PERSPECTIVES TOWARD THE TARGET CULTURE BY SELECTED PARTICIPANTS IN A STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM IN MEXICO

DISSEPTION

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By

Michele-Marie Dowell, B.A., M.A.T.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University

1996

Dissertation Committee:

C. R. Hancock
C. B. Dillard
T. A. Morgan

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
College of Education
To My Mother
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VITA

February 3, 1964........ Born - San Francisco, California

1986.................. B.A., University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

1988.................. M.A.T., University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

1988-1991............. Teacher of Spanish, John Rolfe Middle School and Varina High School, Richmond, Virginia

1991-1993............. Graduate Teaching Associate, The Department of Spanish and Portuguese, The Ohio State University

1992-1995............. Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Educational Studies, The Ohio State University

1995-Present......... Assistant Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Illinois State University

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education

Studies in Foreign and Second Language Education

Minor Field: Spanish Linguistics
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, study abroad programs have increased in popularity (Goodwin & Nacht, 1991). According to a survey by the Institute of International Education, a record total of 76,302 American students participated in credit-granting study abroad programs in 1993-94. This reflects a seven percent increase over the 1991-92 total. While the majority of students continue to study in Western Europe, destinations such as Africa, Asia, and Latin America are becoming more popular. For example, a total of 4,718 students studied in Mexico in 1993-94, representing a 2.6 percent increase over 1991-92. In fact, Mexico was ranked the fifth most popular study destination in 1993-94, and it was the only non-European country in the top five (Rubin, 1995b).

The increase of participation in study abroad programs by American students can, at least in part, be attributed to the fact that cross-cultural understanding is becoming widely viewed as a necessary
life skill for successfully competing in today's global marketplace. Many American educators, parents, and students believe that the experience of studying abroad affords students opportunities to gain a richer understanding of the target culture than would be possible in traditional on-campus language courses.

Unfortunately, research to support this assumption is lacking. Indeed, research on study abroad in general has been "sporadic" according to Rubin (1995a, p. A34). Philip G. Altbach, director of Boston College's Center for International Higher Education stated that, "one would be hard pressed to find a book that says, 'Here's what we know about the field'" (Rubin, 1995a, p. A34). However, several recent developments point to an increased interest in the field of study abroad. For example, the Association of International Education Administrators has created a task force to determine the research needs of the field. The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), too, is in the process of developing a research agenda and plans to launch a journal highlighting research on study abroad (Rubin, 1995a).
While more research on study abroad is called for, a modest body of research currently exists. Much of this research treats linguistic acquisition (Brecht and Robinson (1993); Freed (1995); Lafford (1995); and others) and attitude change (Bueno-Popkey (1991); Carlson and Widaman (1988); Gwynne (1981); and others). Moreover, the research focus has tended to be on the outcomes of participation in study abroad programs, rather than the exploration of student processes during the study abroad experience (Laubscher 1994).

Two studies that focus on process in the area of study abroad are Brecht and Robinson (1993) and Laubscher (1994). As noted above, the former is a study of linguistic acquisition in a study abroad context. This study combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Once the researchers had conducted a statistical analysis aimed at identifying predictors of linguistic gain, they used more qualitative means to attempt to characterize the process of linguistic acquisition. For example, they had participants list all out-of-class activities in order to identify to what types of activities linguistic acquisition could be attributed.
A second study focusing on the process of learning in a study abroad setting is that of Laubscher (1994). Like Brecht and Robinson, Laubscher was interested in students’ out-of-class activities. However, unlike theirs, his focus was not on linguistic acquisition. Instead, he wanted to determine students’ perceptions of the role of out-of-class activities. That is to say, how important are out-of-class activities in a study abroad experience according to the students themselves? In order to answer this question, he conducted a qualitative study in which he developed case studies for thirty Pennsylvania State University students who had participated in various study abroad programs sponsored by the University in the autumn of 1990. Results of Brecht and Robinson’s and Laubscher’s studies are presented in Chapter Two.

Problem Statement

Research is needed to identify the ways in which study abroad experiences lead to a greater understanding of the target culture by study participants. According to the 1979 Report of the
President’s Commission on Foreign Language and
International Studies:

Much more research is needed on the impact of different kinds of overseas experiences on students and teachers in terms of their knowledge and empathetic understanding of other cultures, and their subsequent motivation to be informed on world affairs and international issues (p. 66).

The present study investigated the impact of a study abroad experience on the acquisition of cultural insights of college students of Spanish as a foreign language. Specifically, the study focused on the cultural observations made by two students who participated in a study abroad program in Mexico and on their concepts of Mexican culture. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used, as described in Chapter Three.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined the cultural focus of students who participated in a ten-week intensive study abroad program in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico. Cultural focus refers to the various aspects of Mexican culture one may learn about and from, such as the role of the family, priorities, and pastimes. The study was based
on the analysis of case studies of two college-age students. While data were collected for five participants (referred to as pool participants elsewhere in the text), the study was limited to a consideration of only two students. Before the study began, the researcher’s dissertation adviser suggested developing two or three case studies. Because participation in the study was to be on a voluntary basis and no remuneration was offered to students, the researcher did not know at the outset how many students would volunteer to participate. In addition, she was concerned about the possibility of attrition over the course of the study. As a result, she chose to collect data on all participants in case some chose to discontinue their participation at any time throughout the study.

When all data were collected and all five pool participants had remained in the study for the duration of data collection, the researcher chose two participants on whom the study was based. Limiting the number of participants to two was an arbitrary decision on the part of the researcher. The two participants were chosen on the basis of several factors. One
student was male and the other was female. The male reported having had considerable prior cross-cultural experience before participating in the study, and the female reported having had none at all. It was determined that including these two subjects, based on their individual characteristics, would allow the researcher to study the influence of such variables as gender and background experience on the process of students' cultural learning in a study abroad setting.

Journals, interviews, and observations served as primary data sources. An important goal of the study was to determine those aspects of the target culture on which the students focused before, during, and after the study abroad experience.

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to contribute baseline data on study abroad and processes of cultural learning undergone by students during a study abroad program. It contributes to an understanding of the processing strategies utilized by study abroad students, irrespective of program goals and curricula. As the homestay component of the study abroad experience has
received little research attention to date, another objective of this study was to identify its role in the development of students' concept of the target culture. The study may also help clarify the processes of language and cultural acquisition in the context of a study abroad experience.

**Research Questions**

The main research questions which guided this study were as follows:

1. On what aspects of Mexican culture did study abroad students tend to focus?
2. Among these aspects, on which did they seem to focus the most? Why?
3. How did the prior experiences of study abroad students influence their cultural focus during the study abroad program?
4. How did study abroad students form a concept of Mexican culture after the experience of living there? To what extent were the subjects able to articulate their strategies?
Issues in Study Abroad

Although it is generally accepted in the academic community that a study abroad experience is beneficial during the college years, what does study abroad really add to a student’s overall educational experience? It is also believed, however, that students can study a foreign language on campus without ever leaving the United States. In a campus-only program, students can learn the language and acquire some cultural information, but study abroad is more than language classes and random cultural information. It is the opportunity to participate in the daily life of the host community and, thus, to gain a greater understanding of the target culture.

When a member of one culture undertakes to learn about another culture, many insights are possible. On the individual level, the study of another culture can lead one to a better understanding of that culture and to respect for its members. Second, learning about another culture can help a person learn more about his own culture and in turn about himself. As the anthropologist Paul Bohannan observed, "Learning other cultures throws our own culture into relief, just as
learning another language teaches us things we didn’t know about our own language and the way of thought it imposes" (1992, p. 10). On a societal level, what the individual learns may affect his community and/or country as a whole. For example, if he learns a considerable amount about a given culture, this information may be of benefit to his country’s government, because a government’s military effectiveness is due, at least in part, to the extent of its knowledge base about other countries and their cultures. Moreover, a country’s economy benefits if individual members of the society understand foreign cultures to the extent that they may predict what goods and services will be marketable in that society. Another way in which the individual’s knowledge of another culture may benefit his society as a whole is through general diplomacy. The fact that he chooses to spend time in the other culture may be a sign that he respects and appreciates the other culture and, thus, may combat negative stereotypes that members of the second culture have about members of the first. If the individual’s culture has a reputation for being ethnocentric, for example, each cross-cultural endeavor
on the part of its citizens may work to diminish negative feelings on the part of members of the second culture.

Up to this point, the possible effects of an individual's study of another culture at a "micro" (individual) and a "macro" (societal) level have been examined. There is a third group that may be affected by this process. Some people gain exposure to other cultures via first-hand experience by traveling, working, or studying in another country for a given amount of time. People who have never traveled to other countries often consider those who have traveled abroad as "experts" on those countries. The latter group may assimilate the opinions of the former when it comes to forming its impression of any given culture. Thus the views of the former, relatively small, group may be passed on to a larger group of individuals in the general population and may go unchallenged. Thus, the content of what is learned by an individual through contact with another culture takes on importance for all of the aforementioned reasons and perhaps others.

Study abroad programs potentially offer students the broadest and most direct opportunity for cultural
learning. Several factors must be considered. For example, programs vary widely in terms of location, length of stay, housing options, program goals, and so forth. All of these factors have some impact on the overall study abroad experience. But perhaps the most important issue to consider is linguistic and cultural immersion. That is to say, how immersed will the student be in the given foreign culture (C2)?

Regardless of the aforementioned factors, study abroad program administrators typically include in their literature references to the immersion component of their programs. The idea is that the student will be completely immersed in the C2 both linguistically and culturally, whether he or she intends to be immersed or not. The idea is that it is precisely this immersion experience that will lead to a greater linguistic and cultural understanding of the C2 than would be gained through traditional on-campus language courses. This claim is not always true. In many instances, cultural and linguistic immersion become a matter of choice for students.

The program’s location is an important determinant of success in the area of immersion. Bowman (1987)
stated that the type of cultural adjustment required of the American study abroad student in any European city changes over time. As products become more readily available and even favorite brand names can be easily located, the complexion of cultural adjustment changes. Bowman also stated that "some aspects of the programs which expose the students to cultural differences are no longer so easy to arrange" (p. 46). One reason is that homestay placements that lead to a sense of being part of a family are harder to find due to a decrease in family size and apartment size in the major European cities. Bowman further stated that "the sheer numbers of American students and American tourists that one finds in major European cities serves to dilute the encounter with the foreign culture" (p. 46).

While his comments are specific to Europe, they are similar to the situation in other study abroad destinations such as Mexico. In the case of Mexico, various problems may arise. For example, there is an inherent paradox involved in the placing of students with host families through any program. The longer a given family works with a program, the better it understands the expectations of program administrators.
and students alike. For example, host families learn over time the types and quantity of food expected, as well as the number of meals to be served daily. Even if they have been instructed to serve only typical Mexican cuisine, however, they may begin to serve American style food to accommodate students. While the less adventuresome student may be pleased by the availability of familiar foods, this contrasts with the goal of living with a "typical" Mexican family and trying new things. Moreover, based on his or her limited exposure, the student may come to believe that American food is more prevalent in the average Mexican home than it really is. As Abrams (1981) stated, "Paradoxically, the more often a good family is used, the more it becomes Americanized and less typical of its culture" (pp. 65-66).

Another irony in homestay placements is that the longer a Mexican family hosts American students, the more likely it is that some, if not all, members of the family will speak English. Although program administrators try to assure that no host families speak English, the reality is that many do. In some cases, perhaps no one did speak English when the family
began hosting American students. But after five to ten years, they have learned some English from the students or from their own children who have studied it in school.

Returning to Bowman's observation of the increased numbers of American students and tourists in major European cities, it is clear that the situation in Mexico is much the same. In fact, it would seem that the more successful a study abroad program or program destination is, the more people will learn about it and want to participate. An interesting case in point is Cuernavaca, Morelos, the location of the program highlighted in this study. In 1995, Cuernavaca was home to at least ten professional language institutes, hosting a minimum of twelve semester and year programs and thirteen summer programs for American students. This includes only those American programs and institutions listed in Peterson (1995a, 1995b) and Steen (1995). Again, a paradox arises because this increase in the number of Americans causes a necessary decrease in the sense of immersion for all involved. Not only does the American student see many other Americans on a regular basis, but this leads to other
problems as well. First, he or she is presented with the opportunity to speak English with these fellow Americans instead of trying to maintain immersion in the Spanish language. Second, the large number of American students and tourists in many Mexican cities increases the likelihood that the local commercial community will adapt to the visitors in an attempt to boost commerce. For example, many Cuernavaca taxi drivers, street vendors, and restaurant employees speak English to American students and tourists in order to sell their products. The non-Mexican student often must make a conscious decision to become immersed in the target language and culture in order to achieve her own purposes for studying abroad.

Theoretical Framework

The focus of this study is cultural learning through a study abroad experience. Kroeber and Kluckholn (1952) cited more than 160 definitions of the term "culture." There are various perspectives from which the concept of culture is viewed in academia. For example, sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists each approach culture in a different
manner. While the sociologist might focus on the socially-constructed nature of culture, the psychologist may be interested in the cognitive processes involved in understanding one’s own culture. Within the field of anthropology, various sub-fields each possess a unique perspective on the concept of culture. For example, Dodd (1977) listed four theoretical approaches to culture, including ethnography, cognitive anthropology, ecological theory, and configurational theory. A brief description of each follows.

Ethnography has traditionally been the method of choice for anthropologists attempting to analyze various key categories within any given cultural group. While this approach lends itself to some degree of comparison, it may be limited by inconsistencies in the definition of the categories and sub-categories. Dodd explained that "ethnographic theory seeks to develop and utilize categories of utility in the analysis of culture" (p. 13). For example, the following categories are found in one of several well-known category systems used in ethnographic research: culture, society, and personality; material culture;
economic organization; social organization; political organization; social control; art and play; language; world view—knowledge and belief; and stability and change. Each category is, in turn, composed of subcategories. For example, the category of material culture includes the following subcategories: food and food customs; clothes and personal adornment; housing and community settings; travel and transportation; tools, weapons, and machines; and ceramics, tools, and metallurgy. An ethnographer may use this topical and subtopical analytical system to generate data about any or all of the general categories.

A second approach to culture is that of cognitive anthropology, also referred to as "Ethnoscience," "Ethnosemantics," and the "New Ethnology" (Harris, 1968). This perspective "stemmed from a concern to theoretically explain the cognitive realms behind the material culture that traditional ethnology attempts to describe" (Dodd, 1977, p. 23). Traditional ethnology focuses on the analysis of a given culture via its material manifestations, and cognitive anthropology attempts to determine not only the significant material manifestations, but also the organization and
relatedness of these phenomena in a given culture (Dodd, 1977).

A third approach to culture, ecological theory, stems from the recognition by anthropologists and other social scientists that the environment plays an important role in cultural definition. For example, Dodd (1977) cites two ways in which ecological environment becomes a cultural determinant. First, when a given environment can no longer accommodate a population due to population increases, expansion to new frontiers occurs. In this new environment, changes in dress, diet, agricultural practices, vocabulary, and so forth can be expected to develop. Also, as lower-ranking members of the original society are typically sent to colonize the frontier, they develop new hierarchies in the new culture. Second, ecological theorists are interested in the relationships between neighboring cultures based on the exchange of goods, products, and services. For example, if one community has a supply of wood and another has tobacco, they may begin to trade these products and develop a symbiotic relationship based on their ability to fulfill mutual needs. Once a relationship has been developed,
cultural borrowing may take place in both cultures. Cultural ecology theorists are interested in the environmental-ecological pressures that cause such cultural adaptation.

A fourth approach to culture presented by Dodd, called configurational theory, views culture as more than the sum of its component parts. Instead of focussing on the content of a culture, an attempt is made to understand a dominant idea or theme held by members of the given culture. For example, one configurational theorist, Ruth Benedict, "was more concerned with the discovery of fundamental attitudes than with the functional relationship of cultural items to each other..." (Dodd, 1977, p. 28).

In contrast to Dodd, Keesing (1974) divided the various theories of culture into two main areas, cultures as adaptive systems, and ideational theories of culture. Within each broader heading, Keesing distinguished the various schools of thought. A brief summary of Keesing’s scheme follows.

Those cultural theorists who have been grouped by Keesing under the general title "cultural adaptationists" vary in their approaches to the study
of culture and disagree on various points. However, Keesing presented four points on which they generally agree. First, cultures are seen as "systems that serve to relate human communities to their ecological settings" (p. 75). Second, "cultural change is primarily a process of adaptation and what amounts to natural selection" (p. 75). Third, "technology, subsistence economy, and elements of social organization directly tied to production are the most adaptively central realms of culture." (p. 75). Finally, "the ideational components of cultural systems may have adaptive consequences— in controlling population, contributing to subsistence, maintaining the ecosystem, etc.; and these, though often subtle, must be traced out wherever they lead" (p. 76).

Under the heading of ideational theories of culture, Keesing discussed the view of cultures as cognitive systems, structural systems, and symbolic systems. According to Keesing, theorists who view culture as a cognitive system conceptualize culture as a system of knowledge. Thus, according to Keesing, from this perspective, "...cultures are
epistemologically in the same realm as language (Sassure’s *langue* or Chomsky’s competence), as inferred ideational codes lying behind the realm of observable events*" (p. 77). This theory of culture is equivalent to cognitive anthropology in Dodd’s description above.

From Europe came the idea of cultures as structural systems. One notable theorist in this group is Levi-Strauss. According to Keesing, "Levi-Strauss views culture as shared symbolic systems that are cumulative creations of mind; he seeks to discover in the structuring of cultural domains—myth, art, kinship, language—the principles of mind that generate these cultural elaborations" (p. 78). According to Keesing, "Levi-Strauss is more concerned with ‘Culture’ than ‘a culture’..." (p. 79).

The third view, that of cultures as symbolic systems, has followers in both the United States and Europe. For example, one American theorist in this tradition is Clifford Geertz. According to Keesing, "Geertz sees his view of culture as semiotic. To study culture is to study shared codes of meaning" (p. 79). Keesing further stated that for Geertz "anthropology thus becomes a matter of interpretation, not
decipherment (in this, Geertz contrasts his own approach with Levi-Strauss')... and interpretation becomes 'thick description' that must be deeply imbedded in the contextual richness of social life" (p. 79).

Keesing identified two parallel traditions within the field of anthropology: cultural anthropology and social anthropology. The former is an American tradition and the latter a British tradition. In cultural anthropology, social patterns are considered one realm of the culture. In social anthropology, "cultural patterns are crystallized in social structure" (p. 83).

Keesing pointed out that many modern theorists from both groups agree that "cultural and social realms are distinct though interrelated: neither is a mere reflection of the other--each must be considered in its own right" (p. 83).

With respect to the cultural anthropological theory of culture, Bohannan (1992) stated that cultural anthropology focuses on two characteristics of human beings, tools and meaning. Bohannan defined a tool as "something that is manufactured in order to create or
to achieve something else" (p. 7). Tools should not be perceived as only material creations, for Bohannan explained further (p. 7) that tools may be contrivances like hoes, screwdrivers, or machines. But tools may also be ideas. And, importantly, tools may be social devices and inventions like governments, specialized social groups to achieve economic production or religious enlightenment, or many other organizations for specific purposes.

Meaning relates to purpose or intention. Human beings may use words and symbols in order to assign meaning.

Bohannan described the human being as having two things: biology and culture. Like other living things, the human body follows the laws of biology. But human beings also have culture. The cultural anthropologist seeks to understand culture and to understand the ways in which it adds to the chemistry, physics, and biology of human life without altering their contributions.

Like many others who attempt to define culture, Bohannan began with Tylor’s definition, given in 1871. He stated that "culture is traditionally defined as ‘that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capability acquired by man as a member of society’ (Bohannan, 1992, p. 11). Building on this traditional definition,
Bohannan sorted out the various aspects of culture as follows. First, he noted that culture is a complex whole consisting of a series of interrelated parts. If some key parts are destroyed, a given culture may collapse. Second, culture is acquired, or learned. While human beings are not born with culture, they do have the capacity to learn it. Third, Bohannan stated that culture "is used by persons as members of society; indeed, culture is the very substance of human society" (p. 12). Fourth, culture serves as a teaching device, as elders instruct the young in ways of using their bodies as well as the environment. Fifth, culture serves as an extension to biology as it allows human beings and other creatures to do things that their bodies alone could not accomplish. Here, Bohannan gave the example of chimpanzees that use sticks to fish termites out of their mounds. Without such cultural adaptation, the chimpanzees could not get to the termites. Bohannan pointed out, however, that such cultural adaptations are rare in the non-human world. Finally, culture allows for various solutions to the same basic challenges of life. These given solutions
may then be stored by members of a culture and be passed on to others over time.

Bohannan cited (pp. 13-14) seven characteristics of culture and of the creatures it sustains:
*Culture is learned.
*Every human activity is culturized.
*Culture is the medium of our individuality and personhood.
*Culture is the medium of human social relationships.
*Culture can be seen as a series of symbols.
*Only parts of our culture are conscious.
*Culture, to be culture, must be simultaneously in somebody’s head and in the environment.

The present study used Bohannan’s presentation of cultural anthropology as its theoretical base. Culture is thus defined as tools and meanings. While these are broad categories, not all behavior would fall within their parameters. For example, the action of eating, would not be considered cultural because it is a biological phenomenon. However, how and what and when one eats would be considered part of culture, as these are defined differently across cultures.
Definition of Terms

The following key terms are defined in the context of the present study as follows:

1. **Culture** - Tools and meanings of a group of people.

2. **Learning/Acquisition** - Terms used interchangeably in this study to describe the process of gaining knowledge in naturalistic or classroom contexts.

3. **Pool Participants** - The five students who originally agreed to participate in the study and for whom data were collected.

4. **Routine Study Abroad Activities** - Typical activities performed by study abroad students during the course of their experience, including shopping, visiting with friends in cafes, sightseeing, and so forth.

5. **Study Abroad** - Any academic program allowing students to study in another country for a fixed period of time.
Assumptions

The following assumptions were made by the researcher in the present study.

1. The information contained in participants' journals accurately reflected their beliefs at the time they wrote; any change in beliefs was noted in later entries.

2. Although they are closely interrelated, language and culture may be viewed as related but independent constructs. Language is seen by the researcher as a subset of culture, and thus the present study did not specifically treat this aspect of study abroad. While language was the medium used by participants to transmit their thoughts and feelings via interviews and journals, for example, language itself was not a key variable in the present study, nor was language acquisition on the part of study participants a key variable.
Limitations

The following limitations of the present study are acknowledged:

1. Data were collected over the course of four months, primarily through written and phone contacts. A single site visit to Mexico and two personal contacts in the United States between the researcher and the participants occurred during the study.

2. One typical aspect of qualitative research is the inclusion of participants at every step of the data collection and analysis process. In the current study the researcher was unable to review case studies with participants upon completion of the data analysis. One participant considered quitting the study twice and all pool participants stated that they were extremely busy students. They were not receiving any remuneration for their participation in the study.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One describes the research problem, its significance, and the research questions of the study.
Chapter Two reviews relevant research in the field of study abroad and describes the need for the present study. Chapter Three describes the methodology used in the study. Chapter Four presents the data including general categories of cultural focus and responses to interview questions across participants. Chapter Five begins with an analysis of the data presented in Chapter Four, including answers to the major research questions that guided the study. The chapter concludes with implications of the study for curriculum development and pedagogy as well as areas in which further research is needed. A bibliography and appendices are also included in the study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of the relevant literature was conducted simultaneously with data collection to permit a "creative interplay among the processes of data collection, literature review, and researcher introspection" (Patton, 1990, p. 163).

History of U.S. Study Abroad

Study abroad programs exist in many forms. Programs may offer curricula taught in a target language or in the native language of the students. They are normally designed to last anywhere from two weeks to a year. Students may be taught in sheltered classes or be mainstreamed with students from the target culture.

Study abroad has existed in the United States since colonial times, when young men were sent to Europe to obtain their education. Women were not generally admitted into U.S. colleges until the 1830s,
when the first women’s colleges and coeducational colleges opened. In 1870, the University of Michigan became the first American university to admit women. While American males studied in Europe at universities, females tended to go to Europe on organized educational tours in the course of which they visited museums, cathedrals, and so forth (Bowman, 1987).

What is now commonly referred to as study abroad used to be called junior year abroad. The latter term came into being in the 1920s. In the 1950s, the term study abroad was invented as a broader term, as American colleges were then sending students abroad in their sophomore or junior years. Both terms still exist, but study abroad became the more common term in the 1980s (Bowman, 1987).

Junior year programs before World War II were typically run by women’s colleges and, at first, only enrolled women. An exception to this all-female rule was Delaware College. Now known at the University of Delaware, it was the first school to establish a junior year abroad program in 1921 (sending its first group of students in 1923). Junior year programs in Europe grew in number throughout the 1920s but then were suspended
during World War II. After World War II, most programs began operating again.

In the 1950s, various approaches to study abroad were being used by American colleges and universities. For example, the Antioch program consisted of on-campus classes and off-campus work experiences. Bowman (1987) stated that in the Antioch program "both the academic component and the work experience were to be enriched by the experience of living in a foreign culture" (p. 16). Students in the program gained experience by working in several locations throughout France.

The U. S. State Department, via its Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, endorsed the concept of study abroad in the late 1950s. In 1959, it offered financial assistance to help some universities set up study abroad programs in Latin American countries as an outgrowth of its interest in improving contacts with Latin America.

The National Conference on Study Abroad Programs was held in Chicago in 1960. Some 500 university presidents, deans, language professors, and study abroad administrators were in attendance. Many of the major addresses included cautions about the growth of
the programs. There was general excitement about the programs among program directors (Bowman, 1987). The conference summary included twelve findings of the conference. For example, it was concluded that "immersion in the culture of the host country to the extent possible is an essential part of any program" (Bowman, 1987, p. 18). These twelve points were considered to be the main issues of study abroad throughout the next two decades.

Various meetings and conferences in the early 1960s led to a general consensus as to the desired make-up of an overseas program. The consensus generally mirrored the twelve-point summary of the Chicago conference of 1960.

One area of concern was the issue of proliferation of programs. Bowman (1987) stated that "the schools already operating programs felt that the arrival of American student groups at their host universities would dilute their contacts with the local community and complicate their relationship with local university officials" (p. 19). In fact, while in 1950 there were approximately ten programs in Europe, this number
triplied in 1960 and more than 100 new programs were launched in Europe throughout the 1960s.

Other study abroad topics of discussion in the 1960s were language prerequisites, the creation of special classes (rather than mainstreaming study abroad participants with host university students), language of instruction, the optimum grade level of participants, housing options as they related to the maintenance of contact with the host culture, and so forth. The last issue, that of housing options, was not resolved by any one solution. European dormitories were different from American ones in that they did not encourage as much interaction among students. Apartments or pensions, too, often lacked the ability to stimulate interaction with the community. Family placement often meant renting a room from a widow. Bowman concluded that "whatever the choice in classes or housing, it took careful monitoring of the arrangements to assure that they provided the less adventurous student with the most helpful opportunity to get acquainted with his/her neighboring residents in a foreign city" (pp. 21-22).
The 1960s witnessed growth in study abroad programs throughout Europe and elsewhere. These programs were sponsored by both public and private colleges and universities. Bowman (1987) noted that by 1970 study abroad programs had become an accepted element of undergraduate education.

From 1962 to 1975 there was a rapid increase in the number of study abroad programs. After that time, some programs were discontinued, but increases in the number of programs continued. Total student enrollments continued to increase during the 1970s and 1980s. Bowman stated that increased opportunities for students to study in programs sponsored by other institutions contributed to the increased enrollments since 1970.

Value of Study Abroad - Historical Perspective

The value of study abroad has been promoted by myriad sources including various commissions and task forces. For example, according to the 1979 Report of the President’s Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies report:
We must broaden the opportunities of the American people to acquire knowledge and appreciation of cultures, languages and societies not our own. For many, such knowledge is in its own right a deeply rewarding and fulfilling experience. For all it will become increasingly important (p. 70).

The report emphasized the need to provide the business community with people who have both the linguistic and cultural skills necessary to operate effectively abroad. Without such skilled individuals, the report concluded, the United States will be unable to meet the growing challenge of foreign competition and compete successfully in the global market.

In a questionnaire study polling 1,045 college students, Sharma (1984) found the following qualities related to international experience by college students: cosmopolitan world outlook, understanding of U.S. culture, international career aspiration, and political liberalism. He concluded that "institutions should encourage U.S. students to participate in international travel because this activity appears to be a strong force in helping international education programs meet their goals and objectives" (p. 185).

A 1990 report by the National Task Force on Undergraduate Education Abroad stated that "there is abundant evidence that our citizens are not well
prepared for the international realities ahead" (p. 1). The report went on to claim that "by any measure, whether it be comparisons of foreign language proficiency, tests of geographic literacy, or availability of specialists to advise government or business...the level of international knowledge and understanding in our country is wanting" (p. 1).

The report cited a growing recognition that educational curricula must be infused with more international content and aim to instill in students a greater degree of sensitivity and understanding, and indicated that serious study abroad programs offer college and university undergraduates the opportunity to gain the kind of "cross-cultural understanding and international learning not achievable through almost any other approach" (p. 1-2).

Thomlison (1991) studied the impact of study abroad on University of Evansville students and found substantial changes in terms of attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviors, specific knowledge levels, open-mindedness, personal growth, and general appreciation of other cultures.
A large-scale piece of research on study abroad was reported by Carlson, et al. (1991). The Study Abroad Evaluation Project (SAEP) was begun in 1982 and was designed to answer such questions as who studies abroad, how these students differ from those who do not, what changes occur as a result of study abroad, and how study abroad affects students over time. The study consisted of administering questionnaires to both participants and non-participants before and after the study abroad experience. In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with former study abroad students. Results suggested that "students who study abroad are much more interested in international affairs after this experience than before, and their knowledge of the host country increases dramatically" (p. 48). Findings also suggested that there were two types of former study abroad students, maximizers and minimalists. There were slightly more of the former reported than the latter. Maximizers were defined as people who incorporated their study abroad experience into their present career, in terms of their values and practices. Minimalists were described as people who stated that they valued their study abroad experience
but did not find that experience very relevant to their current job.

Government agencies, task forces, and researchers are not the only groups that have recognized the importance of study abroad experiences. Educational institutions such as Pennsylvania State University have adopted cultural diversity requirements as part of the general undergraduate curriculum (Laubscher, 1994). One way to fulfill the requirement is to participate in a study abroad program. In fact, an advisory committee to the University provost has recommended that the University attempt to ensure that 20 percent of the undergraduate students who ultimately receive baccalaureate degrees participate in a study abroad program at some point in their undergraduate career.

Programs and Practices in a Second Language

Defining Culture for the Language Classroom

Definitions of culture abound in the field of foreign language teaching. For example, in a text on second language acquisition, Ramirez (1995) stated that culture is created collectively by members of a given society and consists of interrelated elements: material
objects and artefacts (dress, type of shelter, tools for working), social patterns for living (kinship arrangements, educational systems, governmental structures, and economic organization), and mental patterns (ways of thinking, beliefs, values, and rules for actions) (pp. 59-60).

In a training video for prospective immersion teachers, Montgomery County Public Schools (1992) defined culture as "the total expression of a society."

While some scholars and practitioners in the field have submitted definitions of culture, others have focused on discussions of its definition. For example, in her text on the teaching of culture, Damen (1987) did not overtly define culture in the opening chapters. Instead she discussed the definitions of others and stated that she chose to postpone her definition until later in the text. Her only direct definition of culture is located in the text's glossary. She defined culture as "learned and shared human patterns or models for living; day-to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is mankind's primary adaptive mechanism" (p. 369). Like Damen, Seelye (1994) avoided overtly defining culture in his text devoted to its teaching. He noted the difficulty that intercultural
communication teachers had had in defining culture and added that it was more important that a definition be broad than that it be precise. He did, however, refer to culture at one point as "everything humans have learned" (p. 22). Robinson (1988) stated that many educators are more concerned with "practicing culture" in the classroom than with defining it. She added that "while this emphasis is well-placed, one’s general concept about what culture is and how it is acquired will determine what is practiced in a classroom aimed at cross-cultural understanding and how it is practiced" (p. 7).

In addition to defining culture for the purposes of the language classroom, there exists a need to define an appropriate way to teach culture. The Montgomery County Public Schools training video mentioned above suggested that the teaching of culture should be organized around cultural symbols, products, and practices. Seelye (1994) suggested approaching the teaching of culture by writing cultural goals. He established a set of six goals to which instructional activities should relate. These goals address student
interest, the who, what, where and when, and why of culture, and cultural exploration.

Gochenour and Janeway (1993) developed a cross-cultural training approach to encourage "the development of an appreciative, nonexploitative relationship with people of another culture" (p. 2). They stated that the objective of the approach was "not improved commerce, national advantage, or religious conversion (to name but a few reasons for going abroad or wanting to be more effective cross-culturally), but solely as an end in itself, as a means toward building a closer human community" (p. 2). Their training approach consisted of the following seven steps:

1. Establish contact and essential communication
2. Establish bona fides and be accepted (i.e. allowed to exist)
3. Observe what is going on and sort out meanings
4. Establish a role within the role definition of the host society
5. Conscious knowledge of oneself - as a center, as a cultural being, and as one taking responsibility
6. Conscious development of needed attributes and skills - mental, emotional, and physical
7. Conscious establishment of self-sustaining and meaningful relationships within the host culture

They stated that success was measured by the "degree to which a person is able to enter into respectful, appreciative (though not necessarily admiring) relationships within a culture other than his or her own, and discover some values that have personal significance and a sense of common humanity" (pp. 2-3).

They stated that the first two stages of the process occur "almost automatically" and happen "to" the individual, whereas at stage three, "the ability of the person to reflect and respond more deliberately becomes important" (p. 4). Stage four links the first three and last three stages. According to Gochencour and Janeway, the final three stages will only occur as a result of conscious effort on the part of the individual.

Types of Cultures

In addition to the ways in which to teach culture, researchers have focused on different types of
cultures, including high and low context, and monochronic and polychronic.

High and Low Context

Hall and Hall (1990) and Steele and Suozzo (1994) distinguished between high and low context cultures. According to Steele and Suozzo, a high context culture is one in which human relations are governed by a relatively complex code of behavioral expectations, hierarchies, and obligations, one in which there are constant references to the past and to events of historical import, one in which actions and policies are seen in relationship to an elaborate context rather than in isolation (p. 55).

Hall and Hall gave examples of high context cultures as Japan, Mexico, and Arab and Mediterranean countries. Low context cultures, in contrast, are ones in which individuals "compartmentalize their personal relationships, their work, and many aspects of day-to-day life" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 7). Hall and Hall gave examples of low-context cultures as the United States, Germany, and Switzerland. Steele and Suozzo stated that no culture is uniquely high or low context and that such designation can derive from cross-cultural comparison such that a given culture might be
considered high context when compared with one culture but be considered low context in comparison with another.

Monochronic and Polychronic

Hall and Hall (1990) and Condon (1985) distinguished between monochronic and polychronic cultures. This distinction deals with the way in which individuals in the given culture view the concept of time. Individuals from a monochronic culture, such as the United States, see time as linear and tend to choose to deal with one issue at a time. They concentrate on that one issue until it is concluded. Individuals from a polychronic culture, such as Mexico, do not see time as linear. Hence, they can adapt to interruptions and delays without becoming disturbed.

Research on Study Abroad

There is currently a growing body of literature on the topic of study abroad. Weaver (1989) compiled a bibliography of some 267 works classified as cross-cultural issues, evaluations, guides, impact studies, general overviews, program descriptions, research and
theoretical presentations. This bibliography covers the years 1951 through 1988 and includes published reports as well as unpublished papers.

Linguistic Acquisition

There have been various studies on the linguistic acquisition of study abroad students (Brecht & Robinson (1993); Freed (1995); Lafford (1995); and others). For example, Freed (1995) compared study abroad participants with non-participants in terms of fluency and found that the study abroad group had higher fluency both before and after study abroad than the non-participants.

Brecht and Robinson (1993) reported on a two-phase study of linguistic acquisition of study abroad students in Russia undertaken by the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) and The National Foreign Language Center (NFLC). Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used in the study. The first phase employed statistical analysis in order to identify the relationship between various student characteristics and assessment of student abilities in speaking, listening, and reading both before and after
participation in the study abroad program. The researchers found three significant predictors of gain, including the following: previous study of another foreign language, grammar/reading ability, and gender.

The second phase consisted of an ethnographic study of the language learning process of students while in Russia. An attempt was made to explain the statistical correlations mentioned above and to use actual student accounts to present a preliminary picture of the language learning experience.

Attitude Change/Social Adjustment

In addition to studies focusing on linguistic acquisition, there have been various studies on attitude change and social adjustment of study abroad participants (Bueno-Popkey (1991); Carlson & Widaman (1988); Gwynne (1981); and others.) Bueno-Popkey (1991) compared participants in a study abroad program with non-participants and found a lack of statistically significant difference between the two groups. Like Bueno-Popkey, Carlson and Widaman compared study abroad participants with non-participants. They found that students who spent a year abroad increased their sense
of international political concern, cross-cultural interest, and cultural cosmopolitanism. Their views of the U.S. were positive but also more critical than those of students who did not study abroad. Gwynne (1981) studied U.S. community college students' attitudes of worldmindedness and attitudes towards members of the host culture. She, too, compared study abroad participants with non-participants, and found that the study abroad group was initially more worldminded and tolerant toward than the non-participants. The study abroad participants increased positively on both types of attitudes after the experience of studying abroad.

Qualitative Research on Process

Most research on study abroad to date has been quantitative and has focused on the impact and outcome of participation in study abroad experiences, rather than using qualitative methods to explore the actual processes involved in producing the outcomes (Laubscher, 1994).

Laubscher’s study added an important new dimension to the research base. In his study, he used
qualitative methodology carried out via case studies in an attempt to focus on the process that precedes the product. In his study of thirty Pennsylvania State University students who participated in study abroad programs in various countries in the autumn of 1990, Laubscher focused on the students' perceptions of the role and impact of out-of-class experiences on their overall experience.

His study placed the students in the role of ethnographer. Data collected through interviews with each student at the conclusion of their study abroad experience were categorized and yielded several salient patterns of discovery. For example, he posited three basic ways in which students believed they learned about cultural differences: participant observation, personal interaction, and travel. He then divided each basic category into subcategories. For example, participant observation was divided into private life and public life.

Laubscher's study was limited in several ways. First, although he referred to the thick description obtained via interviews, one can reasonably question
the depth attained in multiple case studies based on a single interview with each of the thirty participants. Second, Laubscher analyzed only cultural differences: he did not include similarities found across cultures.

Although the focus of this study is different from Laubscher’s in that the researcher is interested in the aspects of the target culture on which study participants focus, rather than on the role of out-of-class activities, the two studies share some common ground. Like Laubscher’s, the present study is designed to use qualitative methods of inquiry to understand the process of discovery on the part of participants.

Through the use of several different sources of data (e.g., journals and interviews) and journal formats (e.g., written versus tape-recorded, English versus Spanish), as well as prolonged engagement in the data collection process, this study attempted to present the kind of detailed and multi-faceted, or "thick," description Laubscher tried to attain.
Research on Mexico

Oster (1989) presented a collection of stories about people he had met while living in Mexico and attempted to include their sometimes conflicting points of view. Various authors (Condon (1985); Heusinkveld (1993); Iturriaga (1987); Paz (1992); and others) have described Mexican culture and some have sought to compare it with American culture in an attempt to increase mutual understanding on the part of individuals from each country. As Condon stated, "despite the intertwining of population, culture and destiny, there is still a great gap in understanding" between the two countries (1985, p. xvi). Paz suggested that

In general Americans have not looked for Mexico in Mexico; they have looked for their obsessions, enthusiasms, phobias, hopes, interests—and these are what they have found. In short, the history of our relationship is the history of a mutual and stubborn decelt, usually involuntary though not always so (1992, p. 57).

The following represent some of these authors’ insights about various cultural topics.
Negative Stereotypes

Both Condon and Heusinkveld addressed the issue of negative stereotypes between Mexicans and Americans and pointed out that the physical proximity of the two countries does not necessarily discourage such a phenomenon. For example, Condon stated that Mexican stereotypes such as the migrant worker or the Frito Bandito and the American stereotype of a rich, greedy character with bags of money still persist. In fact, he stated that "some observers believe that the kinds of superficial contacts Mexicans and North Americans have actually increase rather than decrease the likelihood of serious culture-based breakdowns in their relations" (1985, p. xvii). Heusinkveld also cited the American entertainment industry and the presence of Mexican itinerant farm workers in the United States as sources of stereotyping. In addition, she pointed out that Mexican-American border cities as well as resort cities frequented by American tourists are atypical of Mexico and can contribute to stereotyping. The former tend to have higher crime rates than other Mexican cities. The latter, including Cancun, Acapulco, and Puerto Vallarta are also atypical. According to
Heusinkveld, "these beach resorts present an idealized but superficial view of Mexico: a life of perpetual leisure characterized by tequila, sunshine, and white sand beaches" (p. 3).

Work

Heusinkveld compared Mexican and American views of work and drew several conclusions. First, she concluded that Americans draw their self-identity from their work to a much greater extent than Mexicans, who tend to define themselves based on other aspects of their lives, such as family or hobbies. Second, she noted the difference in the general attitude toward work held by the two groups. Americans tend to adhere to the Puritan work ethic, believing that work is good for the individual. In addition, they typically believe that hard work will pay off in the end and are motivated by this concept. Mexicans, on the other hand, have a history of disequal opportunity and do not necessarily have the same faith in positive results for hard work.
Family

Iturriaga (1987) stated that around the beginning of this century Mexican family ties began to weaken as a result of the need for fathers to leave their home towns and go to larger cities or other countries in search of better employment opportunities. He also mentioned military service as an institution that took fathers away from their families. Iturriaga added that growth of cities was another source of weakening of the Mexican family, explaining that large cities do not typically provide the close-knit social structure found in smaller towns. As a result, many of the strict social rules enforced in small towns are relaxed in cities and such problems as divorce are more common. He stated that women’s increasing role in the business world had also contributed to the weakening of the Mexican family. He suggested that women’s increased sense of economic self-sufficiency had a negative impact on marriages in that women who worked before getting married did not depend on their husbands for their very survival. As such, the marriage was considered less stable. Iturriaga said that imitation of the U.S. had a negative effect on the Mexican
family, adding that the U.S. has one of the highest levels of family disintegration in the world.

Heusinkveld described the family as "the most enduring of all Mexican institutions" and added that "the family continues to provide each Mexican with a measure of moral and emotional support throughout life, from cradle to grave" (1993, p. 10). She said that the intergenerational family is more common in Mexico than in the United States, and that it is common for Mexican family gatherings to include members of several generations. She added that celebrations of birthdays, saints’ days, and so forth are considered important to all members of the family and take precedence over work or other commitments. Heusinkveld said that Mexican children tend to live in their parents’ homes until they marry, even if they are in their twenties or thirties. In addition, the college-bound typically attend the local university and live at home rather than moving away from home as many American students do. She added that changes in tradition are taking place in Mexico.
Language

Heusinkveld explained several ways in which Mexicans' language reflects their culture. For example, she cited the distinction between the familiar and formal modes of address in Spanish, complimenting and insulting practices, and using language to blame fate.

Religion

Iturriaga identified four groups of people in terms of religious affiliation in Mexico: practicing Roman Catholics, those who observe precolonial religions; Protestants and those who practice other non-Catholic religions; and those who practice no religion. Heusinkveld described Mexican religion as a blending of the Catholicism brought by the Spaniards and the pre-Columbian indigenous religious traditions. She identified one common characteristic of Mexican and American societies, the professed separation of church and state. She said that the Catholic Church continues to have considerable influence in Mexico despite the official separation.
Gender Roles

Heusinkveld noted that Mexican gender roles are beginning to change somewhat but that men tend to maintain the traditional role of family provider and virile male who is polite and attentive to females. While some women are seeking careers outside the home, they tend to remain in the roles of wife and mother and provide daily meals, perhaps with the help of a maid.

Condon stated that in the 1970s and 1980s American men and women had begun to be sensitized to sexist attitudes present in some speech, advertisements, and hiring practice and that the ability to fight discrimination in court had become an option. Like Heusinkveld, he stated that in Mexico traditional gender roles are typically still in place. He mentioned the concept of machismo practiced by some Mexican men, including sexual looks and comments directed at women. Condon added that machismo is concerned with authority as well as with sex. He stated that middle- and upper-class Mexican women tend to pay close attention to their personal grooming, including hair, make-up, and clothing.
Leisure

Heusinkveld stated that Mexicans tend to view the American tendency to pack as many activities as possible into their leisure time as frenetic and exhausting. She said that unlike Americans, Mexicans typically include opportunities for leisure in their daily lives, rather than waiting for weekends or vacations. Paz noted that it has only been in recent years that Americans have begun to learn the art of the festival, as hedonism has begun to triumph over the traditional work ethic.

History

Condon noted that while Americans tend to be guided by the future, Mexicans often "look back into history for direction and guidance" (p. 1). The history of the United States has a clear beginning point and a linear chronology of events. Events emphasized are those that were positive in nature, such as battles won. Mexican history, in contrast, is longer and less clearly delineated.

Paz also commented on the dichotomy of time reference between the two countries, noting that "the
American lives on the very edge of the now, always ready to leap toward the future" (1992, p. 65). He stated that the Mexican, in contrast, tends to seek a stability rooted in the past.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while there is considerable research on study abroad, it tends to be quantitative in nature and focus on issues other than cultural acquisition. There are several sources that deal with cultural differences between Mexico and the United States. However, there need to be more studies that apply the latter information to the process of cultural acquisition in a study abroad setting. The present study was designed to partially fill the existing gap in the literature.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction
This chapter describes the methodology and procedures used in the study. It begins with a rationale for the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodology, as well as case studies. Second, a description of the various data sources for the study is given. Third, the researcher’s previous work on this topic is described, along with insights gained which impacted the current study. The fourth section entitled "The Study" presents a detailed description of all aspects of the study, including the following: the location of the study abroad program in which study participants were enrolled, the host school, the program itself, study participant selection and training, data collection methods, logistical concerns of the researcher, the use of peer debriefers, data analysis procedures, and the researcher’s participation in the human subjects review process.
Methodology

This section provides a rationale for the research methodologies chosen and the decision to analyze data via case studies. Before undertaking any investigation, a researcher must make certain key decisions. These include determining and refining the topic of inquiry, reviewing pertinent literature, determining a research focus and methodology, and a host of logistical decisions related to timeline, procedures, and dissemination of results.

Educational researchers typically choose between two broad types of methodology, quantitative and qualitative. Like Brecht and Robinson (1993) this study represented a hybrid research design combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. As such it retained some, but not all, qualities typically associated with each methodology. One quantitative aspect of the study was the use of frequency counts to describe the overall cultural content of participants' journals. The researcher determined that this type of data display would allow for a synthesis of journal content, and thus aid the reader in understanding the content of the journals. This numerical picture was
augmented by qualitative case studies of participants in which their backgrounds, goals, interests, and interview comments were presented. Because it was not a purely quantitative study, the results are not considered to be generalizable to all students who study abroad. Generalizability would require a larger pool of participants (typically about thirty), random selection, and other qualities not included in the present study. Similarly, several characteristics common in qualitative research were present in the study while others were not. For example, the researcher included multiple perspectives of the participants by interviewing their program teachers and resident directors. An attempt was made at prolonged engagement, as the study took place over the course of one academic quarter and included pre-, during-, and post-interviews with participants. In addition, the researcher made a one-week site visit. In purely qualitative research, one might expect the researcher to be on-site for the entire data collection period. While the researcher made field notes throughout the study, one can imagine that they would be richer if the researcher had the opportunity to shadow participants
and interact with them on a daily basis. More field notes, interviews, and interaction with participants would necessarily add to the thickness of study data. Qualitative studies often present data from the perspective of participants. In the present study, it was not possible to do the typical member checks that would allow confirmation on the part of participants that thoughts and feelings attributed to them were accurate.

The decision to include qualitative methodology was based on an earlier informal study performed by the researcher on the same topic in which she used a purely quantitative approach via pre- and post-program questionnaires. The results of that pilot study were discouraging because of inherent artificial limits placed on research outcomes based on the nature of questionnaire-based investigations. That is to say that by relying on a questionnaire to identify participants' cultural experiences, the researcher did not allow participants to supply the kind of unlimited information that might have shed more light on the cultural aspects of their study abroad experience. Rather, the depth and breadth of the information that
they were able to provide were limited by the questions asked. For, as Bohannon (1992) observed, "...most questionnaires are unconsciously designed only to confirm what people think they already know or what they want to hear" (p. 39). Hence, it was decided that a qualitative approach in which participants were not provided with a set definition of culture was well-suited to the present study, as it would allow the participants, rather than the researcher, to construct the parameters of the data. As Patton (1990) observed, "approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry" (p. 13). In other words, a researcher can know in advance what she wants to investigate and why. However, she does not know before beginning the study what she will learn and how best to elicit information by using a finite list of questions. While using a questionnaire study may obtain some data, the researcher may not have received the subjects' unbiased views because of what the researcher may not know to ask. To gain a true understanding of the complex phenomena at play in some research environments, the researcher must enter the
study with an open mind about what she is about to learn and try to avoid any a priori definitions or categorizations that would ultimately prove limiting to the results of the study. In the present study, then, it was decided to combine a methodology that would allow participants the freedom to express themselves and to guide the researcher to an understanding of their individual cultural acquisition experiences and views with one that would reign in the data, once collected, to a manageable whole.

Use of Multiple Case Studies

As discussed earlier, the present study followed a multiple case study format, including the use of a variety of data sources as the primary method of data presentation. The use of various data sources provided opportunities for obtaining data that reflected the goals of the study. Yin (1989) presented the case study as just one of several possible ways of conducting social science research, but he made a case for its value when he stated: "The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (p. 14). The case study is
an appropriate organizing method because it "allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events..."(p. 14). In other words, the case-study format allows the researcher to present a variety of perspectives on a given subject. In the case of the present study, the researcher was able to create a well-rounded picture of each participant by combining participants' opinions and observations about themselves with those of their teachers and resident directors, as well as the researcher's. Case studies were deemed an appropriate method of data presentation since the research questions could best be answered with data from various perspectives. Furthermore, it was important to the researcher to be able to provide data from case studies which might inform administrators and curriculum developers about aspects of cultural insight development within a study abroad context.

As stated in Chapter One, the present study began with the collection of data for five college students who were volunteer participants in a study abroad experience in Mexico during Winter Quarter, 1995. Subsequent to data collection, two of the five
participants were chosen as the focus of the study based on such considerations as gender (i.e., one female and one male chosen) and background (he had extensive prior cross-cultural experience while she reported having had none). Therefore, case studies are presented for only these two individuals. Data sources for the study included journals, interviews, and observations; they are described in the next section of this chapter.

Data Sources

Journals

Student journals were the primary source of data for the present study. Each of the five pool participants kept a journal, either in Spanish or English, written or audio-tape recorded during the ten-week study, describing their basic study abroad activities. The two participants who were ultimately selected for the study, Amanda and Billy, both chose to keep written journals. While Amanda kept her journal in Spanish, Billy kept his in English.

Journal entries were made five times per week and were a course requirement of the program. For purposes
of the study, journal entries dealt with two main topics. Participants were asked to record cultural observations of descriptive, comparative, and analytic nature. They were also to record their feelings about themselves and members of the host culture.

Taylor (1991) distinguished between the objective and the subjective student journal. The objective journal is typically associated with experimentation and research and takes on an expository style. Data from this type of journal often leads to the writing of a research paper. The subjective journal, in contrast, "goes beyond data collection to respond to what one has observed or experienced or read" (p. 3). Taylor favored subjective to objective journal writing for students in overseas study programs. She stated that, "since considerably more processing happens when a student writes subjectively, the learning that results from subjective journal writing is especially valuable for students on overseas study programs" (p. 3). The present study, thus, focused on subjective journals as the main source of data. An additional benefit of using subjective journals was that they were one way to capture participants’ thoughts on a systematic basis.
during the study abroad experience. Journal entries also served as a springboard for discussion in follow-up interviews, a way of probing more in-depth the participants' development of cultural understanding. For example, Amanda made several references during the first few weeks in her journal about the different conceptualization of time in the United States and in Mexico. As a result, the researcher chose this topic to probe further in the mid-quarter interview.

Interviews

In addition to the journals, interviews were another source of data. Three independent interviews with each participant were conducted: prior to the study abroad program, at the mid-point of the program, and after completing the program. Each interview lasted between ten and 100 minutes in length, but a typical interview lasted approximately forty minutes. The shorter interviews were the pre-program interviews which consisted of a pre-determined set of six questions. The mid-quarter and end-of-quarter interviews were longer because in addition to the main set of pre-determined questions, participants were
asked follow-up questions based on the contents of their journals up to that point. Appendices A, B, and C contain the pre-program, mid-quarter, and end-of-quarter interview schedules. The first interview documented the participants' prior cross-cultural experiences and their expectations when entering the program. A written autobiographical statement provided each participant the opportunity to describe previous contacts with members of cultures other than their own. A copy of participants' statements of purpose, part of their program application, was also analyzed, with the aim of identifying specific goals in participating in the program. Appendices D and E provide sample autobiographical and purpose statements. Mid- and end-of-quarter interviews provided further information about the participants' insights on cultural topics discussed in earlier journal entries and additional experiences engaged in by participants during their study abroad program.

Pre-program interviews focused on the participants' expectations of the program and prior cross-cultural experiences. The mid-quarter interviews focused on participants' impressions of the city of
Cuernavaca, their host families, and things that surprised them about their experiences up to that point. End-of-quarter interview topics included a week-long rural study experience (i.e., visit to the town of Buenavista de Cuellar), first impressions upon returning to the United States, and program highlights.

Interviews with on-site program administrators, resident directors, and teachers also served as source data. Program administrators were asked about general program goals, the homestay component of the program, and general impressions of American students in terms of their cultural adjustment and assimilation in Mexico. The resident directors were also asked about general program goals. In addition, they were asked about specific cultural learning goals of the program. The researcher sought the general impressions of each of the study participants as well as how he or she seemed to relate with fellow participants, teachers, and the resident directors themselves. As previously stated, The Ohio State University’s program lasted ten weeks. The quarter was divided into three three-week sessions, each the equivalent of one quarter-long course at The Ohio State University in terms of both
contact hours and curriculum. The remaining week served as a break week for the students. Students remained with the same classmates throughout the program but changed teachers each session. Hence, each student was taught by three different teachers over the course of the program. All three teachers were asked to express their general impressions of their student as well as how the individual tended to relate to others. They were asked to recall any noteworthy comments or observations made by the student in class or during breaks about Mexican culture. Their responses were given in Spanish and later translated into English by the researcher. A teacher of Mexican culture was also interviewed to obtain impressions of American students as they interacted routinely in Mexican culture. This teacher’s responses were not limited specifically to the participants in the present study. Rather, they represented general observations about American students who have studied at Cemanahuac, where the program has included more than 600 students in the past seven years. Coupled with data from student interviews, the staff data provided a composite view of participants’ cultural insights and some
indicators of a developmental process on the part of participants. Specific outcomes of the data gathering are reported in Chapter Four.

Observations

The researcher’s observations of participants and observations made by participants’ teachers and program resident directors were used to add multiple perspectives of participants’ interaction with the target culture. Although anecdotal, the observations serve to strengthen the level of descriptive detail of each case study. A total of nine observations were made of each participant: one each by the two resident directors and three teachers, and four by the researcher. These four observations by the researcher, in turn, consisted of one made before the program began and one after the pre-program, mid-quarter, and end-of-quarter interviews. For example, teachers and resident directors reported having favorable impressions of Amanda, the female participant, in terms of her academic progress. However, their observations of her were limited to comments such as the one made by her first teacher that "Amanda does not talk much. If you
ask her a question, she talks. She’s reserved."

The researcher’s initial impression of Amanda was also that she was very quiet and reserved. However, after the mid-quarter interview, the researcher recorded the following observation of Amanda:

After the mid-quarter interview, I felt very comfortable with her. Although she is a quiet and shy person, she is very likeable... She was very excited about the culture in Mexico and made no complaints -- students typically complain about various aspects of the host culture. She thinks a lot about why things are as they are in Mexico as well as the United States.

Hence, the researcher’s site-visit interaction with Amanda had allowed her to see a different side of Amanda’s personality. While she still reported considering Amanda to be quiet and shy, she added observing Amanda’s excitement about Mexican culture and lack of complaints. This is just one example of the benefit of multiple perspectives to a case study; as individuals interact differently with different people, the various impressions generated help to add depth to the description.
Prior Ethnography

Before undertaking the present study, the researcher conducted a pilot study when she served for one quarter as resident director of the same program in Spring Quarter 1993. While carrying out a duty of the resident director to read and evaluate student journals, the researcher noted a trend in the content of her sixteen students’ written entries, namely a lack of detailed and systematic descriptions of cross-cultural experiences. An informal analysis of two of the students’ journals was subsequently made. All journal entries were coded by topic, and the parts of the text relating to given topics were identified as being either descriptive, comparative, or analytical in nature. For example, a general description of Mexican food was listed under the category of food and labeled descriptive. If the student compared Mexican and American food, the entry was labeled comparative. If the student attempted to explain why he or she thought Mexicans eat certain kinds of food, the entry was labeled analytical. It was found that journal entries contained few references to culture, and those that students included tended to be vague descriptions. For
the most part, entries tended not to be comparative or analytical in nature. In short, a paucity of usable data was generated in the informal procedure described above. However, this analysis proved to be a valuable source of insights for the researcher in preparing for and subsequently conducting the pilot study described in the next section.

Pilot Study

In Autumn Quarter 1994, a pilot study was conducted with a single participant. The researcher attended both pre-program orientation sessions and identified one student at the conclusion of the second meeting. The student was asked to participate as the respondent in the pilot study. The student was selected because he was known by the researcher, who, in turn, felt that he would be willing to participate and be honest during the pilot study. The student agreed to participate in the pilot study and did, in fact, fulfill this role.

At the time of his involvement, the participant was a senior majoring in economics. His only previous Spanish language course was the equivalent of Spanish
101, the first course in the language sequence at The Ohio State University. He had earned a grade of C in Spanish 101 at a local community college during the Summer Quarter 1994.

Once the researcher had explained the study and the role the participant would play, the participant was provided with a packet of information including a description of the assignment, the schedule of journal mailings and telephone interviews, and examples of both bad and good journal entry sentences. The researcher and the participant reviewed the materials together by phone, and once the participant indicated that he was comfortable with the assignment and requirements and had been trained in successful journal writing, the researcher conducted a pre-program interview.

The researcher made several useful discoveries as a result of the pilot study. First, it was determined that more time should be allowed for copies of participants' journal entries to reach the researcher. The school in Cuernavaca provided a service in which all outgoing mail from Cemanahuauc was accepted with U.S. postage and was taken by volunteers who were returning to the United States. It was mailed from the
United States rather than Mexico, which was supposed to ensure a more rapid and dependable delivery. However, the efficiency of the system was limited. If no person returning to the United States offered to take the mail with them, or if simply no one left for the U.S., the mail remained at the school. Obviously, this system had certain inherent flaws and needed correcting.

Second, the long-distance telephone interviews proved problematic. Over the course of the academic quarter, the researcher received four installments of journal entries via U.S. mail and conducted four subsequent telephone interviews. Even when a specific telephone appointment time was established in advance, difficulties arose on several occasions due to unpredictable circumstances on the part of the participant. In the telephone interviews, the researcher asked general questions about the participant’s experiences in the program as well as specific questions relating to the cultural content of his journal entries. This combination of general planned questions coupled with follow-ups to specific journal entries proved useful and was eventually repeated in the study during both the mid-quarter and
end-of-quarter interviews with each participant. The results of these interviews are described in Chapter Four.

Third, in terms of the pilot study participant's journal entries, it was found that the training session in which the researcher stressed the importance of avoiding vague statements, coupled with the use of a focus for each journal entry, helped in the creation of a journal with more usable data, for purposes of the present investigation, than were reported in the prior ethnographic study in which students did not have a similar focus and instruction. However, even when directly instructed to use a variety of types of observation, including description, comparison with U.S. culture, and analysis, the pilot participant tended to use only comparisons until reminded by the researcher to try to also use the other types. At the conclusion of the pilot study, the participant recommended that in the future the researcher should stress this use of various observational techniques if this was, indeed, a desired outcome of the journal-writing activity. The participant reported that even though the materials stated explicitly that he should
use a variety of sentence types, this suggestion was later forgotten. As a result, a statement was added to the instructions in bold face to emphasize the point to participants.

Fourth, the researcher confirmed her fear that participants might be limited in linguistic ability and not be able to fully express themselves in their journals in their second language. The pilot participant stated that he was, at times, unable to express himself in Spanish in the type of detail that he was accustomed to in English. Furthermore, he reported having avoided entire subjects based on his limited linguistic capabilities in the target language. The researcher suggested at one point that he supplement the Spanish written entries with English when necessary. The participant agreed to do so, but he never did.

In summary the pilot study resulted in the following guidelines to the researcher in the present study:
1. Journal entries were to be mailed once before the mid-quarter site visit and once before participants
returned to the United States, in each case allowing ten days for mailing. Journal entries were also collected upon arrival during the site visit and upon the participants’ return to the United States.

2. Telephone interviews were replaced whenever possible by in-person interviews. The addition of a mid-quarter site visit allowed for this change. Of the thirty interviews conducted, only two (pre-program interviews) were conducted by telephone.

3. Each participant was trained in journal writing, to help avoid vague statements and include a variety of self-expressions, including description, comparisons, and analysis.

4. Participants were given the option to write journal entries in English in order to fully express themselves, thereby removing a linguistic barrier since the present study emphasized culture rather than language.

The Study

The following section describes the study abroad program in which students participated including its location and various components.
Cuernavaca

The Ohio State University’s Elementary Spanish Language Program is located at The Cemanahuac Educational Community in the Las Palmas section of Cuernavaca, Mexico. Cuernavaca is a city in the state of Morelos and is seventy kilometers from Mexico City (approximately ninety minutes drive by car). Cuernavaca has a population of approximately 500,000. The average temperature is 75 degrees F. and because of its mild weather, Cuernavaca is often referred to as the City of Eternal Spring.

The Cemanahuac Educational Community

The Cemanahuac Educational Community is located on a quiet sidestreet but is within several blocks of a busy thoroughfare containing many businesses such as a bakery, an office supply store, and a bank. A bus station is one block from the school. Cemanahuac is a language school that offers various programs tailored to the needs of particular organizations, schools, and universities. The student population at Cemanahuac is diverse. At any given time approximately 200 students are in attendance. Some students come from American
colleges and universities, while others are retired or professional adults and still others are junior high or high school students. Many people study through an established U.S.-based program, while others study independently. While most students at Cemanahuac are American, a small number come from other countries such as Japan.

The Ohio State University Program

This Ohio State University study abroad program is administered on-site primarily by graduate students chosen each academic quarter to serve as residents directors of the program. Their main responsibilities include the testing component (design, administration, and grading), journal grading, and counseling and tutoring program participants as needed. The program lasts one quarter (ten weeks) and consists of courses designed to help undergraduates either to fulfill their Ohio State University Bachelor's degree language requirement or to begin a major or minor in Spanish. Requirement-level courses include Spanish 101.01-104.01. Intermediate-level courses include Spanish 201 (Elementary Spanish Conversation and Composition), 401
(Grammar Review), and 402 (Intermediate Spanish Conversation). Each student receives credit for three of these courses, and the grades count toward their BA cumulative grade point average at The Ohio State University.

The Cemanahuac Program

Cemanahuac study abroad programs typically consist of three components: language courses, homestay, and field studies. All three components are part of the Ohio State University study abroad program and each is described below.

Language Component

Cemanahuac tailors its programs to the needs of particular institutions and individuals. Therefore, the aforementioned Spanish language courses are provided to Ohio State University students based on equivalent courses offered at the University. The classes are taught by Mexican instructors trained and employed by Cemanahuac, with class enrollments limited to one to five students.
In addition to the four-hour intensive Spanish language classes each weekday morning, Ohio State University students are required to maintain daily journals written in Spanish in which they record their observations. These journals are graded by the resident directors on a weekly basis. Further, Ohio State University students are expected to participate in six hours of various out-of-class afternoon activities provided by Cemanahuac each week.

The additional activities include conversation club, grammar review sessions, culture class, and conversation partners (called "intercambios"). The first two activities last one hour each. Each culture class meets twice a week for one or two hours, depending on the particular topic. Topics change every few weeks and range from Prehispanic Mesoamerica to Latin American Literature. The conversation partners program is administered by a Cemanahuac staff member and consists of pairing each interested American student with a Mexican individual from the community. Each pair is expected to meet twice a week for two hours each visit. Partners are asked to spend one hour speaking English and one hour speaking Spanish per
visit. They may meet at the school or plan excursions around Cuernavaca.

As part of their language program, Ohio State University students may choose to spend one week studying in Cemanahuac’s rural studies program in Buenavista de Cuellar at its school called Cemanahuatzin. Buenavista is located approximately 90 minutes south of Cuernavaca in the state of Guerrero. Appendix F contains a description of both the extracurricular course offerings and a description of the town of Buenavista prepared by the director of the Cemanahuatzin rural program. While in Buenavista, students continue to spend four hours in language class daily and have the opportunity to participate in various activities specific to the location. For example, they may attend classes on leatherworking, Mexican cooking, basket weaving, embroidery, folk dance, horseback riding, and so forth. Some students are allowed to participate in special classes on herbal medicine, including a visit to an herbalist and a healer.
Homestay Component

The second major component of the Cemanahuac program is the homestay. Ohio State University students typically live with assigned Mexican families and may take all meals in the home. Students may request single or double occupancy, with the latter being less expensive and, consequently, the more common arrangement. Cemanahuac Registrar and Coordinator of Housing Harriet Goff Guerrero said that she considers the homestay aspect of the program to be an important part of the overall experience and an opportunity to get to know what Mexican families are really like. In fact, in terms of students’ cultural learning she stated that:

probably the biggest opportunity is with the [host] family....It gets rid of this whole understanding of the Mexican sitting under the cactus with a sombrero on his head. People will still come to Mexico and ask if the families they’re going to stay with have a bathroom. So there’s this really strange image of Mexico and what it is (personal communication with Goff Guerrero, February 13, 1995).

Appendix G contains the housing information sheet distributed to students by Goff Guerrero. Students choosing to spend a week in Buenavista are housed with
local host families in a manner similar to that of the Cemanahuac program.

Field Study Component

The final component of the Cemanahuac program is the field study program in which Ohio State University students have the opportunity to participate in two full-day trips. Most trips are led by Cemanahuac's resident anthropologist, Charles Goff. Typical destinations include the National Museum of Anthropology, the pyramids at Teotihuacan, Taxco (the "silver city"), and Xochicalco. After participating in the two paid trips, Ohio State University students have the option of paying to participate in as many others as they would like, pending space availability.

Cemanahuac’s Mission

According to Goff Guerrero, the main goal of the Cemanahuac program is to offer the three aforementioned components in order to give students "a good picture of what Mexico is" including a better understanding of its language, people, history, and culture. She said she believes that another benefit of program participation
is the ability to change one’s view of the United States by spending time outside of its borders. Goff Guerrero said she feels that program participants leave Mexico seeing the United States "in a different light," one in which "they can be more critical of the United States and see how other people view it, which I think a lot of Americans don’t [get to do]" (personal communication with Goff Guerrero, February 13, 1995).

The Academic Quarter

The Ohio State University’s program at Cemanahuac lasts one quarter. The quarter is divided into three three-week sessions, each the equivalent of one quarter of Spanish at The Ohio State University. Students are taught by a different teacher each session. There is a one-week break during the sixth week of the quarter during which students typically travel. Many students choose such destinations as Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guatemala.

Program Participants

The Ohio State University’s program in Cuernavaca has a competitive application process. Interested
students must submit an application, a recent transcript, two letters of recommendation, and an essay explaining why they want to participate in the program. In the quarter in which the study took place, thirty-five students were accepted out of a pool of forty-four applicants.

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the thirty-five program participants by gender, age, academic year, course sequence taken in Mexico, state of residency, grade-point average, and academic major. In each case, the first column of numbers represents a breakdown of the thirty-five students in the program, while those in the second and third columns represent breakdowns for pool participants and study participants, respectively.
Table 1. Demographic Information for Program Participants

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<th>Study (n=2)</th>
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Course Sequence

|        | 102-104 | 3 | 1 |
|        | 103-201 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
|        | 104-401 | 5 |   |
|        | 201-402 | 22| 3 | 1 |

Home State

|          | Michigan | 1 |
|          | New Jersey | 1|
|          | Ohio      | 33| 5 | 2 |

Grade-Point Average

|        | 3.5 - 4.0 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
|        | 3.0 - 3.4 | 15| 2 | 1 |
|        | 2.5 - 2.9 | 10|   | 1 |
|        | 2.0 - 2.4 | 4 |   | 1 |
Table 1. Demographic Information for Program Participants (continued)

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Of the thirty-five program participants, twenty-five were female and ten were male, while there were two female and three male pool participants. The average age of the students in the program was 21.2 years old, with the average of the pool participants slightly higher at 21.8 years old. The grade-point average for the entire group was 3.03 (on a 4.0 scale), while the average of the pool participants was slightly lower at 3.00. The majority of the program participants were from Ohio; only two students were from out-of-state, one from New Jersey, and one from Michigan. The majority of the students were Ohio State University juniors or seniors. Most students took the highest-level course sequence offered (201, 401, 402). A wide range of majors was reported by program participants; only seven students had not yet declared majors.

The study was ultimately based on one male and one female participant. Their ages, nineteen and twenty years old, respectively, were lower than the group average. Their class standings were representative of the overall group; he was a sophomore and she was a junior. Her placement in the highest-level course
sequence of 201-402 was more common than his placement in the intermediate course sequence of 103-201. Like most students in the program, both participants were from Ohio. Their mean grade-point average of 3.40 was above the group mean of 3.03. He was an education major, while she was majoring in mathematics.

Access
The issue of access is key to the success of any research study. In the case of the proposed study, access was granted by the director of the program (an Ohio State University faculty member) and by his colleagues at Cemanahuac. The program director granted access to students’ program applications (including their statements of purpose) and gave the researcher permission to attend pre-program orientation sessions and alter the journal-writing assignment for the purposes of the study. Cooperation on the part of Cemanahuac administrators can be attributed to the fact that the Director had already approved the investigation and the fact that the researcher was a former Resident Director of the program.
Sampling

The study included students selected to participate in The Ohio State University's Elementary Spanish Language Program in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico for Winter Quarter 1995. The academic quarter in Cuernavaca lasted ten weeks, from January 9 to March 17.

The researcher interacted with all of the students during the two pre-trip orientation meetings conducted during the previous quarter on the Ohio State University campus by program directors. At the second orientation meeting, she solicited volunteer students to participate in the study. No details about the nature of the study were given at that time. The focus was on encouraging participation in a research project. Interested students gave their names and telephone numbers to the researcher at the end of the meeting. From the group of thirty-five students, six students initially responded. Each interested student was contacted within a few days of volunteering to participate and given a general explanation of the requirements for participating. One student chose not
to participate, and five students became pool participants.

Two students were ultimately selected for the study based on several factors. This selection process took place once all data had been collected for the five pool participants. One male and one female were chosen. They were approximately the same age and both had above-average grades. They differed on several characteristics. For example, throughout the program, he had been characterized by observers as outgoing and friendly, while she was consistently described as "reserved." The sequence of courses that she took in Mexico was more advanced than those he took. Further, he had reported various examples of cross-cultural experiences prior to participating in the program, while she reported having had none. Thus it was anticipated that they would both make interesting case studies based on their particular personality types, levels of prior exposure to Spanish, and prior cross-cultural experiences.
Training

Once identified, the participants met for an orientation session with the researcher before the study began. As was the case in the pilot study, at that time participants received a packet of materials containing a written version of the study assignment, a journal mailing and interview schedule, and examples of "bad" versus "good" journal entry sentences (see Appendix H).

As previously mentioned, it was found in prior ethnographic studies that cultural references made by students in journals tended to be vague, and thus difficult to analyze. Therefore, participants in the present study were trained in journal writing. A training component was developed; it is described below.

Participants were shown pairs of sample propositions using the theme of study abroad in France (see Appendix H). In each pair, the first proposition consisted of a vague statement, while the second included further information to support the given statement. A sample first proposition was, "St. Tropez was really interesting." The researcher described this
sentence as vague because there was no information to explain what was interesting about St. Tropez. The second proposition was, "I found it interesting to see several entire families sunbathing naked in St. Tropez. My family would never do that!" In this case, it was clear that the person found St. Tropez interesting and also why. The researcher continued to review pairs of propositions until the participant stated that he/she understood the degree of detail expected by the researcher in journal entries.

Data Collection

The following section describes the data collection procedures. Data sources included journals, interviews, and observations. While the data sources were described above, this section focuses on the procedures by which each type of data was collected.

Journal Writing Assignment

In terms of writing their journal entries, participants were given an option to write either in Spanish, a requirement of the program, or in English. The latter option was made available as a result of the
pilot study and because the focus of the present study was cultural insights, rather than language development.

Of the initial pool of five participants, two wrote their observations, two audio-tape recorded them, and the fifth use a combination of both formats. Four of the five submitted their journal in English, while the fifth used Spanish. With respect to the two participants, both wrote their journals, one in Spanish and the other in English.

Interviews

Interviews served as a secondary data source in the present study. Each participant was interviewed three times. Once they were trained in journal writing but before leaving for Mexico, participants were interviewed using a variety of background questions (see Appendix A). Participants were again interviewed when visited by the researcher at the school in Cuernavaca during the fifth week of the program. Upon her arrival in Mexico, the researcher contacted the five pool participants and scheduled interview times with each. While pre-program and end-of-quarter
interviews typically took place in the researcher’s office at school, mid-quarter interviews took place at the Cemanahuac school, in the Zocalo (town square), and in a restaurant.

In the mid-quarter interview, a set of general questions was asked of each participant. In addition, specific questions were posed to each participant to encourage elaboration on particular topics discussed in their journals and to encourage them to reflect on their cultural experiences up to that point.

In addition to interviews with study participants, the researcher also interviewed three school administrators, both resident directors, and all of the pool participants’ teachers. The purpose of these interviews was to have staff describe the goals and curricula of the program. Furthermore, in the case of the latter two groups, the researcher probed into outside impressions of study participants. (See appendix I for interview questions.)

The third interview took place once the participants had returned from Mexico and took the same form as the mid-quarter interview. All interviews were tape-recorded with the consent of the interviewee and
lasted between ten and 100 minutes. (See appendix C for interview questions.) As previously explained, the shorter interviews were the pre-program interviews.

Observations

The researcher tape-recorded field notes throughout the study, typically after each meeting or interview with participants as well as during the one-week site visit in Cuernavaca. That portion of interviews with participants’ Cemanahuac teachers and program resident directors dealing with general impressions of the participants and the type and extent of participants’ immersion into the target culture were also included in this category of data. In the case of the Cemanahuac teachers, the observations of the first two teachers for each pool participant were audio-taped by the researcher during the mid-quarter site visit. Participants had not yet begun the third session, and thus, had not yet had class with the third teacher. During the third academic session, the third teacher was asked to hand write answers to the same set of interview questions posed during the mid-quarter site visit. These handwritten observations were collected
by the Cemanahuac teaching supervisor and given to one of the resident directors to return to the researcher in the United States.

Logistical Issues

Because pool participants were given several journal-writing choices at the beginning of the study, appropriate arrangements had to be made to accommodate them. Before leaving for Mexico, pool participants who chose to submit written journal entries were provided with a notebook and funds for duplicating and mailing journal entries twice during the course of the program. Those who chose to use tape recordings were provided blank audio tapes and asked to hold their tapes until the visit by the researcher during the fifth week of the program and then again until the end of the program.

Peer Debriefers

In any research endeavor, it is important for the researcher to create opportunities for multiple perspectives on her research. The present study included two peer debriefers. The first was considered
to be an expert on this particular program at The Ohio State University and at Cemanahuac. She was a doctoral candidate in Spanish, had served as resident director of the Cuernavaca program twice, and at the time of the study was serving in Ohio as administrative assistant to the director of that program. She was contacted by the researcher as necessary to discuss such issues as interview question content and logistical issues of the study.

The second peer debriefer was a doctoral candidate in Foreign Language Education and was knowledgeable about qualitative research methods, an area of expertise not shared by the first debriefer. While most consultation with the first debriefer ended with the completion of data collection, the second debriefer was consulted periodically throughout the study.

Data Analysis

Data were reviewed several times to allow categories and subcategories to emerge. All journal data were coded, and from this process a schedule of general categories of cultural focus (such as "environmental" and "intrapersonal") as well as
subcategories (such as the "intrapersonal" subcategories of "priorities" and "time") emerged for each participant.

As Patton (1990) noted, in a qualitative study it is important to separate description from interpretation. Therefore, data analysis was conducted in the following manner: First, general case studies of the two participants were developed. Each case study began with a description of the participant, including educational background and previous cross-cultural experiences. Next, a composite picture of the participant’s cultural experience in Mexico was presented, combining observations made by the participant, resident directors, and Cemanahuac instructors. After the individual cases were developed frequency counts of the main cultural foci were generated for the two participants. Finally, selected interview questions were presented, with answers given for both participants. All of these elements combined to form the basic description of the study and are presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five presents the data analysis, in which the researcher analyzed data and drew conclusions about the participants’ areas of
cultural focus, the effects prior cross-cultural interaction, and participants’ concept of Mexican culture.

Human Subjects Review Process

The researcher participated in The Ohio State University’s Human Subjects Review Process, which is designed to protect the interests of subjects used in research conducted at this university. Specifically, the process involved submitting an application for exemption (as well as copies of Appendices A, B, C, H, and J) to the Office of Research Risks. This was done during week four of the study.

Each participant was assigned a pseudonym in order to protect his or her identity. The list of pseudonyms was compared with the Winter Quarter 1995 program roster of thirty-five student names to be certain that no duplication of names occurred. Pseudonyms were also assigned to participants’ Mexican friends and host-family members.

Each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix J) after receiving and reviewing his or her packet of information outlining
the requirements of the study, and before participating. Participants had the right to terminate their participation in the project at any time.

The male participant, Billy, indicated that he was considering terminating his participation during the mid-quarter interview in Mexico. He said that he was spending too much of his free time trying to maintain three separate journals. He and the researcher discussed the possibility of him discontinuing the journal for the study, as his personal journal contained many daily observations and many items were duplicated in the two journals. He expressed pleasure at the idea of decreasing his workload while at the same time continuing in the study. He subsequently submitted his personal journal for use in the study (including the five weeks up to that point).

Billy again expressed concern about his participation after returning to the United States. Approximately one week after completing his follow-up interview, he stopped by the researcher’s office for what appeared to the researcher to be an impromptu visit, as the office was centrally located in the education building and he was an education major. He
appeared agitated when he entered the office and began
to complain about The Ohio State University and
expressed displeasure with all things related to the
university and its bureaucracy. At one point he stated
that he was not sure whether he wanted to continue with
the study, as the study was in some way related to the
university. The researcher said nothing to either
encourage or discourage his continued participation.
Subsequent to this conversation, he submitted to the
researcher a copy of several extra documents, including
a vocabulary list he had made while in Mexico. These
materials had not been requested by the researcher.
The researcher discussed the situation with her
dissertation adviser and the two interpreted Billy’s
last action to mean that he had decided to continue
participating.
CHAPTER IV
DATA PRESENTATION

Introduction

This chapter consists of three sections, each of which begins with a description of its contents. The first section includes case studies of the two participants of the study, including information on their background, program goals, self-descriptions and descriptions by others. The second section presents the contents of the two participants' written journals based on frequency counts of the cultural topics mentioned by each one. The final section includes summaries of the two participants' answers to selected interview questions.

Each case study consists of a synthesis of various data sources including program applications, written autobiographical statements, journals, and interviews with participants and others. The observations sections are a synthesis of interviews with teachers and resident directors. The researcher's observations come from tape-recorded field notes that she made
during data collection. Observations made by teachers, resident directors and the researcher are presented separately in order to make clear their individual perspectives on the two participants.

Case I - Amanda

Background

Amanda was a twenty-year-old mathematics major. She grew up in the suburbs of Cleveland in a middle class family of six. She lived with both parents, an older sister and two younger brothers. She attended an all-white middle class Catholic grade school and a public high school that she described as "wealthy." She reported having had no experiences with people from different cultures or races during her high school years. Nevertheless, she stated that, "because of my parents' belief in equality, I was not prejudice [sic] toward others."

After high school graduation, she attended Ohio University for two years. She said she did not feel that this college provided her with much diversity, which she reported to be a factor in her decision to transfer to Ohio State University. In Winter Quarter
1995, Amanda was a junior. She indicated that she planned to pursue a master’s degree in mathematics education upon graduation.

Goals

In her application for the Cuernavaca program, Amanda stated that she felt the program would benefit her as a future educator, given the growing Hispanic population in the United States. According to Amanda, her exposure to foreign cultures was "extremely limited." However, she expressed confidence in the fact that participation in the program would increase her awareness and understanding of the Hispanic world. Another goal she said she hoped to attain was to understand her own culture at a deeper level. As she put it, "This program would provide me with an opportunity to compare and contrast my experiences as an American with other individuals’ cultural experiences." A final goal she expressed was to be able to speak Spanish fluently and study the language at an intensive level.
Course Level

Before participating in the Cuernavaca Program, Amanda had studied Spanish for three years in high school and two academic quarters in college. In Cuernavaca she completed Spanish 201 through 402, the most advanced sequence offered in the Ohio State University program there.

Self Description

In her program application, Amanda described herself in terms of her desire to learn, her motivation to succeed, and her curiosity about the world in which she lived. She said she enjoyed people and travelling and had always been curious about other races, religions, and cultures’ perspective on life. But up until the time of her participation in the Cuernavaca program, she reported having been extremely limited in experiences with people who were different from her.

Homestay Placement

While in Cuernavaca Amanda stayed with a middle class family consisting of two parents and three children. The oldest child, Pablo, was approximately
twenty years old and an engineering student at the local university. He had previously studied for six months in the United States. The other two children were seventeen and fourteen years old. Amanda had an Ohio State University roommate.

Observations by Researcher

My first impression of Amanda was that she seemed very nice and very quiet. Her pre-program interview was brief, and her answers short and to the point. During my mid-quarter site visit, I thought that her quietness would make her difficult to understand. Unlike the other participant, she was not initially warm and outgoing. She was rather reserved, but I felt very comfortable with her after that second interview. Although she was a quiet and shy person, she was very likeable. I was interested to see her development after four weeks in the program because of her prior lack of contact with other cultures. I was surprised by her journal entries and her verbal discourse in that she was very excited about the culture in Mexico and made none of the typical student complaints, such as
lamenting the lack of familiar conveniences. Her comments suggested that she thought a lot about why things were as they were in Mexico as well as in the United States.

Her attitude toward her experience in Mexico was very positive during the end-of-quarter interview. While she was still rather quiet, she seemed very willing to discuss any topic suggested.

Observations by Teachers

When asked to describe Amanda, her first teacher stated, "Amanda does not talk much. If you ask her a question, she talks. She’s reserved." She said that Amanda was selective in choosing her friends and added that "I don’t know exactly what kind of people she likes, but not everyone." When asked for her impressions of Amanda’s assimilation to Mexican culture, she said "She really likes to be with people, with young people, with the [Mexican] family. I know this because she told me that she’s going to stay an extra week because she really likes Mexico."

Amanda’s second teacher described her as dedicated in class, nice, responsible, and courteous. She stated
that Amanda was sociable but "not very extroverted."
She said that (based on Amanda's comments in class) she
adapted well to Mexican culture. According to this
teacher, Amanda was interested in the Mexican sense of
humor. She recalled that "she thinks the Mexican sense
of humor, especially relating to death, is
interesting--the fact that Mexicans make light of
death." The teacher also stated that Amanda commented
on being impressed by how the Mexican family is closer
than the American family. She added that while Amanda
seemed to admire the Mexican concept of family, she
also saw its limitations for herself in that she valued
her independence.

Amanda's third teacher said that she was a good
student and that she "liked to participate and tell
about her experiences." She added that Amanda "got
along with her classmates. She had one special friend
with whom she spent the majority of her time." The
teacher stated that "Based on her comments in class,
[Amanda] liked the Mexican culture and liked to get to
know new places." The teacher added that she was not
sure what Amanda's real interest was, saying

Actually, I cannot be sure whether it was the
culture that she liked or just the places because
one time we went to the market and she wanted to stay and also we saw a film by Gabriel Garcia Marquez and she thought it was very silly. So maybe she is not into understanding a different way of thinking, or maybe it was just a question of taste.

Observations by Resident Directors

The first resident director described Amanda as a very reserved, nice, quiet, "live and let live" type of person. He stated:

She really doesn’t talk to me that much at all. But it’s more like our paths don’t cross more than anything else. The only person I see her associate with is [her roommate]. So I really don’t see her talk to other people....As far as being very outgoing, no. She just does her own thing.

He further described her by way of comparison with another student in the following manner:

I remember that (at a karaoke bar one night) at the same time that Lauren (another student) was singing away and happy, [Amanda] was sort of sitting at the table with [her roommate] and very quiet. And she’d smile at me, but as far as communicating, she wasn’t really open. I think she’s opened up a little bit more since she’s been here.

He noted that she got along well with her fellow students and that she had a good "intercambio" (Mexican conversation partner) situation. He stated that, unlike many other students, she did not complain about
her intercambio. About Amanda’s homestay situation, he said "She gets along fine with the [Mexican] family. The family cooks [her roommate and her] separate food. They really haven’t made an attempt to try to eat Mexican food." This observation was based, at least in part, on the fact that Amanda’s roommate told him that one night they had eaten fried chicken while the host family ate chiles rellenos (stuffed chiles).

In terms of Amanda’s cultural adjustment, he stated "I don’t think that she’s an extreme individual, so she doesn’t have extreme instances of either positive or negative cultural adjustment."

In describing Amanda, the second resident director stated "I have to say that I don’t know much about her. She’s one of those students that it’s like you know she’s there but you don’t know where she is." When asked to comment on Amanda’s relations with other people, he stated that she appeared to have a small circle of friends. He made the following general observations about Amanda’s interaction with Mexican culture:

Something that I’ve realized is that Amanda admires Mexican culture in general. Several times she’s said that it’s great that people get together for lunch. She has written in her
journal ‘I prefer Mexico because life here is different. It’s more like people aren’t worried about others. They care for others.’ I don’t know what her (American) family is like but she said ‘It’s so strange that I have to have lunch with all my (Mexican) family. I never did this in the States.’

Case Two - Billy

Background

Billy was a nineteen-year-old education major. He grew up in northern Ohio in what he described as a racially diverse community, consisting of Jews, African-Americans, Irish, and Italians, with neighbors representing a wide variety of professions. He had Venezuelan neighbors who spoke Spanish in their home. Billy’s household consisted of his two parents, his younger brother, his younger sister, and himself.

When Billy was three years old, his family traveled to Brazil. He said he remembered his grandparents’ Brazilian maid who did not speak English very well. Billy attended a Jewish day school until the eighth grade, where he became familiar with Jewish customs and the Hebrew language. He stated that his high school was as racially diverse as the surrounding community.
Billy traveled to Israel and stayed for several months between his junior and senior years of high school. Based on this travel, he cited many differences between the Middle East and the West. For example, he noted that the food, cars, buildings and structure of neighborhoods were all different. He observed that "In the U.S., the oldest European culture is just over three hundred years old. Israel has buildings, tradition, people, language -- culture that is thousands of years old."

Billy spent Fall Quarter 1994 traveling across the United States with a friend. Although he socialized mostly with young people, he met a variety of people along the way. He recounted:

I worked in a kitchen in Boulder with Mexican immigrants; climbed in Central Park with a band; drank rice wine with Coffee, a free spirit in New York City who understood some of life with the zodiac; I drank coffee with a suburban couple in Atlanta; I discussed selflessness with a Hare Krishna; at Yellowstone a family who cleans houses complained that the rich build money-making motels and resorts, rather than affordable housing.

Billy said that most of his experience with people had been within the United States. "Still," he observed, "when I think of the great variance in lifestyles between a seventy-year-old farming couple outside of
Tolna, North Dakota, and crackheads in Manhattan, I think I have seen man adapted to many different lives on our Earth."

Goals

In his application for the Cuernavaca Program, Billy stated one of his goals in college was to become familiar with a foreign language. He said he felt that Spanish was the ideal language to learn due to the proximity of Mexico to the United States. He added that he believed that learning Spanish would afford him the ability to talk with many more people and "to read Spanish literature as it was written." As Billy put it, "What better place to study Spanish than in a country where all communication is done in that language?"

Billy said he planned to learn about rural Mexican life by living in the rural studies center in Buenavista and was looking forward to "the opportunity to study the culture of a foreign country by living in the home of a native family." During his spare time in Cuernavaca, Billy said he planned to "listen to local
music, meet artists and writers, and explore the city streets."

Course Level

Before participating in the program, Billy had studied Spanish for two quarters at The Ohio State University. While in Mexico, he took the 103 through 201 course sequence.

Self-Description

During his mid-quarter interview Billy mentioned that he had "no fear of any social rules," adding that "I just sometimes need to just go and things just happen." While in Mexico, he mentioned that he liked "being by myself because then I interact the most with the people here." He said that he rarely went anywhere in Mexico with a group, and that that was consistent with his behavior in the United States. As he stated:

I’m more likely at home to do something with one person. I’ll say, ‘Hey, one person, do you want to go do this, or go do that?’ Here, no, even more so. I do things by myself. Just so I can speak Spanish and it’s more surprising.

He compared himself to other people who would become concerned over how to find buses and meals, saying that
he had no problems with such tasks and considered himself to be good at traveling.

When discussing his reaction to Buenavista he revealed his attitude toward nature. He described why he liked the United States, saying that "I like four seasons. I like all the rain and water and snow we have. I like our trees. I like our forests. I just like the land in the United States."

Also during the mid-quarter interview, he discussed his current interest in studying himself. He said:

I'm fascinated right now with taking pictures of myself, and with my own image. And I brought a tape and I want to tape record myself talking and playing harmonica and take pictures of myself. Because right now I feel like, I'm nineteen. I'm not old enough to understand what the hell I'm up to. Like, I would love to be forty for a week to see what I'm doing. So in one way I want to document all this so that when I am forty or fifty I get to see what I was doing.

He gave an example of how he perceived himself to be different from other people. He began by saying that at Cemanahuac he never walked down the stairs, but rather slid down with his hands and feet on the railings and jumped off at the bottom. One day his class was going to make guacamole. He went to wash his
hands and on the way back did not want to dirty them by touching the railings. He said:

I realized that’s the first time I’ve been down those stairs like everybody else. I never walk down the stairs. I realize nobody else does that. The old people here don’t do it. None of my friends slide down the railing like that. So, I think somehow that everyone else is just like some guy named Jim, some guy named Bob. I’m Billy. I’m excited to find out—I have these journals I’ve been keeping all over the place. And I like reading back in them the next day and two days and a week. I’m trying to figure out when I’m just—like, when I can fit into a crowd and be cool and when I’m definitely being Billy and following my own rules.

During the end-of-quarter interview, Billy described his attitudes about basic human interaction in the following way:

I still try to regard every single person I see as a human being. It’s difficult at Ohio State because first of all there are so many people...and also because no one treats it like that. People are completely content to walk within a foot of each other and not say [a] word. They’re content to be on an elevator and not talk and everybody face the same way. I always face the other way in the elevator. Like I’ll talk to somebody. I’ll completely talk to someone I haven’t seen before....Like if someone’s locking up their bike next to mine, like there’s a person, and I would say hello to them.

Homestay Placement

While in Cuernavaca, Billy stayed with a middle class family, along with his Ohio State University
roommate. The father of the family was an architect who had previously spent time in a seminary studying to be a priest. The two sons, according to Billy, spent most of their free time playing Nintendo and soccer. About his host mother, Billy stated that she was nice and that it took him a while to figure out that she was listening at the end of meals to hear what he had liked. He said he learned to comment on the meal without being prompted. Billy summed up his general impressions of his host family by saying that "I have a good time at my house. They're very accommodating. It's like being at home."

Observations by Researcher

The first time we got together for a meeting, Billy had a big framed backpack with him. And I was rather intrigued with him because he seemed like the traveling type, one who would seek adventures on his own. During this first meeting, which lasted about ninety minutes, we talked about the study for only twenty minutes. The rest of the time we talked about many different topics. He seemed like a really interesting person--really enthusiastic about life. We
talked about recycling and about his attitude toward life and the fact that he does not like to have many possessions and he does not want to buy into a lot of the American "system" and capitalism.

During the mid-quarter site visit, I continued to feel as I had before that he was a very interesting person. Having read his journal entries up to that point, I noted that he had a very interesting style of writing. He was rather quiet whenever I saw him during the site visit until the time of the mid-quarter interview. The interview itself went well. Billy was an extremely reflective person, which is something that I noticed immediately when he began participating in the study. I was careful to give him time to answer throughout the interview. I learned to wait through long pauses, because he often had more to say but needed time to think.

Toward the end of the mid-quarter interview, Billy mentioned that before coming to the interview, he had considered discontinuing his participation in the study. He stated that writing three different journals (one in Spanish for class, one in English for the study, and one in English for himself) had become too
time-consuming and decreased his free time. We discussed his concerns and agreed that he would stop writing the English journal for the study and instead submit his personal journal. He expressed his satisfaction with this compromise and said that he had not wanted to withdraw his participation in the study because he knew that it was important to me.

At the conclusion of the mid-quarter interview, as we parted company in the street and I got on my bus, he went skipping down the city sidewalk jumping up to touch the leaves of the trees and the low rooftops.

The end-of-quarter interview went well and Billy's attitudes toward Mexico and the United States were consistent with those previously stated in the mid-quarter interview.

Approximately one week after the end-of-quarter interview, Billy stopped by my office one day. He said that he was very upset with Ohio State University and its bureaucracy. After detailing his complaints, he mentioned that he was thinking of discontinuing his participation in my study, as the study represented part of the university. I said nothing to him at the
time. Several days later he mailed copies of various journal items to me. He did not enclose a note and never again discussed any interest in discontinuing his participation.

Observations by Teachers

Billy's first teacher said "I think he is hyperactive. He is very social. But because he needs more fast-paced, dynamic activity, he is always distracted." She went on to note that "he is the one (of the four students in class) who best understands--notices the little things." She cited an occasion on which Billy blurted out in the middle of class that there was a snail near him but then immediately got back into his classwork.

She said that Billy was good about helping his classmates. For example, she stated that "If a classmate is confused about a grammar point or a vocabulary word, he tries to explain it to them in Spanish."

One occurrence that she recounted illustrated how Billy tended to be different from the other students in
the program. She said that one day on a class excursion to VIPS restaurant:

He was fascinated by everything in the restaurant. He ordered from the child’s menu--strawberry pancakes. He could have ordered from the adult menu. But he said "I want this." And he spoke with the waitress and told her what he wanted and there was no problem.

According to this teacher, Billy was very interested in Mexican culture and sometimes compared Mexico with the United States. She said that he liked Mexico better because "Here in Mexico everyone knows his name....This is one of the things he likes the best because he feels like a person." She said that in the United States, he "[did] not feel like a person, but rather just one more number in a registry." She also stated that he liked Mexican culture "because here there are more outdoor activities and it’s easier to communicate with people—even strangers."

She described Billy’s interpersonal skills, saying "He always has a smile when he is talking or asking for something. So it is very easy for people to reciprocate." She added that "For him, human relations are very important."
Billy's second teacher described him as "very intelligent" and added that:

He has the privilege of being very bright but at the same time he is very anxious and hyperactive. He gets exasperated when I have to ask his classmates questions and he cannot participate. So sometimes he gets distracted and even behaves poorly in class, for that reason, because of his hyperactivity.

She said that if he had a private tutor, "it would be a great opportunity for him." Even though he sometimes became impatient in class, he got along well with his classmates, according to her. She noted that his classmates had expressed to her that Billy was "different." For example, the homework examples that he gave in class were "sometimes a bit crazy," she said. Thinking that she might be upset, the other students reminded her that Billy was just different. She agreed with them, and was not upset.

She said that Billy adapted very well to his surroundings and practiced his Spanish a lot. She stated that he was very observant, citing the following example of something that occurred one day as the class was returning from an trip to the market:

We returned on the bus and there were two girls. He was in the front of the bus and I was in the back, so I could see him very well. And when two girls got on the bus he paid attention to
their manner of dress. He is very observant, very analytical.

She expressed that she thought Billy liked Mexican culture, recalling his excitement at the prospect of making guacamole in class one day. She said that he was "thrilled" because this was something that he had done before in his home in the United States. She was surprised at how much chile he ate on his tostada with guacamole. She even asked him why he was eating so much chile, to which he replied "I like it!"

This teacher said she felt that what made Billy different from the rest of the students was that he assimilated anything he learned quickly. She said this ability made him the top student in the class.

Billy’s third teacher described him as a well-liked person with many friends who appeared to be a dreamer. According to the teacher:

Billy was very pleased by the customs and habits in the culture of Buenavista. He was very attracted to the activities and customs of the "zona fria", or cold zone, such as Huitzilac, Zempoala, and Santiago.

Observations by Resident Directors

The first resident director described Billy as a "high achiever." He went on to say that "He’s non-
traditional in the sense that he's very unorthodox. He has very liberal viewpoints and he has a very creative streak to him, very innovative. And I admire that strongly." He recalled one occasion on which he and Billy had a discussion about education, as Billy was an education major. The resident director stated:

For example [Billy] realized this (being in Mexico) is an ideal learning situation for Spanish. And everything he saw here, the opposite would apply to Ohio State. Instead of a student-oriented school, it's an institution-oriented school. And so we talked about the differences in Ohio State—the way you have to teach differently because students expect different things. And that certain things will never come to pass in that certain learning environment that will always happen in a foreign country, studying abroad.

The resident director stated that Billy "always comes up with these strange but funny quirky ideas." For example, he cited the following occurrence one afternoon at school:

I was sitting there at the table once in the afternoon and two students were there studying. And Billy was telling me, he says "Did I tell you in my journal that I'm going to draw a mural?" And so I said "Now?" He says, "I'm really interested in Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. So I think it would be good to draw a mural. I'm really inspired now." And so the other two students just start smiling because they know this is one of Billy's ideas. It's very quixotic. I'm half sort of playful and I'm half interested. So I say, "We need a wall. For most murals you need a wall." He says "Oh, well, um, we could just use one here because they have so many empty ones here at
Cemanahuac." And then [the girls] start laughing and I start laughing a little bit. It's funny but--I half expected him to do it.

He went on to say that he tried not to dampen Billy's idealism, but rather to encourage him. He said he noticed that Billy had a tendency to write fragmented journal entries, jumping from one topic to another. He added that the journal entries reflected that Billy noticed the smaller details of life that tend to elude most people. He said that one day he and Billy attended a bullfight along with several other students in the program. Billy had bought a Cuban cigar upon entering the stadium and was excited about the prospect of obtaining something not available in the United States. He proceeded to smoke it with another student.

The resident director recounted:

So we went back that night in the metro. And it ended up that there were a bunch of people that were hesitating to get in one of the cars. So I jumped in another car and Billy jumped over with me. And so we just went back to this eternal conversation and he said, "Well, you know, I don't think other people enjoy this much of a cultural experience as much as you and me." And I said, "Well, yeah, I think you're right." And he realized that I also notice these little things and think about these things.
The resident director stated that Billy "has incredible desire and a love for nature." In addition, he noted that Billy would:

approach people without hesitation. And I don't know whether it's because he's used to figuring that "Yeah, ok, I'm allowed to do this because I'm eccentric." I don't know. For example, we were in Xochimilco, he just goes up to this little kid and sits down and starts talking to him. And they start comparing their harmonicas. It was very funny to see that. And someone remarked to me that he did that and I said that "really that's the way to do it."...And I think he realizes this too, and this is why he does it.

He also said that Billy had told him that he enjoyed speaking with people. He also said that Billy liked to "wander off and just do his own thing, but he's always entranced by something else, some other person." He added that Billy was "one of those nice eccentrics" and was well-liked by people. He mentioned that sometimes people had problems with Billy's ideas, finding them crazy. He said they never had problems with Billy as a person. He noted the following example:

One person who worked at the school was telling me about how [Billy] was talking about some liberal idea. And so then she decided it was her job to put him in his place and say "Well, how can you talk about this liberalism? Your father's a doctor" and things like that. And so, to me it was another idea of cynicism defeating idealism and so it just sort of disturbed me that I heard this. But I'm sure [Billy's] used to it because
people have their ideas and it's very hard to get people to give up their ideas.

The second resident director described Billy in the following way:

He's a special person. He's different from most of the people. I think he doesn't like to be involved in a group—he wants to be different, original. He wants to learn; he wants to know why things are like they are. He tries to speak the language more than most of the other students who are in Spanish 103.

He stated that Billy tried to see things from a different point of view. He said that Billy's classmates said things like "Oh, I like to talk to Billy because he makes me think." He added that from talking with Billy, his classmates could "see things from a different point of view." The second resident director said he believed that Billy had an excellent rapport with his classmates, stating that "In general terms, I think he gets along with everybody."

Written journals

The following section presents the selected contents of the two participants' written journals using frequency counts and accompanying prose descriptions of the specific aspects of Mexican culture
about which they wrote. First, a grid is presented with four main categories of cultural interaction. The grid was developed by the researcher to represent possible types of cultural interaction and to categorize specific cultural topics focused on by each participant. The grid was created once the cultural references had been identified and organized in list form by specific topic. The researcher then generated the categories and subcategories both to accommodate the data and to reflect her concept of the possible types of cultural interaction which include dealing with one's own surroundings, one's processing of information received and subsequent decision making from those data, one's close interpersonal contacts, and, finally, one's interaction with strangers and with the institutions that cultures create to manage themselves.

Cultural references found in participants' journals were assigned to one of the four categories. Each category is subdivided into further subcategories and is presented separately for the two participants. The first two levels are the same for the participants. However, the third level may show some variation for
the participants depending on the cultural references contained in the journals. Figure 1 presents the cultural interaction grid. Figures 2 through 5 include a presentation of each quadrant of the overall grid, along with the accompanying subcategories and frequency counts across participants.
Figure 1. Types of Cultural Interaction
AMANDA

Natural
- Weather/Nature ②
- Beaches ⑥

Man-Made
- States/Cities ④
- Attractions ⑥
- Architecture ②
- Pollution ①
- Urban/Rural ①
- Art ⑥

BILLY

Natural
- Weather/Nature ⑧
- Beaches ②
- Plants/Animals ③
- Mountains/Volcanos ③

Man-Made
- States/Cities ③
- Attractions ①
- Architecture ③
- Pollution ②
- Urban/Rural ⑥

Figure 2. Environmental Cultural Interaction and Frequency of Mention for Quadrant 1
For example, in Figure 2 the main category "Environmental" contains the same subcategories of "Natural" and "Man-Made" for both participants. In the accompanying chart the subcategory "Natural" contains the subcategories "Weather/Nature", and "Beaches" common to both participants. Billy’s chart contains the additional subcategories "Plants/Animals" and "Mountains/Volcanos" based on the cultural references found in his journal. Each subcategory is followed by a circled numeral denoting the number of references found about the particular aspect in the participant’s journal. For example, "Beaches 4" means that Amanda mentioned beaches four times in her journal. A prose description of the types of cultural comments made by participants follows the frequency counts for each quadrant.

Environmental Interaction

Natural

In this category Amanda made several references to the beauty and simplicity of Mexico. She stated her opinion that simplicity was a good thing and that she felt that the United States had a negative influence on
the way of life in Mexico and was interfering with nature there (Day 20). She also talked about watching sunsets and looking at the stars at night. She mentioned trips to various beaches, such as Zihuatanejo, Acapulco, and Pie de la Cuesta. Of the latter two, she wrote that she preferred Pie de la Cuesta because there were fewer people there and it was less of a tourist attraction (Day 14). She also mentioned the beautiful view. In spite of her many references to beaches, one entry included her conclusion that even though she enjoyed her beach weekend, she would not want to spend every weekend at a beach as there were many other things to do in Mexico (Day 14).

Billy’s many references to weather and nature included comments on watching the sunrise and sunset and his reaction the first time it rained during his stay. He compared his personal reaction to the rain with that of the Mexicans, saying:

The Mexicans dealt with the rain. They rolled up their windows and went on their way. I took off my shirt and sang and danced in the quietest place I know: behind the school. I sloshed and splashed in the river running down Morelos Street. Many people looked to see what I was up to....I waved to them as they drove by: some honked: They know what’s up (Day 22).
Billy’s references to nature included comments about wanting to live where nature had not yet been paved over, the fact that Cuernavaca was very much paved over, and the observation that he had to go to the Jardin Borda (Borda Gardens) in search of green grass, "for the nicest bits of outdoors in Cuernavaca are inside walls."

Like Amanda, Billy mentioned beach trips in his journal. He wrote that he was enjoying himself at the beach one day and on another occasion that he was planning to go to Puerto Escondido one day to fish. Billy wrote once about birds and butterflies, and once about having seen a scorpion the night before. He wrote a long description of a cactus leaf that he had been studying (Day 13). He described the configuration of the needles, their possible uses for sewing, and the taste of the leaf. He wrote several times about the volcano Popocatepetl, which he said he could see from his bedroom window in the early mornings and from the bus on which he was traveling one afternoon (Days 2, 10, 34). He drew the volcano and its surrounding mountains in his personal journal.
Man-Made

Under this subcategory, Amanda wrote about plans to go to Mexico City, Oaxaca, and other locations, as well as trips taken to attractions such as the wool market in Santiago de Tianguistengo. Most of Amanda’s trip comments included references to beautiful scenery and enjoying herself, no matter where she was.

Amanda’s references to Mexican architecture included one in which she recounted her first impression of Mexican houses as being dirty little shacks (Day 1). In the same entry, she expressed her embarrassment at having thought that at first. In another journal entry, she complained that in Mexico there were walls closing her in in her own yard or out of someone else’s and that homes were not for visiting, as they were in the United States. She wrote

Sometimes I feel trapped here. That is because of the walls and closed gates. When I walk in the street, I can’t see the houses or some stores. I feel that Mexicans do not trust other people. I don’t like this. When I am in a house, I also feel trapped because I can’t see out. In the United States, I like that the houses are free-standing with lawns. It’s very open, and I think that neighbors know each other better in the United States because they don’t have "closed doors." Here, people don’t stay at home in the afternoons. They go to the Zocalo or other places to talk with their friends. In the United States
it is more common to visit your friend’s house. I like [that] (Day 39).

Amanda wrote in one entry that pollution was the worst thing about Mexico (Day 10). She once expressed interest in comparing urban and rural life in Mexico, writing that she had gone to Buenavista to see whether she wanted to spend a week at the rural studies program there (Day 31). She wrote that she thought that Buenavista was very different from Cuernavaca and that she wanted to experience living in the small town. She later wrote that Buenavista was tranquil and pretty and a good change from Cuernavaca (Day 64).

Amanda’s various references to art in her journal included comments about liking art very much, trips to particular art museums, and the fact that she was much more interested in art than in history. In one entry, she compared Mexican and American attitudes toward art, based on her observations (Day 21). She wrote "I observed that art is important to [Mexico]. It’s everywhere—in the restaurants, the hotels, in the stores. In the United States, there are cheesy pictures in public places instead of paintings by local artists."
Billy's journal entries under the sub-category of "Man-Made" were varied, like those of Amanda. He wrote often about several locations, including Buenavista, Oaxaca, and Taxco. He initially wrote about visiting Buenavista to see if he wanted to spend a week there (Day 3). His later entries about the town included descriptions of the town in general. He once described Buenavista as "a nice town. People greet each other (and me) with friendly words and smiles. The town is rich, reasonably clean, and surrounded by mountains" (Day 50). His journals included various comments about loving the town and not wanting to leave at the end of the week-long program there. For example, soon after returning to Cuernavaca he wrote:

I've spent an amazing time in Buenavista, eating from trees, enjoying [the country]. I was not ready to leave. I miss many friends... As we entered [Cuernavaca], I used the word "hate" for the first time in Spanish. I was living in Buenavista. It was not time to leave (Day 60).

(Billy stayed an extra week in Buenavista, skipping his classes in Cuernavaca.) In his references to Oaxaca, he described it as a nice town with naturally-ground chocolate. Billy spent his vacation week in Oaxaca and stayed an extra week there once the other students had returned to Cuernavaca and their classes. As in the
case of Buenavista, he wrote of feeling at home and not wanting to leave when he was supposed to according to the program's schedule. In one entry, he described his life in Oaxaca in the open-air home of a local family whom he had befriended:

I sometimes say when I was "by the beach" or "la playa" or near San Augustin. But I lived in neither. I lived on a mountain by the sea. I might have taken a bus or walked into town for fruit or cheese or bread. I might also have gone to the sea for fish, the shore for sardines, the rocks for snails and [other shellied animals]. I came back to Cuernavaca for Ohio State's grades. I left where I lived, breathed, and fished. I stopped uninterrupted Spanish language immersion to come back to noisy smelly Cuernavaca to take a grammar class (Day 50).

Billy's references to Mexican architecture included descriptions of his host home and furniture in Cuernavaca and some houses that he had seen in the countryside, a description of his classroom at Cemanahuac--which consists of a grass hut with fluorescent lighting. He mentioned pollution several times, writing of his anger at the dirty air and rain in Mexico and how he missed the clean environment in the United States (Days 12, 22). He concluded in one entry that Mexicans seemed to favor cheap cars over clean air (Day 12).
Billy made several references to the contrast between urban and rural settings in Mexico. In one entry he wrote of being able to sense a rural past in urban Cuernavaca (Day 2). In the remaining two references, he wrote of missing the country—with roosters crowing in the mornings, and witnessing a traffic jam in Cuernavaca. In the latter entry he wrote "Tonight a bus stalled and horn honking and all kinds of mayhem broke loose. The tone was greedy and selfish. BOYCOTT CITIES" (Day 60).
Figure 3. Intrapersonal Cultural Interaction and Frequency of Mention for Quadrant 2.
Intrapersonal Interaction

Personal Needs

Amanda wrote only one entry in this subcategory, in which she talked about having made "sopes" in her cooking class in Buenavista (Day 65). She added that she did not like them very much.

Billy, on the other hand, wrote extensively in this subcategory, especially about food and drinks. Some entries contained detailed descriptions of food and drink ingredients and preparation, while others were inventories of foods he had eaten lately. For example, in one entry he listed the variety of food he had eaten in a four-day period as follows:

In a four-day period, I have eaten fresh tuna in a palapa, tortillas and granola in Acapulco, pulque (the fermented juice of the maguey) and quesadillas in Huitzilac...then later that night we had black and green olive pizza, fresh bread and seasoned butter and parsley in oil. My mother in Cuernavaca made guacamole for our lunch because I like it, then shrimp, rice, tortillas, onion, and cactus for lunch before shoeing off to Buenavista where when I asked for a piece of fruit I got noodle soup, chicken, tortillas, aquacates (avocados), and the apple....And my mother here (in Buenavista) blended up some strawberries and milk in a tall glass with ice and the pitcher on the table which held two more pink foamy glassfulls which I'm now savoring with sweet crackers as I write that as I drank the first glass she heated up quick two sweet cheese-and-a-bit-of-salsa tortillas (Day 47).
In a later entry, he again catalogued various types of foods and drinks that he had sampled while in Mexico, including great detail in their descriptions. He wrote:

I have been eating new foods and foods new ways here. Tortillas are staples of the diet. With rice and beans, a cheap, filling meal. Mango with chili and lemon....Avocado with everything.... Oaxaca chocolate is simple, fresh, with an almost gritty texture. Oaxacan cheese is a simple white salted cheese. Tamale are ground corn around meat, chili, pineapple and possibly other things. Usually are wrapped in a corn husk. Atole is a sweet corn and cinnamon drink I’ve had hot. Gtole [sic] is corn on the cob, often with mayonaise, cheese, chili powder, salt, and lime. Flavored waters are popular here....The maguey plant is used to produce three alcoholic drinks. Tequila and mezcal are distilled, pulque is fermented (Day 55).

Billy also wrote about Mexican dress in several entries, noting the fact that Mexican clothing was "not as deliberate or fancy" as that of Americans (Day 2). As he stated, "Shirt and pants provide an adequate description of their garb. O.k., buttoned shirt and pants" (Day 26).

Beliefs

Amanda’s comments in this subcategory centered on the idea of priorities. On her first day in the program, she wrote that she believed that the Mexican
priority system placed the family as the most important aspect of life, adding that she thought that Mexicans were not as materialistic as Americans. In a later entry, she wrote about the Mexican priority system again. She wrote:

I see all of the people in [the] Zocalo selling things and sitting and talking, basically not working and I wonder where they get the money to live. Then, I see the time spent with family and I realize the difference in priorities again. [In Mexico] you work just to get by or to live with the basics so you have so much time to spend with your family. Mexicans, as stereotyped, are not lazy, they are simply family oriented (Day 4).

On another occasion, she wrote about how she thought the United States could learn from Mexican culture, saying:

I think Americans could improve a lot if they replicated certain aspects of this culture. I respect the emphasis of family, lack of materialism, and the casualness yet extreme care they utilize when doing something. The old, feeble man carving replicas of Tepoztlan at the bottom of the mountain exemplifies this (Day 7).

In this entry, the man to whom she referred had been carving replicas when she and her friends started up the mountain one afternoon and was still there working when they descended several hours later.

In addition to priorities, Amanda wrote about the Mexican concept of time. After her first day in the
program she sat in the Zocalo for several hours in the evening. She wrote:

There is one family sitting across from me. They have been there for over two hours enjoying themselves. There is no rush here. I have never sat after a meal and talked for any length of time. Everyone on the streets isn’t in a rush. I really enjoy this more relaxed lifestyle so far but I need to adjust.

Like Amanda, Billy addressed the issue of the Mexican priority system in an early journal entry. He stated that "fashion is not a priority. People wear comfortable clothes, drive small cars, and seem to worry about other things" (Day 1). He, too, said he believed that family was a high priority to Mexicans. He stated, "Family is first. Then work, a way to get food. The children live at home until they’re married. They don’t get apartments after high school" (Day 4).

Billy wrote about his attitude toward time, recounting having bought a bracelet with a sun on it that was serving as a wrist watch. He described the watch by saying "sun for morning, sun and heat for afternoon, can’t see the watch - night" (Day 63). His journal did not include any direct references to the Mexican concept of time, although his interviews did. Billy’s one reference to Mexican religion in the
journal was a comment about seeing a cross of lashed branches at the top of a mountain and being reminded of "this country's religious feeling" (Day 8).
Figure 4. Interpersonal (Private) Cultural Interaction and Frequency of Mention for Quadrant 3.
Interpersonal (Private) Interaction

Family

While many of Amanda’s journal comments involved the family, only one was specific to this subcategory. On one occasion she observed that her host siblings’ friends talked with her host parents and concluded that "the family grows when necessary" (Day 3). She added that she liked this aspect of Mexican culture.

Billy, too, made one reference specific to the subcategory of family. He wrote that his host father asked him to tell his host brothers to come inside the house when he came in because it was getting dark (Day 60). No further description of the occurrence or its significance was given in the journal, but Billy later spoke of it at length during the end-of-quarter interview.

Human Interaction

Amanda wrote once of having had a class discussion in school about men and women but gave no detail. The majority of her comments in this subcategory were made about people. For example, she described Mexican people as "incredible" and always happy (Day 1). To
the latter she added that the same could not always be said of Americans. After returning from her week-long break in Costa Rica, she wrote that she liked Costa Rica better than Mexico (Day 50). She stated as her reasons that "the men didn’t yell things and the people were very nice." On a more personal level, in another entry she wrote that she was pleased with her intercambio and that he had invited her to attend a festival in his town (Day 9).

Billy wrote about a wide variety of topics under the subcategory of "Human Interaction." Like Amanda, he made reference to Mexican gender roles in his journal. Both of his references in this subcategory were about Mexican women. In an early entry he described Mexican women, compared them with American women, and explained how he related to them. He wrote:

Woman here is very strong. These women are not getting raped. I tried to explain how the woman here is different. I couldn’t. I still can’t. Ken said that the girls here at ten are cooking meals for the guys, who appreciate the help. Girls put themselves into their work; my mother prides herself on her rather artistic dishes. In the U.S., a girl who is nineteen or twenty has not had to work, to think of others. Maybe she works, but in a MacDonald’s or in a store....In this culture where women are fully human, rather than functions of men, I am comfortable and able to have conversations with women on the streets (Day 3).
Billy's second reference to women focused on the marrying age in Mexico (Day 13). He observed that "there isn't a community of college age girls. They graduate high school and marry. The eligible age is lower here."

Like Amanda, Billy wrote about Mexican people in his journal. Both of his references categorized in this section were about the same individual, his friend Daniel, whom he met during his week-long break in Oaxaca. After becoming friendly with Daniel and his family, Billy was invited to stay in their house for an extra week. In one journal entry, Billy mentioned having had a discussion with Daniel about each of their lives (Day 36). He described Daniel's life as simple and content and stated that he wanted to return to Oaxaca to "try out that existence." In the second entry, Billy mentioned that he was then living with Daniel and his family in a tranquil and pleasing place (Day 41).

On one occasion, Billy wrote about meeting a group of homosexual males in the Zocalo. He described the interaction among them as well as in relation to him, a
heterosexual American male. He also described their work. He wrote:

Apparently the Zocalo is a gay hangout. I hung out with a group of [gay males] last night. They referred to each other as "she" and woman. We had a good time, though they were frustrated by my sexuality. At twelve o'clock those who were working went to the corner to get picked up. Clients drove by and picked their man and the price, [and] arranged a later pick-up. One hundred, two hundred pesos secured a job (Day 13).

Some of Billy’s journal references to Mexican people were categorized under the heading "Human Interaction" based on the fact that they seemed to have more to do with basic interaction than with the particular individuals mentioned. Billy wrote in an early entry about how he had the habit of talking with Mexican people and how he perceived that they valued human interaction. He wrote:

I talk with storekeepers, bus drivers, kids in the street I play soccer with. And everyone here is happy to shoot the breeze. I walk into a small store and, being the only customer, will talk to the owner for a while and leave. No one is so busy here, so consumed by their job or "the system" that they can’t chat (Day 8).

In a later entry he wrote about meeting up with a friend in the street in Buenavista (Day 59). Having just met the person the night before, he used the term "friend" to refer to him. He mentioned asking the
person about his "car," which really was a horse. The friend offered Billy a ride on the horse, and Billy accepted. On another occasion, when Billy traveled to Taxco, he wrote about meeting a Mexican family who owned mango trees and sampling the fruit (Day 63). He said that he told the family how much he liked Mexican food and new foods in general, after which the mother gave him a slice of jicama to try. He said he showed them his journal and that they were delighted to see that he had taped a tamarind seed as well as other seeds into the journal. On yet another occasion, Billy’s journal entry focused on the primacy of basic interaction as he wrote:

The air is fresh and cool and the people are friendly. A friend walked by with the head of a coyote. We talked long in the road, not trying to understand each other’s every word. Another friend offered me his house. I practiced slingshot, met a boy equally proud of his [slingshot]; we parted in peace. I love the people of the country (Day 62).

When Billy reluctantly returned to Cuernavaca from Buenavista, he wrote a journal entry in which he listed three pages worth of friends he had made and how none had wanted for him to leave Buenavista either (Day 60). He seemed to compare the level of human interaction found in Buenavista with that found in Cuernavaca, as
he ended the reference by saying "I don’t know as many people as well or easily in Cuernavaca."

Billy wrote the numbers one through five and six through ten, respectively, in Nahuatl in two journal entries without accompanying text (Days 17, 22). He did, however, mention during the mid-quarter interview that he was trying to learn this indigenous language from the child vendors in the Zocalo. He made two references to indigenous and mixed-race peoples of Mexico. In the first, he compared Mexico with the United States in terms of the relations between the natives and the conquerors. He wrote that "the Spaniards blended with the population here. There are some pure Spanish here, and a large, alive (not stuck on reservations) indigenous population. The majority are mestizo, or of mixed blood." He went on to ponder the influence of Mexico’s ethnic make-up on the country, writing:

How does that make-up, compared to the United States, where the whites pretty much killed off the native population, influence the country? It might mean that more of their history counts. Mayan and Aztec history might seem more relevant here than Sioux or Blackfoot history in the U.S. (Day 26).
He later returned to the same general theme and added that "whereas in the U.S. we are clearly the whites who replaced the natives, [in Mexico] the culture must constantly define itself. The population here is a new race, neither Spanish nor indigenous but both and neither" (Day 26).
Figure 5. Interpersonal (Public) Cultural Interaction and Frequency of Mention for Quadrant 4.
AMANDA  

Government  
• Government  1  
• Patriotism  1  
• Church/State  1  
• Freedom  1  

Transportation  
• Buses  1  

Economy  
• Market  1  
• Vendors  1  

Leisure Activities  
• Sports  1  
• Dancing  1  
• Movies  1  

Traditions  
• Celebrations  3  
• History  3  

Social Issues  
• Unwanted Animals  1  
• Health  1  
• Teen Pregnancy  1  
• Illiteracy  1  
• Crime  1  
• Discrimination  1  

BILLY  

Government  
• Government  1  

Transportation  
• Buses  1  
• Cars  1  
• Trains  1  
• Traffic Patterns  1  
• Mail  2  

Economy  
• Market  4  
• Vendors  3  
• Goods  2  
• Money  2  

Leisure Activities  
• Sports  1  
• Games  1  

Traditions  
• Celebrations  2  
• History  1  
• Siesta  1  

Social Issues  
• Unwanted Animals  2  
• Health  2  
• Alcoholism  1  
• Violence  2  

Figure 5. Interpersonal (Public) Cultural Interaction and Frequency of Mention for Quadrant 4. (cont’d)
Interpersonal (Public) Interaction

Government

In one journal entry Amanda wrote about having seen a film on the Mexican government's violent attack on a peaceful student demonstration in 1968 and having discussed in culture class the current civil unrest in the state of Chiapas (Day 57). She said that she found the two situations frustrating and that the people of Mexico could not do anything because the party in power, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) was "very powerful and very corrupt." She went on to describe a conversation that she had had with her host mother about the government. She wrote:

I actually talked to my [host mother] a while ago about the government here. I don't understand how they became so corrupt and why the people don't do anything about it. Of course, she explained the people are afraid and it is too difficult to organize everyone. Makes sense. However, I can't imagine what will terminate this so-called government other than a revolution. I don't know, the whole situation frustrates me and I feel sorry for the people here that are trapped under the system (Day 57).

One Saturday, Amanda wrote about having observed members of the military taking down the large flag in the Zocalo and how it was marvelous to watch (Day 21). She said that the people were very proud of their
country and respected this flag removal tradition. In another entry she wrote about the issue of abortion and the fact that it was illegal in Mexico (Day 23). She concluded that even though in Mexico church and state were separate, the Catholics influenced the country. She said that no one religious group could have such influence in the United States, as there were many religions there.

On another occasion, Amanda wrote about a discussion that she had had with her host brother, Pablo, the night before in which they discussed the issue of freedom. She wrote:

I said that I liked the culture here but I enjoyed the "freedom" I have in the U.S. He laughed and asked what freedom I am talking about. It is [as] if I am conditioned, as all Americans are, to respond like this. I don't have any more freedom than people here or wherever. I have opportunities but also I am limited by many things (Day 8).

Billy's one journal reference to Mexican government focused on the civil unrest in Chiapas at that time. He described the cause of the rebellion--the farmers' feeling that the government was not working for them. He went on to say that:

The farmers in Chiapas, and many of the peasants here feel they are not part of the nation, that the nation doesn't consider the rural population
as part of its identity. As in the U.S.,
corporate farming is taking land away from small
farmers, who can’t compete. In a country where
maize used to be the blood of life, corn is now
imported. Sometimes I think this country, and
especially their politicians, will sell out, pass
NAFTA, and become the plebe/slaves of the U.S. and
later mono-world community (Day 27).

Transportation

Amanda’s only journal reference to Mexican modes
of transportation was a comment in one entry about
enjoying traveling by bus (Day 30). She said that she
enjoyed the conversations and the views.

Billy made various references to Mexican
transportation. Like Amanda, he mentioned bus travel,
stating his perception that "this country take the
bus." He compared travel in Mexico with that in the
United States, saying:

It is possible to catch a bus, or a series of
busses, to almost anywhere. Every town has at
least a busstop, if not a more formal station. I
feel the people here move about as people, rather
than people in cars. Maybe what I am trying to
say is that in the U.S. people will go from
climate-controlled house to climate-controlled
work to climate-controlled movie theatres and
restaurants in their radio and AC- and heat-
equipped cars, as if the outside world never
existed. I like traveling here. There are always
fruit stands and places to get water, should I
have forgotten my bottle. The cost of the busses
is low here, especially for me with U.S. dollars
(Day 14).
In one entry, Billy wrote that "people walk here. To go to the store, they walk. The car is for distances" (Day 4). In another entry, he observed that there was a big difference between first and second class cars on the trains. Billy described Mexican driving in the following manner:

Though none of the drivers here seem worried or rushed, they drive fast. As if delighted by the idea that they can rush about while sitting still. Two busses will jockey for position, (no, it isn’t even a race against the other guy, but just find the opening and head towards it) in a space Americans wouldn’t consider more than one lane (Day 15).

In the same journal entry, Billy wrote about his perception of the national attitude toward mail delivery. He wrote, "Hey, where’s my mail? Just as the country’s not too rushed about many things, they don’t knock themselves out to deliver post in any timely fashion. I’m not pressed about it either. Just wondering." Billy mentioned mail delivery on another occasion when he had climbed a steep mountain road (Day 7). He said he wondered how long it took for a letter to reach the people living there.
Economy

Amanda made only two references under the subcategory of "Economy," and both were about shopping in the main market and from the street vendors. In the first she described having found the central market interesting, even though she had not bought anything (Day 33). She said that she liked all the flowers and thought that they were very pretty. In the second entry, she mentioned having bought many things from the vendors and wondered how she would be able to carry them all home to the United States (Day 38).

Billy's journal entries in the subcategory of "Economy" were numerous and varied. Like Amanda, he described the central market. He first compared the market with American shopping malls and said that "rather than large stores, the vendors have booths or [a] table with their merchandise arranged around them. Every night everything is packed up and taken home--no warehouse or shop" (Day 5). In his next entry he again compared the two countries in noting that at the central market the meat was sitting out on display, rather than in refrigerated cases. He concluded that "this country is not infested with rules and
regulations, inspectors and inspections. The vendors don’t sell bad stuff because they’ll lose their business, not because of some third party government agency." Billy described the market in the following manner:

I stood in the middle and closed my eyes. I heard women singing their food for sale, laughing, talking, a warm clamor of shopping bargaining [sic] and little kids racing about. I smelled flowers and water and warm rotten fruit and exhaust and candies and meat, raw from the butchers mixed with slowing [sic] cooking lunches (Day 6).

Billy made one reference to his local grocery store, in which he noted that people did not seem to shop alone, but rather with spouses or entire families (Day 1). He added that the young people working there seemed to enjoy themselves. He concluded that "altogether the grocery was a pretty fun place."

Of the vendors in Mexico, Billy wrote that it was not necessary to establish a business in a fixed location, as there were people everywhere washing windows and selling food and handicrafts (Day 1). He wrote in another entry about the act of vending in the central market, noting that prices were not fixed, but rather arrived at in a personal interaction between vendor and customer (Day 5). He added that he liked
that interaction. On one occasion he wrote his journal entry while sitting at a shoe-making booth in the central market (Day 32). He described the scene, saying "I am sitting in a corner of the market where, in booths cluttered with old shoes, machines and sundry scraps a handful of men sew, cut, hammer, dye, and paste shoes into existence."

About the goods available in Mexico, Billy wrote that there was "considerably less packaging here than in the U.S. What do I mean by that? In the grocery store, the foods are sold more in bulk, clothes and drygoods sit on the shelf free from polyurethane wrappers" (Day 2). He wrote in a later entry that Mexican stores did not "stick to one subject" and that even if they featured clothing or televisions, they also offered food or drinks for sale (Day 9). Billy’s two references to money consisted of a statement that Mexicans did not have as much disposable income as Americans did (Day 1) and a comment that even though Daniel’s family did not have much money, "Ana (Daniel’s young daughter) plays in the dirt with a bucket of pesos" (Day 43).
Leisure Activities

Under the first topic of this subcategory, "Sports," Amanda wrote about having attended a soccer match in which her host brother, Pablo, was playing. She said that she found the match interesting and that she was pleased to have spoken a lot of Spanish while there.

Amanda made a considerable number of references to dancing in her journal. In them, she mentioned that she really liked to dance and enjoyed going dancing. She said that the dance places in the United States were similar to those in Mexico, and that while she enjoyed going dancing, she would grow tired of it if she went too much. In one entry, she mentioned that Pablo had met her and her friends at a popular dance bar and taught her to dance (Day 2). On another occasion, she described the Mexican attitude toward dancing in groups. She wrote:

We went to Baby Rock last night and danced a lot. Pablo was dancing with Melissa and her friend came to dance with them and Pablo stopped dancing with Melissa because that is not acceptable in Mexico. In this way, the culture is more conservative than the United States. It's also more traditional (Day 4).
Amanda made one journal reference to movies in Mexico. She compared Mexicans and Americans in terms of their levels of enjoyment while watching a movie. She said:

I have been to two movies here and I find it ironic that the Mexicans always seem to enjoy the show more than the Americans. I think that is ironic because they have to bother with the subtitles and some jokes don’t even translate. It should be the English speaking audience that is relaxing and getting the most out of the movie. I enjoy the ambiance of the audience here more than in the States. It’s a very minute difference, but it’s one that I took notice of (Day 52).

Billy’s journal comments specifically about leisure activities were few. In one entry he mentioned having attended a bullfight in Mexico City (Day 22). In another, he stated that Mexican children shared American children’s interest in playing pogs, a game similar to tiddlywinks. He taped a Mexican gamepiece featuring a picture of the American cartoon character Lisa Simpson to the page.

Traditions

Amanda wrote about various celebrations in which she either had participated or wanted to participate.
For example, she attended Carnaval in both Veracruz and Tepoztlan. Of the first, she wrote:

This weekend we went to Vera Cruz [*sic*] for carnaval. It was very fun. We all drank a lot and were very drunk, but that’s o.k. I liked the parade a lot because I had a good seat and it was very colorful. After the parade, we danced in the streets with many other people. There were transvestites everywhere (Day 54).

She described the second, in Tepoztlan, and explained why she preferred it over the first. She wrote:

Tonight I went to Tepoztlan for the carnaval. It was incredible! I can’t believe how many people were there. I had a seat on [a] roof that had a view of the entire party. I like this carnaval more than Vera Cruz [*sic*] because the people are involved in the celebration more in Tepoztlan. The people wore interesting clothes, various bands played, and everyone danced in the Zocalo. Also, there were many vendors in the streets (Day 58).

Amanda also wrote about having given a class presentation on birthdays, especially the "quinceanos" celebration in which Mexican girls have a special party on their fifteenth birthday (Day 39). She said that after having researched the tradition, she would like to attend one such party. She also wrote that she thought that boys should have an equivalent celebration.

Amanda also mentioned in her journal celebrating the second of February with her host family, although
on a different day for convenience. This holiday, known as Candelaria, takes place forty days after Christmas and celebrates the first occasion on which Mary and Joseph took the baby Jesus to the temple. Traditionally, whoever receives a tiny toy in their piece of cake on Three Kings’ Day (January 6) must host a party on this day. (Amanda did not explain the occasion for celebration on February 2.)

She made one reference to history, in which she recounted a day-trip to Teotihuacan (Day 28). On the trip, Cemanahuac resident anthropologist Charlie Goff had told students about the rise and fall of the city of Teotihuacan as well as the Mexican student uprising of 1968. Amanda noted that she was surprised by some of the historical information that she learned and that she was glad that Charlie had been leading the group.

Under the subcategory "Traditions" Billy wrote about various topics, including having attended a wedding in Buenavista (Day 49). He said that he danced and ate and would have liked to try a piece of the wedding cake but left before it was cut. He also wrote about a celebration that he happened upon in Mexico
City on the day he left to return to the United States. He described the scene as:

a troupe [sic] of adults and children wearing costumes and often bearded masks. A foreign legionnaire, an Arab, a pirate, soldiers, and masked Zapatistas. The parade would do a few dances, many in costumed pairs. A couple soldiers would punctuate the music with tremendous blasts of their rifles. Then [the] whole spectacle would pick up and move (Day 68).

Billy’s one specific reference to history consisted of a comparison between Mexicans and Americans in terms of the importance of history to them. He wrote:

Somehow the people here are more connected to their history and land than in the U.S....I heard a speaker say that in Mexican speeches, whether political or PTA or whatever, [they] mention the Revolution in one context or another. Maybe one connection is that most of Mexican history has happened in this land, rather than overseas wars (Day 26).

In one early journal entry Billy mentioned the Mexican tradition of the daily siesta (Day 5). He said that he had "fallen into the siesta routine quite naturally and comfortably."

Social Issues

Under this subcategory, several of Amanda’s references were brief comments. For example, she wrote
about being bothered by the many dogs on the beach in Zihuatanejo. In another entry she mentioned having attended the herbalist’s class in Buenavista and wanting to learn more on the subject of herbal medicines (Day 66).

Amanda once wrote about the issue of teen pregnancy out of wedlock. She recounted a discussion that took place in her host home during lunch one day. She wrote:

Today at lunch Pablo talked about his friend who is pregnant. She is seventeen years old. The family said that the situation is very rare in Mexico....Pablo thinks that the situation is very bad. It’s the first time that a student in his school has been pregnant. What a surprise! (Day 23).

On another occasion, Amanda wrote about a volunteer group called Vamos, in whose activities Cemahuac students have the opportunity to participate. The group’s goal is to help educate local youths in Cuernavaca. One day Amanda went with the group to a neighborhood in which there were many children who were not in school. She later recounted:

Last night I talked with a girl who was sixteen years old. She wants to learn English, but she’s not like most of the children. Most were very young and couldn’t read or write. It was very sad but the children appeared to be happy with their lives. The girl with whom I talked was very
intelligent but did not attend school because they expelled her over little problems. I think that this is stupid because the girl wants to learn and can’t. I don’t understand why the children in this neighborhood can’t attend the public schools because of yelling or why the government allows them to stay at home and not attend school. Why isn’t there a law like in the United States? (Day 12).

One day Amanda participated in an excursion to a local prison. She described the prison and how it was different from what she had expected. She wrote:

Now, about the excursion to the prison--it wasn’t what I expected. The prisoners have total freedom. The prisoners’ children live there and there are stores inside the prison. Very different from the U.S. The people appear to be happy. If I were poor, I would want to go to prison (Day 53).

In another entry Amanda wrote about her perception of discrimination between Mexicans and Americans (Day 2). She said that Mexicans did not discriminate against Americans the way that Americans did against Mexicans. She added "I am frustrated with my country because it is [ethno]centric. Also, people in the United States generally aren’t open-minded."

Billy wrote about several different social issues. For example, he wrote about unwanted stray dogs in two different entries. In the first he observed that "the cats stay inside here, because the unruly dogs are in
the street" (Day 22). He then wrote a lengthy
description of the dogs that he entitled "Dogs and
Other Dogs." He wrote:

The dogs here are more wild than in the U.S.
There are many ownerless dogs here. Their fur’s
not as soft as in other countries (no one washes
their dogs here). Many of the dogs are missing
hair or ears or limbs or have limps. The dogs
here are not as friendly. They do not come up to
humans for affection. In general, they seem
grumpy, mean. The dogs here sleep wherever. And
so lazy, when sleeping, the dogs do not look like
they’ve picked a nice spot to nap, but are limp on
their sides like they fell out of the truck
(Day 22).

In a later entry he reiterated that there were many
ownerless dogs, adding that the same was true in the
United States. He then generalized about stray dogs by
way of an encounter with one particular stray while
living with his friend, Daniel, in Oaxaca. He wrote:

[Stray dogs] sometimes hang around a specific
household, looking for scraps of food. A skinny
dog stuck around our place for a couple days.
Daniel commented on the dog’s hunger, as the dog
grubbed on tortilla that during fatter times he
would ignore. I saw that dog get bits of
tortilla, a fried sardine, and pickings at our
fish bones. When he happens upon a decent piece
of meat, he is indeed a lucky dog (Day 47).

Billy followed these observations with a drawing of the
dog, with ribs protruding.

Billy made one reference to health, noting the
dentalwork he had seen in Mexico (Day 22). He stated
that "people here will smile and flash a mouthful of
gold or silver. I don’t know if that is because
natural color dental work is unavailable, or they enjoy
the metals."

With respect to his remaining two topics in the
subcategory of "Social Issues," Billy made references
to the lack of certain social problems in Mexico.
First, he stated in one entry that as he stood in a
liquor store he realized that alcoholism did not seem
to be a big problem in Mexico (Day 10). He added that
"the youths here do not drink a lot--they see Americans
as big drinkers." Second, he referred to the lack of
violence in two different entries. In the first he
noted realizing one day that he had not "seen a fight
here, or even angry words" (Day 9). In a later entry,
he reiterated that Mexico "seems rather non-violent.
I haven’t seen any fights or real anger here. The
driving, while a little crazy, is never malicious"
(Day 27.)

Responses to Interview Questions

The previous section of the chapter described the
contents of the participants’ written journals, and
this section includes a summary of the participants’ interviews with the researcher. Some contents of the pre-program interviews were presented in the first section of the chapter, via the participants’ case studies. Hence, this section includes short answers to each of fifteen questions asked of Amanda and Billy during the mid-quarter and end-of-quarter interviews. Questions dealing with the following topics were used during the two sets of interviews: daily life in Cuernavaca and Buenavista; host families; travel; and participants’ perspectives on the program, Mexican culture, and themselves. The participants’ answers are analyzed in Chapter Five.

Responses to Mid-Quarter Interview Questions

Amanda’s mid-quarter interview took place on day 31 of the program. Hence all of her comments in this section were made on that day. All of Billy’s comments in this section were taken from his mid-quarter interview that took place on day 30 of the program.
1. Tell me about Cuernavaca.

_Amanda (Participant 1)_

Amanda described Cuernavaca in the following manner:

It’s a lot bigger than I thought it would be. I mean, I’ve been to Mexico City, and it’s smaller than Mexico City but it’s still a city where it has businesses and rush hour. And it’s a city like the United States but the culture’s still, like, Mexican, as far as like the rush hour’s at 2 because of comida (lunch)....And the stores close at different times. So it still has the Mexican culture. And I think it’s absolutely beautiful. I love it.

When asked what she thought was beautiful about Cuernavaca, she stated that she loved the mountains and "the Zocalo where people just hang out all the time. I like the culture down here a lot." She gave her impression of Mexican people as being family-oriented, and she expressed preference for that orientation. She compared family life of Mexico to that of the United States, saying "I’m very close to my (American) family...and we never sit down to dinner together. You know, it’s run in and out of the house. It’s much slower here."

Amanda said that Mexicans seemed to put more effort into the small details of life and gave the
example her host mother making fresh meals every day. She also noted that Mexicans did not seem to be as materialistic as Americans. She recalled her first impressions upon arriving in Mexico, saying that she had initially seen poor houses and thought "God they’re so poor." But she said that she later changed her perception, deciding that Mexicans were not as concerned as Americans were about material possessions.

**Billy (Participant 2)**

Billy began his comments by saying "I like the women in Mexico. I like the women and the people in general in Cuernavaca. I don’t like the physical place sometimes." He said that he did not like "the way that the street--like I’ll walk down a street and it’s street and wall, like a little tunnel; it’s busses going by." He stated that he also did not like the air and the noise in Cuernavaca, adding that "I don’t like that I have to go inside to go outside. The quiet places with trees are in the Jardin Borda, inside where [sic] I have to pay money, or in a school."

Billy said that he was going to try to go to a village because the parts of Cuernavaca that he liked,
such as the people, language, and crafts, would be there, but the problems of the big city would not. He complained that

They don’t plan their city. It just happens. And then they find, "Oh, look, we’ve got this one little street. Now it’s tons of traffic and it’s blocked up." Or, they don’t plan parks. They, they just put—it’s just roads and houses. They don’t, there’s no rest.

Billy also lamented the lack of a central park.

2. Tell me about your time so far in Cuernavaca. What have you been doing, where have you been going, with whom?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda said that she traveled a lot with several friends including her roommate. She recounted a trip to Tepoztlan in which she and her friends climbed the mountain and saw the pyramid, which she said she found very interesting. She added that the view was "just phenomenal."

She described a weekend trip to Acapulco and Pie de la Cuesta, a more secluded beach town nearby. Of Acapulco, she said "Acapulco was allright. It was very commercialized." But she described her visit to Pie de
la Cuesta as "the most unforgettable time." She described Pie de la Cuesta in the following manner:

It’s like 30 minutes outside Acapulco and it’s just this more or less secluded beach and it’s one road that runs through this tiny little town. And on the left is the lagoon and it’s huge and people fish in it all day. And on the right it’s the beach, and the mountain is behind it, and there was no—there was [sic] like two families there. It was us and like, Mexicans. And that was it. And, um, it was just phenomenal. We ate at this restaurant that was on the beach. There was just a patio on the beach. There was like, a kitchen. I mean, we were the only people in there obviously. It was like, I don’t know...how they stay open. It was the best food, and then that night we went out and laid in the hammocks and watched the sun set....And, um, then we just watched the stars, you know, and, it was just, phenomenal. Just, I love like the nature down here.

Amanda also mentioned traveling to Mexico City one weekend and having visited many museums. She said that she liked the art that she saw. She observed that local artists’ work was displayed in restaurants. For example, she said "We were in Denny’s eating breakfast. And there was [sic] local artists all over the wall. And it seems to be more appreciated down here...Like in the States you get, like, cheesy pictures everywhere...reproductions."
Billy (Participant 2)

Billy said that he spent a certain amount of time on school-related activities, including class, homework, writing, and reading. He said that he did something different every weekend, using one day to travel. He mentioned having been to Mexico City, Tepoztlan, and a bullfight.

Billy described his attitude toward accompanying his friends to the bars in the following way:

One night I went [out] to Harry’s Restaurant and had a couple beers with my friends. I lasted about ten minutes in there and went outside. And when they came out, they went to a disco and [I] lasted about three minutes in there...because it was night and I was ready to go to sleep. And I didn’t wanna hear loud bad music...and flashing lights, so I left....So I feel like I’ve done it. Like I know every weekend when my friends say, "Do you wanna go out?" I always say, "I have." I know, I know what exactly it’s gonna be.

Billy said that he liked to play pool and "sometimes I just go take a walk and then just see what happens." He added that he was learning the indigenous language Nahuatl from the little girls in the Zocalo. He said had learned his numbers up to five so far. He recounted his activity one Friday night as follows:

I hung out with a bunch of guys who are all pugas—gay....And around twelve o’clock some of them had to go to work, which meant they walked up
to Juarez (a busy street) and waited for guys to come by...to pick them up.

Billy said that he had no fear of any social rules and that "I just sometimes need to just go, and things happen." He added that one time in the Zocalo while he talked on the phone, "so many Mexicans walked by and waved and knew me....I've just been out, talking to people." He said that he tried to avoid going out with Americans because they tended to go to American style places and stay together and talk. He mentioned spending time with his intercambio, who taught in a local English school. He referred to her as a friend and said that she was fun and also helped him with his grammar. Billy mentioned their plans to go to a nearby mountain and drink pulque (a fermented drink made from the maguey plant) on the following day.

3. What has surprised you most about your experiences so far? What have you found to be very similar to or different from what you expected?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda responded that the stereotypes of Mexicans that she had brought with her to Mexico were wrong.
For example, she referred to stereotypes of Mexicans as poor and lazy and said that such characterizations were wrong. She stated:

I think they’re just really family-oriented and it surprises me how close everyone is. Um, and yet they’re still, you know like, advanced. I mean they have everything we have but they just, I don’t know, we, I think we use things wrong, you know? Like, stupid example: We have a microwave in our house here. And at home we use it because we don’t have time to sit down together. We’ll throw something in the microwave and run out the door. Like here, she uses it just because it’s easier. But they still have all the family together and, I mean, they have all the luxuries that we have but they don’t--I don’t know. Do you understand what I’m saying? They still use it in the way that they are still close. And it doesn’t ruin things.

When asked what similarities she saw between Mexico and the United States, Amanda answered:

sometimes I get confused. Like, sometimes I’ll sit down I’ll be like "Everything’s the same", you know, the kids go to school, I mean, I have a brother that’s 20 that lives...with me. And, he goes to college, and he’s going for engineering and I didn’t think that’s like [a possibility], I don’t know why. I guess I was just so egocentric that like, I mean, they’re doing the same things we do at Ohio State and everything else. And, um, so like their lifestyle’s the same.

She added that one contrast between the two cultures was that in Mexico, students did not typically leave their hometowns to attend college.
Billy (Participant 2)

Billy began by saying that the thing that had surprised him the most so far was how little time it had taken him to adjust to the Mexican culture. As he stated:

I felt more like I was adjusting, like I would be if I moved to Chicago. When do the busses run? Where can I get something to eat? Where are the stores? Where is the bank? What's the exchange rate? When is it open? Practical matters that have nothing--that are not Mexico-specific.

When asked to identify similarities and differences between Mexico and the United States, Billy reiterated a theme from an earlier journal entry. He mentioned that products tended to be less packaged in Mexico. He cited an example also mentioned in his journal of home-made Mexican brooms that consisted of straw tied to a stick. He added that he liked "getting a meal wrapped in a corn husk" and the fact that in Mexico some items are not for appearance, but rather solely for function.

Billy said that he noticed that Mexico was trying to "be American." For example, he mentioned that while Guatemalan backpacks were popular in the United States, they were not in Mexico. He added "Nobody wants to be
seen with their silver from the country or native stuff at all."

Billy said that driving was different in Mexico.

As he described it:

"When cars come to an intersection, maybe...one car will go, then maybe two or three from the other way will go, then a couple, they just, a maneuver is successful if no one--the cars don't make contact. Like close doesn't matter, as long as there's no crunch."

He addressed the cultural issue of attitude toward time, saying

"You can chill out as long as you want in a restaurant. They're in no hurry to bring a bill. No one's in a h--except for driving, where people seem to...like, catch up to the car ahead of them. There's--in a lot of ways, there isn't a hurry here."

4. Who have you spent most of your time with since you arrived in Cuernavaca?

*Amanda* (Participant 1)

Amanda responded that she had spent most of her time so far with her friends. She said that her core group consisted of friends from the program but that her circle also included a Mexican named Paco. She added that "we meet a lot of Mexicans when we go out"
and stuff, which is good." Amanda described her typical day, saying "a daily thing is I...go to school from nine to one and either [sic] hang out after school doing something and then come home for comida when it’s four o’clock."

Billy (Participant 2)

Billy responded that he had spent most of his time so far by himself. When asked why, he said:

I don’t have any best friends. I haven’t found friends here that are my complete compatriots... that I’d want to venture all over with, Mexican or American. And I like being by myself because then I interact the most with the people here.

He described his interaction with others in the following way:

There’s different people I do different things with. I have a friend here I climb mountains with. I have a friend here I take pictures with. I have a friend--my roommate...we eat breakfast, we do things around the house together. But I don’t have one person that--I usually decide what I want to do and sometimes other people go with me....Sometimes I meet other people. But I rarely go anywhere with a group.

He said that his tendency to do things by himself in Mexico contrasted with his tendency to do things with another person in the United States. He added:
I’m more likely at home to do something with one person. I’ll say, "Hey, one person, do you wanna go do this, or go do that?". Here, no, even more so. I do things by myself....Just so I can speak Spanish and, it’s more surprising.

5. Tell me about your living arrangements and your host family.

Amanda (Participant 1)

While in Cuernavaca, Amanda stayed with a middle class family consisting of two parents and their three children, who ranged in age from thirteen to twenty years old. According to Amanda, the family was nice and close-knit and had been hosting students for fifteen years. She mentioned that she was not at home a lot, and went on to say of her host family that:

I absolutely love [them]. They’re phenomenal. And the Senora’s just...she’d do anything for you....I wake up and she’s out there making me breakfast. You know, that’s just weird and then, you know, I’ll come home from school [and] my bed’s made.

The oldest child, Pablo, was an engineering student at the local university. Amanda said that he spoke English, while the rest of the family did not. As a result, she stated that he explained his family to her. His explanations varied between English and Spanish.
One thing that she reported learning about Pablo was that he would never consider leaving to go away to college, a common practice for many American students. The majority of Amanda’s host-family related journal and interview comments were about him. The other two children were rarely mentioned directly in Amanda’s anecdotes. Amanda had an Ohio State University roommate.

Billy (Participant 2)

While in Cuernavaca, Billy also stayed with a middle class family, along with an Ohio State University roommate. The father of the family was an architect who had previously spent time in a seminary studying to be a priest. The two sons, according to Billy, spent most of their free time playing Nintendo and soccer. About the boys Billy commented that:

they’re middle class. So the kids are gonna have nice professions and that’s a given. And they go to a good school and they do their homework. And they’re learning there. So they get to play; the rest of the time they play soccer in the street.

Billy stated that his host mother was nice and that it took him a while to figure out that she was listening at the end of meals to hear what he had liked. He said
that at first she often asked him if he liked the food at the end of the meal. He added that he then learned to comment on the meal without being prompted. He explained that "I make it a point of saying what in the meal I liked and didn’t like. And that improves my chances of getting what I liked again, and avoiding what I don’t like."

Billy summed up his general impressions of his host family by saying that "I have a good time at my house. They’re very accommodating. It’s like being at home." He described his host home as:

a Mexican version of a Southern or Central Ohio home, like a lot of knicknacks, a lot of plates on the walls, and just like, bell and, uh, doilies over, and mats over everything. The stereo’s got a cloth cover on top of it. The house doesn’t, it’s...like a completely suburban house. The floors aren’t carpet here because it’s hotter here. Where we live (Billy and his roommate) is on the fourth floor. We have our room, a bathroom, and a balcony. The house is on a hill so we can see the mountain in the morning.

At another point in the mid-quarter interview, Billy mentioned that his roommate seemed to be jealous of the disproportionate amount of attention he received from the host family. He noted:

My roommate says things, like when we get home, "Of course you get the nice welcome." or "Of course you get something nice to eat." He feels, and I don’t know how justifiably so, that I’m
treated like Billy—they’re excited to see me. And Jim is the guy that lives in the house, the student who lives there, not just Billy.

Billy ventured an explanation for the differential treatment he and his roommate received from the host family, saying:

But I talk longer at the table than he does. I’ll sit at the table and he’ll be pressed to go do something. And I’ll chat away in Spanish or I’ll take my hermanos (brothers) out. Like "Let’s go to the Zocalo." I want to take one—I told one I want to take him to the bullfight. I think I’m just, I don’t know. I think he’s resentful sometimes of the attention I get. But I think it’s because I put more time into the family. I ask more of them. I want my padre (father) to bring me back a drill bit. Because I found some teeth when I was climbing on the mountain I want to drill for a necklace.

6. How have you changed since you’ve been in Cuernavaca?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda responded that she thought that she had changed "just because I came down here not knowing anyone. And then I...sat back for a while. And I, I really learned to appreciate things so much more." She added that the first few nights in Cuernavaca "I’d sit in the zocalo and just watch the families...just how
they were together and everything like that." She commented on her current attitude toward the United States, saying:

I look down upon the United States a lot more...like the culture and stuff....I mean, like, we’re so--it’s so egocentric and it’s so discriminatory ....I think I’ve noticed a lot of things being in a different culture. You know, I’m more aware of things.

Amanda expressed her feelings about living in the Mexican culture versus the American culture in the following manner:

It’s weird because I see this culture and I like it. I like the more slow pace and how the family’s together and everything. But yet I miss being at my own place and doing whatever I like and running in and out of the house and the fast-paced life of the city. And, that’s why I’m like, I don’t understand it, because I love it but then I still like my way I live at home.

Billy (Participant 2)

When asked how he had changed since he had arrived in Cuernavaca, Billy said "Skin color is the obvious. [I] got tan." After a long pause, he added:

I don’t know yet. In some ways I’m still figuring out what happened to me in the fall when I traveled. I can see like maybe the change is just I realize earlier changes here. Like, boy, I don’t have a problem where some people are like "How are we going to get the bus? How is this going to happen?" I’m used, I know that I’m already good at traveling. I know that I can
just, I know how to find busses, find meals. I know, I can bargain. I don’t even know where that came from. There’s just certain—I’ve found here that I’m very able to cope with life...My Spanish has definitely improved. I’m starting to think in Spanish.

7. What do you plan to do during break week?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda responded that she planned to go to Costa Rica with several students from the program. She said that someone she knew in Ohio had told her about his trip to Costa Rica before she came to Mexico and that it sounded very interesting to her. She recounted that he had said that Costa Rica was "just really tranquil and...rainforest and volcanos and beaches and the people are great." Amanda said that she was interested in going "for the experience."

Billy (Participant 2)

Billy stated that he planned to go to Oaxaca for the first weekend, to Puerto Escondido for the middle week, and possibly to Acapulco for the second weekend. In Puerto Escondido he said he planned to stay with
several friends from the program in a rented house. As far as the final weekend in Acapulco, he said:

I’ll either go to Acapulco with them or Acapulco by myself or Pie de la [Cuesta]--a small beach with other friends. I don’t know what will happen the second weekend. Right now I’m just getting numbers so if I’m sick of my traveling companions or if I just want to be by myself or do something different with other friends there’ll be all these people around Mexico that I can find for the second weekend.

Billy also mentioned planning to go to Buenavista, but he did not say when.

Responses to End-Of-Quarter Interview Questions

Both Amanda’s and Billy’s end-of-quarter interviews were conducted two weeks after they returned to the United States. All of the following comments were made during those interviews.

1. Tell me about your trip to Buenavista.

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda described her trip to Buenavista by saying that:

I loved it! It was perfect.....It was weird because everyone said that, you know, "Buenavista you’re not going to have anything to do." But they kept us occupied all the time. You know, at
night we did different things and stuff. And it was really nice. I liked it a lot.

She said that she had participated in various activities offered, such as the cooking class, guitar class, and a visit to the herbalist. She added that she had gone to the program director’s house some evenings to dance salsa and went up to the church (at the top of a hill overlooking the town) a lot at night.

Amanda said "I liked being away from the city, away from Cuernavaca." When asked what characteristics of the city she had been glad to be away from, she said that it was more a matter of being pleased with Buenavista than it was being displeased with Cuernavaca. She explained that "it was more that I liked what Buenavista had. Like, it was just so pretty out there and...you didn’t have all the guys walking on the street making comments....It was a change."

Amanda went on to say that Buenavista was beautiful and that she had:

just loved to people-watch there. Like, I’d just walk around the streets, and everyone’d just hang in their doorsteps and not do anything. And it was just, it was really relaxing, very relaxing. You know, I had a lot of time to kind of do what I wanted. And, um, I mean I did the activities which were great, but we just had a lot of time just to hang out. Like a lot of time—I lived with a lady named Paula, and I would just hang out
on the patio at night and in the mornings, and I liked that.

When asked to compare the people of Buenavista to those of Cuernavaca, Amanda responded that the comparison was one of urban to rural settings, comparable to the situation in the United States. She added that life in a small town was slower-paced and more relaxed than life in a larger city.

Billy (Participant 2)

Billy said that he had gone to Buenavista one afternoon during the first few weeks of the program to see what he thought of spending more time there. He said that at the time "it seemed cool to me." Classes of students are given the opportunity to spend one week in the rural studies center under the stipulation that all members of a given class agree to go. If some members do not wish to go, the entire class must stay at Cemanahuac for the week in question. Billy said that his class signed up to spend the eighth week there, but added that "if they hadn’t signed up, I probably would have gone on my own. But I did get everyone signed up the eighth [week]." He said that his plan to spend the eighth week in Buenavista was one
of the reasons he decided to come back from Oaxaca
(where he had stayed an extra week after the sixth-week
break). He explained his reasoning, saying that:

I thought, well, I wouldn’t have come back for
more of Cuernavaca. But I thought, ok, I might as
well. I’ll come back for Buenavista. I spent the
weekend when everyone else went to Vera Cruz
[sic], I got my stuff together. Went to
Buenavista. And immediately I made so many
friends. Things were smaller there. There’s no,
there wasn’t the bureaucracy of Ohio State. It
was actually real life. You see people more than
once and they became my friends. I have so many
friends from just the couple weeks that I was
there.

In spite of the one-week limit stipulated by the
program, Billy stayed an extra week in Buenavista. He
hired a tutor to help him with his Spanish. He
described why he liked living in Buenavista, saying
that:

There weren’t FCC rules....There weren’t...huge
organizations there. There isn’t a bus strike.
There aren’t huge--school is even smaller.
There’s even less formality than there was in
Cuernavaca. We hung out and learned Spanish
there....There are no bells that rang. I went, we
went over to the director of the school’s house.
And that’s just another person who was there who
gave us good advice. There was no formali--yeah,
there was such a cut-down in formality and
structure.

When asked where he thought that the aspects of
structure and formality that were less obvious in
Buenavista came from, he responded in the following manner:

I haven’t made up my mind entirely about this idea. There are things [that]...inherently have to happen with organization, whether Mexican or the United States. When there are 200 people, in some ways there are certain things that just have to be done to manage 200 people. You don’t, it becomes harder to know everybody by first name. Files start to need to be kept. Now I would say America, in general, has more of this bureaucracy for the same amount of people or the same size of organization. There’s a considerable amount--more amount--of paperwork. Mexico, in general, tends to be just more chilled out about that. Um, like we...have been calling our teachers by their first names [in Mexico]. Like that’s just an example of less formality. I found that in general my learning was hampered by [the] structure of Ohio State.

Billy explained that he felt that the classes were going well until the structure imposed by Ohio State University interfered. He recalled:

Like everything was going well in those classes. The teacher asked us what did we need to learn. "Who liked working on this? Who wants to bring in rock songs? What could we do? Do you guys have any questions?" That was very--that learning was very motivated by the learner, and that was very focused on "What do you guys need to learn? I’m your teacher. I’m here to help you." That, I think, was pretty ideal learning. What was a flaw in our learning, or what...bothered me, are the things that we brought from Columbus. When we had this grammar to go through, when we had this syllabus that we had to keep up with. This artificial bit of structure that hindered us. The second week [in Cuernavaca], I was just, everyone was just trying to get their bearing on, on
Spanish. Ed (a member of his class) hadn’t really spoke [sic] too much (before going to Mexico). He only had maybe a month or something. He was just trying to learn, just to get fluent with the language. And we were getting fed complex grammar, that no one could understand, no one was practicing... maybe remembered for the test, but never learned. That was a waste of time and energy entirely. And that’s something that came from Ohio State. And as time went on, I began to really respect Ohio State a lot less.

Returning specifically to the theme of Buenavista, Billy said that the people of the town were very nice. He compared the interaction found in small stores in the United States with those in Buenavista, saying:

You walk around a small store [in the United States], there’s a clerk and you walk in the store. What are you going to buy? You make the purchase and generally leave. And that’s the expected protocol. In Buenavista, you walk into a store, you’ve walked into some person’s house. Especially because their houses usually are right behind...or above that store. That’s one thing that contributes to the mentality. But they correlate, it goes both ways. They have the store near their house because that’s where they live. You walk into that store--maybe their child is in the store. Your dealing is with another person. That person happens to have a lot of rope around, and they’re willing to sell you some. But it’s a personal interaction foremost. And then, like you chat. "So where are you from?" And then, "OK, I’d like some rope." "Anything else? What are you up to? How long are you here?" You’ve had a conversation with another person who often wanders around in a store. And [in the United States] people are consigned to their little capitalistic roles and consumer processes.
Billy was then asked to compare stores in Buenavista with those found in Cuernavaca. Instead of immediately answering the question asked, he began his response by comparing Cuernavaca with the United States, saying that:

I like considering Cuernavaca because it's a city just like we have cities in the U.S. And it's interesting...by comparing that to what I know about U.S. cities, I can say what's inherent to a city, regardless of culture, what just happens? And what is Mexican--what are Mexican-American influences.

He then went on to talk about his experiences in Mexican stores. He spoke about his visits to a photocopying store in Cuernavaca. He said:

I have a friend in a photocopying store near the school. When I go in there, first we talk about what I'm up to. We do the photocopying--when we do the photocopying, he looks at it. I was doing photocopies of my journal, he looked at it. We talked about it--where I was in Buenavista. And he was completely free. If I had gone in there with a cold attitude, "Here, make these copies," he wouldn't have looked at it or he wouldn't have commented on whatever he'd seen. But this was not just a person who is--this man was not a function of the copier. This was a real person, my friend, and I was having him help me out with copies. And of course, by my tone, he knew that he was allowed to look at [the journal] and ask questions. And I know that we would have been free to play around with the change a little bit. If I didn't have a peso, I'm sure I could have come back the next day with the peso or five pesos or whatever because this is just my friend who's not going to hold pesos against me.
Addressing the original question about stores in Cuernavaca versus those in Buenavista, Billy stated:

Cuernavaca and Buenavista? Already that wonderful tone of Buenavista is gone in Cuernavaca....The MacDonald's [in Cuernavaca] is a MacDonald's completely. I never--I went in there once and it freaked me out to walk around MacDonald's and see like a sombrero up on the wall--the classic thing that's not Mexican but is hung up to make things look Mexican, like some other little artifacts. MacDonald's is in its own time, space, sphere. That was like a sterile MacDonald's but it had a little tone of Mexico. I did not like that at all. Some places that crept in. But then again a lot of small businesses are still small businesses. In Cuernavaca there are a lot of little [paper stores] that I'd go into. There's the family; the people who work there are all related.

Billy added that stores in Cuernavaca tended to be busier than those in Buenavista. As a result, he said, "people kind of have to get down to business." In contrast, he said, "in Buenavista there's really such a low commerce. There's just not that much activity in the stores, so people are just there to chill out." He then extended the comparison to stores in the United States, saying:

Here in the United States we don't waste any worker time. Like some of the people when they work in a store are on the clock, and no one wants to pay someone if they're not actively doing anything, it's wasted time. So, when I tried to talk to a friend in Kinko's who was doing some copying, she constantly had people coming up. I couldn't talk to this person. She had work to do.
I told her that’s very different than the attitude and what goes on in Mexico.

By way of comparing his experiences in the small town of Buenavista with small towns in the United States, Billy cited an example from his cross-country trip of the previous fall. He said that near Yellowstone National Park he and his travel companion stopped for gas and that he was surprised that the gas station attendant took his word as to the price of the gas. In addition, he said that he and his friend were invited into the attendant’s trailer home next door to the gas station. He also said that the gas pump did not function well and that in an American city such inefficiency would not be tolerated because of the volume of business that gas stations tend to have in urban settings and the speed with which employees must serve customers in order to keep business running smoothly.

2. What were your first impressions upon returning to the United States?
Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda responded that she was first struck by the brightness of everything. She explained that as she sat in the Atlanta airport watching people:

Like, everything seemed so superficial. Everything was like Reebok, Nike, bright clothes, bright people, hair done, and just, the diversity in the States....Like you have your black and your white and your blondes and red-heads, and just a lot of diversity I think here.

Amanda was then asked whether she had experienced any difficulties adjusting when she returned to the United States. She answered in the following manner:

I was just really relaxed in Mexico. And I did what wanted when I wanted, and it was really quick back to reality. But I got back really late Sunday night and I had classes Monday morning, so I didn’t really have time to like sit down and take it in. I just jumped right in. But it was hard. I mean, just like, I was running constantly. And in the past I didn’t feel like I was always in a hurry, but, just maybe—I don’t know if it was because I had such little time to get back, or if I was just used to a slower-paced lifestyle.

Billy (Participant 2)

When asked about his first impressions upon returning to the United States, Billy began by commenting on the lack of access to the outdoors in the Atlanta airport. He then spoke about the ramifications
he saw of the swift-access air travel provided to distant locations. He explained:

Mexico is far away and very different than the U.S. and I don’t want it to be a three-hour commute from Atlanta. I don’t want to be able to go to Mexico for the weekend. And I don’t want other people to be able to do that because then Mexico just becomes a vacation spot. It becomes just a function of the United States rather than another country far away. I want to go to Mexico again but I want to feel the distance. I want to travel there. That shouldn’t be a matter of just an afternoon, and there I am in Cuernavaca. That’s far away and I want to keep it far away. I don’t want MacDonald’s to get there.

Billy then said that he had "been to the U.S. before, so it wasn’t any major shock" to return home. He added that he was used to changing his living locations and that he had "become pretty good at it." He concluded that, "There was nothing that surprised me or shocked me."

Billy went on to say that his second week back in the United States was "even more intense than the first week." He further explained:

The first week was home, and I knew what home would be like. It was very hard to get my whole family together at the table at once. In Mexico once a day at least everyone was in one place with nothing to do and everyone was free to talk. At my house we had carpools going, my brother goes to this practice, my sister goes here, my Mom’s got work and meetings, my Dad has the same.
Again Billy was asked whether he had encountered any adjustment problems. He answered, "not at all."

He then went on to say that he was now "starting to get difficulties." He explained:

I have spent a year of free-form learning. Summer and fall [I] traveled in the U.S. and the winter in Mexico. I’ve had classes with four people and a teacher we called by their first name. Or I’ve had class by myself where I actually hired a tutor.

He contrasted this phenomenon with his current situation at Ohio State University, saying:

And then I come here and I deal with a class of 200 or I deal with a syllabus. Like how do they know what I want to be studying?....Like right now, the way I am in classes is not like the way I was last year....I’m not going to be back in Columbus next year....This doesn’t work for me.

Billy explained that he had not felt that he fit in with Columbus. In contrast, he said that he had felt that he fit in in Mexico. He stated that "there were times in Mexico when I felt like I fit in. I totally and thoroughly lived. I loved everybody around me. Here I do not like who’s here. I don’t feel comfortable." He concluded by saying, "so, yeah, I guess there is a problem readjusting."
3. If you had to pick out one thing that was the highlight, that really stands out for you from your trip, what would it be and why?

_Amanda_ (Participant 1)

Amanda answered that weekend trips had been the highlight of her experience. She referred back to her trip to Pie de la Cuesta, saying that she would never forget the trip. She said, "We were just hanging out watching the sunset. And there was like six of us, and just laying on the beach watching the sunset. And not doing anything and just talking. I don’t know, I’ll just remember that."

_Billy_ (Participant 2)

Billy said that he did not like questions like the one asked. He chose to give as his answer a description of one particularly meaningful experience.

He recounted that one evening he returned to his host home in Cuernavaca and found his host brothers playing outside. He sat down on the front step and his host father came outside to call the boys in for the
evening. Billy said that he talked with his host
father for a few minutes and added:

he said, before he went back in, "well just when
you come in tell the boys to come in too."...I
was in the family at that point. Like, I was the
older brother and...he knew that they were safe
while I was out there, or as safe as he could make
them.

Billy compared the incident with his present situation
at the Ohio State University, saying that there did not
exist a comparable level of trust between individuals
at the University. He attributed the problem to the
"system."

4/5. In terms of packing for the trip what did you take
and later find that you did not need? What didn’t you
take and later find that you needed?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda said that she had taken too many pairs of
shorts and not enough dressy clothing. As she stated,
"I’m not a dressy person. I like my jeans...but the
discos and stuff are more dressy, I think, than the
bars here (in the U.S.)."
Billy (Participant 2)

Billy responded that he took an unneeded sweater and that he did not end up needing anything he had not brought. He added that:

The more I travel the less stuff I carry around with me because it just becomes heavy.... All I really need to function in daily life is clothes and a wallet. So anything more I become suspicious about why do I need all this stuff?

6. Knowing what you know now about the program, if you were going to do it over again, what would you do differently and what would you repeat?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda answered that if given the opportunity to repeat the program, she would do more things after school. She explained:

I felt like I wasted a lot of time sometimes in the afternoon, just doing nothing. Um, I also would travel alone probably again. Like the last week I went off on my own, and I loved it. Um, I would probably try to pack more things in that ten weeks. But other than that, it was perfect.

Billy (Participant 2)

Billy answered that he would not repeat the program if given the opportunity. He said:
I wouldn’t do the program again. I don’t like the program. Next time the program will be I’m going to go to Mexico and I’m not going to have a roundtrip ticket, which is a mistake. And I’m also not going to let—the program just won’t work. When I was in Buenavista I was not ready to leave Buenavista. It was unnatural, completely. Nobody could understand why I was leaving. It was not in the rhythm of life to leave Buenavista. Right now maybe I would be getting ready to go.... No, the mistake is the program itself.

7. Have you changed since you’ve lived in Cuernavaca?

Amanda (Participant 1)

When asked again during the end-of-quarter interview whether she had changed since living in Cuernavaca, Amanda answered that she thought she had grown up a lot. She described the experience of traveling alone, saying:

I saw a lot of things. Like the last week I changed, I don’t know if you want to say a lot, but... for a few days I traveled on my own and just a lot of things happened. Like, I was sitting in the busstop alone late at night waiting to catch a bus and... I was scared. People kept approaching me. I mean, I was American, I was trying to hide. And just this drunk guy kept coming up to me and wouldn’t leave me alone. And then this other guy came up, and he was gonna--telling me he was going with me and he wouldn’t leave me.... I learned to deal with things, you know, just, take what I [am given].
Amanda said that she spent several days alone in Oaxaca and then met her friends from the program in Zipolite.

When asked whether her friends or family had mentioned noticing any changes in her upon her return, she said that her mother thought she was "nuts." She explained that she had called her mother from the airport (in Oaxaca), thinking that she had already mentioned her plans to travel alone. She said that her mother was surprised and said "Amanda, if you survive your twenty-second birthday, I’ll be amazed."

Amanda said that one way in which she had changed was that she appreciated her family and friends more than she had in the past. She added that the change was probably due to the fact that she had not seen them for a long time.

Amanda was asked to relate her views on the Mexican concept of family to the present question. She responded that before going to Mexico, she did not "hang out" with her family although she considered herself very close to its members. She explained:

But, like I have two younger brothers. I would never hang out with them. Well like I went home...last weekend, and I actually stayed home during the day instead of running all over....[Now] I spend more time with them.
Billy (Participant 2)

When asked how he thought he had changed since living in Cuernavaca, Billy answered by discussing the value of human interaction and saying that he had been frustrated since returning to the United States by the lack of such interaction. He stated that instead of acknowledging the people around them, people at the University ignored each other and "run around here like little cogs in the machine."

Billy spoke next about how his concept of time had changed based on his experience in Mexico. He explained:

I lost my watch in Mexico permanently....For a couple weeks I was missing my watch but now, no problem. I have a clock--it's not that I don't believe in that time. But I don't like it at all. I only use the clock because I'm here at Ohio State where everything is to the minute.

Billy related how he approached meeting the researcher for the present interview, stating:

I knew I had a class that ended at 11:18. I could make a ten-minute walk in about forty-five minutes, because things happen along the way. Like I had a free art lesson already on the way over here. I lived completely. And I asked outside that building, "Hey, you know what time it is?" Someone said "Ten til." I said "Perfect." On time for a twelve o'clock appointment.
When asked whether his friends or family had mentioned noticing any changes in him since he had returned from Cuernavaca, Billy said "I don’t think anyone really would say ‘Billy, you’ve changed so much from Cuernavaca’ because it’s just a given that I don’t follow the rules."

Billy explained his changed views on participation in organized sports activities since returning from Mexico, where he said he was able to join impromptu soccer games. He said that he preferred to join a game in progress on occasion in an unplanned manner over joining an intramural sports team because he did not want to "schedule" his free time.

8. If you were asked to speak to the next group of students going to Cuernavaca and you were just asked to specifically speak to the group on the topic of Mexican culture, what would you say?

Amanda (Participant 1)

Amanda began her answer by giving prospective program participants the following advice: "Lose any stereotypes before you go down." She elaborated on this thought, explaining:
I think that like limited some people. Like, a lot of the females were, like, really turned off by the people on the streets. And yeah, it was annoying. But, I mean, I think it's part of their culture. You know, like when the guys make comments and things like that. I mean like, they think they're giving you compliments a lot of times. Um, and like you think they're poor and everything. And they might not have...all the things that we have, all the materialism we have here, but... They're great people. I loved it....Go in with an open mind.

Amanda was asked to limit her comments to a description of Mexican culture, rather than suggestions for making the trip. She then identified similarities and differences between Mexican and American culture, noting that the time schedule is different in the two countries and that in Mexico life is slower paced and the family is a higher priority than in the United States. She suggested that the Mexican priority system consisted of: family, friends, job, and money, in that order.

Billy (Participant 2)

Billy began by explaining that he found the researcher's question difficult to answer because he did not go to Mexico with preconceived notions of what the culture would be like, and thus "didn't notice that
much difference" between the two cultures. He said that he might need more time in the United States to notice the absence of Mexican culture and that at the moment nothing stood out to him as being "so Mexican."
The one cultural difference that he mentioned between the two countries was that food could be bought in the street in Mexico whereas in the United States one typically had to go into a store where government regulations governed food preparation and selling.

Like Amanda, Billy gave unsolicited advice to prospective program participants. He said that he would suggest that prospective students try not to apply their American rules to Mexican daily life. Billy explained that he thought that people could discover Mexican culture for themselves by doing activities by themselves instead of in groups. He said that when students traveled in groups they were likely to be treated as tourists. He added that if students demonstrated mistrustful or disrespectful attitudes toward Mexicans, they were likely to be reacted to in kind. That is to say that negative pre-conceptions of other people could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. He suggested that by spending time alone a student
would be more likely to be "bumped around by Mexican culture."

Billy ended his comments by saying "I don't feel prepared to make sweeping comments about--any real comment about Mexican culture."
Chapter V
Analysis, Summary, and Recommendations

Introduction

The present chapter includes data analysis, study findings, pedagogical implications of the study, and recommendations for further research. The first section of the chapter presents an analysis of the journal and interview data presented in Chapter Four for each participant. The data analysis is organized around the four research questions that guided the study. Each of the four research questions is treated individually, and the answer to the fourth includes a discussion of the value of the homestay component to participants’ cultural learning experience. The second section of the chapter consists of the presentation of the findings of the study by way of answers to each research question. Pedagogical implications of the study are then presented. Recommendations for further research are presented at the end of the chapter and point to the necessity of further research on various aspects of study abroad.
Data Analysis

A study of the frequency counts of cultural references sheds light on the cultural topics on which the two participants focused most of their attention. But it is necessary to consider the figures in combination with comments presented during participant interviews. Attention to the frequency count totals alone would present an incomplete picture of the participants’ cultural focus for several different reasons. First, frequency counts were tabulated by weighting all cultural references equally, regardless of the type or depth of the reference; that is to say, each time an aspect of Mexican culture was mentioned in a journal, one tick was placed in the corresponding category or subcategory. Hence the resulting table shows no distinction between a comment such as "We had tortillas for lunch today," and "Tortillas are present at every meal and people combine them with all kinds of dishes." Second, each reference was placed in only one category. In some instances, a particular reference may have been placed in several categories, but the researcher selected the category that best fit her
interpretation of the focus of the participant’s cultural reference. As a result, for example, while Amanda’s journal references focused on the Mexican family on various occasions, her frequency counts do not necessarily bear this out because her references to the family were typically categorized under the subcategories entitled "Priorities" and "Time." Hence, the frequency count totals should be viewed as a guide to the aspects of Mexican culture on which participants focused during the program; they do not constitute a quantitative data base of all participant cultural references.

Research Question One
On what aspects of Mexican culture did study abroad students tend to focus?

Table 2 shows the frequency of mention totals for cultural references by category and subcategory for Amanda and Billy. Each participant made cultural references under each of the main categories of "Environmental," "Intrapersonal," "Interpersonal"
"(Private)," and "Interpersonal (Public)" as well as under each main subcategory of each major category.

Table 2. Summary Listing of Frequency of Mention for All Types of Cultural Interaction Across Participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amanda</th>
<th>Billy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRONMENTAL:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man-Made</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRAPERSONAL:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Needs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPERSONAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PRIVATE):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Interaction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPERSONAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PUBLIC):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Activities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditions</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Issues</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview data generally mirrored the frequency counts to the end that both participants mentioned a wide variety of the cultural topics represented in the cultural interaction grid. Each participant made comments in all areas.
Research Question Two

Among these aspects, on which did they seem to focus the most? Why?

While each participant made at least one cultural reference in their journal in each of the four major categories and their main subcategories, some categories and subcategories received more attention than others. The two categories receiving the most cultural references for both participants were "Environmental" and "Interpersonal (Public)." The subcategory most represented in Amanda’s journal was "Man-Made," followed by "Leisure Activities."

Many of Amanda’s references categorized under "Environmental" were about her travels with her small group of American friends. While many references were recollections of travel destinations, Amanda demonstrated her interest in nature by describing the physical environment of places visited. She commented on her interest in art and the fact that she visited various art museums in Mexico. In addition, she noted that works by local artists tended to be featured in Mexican buildings much more than in American buildings.
She expressed the view that high exterior walls kept one from seeing into or out of a property and that this architecture had a negative effect on interaction among neighbors in Mexico.

Amanda’s references under the category of "Interpersonal (Public)" consisted of single comments about a wide variety of topics. The one topic on which she focused most attention in her journal was dancing. In general, she seemed to be interested in societal issues such as the government, leisure activities, and traditions. Amanda’s interview comments also generally suggested that she was interested in figuring out why the Mexican society operated as it did.

Amanda’s references under the categories of "Intrapersonal" and "Interpersonal (Public)" compared aspects of Mexican culture and American culture. Before she participated in the study abroad program Amanda had stated that one of her goals was to understand her own culture at a deeper level by comparing and contrasting her cultural experiences as an American with those of Mexican individuals. In keeping with this goal, she compared Mexican and American culture with respect to priorities, time,
freedom, moviegoing, and so forth. Her journal and interview comments suggested that she favored the Mexican priority system, in which family is valued over work, as opposed to the American system. She also said she appreciated the more relaxed atmosphere found in Mexico as opposed to the rushed atmosphere in the United States. Because of her host brother, Pablo, she examined her long-held notions about the level of freedom enjoyed by Americans versus Mexicans.

Billy’s journals and interviews suggested that he was interested in the environment while he was in Mexico, often writing about sunrises, sunsets, and the local volcano, Popocatépetl. On more than one occasion, he stated a concern that in Cuernavaca nature was being paved over in the name of progress. In addition, he talked about the air pollution in the city. Billy’s references to Oaxaca and Buenavista often included descriptions of the land and general natural environment.

One of Billy’s most oft-mentioned subcategories was "Human Interaction." Along with nature, he paid attention to other individuals. He wrote of having made friends, especially in Buenavista. These
friendships seemed to be of importance to him, as evidenced by his reiteration that he had made many friends and that everyone knew him. He seemed proud of his attempts to make himself known. Billy commented on the Mexican cultural emphasis on personal interaction on several occasions, noting that storekeepers "visited" with customers instead of just selling their products. Billy's teachers and resident directors seemed to have gained an accurate impression of his interest in nature and interaction with others.

Research Question Three

How did the prior experiences of study abroad students influence their cultural focus during the study abroad program?

Amanda reported having had no prior cross-cultural interaction before participating in the program. During the program, she mentioned having formerly believed stereotypes of Mexicans as being generally poor and lazy. She stated her desire to learn more about her own culture by comparing it to that of Mexicans, and her journal and interview references
suggest that she fulfilled this goal. She seemed to
place stock in her host brother Pablo’s opinions,
perhaps due to a combination of her own perceived lack
of prior cross-cultural experience and her awareness of
his experience of living in the United States for six
months. On various occasions, she allowed his
professed views on the two countries to be the
springboard to her own cross-cultural musings. For
example, she said she reconsidered her concept of
freedom as a result of talking with Pablo. And on at
least one occasion, she used Billy’s comments as a
basis for considering the ramifications of American
consumerism.

Billy went to Mexico with prior cross-cultural
experience. He had previously traveled to Israel and
had recently returned from a three-month trip across
the United States with a friend when he left for
Mexico. Instead of focusing his attention on
acclamating himself to a new environment, Billy
appeared to focus on daily life. He said he was
already accustomed to changing locations, finding
himself in novel situations, and meeting different
people. Billy said he endeavored to live an ordinary
life while in Cuernavaca, Oaxaca, and Buenavista. Frequency count totals suggest that he spent time writing about matters of ordinary daily life, rather than tourist issues, such as sight-seeing. For example, he wrote many detailed entries about the types of food and drink that he was experiencing. In addition, he wrote about the various modes of transportation available in Mexico, including buses, cars, and trains. He recounted how he got water in a bucket from a well to water fruit trees and how he learned to catch and prepare his own food while living in Oaxaca.

Billy was an education major. This fact seems to explain to some extent why he made many references, in both his journals and his interviews, to his educational experience in Mexico. These comments were not necessarily related to Mexican culture, and at no time did Billy give any description of the Mexican educational system. The closest he came to making such a reference was his description of having taught a lesson to his friend Angela’s English class in Cuernavaca. The focus was on himself and his sense of being a natural teacher, rather than on any aspect of
the Mexican educational system. His comments seemed to be centered around his personal views on education and the ways in which he felt that the program had failed to address his learning desires and needs. It should be remembered that Billy stopped writing his journal for the researcher after the first five weeks in the program and he submitted his personal journal that he maintained throughout the program. Hence, many of Billy's journal references came from his personal unfocused journal. For example, most of his complaints about his education in Mexico were written in his personal journal.

In sum, it could be argued that Billy's prior travel experiences in Israel and the United States helped to make him a confident traveler and to that extent allowed him to focus his energies on the endeavors of daily life, such as meeting new people and trying new foods and drinks.

Research Question Four
How did study abroad students form a concept of Mexican culture after the experience of living there? To what
extent were the subjects able to articulate their strategies?

Despite her comments on various aspects of Mexican culture throughout the program, when it came time to describe Mexican culture in the end-of-quarter interview, Amanda appeared to have difficulty doing so. Instead she gave helpful suggestions to prospective future students. For example, she suggested that students try not to be governed by stereotypes of Mexico and Mexicans, but rather that they approach the culture with an open mind and try to understand the culture on its own terms.

When asked to confine her answer to a description of Mexican culture, Amanda pointed out the difference in daily schedule and the slow-paced nature of life in Mexico. She talked about the importance of the family unit in Mexican culture and the fact that the family was a higher priority in Mexico than in the United States.

Interaction with the host family seemed to play an important role in Amanda’s formation of a concept of Mexican culture according to her journal and interview
comments. She made references to her host family as well as issues she discussed with them and with her host brother, Pablo, in particular. For example, Amanda said she learned about the Mexican attitude toward abortion as well as teen pregnancy from her host family. She reported having learned to question her views of American versus Mexican levels of freedom, as a result of Pablo's comments. Hence, Amanda appeared to be addressing the issue of ideal versus actual cultural patterns. According to Ember and Ember (1993), some ideal cultural patterns may differ from actual behavior because the ideal is either out-dated or never existed. They give the example of the ideal of American free enterprise, a system in which industry should be free of governmental regulation, and note that this ideal is out-dated due to the increased government regulation of industry. Amanda's journal and interview comments suggest that she may have been considering whether the idea that U. S. citizens really enjoyed more freedom than citizens of other countries was a reality or something that she had been trained to believe.
Based on her journal and interview comments, Amanda seemed to have learned several things about the Mexican family by living with her host family. For example, she observed the emphasis on the mid-day meal, which she said was usually prepared from fresh ingredients and shared by family members who often sit and talk together after the meal has ended. She commented on the way that modern technology such as the microwave exists in Mexico, but is used only to facilitate meal preparation rather than as a substitute for sitting down to a family meal. She noted that Mexican families can expand when necessary to include the children’s friends. Amanda said she gained a better understanding of the role that a university-aged child plays in the family, typically living at home and attending a local university. Finally, Amanda said that Pablo’s comments to her on one occasion changed her attitude toward the Mexican cultural practice of bargaining.

American students sometimes learn before traveling to Mexico that in certain situations bargaining is the expected norm. However, while for many visitors the focus may be on paying as little as possible for a
purchase, Amanda said she was encouraged by Pablo to look beyond the practice of bargaining to the economic plight of the street vendors. She said that as a result of her discussion with Pablo she changed her bargaining strategies as follows: Instead of offering the lowest price imaginable, she made a reasonable initial offer and only one counter offer, settling on a price very close to that asked by the vendor.

In one journal entry Amanda complained that she could not understand her host family during meals because they talked too fast. In contrast, she said she understood the teacher in class. So perhaps the host family was supplying comprehensible input of a more authentic type rather than caretaker speech. As Amanda never again wrote of any such frustration, perhaps she was able to increase her listening skills by spending time with her host family.

During her second week in the program, Amanda wrote about having watched American football on the television with her host family. She said this led her to think about the presence of U.S. influence in Mexico and the lack of Mexican influence in the United States. She gave the example of a box of cereal, writing that
in Mexico, it might contain cards highlighting famous American football players, while in the United States she thought there would never exist a box of cereal containing cards highlighting famous Mexican soccer players. Living with a host family afforded her the opportunity to see the American football on television and to see the box of cereal and these served as a springboard to considering the issue of international influence in Mexico.

On the following day she wrote about a discussion that she had had with Pablo in which he said that everything that Mexico got from the United States was negative, at least as far as ideology was concerned. She wrote that in the same discussion they talked about grammatical differences between English and Spanish. For example, she said they noted the fact that in English an adjective precedes a noun, whereas in Spanish the adjective tends to follow it. She said they concluded that in the United States the description is primary, while in Mexico the object is of greater importance.

Amanda said she had gone to see Pablo play soccer one day and stated that she had had a good time and
that she was pleased that she spoke a lot of Spanish while there. She had complained in the previous day’s journal about the fact that she and her classmates spoke too much English together even though the resident directors had told them from the beginning not to. Amanda’s comments suggest that interaction with her host brother encouraged greater use of Spanish than interaction with her American friends.

Amanda said she became interested in the system of government in Mexico. In one journal entry she wrote about a conversation that she had with her host mother in which they discussed the Mexican government. She stated that while she understood why the citizens were unable to change the government, she was frustrated by the situation and felt sorry for the people.

Billy’s journals and interviews contained various comments on aspects of Mexican culture, as outlined above. Like Amanda he seemed more comfortable giving suggestions to prospective study abroad students than describing the Mexican culture. He suggested that students go out and experience Mexican culture on their own, rather than in groups. He suggested that they would learn more if they put themselves in
unpredictable situations and settings and allowed themselves to interact with the Mexican culture more. When asked to confine his answer to a description of Mexican culture, Billy mentioned that food could be bought on the streets in Mexico whereas in the United States it tends to be sold only in stores.

Billy’s journal and interview comments suggest that the homestay component contributed to his cultural learning while in Mexico. He recounted the importance to him of having been entrusted one evening by his host father with the care of his young host brothers. He said that he knew he was part of the family at that point. His interactions with his friend, Daniel, and his family seemed to help Billy broaden his understanding of the types of Mexican families. While his host family was upper middle class, his friends in Oaxaca were of more humble means. His journal references suggest that this second experience allowed him to experiment with collecting and preparing his own food and interacting to a greater extent with nature than was possible in Cuernavaca.

During the mid-quarter interview, Billy made an observation about participation in the Mexican family
by way of commenting that his roommate seemed to be
jealous and believed that Billy received more attention
from the host family than he did. Billy explained why
he thought the treatment of the two students might have
been different. He said:

I talk longer at the table than he does. I’ll
sit at the table and he’ll be pressed to go do
something. And I’ll chat away in Spanish or I’ll
take my [brothers] out....I told one I want to
take him to the bullfight.... I think [my roommate
is] resentful sometimes of the attention I get.
But I think it’s because I put more time into the
family. I ask more of them.

Summary of Each Participant

Amanda’s journal and interview comments taken
together suggest that she learned much about both
Mexican and American cultures while in Mexico. This
learning was the result of the observations she made
while participating in her daily activities coupled
with the discussions that she had with her host
brother, Pablo, on a wide variety of topics. During
the first week of the program, she noted in her journal
that her observations to that point were limited to the
experience of living with one family and walking around
the city and seeing things. She expressed an interest
in being exposed to different cultural contexts over the course of the quarter. For a person who reported having no prior cross-cultural experience before going to Mexico, Amanda demonstrated sophistication in her understanding of the danger of hastily forming cultural impressions based on limited exemplars.

Her journal entries and interview comments suggest that she learned to question previously held stereotypes of Mexicans and instead began to try to understand Mexicans on their own cultural terms. For example, she repeatedly noted that the Mexican priority system varied from the American system in that Mexicans tended to consider family more important than work or any other facet of life. Applying this new-found understanding to her old stereotype of Mexicans, she concluded that "Mexicans, as stereotyped, are not lazy they’re just family oriented." Not only did she mention appreciating the Mexican emphasis on family, but she said she attempted to increase her own family’s level of interaction upon returning to the United States. Hence she attempted to use what she learned from Mexican culture to make a small change in her own culture.
Another example of her attempt to understand Mexican culture on its own terms was her comment that when men yelled things at women passing by in the street they were trying to be complimentary. She moved beyond the annoyance that typically accompanies being the object of such attention and instead looked at the motivation on the part of the agent. In other words, instead of judging the men’s actions by her own cultural rules and becoming angry, she attempted to interpret the actions by the Mexican men’s cultural rules and determined that they were merely being complimentary. Returning to her initial stereotype of Mexicans as poor, she seemed to reconsider the value of material wealth from the Mexican perspective and then began to criticize the American tendency toward materialism.

Amanda’s discussion with her host brother on the cultural issue of freedom, in which he criticized Americans for thinking that they had more freedom than anyone else, is a good example of her willingness to critically examine her own culture and possibly reconsider long-held beliefs.
Billy’s journals and interview comments taken together suggest that he, too, learned various things about Mexican culture. For example, his journal contains evidence that he concentrated considerable effort on learning about many foods and drinks native to the region. The aspect of Mexican culture that he focused on the most was one-on-one human interaction. While accounts of his cross-country trip just prior to leaving for Mexico point to the fact that he already took interest in meeting and conversing with other people, he seemed particularly intent on it while in Mexico. More than actually learning the importance of human interaction, because he seemed to already value it highly, Billy appeared to find himself in a culture whose priorities were in keeping with his. That is to say that he seemed to find at times that he had more in common with Mexicans than with Americans. For example, he said he generally avoided the activities of his classmates, such as going to the bars and discoteques and traveling in large groups. Instead, he appeared to focus his energies on living a more typical life by Mexican standards. That is to say that he endeavored to know his physical environment, people in the
community, and foods and drinks common to the region. He once commented on picking up trash on a Cuernavaca sidewalk because that was his community and he wanted to keep it clean. This is illustrative of the degree to which he saw himself as a member of the community, not as a visiting tourist. He demonstrated his understanding of the Mexican concept of time and upon returning to the United States realized that he was bothered by his own culture’s preoccupation with time efficiency.

Findings

In summary, analysis of data suggests several general findings with respect to study participants’ acquisition of cultural insights while in Mexico. Findings are presented below for each research question.

Research Question One
On what aspects of Mexican culture did study abroad students tend to focus?
Analysis of the participants' journals suggested that participants focused on aspects of the Mexican culture including the environment, the self, and human interaction on both an intimate and a public basis.

Research Question Two
Among these aspects, on which did they seem to focus the most? Why?

While participants made references to the self as well as human interaction on an intimate level, they focused most attention on the environment and cultural interaction of a public nature. Several explanations may account for this result. First, students need not interact with Mexicans in order to observe the Mexican environment. Thus, whether a student is shy or outgoing, competent in the target language or not, they are able to observe both the natural and man-made environments without interacting with anyone. The large number of cultural references may also be attributable to the participants' personal interests.

Second, the popularity of the category "Interpersonal (Public)" may be due to the fact that
some cultural references that could have been categorized under "Intrapersonal" and "Interpersonal (Private)" were best attributed to this category. In addition, while all other major categories have two main subcategories, "Interpersonal (Public)" has six. Hence, while no individual subcategory received a disproportionate number of cultural references when compared with all other subcategories, when taken together, the six subcategories add up to a large number of cultural references.

Research Question Three
How did the prior experiences of study abroad students influence their cultural focus during the study abroad program?

Participants' prior experiences before participating in the program seemed to affect their cultural focus based on the following three participant characteristics: interests, goals, and comfort level. First, the personal interests that participants brought with them to Mexico, such as nature, art, and human
interaction, seemed to help them focus on particular aspects of Mexican culture.

The goals that participants expressed for themselves before participating in the program also appear to have guided what they focused on while in Mexico. For example, focus on cross-cultural comparisons of Mexico and the U.S. as well as participation in small town life were goals that were realized throughout the program and led to cultural insights reflected in both journals and interviews.

Participants’ comfort level in the target culture seemed to contribute to their cultural learning while in Mexico. The participant with no prior cross-cultural experience seemed to prefer to locate one native informant, a host family member, from whom to learn about Mexican culture, while the participant with prior cross-cultural experience appeared to seek out direct contact with a wider variety of native informants from whom to learn.

Research Question Four

How did study abroad students form a concept of Mexican culture after the experience of living there? To what
extent were the subjects about to articulate their strategies?

In a study abroad endeavor, students have available to them a variety of ways of obtaining information about the target culture that they may use to help them develop a concept of what that culture entails. Options include participant and non-participant observation, formal and informal interviews, and review of documents about or from the target culture. In the present study, participants tended to use a combination of participant and non-participant observation and informal interviews (such as daily conversations). Examples of non-participant observation included trips to the market and the Zocalo and weekend travel. One common example of participant observation combined with informal interview was the students’ participation in Mexican family life via the homestay placement. Journal and interview data suggest that participants learned about the Mexican culture from living with a host family. Not only did they learn about Mexican family life but they also learned about views that their host families held about social
issues such as abortion, teen pregnancy, and the government. While the homestay placement exposed each student to only one Mexican family’s lifestyle and social views, it seems to have given students opportunities for cultural learning on which they could build in the future.

Participants did not articulate their culture-learning strategies to a great extent over the course of the study. The fact that they were asked to record cultural observations, not an explanation of how they arrived at these observations, may have contributed to this finding. One hint at strategies may have been provided by both participants when they suggested that future participants in their study abroad program forge out on their own in order to immerse themselves in the culture, rather than spending time with a group of American friends.

While participants made numerous cultural observations throughout the study in both journals and interviews, when asked to describe Mexican culture during the end-of-quarter interview they seemed unwilling or unable to do so. Instead they initially offered the above suggestion as well as others for
future program participants. Their ultimate descriptions were brief and non-comprehensive.

Implications

The preceding discussion of participants' cultural learning over the course of one academic quarter in Mexico could lead to various pedagogical implications for study abroad programs. First, it is clear that regardless of their background before participating in the program and their individual choices as to how to spend their time in Mexico, both participants in the present study gained a greater understanding of Mexican culture.

In addition, the overt teaching by the researcher as to how to write journal entries that are well-supported, the emphasis in the journal on cultural observations, and interviews with the researcher in which participants discussed their experiences before, during, and after participation in the study abroad program, appear to have helped students gain more (e.g., insights as well as skills in surviving in another culture) from their study abroad experience than they would have otherwise. Both stu
present study commented that they enjoyed participating in the study, and one stated that it helped her become more conscious of the world.

Perhaps the aforementioned aspects could be adapted for use in study abroad programs in ways that permit students to benefit from research strategies that help them to "learn how to learn" during a study abroad experience, particularly in the area of cultural insight development. The pre-trip orientation session might be a good opportunity to discuss journal writing style and themes with students, and to begin to prepare them to be conscious observers while abroad.

In addition to the above suggestions, results of the present study may help individuals associated with study abroad programs (e.g., program developers, administrators, and orientation directors) as they determine how best to design and administer a program. Since it is the job of the program developer to create a program that is beneficial to all student participants, the results of the present study can help identify characteristics of certain types of individuals who choose to study abroad. By reviewing the case studies presented, developers may begin to
identify ways in which to maximize the benefits of their programs for various types of study abroad students.

While many different types of students participate in study abroad programs, the present study dealt with only two individuals who represented two particular types. First, students like Billy may readily immerse themselves in the target culture and avoid spending time in large groups speaking English and participating in typical American activities such as bar-hopping. While this type of program participant may be the rarer type, especially at beginning levels of language instruction, provisions should be made for their particular program needs. For example, this type of self-motivated student may not need or benefit from certain kinds of structure typically built into a study abroad program such as participation in weekly conversation groups and focus on weekly grammar tests. He or she may benefit more from a less structured program that would allow more flexibility such as choosing the types of activities that he or she found most beneficial. For example, if the student were learning more in a rural studies setting than in the
traditional urban setting, he or she might be allowed to continue there rather than following lock-step through a predetermined sequence of activities.

For the second type of program participant who tends to travel in large groups and speak English and who tends to avoid immersing him- or herself in the target culture, the program administrator may wish to consider putting more emphasis on the role of the homestay placement. If he or she were placed with a non-English speaking host family, this second type of student’s cultural experience might be enriched. Administrators may wish to consider the relative merits of placing individual students, rather than pairs, with host families as this would decrease the tendency to rely on English while at home. Administrators whose programs are located in cosmopolitan cities in which immersion by necessity is not a reality would do well to consider the incorporation of an internship for students with local businesses in the community. The addition of such a component may increase all types of students’ immersion into the culture and hence add to their cultural understanding.
A final implication of the present study involves the value of incentives/rewards for research study participants. One basic difficulty in conducting research involving human subjects is how to secure their participation. Participation in research studies is sometimes required of students, as in the case of some military academies and introductory level psychology courses. But in most situations, the researcher must devise a way to attract and retain participants in his or her study. Some researchers pay participants a predetermined nominal fee for their participation, as is often the case in medical studies. Researchers conducting large-scale questionnaire studies often enclose small gifts as incentives to encourage recipients to return completed questionnaires. In the present study which required participants to be interviewed several times and to attend a pre-program training session with the researcher, participants received neither money nor extra academic credit of any kind. While they were offered as an incentive the option to write an English journal instead of the Spanish journal assigned by the program, no one opted for this arrangement. Thus, the
only incentive created by the researcher was not ultimately used. This lack of perceived benefit by participants, coupled with the researcher’s fear of attrition, cause the researcher to feel uncomfortable contacting participants to review their case studies once data collection had been completed. She felt hesitant to ask for any more of the students’ time as she felt she was not offering them anything in return. Hence, one outgrowth of the present study is the suggestion that researchers build into their studies some type of incentive/reward for potential participants. As stated above, the present study’s one planned incentive did not work because participants were not interested in it. While it became apparent by the end of the program that participants had benefitted from their participation, they did not necessarily know upon agreeing to participate that this would be the case.

One suggested incentive would be to offer extra academic credit for those who completed the entire study, including post data collection member checks in which participants would review their case studies and discuss with the researcher whether they felt the case
study accurately captured their thoughts and feelings. This academic credit could be contingent upon the writing and/or presentation of a formal paper based on the contents of participants' focused journal as well as any personal growth as a result of participation in the study. The idea of offering academic credit for participation in a research study might be turned down by college and university administrators concerned with granting credit only in cases of perceived equivalence between on- and off-campus academic experiences. However, if a formal paper or presentation or other form of culminating experience were part of the student's participation in a study, administrators might be more willing to grant academic credit.

Recommendations for Further Research

Various recommendations for further research exist for cultural acquisition in study abroad. This study focused on the cultural insights of two students participating in a ten-week study abroad program in Cuernavaca, Mexico. The goal was to provide baseline information on students’ cultural learning in a study abroad program. Further research should focus on the
effect of length of stay on cultural learning by comparing results from two-week, ten-week (quarter), fifteen-week (semester), and thirty-week (year) programs.

The program on which the present study was based was located in Cuernavaca, Morelos, a large Mexican city. While participants traveled to Mexico City and spent time in the small town of Buenavista, the majority of their time was spent in Cuernavaca. Similar studies should be conducted with participants whose programs are located in larger Mexican cities, such as Mexico City, to determine the role of a more cosmopolitan environment on students' cultural learning. Similarly, studies should also focus on programs in small cities or towns, in order to determine the effects of these environments on participants' cultural learning experiences. In addition, attention should be paid to the region of the country in which the students study. Cuernavaca is located in the state of Morelos in central Mexico. Students studying in the Yucatan, for example, may demonstrate different cultural learning based on the distinct local environment.
In addition to various locations in Mexico, further research should be conducted in other Latin American countries such as Costa Rica, Guatemala, or Uruguay. While these countries share a common language with Mexico, many elements of their cultures are different. Research focusing on areas of other countries that have not had as much U.S. influence as Mexico has had may be able to identify differences in students' cultural learning based on a greater degree of immersion into the host culture.

In the present study, the researcher maintained contact with participants over the course of one academic quarter. The findings reported for this study suggest that cultural learning took place as a result of participants' living in the target culture for a period of ten weeks. Further research should be designed to allow for longitudinal investigation of the effects of participants' cultural learning. By tracking students over the years, researchers may learn about long-term effects of participation that were not known in the initial weeks and months following participation in a study abroad program. Participants should be asked to consent to being contacted after
participating in the study abroad program. They should understand that the researcher intended to contact them at pre-determined intervals such as six months, one year, five years, and ten years after completion of the study abroad program in order to determine the long-term effects of their participation in a study abroad program. Specifically, attention should be paid to former participants' cultural beliefs and behaviors over time. For example, they may report further travel to other countries or that they chose to befriend someone from another culture as results of their experience. In addition to more longitudinal studies, the field would benefit from qualitative studies in which the researcher were on-site with study participants in the target culture for the duration of the program in order to satisfy the need for prolonged engagement in the study environment.

While the present study suggested that a homestay placement contributed to two study abroad participants' cultural learning in one setting, the role of homestay placement has not received enough attention historically. Future studies should be conducted on the value of the homestay component to students'
overall cultural learning experience while studying abroad. These studies should take the effect of homestay placement as their main focus, instead of as a secondary focus, as in the present study. Studies could be conducted comparing the cultural learning of students participating in one program, some of whom are housed with host families while others live in apartments or dormitories. This area of inquiry might identify both benefits and drawbacks of homestay placement by looking at the opportunities created as well as those lost by placing students with a host family. For example, while students placed with a host family gain by being exposed to family life in the target community, they typically do not have to do their own food shopping and meal preparation. Hence, those students housed in apartments or dormitories, where meals are not provided, might gain cultural insights not shared by those who are housed with families as a result of their daily interaction in stores and/or markets.

In addition to focusing on students’ cultural learning, researchers may choose to investigate differences in their linguistic acquisition as a result
of their housing. Studies might focus on the effect of comprehensible input to which students are exposed in a host home versus in an apartment or dormitory (perhaps with roommates or neighbors from the host culture). In addition, attention could be paid to the effect of comprehensible input supplied "at home" (across housing types) versus in the classroom. In the case of homestay placement, studies should focus on the number of students placed in a single home to determine the effect of having American roommates on a student’s cultural and/or linguistic learning. Studies of this type might help determine the optimum study abroad housing placement based on a given program’s goals.
APPENDIX A

PRE-PROGRAM INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1. Why are you going on the program?

2. What do you expect to get out of the program?

3. What experience(s) have you had with the Spanish language so far? Hispanic culture? Hispanic movies? Hispanic literature?

4. How else might you have used the Spanish that you have learned at OSU if you had not gone on the program?

5. Have you ever travelled outside of the United States? If so, have you been on another study abroad program before?

6. How do you feel now that you are about to go?
APPENDIX B

MID-QUARTER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1. Tell me about Cuernavaca.

2. Tell me about your time in Cuernavaca until now. What have you been doing? Where have you gone? With whom? How was it?

3. What has surprised you the most about your experiences so far? What was similar to what you expected? Different?

4. Who have you spent most of your time with since arriving in Cuernavaca? Why? Doing what?

5. In as much detail as possible, tell me about your living arrangements and host family. How is it similar to or different from what you’re accustomed to?

6. Have you changed since you’ve been in Cuernavaca? If so, what is the nature of those changes?

7. What do you plan to do during break week? Why? With whom?
APPENDIX C

END-OF-QUARTER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1. Tell me about your trip to Buenavista.

2. What were your first impressions upon returning to the United States?

3. If you had to pick one thing that was the highlight, that really stands out for you from your trip, what would it be and why?

4. In terms of packing for the trip, what did you take and later find that you did not need?

5. What didn’t you take and later find that you needed?

6. Knowing what you know now about the program, if you were going to do it over again, what would you do differently and what would you repeat?

7. Have you changed since you’ve lived in Cuernavaca?

8. If you were asked to speak to the next group of students going to Cuernavaca and you were just asked to specifically speak to the group on the topic of Mexican culture, what would you say?
APPENDIX D

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT ASSIGNMENT

AND SAMPLE RESPONSE
Please write an autobiographical statement about your life, identifying when you have encountered different (racially, religiously, etc.) people, how you dealt with them, and what you learned from the encounter.

AMANDA

I am 20 years old and have grown up in the suburbs of Cleveland. My family is middle class and includes both parents, an older sister, and two younger brothers.

I attended an all-white, middle class Catholic grade school and a wealthy public high school. During my high school years, I had no experiences with people from different cultures or races. However, because of my parents' belief in equality, I was not prejudice [sic] toward others.

After graduation, I attended Ohio University for 2 years. This college did not provide me with much diversity which was a factor in my decision to transfer to OSU. I have always been curious about other races, religions, and cultures’ perspective on life and so far I have been extremely limited in experiences with
people who are different from me.

Basically, I have not had any significant experiences with other cultures. I hope this information was what you were looking for. If not, let me know.
APPENDIX E

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE ASSIGNMENT

AND SAMPLE RESPONSE
The application for admission into the program included a "Study Abroad Personal Statement Form" to be completed by all applicants. The instructions at the top of the page read:

This statement should be a narrative giving a picture of yourself as an individual, and why you want to study abroad. It should deal with your personal history, family background, influences on your intellectual development, the educational and cultural opportunities (or lack of them) to which you have been exposed, the ways in which these experiences have affected you. Also include your special interests and abilities, career plans, and life goals. Please limit to the space provided.

Billy

Why I Want to Study in Mexico

One of my goals in my college studies is familiarity with a foreign language. Commonly spoken in the United States and nearby Mexico, Spanish is an ideal language to learn. In addition to the ability to talk with many more people, I will be able to read Spanish literature as it was written.

I want to learn in an environment different from Columbus, Ohio. What better place to study Spanish than in a country where all communication is done in that language.
I will learn about rural Mexican life by living it in the rural studies center in Buenavista de Cuellar. I look forward to the opportunity to study the culture of a foreign country by living in the home of a native family.

The description of Cuernavaca makes it sound like an exciting place to live, as well as to study. In my spare time I will listen to local music, meet artists and writers, and explore the city streets.
APPENDIX F

DESCRIPTION OF BUENAVISTA DE CUELLAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE
CEMANAHUAC EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY
CEMANAHUATZIN

Buenavista: An Essay

Nestled in the mountains of Guerrero, Buenavista de Cuellar is a small, well-kept town of white-washed adobe houses roofed with red tiles. Very Mediterranean looking, with red bougainvilleas hanging over walls, Buenavista reminds us of a small town in Southern France. The early Franciscan church, dedicated to San Antonio de Padua, towers over the small, quiet zocalo with its shady park and open bandstand. The people of Buenavista are proud, hardworking and have a strong sense of community solidarity. This attitude is present everywhere. Buenavista is an exceptionally clean, lovingly cared for town. The visitor wants to stay awhile, leave the stress of modern life behind, lay in a hammock, enjoy the view and wonder if he hasn’t found a little piece of paradise.

The main street winds down lazily from the zocalo to the old, semi-abandoned railroad station. This is the ‘happening’ street in town. You can find anything on main street from hardware to liquor stores, from pizzas to hamburgers. But if you want to buy a newspaper or gasoline you’d better go to the paint store by the railroad tracks, otherwise you won’t find any. It is a small town, but the advantage is you can ask anything of anybody and they know: Where to buy milk? Where to buy ice? Where does Caniche live? Somehow people know.

Subsisting mostly on cattle that graze in the surrounding mountains, Buenavista is known throughout Mexico for its leatherwork. Leather workshops are plentiful and supply a great deal of the hats, belts, sandals and bags found in the tourists shops from Acapulco to Cancun.

The tiny, daily market offers some of the most tender and fresh meat your palate ever tasted. Milk, cream and cheeses are literally fresh from the cows. Most of the fruits and vegetables are grown in the area. A few Nahua-speaking Indians from neighboring villages come to sell garlic, matches and herbs in front of the market.

There is no pollution in Buenavista. Unless you call dung, leftover from passing cows, pollution. Although in the evening when the sun sets behind the mountains, noise pollution comes in, or rather the musicians of Bremen move in, the leaders of the band being the donkeys. Boy! Do they love singing.

But even heaven can have its setbacks. Buenavista is quiet, peaceful and beautiful. Even the people are attractive. Many have green or blue eyes and European features. This, according to the residents is due to the French Legion sent to Buenavista during Maximilian’s reign. You know the reputation of those legionnaires. Well the people may be beautiful but the water is not. The water has a yellowish brown tinge which can put you off if not down right scare you the first time you lay eyes on it. But don’t be scared it won’t kill you. Surprisingly it will clean you and your clothes without leaving a
brown residue. Just don’t drink it. Although one would have to be crazy to want to drink this stuff. But don’t worry, every down has its up. The waterman comes by every house everyday with purified water and a handsome smile.

Buenavista is beautiful, as the name implies, but besides looking at the mountains, what does one do in a small Mexican town? First one has to realize that what is normal daily routine in the States may be a great enterprise for us. For example, let’s say you want to make a phone call, simple. you go to one of the public phones available in various shops on main street. You pay some little grandmother five pesos to dial. No lines available yet. Come back later. So you come back at three o’clock to try again, only to find out that it is siesta time and you have to return after four. What would take five minutes in the States can take half a day in Buenavista. The person who goes on trips with a beeper and a portable computer may find Buenavista to be hell rather than heaven. But if you can leave these modern behavioral syndromes behind, you can ride horses, hike in the mountains, take leather workshop classes, cooking, folk dancing, guitar, indigenous medicine, and/or anthropology classes. You can jog, swim, play basketball, football or soccer. You can rent a video, go to the movies, even go to a disco on Sundays. But most of all you can learn and practice Spanish, because no one speaks English in Buenavista except for me.

Prepared for Cemahuaxe by Caniche Mata, Director of Cemahuatsin rural program in Buenavista de Cuellar, Guerrero.
CEMANAHUATZIN

BUENAVISTA DE CUELLAR, GUERRERO

CULTURAL CLASSES

Besides our daily Spanish studies, Cemanahuatzin offers a great variety of cultural classes. We have a number of Buenavista residents at our disposal, who are more than willing to share their knowledge with our students. Most classes are offered in the residents' home. This gives the student a unique opportunity to practice his Spanish and see how the local people live.

The following is a list of the cultural classes available. Each student can sign up for three classes a week at no additional cost. Students sign up for the desired classes on Monday on the school's bulletin board. No more than four students are allowed per class due to a lack of space in people's houses. Students pay for the materials they use in workshops.

Leather Workshop
Buenavista's subsistence is mostly based on cattle farming. Therefore, a large supply of leather is available to the local leather craftsmen. Students can learn to make hats, belts, bags, or sandals with one of the local "maestros".
Students pay for material.
Visiting a local tannery can also be arranged.

Mexican Cooking
Students learn to make the traditional recipe of their choice, tortillas, tamales, salsas, mole, cheese etc... Testing your creation is the best part of this class.
Ten new pesos for ingredients.

Basket Weaving
Students make baskets by weaving palms, a tradition native to the neighboring village of Tlalnacazapa. A native of that village teaches this folk art, which is mostly done by women and their daughters.
Students pay for material.

Embroidery
Lace making and embroidery is practiced by most of the older women of Buenavista. Students can make napkins, tortilla covers, rugs, etc...
Mexican Folk Songs
Learning to sing traditional folk songs and "corridos" with our local guitar teacher can be a very useful linguistic tool. Songs are handed to the students a few days in advance so that they can be studied with their Spanish teachers during regular class hours.

Guitar classes are also available.

Folk Dancing
Mostly adapted from Spanish traditional dancing, Mexican folk dance offers its unique and colorful variation. Here the students learn the different dances from the various Mexican states.

Salsa Dancing
Most young people love to go to discos. Here is a way to learn modern Mexican dances with some of the local young experts. When you feel ready to show your new talent to the world, Buenavista has two discos open on Sunday nights until eleven o'clock.

Horseback Riding
Horseback riding is usually done early in the morning because it is cool. Students start at seven in the morning and return a little before classes start at nine o'clock. The cost is twenty new pesos for a two-hours ride.

Herbal Medicine
Due to the delicate subject matter of the following classes, permission from Cemanahuatzin's director is required prior to signing up.

Plant Collecting
Students hike into the surrounding mountains with a local expert to collect and see medicinal plants in their natural environment. This hike lasts about three hours.

Herbalist
Students visit one of the local herbalist who grows and sells herbal medicine. She gives samples and explains the use of each plant, as she proudly gives a tour of her small garden.

Curandera
A curandera, or healer, explains and demonstrates some of the methods she uses, which include plants and herbs. Due to the delicate subject matter of this class, permission from Cemanahuatzin's resident anthropologist is required prior to signing up.
APPENDIX G

CEMANAHUAC HOUSING INFORMATION SHEET
HOST FAMILY PROGRAM

Staying with a family can be the highlight of your trip to Mexico. Your host family is just as interested in learning about you and your country as you are about theirs. They will introduce you to their friends and relatives and treat you as a member of the family. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know Mexico and its people.

PAYMENT

Payment for your room and board should be made at Cemanahuac, unless you have already prepaid. The families are paid on a bi-weekly basis. Therefore, if there are any changes in your plans the appropriate adjustments can be made.

RULES OF THE HOUSE

The procedures of the family will be explained to you upon arrival by your hostess. These will include meal times, laundry, locking up procedures, and some things which we will go over with you at Orientation but which vary slightly from house to house. Always remember that you are in someone’s home, not in a hotel. Courtesy and common sense should be your guide.

MEALS

Your fee includes three meals daily. Coordinate your schedule with the family’s. the main meal of the day is served between 2:00 and 3:00 pm. Supper is a very light meal, sometimes only rolls and coffee. Since snacks, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages are not included in the fee, you should plan to purchase your own. The hostess plans her meals calculating normal servings. Do not expect to receive double servings during meal times. The kitchen and the refrigerator are off limits to the guests.

WATER

Purified drinking water will be provided for you. It may be boiled, filtered, or from a five-gallon jug of purified water. Your hostess will show you where the drinking water is kept. Cuernavaca has periodic water shortages; be aware of this when bathing. All host homes have hot water, but not all have automatic water heaters. Any special procedures will be explained to you. Please limit showers to one per day.

LAUNDRY

Sheets and towels will be provided and changed at least once a week. All homes have hand laundry facilities, but you are asked to provide your own laundry soap. If you make arrangements to have laundry done for you in your home, your hostess will let you know the fee for this. You may bring your laundry to Cemanahuac and it will be returned in the following day (Monday - Friday) by a nearby cleaning service for a nominal fee per load.
KEYS

Most families will provide you with a key to their house and show you their locking procedures. You will notice that Mexican families are very conscientious about locking their homes; you should be equally careful. You are responsible for the key and any resulting charges if you should lose it. Please remember to return the key when you leave.

YOUR ROOM

Houses are cleaned and mopped daily here in Cuernavaca. This includes your room. Please make sure your room can be easily cleaned while you are out. We ask that you please keep your room neat. Towels should be hung neatly in their place after use and clothes should not be on the floor.

YOUR FEET

In Mexico and Latin America feet are viewed in a different manner as you are probably used to. Feet that have walked through streets, sidewalks, dirt, etc. do not belong on chair rungs, the cushions of the sofa, tables, or dashboards of cars or busses. Feet that walk on the floor belong on the floor. Most Mexicans are amazed at how people can put their dirty feet on household furniture. Please be sensitive to this and keep your feet on the floor.

GUESTS

Families generally request that you not bring guests to the home. You are most welcome to meet friends at Cemanahuac. Many people in Cuernavaca like to meet in the zocalo.

ABSENCES

If you will not be home for a meal, please let your hostess know. There are no refunds for missed meals, but the family will be glad to prepare a bag lunch for you if you ask the day before. If you are planning to be out late or away overnight, please let the family know so they will not worry about you.

TELEPHONE

Please do not use the family telephone to make long distance calls. Telephone calls from Mexico are very expensive because of the high tax. Instead, give your number to family and friends at home and ask them to telephone you.

At Cemanahuac there are two public telephones which you can use to call within Mexico or out of the country, and one telephone with which you can use a Mastercard or VISA card. There are also many long-distance telephones in the downtown area of Cuernavaca. On these you may make international collect calls or use an AT&T credit card by dialing **91 to reach an international AT&T operator. You may purchase a Mexican telephone debit card in the Cemanahuac office for use in many of these phones.

TRANSPORTATION

Your family will show you how to get to and from Cemanahuac. They can also help you with bus and taxi information. Be sure to keep your family's address and phone number in your wallet or purse.
APPENDIX H

PRE-TRIP TRAINING MATERIALS PACKET
Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to work with me in this study.
Please choose ONE of the following options:

1.) Write your regular journal in Spanish and supplement it with English where necessary.

    OR

2.) Write your regular journal in Spanish as outlined by the Resident Directors. Also keep an English journal in which you write 5 two-and-a-half page single spaced entries per week. (This activity can count the same as a 4-hour per week culture class if you would like.)

    OR

3.) Write the English journal mentioned above instead of the Spanish journal.

    OR

4.) Tape record your comments in English on either regular or micro-cassettes.

Regardless of the option you choose, please address BOTH of the following in EVERY (journal or cassette) entry:
1. Make a cultural observation.
   This can be a pure description, a comparison with U.S. American culture, an analysis, an opinion, etc. (Please avoid using only comparisons.)

2. Describe how you are feeling, as a foreigner to the culture, on the given day.

*If I need to change the assignment at any point, I will fax you and explain.

For those of you who have agreed to share your (English or Spanish) journal with me, please xerox it at a xerox place that is convenient to you and use the enclosed stamped envelopes to send me a copy. (When you return from Mexico, I will want to make another complete copy of this journal.) You can put up to 30 sheets of paper in each envelope. (Most copy facilities charge between .08 and .2 pesos per page to xerox. Please do not do your xeroxing at school.)
**SCHEDULE FOR THE PROJECT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 20-Dec. 20</td>
<td>Administrative tasks, including training and interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10-11</td>
<td>Phone call from me to each of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 20</td>
<td>Mail envelope #1 of journal entries to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4-12</td>
<td>I will visit Cuernavaca. (Please leave a copy of the rest of your journal entries or your entire collection of cassette tapes at the front desk at school on Friday, Feb. 3 for me to pick up and read/listen to over the weekend, before meeting with you.) I will want to sit down and talk with each of you at some point during the week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 3</td>
<td>Mail envelope #2 of journal entries to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 17</td>
<td>Classes end in Cuernavaca. When you return to Ohio, I would like to...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
get together with each of you to talk about your trip. Before that time, I would like to get a copy of the rest of your journals/tapes. So, basically, please just call me as soon as you return from Mexico!

My phone number is (614) 267-0864
My address is

Michele-Marie Dowell
3015 Stadium Dr. Apt. 5
Columbus, OH 43202

In terms of journal/cassette entries, here are a few examples of good vs. bad (vague) sentences within a given entry:

BAD:
"I hate the eating schedule here."

GOOD:
"I don’t like the eating schedule here because French people seem to eat dinner later in the evening than
most Americans I know. I get so hungry waiting for dinner!"

BAD:
"St. Tropez was really interesting."

GOOD:
"I found it interesting to see several entire families sunbathing naked in St. Tropez. My family would never do that!"

BAD:
"I didn’t like Paris at all."

GOOD:
"I really didn’t like Paris because the streets are dirty and everyone is speaking different languages."

BAD:
"My host family is/isn’t very nice."

GOOD:
"My host family is very nice. They try to make me feel at home by inviting me on family trips and always making conversation at the dinner table."

OR
"My host family isn’t very nice. They keep saying they consider me a member of the family, but every evening they come by and shut my door while I’m studying. It seems like they don’t want to be around me."

Thank you again for participating in my study. If you have any questions or concerns while in Mexico, feel free to fax me at (614) 292-4054 or call me collect at the aforementioned number.

Sincerely,

Michele-Marie Dowell
APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS,
RESIDENT DIRECTORS, AND TEACHERS AT CEMANAHUAC
Administrators:

1. What does the program offer American students?

2. In terms of cultural learning?

3. What are your general impressions of the American students in terms of their cultural assimilation in Mexico?

Resident Directors:

1. What are the goals of the program in general?

2. In terms of cultural learning?

3. In each level, what is the cultural component?

4. Do students have to attend culture classes? If so, what are the themes?

5. What can you tell me about (student’s name) so far? How does he/she relate to others in the program? With teachers? With resident directors?

Teachers:

1. Tell me your general impressions of (student’s name).

2. And in terms of how he/she relates to others?

3. What did (student’s name) do for his/her immersion activity?

4. What do you think of him/her in terms of Mexican culture? Does he/she assimilate?

5. In class has he/she commented to you about the culture, about things that he/she is learning or impressions that he/she is forming? Things that he/she has seen and does or does not understand?

(Note: Question 5 asked of resident directors and 1-5 asked of teachers were repeated for each participant.)
APPENDIX J

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Informed Consent Form

I consent to participate in dissertation research tentatively entitled: "Study Abroad in Cuernavaca, Mexico."

Michele-Marie Dowell has explained the basic purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the methods to be applied in the process. I have received a packet of information outlining the specific assignment as well as the schedule of activities over the course of my quarter of study abroad.

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the contents of the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily to give Michele-Marie my permission to use the contents of my application to participate in the program, my autobiographical statement that Michele-Marie asked me to prepare prior to participating in the program, my journal (whether in English or Spanish, written or tape-recorded), and transcripts from her interviews with me.

Also, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time.

Signed: __________________________ Date: ______

(Participant)
REFERENCES


Freed, B. (1995, November). What does a study abroad experience contribute to the development of second language fluency?: A study in French. Paper presented at the Research Perspectives in Adult Language Learning and Acquisition Annual Symposium, Columbus, OH.


