

Titans learn importance of language

By KARYLANN SPICER
TMHS Reporter

"Why do I have to learn a foreign language?" students often ask. In the United States, 36.5 million people speak either Spanish or French. Some students simply enjoy learning the language, while others choose foreign languages because they have to for their academic program or because of a particular job like business, teaching, lawyer and medicine. For instance, French teacher Amanda Adams said, "French is very important in international business."

Some colleges recommend four years of study in the same foreign language while others require two years of study in the same foreign language in order to be admitted. Both Juniata College, a small private, liberal arts college, and Penn State University require two years. The University of Pennsylvania, an Ivy league school in Philadelphia, recommends four years of a foreign language. High school students can also take the AP language exams and receive college credits if they get a high enough score.

A new language can mean both a new insight and a good time. Assistant professor of

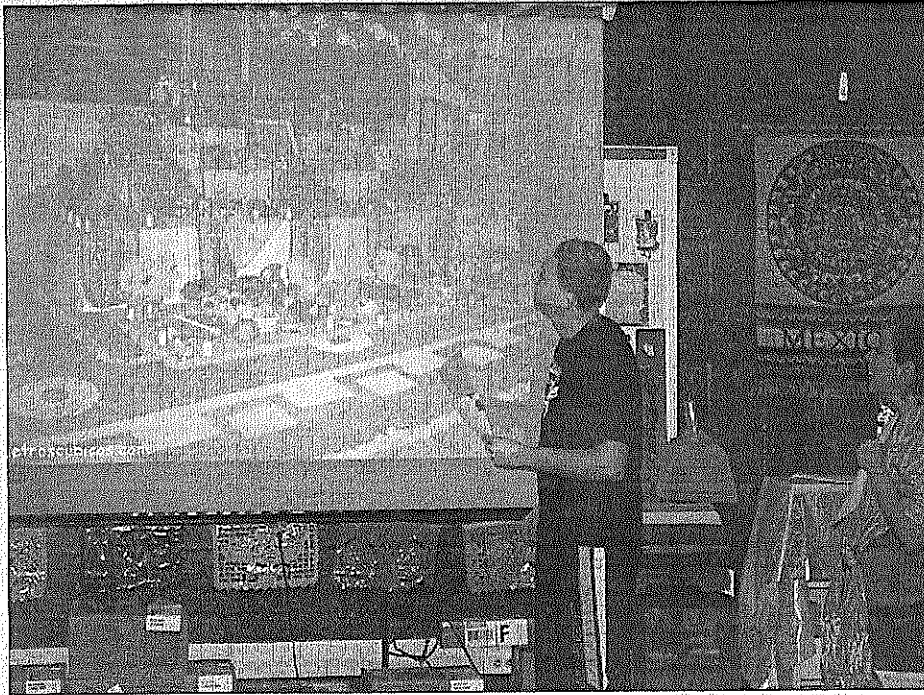


Photo by KARYLANN SPICER

Tussey Mountain sophomore Mitchell McDonald and a Juniata College Language in Motion presenter discuss a piece of Spanish culture during a presentation in Spanish class.

English and director of Language in Motion at Juniata College, Deborah Roney, said, "Learning foreign languages is

important because it opens the world to you. It gives you a new perspective of the world."

Tussey Spanish teacher

Andrea Wakefoose said of her subject, "I love the culture, the background, the people, the fashion, the sound, the energy

and the music." Roney's favorite language to study is Polish. "I like all languages," she said, "but I studied Polish the most because it sounds good and it is an interesting language." Adams studied both French and Spanish, but said she just enjoyed French more. Adams said, "I like the food, the history and the architecture."

Foreign languages are more than just something enjoyable. "It is important for our country to learn new languages. It helps us be good neighbors," said Roney. "It helps people get better jobs and shows the employer you did something new." Spanish, for instance, is the most widely-spoken Romance language (language derived from Latin). "I chose Spanish because it was practical," said Wakefoose. French is also important: it is the second most widely taught second language in the world, according to the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (the international organization of the French-speaking governments and states).

Wakefoose began to learn Spanish in college. She thought if you want to learn it, you have to live in the country, so she traveled a lot and took school there. "I teach the structure and I try to speak so the students can hear the sound," said Wakefoose. Adams

learned both French and Spanish in high school but liked French better. She studied French at Juniata College and then at St. Francis University. She also studied abroad at Université de Québec à Chicoutimini.

Juniata College's Language in Motion Program is a program using international students, upper-level students and study-abroad returnees. "Language In Motion is a class that get students from other countries and or who lived in the countries to talk to high school students about their country, bring food from the country and dance for them," said Wakefoose.

Language in Motion also offers immersion programs. For example, Wakefoose's Spanish 3 students, two of her gifted students and a foreign exchange student went on a trip to Juniata College March 22. The whole day was spoken in Spanish, except at the beginning of the day when they were talking about the College. "There will be tours around the college that will be spoken in Spanish, Spanish students from the college will have plans for activities and presentations and they will also have the students cook, dance and sing (which is all inspired by the Spanish culture)," said Wakefoose.