties at Bowdoin. Writing to his father from Europe in 1827 he stated: "Do not believe what people tell you of learning the French language in six months and the Spanish in three." (Watts, p.73) One of his students wrote of Longfellow's teaching at Bowdoin: "He created an interest for the modern languages which has never since been equaled. He was a model teacher with a special fitness, both natural and acquired, for the department." (Watts, p.74)

Longfellow, however, did not seem to have the acumen either for administering the department or defining its role in high places at Harvard. Although students enjoyed his lectures, the department lost ground at Harvard under his administration. In 1854, having found teaching "a dog's life," he resigned his position at Harvard to devote himself fulltime to his creative writing. Longfellow was replaced in the Smith Chair by James Russell Lowell. (Watts, p. 80)

As Ticknor had foretold, the new colleges springing up in what was then considered the western territory were

beginning to challenge the traditional curriculum based on the English model. The rise of the land-grant college with its penchant for the pragmatic did not do much to advance the cause of the modern language requirement directly; it did continue to hammer away at the ancients and their grip on the collegiate curriculum.

Whereas the first half of the nineteenth century had clearly been dominated by the classical tradition with Latin and Greek as its core (as the Yale Report had claimed should continue to be the case), the end of the nineteenth century would witness the modern languages firmly in place as requirements (often at the expense of Latin and Greek).

Several factors accounted for this shift away from the ancient languages late in the nineteenth century. As has been previously mentioned, the new land-grant and public university systems had an impact. Also to be considered was the entry of the empirical method into a central position in the collegiate arena. Perhaps most crucial was the spirit of Lernfreiheit of the German university model and the generation of administrators in higher education who had been so shaped by it.

Two statements made by President Barnard in the mid-nineteenth century reflect the somewhat rapid shift in emphasis that was to take place in American higher education

after the Civil War. In 1855, as the President of the University of Alabama, he made the following statement: "It is best to reject entirely from the regular course of study all subjects that are taught primarily for their practical value." For Barnard, Greek and Latin should continue to be the keystones of the collegiate structure. (Barnard, p.9) However in 1866, now as President of Columbia University, Barnard shifted his position somewhat . He held that although the ancients might still be considered important, they had to release the tight grip which they had on education. (Barnard in Liedke, p.17)

The dialogue between Porter of Yale and White, who was establishing the prototype for the new order at Cornell, heightened the contrast between those who felt that modern language should be pre-eminent and those who upheld the time-honored curriculum. Said Andrew White of Cornell:

> It is impossible to find a reason why a man should be made a Bachelor of Arts for good studies in Cicero and Tacitus and Thucydides and Sophocles which does not equally prove that he ought to have the same distinction for good studies in Montesquieu and Corneille, and Goethe, and Schiller, and Dante, and Shakespeare. (Letter to N.Y. Tribune, March 16, 1868)

President Porter of Yale replied that he felt a knowledge of the ancient languages continued to be "the most efficient instrument of discipline." (Porter, p.69)

It is ironic that the man who was to launch the elective system in American higher education (a system which many today hold responsible for the decline in modern language instruction) was to make a demand for the equality of the modern languages with the ancient ones. Charles Eliot, who stood as a giant because of his influence of American higher education served from 1869 until 1909 as the reform-minded president of Harvard. He was to bring to fruition many of the reforms dreamed about by men such as Ticknor at Harvard and Abbot at Amherst a half-century earlier. In a strong statement that came at nearly the same time as the formation of the Modern Language Association and of the Alliance française in France, he asserted:

> The next subjects for which I claim a position of academic equality with Greek, Latin, and Mathematics are German and French. This claim rests not on the usefulness of these languages to couriers, tourists, commercial travelers, and not on their merits as languages, but on the magnitude and worth of their literatures, and the unquestionable fact that facility in reading these languages is absolutely indispensible to a scholar whatever may be his department of studies. I urge no utilitarian argument but rest the claim of French and German...to complete equally on the copiousness and merit of their literature and indispensibleness of the languages to all scholars. (Eliot, p.101)

His statement not only established the modern languages as worthy replacements for the requirement of the ancient

languages but also set the manner in which they should be studied and the goal for such a study. Gilbert in "French and German: a Comparative Study" writes that the Modern Language Association founded in 1883 "adopted the methods and objectives of the classicists, emphasizing the discipline of the mind such study provides and stressing grammatical analysis and the translation of prestigious literature in a two-year course." (Gilbert, p.262) The battle over whether language study should be primarily for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons would not break out until after World War I.

The impact of Eliot's statement can be seen in the change in the number of accredited liberal arts colleges requiring modern languages for graduation. In 1884 only a scattering of such colleges required a modern language for the bachelor's degree. By 1896, fifty percent of these institutions had such a requirement. Even Yale required modern languages for graduation in 1885!

In the year 1900, German was by far the most popular of the modern languages in American higher education. German had taken the preeminent position so long held by French largely due to the influence of the German university model. Institutions such as the Johns Hopkins University were markedly different in their educational philosophy from the more established American colleges. The Spanish language got

some attention because the United States acquired Spanish-speaking territories after the Spanish-American War, but was still, at the dawn of the twentieth century, a very minor influence in American higher education.

The years preceding World War I saw a dramatic increase in modern language requirements in American liberal arts colleges. By 1910 nearly 70% required a modern language for graduation and by 1915, 85% had such a requirement." (Zeydel, p.297) In addition, 89% of the nation's colleges required a modern language for entrance. (Parker, p.140) A chart of high school enrollment shows some trends from the period. According to Parker such figures reflect what was happening as well in post-secondary instruction in modern languages.

*Year	Total H.S. Enrollment	%L.	%M.L.	%F.	%G.	%S.
1890	202963	34.7	16.3	5.8	10.5	0.0
1895	350099	43.9	17.9	6.5	11.4	0.0
1900	519251	50.6	22.1	7.8	14.3	0.0
1905	679702	50.2	29.3	9.1	20.2	0.0
1910	915061	49.0	34.3	9.9	23.7	0.7
1915	1328984	37.3	35.9	8.8	24.4	2.7

(Parker, p.139)

* %L. = % Latin, %M.L. = % Modern Language, %F. = % French, %G. = % German, and %S. = % Spanish.

It is interesting to note that Latin enrollment continued to increase in high schools until 1905. Between 1905 and 1910 Latin registered a slight decrease, but between 1910 and 1915 the decline was significant. The increase in German enrollment from 1890 until 1915 was most dramatic. Just prior to World War I nearly a quarter of all high school students were studying German. It is interesting to note that French enrollment actually dipped slightly between 1910 and 1915. Also it is noteworthy that Spanish for the first time registered significantly on enrollment studies.

But as is so often the case, secondary factors (or what sociologists might call a hidden agenda) were about to play a significant role in the shaping of modern language study in the nation's institutions of secondary and postsecondary education. World War I was devastating to the cause of modern langauge study in general and the study of German in particular. Whereas 24.4% of American high school students had been pursuing a study of German in 1915, that percentage dropped to 0.6% by 1922. Parker explains, "Almost overnight Americans developed a hysterical distrust of all things German, hence by emotional logic, of most things foreign." Twenty-two states swept by the xenophobic tide passed laws that were "hostile" to the teaching of modern languages. Though the Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional, but the damage had been done. (Parker, p.140)

Year	Total H.S. Enrollment	%L.	%M.L.	%F.	%G.	%S.
1915	1328984	37.3	35.9	8.8	24.4	2.7
1922	2230000	27.5	27.4	15.5	0.6	11.3

(Gilbert, p.262,263)

With the emergence of Spanish as a major foreign language, a new aspect of infighting amoung language teachers would begin. Until World War I there had been little

arguing that the major aim of foreign language instruction was to be gramatical analysis and literary criticism. Spanish, however, had not yet discovered its literary heritage, and thus set up as its primary function the teaching of communication skills which could be applied in its new market, Latin America. (Parker, p.139)

Although World War I and its aftermath profoundly affected modern language study in American higher education in the years between the two World Wars, other factors were at work. It is important to take note of some of the factors affecting the educational climate at the turn of the century and into the early twentieth century. For instance, the Committee on Reorganization of Secondary Education met to assess educational objectives in light of the Eliot Report of 1893. The commission, chaired by Harvard's Eliot, found that the natural sciences and foreign languages had been held up "to cultivate the habits of observation." The Reorganization Commission found the Eliot Report "elitist." The Commission found "most school children not capable of subject matter and intellectual skill." Elitism [an attribute of foreign languages, felt the Commission] became at once the enemy of democratically oriented education. (Mitchell, p.71)

The Cardinal Principles enunciated in the Commission's Report did not mention foreign languages. The attack on the traditional role of foreign languages is unmistakable: "It [high school] has so exclusively sought intellectual discipline that it has seldom treated literature, art, and music so as to evoke right emotional response and produce positive enjoyment." (Mitchell, p.83)

Perhaps at this point it would be good to address the relationship between high school and colleges in regard to modern language instruction and requirements. Parker contends that college-entrance requirements are not so much affected by the wishes and desires of college faculties as they are by high school administrators and counselors heeding the advice of "professional educators." Says he: "Recognized or not, it is a fact that changes in secondary school education have influenced faculty views of what a college education ought to be." (Parker, p.131)

Another report that had a profound influence on the direction of modern language instruction between the two World Wars was the Coleman Report of 1924, the findings of which indicated that the high school student could not learn much in a two-year foreign language sequence. Since the one skill that might be attained to some degree was reading; therefore, in the interests of time, reading skills should

be stressed at the expense of speaking and listening skills. The effects of such an emphasis would be acutely felt as the United States entered World War II.

In addition, learning theory as developed by researchers such as Thorndike became prevalent in the twentieth century and attacked the time-honored concept that language study was a worthy task for mental exercise and discipline. Thorndike, reporting in 1924, found that "the investigations agree in disagreeing with the traditional doctrine that Latin, Algebra, and Geometry are the prime disciplinary subjects of the high school. The average for Latin (and French) and Algebra is lower than the values for physical science for persons of the same sex and initial ability." (Thorndike, p.98)

In the same vein Bode in Conflicting Psychologies of Learning held that:

> The weight of evidence is all against the former disciplines of tradition. The experimental evidence is against the idea that the 'powers' of the mind CAN be trained like muscles, so that the strengthening of these powers will automatically insure a high degree of efficiency in new and unrelated materials. (Bode, p.44)

Parker reports that, in a 1940 study entitled "Education for All American Youth", it was found that "vicious" subjects like foreign languages were cruelly hurting the nation's youngsters. If students were interested in taking

subjects like foreign languages, chemistry, and literature they should do it in their spare time as a "peripheral" concern. (Parker, p.89)

For these reasons cited and others perhaps even undefinable, 1930-1950 marked a period of decline of the modern language requirement both for entry into the nation's liberal arts colleges as well as for graduation from them. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University noted the trend with alarm when he wrote:

> It is astonishing that while the decades since the first World War have drawn us into even a closer communication with foreign peoples and put on us an ever increasing burden in world affairs, they have also been marked by a steady decline in the study of foreign languages. (Newark, p.v.)

World War II found the United States woefully unprepared in the area of language competence. Many held that declining requirements in the nation's colleges and overemphasis on reading skills contributed to a lack of recruits who could <u>speak</u> a foreign language. The government itself had to take over intensive language instruction with its Army Specialized Training Program. The excellent results of audio-lingual training used in the program would have a profound impact on language instruction techniques in the years following the war. There are those who would quickly add, however, that while the ASTP was quite efficient, its

trainees were immersed in a way not possible in a traditional college classroom. The large blocks of time that ASTP devoted to learning a language just are not there for the professor facing a classroom of students for a term or two.

Ironically, although World War II had once again illustrated that cultural isolation was an impossibility, foreign language instruction continued to decline along with both requirements for college entry and graduation. Once again reference is made to high school enrollment figures as an indicator.

Year	Total H.S. Enrollment	%L.	%M.L.	%F.	%G.	%S.
1922	2230000	27.5	27.4	15.5	.6	11.3
1928	3354473	22.0	25.2	14.0	1.8	9.4
1934	5620625	16.0	19.5	10.9	2.4	6.2
1949	4399452	7.8	13.7	4.7	.8	8.2
1954	6582300	6.9	14.2	5.6	.8	7.3

Note the precipitous decline for both French and Latin. Spanish, although showing lower enrollments did not have so pronounced a decline as that of Latin and French. From 1900-1949 Latin dropped from 50.6% of the high school

population and modern languages dropped from 35.9% of high school students in 1915 to 13.7% in 1949.

Two statements made at Harvard during World War II bear mentioning. The first, made by James Bryant Conant in his 1943 Presidential Report, reflected how the clientele at the institutions of American higher education had changed, as had the rationale for the education received there. "The primary concern of American education today is not the development of the appreciation of the'good life' in young gentlemen born to the purple. It is the infusion of the liberal humane tradition into our entire education system." The Harvard Report of 1945 entitled "General Education in a Free Society" foresaw a role, albeit small, for foreign languages. According to the report: "Indeed they [who learn a foreign language] are essential since any society for want of certain number of persons so educated, slips into insularity." (Harvard Report, p.120)

Although the launching of Sputnik in 1957 did, in reverse, to foreign language study what World War I had done, it can be documented (using Parker's high school enrollment chart as an indicator) that a small increase for modern language could be seen prior to that eventful scientific accomplishment.

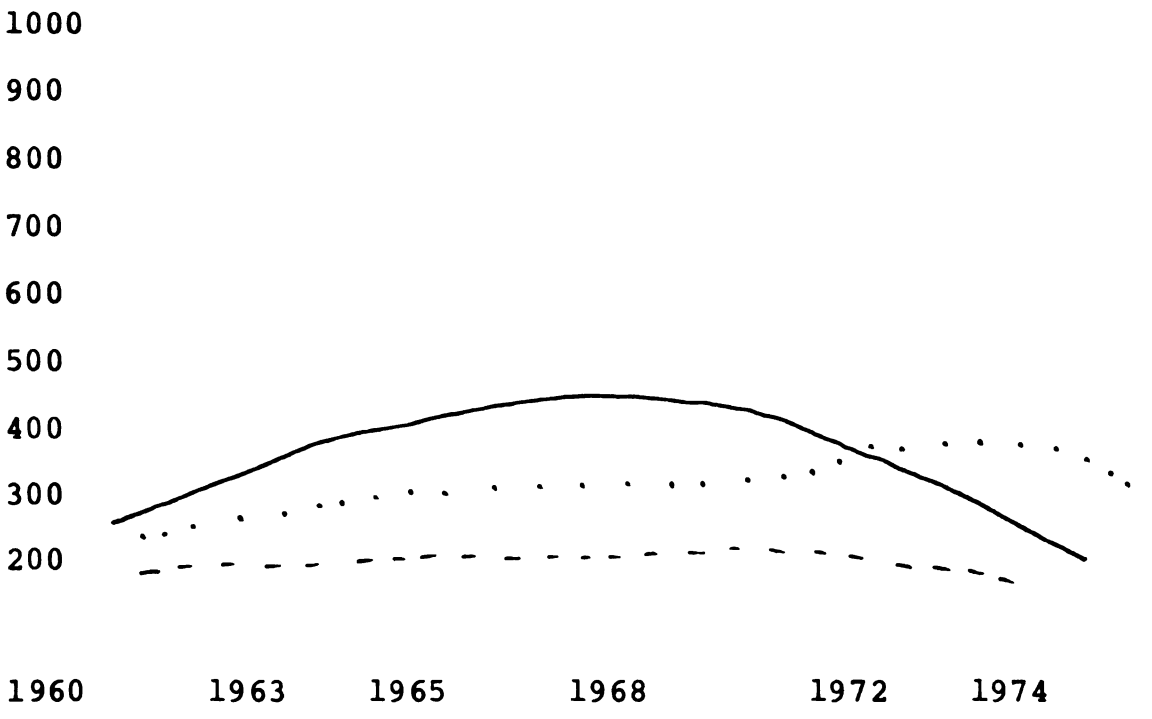
Perhaps such an increase was in part affected by a dramatic statement made by the United States Commissioner of Education in 1952. Asserted Commissioner McGrath:

> For some years I unwisely took the position that foreign language did not constitute an indispensible element in a general educational program. This position, I am happy to say, I have reversed. I have now seen the light, and I consider foreign languages a very important element in general education...Only through the ability to use another language even modestly can one really become conscious of the full meaning of being a member of another nationality or cultural group. It is in our national interest to give as many of our citizens as possible the opportunity to gain those cultural insights...Educators from the elementary school to the top levels of the university system ought to give immediate attention to this matter. (Parker, p.148,149)

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 was most beneficial for modern language study in the United States. Once again using high school enrollment figures as an indicator one can catch a glimpse of dramatic increases.

Year	Total H.S. Enrollment	%L.	%M.L.	%F.	%G.	%S.
1954	6582300	6.9	14.2	5.6	.8	7.3
1958	7897232	7.8	16.4	6.1	1.2	8.8
1959	8155573	7.9	19.1	7.4	1.5	9.8
1964	11056639	5.4	26.2	10.8	2.6	12.3

Note the increase in one single year from 1958-1959. In that year there was nearly a three-percent increase in those enrolled in modern languages in high schools. Latin continued its decline by dropping from 7.9% in 1959 to 5.4% in 1964. Consider actual numbers enrolled in modern languages in American colleges for the years 1960-1974 in graph form (given in thousands).



Key: French _____

German ----------

Spanish .....

(Foreign Language Annals 1976: 90)

By 1965, 89% of the nation's colleges and universities required foreign language for graduation, though only 33% required a foreign language for entrance. By 1974 only 55% had degree requirements and 19% entrance requirements. By 1981 only 8% required a foreign language for entrance. Also in 1974 only 18.4% of high school students were enrolled in a modern language as compared to 27.7% in 1968 (French 1968- 10.4%, 1974- 5.8%) (Foreign Language Annals 1977: 116) Almost as dramatic as the increase in the early 1960s was the decline in the 1970s. What could possibly explain such a precipitous decline? Norma Klayman, who has done several studies on the modern language requirement in American higher education, offers these words:

> The widespread abolishment of the foreign language requirement is attributable to a popular trend which swept the riotous college campuses during the Vietnam War. En masse, at the same time, the nation endorsed the notion that everyone, particularly the student, could do his own thing even if it led to intellectual chaos and intellectual malnutrition. (Klayman, p.168)

Girouard writing in "How America Got Its Foreign Language Gap" asserts that "foreign languages were among the first victims of revamped curricula. They least of all were 'relevant' or 'meaningful' to the Feel Generation." Further he contends that a kind of hidden agenda was at work. Administrators foreseeing enrollment declines and in attempt

to make college more palatable allowed foreign languages to be the scapegoat. (Girouard, p187)

Chastain in an article entitled "The Relevance of Requirements" does not find foreign languages quite so singled out as does Girouard. Instead he found that permissiveness had led to a generation of students that "looks disdainfully upon anything required as distasteful, irrelevant, unnecessary and destructive..." He continues:

> The students, of course, are not all romantic young idealists blazing a path toward Utopia. Some are lazy opportunists who constantly seek out the path of least resistance and follow it passionately. To many students, elimination of the requirements makes things easier for them. If they can get away with it, who can blame them? (Chastain, p.373)

Not since the great debates of the nineteenth century between the ancient and the modern languages has there been so much attention given to soul-searching within the modern language ranks. There are those that feel that the era immediately following NDEA made the modern language departments fat and lazy. Troyanovich, reiterating what Conant had claimed in 1943, in an article entitled "Foreign Languages and the Dodo Bird; A Lesson from Darwin" says that the genteel tradition serving as a cocoon around foreign language is gone, never to return. For him such a situation is healthy, if modern languages can adapt to the changes. (Troyanovich, p.342)

In the period from 1969 through the early 1970s the literature is full of articles stating various reasons for the modern language requirement. Unfortunately for the sake of balanced research most of the data were gathered from people within the language profession. On one hand language teachers, more than any other sector of the academic community, know the issues to be raised in this matter, but the articles often take on the defensive tone of one who is defending his territory.

However, there are those who point to the hostility which results when a requirement yields a captive audience. Wilga Rivers has collected a series of reactions of such "captives." Following is a sampling of comments:

> Les Miserables got its title from all the lucky people taking 101. Many liked the course, but few liked having to take it.
>
> As a foreign language requirement this course contains all the necessary grammar and vocabulary, except for words of frustration, hostility, and anger. A good dictionary will fill in those educational gaps.
>
> (This course) ruins most students averages; it ruins their morale, it ruins their social life by staying in and studying so much; and it really ruins any desire that any would have to learn a foreign language. (Rivers, p.1)

Many argue that the good student seeing the long term need for a foreign language will seek out the opportunity voluntarily. Sammons in an article entitled "Our Problems Are Our Own" comes out against what he terms "protective tariffs." He asserts that if foreign language courses are well taught, and if foreign language departments clearly articulate the rationale for their courses, students will see the educational value and will take the course in question.

Not so asserts Burgett, who insists that "the primary rationale for requiring any course is that students, though realizing the need for a course and often wanting to take that course, do not take the course anyway." (Burgett, p.23)

Cyril Birch agrees but explains the need for a requirement in a different manner. Says he:

> Obviously there aren't many of us, with the best will in the world, who can summon up the kind to determination that starts a diary on January 1 and keeps it up much beyond February 15. A requirement is an irksome but valuable substitute for a particular kind of will power. (Deeken, p.27)

Several studies should be cited at this point concerning the foreign language requirement at the college level. In 1954 Politzer conducted a study at Harvard to measure student attitude toward the foreign language requirement. In a survey of students taking French and Spanish as

an institutional requirement he found that one-third to one-half of the students had no intrinsic interest in the language which they were studying. In addition they found a reading knowledge of the language studied was just as important as a speaking knowledge.
(Politzer, p.15)

A study conducted at the University of Illinois in 1968 found that 50% "preferred a course oriented toward understanding of grammar and reading comprehension," while 47% preferred "a course oriented toward an aural/oral approach." Moreover, the study found that 80% of those in a required language course felt they had to work harder in a foreign language course than in other course and found this difference to be unfair. Sixty-one percent (61%) felt that the extra work required by a foreign language course prevented their pursuing other courses in which they had more interest. Eighty percent (80%) of the students surveyed disagreed that study of a foreign language was helpful in developing "discipline" or "better study habits." Seventy-six percent (76%) disapproved of a foreign language requirement and 40% felt that such a requirement was detrimental. (Jakobovits, p.448)

A survey of students taking a foreign language at Penn State in 1967 found that 81% were taking a foreign language

to fulfill a requirement. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the students claimed that they would have taken the course even if it were not required.

Saviano conducted a survey of liberal arts college graduates to ascertain what they would change about their college careers if given the opportunity. Of all the courses they wished they had taken (with the benefit of hindsight) by rank order the foreign languages were first. Saviano continues: "In their search for what was relevant they were permitted to take what they thought they wanted and avoid what they didn't want to take. It wasn't until their later years that they realized their mistake." (Saviano, p.13)

Castañada, who feels the requirement presents more problems than benefits, offers a plausible reason for the resistance to foreign language courses. He claims that today's college professors were part of the captive audience of the past, and it is possible that they "discourage student advisees from enrolling in foreign language courses, because such courses were the least happy, successful,and rewarding of their schooling." (Castañada, p.46)

William Riley Parker, author of the "Language Curtain" as well as other important essays, once commented, "Heaven help the academic subject that can and must be defended in

terms of being both a tool of practical value and also its contributions to the ideal of liberal arts!" (Parker, p.152) Such a struggle, however, exists between those who hold differing views as to whether extrinsic or intrinsic value of language study should be paramount.

Brod disagrees that there need be an inherent conflict between those who are heirs of the classical tradition and the ones who feel that one is to teach language as a vocational tool. (Brod, p.17) Perhaps, as Brod suggests, there need not be conflict, but the evidence is that such conflict (at times open hostility) often attends an airing of the opposing views.

Numerous sources indicate that for foreign language teachers to campaign for language study as a primary vocational skill is to be dishonest. Yet there are those who will quickly add that, as an auxiliary skill, a foreign language quite effectively complements such degrees as marketing, business management, and engineering.

Several studies show that both the United States government and American business are frankly displeased with the products (even language majors) of American institutions of higher education. American business in general assigns low priority to language skills. Quite often businesses opt either for natives to carry on foreign language tasks or

give their employees a crash course in the foreign language involved. (Berryman, p.123)

Weinstein in an article "Foreign Language Majors: the Washington Perspective" sees several problems with the current attitude of United States business toward the importance of foreign language skills. He sees the United States slipping seriously in international trade. He offers the view that one of the reasons is the insistence on English as the lingua franca. He contrasts this attitude with that of many European and Asian businessmen who meet face to face without the services of the middleman (an interpreter). When a businessman does take a crash course, he usually exhibits a proficiency below that established by the State Department as minimal. Native speakers are simply unacquainted often with technical terms.

Arnett of Olympus Research Corporation indicates that the three major languages needed for international business and government are by rank order 1) Spanish 2)French and 3) German. He finds the attitude of business (i.e. that English must be the lingua franca) to be hurting severely United States interests abroad, and he lays the blame for barriers to the needed retooling squarely on the shoulders of the nation's foreign language departments which he describes as that "monolithic coalition of pre-supposed humanitarians who see themselves only in the light of being

true to the faith of liberal arts and the belles lettres." (Arnett, p.22,23)

Yet there are those in the "monolithic coalition," as Arnett calls it, who feel just as strongly about their position. Assineau claims that teaching of foreign language must not be reduced to the level of "bilingual guides for hurried tourists." He continues: "Our task is to form civilized and cultured young men and women, and not parrots who can repeat sentences...." (Assineau, p.684)

Kimpton in an article entitled "What is French For?" seconds Assineau's position. Kimpton, who resents the marketing of modern languages in an age when language requirements have been dropped in American higher education, holds that

> a doctrinaire insistence on French for everyone recapitulates in the opposite tradition our previous error of French only for the elite. Is it not more reasonable to offer French for all those who are willing and able to master it? The world opened for such students should not be that of "the department store, the Parisian cafe, or the Eiffel Tower, but rather the world of Villon, of Baudelaire, of Valery and of the poets... (Kimpton, p.739)

Thus the question is raised: should the modern language department be training clerks or classicists? Should such courses be required or not? The controversy continues.

Klayman in a recent survey of high school administrators, counselors, and foreign language teachers, sought opinions concerning the foreign language requirement for colleges. Following are the responses to several questions pertaining to foreign language study. Of a total of 650 respondents chosen at random in Western New York State, 29% were administrators, 30% were guidance counselors, and 41% were foreign language teachers. Following are several sample questions:

> Question: What in your opinion constitutes the greatest cause for the decline of foreign language in recent years?
> --From a list of several choices, the most important one cited was the lowering of college entrance requirements. (83%)
>
> Question: Who in your opinion whould study foreign language in college?
> --All college students (20%)
> --Only those who want to study foreign language (25%)
> --At least all liberal arts students (54%)
> (A total of 74% felt that at least all liberal arts students should study a foreign language in college.)
>
> Question: Should a student who has had no foreign language experience in high school be required to take a foreign language for a liberal arts degree in college?
> --Yes 75%
> --No 25%
>
> Question: Should the foreign language requirement be reinstated by colleges for some students?

--Yes 80%
--No 20%

Question: Could in your opinion the limitation of foreign language study only to those who elect to study them be detrimental ultimately to many capable students who might neglect to take a language and eventually to the national interest?
--Yes 70%
--No 30%

Question: Do you feel that state and national efforts to deter decline of foreign language study should be made?
--Yes 86%
--No 14%

(Although on face this study might be dismissed because of the preponderance of foreign language teachers involved, it should be added that, with administrators and counselors separated out as a group, a clear majority of affirmative responses was still shown for each question.)

In a follow-up study in 1978 Klayman chose fifty foreign-language educators who in her opinion have done the most to shape foreign language instruction in the last quarter century. Following are several questions and the answers of these foreign language experts.

Question: Should colleges reinstate the foreign language requirement?
--Yes 93%
--No 7% ("captive audience", "poor teaching milieu")

Question: Were the reasons valid for dropping the requirement?
--Yes 20% ("promised unattainable, unrealistic goals", "profession guilty of poor performances")
--No 74% ("capitulation to student demands")

Question: Is a sensible course of study possible to achieve in 4 years of high school or 4 semesters of college?
--Yes 77%

Question: Are you opposed to culture courses taught in English as substitutes mandated foreign language study?
--Yes 84%

Question: Are you opposed to foreign language in translation to replace foreign language requirements?
--Yes 80%

Question: What should be the priorities of a foreign language department? (Answers by rank order)
-1) Development of basic skills (Reading, Writing, Comprehension, Speaking)
-2) Culture taught in context of foreign language
-3) Literature taught in original language

There are also numerous anecdotes to illustrate the hazards of poor translation. President Carter's embarrassment in Poland was not by any means the only example. Some faulty translation has even had devastating effects. Toward the end of World War II with the use of the atomic bomb pending, the Japanese were offered surrender. Their answer was

"mukusatsu," which in Japanese means "withholding decision." However it was translated in Washington as "offer rejected." On another occasion a French diplomat at the United Nations answered a resolution with the statement: "Je demande l'aide." "Demander" was translated as "to demand," when in fact in French it means "to request." Serious repercussions followed the misunderstanding. (Honig and Brod, p.8-10)

John Foster Dulles seemed to be concerned about the possibility for such misunderstandings when he uttered a generation ago: "Interpreters are no substitute. It is not possible to understand what is in the minds of other people without understanding their language, and without understanding their language it is impossible to be sure that they understand what is on our minds." (Parker, p.101)

In 1975 the Helsinki Accords included a provision "to encourage the foreign language and civilization as important means of expanding communication among people." (Perkins, p.11) The Commission on Foreign Language and International Study was thus established in April, 1978, with the realization that there had been

> a serious deterioration in this country's language and research capability at a time when an increasingly hazardous international military, political, and economic environment is making unprecedented demand on American resources, intellectual capacity, and public

> sensitivity. Nothing less is at issue than the nation's security. (Perkins, p.11)

As chairman, Perkins adds in his report to the President:

> The damage to America's competitive edge in international commerce and our repeated unpreparedness for events overseas that might have been anticipated, or met more effectively by extensive research, illustrate the risks...America's incompetence in foreign language is nothing short of scandalous. (Perkins, p.12)

The report further chided Americans for taking the attitude that the whole world accept English as the lingua franca. The decline from 43% to 8% since 1966 in the number of colleges requiring foreign language for admission was viewed with alarm. It was also noted that in the United States there are 10,000 Japanese business representatives who speak English, whereas of the 900 American businessmen located in Japan few speak Japanese. (Perkins, p.13)

Mitchell picks up on this theme when he suggests:

> When we have finally reached something like our present condition, when the bad name of language study has provided that few college students can even speak English, never mind German, or French, and when businesses find that their memo writers can't understand each other, and when thousands of workers are driven out of jobs by foreign competition, then we discover that every Japanese salesman speaks fluent English, and we wonder if that means something. (Mitchell, p.150)

The report to the President also found that ignorance of international matters accompanied foreign language incompetence. It was found that 40% of 12th graders in the United States could not locate Egypt on a map, and 20% could not locate China or France. (Perkins, p.13)

A brief summary of recommendations made by the President's Commission would include:

1) Schools and colleges should reinstate the foreign language requirements.

2) Foreign language instruction should concentrate on speaking and understanding before other language skills are developed.

3) Attention should be given to the lack of recognition on the part of colleges and universities of effective language teaching with promotion and tenure linked to publication and other non-teaching activities'.

4) Attempts should be made to compensate for inattention to the less commonly taught languages such as Japanese, Chinese, and Russian. (Perkins, p.14-17)

Parker suggests a rationalization frequently cited that hinders the kind of foreign language commitment called for in the Commission's report. Many Americans argue either that "Everything of any importance is available in English" or "I've forgotten all the French and German I ever learned, and I've gotten along all right." Parker adds, that "blind men get along too, but the difference is that one can admire their triumph over handicap." (Parker, p.121)

Mark Twain humorously pointed out in the nineteenth century a provincial attitude so prevalent in much of contemporary American society. The dialogue is between his characters Huck and Jim:

> "Why Huck, doan'de French people talk di same way we does?"
> "No, Jim; you couldn't understand a word they said - not a single word..."
> "S'pose a man was to come to you and say Polly-voo-franzy. What would you think?"
> "I wouldn't think nuffin; I'd take in bust him over the head."
> "Is a Frenchman a man?"
> "Yes."
> "Well, den! Dad blame it, why doan 'he talk like a man? You answer me dat!"
> "I see it warn't no use wasting words...So I quit." (Chastain, p.13, 1976)

Turner in a very insightful article entitled "Why Johnny Doesn't Want to Learn a Foreign Language" suggests that the main obstacle to Americans' learning of a foreign language is cultural. As pragmatists Americans just are not convinced that they will ever sufficiently need a foreign language to warrant their spending the time and effort learning it. Turner further contends that if the foreign language teacher retreats from the extrinsic rationale to the intrinsic, that too is doomed to failure, because it doesn't mesh with the fabric that is the American character. (Turner, p.196)

The "melting pot" concept puts a premium on total

assimilation into the new culture. Haugen claims that in an important sense Americans are all descendants of immigrants. The word immigrant , though, has negative associations for most Americans, for it suggests "someone who is uprooted, homeless, displaced, near the bottom of the social ladder, an ignoramus; in short, someone who is raw material to become a future American." (Haugen, p.9)

Turner suggests that Americans adopt a stance of superiority to all that is not American. He uses a speech made by General Patton during World War II to illustrate his point:

> When we land, we will meet German, and Italian soliders whom it is our honor and privilege to attack and destroy. Many of you have in your veins German and Italian blood, but remember that these ancestors of yours so loved freedom that they gave up home and country to cross the ocean in search of liberty. The ancestors of people we shall kill lacked the courage to make such a sacrifice and continued as slaves. (Gorer, p.123)

Gilbert in "French and German: A Comparative Study" claims that the extent to which assimilation of immigrants into the new culture in which they found themselves depended on certain sociological and political characteristics of the immigrants. For example the Germans settling in colonial America were for the most part "outcasts from the home country, not colonial representatives of it."

Germany had no colonial design invested in this immigration. On the other hand, Gilbert points out:

> French enjoyed a stronger position (in both Louisiana and Quebec) at least initially. French-speaking settlers arrived under the auspices and protection of an official plan of French colonization designed to establish a New France in North America. The colonists were reliably Catholic and often deeply conservative. (Gilbert, p.260, 261)

Today in the state of Louisiana there are two official languages, French and English; moreover Quebec continues to fight assimilation into its dominantly Anglophone surroundings. There is no such German pattern in the North American continent. For all intents and purposes near total assimilation has occurred into the dominant English stratum.

Recent articles in popular magazines, newspapers, as well as professional journals, regarding the importance of foreign language instruction in American higher education would indicate the pendulum that swung so far in one direction in the late 1960s and early 1970s is swinging back in the opposite direction. The present preoccupation of college students with vocational pursuits as well as the tenor of the Presidential Commission on foreign language study would seem to indicate priorities distinctly different from those in an earlier traditional liberal arts framework.

Harvard has just re-introduced foreign language competence into its core curriculum effective with the class

entering in 1982. To what extent will other institutions follow Harvard's lead? Recent international conferences have addressed the slipping prestige of the United States in the arena of international trade. What effects if any, will this have on the foreign language requirement? More time will be needed to assess the impact of these factors on foreign language study.

Parker offers some words of caution in regard to foreign languages in the liberal arts context. A given department may agree that foreign language is of no value to it as a tool. Others may point to the pragmatic results of foreign language study. But Parker hastens to show that both are missing the point of the requirement in the liberal arts context. Parker contends that "the discussion must stay on the subject, which is the nature of liberal education, not the need or lack of need of any department for language as a tool." (Parker, p. 120)

Parker also cautions that liberal arts colleges must be very careful in allowing for formal alternatives to established institutional requirements. Of course formal alternatives are possible where it can be shown that the substitution represents "closely similar experiences of equal value." (Parker, p.124) Parker would not hold computer language as such a similar experience.

Bundy agrees with Parker on this point:

> It is true that computer language is a means of communication; so are road signs, semaphores, and the Morse code. Bees dance; porpoises grunt, whistles, and squeal; dogs bark, growl, and wag their tails. All of these are languages of a sort, but when we talk about man's languages we are talking about something much more complex. (Bundy, p.46)

Pincus adds that computer language "is not a foreign language nor is it a means of communication between people. It is a set of arbitrary symbols that turn switching gears in a computer." (Pincus, p.21)

Parker would concede that computer language or some similar alternative might indeed represent a means of communication and learning, "but it does not teach that human beings in other cultures use sounds and symbols to express concepts which may find no real equivalents in English." (Parker, p.126)

Although numerous studies show that at least two years of college study are needed to achieve even the survival level 1 (FSI of the United States Department of State), Parker grants that, due to the many time demands placed upon the liberal arts curriculum (new courses, increased hours for the major), proponents of the foreign language requirement may not be able to have all the time they feel they need to develop even minimum proficiency. But Parker adds

that "the briefest experience of breaking the barrier of a single language and a single culture may well seem the most liberalizing adventure that a liberal arts college can offer today." (Parker, p. 129) Dr. James B. Conant disagreed. Said he: "A two year course...they might as well play basketball." (Parker, p.9)

To be certain, in the years ahead there will be conflicts both intradepartmental and interdepartmental, in the liberal arts college. However, language teachers and others involved in the debate would do well to observe Parker's admonition to "stick to the subject" in the airing of such differences of opinion.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A cartoon printed several years ago in a newspaper showed a research analyst standing in front of a large bank of computer equipment. With an appropriately detached demeanor he was shown reading a print-out of a problem posed to the computer. However, his objectivity was betrayed by his wearing of a party hat and by his response, "Yippee!! This year's office party is 17.3167% more fun than last year's." (Dyer, p. 157)

Although the example is amusing, there are at least two important points raised for the researcher. First, even a researcher can have difficulty in always maintaining his objectivity. Secondly, where something has even the most remote possibility of being quantified, there is the tendency to do so. To be certain, where data lend themselves to quantitative analysis, proper statistical analysis is to be sought. However some data need not be forced into such a highly precise statistical mode.

To some extent, this study needed some correlations to allow comparisons where helpful, but much of the data from

the interviews, where quantitative analysis was appropriate, lent themselves to such techniques as percentages. Further, since the research was descriptive and exploratory in nature, most analysis was in the form of reporting of the candid answers to open-ended questions during the interview.

The Population

The population for this study included the twenty liberal arts colleges in upstate New York. (Keuka College was unable to participate, since due to some internal administrative changes, there was no dean at the time of the study, and there was no one at that particular college who felt he could represent the dean's office for the interview.)

At each college the interviewer sought an interview with the top academic official at the college and the chairperson of the foreign language department or the chairperson of the department in which foreign languages were placed. Where the top academic official was unable to grant the interview, the reseacher interviewed the official's designated representative (the latter was closely allied to the academic affairs office or foreign language department). Following is a list of the colleges that served as the population, the size of the college, its location, as well as the titles or positions of those interviewed.

College/Location	Interviewees	Enrollment
1) Alfred University Alfred, NY	Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Chairman of Division of Humanities	1937
2) Colgate Hamilton, NY	Dean of the College; Assistant Chairman of the Department of Romance Languages and Literature	1620
3) Canisus College Buffalo, NY	Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs; Chairman of the Department of Modern Languages	3300
4) D'Youville College Buffalo, NY	Dean of Academic Affairs; Chairperson, Division of Humanities	1300
5) Daemen College Amherst, NY	Vice President for Academic Afairs; Chairman of Department of Modern Languages	1100
6) Elmira College Elmira, NY	Academic Dean; Chairman of the Humanities Division	950
7) Hamilton College Clinton, NY	Dean of the College; Chair-Department of Romance Languages and Literature	1620
8) Hartwick College Oneonta, NY	Vice-President and Dean of the College; Chair of the Department of Modern Languages	1380
9) Hobart/Wm Smith College Geneva, NY	Vice-President for Academic Affairs; Chairman of Department of Modern Languages	1700
10) Houghton College Houghton, NY	Academic Dean; Chair-Division of Foreign Languages	1225

11) Ithaca College Ithaca, NY	Dean-Humanities and Science; Chairperson Department of Modern Languages	4800
12) LeMoyne College Syracuse, NY	Academic Dean; Chairman-Foreign Language and Literatures	1928
13) Nazareth College Rochester, NY	Assistant to the Provost; Chairman-Foreign Language Department	1286
14) Roberts Wesleyan College Rochester, NY	Vice President for Academic Affairs; Acting Chair-Division of Humanitites	672
15) Russell Sage College Troy, NY	Academic Dean; Chairperson Modern Language Department	1450
16) St. John Fisher College Rochester, NY	Academic Dean; Chair-Department of Modern Languages	1550
17) Siena College Albany, NY	Dean of the Division of Humanities; Chair-Department of Foreign Languages	2600
18) Skidmore College Saratoga Springs, NY	Provost; Chairperson Department of Foreign Languages	2100
19) Wells College Aurora, NY	Dean of the College; Chairman-Department of Modern Languages	500

To be sure, there are several other colleges in upstate New York that were not included in the population. The criterion established for selection was that in its literature the college claim itself a liberal arts institution.

The Research Interview

The interview method was chosen because the researcher wanted to probe further some of the responses from the participants in the study. Clearly some of the data could have been gathered by means of a questionnaire sent to a random sample, but many important responses might have thus been lost. Henry and Johnnie Smith speak to this point when they write:

> The chief advantage of the interview lies in the informal manner in which it is conducted and the possibilities it offers for drawing out of certain facts which could not be obtained in any other way. Bare facts are not always true facts- accompanying reactions to spoken facts often shade the meanings and even in some instances change them altogether. The interview is really an oral questionnaire and many authorities believe it to be preferable to the written questionnaire for this reason. (Smith and Smith, p. 201, 202)

Hyman further notes the advantages to be gained by use of the interview:

> A variety of gains results from the fact that the interviewer, while he might be a biasing agent, might conceivably be an insightful, helpful person. He might be able to amplify a given question, probe for clarification of an ambiguous answer, or elaboration of a cryptic report, or to persuade the respondent to answer a question that he would otherwise skip.

As was mentioned in the first chapter, the interviewer must take all precautions to maintain objectivity so as not to contaminate the data, especially when he himself may have strong opinions on some of the questions posed. Furthermore, Travers reminds us that "there are difficulties in

quantifying the data provided by the interview. Often the data are such that they do not lend themselves to quantification." (Travers, p. 230) However, Travers hastens to point out the advantages of the interview process including higher percentage of respondents and easier opportunity to explain the purpose of the interview. He adds:

> An interviewer can conduct an interview at a proper speed, while questionnaires are often filled in hurriedly. The writer can recall having to fill in a questionnaire late at night in order that it be available for collection the following morning. True, the questionnaire had lain around the house for two weeks, but somehow time had not been found to answer the questions. This kind of problem can be avoided when the interview is used. (Travers, p.233)

The actual interviews for this study were conducted between October and December, 1983. Letters explaining the purpose of the study were sent to each prospective interviewee. The letter stated that the researcher would be calling soon to make an appointment for the interview. The reception to the invitation to participate in the research project was excellent.

In order to assure that the format for the guided interview was relatively free from ambiguity and to allow for further concerns to be uncovered during the response to open-ended questions, the researcher conducted three pilot interviews in August of 1983. Two of the interviews were conducted at liberal arts colleges in Michigan (outside of the population area). The dean and the department chairperson of

humanities (in which the foreign language discipline was found) of this college were interviewed. Their responses were candid, and both welcomed the opportunity to speak to many of the issues raised by the interviewer.

One further interview was conducted in the population area. A former language chairperson at one of the colleges within the study area was asked to participate. During the course of these interviews, the researcher was able to practice his interviewing techniques as well as to clarify some of the questions asked. Such trial interviews gave more confidence to the interviewer in both his techniques and in the instrument used.

Each interview, which lasted from forty-five minutes to an hour, was taped on a cassette. (One dean declined to be taped, and there were two tapes that were defective, so the interviews were not recorded.) In addition, the interviewer took written notes on each interview. The tapes served as a back-up in case of lost notes or as a context for ambiguous notations which several weeks or months after the interview might not remain vivid in the mind of the researcher.

Before the interviewer started asking direct questions pertaining to the modern language requirement, he asked a few questions concerning what each interviewee felt to be the mission of the liberal arts college. This line of questioning had at least three purposes. First, it continued to establish a rapport between interviewer and interviewee.

Second, liberal arts might mean different things to different people; it helped establish his definition of what a liberal arts college is. Generally such questioning helped the participant to begin to probe what he really believed. Third, the context was established for the main issue--the modern language requirement in the liberal arts college.

With only a couple of exceptions, the interviewer was received warmly, and the interviewees seemed to be most anxious to answer the questions at hand.

Methodology

It was difficult to quantify much of the data collected from open-ended questions in the interviews. Where possible, percentages were used to allow for some quantification of key indicators with each response.

As much as possible, responses of the deans and the department chairpersons have been analyzed separately to allow for contrasts and comparisons. At times the researcher concluded that the best way to represent in-depth responses was to select pertinent quotes that would give the reader a feeling for what the group (deans or department chairpersons) was giving as the rationale for majority as well as minority positions on a given issue.

However, it was considered valuable to include some descriptive statistics to allow for some more precise

assessment of some of the issues surrounding the requirement of a modern language at a liberal arts college. Thus a questionnaire with a Likert scale was devised. The researcher sought to measure with the questionnaire the attitudes toward certain rationale for requiring of the modern language. The scale ranged from 4 (Strong agreement) to a score of 1 (Strong disagreement). For each question the researcher tabulated the mean score and standard deviation. Also, to allow for further comparison between the two groups of respondents, a Pearson correlation was calculated. This method of correlation compared the responses taken as a whole for each group. The investigator was trying to determine through such correlation techniques whether there was substantial agreement between foreign language personnel and another group.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Introduction

Although the population for this study had been chosen in the 1982-1983 academic year, some reports issued by the New York State Board of Regents made this particular population especially interesting for study. During the 1983-1984 academic year, the Board of Regents has been circulating a proposal calling for widespread changes in requirements for a Regents diploma from a high school in the state of New York. (Most high school students in New York anticipating pursuit of post-secondary studies earn the Regents diploma). For the first time in a couple of decades the Board of Regents has called for increased requirements in mathematics, science, and social studies as well as foreign languages

for receipt of such a diploma. If the proposal is promulgated, New York will recommend a three-year requirement in a foreign-language sequence for the Regents diploma.

Hearings on this recommendation followed closely another document circulated by the Board of Regents. In this document, dated July, 1983, entitled Education for a Global Perspective: A Plan for New York State, the New York State Education Department stated as its goal "to develop among all students a knowledge and understanding of the cultures of this nation and the world and to provide more students with communication skills necessary to meet their personal and professional objectives in cultural settings and in languages other than their own."

The Board of Regents then went on to spell out what this would mean in terms of curricular reform:

> All students, preferably in the early elementary years, but no later than by the time they complete grade nine, will acquire a basic proficiency in a language other than English, and secondary schools will provide sequential second language programs which are suited to the needs and abilities of all students; and furthermore, as a condition for receiving a Regents high school diploma students must demonstrate thorough proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing a language other than English at a proficiency level at least that required currently for Regents foreign language credit (3-year sequence).

However, the Regents Global Perspective Plan does not just stop with the potential Regents diploma graduate. It

goes on to insist that "the examination of basic functional proficiency in a language other than English may be taken at an earlier time but no later than the end of grade nine and must be passed for high school graduation."

In addition, the plan requires that by 1994 all new personnel certified to teach elementary school must be proficient enough to teach a second language.

One can well imagine the controversy that such a plan has caused in elementary and secondary educational systems of New York State. To cite once again William Riley Parker, it is often the nation's secondary schools that dictate what the curriculum in America's colleges and universities will be. (See chapter 1.)

Said one dean in this present study: "I believe that New York State is starting a trend that will be followed by California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Michigan. And if these states move in the direction of requiring more foreign languages of their secondary students, so will the rest of the states, as will the colleges." Another chairperson of a foreign language department stated as an aside in his interview: "This is a very timely study. It is so refreshing to be able to sit down and discuss this with a neutral observer in an atmosphere not charged emotionally and politically." Further reactions to the Global Perspective Plan will be included later in this chapter, but it was deemed necessary to preface analysis of the data by making

reference to such upheavals that might affect this population in regard to the modern languages required in the liberal arts college.

The Open-Ended Questions

Since the criticism has been raised in recent years that much data reported concerning the importance of foreign language in the post-secondary and secondary education have come from those within the foreign language discipline, it was decided that a group outside the foreign language profession should also be interviewed. As such, this group would answer the same questions as foreign language personnel, whose expertise concerning the role of foreign language in the curriculum is of utmost importance. However, there are those, as mentioned in chapter 1, that hold that to seek only the opinions of foreign language professionals concerning the modern language requirement for the baccalaureate degree would just add to a growing list of possibly biased reports.

Thus, by interviewing the deans, who represent a wide range of disciplines, the researcher gathered the responses to the same question posed to both groups and sought a comparison. As a result data from each group within the population (the 19 foreign language chairpersons and the 19 academic deans) were analyzed separately with comparisons then being made.

Question one: How do you personally define the mission of a liberal arts college?

When asked this question one dean paused pensively for a moment and then stated boldly: "It is that study that prepares you for everything and yet at the same time for nothing." This pithy statement summed up well the attitudes of many respondents--both deans and language chairpersons alike.

Yet another veteran dean was troubled by the question. He objected to the phrase "liberal arts," "since it is broadly used by American institutions to avoid the problem of defining what we do." He hastened to add, "For practical purposes, however, I take the phrase to refer to all forms of human inquiry carried out for their own sake, rather than the form of applications to anticipated professional situations."

His assessments seemed to reflect well the data received from both groups. Terms like broadening, liberating, developing of critical thinking skills abounded as respondents attempted definition. Clear focus seemed to be lacking. In all fairness, however, because of time limitations it was difficult for the interviewees to give such a question anything but broadest treatment.

Several respondents echoed the dean's concern that liberal arts were not for the purpose of professional

preparation in the technical sense. Another dean offered, "If we are just training them for a vocation, we are doing a lot of 'crystal-balling.'"

Nearly half the deans used the phrase, "a broadening experience" while several others alluded to it. This concept of breadth along with "liberal" in the sense of freeing and employing of liberal arts education for the development of critical thinking skills summarize well the importance of a liberal arts education according to these academic executives. Yet three of the deans mentioned that the breadth had to be accompanied by depth in some specialized training. This too, they held, was a part of the definition of what a liberal arts education should be.

More than half of the language chairpersons specifically used the expression "a broadening experience." They, too, frequently cited the function of a liberal arts education as a liberating experience as well as the fostering of critical thinking skills. One chairperson recounted that two years ago teachers at her institution had not been able to agree on what a liberal arts education should be, but they had decided what it should not be. She and her colleagues were nearly unanimimous in their conviction that they were not in the business of imparting skills for a particular job, but rather were imparting skills needed for any job. Two of the language chairpersons were adamant that the liberal arts were synonymous with the humanities. For them

neither the natural nor the social sciences were worthy disciplines for inclusion into a liberal arts scheme.

If the analysis of this question is vague and somewhat unfocused, it is perhaps in part because the data received lacked clear focus. Perhaps the official who chided his fellow deans for utilizing the term "liberal arts" as a catch-all to avoid clarity is closer to the truth than many of his colleagues would admit. Yet in spite of this vagueness, both groups were remarkably consistent in their definition of a liberal arts education. The investigation will return to one aspect of these data in question nine.

Question two: Should a liberal arts college have a common core curriculum? And if so, what should be its key components?

One dean, when asked this question, responded that eighty percent of his colleagues were in strong agreement that a core curriculum should be restored to their campus but not in the same mold as the one that had been cast aside. Seventeen of the nineteen deans (89%) clearly favored a common-core curriculum. However, the word <u>common</u> did not necessarily mean the requirement of specific courses. Seven of the nineteen deans (37%) specifically used the term "bank of courses" as part of their response to this open-ended question while several others alluded to such a

concept of the core. Clearly the majority of deans in this population were not in favor of narrowly prescribed courses.

One dean stated that common-core courses raised the level of conversation on campus. His feeling was that even if most of the courses in the core were distributive in nature, there should still be a couple that everyone took. Another dean held strongly that common courses were needed by freshmen.

Among the foreign-language chairpersons thirteen of eighteen (72%) favored a core curriculum. Those who were not sure that there should be one offered their reasons for their uneasiness with the concept: One chairperson who graduated in the 1960s remembered how difficult it had been to change an inflexible curriculum. He did not favor a well defined circle around a core curriculum. Another stated that he was not sure one could have a very extensive core that was very meaningful. Another chairperson felt that there was a critical mass to which the truly educated person should be exposed, but wondered who would define what that critical mass should be. Intoned one chairperson: "How could we ever get the divisions of our colleges to agree on this?"

As was the case with the deans' responses, the foreign-language chairpersons as a group leaned toward distribution requirements more than the requirement of specfic courses. The favoring of the "bank of courses" by both groups revealed an inconsistency when compared to some of the responses

in a later question. This issue will be analyzed in question seven.

Question three: The Yale Report of 1828 defined the mission of liberal arts colleges like Yale as "the discipline and furniture" of the mind. Is such a description of the task of a liberal arts college still applicable in your opinion?

"What more could one want than a disciplined and furnished mind," claimed one dean. The deans participating in this research project overwhelmingly favored this concept as a good description of what a liberal arts college should attempt to do. Seventeen of the nineteen deans (89%) interviewed agreed with this aspect of the Yale Report.

However, in agreeing, the deans had certain qualifications. One dean pointed out that it is hard to compare the climate of the 1820s with that of the 1980s. He noted that Yale's self-defined role was to prepare an elite leadership. However, another dean put forward that that is exactly what liberal arts should do. Said he, "We still need to educate liberally our future leaders."

There were those who were a bit uncomfortable with an education where there was such a narrowly intellectual focus. As such, discipline and functions of the mind served as a good basis, to which could be added the affective emphasis. One dean felt the term "furniture" projected too

static a viewpoint. Another dean agreed that Day's assessment as a mission statement was good, but that it was fully as important to prepare one for a career. Echoing this sentiment was a dean who stated that although he personally agreed with the concept, he had encountered many parents and students who, when faced with the high cost of education today, felt that such discipline and furniture might prove to be a luxury.

Only two deans did not answer affirmatively the question. One of them held that discipline and furniture of the mind was "no better than other cliches to mask our [liberal arts colleges'] imprecision." The only dean who flatly disagreed with such a notion insisted that it owed itself to Locke, and thus was to be rejected on philosophical grounds. As was the case with the deans, the foreign language chairpersons with near unanimity embraced this principle from the Yale Report.

There were those who felt that one needed to add to the analytical mind such qualities as compassion, inquisitiveness, and a love of questioning. One of them agreed provided she could change the furniture around from time to time. Some felt that the word <u>furniture</u> itself was too archaic, while one language professional chided American education for limiting the furniture to a western world decor.

What was however of most interest to this investigator in the responses to this question was the observation by

some of these chairpersons that math and modern language study served well as instruments for mental discipline. Such contentions bring to mind the nineteenth-century argument that such components of the traditional quadrivium and trivium as Latin and Greek were of utmost importance for the exercising of the mind as if it were a muscle. Further, there were many nineteenth-century educators who held that such modern additions to the curriculum as French and math should be substituted only by those whose minds were too weak to be given to the rigors of Latin and Greek.

Question four: How do you assess the intrinsic aspects of education as compared to the extrinsic? Is one more important than the other, or should a balance be sought?

"Theory that never involves application is impotent. Application without theory is overly mechanical." Such a call for balance of the intrinsic and the extrinsic in the liberal arts endeavor was shared by a narrow majority (53%) of the deans. One dean warned that since we were not educating monks, over-attention to the intrinsic could lead to solipsism; while another was troubled that such a distinction need be made at all. Being forced to make a choice between the two would prove unfruitful.

Still another dean pointed to an A.T.&T study involving several hundred executives reported in Forbes. The study showed that the technical expertise wins out upon entry into

an occupation, whereas the liberal arts training catches up and actually forges ahead in later years. The assessment was that the most successful executives were those who had been exposed to the liberal arts and who also had some competency in a technical area such as computers.

A sizeable minority (37%), however, believed strongly that the intrinsic should be stressed more than the extrinsic. One of the major reasons for this position was that many felt that since vocationalism had become so prominent, an equally strong reaction in favor of the intrinsic was needed. But there was more than just discussion of the pendulum effect. One dean insisted that the philosophical person will go out and create a job. Such a person is far more likely to reach the highest level of satisfaction as described by Maslow.

The two deans who chose neither the intrinsic nor a balance of the intrinsic and extrinsic included one who would not commit herself and one who favored neither the intrinsic or the balanced view espoused by so vast a majority. The dean who would not commit herself on the issue held that such an argument was a cliché. For her the quality and rigor of an education was more important that considerations of whether intrinsic or extrinsic aspects were more important. The dean who openly rejected either the intrinsic or balanced viewpoint showed great insight in his response.

> I agree with most social scientists who feel that a complete balance could only be brought about by an extraordinary coincidence of historical forces. I am not so concerned about vocationalism as are some of my peers, since I feel it is a healthy tendency to serve the needs of the society within which our colleges are supported. I also think that the simon-pure view in favor of an intrinsically defined curriculum is arrant nonsense, since our intellectual activities must be in a state of dynamic interaction with the society we serve.

A foreign-language chairperson inserting a personal note summed up well the tension between the intrinsic and extrinsic. Said he: "I have a daughter who will be a freshman next year at a liberal arts college. I want her to be able to get a good job when she graduates." He hastened to add, "However to perform without knowing is dangerous."

Others pointed to the running civil war between those who heralded either the intrinsic or the vocational. One contended that those who insisted on a particularly strong emphasis on the intrinsic were often held to be elitist and obsolete in their views. One of the chairpersons when speaking of the civil war said that while he favored a balance of the two, he was of the firm conviction that the extrinsic would generally win.

It is important to know how the intrinsic and the extrinsic battle is perceived as it relates to the study of modern languages. Such a concern will be addressed in a later question.

Question five: How does the study of a modern language fit into the liberal arts curriculum?

One of the deans pointed out that he had recently seen statistics that were of a great surprise to him. His college was located in Rochester, New York, headquarters for several large multi-national corporations including Eastman Kodak. According to a study that had just been released, Rochester did more foreign business per capita than any other city in the United States. He added that the industries of this northeastern city were becoming increasingly interested in the importance of foreign languages to their corporate interests.

Several other deans reflected on the importance of such pragmatic consideration in the study of modern languages. However, the major role of language study was seen to be its releasing of Americans from their cocoon through knowledge of other cultures. As a communication tool languages are of great importance but not so much as their ability to introduce one to the spirit of another culture. Said one dean: "A language is the autobiography of a culture. Language is the way we react to reality and what defines humanness." Fifteen of the nineteen deans (79%) held this increased cultural awareness to be the major function of a modern language in the liberal arts context.

"Our faculty does not perceive a language as a priority. When push came to shove, languages got shoved

out. I feel the study of a language is very important but our arrogant society does not." Thus one dean spoke out on the importance of languages to cultural awareness and the difficulties faced within academia for such an endeavor.
As was the case with the deans, the large majority of language chairpersons pointed up the need for foreign languages for inter-cultural understanding. But other reasons also came to the fore. One language professional asked, "How can one have a liberal arts education without knowledge of a modern language?" In the same breath she added: "But I suppose one could have said the same of Greek and Latin two centuries ago."

Another chairperson viewed foreign-language study as a major category of human endeavor much like the study of the natural sciences or history. Several deans added that as such an endeavor, language study represented a degree of exactitude not found in many educational categories today. Such discipline was held as being of great importance.

Question six: How would you describe your own language study? (asked only to the deans)

As has been pointed out in chapter two of this dissertation, one factor for the abolition by so many colleges of the language requirement in the 1960s and early 1970s might have been the reaction of deans and faculty members who had disliked their own required language study.

The researcher concluded that it might prove interesting to interview the deans concerning their reactions to their own language study.

Fourteen of the nineteen deans (74%) had been required to take a language as a part of their undergraduate education. Of the deans only one had never had formal language instruction. He claimed that if he had it to do over, he would definitely have taken some.

Of those who took a language as a requirement for the bachelor's degree, the general consensus was that it was an enjoyable experience. Exclaimed one dean, "My background was definitely affected by my language learning." Said another dean, "I didn't really understand the structure of English until I took a foreign language."

However there was definite criticism of the language instruction that had been received by these academic professionals. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of those who had taken a language expressed regret that they had never accomplished much oral fluency in the languages studied. They expressed a concern that such not be the case with students learning a modern language presently.

Question seven: Do you personally favor a modern language requirement for receiving a bachelor's degree at a liberal arts college?

Before assessing the reaction of the deans and the language chairpersons, it is necessary to indicate the status of language requirements at the liberal arts colleges in this population. Of these nineteen schools eleven (58%) had no modern language requirement whatsoever at the time of the study. Of the remaining eight schools, five (26%) had very limited requirements for a few majors. Thus eighty-four percent (84%) of the population studied claimed that their institutions had either very little or no language required of their students.

Yet when asked if they favored an institution-wide requirement of their students, seventeen (90%) of the deans answered affirmatively. The reasons given echo those given by this group in question five.

One dean insisted however that if indeed there were such a requirement at his institution, it should include more than French 101 and French 102, or it would probably prove worthless. Another dean in agreement with the institution-wide language requirement admitted that he would have opposed such a requirement twenty years ago. But since people may not make the right choices when given too much freedom, he now would favor such a requirement.

However, one of the deans who did not favor the requirement held that the matter of choice was paramount. Requirements for him represented a false kind of motivation. He expressed concern that there are those students (i.e. the tone deaf) for whom language study is too grueling. And thus

they should not be forced into taking it lest there possibly follow a hatred for foreign languages.

The researcher has already alluded to the opposition of another dean to the language requirement. For him such skills are primarily the task of high schools.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating statistics revealed in this study was that a higher percentage of deans favored a language requirement than did foreign language chairpersons. While a large majority of these language professionals favored an institution-wide requirement, only thirteen (68%) clearly did so. Four from among this group were against a requirement and three (11%) were ambivalent concerning such a modern language requirement.

One of the language professionals who was adamant in her insistence that a requirement be restored at her college exclaimed: "We died when we lost it! Students today are afraid of it (language study) and think it has no importance. They won't take it voluntarily." The comments of one chairperson who favored the requirement were especially telling:

> I've come full circle. I'm for it now. We haven't done our job in this country at an early level, and the leadership in our country will suffer if we don't have it (language requirement). I was not of that opinion fifteen years ago. High schools were doing a decent job then. However, I would rather have those in my classes who wanted to be there.

Two of the four chairpersons who opposed the requirement as well as one who was ambivalent on this issue remembered with particular distaste "the captive audience" in crammed classrooms. One of them suggested that what we need more than a requirement are parents in this nation who expect that their children will pursue the study of a foreign language. In his opinion, such is not the case.

Another chairperson who strongly opposed the reinstatement of the requirement at his institution offered the following reasons for his attitude:

> I was part of the generation that rebelled against requirements...Besides, language learning is easiest for the young. It is not the best time for a nineteen or twenty-year-old to begin language study.

A caveat was issued by one chairperson who emphatically favored restoration of the language requirement to her campus: "There are those on this campus who had to take a language as part of their requirement for the Ph.D and who hated it. They will fight us on this tooth and nail."

Question eight: If your college were to require all students seeking the bachelor's degree to demonstrate minimum proficiency in a foreign language, how would you describe such a proficiency, and how long would it take the average student to acquire it?

"The problem with my training was that I could just read and write." With obvious frustration one of the deans

indicated that as far as he was concerned students should be able to speak and listen, albeit haltingly, in what the French call the language of "la vie quotidienne" (everyday life). Eleven (58%) of the deans emphatically specified the need for students to be able at least to have rudimentary speaking and listening skills. Said one dean "The student should be able to walk into Paris and be able to converse even at a low level of discourse." In addition, the student possessing minimum proficiency in a language should have reading skills sufficient to get the gist of a newspaper article in Madrid and be able to write sufficiently well to "leave a note for the milkman".

One dean felt that minimum proficiency was exhibited when the student was able to read a piece of literature with the aid of a dictionary. For him any attempts at speaking fluency were unnecessary. But in this particular population, these deans overwhelmingly rejected such a narrow definition of minimum proficiency.

The next aspect of this question involved the length of time these deans thought would be necessary to achieve this minimum proficiency. Only one (5%) of the deans felt that such desired proficiency could be accomplished in two semesters of college work. Fifteen (79%) of the deans insisted that a student would need at least intermediate language courses (second year) in order to attain such proficiency, while two deans (11%) maintained that the student would need courses beyond the intermediate level. The only dean who

did not specify how long a student would need to attain minimum proficiency simply stated that once a minimum proficiency was defined a student would take a language for as long as it took for him to attain it.

"I believe that a student should be able to converse without fear in a foreign culture with a child." Thus one foreign language chairperson addressed the aural/oral component of minimum competency. Another added that every student should be given a measure of confidence in his oral ability in a foreign languages. Said she: "It [learning to speak] is what "grabs the student." These two language professionals were joined by a sizeable majority (74%) of their colleagues in their insistence that oral communication skills be a part of minimum competency. Of course reading and writing skills should not be ignored. As was the case with deans,the language chairpersons saw the need for students possessing a minimum proficiency to be able to read fairly easily a newspaper printed in a language other than their own.

There was one chairperson who held that definition of minimum proficiency was no easy matter to establish. She pointed to the effort of organizations such as the American Council for the Teachers of Foreign Language to establish such a standard.

Another chairperson insisted that before much more could be done to define minimum proficiency the language profession would need to examine carefully its pedagogy.

For her the functional-notional approach presented some intriguing possibilities.

The language chairpersons in this population with near unanimity (95%) held that at least the intermediate level of language study would be necessary to attain minimum proficiency.

What was most noteworthy about the reactions of both the deans and language chairpersons was the vast inconsistency between present practice and belief. Although ninety percent (90%) of the deans and ninety-five percent (95%) of the language professionals claimed that minimum proficiency would require at least intermediate-level work, only two (11%) of the institutions presently had an intermediate-level requirement; and for one of these it was not an institution-wide requirement since some professional programs were able to waive the requirement. The only college to require an institution-wide intermediate-level proficiency had a policy which strongly stated that there would be no waivers except where the student, upon entry to the college, could demonstrate she already possessed intermediate-level skills. The dean of this college adamantly insisted that even the most professionally oriented of its students should not expect any special waivers.

Question nine: Several reasons for inclusion of a modern language requirement at a liberal arts college such as this one have been mentioned during this interview. If

you were to appear before the governing body of your college or an academic policy committee, what would you use as your most cogent argument for continuation of your present foreign language requirement or inclusion of such a requirement in the future?

The first question posed during the interview sought what this population held as the major goal of a liberal arts education. As has already been reported there seemed to be wide support for "a broadening experience" to serve as a definition for such an education.

It is not surprising that sixteen (84%) of the deans responded that the most important reason for foreign languages' being required as a part of one's liberal arts education was their value as a culturally broadening experience.

Several of the deans mentioned the incredible provincialism extant in American society. Several voiced the concern that such ethnocentrism in our culture often bordered on arrogance, an arrogance not well received in many foreign countries. One dean summed up the thoughts of many of his colleagues when he articulated:

> The best I can do is to say that exposure to a foreign language gives the student access to an entirely different structure of thought from that defined by his or her own language. Beyond that, I see the need for language instruction as being instrumental, in that it provides access to the Western tradition and with luck non-Western traditions as well, at a level which is impossible to handle in

> translation. The instrumental argument, of course, requires a much higher degree of sophistication than the argument in favor of language instruction as a means of expanding the logical equipment of the learner.

There were three deans who did not directly state this culturally broadening aspect as the most important function of language instruction at a liberal arts college. Two of them referred to the personal satisfaction and sense of power that comes when the student manipulates the symbols that constitute another language. The third dean in a general sense could have been included with the majority who called for a breaking out of the cultural cocoon, but this dean's concern was not so much for the cross-cultural awareness outside the American borders. He pointed out the growing importance of the American public to communicate with the Hispanics in the United States.

As was the case with the deans, the largest number of language chairpersons held that the major value of foreign language instruction was for its heightening of cultural awareness in the student (69%). Although representing a clear majority, fewer language professionals gave this response.

One chairperson pointed out that the whole notion of a melting pot often militated against allowing for significant individual differences within the American culture. She was of the opinion that the American experience should be more of a salad bowl than a melting pot. As a salad bowl each

separate ingredient, while contributing to the whole, would keep its own unique flavor.

The chairperson of one college affiliated with a church saw language study as a ministry of reconciliation. He insisted that the world had been torn apart linguistically by the Tower of Babel, and that attempts should be made to heal the rift.

Said another chairperson, "You acquire another skin." Several other respondents in the group also alluded to the students' seeing the world through different eyes after the study of a foreign language.

Of course there were those who did not indicate that the major value of language instruction to college students was the breaking down of provincialism with resulting broadening of cultural awareness. One chairperson pointed out that foreign language is a subject area that comes very close to the essence of human thinking and as such was even more basic than literature, for language must precede literature.

There were those who saw foreign language instruction chiefly in terms of its unlocking of a literature. Such exposure to a literature other than English allowed the enriching of one's inner life. These respondents were insistent that such literature was not nearly so valuable in translation.

Furthermore, several language chairpersons prefaced their remarks by indicating what was <u>not</u> a major value of

language instruction of those seeking a baccalaureate degree. For them language study should not be for pragmatic reasons such as the acquiring of skills for a job.

Question ten: Do you anticipate that five years from now students at your college will be required to take less, more, or about the same amount of modern language instruction for graduation?

By a narrow majority (58%) the deans felt that in five years there would be more language instruction as a degree requirement. As might be expected nearly all the deans anticipating such an increase represented schools that presently had little or no language instruction as a graduation requirement. In this group several qualified their responses by stating that adequate resources to fund such increases was a very real concern.

One dean, although foreseeing increased requirements at her school, pointed out the obstacles faced:

> Our admissions director is fighting us all the way on this one. He is so afraid of scaring away potential students [by such a requirement]. In addition some of our senior faculty members in the language department are burned out. This adversely affects the foreign language program. New personnel would make the requirement easier to sell. Uninspiring instruction is deadly.

Six of the deans (32%) predicted that there would be about the same amount of language requirement at their colleges in five years. Of these, half were deans of

colleges that presently required intermediate-level foreign language skills for graduation.

One dean of a college that does not presently have language requirements pointed out the slowness with which academic institutions respond to needed change. It was his conviction that such a requirement was sorely needed, but that it would take ten years, not five, for such reform to be enacted.

Another dean foresaw little change at his institution where no language requirements were presently in place. He pointed to enormous movement at the national level to encourage more language instruction, but he added, "I do not see the resources there to accomplish what is needed. We are 'holding the line economically.' The Northeast is such a economically depressed area. How can language instruction compete with the demands of computer instruction and business courses? There is a trade-off. The resources just are not there for everything."

Two of the deans were not sure whether more instruction in foreign language was in the future plans at their schools. Said one: "There ought to be more. But given the realities of life, I am not sure. If the students are tuned in, they had better be taking more."

Of the language chairpersons a wide majority (79%) foresaw increased language requirements for graduation from their schools in five years. The increased interdependence of the world's corporations, as well as curriculum changes

at trendsetting schools (restored language requirements at Ivy League colleges), along with the Board of Regents proposed changes in New York State high schools were some of the reasons stated for such a conviction. As was the case with the deans, several chairpersons cited adequate resources to fund such increased requirements as a matter of concern.

Of those predicting about the same level of requirements in five years, half represented institutions where there was presently an intermediate-level requirement. Although these chairpersons saw the need for more, they stated that intermediate-level requirements were all that they could possibly hope to have.

One chairperson of a school where there are presently no language requirements for the baccalaureate degree offered: "Everybody pays lip service to foreign languages like mother and apple pie, but they will not back such expression of concern with adequate resources."

Another chairperson indicated why foreign language requirements had been dropped at his institution at the time the college which he served made the transition from being a women's college to a co-educational institution. There had been great concern that the foreign language requirement might drive away potential male students, since it was felt that foreign languages would be more readily accepted by female students than by males.

Question eleven: Will French, Spanish, and German remain the predominant languages offered at America's colleges?

There seems to be little doubt in this population that such will be the case. Seventeen (90%) of the deans thought so. But what is of real interest here were the comments made, especially in analyzing the role of such languages as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. The researcher lists some of these comments:

-- The exotic languages are hard to sell, because they are too tough.

-- Yes [French, Spanish, and German will remain predominant], but it will be a mistake. We should stress Russian and the Oriental languages.

-- The pressure is there for study of Chinese. The study of German will go down. Arabic is too difficult and Americans don't like the Arabs. We like the Chinese, however.

-- At a small college like ours such will be the case, but I would like to see more instruction in non-Western languages. German is hanging in there only because of business demands. Otherwise it would go down significantly.

-- In the history of higher education the tradition is there (for French, Spanish, and German). French will remain somewhat important for academic reasons and Spanish for demographic ones.

-- In five years certainly, in ten years probably, in twenty years probably not. Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic will emerge.

-- Yes. The Chinese are much more interested in learning English than vice-versa.

-- Yes, in the near future. But gradually Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic will have an expanded role. Thousands of Japanese business speak English. They understand the American culture.

-- Yes, but it shouldn't be the case. However, it comes down to a question of resources.

-- Probably Spanish will overtake both (French and German). I think the ascendency of French and German is a pity, since the latter is not crucially important in the modern world, and the former is studied out of cultural habit. Anything that can be done to encourage the study of Japanese, Chinese, and Russian would be in the interest of the future.

With a majority similar to that of the deans (95%), the language chairpersons answered affirmatively this question. Once again, the comments were most interesting, and the investigator has chosen to include some of them:

-- Yes, but Spanish will be more dominant. James Naisbitt's book Megatrends states that we will need to be tri-lingual in the future - English, computers, and Spanish. American business has not awakened to the Hispanic consumer at home. The Oriental languages along with Arabic and Portuguese should be stressed more, but traditions are hard to change.

-- Yes, in the near future. Changes come slowly in the educational structure. [i.e. tenured teachers, and vested interests]. After Sputnik there was only a temporary interest in Russian.

-- If I were eighteen, I would want to investigate Chinese, Russian or Japanese. Spanish will remain dominant because of the sheer number of immigrants.

-- Whatever is taught in high schools will be taught in colleges.

-- Yes. The Oriental languages are too hard and would take too long to attain minimum proficiency. It's hard enough for the students to learn the easy ones [foreign languages]

-- Spanish will increase for demographic reasons and French for cultural and professional reasons. I'm not sure about German; it may slip. Non-Western languages will become more and more important for extrinsic reasons.

-- Yes. Spanish is obvious. Japanese will come into its own. Japanese businessmen know the importance of speaking English.

-- Yes, although others are more important strategically. Spanish will remain for demographic reasons. Literature emphasis in the study of foreign language studies will continue to go down, and there will be more emphasis on communications.

Question twelve: If the proposal of the New York Board of Regents (that all students seeking a Regents diploma be required to take a foreign language) were to be enacted, would this have an impact on your college?

As was stated in the preface of this chapter, New York State is presently involved in a controversy as to whether these recipients of the Regents diploma should be required to take a foreign language or not. The Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents have gone on record as favoring such a requirement. But as hearings have been conducted throughout the state, there has been opposition to such a proposal for various reasons chief of which seems to

be the belief that there will be a lack of adequate resources to implement such a plan.

On this question (12) the deans were unanimous in stating that this would have an impact on their colleges, and in most cases a major impact. The most common answer given was that there would be more demand for intermediate and advanced level courses (68%) since many students would presumably be entering college with more foreign language skills.

One dean held that such a requirement in New York State's high school would allow colleges in turn to toughen up their language requirements. He confirmed: "Language teachers are defensive. They have the reputation for being soft touches."

Another dean contended that if more students were to take languages in high school, they might be more easily persuaded to continue to higher levels, since they would already be convinced of the importance of foreign language.

Other deans pointed out that there would be a need for more foreign language majors to handle the dramatically increased demand for courses at both the high school and college level.

Perhaps the most unusual answer given by a dean was: "Yes, implementation of such a policy would have a major impact here. There would be less pressure to offer courses

Since our faculty would feel the student had already had enough foreign language study."

Of the language administrators interviewed seventeen (90%) were of the opinion that there would be a definite impact should such a proposal be implemented. The two who did not foresee a major impact were deans of schools where there either was a three-year language entrance requirement or where the vast majority had studied three years in high school.

Several, although agreeing that the impact would be felt in their departments [students pursuing languages to more advanced levels than at present, need for more foreign language majors, students arriving at college with better foreign language skills], doubted that such policy would ever be enacted due to economic reasons.

One chairperson very honestly stated:

> It would make it easier for us to push through a requirement. There is great worry about diminished numbers of applications at our college. But high schools would take the heat off us, if they required a language for graduation, and then we followed suit.

Another chairperson echoed the opinion of the wide majority of her colleagues that such a policy would encourage more students to take higher level courses in college, but she added: "I worry that we will not have enough language teachers to handle it, if it comes."

Question thirteen: The literature seems to indicate that there is a trend in American higher education to restore some of the requirements (including one for foreign language). Do you personally think that this is a significant trend?

Eighteen (95%) of the deans interviewed answered this question in the affirmative. But what is of great interest here were the reasons given. The researcher is listing several of them here.

-- We are moving away from the smorgasboard approach, but we will never return to iron-bound requirements.

-- New York State will be a leader in this.

-- I hope it's substantial. It is a good one. I think that it will get even stronger than it is presently.

-- How far (the trend will go) is the question. There have always been wild swings up and down in higher education. It makes it hard for administrators to do long range planning.

-- It is measurable as part of a dialectic with other curricular emphases. There is a greater disparity between better and more poorly prepared students. Requirements address this disparity.

-- The pendulum is swinging. Language may or may not be a part of it. Language is, at schools like Harvard and Dartmouth.

-- There is a general conservative trend in the educational establishment. We threw out a lot that was good along with some chain that needed casting off.

-- It won't go away easily or quickly. But the big question is still resources. The trend is happening in our nation's high schools. Will there be a ripple effect?

-- Language requirements will come back, but not in the form they left us.

-- There is much support for this. But will the resources follow? Without such resource, it is just lip service. This is all tied to the conservative back-to-basis movement. We don't have a good language pedagogy. Students want to use the language. We need a new pedagogy for useful language study.

-- This is the beginning of another cycle which goes hand in ahand with the students' being more conservative. There is a battle between those who are scared about admissions projections and those that feel that we should be more rigorous.

-- But will we do what we ought to do? It's still a liberal arts verses the marketplace battle. But liberal arts proponents shouldn't back off from asserting themselves.

-- It's significant, but I think a lot of college officials will cop out, and will not be true to their beliefs. The economic crunch will win out.

Only one dean did not agree that this was not a significant trend. Said he: "It merely represents a kind of a cyclical tinkering to which the very loose tradition of the liberal arts bachelor's degree is subject."

The foreign language administrators were unanimous in their appraisal that there was a significant trend to restore requirements. Many of the statements that accompanied their affirmative responses voiced the same concerns as those of the deans (not enough resources, declining

enrollments, marketplace versus the academic ideal).

The researcher has included several responses as a sample of the opinions of these chairpersons. One chairperson who had been born in Europe and had come here in her adult life gave pause before answering this question. Pensively she offered:

> I think it has always been there. Some didn't see it or wouldn't act on it. The best jobs need those requirements. One cannot keep a good job with a "line of least resistance" approach to education. Every society needs its intellectual elite.

Perhaps the comment made by one of the language administrators addressed the question in boldest terms. Said he: "The first step is that people agree that requirements are okay."

Another chairperson picked up on this same theme and added:

> As this trend crescendos there will be much pressure for requirements. Students do not have the influence that they had in the 1960s. They couldn't ward off the requirements as they did in the early 1970s. Maybe the students of the 1980s will not even want to [avoid requirements].

The Questionnaire

Up to this point in the chapter the researcher has recorded impressions, attitudes, and predictions of the members of this population. As such, these responses have defied all but the simplest statistical analysis. The

writer sensed the need to offer at least some quantifiable data that could be analyzed by statistical methods.

Several common reasons for the importance of foreign language instruction in colleges were listed along with some questions concerning the methodology of language instruction. For each statement the dean or language chairperson was asked to circle the number that most closely resembled his attitudes toward the issue raised.

A four-point Likert scale was used ranging from a 4 for strong agreement to 1 for strong disagreement. It was further explained to each respondent to the questionnaire that a rating of 3 indicated agreement but without much intensity (mild agreement), while a 2 represented disagreement but without much intensity (mild disagreement). Although the four-point scale forced an opinion, the researcher, when requested, did allow the respondent to circle both a 3 and a 2 to indicate no opinion (2.5). There were not many abstentions to the questions asked.

The means for responses to each questions for both the deans and foreign language chairpersons were tabulated along with standard deviations. The Pearson r was calculated for the collective responses of both the groups.

The researcher used several open-ended follow-up questions concerning some of the issues raised by the individual statements on the questionnaire. These follow-up questions can be found after the analysis of the statistical data for the questionnaire.

Statement 1: Knowledge of a foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education.

Both the deans and the language chairpersons strongly agree that foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education. There appears to be little difference between the groups or within each group, since the means are similar (3.9 and 4.0) and the standard deviation are low (.31 and 0) (Where means and standard deviations are given for the following responses, those of the deans will be given first.)

Statement 2: Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's command of one's native language.

Both groups are in fairly strong agreement that learning of a foreign language aids one's command of his own language. In fact the language chairpersons are completely consistent in their strong agreement with this statement (mean 4.0, standard deviation 0). The deans are closer to strong agreement than mild agreement, and there is some difference (although not dramatic) of opinion within the deans as a group (mean 3.63, standard deviation .48).

Statement 3: Knowledge of a foreign language will become more and more essential to those involved in business.

Concerning the function of foreign language instruction for those pursuing a business career, the two groups are similar in their responses both in terms of means (3.68, 3.74) and standard deviations (.44, .48). There appears to

be fairly strong agreement with the statement for both groups while there is fairly moderate agreement within each group.

Statement 4: Knowledge of a foreign language is a culturally broadening experience.

It is noteworthy that both the means and standard deviations for both groups were identical. There was strong agreement as shown by the means (3.9, 3.9) as well as fairly high consensus within the groups (standard deviation .31, .31).

Perhaps one explanation for such remarkable consistency is that when the respondents were asked during the interview the major mission of a liberal arts college and the major value of language instruction, both groups highlighted the importance of the broadening aspect of the liberal arts education. Such strong convictions show up in the reactions to this statement.

Statement 5: Knowledge of the literature of a foreign language is an important part of one's liberal arts training.

Of the statements listed thus far this one shows the largest difference of opinion between the two groups. The deans tend toward only mild agreement that the literature of a foreign language is an important part of liberal arts experience (mean 3.26), while the language professionals tend toward strong agreement (mean 3.68). The standard

deviations would indicate more internal consistency among the language chairpersons than among the deans (.63, .46).

Statement 6: Knowledge of a foreign language should be primarily for pragmatic reasons.

There was a remarkable decline in the reactions of both groups after fairly high mean scores for the first five statements. Both groups clearly disagreed that foreign language study should be undertaken primarily for pragmatic reasons (mean 1.95, 2.00). However there is considerable difference of opinion within the groups themselves on this issue (standard deviation .65, .69). The results for this statement correspond to reactions of both groups when asked during the interviews whether a liberal arts education should be mostly for instrinsic or extrinsic purposes. Although there was considerable support for a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of a liberal arts education, both groups leaned more heavily toward an intrinsic orientation than an extrinsic one.

Statement 7: Knowledge of a modern language should give equal emphasis to all four skills--reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

When asked if equal emphasis should be given to all four basic skills in language instruction, both groups agreed (mean 3.0, 3.53). The major difference between the groups is the intensity of agreement. The deans mildly agree with such a position, while the language chairpersons' responses fall mid-range on the average between mild and

strong agreement. However, it should be noted that for both groups, especially the deans, there is relatively low consensus of opinion, as revealed by the standard deviations (.86, .68). Such results on standard deviations seem clearly to show that there is considerable variability on this issue on the campuses of this population.

Statement 8: Knowledge of reading skills in a modern language is more important than speaking or listening skills.

Of the four skills, a review of the literature has shown that reading has traditionally been the one stressed. It is only in more recent times that communication skills (listening and speaking) have received greater attention. Both groups clearly disagree that reading should be given preferential status in relationship to communication skills. An interesting point to note is that this is the only question where the foreign language administrators had a lower mean than that of the deans (2.11, 1.95). There was more disagreement among the deans than among the chairpersons (standard deviation .78, .51) on this issue.

Statement 9: Knowledge of a modern language improves one's chances of getting a job.

The results on this question were on the surface puzzling. Whereas both groups clearly disagreed that the chief reason for foreign language instruction should be for pragmatic purposes, they both agreed that knowledge of a

foreign language improved one's chances of getting a job. (mean 2.97, 3.08).

However closer analysis might explain this apparent inconsistency. During the course of the interviews, there was considerable opposition to the viewpoint that a liberal arts education be pursued primarily for vocational reasons. Many felt that, although a liberal arts education might not prepare one for a particular job, it does prepare a student for any job.

The study of a foreign language, while not pursued primarily for purely vocational reasons, in the opinion of these professionals, might indeed improve one's chances of getting a job. The apparent difference between the results on statement 6 and statement 9 then might be of a philosophical nature.

As for internal agreement the deans are far more consistent in relationship to the mean than are the language chairpersons (standard deviation .47, .79).

Statement 10: Knowledge of French, Spanish, and German will probably continue to be the most commonly stressed.

The reactions of the two groups to the continuing dominance of French, German, and Spanish have already been noted in analysis of responses given during the interviews. However the means are given (2.74, 3.03) as well as the standard deviations (.62, .71). If one considers a 2.5 as neither agreement or disagreement, the deans are tending

slightly toward such a position. The language chairpersons mildly agree with such a statement. The standard deviations however reveal that there is not strong consensus within either group. Considerable controversy seems to exist.

Statement 11: Knowledge of a foreign language corresponds to the exercising of one's mental capabilities.

This statement raises the traditional reason given for the study of Latin and Greek for several centuries. The Yale Report of 1828 looked askance at the study of French and German in lieu of Latin and Greek, since the former would not contribute so much as the latter to the discipline and furniture of the mind. As was revealed in the review of the literature, the study of a foreign language as a mental exercise came under attack by some modern learning theorists. This statement was included to assess whether there is still support for such a position [mental exercise].

The deans mildly agreed (mean 2.95) that there was a correspondence between study of a foreign language and mental exercises. The mean of the language professionals fell at the mid-point between strong agreement and mild agreement. There was moderate consensus within each group. (standard deviation .47, .50).

Statement 12: Knowledge of a foreign language should be a prerequisite for entrance to a liberal arts college.

Numerically, the widest gap in the mean scores for an individual question was shown on this one. The deans mildly agreed (mean 2.95) that colleges should have as a prerequisite for entrance to a liberal arts college knowledge of a foreign language. The mean of the language chairpersons (3.74) neared strong agreement. Standard deviations (.83, .44) revealed much higher disparity among the opinions of the various deans than among the language administrators.

Statement 13: Knowledge of listening and speaking in a foreign language will become the most important skills mastered.

The stressing of listening and speaking skills as being of most importance in the future receives only lukewarm agreement in both groups. In fact the mean of the deans' responses (2.68) approaches the 2.5 that can be interpreted as neither agreement or disagreement. The mean of responses for the language chairpersons reveals very mild agreement. Standard deviations for this question are relatively high for both groups (.80, .67).

Statement 14: Knowledge of foreign languages is vital to national security.

The deans mildly agree (mean 3) that foreign language instruction could be construed as being vital to national security. The language chairpersons (mean 3.68) feel quite a bit more strongly than the deans that languages are of such importance. There seems to be much higher disparity

among the opinions of the deans than among those of the language professionals (standard deviation .80, .46).

The Pearson Correlation

The means of the deans' responses to all the statements of this modern language questionnaire were compared to those of the foreign language chairpersons by means of the Pearson test for correlation. The results show an r of +.91, indicating a very high correlation between the responses of the deans and those of the language professionals.

One of the criticisms often leveled against recent studies regarding the modern language requirement is that too much data were gathered from language professionals with a possible skewing of results. Thus the researcher in the study saw the need for a group to which responses of language chairpersons could be compared. In this population there appears to be a high correlation between responses given by both academic deans and language chairpersons interviewed.

After administration of the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed the participants by using a few open-ended questions. Below is the analysis of the data received from these follow-up questions.

Follow-up Question one: Does knowledge of a foreign language help one in his ability to understand his native language?

As a group the deans noted that such a transfer from one language to another was there especially when dealing with the European languages. Said one dean: "Where are those little old ladies who used to teach us the structure of our language in our English courses? Where else will we be able to learn parts of speech than in foreign language courses?"

The most common theme emerging as the interviewer listened to the responses of the participants had to do with the conviction that this generation of students clearly does not know the structure of its own language. The tenor of the responses of the language chairpersons followed the same thought. As several deans had pointed out, these foreign language experts held that one's native language is learned at a tender age more inductively than deductively. Added one chairperson:

> It is a bit like the driver who has been driving for twenty years and has never looked under the hood. But if there were to be a breakdown some day, it might be to his advantage if he had some idea how things under the hood actually work.

One chairperson emphatically noted that it had been linguistically proved that such a transfer between languages actually does occur. Yet another chairperson boldly stated: "English instruction in the United States is weak. Students' grammar and syntax skills are abominable." He

added that anything that could help in this matter (foreign language instruction being one) should be urgently sought.

But perhaps the clearest statement of all was offered by the chairperson: "I didn't understand English grammar until I had French."

Follow-up Question two: To what extent will it be important in the future that a person pursuing a career in business know a foreign language?

As was shown by Statement 3 on the modern language questionnaire, both groups saw the increasing importance of foreign languages in the area of business. However there were those, albeit in the minority, that insisted that most businesses were very slow to admit such a need for language, and that language instruction would be deemed valuable in many business circles only with overwhelming evidence that such learning would be economically necessary.

Both groups pointed to fact that most American businesses of any size now have international ties. Many pointed to the reticence of many United States firms to use languages other than English as one of many factors that has led to slippage of such firms in the international marketplace. Many were concerned that Americans' linguistic chauvinism could strangle their economic interests in the future. Others pointed to the need for a heightened realization that the growing Hispanic market within the American borders dictates economically as well as socially that more American citizens be fluent in Spanish.

In response to the question of whether English would remain the lingua franca of international business, both groups overwhelmingly assessed that such would be the case in the foreseeable future. Responded one dean however: "It depends on who wins the next major war. Maybe it will be Chinese someday."

Both the deans and the chairs of the language departments were then asked if there was any particular advantage or disadvantage for an American high-level executive located in a country where English was not the primary language to use a skilled translator in lieu of speaking the native language. With both the deans and the foreign language chairpersons, there was a clear majority that assessed such dependence on an interpreter as a decided disadvantage. The most frequent reason given for this position was the conviction that it was too easy to miss the nuances and gestures, if an important business discussion had to be filtered through several layers of translation. Insisted one language chairperson: "Let's face it. Most important decisions are entre gens over coffee or wine." Being able to speak the language and knowing its culture were seen to be of great importance.

A couple of examples given by the interviewees showed that the nuances of language should be of great concern to the businessman. Several years ago General Motors attempted to market its Chevrolet Nova in South America with poor

results. It seems that no executive had considered that "Nova" in Spanish meant "won't go."

Likewise a confectionary company located in upstate New York met equally disastrous results when attempting to market candy canes in Japan. Unfortunately red and white stripes are the symbol for poison in Japan.

But perhaps the most important reason, thought these deans and chairpersons, for knowing the languages of the country where one was doing business was the compliment paid to that culture (even if one made halting attempts at speaking a given foreign language). Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" was held up as the model. Conversely, refusal to attempt communication in a foreign tongue was often considered effrontery, an effrontery that could translate into unfortunate economic consequences.

Follow-up Question three: Is it as important to teach a language's cultural context as it is the language itself?

This question is closely tied to some aspects of the preceding question. By an overwhelming margin both groups answered in the affirmative. The interviewer offers a few selected comments that arose from this discussion.

-- Yes, the culture is as important. Otherwise the language learned is an empty shell. (dean)

-- Yes, although not an inordinate amount of time should be spent on it. It should only be highlighted as it relates to language. (dean)

-- It's the fallout and enhancement of learning a language.

-- Absolutely, the textbook companies know this already. (language chairperson)

-- You have to understand the culture to understand the literature. (language chairperson)

-- Yes. Such study works against the ethnocentricity of middle-class Americans who know of few patterns of being human. (language chairperson)

-- Yes. Otherwise you are studying language in a vacuum. We (Americans) don't love the English language. However, the French have an emotional attachment to their language, an attachment that is recognized by the government.

Perhaps the best apology given for knowing the cultural context of people was offered by one of the deans. He told of a teacher who knew enough language to communicate with American Indians in their native language. But one day she scolded a youth who would not look at her when answering a question. The boy did not want to return to school, since it was the custom of his culture not to look at someone in a position of respect and authority when addressing him. The dean added that he saw such a danger for misunderstanding whenever two different cultures came in contact with each other, if sufficient cultural cues had not been learned.

Follow-up Question four: Do you favor the substitution of a computer language for a modern language, when a language is required for graduation?

Although this question does not appear on the questionnaire, it was one that came out of a discussion during one of the pilot interviews. Since many deans and language chairpersons favored distribution requirements as a part of core curriculum with freedom of choice, the interviewer wanted to find out if the members of this population favored such a substitution.

Sixteen (84%) of the deans firmly disagreed with such a substitution. The three who agreed with such a substitution did so if it were for utilitarian or research-oriented purposes. However all three of these deans added that if one of the major goals of modern language instruction was the cultural broadening of the student, then their answer would be negative, since indeed a computer language had no cultural context.

One dean who had taken French and Fortran as the two language requirements for his Ph.D. said that several years ago he would have favored such a substitution but no longer would. Two-thirds of the deans used the phrase "no cultural broadening" as a reason for not favoring such a substitution in their answers to this open-ended question. Added one dean adamantly: "That would stretching a metaphor to the impermissible."

Seventeen (90%) of the chairpersons disagreed (a majority adamantly) that no such substitution be allowed. However, as was the case with the deans they did not want

such a position to be interpreted as a denigrating of the importance of computer literacy.

One lone language chairperson openly accepted such a requirement. (The other chairperson who answered the question affirmatively found computer language sorely lacking any cultural content as did a wide majority of his colleagues.) He was convinced that learning a computer language would satisfy such a language requirement, since one was mastering a different form of communication.

Conclusion

The interviewer has attempted in this study to address many of the issues raised in the review of the literature. As the literature has shown, there seems to be a pendulum effect bringing back some of the requirements dropped in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The researcher has sought to find whether such trends were being felt in liberal arts colleges in a selected population. Since his study has been exploratory and descriptive, widespread inference cannot be drawn for a broader population. However, the investigator is convinced that, in this somewhat comprehensive, although not exhaustive, study strong indications have been uncovered that very well may offer some valuable data to those trying to assess the status of the modern language requirement (and the cluster of issues surrounding such a requirement) in American higher education in coming years.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

"The very set now being affirmed is the same set that produced the traditional monolingual America." This was the major premise of a Spanish professor writing for a Point of View editorial in the January 12, 1983 issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education. In his article entitled "The Truisms, Clichés, and Shibboleths of Foreign Language Requirements," Brewer attacked many of the principal reasons traditionally given for requiring of foreign languages in the curriculum of colleges. In particular he focuses on the following reasons:

1) Without a language, you cannot have a real B.A.
2) Language courses really teach foreign culture.
3) Language study is a broadening experience.
4) Requirements are necessary if Americans are to be competent in foreign languages.

The researcher in his study sought to ascertain the reactions of two distinct groups within a population to the traditional rationale for such requirements along with the surrounding cluster of issues.

To the first point [no real B.A. without a language] Brewer puts forward:

> Foreign language study was not among the seven liberal arts of antiquity... The real liberal arts purist should know, in fact, that the very practicality of foreign language study renders it imminently illiberal, and it was for this reason that modern foreign languages were rigorously excluded from liberal curricula until quite recent times. Modern languages were first tolerated as extra and non-academic subjects, like fencing or voice, and then moved to elective status as alternatives to Greek and Latin. (Brewer, p. 72)

The researcher has attempted in chapter two of this study to trace such a changing attitude toward the academic worthiness of French and German in the face of Latin and Greek. One again calls to mind a section of the famous Yale Report of 1828.

> The student who has limited himself to French, Italian, and Spanish is very imperfectly prepared to commence a course for either divinity or law. He knows less of the literature of his own country than if he had been educated in the old method; the faculties of his mind have been brought into less vigorous exercise. (Yale Report, p.38)

As an historical criticism the assertions of Brewer are essentially borne out by a review of the literature. Indeed, a careful reading of pertinent documents reveals that respectability for modern languages such as French, German, and Spanish seems fairly recent. Yet these three

languages have become rather firmly entrenched in what is contemporary liberal arts education. Contends Brewer:

> ...the cliche [no real B.A. with language] holds such universal sway over faculty members and curriculum committes that a proposal to change [drop or lower] the language requirement is automatically viewed as a proposal to water down the "true" liberal arts curriculum.

As for the assertion that "language courses really teach foreign culture" Brewer would ask that pause be taken. Says he:

> My own experience convinces me that faculty members (in or out of language departments) do not agree on the meaning of "culture" or "teaching" in this context...Who can demonstrate the cultural dimension of the German declensions, the French partitive, or the forms and placement of the Spanish object pronouns to beginning students? Yet this is the stuff of which language courses are made and what counts on exam day - not knowing how to find the Left Bank or what the Prado contains. (Brewer, p.72)

Brewer further challenges the study of language as a broadening experience: "If breadth is the desideratum, what single language and culture can do justice to the world's diversity?" Brewer contends that it is not really broadening that should be the goal but rather "differentness." For him the "big three," French, Spanish, and German, simply do not point up significant "differentness" from the Anglo-American cultural experiences to warrant their study for this reason alone.

Brewer reserves his most biting comments for the necessity of the language requirement to insure competency in future generations of American college students.

> If two year or in some cases three year requirements failed to produce a bilingual citizenry before the 1960s, why assume they will do otherwise now? If we leap uncritically to the reinstatement of a failure, we fail (at best) to monitor curricula for appropriateness and effectiveness, or (at worst) we participate in an unbecoming instance of self-preservation by setting up enrollment- insuring requirements of questionable educational value. (Brewer, p.72)

The Guided Interview

The researcher has cited Brewer's article in depth in his summary, because in a sense Brewer's apology for a new notion of language study has served as a significant backdrop for the interviews conducted in this study. Along with the Klayman studies, Brewer's insightful comments helped to frame the questions that were asked of the participant in each interview.

Since the Klayman studies were criticized by some for being overbalanced by depending too heavily on the opinion of foreign language personnel, the researcher in this present study sought parallel groups to whom the same questions would be asked. To be certain, language professionals needed to be a group included in such a study. But to see whether foreign language personnel were over- defensive in insisting on the importance of their discipline in the liberal arts context, the researcher needed to study another group. It was decided that the academic dean of each institution presumably would both exhibit a wide range of knowledge of curricular matters and a breadth of disciplinary background.

In interviews conducted between October and December of 1983 the researcher asked a series of open-ended questions to both the academic dean (or his designee) and the chairperson of foreign languages at each of the nineteen liberal arts colleges in the population area. The population for this study consisted of those liberal arts colleges found in upstate New York. The writer chose to limit the study to upstate New York, since to have included all the liberal arts colleges in all of New York State would have made the interviewing format of research somewhat unwieldy.

This research which was exploratory in nature sought not only to receive affirmative and negative responses to a series of questions. For the most part the researcher was not even concerned with sophisticated statistical analysis, although it was deemed prudent to generate at least some distinctively quantifiable data.

The interviewer attempted to draw out the respondents particularly on those questions where some controversy might be evident. He noted certain nuances as well as intensity of conviction revealed by the respondents to the questions. The interviewer, although limited by time restraints, attempted to pursue information volunteered with appropriate follow-up questions.

The interviewees for the most part seemed eager to participate in this exercise. Several mentioned that the questions posed were touching a sensitive nerve that was presently being stimulated by considerable discussion and soul-

searching on their campuses. Recent indictments of the nation's public education system were cited as having made their impact on these college campuses. The whole issue of requirements within the liberal arts college seemed to be one of the current burning issues on these campuses.

The researcher summarizes the results of the interviews by attempting to give a synopsis of the prevailing opinions shown in response to the various questions.

Question one:

Within this population there is consistency overall concerning the mission of the liberal arts institution. Both the deans and language chairpersons pointed out the need to expose the student to a wide range of disciplines with the aim of liberating the student while at the same time giving him the analytical skills necessary for problem solving.

Although the definitions given were often vague and sometimes without clear focus, there seems to be sufficient understanding of mission to afford the remarkable consistency noted.

Question two:

Although most deans and chairpersons favored a core

curriculum, the most widespread view of an effective core curriculum was distributive in nature. Such a distribution requirement still afforded the student a choice. Perhaps the most difficult task facing a college where a core curriculum was considered to be worthwhile was to get the various departments to lay aside territorial considerations long enough to agree on what such a core should be.

For the most part, respondents in both groups saw as important exposure to the social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, humanities, as well as to courses developing analytical and communications skills.

Question three:

There is widespread support for discipline and furniture of the mind as a worthy goal of a liberal arts education. Although several pointed out that the term furniture was a bit archaic, most respondents saw the stretching of the mind for analytical purposes was just as valuable as when proposed in the Yale Report of 1828.

However, most interviewees hastened to add that certainly the modern liberal arts college was not trying simply to emulate Yale's goal of training the aristocratic elite. In fact many of the deans and chairpersons contended that to stop with the discipline and furniture of the mind was to neglect many of the equally important affective aspects of

a liberal arts education. One dean added that she was "in favor of this [emphasis] as a worthy goal for a liberal arts education as long as she could change the furniture around from time to time".

Question four:

Nearly all the respondents in both groups spoke openly of the inevitable tension between the intrinsic and the extrinsic. Although a slim majority favored a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic concerns, over a third of the deans openly favored a weighting of the intrinsic in any formula.

There seemed to be a defensiveness on the part of a wide majority when it was suggested that vocationalism need be given more stress due to increased competition for career options, especially in burgeoning technical areas. The researcher had the impression during these interviews that many of these deans and chairpersons would favor liberal education for its own sake with less emphasis on purely vocational concerns. However on some campuses there seemed to be a quiet desperation in the face of a declining pool of the 18- to 22-year olds and dwindling resources. One language chairperson summed up the dilemma well, when he stated: "I have a daughter who will be a freshman next year at a liberal arts college. I want her to be able to get a good job when she graduates." He later cautioned: "However to perform without knowing is dangerous."

Question five:

As Brewer stated in his article quoted earlier in this chapter, what is genuinely needed in American higher education is a highlighting of the "differentness" among cultures. Both the deans and language chairpersons for the most agreed that the function of foreign language study in the liberal arts context was the breaking down of the predominant provincialism extant in American culture. The phrase "culturally broadening" was mentioned quite frequently; and although Brewer might claim such a function to be over vague, this broadening aspect does seem to fit well the mission (as revealed in an earlier question of the interview) of the liberal arts college.

To be certain the prospects of using a language in international business was cited frequently (in some instances such a function deemed to be a necessary evil), but the most enthusiasm for the place of languages in the liberal arts context was reserved for its broadening, liberating aspects.

Question six:

The review of the literature indicated that the reason why many colleges might find less than overwhelming support for the modern language requirement was that there were many deans, who themselves having been forced to go through the

ordeal that foreign language instruction can be, opposed such a requirement on their campuses. Thus the researcher asked the deans to describe their own experiences in foreign language instruction at the undergraduate level.

In fact, the deans, most of whom had been required to take a foreign language as undergraduates, enjoyed those experiences. The one dean who had not had any foreign language experience regretted never having had such exposure.

The one recurring criticism however among these academic administrators was the frustration of never having become very proficient in the aural-oral skills. Thus,to the extent that they would offer recommendations for curriculum development on their respective campuses, they would favor that this aural-oral aspect be given considerable attention.

Question seven:

The question of whether the deans and language chairpersons favored a modern language requirement for the bachelor's degree elicited responses that within the population unmistakably showed support for such a proposition. Ninety percent (90%) of deans and sixty-eight percent (68%) of the language chairpersons clearly favored an institution-wide modern language requirement.

On the surface the lower percentage of chairpersons favoring such a requirement is surprising. However, of the chairpersons who did not favor such a requirement, the

majority cited the unpleasantness of having had to teach a captive audience. They seemed to feel that enrollments in foreign languages would remain relatively stable without adding such requirements. It is only fair to add that of the chairpersons who did favor the language requirement at the bachelor's level, the majority showed great intensity in their support of such a proposition.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of the schools had either very few or no language requirements at present compared to the clear support of these participants for such a requirement. Such a disparity might indicate that in the years to come on these campuses either there will be a dramatic increase in the number of institutions requiring foreign languages for graduation, or else there will be widespread frustration due to the discrepancy between what these academic professors deem to be academically desirable and what exists. In any event, attempts to reinstate or increase such modern language requirements will probably draw fire at most of these institutions. The consensus seemed to be that narrow departmental interests and fighting for precious resources would perhaps set up a tooth and nail struggle at some of these campuses.

Question eight:

The definition most commonly given by both deans and language professionals for minimum proficiency in a foreign

language was the ability to be somewhat conversant with all four basic skills in order to deal with daily life. With near unanimity both groups were convinced that such competence could not be attained with any less than completion of the intermediate level of foreign language instruction. Yet only one of these institutions presently had a language requirement at the intermediate level.

Question nine:

When asked what was the most cogent argument for requiring a foreign languages at their colleges, the participants in this study cited the importance of breaking down the incredibly entrenched provincialism extant in contemporary American society. Their responses were consistent with those offered for question one (The major mission of a liberal arts education is its liberating broadening aspects), and for question five. Along with the importance of cultural broadening of the students, several cited the more pragmatic rationale, the importance of language proficiency for companies involved in international trade.

Question ten:

A narrow majority of deans and a wide majority of language chairpersons predicted that there would be more modern language requirements at their schools in five years.

Although nearly all the deans saw the need for such a requirement, several stated that the political and economic realities on their campuses would probably prevent what ought to be [the requirement of a modern language for graduation].

The language chairpersons were more optimistic about the chances for increased language requirements at their school. However many expressed the concern that much of the rhetoric supporting the return of some of the requirements of yesteryear might be mere lip service. They offered the notion that such important decisions might be made not in an academic dean's office so much as in the office of admissions or financial affairs. Yet cautious optimism was expressed by these language professionals that such lip service might be translated into reality. Few conceded that such increased requirements would come at their school without some very real interdepartmental skirmishes.

Question eleven:

Nearly all the deans and language chairpersons forecast that the Big Three (French, Spanish, and German) would remain in place for the foreseeable future. Inertia, tenure rules, and tradition were cited as the principal reasons for such a prediction.

However there appeared to be reservations, especially among the deans, for this case. There were many (more among

the deans) in both groups who indicated that ignorance of Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, and Russian was not in the best interests of either the colleges or the nation as a whole. One language chairperson stated that in the years to come the United States would become far less European-oriented and more Far-East oriented. He spoke of the new Pacific Triangle-- Southern California (Silicone Valley), Korea, and Japan. Not to know at least Japanese, he felt, could in the long run be very damaging to American interests.

Question twelve:

The deans and language chairpersons clearly foresaw a profound impact on their colleges, if the New York State Board of Regents were to pass a proposal calling for language requirement for all those pursuing a Regents Diploma. Both groups agreed the greatest impact would be that many more students would enter their colleges (a large percentage of the student bodies in these colleges is drawn from New York State Schools) with the possibility of being placed in intermediate or advanced level language courses. Thus, requiring that students have at least intermediate-level language proficiency would be more readily received by those whose task it is to promote such requirements. Further, the hope was expressed especially by the chairmen of the language departments that the students would arrive on campus with better language skills than is presently the case.

Should there be some kind of proficiency requirement for all students in New York State in foreign language, several deans and department chairpersons foresaw the need for more language majors to teach the necessary courses.

Question thirteen:

The language chairpersons were unanimous and the academic deans nearly so in their view that the national trend to restore to some collegiate requirements in general and a foreign language one in particular was indeed significant.

Clearly many in both groups saw institution of higher education beginning another cycle where requirements would be more readily received by both the academic community. Most felt the cycle would last at least ten years. (The researcher here points to his review of the literature that showed the cyclical nature of enthusiasm for foreign language study in the United States.)

National studies such as the one commissioned by President Carter and by President Reagan on foreign languages and international studies, as well as criticism of the nation's public school system, have seemed to affect the somewhat favorable attitude toward requirements. In addition, the more conservative bent of today's students (as compared to the students of the late 1960s and early 1970s) may add to this conviction.

The Modern Language Requirement Questionnaire

This researcher sought in this Likert-style questionnaire to elicit the attitudes of both the deans and the chairpersons toward some of the reasons often given to justify study of a foreign language and attitudes concerning some other pedagogical issues related to language instruction. He was interested in comparing agreement between groups and within groups.

Taken as a whole, the responses of the deans and language chairpersons to all the questions showed very high correlation. The Pearson correlation test showed a correlation of .91 between attitudes of the two groups as reflected by their responses to the statements on the questionnaire.

Using a 4 point Likert scale (4=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree) the investigation found the strongest agreement among the deans on the following statements of the questionnaire:

Statement	Mean
Knowledge of foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education.	3.9
Knowledge of a foreign language is a culturally broadening experience.	3.9
Knowledge of a foreign language will become more and more essential to those involved in business.	3.68
Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's command of one's native language.	3.63

Among the language chairpersons strongest agreement was shown with the following statements:

Statement	Mean
Knowledge of a foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education.	4.0
Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's command of one's native language.	4.0

Knowledge of a foreign language is a culturally broadening experience.	3.9
Knowledge of a foreign language will become more and more essential to those involved in business.	3.74
Knowledge of a foreign language should be a prerequisite for entrance to a liberal arts college.	3.74

The deans were least in agreement with the following statements:

Statement	Mean
Knowledge of a foreign language should be primarily for pragmatic reasons.	1.95
Knowledge of reading skills in modern language is more important than speaking or listening skills	2.11

For the language chairpersons the strongest disagreement came on the same items:

Reading skills	1.95
Pragmatic reasons	2.00

The largest standard deviations from the mean were noted on the following statements for the deans:

Statement	Standard deviation
Knowledge of listening and speaking in foreign language will become the most important skill mastered.	.80
Knowledge of foreign languages is vital to national security.	.80

Knowledge of reading skills in a modern language is more important than speaking or listening skills.	.78

For the language chairpersons the largest standard deviations were reported as follows:

Statement	Standard deviation
Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's chances of getting a job.	.79
Knowledge of a modern language should give equal emphasis to all four skills--reading, writing, listening, and speaking.	.68
Knowledge of listening and speaking in a foreign language will become the most important skill mastered.	.67
Knowledge of a foreign language should be primarily for pragmatic reasons.	.65

Smallest standard deviations were noted for both groups on the following:

Statement	Standard deviation
Knowledge of a foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education.	.31(deans) 0 (chairs)
Knowledge of a foreign language is a culturally broadening experience.	.31(both)
Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's command of one's native language.	0 (chairs)

The widest discrepancies in opinion between the two groups for an individual item were reported on the following:

Statement	Mean (Dean)	Mean (F.L.)	Difference in mean
Knowledge of a foreign language should be a prerequisite for entrance to a liberal arts college.	2.95	3.74	.79
Knowledge of a foreign language corresponds to the exercising of one's mental capabilities.	2.95	3.50	.55
Knowledge of all four skills should be given equal emphasis	3.00	3.53	.53

Follow-up Question one:

There was wide support in both groups for the contention that learning a foreign language was of considerable assistance in the fuller understanding of the structure of one's native language. The major rationale offered for this transfer was that one learns one's native language at a young age more inductively than deductively with little attention given to language structure, whereas many foreign language courses concentrate on structure.

Follow-up Question two:

Pointing to the slippage of United States foreign trade both the deans and chairpersons held that greater knowledge of American businessmen, whose interests are sometimes pursued in a country where English is not the primary language, could be one factor among many to check such economic erosion. However, by a similarly wide margin these participants predicted the dominance of English as the lingua franca of international business for at least another generation.

Further, they gave several examples of the importance for America's executives to know the language of the foreign country in which they might serve. Few of the deans or language chairpersons agreed that even a gifted interpreter could serve so effectively as would be the case where the executive and his client would communicate even haltingly in a common language.

Follow-up Question three:

There was wide support among both groups that the cultural context of language is as important a concern for instructional purposes as the language itself. This view is consistent with the principal role most of these deans and chairpersons saw foreign language playing in the liberal arts program.

Follow-up Question four:

The deans and chairpersons overwhelmingly rejected the substitution of a computer language for a modern language requirement. The major reason given for such emphatically negative responses was that there is little or no cultural context in a computer language.

Conclusions of This Study

Conclusion one: Overall, there is not a large difference between the attitudes of deans as a group and the language chairpersons in regard to the importance of the modern language instruction and its requirement in these liberal arts colleges.

The high correlation (r=.91) on the modern language requirement questionnaire between the deans' and chairpersons' responses taken as a whole is noteworthy. The mean for individual items on the questionnaire also generally revealed small differences between the groups.

In addition to fairly close agreement on the items of the questionnaire, the interviewees were for the most part in basic agreement on the mission of the liberal arts college and the principal rationale for the requirement of modern language instruction.

Conclusion two: The principal rationale for the inclusion of language instruction in the liberal arts curriculum closely matches the statement of mission for these liberal arts colleges.

The broadening of a student's horizons is seen as the main purpose served by these liberal arts colleges, and the main function of language instruction is to afford such a cultural broadening.

Second, most of these deans and chairpersons feel that language instruction disciplines the mind and that such discipline develops analytical skills. The deans agreed and the language chairpersons strongly agreed that language instruction *per se* was a good mental exercise. There was strong agreement in both groups that the learning of a foreign language aided in the structural analysis of one's native language.

Conclusion three: There is strong support among these deans and chairpersons for a modern language requirement extending to include intermediate-level instruction.

Ninety percent (90%) of the deans and sixty-eight percent (68%) of the chairpersons clearly favored an institutional modern language requirement for the bachelor's degree. One reason offered for the lower percentage among

the language chairpersons is the aversion to teaching a captive audience.

By an overwhelming margin both groups welcomed the calling for minimum proficiency where one would be able to use all four basic language skills to get along in everyday life. With near unanimity both contended that instruction at the intermediate level at least would be necessary to acquire such minimum skills.

Conclusion four: French, German, and Spanish will remain the dominant languages taught in these liberal arts colleges for the foreseeable future.

In spite of the belief that this will be the case because of the power of tradition and inertia, there was considerable apprehension because there was not more movement toward emphasis of Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, and Russian. Although many in both groups favored increased emphasis on these strategic languages, they pointed to lack of sufficient resources, lack of qualified teachers for the less common languages, and the tenure of teachers in the former languages as major obstacles for change.

Conclusion five: Although there is strong conviction that modern languages will become more and more important for business interests, there is little support for the notion that

the primary reason for language instruction should be of a pragmatic nature.

Here the tension between the intrinsic and the extrinsic aspects of a liberal arts education are at once apparent. Philosophically, there appears to be little support for the idea that pragmatic reasons should be the primary ones for the study of modern languages.

Yet both deans and chairpersons alike see the critical need of American business to recognize that ours is not a monolingual world. Furthermore, although in these participants' opinion, English will probably remain the lingua franca of international business for at least another generation, it will be a distinct advantage for American business executives to be knowledgeable about the language and culture of the foreign country served.

Conclusion six: There is widespread support in both groups of this population for the notion that there is a significant and measurable trend in American higher education to encourage the presence of general requirements in the curriculum and the modern language requirement in particular.

The deans and language chairpersons favored the proposal of the New York State Board of Regents to institute some kind of requirement for at least the Regents' high school

diploma. However, as has been previously stated there was considerable concern that such "back to basics" rhetoric might not be accompanied by either sufficient resources or internal cooperation within the academic community to accomplish any significant result.

Limitations of This Study

To be certain, this population represents a rather narrow slice of what constitutes American higher education. While certain strong indications can be at once spotted, generalizations for yet a larger national population may not be inferred.

In addition, this study sought only the responses of those professionals serving at the liberal arts colleges within the area of the population. One cannot assume that such results would be duplicated were there to be a replication at non-liberal arts colleges.

Furthermore, this study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. The statistical analysis used was neither high-powered nor inferential in nature. Yet the statistics generated can be used for some fairly clear indications for this particular population now. However, a caveat needs to be noted. There is no guarantee that the opinions expressed by these deans and language chairpersons could be construed either as descriptions of present institutional policy or as accurate predictions for future curricular change. In fact,

the interviewer was careful to elicit responses that reflected personal rather than institutional policy. Yet the opinions of the chief academic officer and the head of the language department would no doubt be sought in any decision concerning the modern language requirement.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendation one:

There could be a study made of the non liberal-arts colleges in this geographical area. Using the same format as the present study, the researcher could ascertain whether significant differences are to be found between the attitudes of liberal arts personnel of this population and those of non-liberal arts professionals.

Recommendation two:

The modern language requirement questionnaire used in the study could be administered to a random sample, the data from which could be inferred to a national population of either all liberal arts colleges or all colleges in the United States. In this manner it could be ascertained whether the data collected in this study are representative of more than just a narrow population.

Recommendation three:

This present study did not take into account the attitudes of college students toward the modern language requirement. It has been fifteen years since the University of Illinois study and nearly thirty since Politizer's study concerning students' attitude toward the modern language requirement at Harvard.

Several respondents in this study alluded to current students' attitudes toward language study. However, to have an accurate appraisal of such attitudes in this matter, a study needs to be made.

Recommendation four:

Responses in this study clearly showed that knowledge of a modern language will become increasingly more important for those pursuing a career in business. It would seem that a study seeking the opinions of members of the business community in regard to foreign language proficiency might prove benefical. To be certain, some of the more academically oriented questions of this study would not be appropriate for a research carried out in a business milieu. However some of the questions posed in this study might yield data useful not only to the academic community but to the business one as well.

A Final Word

Although this study has shown that there seems to be considerable support for reinstatement of the modern language requirement, it would be good to take note of a warning by Brewer whose article in the Chronicle of Higher Education was highlighted at the beginning of this chapter. Stated he:

> If all we do is reinstate or re-emphasize language requirements as we have known them, we will soon realize again that virtually nobody is satisfied and we could well see a revival of anti-foreign language sentiment on our campuses. (Brewer, p. 72)

This researcher contends that Brewer's warning is a valid one. Where curricular changes involving foreign language on these college campuses are to be made, there needs to be careful planning and research as well as clear articulation of goals.

APPENDIX

DATA SHEET

The Foreign Language Requirement
in the Liberal Arts College

Name of Your Institution _____

Your Position _____

Undergraduate Enrollment
of Your Institution _____

Year You Received B.A./B.S._____

Major Area of Your B.A./B.S._____

Major Area of Your M.A./M.S._____

Major Area of Your Ph.D/Ed.D._____

Briefly describe how much language you took in your undergraduate studies.

Was a foreign language required for your baccalaureate degree?_____

Briefly describe what foreign language instruction your institution requires for the baccalaureate degree.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this data sheet. I will collect this at the time of our interview.

Modern Language Requirement Questionnaire

Please circle the number representing most closely your attitude toward the following statements concerning the study of modern languages in the liberal arts college. Refer to the following key: Strongly Agree(4), Agree(3), Disagree(2), Strongly Disagree(1).

1. Knowledge of a foreign language is an important part of a liberal arts education. 4 3 2 1

2. Knowledge of a foreign language improves one's command of one's native language. 4 3 2 1

3. Knowledge of a foreign language will become more and more essential to those involved in business. 4 3 2 1

4. Knowledge of a foreign language is a culturally broadening experience. 4 3 2 1

5. Knowledge of the literature of a foreign language is an important part of one's liberal arts training. 4 3 2 1

6. Knowledge of a foreign language should be primarily for pragmatic reasons(i.e. job skills, travel, enjoyment, etc.) 4 3 2 1

7. Knowledge of a modern language should give equal emphasis to all four skills-reading, writing, listening, and speaking. 4 3 2 1

8. Knowledge of reading skills in a modern language is more important than speaking or listening skills. 4 3 2 1

9. Knowledge of a modern language improves one's chances of getting a job. 4 3 2 1

10. Knowledge of French, Spanish, and German will probably continue to be the most commonly stressed. 4 3 2 1

11. Knowledge of a foreign language corresponds to the exercising of one's mental capabilities. 4 3 2 1

12. Knowledge of a foreign language should be a prerequisite for entrance to a liberal arts college. 4 3 2 1

13. Knowledge of listening and speaking in a foreign language will become the most important skills mastered. 4 3 2 1

14. Knowledge of foreign languages is vital to national security. 4 3 2 1

Sample Letter to Participants

Dear

The whole subject of what courses should be required for the baccalaureate degree is under careful study at many of the nation's institutions of higher education. This seems to be particularly evident at liberal arts colleges. As a Ph.D. candidate in Higher Education and Administration from Michigan State University, I am conducting a study concerning the modern foreign language requirement in the liberal arts college. Upstate New York has been chosen as the area to be studied. During the fall of 1983 I would like to interview the academic deans/provosts and the department chairpersons of the foreign language departments of all the Upstate New York liberal arts colleges. There will be twenty colleges involved in the study. (Colleges just north of New York City and in New York City will not be included).

The guided interview which will focus on the foreign language requirement will take between forty-five minutes and one hour of your time. I will be taking notes, and with your permission I would like to record the interview on cassette for later reference. Of course all individual information will remain confidential. References to information concerning your college will only be made in collective data.

Since I have forty interviews to conduct, and since each will involve travel on my part; I am trying to designate a particular day or days when an interview might be possible with you. I will be calling in a few days to confirm your willingness to participate in the study, as well as set a time and place for the appointment. In order to complete these interviews in the time alloted to me, I need to conduct back to back interviews with the dean/provost and foreign language department chairperson of your college, if at all possible.

Enclosed you will also find a data sheet. If you could fill this out prior to the interview and give it to me at the time of the interview, it would allow more time for questions and answers during the actual interview process. These data sheets will be coded and will be kept confidential as well.

When the research for this study has been analyzed, a report will be forwarded to you. I hope that the information contained in such a report will be of benefit to your institution, as you continually assess what is to be contained in your curriculum.

If I am unable to contact you personally when I call to set an appointment, perhaps your secretary would be able to aid in this matter. I would like to visit your college during the week of November 8 after 2:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

David G. Hamilton

DGH/cr