

Openness to the "Other" During a Summer Language Study Abroad in Madrid, Spain: Six Case Studies

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OPENNESS TO THE "OTHER" DURING A SUMMER LANGUAGE STUDY

ABROAD IN MADRID, SPAIN: SIX CASE STUDIES

by

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to explore the interaction of summer language study abroad students in Madrid, Spain, with a cultural and linguistic "Other," and to examine the resulting evolution in those participants' openness to that Other. Gordon Allport's four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory* provided the framework for this analysis.

The student in a language study abroad context is both a linguistic and cultural minority, an experience manifested in multiple daily interactions that potentially affect openness to the linguistic and cultural Other. As such, qualitative data were drawn from six participants via interviews during and soon after their experience abroad, and presented in the form of case studies. These interviews were centered around the following: (1) participants' sense of equality of social status with the Other while abroad, (2) participants' participation in common, authentic tasks with members of the Other, (3) the participants' sense of community and/or institutional support to foster positive relationships with the Other, and (4) participants' sense of the level of intergroup cooperation in the effort to achieve their goals.

Constant comparative analysis, developed by Glaser (1965), was used to analyze the data. Data were analyzed in three different levels: (1) Within-case analysis of participants' experiences and issues arising that centered around the themes of Allport's optimal conditions, openness to the Other, and uniqueness of those experiences and issues due to language study abroad, (2) cross-case analysis of those same themes, and (3) holistically cross-case and cross-theme analysis with an identification of findings that may also contribute to one's evolution or de-evolution of openness to a linguistic and cultural Other.

The findings suggest that the agency of each individual study abroad participant creates or at least affects Allport's (1954) optimal conditions in relation to the unique context of a language study abroad. Specifically, participants exercise agency around three factors when understanding openness to the Other on a language study abroad. These include: (1) participants' goal re-embracement or reframing; (2) by-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams," and; (3) participant initiative versus passivity.

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Chapter I - Identification of the Study

Introduction

One of the most anticipated traditions of the World Language programs of many universities is a program abroad to visit a country where the native language is the language that the program participants have been studying. The idea of a language study abroad also has definite appeals to the potential traveler. Through daily interaction with native speakers, these programs offer the opportunity for the student to gain linguistic competence in a non-native language (L2). Through experiencing everyday situations and interactions with a culture different from their own, language studies abroad also offer the university students an opportunity to gain in multicultural competence, which Stuart (2004) defines as "the ability to understand and constructively relate to the uniqueness of each [person] in light of the diverse cultures that influence each person's perspectives" (p.6), in a way that a classroom environment usually cannot replicate. For individuals traveling internationally for the first time in their lives, a language study abroad experience offers the opportunity for students to see parts of the world that they have so far only been able to read about in books or research on the internet.

Many universities offer these study abroad travel experiences for students enrolled at various stages of a language class sequence at the university. Although the duration of these trips is limited, instructors and professors generally purport these sojourns to be experiences that enhance the student's understanding of the language taught in ways that cannot be replicated in any other way than through the trip itself. Given that the financial burdens of not only studying but living abroad can be tremendous and the time commitment needed to study abroad may not fit seamlessly with a student's

academic timeline, so many students claim that their time abroad is much more rewarding than time spent on vacation. Students traveling abroad expect to better their language skills and understanding of the host culture, and they believe that this will happen most quickly by immersing themselves in the language and culture that they are studying (Allen, 2010).

Some programs offer summer-long trips in which the students are able to not only see the major sites within the host country, but also to take a couple of classes while there (Allen, 2010; DeKeyser, 2010, Talburt & Stewart, 1999; Wilkinson, 1998); other programs offer short abroad trips that serve as extensions of what students learned during a semester of language instruction (Ingram, 2005; McMeekin, 2006; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004); still others offer a longer program of a semester or more that often times offers the students an opportunity to stay with a family that lives in the host country (Hernández, 2010; Isabelli-García, 2006; Kinginger, 2008; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2010; Magnan & Back, 2007; Twombly, 1995); while even others offer possible service projects built in to the study abroad to encourage students to forge relationships that extend beyond their immediate families (Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

Ideally, the abroad experience gives the students an opportunity to showcase and develop their language skills: at the same time the programs give the instructors an opportunity to validate or re-evaluate their own teaching practice and World Language curricula. The degree to which students and instructors take advantage of these opportunities ultimately rests with the individuals themselves. The sojourn abroad also provides the student with a unique opportunity to meet and interact with the "Other."

This Other, for the purposes of this investigation, is defined as an individual that is not only a native speaker of a language other than that of the student traveler, but one who also exhibits a number of cultural differences reified and manifested in daily life. These cultural differences may be exhibited in ways that are obvious, for example in the differences in foods that each person is accustomed to eating, or by the differences in daily routines that each person follows. Cultural differences many times, though, can be much less evident. There may be different rules for communicative appropriateness (Bataller, 2010; DeKeyser, 2010), different norms for social interaction (Hernández, 2010; Magnan & Back, 2007; Shively, 2010; Stewart, 2010), differences in gender interactions (Davidson, 2010; Isabelli-García, 2006; Kinginger, 2011; Twombly, 1995), or differences in how one appropriately expresses disagreement (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Niroomand, 2012). Any of these cultural differences of the Other may be interpreted as something completely foreign or even incomprehensible to the student traveler.

There are an abundance of studies written discussing the linguistic gains of language study abroad versus typical linguistic gains from a classroom setting (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Isabelli-García, 2010), with these gains being measured using a commonly-accepted standard like an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) (Hernández, 2010; Isabelli-García, 2006; Spenser, 2011). And although language acquisition and multicultural competence may be seen to go hand-in-hand during a study abroad, multicultural competence during study abroad may be achieved independently of language acquisition. In fact, most studies of acquiring multicultural competence focus on the study abroad in general, without factoring in the role of language acquisition in the process. It is

important to note that many of these more intangible cultural differences are directly related to language and communicative exchanges, hence making a language study abroad a unique opportunity for students to engage with cultural differences and attitudes towards the Other. For example, various studies have been conducted on American citizens gaining cultural competence abroad where the native languages spoken are languages other than English, but where L2 acquisition was not a principal goal of the program (Bodycott & Walker, 2000; Merrill, Braskamp & Braskamp, 2012; Smith-Miller, Leak, Harlan, Dieckmann, Sherwood, 2010). Likewise, study abroad programs at times are designed with the ultimate goal being an increased multicultural competency, but without the language proficiency goals in mind because the students' native language is also the native language of the host culture (Stanitski & Fuellhart, 2003).

The student in a language study abroad context, however, is both a linguistic and cultural minority, an experience manifested in multiple daily interactions. Language study makes the study abroad experience unique, just as study abroad makes language study unique. Examining both in mutually shaping interaction is needed. Achieving linguistic competence in and of itself, or achieving an increased level of multicultural competence in and of itself, however, may not address the question of openness to the Other. The combination of language study and the multiple daily interactions of a study abroad ultimately places the student in more situations that potentially affect openness to the Other.

There is, however, surprisingly little existing literature on the evolution or interaction of travelers' openness to the Other while on a language study abroad. What the present study seeks to explore is precisely this evolution and interaction. In other

words, how does an individual's level of openness to the Other change during a language study abroad experience, what are the causes of this change, and how does the traveler project this level of openness/lack of openness to the cultural Other in everyday experiences during and after the language study abroad?

While language study abroad can be transformative in developing linguistic skills, the same transformation may be available around developing cultural expertise. There are a number of studies that detail this development in multicultural competence as defined by Stuart (2004) (see Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Ingram, 2005; Merrill, Braskamp & Braskamp, 2012; Schulz, 2007; Shively, 2010; Stewart, 2010). Despite the findings of these studies, there exists insufficient empirical research on the specific attitude changes in students participating in language abroad immersion experiences in terms of *what* is happening in that transformation. Furthermore, although the above studies suggest means of developing abroad students' developing a heightened level of multicultural competence while on a study abroad, none of them investigate the role of language in that development. Analyzing empirical research and interpreting the corresponding data using Allport's (1954) *intergroup contact theory* provides a framework that may yield results that could help us understand and interpret the evolution of the language study abroad student's openness to the Other.

Specifically for the purposes of this research, I am studying the degree to which a university language immersion experience abroad aligns with the optimal characteristics needed to see the benefits of Gordon Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory. Allport posits that in order to create a situation in which the level of prejudice is diminished, four major conditions are optimal: 1) Perceived equal social status among members of each

cultural group - without either group lacking social status in general; 2) Shared, authentic goals which members of both cultural groups are interested in achieving; 3) Intergroup cooperation between members of both cultural groups to achieve the goals previously set forth in this same mutually beneficial relationship; and 4) Community and/or institutional support in the fostering of a mutually beneficial relationship (Allport, 1954, p.488-489).

The analysis of these optimal characteristics in the context of a language study abroad experience may help to reveal whether or not the unique aspects of a language immersion experience abroad mirror Allport's optimal characteristics and how they may affect the evolution of the students' openness to the Other. Implications for improving the efficacy of a language study abroad program also emerge from this work.

Theoretical Framework

Gordon Allport (1954) conducted his research to understand the roots and nature of prejudice and its impact on individuals and communities. His research also offers suggestions for reducing the devastating effects of prejudice and discrimination. Although his research was conducted over a half a century ago, its principles carry over to society today, as do the effects of prejudice. Allport's investigation into prejudice reduction through contact reveals a number of significant findings that are pertinent to language study abroad and how such an experience may or may not work to reduce prejudice, given both language development theory as well as the characteristics of Allport's *intergroup contact theory*. I have situated my research theory within the related language development theory and the empirical studies that provide links to aspects of Allport's *intergroup contact theory*.

The beginnings of a child's language acquisition, as explained by Vygotsky (1978), require that a child use a number of tools, including an increasing capacity for language, to solve problems of increasing complexity. Often times, the refining of this language, and the subsequent ability to participate more fully in a community of practice, takes place under the guidance of an expert (Lave & Wenger, 1991). A language study abroad would seem the perfect context in which Vygotsky's (1978) theory of language development in children could be similarly manifested in a young adult. Given that both the child and the university student in a language study abroad context need their speech as an important "tool" in attaining their goals, and that the more complex the problem faced by both a child and a university student in a language abroad context, the greater the reliance of each on speech as the most integral operation for problem solving. Both the child and the university student will seek to rely on the "expert" to help in solving the problem of immersion in a different culture. Vygotsky said that the expert in the case of the child language learner is likely to be that child's parent. In the language study abroad, however, the expert is likely to be a native speaker with whom the university language student develops a relationship, whether by convenience or necessity. These members of the host culture are likely to include any number of individuals from the student's host family, classes taken while abroad, or newly acquired friends the student makes during her sojourn.

Without a doubt, a language study abroad provides the learner with the chance to interact with the Other, or the "expert" to whom Vygotsky (1978) and Lave & Wenger (1991) may refer. But, since language learning abroad by no means occurs in a laboratory setting, proximity to the expert can have consequences other than the degree to

which the student studying abroad learns the language. Through the degree and the specifics of this interaction with another culture, the student's openness to the Other could likely be affected. Allport's (1954) *intergroup contact theory*, in dealing with groups of people from different cultural backgrounds, formulates that contact between individuals from these groups, under optimal conditions, could effectively reduce intergroup prejudice. Allport reported from his own empirical research of intergroup contact programs, that in just over one half of cases, prejudice was lessened, but in the other half of cases, prejudice actually increased. It was not just contact between members of different cultural groups that mattered, it was the kind of contact, or, the nature of the conditions under which this contact took place that mattered. Allport describes four "optimal conditions" in which prejudice is likely to diminish, which are: 1) perceived equality in social status of members of each cultural group; 2) common, authentic goals; 3) community and/or institutional support; and 4) intergroup cooperation. Allport emphasized that individuals of differing cultural groups that simply come into casual, superficial contact with each other while not under conditions that Allport described as "optimal," and who subsequently become acquainted with each other do not automatically experience a positive relationship and a diminished prejudicial mindset. It becomes extremely important, then, that one understands just how Allport viewed the nature of these "optimal conditions" to which he refers.

Regarding the first optimal condition, equal status of both groups, Allport warned that "contact in a hierarchical social system, or between people who equally lack status..., or contacts between individuals who *perceive* one another as threats, are harmful rather than helpful" (1954, 488, italics mine) in terms of levels of prejudice. In other words, it

is not only important that these individuals of different "groups" hold a similar social status within society. It is equally important for each of those groups to hold some sort of social capital. Without equal social status, other problems can emerge that would interfere with reduction of intergroup prejudice.

Allport's (1954) first optimal condition of equal status is important for reduction of intergroup prejudice, but so also is Allport's second optimal condition of participation in common, authentic tasks as far as being necessary for reduction of intergroup prejudice. Simply finding themselves in contact situations is not sufficient for members of different cultural groups to foster the type of relationship with each other that would lessen prejudice. Allport emphasized that intergroup contact must "reach below the surface" (p.276) in order to alter prejudice, and that members of each group must have an interest in "doing" things together in an effort to achieve a goal that all participants are interested in achieving.

Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction emphasizes the importance of the fostering of positive relationships between members of different groups should "enjoy the sanction of the community in which they occur" (p.489). Whether contact between members of different cultural groups is legislated, made part of program requirements, or has rallied general support from the surrounding communities, positive relationships are much more likely to forge in an environment in which they are viewed positively. Allport specifically referred to programs for which the aim was to abolish racial segregation in the United States in the 1950s, such as The Community Conference or Block Committee in Chicago, and Rachel Du Bois' "community festivals," each of which received a great deal of community support at the time, but a number of other

contexts can equally apply. Even within the context of a language study abroad, the applicable "communities" include institutional support from a host university, for example, as well as that from the university from the home country that the student normally attends. Also included are the home community from which the student language learner comes as well as the community that hosts this student. Even the temporary "community" of other travelers abroad must be taken into consideration when understanding an individual's study abroad experience. Any or all of these relationships may form the student's "community", and may or may not provide the support for positive relationships that Allport described as optimal for prejudice reduction.

A fourth, but no less important aspect of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in intergroup contact theory emphasizes the importance of members of different cultural groups coming together to achieve the common, authentic goals in reducing prejudicial attitudes of the members of these groups, referred to in his second optimal condition. Allport also acknowledged, though, that often times when members of different social groups come together, it is with a sense that whatever program is bringing these individuals together operates under certain auspices of artificiality. Allport cited examples in which individuals working on community projects or on race relations meet to simply talk about problems, without ever engaging these problems in a concerted effort to resolve them together. These opportunities of contact, as described, do not align with Allport's third optimal condition of an authenticity of goals, nor with his first optimal condition of equal social status among members of each cultural group. If each group viewed the other as its equal, each would be more likely to work with the other. Instead of taking advantage of the opportunities presented, often times the

individuals feel patronized and frustrated instead of motivated to work with and develop a true sense of respect for the Other. As such, Allport's optimal condition for dealing with people from different cultural backgrounds is the recognition of common objective and authentic goals - goals in which individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds would be instrumental in their realization. Again, an equality of social status between members of both groups, or at least the perception of equality of social status is integral for these individuals to understand that not only is their own input valued as an important contribution to the realization of these goals, but equally important are the contributions from members of the Other.

In addition to the need for authentic goals mentioned above, Allport (1954) emphasized the importance of members of different cultural groups working together as a team on whatever task is at hand. In other words, once working together on common, authentic goals, it is not sufficient for the individuals of each group to go about their business while simply remaining within their own communities. Allport (1954) stressed that even "while it may help somewhat to place members of different ethnic groups side by side on a job, the gain is greater if these members regard themselves as part of a *team*" (p.489 - emphasis in original). Allport's definition of what constitutes optimal conditions of a reduction in prejudice between members of different cultural groups requires that input from members of each group be valued and considered in the eventual way of achieving the goals' ends. Allport stresses that satisfying this condition requires much more involvement from and consideration of the opinions of members of each cultural group - rather than a simple division of duties and responsibilities to be completed by proxy without working alongside people that would constitute the Other.

In addition to the four optimal conditions described above, Allport (1954) suggested the consequences of a number of other variables be studied both separately and in combination, including the frequency and duration of contact, the role aspects of contact (i.e., cooperative versus competitive relationship; superordinate versus subordinate relation), social atmosphere surrounding the contact, the personalities of all individuals involved experiencing the contact including their initial levels of prejudice, as well as the areas of contact (i.e., casual, residential, occupational, etc.). Each of these also must be taken into consideration when determining just how ideal the contact between two different cultural groups is for reducing prejudice (Allport, 1954, p. 262-263), or creating openness to the Other. Clearly, satisfying all of these conditions at the same time is not easy to accomplish.

Several researchers have critiqued the plausibility of satisfying the optimal conditions of intergroup theory (Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005; Pettigrew, 1998) or have further attempted to align the theory of these optimal conditions with a practical yet naturally-occurring setting of a "jigsaw classroom," in which students were both interdependent and used cooperation to maximize educational gain while simultaneously maximizing classroom harmony (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997). Pettigrew and Tropp (2000, 2006), though, using a meta-analysis of contact studies, concluded that not all of Allport's conditions need to be applied at the same time in order for prejudices to be reduced and for an increasing acceptance of the Other to happen. After having analyzed 696 samples of intergroup contact, the researchers concluded that while "carefully structured contact situations designed to meet Allport's (1954) optimal conditions achieved a markedly higher mean effect size than did other samples" (2006, p.766), other studies (Crain &

Weisman, 1972; Van Dyk, 1990) in which few or none of Allport's optimal conditions were present also indicated a reduction in prejudicial attitudes. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) suggested that additional factors such as perspective taking, broadened views of the in-group, perceived importance of the contact, intergroup mediation, in-group pride, and a willingness to forgive the outgroup are factors also worth taking into consideration when analyzing contact effects. These additional factors do not discount Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in his intergroup contact theory. Rather, these factors help to show the complexity of Allport's theory without discrediting him. Surely Allport's intergroup contact theory and the four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction, as well as language development theory, can serve as a theoretical framework in determining to what degree a language immersion experience abroad can affect an individual's openness to the cultural and linguistic Other.

Review of the Literature

The questions then arise: to what degree might a language immersion experience abroad align with the optimal characteristics needed to see the benefits of Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory? How does this contact affect the language student's openness to the "Other," as well as that student's level of language acquisition while abroad? This review of the existing literature describes factors that influence the level of language acquisition, as well as factors that influence the level of multicultural competence in language students in an abroad context, and highlights the possible links between those factors and Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction, namely: 1) perceived equality of social status; 2) shared, authentic goals; 3) community or institutional support during a study abroad, and; 4) intergroup cooperation. The analysis of this literature will

affirm the lack of crossover between these heretofore distinct areas of research, and will posit that each can inform the other to gain not only a more complete picture of what language study abroad can offer, but how the analysis of both areas simultaneously can help to better understand intergroup contact theory applied to a language study abroad.

Language Acquisition.

This portion of the review of the literature considers factors such as the learner's motivation and career goals, resistance to linguistic and cultural differences as manifested through the use of at-home anchors and other rejections of the host language and culture, and how these changes affect language acquisition while on a language study abroad. The literature also focuses on changes (or lack thereof) in how the learner constructs her own identity, especially as it relates to race, ethnicity and/or nationalism, and how this construction affects language acquisition while on a study abroad.

Goals, attitudes, and motivation.

Research on language immersion study abroad has shown the importance of goals, attitudes, and motivation in the success of a student's overall abroad experience. Each of these is not to be considered individually or exclusively, but rather as interconnected and mutually shaping of each other.

Allen (2010) explained variations in the successes of a language study abroad using an activity theory framework, in which the second language (L2) learners are motivated by biologically or culturally constructed needs. When needs are directed at an object they become motives, gaining and losing power based on the context of any given situation. In a study abroad context, each learner understands and interprets one's own goals differently, and this ability to self-regulate can exert a powerful influence on how

one engages in language learning. For example, the student for whom mastery of an L2 contributes to career goals, that is, learning an L2 provides a means to an end, may view study abroad as a critical linguistic step in the process of achieving that end. On the other hand, for the student who is abroad to learn that language and learn about different cultures, the perception of what the study abroad "should be" is markedly different. For the latter student, learning another language and another culture are ends in themselves. This level of engagement, naturally, has profoundly different effects on how the learner interprets the study abroad experience as a whole.

With regards specifically to language learning, Masgoret & Gardner (2003) concluded that learners in an abroad context have attitudes toward the study abroad experience that directly relate to their goals and are all positively related to achievement in a second language. One of these attitudes is what the researchers call "integrativeness," or the degree in openness to identify with another language community. Another of these attitudes is "motivation," which is the learner's goal-directed behaviors while on a study abroad. A third attitude is what the researchers call "integrative orientation." This differs from "integrativeness" in that one's orientation is a combination of both having "integrativeness," while at the same time being cognizant of this integrativeness and actively embracing it as a positive value, in order to better identify with a community. While learning in a situation in which they are both the linguistic and cultural minority, L2 learners can find the perceptions of the host culture affected, sometimes even transformatively, by each of these. Of these three, "motivation" is most highly and positively related to an increase in language gain. In other words, this study finds that the higher the student's motivation, the greater the language gain. These

attitudes may align with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction of real and perceived equality of status, shared and authentic goals, community or institutional support, and working as a team - and therefore openness to the Other. Motivation, for example, may be linked to the desire to achieve common, authentic goals with members of another cultural group. Of course, the perceptions of the members of the host culture would also need to be taken into account for these conditions to fully align with the optimal conditions that Allport details, which Masgoret and Gardner's (2003) study does not address. Analyzing the language learning abroad experience through this perspective is done so in very few, if any, analyses of language learning abroad contexts. The connection between students' motivation and goals with their perception of and openness to the Other as equal may be supported or contradicted, though, by the "Other's" perceptions of the student studying abroad. This gap in the existing literature is one that this study hopes to address.

Hernández (2010) found that on a whole, students who exhibit integratively motivational goals, that is, those who desire to learn the language for the language's sake while abroad, tend to have much more contact with L2 speakers and interactions in the L2 during the sojourn abroad, and this is commonly manifested in more significant language gains during this period. On the other hand, students who exhibit more predominantly instrumental motivation to learn a language, that is, the learning of language with an overtly pragmatic objective such as fulfilling a program requirement or reaching a level of linguistic skills needed for specific employment, will not seek as much contact with the L2 while abroad. It is precisely this contact with the L2 and collaborative engagement around authentic, integrative goals while abroad that lead to the

greatest gains in language improvement as measured by the Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI) in this study. The deeper relationship that these students forged through their integratively motivational goals seems aligned with Allport's (1954) third optimal condition, active engagement in relationships and cooperation around authentic tasks with members of the Other. Authentic acquaintances between members of different cultural groups lessen prejudice between those groups much more than "casual contacts" do. In fact, "casual contacts" often times affirm perceptions of superordinate-subordinate relationships between members of different cultural groups, leading to an increase in already existing prejudices (1954, p.264-265). In addition, this integrative motivation may align with Allport's first optimal condition, relationships of equal status among members of different cultural groups. The fact that the language learner desires knowledge of the culture and language at an integrative level implies a level of respect for the host culture. Of course it is possible for a language learner in an abroad context to both need to participate in a language-learning trip abroad to reach pragmatic goals, while at the same time exhibiting a high amount of integrative motivation while doing so, thus acting out of instrumental in addition to integrative motivation. Consequently, it would not necessarily be fair to place students into dichotomous categories that do not recognize the possibility of a combination of motivations for the language study abroad. The researcher acknowledged this as a need for future research, though, which will be discussed later.

Levels of motivation and types of attitudes determine themselves in relationships and extended social networks that students forge while abroad. Studying students in an abroad context while in Argentina, Isabelli-García (2006) connected the formation of

these extended social networks to greater increases on the SOPI as measured after the culmination of the study abroad. Not only do motivated students seek out extended social networks and interaction with members of the host culture and communication in the L2, but it is precisely the informal, out-of-class contact that most greatly enhances language acquisition. It is exactly this type of close, yet informal relationship that aligns with Allport's (1954) findings and can lead to a reduction of prejudice between different cultural groups. Whereas people making contact with other cultural groups in "tourist mode" are likely not to have their perceptions and stereotypes of the Other change during their contact, a more sustained acquaintance is likely to lessen the prejudices and increase openness to the Other (Allport, 1954, p.266-267).

Motivation does not always come from the L2 learners themselves. Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart (2010) experimented with requiring students abroad to establish and identify goals during a study abroad. The researchers' identification of student goals stemmed from giving student groups tasks that ideally enhanced student contact with the L2. In other words, the researchers viewed student goals after having given them tasks likely to foster communication and interaction with members of the host culture. These tasks were to be completed while with groups of native speakers - usually with members of the learner's host family. Although the researchers ultimately found that students' motivations usually superseded those of the program directors in that levels of commitment to the thorough completion of these tasks varied quite a bit, it does affirm the thought that students that exhibit forms of integrative motivation would seek out the completion of these tasks naturally. This makes sense in light of the previous research (Allen, 2010; Hernández, 2010; Isabelli-García, 2006; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

Troubling, though, is the conclusion by the researchers that what was reported by student learners, in contrast to what host families reported regarding the nature of these interactions, was inconsistent. In some instances in this study, the degree of interaction between the student travelers and the host families was reported as much higher by the students than by the host families. The researchers concluded that this could have been due to either a glorification in perception of this relationship on the part of the student, or by false reports given to the researchers by the students altogether - in an effort for the students to present themselves in the most positive light possible to the researchers. These findings also present the possibility that student goals developed by program directors may not accurately measure the "success" of a study abroad program as defined by each individual student. It is precisely because the nature of each individual's goals varies that "success" in achieving these goals varies in definition. These differences in perceptions of student travelers and host families may be able to shed some light on possible evolutions in each group's perceptions of the Other during the language learning abroad context.

Lee (2012) also conducted a study that required students to complete tasks in which they were to conduct ethnographic interviews with native speakers of the L2 and then reflect on these interviews through blogging. The aim of these tasks, according to the researcher, was not only for the students to foster cross-cultural communication with members who speak the target language natively, but also for the participants to advance the development of their intercultural knowledge and awareness through the interviews themselves. Although the motivation in this study was mainly extrinsic, with more than 50% of the students' grades being determined by the ethnography/blogging project, the

researcher was able to affirm Masgoret & Gardner's (2003) claim that motivated students are likely to see language gain during this time. Interestingly, there was no measure of intercultural knowledge gain during this same period. The degree of motivation and the approach (integrative versus instrumental) affect the level of language learning, in part by affecting the degree of authentic, meaningful interaction with members of the host culture. Those interactions may produce elements of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction.

In summary, the existing literature indicates the importance of travelers abroad setting individual goals for their study abroad, being able to process their own attitudes toward their study abroad program and their role within it, as well as clearly understanding their motivations for taking on this endeavor. The nature of these goals, attitudes and motivations individualize the language study abroad experience for each study abroad participant. Thus, distinguishing and categorizing an individual's goals, attitudes and motivations for a language study abroad help the researcher to best understand how each individual person experiences an otherwise similar study abroad differently. Goals and motivations that are integrative (ends in themselves) produce greater language acquisition and cultural competence when compared to instrumental (means to an end) goals and motivations.

Resistance to linguistic and cultural differences through use of at-home anchors.

To reiterate, simply placing a language learner in an abroad context is not necessarily a panacea for optimal exposure to the experience of being a linguistic and cultural minority, nor for language learning or learning about a culture that is different from one's own. There are a number of outside factors that may affect the learner's

experience abroad, therefore profoundly affecting the ability to which the learner progresses in what researchers believe are the ideal benefits of an abroad experience, like increased L2 proficiency (DeKeyser, 2010; Hernández, 2010; Hornberger, 2002; Kinginger, 2008; McMeekin, 2006) and appreciation for cultural diversity, frequently seen as of secondary importance (Allen, 2010; Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; Ingram, 2005; Isabelli-García, 2006; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2010; Twombly, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998). These factors are found in the degree to which the study abroad student maintains ties with her native country, including personal relationships and language use.

In her study, Kinginger (2008) concluded that "immersion" in the language and culture is increasingly a matter of choice due to many of the opportunities that the abroad learner has to maintain connections with the home culture and language over the host culture and L2. Each individual learner differs in her¹ willingness to integrate into social groups while abroad, her use of internet and/or various forms of social media to maintain connections with at-home ties, degrees to which the learner receives visitors from home, the tendency to revert back to her first language (L1) with members of the same study abroad cohort or with L2 native speakers that insist upon speaking the learner's L1, or even the establishing of close-knit L2 relationships that may foster in a host family as opposed to the learner living alone in an apartment or dorm setting. These at-home distractions may align with Allport's (1954) optimal condition of equal status between groups. The learner in Kinginger's (2008) study appeared to value the elements from her

¹ The reader will surely notice the use of the feminine pronoun when referring to gender-neutral statements. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, the use of the gender-neutral "one's," or the all-inclusive "his or her" I find both cumbersome and noticeably repetitive. Further, the literature generally purports a disproportionate number of female language students abroad over male language students abroad. As such, in picking one gender over the other by which to associate general statements, I have chosen the female.

own culture more than she did the elements from the host culture, and her tendency to gravitate toward them is explained away as "natural." And while this need to stay connected to one's home may be to a certain extent in one's nature, the potential for alienating all things having to do with the host culture is a possibility. And indulging that desire to the detriment of the level of engagement with the host culture and family may also add to any feelings of national superiority. Although while certainly lacking the technological specifics in the present study, Allport (1954, 1964) explained the degree in which one is willing to integrate by his explanation of "conformity" to aspects or traditions of another culture. In the context of intergroup contact theory, Allport admitted that the individual will inevitably have inextricable connections with the cultural norms of her own group - even adopting prejudicial principles to a degree. Nevertheless, contact with individuals from another group may erase or at least modify some of these effects over time, and cumulatively may shift the group's principles paradigmatically over time. The degree to which the language study student maintains ties to home can affect this process significantly.

Magnan & Back (2007) also explored how learners' frequency of use of at-home anchors leads to very different perceptions of the same study experience abroad. Students may or may not choose to take advantage of the opportunity to "leave life behind" and fully participate in the lives of their host families, which can lead to varying degrees of language ability improvement, but what most negatively affected improvement was the individual student's tendency to speak the L2 not with members of the host community, but rather with other classmates also on the study abroad. Not only could this situation lead to two or more non-native L2 speakers reinforcing their own

incorrect usage of the language, but it could further alienate the L2 as nothing more than a novelty, or distinctly "foreign" (MacNeil & Cran, 2005). The labeling as such of a language, and consequently its cultural practices, would certainly have negative consequences with regards to one's openness to the Other. Instances such as these do not align with Allport's (1954) first optimal condition of equality of social status. Without the language learner's willingness to speak the L2 with members of the host culture while only speaking the L2 with members of her own culture, the L2 is thought of more as a novelty than anything, demonstrating an underlying sense of unequal status between the language abroad student's native language and the L2. Additionally, if the language learner in an abroad context chooses to associate with members of her own culture over with those members of the host culture like members of their host families, any inequality of social status between the different cultural group members persists, and stereotypes that the learner has about members of the host culture or their cultural practices are likely to be at least sustained and quite probably reinforced and strengthened (Allport, 1954, pp.189-192).

Wilkinson (1998) acknowledged the formation of small, clique-like groups by language study abroad participants as a "home-culture anchor," or at-home anchor, as well. The consequences of an increased reliance on at-home anchors such as these clique-like groups can have other, unintended consequences that can affect the goals of a prospective study abroad program. Research by Tusting, Crawshaw & Callen (2002) details the experiences of study abroad students that while using discursive strategies in a large-group setting entirely comprised of SA students, tended to make cultural generalizations that are not flattering to the host culture. Careful to not label these

generalizations as "stereotypes," students would mitigate and use hedging strategies to make it seem as though coming to conclusions about a culture as a whole is not a negative action in and of itself, but rather a natural conclusion about the group of people to whom they were referring. This action aligns perfectly with Allport's (1954) definition of stereotype as "an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category" (p.191). Although students in the Tusting, et. al. (2002) study had trouble categorizing these generalizations as such, they did tend to use personal experiences to legitimize them. Additionally, although the students in this study shared their native language with that of the host culture, there is no evidence to suggest that a common language made any difference in the degree to which the students abroad mitigated. In fact, it is entirely plausible that had these students not shared a common language with the members of the host culture that this mitigation could have been worse, as there would not have been any authentic language learning goal by the abroad participants. Allport's second optimal condition states that it is exactly this type of common, authentic goal in which one person demonstrates a genuine interest in achieving something like the acquisition of a language with the help of a member from another culture, that can reduce prejudice between members of those different cultures. The difference in native languages of the participants and the members of the host culture could have served as another dividing, mitigating factor.

The danger of these at-home anchors to the language learner in an abroad context is not only that they limit the learner's optimal experiences with members of a culture significantly different from her own, but also, this alienation from members of the host culture and reliance on relationships fostered with people with similar linguistic and

cultural practices, albeit physically distant perhaps, could lead to a rejection of the host culture and language. Kinginger (2009), in a meta-analysis of research related to individuals' achievement in the L2 during a language study abroad, summarized the potential dangers of an over-reliance on at-home anchors leading to a sense of national superiority and a cementing of one's own initial stances on international relations despite possible evidence to the contrary based on alternate interpretations of sociocultural contexts while abroad. Despite the technological capabilities, and thus the possible means of communication between people today being completely different from those during the time at which Allport (1954) wrote, his suggestion that prejudices need to be broken down so that openness to the Other can be fostered still applies. He writes, "It is not only the mere fact of living together that is decisive. It is the forms of resulting *communication* that matter...We must not assume that integrated housing automatically solves the problem of prejudice" (p.272, emphasis in original). Nor can we assume that simply participating in a language study abroad program can reduce prejudice.

To summarize, the ways in which a traveler abroad may choose to stay connected with her home culture are varied and may affect her enjoyment of the sojourn, the degree to which she may learn the language, and the degree to which her openness to the Other evolves. These connections include easier electronic links to home as well as the formation of strong peer cohorts who both speak L1 and can tend to create and reinforce unflattering depictions of the host culture. Since the nature of these at-home anchors varies dependent on the individual, each of these must be explored on an individual in order to best understand their effects on that person's study abroad experience.

Identity.

A person's identity is composed of one's self-views, emerging after careful reflection. Upon reflection, one tends to self-categorize membership into a number of communities, even taking on particular roles within those communities (Stets & Burke, 2000). Often, and certainly within the context of a language study abroad, the individual will define her identity, partially, in terms of the surrounding social groups, thus creating a social identity in which she sees herself as either a member of an "in-group" or an "out-group," as well as establishing the degree to which she belongs to either. The construction and evolution of one's identity, as well as one's social identity, each align with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions. Perceived equality of social status among members of two different cultural groups, as well as the degree to which members of two different cultural groups cooperate to achieve authentic, common goals, are greatly reliant upon the degree to which a student traveler can identify with the people and the culture of a host group. Identity and social identity both evolve over time, but the extent to which one's identity may evolve during a language study abroad has the opportunity to be transformative, and may greatly affect not only one's perception of the language study abroad in particular, but also one's openness to the Other in general.

Many times during a study abroad experience, language learners must confront their own expectations of the SA, as well as their own identities, both individually and socially. How well the expectations of what the SA "should be" compare against the reality of what the SA "is," as well as how much the language learner perceives the context of the SA to be a compromise in her own constructed identity, can markedly affect how the learner experiences the SA. Since the SA has the possibility of being a life-altering experience, or at least an identity-altering experience, Ingram (2005)

suggests that it is the responsibility of the institution offering language classes to address this disjuncture. By amplifying the design of language programs with a short trip abroad prior to a longer stay at some point in the future, the researcher asserts, language study programs give students the opportunity to better understand the cultural codes underlying what to the learner seem as strange cultural practices, with an opportunity to unpack this experience before making the commitment to a semester-long, or longer, study abroad.

If the design of the study abroad, set forth by their program, gave the language learner the opportunity to confront some of the issues revolving around language and cultural differences, her perception of the study abroad might be significantly influenced. Wilkinson's (1998) ethnography of two female students, with otherwise similar linguistic backgrounds, detailed how their own personal ideas and sensitivities to cultural diversity, perceptions of the host culture, use of "home-culture anchors," as well as willingness to accept sociolinguistic norms of the host community so as to not compromise their own identities, impacted their abroad experiences. This research asserted that the student with more experience in situations in which other languages are spoken, and different cultural values are accepted, is less likely to project her own language and cultural values onto others as being "correct" and anything else as "different" or "deficient." The result of Wilkinson's study indicated that the student with less prior experience with the Other was also more rigid in how she had constructed her values and identity. Consequently, she demonstrated a higher reliance on at-home anchors and failed to develop any true intercultural understanding, which further contributed to her stopping her language study program altogether upon her return home. These ideas link well to Allport's (1954) optimal condition of equal status, or at least perceived equal status between members of

two different cultural groups. On the one hand, the student in Wilkinson's (1998) ethnography was more comfortable redefining to some degree her identity while abroad due to her openness attributed to a greater number of previous experiences with other languages and cultures - essentially in an effort to equalize her own social status with that of the members of the host culture. The other female student with less experience with the Other, was less likely to compromise her identity - essentially maintaining a disconnect of social status between herself and the members of the host culture. Salient here is the idea that equal social status is just as much perceived by the individuals involved as well as constructed by external hierarchies.

Extremely important in the consideration of the differences of apparently similar students, as seen above, is the individual's socialization, as explained by Berger & Luckmann (1966). According to the authors, socialization is how an individual integrates as a functional member of a society. There are two stages of socialization, primary and secondary. Primary socialization takes place during childhood as the child forms reified beliefs about the way the world works that generally go unquestioned. The child's immediate family, school and close social networks are the primary socializers. Because these beliefs are formed at such an early age - at a time when the child cannot imagine the world in any other way than the one to which she is being socialized - they are rigid and extremely hard to change, even in adult life. Secondary socialization takes place as the individual becomes an adult, usually through one's peers, employment, or university experiences. Small, seemingly unimportant shifts in one's beliefs can be handled without much question, but as the authors aptly state, "some of the crises that occur after primary socialization are indeed caused by the recognition that the world of one's parents is *not*

the only world there is, but has a very specific social location, perhaps even one with a pejorative connotation (p.141)." Since one's identity is formed by how one self-categorizes and finds roles within specific communities, as well as the constant reflection that happens in the evolution and modification of one's identities (Stets & Burke, 2000), the manner in which one is socialized (both primarily and secondarily) obviously plays an enormous part in the groups with whom one self-categorizes. Dependence on one's primary socialization and/or the evolution and effectiveness of secondary socialization factors on one's beliefs can certainly affect the degree to which one is open to the Other (Allport, 1946, 1954).

This dichotomization of thought, i.e. one's primary socialization is superior to other secondary socializers, Allport (1954) maintained, is typical of "the prejudiced person... He dichotomizes when he thinks of nature, of law, or morals, of men and women, as well as when he thinks of ethnic groups" (p.175). Allport continued that it is much more tempting for a person to simplify the world in such a dichotomous way, believing that there is a "right way and a wrong way to do everything" (p.174). If there were to be "specific training in intercultural problems," like Ingram (2005) suggested should be an initial part of study abroad programs, "we should expect the gain in tolerance to be greater" (Allport, 1954, p.434). The goals of any intercultural problem training as part of a study abroad experience are to affect the secondary socialization of an individual (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), but the training may also very likely support the evolution of one's identity to increase openness to the Other.

Many have written about how one's race is inextricably tied to one's identity (Bailey, 2002; Chu, 2008; Talburt & Stewart, 1999; Warnke, 2008). Students in an

obvious racial minority while in a language study abroad can experience the sojourn differently than students racially similar to the people from the host culture. Although the research detailing the experiences of racial minority students from the United States studying a language abroad is scant, Talburt & Stewart (1999) provided an interpretive ethnography of a dark-skinned female student, "Misheila," who expressed not only feeling a "cultural otherness" while studying abroad in Spain, but also a "racial otherness" due to her skin color. She noticed during her stay that the only females she saw whose skin color was the same as hers were prostitutes that congregated in the city center, leading her to believe that dark-skinned females are often more sexualized than white females would be. Being the only dark-skinned female on that study abroad program, her experience was therefore markedly different than that of her counterparts. For many abroad travelers from the United States, being "American" becomes a salient overarching label, with race not being an identified part of that label. Quite plainly, though, race must be considered as an integral part of the makeup of one's identity.

Careful consideration must be taken during the planning stages of a language study abroad program on what implications race may play in the construction of one's own identity, and in turn on how one may perceive her own in abroad experience. It would make sense that in order to give the language learner the experience of not only being a linguistic and cultural minority, it is possible that being a racial minority could be part of that equation as well. Van Dijk (1992) reported that when a situation dictates that members of one racial group are together and the subject of members of another racial group come up, that the talk often times turns negative, even though the interlocutors may not admit to the negativity of this talk. This discourse interestingly both casts members

of the "other" race in a negative light, possibly with broader social, political and cultural functions, and at the same time, constructs an impression of the interlocutors that is as positive as possible. This type of discourse is obviously at odds with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction that necessitate equality in social status among members of the different cultural groups. Specifically, Allport referred to this type of discourse as a "verbal mask" of prejudice and discrimination, and writes that the subject of this talk may be broader than just race, but may also include class difference, ethnicity and cultural factors" (p.209-210).

Very little research has been done on the effects of being a racial minority in a language study abroad program, and how race affects one's identity evolution while abroad. While more research of this sort is certainly needed, it is true that any investigation of students abroad from the United States would have to be conducted through the lens that considers what the host country's perceptions of people from the United States are, regardless of race. Research does suggest that often times, people from the United States enjoy a certain celebrity status in many of the countries in which they choose to study abroad (Twombly, 1995). Other times, research has suggested that American students report that they are subject to harassment or other differential treatment due to their gender or nationality (Block, 2007). These students must come to terms with how they construct their own identities, and may gain insight as to how all linguistic and/or cultural minorities construct and modify their own identities within the context of a different, dominant language and culture. Allport (1946, 1954) warned, though, in cases such as this, those who feel that they have been victims of discrimination are usually either very high in prejudice or else very low in prejudice. They are seldom

"average." Either the victim of harassment will treat others in the way she has been treated, or sympathize with all of whom have been victimized and avoid the temptation to discriminate. Students' reaction to harassment during the language study abroad and even after is lacking in Block's (2007) report of students who described harassment. The research showed no indication whether abroad participants avoid situations in which they feel they may be harassed, what specific reactions to their harassment are, or how this harassment affects their overall perception of the Other. Further study abroad research has indicated that in most contexts, people that end up being designated as "*Nonnative Speakers*" are not by any means a homogeneous group, and that a multitude of social identities can be relevant to learning (Firth & Wagner, 2007). Whatever the social identity categories attributed to learners, whether racial, linguistic, cultural, gender or otherwise, these categories tend to have profound effects on the learners' educational experiences.

In addition to race, gender is also extremely important in the construction of one's identity, and can have a profound effect on how one experiences a study abroad (Davidson, 2010; Malewski & Phillion, 2009). Twombly (1995) examined the negotiation of female students' style of dress while abroad as well as their abilities (or lack thereof) to make female friends from the host culture. Given the fact that different cultures often have different styles of dress, students studying abroad will often not reach a stage in which they will sacrifice their own individuality with respect to how they dress. As this cultural gap in how people dress tends to be greater for women, the language study abroad can be an alienating experience as women deal with issues like being the recipients of catcalls or with difficulty in making women friends in the host culture.

Allport (1954) called this a manifestation of the "Principle of Least Effort," in which something as routinized as how members of a certain group dress opens the door to generalizations about the members of that group, as well as about the group as a whole. As Allport summarized, "to consider every member of a group as endowed with the same traits saves us the pains of dealing with them as individuals (p.173)." Obviously, but unfortunately, when the individuality of "Other" group members is ignored, it is much easier for one to close off her openness to the Other in general.

Furthermore, some attention must be given to conceptualizations of one's own social identity while investigating study abroad participants. Jackson (2008) used Tajfel's (1981) definition of social identity theory (SIT) as consisting "in part, of cultural, ethnic, or social group membership affiliations as well as the 'emotional significance' of that membership" (33), and elaborated that individuals prefer to be attached to groups of people that maintain for them a positive social identity, or see them in the most favorable light. Conflicts arise most often when the members of the group with whom the individual is associating do not afford the individual a seemingly positive social identity. This is a situation that can happen frequently between an individual studying abroad and the social groups with which that individual is encouraged to participate in social activities. An example of this conflict is detailed in Twombly's (1995) explanation of American females' feelings of alienation while studying abroad in Costa Rica as Costa Rican females rejected American females' friendship because the American women were seen as threats in competing for the attention of Costa Rican men. A disconnect in social identities between members of two different groups causes competition, threat, and likely

barriers to authentic communication, all of which are conditions described by Allport (1954) that promote a higher than average number of prejudiced personalities.

One must also keep in mind that identities are not static entities. Block's (2007) research maintained that language learners have more than one identity and that this causes ambivalence, or a willingness and unwillingness at the same time, toward speaking an L2. The constant struggle of re-establishing one's identity while abroad, specifically, can contribute to one's perception of the abroad experience itself. The more the adaptation of elements of the language and culture of the host country in an abroad experience seems to the learner as a loss of one's own identity, the less successful the abroad experience is apt to be, and a generally less-open attitude toward the Other may be a likely result or corollary.

Pavlenko (2003) problematized language learning from a compromised-identity standpoint as well. If the learner has constructed an identity in which the L2 is seen as a truly "foreign" language at odds with values important to the learner, she may construct an "oppositional identity" in L2 education contexts - including a language study abroad. Although perhaps less likely that a participant self-select a study abroad experience in which an oppositional identity be reinforced, it is possible that language learners in an abroad context can interpret the host society's culture and language as in conflict with their own national pride and identity. It is also possible that these individuals will choose to participate in a language study abroad because they have underestimated the degree to which they will feel such cultural conflict. In such instances, it could be argued that it is more beneficial for all parties involved for the learner to come to this realization before participating in a language study abroad in which daily interaction with members of a

host culture who have a different language, and different cultural practices and values happens constantly. These daily interactions, if carried out in part by an individual who has constructed an oppositional identity toward the host culture, obviously does not align with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions of perceived equality of social status.

In summary, identity is a complex, dynamic entity which, often times, even the individual cannot fully realize and understand about herself. Nevertheless, not only can identity be extremely important in understanding how an individual is perceived by members of the host culture and home culture during a language study abroad, but also identity is equally important in understanding how an individual can experience a language study abroad in her own right.

Multicultural Competence.

Each learner studying abroad, whether as a linguistic minority, or as an individual that speaks the host language natively, will begin her sojourn with a certain level of "cultural competence." While this term's use is popular in a number of disciplines, there is no concise definition of cultural competence. It is generally agreed upon, though, that cultural competence includes a knowledge, understanding of, and sensitivity toward cultural practices and norms, especially with regards to race, gender roles, language and religion (Alfaro, 2008; Diller & Moule, 2005; Keengwe, 2010; Larson, Ott & Miles, 2010; Sanner, Baldwin, Cannella, Charles & Parker, 2010; Talburt, 2009). During a language study abroad, the potential for the learner's level of cultural competence has the capability to increase dramatically, and with this increase, generally to mirror the ideality of characteristics to which Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory promotes student openness to the Other. To this point, Allport conceded "self-acquired knowledge, gained

through first-hand experience, is more effective than information sprayed upon us by lectures, textbooks, or publicity campaigns" (p.227).

Byram (1997) detailed five objectives, or "five saviors" which the learner can exemplify to demonstrate a deep learning and understanding of another cultural group, thus in a sense demonstrating a high degree of cultural competence. The first is *attitudes*, or a "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (p.91). The second "savior" is *knowledge* "of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction" (p.94). Byram's third "savior" is *skills of interpreting and relating*, which is "the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own" (p.98). The fourth is *skills of discovery and interaction*, or the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices, and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (p.98-99). The final "savior" of a culturally competent individual is *critical cultural awareness*, or "an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (p.101). A relationship between groups that understand and employ a mentality aligning with Byram's five saviors would lead to interactions in which members of one cultural group would see members of another as equals, as necessitated in Allport's (1954) first optimal condition for prejudice reduction.

Shively (2010) described the use of pragmatic learning activities, or activities which promote the knowledge and skills needed to interpret contextual sociocultural

meanings from language, to increase student cultural competence before a language learning abroad experience. The researcher believed that beforehand exposure to situations that are likely to occur in an abroad setting, with appropriate support for processing the experience, will lead to an increased level of cultural competence as these situations occur while abroad. The researcher admitted that simply letting these situations manifest themselves organically while the language learner is abroad is not automatically going to produce the gains in cultural competency that are ideal. Rather, it is the program director's responsibility to ensure that not only are students provided with pragmatic situations, but are also allowed to use tools like role play to enact them, are also provided with immediate feedback, and are given opportunities to reflect upon how the learner acted with regards to her level of cultural competency in each instance of contact with the "host culture." This reflection is key so that the learner can not only evaluate the degree of her cultural competence in the situation that has gone by, but also to better prepare for a potentially more culturally-competent response to a similar and more authentic and naturally-occurring situation in the future. Additionally, the researcher suggested continuing the pragmatics after the conclusion of the language-learning sojourn via social networking with the contacts that the learners developed while abroad. While Allport (1954, 1958) would likely be concerned that these pragmatic instructional activities do not occur naturally, thus potentially carrying with them a connotation of artificiality over authenticity, he did recognize the value in creating programs that include, by design, opportunities for members of one group to interact with members of another group. In this light, these pragmatic instructional activities suggested by Shively (2010) may be viewed as similar to the abroad goal-setting

activities that Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart (2010) detailed above. Additionally, the optimal conditions for prejudice reduction that include common, authentic goals in which members of both cultural groups are interested in achieving, as well as the intergroup cooperation needed to accomplish these goals, as recognized by Allport (1954, 1958), are also satisfied.

In contrast to these constructed experiences, Bodycott & Walker (2000) informed us about the dangers of letting things develop organically - sometimes they just don't. As mentioned in Shively (2010) and Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart (2010), often language learners in an abroad context simply do not take the initiative to foster meaningful relationships with the Other while abroad. Bodycott & Walker (2000) concluded that many times

the onus is often placed on students to adapt to the cultural context in which they are studying. However, we believe that such an emphasis increases the likelihood of ethnocentric views about cultures prevailing, at the expense of inter-cultural learning.

(p.92)

Through the structure of the program, what the researchers hoped is that despite the possibility of perceived artificiality of the nature of some of these initial intergroup contact encounters, and the subsequent encounters that result afterwards are not only more natural, but even more meaningful as time goes on. This aligns extremely well with Allport's (1954) optimal condition of the encounter between members of two different cultural groups as being authentic, and at the same time enjoying institutional support in the fostering of a mutually beneficial relationship.

In addition to the pragmatic learning activities that may be established for language learners in an abroad context to increase cultural competence, blogging is

another researched method in which this increase can be found. Elola & Oskoz (2008) found that language learners who blog about their L2 experience show measurable gains in inter-cultural competence whether they blog from home or from abroad, and, interestingly, these gains were similar in the way they were quantified. The differences between the two settings were seen in *how* the students went about resolving misunderstandings and developing understandings about the Other, as well as the types of knowledge sought while blogging. For example,

Study abroad students developed ways to understand Spanish culture by participating in the culture itself, whereas the at home students made use of their counterparts' experiences to resolve cultural misunderstandings. Furthermore, at home students were encouraged to find information not only from their blog partners but also from the Internet, journals, and books, developing skills that compensated for their lack of direct exposure of target culture.

(p.470)

Writing a blog allows for the learners to not only express the nature of the cultural interactions they are having, but also to communicate with an audience, allowing for a dialogue that allows the learner to better process these cultural interactions. The researchers in this study cite that students in an at-home context tended to gain more in knowledge *about* the Other while students in an abroad context tended to focus on solving misunderstandings about new aspects of the Other. As the primary goal here, as stated by the researcher, is intercultural competence, it is the study abroad student that cooperates directly with the Other to achieve it, closely aligning with Allport's (1954) optimal condition of intergroup cooperation, while the at-home student needs to rely on other sources to increase competence. While certainly both are valuable, the researchers' quote above presents the experience available to the at-home learner as a sort of "deficit"

set of experiences, in which the learner must do additional research and learning to compensate for what they are missing for not being abroad. This value statement seems to indicate that the abroad experience offers to the learner the potentiality of being a much more enriching experience insofar as increasing one's cultural competence during this time.

Kinging (2011) cited a number of activities in addition to pragmatic learning activities and blogging that a language curriculum can integrate prior to a sojourn abroad to foster experiences that increase the learner's inter-cultural competence. These experiences include digital video projects, e-journals, service learning and internships, computer-mediated communication through social media, and more. The researcher concluded that it is not only through study abroad itself that the language learner increases her cultural competence. Additionally, inter-cultural competence during study abroad is further enhanced through these other experiences.

Deardorff (2006, 2009, 2011) explained the attitude of openness as a component for effectively being able to assess an individual's intercultural competence. The researcher concluded that openness is not a necessary nor a sufficient characteristic for intercultural competence, but rather one of a myriad of possible manifestations of intercultural competence. Interestingly, the researcher did not investigate to understand how much intercultural competency pushes back on individual openness to the Other, which would provide a more thorough understanding of each.

Multicultural competence, or intercultural competence, is complex and may be something that is never fully achieved, but rather achieved to varying degrees by any given individual. A language study abroad puts the individual in a unique position in

which some degree of competence is normally needed before beginning the sojourn, but also to where the level of intercultural competence potentially gained while on the study abroad is tremendous. Distinct from an individual's openness to a linguistic and cultural Other, intercultural competence can nevertheless inform and help to understand more completely the evolution of one's openness to the Other during this same experience abroad.

Limitations of existing literature - implications for research

An analysis of the literature reveals gaps of the knowledge that would be useful in understanding individuals' openness to the Other manifested during a language study abroad. I address these gaps below, and also to demonstrate how this research would contribute to the existing body of knowledge by filling these gaps.

One major limitation of the existing research is gap that exists because of the conflation of the idea of "intercultural competence" with openness to the Other. Many researchers write about the potential increases in intercultural competence during a study abroad, without a specific focus on how much intercultural competence affects openness to the Other and vice versa (Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Kinginger, 2011). Understanding an increased intercultural competence in language study abroad students and its interaction with reduced prejudice/openness to the Other would be enhanced, given more complexity and nuance, by including analysis based on Allport's (1954) optimal conditions of students' perceived social equality among members of both cultural groups, the nature of common, authentic goals in which members of both cultures are invested in achieving, the degree of the community and/or institutional support in achieving the aforementioned goals. Although this understanding would be further improved by examining the degree

of intergroup cooperation between members of the two cultural groups as they ideally foster a mutually beneficial relationship, it still does not answer the question about the evolution of students' openness to the Other during a language study abroad.

Secondly, there is little in the existing literature that links openness to the Other with the specific issues surrounding a language immersion study abroad, rather than a general study abroad that does not include a language learning component. Although the existence of language study is present in the above studies, there is really nothing that assesses how the learning of a language affects this change in openness to the Other during a language study abroad. It is entirely plausible that equal status relationships are easier to foster when there is a common language between members of two different cultural groups. It may even be seen as a sign of good faith for members of one cultural group to show a genuine interest in learning the native language of the members of the other cultural group. This sign may consequently symbolize the willingness to participate in intergroup cooperation in achieving other authentic goals, aligning perfectly with Allport's (1954) fourth optimal condition for prejudice reduction.

Allport's (1946, 1954, 1958, 1964) research centered around cultural groups that are different racially, ethnically, or religiously - but rarely are they different linguistically with regards to home language. When Allport did mention language, it generally revolved around the language that members of one group use to refer to members of another cultural group, or about that group as a whole. Language is also mentioned by Allport with regards to differences in dialect of the English language between members of two different cultural groups (see Allport, 1954, p.178-187 & p.304-307), a difference which often signals differences in social status. In no case were Allport's optimal

conditions of prejudice reduction measured within the context of one group seeking to learn as an L2 the primary language, or L1 of another group. Similarly, the existing research on attainment of cultural competence does not focus specifically on how that attainment is directly affected by the language acquisition experience.

Similarly, Gordon Allport's (1954) *intergroup contact theory* had never been applied to the context of university students participating in a language immersion study abroad program. All of his research and data collection on this topic took place in the United States between different cultural groups that lived in much closer proximity to each other than did my participants with the members of the host culture to which I refer throughout this study. His research also took place at a time in which intercultural prejudice and discrimination in the United States were far more prevalent than the general initial levels of prejudice and discrimination commonly found in university language immersion study abroad students. Nevertheless, I believe that Allport's (1954) principles of prejudice can be applied universally, no matter the context or how societal norms have changed or will continue to change. Allport reminded his readers of Ackerman and Johoda's (1950) definition of prejudice as "a pattern of hostility in interpersonal relations which is directed against an entire group, or against its individual members; it fulfills a specific irrational function for its bearer" (p.4), but also that sometimes, "prejudice is a matter of blind conformity with prevailing folkways" (Allport, 1954, p.12). I believe that situating prejudice in this way, and juxtaposing prejudice with openness to the linguistic and cultural Other is appropriate when aligning Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction according to *intergroup contact theory*.

In light of these existing gaps in the literature, applying Allport's (1954) theory of prejudice reduction provides the opportunity to understand "intercultural competence" as distinct from openness to the Other and to examine how the specifics of a language immersion study abroad are aligned to his theory of prejudice reduction as measured by students' evolution in their openness to the Other. This understanding has the potential to expand our understanding of how Allport's theory works with regards to the specific dynamic of two groups with differences in native language in which one group attempts to bridge the language gap through a language study abroad.

A third gap in the existing literature is that any measure of an individual's openness is treated essentially as a static entity, with the possibility of being explained, but without the possibility of evolving, or exhibiting change. Specifically, in dealing with study abroad, any mention of students' levels of openness to the Other are taken into consideration pre-departure, and the initial level of openness is used to explain or justify a particular student's attitudes or reactions to cultural experiences while abroad. There is no investigation regarding the specific, individual evolution of a student's openness to the Other while on a language study abroad. Again, since the literature does address the evolution of intercultural awareness, this points to the existing literature conflating the ideas of intercultural awareness and openness to the Other. The existing literature would be well served by research that could help gain insight as to whether or not a language study abroad can help one's openness to the Other to evolve - and, if so, how? Additionally, to what degree is this possible shift in one's openness to the Other due to the language study abroad, or are there other determining factors in this shift?

A natural outcome, as evidenced by a number of researchers previously referenced (Allen, 2010; Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; DeKeyser, 2010; Donovan & MacIntyre, 2005; Firth & Wagner, 2007; Hernández, 2010; Ingram, 2005; Isabelli-García, 2006; Kinginger, 2008; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2010; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005; Magnan & Back, 2007; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; McMeekin, 2006; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004; Twombly, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998), focuses on language gain during a study abroad as an essential component to the success of the abroad program. This research also realizes the importance of this outcome, but more importantly seeks to gain insight into how the elements of the LSA interact with and influence Allport's optimal conditions and the corresponding level of openness to the Other.

It is here that I return to my original questions:

1) To what degree can / does a language study abroad satisfy Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for intergroup contact theory?

2) What other experiences reported by students in a language study abroad experience have implications for their openness to the Other?

3) To what extent and in what ways do elements specific to the language study abroad experience interact with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions and other reported experiences?

This research strives to answer these questions.

Chapter II - Methodology

Qualitative Analysis Rationale / Use of Case Study

Striking, in the existent literature, is the scant amount of qualitative / ethnographic research studies available with regards not only to elements of a language study abroad, but also with regards to openness to the Other. Certainly no one piece of existing literature that I have encountered addresses both of these issues at the same time, using either qualitative or quantitative methodologies. Research that centers around gains made during language study abroad - whether linguistic gains or gains in intercultural competence - are measured quantitatively or via students self-reporting data. Nevertheless, researchers like Hernández (2010) acknowledged the need for qualitative research in examining study abroad to help understand the elements explaining functions of a language study abroad, like increased L2 proficiency, in a way that quantitative research may gloss over. Allport (1954) also acknowledged a need for qualitative research to best understand the process of prejudice, and therefore openness to the Other, stating that "maximum understanding of the problem can be gained only by knowing the historical context of each single case" (p.259). It is thus that Allport's optimal characteristics, necessary for the benefits of his intergroup contact theory are best explained. These characteristics, while perhaps applicable universally, are best interpreted personally. Qualitative research, particularly through the analysis of data in a case study by case study basis, gives us the best opportunity to understand these interpretations.

I believe that the most useful way that data on this topic needs be presented to the audience is in the form of a case study. The goal of a case study, as Mitchell (1984)

described, it to provide "telling" cases instead of "typical" cases in which "the particular circumstances surrounding a case serve to make previously obscure theoretical relationships suddenly more apparent" (p.239). Erickson (1986) similarly described that this type of research is interested in focusing more on "particularizability, rather than generalizability" (p.130). Because my study does not look for cause-and-effect variables, but rather details portraits that the reader can look at and transfer their findings to other contexts, presenting the data in the form of case studies is a much more powerful tool to show how general principles derived from Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction manifest themselves in the given set of particular circumstances experienced in a language study abroad.

Stake (1995) emphasized that the researcher in a case study seeks to understand the behavior of each participant, as well as the issues and contexts specific to each particular case. Coding the data collected, reflecting, and triangulating all while maintaining a sense of skepticism toward first impressions and simple meanings are all important in making the data tell a meaningful story in which this data can "correspond" to other cases and other situations.

Aside from providing an opportunity to understand interpretations of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for the benefits of intergroup contact theory, research conducted qualitatively via case study will help inform understanding of how people of various backgrounds and various socializations can come to make sense of a language study abroad and what effect that sojourn has on their openness to the Other. The data collected needs to be interpreted carefully, with the understanding that with qualitative research, transferability of ideas gained is the goal rather than the generalizability of these

ideas to larger populations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Can similarities be seen between any of the participants in the qualitative aspect of the study and future study abroad participants? If so, to what degree? Is it possible that due to the nature of the study's participants, or even due to the number of participants, that this transferability does not readily exist? It is also possible that, although any findings are case specific, recommendations for program design might flow from the analysis of data through case study. In addition, I positioned the language study abroad as a case itself, through doing cross-case analysis of each participant to provide nuanced insight into the nature of this type of language study.

One final point is to be made regarding the nature of presenting data via case studies. Corbin & Strauss (2008) emphasized the importance of making sure research participants have their voices heard. It is more than an important trait in the presentation of a case study, it is the research participants' right to have their voices heard. It is because of this the reader will notice frequent inclusion of quotations, both long and short, throughout the presentation of the case studies. These quotations also show how the participants frequently moved beyond the topic specifically mentioned in the original prompt, thus allowing the voice of the participants to have ascendance. While I believe that I have ethically presented the participants' thoughts and insights, I do want to provide as much of a glimpse as possible to the reader as to what it was like to be present in each of my interviews with my participants. I believe that presenting my data in this way best honors the spirit in which my participants so generously offered me their thoughts on their study abroad experience.

Positionality and Subjectivities

Many authorities on qualitative research have emphasized the importance of the qualitative researcher making clear any subjectivities that might exist in collecting and analyzing data by firmly expressing whatever positionality he or she may have based on any relevant socialization factors (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mitchell, 1984, Stake, 1995). It is important for me, as a qualitative researcher, to do this in an effort to bring to light any factors that might influence my ability to conduct this research. In this section of my study, I attempt to do this in order to make perfectly clear what qualities about me may have affected my interpretation of the data I have collected in this study.

Aside from a graduate student completing this study to fulfill requirements of my dissertation, I am also a full-time Spanish educator in a public high school. As such, I had to take advantage of conducting my research in a time frame that my full-time employment responsibilities would allow. Despite having previous experiences in Spain, I did my best to let my participants come to realizations themselves, and never told them how I thought they “should do things.” Our interviews were conducted entirely in English, my native language as well as that of all six of my participants. Because of the contacts that I have established in my personal and professional life, as well as because of the contact that I have with the Spanish language and culture on an almost daily basis, I would self-diagnose my openness to the Other as “extremely open,” especially with regards to the language and culture that I was investigating in my data collection. Learning about the Spanish language and about the many cultures connected to that language and its various dialects is a passion of mine that has influenced not only the direction of the career I have decided to pursue, but also many of the life choices that I

have made for myself and my family. This personal disposition directed my interest in this research topic and may have contributed to my thoughts in interpreting how my participants' interview data revealed their level of openness.

Research Context and Participants

I drew my participants from a pool of university students participating in a summer abroad program at a private, midsized Midwestern University. Participating students spent the entire month of July 2013 in Madrid, taking either one or two classes while there. Participants were also required to spend weekends in excursions throughout Spain, to places like Toledo, Granada, Segovia, and Asturias. Participants had some flexibility afforded them as far as which classes they would be most interested in taking while in Spain, but also whether or not they would like to live with a Spanish family in a homestay context or in a student residence, and, if in a homestay, whether they would prefer to live alone with the family or spend their homestay with a roommate from their university in the United States.

The selection of my participants constitutes a sample of convenience (Babbie, 2001) based on who was signed up for the trip abroad and who was willing and agreed to participate. Their suitability for the study was their participation in the study abroad trip itself. Of the 24 students panned to study abroad, 19 of them were female and 5 of them were male. One of the 24 students identified herself as a native Spanish-speaker. One of the 24 students identified herself as African American. My six participants communicated their desire to take part in my research between April, 2013 and June, 2013, and despite some initial difficulties of schedule coordination, we were all able to meet face-to-face as researcher and participants on July 1st, 2013 in Madrid. As it turned

out, of my six participants, four were female and two were male. All six identified as Caucasian and as native English-speakers. My participants ranged in age from 19-years old to 21-years old at the time of the research.

Participant Profiles

IRB approval was sought and obtained before I contacted any of my potential participants and before any data of any kind was collected. Corbin and Strauss (2008) emphasized the importance and ethics of protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of research participants, and the measures were taken by me to protect my research participants. All of my research participants voluntarily signed consent forms informing them of the purpose, procedures, duration, risks, benefits, confidentiality maintenance, my contact information as well as that of my academic adviser and my university's office of research compliance, as well as the reassurance that they could withdraw from my research at any time without penalty. I have changed their names, biographical information, and some otherwise potentially telling peripheral personal characteristics that could make their true identities more easily discoverable.

The order in which I describe each of my participants in these profiles corresponds to the order in which I present their stories in my research. All of the information presented below was obtained through a short biographical portion of the first interview, before talking about how any of them were processing their actual experiences. A demographic chart for easier reference can be found at the end of this study (Appendix D).

"Isabel."

At the time of the research, “Isabel” was a rising junior at the Midwestern university where the study was based, majoring in International Business and thinking about a minor in Spanish. “Isabel” was from a major Midwestern metropolitan area, but from a state different than the one where her university is located, and at the time of the research was 20 years old. During the study abroad, “Isabel” was taking two courses at the Complutense - Peoples and Cultures of Spain and Advanced Composition. "Isabel" elected to live in a homestay environment with an English-speaking roommate from her university.

“Marló.”

At the time of the research, “Marló” was a 19-year old rising sophomore at the Midwestern university, and an Electrical Engineering major. He was not planning to earn either a major or minor in Spanish. “Marló” was from a suburb of a major metropolitan area in an adjacent state to the one where he attends university. While in Spain, “Marló” was taking Peoples and Cultures of Spain and Advanced Composition. "Marló" also elected to participate in a homestay environment, with "Carlos," another of my participants who I will detail later.

“Violeta.”

At the time of my research, “Violeta” was 19-years old and was a rising sophomore at her university. She was also a Speech Pathology major and was thinking of minoring in Spanish and/or Business. “Violeta” was from a smaller city 90 miles away from the city in which she attended university. While studying abroad in Spain, “Violeta” was taking People and Cultures of Spain and also Advanced Composition.

“Violeta” elected to participate in a homestay and had a roommate from her university who was not a participant in my study.

“Gabi.”

At the time of the research, “Gabi” was 19-years old and a rising sophomore at her university. She was a Speech Pathology major, and was thinking of adding Spanish to make it a double-major. She was from a suburb of a major metropolitan area in a state adjacent to the one where she attended university. She took two courses while in Spain: Peoples and Cultures of Spain as well as Advanced Composition. “Gabi” also participated in a homestay, but she did not have a roommate with her during this time.

“Mariela.”

At the time of my research, “Mariela” was 20-years old and was a rising junior at her university. She was an Exercise Physiology major, which “Mariela” explained to me is pre-Physical Therapy. She was also an official Spanish minor. “Mariela” was from a suburb of a major metropolitan area in a state adjacent to the one in which she attended university. While studying abroad in Spain, “Mariela” was taking Peoples and Cultures of Spain as well as Spanish for the Medical Professions. “Mariela,” like “Gabi,” also participated in a homestay without a roommate from her university.

“Carlos.”

At the time of the research “Carlos” was a 21-year old rising senior, completing his undergraduate work majoring Secondary Education and Spanish with plans on becoming a high school Spanish teacher. “Carlos” was from a suburb of a major metropolitan area in a state adjacent to the one in which he attended university. While in

Spain, “Carlos” was taking two Spanish classes - Advanced Composition and Spoken Spanish.

It will be important to note that from here on, I will be dropping the “quotation marks” around the pseudonyms of my participants, and will simply refer to each by that name without any accompanying punctuation.

Data Collection, Analysis and Coding

Data Collection.

According to Erickson (1986), interpretive fieldwork research requires that the researcher study intensively, with long term participation in the setting, careful recording using a variety of methods, and analytic reflection of recorded data. It is with these requirements in mind that I collected data while abroad with the language study abroad program in Spain. The students were required to be in Spain for four weeks during the summer of 2013. I was in Spain this entire time and saw each of my participants no fewer than three times while there.

Because I felt my findings would best be explained via case study, my primary data sources consisted of three interviews conducted with each of my participants and the analysis of these interviews. I digitally recorded all the audio from each of these interviews and then transcribed them before the subsequent interviews.

I also enriched my findings with a number of secondary data sources. I identify these data sources as "secondary" because I used them solely to inform my interview questions of each individual research participant. I consider each of my secondary sources as such since my participants never elaborated their experiences in these sources nearly as much as they did in their interviews, nor was the expectation ever that they

would. Among these secondary sources was something I called a "cultural encounter journal," which was an electronic document that each participant shared with me. In this cultural encounter journal, my participants were asked to reflect at least once a week upon cultural encounters they had revolving around any of 21 items from Berry's (1989) Acculturation Index Items (Appendix B). It is important to note that I used these items as prompts only, in order to gain insights into which cultural issues and differences were most striking to each of my participants. As issues arose, I could better explore how each participant reacted by exploring these in our interviews together. Most relevant to my research were the participants' reactions and how they had or had not been able to work through the cultural encounters experienced during their time abroad. In any case, all of the issues that my six participants identified at some point in their experiences abroad as being notable cultural differences between their culture and the host culture are listed and attributed to each participant in Appendix F.

I also used Miville's (1999) Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) as a secondary data source to guide my interview questions (Appendix A). M-GUDS is a 45-item questionnaire with items that are rated on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* (1) to *strongly disagree* (6). This scale ultimately measures a person's position on *Universal-Diverse orientation*, which establishes an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both the differences and similarities that exist among groups of people. This scale consists of items that gather information about the participant's understandings of his or her own characteristics and how they are similar and/or different from those of other people (Relativistic Appreciation), the diversity of contact that he or she currently has, and his or her sense of connectedness with people from different

countries and/or ethnic groups. I administered the M-GUDS twice - once before the first interview and again before the third. I used the information from the M-GUDS to inform the interview questions I asked each participant in those interviews. I also scored each M-GUDS to gain a holistic sense "within case" of how participants perceived their own openness to have evolved during their time abroad. I chose to use the M-GUDS as I did instead of as Miville originally intended because I believe the value was adding complexity to my participant interviews, and not in determining a numerical score in the applicable areas of investigation. Though I am not using the M-GUDS directly, Fuertes, Miville, Mohr, Sedlacek & Gretchen (2000) tested the M-GUDS for reliability and found evidence that the scores are reliable for measuring Relativistic Appreciation, Diversity of Contact and Sense of Connection in individuals. It is extremely important to note that I never used the M-GUDS as a quantitative measure of anything, but rather used the information provided to me on this questionnaire to personalize the interview questions I had for each of my participants as well as to gain a holistic sense of any within-case changes in attitudes or scores. The variations weren't significant and I saw the interviews as providing more nuanced insight into my participants' levels of evolving openness. It was always from the interviews that I drew my data.

I also kept a field notes journal to further make note of topics or issues that I felt important to investigate further either later in that same interview or in the next one. I later would make memos from my field notes in much the same manner as Corbin and Strauss suggested:

...write observational notes documenting each incident, including as much description as possible, then write memos from the observational notes - incident by incident - in a manner similar to interview data, always keeping in mind there is perhaps some conscious and unconscious analysis that

occurs when gathering data.

(p.124)

Each of the first two interviews I conducted with my participants, while abroad, happened face-to-face in or around one of the cafeterias in the Filosofía y Letras A building at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain. This was a centrally-located, public area where my participants and I could also find a quiet corner in which to conduct our interviews. The first interview I conducted with my participants occurred after they had been in Spain for about one week. These interviews averaged about 60 minutes in length and began with my participants providing me with general demographic data. The locus of the interview, though, was focused on their answering questions derived from the cultural encounter journal entries, various learning activities they experienced in the first few days of their experience, as well as any other topics of interest gleaned from their M-GUDS responses. Probing questions were also asked to understand how their experiences aligned with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction. The goal of this interview was to elicit participants' reactions to how they perceived their experiences abroad relative to what they understood the experiences of other program participants to be, or how their own experiences matched up with expectations they had of the language immersion study abroad. Additionally, the nuances and intricacies of how each individual experienced his or her own study abroad informed how each person's openness to the cultural and linguistic Other potentially changed during this time. While coding my data, I was always cognizant of how specific language study abroad activities, motivations, goals, cultural encounters, etc. that are directly related to language learning map on to these optimal conditions. Examples of interview questions are found in Appendix C.

The second interview I conducted with my participants was also in Madrid, within the last week of my participants' language study abroad program. These interviews also averaged about 60 minutes in length. The questions were developed from the transcriptions and analysis of the data from the first set of interviews, additional topics mentioned in their cultural encounter journals, as well as unpacking of previously unresolved issues from before. For example, Violeta had mentioned to me in her first interview that she wasn't sure "if he's alive or if she was divorced, or what is going on." It seemed appropriate to ask Violeta in our second interview "Did you ever find out what happened to your señora's husband?," a topic which sparked a long conversation that revealed an important turn of events in the nature of Violeta's relationship with her señora.

My third interview with my participants was conducted about three months after we had all arrived back in the United States, in the fall of 2013. Thus, each participant had time to reflect upon the abroad experience after having reacclimated to the life they were used to before their language study abroad. This lag in time was purposeful in that I wanted to provide each participant ample time to reflect upon her or his own experience abroad with a number of people and in a number of different settings, including academic, familial and social. I offered to meet my participants individually at their university to conduct the final interview, but five of the six of my participants preferred to complete their final interview over the phone. These lasted an average of 45 minutes. The one interview that I conducted face-to-face lasted over an hour. The questions for this interview were derived from the transcriptions of the second interviews, as well as how the information from both interviews interacted to detail how certain aspects of the

study abroad experience had affected my participants, as well as the evolution of relationships that had formed during the sojourn. I also asked my participants to reflect one last time on issues they highlighted throughout their cultural encounter journals, especially in how they had come to understand these issues now that they were removed from them for three months.

Analysis and Coding.

As my primary data sources consisted of my participant interviews, I used constant comparative analysis. Glaser (1965) described constant comparative analysis as a four-stage process: "(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory" (p. 439). This is to say that I used the data collected from my initial interviews, as well as the field notes, memos, and topics gathered from secondary data sources to inform the line of questioning of subsequent interviews. Thus, while I had a general line of questioning going into my first interview with each participant, by end of my interviews, each line of questioning was as unique and varied as were my participants' language study abroad experiences.

When all of the data was collected, and before continuing toward writing my findings in this dissertation, I found it important to member check with my participants to make sure that I understood and was reporting accurately what my participants were trying to convey in their interviews and my interpretation of them. Many times, this came in the form of me asking for clarification during the interviews. But also, after doing my analysis in which I described what I had seen in each of my participants while abroad, I wrote a profile of each. Each participant then had the opportunity to read his or

her own profile and give me feedback. This profile was a distilled and summarized version of the data collected, allowing each participant the opportunity to challenge the data, but not necessarily my interpretation of that data. Ultimately, all of my six participants felt my profiles were accurate representations and chose not to suggest any changes to these profiles.

Coding of data has been inductively-developed, using students' descriptions of events, encounters, and experiences as units of analysis. Although my participants consisted of two males and four females, I did not necessarily focus the examination of my data from a gendered perspective. Social class differences of my participants were never explored or taken into consideration as no major differences were revealed by any of my participants relative to any of the others on the sojourn.

A description of how I did code my data is as follows: The M-GUDS (Miville et al, 1999) provided insight to the interest level of my participants revolving around hypothetical multicultural or intercultural activities, many of which were likely to arise while on a language study abroad (specific examples can be found in Appendix A). Aside from providing insight into which of these activities my participants indicated they would be most interested in ideally, their answers on the M-GUDS also served in the formation of diverging lines of questioning while in the abroad setting in an effort to understand how many, if any, of these previously hypothetical activities had come to fruition. For example, Marló indicated on the M-GUDS that he "agreed" with item number 41, namely, "It's often hard to find things in common with people from another generation." His affirmative response, indicated to me that I would need to explore not only his relationships with members of the host culture of "another generation," like his

host "parents," but also how savvy he was in seeking relationships with members of the host culture of the "same" generation. As detailed below, the attitude that he indicated on this question of the M-GUDS was not only pervasive throughout his study abroad experience, but also played a major part in determining Marló's overall satisfaction with the program itself.

The cultural encounter journals were coded by which items seemed most "strange" to my participants most frequently, as well as whether or not there were any outliers across cultural encounter journals which would require further exploration on my part with any individual study participant. For example, because five out of my six participants expressed that the "pace of life" in Spain felt "strange" to them, I understood that in my first interview with my participants, I would have to understand the importance of this cultural difference to my participants, and ask a number of probing questions to truly explore the roots of these feelings. Additionally, for the one participant who did not overtly express a sense of "strangeness" with the pace of life in Spain, I needed to ask questions to better understand her relative comfort level with it. Consequently, only one of my participants, Mariela, indicated "religion" as a cultural difference that she found strange. Asking her to delve further into which aspects of religion in the host culture versus religion in her home culture were perceived by her as strange would help me gain an insight into the evolution of her openness to the Other. Finally, there were some aspects of the culture which were strange for completely opposite reasons, depending on the research participant. For example, three of my participants indicated that "communication styles" seemed strange in the host culture, but one perceived these styles negatively, one positively, and the third only noticed linguistic

differences in communication styles initially. For a complete list of cultural encounter journal topics addressed by each of my participants, consult Appendix F.

After the interviews started, coding was ongoing at three levels, with a constant search for relationships among these three levels. The first level of coding was within-case analysis, highlighting specifically participants' experiences and issues that centered around the themes of Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*, openness to the Other, and uniqueness of those experiences and issues due to language study abroad. The second level of coding was cross-case analysis of those same themes and issues.

The third level of coding was a holistic cross-case and cross-theme analysis with an identification specifically of findings that may have also contributed to participants' evolution or de-evolution of openness to a linguistic and cultural Other. These emerging themes include: (1) participant affirmation of or reestablishment of goals due to how they process adversity, (2) by-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams," and (3) participant initiative versus passivity.

Chapter III - Findings

Roadmap of the Findings

Presentation of my data is done via case studies around my research questions and issues that arose during the interviews with my participants. Essentially, I begin with 1) an entry vignette, I move to 2) participant responses organized around my research questions, integrated with 3) participant responses around issues specific to a summer language study abroad program and their relationships to Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction.

It is in this chapter that I detail the findings of my research. I will do this by first answering my three research questions, detailed below in the findings, connecting my findings to Allport's (1954) research on *intergroup contact theory* to the specifics and nuances of a summer language study abroad as well as to the interaction of the two. My research questions will be answered within-case, cross-case, and cross-theme analysis in the case studies. The themes that will be explored align with Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction, namely: 1) perceived social equality; 2) authentic goals; 3) community support, and 4) intergroup cooperation.

Emerging from these findings will be issues that add to the current understanding of *intergroup contact theory* in this context, supported by data from the interviews I conducted in my six case studies. It is from these issues that I answer my second research question, again, detailed below. These issues include: 1) the presence of the university cohort and how it can affect openness to the Other; 2) time-limited "living" in a foreign country; 3) ease of the ability to communicate with the "home culture;" 4) artificiality of program design re: weekend excursions; 5) participant processing of

linguistic and/or cultural conflict, or "adversity," and; 6) importance placed upon casual or superficial intergroup contact.

The interaction of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions and the six elements specific to this particular SLA program provide the answers to my third research question by explaining three examples of participant actions that ultimately contribute to each individual's evolution, or de-evolution, of her openness to the linguistic and cultural Other. Importantly, how each of these actions are manifested are entirely due to the agency displayed by each program participant. These actions include: 1) goal re-embacement or redefining; 2) by-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams," and; 3) initiative vs. passivity. A visual organization of these findings can be found in Appendix G.

A Return to My Original Research Questions

The findings of this study generally support Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory* within the context of a summer language study abroad. The degree to which each member's study abroad experience aligns with Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction also gives insight to the evolution to that individual's openness to the linguistic and cultural Other.

A major contribution of this study in the pursuit of understanding *intergroup contact theory* is its situation in a language immersion study abroad context. While in a language study abroad, the program participant is not only a cultural minority, but a linguistic minority as well. How language development, intercultural competency and openness to the Other co-occur within the context of a language study abroad is an interesting and unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge regarding

intergroup contact theory. The presentation of this research via six case studies provides insights into the nuances of a study abroad program and some individuals that participate in them, and help to understand some of the complexities of *intergroup contact theory* and openness to the Other.

In an effort to best understand my participants' summer language study abroad experiences, I needed to align what each participant told me about her or his individual language study abroad in Spain with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction. My first research question: 1) "To what degree can / does a language study abroad satisfy Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for *intergroup contact theory*?" is addressed specifically in the presentation of case studies of my participants. My second research question: 2) "What other experiences reported by participants in a language study abroad have implications for their openness to the Other?," and my third research question: 3) "To what extent and in what ways do elements specific to the language study abroad and other reported experiences interact with Allport's optimal conditions," will be answered holistically after the presentation of the six case studies.

RQ1: To what degree can / does a language study abroad satisfy Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for intergroup contact theory?

Isabel - "I just glare at them."

Isabel was the first of my participants to indicate interest in taking part in my research. At the time of the research, Isabel was a rising junior at the Midwestern university, studying International Business and thinking about a minor in Spanish. Isabel was from a major Midwestern metropolitan, urban area, but from a state different than the one where her university is located. This seemingly implied that she had previous contact, at least to some degree, with races different than her own and with people whose

cultural practices may be different than her own. At the time of the research, Isabel was 20 1/2 years old. She really made it a point to include the 1/2 year when mentioning her age. During the study abroad, Isabel was taking two courses at the Complutense - People and Cultures of Spain and Advanced Composition. During her homestay, Isabel lived with a señora, and any number of her señora's four children and seven grandchildren. She also had a female roommate from her university that she had really only gotten to know well as the homestay began. When I spoke to Isabel for the first time about my research methodologies at an academic orientation in Madrid, she was one of the two participants that was especially concerned that any interviews may be happening in Spanish, and was visibly relieved when I told her that we could conduct the interviews in Spanish if she so desired, but I was planning on conducting the interviews in English, as English was each of the participant's native language. This indicated to me a possible lack of confidence in speaking Spanish, a feeling that was confirmed as time in Spain went on.

One of the questions I used to "break the ice" with my participants the first time I interviewed them, after they had been studying in Spain for about a week, was something like, "so what do you make of these Spaniards that you're getting to know while here?" I thought I would be able to, first, understand with whom my participants had been interacting, while at the same time, gaining some sort of sense of the nature of those interactions. Isabel was eager to answer this question, and in a way that was not very flattering to the host culture:

[Spaniards] are very open with their feelings, they're very open with their sentiments... They're very slow - like they just do things on their own time, and they're late a lot, which is just accepted here. They're loud too. They could just be talking to each other and it's like they're screaming at each other.

There are a lot of public displays of affection. Or, if someone's really mad at you, they're going to tell you - they're going to yell at you. In America, I feel like people are just trying to be nice. They'll talk around the subject instead of just getting right to it. Where I feel like in Spain they're more clear, they're more direct as to what they want to say. I'm definitely not used to [people] being so direct.

The sense that Isabel was projecting an attitude of her cultural superiority was pervasive throughout my interviews with her, and that position emerged and grew throughout my interviews with her.

Isabel's sense of social equality

Allport's (1954) first optimal condition for prejudice reduction requires a perceived equality of social status among members of each cultural group - without either group lacking social status in general. In Isabel's opinion, the Spaniards certainly did not lack social status within the host culture environment, but she felt she and her cohort group of American study abroad students did lack an equal social status on various occasions. For Isabel, the manifestation of this equal social status would have been evident in the host culture "welcoming" her to her new environment. Isabel expressed that she felt her host family did not welcome her, and made her feel as if she was not a social equal, which she interpreted as a lack of respect and value. Isabel told me, "[my señora] and her family haven't been really inviting. I don't feel like I'm really close with anyone. I think it mainly revolves around this being a job [hosting students] that she really likes to do." Isabel felt her señora was "cold," and mentioned instances in which her señora was critical of her because she had left lights on in rooms she was using, had spilled toothpaste on the bathroom counter and hadn't cleaned it up, had taken a shower for much longer than "allowed," and had left shades open during the day while she was in

class. Isabel summed it up by saying she felt her señora "is constantly criticizing us because of how [my roommate and I] are living and she's always telling us what we're doing wrong."

Isabel's lack of initial understanding of what was expected of a houseguest in her homestay regarding bathroom cleanliness, use of electricity with lights, and consideration of keeping sunlit windows blocked to preserve the color of paint on the walls were all instances that negatively affected her relationship with her señora in her homestay. Nor did she attempt to use communication skills to better understand this disconnect. When talking about closing the blinds during the day, Isabel told me, "she thinks I'm going to mess up the paint. So, I don't know what that even means. It's like I do things she doesn't like and now she checks up on me whenever I'm in my room to make sure that I only have one light on."

Not only did Isabel not even try to find out "what that even means," regarding "mess[ing] up the paint," Isabel further diminished the expectations her señora had of her houseguests to be nothing more than the compulsions of a member of the host culture. Even though, regarding these issues, Isabel said she "just sort of let[s] it go," they likely affected Isabel's overall perception that Spaniards think of Americans as "careless in the sense that we take a lot of the things we have for granted. That we come [to Spain] for vacation. That we just come here for a new place to get drunk and eat different foods."

Even when the señora's adult children came to visit for dinner, Isabel said, "[they] haven't been really interested in talking to us. They just kind of brush us aside." There were rare occasions where Isabel felt "welcomed," for example there was one family dinner where one of the señora's sons "was really interested in me and [my roommate],

and he asked us where we're from in America and how we're adjusting." Unfortunately, this was an exception to the rule in Isabel's experience, and all other evidence points to Isabel feeling very socially unequal within the context of her homestay. It was interesting to me that because Isabel felt she wasn't being treated like novelty, and because her señora would tell Isabel to do things that usually are more in the forefront of people's minds in the host culture, like turning off lights when leaving the room, Isabel interpreted this as her being looked down upon. These sentiments connect with Twombly's (1995) research in which people from the United States enjoyed a celebrity status while participating in a study abroad. That Isabel did not enjoy the status that she was expecting to enjoy at the beginning of her study abroad seemingly contributed to the overall disappointment in the nature of her interactions with the Other.

While in public, Isabel felt the members of the host culture showed no additional warmth in welcoming her to their country. Isabel took the metro each day to class from her homestay, and she told me of the general "rudeness" of the Spaniards each day toward her. "If you're in their way, they'll just push you out of the way. If they don't like what you're doing, you can tell they're talking about you, even if you can't really understand what they're saying." I asked Isabel how she knew they were talking about her in these instances, and she said she heard "*americanas*" a number of times. When I asked her how she handled hearing this, she replied, "I just glare at them. I'm not an idiot."

Isabel's senses of social inequality with Spaniards was not only manifested in her comments regarding how she did not feel as welcomed as she felt she should have been by members of the host culture. Many times, Isabel's statements would imply a judgment

that indicated a superiority of her own cultural norms to those of the host culture. For example, when making comparisons between taking classes in the United States and in Spain, Isabel told me, "one of the things I love about my university is how clean it is. It's just interesting to me that students here put stickers all over their school. And I definitely didn't expect all the graffiti and trash. They don't take as much pride in it as American students do." When comparing a "typical" day for someone living in Spain with someone living in the United States, Isabel concluded "I feel like Americans really try to stick to being as productive as possible each day. I think maybe [Spaniards] miss out on a little bit of the productivity." Isabel also made a comparison that something Spaniards would like if they came to visit the United States by saying "I think Spaniards would like Americans' friendliness. Like, if they sat in classes with Americans like I sat with Spaniards, that Americans would be friendlier and more willing to listen to them and get to know them and be more willing to start a conversation." In each of the aforementioned instances, not only was Isabel contrasting Spanish culture and that of the United States, but she was doing so in a way that passed judgment as Spanish culture being inferior to her own.

Isabel's sense of superiority extended past the cultural generalities from which she made comparisons. She expressed her feelings of linguistic superiority with the relatively few interactions she *did* have with members of the host culture in Spanish, in the sense that the host culture rightly feels "appreciative" of her efforts to speak their language. Referring to the interactions themselves she had with members of the host culture, Isabel expressed

I think the people we meet, for instance playing soccer one night instead of going out and getting drunk... the people we meet those nights are really

appreciative of what we have to say and everything. And sometimes people will just speak English to us, but if they see we're trying and doing the best we can, they appreciate that.

Again, in our second interview, when referring to her willingness to try speaking Spanish more than she had in the beginning of her study abroad, Isabel said "I think I'm more willing to be able to make mistakes and I'm less embarrassed about my mistakes because I think that people are more appreciative of me speaking Spanish."

A number of researchers have written about the “decolonization” of American study abroad students’ viewpoints regarding cultural norms between home culture and host culture. Sharma, Rahadtzad & Phillion (2013) called for reflexive dialogue of American study abroad participants that calls into question self/other, superior/inferior binaries that are likely to manifest during an experience abroad. Breen (2012) wrote about the ‘privileged migration’ that is the American student’s study abroad experience. In this ‘privileged migration,’ the American engages in temporary relocation, while still carrying an attitude of American exceptionalism. In a study abroad like the one Breen detailed in his study, the participant most often reproduces existing perspectives on things, without ever taking the time or having the desire to critically reflect on these things. Many times, this is manifested in the value statements implying the inherent inferiority of something different, for example using graffiti as a form of expression or protest, when these manners of expression are not nearly as common within the home culture. These actions and attitudes by an American student abroad can propagate the danger of “otherizing” members of the host culture, which is defined by Holliday, Hyde & Kullman (2004) as “imagining someone as alien and different to ‘us’ in such a way that ‘they’ are excluded from our ‘normal,’ ‘civilized’ and ‘superior’ group” (p.3).

Isabel's identification of goals

Allport's (1954) second optimal condition for prejudice reduction calls for the establishment of clear, authentic goals in which members of both cultural groups are interested in achieving. Isabel began her study abroad with clear goals that she hoped to accomplish while spending the summer in Spain. "My primary motivation was that [a study abroad] was required for my major - I'm International Business, so I have to have some kind of study abroad. But then I chose Spain because I've always studied Spanish, for pretty much my whole life." Hernández (2010) identified goals such as these as "instrumental." Isabel, though, indicated a more "integrative" goal or, learning the language for the language's sake, when she indicated that "I want to practice and get better at my Spanish and maybe become fluent one day." Isabel also indicated an interest in at least some interaction with the host culture, as she explained, "I'm a people watcher, so I like seeing the way that different people react and interact with each other. We're all people, but I like seeing how we all interact with each other - it's very different in different cultures." Thus, to begin her study abroad, Isabel was at least intrigued by the idea of the Other, and was willing to explore the dynamic of these potential relationships.

Isabel's first goal was satisfied simply by her participation in her university's study abroad program. No cooperation from members of the host culture was needed in order to facilitate her achievement of this goal, and essentially Isabel had already achieved this goal by the time I first met her in Madrid. The satisfaction of her other goals, though, would require some degree of cooperation from people that made up different "community" circles that she would establish while on her study abroad.

Isabel's sense of community support

Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction calls for community and/or institutional support in the fostering of a mutually beneficial relationship. While in Spain, Isabel made reference to a number of "communities" with which she had interactions to various degrees. The distinction between different communities with which Isabel interacted during her study abroad is important because each had its role either supporting or not supporting Isabel's fostering of "beneficial relationships" with members of the host culture. I have identified these communities by the following names: "homestay," "Complutense," "university cohort," and "host culture." There are some individuals that were part of more than one "community" group - for example, Isabel's host señora is part of both Isabel's "homestay" community as well as part of the "host culture" community. Potentially, it is also possible that any particular individual from one participant's community could make up part of one of another member's communities as well. The communities identified here also can describe the four major communities with which each of my other participants interacted during their language study abroad experiences as well, meaning that I am going to refer to these same four communities in each of my other participant's case studies as well.

It is important to go back to Isabel's own words to determine the degree to which she felt support from each of these communities. Regarding her homestay, Isabel expressed mixed degrees of support. Linguistically, Isabel felt generally supported, relating sentiments regarding "going home every day and speaking with our señora [which] was really helpful too because those are real conversations outside of the classroom where you're just learning to converse in Spanish." Even though in the beginning, the señora spoke "a lot of English because we were just getting accustomed to

each other, now we speak a lot more Spanish to each other, so that's good.” Despite this, Isabel did not feel that her interactions in her homestay were positive in general. She summed her homestay up by saying, "it's pretty cold. It's interesting, because I kind of wonder if I came back and I had this whole thing to do over again, would I even do a homestay? Because a lot of times, I don't feel very comfortable with [my señora]." There were no other family members aside from her señora that were present on a consistent basis. "[My señora's children] just drop by every once in a while. And seeing their interactions is interesting because they're all very distant from each other. They don't seem to be a very close-knit family."

Isabel seemed to carry this idea of how Spaniards interact in general to her own interactions with members of the host culture. In our first interview together, Isabel mentioned her interactions with the host culture on the metro where she felt they “just push you out of the way,” or they would see people point at her and mutter “*americanas*,” Initially, when Isabel would go out to bars, "since I'm not one to strike up conversations," communications with members of the host culture were infrequent. She continued, "even when I have talked to people, the conversations usually didn't go anywhere. [Conversations] would generally be asking us about where we were from. Then they would want to know what we do there. But [Spaniards initiating conversation] was rare." Even as time went on, by the time my second interview with Isabel took place, she mentioned that socially in the bars, things hadn't changed much for her. People would either “look at us and make comments about us,” or “were rather drunk and very forward and weren't really interested in getting to know me, but just wanted to party with me. I just generally stay away from those types of friendships where all you do is party

together.” In other words, the people with whom Isabel was interacting in Spain were the types of people that Isabel preferred not to interact with in the first place.

A possible case that contradicted her generally negative perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 1991) that should be mentioned was Isabel’s experience with a large group of 7- and 8-year old boys while Isabel and her cohort were spending time in Asturias. Specifically, "we played soccer with all the little boys in the plaza, that was just so much fun. Just talking with the little kids and playing soccer with them. And they were screaming at us and we were yelling back at them. Even talking about it right now, I have a huge smile on my face." Isabel told me about how that particular interaction with members of the host culture, albeit brief and impossible to sustain for longer than that one night, was her overall favorite experience from her summer in Spain. This experience was so important to her that she even had a picture from that evening as the background on her computer. Despite the amount of fun she had and the importance of that night to Isabel, however, she expressed that she thought these children may have had pejorative attitudes about Americans:

They were all asking us, "Are you drunk? Are you going to go get drunk?" And we were like, "No!" And they're like, "Are you going to go smoke?" And I'm like, "No, I'm not going to smoke. I'm just here playing soccer." They were little kids, like they were no older than 12, but that's what they think about Americans. That and they basically talked about how much better Spain was at soccer mostly.

Isabel’s “Complutense” experience was almost exclusively academic. Regarding the satisfaction of Isabel’s academic goals, she felt as the Complutense community helped her to become “more fluent [in Spanish] just being in class... for four hours every day.” It was also because of her Complutense community that Isabel was able to explore the sites of Spain - visiting areas like Toledo, Segovia, Granada and Asturias. While

there were indeed people from cultures other than her own in her classes at the Complutense, like a group of Chinese students, Isabel expressed no real connection made with them. Isabel expressed this lack of connection by saying, "I think we sometimes try to [communicate with them], but a lot of times we just kind of stick to ourselves. Because I think that our Spanish is a little better than the Chinese students' Spanish. And our pronunciations are totally off of each other. So sometimes we have trouble understanding them." Again, in this interaction like in so many others in which there was some generalizable difference between cultures, Isabel projects this difference as her own cultural superiority and as a cultural deficit of the Other.

Isabel's experience with her "university cohort" community, on the other hand, satisfied her social goals, and to a certain extent, her academic goals. Regarding interacting with her roommate, Isabel felt this was positive. "I really got along well with my roommate. If we were both struggling in Spanish, we could kind of work together." Although Magnan & Back (2007) warned of the dangers that two or more non-native L2 speakers tend to reinforce their own incorrect usage of the language, Isabel felt her roommate was a resource she could use to help her communicate a message. Isabel also expressed that the entire university cohort as a whole was "really close. Because we were just kind of thrown into the middle of Madrid when we first landed - like figuring it all out together made us all really close. I think we might have gotten that close eventually, but that got us close really fast." It is important to mention, however, that the benefit of feeling so close to her university cohort came at the cost of supporting *less* interaction with members of the host culture and less immersion into that host culture. English was the default language of communication within the university cohort, and Isabel

understood that this went against her goal of improving her Spanish while abroad.

During our second interview, Isabel related to me, "I wish that we would speak more Spanish, but I think a lot of people in my group would say the opposite. People are looking at us and making comments about us [when we try to speak Spanish], but I like Spanish and I wish it was more acceptable [in our cohort] for us to speak Spanish, even if it was hard."

Isabel's sense of intergroup cooperation

Allport's (1954) fourth optimal condition for prejudice reduction necessitates intergroup cooperation between members of both cultural groups to achieve the goals previously set forth in a mutually beneficial relationship. As such, we need to concentrate on the communities with which each participant interacted while abroad. The communities in which were no members of the host culture, for example Isabel's "university cohort" community, are not a part of the analysis regarding the satisfaction of these goals, nor are the "university cohort" communities of any of my other participants. If anything, the support provided by the university cohort pulled Isabel away from her study abroad goals of speaking Spanish and having authentic interactions with members of the host culture. Instead, Isabel's interactions with her university cohort helped to reduce her experience abroad to that of an English-speaking tourist.

As such, and in analyzing the experiences Isabel shared with her Complutense community, her goals were satisfied certainly as much as Isabel could have expected. The professors at the Complutense provided Isabel with a context in which she could take her courses, and "through being in class four hours of Spanish a day, I think it really

helps being constantly in Spanish and to constantly ask questions, because I'm still not very sure [speaking in Spanish].”

Referring to the above interactions and explanations, Isabel felt a certain degree of intergroup cooperation with her señora in helping her to achieve her goal of bettering her Spanish while abroad, thanks to the “real conversations” they had, the “tidbits of advice” regarding places to where Isabel and her cohort would travel, and the willingness of the señora “to correct me [in Spanish] - in a polite way - just to help me out and get to where I want to be.”

The satisfaction of this goal was not sufficient to overcome Isabel's negativity towards her host family and Spain in general. Isabel felt overall negatively regarding how her señora and other members of the host culture in general interacted with her and how that likely affected Isabel's perceptions of the host culture in general with relation to her home culture. By not showing an overt excitement in getting to know her and getting to know about her, she perceived it as if she spent her study abroad with people being angry with her. "If someone's really mad at you, they're going to tell you - they're going to yell at you. In America, I feel like people are just trying to be nice. They'll talk around the subject instead of just getting right to it. Where I feel like in Spain, they're more direct as to what they want to say. I'm definitely not used to [people] being so direct."

Marló - "I'm ready to go back home."

At the time of the research, Marló was a 19-year old rising sophomore, studying Electrical Engineering at the Midwestern university. Interestingly, Marló was the only one of my six participants that had no plans to either major or minor in Spanish. Marló

was from a suburb of a major Midwestern city at an adjacent state to the one where he attended university. During the study abroad, Marló was taking two courses at the Complutense - Peoples and Cultures of Spain and Advanced Composition. During his homestay, Marló lived with a señora and señor, their 22-year old daughter, a 24-year old female exchange student from Argentina who was studying nursing, and Carlos, a male roommate from his university and another of my study participants. Marló and Carlos had never met before embarking on their language study abroad.

Before coming to Spain to study for the summer, Marló felt he had a fair amount of knowledge about Spanish culture gained from his classes, his relationship with a girlfriend that had spent time in Spain, and his own investigation, but that his summer abroad was providing him with a tremendous opportunity to learn even more. A self-described social introvert who tended to interact mainly with a small group of friends, Marló felt he needed a little extra "push" to commit to studying abroad in Spain. Marló summed his decision to study abroad to me by saying,

I was almost entirely motivated by my family and my girlfriend who, before I came to college they were like, "at some point you have to study abroad." And that's all they told me - they didn't tell me where, of course, but I wanted to go to Spain mainly because my girlfriend went and told me all about it. And I think it's cool because I came here knowing a lot of stuff about Spain before actually getting here.

Nevertheless, despite his introverted nature and his plan to neither major nor minor in Spanish, Marló seemed to feel comfortable not only talking with me during our interviews, but also demonstrated confidence in using Spanish on occasion.

Marló's sense of social equality

The nature of the interactions Marló had while in the host culture context affected Marló's perceptions of the Other. Marló perceived an interesting relationship between members of the host culture and members of his home culture as being one of "provider/consumer," and, as such, Marló felt "like most people are trying to be on their 'best behavior' around Americans." Marló referenced these thoughts a number of times. When talking about his experiences in Spain regarding going to a bar or a club, "if you're in shorts [and you're a Spaniard], they'll tell you to leave. Because they want people to look fancier. But if they find out you're American, then you're OK. They want you to stay and spend your money and stuff, which makes sense." Marló also expressed this sentiment when talking about the influence of Western culture he saw while walking around Madrid. Mention of the pervasiveness of "American" businesses like McDonalds, Burger King and H&M made it seem to Marló like American tourists were being overly catered to, explaining the overall attitude of the "provider/consumer" relationship of Spaniards to Americans. Marló justified his thoughts, at the same time justifying his decision to "be American" while in Spain.

[Our program directors] were saying you'll be better off trying to pretend to be a Spanish person. But I feel like at least in Madrid, like other tourist places, tourists are held in high regard. I think it's because tourism is a business - a serious business. I mean, it makes sense, right? It doesn't make any sense if [Spaniards] are going to be bitter toward Americans because they need to get their money.

Whether each social group is held in high regard was immaterial for Marló in determining the degree to which he felt each social group was equal, but presenting Spaniards being dependent on US tourism dollars, could have been Marló's perceptions of the Spanish as "needy." What mattered more was his perception that each cultural group had their "role" to play in their economically-defined relationship, and this thought

most certainly does not align with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction.

Marló's identification of goals

Marló, when asked about his goals for his language immersion summer abroad program in Spain, was very clear:

I definitely want to reach a level of Spanish where I can toss out phrases you wouldn't really learn in class and words that you wouldn't really learn in class. I was hoping that I could approach a Spanish person comfortably and have a decent conversation in Spanish and maybe try to fool them into thinking I'm a Spaniard. I would really like to hang out with Spanish students my age.

As time went on, it became increasingly obvious to Marló that his goal of having authentic interactions with members of the host culture that were about his same age was not going to happen as easily as he hoped. In my second interview with Marló, he lamented this as a lack by saying "the only way to interact with Spanish people easily is to find a connection of some sort. I wouldn't really know where to start to try to find those connections." Marló felt the locus of responsibility was with his university, saying "I would have much preferred within this program that there be some sort of setup with Spanish-speaking students learning English, and that could be part of the program. But since there's nothing like that - it's just all visiting places as tourists - I don't really agree with that."

Marló blamed the program design, even though he acknowledged he perhaps didn't do as much as he could have done to foster the relationships he was looking for from the host culture when he admitted, "I guess you could say that I didn't really try too hard to connect with anybody again [from the host culture] like I could have." With the rare instances that Marló *did* have an opportunity to further an initial connection he made

with someone from the host culture, a misunderstanding in social planning caused Marló to cancel plans. A 23-year old student who had dinner with Marló's host family was going to get in contact with Marló and Carlos to go out a few nights after the dinner. "He said he would message us on Facebook about it, and he never did until like the absolute last minute and so we just canceled. I guess I should have just flowed with it, but this is a complete flip-flop of lifestyle for me with the way I am back home." Marló explained that his plans are well-in-place ahead of time, "this is the first time I've ever really had to try to socialize this much. I'm very much a relax-at-home, play-video-games and not so much going out [person]." Marló's attitude seemed to indicate that although he was seeking relationships with members of the host culture, these relationships should have been the product of his university program design, and thus on structured, regimented terms that would fit into his schedule and on his terms.

Even with a week left in his experience out of the total four he spent in Spain, Marló's disappointment with how his program goals were not being satisfied manifested itself in Marló's complete loss of hope that anything could be salvaged from his abroad experience. When I asked him in our second interview if he would ever consider participating in a semester abroad, Marló answered, "No. I'm already tired of it - I'm ready to go back home. Now that I know that there are not going to be any more chances to immerse, other than with my señora."

Marló's girlfriend, who had also previously participated in a study abroad of sorts through her university, had such a positive experience in her study abroad, that Marló really wanted something to emulate that experience, and was disappointed when his didn't, contributing to his feeling that his program goals weren't satisfied:

I keep comparing this program to the one my girlfriend went on, which is you go stay with a student you've been Skyping with over and over. And they came to the US on an "*intercambio*" exchange, and so they did everything that a Spanish person would do. She didn't speak literally a word of English while she was [in Spain]. So I feel like [her experience] was way more valuable [than this experience for me]. I really wish it was more immersion [here] because if I think about how much my Spanish has improved - and I've talked to other people too - we feel like our Spanish has just gotten worse.

Marló's sense of community support

Marló's experience in Spain, however, was not a total and complete failure in his opinion. Regarding his homestay, Marló felt supported in both having interactions with members of the host culture as well as improving his Spanish through these interactions. Marló expressed that his *señora* spoke no English, so there was no choice but to speak Spanish to her. Marló told me, "[with my *señora*] if you're ever going to explain something, you have to use circumlocution, otherwise she's going to be like, 'I don't know.'" Although his *señor* could speak English, Marló kept his interactions with him mainly in Spanish, unless it was to ask for definitions of words like "to borrow" or "to go hang out." There was also a woman from Argentina in Marló's homestay, María, with whom Marló could communicate. Although she was not a member of the "host culture," she was a member of a culture outside of Marló's home culture, effectively categorizing her as an "Other," for the purposes of this study. María was closest to Marló's age, and came closest at providing him with a person with whom he could interact of his own age. Still, though, Marló described a relationship with María that wasn't centered around his communication with her: "...obviously she much more easily communicates with [the *señora* and *señor*] than I do, so it's mostly them talking across the table."

Marl6 expressed regret at what he saw as a “lack of opportunity” to interact with members of the host culture of his own age, in general. At the beginning of his experience, Marl6 attributed this lack of interaction to not having been in the study abroad environment for too much time yet, saying “so far all of us Americans hang out and we just speak English. And so there's definitely not been much immersion yet. I haven't really had any interactions with young Spanish people yet other than just random people that come up to us and talk to us on the street or at events.” Although he felt he put himself in contexts, like going to bars and “events” like the Madrid Orgullo parade, in which interaction with members of the host culture his own age could have happened more so than in his homestay and in classes, whatever interactions Marl6 had were less meaningful than Marl6 was hoping they would be. By our second interview, Marl6 lamented that he had “only ever met one Spaniard since the last time we talked... but we really didn't get to talk that much. It was pretty much the standard stuff like asking for directions or about the food or about places to go or see. [The conversation] didn't really go anywhere.” Marl6's inability to meet members of the host culture that were his age affected his overall excitement for participating in the study abroad itself, to the degree of Marl6 saying “In terms of immersing, [my study abroad] hasn't been as successful as I would have liked. I mean, it's tough because it's just us Americans hanging out all the time and for that we're always looking for the touristy spots to go. So it's actually been difficult finding places and things that Spanish people do.”

Interestingly, Marl6 also shared in the experience of playing soccer with the children in Asturias. Despite calling it “probably the most fun I've ever had at night [during the study abroad] - out of everything,” these children similarly failed to provide

Marl6 with members of the host culture that were his own age with whom he could interact and form meaningful relationships.

Nor did Marl6's "Complutense" community align with what he had expected of it. Marl6 felt his academic experience in Spain was disorganized due to an "absent-minded and not a very good teacher" that eventually caused Marl6 to believe he would not be able to come close to achieving his linguistic goals for the summer. He told me, "we knew right away that we weren't going to get anything out of this [class], so we tried to switch. But ever since the beginning it's been a mess." As it ended up, Marl6 felt he didn't have enough chance in class to better his Spanish as "it was mostly lectures... I had to do one presentation, but that probably didn't help much. It was just memorization." Even that academic rigor of his coursework felt artificial to Marl6, a sentiment he expressed in our second interview, saying, "the professors at the Complutense have been trying to make the tests easier for us. They do understand that we're always busy, but that makes this less of a *study* abroad, doesn't it?" Upon reflection, Marl6 told me his motivation to seek immersion experiences had all but disappeared since he didn't see that as a program goal, saying "I don't remember us really doing anything that was programmed being for the goal of immersion."

Although Marl6's expectations of what the Complutense should have offered him in terms of immersion were not to the level he expected, an equal amount of blame for not immersing fell squarely upon his "university cohort" community. His cohort would choose places to go to "like *discotecas* that were designed to attract tourists," and while planning to go to these places or in these places themselves,

It's irritating because Spaniards instantly tell that we were Americans and they would start speaking English [to us]. And I would think, 'Okay, now

I've got to try to speak more Spanish despite this temptation to speak English and make things easier.' And I would keep speaking Spanish until it got too hard, and then I would be like, 'Okay, let me just try to explain what I'm trying to say to you [in English].

Marl6, though, continued to evidence how using Spanish with his university cohort diminished, with little realistic chance for this pervasive group mentality to change.

Marl6 summarized, "English has become the language of choice because we've made our priority going to see all these places and planning stuff every day and it's more difficult to do that in Spanish. So, I feel like almost everyone has given up on that - except for speaking with their se#oras."

The combination of Marl6's cohort community being together as much as it was, coupled with the lack of authentic interactions with members of the host culture his own age also adversely affected Marl6 feelings regarding achieving his goal of more Spanish fluency as evidenced by his statements, "I really wish it was more immersion [here] because if I think about how much my Spanish has improved... we feel like our Spanish has just gotten worse... other than learning some new words and some new phrases, I don't feel that much better at Spanish."

Marl6's sense of intergroup cooperation

Marl6's Complutense community did not at all satisfy Marl6's academic goals for the summer abroad. With everything happening seemingly "last-minute" and with as much confusion and little opportunity to interact in classes that were "mostly lectures," Marl6 had the sense that "there's obviously not a lot of initiative" with his Complutense community. Marl6 felt that the Complutense community treated him as an afterthought, expressed to me when he said,

I don't know if it's because this is the foreign student program, but the

whole process of getting here and finding our classes was very last-minute. I was honestly a little afraid that we were not going to be able to get to our classes on time. Obviously it all worked out, but right before it was supposed to happen?

Regarding his homestay, Marló felt as much cooperation as could be expected taking into consideration the nature of his host family dynamic. Dinnertime conversations gave Marló what turned out to be what he felt were the only opportunities to use Spanish in authentic situations, as well as an opportunity to process his experiences with members of the host culture. "They'll always try to make sure that I understand the conversation before continuing. So a lot of that intimidation I felt at the beginning [of the study abroad] is gone. I know when I came here I felt like my Spanish was horrible, but overall I feel more confident with them." Marló certainly understood that the homestay not having anyone his own age was not something his homestay family could have done anything about, but being that developing relationships with someone his own age was an important part of Marló's goals for his study abroad, his homestay community could only cooperate with Marló in this goal's achievement to a certain degree. Marló told me about one of his university's study abroad program participants having a "host sister" about her age, and since "she's connected with someone like that, they can just sit down and talk for an hour. So that works out. But other than her, I don't know of anyone who has made that kind of connection."

Violeta - "Everyone seeks their comfort."

Violeta had always dreamed of studying abroad. Her experience in Spain in and of itself had satisfied one of her university goals. She explained to me that her family, although from the same state as the university she attends, has always traveled together

and thus had instilled in her the importance of traveling and being able to experience the world around her.

At the time of my research, Violeta was a rising sophomore and 19 years old. She was a Speech Pathology major and was thinking of adding Spanish as either a major or minor. During the study abroad, Violeta was taking two classes - Peoples and Cultures of Spain, and Spoken Spanish. Although our interviews happened in English, Violeta seemed completely comfortable with how she spoke Spanish, and would say some things during our interview in effortless and confident Spanish. Violeta participated in a homestay environment, living with a señora and with a female roommate from her university.

Violeta's mother studied abroad in London when she was a university student, and Violeta was looking to follow in her mother's footsteps in this regard. Her summer in Spain was the first time Violeta had traveled abroad without her family, but she was approaching her summer in Spain with a lot of optimism and fervor. Although she had previously spent time abroad, this had been entirely in the capacity of a tourist, and mainly in places in which English was the dominant language, or at least the language of respect and deference to tourists in these contexts.

Violeta had not had much formal experience with cultural diversity before her time in Spain. Her hometown is culturally homogeneous, and she had just completed her first year at a university that, although much more culturally and racially diverse than her hometown, had not yet offered anything other than her personal experience to understand and unpack this diversity. Violeta mentioned to me that the Peoples and Cultures class in which she was enrolled at Complutense was the first class she had ever taken that could

be classified as a cultural diversity class. Despite this, Violeta had made conscious decisions to seek out diversity not only in her choice of university, in an urban, more culturally diverse area than that in which she had grown up, but also in her decision to study abroad. She explained to me, "I've always wanted to be in places where not everybody necessarily looks like me."

In my first interview with Violeta, I asked her an "ice-breaker" question of how she was enjoying her first few days in Spain. She answered me with a lot of enthusiasm, saying, "I want to see as much as I possibly can! I feel like never even taking naps. I want to keep going, but I guess I have to sleep sometime, so..." It never occurred to me then how significant Violeta's desire to "see the sites" would permeate her study abroad experience in Spain.

Violeta's sense of social equality

Throughout her language study abroad, Violeta really only had a meaningful interactions with one member of the host culture, her señora. Even that relationship was tumultuous at first, "At first I was really frustrated - communication was really difficult at first. She doesn't really start conversations, so if [my roommate and I are] sitting at the dinner table, we just sit and watch TV until either [my roommate] or I say something. My señora rarely asks us questions." As time went on, though, their relationship improved, which Violeta attributed to her asking her señora what happened to her husband, because "she has a ton of stuff on the walls [of his], so one night I just asked her about it." Violeta found out her señora's husband was a bullfight reporter that had passed away. After asking her señora about him, though, Violeta described

after that night, she really opened up to us. Like, she'd actually talk to us. So, I think our interest kind of made her interested. She told us about how

she really misses him. And I didn't really want to ask anything else, because I didn't really know how, but... She said she was really proud of him, so it was a good conversation. She brought out all these pictures and showed us.

Other than with her señora, Violeta did not have the opportunity to see herself a social equal with anyone else in from the host culture. Her thoughts regarding the social status of the host culture, reflected in her perceptions of what the host culture is "like," came from what she observed, or what she heard from her señora and subsequently applied to all members of the host culture, but did not necessarily substantiate from other experiences or interactions. For example, in one dinner conversation with her señora, Violeta told me, "Last night we talked about how everyone [in Spain] loves Obama and how everyone is really liberal here and all her take on that. A lot with the protesting that is happening lately. But, it's interesting because she says everyone here loves Obama. It's interesting because I feel like a lot of people don't really like Americans that much." It seemed to me as if she made a leap from one topic to another, but when I asked her why, Violeta reiterated her story and that her señora somehow connected the sense of patriotism she associated with protests and how Americans don't show the same level of commitment. "It was like she was lecturing us, and then she was like 'Do you even know Spanish?' I was shocked when she said that."

Violeta affirmed her thoughts to me that members of the host culture "don't really like" members of her culture much when she told me about her take on the soccer game in Asturias with the children that Isabel and Marló had reflected positively upon. Violeta said, "the whole time I was just hearing all these little comments. They were just joking around I guess, but they were like 'USA fptfptfpt (raspberry sound).' I think it was just because we were playing against them, I don't know, but it wasn't very nice."

Violeta ended with a sense that because she didn't fit in culturally or linguistically, her culture was not at all equal to that of the host culture while in the host country. When Violeta went to a bullfight but had to leave after about 30 minutes because "it was terrible. It's like watching animal torture. I could only watch one bull die," she felt like the Spaniards at the bullfight "thought we were softies," but didn't interact with anybody to find this out for sure. Violeta further concluded that Spaniards are "rude" because she, like Isabel, had gotten bumped into on the metro, and "people don't say 'sorry' or 'excuse me,' like if they run into you they just keep going." In these instances as well, Violeta did not communicate these differences with anyone who would help her understand it as a simple difference in cultural norms. Yet another situation that likely affected Violeta's sense of cultural equality happened one day when she was walking to meet some of her university cohort friends:

These guys from Spain were like "*hola, guapa* (hey beautiful)." Always somebody says something. That kind of freaked me out. I just kept walking. Or maybe I said "*adiós*" (goodbye), or "*no, gracias* (no, thank you)." I feel like the [Spanish] guys think that American girls are easy almost. But I don't show them any... I'm not going to have them perceive me that way².

Although Violeta rightly felt nervous after this situation occurred, one must remember that she did not have any interaction in which she could mitigate this experience, and subsequently formed an opinion about a culture in general based on one interaction in particular. These instances clearly showed that Violeta could not have perceived herself as equal in social status with the members of the host culture, but because of her lack of interaction with the host culture, Violeta further indicated that this social equality was not

² While "*guapa*" can certainly mean what Violeta took it to mean here, "*guapa*" is also a common term of endearment that many times is meant to be taken much more innocently than Violeta took it here. Likely, because of the environment in which this term was used, Violeta more than likely interpreted "*guapa*" correctly in that it was meant to both get her attention and convey that the person speaking thought Violeta was attractive.

something Violeta expected nor sought out while in Spain. Quickly Violeta dismissed the idea of pursuing cultural social equality with the host culture and gravitated to her university cohort, as if the effort to connect with the host culture as social equals was not worth the effort. Violeta explained,

[My university cohort] all wanted to see and do the same things. We all wanted to go out and do the touristy things. Like to all the sightseeing things and try this thing and that, and it's easier to do with someone else. We didn't really have friends [from the host culture] because we weren't there enough, we were only there for that month. So, that was big too, because who else could you really hang out with?

Violeta's identification of goals

Violeta began her time in Spain with clear goals that she hoped she could work toward during her time in Spain. First, she indicated to me, "I definitely want to see as much [of Spain] as I can." She continued, though, to mention to me how she viewed it as extremely important to her "to meet people from Spain, whether it's going to be long-term friendships, which might be a little hard because I'm not here for that long, but definitely form friendships." This goal, in particular, was important to Violeta because, as she told me in our first interview, "I'm from a small town, where it's pretty much... everybody is pretty much white. That's just how it is. It's small. And I love being in [my university city] where there are many more people. And here [in Spain], there are so many different people. I love that."

As her final program goal, Violeta shared a goal common to my language study abroad participants, "I definitely want to increase my Spanish proficiency." The satisfaction of each of these goals was dependent to some degree on the cooperation of members of different "communities" that interacted with Violeta while she was in Spain.

Violeta's sense of community support

It is necessary to go back to Violeta's original words and sentiments to determine the degree to which she felt supported by each of the aforementioned communities in achieving her goals. Violeta's sense of her señora's role was definitely much more of a possible teacher than ever being possible friend, a sentiment Violeta expressed by telling me in our first interview, "I thought my señora would be willing to teach us stuff. It's easier to understand her now [than it was the first few days]. She speaks a lot slower so I can understand. She'll try to rephrase things. But it's pretty much communication [with her] to get through." With the goals Violeta had established, the only one that her señora could help her to achieve, was Violeta's goal of improving her Spanish. At first, Violeta's frustration was evident, due to the fact that "communication was really difficult at first. [My señora] really doesn't start conversations... she rarely asks questions. If I have questions, she definitely tries to answer them. But she doesn't know a lot I think because she stays at home."

Violeta saw this as an opportunity, though, to initiate the conversations, and concluded "I think [my señora] has helped as far as the independent conversation [in] that I have to come up with things. And not just sit back and wait for somebody else to do it." Violeta's initiative in starting conversations with her señora led to a transformative experience in which Violeta asked her señora about her husband, who had passed away. The conversation that followed, which Violeta called "a turning point for the whole homestay," led to subsequent conversations throughout her homestay which flowed much more freely. Violeta explained that the conversations were much more frequent after that experience, and how their interactions went from "just [ending] unless I ask other questions," to "whole different conversation[s] - like a real conversation" toward the end

of her homestay. She clarified, "I think [asking my señora about her husband] was a turning point for the whole homestay. Since then it was a whole different interest with each other, which was nice. We talk a lot more at dinner now. Before it was kind of like we would sit there until someone would come up with something to say. Now we always talk about our days."

Violeta's señora also consistently helped her understand intricacies of the Spanish language, like the infrequency of the use of the verb "*poder*." Violeta told me, "I thought *poder* would be used way more than it is. [My señora] tells me to use "*puedo* (can I...?/I can...)"³ less. She says I use it, and "*por favor*" and "*gracias*" way too much. Because the Spanish don't use those words as much as we do."

The host culture community with which Violeta had experience was one that Violeta experienced from a distance. Although Violeta went to events like a bullfight, she did not interact with any members of the host culture. She said, "I couldn't stand it. Prolonged death - that's my perspective. [The Spaniards] were cheering it on. But it's their culture, so we can't judge them for it. In the end, I was just like, 'I don't want to see anymore,' so we left."

³ "Poder" and its forms in Spanish are often mistranslated, and subsequently misused in by English-speaking Spanish learners. "*Poder*" is often translated to the English "to be able to" and its forms, like "*yo puedo*" to the English "I am able to," or "I can..." for example. "*yo puedo*" is better translated to "I am able to" in the sense of "*Puedo hablar dos idiomas*" (I am able to speak two languages). Many problems in comprehension arise when "*poder*" is used in a question by non-native Spanish-speakers, like Violeta. For example, she may ask a question like "*¿Puedo comer más comida?*," wanting to ask "Can I eat more food?" but having her question interpreted by members of the host culture as "Am I able to eat more food?" This may seem like an insignificant distinction, but unless there is a problem of fitting more food into her stomach without her vomiting, for example, she will surely "be able" to eat more. A more common way for a question like this to be asked would be the use of a less-literal request, like "*¿Me sirvo más comida?*" which best translates to "Can I serve myself more food?" This misunderstanding of communication norms by Violeta may subsequently have contributed to her feelings that Spain is more "rude" than the United States when it comes to direct communication.

At bars and clubs, her interactions were always superficial. Violeta summed these interactions up, clarifying, "whenever we [are in a bar and we] talk to people, it's like a big group talking to people, not like me individually with someone. But I've learned some new words I guess, like it's interesting to me how many words they have for the bathroom. Stuff like that. But that's about it." On the metro, Violeta was cognizant of the language being used, as well as certain linguistic constructs that were different than she expected them to be, but there was little to no interaction with members of the host culture. Again, Violeta was the recipient of a catcall by a member of the host culture while walking on the street, but did her best to not engage in any interaction with that individual. This lack of interaction was not blamed on the host culture by Violeta, nor did she take responsibility for this lack of interaction, it simply "was" this way. Violeta summed this experience up thusly: "I was nervous about [those situations] after, but I know that people go through that every day. [Now] I try to avoid any situation that would be sketchy." Based on this lack of interaction, I cannot conclude that the "host culture" community helped Violeta to achieve any of her goals while in Spain, aside from the very few new vocabulary words she seemed to pick up in the bars. In no other instance did Violeta demonstrate the initiative she demonstrated with her señora and asking her about her husband, seemingly to much more resist interaction with members of the host culture outside of her homestay.

Violeta felt the "Complutense" community seriously lacked in helping her get better in Spanish. Partly, this was due to the fact that Violeta had the same problem as Marló in the first part of her summer with a class in which "my professor didn't show up the first two days," and after he did show up, it didn't get any better: "we just really

haven't been doing anything. So, we're trying to move. We just don't want to be in a class that we're not doing anything in." Additionally, Violeta felt a disconnect with the work the Complutense community expected of her with what she felt she should be expected to do, both with the rigor and the content. Regarding rigor, Violeta expressed, "it's hard because I didn't realize we were going to have so much school work here... there's just so much you want to see, so it's hard to sit in your room and do homework or write a paper when so much is happening outside." Regarding content, Violeta felt like much of it revolved around topics that were too unfamiliar for her to speak about: "So we told the teacher, 'we've been here for three weeks, we don't really know the government and economics of Spain, so it's hard for us to participate.' So hopefully she changes topics or something." Violeta's comments about the rigor and the content of her classes indicated to me that she felt the academic end of her language study abroad would be focused more on allowing the participants time to be free and explore rather than taking on the responsibilities of learning something new, consistent with what would be expected of them in classes in the United States.

In fact, the satisfaction of one of Violeta's goals came from experiences in which no community support was required. Because of the nature of the program, Violeta and the other study abroad participants were able to travel to a number of different areas throughout Spain. Violeta indicated to me that she "really liked Granada a lot. For me, that was really the best excursion - I loved all of them, but that one I really enjoyed." For Violeta, that excursion ended up being the experience she believed would be most memorable about her sojourn, and an experience she would have to relate to some of her friends from the US that were thinking of traveling to Spain someday. She told me in our

last interview, "I know a couple of my friends are going [to Spain] next summer to study. I've been trying to tell them all the things they should do and what they should do when they go to the weekend trips, so that will be really cool to hear about their experiences there."

Violeta's "university cohort" community was not expected to facilitate Violeta seeing different areas of Spain. This community, though, had the ability to influence one way or another the degree to which Violeta could achieve her goal of bettering her Spanish while abroad and the degree of opportunity for meeting members of the host culture. Ultimately, Violeta admitted that her cohort spoke "in English a lot because it's more comfortable. We kind of stand out in the street all talking English to each other - more than we probably should. But everyone seeks their comfort - so one person starts speaking English and the next thing you know everyone is speaking English." Even while only with her roommate, Violeta and she would speak a lot of English. Violeta hedged this sentiment by clarifying, "I think maybe I'd like it more if [we] decided to speak Spanish more... I think we'd run out of things to say if we only talked in Spanish though. Sometimes we quit Spanish because we just don't know the words for it." Support for Violeta and her roommate to speak Spanish did indeed come from their señora, "I think she would like it if we speak only Spanish instead of English. But it's hard when [my roommate] and I... when we don't have the words - the vocabulary. So we wouldn't know - we couldn't extend the conversation necessarily." For Violeta, the adversity of not having the words frustrated her to the point of not taking every advantage to achieve her goals.

Violeta's sense of intergroup cooperation

In analyzing the experiences Violeta had with her Complutense community, her experiential goals were satisfied in that she was able to take a number of excursions throughout Spain during her month in the country, allowing Violeta to “see as much as I possibly can” during these excursions. This may not have been enough, though, as Violeta expressed regret about the amount of time spent doing homework instead of taking advantage of “so much you want to see... when so much is happening outside. Plus, there are four [students from my university] in that class that I'm in, and we all don't know what they're talking about. Like, we can understand them most of the time, but we don't really have any input.” Additionally, the confusion of changing classes Violeta experienced at the beginning of the summer coupled with the unfamiliar content took away a number of opportunities for her to fully take advantage of the opportunities to fully participate in class and improve her Spanish in that capacity. She lamented, "By the time we finally changed classes, it was like the summer was half-over anyway, and it was really hard to become a part of that class as much as the other people that were there before." Even though the Complutense supported language learning, it interfered with Violeta seeing Spain as much as she wanted to. She even expressed to me, when thinking about a future study abroad program, "I'd have to debate as to whether I want to go for Spanish or not. There's so much to learn [about Spain] - and it's hard because I didn't realize we were going to have so much school work here. It's hard to sit in your room and do homework or write a paper when there's so much you *could* be seeing."

Violeta certainly was able to take full advantage of the cooperation her señora offered her in the context of her homestay. Thanks to some prodding and investigating by Violeta, the relationship she had with her señora can certainly be classified as

“mutually beneficial” in the sense that Violeta was able to take advantage of authentic conversation while in Spain with a member of the host culture, and did so in ways that she had not been used to before the sojourn, "I was trying really hard to start up conversations at dinner and stuff like that, because I don't really like sitting there and just watching *Pasapalabra* (a television show in Spain). I never really had to do that before." Violeta's señora ended up conversing with her as a confidant, revealing and discussing personal information that at first she was not comfortable discussing. Violeta summed her señora up as "very mother-like. Which is nice, but at some point it's kind of... I don't know. It can be good and bad. Bad when she acts all crazy when we want to go out, but good when she does stuff like make us vegetable soup because she doesn't want us to get sick."

Gabi - "I don't want to be that typical 'American.'"

Traveling to Spain and studying abroad there had been a part of Gabi's academic plan ever since she decided on a major and a career path in university. Gabi was a rising sophomore who had already made the decision that Spanish was going to be one of her majors, with Speech Pathology being the other. Ultimately for Gabi, the ability to work with and help Spanish-speaking clients is a career goal by which a successful study abroad experience in which her fluency in Spanish and her ability to interact with people who are native Spanish-speakers were of utmost importance. At the time of the research, Gabi was 19-years old, and was taking Peoples and Cultures of Spain and Spoken Spanish as her two classes during her summer at the Complutense. Gabi was staying in a homestay with a number of people in a somewhat complicated relationship. As Gabi explained it to me, "there's a great-grandma, a grandma, a mom who I'm pretty sure

adopted her nephew who is an 8-year old. Because he calls her 'mom.' And the grandma's husband has been away, but he's coming back soon."

Before coming to study in Spain, Gabi's self-reported experience with cultural diversity extended considerably, even beyond the classroom. Born and raised in an urban area of a very large Midwestern city, Gabi's daily interactions were with people from a variety of races, religions and languages. Gabi made a connection between taking the metro to the Complutense each day with her routine at home, saying "I used to take [public transportation] home from school every day and there were people talking in different languages to each other, but my language was always the one it seemed like you had to know. And to sit on this [metro] and hear people talking and know my language isn't the one you have to know anymore" was a new, but exciting prospect for Gabi.

Gabi's sense of social equality

Gabi surely realized that she was not necessarily a social equal to the members of the host culture with whom she interacted, Gabi indicated that the reasons that made her social status "unequal" were all potentially remediated, and it was wholly within her power to remediate these should she so choose, given sufficient time and resources. Gabi mentioned "*la crisis*," which is how Spaniards refer to the economic depression affecting the country, especially manifested in extremely high rates of unemployment. Gabi felt she was not on an equal social level with the Spaniards because "all these people are so unhappy and there are protests and strikes all the time. I saw a strike going on, but I couldn't tell for what. I can tell there were a lot of upset young people, but I don't know a lot about that. I feel like I have to learn more to better understand what is happening." Like Isabel, Gabi noticed the graffiti around the Complutense, but Gabi formed a

completely different opinion about it than Isabel's negative opinion of the graffiti being students' lack of pride in their school. Gabi told me, "There's all this communist graffiti, but most of it that I've seen seems to have kind of positive messages. I don't know, they're about freedom and hope and equality and stuff. I'm looking at that one over there and it says '*igualdad*' (equality)." Gabi felt that if she learned, or at least attempted to learn *why* things were the way they were in Spain during her visit, she would be putting herself in a position of being more of a social equal with members of the host culture. "Now that I'm here, I feel I know embarrassingly little about what is going on in Spain. Lots of pro-Communism and anti-Capitalism, so I'm sure [Spaniards] would not think much of American materialism culture. But then we live with all these host families who are super welcoming and curious. It's very interesting to me." While Gabi felt that at that point in time, she perhaps wasn't a social equal because she didn't have as much knowledge about Spanish culture as she felt she should have, she did seem to see the host culture as equally valuable and her culture, and therefore the members of the host culture and equally significant people. Striving toward social equality, then, became a valid and worthwhile endeavor for Gabi.

Gabi made a concerted effort to not only go to "cultural events" like a bullfight in Spain, but also strove to understand more completely the cultural tradition by communicating with a member of the host culture while there. Gabi thought the bullfight "was interesting and I'm glad I went, but I wouldn't want to go again." But instead of dismissing bullfighting as the "prolonged death" and "animal torture" that Violeta thought it was, Gabi turned to "the man sitting next to me. I was asking him what was going on, and he seemed like someone who went pretty frequently. He was shouting and getting

really excited. He would [tell me a] little bit, and then he would get back to yelling and cheering. He seemed kind of annoyed at me, but he was fine." While Gabi may not have felt quite like a social equal with members of the host culture, she seemed encouraged by the fact that even someone enthralled with the bullfight happening in front of him took the time to answer the questions of someone curious enough to ask them. She saw them as equals in that learning about their experience is worth her time - a valuable and worthwhile investment in equals.

Gabi's identification of goals

Gabi was very clear in expressing her goals for the summer. As a Spanish and Speech Pathology major, "I wanted to do a study abroad and I wanted it to be in Spain. My career is going to be one where I need to be fluent in Spanish and I need to be able to interact with people who are native speakers." Another goal that Gabi had was one of putting herself in the position of a linguistic minority. She contextualized this by telling me right away in our first interview, "I think that being that English is my first language and growing up in America - you know, there are tons of people living there that don't speak English, and so I'd love to turn the tables [by studying abroad] and be the person who doesn't speak the language. I thought that would be interesting." Like both Isabel and Marló, Gabi's first and last goals were satisfied by her participation in her university's summer study abroad program. No matter the degree of cooperation from members of the host culture, Gabi was both in an environment in which her language was not the dominant language as well as in a study abroad program in Spain. Her second and third goals, though, would require the cooperation from any number of communities with which Gabi would have experience while in Spain.

A final goal Gabi mentioned to me, was that "I don't want to just be that typical 'American.'" I asked Gabi what it meant to her to be a "typical American," and she summarized it by saying

I see people being "American" especially on the train and I try to not be like that. People are usually speaking English so loud and clearly. Or even on the street. I think it's just how we live. I was talking with my señora - we were talking about food and how food is different here than in America. That everything in America is "to go." And here you never see people eating on the train. But we do. Things like that. I didn't really come here to recreate day-to-day routines I have at home. I want to immerse and do what the Spaniards do.

Gabi's sense of community support

In order to best understand the support that Gabi felt from each of the aforementioned communities in achieving her goals for her summer language study abroad, there is no better evidence than Gabi's descriptions and original language from her interviews. When talking about her homestay, Gabi felt completely supported in her goal of improving her fluency in Spanish, not just from her señora and señor, but from other people in her family as well. She told me her host señores "speak very, very slowly. And the adults, I'm not sure they're as willing to correct me. Sometimes I fudge it, but they'll get it and understand. But when I talk to their 8-year old, he'll instantly tell me it sounds weird or something, which is really helpful actually. It's been good." With a career goal of being a Speech Pathologist, Gabi will no doubt be called upon to interact with people of all ages, and her homestay provided her an environment in which she could interact with an 8-year old boy as well as with someone old enough to be that boy's great-grandmother. The interaction with the great-grandmother was limited, however, due to the great-grandma being deaf. Gabi nevertheless told me how she put some of what she had learned into Speech Pathology classes into action, saying,

[people in the family] just kind of yell at her really loudly. It's interesting to me, coming from a speech pathology standpoint. And so, when we were the only two home, I tried to ask her if she was alright or if she needed anything before I was going to go out. And I wasn't yelling, but I was just trying to enunciate and make my mouth really clear, and she seemed to understand me.

Outside of her homestay, Gabi also found ample opportunities to have interactions with members of the host culture, each of which she found meaningful enough to remember fondly and in detail. On one of her mandatory weekend excursions to Granada, Gabi struck up another conversation with a member from an “Other” culture while he played fetch with his dog. This “Other,” a Spanish-speaking man originally from Senegal, was very receptive in Gabi’s conversational advances and they had an in-depth conversation about how “he misses his family [from Senegal] because they were still there. He’s getting an advanced degree. He also told us it was really easy to tell we were American (laughs). And he was telling us about the best places in Granada to go, but we didn't get to go to them.”

Later, Gabi told the popular story about playing soccer with the children in Asturias, but a big difference in Gabi’s version of the story was that “a bunch of the [American] students were like, 'Oh, it would be so fun to play with them!' So, I asked one of the little kids if we could join them, and he said ‘Yeah,’ and so I was chatting with him for a couple of minutes. They wanted to know about our favorite teams and I asked them about theirs. So we were chatting and playing. It was super fun.” Had Gabi not initiated that conversation with the soccer-playing Asturian boy, it is possible that nobody in her university’s group would have taken that initiative, and this interaction might not have existed for anyone. As it turned out, this was authentic contact with members of the

host culture that can be entirely attributed to the initiative displayed by one member of the minority culture.

Gabi indicated that she got what she expected out of her interaction with her Complutense community. Although not always easy, Gabi understood that this community would support her goal of increasing her understanding of the Spanish language. Gabi expressed that sentiment by saying, “One class I’m in is really challenging, and the teacher wants to keep moving forward. But, she’s made it really clear that if you need help, she will help you...” The Complutense not being a conducive environment during the summer to meet many members of the host culture may have been understood by Gabi early, and may have been another reason for her to seek interactions with the host culture outside of the context of this community. Gabi summed it up for me when she told me, "I know it's kind of cool to have classes together [with her university's students] and go sightseeing with them, but then I also like to have my own little thing going [away from them]. I'm glad for the experience of having to do this without a roommate. I think I was able to speak a lot more Spanish not having a roommate."

Even within Gabi’s “university cohort” community, she recognized that this community would support her goals, or perhaps not, depending on whom she selected for interaction. Consequently, she did her best to find sub-groups within that community that were most interested in speaking Spanish, thus supporting her in her goal of improving her Spanish. She indicated that within this community “there is definitely a good portion of the group that wants to try to speak Spanish to each other and who actually do, so that’s always good to try to practice." Everything Gabi said during her interviews

indicated that, because language learning was one of her goals while abroad, she did her best to keep interactions in Spanish, even with her university cohort. "I try [to speak as Spanish much as possible]. I mean, that's why we're here. If I want to communicate, I have to speak Spanish. It's good practice."

Gabi's sense of intergroup cooperation

Gabi's Complutense community seemed to satisfy her goals regarding improving her fluency in Spanish, at least to the degree Gabi had expected. Gabi was interested in improving her Spanish fluency in a number of different contexts, and the classroom was one of those contexts. She expressed, "I feel there's a high level of support from the professors at the Complutense. They want to keep moving forward, but they are really willing to offer help. I haven't really needed help on anything, specifically, but I can see it happening for the exam maybe." Her comments about one of her classes being "challenging," but added that she would feel supported by her teacher if any problem were to arise, coupled with further ambivalence regarding her Complutense community indicate to me a general satisfaction, or at least an absence of dissatisfaction with this particular community with respect to Gabi's goals.

In speaking about her homestay, Gabi felt an extreme amount of cooperation from all members of the host culture as best as they were able. "I really feel like I'm a part of [their family]. There were a few times where I asked permission to do things and they were just like, 'Oh yeah, you don't even need to ask.' But they're super generous and thoughtful. And they're always willing to help." This cooperation came in giving her a wide variety of contexts in which to improve her fluency in Spanish. For example, "the grandma will tell me about the food she's making, and I'll go in the kitchen with her,

which is cool to learn. And she'll tell me about it all, because they've hosted other students before, what [those students] thought of something, and I'll tell her what I think."

She expressed to me numerous times how much she was really enjoying her homestay and especially how "close" she felt to the grandmother of the family, but especially how much she "missed" the 8-year old child of the family after he and his mom left for the last week to go to Barcelona: "I think when I first got here it seemed like there were more people in the house. It seems quieter since [the 8-year old] left. I would usually be in my room studying and he would just come in and he always wanted to talk. Or when I was eating dinner, he would always be chatting with me." Even despite the fact "that I can't really communicate [with the great-grandmother], which is a bummer," Gabi would still make it a point to "say *hola*" whenever she would walk by her.

Gabi also sought and took advantage of the opportunities to participate in the mundane activities that a member of the host culture might do in her routine of living life in Spain. The most striking example was another interaction between Gabi and her 8-year old host brother:

I got to bring my host brother to the movies. We spent the day walking around... the theater was near *Puerta del Sol*, so we were walking around there and he was showing me a few of his favorite little spots. It wasn't like a huge, action-packed day - it was just the afternoon, but it was a lot of fun. Walking around Spain with a little Spaniard, just exploring... We saw "Despicable Me 2" in Spanish. "*Gru 2*."

Not only did her host family trust Gabi to take on this activity, Gabi accepted. Gabi told me this would be the experience out of all of them that she thinks will stay with her the longest - perhaps because it was one of the experiences where Gabi felt she was of the same social status as a member of the host culture. It also seems this experience is where Gabi felt like her goal of interacting with Spaniards in a context in which she was truly a

linguistic minority was best realized. Her host brother was only 8-years old, but they spent the afternoon together, and she was responsible for him even if he knew his way around that part of Madrid somewhat. His family trusted Gabi with him, he trusted her as well, and through their interaction, they even became friends.

Mariela - "I'm better at taking notice of what I'm supposed to do."

Mariela saw her summer language study abroad in Spain as an opportunity to satisfy a curiosity she had about becoming “more than just a tourist” within the context of a culture different from anything with which she had previously had experience.

Although Mariela admitted that she had not had much experience with cultural diversity before her sojourn to Madrid, she nevertheless was excited to learn more about the language that she had been studying for years and many aspects of a culture associated with that language. At the time of the research, Mariela was a 20-year old rising junior, majoring in Exercise Science with a minor in Spanish. During the study abroad, Mariela was taking an Introduction to Spanish for the Health Professions class, along with Peoples and Cultures of Spain. The People and Cultures of Spain class was the first class she could remember taking regarding cultural diversity. Mariela participated in a homestay, with a señora, a señor, and their two children who were 18 and 27 years old. Mariela, of all my participants, was the hardest for me to provoke detailed answers. She seemed generally shy, evidenced by her short responses to interview questions and a reticence to provide more detail. I remember wondering how that might manifest itself in her interactions with the Other, and I made a concerted effort to rephrase all my questions that I didn't feel Mariela answered with much detail.

Mariela's sense of equality

Mariela felt welcomed as a member of her host family, but didn't engage at the level of a family member - a relationship that Mariela accepted as part of her study abroad responsibilities, but little else. She told me, "I think they definitely want me to speak a lot of Spanish. I think that's the main thing they want me to do. They've kind of even said they want to help me with my speaking skills. I think they take into consideration that I'm not a native speaker and they slow down for me." Still, though, Mariela felt her responsibility in this interaction was more of a listener and observer than an interlocutor. "They really try to force me to speak Spanish. They refuse to say anything in English. If I don't understand something, they find a new way to say it in Spanish. Every time I'm just sort of sitting there and listening, they ask me, 'What do you have to say about that?' and make me speak Spanish."

Due to the overall superficiality of her interactions with members of the host culture while outside of her host family, Mariela seemingly did not sense that she saw her own social status and that of members of the host culture equally. This superficiality seemingly kept Mariela from engaging members of the host culture as more than a tourist. In fact, Mariela's "interactions" with the host culture outside of her homestay were rarely interactions at all. "A lot of times [some friends from my university and I] just are going to the store or a café and ordering something or asking where something is. I'm finding I can get tasks done better now." This superficiality manifested itself by the majority of her host cultural generalizations coming from contexts in which she was either alone or with her university cohort community, usually in situations in which she was in the role of "tourist." She told me,

I feel like everywhere you go, people don't like Americans. Especially when we go out as a [big group]. I think we're definitely louder, so I think

they perceive us as a little bit loud. And we were asking them, "how is it so obvious to tell we're not from here?" And they were like, "you're almost nicer." We were in this group of girls, and the girls from [Spain] are almost more rude and closed off. So the American girls are kind of like going down the street with a smile on our faces and it's really obvious to [native Spaniards].

When in this community, Mariela noticed that "people don't like Americans" because of their loudness and how although the American girls "are almost nicer" than Spanish girls, this is a manifestation of cultural inequality. Mariela noticed that Spaniards dress differently, walk differently, and "walk straight. You don't look around... you're not smiling or anything, you're just walking... with a purpose. So I try to do that now, and I feel like that's been more 'Spanish' of me. I think I'm better at taking notice to see what I'm supposed to do." As time went on, Mariela was proud of the fact that she "played the part" of a Spanish woman without immersing in the language component of the culture.

Toward the end of her stay in Spain, she revealed in the fact that

now people will ask me for directions in the street - maybe that means I look more Spanish. Also, one time I asked someone for directions and they started answering me in Spanish - and then I was like "Oh, *lo siento* (I'm sorry)," you know, I don't speak that much Spanish. And they're like, "Oh, I speak English too." And I was like, "Oh, really?" But then I thought, "Maybe I look more Spanish than I thought!"

Even Mariela's most memorable experiences in Spain, as told to me, involved her not really interacting with any members of the host culture, but rather witnessing their actions or interactions with other members of the host culture. An example includes Mariela listening in on the conversation two Spanish women were having on the metro and realizing, "...this is the best I have ever listened in Spanish!" It was a little bit easier for me, so I think that was a turning point in terms of how I understood Spanish." In another instance on the metro, "it was really sad because there was this homeless man

standing there asking for things. But that was like, 'Oh, I actually understand what he's saying,' and I wasn't consciously translating what he was saying, it was more natural..."

What was important to Mariela wasn't being able to interact, but rather being able to understand, like a voyeur on the host culture. This lack of interaction with the host culture outside of her host family indicates that Mariela didn't see them as equals, or worthy of her interaction. The nature of interactions as described would not align with the social equality needed to satisfy Allport's (1954) first optimal condition for prejudice reduction.

Mariela's identification of goals

Mariela, when asked about her goals for her language immersion summer abroad program in Spain, expressed that she would most like to "definitely learn more Spanish since it's something I've been taking most of my life, and learn more about the culture here." Seemingly at odds, though, with how Mariela had described to me her interactions while in Spain, was her third goal of "being more than a tourist" while abroad. The degree to which one feels like a "tourist" depends partly on how much members of the host culture make one feel like a "tourist." It also depends, though, on how much acts like a tourist. All of these goals, if Mariela were to satisfy them, required some degree of cooperation from members of the host culture. Aside from feeling like she was "more than a tourist," Mariela would be continuing to learn Spanish and would be learning about aspects of the culture from members of the host culture, making cooperation from members of the host culture important for Mariela to achieve her goals.

Mariela's sense of community support

When talking about her homestay community, Mariela felt an enormous amount of support in her learning more Spanish while abroad. Mariela expressed this in many ways, including by saying things like, "they're making it feel like I'm a part of the family. I know it's only been a short time, but they kind of have a similar family structure as mine, just in the way they act. So it's easy to just kind of be a part of that - they're so open and willing to speak to me." Mariela really appreciated her host family's efforts to include her in on the conversations at the dinner table, even if she didn't contribute to the conversation much. Regarding dinnertime conversations, Mariela told me, "[my host family] is very patient with me. It's nice to have that because I'm maybe a little bit shy to speak because I was clearly not as good as them at Spanish. They asked me to speak and be more outgoing with it because otherwise I'm not going to learn. Now that I know that and they've said that multiple times, it's getting easier for me to practice."

Outside of her homestay situation, Mariela found it difficult to have authentic interactions with members of the host culture. In our first interview, Mariela attributed much of her lack of interactions to not understanding the typical nighttime social schedule of members of the host culture. She told me,

[My friend from my university] and I went out to this club at night and nobody got there until 2:00am. We got there at like midnight, thinking oh gosh, we'll be right on time. We were probably like in the first ten people there. So, we had to wait around for like two hours. But then I thought we should just go because I still like to wake up at like 7:00am and go for a run, especially because it gets so hot here that I don't want to do anything in the middle of the day that's like exercise or anything like that.

At the beginning of her sojourn, Mariela sacrificed potential interactions with members of the host culture so she could better keep her routine while in Spain.

As time went on, there ended up being a number of instances in which both she and members of the host culture had the opportunities to communicate with each other, the interactions never materialized to the level that Mariela said she wished they had. For example, when Mariela met up with the Spanish cousin of one of her friends from university, Mariela saw it as an opportunity to have a conversation with a member of the host culture. She described the interaction by telling me,

[The Spanish cousin] was happy that she had someone to speak Spanish with because she doesn't speak that much English. Like, out of our group, I was the only one that wanted to talk to her. She was just kind of sitting there, so it was nice to go talk to someone who was closer to my age. But we didn't end up talking for long. It was just kind of general 'get-to-know-you' things. But then we sort of just ran out of things to talk about.

There was no mention of further conversations with this Spanish cousin. Other typical interactions, according to Mariela, would happen in clubs at night, "but after you meet [people from Spain], you're just like of like, 'well, what do I say now?...' I guess it's different knowing how to speak to people in English rather than in Spanish because I can't say something that I want to say in Spanish like I would in English, especially like what kids our own age know..." Although Mariela felt her Spanish was improving with her host family, she did not seem confident enough to speak much Spanish with other members of the host culture.

Mariela felt some aspects of her Complutense community supported her goals of learning more Spanish, in that her "professors are really supportive, you know if they hear us speaking English, they'll say, 'why aren't you speaking Spanish?'" Mariela lamented, though, the fact that within her classes at the Complutense, there was not much opportunity to interact with the host culture: "being in both classes [offered specifically by my university], we have only [students from my university], so it's not like I can meet

Spanish students to kind of find friends in that kind of grouping and go out with them.” Being in a situation like this, where Mariela felt that she was around members of her own culture as much as she was, interfered with her goal of being "more than just a tourist" while on her study abroad.

Mariela felt her university cohort was not an asset in her continuing to learn Spanish. Typically at the beginning of the summer study abroad, according to Mariela, the group would speak almost exclusively in English, which Mariela realized was at odds with her goal of improving her Spanish fluency. She told me, "During class [we] obviously have to speak Spanish, but I think it's a little more difficult when we get together as just the classmates because it's so much easier to just go back to English. So that's a little bit... that's bad I think." But even when Mariela, or anyone else wanted to change the language to Spanish, “that usually lasts for about ten minutes until someone forgets... so that’s more detrimental to our learning...” As time went on, Mariela found linguistic solace, saying in our second interview together, “When we are going out with certain groups of us - not all together [as a big university group]... within our small groups... we try to speak Spanish amongst each other. With the smaller groups, you're able to control [the amount of Spanish spoken] more. And I think at this point, we really want to get the most out of this experience.” Like Gabi, Mariela recognized that she had to be selective about her cohort community to find support for her goals. Unlike Gabi, though, Mariela sought linguistic support almost solely from her university cohort, and not from the host culture outside of her host family.

Mariela's sense of intergroup cooperation

In her homestay, Mariela often felt cooperation in her quest to learn more Spanish. Often times, Mariela's family "even said that they want to help me with my speaking skills. And it's nice that they always try to encourage me. They're like, 'You speak Spanish really well, you just have to be not shy about it. Then it'll come more naturally.' And so, that's true I think." To help Mariela understand what they were saying better, her host family "slow[ed] down their speaking a little bit - kind of [made] it easier for me to understand, or use different words they think I would know."

Ultimately, Mariela felt being part of a homestay with no roommate from her university was valuable because "I think I got a better experience in terms of language and it was just nice to have the family be able to focus on me I guess - which sounds kind of bad, but just to give me their knowledge. Also, I can't go back to my room and speak English - I'm just speaking Spanish with [my host family]." Mariela felt this paid off in the end as her family felt she had gotten better and even said to her, "When you get back [to the United States] we have to Skype all the time, and keep practicing your Spanish." There were a number of instances, though, where Mariela was encouraged to take part in familial debates in which she did not feel comfortable because she thought it could be controversial that she take one side or another. For example, when asked her opinion about religion, Mariela "didn't know what to say. But I just said that it depends on what you believe, and I just tried to be neutral about everything because I didn't want to upset anyone." Mariela felt it was more important not to upset the señores' children despite the fact that "I would say I'm more of a religious person than... the kids in my [host] family." Later in her homestay, Mariela "obviously... didn't state my opinion" about the importance of the siesta because "I have class during siesta and I'm trying to see

everything, and this was a pretty big discussion.” Mariela felt that if she had stated her opinion, it also would have upset her host brother as he “was complaining about he didn’t get to take a siesta. He said, 'That's not natural to work through the whole day. I'm so tired now.’” Even when the conversation was more directly intended for Mariela, she did not feel comfortable taking part if she thought the topic was controversial. One afternoon, her host brother asked Mariela how she perceived Christopher Columbus. Mariela thought, “[Spaniards] think that we think it's just a terrible thing. Because of the Native Americans. That's what he thought. And I said, 'Well you have to have respect, but we're happy we live in the United States now. And it's just the past.' I didn't ask him how he came to that idea, but he kept saying 'we,' so I think Spaniards think that in general. Maybe they learn that through school.” Mariela seemingly wanted to end the conversation about Native Americans in the United States as quickly as it started. Not taking advantage of participating fully in discussion such as these may have inhibited Mariela learning as completely as possible some aspects of Spanish culture which would have more completely fulfilled her goals had she taken advantage of these opportunities.

Carlos - "I'm ready to swim."

Of all of my participants, Carlos began his language study abroad with the most amount of academic preparation regarding cultural diversity and readiness. The summer of his study abroad was the summer before his senior year at his Midwestern university. Carlos was from a suburb of a major metropolitan area in a state adjacent to the one in which he attended university. A double major in Secondary Education and Spanish, Carlos had the career goal of becoming a K-12 Spanish teacher, and had taken the majority of classes to have completed his degree. At the time of this research, Carlos was

21-years old, and was taking Advanced Composition and Conversation as well as Spoken Spanish at the Complutense. His previous preparation not only included advanced classes in Spanish language and literature, but also cultural diversity courses with names like “Diversity in the Classroom” and “Peoples and Cultures of Spain” (which is a class that other participants were enrolled in while in Spain, but had already been completed by Carlos). Carlos spent his summer study abroad in a homestay, as mentioned previously, with Marló. As such, his host family included a señora, a señor, their 22-year old daughter and a 24-year old female exchange student from Argentina.

Although most of the program participants, and five of my six participants, flew together from the United States to Madrid, participants in this study abroad program were ultimately responsible for their own travel to and from Spain. Because of this, Carlos decided to fly to Madrid two days before the majority of the program participants did, and told me he spent this time “getting to know” Madrid a little on his own. Our first interview began with Carlos telling me of a situation that he ran into revolving around a communication breakdown in a restaurant:

There was this one thing where I guess when you say "*¿quieres comer?*" (do you want to eat?) or "*quiero comer*" (I want to eat)," it's like to sit down and eat. So when the waiter brought over the menu, you know, he had the bread and the water all set out for me, and I just wanted a hamburger I saw in the window. But then he got pretty animated when I said, "Oh no, I just want to eat a little," and he got angry about it because the confusion and the language barrier there. Me not knowing "*comer*" meant to sit down and have like this three-course meal. So, I had to ask him in Spanish, "Is everything alright? Is everything OK?" And then he apologized and he was fine after that, but it was just like I felt kind of bad that I didn't understand that at first. And I talked to [the program director] about it. It all worked its way out.

It struck me how the first thing Carlos told me about was not only an interaction he had with a member of the host culture, and how that interaction included some sort of

miscommunication and misunderstanding, but also how Carlos used the host culture language to ultimately resolve the situation with seemingly no negative implications.

Carlos' sense of equality

Carlos certainly showed during his study abroad in Spain that he believed being perceived as an equal in social status with members of the host culture was a question of presenting himself as often as possible as an equal, while at the same time perceiving the members of the host culture as equal to himself. He attributed his ability to present himself as a social equal to “50% luck, 50% just having the right attitude... I think you kind of gotta not be afraid to just try to meet friends and just go for it.” His language ability could have been a factor, “I don’t know if I was a different person [when I was the younger age of the other participants] than I am now, or how confident I would be with my language skills versus now.” Carlos' description of cultural differences between his home culture and the host culture were generally presented in the context of Carlos simply having been previously misinformed, while always making sure that descriptors like the Spanish being “relaxed” were not pejorative. He made sure to clarify, saying,

I mean, [Spaniards] need to get places, but it's okay if they're running a little behind. They're like, 'I'll make it there.' Normally I'm a fairly impatient person, so if someone slow is ahead of me, I'm like, 'oh my God, please just start walking already!' But I'm going to be honest, I'm loving trying to take it down a little. Get done what you need to get done - but relaxed. If the United States did that... but I really think we couldn't. We're so business-oriented and everyone has got that agenda every day. I think it would be cool, if we were living a little more like here [in Spain].

Carlos would ensure this meaning by never juxtaposing these descriptors with words that would describe his home culture more positively. The nature of Carlos' interactions with the host culture, coupled with the fact that there was a perceived equality of social status,

at least on Carlos' part, would indicate an alignment with Allport's (1954) first optimal condition for prejudice reduction.

Carlos' identification of goals

When I asked Carlos to tell me his goals for his language immersion summer abroad program, he was very clear. He told me, "first and foremost, this is just an amazing opportunity at hand. I consider myself extremely lucky to be here. I know neither of my parents have even been anywhere else but our country. So I was like, 'If I could really do this, it would be amazing.'" Carlos' second goal was due to his career and future professional goals, "I would like to be a Spanish teacher, so I wanted to get to know a little bit about the culture here - I wanted to perfect the language a little bit more in certain areas. I'd like to be able to express myself [in Spanish] better. Also, a travel abroad is one of the requirements [of my major]." As in the cases of my other participants who indicated to me that one of their goals was simply to participate in a study abroad program, whether it be a requirement of their major or simply an academic goal, no cooperation from members of the host culture was needed to facilitate the achievement of this goal. In essence, these participants, Carlos included, had already achieved the goal of fulfilling a program requirement. The satisfaction of Carlos' other goals, including to some degree "taking advantage" of the study abroad, would require some degree of cooperation from people that made up different "communities" that Carlos would come into contact with while in Spain. For Carlos, "the communication is such a key aspect... component. Every day when you're with your friends [from university], it's easier to use the English. But forcing myself [to speak Spanish] is kind of

like being thrown into a cold pool - that's the way it kind of is right now. You know, I'm ready to swim."

Carlos' sense of community support

Whenever referring to his homestay community, Carlos felt as supported as he could have hoped for regarding his opportunities to better his language skills. Carlos could count on having the opportunity "to talk for about forty minutes to an hour with our señora and her husband" during dinner. Not only were these members of the host culture a resource for Carlos, but also "...even if we are quiet, they try to come up with another conversation." Because of this interaction, "I make sure - even though it might be a little inconvenient if you want to go out and be with your friends and stuff - dinner is always at 9:00. You should be there around 9:00 and then eat and talk until about 9:45 or 10:00, and then go out." Carlos also indicated that within his homestay situation, he had been able to process cultural differences between Spain and the United States like social norms, sports, food, and clothing styles. Carlos felt the dinnertime conversations were opportunities for people from two different cultures to explain things more clearly, for example,

we were discussing food, and I thought it was so funny when they said, 'Oh, you're famous for your hot dogs.' And I thought, 'hot dogs?' I said, 'If that's our best thing that we got, you know, we're severely lacking something.' It was so funny, because they're bragging about their ham and this and that. We have hot dogs?!? Are you kidding me? That's like the low of the low. You get six of those for \$1.50 at the grocery store. But everybody has their cultural perceptions that are totally just the most absurd things you've ever heard. Or it can be like, 'Hey, I've never thought about it that way! You come to these [cultural] generalizations, but if you have a conversation about them, you can dig in a little deeper and see what is correct.

Carlos summed up his learning experience with his host family thusly, “You learn something new every day at the dinner table. It’s not necessarily like it’s a life-changing lesson every time or anything like that. But it’s just making you aware of something that you didn’t know at first, and you’re just like ‘wow!’”

Carlos also mentioned the importance he felt in having the ability to converse with the female exchange student from Argentina, if nothing else to understand the linguistic differences between Castilian Spanish and Argentine Spanish in practice. "It's very cool to hear the 'zhe,' and like 'zho zhevo'⁴ and things like that. I feel like I have to keep hearing her speak because I love hearing that."

Interactions that Carlos had with members of the host culture outside of his family were also opportunities that Carlos felt were supportive of his fostering positive relationships. Most of these interactions came while Carlos and his university cohort were out at bars at night. Although during these interactions, Carlos and members of the host culture never really talked about anything in-depth, Carlos nevertheless placed importance on these as useful practice:

Like last night, I was outside of the bar and I was talking to a guy for probably like five or ten minutes... I was telling him I want to be a Spanish teacher and we had this whole conversation about the metro system... he was asking me questions about sports teams... those small little interactions are really key... if you have enough of them, it’s all just going to come that much more natural.

⁴ Native Spanish-speakers from Argentina and the surrounding areas generally pronounce words that have a "y" or a "ll" differently from how native Spanish-speakers from other regions do. In all instances, the "y" and the "ll" are pronounced the same within-regions. In most of the Spanish-speaking world, these letters are similar to the "y" in English. In Argentina and its surrounding areas, these letters sound more like an English "zh." The Spanish words to which Carlos refers here are "yo" (I), and "llevo" (I bring or I carry).

Even with interactions with members of the host culture that started out negatively, Carlos took advantage of the opportunity to bridge the communication breakdown to resolve the situation. Referring back to the first interaction Carlos told me about when he went to eat at the beginning of his stay, and there was confusion about how much he was actually going to eat, because of Carlos' misuse of a verb. This interaction in particular is interesting because it was the language difference that actually opened this opportunity for interaction, which Carlos turned for good.

Carlos felt that his Complutense community supported his goals about as much as an academic institution should during a study abroad. His sentiments were that “the professors at the Complutense are extremely kind,” and they helped him learn a lot of advanced Spanish grammar, which he expressed as “shock” at “how much [Spaniards] use the subjunctive and conditional.” Outside of the academics, though, Carlos felt the Complutense wasn't as much of a resource for learning about the culture and providing interactions opportunities with members of the host culture as he was able to take advantage of outside the Complutense. He said, "The structure [of having classes at the Complutense] I think had me actually communicating less. I did more when I was just exploring." Carlos wasn't even sure the academic part of his study abroad was worth it, stating, “Nothing against the Complutense, but when it came to the classroom, I felt like it was pretty laid back. Pretty unproductive... when it came down to it, though, I found myself learning more outside of the classroom.”

Although Carlos loved spending time with members of his university cohort community, he seemed to understand that he would not be able to satisfy his goals for the summer by spending his time exclusively with them. Carlos expressed his sentiments by

saying, “I think the most difficult thing about the [university] cohort is everyone’s got different goals...when it comes to the language itself, I think we all could do a better job...which is why I take upon myself to try to seek something a little different, and you can be with [friends] but you can try to branch out as well.”

Carlos' sense of intergroup cooperation

Carlos' found that the Complutense did not help him to satisfy his goals of improving his language skills. Although he found the opportunity to “listen to the little details of the language” in terms of the use of advanced grammatical structures like the subjunctive and the conditional tenses, “all the vocab stopped. It just stopped. I feel like if you want the vocab, you have to take it on yourself,” which Carlos did by keeping a vocabulary notebook while in Spain. “I tried to get up to like 500 words, but I took a week off it, just because I was getting tired and I was trying to do and see a ton of things. But I'd still say inside that notebook there are at least 300+ words. It's usually more cultural language, not necessarily textbook language. Some of the slang they use.” Carlos' Complutense community did not provide any cooperation in the satisfaction of Carlos' cultural goals nor did it provide him external opportunities that he felt he could “take advantage of” to satisfy his other main goal. He told me,

When you're just sitting there, you're maybe thinking about [how to communicate in Spanish]. When you're in class, it's class stuff. But it's a whole other animal when it comes out of your mouth. And I'm proud of having that 'no fear' attitude. And now there's certain moments in conversation where it's like, 'oh, wow, I used Spanish very well in that instance.' Or, 'I used that tense extremely well'."

In his homestay, Carlos felt that his host family provided him with more than ample opportunities to practice his Spanish. He was appreciative that "[my host parents] are always helping [Marl6 and me] if we way something wrong or if there is some

vocabulary word that we made up. And our señora is a teacher, so she's very helpful and helping me learn the fundamentals." Carlos felt his host family also provided him opportunities to connect to the host culture outside of the immediate homestay family, as they invited other people from outside the family to have dinner at times. Carlos mentioned that his host family would often have guests with whom Carlos felt he had the opportunity to connect, and he felt it was his responsibility to take advantage of these opportunities. He was grateful that "[our dinner guests] have had great conversations with us. I really think I got a great homestay because [our señora] is always having people over." Specifically, Carlos mentioned Eduardo, who "stayed with [my host family] for two months and he came over the other night for dinner." Ultimately, Eduardo "gave us a Facebook request. And Rodrigo took a picture of me, Marló and Eduardo all together hanging out." Additionally, when the Argentine woman's sister and another friend flew from Argentina to Madrid and came to Carlos' homestay for María's birthday, Carlos saw another opportunity to interact with members of an "Other" culture, even if he spent most of the time "just to listen to them talk. I tried jumping in on the conversation, but with five other people there just rolling on in Spanish, it's tough to find your way into the conversation, especially when what they're saying is a lot more knowledgeable than what you're able to give to the conversation." Although these were conversations between multiple native speakers, Carlos nevertheless pushed himself to participate to his best ability.

RQ2: What other experiences reported by participants in a language study abroad have implications for their openness to the Other?

Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions of *intergroup contact theory* have contributed to the understanding of *intergroup contact theory*, but they must be situated

contextually. Allport's research not only took place entirely in the United States, but also took place at a time in which racial tensions were more overt than any tensions in present society. As such, any researcher seeking to incorporate Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction must also situate that research to take into consideration additional factors that may interact with these conditions. In this spirit, I have identified six elements specific to this particular language study abroad which I believe interact with Allport's conditions in such a way to potentially have an effect on each participant's openness to the linguistic and cultural Other. These elements include: 1) The effect of the presence of the university cohort; 2) time-limited "living" in a foreign country; 3) ease of the ability to communicate with the "home culture;" 4) artificiality of program design re: weekend excursions; 5) individual's reactions to linguistic or cultural conflict, or "adversity," and; 6) importance placed upon casual and superficial contact.

The effect of the presence of the university cohort.

Allport's (1954, 89) original research distinguished a number of categories to which groups of individuals can be "assigned," including race, ethnicity, language, religion, nations, and interests, among others. Each of the above-mentioned categories oftentimes constitutes differences between members of a host culture and participants of a language study abroad program. Each of these categories also, acknowledged Allport, is a possible catalyst for prejudicial thoughts and actions. For the purposes of this research, individuals are placed into one of two groups determined by native language, country of origin, and cultural practices. These categories, then, are used as benchmarks to contrast one group of people from its linguistic and cultural Other.

Participation in a language study abroad such as the one I highlight in my present research, however, presents the beacon of a community, the university cohort, of same-language, essentially same-culture, and newly-acquainted individuals who spend significant time together in a context that otherwise lacks these comforts. This cohort allows the participant to avoid forming communities with those different from themselves - a challenging and sometimes even painful exercise in a language study abroad program. The comfort of the sameness of the cohort significantly interferes with difficult interaction between different groups.

Whether by program design such as course availabilities or weekend excursions, or by social factors such as participants choosing to spend free time together at bars or clubs, the university cohort ends up being an important factor in how each participant perceives her language study abroad. The presence of a university cohort interacts with Allport's (1954) *intergroup contact theory* in at least three distinct ways. First, it gives the participants an additional, yet extremely important community by which to be supported, or in this case, for some primarily *not* supported in the achievement of program goals. Secondly, this university cohort gives participants a barometer against which they could measure their perceptions of social status relative to that of the host culture, as well as the relative cooperation received by members of the host culture in an effort to achieve their individual goals for the language study abroad. And third, it offers them an escape from the pain of trying to relate to the Other. All of my participants mentioned how wonderful it was to have this university cohort group to be with, but Violeta, Gabi, Mariela and Carlos, also talked about seeking out a subset of this cohort that would better support them in their pursuit of goals.

A participant like Isabel, on the other hand, gained an understanding from her university cohort that general use of Spanish outside of a classroom setting was either never sustained for more than a couple of minutes or “rejected” altogether. She said, typically, "We would find ourselves in situations where we were too tired to think about it [in Spanish] or just wanting to talk English - like I'd just want to have a conversation [with my university cohort] and get it over with. And if I said it in English, it would be two minutes long but now in Spanish it's taking me much longer." To Isabel, speaking Spanish was only expected while in Spanish class, and her progression and achievement within class provided her with tools by which to measure her perceived improvement in the language.

The university cohort also provided Isabel not only a sounding board by which she could process her homestay, but also a reinforcement to whom she could rehearse her concerns and hear them echoed back by others with similar concerns. The stories of Isabel and her roommate having to clean up the toothpaste on the bathroom counter, having to turn off lights more often than they were used to, and having to close the blinds in their rooms in an effort to not ruin the paint reinforced to many other members of the university cohort like Marló and Violeta that Isabel's homestay situation was an emotionally painful experience. Further, though, other program participants made by-proxy comparisons between Isabel's homestay and their own, and although Violeta certainly had criticisms of her own señora, and Marló lamented aspects of his own experience, they each felt that at least their experience wasn't as bad as the one Isabel expressed she was having. Isabel concluded ultimately that if she had her study abroad to do all over again, she was not sure that she would elect to participate in a homestay again.

In other words, had she the experience to do over again, Isabel would choose even less interactions with the Other. This conclusion was surely affected, or at least supported by the university cohort with which Isabel processed these events.

Linguistically, Marló also recognized the lack of support of the university cohort in speaking Spanish socially when he said, “One person speaks English, everybody speaks English.” The lack of opportunity that Marló felt in meeting people of his own age from the host culture, coupled with the fact that the university cohort not only almost exclusively spoke English but also spent so much time together socially, led Marló to conclude that his Spanish hadn't gotten any better during his language study abroad. He concluded, "In terms of learning more Spanish, I don't feel like I learned any more, despite spending a whole month [in Spain]. I do feel like it would have happened if there were more Spanish people in our group." Clearly, Marló at least partly attributed his inability to achieve his goals of language improvement to the amount of time his university cohort spent together in Spain.

If there was anything redeeming about Marló's time in Spain, it surely was due in large part to his homestay family. Marló's positive feelings about his homestay were certainly substantiated by the stories he heard from other members of his university cohort about host families “acting bitter toward Americans” or families “yelling at the students for going out too much.” Still, Marló concluded that his homestay situation could have been better had it been more like his girlfriend's, or if his family were bigger like Gabi's, or if he had a sibling that could give him some sort of additional entrée to the host culture. Ultimately, instead of focusing on the positive interactions he was able to have with his host family, Marló's dissatisfaction with how certain aspects of his

homestay matched up with those of other members of his university cohort and his girlfriend's prior experience led to criticism of his sojourn.

Violeta also felt that, despite the almost immediate sense of trust she felt in the other program participants, the university cohort would not support each other in speaking Spanish socially. She expressed, "I think everyone [from my university] is okay with speaking English, like when we're out in the street. And I kind of want to go to the Spanish bars whereas most of the people in my group just want to go drink - that sort of thing." Because of this, much like Isabel, Violeta felt her classes were the major vehicles by which she would improve her Spanish, and indicated that she felt her Spanish improved while she was abroad due to these classes. Violeta's lack of connections to members of the host culture outside of her homestay, along with the amount of time she spent with her university cohort in situations that generally did not support making interpersonal connections to the host language or culture, concluding, "I don't think one month is necessarily enough time to form meaningful relationships [with people from Spain]. But I feel really close to the group [from my university]. I think we could bring those friendships back, so that's a cool thing, I guess." Interestingly, her conclusion that one month was not a sufficient amount of time to really achieve the goal of meeting people from Spain was completely at odds with the degree of closeness she felt to other members of her own culture. However, Violeta planned to participate in a semester-long study abroad in Chile later in her university career, and felt that her time spent in Chile would be more conducive to her not only improving much more in the language, but also in meeting and making connections with the "Other."

Violeta also used her university cohort to help her support her negative evaluation of her own homestay. She felt her señora was critical of her and her roommate when they would go out to bars, and heard from other members of her cohort that “if they don’t go out, their señoras are disappointed.” She, like Marló, seemed jealous of Gabi’s homestay because of how many people of “different generations” were present in the house, as well as the closeness of Gabi’s relationship with her host “brother.” Violeta told me she would love to have a homestay situation in which she could be "talking Spanish, but in different age groups. [Gabi] is by herself. I think she has a little brother, parents and a grandma or something like that. I think it's a whole different thing - her house brother watches movies with her. They watch *fútbol* and stuff like that." Violeta could also position herself as having it better than Isabel, though, as she expressed surprise that “one señora just yells at [them] constantly. And [Isabel] is constantly having to clean - they have to clean the whole countertop every time they brush their teeth.”

Gabi immediately recognized that her university cohort would not linguistically support her program goals, but interpreted this lack of support differently than did Isabel, Marló or Violeta. Instead of criticizing the nature of the program or believing that during class was the best or only time to improve her Spanish, Gabi understood the cohort’s lack of support as a call to seek out interactions and relationships with the host culture on her own. This realization of the linguistic lack of support by her university cohort did not necessarily modify Gabi’s linguistic goals for her study abroad, but did likely shift her understanding of where this support must have come from.

Although many of my other participants, like Isabel, Marló and Violeta especially, looked to Gabi’s homestay as one that represented the ideals of what a

homestay should be, Gabi's interaction with the members of her university cohort also provided her with a barometer regarding which ways she felt her homestay situation could be even better. Gabi didn't think she was "having as much conversation in [her] homestay as other people seem to be having. They'll sit with their families and talk a lot more." Again, though, the overall comparisons Gabi made relative to her university cohort's homestays indicated an attitude by which Gabi would have to take matters into her own hands to make the most of her own situation abroad. Unlike Isabel who used the comparisons among the cohort's various descriptions of homestays to validate her criticisms and withdrawal from the host culture, Gabi used the comparisons to motivate her to initiate closer association with the host culture to improve her achievement of her goals. This attitude was exemplified by Gabi's "gladness" that she was not in the residence halls as there were too many Americans and not as many chances to communicate. She said, "It seems like they've all kind of become friends. I know they have dinner for like one hour a day together in the halls, but then they kind of just hang around together... I'm glad there are not Americans [in my homestay]. If I want to communicate with anybody, I have to speak Spanish." Here, Gabi also expressed her gladness that she chose not to have a roommate from her university as she felt roommates would speak to each other too often in English. No roommate meant extra practice in Spanish for Gabi.

Mariela was my participant most disconnected from the faction of university cohort that "gets to places at like 2:00 in the morning and doesn't leave until the metro opens back up at 6:00. I stay out a little, but I try to get back on the metro and go home before 1:30 - before it closes." She certainly realized the cohort spoke "so much

English,” but chose instead to spend her social time with a “small group” of people from her university cohort. Nevertheless, although Mariela’s group may have least resembled the dynamic of the larger university group, Mariela nevertheless admitted that it was harder for her to achieve her goals of learning more about Spanish as they “try to speak more Spanish - [but] sometimes we forget and slip back to English.” Having disassociated from the large university cohort to a degree, the only comparison Mariela made regarding her homestay relative to other stories she had heard was that, like Gabi, she was happy to not have a roommate from her university as she felt she would have spent all of her free time in her room talking in English to her roommate, much like other people from her cohort admitted they did in their situations.

Carlos understood that his university cohort “could do better with speaking the language,” but ultimately didn’t see his cohort as integral in achieving his linguistic goals. The key difference with Carlos was that while many of the other participants in this study were very dependent on their English-speaking cohort and used it as an escape, or a safe place away from the pressures of Spanish language and culture, Carlos did not. Rather, while he “love[d] the opportunity to be with friends,” from his university cohort and “developed relationships and a camaraderie that has lasted beyond the study abroad,” Carlos knew that to achieve the linguistic goals he established for himself, he would have to seek out opportunities to interact with the Other to learn the aspects of the language he was never taught in class.

Carlos also interpreted his homestay to be “the best,” at least in part to the stories he heard other members of his university cohort tell about their homestays. Whether someone’s “señora was gone for the entire day” and left to fend for himself to eat dinner

each night, or participants' señoras who are "worried and upset" all of the time, or members of the cohort who "go home and they don't really talk" to their host families, Carlos used the reactions of his university cohort to further solidify the positive relationship he had with his homestay family.

In summary, for some the university cohort provided an easy escape from the struggles of speaking a second language and encountering cultural difference. In addition, the cohort provided a place for venting and reinforcing negative evaluations about homestay difficulties. Others, however, resisted these provisions and turned their energies away from the safety of the cohort and towards greater engagement with the host culture.

Time-limited "living" in a foreign country

Another element specific to this language study abroad, that also importantly interacted with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction according to *intergroup contact theory* is simply the fact that each participant is indeed living abroad, but the stay is time-limited and artificial. Similar to certain aspects of the present study, Allport's original research focused on differences that existed between groups of people of different races, religions, socioeconomic statuses, and even at times dialects or native languages, and the focus was more on prejudicial thoughts than actions. In contrast to the present study, however, the participants in Allport's original research were living in their own environments having had some sort of previous interactions with the Other already introduced and added into their lives. There was an authenticity to their living experience. When prejudicial actions were discussed, it was often as a result of members

of two different groups who had all chosen to make their homes in certain geographical regions.

The present research, as well, takes into consideration the experiences of people that have decided, albeit temporarily, the geographic location of a residence in which they will come into contact with members of a linguistic and cultural Other. Further complicating this interaction, though, is the choice that these language study abroad participants had to live either in the context of a homestay or in the context of a residence hall with other language study abroad participants. It is possible that choosing a homestay over a residence hall put more pressure on the study abroad participants to speak Spanish, making a retreat into speaking English with the university cohort an appealing alternative. Finally, unlike any of the participants in Allport's (1954) research on *intergroup contact theory*, the present study's participants were all among the linguistic and cultural Other for a limited duration of time only, knowing that after about a month, they would leave. Thus, for any participant out of her comfort zone either linguistically or culturally with the Other, there was an ever-present understanding that a convenient escape was just around the corner. The participants knew being a part of a month-long homestay wasn't real "living" in the host country. It is possible that if the participants knew they were going to be staying for longer in these living contexts, it could have enforced more openness and resolutions of any tensions between cultures. For some, like Isabel, Marló, Violeta and Mariela, this artificiality rendered them less open to the Other as evidenced below. For Gabi and Carlos, however, the time constraints of their abroad experience seemed to help them demonstrate a greater sense of urgency to make their interactions with the host culture as successful as possible. The

understanding of how different individuals handled the understanding that the time as a study abroad participant would end is important as it could have affected that individual's motivation to "make things work" between herself and members of the Other.

For example, Isabel had often told me how she often felt "uncomfortable" with her señora while in her homestay. She told me how, "my señora always talks about how [Americans] take too much for granted, and that we act like everything is free for us, and we just use however much of everything we want." Specifically, Isabel mentioned to me the conflicts that had arisen when Isabel had not followed the guidelines that her señora felt Isabel should be following:

She asked us to watch how much water we use during the shower. To turn off the water when we're shampooing our hair and then turn in back on when we want to rinse off, so we're not using all her water. Or, she always asks that we turn off the light whenever we leave the room - even if we're going to come right back. She told us we're not allowed to be barefoot in the house, but we're not allowed to wear shoes, so... But I don't always want to have socks out for like when I go to class, so I have to carry socks in my bag with me now wherever I go.

Isabel felt inconvenienced by what her señora was asking her. It got to the point where, in her words, Isabel felt her señora was always "checking up" on her and her roommate - something which really bothered Isabel. She said, "I feel like she's always checking up on us now to make sure we only have one light on [in our room], or some other reason to criticize us." When I asked Isabel how she handled these conflicts, Isabel told me "I just sort of let it go," likely due to the finite duration of her homestay. Had Isabel been setting up longer term or even permanent residence, it is possible that these conflicts would have been handled differently, ultimately affecting (either positively or negatively) her perception of the Other. Additionally, given the fact that Isabel initially chose a homestay over living in the residence halls, she came to ultimately regret her decision.

Ultimately, Isabel felt that her señora "wasn't the friendliest person and she didn't really make us feel like a part of the family. It was more of a business deal. I don't think I would do [a homestay] again if I got to choose again." This remorse surely did not help to increase Isabel's openness to the Other, but rather likely intensified her discontent.

Marló, on the other hand, never questioned whether he made the right decision by participating in a homestay over spending the month in the residence halls. From what he heard about the residence halls, Marló understood that while he could have some cultural interaction with his host family, the program participants he knew in the residence halls rarely, if ever, were able to take advantage of speaking the language in authentic contexts while abroad. He summed up what he heard about the residence halls thusly,

[the residence hall participants] said that they would be able to live there with Spanish students, but I don't think [any of my university's participants] have had any conversations with [Spaniards] because a ton of Americans live there. So, I mean [my friend] said he's met a lot of the Americans there, but I don't think he's met any of the Spanish students. I would not trade with him. I feel like he just sits there."

As mentioned before, Marló's feelings about his homestay provided some of the only redeeming qualities about the study abroad program in his opinion.

Marló's strong cognizance of the amount of time he had spent in Spain and the amount of time he had left to spend in Spain at any given point of his language study abroad, however, affected the fatalistic nature of his attitude regarding his ability to connect with the linguistic and cultural Other. In our second interview together, Marló treated his relationship with the Other as something that had already ended and could not be salvaged, although our second interview happened after three weeks with one full week before departing - a full 25% of his time. He lamented, "I've only ever met one Spaniard since the last time we talked (about two weeks previously), and that's [his

classmate's cousin], but we really didn't get to talk that much. We met some in the first few days, but we've never seen them again." Marló told me "I guess you could say that I didn't really try too hard to connect with anybody again like I could have," implying that any "reconnection" was not going to happen within the last week of him studying in Spain. The sentence that summed his attitude up perfectly at this time was "I'm ready to go back." With this, Marló had essentially conveyed to me that salvaging any additional relationships with the Other was not going to be worth his time or effort because he knew his time in Spain was limited.

By our second interview together, Violeta had also come to the conclusion that with only one week left of one month spent on a language study abroad, there was not enough time to salvage making meaningful connections with members of the host culture. This despite her original desires to "go out and meet people" from Spain and to "develop some friendships with people from Spain," Violeta admitted to me that she no longer believed this to be possible after having completed only three-fourths of her language study abroad, possibly having arrived at that conclusion herself even earlier than that. She summed this up perfectly for me, albeit in a lengthy explanation, when she said

I think the people [on the Chile study abroad] will be a lot more serious [than the people studying in Spain for the summer]. I think it's pretty unrealistic to think we're going to go there for a month and come back fluent and with all these new best friends. I think everyone knows that. I think it's more like 'let's go learn about a different culture, let's go be part of that for a month. Let's try to increase our Spanish.' You know, those are kind of the goals, I think, for most people, for the one-month program. For the semester program, if I go, I'll end up being there for six months and my goals are a lot higher because I'll be there for so much longer. It's not one of those things where I'm like, 'oh, I get to go home in three weeks.' It's something that I'm going to *have* to do - to get by. So, I think the goals change because the amount of time changes. I don't know if it's seriousness... I guess everyone was

pretty serious going [to Spain], but it was definitely more touristy, I guess, for the month. Which is to be expected, I guess.

Interestingly, Violeta told me about the level of trust that existed between her and the members of her university cohort after the same amount of time, saying, "We got to trust each other very quickly - which I like because I didn't know anybody before [arriving in Madrid]. And most of them are older than I am, which is a whole different dynamic." This difference of Violeta feeling more willing to explore friendships with people from her own culture and not with people from the Other culture, given the fact that she knew none of these people before her sojourn, could very well be attributed to the cultural and native language similarities between Violeta and the rest of her cohort. The finite amount of time left with members of the host culture abroad, though, could have also played a part in Violeta's attitude regarding the values she placed on maintaining a level of closeness with each group.

In summary, then, the artificiality of the time-limited "living" experiences produced a level of withdrawal in four of the participants when they encountered challenges, whether cultural, linguistic, or in personalities. Knowing that their time in Spain would soon end, each of these four participants chose to disengage from the Other to some degree and in doing so, withdrew from any effort to more positively align their experiences with Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction.

Ease of the ability to communicate with the "home culture"

When Allport conducted his research revolving around *intergroup contact theory* in the early 1950s, most of the communication between people was face-to-face. Thus, processing of experiences and events in which members of two groups would come into contact was limited to the people with whom an individual interacted personally and in

close proximity. As detailed by researchers like Kinginger (2008), participants studying abroad have increased access to technology that has let them stay in communication with whomever, instead of feeling the sense of isolation that would occur were this communication not possible. Since Kinginger's research in 2008, the means by which participants in an abroad program can sustain connections to their home culture and language have become even more diverse. For example, in addition to calling home, Carlos admitted to using Skype and iMessage to stay in contact with people from home, including friends, "some girls," and family members. He said these conversations "made me really homesick." Perhaps there was no conversation which made Carlos more homesick than one with his grandma that made him very emotional when he recalled it to me. He told me, tearing up a little,

I was able to call my grandma for a quick two minutes, and she didn't even know. And she was like, 'Hello?' And I was like, 'It's your grandson!' And she goes, 'What?' She's kind of losing it a little, but I'm like, 'Grandma, it's me!' And it made her day. Made her day just to talk for those two minutes. And I could have gone on and on for three hours to tell her about all the amazing things I've seen and done, but I had to wrap up in a minute.

Marló also connected with his family and his girlfriend over Facebook and by phone call, and it was the interactions with his girlfriend, when he compared his study abroad to hers, that made him continue to question the worth of his time spent abroad. Even though her words were encouraging - "I was convinced that I wouldn't actually be able to do this in my first few days here, that I wouldn't be able to figure it all out. So I kind of freaked out a little bit, but I talked to my girlfriend who was helpful. She said, honestly, just give it time - if you give it time, you'll get it." Marló didn't really feel he ever "got it," and wanted to return home despite his girlfriend's reassurance.

Isabel used Skype and email to stay in contact with her family, and hearing the details of a family reunion that her family had while she was in Spain made Isabel “a little homesick, especially because I knew I was missing all the food and we always have such a good time together,” and because of that contact, was longing for home. Violeta also talked to her family back in the United States “almost everyday, just for like 10 minutes because my mom says I have to call her everyday to tell her I'm still alive,” using Skype and Facebook Messenger. These interactions are ones which Violeta admitted probably made her more homesick than she would have otherwise been.

Knowing that technology exists but conscientiously deciding *not* to frequently utilize it may also have an effect on the evolution of one's openness to the Other in combination with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction and *intergroup contact theory*. Gabi told her family and loved ones that she would do her best *not* to communicate with them while she was abroad because she didn't want to feel homesick and because she wanted to take full advantage of her time abroad for what it was. She told me, "I didn't really want to come [to Spain] and try to recreate day-to-day routines I have at home. I wanted to really immerse and do what the Spaniards do. I told my family to just let me be while I'm here. I called a couple of times, but told them I just wanted to be present here, and I'll be fine."

Mariela also decided not to contact her family while in Spain for essentially the same reasons. Regarding contacting her family from the United States, Mariela told me, "I kind of told everybody [at home], 'I'm going to just kind of disappear.' I feel like if you keep communicating with everybody from home, then you get homesick and you go on missing this and that. But at the same time, knowing that I'm going home in a week

makes me excited, but not homesick." Although I conclude that Gabi became more open to the Other than did Mariela during their experiences abroad, Mariela nevertheless believed she had achieved her goals to "learn more about [Spanish]" and to "learn cultural aspects associated with that language" much more than many of my other participants who maintained a strong contact with home via technology, such as Violeta, Marló and Isabel. Carlos was different, but perhaps the point that he started his sojourn with a high level of openness to the Other can explain this - a point to which I will return later. In any case, the ease of being able to communicate with people from home instead of having to interact more closely with the Other as the only possible interpersonal contact while in a homestay, as well as the conscious decision as to what degree to take advantage of that communication with the home culture, likely affected the participant's overall sense of how she was experiencing her language study abroad as well as how she was positioned in her interactions with the Other.

In summary, participants knew that despite the physical distance between themselves and those people with whom they were closest from "at home," communicating with them could be realized as often as they wanted and in a variety of different ways. The data suggest that not only did communicating with the home culture facilitate the ability for participants to let their families know how everything was progressing, but it also adversely contributed to some degree in the overall satisfaction of Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions in *intergroup contact theory*.

Artificiality of program design re: weekend excursions

In this present research, participants spent sometimes parts of a weekend, and sometimes the entire weekend, on program-mandated excursions to other parts of Spain

away from Madrid, where all participants were living and studying. Participants spent time in the cities of Toledo, Segovia, Granada, and in the province of Asturias. Most certainly, Allport (1954) never took into consideration the opportunities for members of an “out-group” to spend time together and away from members of the “in-group” to take in sites in a mini-vacation style. This artificial, tourist approach may make developing openness to the Other more difficult, which is seen in the participants' data.

In this study, weekend excursions not only served the purpose of allowing participants to see areas of the country outside of the area in which they were staying, but also it likely reinforced the feelings those participants had regarding their university cohort community - often times a positive relationship being strengthened even more. Additionally, as already described, the strength of the cohort tended to draw students away from the interactions Allport's (1954) conditions include: equal social status, authentic goals, community support, and intergroup cooperation. Weekend excursions, as designed by this particular program, further fostered a voyeuristic approach by many of my participants in which they perceived the Other as exotic, or perhaps as dependent on the money program participants brought, but certainly not as "equal."

Violeta told me of her positive experiences going to church with a group of her university's cohort in Segovia, and how even though "it was echoey and I couldn't understand what particular words were, you're always surrounded by beautiful things." Isabel, Mariela, Marló and Gabi each recounted their group wandering around the quaint streets and plazas of Asturias together. Before any mention of playing soccer with Asturian children, Gabi enjoyed "going out for ice cream when we were in Asturias. And there was this parade going on. There were people all over the streets!" Isabel and

Carlos both marveled at the history and architecture of Toledo, most of which they learned from their tour guide leading them through the city. Isabel marveled at how "all these different cultures lived together in peace in Toledo. I bought this little book and read some of it about how that all happened." In and of themselves, none of these experiences was seen as a negative aspect of the study abroad. What they did, however, was reinforce the attitudes of the participants that, ultimately, "culture" was something they could "take in" as an outsider, without any effort to interact whatsoever. This overall attitude of being an outsider was pervasive, contributing to an attitude of social inequality between cultures and sense of diminished intergroup cooperation since there was no overt expectation of intercultural interaction during the excursions.

While in each of these instances the participants expressed an overall sense of enjoyment having seen these areas of Spain, Marló resented the fact that these excursions ended up being another limiting factor of his inability to make connections with native-Spanish speakers who were his age. Marló told me that instead feeling like he could "fool people into thinking he was Spanish," by the end of his sojourn, he "[felt] so much more like a tourist, after all of the excursions we've had in the program now, because we went to Asturias as tourists. We would hang out in a group and take our pictures and look like total tourists." Carlos equally expressed a disappointment in the excursions in that, although he understood their purpose, they "took away from what [could be] meaningful experiences" that he would otherwise have sought out socially. He said, "Every time you feel like you were just getting used to things here, we're getting whisked off to another destination. I've been to Granada, Toledo, Madrid and Asturias. I wish I

could have just taken another walk in Madrid. Or just hung out with some more people. Or something like that."

In summary, although some program participants undoubtedly enjoyed the touristy nature of these weekend excursions because seeing new things often times is fun, the artificiality of the weekend excursions reinforced the view of the Other as exotic, and not as equal to the participants. Being a tourist thwarts meaningful interaction like intergroup cooperation working towards common goals, and it also positions the Other as a reduced exoticism and not as a social equal.

Individual's reactions to linguistic or cultural conflict, or "adversity"

Allport (1954) described clashes of interests and values between two cultural groups as "realistic conflicts" (p.229), and that often times "it seems virtually impossible to consider [an] issue objectively and in a dispassionate manner unclouded by irrelevant bias," despite the fact that "in most instances the rivalry that is perceived is inflated" (pp.232-233). I make the claim that participants in an abroad setting, when in a situation that calls into question their tacit beliefs regarding how society should function in a given instance, experience adversity. Berger and Luckmann (1966) made a similar claim of adversity when one's reified beliefs, due to primary socialization, are challenged. I further claim that it should be taken into consideration how one either processes adversity as an opportunity to successfully work toward Allport's (1954) conditions for prejudice reduction, or processes adversity as a disconnect regarding Allport's conditions. The nature of how a participant reacts to adversity acts as a catalyst for the evolution or de-evolution of her openness to the Other.

Isabel, for example, was placed in an adverse situation while in the metro, with members of the host culture “pushing [her] out of the way” and talking about her. Instead of trying to process the possibility of different cultural norms regarding the pace and force of traveling on the Madrid metro system, Isabel took it personally and as an action against her as an American woman, to which she reacted by “just [glaring] at them. I’m not an idiot.” This experience very likely affected Isabel’s ultimate openness to the Other. She processed this adversity negatively because she felt she was not a social equal to the members of the host culture. She seemingly believed the Other were “lesser” because she disapproved of their behavior and the social norms of using the metro, and further took it personally when she thought they were talking negatively about her afterwards.

Violeta dealt with adversity when a male member of the host culture said “*hola, guapa*” as she walked by on the street one day. Although I would not have advocated Violeta handle the situation in any other way than she did, by walking away and not acknowledging the behavior, her perceptions of the host culture were affected as she told me, “I feel like the [Spanish] guys think that American girls are easy.” She processed this adversity by generalizing negativity, reinforcing her attitude that she and the members of the Other were not socially equal, and this likely contributed to the evolution of Violeta’s lack of openness to the Other.

There were adverse situations, though, that some of my participants handled in such a way as to try to mediate the conflict and resolve the disconnect between what they had initially taken for granted and what reality had placed at their feet. Gabi, when dealing with the execution of a bull and its dragging out of the bullring, sought to ask an

excited member of the host culture in an attempt to understand the event better. And even though the man was more interested in the bullfight than in talking with her, she interpreted this slight with a positive explanation. Carlos had an adverse experience ordering food in a café when he and the employee taking his order were not understanding each other regarding the complexity of the meal that Carlos wanted to order. Carlos mediated the situation by engaging the member of the host culture in conversation and explaining his intentions. By the end, both sides understood the other much better, and a previously adverse situation turned out more positively and one in which Carlos learned more about a cultural norm than he had understood before.

Both Gabi's and Carlos' processing of initially adverse situations did not negatively affect their openness to the Other, and likely were important steps in increasing their openness. In their processing, they started with a sense of the Other as equal, not "wrong" and thus lesser. This reinforces the idea that the more openness one has to start with, the more positively one is likely to react to adversity as an opportunity to work toward the goals of fostering a positive relationship with the Other. The data imply that younger students who have had less experience in multicultural contexts, and those who have ready access to an escape due to their time-limited stay and English-speaking cohort, are less likely to grow in openness in a short-term study abroad experience.

Importance placed upon casual and superficial contact

Allport (1954) warns of "casual contacts" between members of two different cultural groups as being adverse to prejudice reduction. He wrote, "Such evidence as we have clearly indicates that such contact does *not* dispel prejudice; it seems more likely to

increase it” (p.263, emphasis in original). Allport further explains “Theoretically, every superficial contact we make with an out-group member could by the ‘law of frequency’ strengthen the adverse mental associations that we have. What is more, we are sensitized to perceive signs that will confirm our stereotypes” (p.264). There is a multitude of evidence in my data, though, that dispels Allport’s above sentiments. In fact, many times this casual and superficial contact between my participants and members of the host culture produce transformative experiences working toward an increased openness to the Other instead of the contrary. Since most of the interactions with the host culture in a language study abroad of this duration will be casual, how the individual program participant processes that contact and the relative importance she places upon it act as a catalyst for her evolution of openness to the Other.

For example, Isabel’s favorite story from her experience in Spain, and virtually her only reported positive social contact with members of the host culture, was her soccer playing experience in a plaza with a group Asturian children. Months later, she talks about the experience by saying, “Even talking about it right now, I have a huge smile on my face. It was just so much fun. I have a picture of that day as the background on my computer, so I look at it every day.” No member from either cultural group had any expectations of their contact extending beyond their soccer playing experience, yet Isabel, Marló and Gabi all reflected positively on it. Marló, for his part, called the experience of playing soccer in Asturias as it being “probably the most fun I’ve ever had at night - out of everything.” Gabi indicated that it was she who initiated the contact with these Asturian children, and although the interaction wasn’t “super conversation-based,” the experience for her was “super fun.” For my participants who had relatively little

experience with the host culture, playing soccer in and of itself was not enough to align completely with Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction, but nevertheless provided an experience which positively affected far more than it adversely affected their openness to the Other. This may be because the language struggle with members of the host culture, or feeling socially unequal to them, was disarmed with the children in this instance. All participants were involved in a "common goal" - that of playing soccer. There was intergroup cooperation to successfully achieve this common goal.

Nor was soccer the only casual and superficial contact that had this positive effect. Marló reflected positively on a casual conversation about the book *Danza de tronos* (*Game of Thrones*) with his host sister that he did not see often. He told me, "I never expected that I was going to talk about American culture so much, but at least for her - I guess she watched a lot of American shows and she reads this book. And I know a little bit about the *Game of Thrones*, I mean I wish I could have known more so that I could talk more about it with her." In the end, Marló lamented the lack of opportunities he felt he had to interact with members of the host culture of his own age, but of the relatively few experiences he had in this situation, this casual contact with his host sister was reflected upon positively. Again, in this instance both Marló and his host sister shared a common goal - an interest in sharing what they each knew about a specific topic. This goal promoted a sense of equality as well, in the sense that Marló was knowledgeable about the topic to some degree, as was the host sister. It was not a struggle for either of them to understand some cultural difference that existed between the two cultures, making it a struggle for one person or the other to share ideas, but rather

was more a cooperation to each share information about an interesting topic, their common knowledge of which placed them on equal footing.

Gabi had a positive experience in casual contact with a Senegalese man playing fetch with his dog in Granada. Although the contact was casual in the sense that each interlocutor just happened to be in the same place at the same time, and the two did not meet again, despite his suggestion that they could. Gabi, nevertheless, felt she had made a connection to a linguistic and cultural Other in a way she viewed positively. "He talked about how he was [in Spain] studying, and he was talking about Africa and what it's like to come from there and stuff. And that he misses his family because they were still there. But [conversing with him] was cool." Gabi again initiated another casual contact with a member of the host culture while watching the bullfight. Although Gabi concluded that the man with whom she spoke wasn't really interested in having a conversation with her because he was very invested in what was happening in the ring, Gabi nevertheless considered this a positive exchange in which she was able to better understand certain aspects of a cultural traditions that, until then, she had not really understood at all. Having casual contact with members of the Other brought out Gabi's initiative, but also she was acting on her goals of interacting with the Other. She also gained cooperation and support from the people with whom she initiated contact. Her sense of being socially equal of them also being *her* equal was present in Gabi from the start.

Carlos had a number of interactions with people outside of bars that were never meant to last for more than just a couple of minutes. In flirting with females outside of the bar, Carlos took note that "it's funny to talk to girls in Spain because their slang is all different." In talking with other males outside of the club, Carlos was able to converse

about sports, places to go, or any other number of topics in “five to ten minute” conversations. Carlos felt these superficial interactions were beneficial to all people involved, and that they had a humanizing effect in the sense that each would better view the other as an individual instead of a stereotypical member of some larger group. Carlos, like Gabi, also came to Spain with a strong sense that he and the Spaniards with whom he interacted were equals. As such, initiating contact with them, no matter how casual or superficial, met his goals.

In fact, the only negative cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 1991) of casual or superficial contact in which there was direct interaction between members of both cultural groups was when a male member of the host culture called out “*hola, guapa*” to Violeta and she let this interaction “strengthen the adverse mental associations that we have” (Allport, 1954, p.264). This response may have been justified since this particular incident made Violeta feel objectified, much in a way that Block (2007) described, and did damage to any possible increase in openness to the linguistic and cultural Other that Violeta may otherwise have felt. This was an instance in which Violeta felt demeaned, and then seemingly had to demean the Other in the process, which intersects with her sense of equal social status. Additionally, in the same soccer scenario that Isabel, Marló and Gabi all remembered positively, Violeta only mentioned “hearing all these little comments... they were just joking around I guess. But they were like ‘USA fptfptfpt (raspberry sound).’ Violeta clearly didn't feel a sense of equal social status. She felt that the members of the host culture were criticizing her, and reacted with a sense of superiority over them. Other participants acknowledged these comments from the soccer-playing children, but took them as innocent play, without negative connotations.

Could the first negative incident in which Violeta was catcalled have affected her perceptions of the comments she heard during soccer? Twombly (1995) concluded that some comments made to participants on a language study abroad, even if meant innocently, can serve as constant and powerful reminders of their status as outsiders in a foreign culture.

Isabel's contact with the host culture was mainly superficial and casual in nature and was, in general, not positive. The common denominator for each of these negative interactions seemed to be the level of interest that Isabel expected the members of the host culture to show in her. With her señora's children, when they came to the apartment to visit, Isabel expressed disappointment because "they haven't been really interested in talking to me." This seems to capture a sense of not being social equals. Isabel felt she was more important, and that members of the host culture should have treated her with more deference. While out socially in bars, Isabel never took the initiative to strike up conversations with members of the host culture. When native Spanish-speakers bumped her on the subway, or talked about "*americanas*," she "glared at them" because "I'm not stupid."

In general, though, in an environment in which many participants expressed a lack of opportunity to interact with members of the host culture at all, casual and superficial contacts with the host culture were more positive than negative. They did, however, correlate with a degree of openness already present in the participants. Violeta, who admitted she hadn't had that much experience with the Other due to growing up in a culturally homogeneous environment, did not experience these casual encounters positively. Isabel and Marló only experienced these interactions positively when working

toward a common goal with the Other. When there was no common goal, casual contact with the Other was not perceived positively. Gabi, who grew up in a very culturally diverse area and with a lot of previous experience with the Other, experienced casual contact positively. Carlos, who was the most advanced in his language studies, and who had already taken a number of classes geared toward the appreciation of cultural diversity, also experienced this type of contact positively.

The general nature of this contact may have affected a sense of community support in the achievement of one's goals, which was Allport's third optimal condition for prejudice reduction. Overall, the positivity that my participants generally felt as a result of otherwise casual or superficial contact with the host culture, whether overt or serendipitous, goes against what Allport posited regarding this type of contact. Not only did most instances of casual and superficial contact not "increase prejudice," they generally worked toward lessening it and increasing openness to the Other, possibly depending on the level of openness in the participant to start with.

What does this all mean?

While Gordon Allport's (1954) research provides a general understanding of *intergroup contact theory*, his conclusions are limited when applied to a language study abroad context. It is important to understand each individual's positionality relative to the: 1) presence of her university cohort; 2) her sense of temporarily "living" in a foreign country; 3) ease of her communication with her "home culture;" 4) the tourist quality of weekend excursions; 5) her reactions to cultural conflict or "adversity," and; 6) the importance she places upon casual contact, and how each of these interacts with Allport's optimal conditions for prejudice reduction. This means that each individual's language

study abroad experience must be understood contextually, situated against Allport's optimal conditions as well as the unique elements specific to a language study abroad as mentioned above. It is only with this understanding that one can begin to evaluate any evolution in a participant's evolution of openness to the linguistic and cultural Other.

Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions, combined with the six unique elements of the LSA context detailed above continually interact while the participants take part in their sojourns abroad. This interaction manifests itself in each individual participant's agency to either re-embrace or redefine her program goals, to evaluate by-proxy the meaning of relationships within homestay "teams" of which she is part, and to respond to interactions and/or contexts with either initiative or passivity. The next chapter presents discussion of these factors and how Allport's conditions and characteristics of the LSA context interacted for each of my six participants, ending with a description of each participant's level of growth in openness to the linguistic and cultural Other, with support from the M-GUDS (Miville, 1995).

RQ3: To what extent and in what ways do elements specific to the language study abroad experience interact with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions and other reported experiences?

In aligning my six participants' experiences abroad with Gordon Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*, and then analyzing how this alignment affected their openness to the linguistic and cultural Other, I am concluding that the degree to which each participant's summer language immersion experience abroad aligned with Allport's conditions also provides insight as to the evolution of each individual's openness to the Other, and at the same time, the uniqueness of the SA language experience contributes complexity to our understanding of Allport's theory. Major contributions to the existing body of knowledge regarding

intergroup contact theory, especially when applied to a summer language immersion experience abroad, come from the intricacies of each experience which seem to complicate what Allport posited when publishing his original findings. These factors include: 1) goal re-embracement or reframing; 2) by-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams"; and 3) initiative vs. passivity. What is important to understand is how the individual demonstrates her own agency in determining how each of the above conditions manifest themselves during the language study abroad. While other factors can influence how each of these participants experienced their SA, the data indicate that these factors played an important role in how Allport's theory was expressed in the SA experience.

1) Goal re-embracement or reframing.

Allport (1954) emphasizes the importance of the establishment of common, authentic, purposeful goals which members of both cultural groups are interested in achieving. Specifically, Allport wrote "lacking a definite objective goal, such 'goodwill' contacts may lead to frustration or even antagonism" (p.489). This study supports the value of the goal. This is seen by the fact that both of my participants whose openness to the Other I conclude increased while studying abroad in the summer - Gabi and Carlos - felt that their goal of having meaningful interactions with members of the host culture was satisfied, causing them to further embrace this goal. Even in the face of elements specific to the language study abroad, like the presence of the cohort, time-limited "living" in Spain, ease of communication with the home culture, artificiality of weekend excursions, adversity, and casual or superficial contact, which acted as inhibitors to goal achievement for many of the program's participants, Gabi and Carlos were able to re-

embrace their goals and ultimately increase their openness to the linguistic and cultural Other.

The time-limited nature of the sojourn did not act as a deterrent to Carlos in seeking interaction with the host culture, rather it seemed to add to the sense of urgency to take full advantage of his opportunities while still in Spain. While Carlos still spent significant social time with his university cohort, he consistently sought interactions with the host culture instead of gravitating toward the cohort for linguistic support and comfort. Carlos saw adversity, like what he experienced in his initial restaurant experience, not as an excuse to reject the host culture, but rather as an opportunity to re-embrace his goal of bettering his Spanish in authentic situations, and to ultimately bridge a gap in intercultural understanding. Carlos opined that the weekend excursions took away from his opportunities to further interact with the host culture, again reaffirming his desire to take advantage of the opportunities he *did* have to interact.

Like Carlos, the time-limited stay of her study abroad seemed to inspire Gabi to take advantage of every possible interaction she could have had with the Other, consistently re-embracing her goal to not only better her Spanish while studying abroad, but also to interact with a wide variety of members of the host culture. It was while on her weekend excursions that Gabi sought out an interaction with the Senegalese man in the park in Granada and even instigated the soccer playing experience in Asturias. Instead of spending a lot of her social time with her entire university cohort, Gabi sought out a smaller group of students from her university that would better support her goals than she felt the cohort as a whole would. Even within the context of her smaller group, though, Gabi evidenced the desire to connect with members of the host culture instead of using

the language and other comforts of her home culture as crutches, as evidenced by her interactions with the man at the bullfight. Further, she all but rejected her connections to home, preferring instead to immerse herself in the "new" routine of the host culture as much as possible. How Gabi and Carlos each chose to handle the issues that came up during the study abroad experience, by re-embracing their goals in the spirit of seeking a sense of social equality with the Other while abroad, helped to contribute to an experience that more fully aligned with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*.

Other participants, however, when confronted with casual interactions or adversity, either abandoned or changed their initial goals. The individual agency to embrace, abandon or redefine goals needs to be taken into consideration when evaluating any reduction in prejudice between individuals who consider themselves members of either an out-group or in-group culture (Stets & Burke, 2005).

The reframing of goals specifically for Violeta, attributed to the adversity she experienced, was further justified by the time-limited nature of her sojourn. For example, Violeta expressed one of her personal goals for the summer abroad was to improve her Spanish proficiency while in Spain. As the month went on, she (like many of my other participants) told of the reality of her university cohort speaking almost exclusively English when together. Violeta admitted that she had been speaking more English than she would have liked in this group dynamic. When I interviewed her toward the end of her sojourn, Violeta expressed to me, "I'm a little frustrated because we ended up speaking a lot more English than I [originally] expected and so I feel like I wasn't actually getting as much Spanish as I wanted [out of my abroad experience]. At first, it

seemed like a relief, but now it feels like I lost an opportunity." This ambivalence toward L2 use while abroad aligns with the "willingness and unwillingness to communicate" to which Block (2007) referred. By the end of her summer in Spain, her original goal of increasing her Spanish proficiency was all but forgotten - or at least ignored. But, instead of concluding that she hadn't achieved her goals to the degree that she had hoped, Violeta looked forward to a six-month study abroad in Chile in which presumably she would be "forced to speak Spanish" due to both an increased amount of time spent in an abroad context as well as being part of a significantly smaller English-speaking cohort while abroad. Ultimately, Violeta retreated from her original goals in this SA context, while also reframing her goal for a different setting that will address an escape from an English-speaking cohort as well as provide her a context in which the limits of time "living" abroad are less present in her day-to-day experience.

Both Violeta and Mariela initially expressed an interest in experiencing what Spain had to offer on a deeper level. Specifically, Violeta mentioned that one of her goals was that she "really want[ed] to develop some friendships with people from Spain." Mariela wanted to be "more than just a tourist" in a culture different from her own. As the achievement of these goals was perhaps not materializing to the degree to which they had hoped, both Violeta and Mariela modified their goals to make their experiences satisfy their new goals, instead of saying their experiences were not satisfying their original goals as stated. Violeta, as her experience in Spain ended, assured me that "I don't think a month is necessarily enough time to form meaningful relationships." Mariela told me, "I think within a month, [a study abroad] is still more of a touristy thing." This sentiment connects to the earlier point of time-limited "living" abroad

providing an escape to SA participants. Each participant preferred to see the adversity of her inability to satisfy her original goals as being a victim of circumstance and blaming outside factors, in this case the program. While Carlos and Gabi made their month-long SA experience work, in spite of outside factors, Violeta and Mariela didn't. It was especially the "lack of time" that was blamed for their inability to satisfy their goals, although in that same amount of time each expressed surprise in the degree to which they were able to bond with and have meaningful heart-to-heart interactions with members of their own English-speaking cohort that they had never met before this language study abroad. Hedging their goals after-the-fact as they did, allowed for a more successful self-assessment of completion of each woman's program goals, but did not positively affect their openness to the Other, and may not lead to any more success in a longer SA program, if either were to ultimately choose to participate in one. The short amount of time was indeed an issue, but it by no means was the only issue for these participants.

What is most important is understanding that all program participants engage agency in the choice to either re-embrace or redefine their goals, sparked by the characteristics specific to LSA programs, and that ultimately affects the nature and quality of Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction. Particularly, a participant's agency to re-embrace her goals indicate a more complete satisfaction of Allport's second optimal condition of establishing common, authentic goals. A participant's agency to abandon her original goals and to redefine them instead indicates a lesser satisfaction of Allport's second condition.

2) By-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams."

When dealing with relationships, Allport (1954) wrote about *intergroup contact theory* both at a group level as well as on an individual level. Regarding this point, Allport stated “while it may help somewhat to place members of different ethnic groups side by side on a job, the gain is greater if these members regard themselves as part of a *team*” (p.489, emphasis in original), meaning Allport called for members of *different* groups to see themselves as a team with each other in order to reduce prejudice. The “gain” to which Allport refers is both an overall gain in the sense of equality of social status between groups, as well as at an individual level. In my case studies, and in assessing openness to a linguistic and cultural Other, it is much more beneficial to evaluate relationships on an individual-to-individual level, rather than focusing on a large-group dynamic, in part because most of the large group dynamics were within the university cohort and did not include members of the linguistic and cultural Other. As such, there is overwhelming evidence that the evolution of one’s openness to the Other is affected most by how meaningful the relationships are within an individual participant's homestay "team" relative to other homestay "teams" formed by other members of the LSA, the subsequent comparisons made between homestay "teams," and the resulting hierarchy that followed.

Whatever sense of a mutually beneficial relationship with the host culture "team" was derived by each of my participants with members of the host culture was very individual, but was then communicated publicly within the university cohort, a very present "home-culture anchor" (Wilkinson, 2005). This host-culture "team" generally took the form of the program participant along with her host family. The communication of the nature of this relationship served a dual purpose. First, communicating their

experiences to the university cohort was a way for participants to process their own experiences in the context of a cohort that would often affirm participants' feelings and sentiments. Additionally, these communications often times caused other participants to compare their own experiences with the host culture with those of the other members of their in-group, quite possibly shaping the relative meaning they derived from their own relationships with members of the host culture. What this means is, aside from the dangers Kinginger (2009) expressed of a continually-developing sense of overall cultural superiority due to the over-reliance of home-culture anchors, the public communication of the nature of "intergroup teams" to the university cohort also established a continuum of the perceived success of each team, and individual program participants placed themselves and their homestay "team" somewhere on this continuum. Without the in-group communication and resulting comparison of homestay "team" experiences, individual participants may have viewed their own "team" differently.

For example, Isabel expressed a general dislike for her host señora. She felt their relationship was "cold," and said, "I don't feel very comfortable with her... she's very particular with the way her house is, and she's constantly criticizing us because of how we're living and she's telling us what we're doing wrong." Specifically, she mentioned a note her señora left her saying "'make sure you clean up your toothpaste,' and there'll be arrows pointing to the toothpaste spot that she wants us to clean up." This story was told within the university cohort to such a degree that Violeta mentioned she had heard "one señora just yells at [her students] for cleaning... Like [the students] have to constantly clean the whole countertop every time they brush their teeth. [The señora is] just always yelling at them..." While Violeta had her own complaints about certain aspects of her

homestay and her señora, she expressed that comparisons were made to some degree between her situation and that of Isabel - or, at least how Violeta perceived Isabel's homestay to be based on Isabel's description of it. Violeta even expressed her own efforts to make sure she felt like she was being a "good guest" by telling me, "I try to leave a good impression. I make sure my bed is made every day - I don't do that at home. I try to be a good guest, and I think [my señora] likes that." The fact that Violeta seemed to take some solace in the fact that her homestay was better than someone else's homestay in some regard may ultimately have affected the nature of how Violeta's relationship with her own señora developed while in Spain. Violeta indicated that while her relationship with her señora wasn't the perfect "team," it was at least better than the "team" Isabel had formed with her own señora.

Another case in which stories were communicated between the university cohort include Violet's projection as to what her homestay is like, and how those stories were perceived by other members of her university cohort. While Violeta certainly placed her own "team" at a more desirable position on the continuum than where she saw Isabel's "team," hers was not as positive as other participants' "teams." Violeta told me about one night when she went out and her roommate couldn't, and "[my señora] was saying how [my roommate] is smart and I'm dumb for going out," and "she'll ask us what we're doing every night and tell us not to go out late - not to get home late." Violeta maintained, however, "I don't go out that much at all compared to some people." Whenever Violeta would go out, though, her señora acted surprised and cheekily wondered out loud if Violeta cared enough about her studies. Those participants who had señoras who didn't mind them going out were parts of "teams" in better positions on the

continuum than Violeta was, at least in her own opinion. Violeta's story surely made it back to other program participants like Marló, who told me about a university cohort member's homestay in which "one [señora] got mad at them for going out so much when they don't [go out]. She was like, 'why aren't you going to school?' and getting mad at them." As such, Marló placed himself and his "team" somewhere on the continuum relative to Violeta, and this exercise continued for all participants upon both talking about their own experiences as well as hearing about the experiences of others in their cohort.

As just hearing about a fellow classmate's story could affect one's openness to the Other, this is especially the case when the individual doesn't have as much firsthand experience with members of the host culture, as in Violeta's and Marló's cases. Marló could compare his own homestay and the relationship he felt he had built with his host family and make comparisons in which he likely applied more positive descriptors to his situation after hearing how other people were experiencing theirs. Participants evaluated the cohesiveness of the "team" they formed with their host families, in part, based on the stories they heard about their cohort members and their own host family "teams."

It is important to remember, though, that not all communicated "stories" between members of the university cohort were negative. Violeta also mentioned how positive Gabi's situation had been in that "her house brother watches movies with her. They watch *fútbol* and stuff like that." Marló had also mentioned Gabi's family situation and how "I feel like that would be a lot of fun." It is entirely likely in these situations that hearing about uniquely positive experiences one university cohort members had with members of the host culture could cast a more negative light on the experience of any particular study abroad participant not sharing in a similar experience, tending to make

the participant, in general, more negative. How Violeta or Marló may have manifested any resentment toward Gabi's ability to share experiences with a younger host brother must be at least considered as a possible contributing factor in each person's overall experience, in turn possibly affecting openness to the Other.

Comparisons can also be made with similar situations that occur outside of the context of one particular study abroad. For example, Marló constantly compared his study abroad experience with that of his girlfriend. Although the nature of the studies abroad were relatively unlike in duration, setting, and expectations, Marló nevertheless lamented the lack of relationships he felt he was able to foster with members of the host culture of his own age. Marló's inability to establish individual relatively "meaningful" relationships, or a less-cohesive "team" with the host culture likely affected the evolution of his openness to the Other during his study abroad.

How the meaning of individual relationships was communicated and affected the meaning associated with other participants' relationships with the host culture is impossible to guess. Nevertheless, openness to the Other may be affected by the relative "meaning" placed on the relationships with members of a host culture "team" compared to similar "teams" other program participants have formed while abroad, effectively placing their own relationship on a continuum of different "teams." Those people seeing their "team" less positively as they perceive other "teams" may use the time-limited nature of their experience to not improve their own situation, as evidenced by Isabel "just let[ting] it go," knowing she would soon leave her situation, instead of working on improving things as she might had she not been so quickly leaving.

A less-than-ideal placement on the continuum may be manifested by participants, as well, in cases where there are relatively few firsthand interactions with members of the host culture, a perceived lack of opportunity to interact with the host culture, or due to a lack of individual initiative to interact. This also relates to Allport's (1954) idea of intergroup cooperation to reach goals, as well as the community support in achieving those goals. When participants experienced adversity and resulting disappointment, they chose to disassociate from their homestay "team" and thus away from the linguistic and cultural Other.

As in the decision to re-embrace or re-establish goals, though, the locus of responsibility is placed squarely on the agency of the individual participant when positioning herself somewhere on this continuum, as well as the resulting attitudes that cause the participant either to accept her fate as a member of an underachieving "team," to continually work on improving the status of her "team" along this continuum, and/or to seek out other "teams" in the host culture of which she can be part. The participant's agency manifested in this decision links clearly to the sense of community support, Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*.

3) Initiative vs. Passivity.

In any number of situations during a language study abroad, participants choose to interact with the Other either by taking initiative or by exhibiting an attitude of passivity. The behavior a participant chooses often times affects that person's positionality within any number of Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*. Overwhelmingly, participants experience a more

positive sense of their positionality and their satisfaction of Allport's optimal conditions when they choose to exhibit initiative, even when the expected outcome of these interactions is uncertain. Consequently, when participants exhibited attitudes of passivity, their perceptions of intergroup contact with the Other and satisfaction of Allport's optimal conditions are more negative, with one general, yet important, exception. I further explain this exception toward the end of this section.

There were several incidents of this study's participants demonstrating either initiative or passivity in situations which affected, at times, the nature of their interactions with the linguistic and cultural Other. For example, Marló took initiative in sparking a conversation with his host sister about a book series they were both familiar with, despite the language in which these were presented to each person. Carlos consistently took initiative to converse with members of the host culture, whether socially in clubs, or to fix breakdowns in understanding, like he did during his first experience eating out in Spain. Gabi took initiative on a number of occasions to begin conversations with members of the Other, and each of these experiences were viewed positively by her, with the possible exception of a man at the bullfight who, Gabi surmised, was far too interested in the fight itself to be bothered by anyone at that moment. Still, though, Gabi didn't view this interaction negatively, she framed it positively. This means that because of this particular interaction, at least her initiative wasn't deterred and perhaps her initiative was even intensified. Each of these positive interactions helped, albeit at times temporarily, the language study abroad participant feel an increased sense of social equality with the members of the host culture. This aligns with Allport's first optimal

condition for prejudice reduction, namely a perceived sense of social equality among members of both cultures.

One of the only incidents in which a program participant took initiative and felt no greater sense of social equality with members of the host culture was when Violeta asked for directions from a native speaker working in a kiosk in a plaza. The man told her he didn't know, and when Violeta attempted to ask for any possible clarification, the man "just looked up and wouldn't make eye contact with us." This interaction in which Violeta took initiative but ultimately turned out negatively for her surely contributed to her perception of the people of Madrid being "kind of rude" - a perception that may have been already present based on how Violeta interpreted her señora's comments about her language skills, her lack of desire to initiate conversations with Violeta, and the catcalls she got while walking down the street, for example.

At other times, the initiative taken by participants was seen more as charity, instead of a true desire to align with Allport's (1954) optimal condition for prejudice reduction of equal social status. For example, Isabel felt she took initiative in a few situations speaking Spanish to members of the linguistic and cultural Other in casual and superficial contexts, and found her interlocutors to be "appreciative" of her efforts. Mariela, as well, felt that the native Spanish-speaking cousin of someone in her cohort was "thankful" that Mariela spoke Spanish to her, even though the conversation, ultimately, "didn't go anywhere." Both Isabel and Mariela conveyed, in these interactions, that they felt they were doing a favor for the members of the host culture by agreeing to speak the host culture's language, and that the members of the host culture would reap more benefits out of these interactions than Isabel or Mariela would.

Whether this attitude is due to a previous lack of experience with the Other (Wilkinson, 1998), an over-reliance on home-culture anchors while abroad (Wilkinson, 2005), or some other factors, it indicates a sense of social, or at least linguistic superiority, on Isabel and Mariela's part that does not align with Allport's optimal condition for prejudice reduction of equal social status.

Likewise, when this study's participants demonstrated attitudes of passivity, the incidents were perceived entirely negatively regarding Allport's (1954) first optimal condition, or, their own perceived equality of social status with members of the linguistic and cultural Other. Isabel demonstrated passivity with the Other when she took the attitude in bars that members of the host culture should be more interested in talking to her than they were. She demonstrated the same passivity with her señora's children, assuming they would be more interested in her than they ended up being. In both cases, Isabel was disappointed in the Other instead of questioning her own passivity. Marló demonstrated an attitude of passivity when letting dinner conversation "happen" around him without really taking part. He justified his passivity by saying he felt "out of place" until he could better process everything, but these interactions ultimately contributed to him feeling like a social unequal at the dinner table. Violeta even went so far as to express that how she felt about her interactions with the Other depended largely on how she could respond to them initiating conversation with her. Violeta felt that members of the host culture expected her to be able to respond appropriately to any situation. If she felt could not respond appropriately, Violeta felt socially inferior. For example, Violeta told me, "I feel like I can talk about things that need to get done. Or ask questions about that. But when my señora would ask me about a lot on the news, if I knew stuff about

that, or what I thought about the government in the US, or what I thought about what the issues happening in Africa, it was really difficult for me to come up with something to say." Mariela's passivity in avoiding interaction with the Other in "heated" conversations at her family's dinner table reminded her of her "outsider" status so such a degree that she felt she was not to give her opinions about controversial topics and actively disengaged from these conversations whenever possible. Most of these interactions in which participants showed passivity may have been amplified by their feelings of being part of an "out-group" (Stets & Burke, 2005), but even when asked directly to participate, these individuals chose instead to withdraw.

Allport's (1954) second optimal condition for prejudice reduction calls for common, authentic goals in which members of both cultural groups are interested in achieving. This study's participants, when demonstrating initiative, categorically perceived their experiences in such a way that worked toward the satisfaction of their already-established goals. For example, although Isabel told me her señora would "keep speaking English" to her, Isabel took the initiative to "force the conversation back to Spanish," which she perceived as a step in the right direction to satisfy her goals of improved Spanish fluency while abroad. Marló, who felt overall that his opportunities to speak meaningfully with members of the Other were limited, not only enjoyed the experiences of speaking to his host sister about *Danza de Tronos* and with María the Argentine about movies from her country, but also felt these interactions were the only redeeming conversations he had with members of the Other of his own age. Gabi felt she was placed in an environment where the Other was around her so much as was the opportunity to speak Spanish as well as interact with a number of Spanish speakers. She

also felt it was up to her to interact with as many people as possible if she was to improve her Spanish while in Spain. She justified this thinking by expressing that she had “to initiate the conversation [when out socially], or there is no guarantee you’ll interact in Spanish when you’re away from your host family.” Carlos recognized that the amount of English being spoken by the other members of his university cohort did not align with his goal of being able to improve his fluency in Spanish while abroad, so he “[took] it upon [himself] to seek out something a little different” and interact with the Other whenever possible while out socially.

Conversely, when these participants took a more passive attitude toward their satisfaction of their language improvement goals, the resulting experiences were often viewed by them as negative. Marló went so far as to express regret and guilt for not being able to fulfill his goals of both bettering his language skills and making personal connections with members of the host culture by saying “I know I could have done more.” Violeta initially shared Marló’s goals of language improvement and making connections with members of the host culture, as well as being able to improve her Spanish in academic situations, but her overall passivity in engaging with the Other was demonstrated in the ultimate modification of these goals. She justified these adjustments through the following statements to me: 1) Regarding speaking Spanish outside of class, “the actual language they use [in Spain] is so different, I just basically shut Spanish down;” 2) regarding making connections with the Other, “[our] interactions were never meant to be more than superficial;” and, 3) regarding academic Spanish improvement, “we talk about things I’m not really knowledgeable about, I hope [my professor] changes topics.” One of Mariela’s goals was to “fit in” to Spanish culture, but her passivity,

especially when doing what she could to disengage in “heated” conversations with her family despite their prodding and interest in her input, reinforced her identity as a cultural outsider.

Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction, community support, is the exception to which I referred above regarding participant initiative or passivity. Interestingly, Allport's (1954) third optimal condition did not seem to be directly affected due to the participants' attitudes of passivity. The fostering of a mutually beneficial relationship was not affected positively or negatively due to the participants' attitudes of passivity or initiative. The initiative Carlos demonstrated in learning slang terms to use in social situations as well as the initiative he consistently showed in striking up conversation with members of the host culture resulted in what Carlos felt were mutually beneficial interactions, if not relationships. Violeta, on the other hand, felt a complete lack of support despite her efforts, though not strong and also inconsistent, to interact with the host culture, whether socially or in her homestay. Even the institutional support was lacking in Violeta's academic experience, despite her initiative to make it as palatable as possible, as she immediately sought to change classes and ultimately felt neither her university nor the Complutense did enough to make her academic experience enjoyable outside of the weekend excursions.

Participants' degrees of satisfaction of Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction, community support, did not seem to be directly affected due to their attitudes of passivity either. Isabel, who consistently demonstrated an attitude of passivity throughout her language study abroad, was nevertheless satisfied that she had a beneficial experience with the Other within the context of her coursework, simply by

being in that environment for four hours each weekday. Mariela also felt institutional support by “providing [her] an environment which delivers Spanish to [her].” Since Mariela’s goal was to feel some sort of connection to the culture without necessarily any interpersonal interaction outside of what was required in her homestay, she certainly felt she was able to work toward that relationship in part due to the institutional support she received. On the other hand, despite his overall passivity in fostering any mutually beneficial relationships with the Other himself, Marló criticized the amount of institutional and community support he received as they “should have been better about creating environments in which connecting [to the host culture] was easier.” Violeta was equally critical of the institutional and community support she felt she received, as mentioned before, but surprisingly was most content with the institutional organization of weekend excursions, as these allowed her to “get to know” Spain better than she otherwise could have. These conclusions could be attributed to Kinginger's (2008) claim that the degree in which SA participants choose to immerse is highly personal, and those who choose to immerse only in the most basic sense have a low threshold of what acceptable immersion constitutes. Curiously, in the cases of Violeta, Isabel and Mariela especially, the idea that they could interact with the static entities of “Spain” and “Spanish” without interacting with members of this host culture themselves, allowed for their passivity to help to create feelings that some sort of “relationship” with some sort of “Other” was being fostered. Seemingly, Violeta, Isabel, and Mariela found a significant amount of "community" support in institutions rather than with members of the host culture.

A possible explanation for the disconnect between the findings of this study, regarding participants' initiative or passivity having no real direct correlation to the satisfaction of Allport's (1954) third optimal condition for prejudice reduction has to do with the expectations of those participants to actually interact with the Other. Freire (2000) posited an idea of the "banking concept of education," in which "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p.72). Sadly, although Freire's original criticisms of the banking concept of education came in the 1970s, it is a reality that this traditional model of educating students has not yet disappeared. Freire explained that the banking model of education,

regards men as adaptable, manageable beings. The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them.

(p.73)

It would stand to reason that the positive aspects of demonstrating a lack of initiative align with how instruction is traditionally delivered in the banking concept of education, as it relates to learning a foreign language. A language study abroad is an overall educational experience in which participants are suddenly expected to be more proactive, at least outside of the formal educational setting, than they typically have ever been while "learning the subject." As such, it would be completely understandable that a language study abroad participant who is used to taking a passive role in "storing the deposits" they receive in their formal educational situations as opposed taking on the more initiative-necessitated role expected in being part of a "mutually beneficial relationship"

with a linguistic and cultural Other, as Allport (1954) suggests in *intergroup contact theory*, would find themselves passively engaging the learning of the SA experience. This would include more passive engagement with the institutions than active engagement with members of the host culture. Thus, Isabel seemed satisfied that “being in” Spanish for four hours a day was sufficient to satisfy her goals of improving her Spanish, Violeta counted on the excursions to provide her with a learning environment in which she could learn by “experiencing” the culture instead of reading about it, and Mariela felt grateful to the Complutense for providing an environment which “delivers” Spanish to her.

However, Allport’s (1954) fourth optimal condition for prejudice reduction, intergroup cooperation, seemed to be positively satisfied by instances of participants’ initiative during their language study abroad, and negatively affected by instances of their passivity. For example, on the rare instances that Marló took the initiative to engage in conversation with members of the Other, he found them to be “receptive” and cooperative to his initiative and “good conversational partners.” While it is true that Violeta’s initiative was spurned with the man working in the kiosk who refused to give her directions, her initiative ultimately allowed for an improved relationship with and improved cooperation from her señora compared to how their relationship had started. Mariela’s sense of intergroup cooperation was “okay” when she took initiative to connect, but found “we quickly run out of things to talk about.”

Gabi felt a high level of cooperation in general from the Other while consistently demonstrating high levels of initiative to interpersonally connect. From the Senegalese man in the park in Granada, to the soccer-playing children in Asturias, and even

including the man at the bullfight in Madrid, Gabi felt the Other rewarded her initiative to interpersonally connect by treating her as a conversational partner. Much like Gabi, Carlos' initiative was well-received by the Other. Whether it was with his family welcoming his "interruptions in what my family was doing if I have questions," or socially, having "lots of little five or ten minute conversations," Carlos felt like his attempts to communicate with the host culture led to overall positive interactions. Even when "[the Other doesn't] say 'hi' back, you still have thirty days to try to talk with other people," showing Carlos' attitude that initiative is more often rewarded than not. Carlos' initiative is driven by his positive approach to adversity - he took setbacks and framed them positively. The major differences between Gabi and Carlos and the other participants in this study is that 1) Gabi and Carlos displayed attitudes of having the most sense of equal social status from the start of their sojourn, seen in their consistent attempts to engage the Other in conversation; and 2) they interpreted things positively on a consistent basis while the other participants didn't, except for occasional instances. The inconsistency of initiative shown by the other four participants wasn't enough to create the level of openness to the Other as was created with Gabi and Carlos.

The other four participants' passivity, on the other hand, led to their sense of a significant lack of intergroup cooperation to achieve their goals, again, Allport's (1954) fourth optimal condition for prejudice reduction. Isabel, for example, felt the Other "should want to teach [her] Spanish way more than they seem to want to." Violeta, in her experiences with the Other while she was on excursions or out in Madrid, got the sense that the Other was "overall, more rude than [she] expected," despite her both her limited

initiative to interact with the Other and her subsequent infrequent interactions with the Other.

Ultimately, it is the individual agency demonstrated by the program participant that decides the level of initiative or passivity with which she approaches contexts or relationships during the LSA. As shown above, this agency, embedded in the characteristics of the LSA program, affect the quality of Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions as experienced by the participant. Overwhelmingly, a stronger sense of initiative demonstrated by the individual leads to an overall greater satisfaction of Allport's four optimal conditions in *intergroup contact theory*, while participant passivity leads to an overall lack of satisfaction of Allport's conditions.

I conclude that within the context of a summer language immersion study abroad program, in conjunction with evaluating openness to the Other according to Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions, one must also take into consideration: 1) individual goal re-embracement or reframing throughout the study abroad; 2) the by-proxy evaluation meaningful relationships within the participant's homestay "team," and; 3) the participant's instances of demonstrating initiative versus passivity. Understanding each of these elements specific to a language immersion study abroad is integral to understand the evolution of a participant's openness to the linguistic and cultural Other during this experience.

Chapter IV - Discussion, Limitations, Implications

Discussion

In this section, I will explain how the agency of each individual program participant creates or at least affects Allport's (1954) conditions in relation to the unique context of the language study abroad. I will then summarize how my participants' levels of openness to the linguistic and cultural Other either changed or stagnated during their language study abroad, in part supported by within-case analysis of the M-GUDS data, and how ultimately each participant was the main agent of her own evolution or stagnation in openness.

Gordon Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory* were present to some degree in all six of my participants. Aside from the participants having similar, general goals of improving their language during their LSA and making some sort of connection to the culture of Spain and/or members of the host culture, the degree of Allport's other three optimal conditions varied by participant. The six of them varied in the degree of equality of social status they felt, the amount of community support to achieve their goals (from their cohort, from the Complutense, from their homestays and from the host culture in general), and in the amount of intergroup cooperation they felt while abroad.

The degree of openness to the linguistic and cultural Other that evolved for each participant was also varied. The uniqueness of the LSA experience may have contributed to the growth of openness, the stagnation of openness, or the decline in openness in each individual program participant. The presence of the university cohort, the time-limited "living" in Spain, the artificiality of the weekend excursions, the ease of connecting to the

home culture, the presence of adversity and how it was dealt with, and the importance placed upon casual and superficial contact each were potentially contributing factors to how each participant's openness to the Other evolved.

Given the presence of the unique factors of a language study abroad mentioned above, the nature of individual engagement manifested through either the re-embrace or reframing of goals, the by-proxy evaluations of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams" and attitudes of initiative or passivity all further influenced the level of Allport's (1954) four conditions and their efficacy in producing openness to the Other. The varying degrees of importance attributed to each of these factors and the subsequent degree to which Allport's conditions were met caused the variations in each of the participant's experiences, and thus in each participant's openness to the Other.

Most importantly, what the analysis of the data suggests is that the program participants themselves are instrumental in forming Allport's (1954) four optimal conditions - either that support prejudice reduction and language acquisition, or that resist prejudice reduction. For example, a sense of greater equality and language confidence leads to more initiative. Forming a "team," or even a perception of a "team" pursuing the same goals with members of the linguistic and cultural Other leads to more initiative. Treating the inevitable challenges that occur during a language study abroad as opportunities to better satisfy one's goals leads to a greater sense of social equality with the Other. If the participant begins the language study abroad experience ahead in these areas, the chances of continuing positive growth is much greater. If the participant starts behind in openness and language skills, they most likely will either stagnate or decline in both language and openness to the Other. The "rich" in these areas will really benefit and

get "richer," while the "poor" will very likely become even more "poor" - all intensified by the unique elements of the language study abroad like the presence of the university cohort, the time-limited "living" in a foreign country, the ease of communication with the "home culture," the artificiality of program design re: weekend excursions, the importance placed upon casual and superficial contact, and how a participant deals with adversity due to linguistic and/or cultural differences.

In analyzing each individual case, across-case analysis of the M-GUDS (1995) (Appendix G) data proved inaccurate and skewed. Comparing Isabel's original M-GUDS score of 5.20, the highest of all my participants, and Carlos' score of 4.48, the lowest, are not accurate reflections of their openness as proven repeatedly by the qualitative data obtained in my interviews of them while they were in Spain and after. These initial scores call into question the validity of self-reported responses on a measure such as the M-GUDS. These scores may also indicate either naïve or inflated responses that may seem more politically correct, much like the participants in van Dijk's (1992) research who maintained an effort to present themselves as positively as possible to their interlocutors, while at the same time not supporting their expressed sentiments in their actions. As such, when evaluating the degree to which openness to the linguistic and cultural Other evolved during the summer language study abroad, the reader will notice that I reference the M-GUDS "within case" only, comparing how each individual's starting and ending scores compare (Appendix E). I posit a "cross case" application of the M-GUDS findings are not accurate and only a "within case" analysis is accurate because the self-report method of data-collection skews any cross-case comparison. For example, the reader will notice Mariela has higher scores on the M-GUDS both initially

as well as at the end of her sojourn than does Carlos. The data clearly show, however, that Carlos demonstrated a much higher initial openness than did Mariela at both stages of the LSA. Mariela's high M-GUDS scores could be due to her detached definition of openness and her desire to "fit in" more than anything. Carlos' relatively low M-GUDS scores could be explained by his more realistic grasp of what it takes to interact successfully across cultures. This is why "within case" analysis of the M-GUDS scores provides meaningful information rather than comparing the scores "across case."

Review of Isabel's language study abroad.

By the end of her month in Spain, not only did Isabel feel her overall goals for the summer had not been satisfied, but the interactions that she did have with the host culture both in her homestay environment and socially, resonated negatively with her. She explained this disconnect to me in our last interview,

I feel like I really missed out on an opportunity. I feel like [my señora] wasn't the friendliest person and she didn't really make us feel like a part of the family. It was more of a business deal, I feel like. I had in my mind of some Spanish woman being over the top and welcoming us into the home and throwing us a party. I think [people back home] have been really surprised to find that it was a colder relationship. It wasn't as warm as I was expecting.

This dynamic was enough for Isabel to abandon her goals of interacting, presumably positively, with the Other, and placing the entirety of her goal to improve in the language on her classroom experience. Isabel further communicated the negativities of her homestay "team" experience to her cohort, placing her squarely on the lowest level of the continuum of homestay "teams" as they pertained to this study's participants, and possibly relative to the entire travel abroad cohort. Not feeling a sense of community support to foster mutually beneficial relationships with anyone from the host culture

naturally, which is Allport's (1954) third condition for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory*, led to a feeling of a lack of any sense of cooperation from the host culture group. "I never really came across any people my age multiple times that I could have gotten close to. I met people at bars and clubs, but I don't really feel like those were the people that I really wanted to foster a relationship with." Her overall passivity in not seeking to develop or sustain relationships with members of the Other contributed to her overall decrease in openness. This was substantiated by her M-GUDS (1995) score decreasing by the end of her sojourn more than any other of my participants (Appendix G). She started at an average of 5.20 points on the M-GUDS scale and decreased 0.24 points to end with an average of 4.96 points.

By the end of her sojourn, Isabel had formed generally negative perceptions about the characteristics of members of the host culture, and had not attempted to make contact with anyone from the host culture in the months after she had returned home. Specifically, regarding Isabel's openness to the Other, at first she seemed receptive to the idea of being open to the Other, but by the end of her trip, her reality had taught her everything she seemingly needed to know about the Other: simply, that they were inferior to members of her own cultural group. From this opinion, it was obvious that Allport's (1954) first optimal condition of equal social status was not achieved. Many of Isabel's opinions of this "Other" group specifically seemed to be of a pejorative nature, and Isabel had no plans to do anything in her future to change her point of view. She indicated, "I don't think I'll do [a] semester abroad. It just doesn't work with my schedule and my job and other commitments."

Review of Marló's language study abroad.

Marló began his summer language immersion study abroad with a true sense of excitement to have authentic interactions with the Other. Hearing about his girlfriend's very positive experience had made Marló eager to have a similar experience in Spain. "She even took me shopping to get me clothes that look European. Nice shorts that are not so much cargo shorts and V-necks and new sneakers that are nice. I'm going to try to even look Spanish, because I think it's a really cool look. Maybe even fool people into thinking I'm Spanish." He was counting on the Other as an integral part of the successful completion of his goals to learn more Spanish in an abroad environment than he would have been able to in a class taken in the United States, and was hopeful to immerse himself and indoctrinate the cultural practices of the Other to such a degree as to all but fully assimilate in the host culture while abroad.

Unfortunately, Marló never felt his program gave him the opportunity to interact with the Other, outside of his homestay environment. This feeling affected not only his sense of being a social unequal, which means Allport's (1954) first optimal condition was not satisfied, but also there being a sense of no community support or intergroup cooperation outside of his own homestay family, resulting in Allport's third and fourth optimal conditions not being satisfied either. Perhaps the most important single increase in cultural understanding in Marló's mind came from his señora - "I've been learning a lot about food because my señora is always trying to cook us typical Spanish cuisine. And she explains how she makes everything, so I'm going to bring back recipes to make at home." Marló placed his homestay "team" higher on the continuum than he placed the "teams" of many of his other cohort members after comparing experiences, due to the nature of the interactions he had with his host family. Although generally happy with his

homestay, Marló felt an overall sense of dejection and withdrawal from his whole experience abroad, and this affected his perceptions about the relationships that his culture have with the host culture in general, as if the two cultures were coexisting, but never truly interacting. His overall passivity in not seeking out interactions members of the host culture solidified his understanding that he was a tourist and a consumer in Spain, but not much else. Marló would mention that he and his cohort would "eat in the cafeteria, which I guess is not that typical [for a Spaniard]," "we go to all the clubs where all the Americans already are," and when they visited other places within Spain, "we went as tourists. We would hang out in a group and take our pictures and look like total tourists."

Marló did not exhibit the wherewithal to seek the relationships with members of the host culture that were of his age, as these relationships were not a part of the abroad program design. When a possible interaction with such a person almost came to fruition, in the 23-year old Engineering student that ate dinner with Marló's homestay family, an eventual lack of understanding of the spur-of-the-moment social planning led Marló to feel a sense of hopelessness in fostering future relationships of this nature and contributed to a sense of withdrawing from participating in a culture that he had been so eager to be part of. By the end of the summer, Marló had all but given up and abandoned his goals, effectively not able to satisfy Allport's (1954) second optimal condition, ultimately viewing himself a victim of the design of his summer language study abroad program. He expressed this to me in our final interview, saying,

I regret how different everything turned out to be compared to what I expected. Obviously I have a lot of opinions about the quality of the program and how I thought I would be way more immersed - kind of like what my girlfriend told me, but I wasn't able to speak with Spanish-speakers

my age - [the program] makes it really difficult to do that.

His disappointment manifested in his sense of opportunity lost and a current lack of excitement in the hope of ever achieving a relationship like this with the Other. This attitude indicates an overall decrease in openness to the Other as his LSA progressed, and this conclusion is substantiated by Marló's M-GUDS (1995) results decreasing more than anyone else's, except Isabel. Marló started with an average of 4.93 points on the M-GUDS and decreased 0.17 points to end with an average of 4.76 points (Appendix G). With no plans to return to do a study abroad, and having since not maintained any regular contact with his host family, Marló seemingly was putting his abroad experience behind him. He admitted, "I got more of a tourist experience more than anything. But I'm forgetting all the names of everything. I even forgot where I was at [in Madrid, referring to his homestay]. It was like one stop from *Cuatro Caminos* [metro stop], but I can't even remember."

Review of Violeta's language study abroad.

Violeta was eager to have her first sustained, prolonged contact with the Other. She mentioned the racial and cultural homogeneity of her hometown, and an eagerness to meet and interact with a linguistic and cultural Other. She felt she was facing an opportunity in her language study abroad to meet people in social situations and even develop friendships with people different in language and culture from the type of people she had always been with because of the circumstances of her primary socialization.

The reality of Violeta's abroad experience, though, did not allow her to realize any of these potential interactions, other than with, to some degree, her host señora. Violeta summarized her language use by telling me, "I speak Spanish obviously in the

[homestay] apartment because my señora doesn't know any English. But I would like to be speaking more, but now it's like I'm comfortable speaking English [socially], so it's harder to step out and do that." Interestingly, while Violeta's initiative to converse with her señora salvaged the relationship the two of them formed together, Violeta's general passivity in social contexts with the Other led her to believe that there was no real opportunity to interact with the Other in this context. Violeta's "lack of opportunity" to interact meaningfully with members of the host culture eventually modified her goals of developing friendships with members of the host culture due to the "unrealistic" expectation of being able to really get to know the Other within a month-long study abroad experience. Violeta told me as much in our second interview together, about a week before she returned to the United States, by claiming "I don't think a month is necessarily enough time to form meaningful relationships [with anyone from Spain]." Her reframing of initial goals to new goals which could not possibly be satisfied during this LSA meant Allport's (1954) second optimal condition was not satisfied.

This lack of opportunity, coupled with a number of initial homestay miscommunications and misunderstandings led Violeta to believe that her señora was quick to point out deficiencies of Violeta's home culture. Despite the instances in which Violeta felt her señora was almost "motherly," Violeta felt that negativity toward the United States was highlighted. Regarding San Fermín and the running of the bulls, "if one person gets hit by a bull, [my señora] is like, 'it's probably a stupid American. They think they have this pride, and they don't know what they're doing.' She always has little things like that." This negativity was also combined with a perceived disinterest on her señora's part about any cultural practices in the United States. For example, when

Violeta tried to talk to her señora about what her family does for Christmas, "[my señora] would just stop. She'll like walk away - kind of thing. And then she'll come back in a few minutes and start a totally new conversation." In using her university cohort to help her process her homestay "team," Violeta placed herself lower than everybody but Isabel on the homestay "team" continuum, meaning that she also viewed her level of community support and intergroup cooperation, Allport's (1954) third and fourth optimal conditions, as worse than that of other people in her cohort.

Violeta's reframing of goals, from wanting to form possible "long-term friendships" with people from Spain, to concluding that the during of time in which she was in Spain made this impossible, was a response to her dismissing the possibility of becoming more open to the Other while on this particular language study abroad. When referring to a possible study abroad in Chile, Violeta compared her stay in Spain by saying "we'll be [in Chile] for longer, so I think we'll actually become part of the culture and learning about the culture instead of just being a visitor." Looking to the future, Violeta thought the promise of a much longer study abroad experience of an entire semester in Chile would be much more likely to allow her to form relationships and have authentic interactions with the Other, saying, "I think it'll be a given that we'll be expected to talk Spanish more [in Chile]. I think it will be very much Spanish all the time." Because of this hope for future interaction, Violeta's interest in and openness to the Other seems to be about the same as before her summer study abroad, as she felt at both points in time an interest in the Other, with the only hindrance having been her circumstances not giving her the opportunity to truly interact with the Other while in Spain. This is supported by her M-GUDS (1995) results being more similar than those of

any of my other participants from the beginning of her sojourn to the end. Violeta started with an average of 5.06 points on the M-GUDS and decreased only 0.08 points to end with an average of 4.98 points (Appendix G).

Review of Gabi's language study abroad.

Gabi's experiences pre-study abroad had given her a number of experiences interacting with the Other. "I think I'm very lucky I come from [my hometown] - I grew up in the city part of it. I think growing up in a really urban setting gave me a good balance between not being paranoid but not being naive. I came into it with an open mind." Not only did she grow up in a linguistically and racially diverse urban area, she had also worked with an organization that afforded her additional experiences with the Other, "I went on a spring break trip last year before study abroad, to Arizona, and worked in a shelter for mostly immigrants who are seeking political asylum and pretty much all of them came from Mexico. I learned about their stories, I learned about their difficulties of becoming a citizen here. And I'm actually going back there for the duration of winter break." With Gabi's multiple experiences with linguistic and/or cultural Others, and her desire to participate in yet another experience in which she hoped to foster new relationships with the Other, it is evident that Gabi's initial interest in and openness to the Other was extremely high.

Gabi's experience abroad was one in which she was able to satisfy all of her goals with the support and cooperation she felt she attained through her multiple and multicontextual interactions with the Other during that time. She told me, "I think I'm most proud of how I've been able to speak to complete strangers in Spanish. Usually at home I'm pretty shy. I think I kind of came out of my shell a little bit. And that was

partly necessity. But, I'm not nervous to go talk to strangers in another language at all anymore." Her initiative was consistently rewarded by the Other not only in the resulting interactions with members of the host culture, but also in Gabi's sustained feeling of being a social equal while a part of these interactions. For Gabi, the opportunities to interact with the Other, whether in her family or socially in a bullfight, playing soccer, or in a park with a man playing with his dog, were hers to embrace. Any cultural misunderstandings that came up for Gabi, like seeing graffiti, worker strikes or other protests, were opportunities for Gabi to inform herself more about the actuality of Spain that was different than what she could experience in a classroom. She continually re-embraced her goals of interacting with members of the host culture while at the same time improving her language skills. As such, Gabi felt her Spanish fluency was affected by her opportunities to interact with the Other, by saying, "I got better at how people speak outside of classrooms. It's more than just knowing slang... I think it's being able to branch out a little, like speak to Spaniards, or with the family, you pick up on ways people talk or ways they phrase things, and try to match it. I think my Spanish definitely got better in Spain." However she processed these differences, Gabi felt her desire to more fully understand was supported by the members of the Other throughout her language study abroad. She viewed the host culture positively, and her homestay was a big part of that. In fact, when comparing her homestay "team" to those of the rest of her cohort, most of Gabi's cohort looked to her homestay "team" as the ideal standard by which all other "teams" should be measured. Hence, during her time in Spain, Gabi seemed to satisfy all of Allport's (1954) conditions of feeling like a social equal, realizing

the goals she set for herself, feeling a sense of community support and intergroup cooperation in her sojourn.

As her month in Spain ended, Gabi set her sights on returning to work with the same organization that she worked in previously, but in a capacity in which she would interact even more closely with the Other. She thought, "I should be participating in getting petitions signed, grant writing, and doing research out in the community. Last time, it was pretty intimidating and I didn't say much [in Spanish]. And I'll definitely be ready to get more practice now that I've come out of my shell a little bit." She also planned on participating a semester-long study abroad in which she would again be placed squarely in an environment interacting with the Other on a constant basis. She told me, "I'm considering Chile and also coming back to Madrid. I definitely want to go somewhere Spanish-speaking, I'm just weighing those two options, but I'm kind of liking Madrid of those two right now. The Spain trip kind of reinforced that." It seems accurate to claim that although Gabi entered her study abroad very open to the linguistic and cultural Other, this openness increased even more while Gabi was abroad, a claim substantiated by Gabi's M-GUDS (1995) results increasing from the beginning to the end of her study abroad experience more than all but one other participant (Mariela). Gabi began with an average of 5.13 points on the M-GUDS scale and increased 0.23 points to end with an average of 5.36 points (Appendix G).

Review of Mariela's language study abroad.

Mariela entered her language study abroad with the understanding, as many of my other participants had, that she would be in a position to have prolonged and sustained contact with the Other, and hoped to situate herself within this environment as "more

than a tourist.” For Mariela, however, being open to the Other did not necessitate her having authentic interactions with members of that culture, but rather adjusting her lifestyle, language, and even to a degree her mannerisms and appearance to best “blend in” with the Other. It is entirely reasonable that Mariela's sense of social equality, and thus her satisfaction of Allport's (1954) first condition, stemmed from how comfortable she felt "blending in."

Without a doubt, Mariela exhibited more passivity than any of my other participants as far as interacting with the Other. In our last interview, when I asked Mariela to describe to me an interaction with the host culture outside of her host family that she was most proud of, she told me, "I would go to our local café and get coffee by myself, just kind of people-watched. Maybe most people [from my university cohort] wouldn't feel comfortable sitting at a café by themselves, but I kind of liked it. I even got those flowy pants with patterns on them - I call them 'Aladdin pants.' So I think I fit in pretty well." As far as actually interacting and communicating with the Other in social situations, Mariela demonstrated ambivalence more than anything. This could have been due to a lack of confidence, as she told me various times about how she was "really nervous because it was my first time [in another country] and before we went there was so much information in terms of 'watch out for pickpockets,' 'stick together,' you know, all about safety because [the program directors] want us to be safe." However, Mariela's ambivalence could have been a lack of interest in developing relationships with members of the host culture as well, as she explained the relationships she did foster while in Spain, saying "There were really only a few times you could really go out of being with the [participants from my university]. Maybe after class, but at that time you'd want to

go shopping or to a café or going to other touristy sites. So I think there wasn't as much opportunity to kind of branch out to meet Spanish-speaking students, but [my cohort] got to know each other really well."

Mariela felt close with her host family as she likely understood the importance of a positive homestay experience as essential to her enjoyment of her study abroad, but developing relationships outside her homestay was not thought of as equally important for her enjoyment of the experience. At no time was there any evidence of Mariela comparing her homestay "team" to that of any other member of her cohort, meaning there was no evidence of by-proxy evaluation of meaningful relationships within her "team" relative to the "teams" of her cohort, making her "team's" place on the continuum unknown. Seeming to "fit in" was more important to Mariela than interacting with the Other. To this point, Mariela noticed in the metro, "When you're on the escalator there's the standing side and the walking side. If you're standing on the walking side, people just push you. And they don't say 'excuse me' or anything. I'm the type of person that's normally like 'excuse me, excuse me.' But nobody really listens here, so now I just sort of push through." Allport's (1954) third and fourth optimal conditions of community support and intergroup cooperation were never really an issue for Mariela socially, since these interactions were never pursued by her in that context.

As such, "opportunity" to interact with the Other, or lack thereof, was also not really an issue that affected Mariela's language study abroad experience. Any "homestay miscommunications" or misunderstandings of cultural practices were dealt with by Mariela in such a way that she would disengage as much as possible from the interaction, as evidenced in her homestay family's disagreements about church, the necessity of a

daily siesta, and conversations about Christopher Columbus. Although Mariela had strong feelings about some of these topics, for example with church that "teaches morals and kind of the family unit, and that's what everybody grows up with," she preferred to not say anything that might have contributed to any further unease.

Mariela expressed thoughts that if she had more time to spend with the Other, she may have been able to interact with them more than she did, but her major would not allow her to participate in a study abroad longer than the one she completed in Spain. This sentiment indicates a reassessment, if not a reframing of goals, to whatever degree Mariela had expected to interact with the Other. Mariela superficially continued her relationship with her host family to a degree via email, but had no plans to put herself in an environment again in which close interaction with the Other would be expected. Mariela summarized, "I definitely think my Spanish would have improved even more and that I would have been able to meet more of the Spanish students or maybe the Spaniards if I stayed for a whole semester or a year, but my major won't allow for that." In all, it seems that Mariela was open to the Other from a distance, and not much happened during her homestay to affect her level of openness one way or the other. This conclusion may seem to be problematized by the positive change in Mariela's M-GUDS (1995) score while abroad, which increased more than the score of any other participant in my study (Appendix G). While Mariela started with an average of 4.69 points on the M-GUDS scale, she increased by 0.44 points to end with an average of 5.13 points. This may be explained, though, by what it meant to Mariela to be "open to the Other." If indeed Mariela's openness was never dependent on her authentically interacting with members of

the host culture, she may have indeed felt an increased openness despite qualitative evidence indicating her openness level during her study abroad as static or ambivalent.

Review of Carlos' language study abroad.

Carlos, as a rising senior and Spanish major, began his experience abroad having studied about the language and culture of the Other more than had any of my other study participants. Initially, Carlos felt more comfortable using the language with members of the host culture than my other study participants as well, and that difference may have been manifested in attitudes different study abroad participants had toward the host culture. When talking about his university cohort, Carlos told me

I think maybe some people [from the university program] might feel less-liked. Maybe it's just a difference in [our] behavior and personality. There are a few of them that I think get nervous even though their Spanish is probably better than they think. They feel a little uncomfortable. There's me and [two females from my program], and we're probably the three that usually are out and talking to everybody. I think if [the other participants] come out of their shells, it will help them.

Carlos felt, that with a concerted and sustained initiative on his part to continue to learn and find his place within the host culture, he could take full advantage of his experience from the Other and continue to learn things about the Other's language and culture that he had not understood previously, effectively becoming the agent of his own social equality with that of the host culture (Allport, 1954). He also felt he could act as an ambassador of his own culture, and that his relationship with the Other should be the opportunity to more-fully learn about each other. Carlos told me, "Since we speak about a lot of cultural things at our [dinner] table, I always try to have input. [The Spanish] are all curious about us. But we're helping each other bridge the gap. They want to hear about our culture just as much as I want to talk about their culture. And that's something

to take away that's special." The combination of all of these circumstances contributed to an overall high initial level of openness to the linguistic and cultural Other, which I conclude despite both of Carlos' M-GUDS (1995) scores being lower than those of any other participant (Appendix G). As mentioned before, it is the "within case" increase or decrease that may be of some value in understanding each case, but the complexity and nuance of the qualitative data from the interviews will always provide much more accurate information.

Carlos' experience with the Other during his summer language study abroad was positive, and although Carlos noticed differences between his culture and the Other, these differences were things to be mutually understood by members of each culture, and conversation through personal interactions with members of the host culture would remedy these gaps in understanding that had previously existed. These thoughts are manifestations of Carlos' agency for seeking community support and intergroup cooperation, Allport's (1954) third and fourth optimal conditions. For example, Carlos told me that he is a person that would always wear a hat, and one night he still had his hat on when he sat down to the dinner table. "[My host family] mentioned it, and I was like, you know, 'Is this okay?' I didn't want to be disrespectful. And they laughed and said, 'Oh, it's okay. Don't worry about it.' But then we got to have this whole conversation about clothes and bikinis on girls and things like that. So it was just an [unintentional situation] that really dialed down into something." With regards to his homestay "team," interactions such as these, combined with no evidence of Carlos ever comparing his homestay negatively to another homestay, suggests that Carlos put his "team" at a positive place along the continuum of cohort "teams." Further, any misunderstandings

within the context of his homestay or even with other members of the host culture (like the waiter in the first place at which Carlos ate in Madrid) were seen as opportunities to bridge communication gaps between members of distinct linguistic and cultural groups. These misunderstandings also reaffirmed Carlos' commitment to his goals instead of inhibiting them or causing him to re-establish them.

As the experience abroad ended, Carlos took further advantage of meeting members of the Other that were in a similar study abroad context at his university's campus in the United States in an effort to continue the learning experience, but also to act as a facilitator in their own learning experience. Carlos explained,

I just started to speak Spanish with them. So it was funny because they said, 'Oh, you speak really well!' And it's funny to hear them try to say that in English. So I would say that a couple of them are relying heavily on their Spanish, but a couple of them as well are trying to put themselves out there - the same scenario I was trying to do in Spain - but to speak English.

Overall, Carlos demonstrated a high degree of openness to the Other which increased even more through his study abroad experience and beyond, as supported by the increase in his M-GUDS (1995) scores as his sojourn progressed. Carlos started with an average of 4.48 points and increased 0.16 points to end with an average of 4.64 points on the M-GUDS scale (Appendix G).

Limitations of the study

There are several limitations to this study, which vary in their nature and which I will attempt to address here. One limitation, naturally, is the scope of the data I was able to collect. This study examines six individuals from one university cohort of twenty-four undergraduate students. All six of my participants self-identified as members of the same racial group. Likewise, all of my participants not only attended school at the same

private Midwestern university, but each participant resided in the Midwestern United States while away from university. Moreover, my data were only analyzed from certain angles. Other aspects of my participants' identities that affect identity, and quite possibly openness to the Other, like primary socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) were perhaps not investigated as fully as they could have been. An apparent aspect of my participants' socialization that would have been very interesting to analyze would have been to ask them about questions to determine their initial levels of openness. In my research, as the evidence mounted up, it became apparent to me that Carlos and Gabi were more successful in their experiences than my other participants, due in large part to the previous experience they had interacting with the Other in some capacity.

The method by which linguistic gains were evaluated by my participants during their time in Spain is certainly a limitation of this study. My participants simply self-reported their experiences and perceptions as well as whatever linguistic gains they felt they either made or didn't. Having a standard measure of linguistic gain would have added an interesting dimension to my data. The most common measure of language proficiency is the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), which was developed by the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012). The OPI is administered and scored on a generally-accepted scale by a trained ACTFL rater, and I am not one. Therefore, any degree of proficiency in Spanish inductively came from interview data.

Likewise, the degree to which I immersed myself in the lives of my participants while we were all in Spain may be a limitation of my study. Due to the length of their sojourn, I felt that collecting data as I did was most appropriate while at the same time

being least intrusive in my participants' abroad experiences. Thus, I made the conscious decision not to take the role of "observer," in which I would have watched my participants and recorded data in their social situations or with their host families. I was not a "participant," meaning that my participants viewed me in the role of a researcher only, and not necessarily as a confidant that shared their experiences to some degree (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While I may have gotten different data to some degree, and while those differences may have ultimately affected how I interpreted any of my participant's evolution of an openness to the cultural and linguistic Other while abroad, I wanted to do my best to be the least-intrusive as possible and to let each participant's experience develop as organically as possible. I felt that the nature by which I collected data and the frequency in which I did so was the best way to let my participants' experiences develop in this way.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study have several implications for future research, which I will detail in this section. These implications stem from both the limitations of my present study, as well as themes that emerged only peripherally in my study that could be interesting avenues of exploration if the proper time and dedication were given to each.

Examination of a semester-long or year-long language immersion study abroad program's alignment with Allport's (1954) optimal conditions for prejudice reduction in *intergroup contact theory* and the resulting evolution of participants' openness to the Other would contribute to the existing knowledge in this area. Notably different would be the increased duration in which members of both the host culture and the minority culture would come into contact. This would help researchers further understand the role

of my findings insofar as the presence of the university cohort, time-limited "living" in a foreign country, ease of ability to communicate with the home culture and its frequency in a longer-duration sojourn, the artificiality of program design re: weekend excursions, participant processing of adversity, and importance placed upon casual and superficial contact with the Other. It would be interesting to investigate the degree to which increased duration leads to how participants either re-establish or reframe goals, how an increased duration affects by-proxy evaluation of meaningful relationships within homestay "teams," and how increased duration affects participant initiative or passivity, if at all. Any resulting findings would provide an increased understanding to how these conditions interact and subsequently affect openness to the linguistic and cultural Other.

Through purposive, criterion sampling (Babbie, 2001), it would be interesting to investigate the roles that gender, race and/or primary socialization, or, perhaps more importantly, the role of prior abroad experience, initial language proficiency, and initial degree of openness, play in the development of openness to the Other during a language study abroad. Depending on the context of the study abroad, it is possible that any or all of these individual characteristics could act as inhibitors or tools of entree in contact with members of the host culture. In the cases in which gender, race and/or primary socialization act as inhibitors to the development of meaningful relationships between members of each culture, it would be interesting to investigate if these characteristics can be overcome as inhibitors and how. Conversely, if these characteristics act as tools of cultural entree, it would be interesting to investigate any circumstances that may overcome this and how.

Another implication for future research includes investigating the degree to which openness to the linguistic and cultural Other co-occurs with language development as measured by a trained rater using a generally-accepted tool, like the OPI. Extremely important would be not only the establishment of baseline data by means of a pre-study abroad OPI, but a subsequent post-study abroad OPI that measures growth. A comparison should be made, if possible, with a “control group” of non-study abroad students at the same time to compare their language development independent of a language study abroad with that of the study abroad participants. With this, the question of how language confidence correlates with openness and initiative could be addressed.

Other themes that only very peripherally emerged from my study could serve as jumping-off points for future investigation. One example of this would be investigating the attitude of study abroad participants regarding the degree that they feel their attempts to speak the host language are “appreciated” by members of the host culture. One of my participants felt that her attempts to speak Spanish with members of the host culture were generally “appreciated.” Is this feeling of being “appreciated” common for university students abroad? Are these efforts truly “appreciated” by members of the host culture? Should they be? How does this “appreciation,” or lack thereof, affect the abroad participant’s openness to the Other? Are there connections between the level of “appreciation” sought, or expected, and a sense of cultural exceptionalism?

During my interviews with my participants, I found that in at least one instance interactions with members of the host culture seemed to be embellished somewhat resulting in what would be a more positive presentation of a particular participant. For example, one of my participants told me initially about a somewhat contentious

conversation between her host señor and her host brother regarding the appropriateness of taking a siesta during the day. Initially, my participant explained how she withheld her opinions on the issue, saying “obviously I didn’t state my opinion because I have class during siesta and I’m trying to see everything...” About three months later, when I interviewed her again, she recounted the same incident, but this time with a much more active role in the conversation, in which “I was actually talking to my host brother, and he was shocked that we didn’t have a siesta. He just didn’t know how people get through their day without taking a siesta.” While it certainly is possible that these two conversations took place on separate occasions, it would be interesting to investigate to what degree the passage of time changes participants’ self-perceived roles in intercultural interactions, and if that continually changing perception tends to romanticize or perhaps even demonize a language study abroad if the participant views her experience as more interactive with the host culture as time goes on.

At least two of my participants treated the “host culture” as more of a static entity, and with whom interaction on an interpersonal level was not necessary in order to be experienced successfully. To what extent is this attitude pervasive? What are the different beliefs of various study abroad participants regarding how they prefer to “interact with the host culture?” To what degree do these attitudes align with an initial openness to the linguistic and cultural Other and how do those beliefs specifically affect the evolution of this openness during a language immersion study abroad?

After having completed their summer language immersion study abroad program, all six of my participants returned to the same private Midwestern university to continue their studies. One of my six participants indicated to me that he found out there was a

group of students from Spain spending the semester at his university. I interpreted the fact that he sought out these students and interacted socially with them on multiple occasions as a sign of continued openness to the Other. That my other participants did not either know about members of the Spanish culture studying in the context of their new host culture - the same as my participants' home culture, or that they did know but did not seek out interactions with these language study abroad students does not necessarily indicate a lack of openness to the Other. This information, though, does not seem that it would be that hard to discern if one made the effort to do so. In that spirit, an interesting avenue of investigation would be to examine, through a more longitudinal study, in what ways study abroad participants continue to manifest their openness to the Other, or lack thereof, after completion of the study abroad? Successfully investigating any of these implications for future research more completely would provide a deeper understanding of the evolution of a study abroad participant's openness to the linguistic and cultural Other due to a language immersion study abroad experience.

Program Implications

The results of this study suggest several implications for future language study abroad programs that could help diminish issues not only that the study's participants found problematic, but those that may have also contributed to a less-than-ideal increase in openness to the linguistic and cultural Other. While it is true that based on the results of this study, not all participants needed additional interventions to experience an increased openness to the Other, these programs may still serve to increase openness for similar participants in the future. It is very unlikely that any of these implications have adverse effects on the openness levels of those participants who otherwise would have

exhibited an increased openness without any of these interventions in place. These suggested interventions are not necessarily presented in order of importance. Rather, each of these interventions can be viewed as independent contributions to an experience more likely to foster increased openness levels.

Increasing the likelihood of meaningful relationships with the Other through purposeful homestay selection.

Violeta was surprised to find out, once she and her roommate arrived in Spain, that they would be staying in an apartment with an older widow whose child had long since moved out. She expressed some difficulty at the beginning of her stay with being able to connect with her señora on a personal level. In all, Violeta never felt she had a good opportunity to meet anyone from Spain her own age, helping to cause a disconnect from members of the host culture. Isabel was in a homestay situation in which the señora's children came to visit at times, but were significantly older than Isabel was and didn't take much of an interest in her. Mariela had a "host brother" with whom she was able to connect to the most, along with the rest of her host family, while she was there. Carlos and Marló shared a residence with a "host sister" that was a little older than the both of them, but with whom Marló felt like he had a small connection with, despite the fact that they both felt like she wasn't around much. Gabi had an 8-year old "brother" with whom she felt a close connection and who was one of the instrumental parts in her connection to the host culture. Looking back, Marló lamented, more than any other aspect of his language study abroad, the inability to make connections with members of the host culture around his own age. If the language study abroad program sought more host families with similarly-aged family members as the study abroad participants, perhaps these connections could more likely take place. Perhaps these hosting

opportunities could be advertised at the cooperating university and vetted with the university's cooperation in order to foster more opportunities to connect with members of the host culture, and hopefully subsequent relationships that increase mutual understanding and openness to the linguistic and cultural Other.

Increasing the likelihood of meaningful relationships with the Other through mentor/tutoring programs.

Whether the availability of families matching those detailed above are readily available enough to accommodate all of the language study abroad participants or not, the visiting and host universities could organize an arrangement in which similarly-aged university students could serve as mentors or tutors to the visiting university program participants. With the economic problems facing many areas of the world, and especially university-aged students, a small stipend built into the program costs of the language study abroad participant could be offered to the host culture mentors/tutors upon successful completion of the language study abroad program. Much like the relationships that Marló, Violeta and Isabel sought but never experienced, an organized, regularly-occurring and consistent relationship between members of both cultural groups could provide the opportunity for an increased openness to the Other while at the same time providing meaningful academic support and understanding to the university participants. It is likely that in those relationships that go well, members of both cultures will seek to expand the group socially, and the amount of meaningful contacts with the Other would increase exponentially.

Increasing the likelihood of meaningful relationships with the Other through “tertulia.”

The concept of “*tertulia*” is popular in both Latin America and in Spain. *Tertulia* is an informal social gathering during a dedicated block of time in which participants,

called *contertuli@s*⁵ in Spanish, comment about any number of themes. As a part of each class available to language study abroad participants, the university could offer *tertulias* with as a part of the class requirements. This would give participants not only an opportunity to meet with the previously-mentioned tutors/mentors, but would do so in an structured, group setting with other members of both cultures. Since all six of my participants described the ease of getting to know other members of their university cohort after arriving in Spain, this dynamic could help to increase the ease of getting to know members of the host culture as well, with so many already-established avenues of entree via the tutor/mentor relationships built in as part of the program. *Tertulias* are known to take place in any number of places, and locations often change from one meeting to another. Thus, desires expressed by program participants like Carlos, Violeta, Marló and Isabel to get to know places where members of the host culture frequent socially would be much more likely to be satisfied as the tutor/mentors could suggest locales conducive to establishing a mutually-beneficial relationship, as Allport's (1954) fourth optimal condition for prejudice suggests.

Increasing the likelihood of meaningful relationships with the Other through shared experiences via day-long weekend excursions.

My study's program participants were required to go on weekend excursions to four different destinations during their month in Spain. The first weekend, they were to go to Toledo, ancient capital of Spain, and one of its most important cultural, artistic and

⁵ Because of the gendered-nature of adjectives in Spanish, a group of male *contertulios* would carry the masculine, plural ending of *-os*. Were the group comprised of all female *contertulias*, one would see the feminine, plural ending of *-as* applied. Due to a historically male dominated society, and thus masculine-preferred societal connotations, traditionally a group of both male and females in *tertulia* would be referred as the masculine *contertulios*. More progressive and gender-neutral literature increasingly has incorporated the "@" to signify a combination of the masculine "o" and the feminine "a" in adjectives. Hence, *contertuli@s* refers to what is likely to be a combination of males and females in this context.

architectural destinations. Another weekend, program participants went to Granada, the former Moorish capital of Spain, in the southern region of Andalucía. One weekend was spent in Segovia visiting its Roman aqueduct, impressive Gothic-style cathedral, and Royal Alcázar among other things. Additionally, one weekend was spent in the province of Asturias, along the Cantabrian coast in northern Spain.

From Madrid, the Toledo excursion and the Segovia excursion could be done without having to have the participants stay overnight in a hotel. Because of their relative proximity to Madrid, each of these excursions are feasible to take leaving Madrid in the morning and returning to Madrid in the evening, while still being able to see the highlights of each city, which is what the participants in my study's program did any case. My participants' reactions to these excursions overall were a mixture of appreciation and confusion. Some participants like Violeta and Gabi valuing the opportunity to visit outside of Madrid, a participant like Carlos feeling like his time could have been spent better away from the formality of the tour group, while Isabel seemed not to accurately be able to explain what she had seen, telling me she had "really enjoyed visiting the *Museo de Segovia*," which after attempting to clarify further, since there are many museums in Segovia, but none of them are called specifically this, Isabel reassured me, "it was just called the *Museo de Segovia*." If there were a tutoring/mentoring program in place between the Complutense and the university at which my participants studied, I believe not only would the participants learn more about the sites they were visiting thus being able to appreciate them more, but it would also give the members of both cultures another situation in which to interact - neither purely academic nor purely social. There is no indication from any of my participants that enjoyed the excursions as

they were that they would have enjoyed the excursions less had a member of the host culture that was about their own age and with whom there would have already been some established and meaningful contact been along as well. In fact, their reactions likely would have been the opposite, based on what Violeta had indicated as her original program goals and how Gabi consistently sought to explore interactions with the Other. What I am proposing is that it is in the interests of both the visiting university as well as the host university to foster relationships of this nature in a variety of social contexts, and day-long excursions should be considered as a means of fostering them.

Decreasing cultural misinterpretations and misunderstandings through pre-program situational/contextual problem solving activities.

Although no two language study abroad programs are ever the same, and there are sure to arise situations unique to each study abroad context, universities surely have enough longitudinal anecdotal data to be able to put together a database of sorts from which they can draw common experiences that in the past have caused cultural misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Surely, Carlos hasn't been the first language study abroad participant that fell victim to a server misunderstanding his intentions regarding how much of a meal he wanted to sit down to have. Isabel can't have been the first language study abroad participant that went into her homestay underprepared for how cautious and overly-respectful house guests may be expected to be while abroad. Marló surely wasn't the first language study abroad participant surprised or put-off at the social agenda-making norms of a host culture. Whether it was any of these, or Mariela feeling uncomfortable with "controversial" family conversation, Violeta hearing catcalls on the street or Gabi trying to process the graffiti she saw around campus and around Madrid, issues and circumstances will occur during a language study abroad that will not

be what participants in the program are used to, or expecting. That is, unless the university program coordinators overtly address these issues in pre-program sessions designed with this end in mind. While the logistics of coordinating so many university students' schedules, and those of the program directors may not be easy, if the participants see this as an integral part of their preparation, and mandatory as a requirement of the program, they will likely find the time to be there. While there, not only can certain specific situations be addressed and communicative solutions be role-played, for example, but participants can also understand that they are likely going to experience situations that are unexpected. Understanding that other unexpected situations can be dealt with through initiative and proactive responses to adversity may act as a catalyst to these participants taking their own initiative to resolve any unique situation that may arise during their stay. For example, if participants role-played a scripted scenario that emulated the context of a homestay in which family members vehemently disagreed about something deeply personal, like religion, and other participants then needed to react how they would while abroad, then all participants involved could at least understand not only that cultural differences may arise but they can also they practice going through possible solutions either through direct involvement in this role-play, or at least as a conscious observer. This connects to the idea of making each potential study abroad "richer" in openness to the Other pre-trip. Better preparation would give the potential participant more resources to start out their sojourn with, and could curtail the "lesser than" judgments that occurred.

Increasing participants' proactivity and initiative in fostering communication to resolve otherwise "adverse" situations.

Various situations arose for my participants during their language immersion experiences in Spain in which the expectations of interpersonal interaction of the host culture did not align with the expectations of interpersonal interaction of the study abroad participants. For example, Carlos went to a restaurant with friends expecting to grab a quick bite to eat, but the restaurant worker was under the impression that the group was there for a much more formal dining experience. In the subway, Isabel was expecting the members of the host culture to respect the personal space that she was used to when navigating crowds in the United States. The host culture, on the other hand, is much less uncomfortable brushing up against or bumping into other people taking the subway.

Although both experiences began negatively, with Carlos saying the waiter “got angry” and “got pretty animated” at this communicative disconnect, the situation was eventually resolved through communication initiated by Carlos. Isabel, on the other hand, did not communicate with any members of the host culture regarding what she felt was an invasion of her personal space, and this initially adverse interaction remained a negative experience to which Isabel attributed in part to a host-cultural generalization of rudeness.

Of the four classes offered to the language study abroad participants, two of them (*Spoken Spanish* and *Peoples and Cultures of Spain*) could easily include as part of their curricula a requirement that encourages the students to complete “tasks” outside of the classroom setting in which program participants interact with the host culture in ways that may cause these cultural clashes. By addressing situations that may cause these clashes thematically by location (subway or other public transportation, restaurants, marketplace, host family residence, public areas like parks or plazas, etc.) and talking

about cultural disconnects that past program participants have experienced, current participants become aware of the potentiality of adversity in any of these given locations, as well as the awareness that “adversity” may come up at some point in the language study abroad. Providing the program participants with “tasks” that they are to complete in different locations, with the ultimate goal being the participants' engagement of members of the host culture in conversation, they are encouraged to take a proactive role in the language instead of the reactive role that students like many of this study's participants expected to take while in Spain. Making these “tasks” a requirement of the courses offered abroad will allow the students a meaningful context in which to process these experiences as well as with an audience experiencing similar situations and with the tutelage of a host culture expert that can offer perspective.

Closing

Language study abroad programs give the program participant an experience unlike any other - the chance to learn about a language other than her own, in that language, and in a social context which functions largely by means of that language for an extended period of time. As has been well-documented by previous research (see Allen, 2010; Hernández, 2010; Isabelli-García, 2006; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2010; Lee, 2012; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), language learning and increased L2 proficiency during this time is an important objective for any university program due to the opportunities for participants to apply their knowledge in authentic situations.

Equally important, though, is the fact that in this time abroad, language study abroad participants are subjected to almost constant contact with the linguistic and cultural Other - many for the first time in a situation as prolonged as this. Allport (1954)

claimed that prejudice often times results between such “in-group” and “out-group” contact as one cultural group ultimately views its practices and conduct in higher regard than those of the other culture. Allport posited, “The resulting disruption in the human family is menacing. And as the peoples of the earth grow ever more interdependent, they can tolerate less well the mounting friction” (p.15). As such, the evolution of participants’ openness to the Other should be an important factor in determining the success of any language study abroad program. It behooves those who design university language study abroad programs to understand how participants’ openness to the linguistic and cultural Other is more likely to increase so that measures can be taken to ensure every preparation can be taken both pre-trip and during the sojourn to facilitate this increase. Social scientists as well would benefit from this understanding of openness as the world continues to become increasingly cosmopolitan and extended travel abroad is ever more available. If we are to have any hope of realizing a society that “prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiple identities, pushes for communities of wide scope, recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups, and accepts the formation of new groups as a part of the normal life of a democratic society” (Hollinger, 2000, p.116), then we would do well to start with understanding the intricacies of and seeking to promote an increased openness to the Other.

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Appendices:

Appendix A - Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) (1995)

Appendix B - Berry's (1989) Acculturation Index Items

Appendix C - Sample Interview Questions

Appendix D - Demographic Chart of Six Case-Study Summer Immersion Language Study Abroad Participants

Appendix E - Participant's responses on M-GUDS measure

Appendix F - Participants' "Allport's (1954) Alignment" Chart

Appendix G - Venn Diagram of the Findings

Appendix A

Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (1995)

1. I would like to join an organization that emphasizes getting to know people from different countries. (DC)
2. I would like to go to dances that feature music from other countries. (DC)
3. I often listen to the music of other cultures. (DC)
4. I am interested in learning about the many cultures that have existed in this world. (DC)
5. I attend events where I might get to know people from different racial backgrounds. (DC)
6. I feel a sense of connection with people from different countries. (SC)
7. I am interested in knowing people who speak more than one language. (DC)
8. I am interested in going to exhibits featuring the work of artists from minority groups. (DC)
9. I would like to know more about the beliefs and customs of ethnic groups who live in this country. (DC)
10. I often feel a sense of kinship with persons from different ethnic groups. (SC)
11. Becoming aware of the experiences of people from different ethnic groups is very important to me. (RA)
12. I don't know too many people from other countries. (DC)
13. If given another chance, I would travel to different countries to study what other cultures are like. (DC)
14. I have *not* seen many foreign films. (DC)
15. I am not very interested in reading books translated from another language. (DC)

16. I would be interested in taking a course dealing with race relations in the United States. (DC)
17. It deeply affects me to hear persons from other countries describe their struggles of adapting to living here. (SC)
18. When I hear about an important event (e.g., tragedy) that occurs in another country, I often feel as strongly about it as if it had occurred here. (SC)
19. I feel comfortable getting to know people from different countries. (SC)
20. For the most part, events around the world do not affect me emotionally. (SC)
21. Persons with disabilities can teach me things I could not learn elsewhere. (RA)
22. I can best understand someone after I get to know how he/she is *both* similar and different from me. (RA)
23. Knowing how a person differs from me greatly enhances our friendship. (RA)
24. Knowing someone from a different ethnic group broadens my understanding of myself. (RA)
25. In getting to know someone, I like knowing *both* how he/she differs from me and is similar to me. (RA)
26. Knowing about the experiences of people of different races increases my self-understanding. (RA)
27. Knowing about the different experiences of other people helps me understand my own problems better. (RA)
28. When I listen to people of different races describe their experiences in this country, I am moved. (SC)
29. It grieves me to know that many people in the Third World are not able to live as they would choose. (SC)
30. I would be interested in participating in activities involving people with disabilities. (DC)

31. I place a high value on being deeply tolerant of others' viewpoints. (RA)
32. In getting to know someone, I try to find out how I am like that person as much as how that person is like me. (RA)
33. Getting to know someone of another race is generally an uncomfortable experience for me. (SC)
34. I am only at ease with people of my own race. (SC)
35. It's really hard for me to feel close to a person from another race. (SC)
36. It is very important that a friend agrees with me on most issues. (RA)
37. I often feel irritated by persons of a different race. (SC)
38. I have friends of differing ethnic origins. (DC)
39. It does not upset me if someone is unlike myself. (SC)
40. Knowing how a person is similar to me is the most important part of being good friends. (RA)
41. It's often hard to find things in common with people from another generation. (RA)
42. I am often embarrassed when I see a physically disabled person. (SC)
43. Placing myself in the shoes of a person from another race is usually too tough to do. (RA)
44. It's hard to understand the problems that people face in other countries. (RA)
45. I sometimes am annoyed at people who call attention to racism in this country (SC)

Note: DC = Diversity of Contact Scale on M-GUDS; RA = Relativistic Appreciation Scale of the M-GUDS; SC = Sense of Connection Scale of the M-GUDS.

Appendix B

Berry's (1989) Acculturation Index Items

1. Clothing
2. Pace of life
3. General knowledge
4. Food
5. Religious beliefs
6. Material comfort
7. Recreational activities
8. Self-identity
9. Family life
10. Accommodation/residence
11. Values
12. Friendships
13. Communication styles
14. Cultural activities
15. Language
16. Employment activities
17. Perceptions of United States and its citizens
18. Perceptions of Spain and its citizens
19. Political ideology
20. Worldview
21. Social customs

Appendix C

Sample interview questions

- In your cultural encounter journal, you wrote about X. Can you describe what about X struck you as different?
- Can you describe the situation surrounding this encounter?
- How do you feel this encounter has affected how you approach your goals for this trip? What sort of changes in your perceptions of your summer study abroad program has this encounter caused?
- Were members of the Spanish community involved in this? How?
- How did this affect your relationship with those involved?
- With whom have you been able to process this cultural encounter? How did that person or those people help you to process this encounter?
- Can you describe for me what you consider to be your most memorable experience during your study abroad?

Other probing questions revolving around each of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions included some of the following:

(Optimal condition #1 - Participants' sense of equality of social status with the Other while abroad)

- How much a part of your host family do you feel? Why do you feel that?
- Are you developing relationships? What do these look like?
- In the cultural encounters that you've experienced so far, how do you think members of the host culture perceive you? Why do you think that? Can you give examples?

- How do you think the host culture perceives your culture as a whole? Why do you think that?

- What would you need to do to be more “Spanish?”

- What would you imagine Spaniards liking or disliking about the United States if they came to stay in the United States for a month?

(Optimal condition #2 - Participants' participation in common, authentic tasks with members of the Other)

- What shared activities have you participated in while studying abroad? With whom did you interact during those activities? Why did you choose that dynamic of people to interact with?

- Describe some activities that you have been a part of while abroad in which you have interacted closely with members of the host culture.

- How do you feel your homestay situation affected your study abroad experience?

(Optimal condition #3 - Participants' sense of community and/or institutional support to foster positive relationships with the Other)

- How do you feel about the level of support that you are getting from your host family? Can you explain?

- How do you feel about the level of support that you are getting from your cohort? Can you explain?

- How do you feel about the level of support that you are getting from your professors / university? Can you explain?

- What were your conversations like with members of the host culture when you initiated them? How were the conversations any different if members of the host culture initiated them?

(Optimal condition #4 - Participants' sense of the level of intergroup cooperation in the effort to achieve their goals)

- What was your motivation to sign up for this trip abroad? What are your personal goals to achieve during your study abroad? How has your host family helped / hindered you achieving your goals?

- What do you think your host family's goals are for you during this study abroad?
- With whom do you find that it's easier for you to achieve your goals? Can you explain why?

- How does the “Spain” you expected compare to the “Spain” you are experiencing?

- Can you explain what are you most proud of yourself for doing while in Spain? Any regrets?

- To what degree do you feel you have satisfied your goals during your study abroad? Can you explain?

- What does it mean to be “fluent?” Are there aspects of your study abroad that helped you in this area?

Follow-up questions to each of these initial probing questions also helped to investigate the degree to which language is interrelated to the cultural encounters.

Appendix D

Demographic Chart of Six Case-Study Summer Immersion Language Study Abroad Participants

Name	Age / Gender	Year in university	Race	Major (minor)	Abroad Living Arrangement	Courses taken during SA*
Isabel	20 ½ / female	Rising junior	Caucasian	International Business (Spanish)	Homestay with roommate	• ACC • P&C
Marl6	19 / male	Rising sophomore	Caucasian	Electrical Engineering	Homestay with roommate (Carlos)	• ACC • P&C
Violeta	19 / female	Rising sophomore	Caucasian	Speech Pathology / Spanish? (Spanish? / Business?)	Homestay with roommate	• P&C • SS
Gabi	19 / female	Rising sophomore	Caucasian	Speech Pathology / Spanish?	Homestay without roommate	• P&C • SS
Mariela	20 / female	Rising junior	Caucasian	Exercise Science (Spanish)	Homestay without roommate	• ISHP • P&C
Carlos	21 / male	Rising senior	Caucasian	Secondary Education / Spanish	Homestay with roommate (Marl6)	• ACC • SS

* The names of courses corresponding to the above acronyms are as follows:

ACC = Advanced Composition and Conversation

ISHP = Introduction to Spanish for the Health Professions

P&C = Peoples and Cultures of Spain

SS = Spoken Spanish

Appendix E

Participants' responses on M-GUDS (1995) measure* (Item# correspond to M-GUDS detailed in Appendix A)

*Reverse scoring: items 12, 14, 15, 20, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45

(I = Isabel, Mó = Marló, V = Violeta, G = Gabi, Ma = Mariela, C = Carlos)

Item #	I1	I2	Mó1	Mó2	V1	V2	G1	G2	Ma1	Ma2	C1	C2
1	5	5	6	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	4	4
2	6	5	5	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	5	5
3	4	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	2	6	2	3
4	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	4
5	5	6	4	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	6	5
6	6	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
7	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	6
8	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	6	4	4	5	5
9	6	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	5	5	4
10	6	5	4	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	5	5
11	5	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	6	4	4
12	2	5	5	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
13	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
14	1	2	5	6	2	3	4	4	3	3	1	1
15	5	4	5	2	5	2	2	6	2	3	4	3
16	6	5	5	5	4	4	6	6	5	3	6	5
17	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	6	6	5	4	4
18	**	5	5	4	5	5	4	6	5	5	4	4
19	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	4	5	6	5	6
20	5	5	3	3	4	5	5	6	5	5	4	4
21	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	5	6	**	4
22	6	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	6	5	6
23	6	5	5	5	6	4	4	4	5	6	5	6
24	6	4	5	4	6	5	5	5	5	6	5	6
25	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	6	5	6

Item #	I1	I2	Mó1	Mó2	V1	V2	G1	G2	Ma1	Ma2	C1	C2
26	6	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	6	5	5
27	6	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	6	5	6
28	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	3	6	4	4
29	6	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	5	6	6	6
30	5	5	4	5	6	5	6	6	4	5	5	5
31	6	5	6	5	5	5	6	5	5	6	5	5
32	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6
33	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	5	6	5	6
34	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6
35	6	6	5	4	6	6	6	6	4	5	6	6
36	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	6	3	3
37	5	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	5	5	5	6
38	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
39	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	3	5
40	6	3	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	3	3
41	5	5	2	1	5	5	2	5	6	3	6	5
42	6	5	5	6	5	5	6	5	5	5	3	5
43	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	3	3	4	5
44	2	3	2	2	2	3	4	5	3	2	3	3
45	5	6	4	5	5	5	6	6	4	4	1	1

Avg. 5.20 4.96 4.93 4.76 5.06 4.98 5.13 5.36 4.69 5.13 4.48 4.6**

** Indicates no answer, item not factored into overall average.

M-GUDS1 score	M-GUDS2 score	M-GUDS change (+/- score)	
Isabel	5.20	4.96	-0.24
Marl6	4.93	4.76	-0.17
Violeta	5.06	4.98	-0.08
Gabi	5.13	5.36	+0.23
Mariela	4.69	5.13	+0.44
Carlos	4.48	4.64	+0.16

Appendix F - Participants' "Allport's (1954) Alignment" Chart

Name	Cultural encounter journal topics	Common "cultural" events	Perceived Equality of Social Status	Study Abroad Goals	Overall Sense of Community support	Overall Sense of Intergroup cooperation
Isabel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pace of life • communication styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullfight • Soccer game 	Americans are superior to Spaniards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA for major • Improve her Spanish • Get to know Spain and surrounding area better • See the way different people interact & how we all interact with each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (bad) • University Cohort (good) • Complutense (good) • Host Culture (bad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (OK with conversation opportunities, not in fostering a nurturing relationship) • Complutense (linguistically as expected, socially lacking) • Host Culture (No cooperation: rude, superficial)
Marló	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clothing • pace of life • food • recreational activities • values / friendships • social customs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chueca • Soccer game 	The social inequality that exists is due to the nature of this program and there is nothing he can do to overcome it, given these circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and girlfriend said he had to do an SA • Speak better Spanish • Converse comfortably with Spaniards and maybe fool them into thinking he's a Spaniard • Meet "young Spanish people" (people his own age) like his girlfriend was able to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (good) • University Cohort (good and bad) • Complutense (bad) • Host Culture (bad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (As much cooperation as could be expected, but there was nobody his age there) • Complutense (No cooperation: classes were disorganized and watered down - memorization over interaction) • Host Culture (No cooperation: poor social planning and overall lack of opportunity with people his age)

Name	Cultural encounter journal topics	Common “cultural” events	Perceived Equality of Social Status	Study Abroad Goals	Overall Sense of Community support	Overall Sense of Intergroup cooperation
Violeta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • communication styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chueca • Bullfight • Soccer game 	In Spain, it is unrealistic to expect Americans to be socially equal to Spaniards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She wants to “see as much as [she] possibly can” • “[She] also want[s] to meet people from Spain” • Increase her Spanish proficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host family (good and bad) • University Cohort (good and bad) • Complutense (good and bad) • Host Culture (bad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host family (Helped conversationally, señora was like an overbearing mother) • Complutense (Allowed her to see sites, but academically very rigorous) • Host Culture (many negative comments toward her)
Gabi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religion • pace of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chueca • Bullfight • Soccer game 	Americans can be social equals if they try to become as informed as possible about Spaniards’ way of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a SA in Spain. • Become comfortable interacting with native Spanish-speakers • Improve her fluency in Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (good) • University Cohort (OK) • Complutense (good) • Host Culture (good) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (Cooperative: interactions with many “types” of people in different contexts.) • Complutense (As expected: provided challenging classes) • Host Culture (Cooperative: all positive interactions)
Mariela	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religion • pace of life • family life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullfight 	In Spain, it is expected that American culture be submissive to Spanish culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be “more than just a tourist” in Spain • Learn more about Spanish • Learn cultural aspects associated with Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (good) • University Cohort (not great) • Complutense (not great) • Host Culture (not great) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (Cooperative: linguistically put her in situations in which her participation was valued) • Complutense (Classes let her practice Spanish, too many tourist experiences, lots of English) • Host Culture (Not too cooperative: not a lot of interactions, lots of reversion to English)

Name	Cultural encounter journal topics	Common "cultural" events	Perceived Equality of Social Status	Study Abroad Goals	Overall Sense of Community support	Overall Sense of Intergroup cooperation
Carlos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pace of life • food • material comfort • recreational activities • communication styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullfight 	Americans' social status is equal to that of Spaniards, and that equality is manifested through intercultural interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Take advantage" of being on an study abroad. • "[He] wanted to get to know a little bit about the culture" • "[He] wanted to perfect the language in certain areas" • SA is a major requirement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (good) • University Cohort (good) • Complutense (OK) • Host Culture (good) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Family (Cooperative: opportunities to communicate and make meaningful relationships) • Complutense (Linguistically: cooperative to a certain extent -> grammar, yes / vocab., no. Lack of additional opportunities socially) • Host Culture (Communication/interactions were seen as opportunities for him to take advantage of)

Appendix G - Venn Diagram of the Findings

