

EXAMINING THE USE OF INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES TO INCREASE  
MOTIVATION IN THE L2 CLASSROOM THROUGH JOURNALS

by

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CERTIFICATION OF PROJECT WORK

We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled EXAMINING THE USE OF INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES TO INCREASE MOTIVATION IN THE L2 CLASSROOM THROUGH JOURNALS by Monica L. Knoll, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, TESOL, is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.



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## **Abstract**

Motivation is one of the key factors for learning and can have serious implications for students when studying any subject matter (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei, 1994). The issue being addressed is that many students in the U.S. see little need to learn a foreign language given the current status of English as a global language (Kachru, & Nelson, 1996). This research study seeks to determine whether an increase of target language practice in authentic and culturally relevant situations will have an effect on high school students' motivation to learn a foreign language. The mixed method study required students to actively seek situations outside of the classroom to use Spanish and then to write a journal about the activity for which guiding questions were provided. Seventeen students from a rural high school in grades nine and ten completed an initial and midpoint questionnaire, cultural experiences over a ten week period and a final interview at the end of the study (Gardner, 1985). Results indicate many increases in positive answers throughout the questionnaires and journals. Students also reported higher levels of confidence, ability to decipher through contextual clues and improvements in pronunciation of Spanish. Implications for the research include the ways in which experience journals could be used in other subject areas and how this could impact various content areas. Future research may include the results from conducting the culture journals over longer periods of time or in different areas of study. Building more culturally and personally relevant projects into foreign language classes may encourage language learning among students as well as fostering active and independent learners which may contribute to more language learners overall.

*Keywords:* motivation, attitude, foreign language, cultural awareness, journals

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## Introduction

Across the country teachers struggle everyday with investigating new ways to engage students and increase their knowledge in various content areas while keeping students engaged and motivated. However, according to New York State Higher Education and the U.S. Department of Education, foreign language as well as bilingual education are designated “High-need Fields” meaning that there are not enough teachers to fill the positions available to teach the subjects to students ([http://www.hesc.ny.gov/content.nsf/SFC/TEACH\\_Grant\\_Program](http://www.hesc.ny.gov/content.nsf/SFC/TEACH_Grant_Program)).

Without teachers to impart knowledge on students and without students studying foreign languages, these important content areas central to global communications and cultural knowledge very well may diminish or even disappear in schools without the support of learners. Students may become more encouraged to interact with others using other languages if motivation is increased, and multilingualism will make them more marketable as world citizens no matter what language they learn (Norton, 2010). Intercultural experience may provide an answer to a much needed boost in the perceived importance of foreign and second languages and the motivation to learn them. Intercultural experiences have been known to increase students’ perceived need to use the target languages and in light of this, may increase the number of students continuing in a foreign language in the United States (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Yager, 1998; Jing, 2011).

According to McGroarty (2010), intercultural and community interaction can increase students’ perception of the usefulness of foreign language in their own lives. Cross-cultural interaction may provide students with a practical use for the language they are learning which will validate the idea that it is useful at home as well as abroad. Globalization in terms of communication and technology can assist in giving students access to multiple and varied forms

of language inside and outside of the classroom (McGroarty, 2010). Implementing creative and varied use of language for the students allows them to be proactive in learning a language and encourages them to seek their own engaging methods of learning (Schumann, 1978; Saville-Troike, 2012).

This research project required students to seek out and actively participate in various target language experiences outside of the classroom. The goal was to give students a chance to use what they learned in class in order to see practical applications of language learning, and to connect with the culture of the target language (Schumann, 1978; Ellis 1999). Cultural experience journals were explored in the current research as motivators to detect change in motivation or attitude towards language learning. These changes also determined whether the cultural experiences increased or decreased student knowledge of the target language or culture. Studies in the past have shown that the more experience a student has using the second language or L2 the more the student will have positive cultural representations of the respective L2 communities which may increase the student's desire to learn the language (McGroarty, 2010). Since schools do not normally fund study abroad experiences for students, it is important for teachers to find ways of integrating culture and language into the content (Cutshall, 2012; Schumann, 1978).

Motivation is an important factor in the desire to learn languages and also for students to see practical applications of the subject in society (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Integrative motivation, a motivational theory by Gardner and Lambert, reflects an interest in learning the L2 through a desire to integrate or participate with the people and culture represented by the L2 community. It seems that there are many students in the United States who expect others to learn English, and because they have little cross-cultural experience or experience with other

language groups, they see little need to learn a foreign language. However, it is important for the survival of the field and language in general to connect students with the culture and real life applications of the subject matter since rural societies such as the one studied may not see the importance of other languages in their everyday lives (Lamb, 2012). This may assist in motivating students to learn the subject matter and even to foster a deeper understanding of why the content is essential in their lives. Motivation and attitude research could benefit teachers in all areas if it shows improvement in student motivation and attitude towards the subject matter. In current society, tests and student achievement dictate how well a teacher and a school performs, and so any research that teachers can use to help increase student motivation to learn and to be successful will be supportive of education.

### **Literature Review**

Sociolinguistics is the study of how language and society are connected including the concepts of power, identity, ideologies, and approaches to policy and how they are related to language. Additionally there are a number of theories as to how language should be taught and even what language should be taught and why. The concepts under sociolinguistics are often debated and because of their controversial nature people seldom agree entirely on the way people should learn language and the belief systems which accompany language. (Saville-Troike, 2012; Wright, 2010).

The literature reviewed begins with historical perspectives of language in the United States and the state of flux that language learning has been in since the beginning of the nation as well as the influence language has had on ideology and power. The history is followed by the way language is learned as a second language and the various theories behind second language acquisition (SLA) as well as how these affect student learning, attitude and motivation. Next is

language and identity which explores student investment in learning, their background in connection to knowledge and the idea of *imagined communities*. Culture and language follows identity examining the connections between the two concepts and how the integration of these ideas within the classroom can benefit learners. The last piece focuses on motivation and how students are motivated to learn including the different types of motivation, and what impacts it.

### **Language in the USA**

**Historical ideologies.** The United States was built on immigration and it is a multilingual and multicultural country in which practices and perspectives in terms of language and culture still widely vary (Wright, 2010). Through the early 1900s foreign language (FL) was an integral part of education with bilingual education programs throughout the country in a number of different languages. In the 1800s French was a compulsory subject in Massachusetts high schools and in the 1900s Spanish was compulsory in New Mexico public high schools (Kloss, 1998). German was taught in elementary schools in Washington, DC and many Midwestern high schools were bilingual German-English. Some governments even provided support to schools to teach foreign language including Russian in Alaska, French in New Orleans, Magyar in Connecticut and Italian throughout the country. Polish was taught in public schools in Milwaukee and Italian was taught in all grades levels in elementary school. These programs took place in the early 1900s and indicate that language was once essential in the United States and the language taught varied by region.

At times throughout history FLs were tolerated and even promoted but there have also been waves of language restrictionism which limited and sometimes outlawed bilingual schools and even FL instruction (Crawford, 1998; Wright, 2010). The purpose of language restriction was usually tied to discrimination and largely for social control put in place by the dominant

group in society, rather than as a means to help immigrants with English. Around the times of World War I and II (1920s-1950s) the Americanization movement was in effect which campaigned the belief that to be American means to only speak English. In 1968 the Bilingual Education Act was passed which provided competitive federal grants to school districts in order to support bilingual education programs (Wright, 2010). However, the act did not specify what the program should entail and many of the programs were not really bilingual in nature (Crawford, 1998). Different presidents also have had a strong impact on foreign language, flip-flopping between English only legislation and dual language or bilingual education promotion (Wright, 2010).

**Current ideologies.** Since the 1900s the United States has slowly become a country where many people do not learn a second language and they rely on English as the only language they need. One reason for this may be that English is the most widely known language that the world has ever seen, however, there are many different forms of English all over the world since numerous countries have adopted it as their official language (Kachru & Nelson, 1996).

Currently, 79.2% of the population five years and older speak English only.

([http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_11\\_1YR\\_S1601&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_1YR_S1601&prodType=table)). Thirty one U.S. States have laws making English the official

language meaning that “official government business at all levels must be conducted solely in English. This includes all public documents, records, legislation and regulations, as well as hearings, official ceremonies and public meetings” (<http://www.us-english.org/view/13>).

However, the U.S. as a whole has never and still does not have an official language, despite English being commonly used and many states having adopted it as the official language (Wright, 2010).

It seems in many ways as if the importance of foreign language in the U.S. is dwindling as shown by various reports of decreased offerings and overall ability in a second language demonstrated by Americans. Only 18 percent of Americans report speaking a language other than English, while 53 percent of Europeans can converse in a second language

(<http://www.forbes.com/sites/collegeprose/2012/08/27/americas-foreign-language-deficit/>).

Within elementary schools, foreign language instruction decreased from 31 to 25 percent from 1997 to 2008 and about 25 percent of elementary schools and 30 percent of middle schools reported a shortage of qualified foreign language teachers. Some of the reasons for decreases may include budget cuts, but in light of the jagged past of foreign language in the U.S. it may be that the country is encountering a period of language restrictionism. Even at the higher education level, only 50.7 percent of these institutions required foreign language study for a baccalaureate degree in 2009 to 2010. Language research shows that learning a second language can support academic achievement, provide cognitive benefits and support positive attitudes towards other cultures and languages (<http://www.actfl.org/advocacy/discover-languages/what-the-research-shows>). In spite of all these benefits and positive effects on student learning, the perceived importance of foreign language is in a state of decline in the United States (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/collegeprose/2012/08/27/americas-foreign-language-deficit/>).

*Power.* Language learning is often affected by socially and historically based relationships to the target language and the power that one group may hold over another (Wiley, 2005; Crawford, 1998). Second language learners may be ambivalent to learning another language because of power struggles within the community, perceived limited importance of the target language and poor relations in general with the target language speakers or culture.

Currently, English is seen as a gatekeeper to many opportunities in education, business, law and culture and has taken on a power of its own.

Although research today provides more support for bilingual education than it did when the Bilingual Education Act was passed in 1968, learning a second language in addition to the first language of a student is stigmatized by many educational policies as a step backwards in education (Crawford, 1998; Lo Bianco, 2010). Since the 1980s many U.S. voters have reacted defensively against the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity brought about by an increase in immigration (Crawford, 1998). Although the United States does not have an official language, a nationwide campaign seeking to “protect English” has led to 31 states designating English as the sole language of government (<http://www.us-english.org/view/13>). In 1998 California voted to outlaw bilingual education despite the advice of professionals in the field which leads into the idea that little by little the United States is setting a goal of acculturation for its inhabitants (Crawford, 1998; Lo Bianco, 2010).

In the United States, Spanish speakers make up the largest language group other than English (62.3 percent) and therefore have been especially affected by the status of language programs since linguistic issues spur policy making (Wiley, 2005; <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/acs-12.pdf> ). Spanish in the U.S. is classified as an old colonial language, an indigenous language, an immigrant language, a transnational language, a refugee language and a contemporary dominant language of Puerto Ricans who are U.S. citizens (Wiley, 2005). In the U.S., the widespread use of Spanish may depend on what state or region you are in and whether the schools view language as necessary in terms of the community. Some groups do not want their language expanded past the community because it has the potential to bring a community together or to segregate it further. One Spanish speaking

community viewed teaching Spanish to English speaking students as “giving Spanish away casually to the children of the powerful” (Wiley, p.596). The United States is the fifth largest Spanish speaking country in the world with over 35 million speakers or 12 percent of the population (<http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/acs-12.pdf>). However, despite the language’s high number of speakers, varied classifications and importance in many communities, Spanish is still being taught as a *foreign* language in most schools in the U.S.

### **Learning Languages**

Second language acquisition (SLA) refers to the study of groups and individuals who learn one or more second languages (L2s) in addition to their first, and the process of learning the language or languages (Saville-Troike 2012; Lightbown & Spada 2011). Cognitivists emphasize the idea that the mind learns and retrieves information for learning language in the same way as any learning in general may be obtained (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). A well-known piece of cognitive theory is connectionism which emphasizes the influence of the environment on learners and learning is an innate ability accessible for all people. In terms of environment it is believed that conversation is predictable because human interactions usually follow specific patterns and this may assist learners since they can hypothesize or generalize what will come next in a sequence. Frequency is also an important factor in learning according to connectionism because the more a learner encounters a piece of language, the stronger the connections will become. One of the things the proposed research will accomplish is to give students more frequent encounters with the language being learned which according to connectionism will build stronger relationships and deeper understanding.

**Interaction and SCT.** Innatist theory states that language is acquired through natural, unstructured language in authentic situations and real communication acts (Lightbown & Spada,

2011). The theory also embodies conversational interaction and construction of knowledge via interaction with your environment. According to Krashen (1978), who is a key theorist for Innatist theory, it is important that students are exposed to differing levels of ability and knowledge so that they are achieving comprehensible input. This input must also contain  $i+1$  which teaches one step ahead of the learner's already acquired knowledge of the language. Krashen also developed the idea of the affective filter which claims that when a person is anxious it will be more difficult for them to learn because the anxiety creates a mental block disallowing new information to be accepted (Saville-Troike, 2012). Therefore, it is important to create an environment in which students feel comfortable using language so that they are free to learn. The affective filter also may account for why people exposed to language in large amounts do not necessarily acquire any knowledge related to the language (Lightbown & Spada, 2011).

The sociocultural theory believes that interaction is a causative force for learning an L2 and that learning is not done through interaction but within interaction (Saville-Troike, 2012). This theory emphasizes communicative competence, which is the ability to use language in a variety of ways and also demonstrates the ability to convey meaning rather than grammaticality (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). Through interaction with their environment, students are able to construct knowledge which promotes competence in the target language. Learners must interact with native speakers in order to use their new language, to try to get their ideas across, and to communicate meaning. Learners are also active problem solvers, and they must use their schema to solve problems and not just copy their teacher's knowledge. A key figure within sociocultural theory is Vygotsky who believed that language development arises as a result of social interactions. He developed the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which entails

the range of abilities that a person can perform with scaffolding or assistance but that the student cannot yet perform individually (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). The ZPD is also a metaphorical location in which learners can co-construct knowledge and collaborate with the speaker and it includes a strong emphasis on language development.

According to Michael Long who developed the Interactional Hypothesis, learners must negotiate meaning with the speaker in order to communicate effectively (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). Because of this negotiation, the input provided may be altered in nature or scaffolded to be more understandable for the learner. Long's hypothesis states that conversational interaction including  $i+1$  is an essential condition for SLA. Speakers have been noted to naturally modify their speech so that others can understand through elaboration, slower speech, context clues and gestures. Natural interaction which is modified leads to better understanding than simplified interaction which has been planned in advance because the learner is forced to negotiate meaning. The Output Hypothesis created by Swain states that when learners produce language they will see their own limits and these demands push learners to learn more. This hypothesis may also force learners to co-construct knowledge through interactions and thereby it allows language use and learning to occur simultaneously.

In the 1999 study Ellis conducted in Japan, students learning English as an L2 were tested on their response to directions given three different types of input; unmodified, pre-modified, and interactionally modified. The unmodified group had the directions read to them as they would be heard by a native speaker and the duration of the test was ten minutes. The pre-modified group heard directions that had been modified before-hand which included speaking more slowly and pausing between directions for as long as the student needed and this test lasted twenty minutes. The Interactionally Modified (IM) group received clarification and the student

could negotiate for meaning with the teacher but the teacher was not allowed to gesture and this test lasted 45 minutes. The complexity of all three input types was about the same but the students in the IM group received more repetitions and overall they were exposed to more input. This can be seen clearly through the length of the conversation and the fact that the student could negotiate meaning with the interlocutor. The students in the IM group received higher comprehension and vocabulary acquisition scores than either the unmodified or pre-modified groups. The IM students also had a higher degree of success in carrying out the directions given by the teacher. In this study the students were able to collaborate and problem-solve so that they could better internalize the information which the results show that they accomplished. Interaction can potentially enrich input in many ways through negotiation of meaning, increases in the quantity of input, added information through elaboration and the use of contextual support, which is especially important for beginning learners.

### **Attitudes Towards Language Learning**

Language attitude research exists in the realm of psychology and sociolinguistics and it includes accent evaluation, investigation of positive cultural representation and determines how motivation is affected by one's attitude (McGroarty, 2010). Attitudes about language can be difficult to understand since they may not always be explicitly stated but must be observed in the speaker's behavior or social interactions but they influence both language use and learning. Surveys and questionnaires are often used in this field to identify patterns and opinions which coincide with success in learning a language.

A few well-known researchers in the field, including Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Dörnyei (1994) have looked into language attitudes and motivation. Dörnyei and Csizér (2006) note that Gardner was the pioneer researcher in the field of language attitudes and motivation

beginning in the late 1950s using surveys and questionnaires to identify patterns of opinions and success which was usually measured by course grades. Gardner (1985) was also responsible for the creation of the Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which is connected to psychology but is deeply rooted in linguistic attitude. The AMTB was initially used to find individual differences but now includes broader concerns such as reflections on language ideologies, identification with the first and second language community and contact with the L2 community or media (McGroarty, 2010). The AMTB was originally used in Canada for students learning French as an L2 and it included Likert scale tests in a variety of areas to determine attitude toward learning an L2 (see Table 1). Dörnyei and Csizér (2006) extend Gardner and Lamberts' (1972) research regarding language attitudes to include language instruction in order to discover what motivates students to learn a language and how positive attitudes can increase success in the L2 classroom.

Students' attitudes toward their own language as well as languages that can or must be studied in school have encouraged research about students' perceptions of other languages and the ethno-linguistic groups which accompany the language being studied. Matched guise tests are used in attitudinal research to find learners opinions of a language or the speakers of the language. The test has a bilingual speaker read a passage in both English and the target language but the student is unaware that the same person is reading both passages. The student is then asked to rate the personality and appearance of the voice heard during both the English and the target language reading (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). One example of Gardner's research shows learners' stereotypes of French speaking people and the results were very similar between students of different backgrounds and regions using a matched guise test. The student was asked to rate the personality and appearance of the voice heard on a Likert scale.

Table 1  
*Testing Areas in the AMTB*

AMTB- with sub-tests	Description
Attitudes toward French Canadians	Indicates positive or negative attitudes towards French speaking Canadians
Interest in Foreign Languages - Desire to Learn French	Assesses subjects' general interest in studying foreign languages and French specifically in the sub-test.
Attitudes toward European French People	Indicates positive or negative attitudes toward European French people
Attitudes toward Learning French	Indicates positive or negative attitudes towards learning French.
Integrative Orientation - Motivational Intensity -Orientation Index	Indicates the importance of learning French in order to permit social interaction with French Canadians or others who speak French - measure the intensity of a student's motivation to learn French in terms of work done for classroom assignments, future plans to make use of and study the language -used to further find the students' reason for learning French; instrumental or integrative
Instrumental Orientation - Motivational Intensity -Orientation Index	Indicates the pragmatic or utilitarian value of learning French to the student -see subsets under integrative
French Class Anxiety - French Teacher Evaluation, Rapport, Competence, Inspiration -French Course Evaluation, Difficulty, Utility, Interest	Reflects subjects' degree of comfort/discomfort while participating in the French class -Students' feelings toward their teacher -Students' feelings towards the French course itself
Parental Encouragement	Students feel their parents support them in their French study

*Note.* Adapted from *The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: Technical Report*, by R. Gardner, 1985.

Students in all areas typically saw French speakers as bossy or cocky but more physically attractive, shorter and more entertaining or humorous. The French-Americans held the same stereotypes about French speakers even though they were French speakers themselves, raising the question whether they believe this or if it is something they have adopted from living in the United States or a non-French speaking region. If a language learner does not see bilingualism or trilingualism as a positive aspect then it may affect their attitude towards learning a second language.

**Individual differences.** There are many factors which make up individual differences including intelligence, aptitude, learning styles, learner beliefs, age, motivation, attitude, identity, ethnic group affiliation and personality (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Environment and mental capacities of learners are also factors in the student's second language acquisition which can assist or hinder learning. Second language acquisition theories differ in the way they take individual differences into account when learning but sociocultural theory emphasizes the necessity to make learning experiences culturally and individually relevant for the student to fit that information into their own schema, beliefs, and world (Lightbown & Spada, 2011).

Depending on the age of the learner, there are advantages and disadvantages to learning a second language whereas a learner's L1 is naturally acquired with little difficulty (Wright, 2010). Young children learning language often have greater motivation, instructional time due to school hours and their anxiety to use the language is often lower than that of adult learners (Wright, 2010). Adult learners have opposite types of advantages including knowledge and skills from their L1 that may transfer to the L2, the students may be literate in the L1, and have more advanced cognitive skills and study strategies.

Instrumental motivation reflects practical value and relies on the advantages of learning a second language whether they are economic, social or other external rewards. Gardner and Lambert (1972) conducted a study in the Philippines about the learning of English language and culture. The students in the Philippines saw a highly instrumental value in learning English and parents played a large part in perceived language importance to the student and also in their success in the language. For these students it was determined that instrumental motives may be more effective for success than integrative because the students wanted to identify with the language group for reasons of social or economic gain. If students can see a purpose linked to social or economic mobility, the language they learn may seem more important (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

The integrative motive reflects a personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group. Some of the ways to increase integrative motivation are adding a sociocultural component, cross-cultural awareness, which focuses on similarities, promotes contact with L2 speakers, informs students of the uses of the L2, develops self-confidence and models interest in L2 learning (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). More connection with the community of L2 speakers has the potential to increase motivation to learn since there are more possibilities for use of the L2 (McGroarty, 2010). According to Lamb (2011), the idea of integrativeness relies on there being clear ethno linguistic communities with which to identify. In rural areas there may be a lack in multilingualism or multiculturalism with which students can come into contact. However, even when contact with L2 speakers is impossible or very improbable students still use integrative reasons as motivators for learning (Clément & Kruidenier, 1985). Even when real integration into the L2 community is impossible and direct communication is

unrealistic, it is still key to motivation possibly because of the connection with the possible or ideal self (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005).

Ethnocentric views also affect students' perceptions of different language groups and these attitudes affect motivation (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Over time stereotypes can be dispelled through contact with the ethno-linguistic group and even the act of taking a second language can help to dispel stereotypes and negative perceptions with the help of cultural integration (Yager, 1998). It is possible that stereotypes will cross over to the linguistic group itself, influencing those who have lived in the United States for an extended period of time as happened with the French-American students in Gardner and Lambert's study (1972). Attitudes towards L2 speakers are key to L2 motivation when speaking in terms of integrative motivation because if the student has no desire to interact with members of the L2 community then the student will not feel motivated to learn how to speak with the L2 speakers.

Students from small or rural geographic areas with little interaction with the L2 community may have difficulty seeing the importance of learning another language when there is no use for the L2 in their area (Lamb, 2012). Urban and suburban students had more positive attitudes toward learning English as an FL most likely because they had more opportunities and greater resources to use the language. Families had less influence on the motivation of rural learners because they were probably less aware of the advantages to knowing English as an L2 and they had fewer opportunities to learn outside of school. Lamb also found that it was not only school experiences that mattered to the student but the potential enjoyment to be gained by learning outside of school through varied English media also contributed to overall attitude and motivation to learn English. Learning is should be seen as a social process and information that

matters to the learner will be retained because the learner has a personal stake in knowing the information according to Ellis (1999).

**Acculturation.** John Schumann (1978) developed the acculturation model which claimed that SLA is affected by the level of social and psychological integration between the learner and the target language (TL) population. Schumann also stated that social and psychological contact with the TL population is essential to language acquisition. Social variables in which one language group is dominant to the other in political, cultural, technical or economic ways will affect language learning because the imbalance will create distance between the learner and the target language group. However, if the groups are equally dominant then language acquisition will be enhanced. Schumann incorporated three types of integration into the acculturation model including assimilation in which the learner abandons their previous language and culture (subtractive bilingualism), preservation in which the learner refuses to learn the target language in favor of their own native language, and adaptation in which the learner adds a second language (additive bilingualism). Within psychological factors the learner may experience language or culture shock (Krashen, 1978), differences in motivational factors (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), and changing of identity or ideologies (Norton, 2010). Although the acculturation model is mainly developed for learners involved in immigration or a lengthy period in a TL country, many of the ideas of how one learns language also coincide with the way people learn an L2 (Schumann, 1978).

### **Language and identity**

The aim of identity researchers is to find a connection between social structure and the human identity and also to find out how power can enable or constrain peoples' actions (Norton, 2010; Wiley, 2005; Crawford, 1998; Lo Bianco, 2010; Schumann, 1978; Gardner & Lambert,

1972). Identity is comprised of aspects of race, gender, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation and these factors assist in the creation of an individual's language ideologies as well (Norton, 2010). With these factors in mind it is important to determine how valued the learner is in a classroom or within the community. Some identity positions offer more possibilities for social interaction and human agency or their impact upon society.

**Investment.** Motivation or investment in the target language can impact how a person acquires language as well as how quickly and to what depth the person understands it (Norton, 2010). However, high motivation on the part of the learner does not necessarily equal good language learning. Motivation theories assume that motivation is a character trait of learners and learners who do not learn an L2 are simply not committed (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Investment expands the idea of motivation and also acknowledges the complex identities of a learner which change over time and are both socially and individually determined. For example, a student may be highly motivated to learn Spanish but if the teacher and student have different concepts of good language teaching the student's investment may be compromised. Investing in the target language allows the person to increase their "cultural capital" or the knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups of people. "Cultural capital" is valuable to students and teachers because it may account for different exchange values in different fields of study and varying social situations. Investment allows students to make meaningful connections between their desires for themselves and their futures and their commitment to learn a language and increase their cultural capital (Norton, 2010). Language learners have complex identities and so even if the learner is motivated, they may or may not be invested in the language practices of the learning community.

**Imagined Communities.** The vitality of the target language community can be an important influence in the perceived importance to learn the language (Norton, 2010). Linguistic minorities within America have succeeded in maintaining distinct communities with varying degrees of toleration or accommodation from authorities over the years and participation in these communities will have an effect on one's identity (Crawford, 1998). When a person learns a new language he/she believes in an imagined community in which they will identify once the language is acquired. In language classrooms the community may be a reconstruction of various communities from the present, past and various regions. However, this desired community offers speakers the possibility to use their newly acquired language skills with a variety of identity types. In L2 classrooms, arguably all incoming students are newcomers to the practices of the community because it is all new and the community has been created by the teacher. In research conducted by Lamb (2012) in Indonesia, it was found that students in more rural areas found it more difficult to imagine themselves speaking English as an L2 than did students in urban or suburban areas. Even when opportunities to use the TL do not exist, students and teachers can bring their own experiences of intercultural communication to the class for discussion and reflection, for example they may consider what was successful or not successful or how they felt about the experience (Baker, 2010). Still, students may feel an overall indifference towards learning an L2 because they may not see the necessity or importance of the language in their own lives (Wiley, 2005).

### **Culture and Language**

There are more than 7,000 known languages in the world but it is estimated that about half of those languages will be lost by the next generation (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-XozG0RSCo>). Preserving language is the key to preserving culture but unfortunately if language

is not preserved then the culture will not survive either because the knowledge will be lost.

Language is a tool which helps us to communicate in a multilingual world in which travel and interaction with other language speakers is easily accessible. Currently even though the world is connected through cyber-space, there are only about 60 languages being well represented in technology today. Learning or maintaining multiple languages has been proven to help students to perform better in schools and increase literacy rates but only about a quarter of the world's languages are used at all in education or in any form of technology.

Culture and language are deeply intertwined and so it is naturally taught in language courses through reading portions in second language textbooks, and through simply teaching the language. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) endorses teaching language through the “three Ps” or Products, Practices, and Perspectives. Products include both tangible and intangible items such as books, arts and crafts, tools, foods, laws, dress, types of dwellings, music, dances, and games. Practices are patterns of social interactions or behaviors accepted by a society, such as rites of passage, use of forms of discourse, social “pecking order,” and use of space. Perspectives represent the culture's view of the world, including meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas (Cutshall, 2012). However, what type, how much and what depth of culture students receive can depend on many factors such as the teacher's knowledge of the culture, the textbook used in class and the emphasis of the importance of culture by the teacher. Culture has been defined by The National Center for Cultural Competence as:

An integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social

group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations (Goode, Sockalingam, Brown & Jones, 2000).

**Integration of culture in language courses.** There are many ways to integrate culture and language learning in the classroom such as using *realia*, conducting an interview with a native speaker, using technology, and reading cultural texts rather than translated texts from the students' culture (Cutshall, 2012). Cross-cultural experience may be associated with travel abroad or exchange programs to countries with the target language being the native language. However, this is not necessarily true because students simply need contact with the L2 culture or native L2 speakers in order to have these experiences (Yager 1998).

Community and family involvement are valuable resources which can be harnessed for classroom use (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002). Even knowledge and experience of extended family such as occupational histories, household activities, and cultural practices such as dances or candy-making can provide valuable cultural capital for both students and teachers. In a study conducted by Yager (1998) students studying Spanish at various levels were taken on a study abroad to Mexico for a summer where the students were able to have greater interactive contact with native speakers and native culture. The beginning language learners had greater gains than the more advanced learners but the latter did experience gains in more refined aspects of the language. The experience facilitated integrative motivation within the students which benefitted students with more native-like Spanish pronunciation, improved attitudes towards Mexicans and better overall L2 proficiency.

Students may perceive textbook examples of culture as fictional because the examples do not seem real to the students. The advantage of embedding culture in everyday activities and lessons is to make it more authentic for students. This can be achieved through the use of *realia*,

which are authentic materials used by an instructor from a country being studied. Other effective approaches are having the teacher or students share experiences with the target culture and including culture in all aspects during every lesson. Integrating culture is also a way to achieve cross curricular teaching with subjects like geography, history, cuisine and many others depending on what part of culture is being taught (Ömer & Ali, 2011). Currently, culture is not usually the focus in class and is rather a side note in FL courses and textbooks although research has found that integration of culture can increase students' integrative motivation in the L2 classroom (Uchihara, 2001).

Culture is key to motivation for learning and understanding the language as a whole since culture is embedded in every aspect of language including grammar and vocabulary (Cutshall, 2012). Culture and language frame how a speaker sees their world, in other words, the speaker's culture will influence their language use and at the same time language will influence the culture (Byram, 2011). Explicitly linking linguistic forms and culture may help students develop sensitivity to the pragmatics within language or the underlying meanings they entail within context. Language instructors do not usually explicitly address perspective but it is taught to L2 learners through verb conjugations, honorifics (*tú* vs. *usted*), and varied vocabulary (*flaco* vs. *delgado*) within the language. Students will continue to refine their understanding of language use and perspective through gaining specialized vocabulary to which they feel connected and into advanced study of the language. Linking perspective to language learning and encouraging students to reflect on the connection can create intellectually stimulating learning even at early stages of L2 acquisition. Culture is equally important as the language being learned because it comprises a greater wealth of information than the language alone and so if only one is taught without the other, students are receiving an incomplete language

education (Ömer & Ali, 2011). Jing (2011) suggests that integrating target culture into course lessons and relating it to linguistic teaching is essential for motivating students to learn.

Gonzalez and Moll (2002) created a project called the *Puente* experience which had the express purpose of identifying and incorporating *funds of knowledge* from the surrounding Latino community into elementary and high school preparation. Funds of knowledge refers to the knowledge that students come to the classroom with before teaching begins and the idea that the teacher should build on their life experiences. The purpose behind the experience was to link instruction to students' lives including local history and the community and to treat learning as a social process. Students were able to take part in researching their own cultural capital while identifying themselves as producers rather than only consumers of knowledge which would transfer across disciplines and activities. Schools in the United States are experiencing greater standardization and so students may be missing out on diversity and academic knowledge is being pushed rather than valuing experiential knowledge. Through connecting students to the cultural capital within their own lives and community they can gain knowledge useful for more than purely academic purposes. Projects like the one conducted by Gonzalez and Moll teach students to be active learners and prepare them to be lifelong learners as well. The Puente experience exemplifies the idea that using a community as a resource can help create connections between secondary and higher education, community and school relations, and between diverse people in order to achieve a common goal of learning for all participants.

**The effects of cultural experiences on L2 students.** Acquiring a new language can be a challenging experience and many theories exist as to what is the best instructional approach. Some of the methods for learning a foreign language include sheltered instruction, comprehensible input, and immersion (Wright, 2010). All methods continue to be taught

depending on which method the school deems the best way for students to learn.

Comprehensible input allows students to continuously build on what they know at the moment of instruction. Immersion methods are thought by many to be the most effective because the student must learn to adapt and survive with their ever growing language abilities. Being immersed in a new language can be frightening when L2 skills are still at a basic level but because of the constant interaction and use of the L2 chances are that knowledge will increase especially in oral and aural skills (Yager, 1998). Search suggests that more interactive approaches to learning may benefit students because they are not only making connections between their own lives and the knowledge but also having a greater quantity of input through interaction (Schumann, 1978) (Ellis 1999).

Cultural Awareness (CA) is a conscious understanding of the role culture plays in language learning and communication whether one is learning an L1 or an L2 (Baker, 2012). Teaching CA stresses the importance that learners are aware of beliefs and behaviors of other cultures and as well as their own. There are a number of ways to integrate culture and language in the classroom and each should provide students with the opportunity to experience intercultural communication and to investigate local and other cultures as well as a chance to reflect on those experiences afterward. Baker (2012) developed six types of CA activities which include exploring local cultures, language learning materials, print and audio/visual media, electronic media, interacting with cultural informants or teachers with cultural experience, and face to face communication. In order for students to gain a well-balanced understanding of all cultures of a language it is important to include cultural examples from a variety of locations that speak the language being taught.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) outside experience can also affect the effort the students put forth because they may overestimate their ability in the language. This overestimation can occur if the student has a great deal of experience with the ethno-linguistic group outside of the school setting in which the student frequently participates such as L2 speaking friends or relatives. This piece concerns students who are in an L2 classroom but the student already speaks the language for the most part and does not likely see the purpose of the class if he/she already feels proficient in the language. The more participants can engage and identify with the topic matter being taught, the more interest and motivation will be generated by the learner (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002).

### **Motivation to Learn a Second Language**

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) some of the reasons students succeed in learning a second language are the desire to identify with the target culture, the need for achievement or fear of failure, and the desire for integration. These reasons outline the two basic motivational purposes throughout most research in the field including modern research for motivation of a student, specifically, instrumental and integrative. The instrumental motive reflects practical value and relies on the advantages of learning a second language whether they are economic, social advantages or other external rewards. The integrative motive reflects a personal interest in the people and culture represented by the ethno-linguistic group. At times the two can blend into each other since some factors of integrative may also be instrumental motivators such as knowledge, friendship, travel orientations and sociocultural reasons. Dörnyei notes in his own work with motivation and attitudes that "the main problem with Gardner's social psychological approach appeared to be, ironically, that it was too influential" (1994,

p.273) making it difficult for new researchers to develop reasons for motivation that will be seriously considered more accurate than Gardner's classification of instrumental and integrative.

**Tapping student motivation.** In a study by Gardner and Lambert (1972) students with an integrative motivation performed better in aural/oral skill tests. Students with a great desire and motivation to acquire an L2 also achieved higher grades than their peers with lower motivation levels. A study conducted by Nikitina & Furuoka (2006) showed the increase of integrative motivation among students learning Russian in Malaysia through coursework alone which included cultural lessons embedded into the daily lessons. From the start of the course to the end of the second semester of learning Russian seventeen percent more students indicated a strong indication that they were interested in learning Russian because of the culture, and their desire to gain deeper insights into the country and language. This study shows that through cultural lessons within language classes there is potential for enhancing learner motivation, and specifically integrative motivation.

Knowing the students motivation for learning a second language is important when planning the course may help the instructor to plan more efficiently to meet students' specific language learning needs (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Being aware of what motivates students is also important in relation to connectionism, and sociocultural theory in order to provide relevant information and encourage students to learn what interests them as individuals (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Motivation is largely dependent on who learns what language where since the location and the language being learned can cross into other fields such as ideologies, identity and attitudes towards the language and its population (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Motivation is only the reason why people behave the way they do but does not always predict how successful their behavior will be (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005).

**The effect of attitudes on students' motivation.** Students' attitudes toward learning a second language and the language group are crucial to the students' motivation to learn a second language. The vitality of the L2 community may affect perceived importance of the language because if the community is very small or hidden the student may think it is not as vital to learn (Giles & Byrne, 1982). Valuing the students' background, culture and "funds of knowledge" must be considered because in order to understand a student you must know the student as a whole (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). According to Ladson-Billings (2001) it is important for teachers to have cultural experiences with cultures other than their own in order to teach a diverse group of students because it enables teachers to understand more about their students. Interest shown in students' backgrounds and lives has an important payoff in the classroom since it can tune the teacher into the students' strengths, interests and motivation. Wright (2010) stated that culture is an important part of a person's life and it is necessary for students to embrace both their native culture and the new culture and language being introduced. Identity could hinder attitude towards learning a second language because of racism, sexism, or elitism towards a certain group especially because of the culture which is embedded into language and the process of learning of another language. These issues may end up silencing students if they are part of a group such as those who are racist, sexist, or elitist.

Ideologies of students can assist learning if the student sees a purpose or use in learning a second language. Ideologies may change over time in the same way that perceptions of people or interest in certain topics adjust as one grows. The difficult part is that ideologies are deeply embedded and not easy to change as well as the fact that they are different for everyone. Opinions tied with identity may be difficult to change because it is also part of who the student identifies with.

In various studies data have shown that stereotypes, perceptions and attitudes towards the target speakers affect motivation (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Attitudes towards L2 speakers are key to L2 motivation when speaking in terms of integrative motivation because if the student has no desire to interact with members of the L2 community then the student will not feel motivated to learn how to speak with the L2 speakers. Over time stereotypes can be dispelled through contact with the ethno-linguistic group and even the act of taking a second language can help to dispel stereotypes and negative perceptions with the help of culture integration (Yager, 1998). However it is also possible that stereotypes will cross over to the linguistic group itself who have lived in the United States for an extended period of time (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

Even students who are currently bilingual must work continuously at maintaining both languages spoken and cultures as well as comfortable contact with both communities or risk losing skills in the language or community relations. Importantly for language educators, findings indicate that increased experience using the L2 coincide with more positive cultural representations of the L2 communities involved for both groups of participants (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Therefore, if positive experiences with the L2 have the potential to increase positive relations and cultural representations, it may have an impact on the SLA process. Will an increase in intercultural experience with the target language outside the classroom increase motivation to learn the target language in the classroom for high school students?

### **Method**

The purpose of the project was to determine the students' attitudes toward learning a second language (in this case, Spanish) and their motivation to learn said language and if these areas changed with the completion of the project. One of the goals of this research was to foster communicative competence outside the classroom and to encourage students to become active

learners who are connected to the world outside of school. The data collected helped to determine whether this was a worthwhile activity and whether to conduct the project with students in following years as well. Because of the amount of exposure to interactions with Spanish speakers and culture, the hypothesis was that the journals would increase students' motivation to learn Spanish.

### **Setting**

The school consisted of 281 students in grades nine through twelve with between 60 and 75 students in each grade level (<https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>). The average class size was between 14 and 21 students depending on the subject area. The student population was 94 percent White, five percent Hispanic or Latino and one percent Black or African American. It is estimated that 21-30 percent of students' families received public assistance and 19 percent of the students were eligible for free lunch. Two percent of the students were considered Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. The graduation rate for all students was 78 percent and the school was in good standing in terms of AYP for ELA and Math. For the Spanish Regents Exam in 2010-2011 40 percent of the students received a score of 85 or above and 90 percent of the students received a score of 65 or above. Seventy-eight percent of students in 2010-2011 graduated with a Regents Diploma and 90 percent of students planned to go to a two year or four year college after graduation. The school was situated in a small rural and tightly knit community where the school held high importance in the town.

Within the Spanish classroom, a variety of strategies were implemented which catered to the Interactionist, Cognitive, and Sociocultural perspectives. Communicative competence is key to these theories and therefore meaning was emphasized over grammaticality within the classroom as long as essential information was not lost in the process (Saville-Troike, 2012). In

the classroom, the target language was spoken as much as possible so that students could receive comprehensible input and negotiate meaning. Because of the interactive nature of language and communication, students were encouraged to negotiate meaning through scaffolding, circumlocution, modified speech and rephrasing. Research shows that these strategies have the ability to lower students' affective filter since they are being assisted with meaning (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). Since learners are active problem solvers, and they were encouraged to use their prior knowledge to solve problems and not just parrot the teacher (Ellis, 1999). Through interactive methods, students were able to take control of learning through questioning and engaging in activities which fostered communication between peers. Students often worked in partners or in groups to problem solve tasks which allowed them to interact with differing levels of ability and to internalize how to complete the task.

### **Participants**

The participants involved in the study were all high school students in ninth and tenth grade at a rural high school in western New York enrolled in a high school Spanish class. The students' ages were between fourteen and seventeen years old and there were nine boys and eight girls creating a total of 17 participants. All participants were White, native-English speakers and one had a secondary linguistic background in French (see Table 2). The students in ninth grade were in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of language study and students in tenth grade were in their fourth. Students began an exploratory program in sixth grade, however since this year was only to introduce the language, only lasted one school quarter and the only purpose was introduction to language it is not counted as part of the students' years of study.

Seventh and eighth grade language study at the school were dedicated to preparing students for the New York State Proficiency but only the tenth grade students received the exam.

Table 2  
*Specific Information About the Participants.*

Student	Grade	Years of Spanish	Language Background
Dillon Alberghi	9	2	Spanish
Evan Strickland	9	0	French
Anthony McNeil	9	2	Spanish
Zoe Lister	9	2	Spanish
Hubert Griffin	9	2	Spanish
Deann Fuentes	9	2	Spanish
Dana Sturm	9	2	Spanish
Roselyn Bevan	9	2	Spanish
Neil Ramsey	9	2	Spanish
Isaac Hansen	9	2	Spanish
Hayden Paster	10	3	Spanish
Oz Bretz	10	3	Spanish
Erin Andrews	10	3	Spanish
Lily Sullivan	10	3	Spanish
Kyra Summers	10	3	Spanish
Rudy Albertson	10	3	Spanish
Stacey Alvin	10	3	Spanish

The ninth graders were not eligible for the exam because they lacked one quarter of one credit for the test to be administered. This occurred because the school was forced to reduce the languages offered in the previous school year from French and Spanish to Spanish only because of budget cuts. Since the ninth grade students were ineligible to take the exam, many of them were frustrated for a number of reasons. Some of the reasons included learning French in middle school and then having to take Spanish or having taken Spanish through middle school and then being required to take another whole year because an exam was not given. All students who received French in middle school were placed in high school Spanish in order to receive the one

credit required for graduation (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/gradreq/intro.html>). One of the participants in the ninth grade never received Spanish instruction prior to the 2012-2013 school year and had been in French throughout middle school. In the beginning of the school year many of the students who had been in French were openly opposed to learning Spanish and this was clear through verbal communications between the teacher and students and entries in the journals. However, this was not limited to the French students since students in Spanish during middle school felt frustrated that this course may be taking away from something they were more interested in learning. On account of these conditions students' attitudes towards language learning and motivation, other than a passing grade, were low at the beginning of the school year and these attitudes continued into the beginning of the project.

### **Procedure**

To determine the students' baseline attitude and motivation levels, students answered a questionnaire at the beginning of the project in which they wrote about their feelings and motivation levels towards learning another language and their attitude about using the language outside of the classroom. Students completed the same questionnaire again halfway through the study in order to have a midpoint assessment and to share any relevant information about the progress of the journals or how the project made them feel in general. Guiding questions for the initial and mid-point questionnaires can be found in Appendix A and they are based on previous research performed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Dörnyei and Csizér (2006). At the end of the project, semi-structured interviews were conducted to determine students' final attitude and motivation and to discuss any changes the student perceived in his or her motivation or attitude towards Spanish which may not have been stated previously in the journal (see Appendix B).

The study took place during the Spring 2013 semester and spanned ten weeks. Over this time period students were required to actively seek out ways to use Spanish, outside of the Spanish language classroom at least once a week and write a journal about the experience (see Appendix C). Since many students in this rural setting were unaware of how Spanish even could be used in their community the teacher led a session in which students came up with examples of how to use Spanish. This way of introducing the project allowed the students to problem solve and discuss the possibilities rather than being handed the answers or the assignment, which allows the project to be relevant and engaging for each individual student (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). The teacher assisted by provided some extra thoughts, examples and advice when the students ran out of ideas to contribute. Some acceptable examples for using Spanish in an out-of-classroom experience can be found in the brainstorm in Table 3, which was created with students in an open discussion format.

Table 3  
*Culture Journal Brainstorm with Students*

Interaction Type	Examples
Media	Watch a film, TV show or the News with Spanish sound (Univision, Youtube, Cable TV) Listen to Spanish language radio Read a Spanish language newspaper
Technology	Use the Coinstar, Red box, Self-Check out or ATM in Spanish Post or send a message on your own or another friend's Facebook/ Twitter/ Myspace/ Glog Change technology (computer/ phone/ videogame) settings to Spanish
Human Interaction	Order in Spanish at a restaurant where Spanish is spoken Conversation/interview with a native or near native Spanish speaker

There were many ways in which students could use Spanish outside of class including the media, human interaction, and technology. Throughout the project no two written experiences

were to be the exact same activity because of the broad set of options. However, students could complete the same *type* of activity such as watching a video since this allows the student to find experiences based on their interests and comfort level. For example if a student watched a movie with Spanish sound and subtitles, none of the following assignments should include the same movie but they could watch other movies in the same way. The reasoning for this was to expose students to different types of Spanish language, and in order to provide an array of vocabulary and various cultural information. Students were allowed to choose for themselves which activities they completed in order to make the experiences personally relevant and enjoyable and so that students who were not yet comfortable in certain situations were not forced into them since this would only increase their anxiety (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002; Lightbown & Spada, 2011; Saville-Troike, 2012). During the project, the students were required to write a journal entry for each cultural experience in which they discussed the guiding questions provided (see Appendices A and C).

There were no adverse effects anticipated with the study beyond what was expected in social interaction including anxiety. Any subject who experienced adverse effects from this study were referred to school counselors for assistance. School counselors were available for the participants at any time prior to, during, and after the study's completion. The potential risks were discussed with students prior to the start of the project and they were asked not to seek assistance from strangers with the assignment and that they stayed away from questionable online chat-rooms or making friends with strangers for the purpose of the journal. Students were advised to exercise good judgment and ask parents for permission if necessary for involvement in an experience such as travelling to another town. To maintain the psychological and emotional safety of the students, they were reminded throughout the process that their

participation in the study was voluntary and they could withdraw their data from the study at any time. They were also reminded that their participation and/or performance had no effect on the student-teacher relationship (see Appendices D and E).

### **Results**

The assignment was initially given to 58 students among four different Spanish classes, three sections of Spanish level one and one section of Spanish level two. Forty-five students gave consent to complete the project for research along with parent consent as well (see Appendices E & F). However because the research was contingent upon the students completing the entire project, only 17 students fully participated ( $N = 17$ ) with a *return rate* therefore of 38 percent. A completed project required a minimum of an initial and mid-point questionnaire which was answered during class time, at least 10 culture journals which documented the out of class experiences and an interview at the end to measure and document any change within the participants' ideologies, attitude or motivation towards language.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collected for this study were coded and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The information provided in the journals, the questionnaires and the final interview make up the qualitative data gathered. The journals and questionnaires were collected at five week intervals, coded and analyzed using themes present in the questionnaires as well as in the final interview (see Appendices A and B). At the end of ten weeks the journals were analyzed as qualitative data and any changes were noted in the students' answers from the initial questionnaire and the final interview (see Table 4). The researcher also noted through the culture journals any time students indicated a change in their attitude or motivation towards Spanish culture or language whether it was *positive* or *negative*.

Table 4  
Codebook

Code	Literature Review	Definition	Examples from Student Journals
Positive	Baker (2012)	Indicated through a positive or affirmative description in terms of language learning. This may also include a description of increased ability, confidence, or cultural awareness.	“interested” “important” “increase” “better” “easier” “less nervous”
Neutral	Baker (2012)	Indicated through answers which gave opposing arguments for the same question, a repetition of the question or a conditional answer as in “if x then y” or a simple agreement. This may also include answers which indicate no change within ability, confidence or cultural awareness.	“I would like to but it is hard.” “It’s good but not necessary.” “It’s ok.”
Negative	Baker (2012)	Indicated through a negative or contradictory answer to the question provided in terms of language learning. This may also include a description of decreased ability, confidence or cultural awareness.	“not interesting” “not important” “I don’t like...” “I don’t want...” “harder/ difficult” “nervous” “decrease”
Indiscernible		Indiscernible answers were either illegible or didn’t make sense in relation to the question, or were skipped altogether.	
Integrative	Gardner & Lambert (1972)	A motivational theory which reflects an interest in learning the L2 through a desire to integrate or participate with the people and culture represented by the L2 community.	“fun” “enjoy learning” “to speak Spanish in a Spanish speaking country” “travel” “being bilingual” “culture” “Communicate with people” “family speaks it”
Instrumental	Gardner & Lambert (1972)	A motivational theory which reflects practical value and relies on the advantages of learning a second language whether they are economic, social or other external rewards.	“grades” or “credit” “help in career” “travel”

Much of the information was turned into quantitative data through use of the codebook so that overall changes through the research could be seen in a numerical format. The quantitative data measured how many students had *positive*, *neutral* or *negative* answers to each question given as well as measuring changes between the initial, and mid-point questionnaires and the final interview. Students were also labeled with a motivation type of *instrumental* or *integrative* unless neither was detected in which case the student was assigned *neither*. The culture journals were analyzed for how many of each type of activity was conducted in order to find the preferred and less preferred methods of interaction by the students.

The questionnaires were first read to find whether the students noted positive, negative or neutral answers to the initial questions provided (see Appendix A and Table 5). The question numbers and student answers in positive, negative and neutral for the initial journal are listed in Table 5. Questions eleven, twelve, and thirteen were negatively worded and even if an answer indicated a *no* or negatively worded answer these would account for positive answers in terms of language acquisition (see Table 4).

The midpoint questionnaires were read at the five week interval to find whether the students noted positive, negative or neutral answers to the same questions provided in the initial questionnaire (see Appendix A and Table 4). The question numbers and student answers in positive, negative and neutral for the midpoint journal are listed in Table 6. In addition, figures one and two show the differences between the overall answers for students in the initial and midpoint questionnaires in a bar graph for questions 1-10, while figures three and four show the same but for questions 11-19. Also, overall, when looking at figures 1-4 which ones jump out at you as having a significant change-- e.g., say that one question jumped from 10 negative entries at the initial and then suddenly 15 positive (meaning those 10 changed in some way).

Table 5  
*Initial Journal*

Question	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Indiscernible
1	Dillon, Deann, Roselyn, Erin, Lily	Anthony, Zoe, Hubert, Dana, Hayden, Kyra, Stacey	Evan, Neil, Isaac, Oz, Rudy	
2	Dillon, Hubert, Dana, Roselyn, Erin, Lily	Anthony, Zoe, Deann, Neil, Hayden, Kyra, Stacey	Evan, Isaac, Oz, Rudy	
3	Dillon, Zoe, Hubert, Roselyn, Neil, Hayden, Erin, Lily, Kyra, Stacey	Anthony, Deann, Dana, Isaac	Evan, Oz, Rudy	
4	Dillon, Hubert, Deann, Roselyn, Erin, Lily, Stacey	Anthony, Dana, Neil, Isaac	Evan, Zoe, Hayden, Oz, Kyra, Rudy	
5	Dillon, Evan, Zoe, Deann, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, Kyra	Anthony, Dana, Lily, Stacey	Neil, Isaac, Oz, Rudy	Hubert
6	Roselyn, Erin, Kyra	Hubert, Oz, Lily	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Deann, Dana, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, Rudy, Stacey	
7	Hubert, Roselyn, Lily, Kyra, Stacey	Dillon, Dana, Isaac, Hayden, Oz, Erin	Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Deann, Neil, Rudy	
8	Dillon, Hubert, Deann, Neil	Evan, Anthony, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Lily, Kyra, Rudy	Zoe, Isaac, Stacey	
9	Dillon, Evan, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, Kyra, Stacey	Anthony, Neil, Lily	Zoe, Isaac, Oz, Rudy	
10	Hubert, Neil, Isaac, Kyra, Stacey	Evan, Anthony, Deann, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, Lily	Dillon, Zoe, Dana, Oz, Rudy	

11	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Lily, Kyra, Stacey		Rudy	
12	Evan, Hubert, Isaac, Erin, Rudy	Roselyn	Dillon, Anthony, Zoe, Deann, Dana, Neil, Hayden, Oz, Lily, Kyra, Stacey	
13		Anthony, Hubert, Roselyn, Neil, Erin, Lily	Dillon, Evan, Zoe, Deann, Dana, Isaac, Hayden, Oz, Kyra, Rudy, Stacey	
14	Dillon, Anthony, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Kyra	Zoe, Oz, Lily	Evan, Neil, Isaac, Erin, Rudy, Stacey	
15	Zoe, Hubert, Roselyn, Lily, Kyra	Dillon, Anthony, Deann, Dana, Neil, Hayden, Oz, Erin	Isaac, Rudy, Stacey	Evan
16	Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Isaac, Hayden, Erin, Kyra	Dillon, Anthony, Oz, Lily, Stacey	Evan, Zoe, Neil, Rudy	
17	Dillon, Anthony, Zoe, Hubert, Dana, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, Lily, Kyra	Deann, Roselyn, Oz, Erin, Stacey	Evan, Rudy	
18	Dillon, Anthony, Zoe, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Lily, Stacey	Neil, Kyra	Isaac, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Rudy	Evan
19	Anthony, Dana	Hubert, Deann, Roselyn, Neil, Oz, Erin, Lily, Kyra	Dillon, Evan, Zoe, Isaac, Hayden, Rudy, Stacey	

*Note.* This is a representation of the coding of the student answers from the initial questionnaires based on the codebook created by the researcher.

<sup>a</sup> Questions 11-13 were negatively worded and so even if an answer indicated a “no” or a negatively worded answer this would account for a positive answer in terms of language acquisition and was thus listed under positive.

Table 6  
*Midpoint Journal*

Question	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Indiscernible
1	Dillon, Deann, Roselyn	<b>Evan</b> , Zoe, Hubert, Dana, Hayden, Kyra, Stacey, <b>Neil</b> , <b>Oz</b> , <b>Erin</b> , <b>Lily</b>	Isaac, Rudy, <b>Anthony</b>	
2	<b>Deann</b> , Dillon, Hubert, Dana, Roselyn, Erin, Lily, <b>Anthony</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	<b>Evan</b> , Zoe, Hayden, Kyra	Isaac, Oz, Rudy, <b>Neil</b>	
3	Zoe, Hubert, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, Stacey	<b>Evan</b> , Dana, Isaac, <b>Neil</b> , <b>Lily</b> , <b>Kyra</b>	Oz, Rudy, <b>Dillon</b> , <b>Anthony</b> , <b>Deann</b>	
4	Dillon, Hubert, Deann, Roselyn, Erin, Stacey, <b>Dana</b>	Anthony, Neil, Isaac, <b>Lily</b>	Evan, Zoe, Hayden, Oz, Kyra, Rudy	
5	<b>Hubert</b> , Dillon, Deann, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, <b>Dana</b> , <b>Lily</b>	Anthony, Stacey, <b>Neil</b> , <b>Kyra</b> , <b>Rudy</b>	<b>Evan</b> , Isaac, Oz, <b>Zoe</b>	
6	Erin, Kyra	Oz, Lily, <b>Dana</b> , <b>Roselyn</b> , <b>Rudy</b>	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Deann, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, Rudy, Stacey, <b>Hubert</b>	
7	<b>Dillon</b> , Roselyn, Lily, Stacey, <b>Erin</b>	Dana, Isaac, <b>Hubert</b> , <b>Deann</b> , <b>Kyra</b>	Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Neil, Rudy, <b>Hayden</b> , <b>Oz</b>	
8	Hubert, Deann	<b>Dillon</b> , Evan, Anthony, Dana, Roselyn, Oz, Erin, Lily, <b>Zoe</b> , <b>Neil</b>	Isaac, Stacey, <b>Hayden</b> , <b>Kyra</b> , <b>Rudy</b>	
9	Dillon, Evan, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Erin, Kyra, Stacey	Anthony, Neil, Lily	Zoe, Isaac, Oz, Rudy	
10	Isaac, Kyra, <b>Deann</b> , <b>Erin</b>	Evan, Anthony, Deann, Roselyn, Hayden, Lily, <b>Hubert</b> , <b>Dana</b> , <b>Neil</b> , <b>Oz</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	Dillon, Zoe, Rudy	

11	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Zoe, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, Erin, Lily, Kyra, Stacey	<b>Oz</b>	Rudy	
12	<b>Dillon</b> , Hubert, Erin, Rudy, <b>Anthony</b>	<b>Evan</b> , Roselyn, <b>Isaac</b> , <b>Lily</b>	Zoe, Deann, Dana, Neil, Hayden, Oz, Lily, Kyra, Stacey	
13	<b>Hubert</b>	<b>Evan</b> , Anthony, Roselyn, Neil, Erin, Lily, <b>Zoe</b> , <b>Deann</b>	Dillon, Dana, Isaac, Hayden, Oz, Kyra, Rudy, Stacey	
14	Dillon, Anthony, Hubert, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Kyra, <b>Neil</b> , <b>Isaac</b>	Lily, <b>Erin</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	Evan, Rudy, <b>Zoe</b> , <b>Oz</b>	
15	Zoe, Roselyn, Lily, <b>Deann</b> , <b>Dana</b>	Dillon, Anthony, Neil, Hayden, Oz, Erin, <b>Evan</b> , <b>Hubert</b> , <b>Isaac</b> , <b>Kyra</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	Rudy	
16	<b>Dillon</b> , Hubert, Dana, Roselyn, Erin, <b>Lily</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	Anthony, Oz, <b>Deann</b> , <b>Isaac</b> , <b>Hayden</b> , <b>Kyra</b> , <b>Rudy</b>	Evan, Zoe, Neil	
17	Dillon, Dana, Neil, Isaac, Hayden, <b>Deann</b> , <b>Erin</b> , <b>Stacey</b>	Roselyn, Oz, <b>Evan</b> , <b>Anthony</b> , <b>Zoe</b> , <b>Hubert</b> , <b>Lily</b> , <b>Kyra</b>	Rudy	
18	Hubert, Deann, Roselyn, Lily, Stacey, <b>Hayden</b> , <b>Erin</b> , <b>Kyra</b>	<b>Dillon</b> , <b>Anthony</b> , <b>Zoe</b> , <b>Dana</b> , <b>Rudy</b>	Isaac, Oz, <b>Neil</b>	Evan
19	<b>Erin</b>	<b>Dillon</b> , Hubert, Deann, Roselyn, Neil, Oz, Lily, Kyra, <b>Anthony</b> , <b>Dana</b> , <b>Hayden</b>	Evan, Zoe, Isaac, Rudy, Stacey	

*Note.* This is a representation of the coding of the student answers from the initial questionnaires based on the codebook created by the researcher. Students who demonstrated change between the initial and mid-point questionnaire are in bold.

<sup>a</sup> Questions 11 to 13 were negatively worded and so even if an answer indicated a “no” or a negatively worded answer this would account for a positive answer in terms of language acquisition and was thus listed under positive.

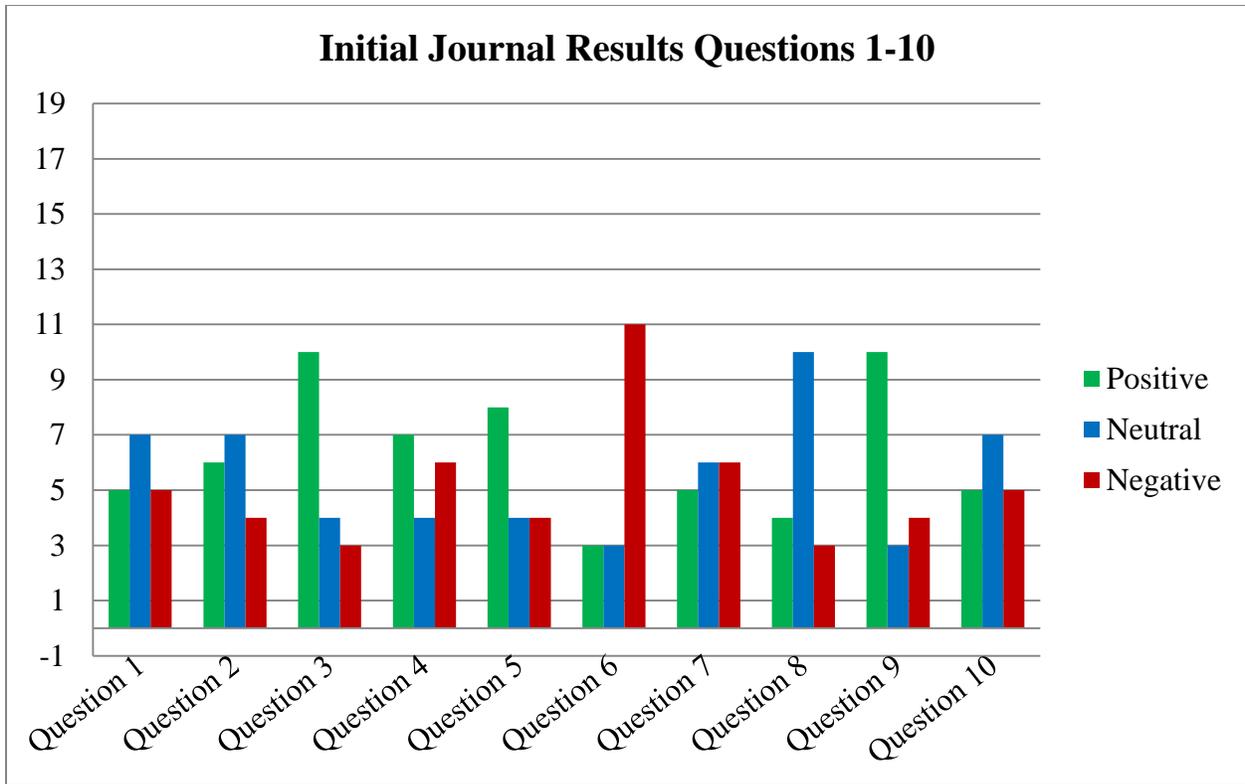


Figure 1

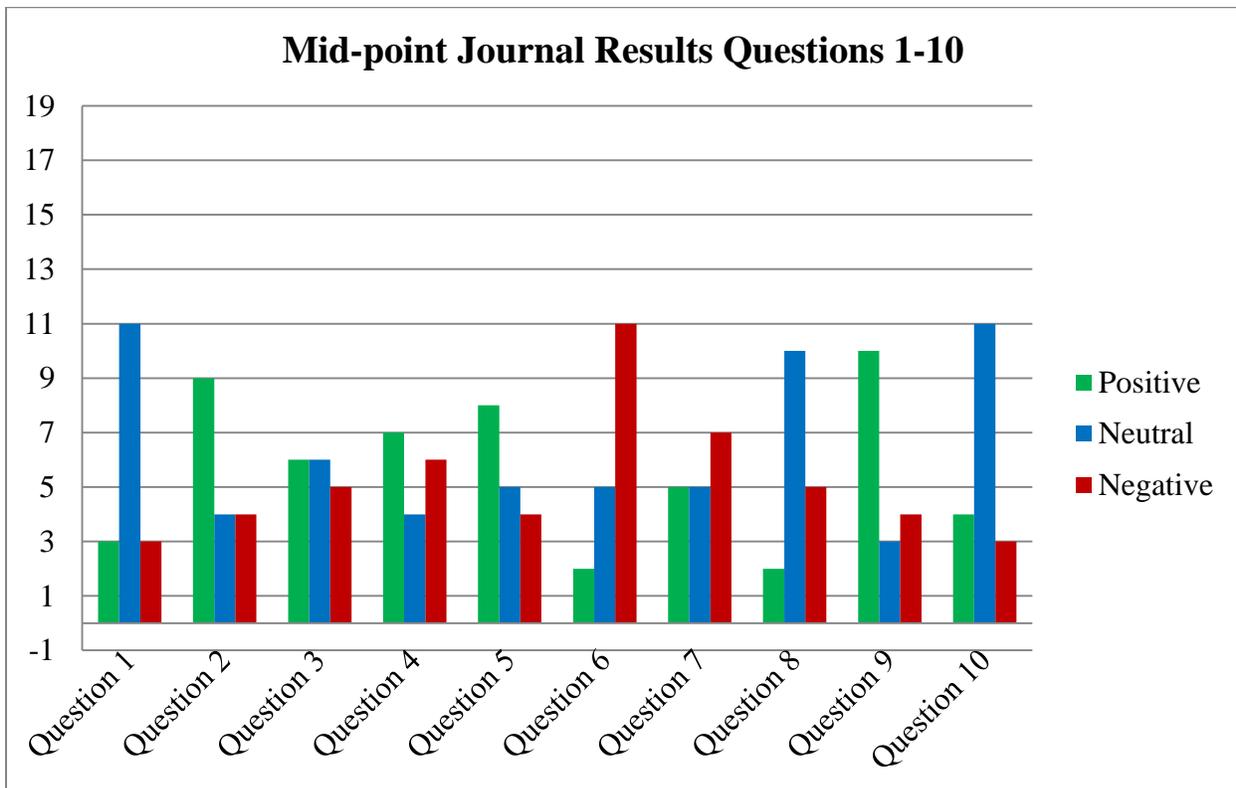


Figure 2

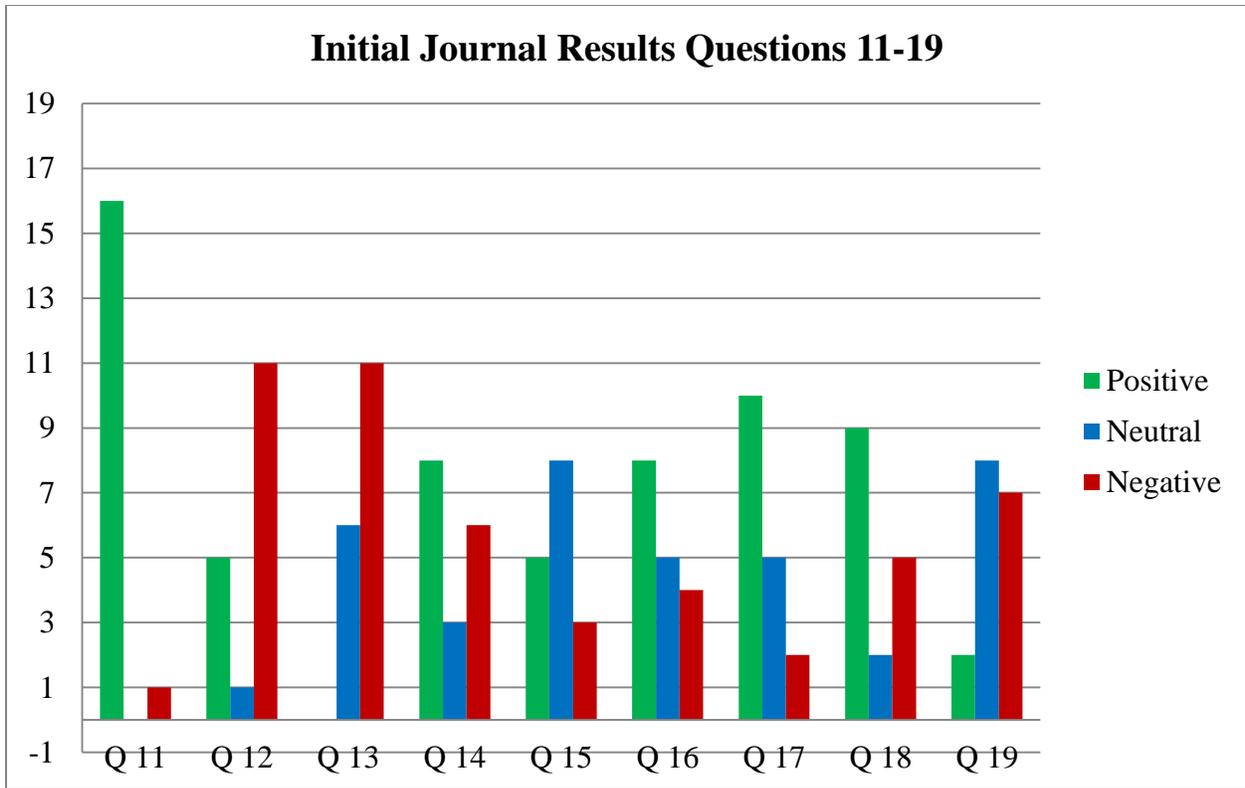


Figure 3

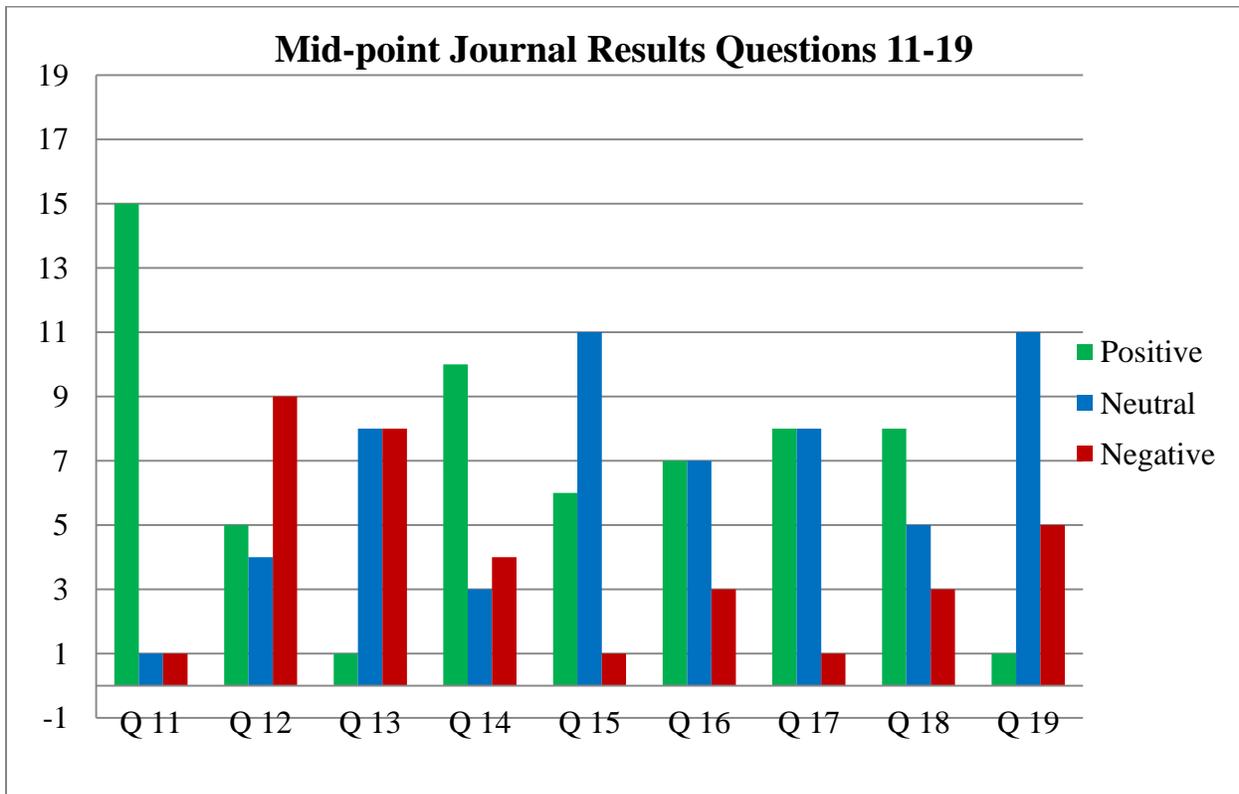


Figure 4

Table 7 shows the number of answers in positive, negative and neutral for each individual student for the initial and mid-point questionnaires. Since change does not always equate more positive answers it is also indicated through a decrease in negative answers as show by the students in this study. There were more cases of a decrease in negative answers than there were increases in positive answers but this also indicates positive growth. Therefore, if the student demonstrated a decrease in negative answers this indicates a positive change as well because this demonstrates that their views have changed to be less negative.

Throughout the journals and questionnaires students noted on their motivational tendency whether that was instrumental or integrative (see Table 8). The initial motivation for students was derived from their answers in the initial questionnaire and the first through fifth culture journals and notes that were made within. The midpoint motivation was derived from student answers in the midpoint questionnaire and notations in the sixth through tenth culture journals. Motivation at the final point was taken only from the answers provided by the student in the semi-structured interview with the researcher.

The final interview was conducted at the end of ten weeks and when the final completed project was turned in to the teacher. The questions did not line up in the same way with the questions from the questionnaire and because they measured positive or negative change rather than what the orientation was at the moment (see Table 4 and Appendix B). The question numbers according to the interview questions and student answers in terms of change when compared to the initial are listed in Table 9 (Appendix B). Students who demonstrated change from the initial questionnaire to the final interview within their answers are listed under positive or negative change and students who did not change are listed under neutral. A bar graph representing the number of students in each category for each question can be found in Figure 5.

Table 7  
*Total Journal Responses by Student*

Student	Initial			Middle			Overall decrease in negative entries
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Evan	4	2	11	2	9	7	X
Hubert	14	4	0	12	6	1	
Dillon	11	3	5	11	4	4	X
Dana	8	7	4	9	8	2	X
Deann	9	6	4	12	5	2	X
Neil	5	7	7	3	10	6	X
Roselyn	13	6	0	12	7	0	
Isaac	5	3	11	4	6	9	X
Anthony	5	11	3	4	11	4	
Zoe	6	3	9	3	6	10	
Erin	10	7	2	14	5	0	X
Lily	9	9	1	7	12	0	X
Hayden	7	6	6	7	6	6	
Kyra	11	5	3	6	9	4	
Stacey	7	5	7	9	5	5	X
Oz	1	8	10	0	9	10	
Rudy	1	1	17	1	3	15	X

*Note.* It is important to remember that some items were reverse-coded; items 11, 12, and 13 were eliciting a negative response on purpose. Therefore, those results are presented here as representative of positive journal entries.

Table 8  
*Type of Motivation by Student at Checkpoints*

Student	Initial	Midpoint	Interview
Dillon	Integrative	Integrative	Integrative
Evan	Neither	Instrumental	Instrumental
Anthony	Neither	Neither	Instrumental
Zoe	Instrumental	Neither	Neither
Hubert	Integrative	Integrative	Integrative
Deann	Integrative	Integrative	Integrative
Dana	Neither	Integrative	Neither
Roselyn	Both	Both	Both
Neil	Neither	Neither	Instrumental
Isaac	Neither	Neither	Instrumental
Hayden	Neither	Neither	Neither
Oz	Instrumental	Instrumental	Instrumental
Erin	Instrumental	Both	Instrumental
Lily	Integrative	Integrative	Integrative
Kyra	Instrumental	Neither	Integrative
Rudy	Neither	Neither	Neither
Stacey	Both	Integrative	Integrative

*Note.* See Table 4 for explanations of *Instrumental* and *Integrative*.

Table 9  
*Final Interview*

Question	Positive Change	No Change (Neutral)	Negative Change
1	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Stacey, Lily, Zoe, Oz, Erin, Neil, Kyra	Rudy, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Hubert, Isaac	
2	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Rudy, Stacey, Lily, Zoe, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Neil	Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hubert, Isaac, Kyra	
3	Rudy, Stacey, Deann, Roselyn, Lily, Zoe, Oz, Erin, Hubert, Isaac, Kyra	Evan, Anthony, Dana, Hayden, Neil	Dillon
4	Anthony, Lily, Zoe, Erin, Hubert	Dillon, Evan, Rudy, Stacey, Deann, Dana, Roselyn, Hayden, Oz, Neil, Isaac, Kyra	
5	Rudy, Lily, Isaac, Zoe, Oz	Stacey, Kyra, Erin, Hayden, Neil, Roselyn, Dana, Deann, Hubert, Anthony, Evan, Dillon	
6	Roselyn	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Stacey, Deann, Dana, Lily, Zoe, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Hubert, Neil, Isaac, Kyra	Rudy
7	Evan, Roselyn, Lily, Zoe, Oz, Erin, Neil, Isaac	Dillon, Anthony, Rudy, Stacey, Deann, Dana, Hayden, Hubert, Kyra	
8	Dillon, Evan, Anthony, Lily, Hayden, Erin, Isaac	Rudy, Dana, Roselyn, Zoe, Oz, Neil, Kyra	Stacey, Deann, Hubert
9	Stacey, Erin, Deann	Rudy, Kyra, Lily, Hayden, Isaac, Roselyn, Dana, Hubert, Zoe, Anthony, Evan, Oz	Neil, Dillon
10	Dillon, Evan, Deann, Lily, Zoe, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Neil	Anthony, Rudy, Stacey, Dana, Roselyn, Hubert, Isaac, Kyra	
11	Dillon, Anthony, Rudy, Dana, Roselyn, Lily, Oz, Erin, Hubert, Kyra	Evan, Stacey, Deann, Zoe, Hayden, Neil, Isaac	
12	Evan, Anthony, Rudy, Stacey, Deann, Lily, Hayden, Oz, Erin, Hubert, Neil, Isaac	Dillon, Dana, Roselyn, Zoe, Kyra	

*Note.* Answers were based on change from the beginning to the end of the project. For descriptions of what constitute as *positive*, *neutral*, or *negative* see Table 4.

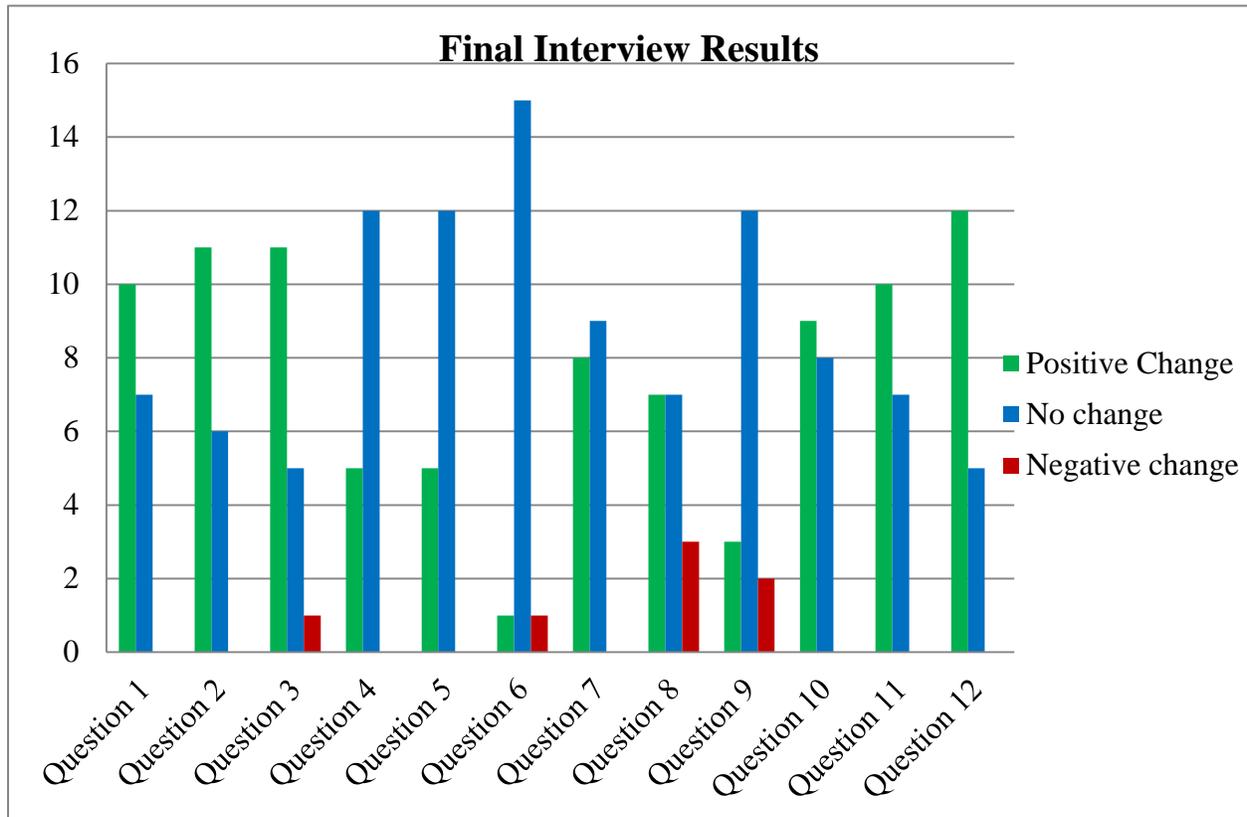


Figure 5

Students were able to choose what type of experience they wanted to have and they were in charge of finding the experience with guidance from the classroom teacher if needed (see Table 3; Table 10). Most of the student journals required some type of technology and few of the experiences were completed with human interaction or print media alone. The most popular type of journal were video clips, movies, and television programs with 46 out of 170 journals being of this type or 27.1 percent. The popularity of the journal types are represented in Figure 6 which shows the total of how many of each type of journal was completed by the participants.

Table 10  
*Type of Journals Completed by Students*

Type of activity	Students who completed this type of activity
Television program, movie, or video clip	Stacey (5), Rudy (3), Kyra (2), Lily (2), Erin(3), Hayden(5), Isaac (3), Neil (3), Deann (2), Zoe (2), Anthony (2), Evan (2), Oz (5), Roselyn, Dana (4), Hubert (2), Dillon
Listen to Spanish music	Stacey, Rudy (2), Kyra, Erin, Isaac, Neil, Dana, Deann, Hubert, Zoe, Anthony, Evan, Oz
Decipher a text	Stacey, Kyra, Isaac, Roselyn (4), Dana (3), Deann (2), Hubert, Zoe, Anthony (3), Dillon (5), Erin
Read a webpage	Erin, Neil, Zoe, Dillon
Videogame in Spanish	Kyra, Hayden, Evan, Oz
Skill building game	Kyra, Hayden, Neil, Hubert, Evan
Speak with a Spanish speaker	Rudy (2), Lily (6), Isaac (2), Neil (3), Deann, Hubert, Zoe, Anthony (2), Evan (2), Dillon (2), Oz
Voice recognition technology	Stacey, Deann
Follow a set of directions	Lily (2), Erin (2), Dana (2), Hubert, Zoe (2), Evan
Change technology settings	Rudy, Kyra, Erin, Hayden (2), Isaac, Roselyn (3), Deann (2), Hubert, Zoe, Anthony, Evan (2), Dillon, Oz
Social media interaction	Stacey, Kyra, Isaac, Hubert
Text messages	Neil, Roselyn
Use a Coinstar, Red box, Self-Check out or ATM	Stacey, Rudy, Kyra (2) , Erin, Hayden, Isaac, Roselyn, Deann, Anthony, Oz
Teach Spanish	Rudy, Zoe
Listen to Spanish speakers	Hubert

*Note.* The numbers in parentheses are the number of activities each student completed if it was above one of that type.

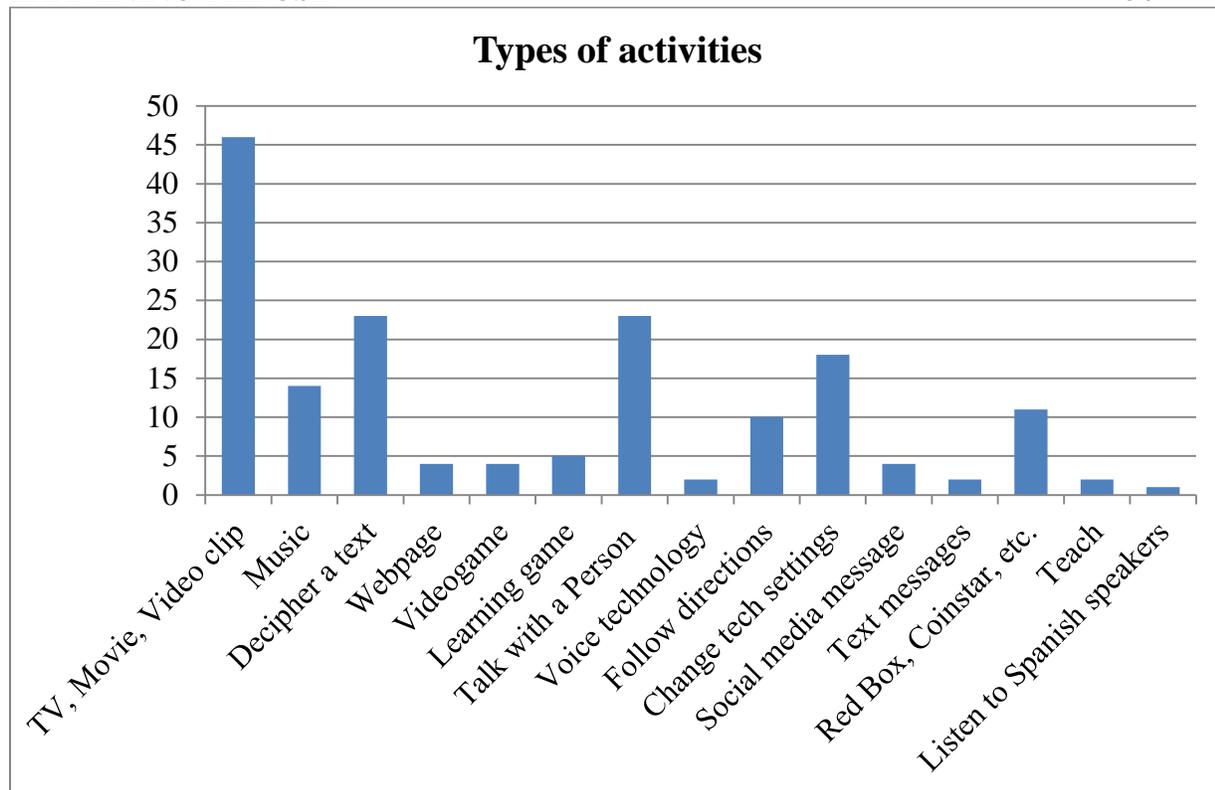


Figure 6

### Discussion

The rural community with which the current research was conducted was made up of a 97 percent White population and was isolated from most cultures and languages from outside the United States and English. When the culture journals were first introduced, more than half of the students believed that culture and language were either not related at all or not connected. There was a disconnect between culture and language which can be noted in the initial questionnaire entries for questions 14 and 15 (see Figure 3). For example, Stacey wrote, “I like speaking Spanish, but the culture is not very important to me” and Erin wrote, “I like learning about the culture but would rather learn about the language.” Overall for question 14, which indicated the importance of culture to language, six out of 17 students answered negatively in the initial but at the midpoint four students answered negatively (see Figures 3 and 4). For question 15, which

asks how much the student enjoys Spanish culture, students went from three students who answered negatively in the initial to one at the midpoint. At the final interview students were asked if how much they enjoy Spanish culture has changed since the beginning of the project in question 9 (see Appendix B) and two students indicated negative change, three indicated positive change and the rest answered neutrally. Through the journals students were given access to the practices and perspectives accepted by the Spanish speaking society, as well as the culture's view of the world, including meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas (Cutshall, 2012). However, according to the research compiled from the initial questionnaire through the final interview there was no significant change in the student answers in relation to culture with the intercultural experiences (see Figures 3 and 4).

**Communicative competence.** Communicative competence is centered around the goal of conveying meaning rather than being perfectly and grammatically correct (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). In this study learners were required to interact with native speakers in order to use their new language, and to communicate meaning. The project also enabled students to use their language skills in real language settings outside of the classroom (see Table 3).

In the beginning of the project many students indicated that they felt anxious using Spanish due to a number of different reasons. Some of those reasons included a *fear of messing up, difficulty* with speaking or learning the language in general, and overall uncertainty regarding the correct way to conduct a conversation. The affective filter for students was very high in the beginning of the journals with most students indicating feelings of anxiety when using language outside of the classroom (see Figure 3). Some of the excerpts from students journals in the beginning included "I don't want to make mistakes" (Deann), "I feel hesitant while communicating in a foreign language" (Anthony), "I feel like I'm messing up" (Oz), and "I feel

very nervous...when I'm under pressure" (Kyra). At the initial questionnaire 11 out of 17 students indicated feelings of anxiety as seen in question 12, then at the midpoint nine out of 17 students reported feeling anxiety which indicates a positive change through a decrease in negative answers (see Figures 3- 4). The final interview demonstrated how many of the students experienced an increase in their comfort level with utilizing the language in authentic situations with eight out of 17 or 47.1% of students indicating less feelings of anxiety and zero students reporting more anxiety (see Figure 5, Question 7). One student initially indicated anxiety in the initial questionnaire but when she had a positive experience she wrote, "[it] made me feel smart and good about myself for know[ing] Spanish this well" (Kyra). Lily, who said she felt nervous in the beginning learned that making mistakes can even help you learn, "Even if I mess up I am learning to use it [Spanish] better and be more comfortable talking." Although answers in the area of anxiety did change drastically, the change was not through positive answers but rather the decrease in negative answers. This is significant because change does not always imply an increase in positive answers but may also consist of a decrease in negative answers (see Table 7).

Students indicated in the beginning of the journals that they were afraid to speak in Spanish specifically for fear of saying something wrong. By the end of the journals nine students reported a positive increase in their pronunciation of Spanish which is linked to their own confidence since the student was the one monitoring his or her own progress (see Figure 5, Question 10). An example of this change can be seen in Erin's responses over the course of the project. At the initial she wrote "If I am talking to someone who speaks Spanish I am nervous I will say a word incorrectly" and then at the midpoint this begins to change with "I like participating when I am fully sure I know what I am doing." This indicated a build in pronunciation confidence because the student is no longer dwelling on the unknown or the

possibility of being wrong. At the final interview Erin stated “[My pronunciation has] gotten better you learn new words and you try and learn new ones.” Erin’s journals were diverse in what type of experience she completed (see Table 10) and this may indicate that having a wider variety of types of experiences rather than all being of one type may have a greater impact, although this is an area that would require study beyond this project. Out of the 170 journals that were completed throughout the research only a few of the journals indicated that the student would not choose to have this experience again. Instead, many students reflected on the interaction and how they would have changed it to go more smoothly. The affective filter plays a role in students’ learning of another language and since students indicated less anxiety through the journals this leads to the conclusion that students may be more willing to use the language.

The culture journals pushed students into an  $i+1$  setting where they were not always sure of what was being said or written about and they had to decipher the meaning. Through the journal entries students noted some of the ways in which they had to decipher meaning and that it made them feel proud of themselves. In an entry by Hubert he was communicating with a Spanish speaking relative over several hours while doing other activities and he stated “He was teaching me many new meanings and how to properly speak Spanish. This made me feel accomplished in that I was talking to someone who speaks Spanish.” This journal demonstrates the  $i+1$  setting because he was taught many new things and therefore learned more through the interaction. Therefore, the student was not only using the content outside of the classroom but also learning new material without the teacher which could impact education through giving students assignments which they cater to their own interests and their everyday lives. Students interviewed discussed the ways in which they used contextual clues through the journals and most students reported an increase in their ability to figure out the meaning of a text or

conversation they did not understand fully. Deann stated, “I used what I knew from class to figure it out” and Zoe similarly noted, “I would skip words and go back later to figure them out.” In terms of listening and speaking specifically, Oz said, “watching videos they say things we don’t learn, [and] I guessed at meaning” and Stacey stated, “having to listen to people speak it [Spanish] makes me want to learn more to figure out everything.” These statements lead to the idea that trying to understand information which is a bit out of grasp can lead the learner to attain greater gains in the language being learned through an *i+1* setting.

Learning a foreign language is not an easy undertaking and it takes time, energy and motivation on behalf of the student in order to fully learn a language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This fact did not escape many of the students since 11 out of 17 students wrote that they thought learning a foreign language was difficult and none believed it not to be difficult (see Figure 3). At the midpoint eight students believed that learning an FL was difficult (see Figure 4). In the final interviews seven out of 17 students believed that language was less difficult to study than they thought in the beginning but three of them believed it to be even more difficult than they originally thought (see Figure 5). The change in either direction may be due to an increase in exposure to native speakers and what language looks and sounds like in an authentic setting whereas classroom content is often altered to match the learning level of the student.

**Attitude and motivation.** The overarching goal of this research was to determine whether the culture journals could impact student motivation or attitudes. There are several questions throughout the questionnaires which explicitly refer to the students’ motivational tendency and their attitude towards Spanish. However, most other questions at all three stages of questioning target the various areas which determine the orientation for students in each of these domains. According to findings in the final interview 10 out of 17 students indicated feeling

more positive attitudes or motivation and none of the students indicated feeling less motivated or having more negative attitudes. The findings that students' confidence levels in their own ability, deciphering, future planning around interacting with the language and lowered anxiety indicate higher levels of motivation and attitude towards the language.

The students' motivational tendencies, whether instrumental or integrative, revealed no significant changes from the beginning to the end of the study. Although there were more students in the end of the research who claimed one or both tendencies rather than stating that there was no motivation to learn (see Table 8). The lack of change in this area may be due to the types of activities the student chose to take part in or due to something outside of the project itself (see Table 10). Some of the chosen activities may have fostered the integrative or the instrumental motives for students, for example the ATM or automated checkout would be more instrumentally motivated while talking to a family member or friend would be more integratively motivated. This would be an interesting topic for further study since there may be certain types of activities which could increase student motivation to learn foreign languages.

### **Limitations**

Finding new ways to use the target language was especially difficult for students in this area because most of them rarely had contact with speakers of the target language. One limitation of the study was the fact that the students needed to be given multiple ideas of how to fulfill the journal requirements since they do not live in a community with many Spanish speakers (see Table 3). There was a community within 20 miles with a large Spanish speaking population but since the students had not ventured there often or did not know where to go once there, they were somewhat limited in the ways they were able to use the language outside of class. Technology was the greatest asset during this project because students had access to

multiple mediums of language without having to travel. If the students did not have access to technology it is possible that they would not have been able to complete the experiences within the community. For some experiences students needed to step out of their comfort zone which caused some anxiety or embarrassment. Students felt anxiety over the idea of using the language with others, but this is a natural feeling when learning and speaking a second language according to many second language acquisition theorists (Saville-Troike, 2012).

### **Implications and future research**

Improvements among students were demonstrated in this research in various areas of SLA without any classroom instruction. Using this type of project may indeed prove useful to other content areas by applying what students learn in the classroom to various situations outside of the classroom. Perhaps assigning students to find real world applications of subject matter and reporting on the experience could make academia more relevant to the student's life. Creating these types of assignments for students may increase confidence and knowledge in the subject area as it did within an FL setting.

Building the concepts of this project into other subjects matters or into class time would be a worthwhile topic for future research given the positive effects this project had on students. If teachers were to begin building in personally relevant texts into the classroom or to allow students to choose their learning focus within a language it may improve the students motivation towards learning the target language. Additionally, the current project was conducted over a ten week period yet it had dramatic results within certain themes such as self-confidence and anxiety (see Appendix G) and for certain students (see Appendix H). Therefore it would be interesting to conduct the project over an extended period of time to determine if the results are the same or if more gains or losses are experienced.

The current research was a project developed to encourage students to use Spanish skills outside of the classroom and in the process they learned more about the language and although change varied by student and theme, many students developed more positive views on different parts of learning a foreign language. Through encouraging students to be independent and active learners they were able to participate in experiences which were culturally and personally relevant. The most significant improvements among students were increased confidence, decreased anxiety, gains in content knowledge and pronunciation and increases in the amount of time spent using the language outside of the classroom. Although, there was little change in terms of cultural importance or enjoyment, the students' desire to travel or in the perceived importance of foreign language, this is not to detract from the significant gains experienced by students in other areas. Attitude and motivation are affected by many areas, however through the discussion in this study it is obvious that this type of project could impact foreign language learning in a positive and influential way.

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*Appendix A***Reflection Questions for Beginning and Mid-point Student Journals**

(Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei & Csizér 2006)

1. What is your attitude towards Spanish speakers?
2. How interested are you in learning Spanish? Do you enjoy learning Spanish?
3. If you were visiting a Spanish speaking country would you want to speak Spanish there?
4. Would you study Spanish if it was not required?
5. Do you enjoy meeting people who speak other languages?
6. Is learning Spanish important to your future career?
7. Is learning Spanish important to you because of a desire to converse with people from Spanish speaking countries or to be part of the culture?
8. How do you feel about volunteering answers or participating in Spanish class?
9. Do you think that foreign languages are important school subjects?
10. Do people around you think that it is a good thing to know a foreign language?
11. Does learning a foreign language make you feel less American?
12. Do you feel anxious when communicating in a foreign language?
13. Do you think learning a foreign language is difficult?
14. How important do you think it is to learn Spanish in order to learn more about the culture of its speakers?
15. How much do you like Spanish culture?
16. How much do you think knowing Spanish will help you when travelling abroad or in your career in the future?
17. How important do you think Spanish is in the world?

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18. How much would you like to travel to a Spanish speaking country?

19. How rich and developed do you think Spanish speaking countries are?

*Appendix B***Semi-structured Interview Questions**

(Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei & Csizér 2006)

1. Do you feel that your attitude or motivation to learn Spanish has changed in any way since beginning the journals? If yes, in what ways?
2. Do you feel that your level of interest in learning Spanish has changed since beginning the journals?
3. Do you feel an increased or decreased desire to travel to a Spanish speaking country since beginning the journals?
4. Has the way you feel about volunteering answers or participating in Spanish class changed?
5. Do you think that foreign languages are important school subjects or important to learn? Explain why or why not.
6. Do you feel more or less American using Spanish in public settings?
7. Has your level of anxiety changed over the course of the experiences?
8. Has your perception of how difficult it is to learn Spanish changed?
9. How much do you like Spanish culture?
10. Do you think your pronunciation of Spanish vocabulary has improved or gotten worse? Can you think of an example?
11. Have you learned more about grammar or vocabulary which we have not learned in class?
12. How often did you use Spanish before the culture journal project?

*Appendix C***Culture Journals**

**Task:** To practice communicating in Spanish outside of the classroom in authentic situations and/or with native speakers.

**Assignment:** Students will actively seek out ways to use Spanish outside of class. For each experience a journal of at least one page will be required. A total of at least 10 journals will be completed over the course of ten weeks. The journals can be completed in either English or Spanish, this is the student's choice and the student may complete more journals for extra credit.

- The 10 journals may be handed in earlier than 10 weeks if all are completed
- There will be one journal at the beginning and one in the middle with different questions but this will be done during class time.
- **Due Date: 10 weeks after assigned**

**Note:** Please exercise good judgment and ask parents for permission if it is necessary for involvement in an experience such as travelling to another town.

Essential Questions to answer in your journals:

- What activity or interaction did you complete?
- There are many different varieties of Spanish, -- Could you place which one was being used? How did you know?
- Did you learn any new vocabulary or pronunciations?
- What was the experience like? Did you encounter any difficulties when trying to communicate and if so were they resolved and how?
- How did the experience make you feel?
- Is there anything you would change for next time and would you choose to have this interaction again?



**Where can I use my Spanish outside of school?**

*Appendix D***Explanation Dialog for Students**

As most of you know I am completing my Master's degree at SUNY Fredonia. What you might not know is that I have to write a thesis for my Master's, which is a big research project. What I would like to do is use information from journals you will be writing as a class project. The study is voluntary meaning that you do not have to participate in the study. However, whether you participate or not you do still have to complete the project. Any questions so far?

Let's talk about the study for a minute because there are some important things I want you to know about it. First of all, the goal of this study is to find out what your attitudes toward learning a second language (in this case, Spanish) and your motivation to learn Spanish. This research will also help me to teach you more effectively by seeing what works or what does not work. Your name will not be used anywhere in the study because I will be removing your names from all the journals you turn in. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you can drop out at any time without your grades in Spanish being affected or how I feel about you being affected. If you have any questions about this research or about how this research makes you feel, you can talk to the school counselor, your parents or guardians, or any other adult with whom you are comfortable

OK, let's go over the project. (Hand out Journal Assignment and review with students, Appendix C) This project involves using your Spanish skills outside of the classroom and then writing journals about those experiences. We will also be writing journals at the beginning and halfway through the study in which you will reflect on your own learning and motivation in Spanish. These experiences must be done outside of class time and the journals you submit will be part of your class grade regardless of your participation in the study. Are there any questions about the project or the study?

With this in mind I have come up with some questions to help guide you while writing your journals (Hand out Guiding Questions, Appendix A). You do not have to answer every question every time however your journals should each be at least one page and you may choose whether you want to write it in English or in Spanish. You will complete the journals outside of Spanish class at least once a week for ten weeks. You may complete more than one experience per week for extra credit (equaling the same as one journal grade). Any questions about the journals or the study?

Let's brainstorm some examples of how we can use Spanish outside of the classroom (See Table 3). I would like you to keep in mind that no two written experiences should be the exact same activity throughout the journals. Any questions?

*Appendix E*  
**Student Consent to Research**

As you may already know I am currently a graduate student completing a master's degree at SUNY Fredonia. As part of that degree, I would like to perform a research study using data from the journals you will be writing for class. The purpose of this study is to learn about the possible benefits of interacting with the Spanish language in a non-school setting and the effects it may have on learning a foreign language.

As part Spanish class, you often practice writing and speaking in Spanish. You will all be completing a series of journals over a period of ten weeks in which you must encounter the Spanish language in some way outside of class time and then write about the experience with the guiding questions provided. The journals are to be handed in at the end of each week so that I can read about the experiences and reflect on them for my own teaching practices. I also want to assist you with any difficulties you may have in your language interactions. Participating in this study means that you are giving me permission to use your journal entries as part of my project results.

If you agree to participate, this is how I will use your journals: before reviewing the journals, I will make a photocopy of the papers of the ones by you who have given me your and your parents' consent and remove any forms of identification. I will replace the names with pseudonyms (Fake names) so that the data that I analyze is anonymous. None of your real names will appear anywhere in the research or the final report.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Whether you give your permission or not, your course grade will not be affected, and neither will your relationship with me, the teacher. Only those students who consent may participate in having the information from their journal entries used for my project. If you do not consent to your information being used you are still required to complete the journals for class.

Possible benefits of this assignment include increased practice of the language with native speakers in realistic situations and increased vocabulary through exposure to new words and phrases. There are no adverse effects anticipated with the study beyond what is expected in social interaction. However, if at any time you experience adverse effects from this study or have questions about how it makes you feel you will be referred to school counselors for assistance. School counselors are available at any time prior to, during, and after the study's completion.

Attached is a Consent Form for you to read and sign. Please sign either "yes I agree to participate," or "no thanks, I do not want to participate in this study." Please bring the signed form to Ms. Knoll.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me:

You may also speak with my college supervisor, Dr. Karen Lillie at Fredonia University (673-4656; Karen.lillie@fredonia.edu ) or Maggie Bryan-Peterson, the Human Subjects Administrator at Fredonia University (673-3528).

*Appendix E (cont.)*

**Child Informed Consent Form**

Ms. Knoll  
Spanish Teacher  
Informed Consent form: Student

By signing below, I acknowledge the following:

I have read and understood the purpose of this study.

I understand that I must return this form to Ms. Knoll (Spanish Teacher) by January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013

My participation in this research is voluntary.

If I agree to participate in this study I am free to withdraw my data at any time.

My name will never appear in the study.

My class grades and my relationship with Ms. Knoll will not be affected by my choice to participate in this study.

All papers related to this study will be kept in Dr. Lillie’s office at SUNY Fredonia.

[please Choose one]

YES, I AGREE to participate in this study.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

\*\*\*\*\*

NO, I do NOT WANT to participate in this study.

Name:

Signature:

*Appendix F*  
**Parent Consent to Research**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am your child's Spanish teacher and a graduate student completing a master's degree at SUNY Fredonia. As part of that degree, I would like to perform a research study using data from your child's journal written for class work. The purpose of this study is to learn about the possible benefits of students interacting with the Spanish language in a non-school setting and the effects it may have on motivation and attitude in the classroom towards learning a foreign language.

Because your child has indicated that he or she would like to participate in my study, I am now sending you this letter in order to find out your decision about having your child participate.

As part of their regular Spanish class, it is necessary for all students in my Spanish classes to practice writing and speaking in Spanish. The whole class will be completing a series of journals over a period of ten weeks in which they must encounter the Spanish language in some way outside of class time and then write about the experience with the guiding questions provided. All students will be handing in the journals at the end of each week so that I can read about the experiences and reflect on them for my own teaching practices and to assist with any difficulties in their language interactions. Allowing your child to participate in this study means that you are giving me permission to use your child's journal entries as part of my project results.

Before reviewing the class activities, I will make a photocopy of the papers with student and parental consent and remove any forms of identification. I will replace the names with pseudonyms in order to create an anonymous set of data to analyze. No student names will appear anywhere in the research or the final report.

Possible benefits of this assignment include increased practice of the language with native speakers in realistic situations and increased vocabulary through exposure to new words and phrases. There are no adverse effects anticipated with the study beyond what is expected in social interaction. However, any students who experience adverse effects from this study will be referred to school counselors for assistance. School counselors are available for the participants at any time prior to, during, and after the study's completion.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Whether you give your permission or not, your child's course grade will not be affected, and neither will his or her relationship with me, the teacher. Only those students whose parents say "yes" may participate in having their journal entries be used for my project.

Attached is a Consent Form for you to read and sign. Please sign either "yes I agree to allow my child to participate," or "no thanks, I do not want my child to participate in this study." Please send the signed form with your child to Ms. Knoll.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me:

You may also speak with my college supervisor, Dr. Karen Lillie at Fredonia University (673-4656; Karen.lillie@fredonia.edu ) or Maggie Bryan-Peterson, the Human Subjects Administrator at Fredonia University (673-3528).

A copy of the finished Master's project will be available to any parent requesting a copy.

*Appendix F (cont.)*

**Parent Informed Consent Form**

Monica Knoll  
Spanish Teacher  
Informed Consent form: Parent/Guardian

By signing below, I acknowledge the following:

I have read and understood the purpose of this study.

I understand that I must return this form to Ms. Knoll (Spanish Teacher) by January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013

My child's participation in this research is voluntary.

If I agree to allow my child to participate in this study I am free to withdraw my child's data at any time.

My child's name will never appear in the study.

My child's class grades and his or her relationship with Ms. Knoll will not be affected by my choice to allow my child's participation in this study.

All papers related to this study will be kept in Dr. Lillie's office at SUNY Fredonia.

[please Choose one]

YES, I AGREE to allow my child to participate in this study.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

\*\*\*\*\*

NO, I do NOT WANT my child to participate in this study.

Name:

Signature:

Appendix G

Overall Answers by Themed Questions

The figures in this appendix indicate change based on *positive*, *neutral* and *negative* coding per question beginning with the initial questionnaire, then the mid-point questionnaire and ending with the final interview (see Table 4). The initial and midpoint questionnaires are coded according to how the student commented on the question but the final interview questions ask students to answer in terms of change from the beginning of the project. Interview answers were compared with initial responses in order to check that the student demonstrated any noted change through their responses.

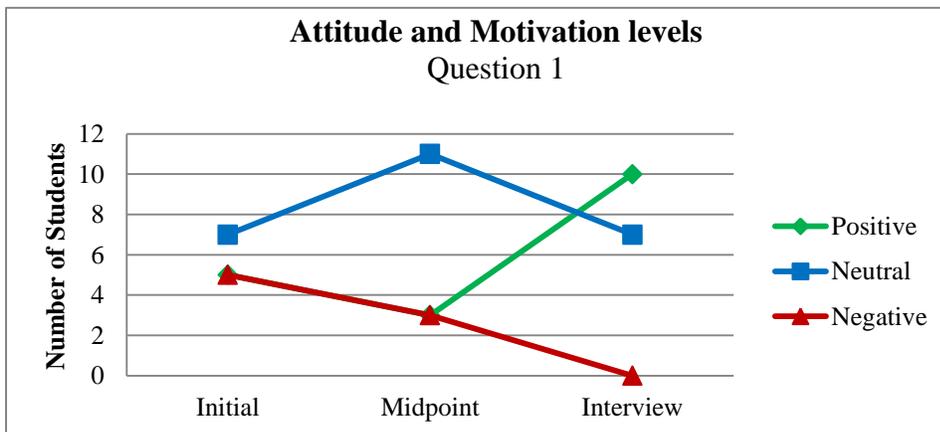


Figure 7

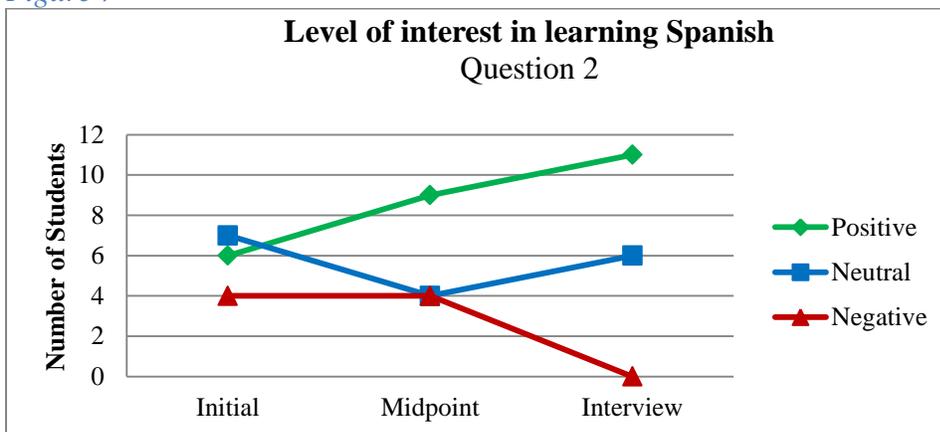


Figure 8

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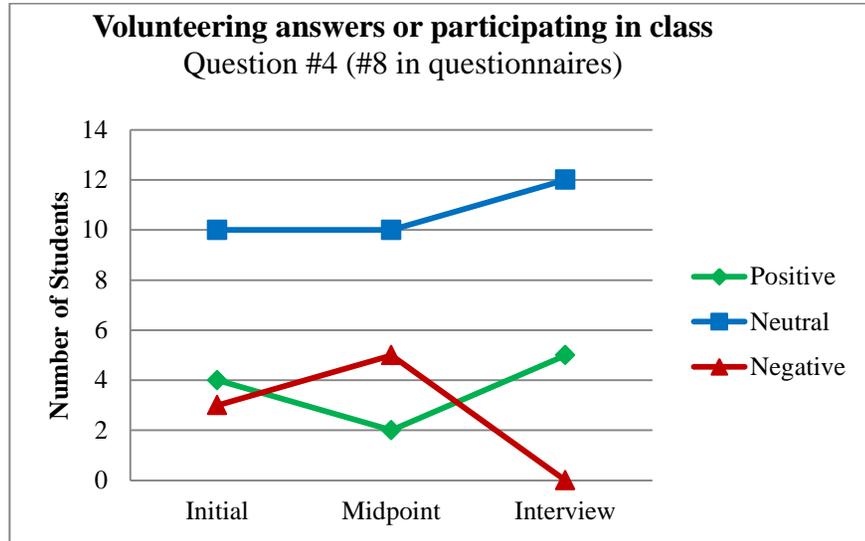


Figure 9

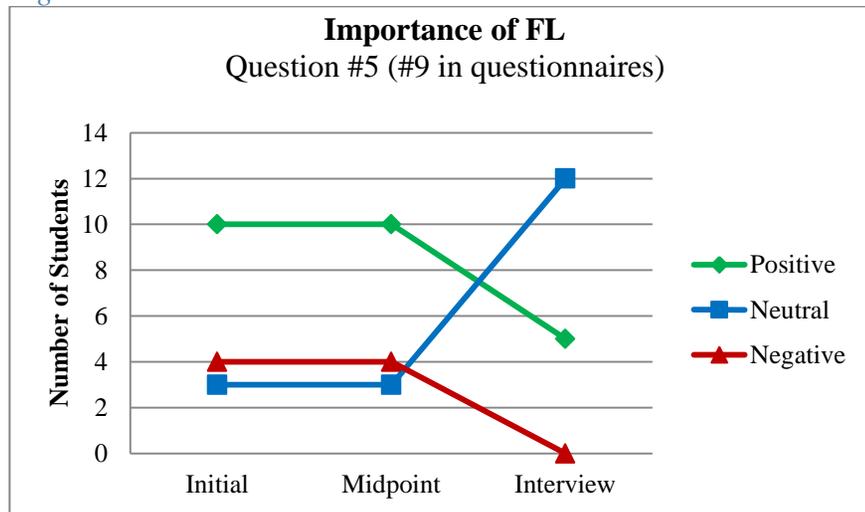


Figure 10

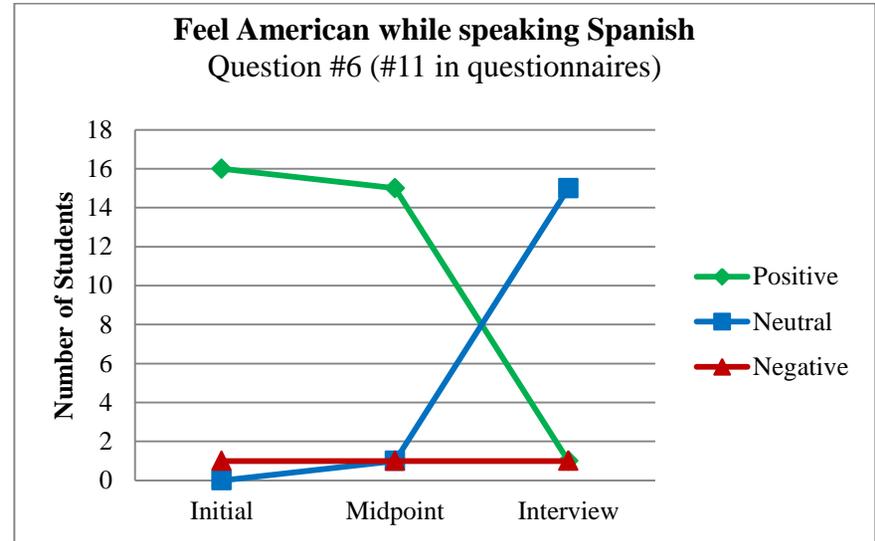


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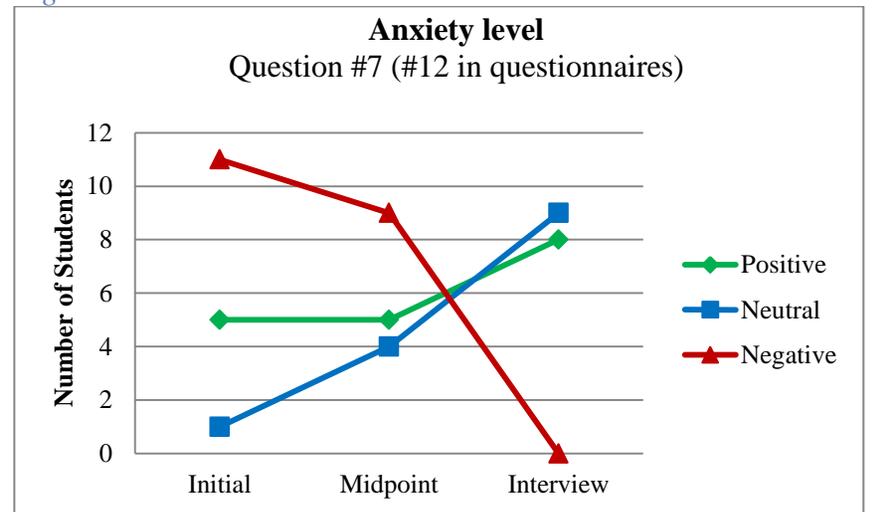


Figure 12

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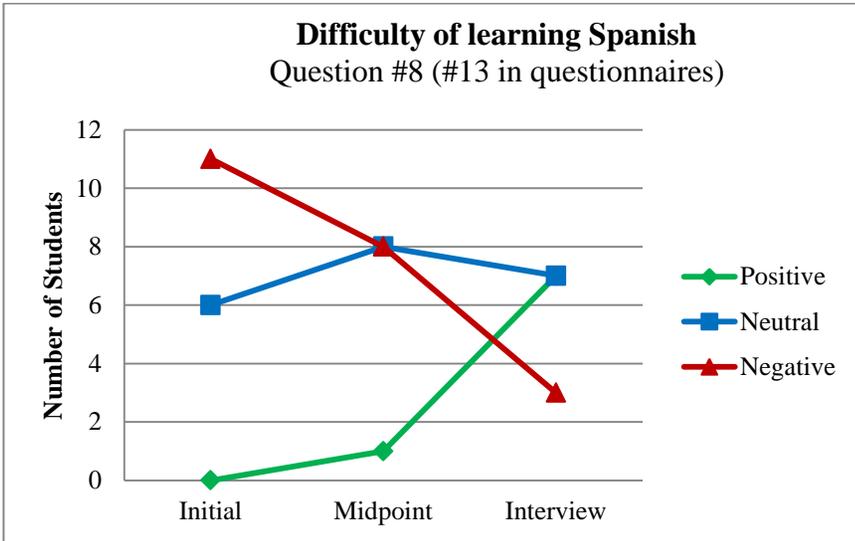


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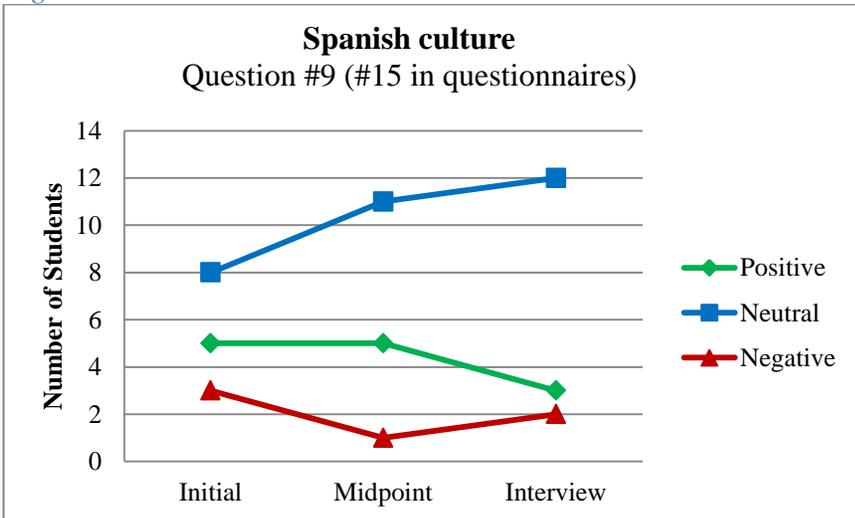


Figure 14

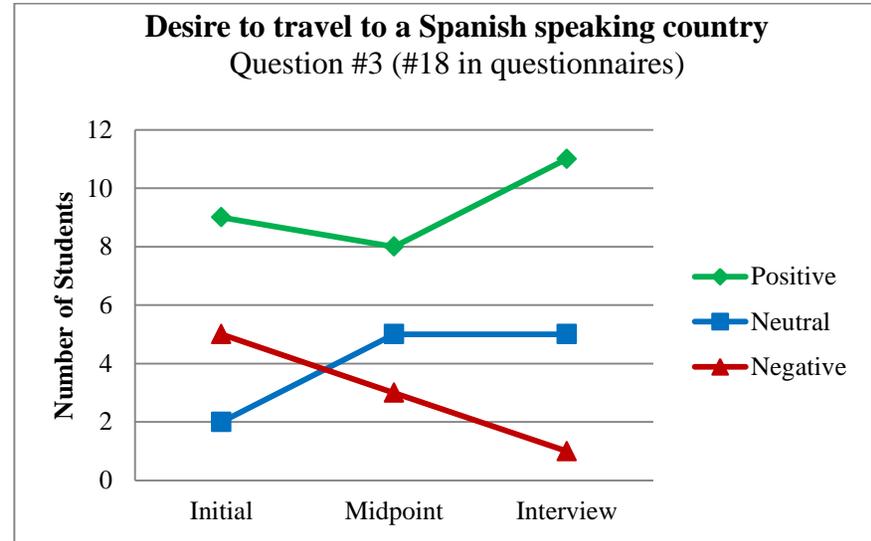


Figure 15

*Appendix H*

**Overall Answers by Individual Students**

The data represented in the following figures show change per student throughout the project rather than by question. Only nine of the questions were used for these comparisons because they were the only questions which spanned all three stages of questioning. The nine question themes can be found in the first nine questions of the final interview (see Appendix B). The three separate lines represent the number of positive (green), negative (red), and neutral (blue) answers by the student at each stage of the questionnaires. As can be seen through the students' charts, the answers and change within answers varied greatly and this promotes the idea of individuality among students.

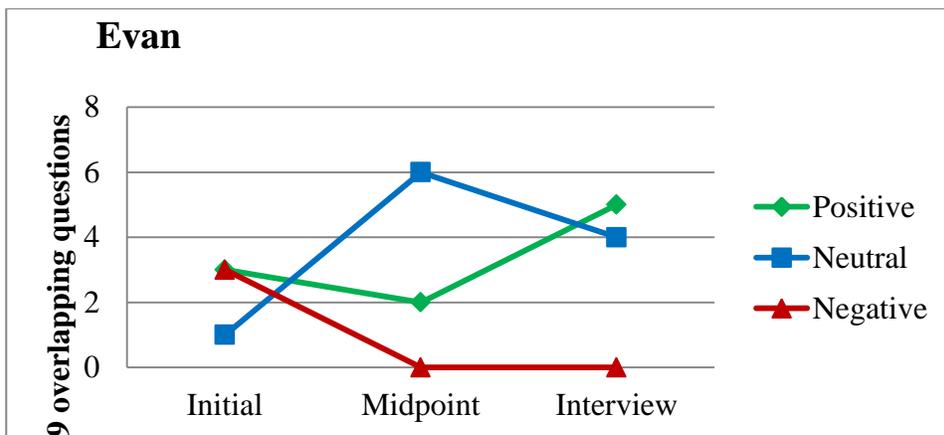


Figure 16

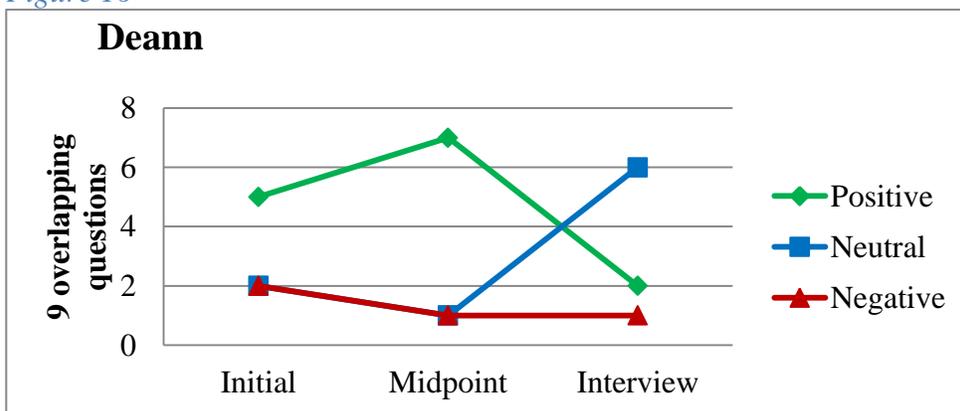


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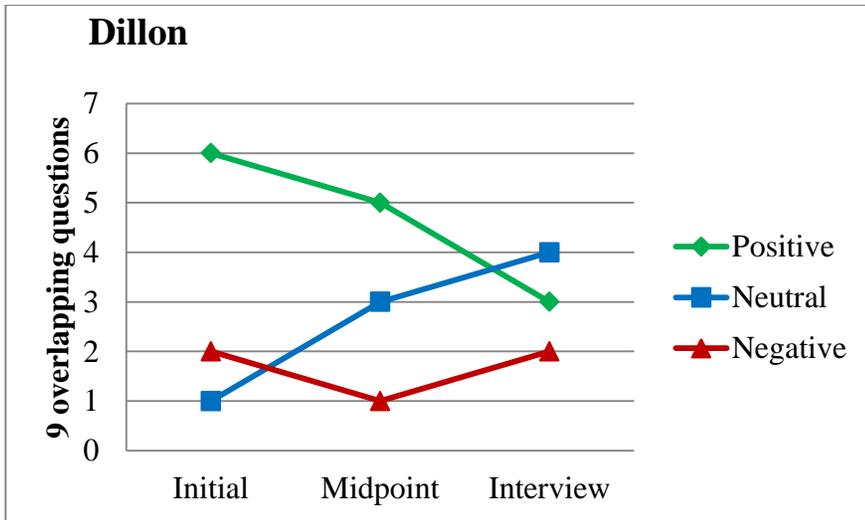


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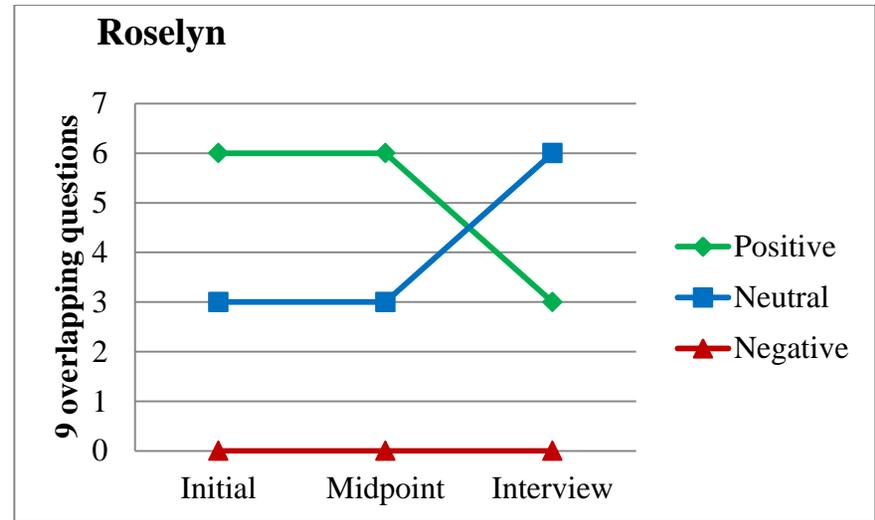


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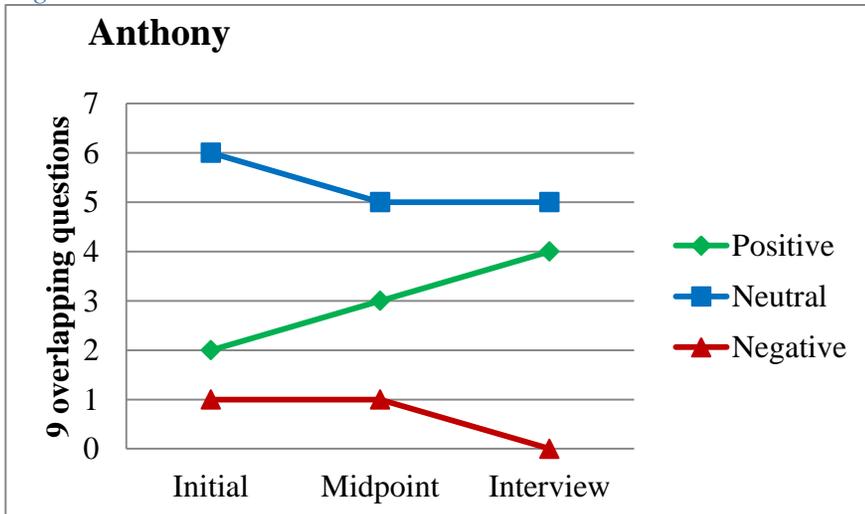


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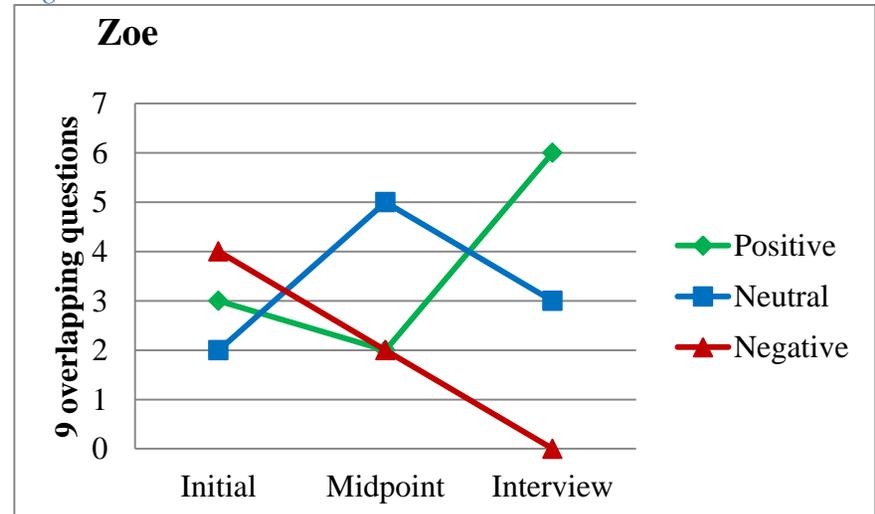


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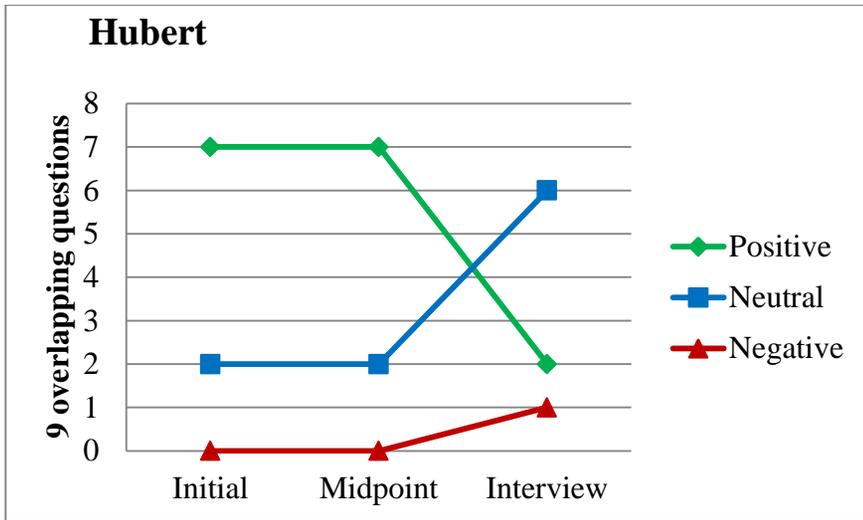


Figure 22

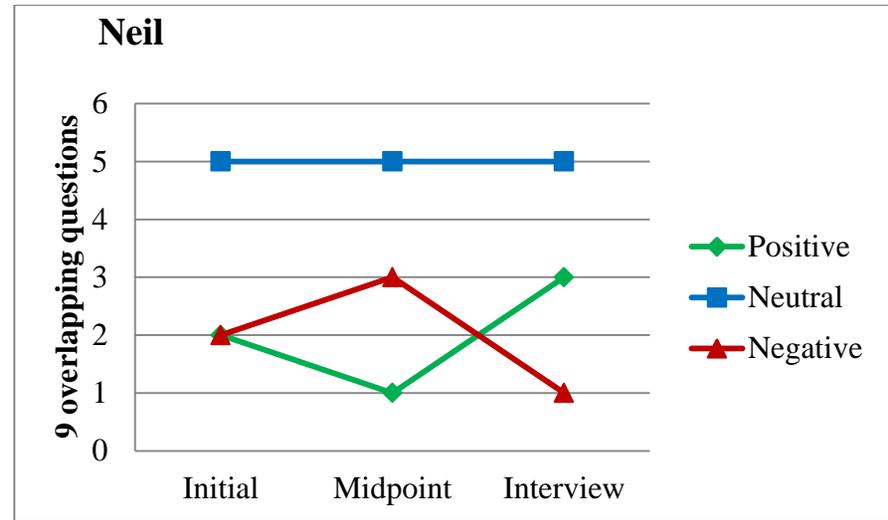


Figure 24

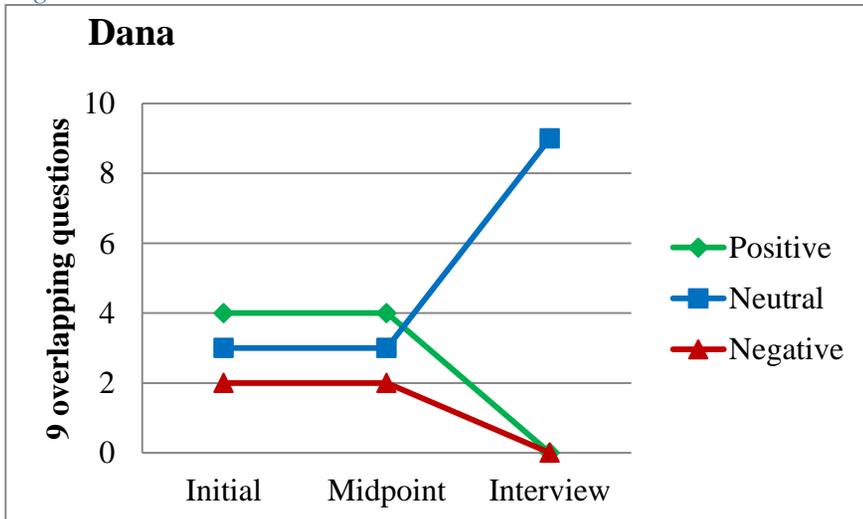


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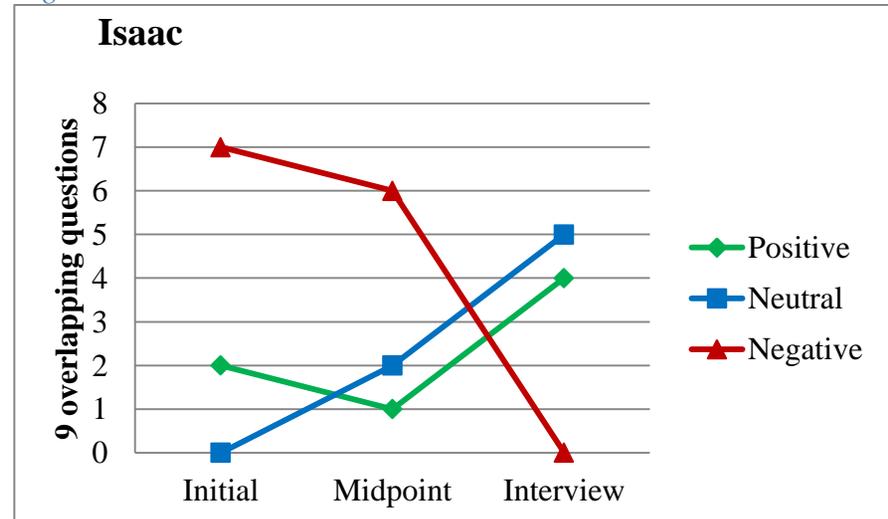


Figure 25

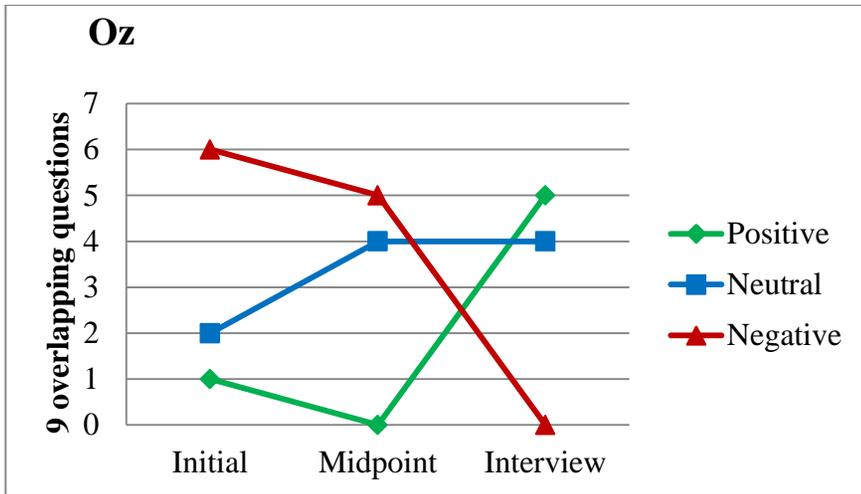


Figure 26

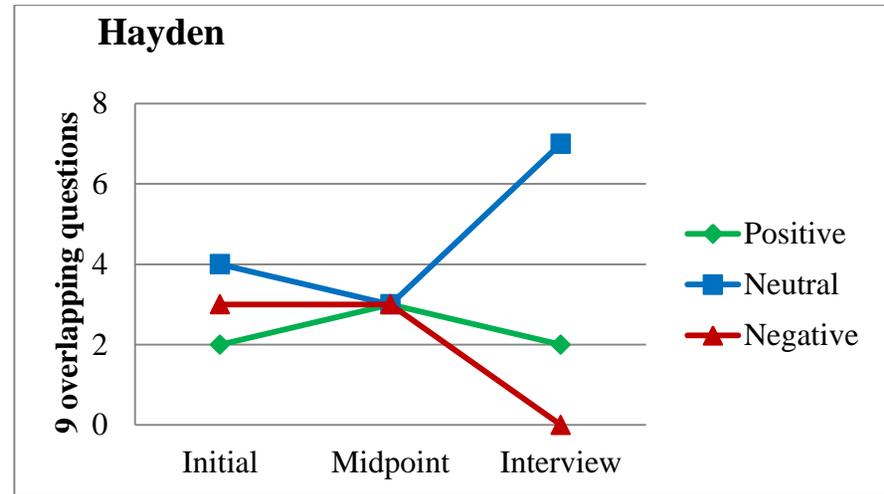


Figure 28

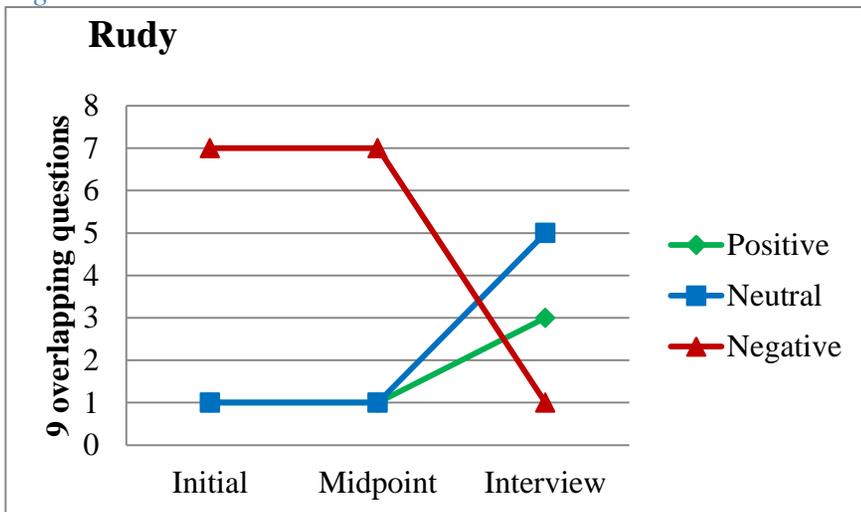


Figure 27

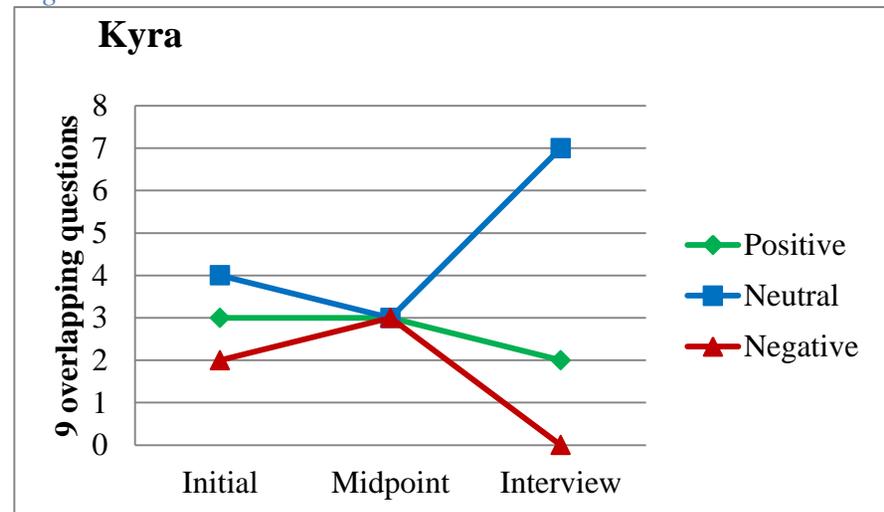


Figure 29

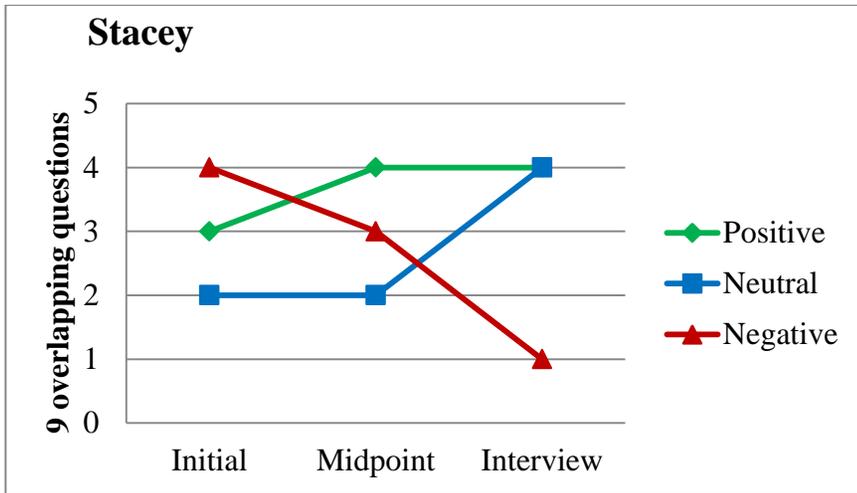


Figure 30

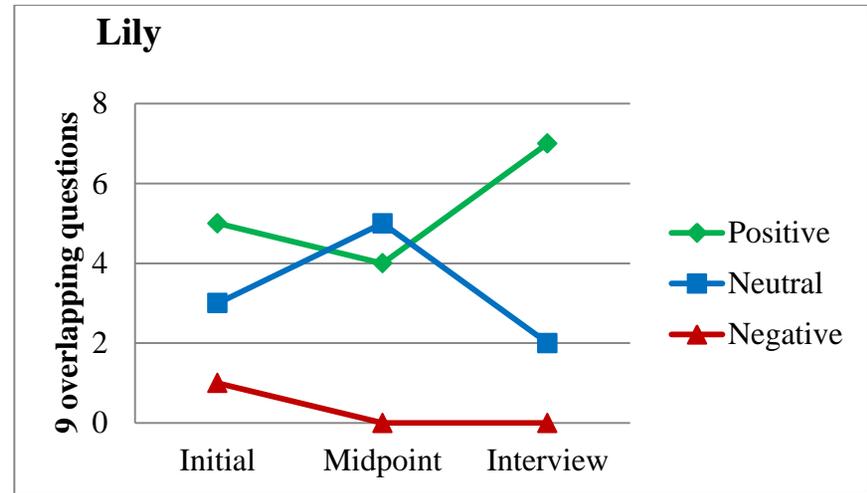


Figure 32

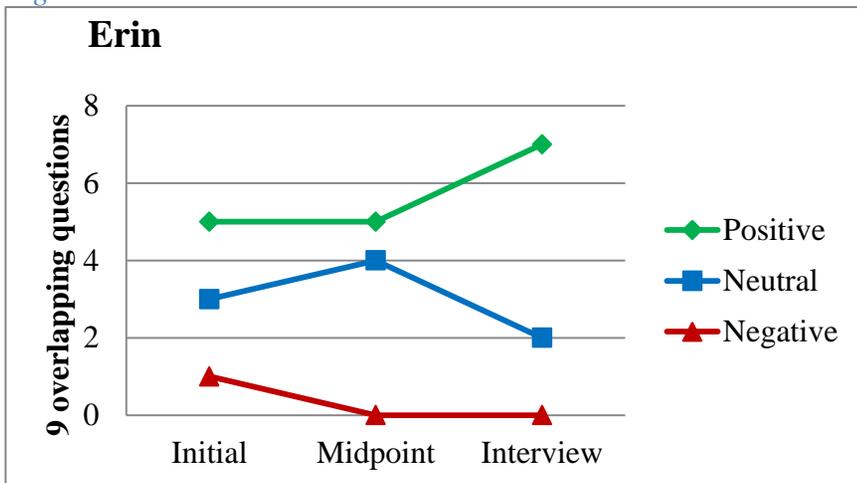


Figure 31

*Appendix I*

**Approval Email from SUNY Fredonia's Human Subjects Review Board**

From: **Maggie Bryan-Peterson** <[Maggie.Bryan-Peterson@fredonia.edu](mailto:Maggie.Bryan-Peterson@fredonia.edu)>  
Date: Wed, Dec 19, 2012 at 10:37 AM  
Subject: Re: Your Human Subjects Review Request - Knoll, Lillie  
To: Monica L Knoll <[knol0922@fredonia.edu](mailto:knol0922@fredonia.edu)>, Karen E Lillie <[karen.lillie@fredonia.edu](mailto:karen.lillie@fredonia.edu)>  
Cc: Maggie Bryan-Peterson <[petersmb@fredonia.edu](mailto:petersmb@fredonia.edu)>

Ms. Knoll and Dr. Lillie --

Thank you for your revised application for your proposed research titled "*Language Journals and Motivation to Learn a Second Language*." Your revisions have answered the concerns of the Committee. This e-mail is your approval and your research may proceed as described.

As a reminder, you must comply with Part D of the Campus Policies on Human Subjects requiring notification at the time data collection begins and when it is done. You may accomplish this with a simple e-mail to me.

Thank you for keeping the high standards relating to research and the protection of human subjects on the Fredonia campus. Best wishes on your research.

Maggie Bryan-Peterson

Human Subjects Administrator

*Appendix J*

**Approval Email from School Administrator**

From: [REDACTED]  
To: Maggie.Bryan-Peterson@fredonia.edu  
Date: 12/18/2012 01:57 PM  
Subject: Monica Knoll

Monica Knoll is a Spanish teacher at [REDACTED]. As secondary principal, I am aware of Miss Knoll's project and grant her permission to complete this assignment in order to complete her thesis. Information can only be used if both parent and student sign the appropriate consent form.

Thank you  
[REDACTED]