Effects of Culture Awareness Lessons on Attitudes of University Students of French

Mahonri Manjarrez
Brigham Young University

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Effects of Culture Awareness Lessons on Attitudes
of University Students of French

Mahonri Manjarrez

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Blair E. Bateman, Chair
Robert G. Erickson
Nieves Pérez Knapp

Center for Language Studies
Brigham Young University
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ABSTRACT

Effects of Culture Awareness Lessons on Attitudes of University Students of French

Mahonri Manjarrez
Center for Language Studies, BYU
Master of Arts

In response to the dearth of research on culture awareness instruction prior to foreign language instruction, the objective of this study was to explore the effects of culture awareness lessons on learner attitudes and beliefs in second-semester university students of French. As a treatment, the experimental group received lessons on culture awareness prior to traditional French classroom instruction; the control group did not. Culture awareness lessons addressed terms such as perspective, culture, interpretation, and stereotypes. Lessons also included worksheets consisting of open-ended questions designed to capture students’ responses to the aforementioned topics of discussion. Data collection methods consisted of pre- and post-surveys that included Likert-scale questions and reflections that incorporated open-ended questions designed to capture student attitudes and beliefs. Reflections included general questions on attitudes toward the French as well as cultural practice-specific questions.

Qualitative analysis revealed that students from the experimental group showed greater appreciation for culture as an important component of foreign language instruction as well as higher response rates vis-à-vis intercultural understanding. Statistical analysis of the Likert-scale questions also showed significance among questions addressing greater understanding of cultural differences and increased perceived similarity between American and French cultures among the experimental group. However, the experimental group also showed a decrease in student predilection for studying and talking about culture. In general, the study reveals that the explicit teaching of culture awareness prior to traditional foreign language instruction, in conjunction with the opportunity students had to reflect and express their thoughts, has a positive effect on student attitudes.

Keywords: culture awareness, foreign language teaching, culture teaching, student attitudes, teaching French
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, culture has been defined, redefined and even undefined. One definition of culture suggests that “culture is a system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society” (Kohls, 1996, p. 23). Another states that “culture is the message” language communicates (Lafayette, 1978, p. 15). If language communicates culture, then culture is certainly something that is learned both by means of instruction as well as exposure. Moreover, knowing a language means being able to use a system of communication comprehensible to others (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2011). Ignorance or even partial ignorance of how to use said system of communication can indeed lead to the occasional faux pas or even result in what cross-cultural researcher Milton Bennett coined to be a “fluent fool.”

Ever increasing global interaction requires that language learners be interculturally competent communicators. In order to do so, they must have some knowledge of the semantic relationship between language and society (Inchaurralde, 1997; Larsen-Freeman, 1995; Yin, 2009). Otherwise, students become “pragmatic failures” (Reiter, 1997, p. 148). Without comprehending cultural meanings and usage, it is not possible to understand and use language as natives do (Kitao, 1991). Thus, culture teaching is necessary because “culture lies behind sociolinguistic competence” (Tseng, 2002, p. 12).

In addition to becoming interculturally competent, some consider the goal of culture teaching to be awareness that leads to a change in learner behavior (Chen, 2005). By reflecting and considering our own behavior, we can come to better understand how culture influences the way we act and interact with others. Moreover, Crawford and McLaren (2003) posit that as learners first develop awareness of their own culture, practices around them become noticeably influenced by culture. It then stands to reason that it is important for students to first know how
they are influenced by their own culture in order to then later be able to see and understand others’ ways of being and doing.

If culture learning begins at birth in first language acquisition, then culture should likewise be studied in introductory foreign language courses (Knutson, 2006; Reiter, 1997). A better understanding of self can prepare language learners for enhanced cross-culture understanding. Thus, in order to make students aware of their own attitudes and values, the present study will examine two university-level introductory French classes that will receive lessons on cross-culture sensitivity and exploration in a non-threatening environment. Knutson (2006) states that “foreign language learners cannot learn about values of another culture (C2) without considering those of their own (C1)” (p. 592). By participating in these lessons on cross-culture sensitivity, learners will recognize that the individual is defined and influenced by different sub-cultures (Osborn, 2000; Yoshida, 1996). Although unconventional, a unit on culture awareness first exploring C1 can encourage reflection and give students “an extremely valuable perspective on the cultural dimension of communication and language learning” (Knutson, 2006, p. 600).

Moreover, that language study automatically leads to cross-culture understanding is not supported by research (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Lafayette (1978) states that culture instruction should be 1) “planned as carefully as language learning activities” and 2) “tested as rigorously as language components” (p. 9). Unfortunately, too many individuals who took classes in secondary or post-secondary institutions in the U.S. will recall that culture either took the form of foreign films with English subtitles or showed up once a month as “food days.” This type of preparation prior to formal language and culture instruction can be a first step in beginning to reintegrate culture into mainstream language teaching.
Research investigating a relationship between culture awareness teaching and its impact on student attitudes in the foreign language classroom remains scarce. However, some studies involving classroom approaches to investigating culture have shown that student attitudes have undergone positive change (Bateman, 2002; Clavijo, 1984; Mantle-Bromley & Miller, 1991; Morgan & Cain, 2000; Rowan, 2001). Moreover, in regard to preparing students to explore a second culture, Mantle-Bromley and Miller (1991) found that “students’ attitudes are more positive when multicultural sensitivity lessons are incorporated into the curriculum than when no such lessons are taught” (p. 423). The objective of this study is to explore the relationship between culture awareness teaching materials and their effects on attitudes of language learners of French.

**Study Overview**

**Lessons on culture awareness**

I taught two lesson plans on culture awareness (see Appendix A) at the beginning of the Winter 2013 school semester. These two lesson plans were divided into four 20-minute sessions spanning the first four days of the semester. These lessons included discussing the concept of culture itself as well as terms such as perspectives, sub-cultures, observation, interpretation, stereotypes, etc. These lessons consisted of instruction, activities, and classroom discussion in English to facilitate and promote student participation. The purpose of these lessons was twofold: first, to encourage students to reflect on who they are, which cultural practices have shaped their way of behaving, and how they themselves are influenced by culture; and second, to prepare students for cultural study.

Each of these four 20-minute sessions was administered during the second part of the class period during the first four days of classroom instruction in two second-semester classes of French 102 (the experimental group). The reason for this was that during the first week of class in
French 102, classroom instruction consists of reviewing concepts from French 101, the first semester of French instruction at BYU. In order to control for teaching differences among instructors during this part of the study, I taught these lessons on culture awareness myself to both classes comprising the experimental group.

Information for the study was gathered from three sources: a pre-survey, a post-survey, and students’ reflections on cultural concepts. Surveys, assignments and reflections were part of the required coursework for all French 102 classes. Assignment grades were not based on student opinions or attitudes as reflected through their participation but rather were recorded as completion grades. Furthermore, in order to allow students to fully express themselves, all reflections were in English, and students were asked to answer questions in English as well.

Pre-survey

The pre-survey was administered during the second half of the first day of class. Students were given approximately 5-7 minutes to take a pre-survey in class. This survey was composed of demographic questions (for classification purposes), Likert-scale questions, and open-ended questions. Likert-scale questions were not borrowed or adapted from another source.

Reflections

A total of nine reflections were assigned throughout the study. Reflections were assigned after the second and fourth lessons on culture awareness in addition to one reflection per chapter throughout the rest of the semester. Although there were several cultural mentions throughout each chapter, students were only given one cultural concept to reflect on per chapter. These selections were based on cultural similarities and differences. Some concepts addressed differences between cultures and others addressed concepts that were not strictly “differences” per se.
The reflections were the same for all students and followed each *Cross-Culture Activity on Perspective* (defined below). Assigned reflections were due the following day. Students were assigned a self-selected, unique four-digit number so as to remain anonymous. Reflections were submitted electronically in order to facilitate subsequent analysis. Reflections were written in English.

**Post-survey**

The post-survey included the same questions as the pre-survey in addition to questions that led students to reflect on which aspects of classroom instruction most helped increase culture awareness. Likert-scale questions were not borrowed or adapted from another source.

**Cross-Culture Activities on Perspective - C-CAPS**

C-CAPS are activities or discussions that involved discussing cultural patterns by comparing and contrasting them as appropriate. I identified one C-CAP per chapter, and chapter reflections were assigned for homework once students participated in the C-CAPS. The C-CAPS for Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 11 involved a reading assignment for homework that was followed by class time for discussion. Chapter 10’s C-CAP included a reading assignment from the textbook in addition to a small activity outside of the classroom. The cultural excerpt for this chapter was based on the social function of giving and responding to compliments. The activity consisted of students giving compliments to people outside of class and recording their (the receiver’s) reactions (see Appendix D). Chapter 12’s C-CAP activity included a reading assignment, classroom discussion and a mini ethnographic interview of someone not originally from the U.S. (see Appendix F).

**Experimental and Control Groups**

The experimental group (two French 102 classes) received the explicit lessons on culture awareness during the first four days of the semester as previously mentioned; the control group,
composed of the two remaining classes, did not. Both groups received pre- and post-surveys and participated in all reflections as well as C-CAPS and related readings on culture. In summary, the main difference in instructional innovation between the experimental and control groups was that the experimental group received lessons on culture awareness during the first week of the semester.

This chapter has introduced the study as well as relevant terms and explanations thereof. Chapter 2 will review relevant literature. Chapter 3 will set forth the research questions, study design, methodology, sources of information, and data analysis procedures. Chapter 4 will present findings and results. Chapter 5 will discuss and draw conclusions from the aforementioned findings and results as well as address study limitations, implications for practice, and future research. References and Appendices will follow.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"To study a language without learning its culture is a great way to make a fluent fool of yourself."

– Milton Bennett

When considering teaching culture in the foreign language classroom, the challenge of knowing how to teach is only enhanced by defining exactly what to teach; that is, what is culture? In attempting to synthesize the innumerable definitions of culture already in existence, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) undertook the daunting task of analyzing hundreds of definitions of culture among anthropologists. In categorizing and analyzing the various definitions, they found that the earliest definition was that of Tylor of 1871, “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). And the next earliest definition would be sociologist Lester Ward’s “a culture is a social structure, a social organism, if any one prefers, and ideas are its germs” in 1903 (as cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). However, the term culture itself was appearing in publication titles as early as the late 19th century—culture was being used without being defined (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952).

Defining Culture

Decades later, defining culture remains as daunting a task as ever. What is culture?

One definition of culture posited by cross-culture trainer Robert Kohls (1996) suggests that “culture is a system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society” (p. 23). Similarly, Ochs (1986) also sees culture as being a construct of social interaction. As suggested by Goodenough (1957), culture “consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members” (as cited in Geertz, 1973, p. 11). Furthermore, Clyde Kluckhohn (1959) defined the concept as: “the total way of life
of a people”; “a way of thinking, feeling, and believing”; a “storehouse of behavior”; and as “learned behavior” (as cited in Geertz, 1973, p. 4). Culture is thus a way of life that serves as “glue” that binds and characterizes people within a given context in the way they think, feel and relate to others. Moreover, Geertz (1973) asserts that man is “suspended in webs,” webs that Geertz considers to be the culture that gives a situational context to man’s being (p. 5). This “glue” or “web” that characterizes man is nonetheless “relative and changeable” (Fox, 1999, p. 90). Rather than being a noun or something that people possess, culture is then a verb and in addition to being something people might possess is also something people do (Street, 1993).

If changeable, relative, and kinesthetic, then culture must be learned or acquired and as a result be teachable (Brody, 2003; Damen, 1987; Mead, 1961). Teaching culture not being without its challenges, the question is then what to teach and where to begin. Before moving on to discussing beginning to teach culture, let us address the concept of language.

**Defining Language**

From a strictly linguistic perspective, *language* is a code composed of elements such as phonology, lexicon, and syntax. Knowing a language, then, means being able to use a system of communication comprehensible to others (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2011). Language then is essentially a “dictionary and a grammar” in the strictest sense of the word (Becker, 1995, p. 9). In addition, Kuang (2007) asserts that language carries culture and that culture is itself the content of language. Although language may be the medium of communication between people, “culture is the message” being conveyed (Lafayette, 1978, p. 15). This moves us along the language continuum toward defining language as being more than a particular code. If the message that language conveys is cultural, then language must be imbued with aspects of the culture it is conveying.
Language Reflects Culture

Becker (1995) posits that in contrast to language exists languaging. Languaging is expressing the way one is through the language itself. Becker further explains that languaging consists of “taking old texts and reshaping them into present context” (p. 9). In other words, the language, or code, we use to communicate is continually being recycled to fit the communication presently. The key here is that language is not detached from culture because the language reflects culture in the way it is used. Consequently, knowing how to language in one’s first language interferes with learning how to language in a second or third language because every language is “pragmatically and socioculturally conditioned” (Yin, 2009, p. 76).

Moreover, as suggested by Yin (2009), “various cultural features” exist between languages in relation particularly to lexicon, semantics and pragmatics (p. 75). Yin continues by suggesting that these linguistic differences reflect cultural differences as well. Inchaurralde (1997) further asserts that even in learning a word, foreign language learners are “learning a complex symbolic structure with many different levels” (p. 55). As a result, issues in language learning arise due to cultural differences as reflected by linguistic differences. Consequently, learners must have some knowledge of the semantic relationships of the L2 language in the different social contexts (Inchaurralde, 1997; Larsen-Freeman, 1995; Yin, 2009). If teachers fail to provide learners with the appropriate cultural knowledge of the language, the result is “pragmatic failures” (Reiter, 1997, p. 148).

The goal then is not to simply learn a different code from ours, but rather, also learn to use the newly acquired code to reflect the inseparable ideas and beliefs expressed through and by it (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Huang & Xu, 2011; Kramsch 1983). Although the general consensus is that culture and language are related, language is not taught as being cultural itself (Kramsch, 1995). Whereas language learning activities should be contextualized in order to
increase learning, similarly, the traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing should be imbedded in the context of culture from day one (Kramsch, 1991, 1993). In short, culture is the background or context for language learning.

**Why Teach Culture?**

According to Qu (2010), a monolingual environment can limit individuals’ understanding of the world. In 1905, Jespersen claimed that the purpose of teaching language was to “access the spirit” of the nation espousing the language being studied (p. 9). Many widely believe that this “access” happens through intercultural competence and dialogue (Brière, 1986; Byram & Feng, 2004; Damen, 1987; Lafayette, 1978; Morgan & Cain, 2000; Sherzer, 1987; Yang, 2011). In the foreign language classroom the ability to use the proper linguistic forms in the appropriate cultural context generally falls under *sociolinguistic competence* (Canale & Swain, 1980). Without understanding cultural meanings and usage, it is not possible to understand and use language as natives do (Kitao, 1991). Thus, culture teaching is necessary in the foreign language classroom because “culture lies behind sociolinguistic competence” (Tseng, 2002, p. 12).

In addition to helping learners become interculturally competent, several researchers consider the goal of culture teaching to be culture awareness that leads to a transformation of learner behavior (Chen, 2005). In fact, Hall (1959) argues that the objective of foreign language and culture study is to grow in understanding of our own culture. Kramsch (1996) notes that there is some confusion among US American youth about who has culture—culture being something others have. Thus, as learners first develop awareness of their own culture, practices around them then become salient as practices marked by culture (Crawford & McLaren, 2003). As learners develop this awareness of self, the presentation of another culture can then lead to a “third kind” of culture where meaning and being is not regulated by either culture (Kramsch, 1993, pp. 13-14). In this light, foreign language and culture teaching should lead learners to “develop their unique
identities” (Porto, 2010, p. 46). Similarly, Robinson (1991) refers to the synthesis of C1 (own culture) and C2 (new culture) as the “Color Purple.” This refers to a space that allows a foreign culture learner to consider both C1 and C2 perspectives to enhance cross-cultural understanding. As a result, the foreign language teacher is to be an “agent of social change” if changed learner behavior is part of the goal (Kramsch, 1995, p. 91).

**The Challenges to Teaching Culture**

If language is then culture itself (if not all inclusive) and an important part of the foreign language classroom, why is it not more of an integral part of the foreign language classroom? Why is it, as Tseng (2002) considers, often neglected or even considered a “supplementary diversion” to language teaching (p. 11)?

**Language as Only a Code**

The common misconception that effective communication only entails “pronunciation, grammar, [and] vocabulary” has caused culture teaching to “lag far behind” language teaching (Yang, 2011, p. 111). This view of language is reflected by Scollon’s acknowledgment of a request that he as a linguist assist in “setting up analytic procedures to tell how somebody is lying in another language and to set up pedagogical procedures” to efficiently distribute this knowledge (2004, p. 273). This notion of language and culture existing independent of each other is echoed in a study involving Spanish-language learners that demonstrated a “compartmentalized” notion of language (Spanish) and culture (Nocon, 1991 as cited in Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996).

**Which Culture to Teach?**

Another reason for the avoidance of teaching culture is that teachers do not know what culture to teach (Damen, 1987). In seeking to define otherness or foreignness, the danger resides in considering cultural values as universals or absolutes (Brière, 1986; Morgan & Cain, 2000). Foreign language instructors should thus be aware of the heterogeneous nature of culture and the
particularity of individuals and sub-cultures (Mantle-Bromley, 1998; Morgan & Cain, 2000; Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011). In fact, Tomic (2000) argues that in cultural exploration the individual’s voice stands out above the culture itself. At the same time, “no one individual represents all possible beliefs and values or views of a particular culture” (Damen, 1987, p. 67). In addition, in language classrooms where the target language itself is multi-cultural, the dilemma is which cultural aspects should be addressed without creating new stereotypes, overgeneralizations or oversimplifications (Fantini, 1999; Guest 2002, Hu & Gao, 1997; Kramsch 1983; Morgan & Cain, 2000).

**Instructor C2 Experience**

Additionally, in some instances, foreign language instructors do not have first-hand experience with the target culture, and if they do, it may not be recent (Allen, 2000; Damen, 1987). In fact, a study of pre-service non-native English teachers by Arikan (2011) suggests that these particular teachers considered themselves “knowledgeable in target language, but insufficient in target culture” (p. 232). In this regard, teachers may not consider themselves to be “culturally qualified” (Yajuan, 2009, p. 77). Teachers “ought to pursue further study abroad, where they immerse themselves in the cultural atmosphere and experience the language and cultural differences” (Yang, 2011, p. 115). This suggests that a qualified foreign language teacher must have cultural knowledge in addition to linguistic knowledge (see also Yang, 2011). Similarly, Qu (2010) affirms that if teachers are not able to spend time immersed in the target culture, they must “compensate for the lack by disciplined reading,” be actively engaged in staying current with cultural developments and contact native speakers whenever possible to “educate [themselves] in cultural interpretation” (p. 61). However, Murti (2002) does mention an advantage of the non-native teacher—that of being able to teach foreign culture learners “how to use somebody else’s linguistic code in somebody else’s cultural context” (p. 29).
Textbook Design

Yet another reason teaching culture is difficult is the design of most foreign language textbooks. One of the major pedagogical problems with textbooks is that courses as well as textbooks are “generally written and taught by people who have been trained primarily as language teachers” (Brière, 1986, p. 206). Similarly, Osborn (2000) signals that foreign language students who encounter cultural practices different from their own are generally introduced to them through “cultural blurbs, usually in the form of a paragraph or two in some corner of the chapter” (p. 24). Although language teaching has moved away from rote learning and imitation drills, it seems that language instructors still use “mostly stimulus-response methods of presenting culture,” which is related to conditioning learners to produce a particular behavior when a certain stimulus is present (Kramsch, 1983, p. 437). The uneven treatment of culture in textbooks, as mentioned by Lafayette (1988), appears to have leveled out since the push for “culturalization” in the 1990s (Kramsch, 1995; Tang 2006). However, in their review of foreign language textbooks, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) found that material on the target culture was not always present.

Teaching Culture

Exploring C1

Toward the end of the first year of life, infants engage in triadic interactions involving them, adults and “some outside entity” (Tomasello, 2000, p. 38). By the age of one, infants begin to “tune in” to the world around them and accordingly adapt their behavior. If culture learning and language learning occur simultaneously in first language acquisition, then second culture instruction should likewise be introduced in introductory foreign language classes (Knutson, 2006; Reiter, 1997).
Considering that “foreign language learners cannot learn about values of another culture (C2) without considering those of their own (C1),” Knutson (2006) is not alone in suggesting first examining the learner’s own culture (p. 592). Thus, drawing attention to self can increase awareness “of one’s own identity as a culturally and socially defined individual” (Brière, 1986, p. 204). Learners learn to “see themselves, not just others, as culturally marked” (Knutson, 2006, p. 598, emphasis in original). Furthermore, in considering the self as culturally defined, foreign language learners begin to see that the individual is defined and influenced by different sub-cultures (Osborn, 2000; Yoshida, 1996). Although unconventional, a unit on culture awareness first exploring C1 can encourage reflection and give students “an extremely valuable perspective on the cultural dimension of communication and language learning” (Knutson, 2006, p. 600).

And in the task of making students aware of their own attitudes and values, the foreign language teacher must ensure that this study occurs in a non-threatening environment (Kramsch, 1983; Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011).

**Preparing to Explore C2**

That language study automatically leads to cross-cultural understanding is a false assumption (Bateman, 2002). Nor is it supported by research (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Numerous studies show that cultural understanding does not accompany foreign language learners throughout the language learning process (see Osborn, 2000; Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). As a result, culture as well as the cultural features of language must be made salient to the language learner. Even though different approaches to teaching culture exist, the remaining discussion is on preparing to teach culture with some suggestions for beginning the teaching process as well.

**Setting goals.** Before setting out to teach and address culture, it is important that cultural goals be established similarly to how language goals are set. (For suggestions on what type of
goals can be fixed, see Lafayette, 1978, p. 1-2; Seelye, 1993, p. 29-34; Tran, 2010, p. 22-24)

Damen (1987) suggests that cultural goals be carefully planned out. Similarly, Lafayette (1978) states that cultural instruction should be 1) “planned as carefully as language learning activities” and 2) “tested as rigorously as language components, lest students assume that cultural knowledge…is not worthy of their attention” (p. 9). He continues by suggesting that culture not be treated as an “afterthought” by being planned exclusively on Fridays or before holidays.

**Acknowledging limited understanding.** “Increasing cultural diversity within national boundaries makes comprehensiveness in curricular content impossible” (Knutson, 2006, p. 597). Seeing that what we teach as language teachers “cannot be made fail safe,” the foreign language teacher should acknowledge that fully understanding culture (C1 or C2) is not possible (Scollon, 2004), p. 274). In doing so, both teacher and student can avoid the danger of creating new stereotypes or increasing ethnocentrism (Hu & Gao, 1997).

**Beginning to Teach Culture**

Sherzer (1987) suggests that “in order to study culture we must study the actual forms of discourse produced and performed by societies and individuals” (p. 306). This further suggests that language and culture reflect each other. Similarly, Lado (1957) also recommends that culture be studied as language is—that is, in comparison and in contrast of the other. He suggests that studying the differences in the language features can lead to studying different cultural features as well (Lado, 1957). Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) recommend this type of study by introducing culture through lexical phrases such as expressions used in communication strategies (asking for help, being polite, etc.).

Byram and Feng (2004) note that a facts-oriented approach remains common where students have little contact with C2. Considering textbooks’ presentation of cultural material, it is important to study and discuss the attitudes and values that underlie the surface study of culture
(e.g., facts and blurbs peppered throughout a chapter) in order to avoid developing a superficial perspective (Kramsch, 1983; Osborn, 2000; Rowan, 2001; Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011).

Also important is the presentation, or lack thereof, of literary works, visual arts, and cultural products that reflect cultural behavior. For instance, Lewald (1968) points out that even though literature can show cultural patterns, the challenge is in “determining which types of literature or art forms are most suitable to elicit cultural patterns” (p. 303). Seelye (1993) adds that there might also be difficulty in finding appropriate literature reflecting contemporary cultural patterns.

**The Study of Culture and Student Attitudes**

Research investigating the relationship between culture awareness teaching and its impact on student attitudes in the foreign language classroom is scarce. Research on the relationship between the study of culture and student attitudes resides in ethnographic approaches to teaching culture (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Considered an adaptation of ethnography as well as a learning tool in the classroom, “pragmatic ethnography” consists of students interviewing “informants” from the C2 in order to gain an emic or insider’s perspective (Damen, 1987). Studies involving classroom approaches to investigating culture have shown that student attitudes have undergone positive change (Clavijo, 1984; Mantle-Bromley & Miller, 1991; Morgan & Cain, 2000; Rowan, 2001).

Although “people working in foreign or second language education have developed their teaching theories and applications under the umbrella of teaching culture for intercultural competence” (Byram & Feng, 2004, p. 149), there is a lack of empirical research investigating linguistic competence as it relates to cross-cultural competence. For instance, native speakers of a language tend to associate linguistic proficiency with culture awareness (Southwick, 1976).
Byram and Feng (2004) also suggest that creating an agenda for research can help build up a “systematic knowledge of language-and-culture teaching” (p. 149).

In preparing students to study C2, Mantle-Bromley and Miller (1991) found that “students’ attitudes are more positive when multicultural sensitivity lessons are incorporated into the curriculum than when no such lessons are taught” (p. 423). Knutson (2006) suggests that a unit on culture awareness can help students begin to view themselves as cultural beings. As Byram and Feng (2004) note, many researchers and innumerable teachers in language teaching have indeed created many teaching materials for exploring C1 (Damen, 1987; Eder, 1998; Knutson, 2006; Mantle-Bromley, 1998; Porto, 2010; Tseng, 2002; Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011).

The next step then is to explore the relationship between pre-C2 materials and their effect on C2 learner attitudes. Chapter 3 will explain how the present study sought to examine this relationship.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present study is to explore the relationship between explicit culture-awareness instruction and student views, beliefs and attitudes toward C2. The large quantity of written data collected from students through their reflections will serve to address the research questions below.

Research Questions

1. How do Cross-Cultural Activities on Perspective (C-CAPs) affect students’
   a. attitudes toward French culture?
   b. understanding of French culture?
   c. awareness of their own culture?

2. Of the following techniques, which do students find most helpful in furthering their understanding of the target culture?
   a. Explicit instruction on culture
   b. Cross-Cultural Activities on Perspective
   c. Reflections

Due to the quasi-experimental nature of this study, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was done for the total score on the pre- and post-surveys and for each of the Likert scale questions. As for the qualitative data analysis, an inductive approach was used to analyze the data. An exploratory framework focusing on the emergence of themes and categories allowed for greater flexibility during the coding process as well. Approaching this study with a “mixed-methods” methodology allowed me to address the research questions from multiple investigative perspectives.
Study Design

Participants

Participants were purposely selected since this is a case study of all four French 102 classes offered during the 2013 Winter semester; as such, this was also a convenience sample. French 102 is the second-semester class of beginning French language instruction at BYU. This course is a daily class that lasts 50 minutes per day. In-class instruction was conducted in the target language, and teaching materials, including *Mais oui!*, the textbook used by first-year students of French, were in French. Two of the French 102 classes served as the experimental group (35 students), and the two other classes made up the control group (29 students). The 64 participants (54 female, 10 male) included freshmen (34), sophomores (17), juniors (7), seniors (5) and 1 graduate student. As for prerequisites, students taking this course were required to take the equivalent of one semester of introductory college French either at BYU or at another institution of higher learning. All participants took French in high school; nine of these sixty-five students successfully placed out of French 101 directly into French 102.

Students were asked to select the reasons for which they were taking French 102 on the pre-survey. Students were able to select as many of the following applicable reasons (in order of most selected): beautiful language (58), want to visit French-speaking countries (55), interested in francophone cultures (34), fulfills a major/minor requirement (29), useful for career (27), fulfills a general education university requirement (25), want to read francophone literature (21); parent(s) speak it (18); other family members/friends speak it (16); ancestors spoke it (7); and other (7). Participants’ ACTFL speaking proficiency was estimated to range between Novice High and Intermediate Low, although their proficiency level was not directly measured.
Instructional Methods

The experimental group participated in four 20-minute mini-lessons that spanned the first four days of the Winter 2013 semester. In order to control for teaching differences among instructors during this specific part of the study, I taught these lessons to both classes that made up the experimental group. These lessons were taught during the second part of the class period. The reason for this is that during the first week of class in French 102 during the winter semester, classroom instruction consists of reviewing concepts from French 101. During this time, the control group reviewed concepts taught in French 101 as normally set out in the French 102 syllabus for winter semesters.

The mini-lessons on culture awareness included discussing the concept of *culture* as well as terms such as *perspectives, sub-cultures, observation, interpretation, stereotypes*, etc. The purpose of these lessons was twofold. First, students were able to reflect on who they are, which cultural practices have shaped their behavior, and how they themselves are influenced by cultures and sub-cultures. And second, the lessons aimed to prepare students for cultural study (See Appendix A).

During these mini-lessons, students filled out two reflections pertaining to the material that was presented. Questions ranged from *What is perspective?* to *What sub-cultures have affected who I am?* The control group did not fill out any reflections during this time. Thereafter, both the control and experimental groups filled out reflections following cultural readings or activities as well as C-CAPS, as explained below.

C-CAPS are activities or discussions that involved discussing cultural patterns by comparing and contrasting them as appropriate. For example, in some cases, in-class discussion questions followed a cultural reading that was assigned for homework. The C-CAPS for Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 11 involved a reading assignment for homework followed by classroom discussion.
Chapter 10’s C-CAP included a reading assignment from the textbook as well as a small activity outside of the classroom. The cultural excerpt for this chapter was based on the social function of giving and responding to compliments. The activity consisted of students giving compliments to people outside of class and recording their (the receiver’s) compliments. Chapter 12’s C-CAP activity included a reading assignment, classroom discussion and a mini ethnographic interview of someone not originally from the U.S.

**Sources of Information**

In order to analyze how this set of participants understood culture in this specific context and how they internalized information as it was presented in French 102, information for this study was gathered through pre- and post-surveys as well as student reflections on cultural concepts and discussions. In order to lend legitimacy and face validity to the various sources of information (surveys, reflections, etc.), these exercises were integrated into the course syllabus as required coursework for all French 102 classes and participation points were assigned for each assignment. A description of each source of information follows below.

**Pre-survey.** Pre-surveys were administered during the second half of the first day of class. Students were given approximately 5-7 minutes to take the survey in class so as to control for the environmental variable. The survey consisted of demographic questions (for classification purposes), Likert-scale questions, and open-ended questions. Likert-scale questions were not borrowed or adapted from another source (See Appendix B). The pre-survey was identical for both the control group and experimental group participants.

**Post-survey.** The post-survey included the same questions as the pre-survey in addition to questions designed to prompt student reflection on which aspects of classroom instruction most helped increase their own personal culture awareness. Likert-scale questions were not borrowed or adapted from any another source. (See Appendix C.)
**Reflections.** During the semester, students in the control group completed one reflection (follow-up assignment) per chapter (seven chapters); students in the experimental group completed one reflection per chapter in addition to the two reflections that were assigned after the second and fourth mini-lessons at the beginning of the semester. Although there were several cultural mentions throughout each chapter, students were only given one cultural concept to reflect on per chapter. These selections were based on cultural similarities and differences between French and American culture. Some concepts varied between the two cultures and others addressed concepts that are not explicit “differences” between the two.

Reflections were assigned after C-CAPS and due the following day. Students selected a four-digit number to remain anonymous. All reflections were written in English and submitted electronically in order to facilitate their analysis (see Appendix E).

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Data analysis consisted of a qualitative analysis of the raw data collected from the reflections and open-ended questions on both pre- and post-surveys. The qualitative analysis was conducted based on the theoretical framework of Grounded Theory (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Attention was given to patterns regarding attitudes toward students’ own attitudes toward C1, student attitudes toward C2, and change in behavior or beliefs as they emerged during the analysis. Using the Grounded Theory framework allowed me to not only attempt to find answers to the abovementioned research questions, but also to go where the data led me and thereby explore emerging patterns that I had not anticipated. Patterns of attitudes in student responses that addressed the research questions as well as other patterns were analyzed and will be presented in the following chapter.

Analysis of quantitative data from students’ surveys included the calculation of descriptive statistics, which allowed me to provide an overall view of the students’ data. Multiple
tables and figures, as well as students comments on culture (see Appendix G), can be found throughout Chapter 4. In addition, pre- and post-surveys each contained 10 Likert scale questions that required an analysis of covariance to measure change.

**Internal Validity and Reliability**

In order to promote genuine student responses, it is important to ensure that classroom discussions and partner work are done in a non-threatening and non-judgmental environment (Kramsch, 1983; Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011). To that end, open-ended questions on reflections and the post-survey aimed to capture participants’ overall thoughts on cultural instruction. It must be noted that instilling a love of the target culture, in this case French, was not the goal of this study.

Furthermore, there were several opportunities students had to participate in university-sponsored “cultural activities.” This of course increased the possibility that something outside of class would affect student attitudes as well. However, since there is a section-wide class requirement to participate in four extra-curricular cultural activities, this variable applied to all study participants. The pre- and post-surveys were given in class to control for the variable of location. As for the reflections, due to their time-consuming nature, they were assigned as homework.

Researcher bias, as previously mentioned, is one of the greatest threats to validity. As a multi-cultural individual myself (Mexican-born but American-raised), I fully disclosed to my students my tendency to promote culture awareness and understanding.

**Delimitations of Study**

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between explicit culture-awareness instruction and student views, beliefs and attitudes toward C2. One possible pitfall therefore, is to make generalizations and overreaching conclusions. I have taken particular care not to include
such all-encompassing generalizations or blanket statements in the discussion of data that is to follow. I do not believe that it is in generalities that we may find answers to questions on culture, but rather, in the particular answers to general questions. The following chapters will discuss any indications of changes that may be attributed to pre-culture instruction. There is no attempt to show that one classroom technique is better than another. Rather, cultural instruction prior to language and culture study is what is under consideration.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

As previously mentioned, the aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between explicit culture-awareness instruction and student views, beliefs and attitudes of C2.

Results will be presented in two sections. The first will be the Quantitative Analysis. The statistical analysis of the Likert-scale questions begins the reporting of results and is followed by frequency scores and discussion of student responses. Included in this data are descriptive statistics as well as observation of student comments where appropriate. The second section will be the Interpretative Analysis section, which will present student remarks that have been coded under 13 themes appearing in the data.

Quantitative Analysis

Regarding the Likert-scale questions that were included in pre- and post-surveys, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was done for the total score on the pre- and post-surveys and for each of the questions. The dependent variable was the change from the pre-test score to the post-test score. The pre-test score was used as a covariate in the model. The treatment was the primary independent variable tested. All analyses were done using SAS v9.4. (SAS institute, inc., Cary, NC).

Table 1 shows that overall there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups (p = .1689). The control group lost a little and the experimental group gained a little. Although these are not very big changes, they are positive. Individually, Question 2 alone had a significant change (p = .0435), and question 7 approached significance (p = .0983). Interestingly, Question 2 was “I am excited to learn about French culture.” Therefore, in spite of the instructor bias that affected the overall analysis—both qualitative and quantitative—it appears
that there was positive growth among experimental group participants regarding their feelings towards learning about French culture, which is in and of itself positive.

Table 1

**ANCOVA Comparing Pre- and Post- Survey Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>F value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 The French and American cultures are similar</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.1668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 I am excited to learn about French culture</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>.0435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 From what I know about the French, I like them</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>.8016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 I have good feelings toward my own culture</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.7127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 I am accepting of people that are different</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>.5292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 I like studying/talking about culture</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>.1470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 I am excited to learn more French</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.0983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 I am tolerant of other cultures</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>.3878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 Learning about culture is important to learning language</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>.3622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 I understand cultural differences between the US and France</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.6309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11 I have good feelings towards the French culture</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>.6405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.1689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated gain</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>-0.5399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>0.4782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 on page 28 displays means, standard deviations, $t$, and $p$ values of responses on pre- and post-survey Likert scale questions for both the experimental group and the control group. These are the results of a single-tailed paired $t$ test for means that was carried out for each of the questions for both groups. Questions 1, 6, and 10 showed statistical significance among the experimental group. Questions 1 and 10 both showed gains, but question 6 showed a loss.

Question 1, *The French and American cultures are similar*, reflects the high response rate of experimental group students on the reflections’ open-ended questions, as shown under the “G. Similarities” theme (see Table 9). These students did indeed increase in their opinion that French and American cultures are similar. The increase in this belief may be partially attributed to the fact that in discussing French behavior, students came to see that even though practices were indeed different, the two cultures were similar in that they both carried out essentially the same basic interactions. In regard to Question 10, *I understand cultural differences between the US and*
France, the gain in this average for the experimental group is in harmony with the high response rate of statements under the “A. Learning Culture Fosters Greater Understanding” theme (see Table 9).

In regard to Question 6 and the loss shown there, the lower average may be attributed to the overt study of culture that the experimental group was exposed to; the lessons on culture awareness at the beginning of the semester may have set up an atmosphere that decreased student attitudes toward studying culture by the end of the semester. As for the loss shown within the control group’s Question 2, *I am excited to learn about French culture*, which was also statistically significant, it should be noted that the average for this question for the control group was among the highest beginning averages of all the questions; only Question 7 was higher. It is possible that the overall focus on French culture in the curriculum also had an effect on student attitudes.
### Table 2

*Comparison of Pre-Post Means on Survey Items for Each Group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 The French and American cultures are similar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 I am excited to learn about French culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 From what I know about the French, I like them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 I have good feelings toward my own culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 I am accepting of people that are different</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 I like studying/talking about culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 I am excited to learn more French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 I am tolerant of other cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 Learning about culture is important to learning language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 I understand cultural differences between the US and France</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11 I have good feelings towards the French culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The amount of written data that were gathered and analyzed consisted of over 400 documents (surveys and reflections). Over 1,500 items within this collection of documents were selected and coded in consideration of the research questions. As a result, not all of the data were coded into one of the over 60 coded categories. In other words, the research questions as well as emerging themes guided me in identifying categories. *Dedoose*, a mixed-methods analysis software program available online was used to treat, code and process this data.
The first research question aimed to gain a better understanding of how C-CAPs impacted student attitudes, understanding, and awareness. Of the 390 total possible chapter reflections (6 reflections x 65 participants), the response rate was 74% (287 completed reflections). Therefore, the data presented below are based on the number of actual responses and not potential responses.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of the number of student responses to “Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion?” Because there were potentially multiple responses from each student, the totals in the table do not correspond to the number of participants in the study.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in View/Opinion as Recorded in Chapter Reflections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Change in view/opinion (total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first column shows the total number of responses that indicated there was no change in student views/opinion. The second column shows the number and percentage of responses that stated there was no change in view/opinion because the student already “knew this” or previously “felt a certain way.” The third column shows the number of responses that indicated a change of view/opinion, and the final column reflects how many of these changes in view/opinion were negative changes in opinion. Of particular note is the percentage of “No change” responses to “View/opinion changed” responses within the experimental group when compared to the
breakdown of the same within the control group (57% to 43% respectively), especially considering that the experimental group received explicit lessons on culture awareness. By comparison, the percentage of “No change” responses and “View/opinion changed” within the control group (50.4% and 49.6% respectively) was almost even.

Upon further analysis of the data presented in Table 4, it appears that a variable was at play within Control Group 2. The ratio of “No change” responses to “View/opinion changed” changes for Control Group 1 is approximately 3:2; however, analysis of the same data for Control Group 2 shows a ratio of 6:11 approaching 1:2. This led me to compare and consider findings within the two control group sub-groups as well as between the larger control and experimental groups.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in View/Opinion as Recorded in Chapter Reflections</th>
<th>Control Groups</th>
<th>Experimental Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change in view/opinion</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View/opinion changed</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presented in a multi-dimensional bubble chart, these data also appear in Figure 1.
The bubbles in Figure 1 represent “View/opinion changed” responses. Their respective size represents the number of “View/opinion changed” responses in relation to the number of “No change” responses. The large discrepancy in this particular dataset warrants further analysis and suggests the possibility that there were variables that were not accounted for that may have affected Control Group 2. A similar analysis of these data regarding class justifies a closer more detailed look at the possible factors that affected the behavior in Control Group 2 participants (see Figures 2 and 3).
A class and sub-group participant analysis shows that Control Group 2 had the smallest number of freshmen (six) but the highest percentage of freshmen (67%) in relation to other classmen (see Table 3). However, when comparing all freshman responses independent of overall class composition, the data show that freshmen from Control Group 2 account for a much larger number of “View/opinion changed” responses than their counterparts in the other groups (control and experimental). Clearly, other factors or variables came into play.

In an attempt to control for instructor and researcher bias, I taught a control group during this study. However, it just so happens that I taught Control Group 2; this issue will receive further consideration in Chapter 5. Moreover, another variable that may have come into play was Control Group 2’s noticeably smaller class size; this group was approximately half the size of each of the three other sub-groups. Class size is an important factor to take into consideration of
the data, especially since it is generally accepted by the educational community that smaller class sizes enhance student learning—foreign language or otherwise.

### Table 5

*Class distribution – sub-group breakdown*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control Groups</th>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental Groups</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>10 (48%)</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td>9 (3%)</td>
<td>8 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>3 (14%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>5 (29%)</td>
<td>8 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>3 (14%)</td>
<td>1 (16%)</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages indicate percentages within each sub group.

Returning to the issue the composition of each group by year in school, the high percentage of freshmen may in fact be an attenuating factor to the sharply contrasting overall behavior of Control Group 2 to Control Group 1 when considering that freshmen constituted a greater percentage of the entire study’s participants than all other classes. However, the surprising ratio of 1:4 (freshmen to number of “View/opinion changed” responses) also appears in Control Group 2’s sophomore data, as seen in Table 6.
Using the data in Table 6, the overall ratio of freshmen to “View/opinion changed” responses is almost exactly 1:2 (i.e., 33 freshmen provided 65 “View/opinion changed” responses). However, when removing Control Group 2’s data, the resulting ratio is almost exactly 2:3, a noteworthy difference. The data above further shows that the sophomore population has a higher overall rate of student to “View/opinion changed” responses. Therefore, it appears that despite the considerably smaller number of participants in Control Group 2, this dataset impacts overall analyses.

In further consideration of how C-CAPs affected student attitudes toward French culture, pre- and post-survey responses were coded into pre and post categories modeled after survey questions a) *What do you like about your own culture?*, b) *What, if anything, do you dislike?*, c) *What do you like about the French culture?*, and d) *What, if anything, do you dislike?*

The categories and response counts displayed in Tables 7 and 8 emerged during the coding process of the data. Several students provided more than one answer and some did not
provide any answer at all; notably, some students did not provide a response only when asked about their dislikes.

**Table 7**

*Pre- and Post-Survey Responses: What Students Like and Dislike About French Culture*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fine Arts</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Belief/mentality</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Fashion/clothing</th>
<th>History/traditions</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Arrogance/stand-offish</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Belief/Mentality</th>
<th>Intolerance/dislike of others</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Materialism</th>
<th>Vanity</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre Like French Culture Response</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Control Group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post Like French Culture Response</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears that from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester there was a 28% overall increase in “likes” regarding French culture (79 to 101). Furthermore, even though, experimental group participants ended up averaging 1.49 comments per student while control group participants averaged 1.63 comments per student at the end of the semester, the increase of “likes” per student within the experimental group was greater 37% (38 to 52) to only 20% (41 to 49) in the control group. The fact that the control group provided more comments per student to
begin with—prior to the lessons on culture awareness—may suggest that the participants in Control Group 2 were not representative of the rest of the study’s participants.

On the other hand, there was also a 31% increase in the number of reported “dislikes” of French culture overall (48 to 63). The experimental group increased incrementally from .83 comments per student to .89 comments per student, whereas the control group increased 68% from .63 comments to 1.07 comments. This suggests that the lessons on culture awareness at the beginning of the semester to the experimental group may have helped students see other cultural behaviors as different and not necessarily better or worse than their own. Several experimental group participant comments lend support to this hypothesis (see Appendix G). It is also worth noting that 15 students (10 from the control group and 5 from the experimental) left this question blank on the pre-survey. However, only seven students did not reply on the post-survey, and the eight students who did reply with a “dislike” all came from the control group. On the pre-survey, several students replied that they did not yet know enough about the French culture to dislike something. This however, was not a reason cited on post-survey responses.

Table 8 shows the corresponding set of information regarding student responses and their own culture, all of which provides some insight into how C-CAPs affected student perspectives of their own culture as well as French culture.
From the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester there was a small 11% overall increase in “likes” regarding students’ own culture (85 to 94). Furthermore, even though control group participant comments decreased slightly from 1.53 to 1.47 comments per student, experimental group participant responses increased from 1.11 to 1.37 comments per student, a 23% increase from 39 to 48 total comments. This increase may have been influenced by the course’s overall focus on culture awareness. In addition, three students—interestingly all from the control group—mentioned that studying other cultures helped them reflect on their own culture.
Similarly, there was a slight 9% overall increase in the number of reported “dislikes” of their own culture (56 to 61). The experimental group number of responses per student decreased from .89 comments per student to .86 (31 to 30), and somewhat surprisingly, the control group number of comments per student actually increased 24% from .83 comments to 1.03 comments per student (25 to 31 comments). The almost identical increase in both “like” and “dislike” comments within the control group suggests that the lessons on culture awareness the experimental group received at the beginning of the semester may have influenced student perspectives of cultural behavior in general and not only in regard to foreign cultural practices. Also worth noting is that on the pre-surveys, 2 students in the control group stated they disliked “nothing” about their culture, but on the post-survey, none answered “nothing” to this question. In contrast, no student answered “nothing” on the pre-survey for the experimental group, but on the post-survey, four students answered “nothing” in regard to what they disliked about their culture. This difference in the amount and percentage of dislikes vis-à-vis French and their own culture among the control and experimental groups leads one to believe that the lessons on culture awareness may have tempered student perspectives within the experimental group when considering what they may “dislike” about a culture.

In summary of Tables 7 and 8, the number of comments in response to “likes” and “dislikes” of French culture increased 28% and 31% respectively. In contrast, student responses to “likes” and “dislikes” of their own culture increased only 11% and 9% respectively. This may be due to the fact that students learned more about French culture than they did about their own, and thereby opening themselves to more potential “likes” and “dislikes” of French culture than their own culture. In other words, the amount of novel information regarding French culture outweighed the amount of new information regarding their own culture, which then resulted in a greater increase in comments regarding French culture, both positive and negative.
Regarding the three learning activities students were asked to rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 was “Not at all helpful” and 5 was “Very helpful”, students in both the groups reported the lowest ratings for the reflections, as shown in Figure 4.

*Figure 4. How Beneficial Were the Reflections?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating: 5</th>
<th>Rating: 4</th>
<th>Rating: 3</th>
<th>Rating: 2</th>
<th>Rating: 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In fact, twelve students (eight – control, four – experimental) commented that the “reflections were redundant” or “busy work.” The greater number of negative comments regarding the reflections from the control group suggests that the lessons on culture awareness at the beginning of the semester primed the experimental group students to see these reflections in a more positive light, if only slightly more so. Here again, however, we can see that a breakdown of the groups suggests an unexpected trend among Control Group 2’s students.

Regarding cultural activities and class discussions (see Figure 5), it is important to first mention that these two types of activities should have been separated. Having said that, only one student attempted to differentiate between the two types of activities and rate them
independently. Another student commented “the cultural activities were interesting but there was a lot of emphasis placed on them, which sometimes distracted from learning the language.”

*Figure 5. How Beneficial Were the Cultural Activities and Class Discussions?*

The average rating among experimental group students for Cultural Activities and Class Discussions was 4 while the control group participants averaged a slight higher 4.2 average. The very positive ratings by all participants regarding activities and class discussions is noteworthy when also considering that 23 students mentioned that class discussions were the “most beneficial” at least once on their chapter reflections. This is a positive trend that suggests students may benefit—or at least believe they benefit—from discussion that accompanies learning about culture because as one student answered, some students have “no idea” what is beneficial to their learning. More information regarding what types of learning activities students found most beneficial will follow later in this chapter.
When considering the third type of learning activity students were asked to rate, the lessons on culture awareness that were given to the experimental group only, the overall ratings trended toward the positive end of the scale as well (see Figure 6) with an average of 3.4.

Figure 6. How Beneficial Were the Lessons on Culture at the Beginning of the Semester?

In addition to the aforementioned learning activities, students also had the opportunity to report what they found to be most beneficial to their learning regarding each C-CAP at the end of each respective reflection. Student responses for both control and experimental groups are displayed hereafter in a code co-occurrence grid (see Figure 7). The grid displays coded terms that emerged from the subsequent data analysis of student reflections. The co-occurrence algorithm takes into consideration comments that occurred within the same reflection, and upon a more detailed analysis, even within the same comment in some cases.

Among the most notable co-occurrences appearing in concert with the “Learning Culture” code are “Discussion” (eight students; nine instances) and “Learning Information” (13 students; 16 instances). The 13 students that mentioned “Learning Information” in connection with “Learning Culture” falls in line with the longstanding practice that to teach culture is to teach about culture. Although my intent with this question was to collect information regarding
teaching practices and activities, many students considered the *content* when answering and not learning modes. This is illustrated by the fact that 43 students commented at least once that “Learning Culture” was beneficial to their learning.

*Figure 7. Code Co-Occurrence Grid of Beneficial Learning Activities*

Moreover, the co-occurrence of “Learning Culture” with “Better/Greater Understanding” (10 students; 14 instances) suggests that several students (approximately 15%) may have made a connection between learning culture and its role in achieving a better understanding of French culture. And 27 students (14 control; 13 experimental) mentioned having achieved a better
understanding of French culture overall. Here again, however, six of the nine students in Control Group 2, almost double the rate of student responses in Control Group 1, reported a better understanding of at least one cultural concept addressed by the C-CAPs. As previously mentioned, it would appear that instructor bias was a factor that affected Control Group 2 data. In other words, the instructor’s teaching style and/or penchant for cultural instruction influenced student learning more than had been anticipated.

**Interpretive Analysis**

Due to the volume of qualitative information that was collected through student reflection during this study, an interpretive analysis was carried out. A brief statistical overview of this data is followed by the interpretive analysis of the same. Reflections that both groups filled out were factored into this analysis. Comments from the control group totaled 35 and comments from the experimental group came to 76. This suggests that the reflective nature of the lessons on culture awareness the experimental group received at the beginning of the semester fostered student reflection and/or a greater willingness to participate and share their thoughts. Students were then provided a medium (the reflections) through which they were encouraged to express their thoughts.

Furthermore, “like” and “dislike” response rates among the experimental group were almost 200% lower than their control group counterparts. This difference could be a result of the lessons on culture awareness at the beginning of the semester and their priming effect on students’ view of culture in general, which then allowed them to view culture practices—their own as well as foreign—through a filtered and more balanced perspective. In turn, students appear to have been more moderate in making personal judgments of foreign practices.

Table 9 displays the number of open-ended responses from student reflections by theme for both the experimental and control group.
During the data analysis, themes that centered around students’ views of culture and language learning emerged from the data shown in Table 9 and in Appendix G. An interpretive analysis including student quotes and takeaways follows below.

**M. Not Knowing Enough to Say**

As previously mentioned in this chapter, some students from both groups expressed not knowing enough about French culture to express a dislike. This is particularly interesting since every one of the students who participated in this study either took French 101 at BYU or took a placement test of their ability in French, which meant they took enough French in high school to place out of French 101 and take French 102. Whichever the case may be, it is not unreasonable to believe that students received a considerable amount of French classroom instruction. Why then would students say they did not know enough about French culture to give “an acceptable answer?” It is possible high school instruction included food days and movie days, in which case, cultural practices contradictory to their own may not have been highlighted or addressed. After all, why would a foreign language teacher address seemingly *negative* aspects of a culture?

**Table 9**

*Numbers of Open-Ended Responses from Student Reflections, by Theme*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Learning Culture Fosters Greater Understanding</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Stereotypes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Not Better or Worse, Just Different</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Everyone has Culture</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Culture is Helpful to Language Learning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Culture Leads to Introspection</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Similarities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. My Culture is Not Obvious</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Quick to Judgment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Culture Teaches Culturally Appropriate Behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. No Connection Between Culture and Language</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Differences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Not Knowing Enough to Say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, for students who took French 101 at BYU, the question is a bit more difficult to answer. Upon further analysis, it was shown that of the students that answered not knowing enough to give a proper response, all of them were upperclassmen. This might suggest that learners’ experience contributes to their willingness or ability to answer a question such as “What, if anything, do you dislike about French culture?”

**H. My Culture is Not Obvious**

In addition to reflecting on their views of French culture, students in the experimental group also reflected on their own culture and practices on the *Who am I?* reflection. The purpose of this reflection was to encourage students to think about their own cultural practices. They were also asked about having culture, to which several students replied that having culture was not entirely obvious. For instance, in response to this question about having culture, one student answered, “Yes, but I don’t think that I realize that I have culture until I really think about it.” Another commented, “Yes, while I don’t feel it’s very prevalent or defining in my life, I’m sure from the outside I indeed have characteristics of my culture.” And the most poignant of these remarks was, “I’ve never been anywhere else so it’s hard to pinpoint ‘my culture.’” These students were realizing that when a group of people shares a common belief or practice, it is not always obvious that this characteristic may be cultural. In fact, “having culture” became much more salient to one of the students who was living in American culture but not necessarily sharing the same practices: “Yes, I especially feel that I do here in America because of my nationality.”

It is also interesting to note that a couple of students from the experimental group would later refer to education, music, and the arts as “culture,” which suggests that they were differentiating between our classroom’s working definition of culture and maybe a primary or default definition of culture outside of the language learning domain.
D. Everyone has Culture

Almost in contrast to the types of answers in the previous section, some students, also on the Who am I? reflection, responded that everyone has culture. For example, one student remarked that “Everyone has culture, it is inherent within each social system.” Another stated, “It is something that is impossible to not have.” Later on, in response to a chapter reflection question about giving and accepting compliments, one student wrote that how she replies to a compliment doesn’t say “anything about me except that I was raised in the American culture and therefore respond that way.” Interestingly, one student from the control group commented, “I feel no matter what culture I was raised in I would like it” on a post-survey. Another student from the experimental group provided great insight into how individuals are affected by different ”levels” of culture when she said, “I think everyone has an individual culture and a broad culture. It’s all of those little subcultures that make people different and unique, but a broad culture like an ethnicity can make you like everyone else.”

These comments show that even though some students—such as those who made comments about their culture not being readily apparent or obvious—might have been coming to a realization of their own culture during these lessons, others were more aware of the fact that everyone has culture.

E. Culture is Helpful to Language Learning

One of the anticipated objectives of this study was to gain insight into what connection, if any, students made between culture and language. As evidenced by comments such as, “I think it helps to understand the way French culture is in order to understand nuances and rules in their language,” several students commented on how useful learning about the culture was to learning the language. Although it is true that one student said, “The cultural activities were interesting but there was a lot of emphasis placed on them, which sometimes distracted from learning the
language,” this was in regard to the required extracurricular activities outside of the classroom and not classroom activities. And eventhough this was the only recorded comment, this particular student’s feelings about outside-of-class cultural activities is not uncommon among students, and receive additional consideration when teaching culture in the foreign language classroom. This remark will be further addressed in the section on implications for practice in Chapter 5.

Multiple students were of the opinion that learning culture was an integral part of learning the language. For instance, one student from the control group said, “Learning about these things [current cultural issues] is as essential to learning French as the grammar structures and verb conjugations.” Others from the experimental group made similar comments as well. One remarked that “Understanding culture helps with use of language, pronunciation, and understanding,” and another said, “I think including the discussion of cultural norms is just as helpful as vocabulary and grammar structures.” These students, all but one from the experimental group, associated culture learning as an integral part of language learning.

Additionally, students from both groups commented on how learning about culture enhanced learning French. As one student said, “I think knowing more about the culture explains stuff about the language.” Another would comment that “learning how the French react to their environments helps us learn their culture and language.” And finally, one student from the control group further illustrated this point when she said, “I really liked learning about the cultural aspects of the language we are learning. It helped me understand why they say certain things in a certain way.” Although these types of comments illustrated a connection between culture and language learning, comments regarding culture and understanding surpassed the former in terms of quantity (see comments under the “A. Learning Culture Fosters Greater Understanding” theme).
K. No Connection Between Culture and Language

Despite the many comments students made regarding their attitude toward culture in general and French culture specifically, several did not make a connection between culture and language. It is important to highlight here that the majority of the comments under this theme came from the control group and only one such comment was made by someone from the experimental group. One student from the control group claimed to “not care about culture”; however, the majority of the other comments failed to cite a connection between culture and language learning.

For instance, one student clearly differentiated between the two when he said, “I don’t see language particularly applicable this time. Mostly just culture.” Another student also shared this same sentiment when she wrote, “I may have learned some about culture, but I don’t really think I learned a lot about the language.” In regard to how culture enhances language learning, or doesn’t in this case, a student from the control group remarked:

I just think it’s interesting to know about the French culture and how they do vacation.

It’s relevant because that’s what we’re learning to talk about, but I don’t think the actual knowledge itself does anything significant for learning French.

Another student, the only one from the experimental group to voice such a remark on the reflections, stated, “I don’t really find anything beneficial to my learning. I already know a lot about French culture and the things that I do learn about culture in class do not exactly benefit how I learn the language.” It should be noted that this student has a Canadian background. Since this student stated she did not study any French in high school, it may be that her Canadian background may or may not have played a role in her previous knowledge of French culture. This in turn suggests that one’s previous exposure or knowledge of French culture might affect how one perceives the role of culture in learning French.
A. Learning Culture Fosters Greater Understanding

Despite a few students who did not view culture as beneficial to their learning of French, many others commented on how learning about the culture led to a deeper understanding about the French. In regard to the volume of responses under this theme, both the experimental group and control group commented extensively. For instance, one student from the control group commented that “knowing what they like to do helps me to understand them better.” For instance, during Chapter 7, students learned about the 30+ vacation days Frenchmen typically enjoy. In response to this new bit of information, another student from the control group remarked that “Knowing that they have so many vacation days helps me understand more about French culture.” Comparable comments from other students in the experimental group were also made regarding French views of friendship. Similarly, one student from the experimental group said, “Yes, as I learn more about their culture I understand the French behaviors better.” Another student even justified why she wanted to gain a better understanding of French culture by saying, “I would like to know more of the reasons behind why they try so hard to keep their language pure so I can understand them better and not judge them unfairly.”

Moreover, a few students mentioned values or ideals as part of culture and understanding. For example, one student from the experimental group stated that “Doing this comparison helped me really understand the culture and what the motivation might have been behind each choice and question.” Another, still from the control group, said, “I thought it was interesting to see the kinds of things the French tend to value, which I think leads to greater understanding of the culture.” Another still from the control group posited, “I found developing a better understanding of the types of dreams and ideals the French people hold dear really changed my view of French culture. I feel like I now have a stronger view of the French as a complex and caring people, instead of relying so heavily on stereotypes.” The balance of comments in this regard from both
groups is interesting to note. This evenness in reporting may be attributable to the opportunity students were given to reflect and share their thoughts. Thus, it appears that the reflections throughout the study served as a medium for students to produce and/or demonstrate possible changes in attitudes of C2.

B. Stereotypes

“I think it's valuable to understand the deeper themes of French culture, not just how Americans view them,” commented a student from the experimental group. This student’s comment that touches on what we may consider to be stereotypes is echoed by another student’s remark that “the idea of subcultures helped me to better understand the French and who they are rather than just who the rest of the world thinks they are.” Both comments demonstrate that these students believe that a greater understanding of French culture will help them dispel what people from other cultures believe or say about French culture. Another student, from the experimental group as well, captures the importance of casting off prejudice by saying, “Immersing oneself in foreignness is the cure to prejudice.” Therefore, it would appear that learning more about culture can enhance one’s cultural understanding to move past typifications of French culture, as expressed by students above.

Student comments also revealed a related sub-theme to stereotypes and how stereotypes might form. For example one student from the control group commented, “I made somewhat of a connection between the personality of the French and their stereotype to others around the world. It is said that the French can be mean, and I am wondering if the way they handle compliments adds to that stereotype?” Two students, one from each group in fact, made almost identical remarks saying, “I think that their way of interacting is probably what gave rise to the stereotype of the ‘rude Frenchman.’”
Another illustrative quote, this time from a student from the experimental group, provides insight into a more in-depth connection this particular student made between behavior and how stereotypes form:

The fact that they think their language is so beautiful and rich that they want everyone to speak it is a way better excuse that [sic] I would have thought. Everyone always says that the French don’t like Americans, and now I sort of think it has something to do with the fact that we arrogantly stride into their country and culture and try to make them speak our language instead of use [sic] speaking theirs.

These types of comments further suggest that the reflections enabled students to consider any preconceived notions they may have themselves subscribed to prior to learning about specific French cultural practices. And actually, one student from the experimental group expressed, “The most beneficial part of this discussion was just learning more about the French culture and therefore getting rid of any former stereotypes I may have had concerning the French people.”

In addition to becoming aware of how stereotypes might form, a couple of students from the experimental group also demonstrated awareness and some sensitivity to overgeneralizations. For instance, in response to what they found to be most beneficial to their learning, one student remarked, “I learned that you can’t typify the French into all the same category.” Another replied, “The chart just generalizes the dreams of all French people, when in reality, you cannot apply those dreams to everyone,” in response to a question asking students about what they learned about French culture. It is possible that the lessons on culture awareness at the beginning of the semester prepared students to recognize or become aware of the individuality of people within a culture and the tendency to make overgeneralizations. This type of awareness was after all, one of the learning objectives for these lessons on culture awareness.
I. Quick to Judgment

Whereas some students commented on how understanding culture helped overcome or sidestep stereotypes, others confessed they were quick to judgment but also acknowledged their limited view of culture. Here again, student comments came from both groups. One student from the control group said, “I probably judge people way too fast, so I need to look past the first impressions and be more open to new cultures and people.” And one student from the experimental group stated that, “I kind of think they’re a bit lazier than we are, but that’s just a quick judgment so it’s probably not true.” This shows that some students understood that their initial judgments might not be appropriate when judging others.

In light of this type of comment, it is important to note that these students demonstrated awareness of the erroneous way people mistakenly judge foreign behavior by applying one set of values to another’s cultural practices. In fact, a couple of students from the experimental group made very similar remarks. One declared, “Cultures of different countries around the world are different to each other, and we shouldn’t judge them the same way we judge our culture.” Another also added, “We then apply the values of our culture to theirs and say that they are being rude, but we are being unfair. They are not being rude, that’s just how their culture is.”

C. Not Better or Worse, Just Different

Several students expressed, at least on paper, reserving judgment of cultural practices different than their own. Although one student from the experimental group did report an initially negative reaction to conversation norms in France, multiple students (the student in question included) from the same group mentioned that practices are “different and not better or worse” and “just because something is different doesn’t mean it’s bad. It’s just different.” In fact, as one student said, “French culture and American culture are different but it doesn’t mean that either of them is wrong. They are just different ways of seeing things.” Moreover, some students went
further in their analysis and explained how cultural practices are “normal” within their own respective cultures:

We often misunderstand each other because of our cultural norms (Americans may think of the French as “rude” because they interrupt, the French may think of Americans as “holding a conference” for simple questions), but both norms are fine for each culture since they are norms and understood within the culture.

These comments speak to the type of comments students made regarding culture being inherent to every society and the normalcy of cultural practices within respective societies.

Of the several comments above, it should be noted that only one student from the control group made a similar remark to those mentioned above. Having said that, however, this student’s comment touches on the role language plays in this discussion. On the reflection about giving and responding to compliments, she indicated, “It makes so much more sense to me to just say thank-you. But I realized that different words mean different things to different cultures. And to them, replying in the way they do means ‘thank-you.’” This comment suggests a greater understanding of speech acts and pragmatics of language, and is in harmony with the previously cited comments under this theme that cultures do things differently and that neither’s approach is better or worse than the other’s.

However, it is important to mention that a couple of students from the experimental group demonstrated using one culture’s values and practices to judge another culture’s behavior. For instance, one student remarked, “My opinion of the French did change: now I sort of think that they all have a hidden agenda to interrupt and tell a better story. I find that quite rude.” Another student more explicitly condemned French conversation norms by stating, “I think it just shows that disrespect has become commonplace and acceptable there. Even if it’s ‘acceptable,’ you are
still cutting off someone’s train of thought and not listening.” It appears that for these students, conversation norms, as they pertain to their own culture, are not culture-dependent, but rather, universal. In instances such as this, it seems lessons on culture awareness may not have had a desirable outcome for these students.

G. Similarities

An interesting theme that emerged during data analysis was the frequent mention of students’ views that French and American cultures are very similar. All of these types of comments, it should be noted, came from students in the experimental group. In fact, one mentioned, “I think I just understood that they are more like me than I sometimes realize because sometimes we view things very similarly.” Another stated, “The French are just like Americans, but they have their own individual interpretation of things just like we do.” One even went so far as to say, “It was interesting to learn that our cultures have something in common, but I didn’t really think we were that different to begin with,” which was echoed by, “The French are more similar to us than people think they would be.” To one of the students, it would appear that “Because we have similarities, they seem more like real people.” Based on the tone of these comments, it would appear that several students had preconceived notions that Frenchmen and Americans are more similar than they are dissimilar. And according to their comments, differences in specific cultural practices did not change overall beliefs that “the French are just like Americans.”

L. Differences

On the other hand, many other students acknowledged and commented on the differences between French and American culture. A couple of students from the experimental group mentioned being “a little surprised at the different” and being reminded yet again that “there are more cultural differences between France and American than I would have thought.” Students
from the control group also made similar comments. For example, one student recognized that cultures do have differences “even down to something as simple as having a conversation.” Although these comments show an acknowledgment of differences, it would appear that these students also previously believed French and American cultures were very similar. In fact, one comment made by a student from the control group provides a greater insight into possibly why students don’t view American and French culture as being very different; she stated, “I am growing more and more surprised at how different their culture is from ours, considering that English is not that different from French.” Here too, the student acknowledged her growing surprise at the differences between French and American culture; moreover, she cited the fact that “English is not that different from French” as the reason for her growing surprise.

J. Culture Teaches Culturally Appropriate Behavior

Although not many students professed to integrate French customs or behavior into their personal practice, several did mention one of the more obvious purposes behind learning culture, which is learning how to act in Francophone cultures should the occasion arise. Here, students from the experimental group once again made the majority of comments. One student appeared to reluctantly acknowledge some benefit to learning about culture when he said, “I guess the culture helps me to understand ways to approach French people if I ever visit France.” Others, however, were more positive in their comments, saying, “I always like learning new things about the culture because it will help me when I am there,” and “I will now be able to use this information to properly integrate myself into French culture.” For the majority of students, as was shown on the pre-surveys, one of their reasons for taking French 102 was to visit Francophone countries, and it is therefore somewhat surprising not more students made similar remarks.
F. Culture Leads to Introspection

Students from both groups commented that their views and opinions of the French did not really change, but rather, “they just expanded.” To this point, one student commented that what was most beneficial to his learning was “Broadening my views of the ways others think.” Similarly, another said the cultural discussion on immigration “broadened my world view.” In addition to these types of comments, several more students commented on how learning about culture led them to reflect on their own behavior.

For example, a student from the control group said that realizing other cultures have different values and dreams will help her “be more accepting of others and not judge them because they think or act differently than I do.” Another student demonstrated how newly acquired cultural knowledge “relate back to the perceptions” she already had. Some also expressed thoughts such as, “This discussion made me think about how people change and why they change.” This type of comment shows a broader application of culture learning to one’s life, one that moves beyond French culture and possibly affects daily life in one’s own culture.

In addition, other students made remarks commenting on how learning about culture was affecting their own behavior. For example, a student from the experimental group stated that “The way we talked about their likes and dislikes in respect to how we do things in America was most beneficial to me because I like to contrast and then I can decide which I like better from there.” A comment such as this suggests learning culture can lead to reflection and the change to one’s own behavior. Specifically in regard to French views on friendship, one student commented, “It made me think about how I see my friends and what type of friend I want to be. I was inspired to be more proactive in helping my friends and showing them that I care about them.” It appears then that several students, from both groups, considered French cultural
practices carefully enough to then reflect on their own practices and accordingly change or adjust their behavior to their preferred way.

Summary

In consideration of the first two research questions that sought to analyze changes in attitude and beliefs among the experimental group as well as the control group, the data herein reveal that even though my participation as one of the sub-control group instructors called for a more granular analysis of the data—which was distorted in some instances, as shown in the Quantitative Analysis section—the experimental group data did show positive trends in student attitudes toward C2 as well as toward C1. As regards the third research question and the effects of the lessons on culture awareness on the experimental group, the paired t-test results of individual questions within each respective group as well as the themes that emerged from the open-ended responses on student reflections, the lessons on culture awareness appear to have indeed had a positive effect on student attitudes concerning their views of both C1 and C2. Possible explanations for these findings and further discussion will follow in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

Not every student cared about the culture or noticed a relationship between language and culture. As one student stated, “The culture is interesting. I don’t know whether it’s the most beneficial to my learning French.” As mentioned before, one student commented not “[caring] about culture.” However, these types of comments were far and few between. As stated previously, the majority of disparaging comments were regarding the redundant nature of the reflections. However, it appears that the reflections did serve as a medium for students to comment on how they felt about culture. Appendix G is a compilation of student comments that a) expressed general or personal beliefs relating to culture or b) demonstrated some degree of personal reflection, or a combination of the two.

Although it is true that not all students will appreciate a focused or culture-centric approach to language instruction, as demonstrated by the student who said, “I don’t really find anything beneficial to my learning. I already know a lot about French culture and the things that I do learn about culture in class do not exactly benefit how I learn the language,” many will. How else can we explain comments such as, “I have always wanted to know the vocabulary and the culture behind it. It’s sad but I have been waiting for this lesson for about 5 years studying French.” I believe that at its core, teaching is about the individual, and if one student feels this way, others may as well. In fact, others longed for more by saying, “I wish we could have learned about a larger variety of cultures” and “Can’t we talk beyond the basics? Like, the implications of cultural disparities, intolerance as it exists today, etc.?” As a word of caution, however, it is important to note that when discussing culture and behavior “beyond the basics,” one must approach interpretation cautiously much as one student suggested when they said, “I am skeptical of the truthfulness/actuality to what we discuss.” Just as some students aptly remarked under the
“B. Stereotypes” theme, it is crucial that in an attempt to understand cultural behavior, one not fall prey to erroneously creating new stereotypes or overgeneralizations.

In addition, when discussing cultural practices and behavior it is important to “not judge them the same way we judge our culture” as several students remarked. And in furtherance of avoiding overgeneralizations and stereotypes we are ourselves often victims to, we should not “typify the French into all the same category,” along the path to dispelling inaccurate notions and stereotypes.

As mentioned at the beginning of the Interpretative Analysis section in Chapter 4, comments centered on cultural practice and attitudes from the experimental group almost outnumbered control group remarks by a ration of 2:1. However, it should be noted that students from the control group shared many of the experimental group’s insights, even if the majority of the comments manifested themselves more frequently among the latter.

Implications for Practice

If one of the objectives for language learning is to promote tolerance, understanding or acceptance of others, and if the data in Appendix G is any indication, lessons on culture awareness prior to language instruction may help foster student understanding of the target culture as well as their own. However, it would be important to address students’ concerns about the reflections not being very helpful or redundant. To this end, reducing the number of reflections may be one adjustment. Another adjustment would entail modifying or reducing the number of questions in the reflections. It may not be necessary to ask the same questions on each reflection. Instead, feedback or follow-up questions tailored to students’ previous responses may prove to be more beneficial to student learning. This practice, however, would increase the demands on the instructor’s time, which in turn may or may not make this approach feasible.
From a standpoint of practicality, the lessons on culture awareness and activities at the beginning of the semester did not take more than 60 minutes altogether, and they spanned three days. Furthermore, the materials and examples were all provided in the lesson plans, therefore, appropriate implementation of these would require minimal instructor training. Any implementation of culture-specific instruction should also be measured or evaluated similarly to vocabulary and grammar. Otherwise, it will continue to be seen as “complementary” to language learning and not as important as one student remarked, “I understand that culture is important but I feel that sometimes it was more of an afterthought for me in regards to homework and tests rather than something I really cared about.” The types of questions would then be “What elements of culture should be assessed? Population counts? Encyclopedic statistics? Behavioral culture and if so, how?” and so forth.

While assessing the construct of ‘cultural perspective’ or “culture learning” is still not clear, and beyond the scope of this discussion, the data presented in this study suggest that lessons on culture awareness, in combination with opportunities for personal reflection, appeared to have a positive impact on student learning and understanding of their own culture as well as French culture. And lastly, providing students with the opportunity to purposefully reflect may in and of itself be a learning medium worth using, independent of lessons on culture awareness even. It is true that some students may object to this type of assignment; however, reflections provide an excellent medium for all students to at least have the opportunity to voice their insights and opinions out loud, especially in an immersion classroom where beginners may not have the linguistic proficiency to express these thoughts in class—not to mention the time constraints that rarely allow for every student to participate.

Study Limitations

As data from Control Group 2 revealed, instructor bias greatly affected the overall data
analysis, which resulted in the greatest limitation to the present study. In an attempt to control for this variable, I thought that teaching one of the control groups would be appropriate. However, I did not take into consideration my experience as an instructor (four years), my major (French Teaching), and my graduate program (second language pedagogy), which in hindsight should have been taken into greater consideration. If done again, I would have absented myself from teaching any of the groups.

In addition, due to the richness and depth of student comments on the reflections, I would have added follow-up sessions consisting of interviews as a data collection tool because even though data may speak for itself, it doesn’t always say what it truly means.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This study, while rich in qualitative data gathered, can serve as a starting point from which more precise and focused research may be undertaken. The data herein did show an overall positive trend on student perspectives and beliefs on culture. In order to allow for greater insight and analysis of student change or growth regarding attitudes and perspective, it would be beneficial to conduct a more narrow and concentrated case study or even attempt to replicate results among other French classes or even other languages. This would then allow me to introduce interviews as part of the data collection process since this method requires more time in terms of both interviewing participants and analyzing the data gathered. However, in order to effect and implement change in curriculum or instructional design vis-à-vis culture teaching on a noticeable scale, it is paramount that solid quantitative studies addressing the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of teaching methods and materials accompany qualitative research studies. Together, qualitative research can provide insights into student perceptions that quantitative studies can corroborate in the debate of introducing new teaching methods into culture and language teaching.
Conclusions

The aim of this study was to explore the impact, if any, of culture-awareness instruction and student attitudes of C2. The volume of data provided by students shows promising signs of personal reflection and growth among the experimental group that received clear and straightforward lessons on culture awareness prior to French language instruction. In addition to the data presented, the practicality and ease of implementing such lessons further justifies teaching culture awareness prior to French language instructions at the beginner-intermediate levels at BYU.

However, if the data analyzed from Control Group 2 is any indicator, an instructor who integrates culture into multiple facets of language instruction can also have a positive effect on student views and perspectives of French culture. In addition, there was no attempt to show that one classroom technique is better than another. However, the data herein also suggests that in-class discussion in French can be a positive instructional technique to promote an increased understanding of the foreign culture. I believe that comments such as, “It’s good for me to realize other cultures have different values and dreams as it will help me to be more accepting of others and not judge them because they think or act differently than I do,” illustrate one of the main objectives of language learning and provide sufficient justification in the debate of culture teaching and its role in the foreign language classroom.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: CULTURE LESSONS

Culture Lesson #1

Objective: Students will
• Show and understand how culture influences the way they participate in society as measured by a personal reflection
• Analyze how culture influences our view of others
• Reflect on who they are
• Identify which subcultures influence who they are

Materials:
• Who am I? – Reflection handout
• C1/C2 Culture Diagram

Procedure:
1. Ask students who has culture and make a list on the board with a few examples from a couple of the cultures. Then introduce concept of Big C and little c. Give students examples of Big C items and together create a list of little c items.
2. Then, based on the lists on the board, ask students to identify what culture is with a partner or in a small group. Have the class share their definitions.
3. From the lists on the board, ask students which items on the board would be considered to be stereotypes. Discuss stereotypes. Have students in groups come up with a definition for stereotypes. Have class share their definitions.
4. Make a list of stereotypes they have of themselves with a partner. Then come together as a class and make a list on the board. Next to that list, make a list non-Americans have of Americans; compare and contrast. Ask students to share with a partner how they fit or do not fit stereotypes on either list.
5. Introduce Culture Diagram and explain how the way we view others is influenced by the way we view ourselves. Take questions or comments/personal experiences. Lead into subcultures.
6. Talk about subcultures and make a list on the board of the different subcultures students belong to. Discuss how belonging to a culture or subculture influences their view of others.
7. Assign students to bring an object (not a picture) that they think best reflects something about themselves. Have them make a list of the attributes the object represents. Ask them to bring their object in a bag.

Lesson plan and activities adapted from

Evaluation/assignment:
- Who am I? Reflection to be completed for homework

No. __________  Who am I? Reflection  Date __________

1. Where am I from?

2. What culture(s) do I belong to?

3. What subcultures am I part of?

4. What subcultures influence who I am?

5. Do I have culture?

6. What are some stereotypes of others that you are aware of?

7. How does being part of a subculture influence how I view and think about others?

C1/C2 Culture Diagram

Diagram source: Blair Bateman, Assistant Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, BYU
Culture Lesson #2

Objective: Students will

• Analyze and understand how culture influences our view of others
• Be able to ask questions to obtain further knowledge of others as demonstrated in classroom activities
• Understand the difference between inferring and interpreting as demonstrated in a personal reflection
• Explain what is meant by cultural relativity

Materials:

• Optical illusions
• Personal representative object
• Perspective handout

Procedure:
1. Ask students to share any comments or realizations they might have come to while filling out Who am I?
2. Have students pull out their bag and exchange it with another student. Then have students make a list of attributes they think the object represents about their owner. Ask students to not ask questions or talk to each other. Then have students share their lists with each other.
3. Hold a class discussion addressing the following:
   a. Did your partner interpret the object the way you did?
   b. Where you surprised by their list at all?
   c. When you were making your list, where did your knowledge of the object and classmate come from?
   d. Address perspective and its influence on how we see things.
4. Introduce inferring VS. interpreting. Ask students which of the two they were doing. Ask them how we can correctly interpret objects or behavior.
5. Next show the optical illusions and have students quietly write down what they see. Introduce observation VS. judgment and cultural relativity. Ask students if there is a right or wrong answer and how this relates learning about culture. Address perspective.

Lesson plan and activities adapted from


Evaluation/assignment:
  • Perspective reflection

No. __________  Perspective Reflection  Date__________

1. What is perspective?

2. How does perspective influence the way you see?

3. What does inferring mean?

4. What does interpreting mean?

5. How can someone move from inferring about culture to interpreting culture?

6. Why do people do things differently?

7. Explain what is meant by cultural relativity.

Materials for class use

Optical illusions
APPENDIX B: PRE-SURVEY

No. _______  Pre-Survey  Date _________

Part I – Please answer the following questions based on your personal feelings.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The French and American cultures are similar</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I am excited to learn about French culture</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>From what I know about the French, I like them</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I have good feelings toward my own culture</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I am accepting of people that are different</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I like studying/talking about culture</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I am excited to learn more French</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I am tolerant of other cultures</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Learning about culture is important to learning language</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I understand cultural differences between the US and France</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I have good feelings towards the French culture</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. What do you like about your own culture?

13. What, if anything, do you dislike?

14. What do you like about the French culture?

15. What, if anything, do you dislike?

16. What cultures do you consider yourself to be a member of? List them here.

Part II – The following questions are regarding your experience with French.

1. Did you take French in high school? __Yes __No If yes, for how many years? ____

2. How many semesters of French have you had at the university level? 0 1 2 3 4

3. Have you studied other languages? __Yes __No

   If yes, for how many years in high school and/or semesters in college?

   High school: ____ years  College: ____ semesters

4. I am taking French because (select all that apply):

   ___ My ancestors spoke it
   ___ One or both of my parents speak it
___ My spouse speaks it
___ Other family members or friends speak it
___ I want to visit French-speaking countries
___ It will be useful in my career
___ I am interested in francophone cultures
___ I want to read francophone literature
___ I think it is a beautiful language
___ It fills a requirement for my major
___ It fills a requirement for my minor
___ It fills a GE requirement
other _____________________________

5. Which French classes do you plan on taking (select all that apply):
   ___ French 201   ___ French 202   ___ French 211 – Conversational French
   ___ FR 321 – Advanced Grammar   ___ FR 322 – Advanced Composition
   ___ FR 340 – Intro Literary Analysis

6. Do you plan on studying a different foreign language after French?
   ___ Yes   ___ No   ___ I am already studying a different language: __________

Part III – The following section is for classification purposes.

Gender: Male Female Age: _________
Major: _________________________ Minor: _________________________
Year in school (circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior
APPENDIX C: POST-SURVEY

No. ______ Post-Survey Date _____________

Part I – Please answer the following questions based on your personal feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The French and American cultures are similar</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am excited to learn about French culture</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. From what I know about the French, I like them</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have good feelings toward my own culture</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am accepting of people that are different</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I like studying/talking about culture</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am excited to learn more French</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am tolerant of other cultures</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Learning about culture is important to learning language</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I understand cultural differences between the US and France</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I have good feelings towards the French culture</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. What do you like about your own culture?

13. What, if anything, do you dislike?

14. What do you like about the French culture?

15. What, if anything, do you dislike?

16. What cultures do you consider yourself to be a member of? List them here.

17. Please rate the following class activities in terms of how helpful they were to your learning of culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all helpful</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessons on culture at the beginning of the semester</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural activities and class discussion</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections after cultural discussions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Please use the space below to add any additional comments to question #9 or comments regarding the cultural components of class this semester.
Part II – The following questions are regarding your plans with French.

1. Which French classes do you plan on taking (select all that apply):
   
   ___ French 201  
   ___ French 202  
   ___ French 211 – Conversational French
   ___ FR 321 – Advanced Grammar 
   ___ FR 322 – Advanced Composition
   ___ FR 340 – Intro Literary Analysis

2. Do you plan on taking a different foreign language after French?
   
   ___ Yes  
   ___ No  
   ___ already studying a different language
Note culturelle

Les compliments. Les formules de politesse ne se traduisent pas toujours très bien d’une culture à l’autre. En Amérique du Nord, par exemple, «Thank you» est la réponse attendue à un compliment. En France, par contre, «Merci» suggère une certaine fierté (pride). C’est comme si on disait: «Je suis d’accord! Vous avez raison!» En français, il faut plutôt minimiser l’éloge (praise) en exprimant le doute—«Vraiment? Tu trouves?»—ou en partageant la gloire—«Mais Thomas m’a beaucoup aidé». On peut aussi reporter l’attention sur la gentillesse de l’autre personne—«Mais vous êtes trop gentille». Est-ce que vous avez jamais eu une réponse inattendue à un compliment que vous avez fait à quelqu’un?

Bloguez!

Expliquez comment il faut répondre à un compliment chez vous. Est-ce différent selon la personne? Si c’est un(e) ami(e)? Si c’est quelqu’un que vous ne connaissez pas bien?

Stratégie de communication

Giving and responding to compliments

Observez et déduisez

Study the mini-dialogues below, and find some examples of how compliments are given and how they are minimized.

— Elle est vraiment chic, cette robe.
— Vraiment? Vous pensez que ça me va (fits me)?
— Ah oui. Et la couleur vous va vraiment bien.
— Vous êtes bien gentille.
— J’aime beaucoup ta jupe! Elle est très jolie.
— Tu trouves? Je l’ai depuis longtemps.
— Quelle belle cravate!
— C’est ma femme qui me l’a achetée. Elle a bon goût, n’est-ce pas?
— Tu as vraiment fait du bon travail!
— Tu trouves? Ce n’était pas si difficile que ça.

Elle est vraiment chic, cette robe.
Confirmez

Des expressions utiles
pour faire un compliment

C’est vraiment chic, votre... (robe, etc.)
Quelle belle cravate! (Quel beau pantalon!, etc.)
Cette couleur (Ce jogging) vous va bien.

pour répondre à un compliment

Vous trouvez? / Tu trouves?
Vous pensez que ça me va? / Tu penses que ça me va?
Vous êtes bien gentil(le).
Vraiment? Je ne sais pas.
C’est ma femme (mon père) qui...
Je l’ai depuis longtemps.

Activités

Des compliments. Avec un(e) partenaire, jouez les scénarios suivants.
À tour de rôle, faites un compliment ou acceptez le compliment « à la française ».

1. Vous aimez beaucoup la coiffure d’une copine.
2. Vous admirez le pantalon de votre professeur.
3. Vous aimeriez les nouvelles chaussures d’un(e) camarade de classe.
4. Votre petite sœur vous fait un compliment sur votre nouveau pull (et non, vous ne voulez pas le lui prêter).
5. Vous complimenterez votre camarade de chambre sur le dîner qu’il (elle) a préparé.
6. Vous pensez que la veste de votre meilleur(e) ami(e) lui va très bien.

Chapitre 10  La vie de tous les jours

APPENDIX E: CHAPTER REFLECTIONS

No. _________  
Ch. 7 Reflection: Les vacances (Vacation)  
Date_______

1. What would you do with 39 days of vacation? Would you take small vacations throughout the year? Would you take fewer, but longer vacations?

2. Based on your answer to question #1, is this similar to or different from the French perspective on “vacationing”? How is it similar or different?

3. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

4. From the reading and class discussion about vacationing in France, what did you learn that you didn’t know before?

5. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?

No. _________  
Ch. 8 Reflection: L’amitié (Friendship)  
Date_______

1. What is your definition of friendship?

2. Did your definition of friendship change after the reading and class discussion? Please explain how it did or didn’t.

3. Is your definition of friendship similar to or different from the French perspective on “friendship”? How is it similar or different?

4. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

5. From the reading and class discussion about friendship in France, what did you learn that you didn’t know before?

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?
No. _________   Ch. 9 Reflection: La langue (Language)   Date________

1. What do you think is the purpose of language?

2. What side of the debate are you on? Do you think there should be a “correct” way of using language? Are you a language purist or revolutionary? Why?

3. What do you think the way a person speaks says about them?

4. What insight(s) did you gain about the French and their view of their language after the reading and class discussion?

5. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?

No. _________   Ch. 10 Reflection: Les compliments (Compliments)   Date________

1. What are some similarities/differences between the way the French and Americans respond to compliments?

2. How do you respond to compliments? What does that reveal about you?

3. What does the way a person dress say about them?

4. What insight(s) did you gain about the French and their view of their language after the reading and class discussion?

5. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?
Ch. 11 Reflection: La conversation (Conversation)  Date_________

1. What are some similarities/differences between the way the French and Americans have conversations?

2. What do interruptions represent to the French? How do you feel about interruptions in American conversations?

3. After our discussion and the reading, what thoughts do you have about French conversation norms opposed to American conversation norms?

4. What insight(s) did you gain about the French and their view of their conversing after the reading and class discussion?

5. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?

Ch. 12 Reflection: Les fantasmes (Dreams)  Date_________

1. Looking at the survey about French “dreams,” did you notice any kind of theme in the answers given by the French public? Please explain.

2. What are some similarities/differences between the way the French answered questions regarding dreams and the way Americans might?

3. After our discussion and the reading, what thoughts do you have about French “dreams” in comparison to American “dreams”?

4. What insight(s) did you gain about the French in regards to their responses to the survey (based on the survey and class discussion)?

5. Did your views or opinions of the French change in any way after this reading and class discussion? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?
1. What comments or thoughts do you have about this assignment? Please explain.

2. Are there any similarities/differences between you and the individual you interviewed?

3. After our discussion and your mini-interview, would you say this was beneficial to your learning? If so, how?

4. What insight(s) did you gain about people of different nationalities based on class discussion on immigration and your mini-interview?

5. Did your views or opinions of immigrants change in any way after this assignment? If your view changed, please explain why or how it changed. If your view did not change, please also give a brief explanation.

6. Regarding this discussion about culture, what did you find the most beneficial to your learning?
APPENDIX F: MINI ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW

No. __________ Mini Ethnographic Interview Date ____________

Instructions: Find a student or individual that is from a foreign country. Ask them for 10-15 minutes of their time to ask them a few questions about their experience in the US.

REMINDER: INFORM THE INTERVIEWEE THAT THIS IS ANONYMOUS.

Questions:

Where are you from?

How long have you been in the U.S.?

Did you have expectations before coming to the U.S.? If so, where they met?

What have you found to be “easy” to adapt to?

What have you found to be difficult to adapt to?

Did you have to change or give up the way you were accustomed to doing things?

Do you feel you have “integrated” yourself into the culture? Why or why not?

Do you have any suggestions for someone trying to adapt to a new culture?
## Appendix G: Student Quotes

### Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID8294</td>
<td>I don’t feel like I know enough to give an acceptable answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID6573</td>
<td>I do not know enough to dislike anything specifically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID6841</td>
<td>I just think it’s interesting to know about the French culture and how they do vacation. It’s relevant because that’s what we’re learning to talk about, but I don’t think the actual knowledge itself does anything significant for learning French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID4518</td>
<td>The thing I found most beneficial was the way the French like to spend their vacations. It’s great to know they get 5 weeks off, but knowing what they like to do helps me to understand them better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID3141</td>
<td>The culture is interesting. I don’t know whether it’s the most beneficial to my learning French. The reading itself might be more beneficial, but learning about culture makes learning the language more interesting and purposeful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ID6573</td>
<td>It made me think about how I see my friends and what type of friend I want to be. I was inspired to be more proactive in helping my friends and showing them that I care about them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ID0326</td>
<td>Discussion in class is always the most helpful thing for me in understanding the culture notes because it is really hard for me to grasp the differences between cultures sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ID4518</td>
<td>I would like to know more of the reasons behind why they try so hard to keep their language pure so I can understand them better and not judge them unfairly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ID8294</td>
<td>The only reason that a language should be prevented from change is to preserve culture or to establish cultural dominance. I do not care about culture, thus I feel no desire to retain language purity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ID1234</td>
<td>I like French people better than Americans. Can I just move to France now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ID1802</td>
<td>I don’t see language particularly applicable this time. Mostly just culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ID0841</td>
<td>My views did not really change, although I made somewhat of a connection between the personality of the French and their stereotype to others around the world. It is said that the French can be mean, and I am wondering if the way they handle compliments adds to that stereotype? I think it could be a possibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ID4884</td>
<td>I may have learned some about culture, but I don’t really think I learned a lot about the language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ID6573</td>
<td>It makes so much more sense to me to just say thank-you. But I realized that different words mean different things to different cultures. And to them, replying in the way they do means “thank-you”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID4884</td>
<td>I am growing more and more surprised at how different their culture is from ours, considering that English is not that different from French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID2580</td>
<td>I think that their way of interacting is probably what gave rise to the stereotype of the “rude Frenchman”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID6764</td>
<td>It made me more aware that cultures do have differences, even down to something as simple as having a conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID5755</td>
<td>I don’t like reading about culture. I want to go experience it in the actual country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID2248</td>
<td>It’s interesting to see all the differences between cultures. I hadn’t really thought about language and conversation itself being part of a culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID0569</td>
<td>I thought it was very enlightening because it explains a lot about why French people think it is okay to interrupt and weird if you don’t. It is cool to see how different cultures work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ID5756</td>
<td>I think that it is beneficial for American students studying French to understand how the French speak and converse, especially if they ever plan to visit France or interact with French speakers. It can be very shocking at first, so I think including the discussion of cultural norms is just as helpful as vocabulary and grammar structures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I thought it was interesting to see the kinds of things the French tend to value, which I think leads to greater understanding of the culture.

I found developing a better understanding of the types of dreams and ideals the French people hold dear really changed my view of French culture. I feel like I now have a stronger view of the French as a complex and caring people, instead of relying so heavily on stereotypes.

It’s good for me to realize other cultures have different values and dreams as it will help me to be more accepting of others and not judge them because they think or act differently than I do.

This discussion made me think about how people change and why they change.

I thought it was helpful for us students to be presented with statistics and current events that are taking place in France. Learning about these things is as essential to learning French as the grammar structures and verb conjugations.

I think immigrants will always appear different on the surface, but as I get to know them I will find they are actually a lot like me and that the faults I think I see are probably due to their circumstances, and not their culture or personality.

I probably judge people way too fast, so I need to look past the first impressions and be more open to new cultures and people.

I think it’s important to know about the issue of immigration because it helps you understand the culture better, and be able to speak the language with more context.

I learned the most about culture when I participated in the class discussions.

I wish we could have learned about a larger variety of cultures.

I think what helped the most was discussing the culture in class & compared it to our culture.

Our class discussions were always very interesting and thought provoking.

I feel no matter what culture I was raised in I would like it.

I really liked learning about the cultural aspects of the language we are learning. It helped me understand why they say certain things in a certain way. It also made it more fun for me.

### Experimental Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID8053</td>
<td>I hate how Americans don’t learn a second language at a young age. I feel like we alienate ourselves from the world because of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID0717</td>
<td>I’ve never been anywhere else so its hard to pinpoint “my culture.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID8674</td>
<td>I’m not a fan of the French mustache. I don’t really know enough about it [the culture] to say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>ID7946</td>
<td>The similarities it has w/ American culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID3034</td>
<td>Yes, while I don’t feel it’s very prevalent or defining in my life, I’m sure from the outside I indeed have characteristics of my culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID3564</td>
<td>Yes, I am a product of many subcultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID0717</td>
<td>I think that culture is difference between people and their lifestyles, so as long as people are different, I have a culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID5287</td>
<td>Yes, I especially feel that I do here in America because of my nationality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID2070</td>
<td>Although I belong to many subcultures that make up parts of me, there is no definite subculture for every part of me. I’m not only made of the subcultures I belong to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID6515</td>
<td>I am influenced by other cultures and subcultures, and I take part in the “cultured” aspects of my own cultures (music, art, film, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID8053</td>
<td>I think everyone has an individual culture and a broad culture. It’s all of those little subcultures that make people different and unique, but a broad culture like an ethnicity can make you like everyone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID7632</td>
<td>Everyone has culture. Some just have it a little more than others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID1558</td>
<td>Yes, but I don’t think that I realize that I have culture until I really think about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID9999</td>
<td>Yes, I would consider myself “cultured” partly because of the educated and interesting family I come from and partly because of the creative and diverse college oriented part of Albuquerque I have lived in my whole life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID7121</td>
<td>Everyone has culture, it is inherent within each social system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID7055</td>
<td>I feel like culture being applied or defined in regards to an individual would basically be that person’s character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID2882</td>
<td>I’m not sure what you’re asking, but I think so. I have traditions and things that I follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ID8674</td>
<td>It is something that is impossible to not have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID0717</td>
<td>I don’t think I really have an opinion of the French. I just am interested in learning about the culture. I don’t have a good or bad opinion of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID0717</td>
<td>I think that learning how the French react to their environments helps us learn their culture and language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID8067</td>
<td>I think I just understood that they are more like me than I sometimes realize because sometimes we view things very similarly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1293</td>
<td>I learned that you can’t typify the French into all the same category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID7632</td>
<td>It was interesting to learn that our cultures have something in common, but I didn’t really think we were that different to begin with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1344</td>
<td>I kind of think they’re a bit lazier than we are, but that’s just a quick judgment so it’s probably not true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1344</td>
<td>I think knowing more about the culture explains stuff about the language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID9999</td>
<td>Anything to further my understanding of foreign culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID3039</td>
<td>Yes, as I learn more about their culture I understand the French behaviors better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1169</td>
<td>The idea of subcultures helped me to better understand the French and who they are rather than just who the rest of the world thinks they are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID7946</td>
<td>The way we talked about their likes and dislikes in respect to how we do things in America was most beneficial to me because I like to see contrast and then I can decide which I like better from there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID3034</td>
<td>I think it helps to understand the way French culture is in order to understand nuances and rules in their language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID8674</td>
<td>It is one thing to just talk about the importance of culture to the French but I didn’t really understand the importance of it until I looked at my own life and culture and saw how different that was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1776</td>
<td>In terms of learning, I feel that I learned about the French character. People are people, no matter where they are from. Water is boiling. Peoples is peoples. I believe that this applies to anyone, anywhere. It's only logical to assume that culture is normal at its origin. Immersing oneself in foreignness is the cure to prejudice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID1415</td>
<td>Knowing that they have so many vacation days helps me understand more about French culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ID3095</td>
<td>No idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ID7121</td>
<td>I guess the culture helps me to understand ways to approach French people if I ever visit France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ID5059</td>
<td>I like the book and its cultural reflections, although sometimes I think that it is biased toward the French when comparing them to Americans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
French culture and American culture are different but it doesn’t mean that either of them is wrong. They are just different ways of seeing things.

I don’t think my opinions of the French changed; it just widened my perspective of them. Because we have similarities, they seem more like real people.

Even though they may seem rough on the outside, because they would rather have only a few close friends, it makes them seem more genuine.

I originally didn’t have any opinions on the French people. I just was interested in the language. I just saw them as people who do things just a little differently than I do.

I have always wanted to know the vocabulary and the culture behind it. It’s sad but I have been waiting for this lesson for about 5 years studying French.

The most beneficial part of this discussion was just learning more about the French culture and therefore getting rid of any former stereotypes I may have had concerning the French people.

I think it’s different than what we have here, but not necessarily better or worse.

Those differences helped me learn the most about culture.

Learning about how the French view friendship helped me understand their culture better which is an important part of learning a language.

I just found the discussion itself as beneficial because I love to learn about other cultures and what they do and have done in the past that make them unique.

Discussing their relationships, because I think it’s valuable to understand the deeper themes of French culture, not just how Americans view them.

I liked when we discussed the cultural information in the book, because I liked that we were able to go more in-depth.

I think it’s interesting to learn how a language grows into a culture.

The fact that they think their language is so beautiful and rich that they want everyone to speak it is a way better excuse that I would have thought. Everyone always says that the French don’t like Americans, and now I sort of think it has something to do with the fact that we arrogantly stride into their country and culture and try to make them speak our language instead of using their own.

I think speaking with a stupid accent like Utah or New Jersey or something really makes someone seem stupid.

While I can see the value in trying to preserve the “pure” language or culture, when two languages/cultures collide something new is made and there is just as much value in the new language/culture as in the old one.

I don’t really find anything beneficial to my learning. I already know a lot about French culture and the things that I do learn about culture in class do not exactly benefit how I learn the language.

I always like learning new things about the culture because it will help me when I am there.

I think that, while clothes aren’t particularly exciting or interesting or important, it’s necessary to figure out the values of the culture, and propriety seems to be one of them.

Just like with most of the things I learn about French culture, I was a little surprised at the different, but that doesn’t make it better or worse. It’s just a different perspective.

It’s not a bad thing, just a cultural difference that makes them unique!

I respond with a thank you or returning the compliment. I don’t think this tells anything about me except that I was raised in the American culture and therefore respond that way.

Well from the above, I definitely like the French more. I thought they were sort of haughty people—and they may still be—but I like that they try to deflect compliments.

The purpose of learning about culture, is to learn the differences and similarities, but I understood the differences and why the French see complimenting and accepting compliments the way they do.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My opinion of the French did change: now I sort of think that they all have a hidden agenda to interrupt and tell a better story. I find that quite rude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I learned that the French are SUPER polite to each other...but in their own way that is different than ours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cultures of different countries around the world are different to each other, and we shouldn’t judge them the same way we judge our culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I’m more afraid to talk to them, if that’s what you’re talking about. I mean, it’s cultural, so I’d try to be understanding, but that just sounds more intimidating than anything. You know? Beginning French speakers + Impatient French natives = disaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I think it just shows that disrespect has become commonplace and acceptable there. Even if it’s “acceptable,” you are still cutting o someone’s train of thought and not listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Broadening my views of the ways others think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My initial reaction was of displeasure, because in America frequent interruptions are rude, but they are not in France; and just because something is different doesn’t mean it’s bad. It’s just different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>In America we often stereotype the French as being really rude and perhaps one of the reasons we feel this way is because they are always cutting each other off in their conversations. We then apply the values of our culture to theirs and say that they are being rude, but we are being unfair. They are not being rude, that’s just how their culture is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>They didn't change - just expanded!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I will now be able to use this information to properly integrate myself into French culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The importance of conversation in cultures is interesting. Everyone communicates differently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>That the French are just like Americans, but they have their own individual interpretation of things just like we do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>It was beneficial for me to relate these new ideas back to the perceptions that I already had.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>We often misunderstand each other because of our cultural norms (Americans may think of the French as “rude” because they interrupt, the French may think of Americans as “holding a conference” for simple questions), but both norms are fine for each culture since they are norms and understood within the culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The only way it really changed was to remind me yet again that there are more cultural differences between France and American than I would have thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Doing this comparison helped me really understand the culture and what the motivation might have been behind each choice and question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Talking about it in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>And although those are given as statistics, each person’s dreams are different and cannot be accurately represented as a whole. The chart just generalizes the dreams of all French people, when in reality, you cannot apply those dreams to everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The French are more similar to us than people think they would be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comp</td>
<td>I was able to see a larger picture of immigration, not just as it exists in my country, but in France and other places. I was able to see a different perspective and realize isn’t one culture just as good as any other? Yet we often insist that it is not. This attitude needs to change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comp</td>
<td>It broadened my world view and my own opinions on immigration!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>I think it was best to learn about a culture in its own language. Many words hold a different weight than their direct translation. Interpretation is key to comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>The discussions that helped me the most were the non-structured lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>The cultural activities were interesting but there was a lot of emphasis placed on them, which sometimes distracted from learning the language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post ID</td>
<td>Post Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>1415</td>
<td>The cultural reflections were somewhat helpful – the first couple questions usually helped me reflect on the culture, but the questions about my changing opinion of the French were harder because my didn’t opinion didn’t change much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5309</td>
<td>Sometimes just talking about culture is very difficult to impact me. I am skeptical of the truthfulness/actuality to what we discuss. That being said, they are informative and interesting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7946</td>
<td>I understand that culture is important but I feel that sometimes it was more of an afterthought for me in regards to homework and tests rather than something I really cared about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2875</td>
<td>Can’t we talk beyond the basics? Like, the implications of cultural disparities, intolerance as it exists today, etc. I already know what culture “is.” Why not how it works, how cultures interact, what it all means for us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2070</td>
<td>The more you get to understand them the less snobby they are, however.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7055</td>
<td>Understanding culture helps with use of language, pronunciation, and understanding. If you enjoy the culture you are also more motivated to learn the language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>