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### Putting the Fun in Foreign Language: Defining Leisure Language Learning and the Implications for Foreign Language Educators

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Presentation by

**Graca Webster**

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholar's Day | 2023

# Putting the Fun in Foreign Language!

**Defining and Justifying Leisure Language Learning and the  
Implications for Foreign Language Educators**

*Honors Thesis Project*



**Post-pandemic effects**



**Unprecedented access to the rest of the globe**



**Decreased enrollments in foreign languages**



**Prime setting for Leisure  
Language Learning**

*Contextualizing the Idea*

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# *Legitimizing*

**01**

Pleasure  
Hypothesis

**02**

Self  
Determination  
Theory

**03**

Comprehension  
Hypothesis

**04**

Acquisition vs.  
Learning  
Hypothesis



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# Conceptualizing

**Leisure language learning:** the pursuit of acquisition of a foreign language free from obligation, and in a manner that is pleasurable for the learner



## Obligation-free

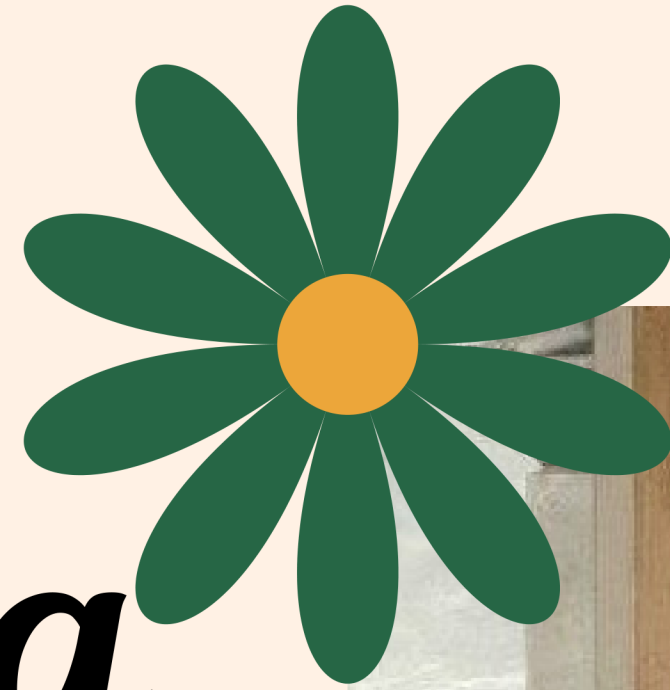
- Pursuits of obligation: career, necessity, academics, mandated tasks
- Zero-obligation: detached from external pressures

## Pleasurable

- Brings relaxation, fulfillment, and emotional satisfaction
- Exciting, rewarding, and internally motivating

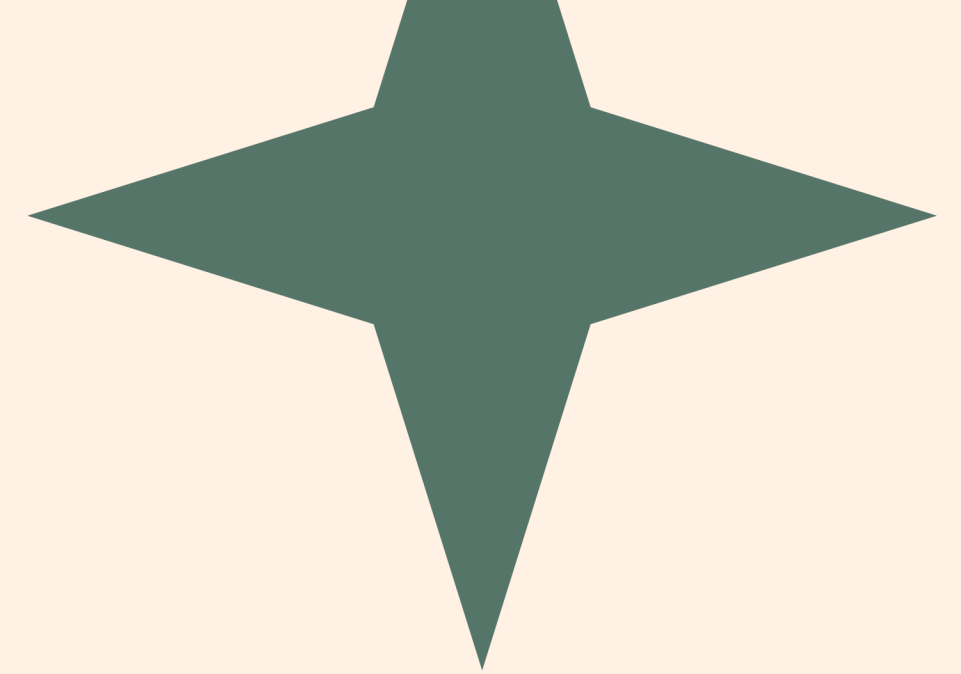
# *Incentiwizing*

**Still unsure? Prepare to be convinced!**



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# Cognitive Rewards



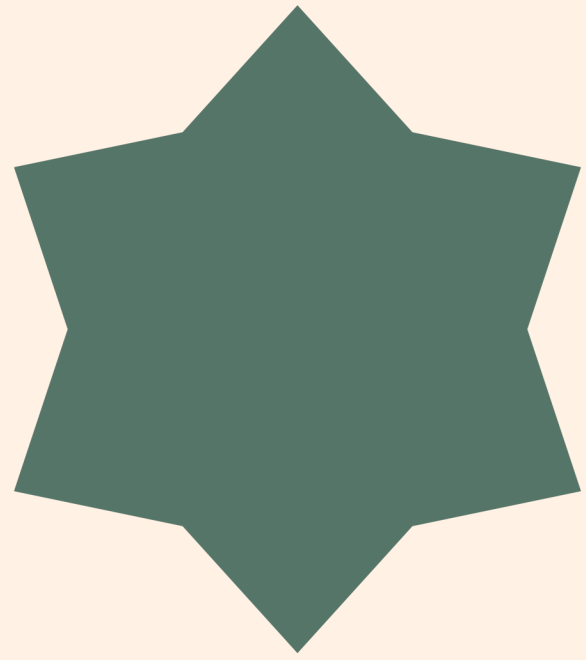
- 2014\* Published overview of neuroplasticity research: language learning increases gray matter density and white matter integrity
- No matter the age of the learners, time spent learning, difficulty of activity, or individual characteristics, there is significant cognitive change

**Incentivizing**

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\*Li et al. 2014 "Neuroplasticity as a function of second language learning: Anatomical changes in the human brain."





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# *Social Merits*


- Language is a social tool
- Power to increase empathy
- New potential for meaningful relationships
- Expand the limits of your self-identity
- New communities to belong to



**Incentivizing**

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# *Adaptability*



- Language accompanies the majority of our activities of daily living
- Leisure Language Learning can be customized to fit an individual's goals, interests, schedule, values, current hobbies, etc.
- The possibilities are endless!

**Incentivizing** \_\_\_\_\_

# Realizing

Where do you begin a  
Leisure Language Learning Journey?

**Books**

**Gamified Learning**

**Recipes in Target Language**

**TV and Movies**

**Music/Playlists**

**News**

**Youtube**

**Video Games**

**Sports**

**Social Media**

**Cultural Experiences**

**Podcasts**





Los Muppets - Hombre o Muppet (Letra)



Share

*Y voy otra vez solo  icaba el tiempo así*

V A M E N I U W U

Watch on  YouTube

# *Utilizing*

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## **Leisure Language Learning is a tool available to be leveraged by Foreign Language Educators**

- Possibility to improve student outcomes
- Create positive dispositions towards language learning
- Build confidence in students



# *Humanizing*

## **A Biblical Perspective**



- Language is a tool created by God for human connection
- the Gospel moves at the speed of relationships, and language is we use to pursue relationships with people.
- Language a foreign learning acknowledges the value of a person as a fellow image-bearer, their story, and their identity
- Walk in the shoes of your neighbor
- "To learn a language is an act of love" (Calvin Seerveld)

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# *Servants*

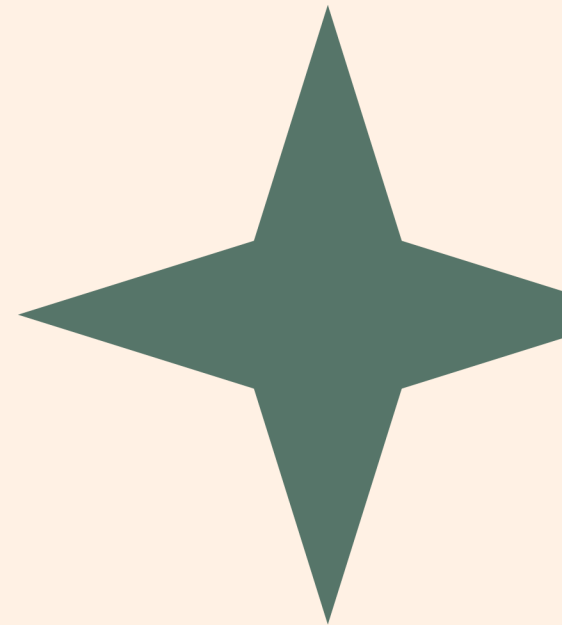


## **Sacrifice**

- Learning a foreign language is challenging and uncomfortable
- Reflective of Christ's efforts to meet us

## **Humility**

- Linguistic submission
- Accepting your own mistakes
- Honoring your conversation partner





# Emphasizing

01

## The Moment is Now

- Culturally relevant and ready
- Available resources
- Rewards are numerous

02

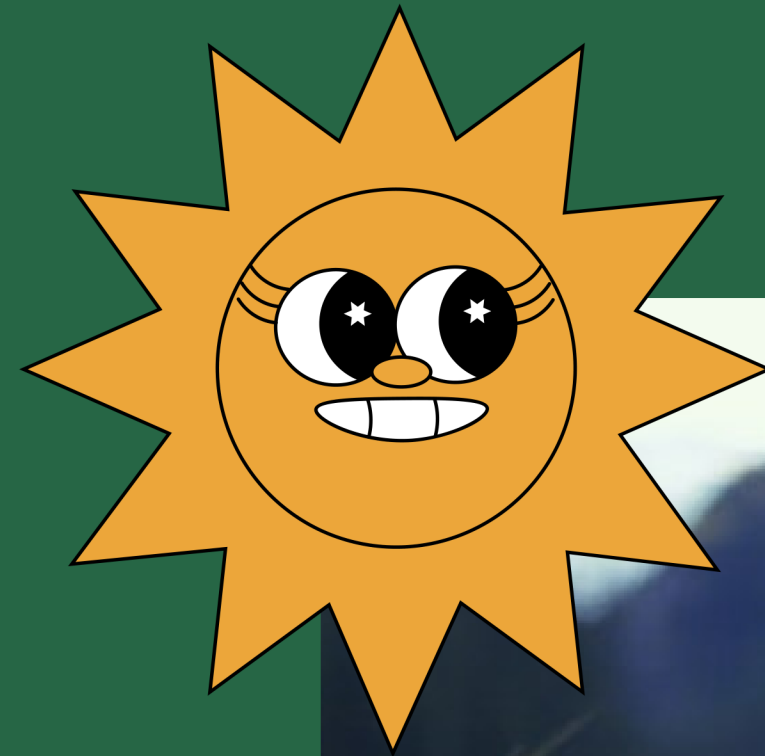
## Human Obligation

- Leisure with a purpose
- Global citizens
- Loving our neighbors



# Conclusion

For Leisure Language Learning, the future is bright and the possibilities are vast!



*Questions?*



Presentation by

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*Thank  
You!*



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