Transformative Learning and ICC Development: The Case of SPVE-Centered Tasks

by

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ABSTRACT

Driven by the goal to better prepare language learners to engage in an increasingly interconnected world, this dissertation examined the effectiveness of transformative learning theory-guided service provider virtual exchange (SPVE)-centered tasks in fostering intercultural communicative competence (ICC) among third-year Spanish language learners. Specifically, it explored: (1) how language learners experience perspective transformation with SPVE-centered tasks specifically designed to facilitate transformative learning and (2) the relationship between perspective transformation and ICC development.

Using a mixed methods approach, this study analyzed participants' transformative learning experiences, influential activities and interactions, and participants' ICC development after participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. The findings demonstrated the positive potential of transformative learning theory as a guiding pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development in SPVEs. In terms of transformative learning experiences, the results of the present dissertation indicated that engagement in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks primarily prompted participants to experience the reflection on and assessment of their perspectives. These experiences were influenced by the cumulative effect of task activities, with particular emphasis on the SPVE sessions, which provided crucial native speaker interactions. In the area of ICC, this dissertation found that after participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, participants demonstrated ICC gains from pre- to post-test in all three domains (cognitive, affective, and behavioral). The results revealed several additional influential variables affected participants' ICC development (related to

perceived transformative learning experiences and gender). Much like the transformative learning experiences, ICC development was largely attributed to the SPVE sessions and the native speaker interactions within them.

Overall, this dissertation found the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks to be successful and recommends further exploration of transformative learning theory as a guiding framework for fostering ICC development in SPVE contexts.

DEDICATION

Soli Deo gloria

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES x

LIST OF FIGURES xii

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION 1

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) 1

ICC in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) Contexts 2

The Progressive Exchange Model for CMC 2

Transformative Learning Theory and ICC 4

Definition of Terms 7

Overview of the Dissertation 11

2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 13

Conceptualizations of ICC 13

CALL and ICC 40

Transformative Learning Theory 68

Chapter Summary 84

Research Questions 85

3 METHODS AND PROCEDURES 87

Design of the Study 87

Research Setting and Participants 91

Instruments 99

Procedures 108

Data Coding: Preparing the Data 111

Data Analysis 111

Chapter Summary 120

4 RESULTS 122

Research Question 1a: Influence of Activities on Transformative Learning Experiences 123

Research Question 1b: Influence of Interactions on Transformative Learning Experiences 161

Research Question 1c: Transformative Learning Tasks and Transformative Learning 181

Research Question 2a: ICC and Transformative Learning Tasks 201

Research Question 2b. Transformative Learning Tasks and ICC Development or Demonstration 211

Research Question 2c: Factors that Predict ICC Change while Participating in Transformative Learning Tasks 235

Chapter Summary 240

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION 242

Research Question 1: SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks and Participants' Transformative Learning Experiences 246

Research Question 2: SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks and Language Learners' ICC 259

The Use of Transformative Learning Theory for Guiding ICC Development in SPVEs 269

Limitations of the Study and Future Research 277

REFERENCES 280

APPENDIX

A TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: LIST OF OBJECTIVES 300

B TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: COMPREHENSION ASSIGNMENT 302

C TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: PREPARATION QUESTIONS 305

D TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: REFLECTION PROMPT 308

E ICC SURVEY 311

F MODIFIED VERSION OF KING'S (2009) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEEY 316

G BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE 319

H SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW 321

I LEE AND SONG (2019): CONGITIVE DOMIAN ITEMS 324

J INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE (CHEN & STAROSTA, 2010) 326

K INTERCULTURAL EFFECTIVENESS SCALE (PORTALLA & CHEN, 2010) 329

L KING'S (2000) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY: HIGHER ED 332

M KING'S (2000) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS: HIGHER ED 337

N IRB APPROVAL 340

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1. Data Analysis and Instruments for Each Research Question 90

2. Participant Demographic Information 91

3. Topics for SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks 100

4. List of A Priori Codes 118

5. Number of Participants Who Answered LAS Question 4 125

6. Likert Scale Values ($\bar{x}$) from Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 Overall 128

7. Likert Scale Values ($\bar{x}$ and SD) from Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 for Each Task 130

8. Number of Participants that Answered LAS Question 5 162

9. Quantified Responses to LAS Question 5: Influential Interactions 164

10. Number and Percentage of Participants Who Indicated a Change in Ideas or Points of View 184

11. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 2 185

12. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 Across Tasks 187

13. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 for Each Task 190

14. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Cognitive Construct 203

15. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Engagement Construct 205

16. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Confidence Construct 205

17. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Enjoyment Construct 206

18. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Behavioral Construct 207

19. Descriptive Statistics for ICC Survey Pre- and Post-Test 208

20. Predictor Variables Affecting the Cognitive Model 238

21. A Predictor Variable Affecting the Affective-Interaction Confidence Model ... 239

22. Predictor Variables Affecting the Affective-Interaction Enjoyment Model 239

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

1. Deardorff's (2004, 2006) Pyramid Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004) 33

2. Deardorff's (2004, 2006) Process Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004) 34

3. Phases of Perspective Transformation (Adapted from Mezirow, 2000) 69

4. Example of LAS Question 4 124

5. Likert Scale Values for Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 Overall 127

6. Likert Scale Values for Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 for Each Task 129

7. Example of LAS Question 5 161

8. Quantified Responses to LAS Question 5: Influential Interactions 164

9. Example of LAS Question 2 182

10. Example of LAS Question 3..... 182

11. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 2 184

12. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 Across Tasks 187

13. Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 for Each Task 190

14. Representation of Changes in Standardized Mean from Pre- to Post-Test for ICC Constructs 209

15. Progressive Exchange Model (Adapted from O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016) 273

16. Proposed Adaption of the Progressive Exchange Model for SPVEs (Adapted from Tecedor, 2024b) 273

17. Proposed Model for Transformative Learning Theory-Guided Tasks for ICC Development in SPVEs 273

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Considering the increased global interconnectivity and multicultural reality of societies, the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations is more important than ever. To become a world citizen who engages in the increasingly interconnected societies, one must develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (Garrett-Rucks, 2016). ICC, sometimes referred to as IC, is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2004, p. 184 also Deardorff, 2006, p. 247-8). That is to say, ICC is the conceptualization of the constituting knowledge, skills, and attitudes deemed necessary to be able to navigate intercultural interactions well (Byram, 1997; Chen & Starosta, 1997; Deardorff, 2004; 2006), where "well" is defined as effectively and appropriately (Chen & Starosta, 1997). Consequently, it is not difficult to imagine why ICC has received increasing attention from educators and scholars as a key component of the educational process. In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), ICC development is especially relevant, as a primary goal for language educators is to prepare second language (L2) learners to engage in intercultural interactions (Byram, 1997).

In the field of SLA, the importance of ICC development is evidenced by its increasing incorporation into proficiency guidelines and standards for language learning. For example, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) organizations

have incorporated ICC into their standards. Specifically in the United States, the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and ACTFL have emphasized the importance of ICC for L2 learners with the creation of an intercultural communication proficiency benchmark (ACTFL-NCSSFL, 2017). These standards crucially draw attention to the necessity of fostering ICC development as part of the language learning process. Yet, while scholars, educators, and administrators recognize the importance of ICC development, questions concerning best practices for fostering ICC development remain.

ICC in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) Contexts

Historically, ICC has primarily been promoted in study abroad contexts, yet the development of various computer mediated communication (CMC) tools has created more opportunities for intercultural interactions without the requirement of travel. Now, learners—who might not have the capability to travel—can connect with others from different cultures and languages through tools such as e-mail, social media, and videoconferencing, among others (Chun, Kern, & Smith, 2016). Within the context of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), the use of such technological tools has demonstrated great potential for ICC development (e.g., Lee & Song, 2019; Liaw, 2006; Schenker, 2012). Namely, intercultural interactions via CMC tools create opportunities for learners to develop the constituting components of ICC, such as building cultural awareness and refining intercultural interactional skills.

The Progressive Exchange Model for CMC

While CMC tools have created unprecedented opportunities for intercultural interactions for L2 learners, interacting with native speakers of the target language does

not guarantee the development of ICC, and a number of factors such as task design, L2 learners' pre-existing ICC, L2 learners' motivation, and the organization of a course can cause failed exchanges in telecollaborative projects (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006)[1]. As a response to these failed exchanges and the interest in CMC—specifically virtual exchanges (VE)—for ICC development, the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) emerged. The progressive exchange model outlines a task-based instructional sequence for ICC development in VEs. This pedagogical model consists of three types of tasks: familiarization, comparison and analysis, and collaboration. Following the progressive exchange model, learners first participate in introductory tasks to get to know their cross-cultural counterparts. Then, learners engage in activities in which they compare and/or analyze the cultures. Finally, learners work collaboratively with their cultural counterpart(s) to complete a task, such as creating a web page, making cultural adaptations/translations for a text, or producing a PowerPoint presentation. Pedagogical models such as the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016) have greatly contributed to the CALL field by establishing a guiding framework for task design for ICC development. However, reports on current practices demonstrate there are areas for continued development, and certain forms of VEs, such as service provider virtual exchanges (SPVEs), do not have an established pedagogical model.

An important component to consider in pedagogical models aimed at developing ICC is reflection, which has been argued to be crucial for ICC development (Bennett,

[1] "Failed communication" refers to virtual exchanges marked by limited involvement, disinterest, conflict between participants, or unfavorable perceptions of the of the partner group or their culture (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006).

1986, 1993; Byram, 1997; Byram & Wagner, 2018; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016). Reflection leads to intercultural awareness (Byram, 1997; Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Zarate, 1996), which can prompt change and growth in ICC as learners move from ethnocentric to ethnorelative orientations (Bennett, 1986, 1993).

In assessing current ICC instructional practices, however, scholars have noted the current ICC instructional practices tend to lack reflection (e.g., Helm & Guth, 2010; Müller-Hartmann, 2016) and rely on comparison-centric activities (Baker, 2015; Garrett-Rucks, 2016). These gaps are concerning, as reflection should be a key component to incorporate in tasks for fostering ICC development (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Guth & Helm, 2012), and excessive cross-cultural comparisons have been argued to be problematic for their tendency to lend to stereotypes and overgeneralizations (Baker, 2015; Bennett, 1986, 1993; Garrett-Rucks, 2016). Furthermore, over-reliance on cultural comparisons can lead to nations-culture dyads (Baker, 2015), a "national paradigm" conceptualization of culture that idealizes the native speaker (Guth & Helm, 2012), and/or othering (Garrett-Rucks, 2016).[2] It is, perhaps, unsurprising then that scholars, teachers, and professional organizations have all called for a shift in pedagogical practices in order to move away from the national paradigm approach, generalizations, and stereotypes (Philips & Abbot, 2011).

Transformative Learning Theory and ICC

Transformative learning theory, developed by Mezirow (1978), presents promising potential as a theoretical and pedagogical framework for ICC development,

[2] The practice of othering was originally described by Smith (1991): the process in which a minority group is misrepresented or misinterpreted, resulting in an "us" versus "them" representation.

especially given the fundamental principles shared by ICC and transformative learning theory. Transformative learning theory posits that engagement with others' perspectives can lead students to experience a "disorienting dilemma" which can in turn make students reflect on their own and others' beliefs. Through reflection, individuals are prompted to "try on" others' perspectives and then can choose to alter their perspectives and behaviors.

Considering their theoretical stances and goals, both transformative learning theory and ICC development share an emphasis on reflection, dialog, and open mindedness as part of the transformation process. First, not only is reflection foundational for ICC theory (Bennett, 1986; 1993; Byram, 1997; Byram & Wagner, 2018; Garrett-Rucks, 2016), but also transformative learning theory (Kitchenham, 2008; Mezirow, 2012). For ICC development, reflection engages L2 learners in evaluation of their own and others' products, practices, and perspectives, which can prompt change and growth in ICC (Bennett, 1986, 1993; Byram, 1997). Similarly, for transformative learning theory, learners must recognize their own perspectives and others' perspectives to be able to validate, accept, and –potentially– adopt new perspectives (Mezirow, 1978). Additionally, both transformative learning theory and ICC theory see dialog as a catalyst of (inner)conflict. For ICC scholars, conflict from intercultural dialog is seen as a source for transformation leading to ICC development (Helm, 2013). Likewise, transformative learning theory views dialog as a key source of disorienting dilemma(s), which are critical incidents or events that can act as a trigger leading to perspective transformation. Lastly, a shared goal of both transformative learning theory and ICC development is open-mindedness and deeper understanding of others' (and one's own) cultures (Godwin-

Jones, 2019). To progress in ICC development and to experience transformation, a learner must be willing to learn about others' viewpoints.

Beyond their shared tenets, transformative learning theory holds promising potential as a guiding theoretical and pedagogical framework for ICC development given the conducive learning environment of L2 contexts and previous successful implementations of the theory. Research has shown the L2 learning environment naturally affords opportunities for transformative learning experiences, given the opportunities for disorienting dilemmas (e.g., Crane, et al., 2017; Foster, 1997; Johnson, 2015) and for gaining more awareness of and tolerance for other cultures (e.g., Goulah, 2007; Johnson & Nelson, 2010). Applications of transformative learning theory in an L2 learning context have found L2 learners can experience transformative learning outcomes, including gaining a deeper understanding of their own and others' culture (e.g., King, 2000; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022), engaging in critical reflection (e.g., Johnson, 2015; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022), increasing their awareness of ethnocentric biases (e.g., Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Sosulski, 2013), altering their self-positioning in relation to the target language and its cultures (e.g., Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022), and/or becoming more self-directed and active in the learning process (Johnson, 2015). Despite these encouraging findings from applications of transformative learning theory in L2 learning contexts, there is little research on the effects of the application of transformative learning theory as a guiding pedagogical framework for ICC development, and more research is needed to confirm and further develop recommended pedagogical practices for transformative learning (Crane & Sosulski, 2020).

To equip learners to engage in the increasingly interconnected world, it is imperative to foster ICC development and to refine pedagogical practices for such ICC development. The alignment and potential of transformative learning theory as a guiding framework for ICC development in L2 learning contexts offer exciting and promising prospects, yet more research is needed on the application of this theory as a framework for ICC development. This dissertation aims to fill this gap by adopting transformative learning theory within SPVEs, contributing to SLA, and better preparing L2 learners for engagement in multicultural, multilingual communities.

Definition of Terms

Here, this dissertation presents key terms and their definitions to aid in orienting the reader to their intended meanings.

Second language acquisition (SLA)

The field of second language acquisition (SLA) is "the scholarly field of inquiry that investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired" (Ortega, 2013, p. 1-2). The processes of learning and teaching a second (third, fourth, or otherwise) language are studied, incorporating a vast array of topics pertaining to the acquisition of languages.

L2 Learner

An L2 learner is someone who is in the process of learning "any language learned after the L1 (or L1s)" in which the L1 refers to "the language (in the case of monolingual acquisition) or languages (in the case of bilingual or multilingual acquisition) that a child learns from parents, siblings and caretakers during the critical years of development, from

the womb up to about four years of age" (Ortega, 2013, p. 5). As noted by Dörnyei (2005), "The outcome of the acquisition of an L2 is significantly more diverse than that of an LI, ranging from zero to native-like proficiency" (p. 2). L2 learners, therefore, might demonstrate a proficiency level anywhere in that range as they learn a language.

Native Speaker of a Language

A native speaker of a language is a person who speaks the language in question as (one of) his first language(s) rather than having learned it as a second (third, fourth, etc.) language later in life. This includes heritage language speakers, as established by Rothman and Treffers-Daller (2014).

Heritage Language Learner

As previously noted, heritage language speakers are native speakers, and for the educational context of this study, Valdés' (2001) definition of a heritage language learner is used: "a student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English" (p. 38).

Culture

Culture, as noted by Levy (2007), is affected by both the membership to a discourse community (Kramsch, 1998) and the individual experience (Skelton & Allen, 1999). Levy (2007) describes culture as "a manifestation of a group, or a community, and of an individual's experience within it, or apart from it" (p. 105). This definition acknowledges the group membership view of culture, reflected in the ACTFL World Readiness Standards (2015) "3 P's" (practices, products, and perspectives), as well as the

view that individual experiences that influence culture (e.g., race, gender, age, religion, geography).

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

Chapelle and Jamieson (2008) described CALL as "the area of applied linguistics concerned with the use of computers for teaching and learning a second language" (p. 1). Today CALL refers to more than computers, as it has been noted that the "technology use in language education is quite diverse, ranging from well-established, computer-based programs to relatively new tools" (John, 2018). As such, CALL denotes the use of technology to foster second language acquisition by providing opportunities for language and culture learning beyond the confines of a physical classroom.

Videoconferencing

The act of meeting with others, or another, from remote locations. It is facilitated by web-based platforms that allow for audio and visual transmission. Although a relatively recent CALL tool, videoconferencing has been argued to be "an important tool for online intercultural interaction" (O'Dowd, 2016, p. 304).

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Intercultural communicative competence is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2004, p. 184 also Deardorff, 2006, p. 247-8). This definition highlights three components of ICC: knowledge (the cognitive domain), attitudes (the affective domain), and skills (the behavioral domain). These three components have been recognized by scholars to be the core constituting elements of ICC (e.g., Bennett, 2009; Chen & Starosta, 1997, 2000; Deardorff, 2004, 2006; Fantini &

Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Lee & Song, 2019). The division of these components–cognitive, affective, and behavioral–reflects the various models and tools that have been developed by scholars to conceptualize and operationalize ICC.

Cognitive ICC. For the present dissertation, the cognitive domain of ICC is defined as one's knowledge of various practices, products, and perspectives relevant to a particular culture and one's awareness of the cross-cultural differences between a given culture and his own culture(s). To operationalize the cognitive domain, the present dissertation used modified Likert scale items from Lee and Song (2019), which draws on ACTFL's World Readiness Standards (2015) "3 P's" and the importance of knowledge and awareness of cross-cultural differences (Byram, 1997).

Affective ICC. The affective domain of ICC is intercultural sensitivity, or individuals' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 231). To operationalize the affective domain, the present dissertation used Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, which includes the subdomains of interaction management, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.

Behavioral ICC. The behavioral domain is one's intercultural effectiveness, or "communication skills, including both verbal and nonverbal behaviors, which enable individuals to attain their communication goals in intercultural interaction through an appropriate and effective performance" (Portalla & Chen, 2010, p. 22). To assess the behavioral domain, the present dissertation employed Portalla and Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale, which includes the subdomains of behavioral

flexibility, interaction relaxation, interactant respect, message skills, identity maintenance, and interaction management.

Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative learning theory, first introduced by Mezirow (1978), describes the process of perspective transformation. This perspective transformation involves several processes: awareness of one's own and others' perspectives, evaluation of one's perspective(s), change in perspective(s), and acting upon the new perspective(s) (Mezirow, 1978). The theory suggests there are ten phases through which people progress as they experience a disorienting dilemma, participate in dialog with other perspectives, and engage in reflection. While transformative learning theory acknowledges people cannot be made to transform their perceptions, understandings and feelings about the world, the last phase of the ten steps marks a change in behavior based on new perceptions, understandings, or feelings.

Overview of the Dissertation

The present dissertation serves two purposes: (1) to examine how language learners experience perspective transformation with SPVE-centered tasks specifically designed to facilitate transformative learning and (2) to explore the relationship between perspective transformation and ICC development. This dissertation has six chapters. Chapter 1 has introduced the reader to ICC, its importance for preparing individuals to become globalized citizens, the theoretical background of ICC, and ways that CMC, especially virtual exchange, can be utilized to foster ICC in language education contexts. Additionally, this chapter succinctly has described the primary task-design model for fostering ICC in virtual exchanges—the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis,

2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009)—and identified two issues that applications of this model might ascribe to: an over-reliance on cultural comparisons and a lack of reflection practices. Subsequently, transformative learning theory is introduced, highlighting its significance in guiding ICC development.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertinent to the topics of ICC, CMC for ICC development, and transformative learning theory. This review of the literature includes a discussion on the conceptualization and operationalization of ICC. Additionally, diverse methods of employing intercultural CMC for ICC development—particularly videoconferencing-facilitated virtual exchanges (VEs)—and pedagogical approaches for ICC development within VEs—such as the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009)—are discussed. Furthermore, Chapter 2 describes transformative learning theory, its conceptualization, and its promising application for ICC development within L2 learning contexts.

Chapter 3 details the methodology utilized in the present study. This chapter describes the design of the study, the research setting and participants, the instruments used to collect data, and the data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results of the mixed methods data analysis, providing data to answer each research question. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the results for an L2 learning context and provides a conclusion which includes a description of the contributions this dissertation makes, its limitations, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter aims to present the relevant theoretical frameworks—including those of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and transformative learning theory—, explore past and present pedagogical practices for ICC development, and examine the potential benefits of utilizing transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development within the context of service provider virtual exchanges (SPVEs). As a reminder, this dissertation seeks to (1) examine how language learners experience perspective transformation with SPVE-centered tasks specifically designed to facilitate transformative learning and (2) explore the relationship between perspective transformation and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) development. As such, the first section of this chapter reviews literature regarding the conceptualizations of ICC employed in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Then, a review of past and present instructional approaches to ICC development are reviewed, focusing on methods developed to take advantage of modern technological tools. A discussion of a current model for task-design for ICC development as well as its critiques will follow. Finally, a description of transformative learning theory and a proposal for the use of this theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development are presented.

Conceptualizations of ICC

Generally, ICC can be understood as the ability to interact appropriately and effectively in an intercultural context. While many models have been created and employed for analysis of the development of ICC, several stand out as the most

influential models in the L2 educational context: Bennett's (1986, 1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), Byram's (1997) model for ICC, and Deardorff's (2004, 2006) pyramid model and process model of intercultural competence (IC). These works, among others, have been influential in shaping researchers', administrators', and instructors' understandings of ICC developmental and/or ICC assessment. The three models included in the present dissertation were selected for their notable contributions to understanding ICC in the field of SLA.

Bennett (1986, 1993): A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Considered to be one of the first models for ICC is Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS). Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS focused on intercultural sensitivity, or the affective domain. The model was developed under the influence of several fields, principally constructivist principles and cognitive psychology, as well as Bennett's personal observations from years of training individuals for intercultural communicative contexts. Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS depicted the process in which individuals grow in intercultural sensitivity, moving from ethnocentric to ethnorelative orientations, which enables them to better communicate in intercultural contexts. Of particular influence for this model's conceptualization of an ethnorelative orientation were Adler's (1977) concept of a "multicultural man," Bochner's (1979) "mediating person," and Heath's (1977) "maturity." Adler's (1977) concept of a "multicultural man" and Bochner's (1979) "mediating person" both described the qualities of a person who can competently adapt to other cultures. Adler's (1977) "multicultural man" focused on an individual's understanding of and appreciation for other cultures, as well as an individual's abilities to interact in intercultural contexts with

sensitivity and respect. Bochner's (1979) "mediating person" focused on individuals who can facilitate intercultural communication, understanding, and collaboration. Finally, Heath's (1977) conceptualization of "maturity" described the components of a mature individual, emphasizing emotional intelligence, self-awareness (especially moving away from egocentric orientations), and social competence for engaging in relationships and fostering personal development.

Although the model is not explicitly centered on ICC,[3] Bennett (1986; 1993) found individuals needed to grow in intercultural sensitivity to better communicate in intercultural contexts, and he situated his work among other intercultural (communication) scholars of the time (e.g., Brislin, Landis, and Brandt, 1983; Paige and Martin, 1983). In addition to its colocation among fellow ICC scholars, Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS is considered a model for ICC because it focuses on an individual's ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural contexts (Arasaratnam, 2016).

The goal of Bennett's (1986, 1993) developmental model was to help identify an individual's current level of intercultural sensitivity and then to offer corresponding strategies to help learners move to the next stage of increased intercultural sensitivity. This model was based on the "phenomenology of training" (1986, p. 179) in which instructors must be cognizant of how individuals will construe cultural differences and how different individuals will react differently to materials. Likewise, the trainers,

[3] ICC, as a term, was not yet introduced. It was later coined by Byram (1997) with the presentation of his model.

instructors, or educators were encouraged to foster new attitudes and awareness in order to help individuals move from one stage to the next.

The DMIS presented six stages of intercultural sensitivity, in which each stage represented a different way of rendering cultural differences and together comprised a continuum of personal growth from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The ethnocentric stages included denial, defense, and minimization. The first ethnocentric stage, denial, occurs when an individual disregards diversity by electing to isolate or distance themselves from the perceived "diverse group" and by refusing to acknowledge the diversity within their own group. To move beyond the first stage, Bennett (1993) recommended intentional exposure to and attention on cultural differences (i.e., cultural awareness activities).

Defense, the second stage, represents an individual's attempt "to counter the impact of specific cultural differences perceived as threatening" (Bennett, 1993, p. 34), which often takes the form of an "us" versus "them" mentality. In the defense stage, individuals might employ one of three mechanisms: "denigration of difference," "assumption of cultural superiority," or "reversal" (in which they assign superiority to the non-native culture(s) instead of their own) (1986, p. 183; 1993). To facilitate movement beyond the defense stage of the DMIS, Bennett (1993) suggested cultural similarities be emphasized, especially the perceived "good" features of the cultures. Although seemingly antithetical to the goal of the DMIS—cultural relativity for intercultural communication––Bennett (1993) maintained this step is crucial, because it allows individuals to confront their defensiveness and recognize the common vulnerability and worth inherent in all human beings.

The final stage in the ethnocentric portion of the continuum is minimization. At this stage learners seek to negate differences by focusing on similarities between the two cultures, aligning with universalist perspectives. Bennett (1986; 1993) noted there are two sub-stages of minimization: physical universalism—believing all humans as equal due to similar physiological needs–and transcendent universalism—believing all humans are equally subject to political, religious, or other ideologies. In this stage, an individual will focus on the similarities between the two cultures, and differences are viewed as trivial. The shift from this final ethnocentric stage to the ethnorelative portion of the spectrum is considered a major movement, and it requires a new understanding: a shift from viewing difference as a static "thing" to conceptualizing it as a dynamic "process." From the ethnorelative perspective, people do not "have" behavior patterns–they behave. More profoundly, people do not "have" values–they value (Bennett, 1986, p. 185). This shift was referred to as overcoming the "paradigmatic barrier" (1993, p. 485). For individuals from a Western cultural background, Bennett (1993) suggested the paradigmatic shift be approached inductively, first by increasing cultural self-awareness to allow for an understanding of how their behaviors and perspectives are culturally situated, not universal. At this stage in the DMIS Bennett (1993) suggested employing small, facilitated discussion groups with a trained person of another culture as a resource.

After the ethnocentric stages, an individual moves to the ethnorelative stages which include acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Acceptance, the fourth stage overall and the first ethnorelative stage, indicates an acknowledgment of and respect for cultural differences. Individuals at this stage perceive cultural differences as worthy of understanding and respect, but individuals do not necessarily agree with cultural

differences. Bennett (1993) recognized acceptance presents a delicate stage, in which individuals are still construing their conceptualization of valuing, teetering between static and dynamic operations: having values or valuing. To encourage an individual to see valuing as an actionable process, individuals must be encouraged to regard differences as part of a culture's overall worldview. This allows for a paradigmatic view of cultural differences, rather than a disagreeable trait.

The second ethnorelative stage, adaptation, is achieved when individuals integrate values and behaviors from another's culture into their own cultural repertoire, enabling them to temporarily adapt their thinking and behavior according to what is accepted as appropriate in a culture. Adaptation commonly involves two shifts: the first is empathy (a temporary adaptation) and the second is a pluralistic perspective of culture, in which the learner has developed "multiple permanent frames of reference" (Bennett, 1993, p. 52). Perpetuated by the multitude of worldviews, it is possible that individuals might experience an identity crisis. This allows for further development into the last stage of the DMIS: integration. To promote this development Bennett (1993) recommended intercultural face-to-face interactions as well as empathy training. It is important to note that, while there is still opportunity for ethnorelative development beyond the stage of adaptation, Bennett (1993) remarked this stage is typically considered satisfactory for the majority of personal and professional intercultural communication contexts.

The last stage of the DMIS is integration. The stage of integration draws on Adler's (1977) concept of a "multicultural man," or an individual whose cultural frame of reference is no longer that of his native culture; rather, it is shaped by a new identity in which is "inclusive of life patterns different from his own and who has psychologically

and socially come to grips with a multiplicity of realities" (Adler, 1977, p. 25). Again, there are two sub-stages for integration: contextual evaluation –ethical choice and action based on their ethnorelative identity– and constructive marginality –the construction of one's identity as marginal, not based on one culture, or without a "natural cultural identity" (Bennett, 1993, p. 63). To avoid issues in the last stage of enthorelativism Bennett (1993) recommended self-reflection, which is not always embedded in different cultures. While this is the last stage of the DMIS, Bennett (1993) noted it is not the end of learning: as individuals can continue to extend the continuum further along in ethnorelativity.

Continued Relevance of Bennett's DMIS. In practice, the DMIS has been widely employed in a diverse array of contexts other than second language (L2) education; for example, Bennett's (1986, 1993) conceptualization of ICC has been highly influential in higher education programs for intercultural training (e.g., Lucietto & Russell, 2020; Pedersen, 2017), studies on tourism (e.g., Fan, Tsaur, Lin, Chang, & Tsa, 2022; Viken, Höckert, & Grimwood, 2021) and research on intercultural relations (e.g., Dandy, Doidge, Lefringhausen, Kunst, & Kenin, 2023; Rodríguez-Izquierdo, 2021). While Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS has garnered significant attention outside of the realm of SLA, its application in investigating ICC, within L2 educational contexts has been comparatively limited, especially when contrasted with Byram's (1997) model for ICC. Nevertheless, the DMIS's ability to depict individuals' ICC developmental trajectory has prompted the application of Bennett's model in certain L2 learning contexts (e.g., Hertel, 2003; Hirotani & Fujii, 2019; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020).

To offer a method of measurement for measuring individuals' intercultural sensitivity, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was created (Hammer & Bennett, 1998). The IDI was designed to evaluate individuals' stage of intercultural sensitivity (the six stages of the DMIS), and it consists of 50 Likert scale items as well as background questions (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). The IDI has primarily been employed in commercialized and higher education contexts for training and assessment purposes (e.g., Durocher, 2009; Demetry, & Vaz, 2017; Pedersen, 2010), yet, within the field of SLA its employment has been minimal (Durocher, 2007). The limited use of the IDI in L2 education for ICC has primarily been attributed to (1) its indistinguishable components of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral of ICC, making it difficult to isolate any one construct (Vogt, 2006), (2) its inaccessibility for educators due to the mandatory three-day seminar, seminar fee, and IDI distribution price (Schenker, 2012), and (3) theoretical concerns with the DMIS (Durocher, 2007) (several of which are discussed below).

Overall, Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS has provided important insights regarding how individuals might progressively develop ICC with key indicators of their development, and it has impacted SLA conceptualizations of ICC (Garrett-Rucks, 2014); however, it is not the most prominent model for ICC in SLA. This could be attributed to its multidimensional developmental stages (Vogt, 2006), the lack of emphasis placed on the importance of L2 proficiency for intercultural interactions (Durocher, 2007; Fantini, 2009; Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler, 2003), its linear depiction of ICC development (Garrett-Rucks, 2014; Liddicoat et al., 2003), and/or its emphasis on integration as the ultimate goal (Holliday, 2011; Zhu, 2014).

First, it is important to note Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS does not address language and its role in ICC. This is problematic, as language forms a crucial component of intercultural interactions: if ICC is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in an intercultural interaction, the ability to communicate in an L2 cannot be ignored (Fantini, 2009; Fantini, 2012). Likewise, the importance of the relationships between language and culture should be considered when preparing individuals for intercultural interactions (Durocher, 2007).

Another critique of Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS are the developmental pathways, which are outlined more extensively compared to other ICC models. The developmental pathways have been subject to criticism due to its portrayal of ICC development as linear. For example, in a study on the intercultural sensitivity of L2 learners of French, Garrett Rucks (2014) analyzed the effect of various pedagogical activities and interactions using Bennett's (1993) DMIS. To inform future methodological practices, Garrett Rucks (2014) compared these findings with findings from an application of Byram's (1997) model for ICC, which revealed discrepancies in their estimation of learners' IC(C). In her analysis of participants' responses in online classroom discussions about French people and culture, she found ICC development could not be accounted for by Bennett's (1993) DMIS, as learners inconsistently fluctuated between progressing and regressing through developmental stages.

Additionally, the multidimensional nature of the developmental stages has been critiqued for the limitations it presents regarding the assessment of the distinct ICC components. As noted by Vogt (2006), Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS and the IDI (Hammer & Bennett, 1998) reflect a conceptualization and operationalization of ICC in

which the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components are indistinguishable within the developmental stages. The multidimensionality of the developmental stages makes it challenging to distinctly separate these elements for assessment purposes. For instance, in a study L2 learners' ICC in intercultural e-mail exchanges, Vogt (2006) desired to isolate the attitudinal component of ICC, yet Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS and the IDI (Hammer & Bennett, 1998) would not facilitate such a focus. Given the multidimensional developmental stages, Bennett's (1986, 1993) model is not suitable for extracting specific components of ICC for assessment.

Lastly, integration as the ultimate goal has been questioned. As noted by Holliday (2011), the pursuit of integration in Bennett's (1986; 1993) DMIS promotes cultural relativism, which might encourage ignoring harmful practices or ethnical concerns. Furthermore, Knežević and Bratina (2017) argued the integration-driven cultural relativism is a disguised preferment of Western ideals. Specifically, Knežević and Bratina (2017) argued Bennett's (1986; 1993) push for cultural relativism reflects a decentralized, unruled orientation resembling that of Western nomadic culture. Additionally, they argue the lack of invitation for criticism of other cultures reflects the Western culture's conquering past. Bennett (1993) addressed some of these concerns early on, such as the issue of presenting overly relativistic views of cultures, emphasizing the need to incorporate critical reflection and ethical consideration as one grows in ICC. Additionally, Bennett and his colleagues (Hammer et al., 2003) later clarified the final stage of the DMIS—integration—is not necessarily better than its predecessor stage—acceptance. Rather, the final stage offers a description for groups of people who have reached an extensive level of ethnocentricity, such as long-term expatriates and "global

nomads" (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 425). However, concerns persist regarding the promotion of cultural relativism through the model's ethnorelative push for integration.

Byram (1997): A model for ICC

Within the field of SLA, Byram's (1997) model for ICC is considered the most prominent ICC model for its influence (Avgousti, 2018; Hoff, 2020) and its widespread use in language learning contexts (Avgousti, 2018). Byram's (1997) model for ICC was developed in the context of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and thus reflects the European, turn-of-the-century context linguistic and political landscape(s) of the 1990s. However, it has been, and continues to be, used globally in numerous education contexts (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2015).

Byram's (1997) model for ICC was developed as an extension to the communicative competence framework (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972; van Ek, 1986). Byram (1997) argued the conceptualization of communicative competence did not account for the requisite knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness learners needed to engage successfully in an intercultural interaction. For Byram (1997), a successful intercultural interaction not only entails an efficient exchange of information (the communicative competence norm) but also enables individuals to form and maintain interpersonal relationships. He argued communicative competence necessitated intercultural communicative competence, introducing ICC to the field of SLA. Consequently, Byram (1997) created a model for ICC, in which he identified five *savoirs*, or constituting components, of ICC: *savoir être* (attitudes), *savoir* (knowledge), *savoir comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating), *savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction), and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness, or political

education). While Byram's (1997) model of ICC is not explicitly sequential, interlocutors' attitudes (*savoir être*) and knowledge (*savoir*) are considered foundational, continually strengthened as learners employ ICC skills (*savoir comprendre* and *savoir apprendre/faire*). Additionally, the fifth component— *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness, or political education)—develops as the other four components increase.

In the presentation of his model for ICC, Byram (1997) provided a description of each component. *Savoir être* (attitudes) encompasses individuals' curious and open disposition as well as their willingness to temporarily set aside their preconceived notions about their own and others' cultures. *Savoir* (knowledge) relates to an understanding of a cultural group's practices, products, and perspectives, with a focus on the normalized interactional processes in a culture. Byram's (1997) conceptualization of *savior comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating) focuses on the ability of individuals to analyze and understand the meaning of a document or event from another culture as well as the ability to relate it to documents or events in their own culture. The other set of skills, *savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction), encompass both the ability to gain a new understanding of a culture and its practices and the ability to apply this knowledge—with appropriate attitudes and skills—in real-time communication and interaction. Lastly, *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness, or political education) considers an individual's capacity to evaluate, critically analyze, and engage with cultural products, practices, and perspectives of both their own and other's cultures in a respectful and informed manner. With this critical cultural awareness, individuals are able to partake in political activity, which requires the ability to employ a respectful, informed evaluative stance. Byram (1997) maintained that each component of ICC contributes to a

learner's overall ICC. Greater ICC improves intercultural communication by increasing the effectiveness with which a learner can engage as well as increasing the likelihood that the learner develops and maintains an interpersonal, intercultural relationship based on respect and understanding.

Byram's (1997) model for ICC both delineated the five components of ICC and provided assessment criteria for each component. In his description of the objectives for each component, Byram (1997) referred to a threshold level, which indicated a basic stage at which a learner possessed sufficient ICC to effectively operate in intercultural interactions. While Byram's intended audience comprised L2 educators, administrators, and policy makers, the breadth of the assessment guidelines (29 objectives for five components) deterred the incorporation of ICC into L2 classrooms. As a result, Byram (2000) produced a streamlined set of guidelines for self-assessment to facilitate ICC evaluation. His guidelines for self-assessment included five categories: (1) interest in other peoples' way of life, (2) ability to change perspective, (3) ability to cope with living in a different culture, (4) knowledge about another country and culture, and (5) knowledge about intercultural communication. The use of Byram's (2000) self-assessment guidelines has since expanded beyond self-assessment, and researchers have employed this tool to examine ICC in various L2 learning contexts (e.g., Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Liaw, 2006; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020).

Continued Relevance of Byram's Model for ICC. Overall, Byram's (1997) model for ICC remains relatively unchanged and continues to appear in intercultural literature reviews, be utilized for empirical studies, and serve as a starting point for modern reconceptualizations of ICC (Hoff, 2020) especially in the field of SLA

(Avgousti, 2018). Byram's (1997) model for ICC and Byram's (2000) assessment guidelines have primarily been applied in research pertaining to L2 education or English as a foreign language (EFL). Often, those within the sphere of SLA have entailed L2 learners engaging in technology-facilitated intercultural communication (e.g., Belz, 2003; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Liaw, 2006; Vogt, 2006) or study abroad experiences (e.g., Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Gutiérrez Almarza, Durán Martínez, & Beltrán Llavador, 2015; Lomicka & Ducate, 2019). Yet, Byram's framework has been applied in other SLA facets as well, such as teacher training (e.g., Kean & Kwe, 2014; Moloney, 2013; Senyshyn, 2018) and pedagogical design (e.g., Sakamoto, 2018; Vu, 2019).

Given that Byram's (1997) model has been widely utilized, it is unsurprising the model has received numerous critiques. Many of the critiques of Byram's (1997) model for ICC have argued the model focuses too strongly on a performance-based, metric approach to intercultural learning and teaching, neglecting to integrate the nuanced complexities of communicating within 21st-century multicultural, multilingual societies (Hoff, 2020). These critiques have drawn attention to practical and theoretical concerns, especially pertaining to apprehensions regarding the model's ability to apply to the continually technologized and globalized world. Here, the present dissertation will discuss several of the most common critiques: (1) Byram's (1997) conceptualization of "culture" and "identity," (2) Byram's (1997) concept of an intercultural speaker as someone who has some degree of physical mobility to immerse oneself in the target culture(s), (3) the model's Western ideological orientation, and (4) the model's problematic assessment and lack of a clear developmental path for ICC.

First, it has been argued that Byram's (1997) model for ICC is too simplistic, reflecting essentialist ideas of culture and identity, especially for today's increasingly diversified societies with numerous expressions of culture and identity (Asararatnam, 2007; Belz, 2007; Kramsch, 2011; Wahyudi, 2016). This critique stems from Byram's (1997) frequent association with a country and its (singular) culture and (singular) perspective. The nation-culture dyad fails to sufficiently acknowledge the internal diversity within nations, or the presence of cultural groups connected by shared ideologies or ethnicities that transcend national borders (Belz, 2007; Holliday, 2011; Risager, 2006, 2007).

Yet, it should be noted that while Byram's (1997) model frequently addressed culture (in its singular form), downplaying intracultural diversity, the model acknowledged the existence of multiple cultures within one country (Hoff, 2020). For instance, Byram (1997) discussed the possibility of engaging in the L2 within one's own country to speak with someone of another ethnic group. Because of such a possibility, Byram (1997) maintained L2 instruction should focus on developing learners' abilities to analyze and understand cultural nuances if that might not align with the general national group. While Byram (1997) promoted the development of critical and comparative skills, he maintained understanding "a national culture and cultural identity" is equally important (p. 21).

While critiques of Byram's (1997) model have often highlighted the model's inability to align with multicultural, dynamic, non-geographically tied cultural identities, Hoff (2020) noted many people do not have the opportunity to travel or engage with multicultural resources, and, as a result, their cultural identity remains comparatively

uncomplicated. Yet, in the context of the increasingly globalized and connected world, it is imperative to acknowledge the nuanced dynamics of cultural identity.

A second critique questions the ability of individuals to experience diverse cultural expressions. Byram's (1997) model was primarily centered on an intercultural speaker, someone who has some degree of physical mobility to immerse oneself in the target culture(s) to engage in face-to-face, real-time intercultural interactions. In his model, Byram (1997) presented a dichotomous comparison of a tourist and a sojourner. A tourist was a traveler who engages with foreign peoples, cultures, and artifacts to enrich his life with their novelty. In contrast, a sojourner was a traveler who engages with foreign peoples, cultures, and artifacts in a way that challenges and changes her beliefs, behaviors, and frames of meaning (Hoff, 2020). The sojourner represented an individual who demonstrates ICC, and Byram (1997) argued language education should strive to equip L2 learners to be sojourners. This focus on mobile sojourners has received criticism (Belz, 2007; Helm & Guth, 2010), as today's L2 learners do not need to travel to be immersed in the target culture(s): diverse linguistic landscapes and/or the affordances of modern technological tools foster connection.

Additionally, although Byram's (1997) model included written forms of communication (not dependent on real-time, face-to-face interaction), the focus relied primarily on the intercultural speaker (oral production). Yet, the 21st century has ushered in increased globalization and connectivity, which has changed the literacy landscape, requiring learners to engage with multimodal forms of communication (Chun, Kern, & Smith, 2016; Helm & Guth, 2010). For example, in a study on L2 learners' of German ICC development while participating in intercultural e-mail exchanges, Schenker (2012)

employed Byram's (1997) model to analyze instances of ICC in the e-mail exchanges. She found evidence of all the *saviours* except for those referring to real-time, face-to-face communications. Synchronous, in-person communication was, of course, not possible given the context of the study: e-mail exchanges. The face-to-face, real-time focus of Byram's (1997) model has been criticized for its inability to apply to the online intercultural interactions (Orsini-Jones & Lee, 2018) and multiliteracies (Ørevik, 2018) made available by technological advances and globalization.

Another critique of Byram's (1997) model for ICC pertains to its Western ideological orientation. The Western ideological roots were tied to the origin of the model: a response to the Council of Europe's call for a "Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning and Teaching" to promote greater collaboration and cooperation between members of the European Union, which emphasized education as a means to prompt ideals such as critical thinking and reflection, moral and ethical development, holistic learning, and democratic citizenship (Hoff, 2014; Hoff, 2020). Accordingly, Byram's (1997) model for ICC reflected these values. Similar to those put forth by the Council of Europe, additional Kantian values were reflected in Byram's (1997) model, such as autonomy and rational reasoning. In Byram's (1997) model, these Kantian values were upheld through democratic citizenship (Hoff, 2020; Spitzberg & Chagnon, 2009). The model's prioritization of democratic, Western values has been critiqued as a foundation for assessing other cultural viewpoints (Belz, 2007) and for being upheld as the universal benchmark for resolving misunderstandings or conflicts (Matsuo, 2016). As noted by Hoff (2020), Byram and his colleagues (Porto, Houghton, & Byram, 2017) have since addressed the model's Western ideological orientation,

specifically warning against relying on Western conceptualizations of human rights as a universal framework.

Lastly, it is imperative to discuss the challenges regarding ICC assessment with Byram's (1997) model for ICC. Namely, the measurement of learners' ICC with Byram's (1997) model and assessment guidelines (Byram, 2000) have been critiqued for their limited ability to assess the fifth component of ICC: critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020), a reliance on a threshold of intercultural competence (Belz, 2007), and their inability to provide a clear progressive pathway for ICC development (e.g., Garrett-Rucks, 2014; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020).

As previously mentioned, Byram's (2000) assessment guidelines for ICC were created to simplify the assessment process, and they included five categories: (1) interest in other peoples' way of life, (2) ability to change perspective, (3) ability to cope with living in a different culture, (4) knowledge about another country and culture, and (5) knowledge about intercultural communication. Notably, the guidelines did not include an assessment category for Byram's (1997) *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness, or political education). Following the assessment guidelines has been argued to be problematic, as it is tempting—yet dangerous—to evaluate learners' ICC based on positive comments about the L2 and its cultures rather than their capacity to evaluate, critically analyze, and engage with cultural products, practices, and perspectives of their own and other's cultures in a respectful and informed manner (Belz, 2007; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020). To adapt the assessment to their needs, many scholars have opted to base their analysis on Byram's (1997) description of the five *savoirs* (and the objectives

provided in his initial explanation) instead of Byram's (2000) assessment guidelines (e.g., Vogt, 2006; Schenker, 2012).

The use of Byram's (1997) model for ICC still presents issues for assessment, however, as Belz (2007), for instance, critiqued the concept of a threshold for ICC. Belz (2007) argued the model's capacity to assess certain components of ICC such as those pertaining to synchronous communication and attitudes have been questioned, as applied research (e.g., Schenker, 2012; Vogt, 2006) has demonstrated Byram's (1997) model for ICC does not always function well in practice to assess the varying components of ICC. For example, in a study on L2 learners' attitudinal ICC development in intercultural e-mail exchange projects, Vogt (2006) coded and analyzed L2 learners' e-mail exchanges, essays, journals, and classroom transcripts. Vogt (2006) found an application of Byram's (1997) model for ICC left gaps in understanding regarding certain aspects of L2 learners' attitudes (e.g., readiness to experience stages of adaptation, willingness to question one's own values and integrate others' perspectives). Vogt (2006) suggested these gaps stem from the difficulty to truly assessing others' attitudes as well as the mediated nature of the data sources: the students were not immersed in the L2 culture, and their conversations were influenced by the mediated context.

Lastly, it has been noted that Byram's (1997) model for ICC does not provide a clear progressive pathway for ICC development (e.g., Garrett-Rucks, 2014; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020). While Byram (1997) suggested attitudes (*savoir être*) and knowledge (*savoir*) were foundational for building ICC, there was not an explicit depiction of how L2 learners might progress in ICC development. Additionally, while Byram (1997) suggested there was a threshold at which L2 learners can effectively operate in

intercultural interactions, this threshold lacked a clear description and operationalization, which Belz (2007) sustained made it difficult to implement this model for ICC at the lower proficiency levels.

Deardorff (2004, 2006): The Pyramid Model and Process Model of IC

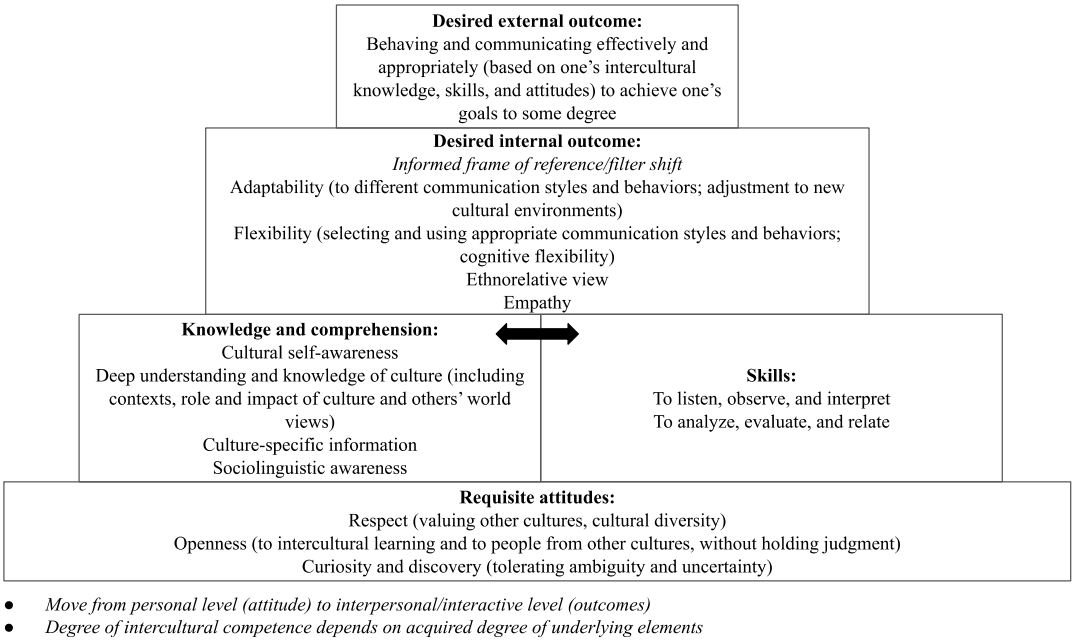
Driven by a desire to obtain an agreed upon definition and method of assessment for the construct of IC for SLA, Deardorff (2004, 2006) conducted a study among various IC scholars and administrators from which she produced two proposed models: the pyramid model (Figure 1) and the process model of IC (Figure 2). These models represent two visual conceptualizations of IC based on 22 agreed-upon elements of IC. Each model consists of requisite attitudes, knowledge/ comprehension, skills, desired internal outcome (informed frame of reference/filter shift), and desired external outcomes (behavioral and communicative). The first, the pyramid model, displays the essential elements in a pyramid structure in which the attitudinal component (respect, openness, and curiosity and discovery) forms the base and creates the starting point (although individuals can "enter these frameworks at any particular point" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 255)). Following attitudes, the next level in the pyramid consists of skills and knowledge and comprehension. The third block describes the desired internal outcome, an informed frame of reference shift, which includes adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative view, and empathy. The final portion of the pyramid houses external outcomes: behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations to achieve one's goals to some degree. Deardorff (2004; 2006) noted that while acquiring the lower-level components can facilitate the development of the higher-level components, IC development does not have to begin at the base level of the pyramid. To illustrate this,

Deardorff (2004; 2006) also presented her model of IC in a different format: the process model of IC.

The process model includes the same components as the pyramid model but employs a cyclical structure to depict the dynamic movement between the different components, highlighting the complex process involved in developing IC. The cyclical conceptualization of the process model demonstrates the continual process of IC development, revealing it is unlikely that maximum IC be achieved. It should be noted that, in both models Deardorff (2004, 2006) maintained that attitudes comprise the foundational component of IC development, yet learners do not have to progress through each following stage before demonstrating the desired external outcomes.

Figure 1

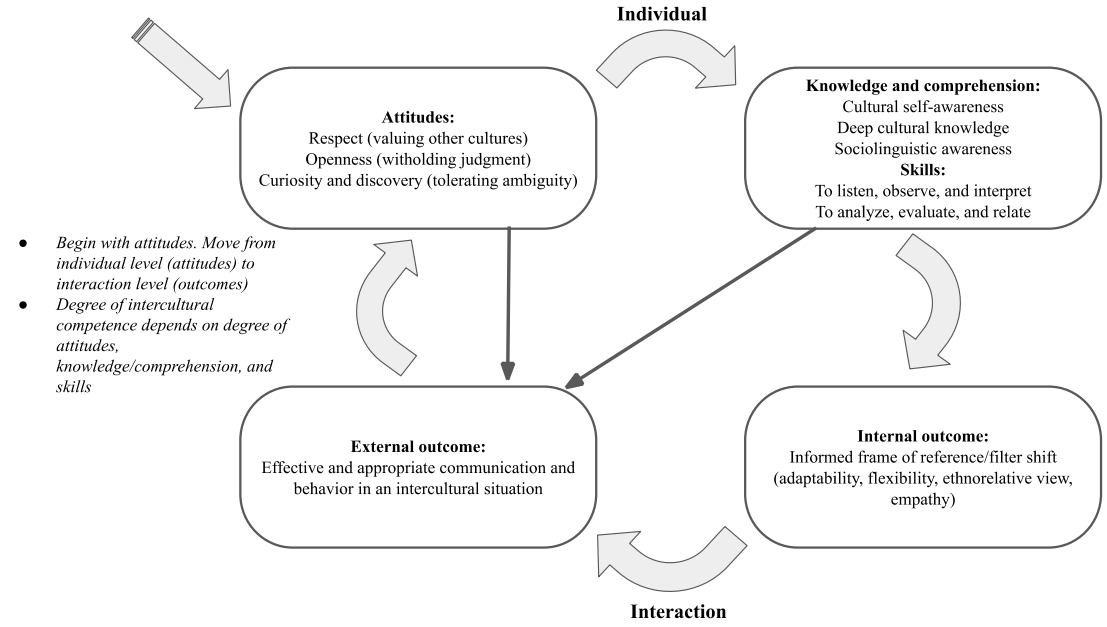
Deardorff's (2004, 2006) Pyramid Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004)



Note: Figure 1: Pyramid Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004)

Figure 2

Deardorff's (2004, 2006) Process Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004)



Note: Figure 2: Process Model (Adapted from Deardorff, 2004)

Continued Relevance of Deardorff's Models for IC. In practice, Deardorff's (2004; 2006) conceptualization of IC has not only been employed to define IC(C) within the field of SLA (e.g., Fantini, 2009; Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Hackett, Janssen, Beach, Perreault, Beelen & van Tarwijk, 2023), but it has also informed the definition of IC and related phenomena in other fields, such as internationalization in psychology and higher education research (e.g., Gopal, 2011; Soria, & Troisi, 2013) and cultural competence in healthcare studies (e.g., Blazhevski, 2016; Henderson, Horne, Hills, & Kendall, 2018).

To complement the pyramid and process models (Deardorff, 2004; 2006) and to facilitate the process of assessing IC development, Deardorff (2012) later crafted a self-assessment tool. Based on the five components of the pyramid and process models (Deardorff, 2004; 2006), this tool has 15 categories, which collectively cover the 22 elements considered to be crucial for developing IC. The categories pertaining to attitudes concern respect, openness, tolerance for ambiguity, withholding judgment, and curiosity and discovery. The categories for knowledge and comprehension ask about cultural self-awareness/understanding, understanding others' worldviews, culture-specific knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness. Those for skills ask about skills to listen, observe, and interpret as well as skills to analyze, evaluate, and relate. The internal outcomes assessment categories concern adaptability, flexibility, and empathy; and, lastly, the assessment categories for external outcomes focus on communication skills.

Deardorff's (2004; 2006) agreed upon definition of IC and its constituting components was, and is, widely influential in the field of SLA, yet Deardorff's (2004; 2006) models of IC and corresponding 15-categories assessment tool (Deardorff, 2012) have been infrequently applied in empirical ICC research. One study conducted using Deardorff's (2012) 15-item assessment tool was that of Lenkaitis, Calo, and Venegas Escobar (2019). The authors aimed to investigate the potential benefits of synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC)-based virtual exchanges through Zoom for L2 learners' of Spanish IC development as well as to evaluate the implementation of Deardorff's (2012) 15-category assessment tool for measuring IC development. It is important to note that the authors employed Deardorff's (2012) 15-category assessment tool as a framework for coding participants' Zoom session comments rather than a self-

assessment and, given that Deardorff (2012) did not provide definitions for each of the 15 categories, the authors created their own definitions for the coding process. Out of the 15 categories, Lenkaitis et al. (2019) found 11 of the categories had notably few instances, and one category –withholding judgment– was not coded once. Overall, the most frequently coded category was communication skills, with approximately 72% more instances than the second most frequently coded category: cultural self-awareness/understanding. When comparing each week of the virtual exchange, the number of coded instances varied weekly, with the last week having the fewest number of coded instances of IC. The authors suggested the variation in the number of IC instances each week affirmed the dynamic nature of IC development, unique for each individual (Deardorff, 2012). However, while an application of Deardorff's (2012) 15 categories showcased L2 learners' dynamic ICC development, Lenkaitis et al. (2019) raised some concerns regarding its use as an assessment framework. Namely, Lenkaitis et al. (2019) reported the absence of definitions for each category made the process more arduous; some of the categories were difficult to observe (e.g., skills to listen, observe, and interpret necessitated all three skills be evident); and it was challenging to identify instances of categories representing internal processes (e.g., adaptability and flexibility).

Likely because of its relatively infrequent application in empirical SLA research, there is generally less criticism expressed about the pyramid and process models for ICC. However, the absence of critiques does not signify that the models have perfected a description and means of assessment for IC. Of the two models, the process model has received more attention in the research realm given the illustration reflects a dynamic representation of IC(C) development. This model has been classified as a causal path

model, given its sequence of "distal-to-proximal concepts leading to a downstream set of outcomes that mark or provide a criterion of competence" (Spitzberg & Changon, 2009, p. 10). Causal path models have both strengths and weaknesses in their ability to offer potential explanations for (the lack of) ICC development. The most prominent critique is the abundance of feedback loops, which detracts from their amenability for empirical testing of the theoretical ICC representation (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Variability in developmental paths complicates diagnostic and explanatory measures, and the lack of clarity about the expected path weakens the causal model.

Additionally, as previously discussed, the application of the 15-category assessment has presented some concerns (Lenkaitis et al., 2019) regarding the absence of definitions for each category, the difficulty in observing certain categories (e.g., skills to listen, observe, and interpret necessitated all three skills be evident), and the challenge of identifying instances of categories representing internal processes (e.g., adaptability and flexibility).

It is important to note that concerns regarding assessment itself of ICC have been expressed (Hoff, 2020), drawing attention to the discussed models and their forms of assessment. For instance, Hoff (2020) brought into view the issue of whether ICC should be assessed considering the personal, characteristic nature of several components, the increasing standardization of testing, and the fluctuating, nonlinear development of ICC (Porto, 2014). Given the difficulty in assessing learners' ICC, self-reflection (Houghton, 2013; Deardorff & Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017) and portfolios (Byram, 1997; Ingulsrud, Kai, Kadowaki, Kurobane & Shiobara, 2002; Jacobson, Sleicher & Maureen, 1999) have been suggested to measure ICC development within language learning settings.

Moreover, it has been suggested that researchers, administrators, and practitioners keep in mind the ultimate goal: the process of becoming an intercultural speaker (Byram, 1997; Hoff, 2020), rather than an end product.

A Three-Pronged Conceptualization of ICC

A review of Bennett's (1986; 1993) DMIS, Byram's (1997) model for ICC, and Deardorff's (2004; 2006) pyramid and process models demonstrates variation in the conceptualization of ICC; however, common components remain consistent across ICC models. The constituting components of ICC, minimally, can be operationally defined according to three domains: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. These three domains have been recognized by scholars to be the core constituting elements of ICC (e.g., Bennett, 2009; Chen & Starosta, 1997, 2000; Deardorff, 2004, 2006; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016;[4] Lee & Song, 2019). The conceptualization of ICC influences the operationalization, which is reflected in the tools developed for ICC models. For instance, in their work on developing the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, Chen & Starosta (1997, 2000) defined the cognitive component of ICC as one's intercultural awareness; the affective component of ICC as one's intercultural sensitivity; and the behavioral component of ICC as one's intercultural adroitness, or effectiveness.

Advantageously, an operationalization of ICC as a construct with three principal domains—cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral—permits the assessment of each domain independently in addition to its overall assessment. Likewise, a three-pronged

[4] Fantini and Garrett-Rucks (2016) describe the components of ICC as the combination of characteristics (e.g., open-mindedness, patience, motivation, empathy), abilities (establish relationships, communicate well, and collaborate), target language proficiency, domains (knowledge, attitudes/affect, skills in addition to (critical) awareness), and a longitudinal, developmental process.

conceptualization and operationalization of ICC (separating cognitive, affective, and behavioral components) allows for a more nuanced understanding of the multidimensional aspects of ICC (Lee & Song, 2019). By examining the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains individually, instructors, researchers, and administrators can gain better insight how students are developing ICC given that learners might develop some aspects of ICC but not others (e.g., Lee & Song, 2019; Liaw, 2006) and learners will follow unique ICC development trajectories for a variety of reasons (Deardorff, 2012), such as more developed in certain components of ICC (e.g., Tian & Wang, 2010; Schenker, 2012) or differing cultural experiences (e.g., Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Lee & Song, 2019; Özdemir, 2017). A three-pronged approach to ICC reflects the individuality of language learners: overall ICC and domain-specific development will occur at different rates, especially when considering learners' existing knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

Considering the advantages of assessing ICC both overall and on a domain-specific basis, and acknowledging the fundamental cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of ICC, this dissertation adopts the three-pronged conceptualization of ICC. The three-pronged conceptualization adopted for the theorization and operationalization of ICC for the present dissertation is strongly influenced by each of the models for ICC discussed above.

First, the inclusion of the cognitive domain allows for an assessment of learners' knowledge of cultural products, practices, and perspectives as well as their awareness of cross-cultural differences. It is imperative to incorporate the cognitive domain in ICC conceptualization and operationalization given knowledge of cultural differences is often

considered foundational for ICC development (Bennett, 1986; 1993; Byram, 1997). Second, the affective domain, conceptualized in the present dissertation as learners' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 231), allows for an understanding of learners' affective responses to intercultural interactions (e.g., confidence, enjoyment) as well as their (dis)respect for cultural differences. Again, the affective domain is imperative to include, as it foundational for further ICC development (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2004; 2006), and further development in the affective domain reflects growth in ICC development, such as increased ethnorelativity (Bennett, 1986, 1993; Deardorff, 2004; 2006). Lastly, the behavioral domain facilitates an understanding of learners' internal and external actions (e.g., communicating well, showing respect, being adaptable). This conceptualization addresses Byram's (1997) *savoir comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating) and *savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction), along with a multitude of indicators delineated by Bennett (1986; 1993) for various stages of ethnocentricity/ethnorelativity and desired internal and external outcomes identified by Deardorff (2004; 2006). In sum, each domain offers valuable insights into learners' evolving ICC within their respective domains, and when considered together, these domains offer a comprehensive depiction of learners' overall ICC.

CALL and ICC

Engaging in intercultural computer mediated communication (CMC) with a native speaker of the L2 presents significant opportunities for both language proficiency and ICC development (Blake & Guillén, 2020) by fostering intercultural communication and

collaboration (e.g., Belz, 2003; Lomicka, 2006; O'Dowd, 2003). The present section will (1) provide an overview of the use of CMC, focusing on videoconferencing-facilitated virtual exchanges (VEs) in language education, (2) discuss the main findings from the application of videoconferencing-facilitated VE for ICC development, and (3) describe the widely employed pedagogical model for VEs—the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009)—and suggestions for its improvements.

VE in L2 Learning Contexts

Generally, the studies that use CMC to foster L2 learners' ICC development employ tools such as videoconferencing platforms (e.g., Friermuth & Huang, 2021; Helm & Van der Velden, 2021; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020), e-mails or online messaging boards (e.g., Belz, 2007; Hertel, 2003; O'Dowd, 2005; Schenker, 2012), blogs (e.g., Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Lee & Markey, 2014), or social networking websites (e.g., Bray & Iswanti, 2013; Lee & Markey, 2014; Özedemir, 2017). When these CMC tools are employed as a part of a language education program to connect language learners of different cultural contexts or geographical locations to foster intercultural exchange it is known as virtual exchange (VE). VE, traditionally known as telecollaboration or online intercultural exchange (OIE) (O'Dowd, 2018; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006),[5] has gained popularity within

[5] In his overview of the different present-day models and approaches to VE, O'Dowd (2018) also provides a synopsis of the diverse array of activities that have, at one point, been referred to as telecollaboration, including online intercultural exchange (O'Dowd, 2007; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016), virtual exchange (Helm, 2015), and e-Tandem (O'Rourke, 2007) or teletandem (Leone & Telles, 2016), among others. The diversity of names to refer to the same type of activity has provided certain benefits, such as demonstrating success in a wide variety of educational and pedagogical contexts, yet it has also inhibited its dissemination among practitioners given the confusion the multiple names have caused. Therefore, O'Dowd (2018) suggests "virtual exchange" be used as an umbrella term in the field of SLA when referring to the varying actualizations of "virtual exchange."

the fields of SLA, and foreign language education.[6] In addition to the vast array of tools, VEs might differ according to the participation style (learner-to-learner interaction or class-to-class interaction), modality (e.g., video, audio, written), and synchronicity (synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination) (Avgousti, 2018).

Initially, inspired by interactionist perspectives for SLA, VE activities focused primarily on fostering language proficiency development through interaction (Godwin-Jones, 2019). From an interactionist perspective, the use of VEs aligned with the tenets of comprehensible input, the output hypothesis, and 'noticing' (Schmidt, 1990). Later, the dawn of the 'intercultural turn' in language education and the rise in new medias of the early 2000s (Thorne, 2010) expanded the aims of many VE projects beyond the development of language to include fostering ICC and digital literacies (Helm & Guth 2016). Thus, the use of VE in language education became supported by Vygotsky-inspired sociocultural theory, given its ability to address the social and intercultural aspects of learning an L2. The implementation of VE in language education was, and is, sustained by the increasingly important need to foster multiliteracies (Helm & Guth, 2010), equipping L2 learners with digital competency to understand new types of discourses and social practices and to gain and execute the skills required to engage in evolving technologies (Chun et al., 2016).

In the field of SLA, the initial VEs were almost exclusively text-based, with email being the most frequently used medium, followed by text chat as it became more

[6] Foreign language education refers to the teaching and learning of a language in context in which the language is not natively spoken. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to the learning of a language in a context in which it is, to some degree, natively spoken. In a systematic review (Avgousti, 2018), it was revealed that the majority of VEs were conducted in English, often in the field of English as a foreign language, which is part of foreign language education.

accessible (Godwin-Jones, 2019). The emergence of text chat, or texting, created new possibilities, as L2 learners could interact synchronously, which introduced real-time negotiation of meaning in VEs (Godwin-Jones, 2019). Despite the emergence of more synchronous tools for VEs, reviews of relevant research (Avgousti, 2018; Çiftçi & Savaş, 2018) indicate that asynchronous tools remain the most used in VE today. This could be attributed to certain advantages offered by the asynchronous mode, such as the ability for L2 learners to reflect on and plan their responses (Helm, 2015), its effectiveness in helping L2 learners notice language forms (Zeng, 2017), and its accessibility for grading and/or research (Godwin-Jones, 2019). However, there are disadvantages to relying on asynchronous tools for VE. For instance, asynchronous communication, which is typically written, can make L2 learners feel that their interactions are depersonalized or as if they are not communicating with real people (Baroni, et al., 2019; Helm, 2015), and it does not permit exposure to important non-textual components of a conversation (e.g., tone, gestures, prosody) (Wang & Sun, 2001).

While there is still a tendency to primarily use text-based communication for VEs, the increased ownership of personal computers and technological advancements have facilitated the use of synchronous audiovisual communication, which addresses the limitations of text-based, asynchronous communication and represents a significant innovation in VE for language education (Godwin-Jones, 2019). This synchronous audiovisual communication—videoconferencing—in VE offers the advantage of direct audiovisual interaction, which in a language learning setting, can be highly motivating for L2 learners (Godwin-Jones, 2019). Moreover, in a systematic review of 57 articles pertaining to language learners' ICC and VEs, Avgousti (2018) employed a thematic

synthesis to reveal common themes among the studies. The findings of the thematic synthesis revealed videoconferencing affords participants the unique opportunity to see their conversation partner and observe non-verbal cues (e.g., gestures, body language). These affordances not only improved learners' ICC, oral communication, pragmatic competence, and non-verbal communication (Li & Wang, 2014), but it also reduced L2 learners' feelings of anonymity in the VEs (Jauregi & Banados, 2008).

It is important to consider that these advantages of videoconferencing also introduce increased cognitive demands on L2 learners, requiring them to process significant input (verbal and non-verbal), quickly formulate appropriate and effective responses, and simultaneously interpret fellow videoconferencing participants' reactions (Godwin-Jones, 2019). Along these lines, Van der Zwaard and Bannink (2019) noted, in some instances, the presence of a webcam might be face-threatening and impede L2 learners' task performance.

While these challenges are important to keep in mind, the advantages of videoconferencing activities have received increased interest (Çiftçi & Savaş, 2018), further prompted by the cessation of study abroad brought about by the COVID 19 crisis (O'Dowd, 2021). In light of this interest, it is pertinent to discuss the three primary forms in which videoconferencing-facilitated VE is used in language education today: telecollaboration,[7] e-Tandem exchanges,[8] and, more recently, service provider virtual exchanges (SPVEs). However, before delving into these VE forms, it is important to

[7] As previously mentioned, a number of terms have been used to refer to telecollaboration (O'Dowd, 2018), such as online intercultural exchange (O'Dowd, 2007; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016), virtual exchange (Helm, 2015), and e-Tandem (O'Rourke, 2007) or teletandem (Leone & Telles, 2016)

[8] E-Tandem learning is also known as teletandem or Tandem learning (Thorne, 2010).

recognize there is limited research on videoconferencing in language education, particularly concerning the ICC development (Avgousti, 2018). That said, insights from other modalities (e.g., text-based, multimodal) and several more recent studies collectively contribute to a broader understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with these forms of VE.

Telecollaboration L2 Learning Contexts. Firstly, telecollaboration is a type of subject-specific VE that focuses on the development of language proficiency, ICC, and/or digital literacies (Çiftçi & Savaş, 2018; Helm & Guth, 2016; O'Dowd, 2018). It is an educator-initiated activity in which there is an online intercultural exchange between classes of language learners from distinct geographies (Helm & Guth, 2016). Broadly speaking, telecollaboration can be executed with a variety of tools and in different modalities, from asynchronous e-mail telecollaborative projects (e.g., Belz, 2003; O'Dowd, 2003) to synchronous videoconferencing (e.g., Lu, Goodale, & Gu, 2014; Dey-Plissonneau & Blin, 2016). Likewise, telecollaboration can be arranged as class-to-class exchanges, paired partners, or small groups from each class; although, the earlier forms of telecollaboration relied primarily on class-to-class VEs (e.g., Furstenberg, Levet, English, & Maillet, 2001). Specifically regarding telecollaboration as a form of videoconferencing-facilitated VE, research has utilized the videoconferencing in telecollaboration projects either as the sole means for intercultural interaction (e.g., Dey-Plissonneau & Blin, 2016; Freiermuth & Huang, 2021) or in conjunction with other forms of communication (e.g., Jauregi & Bañados, 2008; Jauregi, Canto, de Graaff, Koenraad & Moonen, 2011; O'Dowd, 2006).

Instructors aiming to establish a telecollaboration project between geographically and culturally diverse classes must collaborate closely to design a project that accommodates the distinct cultural and linguistic contexts of both student groups. The instructors must elect the task(s) for students to carry out, choose appropriate and accessible technological CMC tools, integrate the telecollaboration into the course syllabus, decide on appropriate assessment, navigate language issues[9], and monitor and provide support for interactions among L2 learners[10] (Müller-Hartmann, O'Dowd, & EVALUATE colleagues, 2020). While the difficulties in mounting a telecollaboration project do not detract from its benefits for L2 learners, it is important to note that these tasks can be daunting for instructors, and they require significant time, effort, and dedication. In the context of videoconferencing-facilitated telecollaboration, instructors must also consider the added cognitive demand of synchronous audiovisual communication (Godwin-Jones, 2019), the potential danger of cultural distancing based on visual judgments (Helm, Guth & Farrah, 2012),[11] and the face-threatening nature of communicating into a webcam (Van der Zwaard & Bannink, 2019).

E-Tandem in L2 Learning Contexts. Like telecollaboration, e-Tandem, in foreign and second language education, refers a type of subject-specific VE that focuses

[9] Instructors must decide if they would like to use English as a *lingua franca* or incorporate both L2s. If the VE is more focused on the language skills, many instructors will elect to follow an e-Tandem model in which the time spent in each language is evenly split. Additionally, instructors must consider that students may require additional support and feedback on their language skills as well as space to reflect on their language and that of their partner(s) (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2020).

[10] Instructors might need to support L2 learners who find their VE partners are disrespectful, unengaged, or otherwise unable to appropriately, productively, and effectively contribute to the VE (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2020).

[11] In their study on cultural, linguistic, and technology hegemonies in telecollaboration, Helm et al., (2012) found divisive group identifies were enabled through videoconferencing, where distinctive features (e.g., wearing a hijab) encouraged distancing. However, the authors noted this eventually became an opportunity for cultural learning rather than conflict.

on the development of language proficiency, ICC, and/or digital literacies (O'Dowd, 2018). While the terms telecollaboration and e-Tandem are often used synonymously, historically, telecollaboration indicated a class-to-class exchange while e-Tandem was reserved to refer to an exchange in which two individuals of different native languages (L1s) help each other learn language and/or cultural content (Thorne, 2010). While, like telecollaboration, e-Tandem can occur in a variety of formats (e.g., asynchronous text-based or synchronous videoconferencing), there has been growing interest in multimodal (e.g., Lloyd, 2012; Bohinski & Mulé, 2016)[12] and video-based (e.g., Arellano-Soto & Parks, 2021; Tian & Wang, 2010) forms of e-Tandem.

Ideally, in an e-Tandem exchange the same amount of time is devoted to both languages and both participants express autonomy to guide the content of the exchange (Blake & Guillén, 2020; Helm & Guth, 2016). Both in past and present e-Tandem exchanges, language proficiency development tends to be the primary focus in the intercultural VEs. Many of the studies on videoconferencing-facilitated e-Tandems have accordingly focused on language proficiency development (e.g., Bohinski & Mulé, 2016; Kato, Spring, & Mori, 2016).[13] However, there are two presently known studies that have also investigated ICC development while following an e-Tandem model in videoconferencing-facilitated VE: Lenkaitis et al., (2019) and Tian and Wang (2010),

[12] Bohinski and Mulé (2016) refer to their study as a telecollaboration project, which it reflects in its incorporation of a collaborative project. However, the structure of the sessions reflected an e-Tandem model in which the native language of each participant (English or Spanish) was spoken for half of the session (20 minutes). Additionally, the focus of the sessions and the research analysis was more language proficiency driven than intercultural learning. For these reasons, the present dissertation considers this study to follow the e-Tandem model.

[13] Kato, Spring, & Mori (2016) refer to their research as a study on video-synchronous computer-mediated communication without referring to a specific model for videoconferencing-facilitated VE. Given their split-time structuring of the sessions and their primary focus on language proficiency development, the present dissertation considers this study to follow an e-Tandem model.

both of which demonstrated videoconferencing-facilitated VEs facilitated ICC development through the intercultural interpersonal collaboration. For instance, Lenkaitis et al., (2019) found the synchronous, multimodal nature of videoconferencing enabled unique opportunities for the behavioral component of ICC, equipping learners with skills, such as real-time negotiation of meaning, for intercultural interactions. To facilitate ICC development within the VE, Lenkaitis et al., (2019) emphasized the activities must be carefully structured, particularly to incorporate topics that will stimulate increased language production. While e-Tandem is typically directed by an individual learner—requiring less instructor involvement and facilitating more learner autonomy (Thorne, 2006)—the instructor must still provide support and guidance for the language learners in addition to the logistical and technical efforts required to incorporate e-Tandem exchanges into the course structure.

SPVEs in L2 Learning Contexts. Lastly, a type of VE characterized by predominantly synchronous and audiovisual interactions is the service provider virtual exchange (SPVE). SPVEs employ an approach in which language education programs or instructors partner with service providers to offer intercultural videoconferencing VEs with native speakers of the L2. In an SPVE, service providers offer a platform and coordinate videoconferencing sessions with native speaking partners for a fee, which is typically funded by either the institution or the L2 learners themselves (O'Dowd, 2018, O'Dowd, 2021). The service providers hire native speakers of the L2, who are then trained to interact and lead sessions with L2 learners in one-on-one or small group videoconferencing sessions (Echevarría, 2019). SPVEs in language education are exclusively conducted through videoconferencing, and research on their use in L2

educational contexts reflects this modality. While the research on SPVEs in L2 education is limited, existing literature indicates that SPVEs can foster the development of language proficiency (e.g., Kessler, Loewen, & Trego, 2023; Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021; Warner-Ault, 2020) and ICC (e.g., Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020; Warner-Ault, 2020).

Advantageously, SPVEs offer substantial benefits for educators by alleviating logistical and technical burdens. The instructors, for example, can offload technical support for L2 learners to the SPVE platform (Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021); the instructors do not have to concern themselves with interinstitutional alignment (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020); and the instructors are not charged with finding suitable native speaker partners for their L2 learners (O'Dowd, 2021). Additionally, the SPVE coach's economic interest minimizes the issue of fluctuating engagement and motivation of the intercultural speaking partners (Echevarría, 2019; Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021), as the native speaker coaches will be prepared and committed (Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021). Moreover, SPVEs allow for L2 learners to engage in the L2 for the entirety of the exchange, and they do not require training of L2 learners on how to provide feedback to their speaking partner (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020). Additionally, it is also important to note many SPVEs offer VEs in less commonly taught languages, enabling valuable interactions with native speakers of the L2 that might have otherwise been too difficult to coordinate (Lin, Warschauer, & Blake, 2016).

While there are promising benefits of SPVEs in language education, there is still relatively little known about how L2 learners develop their linguistic and intercultural competences in SPVEs (O'Dowd, 2021). O'Dowd (2021) maintains it is important to investigate the impacts of SPVEs given the videoconferencing sessions are often

unmonitored by instructors and frequently involve decontextualized content, tending to focus on isolated grammar topics or speaking practice without broader context. More research is needed to better understand the affordances of SPVEs, the best practices when implementing SPVEs, and the challenges that might arise amidst an SPVE.

Advantages and Challenges of VE in L2 Learning Contexts. While more research is needed for SPVEs—as well as other diverse manifestations of VE—in language learning contexts, previous research has suggested VEs lead to a number of positive outcomes. Broadly, these positive outcomes include high student satisfaction and enjoyment, increased cultural knowledge, greater awareness of ethnocentric tendencies, improved language proficiency, the development of 'soft skills' (e.g., working with others, flexibility, problem-solving), and feelings of greater preparedness for engaging in intercultural interactions (including greater critical thinking skills and appreciation of diversity) (O'Dowd, 2021).

On the other hand, particularly in the telecollaboration or e-Tandem exchanges, issues with VE have occurred for both the instructor(s) organizing the VE as well as the L2 learners. For example, instructors might experience linguistic and cultural clashes as well as implementation issues such as aligning scheduling, electing objectives, creating assessment, and choosing equally accessible technological applications (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2020; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006). Likewise, learners participating in telecollaboration or e-Tandem exchanges might encounter challenges, such as insufficient (or differing) language proficiency levels (Blake & Guillén, 2020; Bueno-Alastuey & Kleban, 2016; Tian & Wang, 2010); varying degrees of participant commitment, value, and engagement (Lee & Markey 2014; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006; Tian & Wang, 2010;

Ware, 2005); differing expectations for the VE (Bueno-Alastuey & Kleban, 2016; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006); low existing ICC (Blake & Guillén, 2020; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006), different social and institutional factors (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006; Ryshina-Pankova, 2018; Ware, 2005); technological issues (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Liaw, 2006; O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006); and scheduling or time zone differences (Freiermuth & Huang 2021; Lee & Markey 2014; Ware, 2005).

Though there is little literature available considering the challenges encountered in implementing SPVEs, from the available resources, it has been noted that SPVEs are also susceptible to occasional technical issues (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020) and tend to be transactional in nature (Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021). Because of their propensity to reflect a tutoring-style interaction, SPVE sessions may resemble classroom talk rather than natural conversation (Echevarría, 2019). However, as previously mentioned, SPVEs tend to minimize some of the common challenges posed by the implementation of telecollaboration or e-Tandem exchanges (e.g., scheduling difficulties; unengaged intercultural partners). For this reason, as well as its under-researched status coupled with its growing popularity and promising potential, this dissertation focuses primarily on the effects of SPVEs on L2 learners' ICC development.

Videoconferencing in VEs for ICC Development

When VEs are employed to foster ICC development, the use of videoconferencing-facilitated VEs has widely demonstrated positive results (e.g., Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Lee & Song, 2019; Lenkaitis et al., 2019; Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020; Tian & Wang, 2010). In order to fortify the scarce SPVE-specific research in this area, and to illustrate the various modes in which videoconferencing-

facilitated VEs have had a positive impact, the present dissertation will discuss three studies: a telecollaboration study (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021), an e-Tandem study (Tian & Wang, 2010), and an SPVE study (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020).

Freiermuth and Huang (2021) conducted a study exploring the impact of videoconferencing-facilitated VEs on learners' of English as a foreign language (EFL) intercultural competence.[14] Motivated by the lack of bidirectional cultural knowledge sharing in VEs to support intercultural competence development, the researchers designed a VE in which EFL learners from Japan and Taiwan interacted via Zoom. Six Japanese participants were paired with five Taiwanese participants, with one Taiwanese student meeting with two Japanese students. The study focused on a single videoconferencing session, where participants introduced themselves and shared three cultural images. Freiermuth and Huang (2021) deliberately provided no further directions for the participants to encourage "natural interaction" once the cultural images were presented (p. 192).

The sessions were conducted in English, and upon conclusion, the recordings were automatically uploaded to a Zoom server. Participants subsequently completed a questionnaire (adapted from Freiermuth & Huang, 2012), which included Likert-scale and open-ended questions to gauge their perceived increase in intercultural competence and their experiences in the VE.

[14] In their study, Freiermuth and Huang (2021) used the terminology "intercultural competence," which they define according to Deardorff's (2004; 2006) definition and Yashima's (2002) "international posture" as part of the willingness to communicate framework. The present dissertation employs their terminology to describe the focus of the study; however, ICC would also be appropriate given their focus on both the intercultural and communicative aspects.

To analyze the data, Freiermuth and Huang (2021) employed a mixed methods approach, quantitatively assessing the Likert-scale responses and qualitatively examining the videoconferencing interactions and open-response answers. Freiermuth and Huang (2021) reported the average rating for each Likert-scale item, pertaining to participants' perception of effect of the VE on their enjoyment, expression of culture, cultural awareness, cultural perceptions, intercultural knowledge, camaraderie with intercultural partner(s), the activity itself, and their language skills. For each topic, Freiermuth and Huang (2021) supplemented these findings with commentary from EFL learners' open-response answers or videoconferencing recordings.

The analysis revealed, overall, the language learners positively perceived the VE experience and the affordances it provided for their intercultural competence development. Based on participants' positive perceptions (4.2 or higher out of 5 for the Likert-scale items), Freiermuth and Huang (2021) found the language learners perceived the VE to be enjoyable, a good way for them to express culture, a means to increase their awareness of another culture and intercultural knowledge, a pleasant opportunity to communicate with their intercultural partners, and an experience that increased their interest in others' daily personal experiences. The participants also perceived their perceptions about culture changed in their VE experience, but with a slightly lower Likert-scale evaluation (3.9), which Freiermuth and Huang (2021) attributed to preexisting positive attitudes about the other's cultures and a politeness-driven desire to find cultural similarities, rather than differences.[15]

[15] Notably, the preference to seek similarities rather than recognize cultural differences would be classified as minimization —the last ethnocentric stage— in Bennett's (1986; 1993) DMIS.

Overall, Freiermuth and Huang (2021) found participating in the VE videoconferencing contributed to participants' perceived increase in intercultural competence, especially regarding their interest and openness to others and their cultures. While the study demonstrated promising potential for videoconferencing in VE for ICC development, Freiermuth and Huang (2021) acknowledged the limitations imposed by the small sample size, which affects the generalizability of the findings.

To contribute to the understanding of the potential linguistic and intercultural benefits of videoconferencing in an e-Tandem exchange for language learners, Tian and Wang (2010) designed and implemented a videoconferencing-facilitated e-Tandem exchange between Chinese English language learners (ELLs) and Australian Mandarin language learners (MLLs)[16]. The e-Tandem exchange paired 15 ELLs with 15 MLLs. For nine weeks the paired participants participated in weekly one-hour Skype sessions in which they were instructed to spend half an hour speaking in Mandarin and half an hour speaking in English. While the participants were encouraged to interact freely, they were provided with a list of suggested topics that were appropriate for the MLLs' language proficiency, who had spent significantly less time studying the Mandarin language (approximately four semesters) compared to the ELLs, who had been studying English for approximately 12 years. After each VE session, the MLLs gave a two-minute oral report in Mandarin of their session, the ELLs wrote a brief report, both groups completed a reflection sheet, both groups submitted the recording of the Skype session, and the

[16] While Tian and Wang (2010) use Byram's (1997) model for intercultural learning and assess for components generally considered to form ICC — cognitive, affective, and behavioral— the researchers refer to linguistic and intercultural competence separately throughout their study. As such, the present dissertation follows suit and uses their terms "linguistic" and "intercultural" to describe the study.

ELLs submitted the text chat scripts from the Skype sessions. At the end of the nine weeks the participants completed a survey that included Likert-scale items and open-responses questions. The survey questions pertained to participants' perception of their experience participating in the VE, their growth in linguistic and intercultural competence (conceptualized as Byram's (1997) model for ICC), the amiability of the VE for fostering linguistic and intercultural competence development, and the greatest benefit of the VE. To support findings from the survey the ELLs were interviewed.

To inform the study's results, Tian and Wang (2010) analyzed the surveys and the interviews with a mixed methods approach, quantitatively analyzing the Likert-scale responses, and qualitatively analyzing the open-response survey and interview answers. For the Likert-scale responses, the researchers employed a between-group t-test to assess for statistically significant differences in the groups' perceptions regarding the linguistic and intercultural benefits of the VE. To support the quantitative data, Tian and Wang (2010) employed content analysis to extract complementary themes from the open-response survey and interview answers.

From their analysis, the researchers found both groups (ELLs and MLLs) perceived there to be both linguistic and intercultural benefits from participating in the e-Tandem. However, there were notable differences in the extent of these perceived benefits, with several Likert-scale items showing statistically significant differences between groups. The ELLs showed more certainty about the VE's ability to foster the linguistic and intercultural benefits, with statistically significant differences in their responses on two Likert-scale items. Specifically, the ELLs perceived the VE to be more beneficial, especially for the opportunities they create to receive and provide feedback,

develop fluency, improve pronunciation and interpretation, increase confidence in intercultural interactions, and cultivate skills for spontaneous replies. Tian and Wang (2010) attributed the groups' differing perceptions to the language proficiency mismatch, as the ELLs could more easily express themselves and overcome communication breakdowns in their foreign language, which was especially notable given English dominated the participants' exchanges. Despite the significant differences, overall, Tian and Wang (2010) found that participants from both groups perceived a strong linguistic and intercultural benefit from the activity.[17]

Lastly, to examine the effects of SPVEs on participants' ICC and how language learners both describe and further construct their ICC development within the reflections, Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) carried out an SPVE for fourth-semester Spanish language learners. The study reports on data from 18 participants, who engaged with a trained Spanish native speaker through TalkAbroad—an SPVE platform—for four 30-minute sessions throughout a semester. The L2 learners were encouraged to choose one of two topics for each session that were related to the course content. Before the session, the L2 learners were encouraged to prepare a list of relevant vocabulary and possible questions for their native speaker SPVE coach. After each session, the students were asked to write a reflection in English regarding their cultural reflections and experience in the SPVE session. To evaluate L2 learners' ICC, Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) employed an innovative approach to ICC conceptualization and operationalization: the researchers used a combination of Byram's (2000) assessment guidelines and Bennett's (1986; 1993)

[17] While e-Tandems are typically considered to focus more on the linguistic component than the intercultural (Blake & Guillén, 2020; Helm & Guth, 2016), Tian and Wang (2010) found that participants perceived a stronger intercultural benefit than a linguistic benefit.

DMIS. According to the authors, the combination of models facilitated an examination of instances in which learners expressed components of ICC while still below the "threshold" level (Byram, 1997) and the combination of models allowed for an assessment of monolithic views of culture as well as a way to track ICC development (Bennett, 1986; 1993).

For their assessment of the data, Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) employed a mixed methods approach. The reflections were coded with an iterative and recursive content analysis. Then, the coded instances were quantified. The quantification allowed for a visual representation of trends in the data as well as a depiction of how participants' ICC might have changed over time. Salient themes were supported with excerpts from participants' reflections.

From their analysis, the Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) found the L2 learners displayed instances of ICC across all six components, as defined by their adapted version of Byram's (2000) assessment guidelines: interest in knowing other people's way of life, ability to change perspective, ability to cope with interaction, knowledge about another country and culture, knowledge of the intercultural communication process, and critical awareness. Among the six components, the most prominent was an interest in understanding others' ways of life, evidenced by participants expressing curiosity about the lives of their native speaker coaches.

When evaluating participants' ICC according to Bennett's (1986; 1993) DMIS, Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) noted the participants predominantly remained in the ethnocentric stages. While the authors observed a tendency to operate in the ethnocentric stages, they also noted a decrease in instances of denial and defense after the first

reflection and an increase in minimization and acceptance. These changes mark movement toward the ethnorelative end of the DMIS's spectrum, suggesting ICC development. This shift represented for Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) the ability of SPVEs to facilitate ICC development, even without structured in-class discussion or guidance.

Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) concluded that SPVEs hold promising potential for their ability to increase cultural content and facilitate ICC development. Consistent with previous research (Godwin-Jones, 2003; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), they emphasized the critical role of reflections for ICC development, maintaining that reflections facilitate critical thinking and provided a space for L2 learners to examine their beliefs about cultural differences. Finally, the researchers asserted that integrating the two ICC models offers a more comprehensive understanding of L2 learners' ICC and developmental trajectory, particularly at lower proficiency levels or below the "threshold" (Byram, 1997).

Taken together, these studies demonstrate the possible positive outcomes of videoconferencing-facilitated VE for ICC development, including cognitive, affective, and behavioral benefits. Pertaining to the cognitive domain of ICC, participating in videoconferencing-facilitated VE demonstrated gains in knowledge about the target culture(s) and, in some cases, it fostered greater (self-)awareness of participants' own and others' cultural perspectives. In the affective domain of ICC, participants showed a greater interest in learning about others' cultures and expressed enjoyment in partaking in the intercultural interactions. Lastly, the studies reviewed suggest videoconferencing-facilitated VE supported development in the behavioral domain as well, as L2 learners were likely to report improved linguistic skills. These findings are consistent with

previous studies (Lee & Song, 2019; Lenkaitis et al., 2019), which also report additional benefits of videoconferencing-facilitated VE for ICC development. For instance, videoconferencing-facilitated VE has fostered increased willingness or efforts to learn about the target culture (Lee & Song, 2019); encouraged listening, observational, and interpretive skills (Lenkaitis et al., 2019); and ignited intercultural curiosity and discovery (Lenkaitis et al., 2019).

Despite these encouraging findings, it is important to note, as was with other forms of VE, challenges might arise in videoconferencing-facilitated VEs for ICC development. Freiermuth and Huang (2021), for example, reported some participants encountered scheduling difficulties and connectivity issues. Likewise, Tecedor and Vasseur (2020) noted there were occasional remarks made by participants about poor Internet connection affecting the quality of the audio and/or video, inhibiting comprehension of their partners in the sessions. Beyond technological problems, these studies have presented important topics for further investigation, such providing results with greater generalizability (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021), reducing English-dominance and difficult pedagogical planning caused by proficiency mismatch between intercultural interlocutors (Tian & Wang, 2010), using more than Byram's (1997) model for conceptualizing and operationalizing ICC (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020), and implementing reflection as a critical component in pedagogical practices for ICC development (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020). To explore some of these topics in the context of SPVEs, this dissertation will investigate the potential benefits of SPVEs for ICC development, emphasizing their unique affordances (e.g., the presence of trained native speaker coaches, a professionally managed platform, technical support for L2 learners, and

consistent and reliable communication) to remediate some of the more common issues with videoconferencing-facilitated VEs such as scheduling conflicts, uncommitted intercultural partners, the overreliance on a *lingua franca*, and the arduous challenges regarding language development and instructional planning. To implement an SPVE into a language course curriculum, it is important to consider how it might be pedagogically designed and executed. The following sub-section discusses the current guiding standards in SLA for pedagogical design in VE.

A Pedagogical Model for ICC Development in CMC

To guide educators in using VEs for ICC development, suggestions for task design have been proposed. In the field of SLA, a task-based approach is commonly used within VEs to structure exchanges and foster collaboration in intercultural interactions (Guth & Helm, 2012; Helm & Guth, 2016).[18] A progressive series of tasks has been recommended to guide VEs (Guth & Helm, 2012), beginning with socialization and familiarization, advancing to dialog between intercultural interlocutors, and culminating in either critical reflection (Müller-Hartmann, 2007) or collaboration between intercultural interlocutors (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009).

One model for task design that outlines this progression of tasks is the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009), which is the prominent pedagogical model for VEs (Helm & Guth, 2016), applicable to both those centered on ICC development and others. The progressive exchange model (O'Dowd &

[18] The conceptualizations of task-based approaches for language learning and teaching are diverse, yet Skehan (1998) offered the following synthesis: tasks emphasize meaning over language practice, are realistic and student centered, resemble real-world activities, focus on completion, and are assessed according to learners' ability to carry out the task.

Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) was designed for telecollaboration-type VEs focused on developing multiliteracies and ICC (Müller-Hartmann, et al., 2020).

While the present dissertation employs SPVEs, a specific type of VE, the extensive use of the progressive exchange model for VEs, the similarities between SPVEs and more general VE (specifically, the technology-mediated intercultural interaction), and the absence of a defined pedagogical model for SPVEs warrant the consideration of the progressive exchange model as the basis for task design for SPVEs[19]. The present dissertation does not employ the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) (for reasons discussed below), but it was deemed important to consider this leading pedagogical model as a reference for task design practices in VE. Given the propensity of SPVEs to convert into language tutoring sessions (Echevarría, 2019) or decontextualized language practice (O'Dowd, 2021), it is important to provide structure and guidance for the intercultural interactions aimed at fostering ICC development. As such, the present dissertation will (1) present the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) to explore current practices and guiding principles, and (2) discuss concerns regarding the progressive exchange model before proposing an innovative approach to guiding and structuring SPVEs.

[19] Recently, Tecedor (2024b) presented an adapted version of the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) for SPVEs. Namely, the suggested model for task design emphasized the importance of preparation (topical and language), cultural discussion (not centered on comparisons) in the SPVEs, and reflection —both individual and group reflection— as key components. While this proposed model addressed concerns like the lack of reflection and reliance on comparison in the progressive exchange model, it was not available prior to the start of the investigation of the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks developed for the present dissertation.

The Progressive Exchange Model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009). O'Dowd and Ware (2009) formulated the progressive exchange model based on their analysis of 40 peer-reviewed works on VEs, identifying essential elements of a task-based instructional sequence for VE, which were then categorized into three task stages: (1) familiarization, (2) comparison/analysis, and (3) collaboration. The first stage of the progressive exchange model contains "information exchange tasks," or those in which the students introduce themselves and provide general information about their home culture (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009, p. 175). The second stage contains activities in which students compare and analyze cultural and/or linguistic information collected from the exchange to explore cultural similarities/differences (Cunningham & Akiyanana, 2018). Finally, the third stage identified by O'Dowd and Ware (2009) includes collaborative tasks. Learners are tasked with creating something (e.g., blog, web page, digital story) in the context of an intercultural partnership or small group. This collaboration stage is considered crucial for making exchanges more meaningful, as it provides opportunities for negotiation and the deepening of relationships (Godwin-Jones, 2019).

Concerns Regarding the Progressive Exchange Model

Here, the present dissertation discusses several concerns regarding the use of the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) as a pedagogical model for ICC development in (SP)VEs before proposing transformative learning theory (in section 2.3) as a solution.

Concerns Regarding the Inability to Collaborate. First, when considering the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) for SPVEs, its suitability as an appropriate model for SPVEs is questionable, particularly

considering the third stage—collaboration. Given the tutoring-style nature of SPVEs, these interactions tend to be more transactional than collaborative (Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021), and, thus, would not be appropriate for collaborative tasks.

Concerns Regarding the Abundance of Cross-Cultural Comparisons. Second, the second stage of the progressive exchange model—comparison/analysis—draws attention to concerns of some SLA researchers (Baker, 2015; Garrett-Rucks, 2016) and educators (Phillips & Abbot, 2011), who have warned against the abundance of cross-cultural comparisons in cultural and ICC instruction. In fact, the creators of the progressive exchange model, O'Dowd and Ware (2009), noted that in the absence of instructor guidance, comparison activities might lead to superficial contrasts in VEs for ICC development. These concerns merit serious attention, as a reliance on cross-cultural comparison can produce dangerous nations-culture assumptions (Baker, 2015), overgeneralizations (Baker, 2015; Garrett-Rucks, 2016), othering (Garrett-Rucks, 2016), and conceptualizations of culture as invariable and monolithic (Guth & Helm, 2012). Bennett (1986, 1993), for instance, suggests comparison be avoided in the first ethnocentric stage of his model for intercultural sensitivity—the DMIS—as a discussion of differences at this stage would likely lead to rationalization of the familiar and comfortable denial or the differences would altogether be ignored. The second stage of the DMIS, defense, is an appropriate time to focus on the good of all cultures to help individuals recognize their shared humanity; however, cross-cultural contrasts should not be incorporated until later, when the individuals can employ a more ethnorelative perspective (Bennett, 1986; 1993). Importantly, while comparisons cannot be altogether avoided as L2 learners need to recognize cultural differences (Bennett, 1986; 1993) to

build intercultural awareness (Baker, 2015; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016), caution should be taken. This is especially true for lower-level courses, given that L2 learners might not have developed ethnorelative orientations (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020), making comparison focused on highlighting cultural differences inappropriate.

Even amidst criticism and skepticism of the value of comparisons, it is not surprising SLA instructors and researchers continue employ comparison-based activities as part of cultural and ICC instruction given (1) cultural comparisons remain an important part of developing ICC (Baker, 2015; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016) and (2) instructional practices are informed by ACTFL's 5 "C's". Therefore, the field of SLA stands at a critical juncture: while comparisons can aid in nurturing cultural awareness, the context in which they presented should consider the individuals' existing ICC. It is essential to proceed with caution to mitigate any unintended adverse effects when engaging with cross-cultural contrasts.

Concerns Regarding the Limited Emphasis on Reflection. Lastly, in addition to critiques regarding the over-reliance on comparison activities, concerns have been expressed regarding the limited emphasis on reflection in tasks for ICC development. The progressive exchange model presented by O'Dowd and Ware (2009) and O'Dowd and Lewis (2016) does not incorporate reflection as an integral component of task design.[20] Yet, reflection has been argued to be crucial for cultural learning (Kramsch, 1993;

[20] O'Dowd and Lewis (2016) acknowledged the need to incorporate reflection in VEs, and they propose several practical measures for incorporating reflection such as portfolios or diaries as well as classroom-based reflective practices in which educators partner with learners to discuss, interpret, and better understand their intercultural interactions. It has also been made know to the author of this dissertation that O'Dowd has continued to emphasize the need for reflections throughout the VE in academic talks or presentations.

Kramsch, 2014) and ICC development (Bennett, 1986, 1993; Byram, 1997; Byram & Wagner, 2018; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016), making it a key component to incorporate in tasks for fostering ICC development (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Guth & Helm, 2012). Kramsch (1993), for instance, has advocated for cultural reflection to occur within the "third space," a conceptual zone between the learner's first culture and their target culture. In this space, cultural reflection facilitates the process in which individuals negotiate their identities as they engage in dialog, mindful listening, and the co-construction of meaning.

Moreover, increased intercultural awareness is directly tied to discovery and reflection. That is to say, to develop a greater understanding of others' culturally embedded perspectives, individuals engage in a process in which they discover and reflect upon their own and others' cultural perspectives (Bennett, 1986; 1993; Byram, 1997; Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Zarate, 1996). Byram's (1997) model for ICC, for instance, specifically encourages reflection in one of the five components: *savoir s'engager*—or critical cultural awareness—urges learners to engage in reflection of their own and others' cultural products, practices, and perspectives. In part, because of the importance of the critical reflection as part of ICC development, Byram (Byram, 2010; Byram & Wagner, 2018) has advocated that language education cultural instruction focus on ICC development.[21] Byram and Wagner (2018) argue when learners are equipped with ICC skills, critical reflection empowers learners to engage with humility and purpose as they interact and pursue social justice as global citizens. Reflection, in

[21] Byram and Wagner (2018) emphasize the critical component of the critical cultural awareness. Byram and Wagner (2018) discuss the importance and potential of critical reflection in language education, emphasizing its role assessing language, discourse, and culture in the context of power inequality.

sum, plays an important role in supporting individuals as they negotiate their identities in the third space and as they (critically) examine their own and others' cultural products, practices, and perspectives.

In terms of how to incorporate reflections into (inter)cultural teaching, however, there are very few guidelines to assist language educators (Garrett-Rucks, 2016). This is, for example, evident given the limited emphasis on reflection in the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009). Specifically for ICC development, reflection is deemed an important component of learning activities for ICC development and is frequently recommended (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Garrett-Rucks, 2016), yet the field lacks clear guidance or structure for conducting this reflection. One study that has provided some clarity to best-practices for reflection in pedagogical practices for ICC development is that of Garrett-Rucks (2016).

To address the difficulty of teaching culture and to support language educators by bridging theoretical and practical applications of ICC in L2 learning contexts, Garrett-Rucks (2016) conducted a case study on the effect of a telecollaboration project on participants' ICC, with a focus on shifts in their worldviews. This study was informed by Byram's (1997) model for ICC, the American Council on Education's (ACE, 2007) definitions of intercultural competence, and Bennett's (1993) DMIS. The study involved three L2 learners of French who participated in a telecollaboration project, engaging in online discussion forums with native French learners of English about cultural content. These forums served as a reflective space where learners could express their thoughts in English on authentic texts, explicit cultural instruction, and French informant interviews uploaded on YouTube. To analyze the data, Garrett-Rucks (2016) employed a qualitative

approach. A deductive approach was used to investigate participants' discussion transcripts for development in intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993), and content analysis was utilized to investigate changes in participants' ICC (ACE, 2007; Byram, 1997). Data sources included pre- and post-questionnaires, discussion transcripts, post-discussion interviews with participants, and interviews with instructors.

The findings revealed that participants, guided by French informants' perspectives, were able to shift from ethnocentric to ethnorelative stages and, with increased intercultural skills, change their attitudes toward French people and French culture. Importantly, Garrett-Rucks (2016) found the activities prior to the discussion forum reflections contextualized the cultural products and practices, enabling participants to explore a "specific aspect of human existence across cultures" (p. 125). Garrett-Rucks (2016) found the participants mediated their thoughts in the reflections, and this ability to explore their third space facilitated ICC development. The researcher also noted that while there is a general emphasis on maximizing the L2 in language courses, allowing the use of the L2 learners' native language, especially at lower proficiency levels, can foster the deep reflection necessary for intercultural learning.

While further research should confirm these findings, they underscore the importance of reflection in facilitating ICC and offer valuable insights regarding the key components of a successful reflection when designing tasks to foster ICC development. Given these findings and the vital nature of reflection in both cultural learning and ICC development, it is crucial to consider how task design for ICC development in VE might incorporate reflection.

In sum, while the progressive exchange model has made significant contributions to the field of SLA in providing a beneficial structure to the designing of a task for ICC development, the model is not without concerns. Given the tendency to rely on cross-cultural comparisons and the limited emphasis on reflections, modifications to the current model for task-design, or the use of a different model, should be considered. Likewise, for SPVEs, the collaborative tasks would be inappropriate. As such, this dissertation investigates the use of a novel approach to task-design for ICC development in SPVEs.

Transformative Learning Theory

To overcome some of the challenges and issues associated with culture and ICC instruction, transformative learning theory has been proposed as a possible solution to guide ICC development within a L2 classroom (Crane & Sosulski, 2020). Transformative learning theory was developed by Mezirow (1978), who aimed to address the needs of women reentering the educational system after an extended period of time: Mezirow (1978) discovered that the women experienced transformation in 10 phases (see Figure 3),[22] and he identified two key elements in this process: critical (self-)reflection on one's assumptions and the engagement in critical discourse (Kitchenham, 2008). Since the introduction of the 10 phases, they have primarily been utilized (with different degrees of strict adherence) in studies that investigate how adults respond when they encounter perspectives different from their own. For example, transformative learning theory and its ten phases have been used in research concerning study abroad (e.g., Stone, Duerden, Duffy, Hill & Witesman, 2017; Biber, 2020) and adult education (e.g., Christie, Carey,

[22] Since the identification of the 10 transformation phases, Mezirow (1991, 2000) has continued to revise the theory, and he added one more phase (between #8 and #9) to reflect how perspective change might shape and alter relationships.

Robertson, & Grainger, 2015; Mokhtarian, 2020). Recently, transformative learning theory and its phases have begun to be implemented to study the complex and multifaceted nature of L2 learning, encompassing cognitive, affective, and sociocultural dimensions of the language learning process (e.g., Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Johnson, 2015; Sosulski, 2013). The present section will discuss the principal components of transformative learning theory, the main findings from the application of this theory in L2 learning contexts, and the promising potential of using transformative learning theory as a framework for ICC development.

Figure 3

Phases of Perspective Transformation (Adapted from Mezirow, 2000, p.22)

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontentment and the process of transformation are shared
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

The development of the transformative learning theory was guided by several sources of inspiration. Mezirow (1978) drew upon theoretical concepts prevalent at the time, such as Kuhn's (1962) conceptualization of paradigm, Freire's (1970) *conscientization*, and Habermas' (1971, 1984) domains of learning. In addition to these theoretical ideas, transformative learning theory was informed by the concept of language as communicative action as well as the identified phases and elements of transformation. Drawing from these sources of inspiration, Mezirow (1978) developed the transformative learning theory.

Mezirow sustained that everyone carries a unique meaning perspective, or "the structure of cultural and psychological assumptions within which our past experience assimilates and transforms new experience" (1985, p. 21). These meaning perspectives are "broad dispositions that we use to interpret experience" that consist of meaning schemata, or "habitual, implicit rules for interpreting experiences" (Cranton, 2016, p. 18). According to Mezirow, individuals who experience transformative learning may undergo a comprehensive perspective shift —a restructuring of their meaning perspectives— or a modification (or addition to) their meaning schemata. The latter outcome, a modification of or addition to one's meaning schemata, could lead subsequent changes in their overall meaning perspectives after additional meaning schemata alterations or with the passage of time. Mezirow (1985) summarized the potential outcomes of participating in the transformative learning phases: (1) the modification of, or addition to, existing meaning schemata; (2) the acquisition of new meaning schemata compatible with existing meaning schemata; or (3) the transformation of a meaning perspective. Transformative learning theory describes cumulative process of perspective transformation, as the

"process of becoming critically aware of how and why our presuppositions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; of formulating these assumptions to permit a more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspective; and of making decisions or otherwise acting upon these new understandings" (Mezirow & Associates, 1990).

As mentioned, perspective transformation occurs in the 10 (later 11) developmental phases. Importantly, while the 10 phases present a progressive depiction of meaning perspective transformation, several scholars have argued the process of perspective transformation is not linear, rather cyclical, and ongoing (Calleja, 2014; King, 2008; Taylor, 1997). To account for the non-sequential movement through the transformative learning phases and to describe perspective change more generally, Mezirow's (1978) 10 phases have been reconceptualized as three encompassing blocks of phases (e.g., Addleman, Nava, Cevallos, Brazo & Dixon, 2014; Taylor, 1998).[23] These three blocks of phases, or stages, provide a more generalized approach to Mezirow's 10 phases. The first block involves a reflective examination of one's underlying assumptions, which are challenged by a dilemma that provokes a feeling of disconcerting disorientation (Crane & Sosulski, 2020). The initial trigger involves a disorienting dilemma brought about by instances of dialogic learning that "illuminate and challenge heretofore invisible and unquestioned assumptions that determine how we know ourselves and the world around us" (Taylor & Elias, 2012, p. 150). To engage with the disorienting dilemmas, individuals partake in "a learning process by which the subject

[23] The transformative learning phases have also been summarized in other quantities of stages, such as Nohl's (2015) practice-based model, which consists of five phases of transformative learning.

moves from an unexamined way of thinking to a more examined and critical reflective way (Mezirow, 1999)" (Calleja, 2014, p. 129). The second block brings a new perspective, or perspectives, into consideration: individuals engage in critical (self-)reflection, brought about by critical awareness, in which they examine their assumptions and values, and they "try on" others' perspectives (Mezirow, 2012). Finally, in the third block, individuals can alter—if they so choose—their meaning perspectives. The transformation of the meaning perspective provides a new disposition from which an individual interprets his experience. In the last phases, individuals validate and employ the transformed meaning perspective, which guides future actions.

Although not all individuals process through the stages in a sequential fashion, progressing through multiple phases seems to benefit transformative learning: several studies have found those who reported experiencing a greater number of phases were more likely to undergo transformative learning (e.g., Johnson, 2015; Sosluski, 2013). In sum, transformative learning theory and its 10 phases serve as a valuable tool for understanding individuals' perspective transformation experiences. By partaking in transformative learning, individuals might modify or add to an existing meaning schema, add a new meaning schema, or undergo meaning perspective transformation.

Transformative Learning Theory in L2 Learning Contexts

Transformative learning theory presents important advantages for enhancing the field's understanding of L2 learners' transformative experiences and guiding instructional decisions to prompt such transformations in the L2 learning context. Although traditionally underutilized within the field of SLA, transformative learning theory is gradually gaining recognition for its potential contributions as a theoretical and

pedagogical framework. As a theoretical framework, transformative learning theory contributes to a more holistic understanding of the type(s) of learning that occur within language education contexts, especially when social pedagogies are employed to facilitate learners' development of attitudes, skills, and knowledge for global citizenship (e.g., adaptability, open-minded attitudes, ability to work in uncertain or uncomfortable situations) (Crane, 2019).

Likewise, concerning L2 pedagogical practices, transformative learning theory offers an appropriate pedagogical framework, recognizing the complex nature of language learners, who frequently navigate cultural intersections in the language learning process. By emphasizing the necessity of exploring diverse perspectives and behaviors and fostering critical reflection, this theory offers invaluable insights for educators. Here, the present dissertation discusses the principal findings derived from an application of transformative learning theory (as a theoretical and/or pedagogical framework) to both study existing transformative learning experiences of L2 students and to further prompt such experiences in an L2 learning context.

The application of transformative learning theory in the context of L2 learning has revealed the language learning context can facilitate perspective transformation (e.g., Crane, Fingerhuth, & Huenlich 2017; King, 2000, Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010). Research has identified different salient components of (the process of) perspective transformation in language learning contexts, including the opportunities for disorienting dilemmas (Crane et al., 2017; Foster, 1997; Johnson, 2015) and more awareness of and tolerance for other cultures (Goulah, 2007; Johnson & Nelson, 2010). Likewise, research has identified several language course components or activities which

seem strongly related to L2 learners' experience of transformative learning. Primarily, researchers have identified the following class activities as influential in prompting transformative learning: class discussions (including sidebars and small group discussions) (Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010; King, 2000), interactions with native speakers (including the course instructor) (Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022), course content (Reisinger & Clifford, 2022)—including assigned readings (King, 2000) and films (Johnson 2015, Johnson & Nelson, 2010)—, and reflections (Goulah, 2007; Johnson, 2015; King, 2000). These findings were derived from an investigation of existing practices, without altering the instructional strategies, as very few studies have investigated the intentional pedagogical application of transformative learning theory in an L2 learning contexts.

King (2000), for example, investigated the extent to which English as a Second Language (ESL) learners (n=208) experienced transformational learning in relation to their ESL program. King (2000) collected data through participants' responses to a Learning Activities Survey (LAS), which was designed to assess transformative learning experiences based on Mezirow's (1978) 10 phases and the factors that influenced said experiences, as well as follow-up interviews. To analyze the responses, King (2000) employed two rounds of analysis; however, it should be noted that there is a limited amount of information provided regarding the analysis procedures. For the first round, King (2000) assigned a perspective transformative (PT) index category to each completed LAS according to the summative evaluation of their LAS responses, resulting in a PT-index category of (1) a perspective transformation related to the ESL classes, (2) a perspective transformative unrelated to the ESL classes, or (3) no perspective

transformation. The results informed the follow-up interviews. The second phase of the analysis considered quantitative data collected through the LAS (e.g., individual effects, frequency of transformative learning phases) as well as qualitative data from coding participants' LAS free responses and interviews. A causal-comparative model was used to identify the influence of the various activities, and the free-response LAS and interview questions were coded using an emergent approach.

The findings showed that the majority of participants (66.8%) experienced transformative learning in relation to their studies, often associating the perspective change with pivotal experiences in their ESL program. King (2000) found three salient themes that provided insight into why the ESL program fostered transformative learning: (1) greater English language proficiency, (2) gained cultural understanding of the target culture and intercultural awareness, and (3) improved self-esteem and empowerment. Moreover, King (2000) identified specific activities, interactions, and/or life changes perceived to be influential by participants for facilitating perspective transformation. The most influential activities were class discussions, class activities, essays, assigned readings, and writing about their concerns. The most influential interactions were with the instructor, friend(s), student(s), and family member(s), and the most influential life changes were immigration, moving, and job changes. In sum, King (2000) found the adult ESL learners experienced perspective transformation about cultures, language learning, and themselves, and this transformation was often related to the abundance of opportunities for transformative learning in the ESL program through its activities and interactions.

In a case study, Johnson and Nelson (2010) examined the experiences of three Spanish language learners to better understand the transformative learning experiences of the participants and to identify activities that contributed to these experiences in a language learning context. The authors employed a modified version of the LAS (King, 2006) and conducted in-depth interviews with the three women. To understand how the type of activity and learning outcomes related to one another, Johnson and Nelson (2010) employed open coding in their analysis of the participants' LAS and interview responses. The analysis revealed three primary areas in which participants experienced perspective transformation: (1) increased sense of solidarity with Hispanic cultures, (2) greater awareness of diversity among Spanish-speakers, and (3) more awareness of ethnocentricity. Concerning the activities that prompted perspective transformation, Johnson and Nelson (2010) identified three: (1) interacting with native speakers (including the course instructor), (2) participating in collaborative learning with classmates, and (3) watching and analyzing movies from L2 language and culture(s). The authors concluded that L2 education provides an opportunity to engage learners in transformative learning, and they recommended incorporating authentic materials (e.g., movies) and interactions with native speakers to facilitate critical reflection and examination.

In an ethnographic case study, Johnson (2015) investigated instances of transformative learning experiences of first-semester Spanish learners at a community college to better understand the nature of such transformative learning experiences, the key indicators of perspective transformation, and the course components that facilitated these experiences. The data for the case study was derived from the author's observations

in the classroom, the L2 Spanish learners' journals, and follow-up interviews with student participants. In the qualitative analysis the data was coded and categorized to describe the class (the setting and participants of the case study), how the class was taught, what the students learned, and instances of transformation and development. Concerning instances of transformative learning experiences, the findings of the study showed that the L2 learning context provided opportunities for disorienting dilemmas and critical reflection, affording participants the opportunity to engage in the (initial) phases of transformative learning. Specifically, the L2 learners actively sought out various resources to understand Spanish and its cultures from different perspectives, took charge of their learning by delving deeper into the language and cultures, and critically assessed their own language and culture (fostering ethnorelativism). The data analysis revealed several influential components of the course for transformative learning: the instructor's sidebar comments about cultural differences, a movie, discussion activities with classmates, and journals. Of these, the sidebars and the movie were deemed to be the most integral for facilitating transformative learning. Johnson (2015) concluded that the L2 learners seemed to engage in transformative learning over the course of a semester, and she suggested educators need to acknowledge and assess not only language learning, but also the other types of learning in which students engage through the process of learning an L2.

Lastly, Reisinger and Clifford (2022) studied L2 learners' (n=25) experiences of transformative learning in two courses designed for community-based learning. These courses regularly and strategically incorporated critical reflection activities and assignments. To collect data regarding if (and when) L2 learners experienced transformative learning and which activities and modes of communication were

associated with changes in beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions, a modified version of King's (2009) LAS was used as a pre- and post-test. The mixed methods analysis revealed the majority of the participants experienced a moment of transformative learning during the course, typically prompted by both community interactions and course activities. The most influential activities on L2 learners' change(s) in perspective were interactions with native-speaker community members as well as in-class discussions or debates, listening activities (films, recorded interviews, native guest speakers), and written reflections in the target language. Reisinger and Clifford (2022) concluded the community-based experiences and course activities (discussions, listening activities, and other reflective assignments) prompted L2 learners to engage in critical reflection, especially regarding their positioning in and perceptions about their local community. The authors highlighted the importance of community engagement—especially in the interpersonal mode of communication—as well as the practice of critical reflection for facilitating transformative learning.

Taken together, these studies provide evidence for transformative learning outcomes in L2 learning contexts. The research also identified specific activities and interactions linked to these learning experiences. In the context of L2 learning, transformative learning manifests as learners gain a more profound understanding of their own and others' culture, engage in critical reflection, increase their awareness of ethnocentric biases, alter their self-positioning in relation to the target language and its cultures, and/or become more self-directed and active in the learning process. However, these studies did not investigate the effects of intentional transformative learning

instructional approaches in an L2 learning context, which merits further investigation to inform future practices.

The available research on intentionally designed transformative learning instructional approaches in an L2 learning context is limited, yet the known literature provides promising insights. The studies that have intentionally followed the tenets of transformative learning theory for instructional practices have focused on incorporating structured reflection to help learners make sense of moments of dissonance. Structured reflection has been demonstrated to (1) help L2 learners in achieving a deeper understanding of their own and others' culture (Sosulski, 2013), and (2) be appreciated by L2 learners, sometimes fostering the transformative learning process (Crane & Sosulski, 2020).

For instance, in an effort to advocate for the appropriateness of transformative learning theory for the language learning context, Sosulski (2013) described the process with which he had found success in facilitating opportunities for transformative learning for L2 learners of German. Sosulski (2013) described a three-step process: "(1) understanding one's assumptions; (2) comprehending key theories and concepts; (3) coming to an understanding of one's experiences" (p. 103). Sosulski (2013) warned the third step—understanding instances of cultural dissonance in one's life—may not occur within the confines of the course. To arrive at the third step, Sosulski (2013) maintained the employment of structured reflection is crucial because: "It is in this place that students can most readily—and honestly—address their own frames of reference and all that they entail" (p.104).

In an empirical study, Crane & Sosulski (2020) investigated how L2 learners of varying proficiency levels (n=237) perceived structured reflection tasks as part of the course curriculum and to what extent they perceived the structured reflections tasks as facilitating for perspective transformation. Data was collected from an in-class written questionnaire at the end of the semester. The questionnaire included demographic information, an adapted LAS, and questions pertaining to structure reflection. To analyze the data, a mixed methods approach was employed, which revealed the vast majority of L2 learners found the structured reflection tasks to be valuable (60% said it was "somewhat valuable"; 21% said it was "valuable") (p. 81). Mainly, the L2 learners found the structured reflections to prompt metacognition and to help them evaluate and track their progress with the language and course content. When asked which activities facilitated a "change of ideas or point of view," the results varied by level, with those in the upper-level courses statistically significantly more likely to say that structured reflections influenced such a change. Crane & Sosulski (2020) concluded that the majority of L2 learners valued the reflective work, and their perceived benefits of structured reflections included facilitating thinking about learning and evaluating one's learning. While not overtly common, Crane & Sosulski (2020) also found instances in which some L2 learners found the structured reflections to be beneficial for facilitating perspective-shifting.

In sum, the research on transformative learning theory in the L2 learning context offers important advantages as a theoretical and pedagogical framework. Its application allows for an understanding of to what extent, and how, L2 learning contexts facilitate transformative learning experiences. Additionally, research has begun to identify

instructional strategies and activities that can be implemented to foster transformative learning. Namely, L2 learning contexts provide natural opportunities for transformative learning, and, to enhance this learning, interactions with others (e.g., classmates, instructor, native speakers), authentic materials, and critical reflections constitute important parts of the perspective-shifting process. More research, however, is needed to affirm and further develop recommended pedagogical practices for transformative learning (Crane & Sosulski, 2020).

Shared Tenets of Transformative Learning Theory and ICC: Support for the Application of Transformative Learning Theory for ICC

Based on the conducive learning environment of language education, the general success in implementing transformative learning theory in L2 learning contexts, and the shared tenets and goals of transformative learning theory and ICC, transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development has been suggested (Crane & Sosulski, 2020) to address some of the previously discussed challenges of culture and ICC instruction. In broad terms, both ICC and transformative learning theory share the goal of encouraging learning about and tolerance for other perspectives through discourse and (self-)reflection (Godwin-Jones, 2019). In fact, it has been noted that transformative pedagogies closely resemble several I(C)C models such as Kramsch's (2009) symbolic competence, Liddicoat and Scarino's (2013) dissonance and consonance, and Kearney's (2015) perspective-taking (Crane & Sosulski, 2020) as well as Byram's (1997) fifth *savoir* of critical cultural awareness/political education (Randolph & Johnson, 2017). Furthermore, as Crane and Sosulski (2020) note, the importance of decentering oneself from existing assumptions to engage with other

cultural perspectives is fundamental for both ICC models (e.g., Bennett, 1986, 1993; Byram, 1997, Deardorff, 2004, 2006) and language learning objectives (e.g., ACTFL's (2015) World-Readiness Standards). In addition to fostering awareness of and tolerance for others' perspectives, both ICC and transformative learning theory emphasize the importance of (self-)reflection, dialog, and open-mindedness as key components of development.

First, (self-)reflection is foundational for both ICC (developmental) frameworks (Bennett, 1986; 1993; Byram, 1997; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016) and transformative learning (Crane & Sosulski, 2020). For ICC development, reflection leads to intercultural awareness (Byram, 1997; Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Kramsch, 1993, 2009; Zarate, 1996), which can prompt change and growth in ICC as learners move from ethnocentric to ethnorelative alignment (Bennett, 1986, 1993). Similarly, for transformative learning theory, learners must recognize their own perspectives and others' perspectives to be able to validate, accept, and—potentially—adopt new perspectives (Mezirow, 1978).

Additionally, both transformative learning theory and ICC development see dialog as a catalyst of (inner) conflict. For ICC scholars, intercultural dialog is seen as a source of conflict, which, as demonstrated by several researchers, has benefits for ICC development (e.g., O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006; Ware, 2005): conflicts from intercultural interactions have the potential to create a cultural "rich point" (Agar, 1994) from which learners can more deeply understand others' cultural products, practices and/or perspectives as well as their own. Likewise, since the early models of the transformative learning theory, Mezirow (1978, 1985) emphasized the social component of transformative learning due to its ability to call attention to differences of perspectives, to

provide emotional support, to engage in assessing a given situation from different points of view, to relate to others experiencing disorienting dilemmas and transformations, and to "provide models for functioning within the new perspective" (Mezirow & Associates, 1990, p. xiv).

Third, a shared goal of both transformative learning theory and ICC development is fostering open-mindedness and deeper understanding of others' (and one's own) cultures (Godwin-Jones, 2019). To progress in ICC development and to experience transformation, learners must be willing to learn about others' viewpoints and recognize their own. ICC models commonly emphasize knowledge and awareness as fundamental elements to develop ICC (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2004; 2006), which cannot be gained if a learner is unwilling to learn about others' and one's own culture. Likewise, transformative learning theory necessitates the action of "trying on" new perspectives (Mezirow, 2012) which requires learners to possess a degree of open-mindedness to consider a different perspective.

Lastly, it is important to note that transformative learning theory offers potential solutions for several of the critiqued aspects of current ICC instructional practices. First, transformative learning theory does not heavily rely on comparison-centric activities. Differences are not explicitly described, rather they are encountered naturally in the intercultural dialog, and individuals are encouraged to "try on" new perspectives rather than partake in an *us* vs *them* mentality. Second, while many existing cultural and ICC practices do not incorporate reflection, transformative learning theory strongly relies on the practice of (self-)reflection even though the field lacks clarity about the structure or guidance for this practice.

In sum, alongside the favorable outcomes of transformative learning theory in the L2 learning context, the shared tenets and goals of transformative learning theory and ICC substantiate the promising prospect of using transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development. The present dissertation follows the suggestion made by Crane and Sosulski (2020) and uses transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for ICC development.

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature on ICC, VE in language education, and transformative learning theory. It examined past and present pedagogical practices for ICC development, focusing on videoconferencing-facilitated VE, and proposed the use of transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework due to its aligned tenets and potential for fostering ICC development.

Key highlights from this chapter highlight the necessity and relevance of the research conducted in this dissertation. First, Bennett's (1986; 1993) DMIS, Byram's (1997) model for ICC, and Deardorff's (2004; 2006) models for I(C)C have shaped the conceptualization and operationalization of ICC within the field of SLA, each with their own advantages and challenges. In turn, an operationalization of ICC as a construct with three principal domains—cognitive, affective, and behavioral—is advantageous in its ability to assess each domain independently and its overall assessment and to reflect the individuality of language learners in their ICC developmental paths.

Engaging in intercultural CMC with a native speaker of the L2 presents significant opportunities for ICC development (Blake & Guillén, 2020) by fostering intercultural communication and collaboration (e.g., Belz, 2003; Lomicka, 2006;

O'Dowd, 2003). One method to foster intercultural CMC through videoconferencing-facilitated VEs, which primarily occur as telecollaboration projects, e-Tandem exchanges, or SPVEs. Each of these methods has demonstrated to foster ICC, and they each present advantages and challenges. SPVEs, despite their under-researched status, show promise due to their ability to mitigate common challenges like scheduling difficulties and disengaged partners. This dissertation focuses on SPVEs to explore their impact on L2 learners' ICC development, addressing the current knowledge gap (O'Dowd, 2021).

To guide ICC development in VEs, the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) has been the standard, but it has limitations, such as an over-reliance on cultural comparisons and a lack of an emphasis on reflections. These issues, along with SPVE's non-mutually beneficial interactions, make this model less suitable for guiding ICC development in SPVEs. Thus, this dissertation proposes transformative learning theory as a novel approach to guide ICC development in SPVEs. This theory, successful in L2 learning contexts, aligns well with ICC's goals of fostering awareness, tolerance, reflection, dialogue, and open-mindedness. Despite promising results, more research is needed on the application of transformative learning theory as a framework for ICC development. This dissertation aims to fill this gap, contributing to SLA and better preparing L2 learners for engagement in multicultural, multilingual communities by adopting transformative learning theory with SPVEs.

Research Questions

(1) How does participating in transformative learning tasks affect learners' experience of transformation?

a. How do the different activities, including SPVEs, in the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?
b. How do the different interactions prompted by the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?
c. To what extent do fifth-semester Spanish language learners who participate in the transformative learning tasks experience the phases of transformative learning, as outlined in the Learning Activities Survey (King, 2009)?

(2) How does participation in transformative learning tasks relate to changes in participants' ICC?

a. Does participants' ICC change after completing transformative learning tasks?
b. How did participants demonstrate their ICC, and if changes in ICC occurred, what were the nature of these changes and the factors influencing them?
c. Which factors predict a change in ICC when participating in transformative learning tasks?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter provides information about the research design, the participants involved in the study as well as the instruments used for data collection and an explanation of the data analysis procedures.

Design of the Study

To answer the research questions, the present study employs a mixed methods approach, as recommended by Deardorff (2004; 2006) for intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and by King (2009) for transformative learning theory, acknowledging the complex nature of both concepts.

Multiple definitions of mixed methods research have emerged over the years, integrating diverse elements of methods, research processes, research purpose, and philosophy (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Classically, mixed methods research has been defined as a methodological approach to research incorporating both "qualitative and quantitative approaches in the methodology of a study" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. ix). While this definition adequately highlights the essential process of mixed methods research, more recent definitions have aimed to capture additional components, such as the purpose, key characteristics, and philosophical viewpoints unique to mixed methods research. Focusing on the intent rather than the priority of quantitative or qualitative data within mixed methods research, Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) proposed that mixed methods research be defined by its core characteristics: its methods, research design, and philosophical orientation. As a result, the authors defined a mixed methods study as one in which the researcher (1) "collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data

rigorously in response to research questions and hypotheses"; (2) "integrates (or mixes or combines) the two forms of data and their results"; (3) "organizes these procedures into specific research designs that provide the logic and procedures for conducting the study"; and, lastly, (4) "frames these procedures within theory and philosophy" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 5).

Within mixed methods research there are numerous variations for research designs. These designs dictate the procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data and reflect the worldview, or paradigm, of the study. Regarding the paradigm, the present dissertation primarily adheres to a pragmatist standpoint in which a single reality can exist (e.g., there is one way best suited to develop ICC) and there might be multiple realities (e.g., individuals and other factors will impact the outcome). With this ontological stance, the present study's epistemology reflects a practical — "what works?"— orientation in which both deductive and indicative approaches are taken to answer the research questions. With this pragmatist approach, the emphasis is placed on the research questions themselves to generate practical solutions for addressing real-world problems rather than, for example, uncovering contextual and multiple realities that describe complex human experiences (constructivism) or focusing on observable, measurable phenomena to reveal objective truths (positivism) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Following the pragmatist approach, the present dissertation employs qualitative and quantitative methodologies to answer the questions allowing for a deeper understanding of the topic as well as feasible solutions.

Regarding the specific research design, the present dissertation employs an explanatory sequential design, in which qualitative methods are used to explain the

quantitative results obtained (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The quantitative analysis is designed to establish the general patterns and highlight key results and patterns in the data. The sequential qualitative analysis aims to provide insight into initial quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This sequential process for data analysis facilitates the interpretation of significant (or non-significant) results as well as exemplary outcomes, outliers, and unexpected results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The explanatory sequential design boasts several advantages. First, by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches (across-methods triangulation), as well as multiple quantitative and qualitative sources (within-methods triangulation), the weaknesses of one method can be offset by the strengths of another (Jick, 1979; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The benefits of triangulation are especially pertinent for the present study, as both Deardorff (2004, 2006) and King (2009) have suggested, the complex nature of ICC (Deardorff, 2004; 2006) and transformative learning (King, 2009) necessitate the use of more than one method to achieve a more complete understanding of the transformation and/or development. Second, the explanatory sequential design is suitable for emergent approaches or approaches in which the second phase of analysis is shaped by the outcomes of the initial phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). For instance, the results from the quantitatively analyzed data can alter the focus of coding in sequential phases of investigation. Third, an explanatory sequential approach facilitates the exploration of unexpected results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). For example, instances in which participants did not experience instances of transformative learning can be further examined. Lastly, the explanatory sequential design enables the assessment of a newly developed product's transferability and

generalizability (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), which is reflected in this dissertation's goal to investigate the effectiveness of innovative service provider virtual exchange (SPVE)-centered transformative learning tasks for ICC development. Table 1 illustrates the relationship between the research questions, data analysis procedures, and sources of the data for the present dissertation.

Table 1

Data Analysis and Instruments for Each Research Question

Research Question (RQ)	Data Analysis	Data Source
RQ1a: How do the different activities, including SPVEs, in the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics Qualitative: Thematic analysis	Learning Activities Survey (LAS) (Question 4) Reflections and interviews (focus on activities)
RQ1b: How do the different interactions prompted by the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics Qualitative: Thematic analysis	LAS (Question 5) Reflections and interviews (focus on interactions)
RQ1c: To what extent do fifth-semester Spanish language learners who participate in the transformative learning tasks experience the phases of transformative learning, as outlined in the Learning Activities Survey (King, 2009)?	Quantitative: Descriptive statistics Qualitative: Thematic analysis	LAS (Question 3) Reflections and interviews (focus on evidence of phases of transformative learning theory)
RQ2a: Does participants' ICC change after completing transformative learning tasks?	Quantitative: Goodness of fit statistics and structural equation modeling (SEM)	ICC survey

RQ2b: How did participants demonstrate their ICC, and if changes in ICC occurred, what were the nature of these changes and the factors influencing them?	Qualitative: Thematic analysis	Reflections and interviews (focus on ICC (development))
RQ2c: Which factors predict a change in ICC when participating in transformative learning tasks?	Quantitative: Goodness of fit statistics and structural equation modeling (SEM)	ICC survey, background questionnaire, and LinguaMeeting participation data

Research Setting and Participants

Participants in this study are students enrolled in three sections of a fifth semester Spanish Conversation and Composition course at a large public university in the southwest United States. According to the course syllabus, the class is intended for students with an intermediate to advanced level of Spanish, and the course design places a strong emphasis on learners' oral production. The learning objectives for the course include using different registers, orally presenting and defending ideas, writing short essays, orally debating relevant topics, and critically understanding and analyzing authentic texts and films.

In the spring 2023 semester, 59 students enrolled in Spanish Conversation and Composition I. Out of the 59 students, 39 students provided consent and participated in all five SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. Therefore, the present study reports findings for 39 participants. Table 2 displays some of the self-reported demographic information collected in the background questionnaire (Appendix G).

Table 2

Participant Demographic Information

Demographic Marker	Participant Representation
Gender	Female = 24 Male = 15
Age	Mean = 20.19 years Median = 19 years Range = 26 years (one outlier of 44 years of age)
Race	White (non-Hispanic) = 32 Hispanic = 3 Asian = 2 Mixed Race (White & Asian; Black & Latino; White & Native American) = 3
Native language(s)	English = 35 Language other than English (Chinese, Japanese) = 2 Bilingual (Italian & English; Aramaic & Arabic) = 2
Language(s) spoken in childhood home(s)	English = 32 Language other than English (Chinese, Japanese) = 2 Bilingual or Multilingual (Italian & English; Aramaic, Arabic & English; Spanish & English) = 5
Other languages spoken (besides native language and Spanish)	No other language(s) spoken = 32 Other language(s) spoken = 7 Each corresponds to one student: • Japanese • French • Russian • English, Mandarin & Korean • Korean • Hebrew, Tok Pisin, Korean, Polish • Mandarin, some French, some Cantonese
Participants who have lived in a country besides the United States	No = 31 Yes = 6 Each corresponds to one student: • China • France (only 2 months) • Iraq and Syria • Italy • Japan • Hong Kong (10 years), France (2 years), China (3 years)

	Note: two people did not answer.
Academic status	1st year = 18 2nd year = 11 3rd year = 4 4th year = 3 Other = 1 *Note: two participants did not answer, and no clarification was provided for "other"*
Reason(s) for taking Spanish	Majoring in Spanish = 5 Minoring in Spanish = 22 Taking Spanish as a graduation requirement = 5 Taking Spanish for enjoyment = 19 *Note: one participant did not answer; and eleven participants provided more two or more reasons for taking Spanish (nine participants provided two reasons; two participants provided three reasons)*
Previous years or semesters of Spanish	Elementary/Middle school ($\bar{x}$ = 1.76 years; SD = 2.38) • 0 years = 17 • 1 year = 4 • 2 years = 7 • 3 years = 5 • 4 years = 1 • 5 years = 1 • 8 years = 2 • 9 years = 1 High school ($\bar{x}$ = 3.24 years; SD = 1.17) • 0 years = 2 • 1 year = 2 • 2 years = 4 • 3 years = 7 • 4 years = 23 Community college ($\bar{x}$ = 0.26 semesters; SD = 0.86) • 0 semesters = 34 • 1 semester = 1 • 2 semesters = 1 • 3 semesters = 1 • 4 semesters = 1 Prior semesters at ASU ($\bar{x}$ = 1.92 semesters; SD = 1.28)

- 0 semesters = 3
- 1 semester = 15
- 2 semesters = 10
- 3 semesters = 2
- 4 semesters = 8

Prior semesters at other four-year university ($\bar{x}$ = 0.21 semesters; SD = 0.84)

- 0 semesters = 34
- 1 semester = 3
- 5 semesters = 1

Note: one student did not answer

In addition to the information in Table 2, participants also provided information about their birthplace, their parents' birthplace, their cultural background, and their major(s) and minor(s). When asked about their birthplace and that of their parents, most participants reported they were born in the United States (n=36), with (n= 3) reporting being born outside of the United States (China, Japan, and Iraq). Likewise, most participants reported both parents were born in the United States (n= 31). However, there was some variation: eight participants reported at least one parent was born outside of the United States (Canada, Colombia, China, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, and Mexico).

Answers to the question "What is your cultural background?" provided insight into participants' perceptions of their cultural background. Participants' responses demonstrated wide diversity in perception of their own culture. The most common answer was "American" (n= 5), followed by "English" (n=4) and "Jewish" (n=3). Some answers explicitly referenced heritage nationality; for example, "British, Norwegian, Swedish, German," "Born and grew up most of my life in Japan," and "Assyrian." Several answers referenced certain regions (e.g., "Latin America" and "Eastern

European") and others revealed the complexity of the question with answers such as "Complicated" and "I don't know."

Academically, the participants represented a diverse array of majors, including majors in biology, anthropology, aerospace engineering, finance, global politics, English linguistics, and more. Only two participants were seeking a major in Spanish, one of which was pursuing a double-major in Spanish and biology. The most common minor was Spanish (n=22), and one of the participants seeking a minor in Spanish was also seeking an additional minor (criminal justice). Otherwise, only two other minors were reported (French and history).

Notably, while the participants for the present dissertation were students enrolled in the Spanish Composition and Conversation course at a public university, they represented a relatively heterogenous sample. The participants offered unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds (e.g., seven participants grew up in a bilingual or non-English-speaking home) and varied lived experiences (e.g., six participants lived outside of the United States). This heterogeneity enriched the study by creating the possibility for the emergence and exchange of culturally informed perspectives in the designed SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks.

Interview Participants

From the overall group of participants, eight individuals participated in interviews with the researcher.

David. David identified as a 19-year-old Hispanic male with a "Latin America" cultural background (background questionnaire). David was born and raised in Arizona, although his parents were born in Mexico. He reported having lived outside of the

country, although he did not specify where or the duration of that experience. In the interview, it was revealed that David frequently traveled to Mexico to see and spend time with his relatives. However, when asked if he identified as a heritage learner, he dismissed the question, saying:

> Excerpt 1
>
> [I'm] not a heritage speaker, but I definitely can understand a lot better; like I understand their accents and more like day-to-day things. Like, I can go to Mexico, and I can understand, but they'll speak to you Spanish, and I'll speak to them in Spanish and then [they] just know: like they just start speaking English like ugh, that sucks" (David, interview).

In the background questionnaire, David reported English to be his sole native language, although in the interview he said both Spanish and English were spoken in his childhood home. David was in his first year at the university, majoring in healthcare administration and policy, and he reported to be taking Spanish for enjoyment.

Ethan. Ethan identified as a 19-year-old white male with an "Eastern European" cultural background from California. Ethan had one parent of international origin (Canada), and the other was from the United States' (New York). Ethan reported English to be his sole native language and the only language spoken in his childhood home. He had not lived anywhere outside of the United States. Ethan was in his first year at the university, majoring in aerospace engineering. He was also pursuing a minor in Spanish, for which he was enrolled in Spanish Conversation and Composition I.

Isabella. Isabella identified as a 22-year-old "Italian American" female born in the United States to one foreign-born parent (Italy) and one United States parent

(Washington). For both her race and her cultural background, she wrote "Italian American." In her interview, it was revealed that Isabella frequently moved throughout her adolescence for her American father's military career, including time spent living in Italy, where she lived "on and off throughout childhood" (interview). Isabella reported English and Italian to be her native languages and those spoken in her childhood home. Isabella was a third-year undergraduate student at the university, majoring in Italian language and literature and pursuing two minors: one in criminal justice and one in Spanish. She reported to be taking Spanish Conversation and Composition I for both the minor and her enjoyment.

Johnathan. Johnathan identified as a 20-year-old white male, born and raised in Arizona. His parents were born in the Midwest United States, and when asked about his cultural background, Johnathan wrote "suburban white Christian family" (background questionnaire). English was Johnathan's sole native language and the only language spoken in his childhood home. He had not lived outside of the country. Johnathan was in his second year at the university, majoring in civil engineering with a minor in Spanish, for which he was enrolled in the course.

Haoyu. Haoyu identified as a 25-year-old Asian male, born and raised in China to Chinese parents. When asked about his cultural background in the background questionnaire, Haoyu wrote "Chinese." Chinese was Haoyu's native language and the only language spoken in his childhood home. However, in addition to his native language, Haoyu spoke English, Japanese, and Spanish. Haoyu was in his fourth year at the university, majoring in computer science as well as political science. Haoyu took Spanish Conversation and Composition I for enjoyment.

Amanda. Amanda identified as a 19-year-old white female, native to Arizona. Her parents were both born in the United States (Arizona and Mississippi), and she culturally identified as "American" (background questionnaire). Amanda reported English to be her sole native language and the only language spoken in her childhood home. She had not lived outside the United States; although, during the interview, Amanda shared she frequently traveled to Mexico growing up: "I've been to Mexico before many times; I actually spent a month in Hermosillo as a part of an exchange program, and so I lived with a host family" (interview). Amanda was in her first year at the university. She was a business major, and she enrolled in Spanish Conversation and Composition I for enjoyment.

Ivy. Ivy identified as a 20-year-old Caucasian female born in Arizona to parents who were both from South Dakota. In the interview, it was revealed that Ivy grew up in South Dakota, rather than her birth state. When asked about her cultural background, Ivy wrote "n/a" (background questionnaire). English was Ivy's native language and the only language spoken in her childhood home. She had not lived outside the United States. Ivy was a second-year undergraduate student majoring in psychology and minoring in Spanish. She reported to be taking Spanish Conversation and Composition I for both her minor and personal enjoyment.

Nevada. Nevada identified as a 20-year-old white female from North Dakota whose parents were both from the Midwest (North Dakota and Illinois). When asked about her cultural background, Nevada wrote "German, French, and Sweden [Swedish]" (background questionnaire). Nevada reported to English to be her sole native language and the only language spoken in her childhood home. She had not lived outside the

United States. Nevada was in her second year at the university, where she was majoring in biology with a minor in Spanish. She reported to be taking Spanish Conversation and Composition I for her minor and for her enjoyment.

Instruments

Instructional Materials

The instructional materials were a central component of this study. To examine the effect of SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks on participants' ICC, five tasks were created and incorporated into the course curriculum. Each task consisted of: (1) a list of task objectives (see Appendix A for an example), (2) an authentic short film (*cortometraje)*, (3) a comprehension assignment about the short film (see Appendix B for an example), (4) a set of preparation questions (see Appendix C for an example), (5) a videoconferencing conversation (LinguaMeeting session) with a Spanish native speaker and one or two of their peers, and (6) a reflective assignment (see Appendix D for an example). The list of task objectives, comprehension assignment about the short film, preparation questions, and reflective assignment were created by the researcher. The short authentic films, *cortometrajes*, were part of the course textbook content.

The tasks were designed to reflect the transformative learning principles of disorienting dilemma and (self-)reflection. As a reminder, a disorienting dilemma occurs through dialogic learning in which previously unquestioned perspectives are illuminated and challenged. By engaging in a disorienting dilemma with (self-)reflection (in which one's own beliefs and others' beliefs are examined), learners partake in "a learning process by which the subject moves from an unexamined way of thinking to a more examined and critical reflective way (Mezirow, 1999)" (Calleja, 2014, p. 129). Learners

can “try on” others’ perspectives (Mezirow, 2012), and, by engaging in this process, learners might alter or maintain an existing perspective or adopt a new perspective. Guided by this transformative learning process, the tasks served two main purposes. The first purpose was to create an opportunity for students to experience disorienting dilemmas by engaging with the cultural, perspective-ridden products (*cortometrajes*) as well as their LinguaMeeting coaches and their fellow classmates in guided discussions. The second purpose for the tasks was to prompt critical (self-)reflection through the reflections. Each task topic was aligned with the course content and sequencing (Table 3).

Table 3

Topics for SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks

Chapter	Task Topic
Chapter 1	Social class and inequalities
Chapter 2	Social roles and societal expectations
Chapter 3	Openness to immigration
Chapter 4	Trust in the government
Chapter 5	Relationships and marriage

Data collection instruments

In order to examine (1) if and how language learners experienced perspective transformation with tasks specifically designed to facilitate transformative learning, (2) their development of ICC after participation in transformative learning tasks, and (3) the connection between participation in transformative learning tasks and ICC development, data was collected from a variety of instruments. The data collection instruments and the procedures for administration are discussed here in the order in which they were

implemented. The data collection instruments included: (1) two intercultural communicative competency (ICC) surveys (Appendix E), (2) five reflections (Appendix D), (3) five LASs (Appendix F), (4) a background questionnaire (Appendix G), and (5) interviews with selected participants (Appendix H).

ICC Surveys (Appendix E). In order to assess the impact of the transformative learning tasks on participants' ICC (RQ2), ICC was measured before and after the treatment. To that end, participants completed a survey based on the three ICC domains: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Through Qualtrics the participants accessed and completed the ICC survey twice: once at the beginning of the semester before beginning the first task (pre-test), and once at the end of the semester, after having completed the last task (post-test). Participants' names were collected (1) to facilitate the removal of individuals who did not participate in all 5 tasks from statistical analysis and (2) to match ICC data to transformative learning and demographic data. In the second ICC survey, participants provided consent, then completed the ICC survey, and, lastly, responded to the background questionnaire (all within the same Qualtrics sequence).

The pre- and post- ICC survey contained the same 51 randomized Likert scale items. For the present dissertation, the cognitive domain is operationalized as learners' knowledge of the three "P's" —products, practices, and perspectives—and their awareness of cross-cultural differences. To measure the cognitive domain, the present dissertation used a modified version of Lee and Song's (2019) Likert scale questions (items 1-7 in the ICC survey).[24] The validity of the original cognitive domain Likert scale items (n=4) was confirmed with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Lee & Song,

[24] See Appendix I for Lee and Song's (2019) original cognitive Likert scale items.

2019). To reflect the content of the instructional tasks for the present dissertation, an additional item was created for each "P" to address various practices, products, and perspectives presented in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks for a total of seven cognitive Likert scale items.

The affective domain was defined as individuals' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 231). To measure the affective domain, this dissertation used Chen and Starosta's (1997, 2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, which includes 24 Likert scale items addressing the subdomains of interaction engagement (items 8-14), respect for cultural differences (items 15-20), interaction confidence (items 21-25), interaction enjoyment (items 26-28), and interaction attentiveness (items 29-31).[25] The 24-item Intercultural Sensitivity Scale has demonstrated strong validity and reliability (Chen & Starosta, 2000). For the present study, all 24 items were maintained, yet the wording for select items was modified to better represent the students' experiences: "culturally-distinct counterpart" was changed to "a person of another culture."[26]

Lastly, the behavioral domain was operationalized as intercultural effectiveness, or "communication skills, including both verbal and nonverbal behaviors, which enable individuals to attain their communication goals in intercultural interaction through an appropriate and effective performance" (Portalla & Chen, 2010, p. 22). To assess the behavioral domain, this dissertation used Portalla and Chen's (2010) Intercultural

[25] See Appendix J for the original Intercultural Sensitivity Scale items (Chen & Starosta (1997, 2000)).
[26] The change in wording from "culturally-distinct counterpart" to "a person of another culture" was changed given the fact that upon taking this survey as a pre-test, the learners had not yet been assigned to interact with a person of another culture. Therefore, the broader language made it applicable even without having engaged in the assigned LinguaMeeting sessions.

Effectiveness Scale, which includes the subdomains of behavioral flexibility (items 32-35), interaction relaxation (items 36-40), interactant respect (items 41-43), message skills (items 44-46), identity maintenance (items 47-49), and identity management (items 50-51).[27] This scale contains 20 items to assess the behavioral domain and has demonstrated strong validity and reliability (Portalla & Chen, 2010). For the present dissertation, slight modifications were made: "my culturally different counterpart(s)" was changed to "people of different cultures" or "a person of a different culture."

Reflections (Appendix D). To assess the influence of transformative learning tasks on participants' intercultural competence (RQ2) both before and after the intervention, along with participants' engagement with transformative learning (RQ1c) and the specific activities and interactions that facilitated transformative learning (RQ1a and RQ1b), participants' five reflections were analyzed. The reflections not only allowed for adherence to recommended practices for facilitating ICC development and transformative learning, but also (1) allowed the researcher to obtain the language of the participants and (2) demonstrated the areas to which participants gave their attention (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 188).

As a reminder, at the end of each task students wrote and turned in their reflection after watching the short video (*cortometraje*). The reflections were semi-structured, and students could answer in Spanish, English, or a combination of the two languages. While the specific terminology of "ICC" and "transformative learning" were not used, students were asked to answer at least one question pertaining to ICC (Part A) and one question pertaining to their experience of transformative learning (Part B). The prompt asked the

[27] See Appendix K for the original Intercultural Effectiveness Scale items (Portalla & Chen, 2010).

students to write approximately 300 words, and it stated that they did not have to answer all the questions, but rather, they should answer the question(s) that most corresponded with their experience.

In total, the reflections prompt consisted of seven guiding questions. Questions 1-3 pertained to ICC, each targeting a specific ICC domain: cognitive (Question 1), affective (Question 2) or behavioral (Question 3). Questions 4-7 related to learners' perceived experience of transformation including the activities that facilitated a perspective change (Question 4); the influence of interactions with fellow participants and their (differing) perspectives on a perspective change (Question 5); changes in, or questioning of, one's own ideas (Question 6); and the extent to which the different activities (e.g., *cortometrajes*, LinguaMeeting sessions) enhanced their understanding of and appreciation for others' perspectives (Question 7).

While the students received a grade for their reflections (see rubric in Appendix D)—consisting of content (inclusion of the required elements) and development (presence of main ideas and supporting information)—the researcher did not access the students' grades. The researcher downloaded the reflections of consenting participants, saved the documents under the participant identifier codes, and uploaded them to Dedoose (a password-protected cloud application for qualitative and mixed method analysis) for qualitative analysis.

Learning Activities Survey (LAS) (Appendix F). In order to assess participants' perceived experience of transformation (RQ1c) and the activities or interactions that prompted change in perspective (RQ1a and RQ1b), the present dissertation used a modified version of King's (2009) Learning Activities Survey (LAS) in conjunction with

the reflections and interviews. This survey was taken five times by students via Qualtrics: after completing the activities for the task (*cortometraje*, comprehension assignment, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting session, and reflection). While it was incorporated into the instructional activities sequencing in Canvas (listed after the reflection), students did not receive a grade for completing the LASs.

Drawing from Mezirow's (1978, 1985) conceptualization of transformative learning theory and its ten phases, the LAS was developed by King (2009) to reveal, name, and categorize transformative experiences.[28] The LAS has been demonstrated to have validity (King, 1998, 2005) and reliability (King, 2009). In its original form, the LAS contains 14 questions. For the present dissertation, the wording of several questions was modified to better reflect the students' experience in completing the tasks. Additionally, the total number of questions was reduced from 14 to six: one question item for their name, four question items pertaining to transformative learning, and one question item to allow for additional comments. The questions removed were either deemed repetitive given the background questionnaire, unnecessary for the present study, or better suited for an interview context. The remaining questions pertaining to transformation centered on (1) whether the learners changed any of their perspectives after participating in the LinguaMeeting session and completing the related activities; (2) if the learners progressed through any phases of transformative learning; (3) the activities that facilitated a change in perspective; and (4) the personal interaction(s) that facilitated a change in perspective.

[28] See Appendix L for the original version of the LAS (King, 2009).

Background Questionnaire (Appendix G). To better inform an understanding of any demographic factors that might have affected participants' transformative learning experiences (RQ1) and/or ICC development (RQ2), demographic information was collected about participants. Toward the end of the semester, participants completed the background questionnaire once in conjunction with the second ICC survey (post-test) in Qualtrics. The background questionnaire consisted of demographic questions regarding participants' extralinguistic and linguistic characteristics. The questions pertained to the participants' age, gender, cultural background, academic year, area of specialization, knowledge of other languages, reason for studying Spanish, and years of experience with Spanish or other languages.

Interview (Appendix H). In order to further examine the causes and nature of participants' perspective transformations (RQ1),[29] the present dissertation carried out and analyzed interviews with eight participants. This procedure follows the suggestion made by King (2009) to support findings gathered from the LAS with additional data sources given the complexity of transformational learning. After providing consent and completing the second ICC survey (post-test), participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in a 30-minute interview about their experiences in participating in the LinguaMeeting videoconferencing sessions and completing the corresponding activities. They were informed that interview participants would receive a $25 gift card. If they were interested, the participants provided their name and email address so the researcher could contact them. The interviews occurred at the end of the semester after

[29] While the focus of the interviews was on participants' transformative learning experiences, the data also provided information about participants' ICC development, which was used to help answer RQ2.

participants had completed all tasks. The interviews were semi-structured, open-ended, and audio-recorded.

The interviews consisted of 12 questions based on King's (2009) LAS Interview Questions.[30] A pilot interview was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the questions and identify possible gaps in the questions. The student who volunteered to participate in the pilot interview had previously used the LinguaMeeting platform for a previous class, although the corresponding tasks and objectives for the videoconferencing sessions significantly differed. After the pilot interview, the wording was altered for several questions, and a preliminary question pertaining to previous use of LinguaMeeting was added (Question 1). Just as with the LAS, the changes in the wording from the original LAS Interview Questions often served to narrow the scope: focusing on the LinguaMeeting sessions and their corresponding activities rather than the participants' educational experience (Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, and 11). Several questions were added (Questions 3 and 7), and Questions 4-6 were repeated (as Questions 9-11) to encourage the interview participant to describe their positive and/or negative change in ideas, values, or beliefs before describing the experience that triggered the change. Finally, several of the questions removed from the LAS were also removed from the interview questions (i.e., those pertaining to life changes and overall educational experiences). Overall, these modifications allowed the researcher to know about the participants' previous use of the LinguaMeeting platform, obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of the change(s) the student experienced, and acquire

[30] See Appendix M for the original set of interview questions designed by King (2009) to accompany the LAS for transformative learning analysis.

information about both “positive” and “negative” changes in ideas, values, or beliefs. Given the semi-structured nature of the interview, additional questions were added during each interview to build rapport and clarify.

Procedures

Data for this study was collected during the spring 2023 semester. Before beginning the spring 2023 semester, the researcher contacted the upper-level coordinator to ask for permission to implement the tasks within the Spanish Conversation and Composition I courses. Once permission was granted, the transformative learning tasks (Appendices A, B, C, D and F) were incorporated into the course learning management system (Canvas). The university instructors for the Spanish Conversation and Composition I classes were informed that their students would be completing the LinguaMeeting session and corresponding tasks throughout the semester, and they received training involving an informative meeting describing the overall nature of the different assignments, the instructor’s role throughout the process, how to access the LinguaMeeting platform, and who to contact if any issues arose. Throughout the semester, the researcher provided continued support for the instructors regarding any issues or concerns. Additionally, prior to the start of the semester, the researcher communicated with the service provider platform, LinguaMeeting, to communicate the goals and vision for the transformative learning task LinguaMeeting sessions. As a part of this vision-setting meeting, the researcher met with the coaches’ supervisor to establish expectations for the coaches and the LinguaMeeting session, and, subsequently, the LinguaMeeting coaches were informed of the purpose and goals for the sessions.

Within the first two weeks of the semester, as part of a normal course assignment, students in the Spanish Conversation and Composition I courses completed the ICC survey (pre-test), which was administered via Qualtrics. The link for the ICC survey was accessed through the courses' Canvas pages. Additionally, during the first two weeks the students registered for the videoconferencing platform (LinguaMeeting) and signed up for their videoconferencing sessions. The students were able to choose the sessions times that worked best for their schedules, as well as the native speaker coach they preferred to meet with. While some students opted to register for the same session time and coach for all five sessions, others sometimes changed the time or coach. As a result, while the LinguaMeeting participants (fellow classmates) and LinguaMeeting coach were often consistent, this was not always the case.

Throughout the semester, students completed the five transformative learning tasks. As a reminder, these five tasks consisted of a *cortometraje*, a comprehension assignment, a LinguaMeeting session (with preparation questions), a reflection, and a Learning Activities Survey (LAS). The *cortometrajes* were accessed by students through their online textbook platform (Vistas Higher Learning). Students accessed and submitted the comprehension assignment in Canvas. Likewise, the preparation questions for the LinguaMeeting session were accessed in Canvas. Students participated in the LinguaMeeting session via the LinguaMeeting website and Zoom. After each LinguaMeeting session, the students returned to Canvas to access and submit the reflection. Lastly, for each task, after completing the LinguaMeeting session and its corresponding activities, the students completed the LAS, which they accessed in Canvas and completed in Qualtrics.

After completing the fifth task, students were asked, through an announcement made in Canvas, to complete the second ICC survey (post-) and provide consent. Students were incentivized to participate with 0.5% extra credit added to their final course grades. Those who did not wish to provide consent were presented with an alternative assignment in which they could still receive 0.5% extra credit. Consent allowed the researcher to access participants' course assignments related to the five transformative learning tasks. If participants provided consent, they completed the background questionnaire and ICC survey (post-test) in Qualtrics.

Additionally, for the fifth (last) task, the last LAS asked students if they would be willing to be briefly interviewed regarding their experience in exchange for a small monetary incentive; if so, students provided their name and email address. All students who expressed interest in participating in the interview (n=37) and had given consent to participate in the study were contacted. While the original intention of the study was to have a selective sample (following an emergent approach for analysis) of participants for the interviews —representing differing experiences and transformation change—given the small number of participants who responded to the follow-up email to participate in the interview, it was necessary that all who replied be interviewed (n=8). Regardless, the eight participants represented differing experiences, ICC development, and perspectives on the transformative learning tasks. The researcher carried out audio-recorded, on-site individual interviews with the eight participants. The interviews varied in length from 33 minutes 22 seconds to 50 minutes 43 seconds (average: 40 minutes 9 seconds), depending on the participants' responses. Although a general list of questions was created (and a copy of the guiding questions were provided to participants), each interview slightly

differed, based on the participants' answers. Throughout the interview, the researcher adopted a collaborative approach to create an open-dialog atmosphere to help participants feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences (Glesne, 2016).

Data Coding: Preparing the Data

After the semester had ended, data from the participants who provided consent was collected. The data (the transformative task assignments, ICC survey answers, and background questionnaire responses), was downloaded into an Excel file and stored in a password-protected file storage system. Participants' names were replaced with a numerical identifier to maintain confidentiality, and, for reporting purposes in the present dissertation they were given a pseudonym. Likewise, any mention of others' names in participants' writings or interviews were replaced with pseudonyms. In total, the information in the Excel file included demographic information, participants' identifier codes, responses to each item on the ICC surveys (pre- and post-test), LAS responses, data regarding their participation in different assignments, and participants' consent and interest in being interviewed.

Both the participants' reflections and the interviews were uploaded to a password-protected file storage system. Then, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed using standard orthography. The transcription was carried out by first utilizing the automated speech to text feature within Microsoft Word. After this first round was completed, the researcher reviewed and manually corrected the transcripts. Then, both the participants' reflections and the transcribed interviews were uploaded to Dedoose (Version 9.0.17).

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

RQ1 aims at understanding how participating in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks affected learners' transformative learning experience(s) and RQ2 seeks to understand how these tasks might have promoted the development of the ICC domains–cognitive, affective, and behavioral. To answer RQ1, a quantification of the data from the LASs was conducted. The resulting data provided important information regarding participants' perceived influence of the activities and interactions on their perspective change(s) as well as their perceived experience of the various transformative learning phases. The answer to RQ2 is, in part, based on a quantitative analysis of the ICC surveys. The quantitative analysis for RQ2 not only evaluated changes in participants' ICC, but also the factors that might have contributed to these changes in ICC (e.g., participants' perceived experience of perspective transformation, gender, course instructor).

Participants' Experience of Transformative Learning. To answer RQ1a and RQ1b—participants' perception of the activities or interactions that prompted any change in perspective—and RQ1c—participants' perceived experience of the transformative learning phases—LAS Questions 2-5 were assessed descriptively. The data collected from LAS Questions 2 (participants' perception of a change in ideas or points of view) and 3 (participants' perceived experience of the phases of transformative learning) was evaluated according to counts and percentages. For LAS Question 4 (the perceived influential activities), the data was analyzed via measures of central tendency and dispersions. Lastly, the data collected from LAS Question 5 (the perceived influential interactions) was assessed using counts and percentages. The data from LAS Questions 2-5 was analyzed both for each individual task and collectively (across tasks), facilitating

an examination of result variations within each task as well as the overall effect of the tasks.

Participants' ICC (Development). To quantitatively measure participants' ICC before and after the treatment (RQ2), participants completed the ICC survey (Appendix E) based on the three ICC domains: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Likert scale items were assigned a score from strongly agree (6) to strongly disagree (1), and negatively worded items were recoded positively.

For the present dissertation, prior to evaluating changes in the latent means of the ICC-related constructs from pre- to post-test, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to validate the instruments used and to achieve a better understanding of the relationship(s) between participation in the transformative learning tasks and participants' ICC.

SEM is a statistical technique used to test and estimate complex relationships among variables. There are several notable characteristics in SEM that distinguish it from other multivariate techniques. First, "it takes a confirmatory, rather than exploratory, approach to the data analysis" (Byrne, 2011, p. 3). A confirmatory approach aims to prove (or combat) a hypothesis with evidence, which is suitable for the present dissertation, as the goal is to confirm the usefulness of SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks for ICC development. Assuming goodness of fit, SEM can suggest plausible relationships between variables, making it capable of testing hypotheses while other multivariate procedures are primarily descriptive (Byrne, 2011). Second, unlike traditional multivariate methods, which cannot evaluate or correct measurement error, estimates of error variance parameters are provided in SEM. Third, whereas traditional

multivariate analyses rely solely on the observed measurements, SEM incorporates both observed and latent variables (Byrne, 2011).

SEM consists of two parts: the measurement model and the structural model (Kunnan, 1998). The measurement model, a type of confirmatory factor analysis, evaluates the validity of latent variables through estimated factor loadings. These loadings indicate the strength of the relationships between each observed variable and its corresponding latent construct. The structural model, then describes the relationships among latent constructs, specifying hypothesized causal pathways or associations between them and allowing for the testing of hypotheses.

First, following this two-model process of SEM, the measurement model's CFA was first employed using MPlus (Version 8.10) to evaluate the reliability of the instrument (i.e. the strength of the links among the latent and the observable variables). Informed by the ICC survey (see Appendix E), the following constructs were tested: (1) cognitive, (2) affective-interaction engagement, (3) affective-respect for cultural differences, (4) affective-interaction confidence, (5) affective-interaction enjoyment, (6) affective-interaction attentiveness, (7) behavior-behavioral flexibility, (8) behavior-interaction relaxation, (9) behavior-interactant respect, (10) behavior-message skills, (11) behavior-identity maintenance, and (12) behavior-interaction management. Distinct models were run for each proposed ICC construct at pre- and post-test separately. In all tests the pre-test was controlled. To confirm the validity of the measurement models, goodness of fit indices were calculated for the constructs at pre- and post-test. In line with conventional SEM protocol, several goodness of fit measurements were calculated: $\chi 2/df$ (chi-square divided by degrees of freedom), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

(RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). An acceptable model is indicated by $\chi 2/df<3$, RMSEA<.06, CFI/TLI>.95, and SRMR<.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). If the validity of an observed construct was not supported, this indicated potential issues such as poor discriminant validity (i.e., the construct was not sufficiently distinct from other constructs) or poor convergent validity (i.e., the indicators did not correlate well with one another). To satisfy the basic validity requirements of the measurement model, several of the initial latent constructs and indicators (survey items), were removed. Four validated latent ICC constructs remained: cognitive, affective-interaction engagement, affective-interaction confidence, affective-interaction enjoyment, and behavior.

Concurrently with the CFA for the ICC constructs, measurement invariance was assessed to confirm their consistency over time, enabling comparison of construct means between pre- and post-test. To test for measurement invariance, configural models—an invariance measure for equivalence of model form—and metric models—an invariance measure for equivalence of factor loadings—were first conducted, and their statistical similarity was evaluated (indicated by an insignificant p-value (>.05) in a chi-square test). Then, a scalar model—an invariance measure for equivalence of item intercepts—was conducted and tested for statistical similarity with the configural model using a chi-square test (again, indicated by an insignificant p-value (>.05)). Subsequently, after the initial measurement model phase, the validated ICC constructs were combined into a structural model to depict the relationships among latent constructs, enabling the researcher to visualize the associations between them and confirm it was consistent with ICC theory.

After the reliability and validity of the instrument were established, latent mean structure analysis was used to identify any statistically significant differences in participants' ICC before and after the intervention as well as which factors might have influenced a change in ICC, specifically focusing on the participants' participation in the transformative learning tasks and their endogenous (course section, instructor, gender) variables. The use of latent mean structure analysis within SEM has important advantages over traditional methods such as repeated-measures analyses of covariance, path analysis based on multiple regression and multiple regression analysis. Specifically, latent means analysis within SEM allows for a direct comparison of latent variables (e.g., cognitive, affective-interaction enjoyment, and affective-interaction confidence) over time without relying on observed indicators alone (Loehlin, 2004). Additionally, this analytical technique explicitly accounts for measurement error and recognizes correlated measurement errors from repeated measures, providing a more accurate and reliable estimate (Bollen, 1989).

Qualitative Analysis

Following the sequential design, a qualitative approach to data analysis was employed to better understand influences, experiences, and processes the learners experienced that are not visible with quantitative data analysis alone. The qualitative analysis served to assess how participants perceived: (1) the influence of the various activities and interactions on their experience of transformative learning and ICC development, (2) their experience of the phases of transformative learning, and (3) changes in their ICC domains (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) and subdomains.

Participants' ICC (Development) and Experiences of Transformative Learning. To better understand participants' experiences of transformative learning (RQ1) —and the activities and interactions that prompted this process— as well as their ICC development (RQ2), their reflections and interviews were analyzed.

The reflections of participants who provided consent were downloaded, de-identified, and coded to support and/or explain quantitative findings. While reflection Questions 1-3 specifically asked participants to reflect on topics related to the ICC domains–cognitive, affective, and behavioral–and Questions 4-7 pertained to participants' perceived experience of transformative learning, evidence of ICC development and transformative learning were often found in both the ICC and transformative learning sections. Therefore, the researcher coded for ICC and transformative learning throughout the reflections. The interviews were analyzed in conjunction with the reflections. The primary foci of the interviews were participants' experiences of transformative learning and the effectiveness of the transformative learning tasks and their activities, but an analysis of the interviews also revealed several instances of ICC.

The analysis of both the reflections and the interviews employed two cycles of coding to extract themes to describe the subtle yet important patterns in the data. A theme, as defined by Saldaña (2016) "can be an *outcome* of coding, categorization, or analytic reflection, but it is not something that is in itself, coded" (p. 15). This first cycle of coding aimed to identify the activities and interactions discussed by participants, instances in which they experienced a transformative learning phase, and occurrences in which participants' experiences contributed to a development of an ICC (sub)domain. For

these purposes, the first cycle of coding used descriptive coding, consisting primarily of a priori codes established from previous literature and the structure of the study. See Table 4 for a list of the a priori codes for which the researcher examined the data.[31]

Table 4

List of A Priori Codes

A Priori Parent Codes	A Priori Child Codes
Influential Activities	*Cortometraje*, comprehension assignment, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting session, reflection
Influential Interactions	Course instructor, LinguaMeeting coach, classmates in class, fellow participants in LinguaMeeting session
Phases of Transformative Learning (King, 2009)	(1) Disorienting dilemma (2) Self-examination (3a) Critical assessment of assumptions (discord with previous beliefs or ideas) (3b) Critical assessment of assumptions (maintenance of previous beliefs or ideas) (4) Recognition that one's discontentment and the process of transformation are shared (5) Exploration of options for new roles relationships, and actions, (6) Planning a course of action (7) Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans (8) Provisional trying of new roles (9) Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships (10) A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective
ICC: Cognitive	Cultural products, cultural practices, cultural perspectives, cross-cultural comparisons
ICC: Affective	Interaction engagement, respect, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, interaction attentiveness

[31] The parent codes listed in Table 2 are names given to categorize the various groups of child codes. When analyzing the data with descriptive coding, the researcher looked for instances of the child codes. More child codes were added through the data analysis process, evolving to reflect the data.

ICC: Behavioral	Behavioral flexibility, interaction relaxation, interactant respect, message skills, identity maintenance, interaction management

In naming the activities, interactions, phases, or ICC (sub)domains, the use of descriptive coding allowed for a basic understanding of the experiences of the participants. As stated by Saldaña (2016), "Description is the foundation for qualitative inquiry, and its primary goal is to assist the reader to see what you saw and to hear what you hear in general (Wolcott, 1994, p. 55, 412)" (p. 102). By identifying the experience(s) of transformative learning phases—and the activities and interactions that triggered these experiences—as well as the development of the ICC (sub)domains, a clearer understanding of participants' experiences in their completion of the transformative learning tasks was gained.

The second cycle of coding aimed to better understand how and why: (1) certain activities or interactions were more (or less) beneficial for participants, (2) participants' experiences of transformative learning phases unfolded, and (3) participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks facilitated (or not) ICC development. For this purpose, the second cycle of coding employed eclectic coding in which both In Vivo and concept codes were used. In Vivo coding was used to honor the participants' voices and capture participants' experiences and perspectives as they engaged with the transformative learning tasks. According to Saldaña (2016), In Vivo is a meaning-driven method that aims to "prioritize the participant's voice" (p. 106). Therefore, this method of coding was appropriate given the aim to discover and capture, from the participants' perspective, the underlying reasoning behind the salient beneficial activities and

interactions, experienced transformative learning phases, and ICC development. Concept coding allowed for a focus on salient ideas, including those participants held about the activities, their interactions, their experiences of transformative learning, and their experiences of ICC development. Together, the use of In Vivo and concept coding emphasized participants' perspectives about their experiences. As a result, these coding approaches provided a deeper understanding of participants' experiences in completing the transformative learning tasks as well as how and why various aspects might have been more beneficial for fostering transformative learning and ICC development.

Within Dedoose, participants' demographic descriptors were added and linked correspondingly to each of their documents (i.e., reflections and interview transcripts) to investigate possible relationships between demographic data, experience of transformative learning, and ICC development. The assessed descriptors, gathered from the background questionnaire, were those included in the quantitative analysis—course section, instructor, gender, race, academic status, and reason(s) for taking Spanish. Using the Dedoose analysis feature, a quantification of the code co-occurrences and the code-descriptor co-occurrences were calculated to depict data trends and facilitate the researcher's interpretation of the data.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive description of each component of the methodology employed for this dissertation. The first section described about the study design: a mixed methods approach with an explanatory sequential design. The second section provided information about the research setting and participants. The third section described the instruments used in the present dissertation, including the designed

instructional materials and the data collection instruments. The fourth section presented the procedures taken to develop and implement the transformative learning tasks as well as the procedures for data collection. The fifth section provided information about the data coding process. Finally, the sixth section detailed the processes of data analysis, describing both the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The following chapter provides the results of the methodological processes described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

For the present dissertation, two research questions were posed. The first research question (RQ1) aims to investigate participants' transformative learning experiences and the sources that prompted and further facilitated these experiences. RQ1 is divided into three sub-questions: (1a) How do the different activities, including service provider virtual exchanges (SPVEs), in the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?; (1b) How do the different interactions prompted by the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?; and (1c) To what extent do fifth-semester Spanish language learners who participate in the transformative learning tasks experience the phases of transformative learning, as outlined in the Learning Activities Survey (LAS) (King, 2009)? The second research question (RQ2) aims to investigate participants' changes in intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and the factors that might have influenced a change in ICC, particularly focusing on the impact of participation in the transformative learning tasks. Like RQ1, RQ2 is divided into three sub-questions: (2a) Does participants' ICC change after completing transformative learning tasks?; (2b) How did participants demonstrate their ICC, and if changes in ICC occurred, what were the nature of these changes and the factors influencing them?; and (2c) Which factors predict a change in ICC when participating in transformative learning tasks?

To answer these questions, a mixed-methods approach was employed. Data collected from a variety of instruments was analyzed, including the ICC surveys (a pre- and post-test), reflections (written after completing the assignments for a task), LASs

(taken after completing each task), background questionnaire, and interviews. This chapter presents the findings of the mixed methods analysis in response to the research questions.

Research Question 1a: Influence of Activities on Transformative Learning Experiences

Data Sources for Research Question 1a

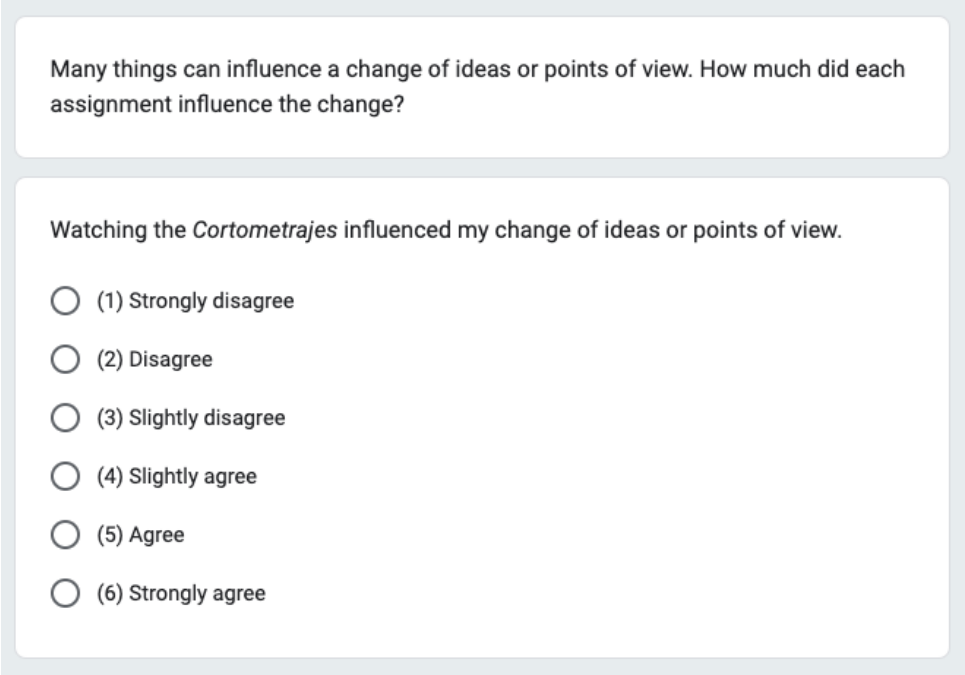
To answer RQ1a, which aims to pinpoint which activities within the tasks were most influential for transformative learning, three data sources were analyzed: participants' reflections, participants' answers to LAS Question 4, and interviews. As a reminder, at the end of each task, students wrote a reflection, guided by prompting questions about their experience, and completed the LAS, a 5-item questionnaire designed by King (2009) to assess perceived experience of perspective change and transformative learning. At the end of the semester, participants who volunteered were interviewed about their experience in participating in the LinguaMeeting videoconferencing sessions and completing the corresponding activities.

LAS Question 1 recorded participants' names while LAS Questions 2 and 3 addressed their experiences with transformative learning phases. To answer RQ1a, LAS Question 4 is examined, which focused on how various activities influenced participants' change in perspective. LAS Question 4 read: "Many things can influence a change of ideas or points of view. How much did each assignment influence the change?" Students rated each task activity's (i.e., *cortometraje*, comprehension assignment, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting session, reflections) influence on their change in perspective by disagreeing or agreeing to a 6-point Likert scale item for each activity (see Figure 4

for an example). To assess how much participants perceived each activity influenced their change in points of view or ideas, their responses to LAS Question 4 were examined in terms of central tendency and dispersion for each task as well as for the tasks overall.

Figure 4

Example of LAS Question 4



Note. Figure 4: Example of LAS Question 4

In addition to participants' LAS Question 4 responses, participants' reflections and interviews were also analyzed to foster a deeper understanding of the participants' perception of the beneficial activities for transformative learning. The reflections and interviews both included questions pertaining to the learners' experience(s) regarding their participation in the different task activities. As noted in Chapter 3, the reflections were composed of seven free-response questions and students were asked to answer at least one question pertaining to ICC and one question pertaining to transformative

learning. The interviews were semi-structured, audio-recorded and conducted on-site with eight individual students. The interviews contained 12 questions and were based on King's (2009) LAS Interview Questions.

Participants' reflections and interviews were coded in two cycles: descriptive and then eclectic. First, they were coded for activities mentioned by participants in relation to transformative learning experiences as defined by the 10 phases of transformative learning theory outlined by King (2009). In the second round of coding, any reasoning participants offered, whether implicitly or explicitly, regarding the significance of certain activities in prompting transformative learning experiences was coded. As the list of codes evolved, earlier decisions were frequently revisited, reflecting the dynamic nature of the coding process.

Prior to reporting the results, it is important to note that the completion rate of the LASs varied, potentially because, although the LAS was part of each task sequence, students were not awarded points for completing it. While a total of 39 students provided consent and completed all five videoconferencing tasks, only 32 of them completed at least three LASs. Consequently, seven participants were removed from the analysis of the LAS data to maintain consistency when assessing the patterns across tasks. It is also important to note that if participants answered "no" to LAS Question 2 ("Since you participated in the LinguaMeeting sessions and related activities, do you think any of your ideas or points of view have changed?") the LAS ended, and they were not presented with the remaining questions. Table 5 details the number of participants that answered LAS Question 4 for each task.

Table 5

Number of Participants Who Answered LAS Question 4

LAS (Task#)	#Participants (out of 32 total)	#Participants who answered Question 4
LAS 1 (Task 1: Social class and inequalities)	25	18
LAS 2 (Task 2: Social roles and societal expectations)	27	22
LAS 3 (Task 3: Openness to immigration)	30	24
LAS 4 (Task 4: Trust in the government)	28	20
LAS 5 (Task 5: Relationships and marriage)	27	22

Results: Activities that facilitated a change in perspective

Overall Ratings for Activities. As can be seen in Figure 5 and Table 6, overall, participants perceived the LinguaMeeting sessions to contribute most to their change in perspective. Additionally, participants' ratings of the LinguaMeeting sessions had the smallest standard deviation overall, indicating the average rating for the LinguaMeeting sessions within each task was very consistent (between "slightly agree" and "agree").[32] Following the LinguaMeeting sessions, the participants found the preparation questions to be the most influential. The activity perceived to be the third most—and third least—influential was the reflections. The comprehension assignments were seen to be the second least influential. Finally, participants considered the *cortometrajes* to be the least influential in facilitating a change in perspective. The agreement levels with the statement

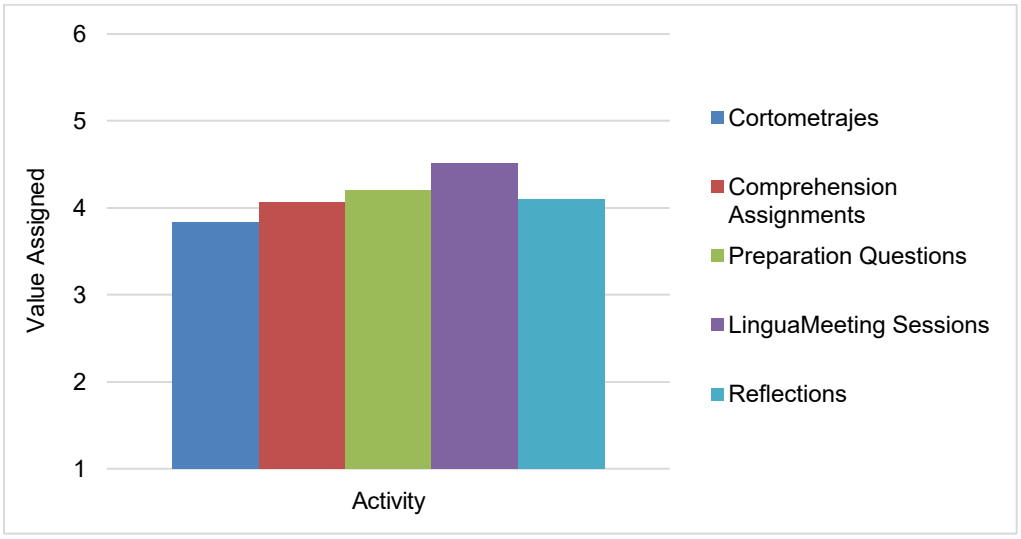
[32] It should be noted, however, that as the mean gets closer to one of the ends of the scale, the standard deviation tends to decrease.

that the *cortometrajes'* contributed to their perspective change fell between "slightly disagree" (value of 3) and "slightly agree" (value of 4).

Overall, the participants, minimally "slightly agreed" (value of 4) that all the activities besides the *cortometrajes* contributed to a change in idea or point of view. When assessing the effectiveness of each activity overall, it should be noted that the participants' evaluations of each activity did not present large differences: the range of average ratings for the activities was 0.68. While it can be seen, overall, the LinguaMeeting sessions were perceived to be the most influential and the *cortometrajes* were perceived to be the least influential, further investigation of the ratings assigned within individual tasks as well as students' reflections and interview commentary provided more insight.

Figure 5

Likert Scale Values for Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 Overall



Note. Figure 5: Likert Scale (1=Strongly Disagree; 6=Strongly Agree) Values ($\bar{x}$) from Participants' Responses to "[Activity] influenced my change of ideas or points of view."

Table 6

Likert Scale Values ($\bar{x}$) from Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 Overall

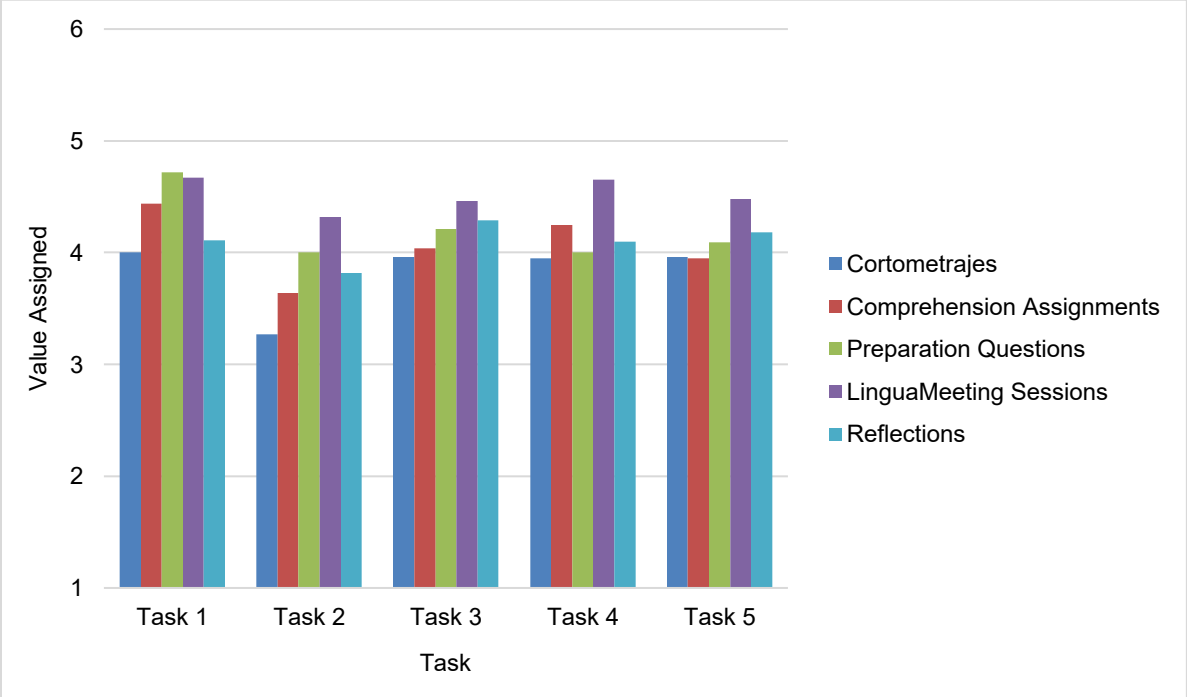
Activity	*Cortometrajes*	Comprehension Assignments	Preparation Questions	LinguaMeeting Sessions	Reflections
Overall Rating (SD)	3.83 (0.31)	4.06 (0.31)	4.2 (0.3)	4.51 (0.15)	4.1 (0.18)

Activity Ratings for Each Task. Consistent with the overall ratings reported above, the LinguaMeeting sessions were consistently perceived to be the most influential in all tasks apart from Task 1 ("Social class and inequalities"), for which students rated the preparation questions as more influential on their perspective change than the LinguaMeeting session (see Figure 6 and Table 7). Interestingly, apart from the reflections, the activities in Task 1—the *cortometraje*, comprehension assignment, preparation questions, and LinguaMeeting session—received higher ratings than their norm. For Task 2 ("Social roles and societal expectations") all the activities—the *cortometrajes*, comprehension assignment, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting session, and reflections— received their lowest (or tied for lowest) ratings from participants. The activities in Task 3 ("Openness to immigration") and Task 4 ("Trust in the government") were given higher ratings, indicating participants perceived these activities to be more effective in prompting a change in perspective or point of view. In Task 3 ("Openness to immigration"), participants assigned the preparation questions its second highest score and the reflection its highest score. The average ratings given for each activity in Task 4 ("Trust in the government") revealed similar participant perceptions to Task 3 regarding each activity's influence on their change in perspective. However, notably, when comparing the values across tasks, the *cortometraje* in Task 4

received its second lowest value, and the preparation questions received its lowest rating. In contrast, the comprehension assignment and LinguaMeeting session in Task 4 were given their second highest evaluations. Participants' reflections and interviews provided some insight into the dichotomous perception of the Task 4 activities. Finally, when asked to rate the perceived influence of each activity in Task 5 ("Relationships and marriage"), participants' responses closely reflected the overall average ratings.

Figure 6

Likert Scale Values for Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 for Each Task



Note. Figure 6: Likert Scale (1=Strongly Disagree; 6=Strongly Agree) Values for Participants' Perception of Activities' Influence on Perspective Change within Each Task.

Table 7

Likert Scale Values ($\bar{x}$ and SD) from Participants' Responses to LAS Question 4 for Each Task

Task	*Cortometrajes*	Comprehension Assignments	Preparation Questions	LinguaMeeting Session	Reflections
Task 1 (SD)	4 (0.97)	4.44 (0.98)	4.72 (1.02)	4.67 (0.97)	4.11 (0.76
Task 2 (SD)	3.27 (1.08)	3.64 (1.09)	4 (1.02)	4.32 (0.99)	3.82 (1.18
Task 3 (SD)	3.96 (0.95)	4.04 (1.04)	4.21 (0.93)	4.46 (0.67)	4.29 (0.91)
Task 4 (SD)	3.95 (0.76)	4.25 (0.72)	4 (1.03)	4.65 (0.81)	4.1 (0.85)
Task 5 (SD)	3.96 (0.93)	3.95 (0.86)	4.09 (0.75)	4.48 (1.03	4.18 (1.01)

Findings on Influential Activities from Coding. Before presenting the qualitative results, it is important to note that this dissertation reports the number of participants whose written or spoken excerpts were coded for the themes discussed. While there were 39 participants, not all responded to the same prompting questions during their reflections, nor did they consistently specify which questions they were addressing. As a result, the reflection data represents what participants chose to express at least once. Similarly, the interviews did not always adhere to the exact same questions or topics. Consequently, while the quantification of the participants whose ideas were coded for the themes highlights the robustness of the coding, it is not exacting.

Lastly, to support certain explanations and exemplifications, the present dissertation employed discourse analysis techniques based on Halliday's (1994) conceptualization of transitivity, or process type, in systemic functional linguistics, which holds grammar as representation of meaning.

The analysis of participants' reflections and interviews revealed new findings and offered insight as to why certain activities were perceived as more influential. In what follows, the themes that emerged from the descriptive and eclectic data analysis are presented.

1) The perceived value and effectiveness of the *cortometrajes* varied; in some cases, the *cortometrajes* prompted participants to examine and reflect on their perspectives.
2) The comprehension assignments provided clarity but did not necessarily prompt transformative learning.
3) The preparation questions, either on their own or in conjunction with the other activities, provided the participants with an opportunity to reflect.
4) The LinguaMeeting sessions encouraged transformative learning experiences by providing opportunities to engage with others' ideas.
5) The reflections were repetitive, but they were somewhat useful for recognizing any change in perspective.
6) All the task activities (*cortometrajes*, comprehension assignments, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting sessions, and reflections) worked in synergy to facilitate transformative learning experiences.

These themes and their subthemes are discussed below with representative quotes pulled from participants' reflections and interviews.

1) The perceived value and effectiveness of the *cortometrajes* varied; in some cases, the *cortometrajes* prompted participants to examine and reflect on their perspectives.

The quantitative data found the *cortometrajes* were perceived to be the least influential overall in causing a change in perspective. The two cycles of coding of the reflections and interviews found that although the *cortometrajes* might have facilitated transformative learning in certain instances, the subsequent activities were sometimes required to prompt greater understanding and reflective thinking. The *cortometrajes* were short authentic films from the textbook content for the Spanish Conversation and Composition course. Each chapter included a *cortometraje* related to the chapter's theme. The *cortometrajes* were incorporated into the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks to serve as authentic L2 materials that might prompt a transformative learning experience.

When participants wrote about the *cortometrajes* in their reflections or spoke about the *cortometrajes* in their interviews, their responses greatly varied regarding their affinity toward the *cortometrajes* and the perceived usefulness of the *cortometrajes* for influencing a change in perspective. For eight participants (out of 39), the *cortometrajes* alone fostered transformative learning experiences (Excerpts 2 and 3).

Excerpt 2

I know with the *Por Siempre Jamón,* watching that really made me reflect on how I value relationships, and so that shaped my value a lot (Jonathan, interview).

Excerpt 3

Al final, Jose pudo ayudar al inmigrante y arreglar su cámera. Sin embargo, Me di cuenta de que Jose tenía ideas preconcebidas sobre inmigrantes antes de su reunirse con el inmigrante. Esta parte del video tuvo un impacto de mis ideas

sobre los inmigrantes. Pienso que es triste que las personas estan tratadas injustamente porque ellos son de países diferentes.

"At the end, José could help the immigrant and fix his camera. However, I realized that José had preconceived ideas about immigrants before his meeting with the immigrant. This part of the video impacted my ideas about immigrants. I think that it's sad that people are treated unjustly because they are from different countries" (19, Task 3 Reflection).[33]

Both Jonathan (Excerpt 2) and participant 19 (Excerpt 3), found watching the *cortometraje* encouraged reflection on their ideas (e.g., "made me reflect on how I value," Jonathan) (phase 2 of transformative learning theory) and even a critical assessment of their assumptions, re-shaping their assumptions (e.g., "impacted my ideas about immigrants," participant 19) (phase 3 of transformative learning theory). While in some instances, watching the *cortometraje* influenced the participants' ideas, other times the *cortometraje* laid the foundation for the subsequent activities, which would further prompt self-reflection and self-examination (Excerpt 4) (nine out of 39 participants).

Excerpt 4

Pienso que la actividad Namnala, el corto, me ha ayudado a entender y valorar los problemas que los inmigrantes encuentran. De verdad, yo sabía que siempre existieron estos problemas y los ideas y opiniones de mis compañeros sirvió para solidificar más mi opinión.

[33] Participants' writings in Spanish were not altered for grammatical correctness or otherwise. The interpretations, provided by the researcher, strive for a direct rendition that preserves the essence of the original Spanish statements.

> "I think that the *Namnala* cortometraje has helped me to understand and value the problems that immigrants face. Honestly, I knew that these problems existed, and my classmates' ideas and opinions served to solidify my opinion" (Isabella, Task 3 Reflection).

After watching *Namnala*, the *cortometraje* Task 3, ("Openness to immigration") Isabella felt she had a deeper understanding and awareness of the challenges those who immigrate face. Then, engaging in the conversation with fellow LinguaMeeting participants enabled to hear others' ideas and opinions. Together, these activities served to prompt (self-)reflection on and (self-)examination of her ideas and assumptions regarding immigration and the challenges people who immigrate face. The gained understanding and shared opinions resulted in the maintenance of her opinion, resembling phase 3b of transformative learning theory: preservation of beliefs after critical assessment of one's perspective.

As seen in Excerpts 2, 3 and 4, the most praised *cortometrajes* were that of Task 5 ("Relationships and marriage")—*Por Siempre Jamón*—and Task 3 ("Openness to immigration")—*Namnala*. When participants mentioned these *cortometrajes* in their reflections or interviews, they were often complimented for their engaging content and ability to prompt perspective-ridden conversations and reflections. The investigation of the remaining less commonly discussed *cortometrajes* revealed mixed reviews from students on their affability and effectiveness for prompting perspective change. Participants' perceptions of the remaining *cortometrajes*—those for Tasks 1, 2, and 4—were primarily explored in the interviews, given that participants did not frequently write about these *cortometrajes* in their reflections as something that influenced a

transformative learning experience. Only Amanda perceived the *cortometraje* for Task 1, *Viaje a Marte*, to be a good starting point for the conversation on social class and inequalities, and its artistic style (Claymation) was somewhat polarizing: either enjoyed (Ethan, Nevada) or strongly disliked (Haoyu, Ivy). The *cortometraje* for Task 2 ("Social roles and societal expectations"), *Diez minutos*, was cited by Isabella to be her favorite *cortometraje* because she found it humorous and "really helpful" for prompting conversation. Amanda, however, stated she did not find this *cortometraje* likable because of its content (which she found to be strange) and Ivy found this *cortometraje* to be applicable to real-life yet unengaging. Finally, the *cortometraje* for Task 4 ("Trust in the government"), *Forastero,* was viewed as impactful but difficult to understand: both for its storyline and its language (Ethan, Ivy, and Isabella) (Excerpts 5 and 6).

Excerpt 5

That one [*Forestero*] was the most difficult for me to understand-like I always tried to understand it as best as I could, but it was hard to follow for me (Isabella, interview).

Excerpt 6

Forestero was a little, maybe, odd, and I don't like-again, it's probably partially the language barrier, maybe, but I didn't fully get what was going on until like the class or until class after like-during the class. I don't think I fully understood what was going on until then (Ethan, interview).

Forestero required further unpacking for participants to understand it.[34] Beyond their content, two interview participants (Jonathan and David) shed light on why certain *cortometrajes* might not have been as influential: difficulty in connecting the *cortometrajes* with the task topic (Excerpt 7) and the necessity of subsequent activities to elicit meaning (Excerpt 8).

Excerpt 7

> In general, I think they [the *cortometrajes*] were hit or miss. What I mean by that is that some I noticed were better at introducing topics than others. I know that, especially at the beginning, I was kind of shocked how they connected themes with the *cortometrajes*. What you remember off the bat, I think—I forget what our first conversation was on—but it was like with the *Viaje a* Mars, and how like–I was like I feel like that doesn't have almost anything to do with it. I felt like, in general, the different like *cortometrajes* that they used could have corresponded more with the actual like questions–*tareas* [activities], but there were some like I remember that were like perfect for the topic (Jonathan, interview).

David expressed he thought the *cortometrajes* were all "conversation provoking," although oftentimes this was only after engaging with the subsequent activities, which elicited meaning from the *cortometrajes* (Excerpt 8).

Excerpt 8

[34] It is possible that some of the *cortometrajes* may have been poorly selected for participants' language proficiency level. However, to integrate into the exisiting Spanish Conversation and Composition course sequencing and content, the *cortometrajes* provided by the textbook were maintained.

I think I think they're [the *cortometrajes*] all like conversation provoking to be honest, or even if I didn't think they were when I initially watched them maybe like the activity [comprehension assignment] would kind of bring it out of it like "oh like this-that's what-that's what it's talking about" you know? and I had no idea—like no idea—where some of them were going, and I see like oh, like, we're talking about this topic (David, interview).

Throughout the reflections and interviews, it became clear the subsequent activities played an important role in furthering transformative learning experiences (Excerpts 4 and 9).

Excerpt 9

Pienso que el video me ayudó a formar mi propia opinión porque cuando vi el cortometraje, empecé a pensar en los temas de la corrupción, la violencia, y la confianza en el gobierno. Las actividades sobre el video me ayudó a desarrollar mi opinión y comparar el video a mi vida.

"I think that the video helped me to form my opinion because when I saw the video, I started to think about the topics of corruption, violence, and trust in the government. The activities about the video helped me to develop my opinion and to compare the video to my life" (13, Task 4 Reflection).

In sum, the perception regarding the influence of the *cortometrajes* on a change of perspective and the affinity toward *cortometrajes* themselves greatly varied, which aligns with the fluctuating quantitative evaluation regarding the influence of the *cortometraje* in each task. Several of the *cortometrajes* were perceived by students to be less impactful for a variety of reasons, such as language difficulties and unengaging or unrelatable

content. As a standalone activity, certain *cortometrajes* (*Por Siempre Jamón* (Task 5) and *Nanmala* (Task 3) had the potential to impact learners' experiences of transformative learning (through self-reflection and self-examination of one's perspectives). Either when coupled with subsequent activities like the comprehension assignment or LinguaMeeting session or as a standalone activity, the *cortometrajes* were able to facilitate transformative learning experiences for several participants.

2) The comprehension assignments served to provide clarity but did not necessarily prompt transformative learning.

In line with the quantitative data, which found participants perceived the comprehension assignments to be the second least influential activity overall, the coding of participants' reflections and interviews revealed that the participants did not perceive the comprehension assignments to be influential in producing a change in perspective. Rather, participants viewed the comprehension assignments as helpful for clarifying the topic of the task (and/or video itself) as well as for noticing any gaps in understanding (language and/or content). It is worth noting, that since participants did not explicitly mention the comprehension assignments in their reflections, the analysis reported here comes in its entirety from the interviews, where participants were explicitly asked about the perceived role of the comprehension assignments in relation to perspective change. This, then, limits the generalizability of the responses, given that only eight participants voiced their perspective on the comprehension assignments. However, a notable pattern emerged: the participants perceived the primary value of the comprehension assignments to be their usefulness for constructing an understanding of the *cortometrajes* and the task topic (Excerpts 10 and 11).

Excerpt 10

> OK, I thought those are pretty helpful because I mean like sometimes, I didn't fully understand the videos. I'd be reading the questions be like “oh shoot! I should re-watch it or re-watch this portion” because I didn't like understand it, but I think it helped me like understand it better because I’d be like: “Oh! That's what they meant, like this is what this like question saying”, and I'd be like “Oh wait, I didn't even realize they talked about that! I have to go back”, you know? (Ivy, interview).

Excerpt 11

> I don't know if they helped get the message-I don't know if they get their message I mean definitely like basic comprehension, yes: understanding like the order of events, but not necessarily like pulling value out (Amanda, interview).

While the comprehension assignments were primarily viewed as an activity to check understanding of the *cortometraje* content and/or language, interestingly, one participant —Ethan— viewed them as a springboard for starting to reflect on his perspectives (Excerpt 12).

Excerpt 12

> I think, well, I think honestly starting with like just like watching or doing like the first like *tarea uno* [comprehension assignments], it kind of made me think a lot more about a lot of things like maybe stuff that I hadn't really thought about in the past (Ethan, interview).

While this result is noteworthy, indicating Ethan engaged in reflection on his ideas (“think a lot more about things”) (phase 2), Ethan was the only interview participant who

reported experiencing transformative learning in relation to the comprehension assignments.

In sum, the students did not perceive the comprehension assignments as influential in prompting transformative learning experiences. Rather, the comprehension assignments were viewed as helpful noticing any gaps in understanding (language and/or content).

3) The preparation questions, either on their own or in conjunction with the other activities, provided the participants with an opportunity to engage in self-reflection.

The quantitative analysis of participants' LAS responses revealed the preparation questions were the second most influential activity overall, and in Task 1 they were perceived to be the most influential in changing a point of view. As a reminder, the preparation questions (Appendix C) were provided to students, but they were not required to submit them for grading, thereby allowing students flexibility in how much preparation they engaged in prior to the LinguaMeeting sessions. The interviews allowed for investigation into the extent to which participants engaged with the preparation questions, and it was found the interview participants reported varying degrees of preparation for the LinguaMeeting sessions, ranging from not looking at the questions until right before or during the LinguaMeeting session, to writing out complete, research-backed answers prior to the LinguaMeeting session. From the interviews, it became evident that the amount of preparation varied not only by student, but also by task (Excerpts 13 and 14).

Excerpt 13

> Normally I would actually, so I always would open up like a Word Doc, type the first one on there, and then I'd have the second one, and I noticed I'd–so in the beginning, I always kind of responded to them because I thought we had to turn them in. And then, later on, I would always look at them before, but I wouldn't necessarily like type out responses completely, but I'm always being familiar with different avenues of the conversation (Jonathan, interview).

Excerpt 14

> Um, I usually yeah-well, every time I looked at it [the set of preparation questions] beforehand. I tried to write it down beforehand: I kind of put it on my To Do List of like this is something I wanna get done, like writing it out. I think that kind of fell off for the last couple, but like I think three of the preparation questions sets I did end up writing down (Ethan, interview).

Ethan continued, explaining having the answers written out made for a better experience while he was becoming familiar with the LinguaMeeting sessions and improving his speaking skills (Excerpt 15).

Excerpt 15

> I think in the beginning it was better to have them written down than at getting more comfortable with the LinguaMeetings, the formatting, and overall, I guess getting a little bit better with like speaking. Um I don't think it was as necessary to write it down and just more looking over the questions and just maybe just thinking about it a little bit before the meetings (Ethan, interview).

Participants reported varying degrees of preparation, which might have been tied to, as Ethan suggested, comfortability in the LinguaMeeting sessions and confidence in one's speaking abilities.

For RQ1a, the focus of the analysis centers on the participants' perception of the preparation questions for their influence in any experience of transformational learning. In the coding process, it was found only one participant explicitly tied the preparation questions to transformative learning in the reflections. However, when asked about the preparation questions in the interviews, three of the eight participants (Ivy, Jonathan, and Ethan) stated they found the preparation questions to be helpful for initiating self-reflection. To this end, a theme emerged in the process of coding: the preparation questions provided the participants with an opportunity to engage in self-reflection.[35]

The preparation questions, either on their own (Excerpt 15) or in conjunction with the other activities (Excerpt 16), provided a few participants (4/39) with an opportunity to reflect on their own perspectives regarding the topic.

Excerpt 15

> Answering those [preparation] questions was really the first kind of jump in recognizing any kind of contrast that you have or any like room for development and whatever perspectives that you have, and so thinking like those–that

[35] It is important to note that many participants described the impact of "the activities" as a whole, with 10 participants relating "the activities" to prompted reflection. It is difficult to ascertain if participants intended to include the preparation questions as part of "the activities" that prompted reflection on their own ideas. Therefore, the present theme focuses only on cases in which the preparation questions alone were explicitly associated with reflection, and a discussion of the influence "the activities" on transformative learning experiences follows later.

assignment was kind of like your self-reflection on the topic (Jonathan, interview).

Excerpt 16

The activities about the video, however, were more helpful [than the *cortometraje*]. The prep questions for Linguameeting were exactly what we talked about, so being able to answer those questions beforehand made it easier and less intimidating to participate in the conversation. The work beforehand and the conversation were the most effective in helping me form my own opinion (10, Task 1 Reflection).

Notably, when asked in his interview what the most beneficial component of the tasks were for gaining a new perspective, Haoyu stated the preparation questions for their requisite reflection on, and investigation of, one's own perspective (Excerpt 17).

Excerpt 17

I'll say the reflection [prompted by the preparation questions]. Like when you're doing your reflection you're gonna have to do your own research, and then like you have to like come up with a response to that and then like during the process…Like you kind of have to do research, and then like by doing research, like it kind of like adds on to your perspective where it can even like, you know, have an impact on your experience; on your perspective" (Haoyu, interview).[36]

Similarly, when asked if there was a specific assignment that Ethan felt influenced a change in perspective, he replied saying that the preparation questions were

[36] Although Haoyu referred to "the reflection," he was speaking about the preparation questions, as verified by the researcher: Researcher: "Would that [reflection] be before LinguaMeeting or after?"; Haoyu: "Before," indicating he was referring to the preparation questions (interview).

impactful, although they alone did not account for a change in perspective, rather they served to reveal his own ideas on the topic, which were revisited and examined in the LinguaMeeting sessions (Excerpt 18).

Excerpt 18

> I think it [preparation questions] was a good reflection of what to like expect from the meetings and so it gave me a good chance to really think about my ideas beforehand… so yeah writing down my own ideas I think was good for seeing what I already thought, and then in the LinguaMeetings again hearing perspectives yeah so I think it [preparation questions] did; it did help with it [change in perspective] (Ethan, interview).

Ethan related the preparation questions to a preview of the content that would be covered in the LinguaMeeting session, an opportunity to contemplate his ideas ("really think about my ideas beforehand"), and a source of revelation of his ideas ("seeing what I already thought").

Interestingly, both Ethan and Haoyu explicitly used the word "reflection" when describing the preparation questions, yet the meaning behind "reflection" differed for the two participants. To inspect this important finding, Haoyu and Ethan's responses were examined with an application of Halliday's (1994) process type. Haoyu's use of "reflection" indicated participation in a process that incited the actions of "do[ing] your own research" and "come[ing] up with a response," reflecting Halliday's behavioral process verbs rather than mental process verbs, given their emphasis on doing rather than thinking/feeling. Ethan, in turn, initially uses the word "reflection" as a noun, synonymous with preview. However, he then describes the prompted "thinkin[ing] about

my ideas beforehand," indicating a mental process verb, "writing down my own ideas," a material process verb —indicating a tangible action—, "seeing what I thought," and a mental process verb.

In sum, the preparation question-prompted reflection enabled the mental processes and behavioral—or material processes—(action-oriented) in the investigation into their ideas. The preparation questions not only equipped participants with language and content knowledge but also provided an opportunity to participate in the mental and action-oriented processes of reflection. These findings are in line with the LAS results, which indicated the preparation questions were one of the more influential activities in fostering transformative learning experiences. However, the quantification of the participants suggests their influence may have been less pronounced.

4) The LinguaMeeting sessions encouraged transformative learning experiences by providing opportunities to engage with others' ideas.

As observed in the participants' LAS responses, in which the LinguaMeeting sessions were perceived to be the most influential activity overall, the analysis of the reflections and interviews revealed LinguaMeeting sessions were impactful for prompting transformative learning experiences. Specifically, the LinguaMeeting sessions encouraged reflection on one's own perspectives and examination of one's perspectives after gaining awareness of others' perspectives. Moreover, in some cases, participation in the LinguaMeeting sessions facilitated the modification, or creation, of a perspective. The two coding cycles revealed two prominent sub-themes pertaining to the effectiveness of the LinguaMeeting sessions: (i) the participants in the LinguaMeeting sessions often held similar beliefs, but (ii) when there were differing perspectives, the LinguaMeeting

sessions frequently fostered awareness of one's own and others' perspectives and, in some cases, prompted a change in perspective.

(i) The participants in the LinguaMeeting sessions often held similar beliefs.

Participants' similar beliefs merit attention because, according to Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory, previously unquestioned perspectives must be illuminated and challenged (a disorienting dilemma). The disorienting dilemma is a crucial component of transformative learning, and despite the intention of the tasks to foster the sharing of differing perspectives, many participants (22/39) reported the absence of such diverse perspectives (Excerpts 19, 20, and 21).

Excerpt 19

No hubo mucha diferencia entre mis opiniones y las de las otras personas en la sesión. A veces, el contexto de la situación [ciudad/región/país] es muy importante y cambiaría las opiniones de las personas, pero en esta situación el contexto es muy, por lo tanto, nuestras opiniones son las mismas

"There wasn't much of a difference between my opinions and the opinions of the other people in the session. Sometimes, the context of the situation [city/region/country] is very important, and it could change peoples' opinions, but in this case the context is very similar, so our opinions are the same" (36, Task 1 Reflection).[37]

Excerpt 20

[37] By "context" the participant was likely directly addressing the prompting question, which asked "During the conversation, you had the opportunity to listen to your conversation partners' perspectives. Were their ideas or opinions different from yours? Do you think that the context (city/region/country) is fundamental to understand this topic? Briefly describe your answer" (reflection prompt)

My conversation partners didn't really make me question my own beliefs, because we had similar beliefs to start with (Participant 28, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 21

Even while we are all from different backgrounds, many of our views were very similar (Participant 8, Task 3 Reflection).

These statements suggest certain groupings might not have included diversity of thought, or, potentially, differing views were not voiced within the LinguaMeeting sessions. Potential explanations for the similarity of perspectives offered by participants include similar age, the influence of social media, geographic roots, religion, and/or political orientations (Excerpts 22 and 23).

Excerpt 22

It was interesting to hear everyone's opinions but for the most part everyone had the same ideas. I think that this is becoming more common in my generation because we are very politically aware and actively activate our beliefs. My generation grew up in a recession, lived through a pandemic, and have seen many people's rights get taken away from them, so I think that has created a lot of unity within our generation. I also do believe that location does also have a factor in people's beliefs. I have noticed that people from bigger cities are more left leaning but when people are from smaller towns, they tend to lean more to the right. Also, religious beliefs tend to affect people's political standing. Overall, I think that it was interesting to see the similarities in my peers' and I's responses to each question even if we are from different areas of the United States (8, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 23

During each conversation, I did have the chance to listen to other peoples thoughts about social class, inequality, and social roles. Many of the things I believed my classmates had similar opinions on likely because of social media creating so much awareness surrounding all sorts of individuals as well as the proximity to where most of us were raised (Ethan, Task 2 Reflection).

The comments regarding similar perspectives were often difficult to decipher regarding who they were including—either limiting the similar perspectives to their classmates or including their LinguaMeeting coach in these statements. Participants' reflections and interviews provided evidence of both possibilities (Excerpt 24); however, they primarily seemed to be referring to their classmates (not the LinguaMeeting coach) (Excerpt 25).

Excerpt 24

Sí, tuve la oportunidad de escuchar las perspectivas de mis compañeros de conversación. Ellos, en su mayoría, tenían ideas y opiniones similares a las mías. Generalmente, estuvimos de acuerdo sobre el amor, el matrimonio, el amor verdadero, y el amor a primera vista. Creo que el contexto, como la ciudad, la región, y el país, es fundamental para entender este tema porque en culturas diferentes, las expectativas culturales sobre el matrimonio y otras cosas son diferentes.

"Yes, I had the opportunity to hear the perspectives of my conversation partners. For the most part, their ideas and opinions were similar to mine. Generally, we agreed about love, marriage, true love, and love at first sight. I think context, like

the city, region, and country, is critical to understanding this topic because in different cultures, cultural expectations about marriage, and other things are different" (13, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 25

Generalmente, mis compañeros presentaron ideas y perspectivas similares a mías. Nosotros hemos tenido experiencias similares. Antes de la sesión de LinguaMeeting, yo pensé sobre mis respuestas, pero mis compañeros dijieron puntos que estaba familiarizado para mi (yo no pude pensar de todo cuando estaba planeando mis respuestas).

"Generally, my [conversation] partners presented ideas and perspectives similar to mine. We've had similar experiences. Before the LinguaMeeting session, I thought about my answers, but my partners made points that were familiar to me (I couldn't think of everything when I was planning my answers)" (37, Task 4 Reflection).

As seen in Excerpt 25, participant 37 referenced having similar experiences, which would suggest he was referring to his fellow LinguaMeeting session participants (classmates).

(ii) The LinguaMeeting sessions frequently fostered awareness of one's own and others' perspectives and, in some cases, prompted a change in perspective.

Despite instances in which the LinguaMeeting sessions might have lacked diversity of thought, overall, the results suggested the LinguaMeeting sessions were highly impactful for fostering a transformative learning experience for students, either on their own or in conjunction with the other activities. Many (27/39) participants reflected

on a transformative learning experience tied directly to the LinguaMeeting session(s) (Excerpts 26 and 27).

Excerpt 26

Creo que las actividades de esta unidad me han ayudado a entender y valorar las perspectivas de otras personas sobre la clase social, las desigualdades sistémicas y las soluciones. Fue interesante aprender como personas de otros países piensan sobre el tema. Conocía parte de la información, pero no había pensado en mirarla desde la perspectiva de alguien que vive en un país diferente. La perspectiva de la entrenadora sobre la atención médica y la matrícula universitaria eran muy diferentes a la mía y me encontré de acuerdo con su forma de pensar sobre mi perspectiva anterior. Como estudiante con dinero limitado, me gusta la idea de la atención médica gratuita, ya que eliminaría mi miedo de tener que pagar una factura alta del hospital si me lesiona o enferma. Esta idea inicialmente parecía extraña debido a mi propia perspectiva cultural, pero cuanto más hablaba la entrenadora sobre su perspectiva, tenía más sentido.

"I think that the activities in this unit have helped me understand and appreciate other peoples' perspectives on social class, systemic inequalities, and solutions. It was interesting to learn how people from other countries think about the topic. I knew some of the information, but I hadn't thought to look at it from the perspective of someone who lives in a different country. The [LinguaMeeting] coach's perspective on healthcare and college enrollment were very different than mine, and I found myself agreeing with her thinking about my previous perspective. As a student with limited money, I like the idea of free healthcare

given that it would eliminate my fear of having to pay a high hospital bill if I get injured or sick. This idea initially seemed strange due to my own cultural perspective, but the more the coach talked about her perspective, the more it made sense" (20, Task 1 Reflection).

Excerpt 27

Fue interesante aprender sobre las maneras en cual otras personas ven amor y piensan sobre amor. No fue mucho sobre no estar de acuerdo con las creencias de otras personas pero más sobre aprender sobre otras maneras de ver un tema. Es fácil crear un mundo en el cual solamente ves algo de una manera, pero escuchando a otros provee la oportunidad de cambiar tu percepción. En la linguameeting alguien mencionó la confianza como un ingrediente importante a un relacion buena. Estoy de acuerdo con esta idea, y ahora es interesante ver cómo la adición de otros factores cambian mi percepción de un concepto.

"It was interesting to learn about the ways in which other people see love and think about love. It wasn't much about disagreeing with other people's beliefs but more about learning about other ways of looking at a topic. It is easy to create a world in which you only see something one way, but listening to others provides the opportunity to change your perception. In the LinguaMeeting someone mentioned trust as an important ingredient to a good relationship. I agree with this idea, and now it's interesting to see how adding other factors changes my perception of a concept" (35, Task 5 Reflection).

As both participants 20 and 35 remarked, they were exposed to (an)other idea(s) in the LinguaMeeting sessions. As a result, participant 20 reflected on and assessed her

own ideas, as indicated by the mental process verb "think" ("thinking about my previous perspectives") (phase 2) and descriptions of statuses for her perspectives that indicate movement away from a previous perspective, such as "previous" and "it made sense" (phase 3). While phase 2 (reflection on one's ideas) was not explicit in participant 35's reflection for task 5, phase 3 (assessment of one's ideas in consideration of others' ideas) was seen as she expanded her idea in response to a new idea. Participant 35 described a specific incident in which she modified her idea about the ingredients to a good relationship, expanding it to include trust after hearing this idea from a fellow LinguaMeeting participant. Phase 2 and phase 3 were the most commonly coded phases in relation to the LinguaMeeting sessions. In participants' reflections and interviews, 25 participants associated the LinguaMeeting sessions with phase 2 at least once and 24 participants associated the LinguaMeeting sessions with phase 3 at least once. Within phase 3, participants might have altered, or added to, their meaning schemata (phase 3a) (20/39 participants), or they might have maintained their previously held perspectives (phase 3b) (21/39 participants). Rather than adopting a new meaning perspective (phase 10 of transformative learning theory), in some cases, participants modified, or added to, their existing meaning schemata (phase 3a) as a result of the LinguaMeeting session. For instance, a LinguaMeeting coach's perspective on the importance of cultural values and how these cultural values can impact a cross-cultural relationship prompted a participant to alter his view on the topic (Excerpt 28).

Excerpt 28

La tutora cambió algunas de mis opiniones de la búsqueda del amor, especialmente de las diferencias de las culturas. Por ejemplo, de la tutora, las

libertades y las ideas de independencia y el valor individual son muy diferentes de las culturas muy distintas. Una persona que vive en una sociedad con mucha libertad e independencia tendría vistas diferentes de una persona que vive en una sociedad con ninguna libertad ni independencia.

"The LinguaMeeting coach changed some of my opinions about the search for love, especially the differences in cultures. For example, for the LinguaMeeting coach, the ideas of freedom and independence and the value of individual(ism) are very different in different cultures. A person who lives in a society with a lot of freedom and independence would have different views from a person who lives in a society with no freedom or independence" (36, Task 5 Reflection).

As a result of the discussion in the LinguaMeeting session, participant 36 modified some of his ideas about the importance of cultural values in relationships. A modification of perspective could have been more drastic, as well. For example, Amanda's reflection entry for Task 4 revealed a more pronounced change in her perspective on voting and government that occurred as a result of her exposure to her LinguaMeeting coach's perspective in the LinguaMeeting session (Excerpt 29).

Excerpt 29

In my LinguaMeeting session, my LinguaMeeting Coach spoke about her life in Lima, Peru. While she did not specifically cover police corruption or the power dynamics between a wealthy and low-income individuals, she discussed civic engagement and its benefits. My Coach mentioned how civic engagement can restore general trust in the government and in extension, the police. In Peru, every citizen is required to vote in two elections annually (if I understood correctly). If

they refuse to do so, they are forced to pay a hefty fine and explain their actions. I think involving the community in local proceedings encourages confidence in government actions. By being upfront, the community will have high engagement and citizens will have faith in the government. My Coach's perspective was eye-opening and really made me think. After the session, I now believe voting should be mandatory in the United States as well because it would create good faith in the country's democracy (Amanda, Task 4 Reflection).

Amanda altered her ideas about voting after engaging in the LinguaMeeting session. While there were three participants who did not link their meaning schemata change to the LinguaMeeting session, the coding process revealed a strong tie between the LinguaMeeting sessions and a change in perspective, either as a direct result of the LinguaMeeting session, or as a result of the LinguaMeeting session in conjunction with the other activities. As the examples demonstrate, the changes in perspective were often associated with a disorienting dilemma (illuminating and challenging one's previously unquestioned perspectives) initiated by the LinguaMeeting coach's perspective.

In sum, the present data analysis found that while LinguaMeeting sessions sometimes lacked diverse perspectives (limiting the potential for disorienting dilemmas), they often increased awareness of one's own and others' views and occasionally catalyzed the process of adopting new perspectives. These findings align with quantitative results showing that LinguaMeeting sessions were highly influential, particularly in prompting (self-)reflection and (self-)examination.

5) The reflections were repetitive, but they were somewhat useful for recognizing any change in perspective.

In the LASs, participants slightly agreed that the reflections were influential in a change of perspective. Further analysis of the impact of the reflections was constrained by the inability of students to concurrently articulate the impact of reflections while completing the reflections. Therefore, the qualitative analysis relied on the interviews for insights regarding the influence of the reflections on participants' experience of transformative learning. In total, there were four comments made by four participants in which they related the reflections to a transformative learning experience. The reflections were perceived to be repetitive, yet, useful for continuing the examination of others' perspectives (Isabella), recognizing any change of ideas (Ethan and Nevada) and/or furthering self-examination of perspectives (Amanda).

David, Haoyu, Jonathan, and Ivy did not find the reflections to be influential in a change of perspective (Excerpts 30, 31, 32, and 33).

Excerpt 30

It just felt like any other reflection. It wasn't really thought provoking to be honest (David, interview).

Excerpt 31

I feel like, huh, if I'm being honest like I feel like it's kind of repetitive (Haoyu, interview).

Excerpt 32

It kind of just felt like very repetitive (Ivy, interview).

Excerpt 33

From my perspective as a student, the *tarea* [activity] three and then the like post-survey [LAS] kind of just felt a little bit like more work on your plate, and it

didn't feel like it added to necessarily your perspectives as much (Jonathan, interview).

While half of the interview participants found the reflections to be monotonous, uninteresting, or a form of busy-work, others found the reflections to be beneficial. For instance, Ethan and Nevada saw the reflections as an opportunity to reflect on any ideas that might have changed or been challenged throughout the tasks (Excerpts 34 and 35).

Excerpt 34

Yeah, more maybe that's something that the reflection was good for too: was, yeah, making me think a little bit about like what had actually changed my mind (Ethan, interview).

Excerpt 35

Even like reading through them [reflection questions] I can see like, oh my ideals were this and this and this, and then looking at the reflection or the after-post questions I could see, oh wait, I did change a little bit; I still have maybe my concrete beliefs, but sections of it were changed, or little-little things, but I was like: OK, like maybe what I believe isn't really that stuck in my head–if that kind of makes sense (Nevada, interview).

Amanda echoed this sentiment and added she found the reflections to be influential in furthering self-examination of her perspectives (Excerpt 36).

Excerpt 36

We had to write two big paragraphs about what happened during the meeting, and I think I realized that some of my beliefs had changed, or, at least, I was

contemplating my own. I think the reflection helped; I think it was retrospectively thinking about it afterward that encouraged more thought (Amanda, interview).

Isabella, interestingly, did not see the reflections as an opportunity to reflect on her own ideas, rather, she would take the opportunity to further understand others' ideas (Excerpt 37).

Excerpt 37

> I would kind of think about everything that I heard and then kind of think about that like- make comparisons and like try and understand the perspectives of the people in my group (Isabella, interview).

Ethan, Nevada, and Amanda focused on the role of reflections in fostering self-reflection and/or self-examination, and Isabella focused on reflecting on others' perspectives. It is possible that Isabella positions herself as a multicultural person—drawing from her Italian American heritage and experiences living outside of the United States. This is reflected in much of her writing and interview commentary: she often distanced herself from her fellow classmates, referring to her classmates as the "American students" (interview), and described the requisite time and space to process others' perspectives: suggesting the American cultural ideas might have been prompting disorienting dilemmas for Isabella.

In sum, for half of the interview participants, the reflections were considered helpful for recognizing the challenging of or a change in perspective (Ethan, Nevada), furthering the self-examination process (Amanda), or continuing the examination of others' perspectives (Isabella).

6) All the task activities (*cortometrajes*, comprehension assignments, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting sessions, and reflections) worked in synergy to facilitate transformative learning experiences.

The present analysis found when participants described their transformative learning experiences, several participants (12/39) described more than one activity, highlighting their interaction (*cortometrajes*, comprehension assignments, preparation questions, LinguaMeeting sessions, and reflections) (Excerpts 38 and 39).

Excerpt 38

Upon the completion of the video and activities, I gained a new perspective on social class and systematic inequality (19, Task 1 Reflection)

Excerpt 39

En mi opinion creo que las actividades me han ayudado a entender las perspectivas de otras personas sobre la clase social.

"In my opinion, I think that the activities have helped me to understand others' perspectives on social class" (7, Task 1 Reflection).

As can be seen in Excerpts 38 and 39, participants often described the influence of "the activities," in some cases naming the specific activities (e.g., Excerpt 38: "the video"). Coding for the influence of the activities as a task, rather than separate entities revealed several instances in which participants concretely described how the coherence and continuity between activities allowed for progression of a transformative learning experience (Excerpts 40 and 41).

Excerpt 40

I feel like the video, activities, and conversation really helped me form an opinion by offering me a lot of different viewpoints. The video helped by opening my mind to the topic and really got me thinking about how the main character faced inequality and what systems helped to perpetuate inequality and what systems fought against that inequality. As we got to the activities, the different questions helped me form my opinions into words and helped guide what I really thought about inequality in the United States. Lastly, the conversation acted as the ribbon on top that shared differing opinions that helped me tweak some ideas and solidify my final thoughts (30, Task 3 Reflection).

Excerpt 41

I think that the activities in the unit did a good job at engaging students' opinions of how they viewed their trust in the government. The video, "Fosastero" was an interesting way to introduce the unit. The video was a representation of the trust between the government and its citizens in a Spanish speaking country. The video was longer than expected, however, I enjoy how it examined multiple angles of the topic for us to build off of. The activities about the video allowed me to draw connections between the video and relate them to the topic of trust in the government. While doing the activities I enjoyed the brief research I did into reports that examine citizen trust in the government, government structures in Spanish speaking countries, and governmental initiatives to bolster trust. The LinguaMeeting wrapped up the unit positively too. I think I enjoyed most about bringing in my own perspectives about the US government and hearing about perspectives from Peru. Getting the cultural engagement in the meeting helped me

> realize that governments in other countries can look and act very differently. The US government has a very interesting organization not only at a federal level but also how it is divided into a state, country, and local governments. Each of the activities pushed me to generate my own ideas and think critically about issues (Jonathan, Task 4 Reflection).

Participant 30 expressed his perception of the activities within the task and how they worked together to help him "form an opinion by offering me [him] a lot of different viewpoints" (Task 3 Reflection). This student identified the *cortometraje* as the activity that prompted reflection regarding the inequalities the immigrant man faced and the systems that either perpetuated the injustices or fought against them. Then, he highlighted the activities —"the questions," which could signify the comprehension assignment and/or the preparation questions— as the source of self-reflection on his own perspectives to articulate his ideas. Finally, he identified the LinguaMeeting session as the activity in which he heard various perspectives, which prompted further self-reflection and self-examination, resulting in a revision of his perspective on the topic.

A very similar description was provided by Jonathan in one of his reflections (Excerpt 41). Again, the synergy of the tasks was displayed, as they worked together to foster a transformative learning experience. Jonathan highlighted the *cortometraje* for its role in capturing his attention and showcasing "multiple angles of the topic for us to build off of." He reported the activities after the *cortometraje* and before the LinguaMeeting session prompted him to research the topic and make connections with the video, and, lastly, he wrote the LinguaMeeting session helped to conclude the topic, allowing him to share his perspectives as well as hear about others' perspectives. This perspective-ridden

conversation helped foster reflection on his government in light of the differences with other governments. As a whole, he saw the task to be beneficial for generating his own ideas and thinking critically about the topic.

To conclude, the results suggest the activities worked together, building upon one another, to foster transformative learning experiences. In line with the findings from the LAS results, each component presented a unique advantage to the tasks, with the primary negative remarks being dislike for, or the inability to understand, certain *cortometrajes* and the repetitive nature of the reflections. While the LinguaMeeting sessions were most strongly linked to experiences of transformative learning—specifically prompting self-reflection and self-examination—participants often spoke of two or more activities that—together—fostered transformative learning experiences.

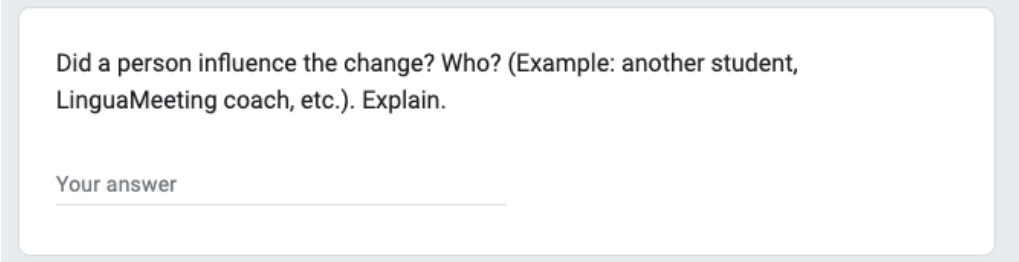
Research Question 1b: Influence of Interactions on Transformative Learning Experiences

Data Sources for Research Question 1b

To answer RQ1b, which aims to identify and explain why certain interactions were more influential for transformative learning, three data sources were analyzed: participants' reflections, participants' answers to LAS Question 5, and interviews. LAS Question 5 asked about interactions that influenced a change in perspective: "Did a person influence the change? Who? (Example: another student, LinguaMeeting coach, etc.). Explain." The question prompted students to respond with a short-answer response (See Figure 7 for an example).

Figure 7

Example of LAS Question 5



Note. Figure 7: Example of LAS Question 5

As with LAS Question 4, the completion rate of LAS Question 5 varied. For each task, there were participants who did not respond to LAS Question 5. Table 8 reports the number of participants that answered LAS Question 5 for each task.

Table 8

Number of Participants that Answered LAS Question 5

LAS (Task #)	#Participants (out of 32 total)	#Responses LAS Question 5 (Interactions)
LAS 1 (Task 1: Social class and inequalities)	25	15
LAS 2 (Task 2: Social roles and societal expectations)	27	13
LAS 3 (Task 3: Openness to immigration)	30	21
LAS 4 (Task 4: Trust in the government)	28	14
LAS 4 (Task 5: Relationships and marriage)	27	12

Depending on the task, 30-55.6% of the participants who completed the corresponding LAS did not provide an answer for LAS Question 5. It is important to note that LAS Question 5 was answered in the short-answer format, and participants could have chosen to not answer Question 5 if they did not, or could not, identify an influential person in their change of perspective. In answering LAS Question 5 many participants identified an influential person, or a combination of influential people, yet there were

three occasions in which participants explicitly negated the influence of a person in the change of perspective: "N/A" (11, LAS, Task 4), "No[t] really, I was just able to build further off of what my group members had said during the meeting" (20, LAS, Task 5), and "No" (22, LAS, Task 5).

Results: Interactions that facilitated a change in perspective

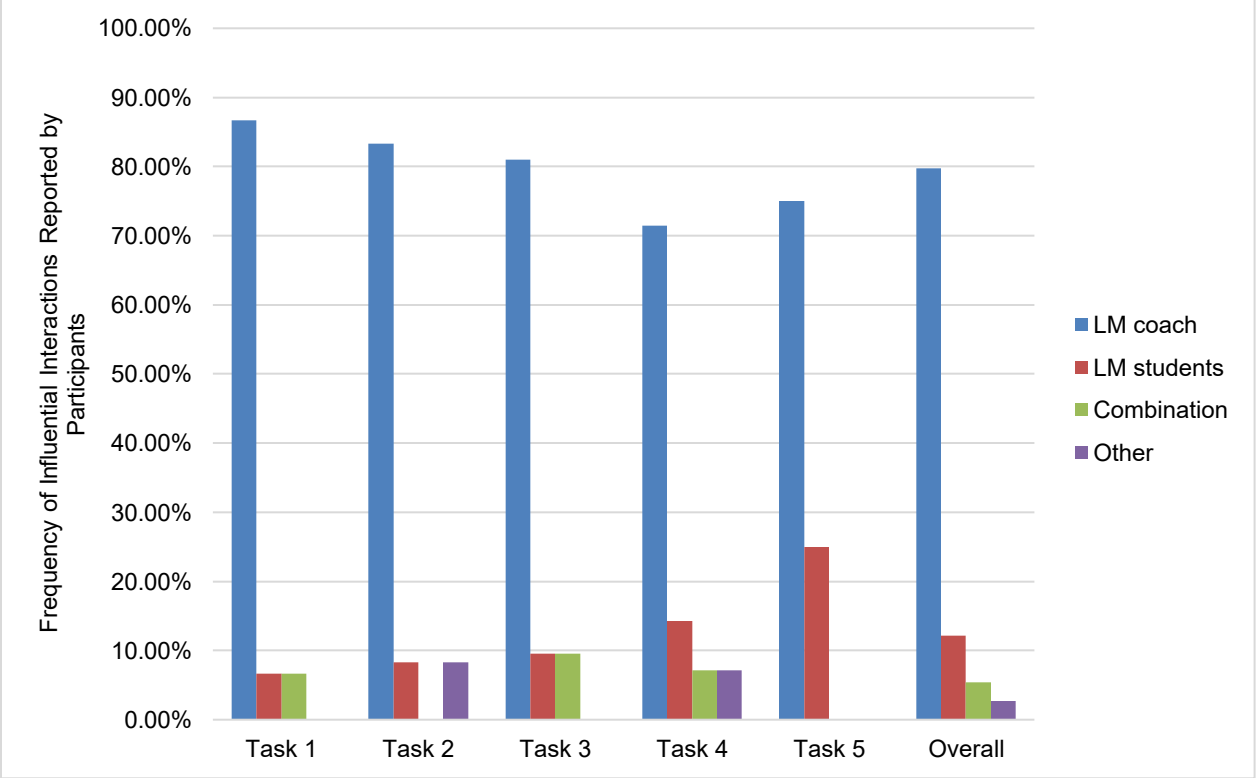
To identify the interactions perceived by participants to have changed their points of view or ideas, the 74 responses to LAS Question 5 were assessed quantitatively.

Influential Interactions Overall. When examining the number of times in which participants listed specific interlocutors as influential across tasks, the results revealed the participants primarily reported their LinguaMeeting coach as the person who influenced their change in perspective (79.73%, n=59) (Figure 8). For example, participants wrote responses such as "The LinguaMeeting coach from Spain shared about her experiences there, and it expanded my ideas about inequality" (12, LAS, Task 1); "The LinguaMeeting coach had me realize that the problems the United States faces with immigration is not the same outside of the US. It really shed some light on how politics have influenced my perceptions about the world at large" (Ethan, LAS, Task 3); and "[The] LinguaMeeting coach helped influence my change in thinking because she shared her experience in Spain" (Ivy, LAS, Task 5). In addition to the LinguaMeeting coach, 12.16% (n=9) of participants' responses identified fellow LinguaMeeting participants who were in the LinguaMeeting session, 5.41% (n=4) of participants' responses listed a combination of the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants, and 2.70% (n=2) of participants listed someone else. Of the two participants who listed someone else, one participant identified a friend outside of class (Jonathan, LAS, Task 2), and the other

participant identified a whole class discussion related to the task topic (21, LAS, Task 4). Figure 8 and Table 9 offer a depiction and summary of the participants' responses to LAS Question 5 for each task and overall.

Figure 8

Quantified Responses to LAS Question 5: Influential Interactions



Note. Figure 8: Average Frequency of Influential Interactions (Persons) Reported in Participants' Responses to the Question "Did a person influence the change? Who?" Across Tasks and Overall.
Note. "LM coach" indicates the LinguaMeeting coach. "LM students" indicates fellow LM participants in the LM Sessions. "Combination" indicates the influence of the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants together, and "Other" indicates someone other than the LinguaMeeting coach or fellow LinguaMeeting participants.

Table 9

Quantified Responses to LAS Question 5: Influential Interactions

Response	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Overall
LM coach	86.67% (n=13)	83.33% (n=10)	80.95% (n=17)	71.43% (n=10)	75% (n=9)	79.73% (n=59)
LM students	6.67% (n=1)	8.33% (n=1)	9.52% (n=2)	14.29% (n=2)	25% (n=3)	12.16% (n=9)

Combination	6.67% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	9.52% (n=2)	7.14% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	5.41% (n=4)
Other	0% (n=0)	8.33% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	7.14% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	2.7% (n=2)

Influential Interactions for Each Activity. When examining the number of times in which participants identified each influential interaction within each task, the results revealed, as with the overall average rating, the LinguaMeeting coaches were consistently perceived to be the most influential in all tasks (Table 9): 71.43-86.67% of participants named the LinguaMeeting coach as the person who influenced their change in perspective. The task with the highest frequency in which the LinguaMeeting coach was mentioned as influential in perspective change was in the LAS for Task 1 ("Social class and inequalities") followed by Task 3 ("Openness to immigration"). The task in which the LinguaMeeting coach was least mentioned was Task 5. For Task 5, there was an increase in the frequency with which participants identified their fellow LinguaMeeting participants as influential on their change in perspective. For example, one participant wrote: "*Los estudiantes en mi sesión de LinguaMeeting me ayudaron pensar de mis opiniones sobre el amor*. [The students in my LinguaMeeting session helped me to think about my opinions about love]" (13, LAS, Task 5). Other than Task 5, the frequency with which participants reported their perspective change to be influenced by their fellow LinguaMeeting participants, a combination of the LinguaMeeting coach and the fellow LinguaMeeting participants, or another person (or people) was relatively consistent. For Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 4, one or two (6.67-14.29%) participants identified their fellow LinguaMeeting participants as influential in a change of views or ideas. In Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 4, between zero and two participants (0-9.52%) identified a combination of

the LinguaMeeting coach and their fellow LinguaMeeting participants to be influential. Lastly, as previously mentioned, there were only two instances in which participants identified a different influential interaction: once in Task 2 (a friend) and once in Task 4 (class discussion).

Findings on Influential Interactions from Coding. To further investigate perceived influential interactions and to offer insight as to why certain interactions were perceived as more (or less) influential, participants' reflections and interviews underwent two rounds of coding (descriptive and then eclectic). From this process, several salient themes emerged, which are presented below. The salient themes were:

1) The interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach encouraged transformative learning experiences by fostering awareness of distinct cultural products and perspectives.
2) The interactions with fellow LinguaMeeting participants also contributed to transformative learning experiences, either independently or in conjunction with the LinguaMeeting coach interactions.
3) Interactions outside of the LinguaMeeting sessions might have served to further transformative learning experiences after the task activities.

These themes are discussed below with reflections and interview excerpts.

1) The interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach encouraged transformative learning experiences by fostering awareness of distinct cultural products and perspectives.

Just as the quantitative data revealed the interactions with the LinguaMeeting coaches were perceived to be the most influential overall in a change in perspective, the

two cycles of coding of the reflections and interviews found the interactions with the LinguaMeeting coaches were the most influential in fostering transformative learning experiences by cultivating awareness of distinct cultural products, practices, and perspectives. When participants wrote about their interactions throughout the tasks, their responses often highlighted the perceived influence of the interactions with the LinguaMeeting coaches in the LinguaMeeting sessions on their own perspectives (17/39 participants). The interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach provided the participants with an opportunity to engage with unfamiliar practices, products, or perspectives, often prompting the transformative learning experiences of (self-)reflection (Excerpt 42) and (self)-examination (Excerpt 43).

Excerpt 42

Finalmente, la conversación en LinguaMeeting me ayudó a considerar las opiniones de las otras personas en mi grupo. Fue muy interesante oír la opinión de mi coach, [nombre], porque ella es de Perú. Ella nos dijo que en Perú, los roles sociales son diferentes que en los Estados Unidos. Por ejemplo, ella nos dijo que hay más desigualdad entre las mujeres y los hombres en Perú. Lo que [nombre] dijo me ayudó a pensar de mis opiniones de una manera más internacional. Después de la conversación, pienso que yo sé más sobre los roles sociales y expectativas en los dos países de que hablamos, Perú y los Estados Unidos.

"Lastly, the LinguaMeeting session helped me to consider the opinions of other people in my group. It was very interesting to hear my coach's, [name], opinion, because she is from Perú. She told us that in Peru, social roles are different from

those in the United States. For example, she told us that there are more inequalities between men and women in Peru. What [LinguaMeeting coach's name] told me helped me to think about my own opinions in a more international way. After the conversation, I think I know more about the societal roles and expectations of the two countries that we talked about: Peru and the United States" (13, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 43

One of the things that I think really came out with the coach was more talking about how Spain, I guess, is more they're more guided by religion and the Catholic Church, and I think it made me think more about like how much religion plays a role I think in someone's marriage or like the strength of the marriage (Ethan, interview).

Participant 13, for example, reported the information shared by the LinguaMeeting coach for Task 2 prompted self-reflection on his views regarding social roles and a consideration of others' perspectives. Likewise, Ethan observed the conversation with the LinguaMeeting coach prompted examination regarding the role of religion in marriage. The interaction with the LinguaMeeting coach not only prompted these transformative learning experiences, but also, in a few instances, interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach were directly tied to modifications of meaning schemata, moving toward the adoption of new meaning perspectives (Excerpts 44 and 45).

Excerpt 44

I think the activities from this unit have greatly changed my perspective on social class and systemic inequalities. Since, hearing the difference from how a foreign

country like Guatemala runs, and just the price difference between things in each country was shocking to me. Originally, I thought it was fairly similar worldwide with the opportunities people have, but I was completely wrong, every country you go to is run differently, and directly impacts the lives of the people living in it. I think my ideas on solutions have really stayed the same, since it would be very difficult to implement rules and regulations that would fully solve the issue of social inequalities. I believe that is due to the way the world has been set up, where every person lusts and is hungry for power and money. But, it was interesting hearing someone from another country's perspective on how their country runs, as well as seeing how she reacted when I told her about some laws and regulations in the United States. But, overall, it really changed my perspective on some things and was a good way of informing me on global problems and life in foreign countries, which I usually would never get since I don't have a passport (9, Task 1 Reflection).

Excerpt 45

La tutora cambió algunas de mis opiniones de la búsqueda del amor, especialmente de las diferencias de las culturas. Por ejemplo, de la tutora, las libertades y las ideas de independencia y el valor individual son muy diferentes de las culturas muy distintas. Una persona que vive en una sociedad con mucha libertad e independencia tendría vistas diferentes de una persona que vive en una sociedad con ninguna libertad ni independencia. En mi opinión, la superación de las diferencias es la principal del amor y es posible en cada situación, pero según la tutora, no es posible en las situaciones particulares.

> "The coach changed some of my opinions about the search for love, especially the differences between cultures. For example, for the coach, freedom and the concepts of independence and individualism are very different for different cultures. A person that lives in a society with a lot of freedom and independence would have different views than a person who lives in a society with no freedom or independence. In my opinion, overcoming the differences is the essence of love and it's possible in each situation, but according to my coach it's not possible in certain situations" (36, Task 5 Reflection).

Importantly, because the participants did not articulate an adoption of a new meaning perspectives (phase ten of transformative learning theory), rather the modification of, or addition to, existing meaning schemata ("changed my perspective on some things" and "change some of my opinions"), these excerpts were coded as phase 3a: "As I thought about these things, I realized that I did not agree with my previous beliefs or ideas about [topic] anymore." While the participant 9 and 36's views of social class and inequalities or relationships might not have entirely changed, they reported an alteration, in varying degrees, to their perspectives as a result of the input from the LinguaMeeting coach. The LinguaMeeting coach was depicted as an informant, providing new information to the participants about cultural products (e.g., price of goods, societal roles, political institutions) and perspectives (e.g., the importance of similar cultural values in romantic relationships).[38]

[38] While the three "p" conceptualization of culture focuses on cultural products, practices, and perspectives, the present dissertation found only three instances in which excerpts were coded for phase 3a (examination of beliefs resulting in a rejection of previously held beliefs), the influence of the LinguaMeeting coach, and cultural practices.

The interviews allowed for further investigation of this influential interaction. All interview participants were asked if there was a person who influenced a possible change in perspective. Six of the eight interview participants (David, Ethan, Isabella, Jonathan, Amanda, and Ivy) stated it was primarily the LinguaMeeting coach who influenced a transformative learning experience of increased awareness or perspective change (Excerpts 46 and 47), reflecting the quantitative data which found 79.73% of responses named the interaction with the LinguaMeeting coach as influential in changes of perspective.

Excerpt 46

Interviewer: OK, so when you kind of were engaging in this expansion of values, ideas, and beliefs what do you think triggered it? And with that I'm asking, first of all, was there a person who tended to influence this change?

Ethan: Um mostly the coach

Interviewer: The coach?

Ethan: Yeah

Interviewer: OK, maybe not so much the other students?

Ethan: Not so much. I think it was-yeah-I think it was just mostly the coach; students mostly the same [perspectives], yeah (Ethan, interview).

Excerpt 47

Interviewer: OK yeah! So who do you think most then kind of helped expand the awareness?

Ivy: I'd say definitely the LinguaMeeting coach just because, you know, they did have a different like perspective, you know, with a different country and everything (Ivy, interview).

Ethan and Ivy spoke to the reasoning as to why the LinguaMeeting coach was perceived to be so much more influential: a different viewpoint derived from their culturally distinct background. Overall, the present data analysis found, like the LinguaMeeting sessions themselves, the interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach fostered the transformative learning experiences of reflection and examination by increasing participants' awareness of different cultural products and perspectives. The interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach provided an opportunity to consider, and even alter, one's own perspectives by taking into account new ideas.

2) The interactions with fellow LinguaMeeting participants also contributed to transformative learning experiences, either independently or in conjunction with the LinguaMeeting coach interactions.

In addition to learning about differing cultural products and perspectives from their LinguaMeeting coach, participants (17/39) also gained awareness of different cultural expressions through interacting with their fellow LinguaMeeting session participants (Excerpts 48 and 49).

Excerpt 48

My conversation partners' ideas and opinions forced me to consider my ideas about systemic inequalities. When my LinguaMeeting Coach posed a question about what factors contribute to inequality in modern society, I immediately thought of economic inequality. I told the Zoom participants how low-income

individuals lack access to opportunities for social mobility. I ended my answer by sharing a story about a coworker of mine from my first job at a supermarket. In essence, poor public transportation prevented him from working more hours and majorly disrupted his life. [Fellow LinguaMeeting participant] (I think that was her name), speaking from an entirely different perspective, told the group about how racism and discrimination seriously contribute to social inequality. She answered the question differently and it made me think about how race plays such a big role in economic inequality as well. She expanded our discussion and added important insight. After the discussion ended, I widened my views on inequality to include [fellow LinguaMeeting participant's] revelation (Amanda, Task 1 Reflection).

Excerpt 49

David: Hmm, I don't know if I'd say changed necessarily, but maybe become more aware. I think what I liked-what I liked the most was hear[ing] other people's and my like my classmates talk about it because some were from more eastern or like Midwest parts of the U.S., and all my cultures come from either like- Hispanic culture like southern-not like southern sorry-like that West Coast culture you know, so I think it was more so interesting like how we talked about government and stuff: like there are different approaches and opinions on it. So, I would say more so that my opinion was changed but just became more aware of what other people think; you know? Not everyone thinks like me, especially my classmates

Interviewer: Yeah, so like realizing that not everyone thinks like you?

David: Yeah, well that sounds kind of dumb. Like obviously but like... uhm

Interviewer: It doesn't sound dumb

David: yeah just, yeah you know what I mean. Just like feel a little more aware: like my classmates definitely have different values (David, interview).

Amanda and David recognized the multiculturality among their fellow LinguaMeeting participants, highlighting how differing backgrounds (e.g., racial, regional) can lend to distinct cultural perspectives. The LinguaMeeting sessions provided a space in which participants could hear and reflect on fellow classmates' perspectives, broadening their awareness about the cultural diversity represented in their Spanish class (David) and leading to meaning schemata expansion (Amanda).

The LinguaMeeting sessions created a space for influential interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants. As such, participants' experiences of transformative learning might have been fueled by input from all participants in the LinguaMeeting sessions. For example, when describing what he considered an expansion in perspective that occurred by partaking in the transformative learning tasks, Jonathan described transformative learning processes that were influenced primarily by the LinguaMeeting coach, but the other LinguaMeeting session group members also influenced this shift in perspective by sharing about their own unique familial structures (Excerpt 50).

Excerpt 50

Interviewer: That's interesting. OK any other specific–I don't know–realization or change you feel like you experienced?

Jonathan: I know another one we talked about was I think this was like our last one and we talked about: kind of different family structures in different countries, and I thought that was really interesting. Like, she was talking about from Peru it's really normal to have large families normally, although recently it's kind of the size of a family has shrank more. But it made me think about how in the US now like divorce is more popular, and how in other countries you live with like your grandparents live in the house and stuff like that, but here that's not normal like yeah my grandparents live close to me, but they don't live in the same house, which is really interesting how like those different cultural aspects are different between the two.

Interviewer: Yeah, and so when you kind of–do you feel like you changed your value on that family structures with that?

Jonathan: I think so

Interviewer: OK but in what way?

Jonathan: I think how they value family is more close knit, and I appreciated that, and I feel like drawing that into how I view family now is really important. So maybe like being more inclusive with like my grandparents or just like having a better relationship with my parents in general. I feel like that's something that in our culture maybe gets undervalued and so seeing that represented in the culture of the LinguaMeeting coach kind of reminded me of like how important and necessary those relationships are, and how much more we should invest in them.

Interviewer: Yeah, no that makes sense. And so do you think that talking with LinguaMeeting coach is what triggered that? Or was it students, like the other students in your group? Or was it someone else?

Jonathan: who was responsible for–?

Interviewer: yeah kind of bringing that up

Jonathan: I would say mainly the coach

Interviewer: OK

Jonathan: I felt like her experience was the most unique from mine, and so hearing that aspect was really interesting. I felt like everyone in the group had really cool perspectives too in different ways, like maybe they come from different family structures than my own, and so they each brought their own, but I think the coach is what primarily kind of ignited me to change my beliefs (Jonathan, interview).

As can be seen in Excerpt 50, Jonathan experienced a disorienting dilemma (becoming aware of differing family structures), (self-)reflection (familial norms in the United States such as divorce, multigenerational homes; his own values), and (self-)examination (consideration and rejection of some of his previous beliefs regarding family structures). He primarily attributed these experiences to the LinguaMeeting coach's "unique" perspective, but he also acknowledged the role of the fellow LinguaMeeting participants, given their differing family structures. In instances in which both the interactions with the fellow LinguaMeeting participants and the LinguaMeeting coach were sources of influence for changes in perspectives, the influence of the LinguaMeeting coach tended to be (viewed as) more influential. Overall, the results

indicate that, though to a lesser extent, interactions with fellow LinguaMeeting participants contributed to transformative learning experiences, whether independently or alongside interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach.

3) Interactions outside of the LinguaMeeting sessions might have served to further transformative learning experiences after the task activities.

As participants reflected on their experiences completing the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks in their reflections and interviews, the focus on interactions primarily focused on the exchanges in the LinguaMeeting sessions, which is expected given this is the only activity in the transformative learning tasks in which participants were asked to interact with others. In the reflections, there was only one influential interaction identified other than those with the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow LinguaMeeting participants. In this instance, Jonathan responded to a reflection question about whether the activities had helped him to understand and value other perspectives on social class, systemic inequalities, and solutions. He explained the task activities and further conversation with his friend helped him to understand other perspectives on social roles and their influences (Excerpt 51).

Excerpt 51

Sí, porque las ideas me han ayudado comprender otras perspectivas en estos temas. Por ejemplo, cuando yo hablaba con mi amigo [nombre], yo aprendí más sobre cómo la cultura popular influencia los roles sociales. Las actividades de esta unidad empujan estudiantes examinar sus creencias.

"Yes, because the ideas have helped me to understand other perspectives on these topics. For example, when I was talking with my friend [name], I learned more

about how pop culture influences social roles. The activities in this unit push students to examine their beliefs" (Jonathan, Task 2 Reflection).

Apart from Jonathan's excerpt, only one other participant (Haoyu, interview) provided an explanation where they connected an influential interaction outside of the LinguaMeeting session to a change in perspective. Haoyu told of his experience of learning about discrimination and hate against certain minority groups in Mexico from his course instructor, in which he gained a meaning schemata shift (i.e., racism is not limited to one country or culture). The analysis of others' interviews revealed participants would continue to discuss the task topic with family members (David, Jonathan), friends (David, Jonathan, Amanda, Nevada, Ivy), or significant others (Isabella) after or throughout the task activities. This further discussion allowed them to further probe their awareness of and reflection on differing perspectives on the topic (Excerpts 52 and 53) and to recognize a change in perspective (Excerpt 54).

Excerpt 52

Interviewer: um OK So what did you do kind of once you realized you had changed your views or perspective?

Amanda: I talked about it with my friends actually

Interviewer: Oh, you did?

Amanda: Mm-hmm I talked to them about how long they think they should get married-or how long they should wait before getting married; how long they should date; if they plan on having children; and like what motivates them to do that

Interviewer: Were friends outside of class?

Amanda: Mm-hmm

Interviewer: OK, that's interesting. Did they have different opinions?

Amanda: Yeah, actually

Interviewer: They did?

Amanda: Yeah, actually I talked about it with my friend-my partner–*mi compañera*–in the class, and we talked about that she talks about how she doesn't want to have kids

Interviewer: She doesn't?

Amanda: Mm-mm and so it's interesting to hear, and then this other girl she doesn't want to get married either or have children, so it was interesting to hear like their perspective; how they're going against maybe the 'norm' (Amanda, interview).

Excerpt 53

Interviewer: OK, so thinking back to like maybe when you first were-realized that your views or perspectives had slightly changed on a topic, when did you realize this change had happened? Was it while it was happening, mid change, or once it kind of happened entirely -more of a retrospective way?

Isabella: I feel like it was more retrospective

Interviewer: OK

Isabella: I feel like after the LinguaMeeting I would kind of think about everything that I heard and then kind of think about that like make comparisons and like try and understand the perspectives of the people in my group

…

Interviewer: So, if you were kind of realizing this change happened, what was it that made you aware?

Isabella: Well, I think so you said that you know someone [who] went to their roommate and said something like that. Actually, I just was thinking that I had a similar experience: I have a boyfriend, and he is American, so I do sometimes come up-and I mean I'm also-I'm like Italian American so like my perspective is different, so I wanted to know: "Is this what you think of some things?" and he was like: "Oh, like, I didn't." Because I felt like [when we] only first started dating I just felt like I was blowing his mind because I would tell him-I would just tell him things all the time and he'd be like: "What? No! Really?" and he just didn't know these things. And I'm just like: "Oh yeah," and so it was constant. So I feel like I-I talked to him and I said "I was blowing people's minds in my LinguaMeeting" or something like that, or you know (Isabella, interview).

The additional interactions prompted further reflection and examination of both one's own and others' perspectives. For Isabella, the additional interactions allowed her to both recognize her different perspectives from others and to realize her perspective might have changed. While the participants did not identify these interactions as the source of perspective changes, the participants described these interactions as a continuation of the learning experience, providing additional opportunities for further transformative learning.

In sum, when participants reflected on influential interactions while completing the transformative learning tasks, they focused primarily on the LinguaMeeting coach given the coach's ability to foster greater awareness of distinct cultural products and

perspectives. Fellow LinguaMeeting session participants, although to a lesser extent, facilitated transformative learning experiences either on their own or with the additional input from the LinguaMeeting coach. Both interactions with the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants were associated with the early transformative learning experiences, namely, (self-)reflection and (self-)examination. Interactions outside of the LinguaMeeting sessions were rarely mentioned in the LAS or reflections. However, data from the interviews revealed these interactions, such as those with family or friends, might have played a role in fostering further transformative learning experiences by encouraging more awareness of others' perspectives or helping participants to recognize shifts in their perspectives.

Research Question 1c: Transformative Learning Tasks and Transformative Learning

The present dissertation designed and implemented tasks to reflect the tenets of transformative learning theory, which holds that engagement with others' perspectives prompts a disorienting dilemma that provokes reflection and assessment on one's own and others' beliefs, eventually leading to the modification, alteration, or preservation of one's beliefs, or the adoption of a new belief. The third sub-question of RQ1—RQ1c—aims to identify and describe the extent to which participants experienced the different phases of transformative learning theory.

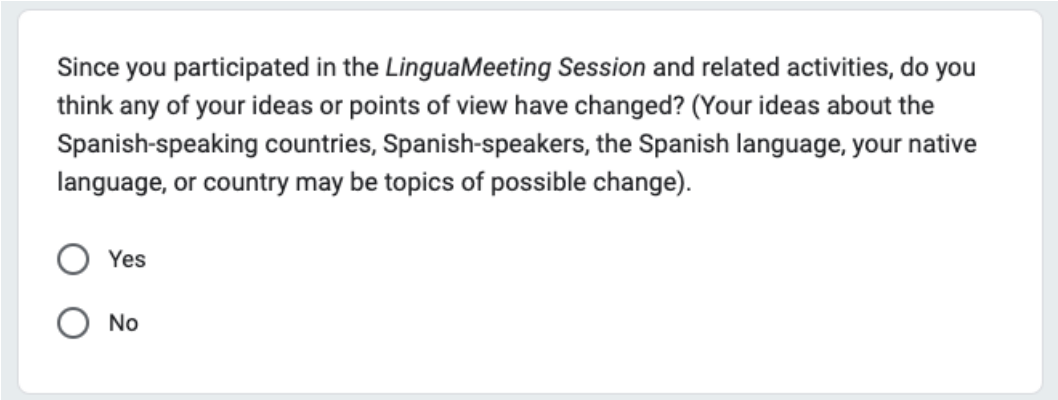
Data Sources for Research Question 1c

To answer RQ1c, the data sources examined were participants' responses to LAS Questions 2 and 3, reflections, and interviews. LAS Question 2 (Figure 9) asked students if they felt their ideas or points of view had changed since participating in the

LinguaMeeting session and related activities.

Figure 9

Example of LAS Question 2

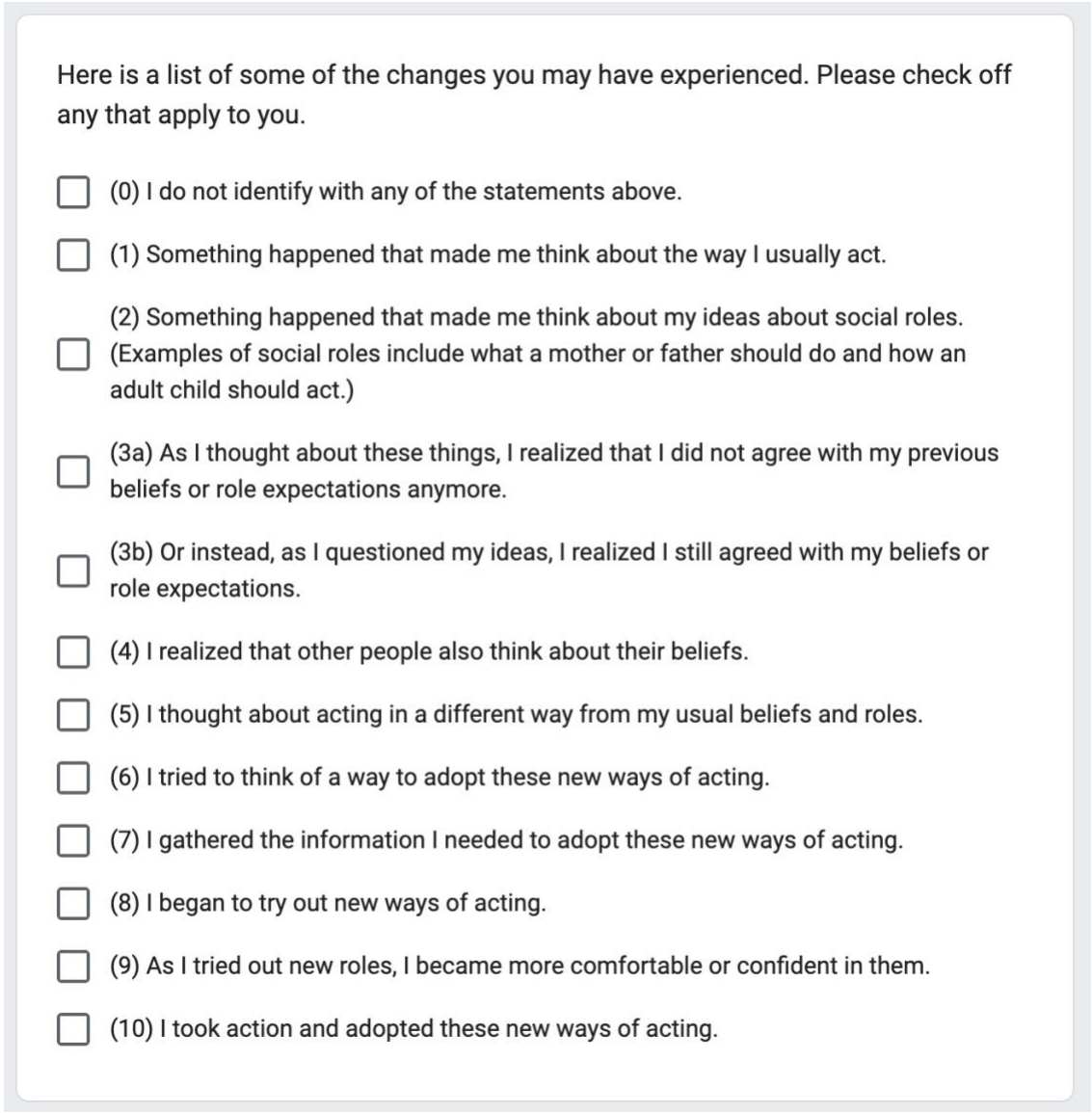


Note. Figure 9: Example of LAS Question 2

LAS Question 3 (Figure 10) presented students with statements representing the 10 phases of transformative learning. Students were asked to identify any of the changes they might have experienced after participating in the LinguaMeeting session and completing the corresponding activities. The students were able to select multiple options, and each option corresponded to a phase of transformative learning. However, option 0 indicated that the participant did not identify with any of the options, and options 3a and 3b represented distinct components of phase 3. It is important to note that if participants answered "no" to LAS Question 2 the LAS ended, and they were not presented with the remaining LAS questions. For LAS Question 3, participants' responses were primarily examined in terms of counts and percentages for each task as well as for the tasks overall.

Figure 10

Example of LAS Question 3



Note. Figure 10: Example of LAS Question 3 (Task 1)

To gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions of their transformative learning experiences, participants' reflections and interviews were also analyzed. These data sources were coded for instances in which participants mentioned an experience corresponding to a transformative learning phase. In the second round of coding, any reasoning participants offered, whether implicitly or explicitly, regarding the contributing factors that influenced said transformative learning experience were coded

(as seen with the identified influential activities and interactions).

Results: Participants' experiences of transformative learning phases

Overall Perceived Change in Perspective. As can be seen in Table 10, overall, the majority of the responses (78.02%, 107 out of 137 total responses) indicated participants perceived to have experienced a change in ideas or points of view.

Table 10

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Indicated a Change in Ideas or Points of View

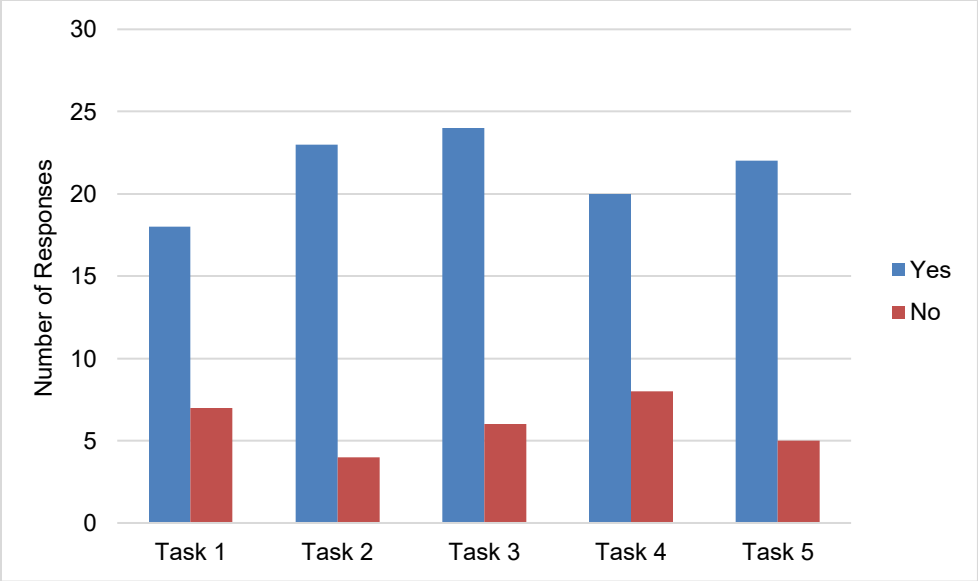
Response	Number (Percentage)
Yes	107 (78.10%)
No	30 (21.90%)

Note. Table 10: Overall (across tasks) Responses to the Question: "Since you participated in the LinguaMeeting sessions and related activities, do you think any of your ideas or points of view have changed?"

Perceived Change in Perspective for Each Task. When examining the ability of each task to prompt a change in perspective, the results highlighted patterns associated with specific tasks. As it can be seen in Table 11, the results revealed 80-85.19% of participants reported a change in idea or point of view more for Tasks 2, 3, and 5. For Tasks 1 and 5 the majority of participants still indicated they experienced a change in ideas or point of view, yet to a lesser extent, with 71.43% (Task 5) and 72% (Task 1) of participants responding "yes" to LAS Question 2.

Figure 11

Participants' Responses to LAS Question 2



Note. Figure 11: Responses to the Question: "Since you participated in the LinguaMeeting sessions and related activities, do you think any of your ideas or points of view have changed?" in for Each Task and Overall Average.

Table 11

Participants' Responses to LAS Question 2

Response	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Average (SD)
Yes	18 (72%)	23 (85.19%)	24 (80%)	20 (71.43%)	22 (81.48%)	21.4 (2.41)
No	7 (28%)	4 (14.81%)	6 (20%)	8 (28.57%)	5 (18.52%)	6 (1.58)

Overall Perceived Experience of Transformative Learning. When examining the phases selected by participants for LAS Question 3, the results revealed participants identified experiencing certain phases of transformative learning more than others. Overall, the 32 participants selected a combined total of 238 response options.

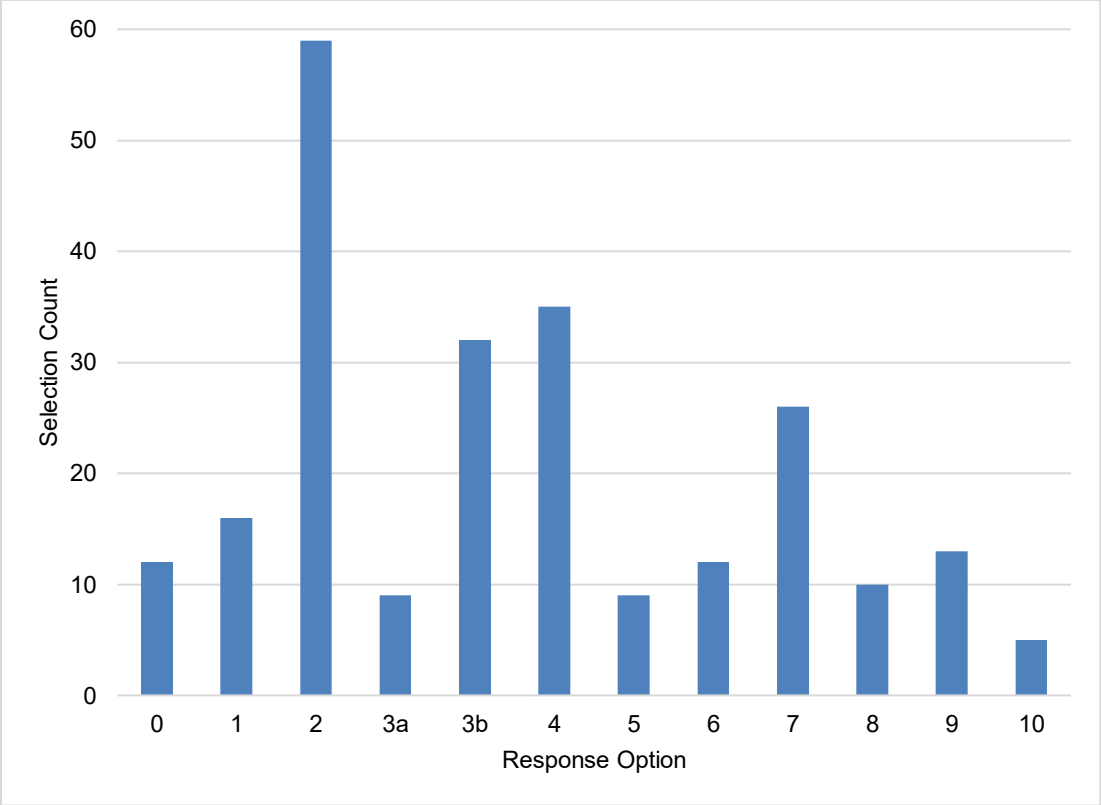
As it can be seen in Figure 12 and Table 12, of the 238 response options selected, the most frequently selected option represents transformative learning phase 2: "Something happened that made me think about my ideas about [task topic (e.g., social

roles)].” The next most frequently selected option represents phase 4: “I realized that other people also think about their beliefs” closely followed by the option 3b, representing the second half of phase 3: “Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations.” The least commonly selected options overall were those representing phase 10: “I took action and adopted these new ways of acting,” phase 5: “I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles,” and phase 3a: “As I thought about these things, I realized that I did not agree with my previous beliefs or role expectations anymore.” Despite the high frequency of the options representing phases 2, 3(b), and 4, the option representing phase 1 (“Something happened that made me think about the way I usually act”), a part of the disorienting dilemma, was not frequently selected by students as something they perceived to have experienced.

The remaining options, those representing phases 6, 7, 8, and 9, encapsulate the processes one undergoes in adopting a new perspective before claiming it as one’s own: thinking of ways to adopt a new way of acting (phase 6), gathering information about a new way of acting (phase 7), starting to act in a new way (phase 8), and growing more comfortable and confident in the new way of acting (phase 9). Of these phases (6, 7, 8, and 9), only the option representing phase 7 was selected with an above average frequency (overall average: $\bar{x}$=20.63, phase 7=26).

Figure 12

Participants’ Responses to LAS Question 3 Across Tasks



Note. Figure 12: Number of Times Each Option was Selected by Participants Across All Tasks.

Table 12

Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 Across Task

Option	Selection Count	# of Participants
0	12	8
1	16	12
2	59	21
3a	9	7
3b	32	17
4	35	20
5	9	8
6	12	9
7	26	15
8	10	7
9	13	10
10	5	4

Perceived Experience of Transformative Learning for Each Task. Through an assessment of the phases selected for each task, several notable patterns emerged (Figure 13 and Table 13). Consistent with the overall selection of each option (phase), the option representing phase 2 was consistently chosen the most frequently, apart from Task 4 ("Trust in the government"), for which the options representing phases 2 and 4 were equally chosen. As a reminder, phase 2 states: "Something happened that made me think about my ideas about [task topic]."

Specifically for Task 1 ("Social class and inequalities"), the option representing phase 2 was the most frequently selected: at a minimum it was selected twice as often as the other options. Besides the option for phase 2, the options representing the other early phases of transformative learning that correspond with a disorienting dilemma and the ensuing critical (self-)reflection (phases 1, 3a, 3b, 4) saw low-to-moderate selection. Likewise, the later stages—those involving actions to adopt and act on a new perspective—were infrequently selected by the participants apart from phase 7, which was selected by six participants: "I gathered information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting."

Like Task 1, the option representing phase 2 was again the most frequently chosen by participants for Task 2 ("Social roles and expectations"). Options representing phase 3b and 4 were selected by students with moderate frequency, more so than in Task 1. The option representing phase 7, however, decreased. The options representing phases 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were all selected fewer than five times, and the options representing the first portion of phase 3 (3a) and phase 10 were not selected. It is important to note that Task 2 saw the highest number of the option representing phase 0 (n=6), which is

notable given the fact that LAS 2 had the highest percentage of students who reported "yes": they had experienced a change in idea or point of view.

For Task 3 ("Openness to immigration") the option representing phase 2 was again the most chosen by participants, with its selection frequency almost doubling all other options. For the first time, phase 1 ("Something happened that made me think about the way I usually act") was selected. The option for phase 1 was selected more for Task 3 than any other task. In addition to the option for phase 1, the options representing phases 3b, 4, and 7 were chosen with moderate frequency. Notably, the option representing phase 5 saw an increase: five participants identified with the statement "I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles," and Task 3 saw the first instance in which participants selected the option representing phase 10 "I took action and adopted these new ways of acting."

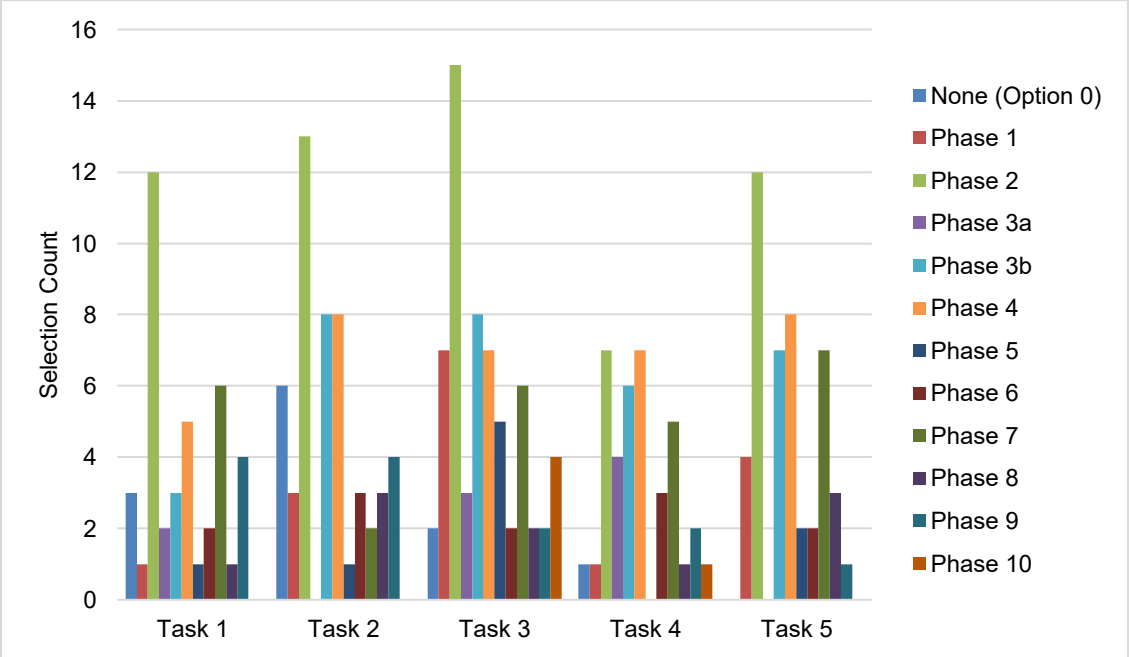
For Task 4, it is noteworthy that there was a narrow range in the frequency with which the options were selected. Seven participants chose the options corresponding to phases 2 and 4, making them the most frequently selected for this task. Options representing phases 3a, 3b, and 7 received a moderate number of selections, which is significant for phase 3a ("I realized that I did not agree with my previous beliefs anymore"), whose frequency was less consistent across tasks. The remaining options, representing phases 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10, were selected infrequently. However, it is notable that the option representing phase 10 was selected by one participant.

Finally, for Task 5 ("Relationships and marriage") the results closely resembled those of Task 2, except more participants selected the option corresponding with phase 7 and fewer selected the option representing phase 9 in Task 5. Phase 2 remained the most

selected by participants. The options representing phases 1, 3a, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 were minimally chosen. No participants selected the options corresponding with phases 3a or 10. Likewise, no participant identified with the option representing phase 0, perhaps demonstrating familiarity with the LAS's conceptualization of change in idea or perspective.

Figure 13

Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 for Each Task



Note. Figure 13: Perceived Experience of Transformative Learning Theory Phases for Each Task

Table 13

Participants' Responses to LAS Question 3 for Each Task

Phase	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5
None (Option 0)	3 (7.5%)	6 (11.76%)	2 (3.17%)	1 (2.63%)	0 (0%)
1	1 (2.5%)	3 (5.88%)	7 (11.11%)	1 (2.63%)	4 (8.7%)

2	12 (30%)	13 (25.49%)	15 (23.81%)	7 (18.42%)	12 (26.09%)
3a	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	3 (4.76%)	4 (10.53%)	0 (0%)
3b	3 (7.5%)	8 (15.69%)	8 (12.7%)	6 (15.79%)	7 (15.22%)
4	5 (12.5%)	8 (15.69%)	7 (11.11%)	7 (18.42%)	8 (17.39%)
5	1 (2.5%)	1 (1.96%)	5 (7.94%)	0 (0%)	2 (4.35%)
6	2 (5%)	3 (5.88%)	2 (3.17%)	3 (7.89%)	2 (4.35%)
7	6 (15%)	2 (3.92%)	6 (9.52%)	5 (13.16%)	7 (15.22%)
8	1 (2.5%)	3 (5.88%)	2 (3.17%)	1 (2.63%)	3 (6.52%)
9	4 (10%)	4 (7.84%)	2 (3.17%)	2 (5.26%)	1 (2.17%)
10	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (6.35%)	1 (2.63%)	0 (0%)

Findings on Participants' Experiences of Transformative Learning from Coding. To better understand participants' transformative learning experiences and their contributing factors, participants' reflections and interviews underwent two rounds of coding (descriptive and then eclectic). From this process, several salient themes emerged, which are presented below. To answer RQ1c —participants' experiences of transformative learning—, the present analysis presents and discusses representative excerpts from participants' reflections and interviews to describe the contributing factors and circumstances to participants' experiences of transformative learning. The salient themes were:

1) The SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks prompted participants to reflect on their own perspectives, experiencing the second phase transformative learning theory.

2) As participants considered their own and others' perspectives, many participants embarked on the third phase of transformative learning theory, critically assessing their previously held ideas.
3) While participants expressed interest in hearing others' perspectives, many held onto their own deeply rooted perspectives.

Before discussing the themes, it is important to note the data primarily indicated participants experienced phases 2 and 3. Notably, while there were five instances coded as phase 1—reflection on one's way of acting—the focus of participants' reflections and interviews was primarily on the reflection on and critical assessment of their ideas, rather than their actions. Consequently, phase 1 was rarely coded (5 instances; 3 participants) while phase 2—reflection on one's ideas—was the most frequently coded (83 instances; 28 participants), followed by phase 3—critical assessment of one's ideas—(76 instances; 26 participants).

1) The SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks prompted participants to reflect on their own perspectives, experiencing the second phase of transformative learning theory.

The coding revealed that participants (28/39) experienced moments of reflection on their own ideas about certain topics, aligning with King's (2009) description of phase 2: "I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles." As noted in RQ1a and RQ1b, participants attributed these reflective experiences to various sources, yet they frequently linked the motivation to reflect directly to their discussions with their LinguaMeeting coach and/or fellow classmates (Excerpts 54 and 55).

Excerpt 54

No creo que las cosas de qué hablamos cambiaran mi opinión pero me hicieron pensar más sobre el matrimonio, el amor y la cultura en todo el mundo y las maneras que son diferentes.

"I don't think that the things that we talked about changed my opinion, but they made me think more about marriage, love, and the culture across the world, and the ways in which they are different" (31, Task 5 Reflection)

Excerpt 55

La conversación me ayudó a pensar de mi propia opinión y oír las perspectivas de mi coach y de mis compañeros de sesión. Pienso que sea beneficioso hablar con otros porque cuando hablo con otras personas, puedo considerar situaciones diferentes. Por ejemplo, yo nunca he ido a una protesta, y no puedo saber la perspectiva de un manifestante. Sin embargo, en la conversación con mis compañeros de sesión, oí otras perspectivas. Estas perspectivas me ayudaron a entender las opiniones diferentes de estas temas.

"The conversation helped me think about my own opinion and hear my coach's and my session partners' perspectives. I think it's beneficial to talk to others because when I talk to other people, I can consider different situations. For example, I've never been to a protest, and I can't know a protester's perspective. However, in the conversation with my session partners, I heard other perspectives. These perspectives helped me to understand the different opinions on these topics" (13, Task 4 Reflection).

Following their exposure to others' perspectives in their conversations with the LinguaMeeting coach and fellow LinguaMeeting participants, participants examined their

own ideas. Beyond the discussions with their LinguaMeeting coach and/or fellow LinguaMeeting participants, participants associated their reflective experiences to other corresponding task activities (e.g., *cortometrajes*) (Excerpt 56) or to the combination of various task components (Excerpt 57).

Excerpt 56

Pienso que el video, Diez Minutos, me ayudó empezar a pensar sobre las temas de esta lección y me dio un fondo para aprender más de las actividades sobre el video y la conversación en LinguaMeeting. El video no fue mi cortometraje favorito, pero fue interesante. Diez Minutos no me enseñó mucho, pero cuando lo miré, consideré ideas sobre los roles sociales, el rol que la tecnología juega en nuestra sociedad, y la importancia de seguir las reglas o ser independiente.

"I think the video, Diez Minutos, helped me start thinking about the chapter topics and gave me a foundation to learn more from the activities about the video and from the LinguaMeeting session. The video wasn't my favorite *cortometraje*, but it was interesting. Diez Minutos didn't teach me much, but when I watched it, I thought about [my/the] ideas about social roles, the role technology plays in our society, and the importance of following rules or being independent" (13, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 57

I think hearing through the activities it almost made me realize how much I didn't trust the government, which was really interesting. I think going into it I think I had a mindset where like: "Oh yeah, you're just supposed to trust them," and then we started like exploring like maybe different like social movements that have

been going on, or different just events in the world, and then it made me think like: “Oh yeah, most people don't actually trust the government and, that's really interesting because it's like you know they're the like organization you're supposed to trust because they kind of run the show,” and so seeing that like oh the majority of people kind of –that's why we have like checks and balances and stuff, and so I think through these activities it like reminded me like: “Oh yeah, that’s how that works. That makes sense” (Jonathan, interview).

Participant 13 described the reflection in which she engaged after watching the *cortometraje* and Jonathan described the reflection prompted by learning about others’ perspectives throughout the activities.

While participants largely related their provoked self-reflective experiences to the LinguaMeeting sessions or the corresponding task activities, there were a few instances (4 excerpts) in which participants related their self-reflection to an interaction or instance outside of the transformative learning tasks, such as the subsequent in-class discussion (Excerpts 58).

Excerpt 58

Cuando oí las perspectivas sobre el video Porsiemprejamón en clase, una persona pensó que el amor entre mejores amigos fue extraño, y me hizo pensar sobre mi opinión en el matrimonio de amigos. No obstante, pienso que sentir la misma manera que un matrimonio entre mejores amigos debe resultar en más feliz por ambas parejas.

“When I heard the perspectives on the Porsiemprejamón video in class, one person thought love between best friends was weird, and it made me think about

my opinion on the marriage between friends. However, I think that I feel the same way: that a marriage between friends should result in greater happiness for both partners" (Ethan, Task 5 Reflection).

For the present dissertation, the in-class activities were not controlled or included in the transformative learning task design. However, participants' reflections and interviews revealed their instructors incorporated many of the same themes in the in-class discussions and activities. As seen in Excerpt 58, a class discussion corresponding to Task 5 was influential in prompting self-reflection for Ethan.

Overall, in line with the quantitative results, the qualitative results revealed the most notable effect of the transformative learning tasks on participants' transformative experiences was the self-reflection they prompted. The participants engaged, or started to engage, in the process in which they examined their perspectives as they recognized others' perspectives.

2) As participants considered their own and others' perspectives, many participants embarked on the third phase of transformative learning theory, critically assessing their previously held ideas.

Phase 3 of transformative learning theory marks the stage in which one can more critically examine one's own assumptions while considering new information and thoughts. The data from the reflections and interviews revealed that many participants experienced this critical self-assessment: many participants experienced phase 3a (alteration or addition to meaning schemata) (47 instances; 23/39 participants) or phase 3b (maintaining their previously held perspectives) (51 instances; 23/39 participants) either as a direct result of the LinguaMeeting session, or as a result of the LinguaMeeting

session in conjunction with the other task activities. Notably, 18 participants expressed experiencing both phase 3a and 3b. Participants elected to either maintain their perspectives, alter them, or replace them with new perspectives. Like phase 2, participants related their experiences of phase 3 to various sources, yet most often directly linked their self-assessment to discussions with their LinguaMeeting coach and/or fellow classmates (Excerpts 59 and 60).

Excerpt 59

> While I was exposed to different opinions from different cultures during this LinguaMeeting session, I do not think that my opinions changed entirely. This topic I think had a lot to do with how you were raised and what culture you are a part of. So, while I enjoyed hearing about everyone's different opinions on marriage and weddings, I do not believe that it changed my personal opinion on this topic. I do, however, understand where they are coming from and I am not opposed to their opinions and ways of going about marriage. I appreciate how each culture has their own ways of going about these important occasions in their lives, so I really appreciated this topic of conversation in this LinguaMeeting. It allowed me to stay alert but also interested (8, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 60

> *Fue interesante aprender sobre las maneras en cual otras personas ven amor y piensan sobre amor. No fue mucho sobre no estar de acuerdo con las creencias de otras personas pero más sobre aprender sobre otras maneras de ver un tema. Es fácil crear un mundo en el cual solamente ves algo de una manera, pero escuchando a otros provee la oportunidad de cambiar tu percepción. En la*

linguameeting alguien mencionó la confianza como un ingrediente importante a un relacion buena. Estoy de acuerdo con esta idea, y ahora es interesante ver cómo la adición de otros factores cambian mi percepción de un concepto.

"It was interesting to learn about the ways in which other people see love and think about love. It wasn't so much about disagreeing with other people's beliefs, but more about learning about other ways of looking at a topic. It is easy to create a world in which you only see something one way, but listening to others provides the opportunity to change your perception. In the LinguaMeeting session someone mentioned trust as an important ingredient for a good relationship. I agree with this idea, and now it's interesting to see how adding other factors changes my perception of a concept" (35, Task 5 Reflection).

Notably, in Excerpts 59 and 60, participants 8 and 35 relayed different mental processes and conclusions in their critical assumption assessments. Participant 8 (Excerpt 59) considered a change in opinion: "I do not think that my opinions changed entirely," yet maintained her belief: "I do not believe that it changed my personal opinion on this topic" (phase 3a), citing upbringing and cultural differences. Participant 35 (Excerpt 60) described how the discussions "provides the opportunity to change your perception." As a result of participating in the LinguaMeeting session and examining his ideas, participant 35 altered his view on what should be included for a good relationship (phase 3b).

During the coding process, participants commonly expressed a new idea or belief while still maintaining the essence of their previous perspectives. This suggests they experienced modifications or additions to their meaning schemata. These changes reflect

subtle changes to their normative, ingrained rules for interpreting experiences, which can lead to meaning perspective shifts with more meaning schemata modifications or additions over time. Overall, the coding revealed many participants experienced phase 3, often from increased awareness of others' perspectives.

3) While participants expressed interest in hearing others' perspectives, many held onto their own deeply rooted perspectives.

When investigating why participants might have either forgone reflection and critical assessment of their perspectives or decided to maintain their beliefs post-assessment, the coding revealed that participants chose to adhere to their deeply rooted perspectives (Excerpts 61, 62, and 63).

Excerpt 61

> My past LinguaMeeting Coach or my peers on the call did not change my ideas or beliefs. I am stubborn, and it is hard for me to change my mind about things. Regarding matrimony, I have the same beliefs as my mother and father. I think you should date someone for a long time before you marry them. I also think respect and honesty are crucial to a healthy long-term relationship (whether those values are expressed by friends or lovers). However, it was interesting to hear my LinguaMeeting Coach discuss her opinions, being a Peruvian woman. It seems typical to have a long courtship (around two to three years) and value communication highly. These match up with typical American culture and beliefs. My Lingua Meeting Coach, [LinguaMeeting coach's name], talked about her friend's long relationship…While my beliefs were not necessarily changed, it was interesting to hear her perspective. [LinguaMeeting coach's name] and I come

from different backgrounds but share some of the same values on relationships and love (Amanda, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 62

No creo que las ideas y opiniones de mis compañeros de conversación me hicieron cuestionar o incluso cambiar mis propias ideas sobre la clase social, las desigualdades sistémicas y las soluciones porque tengo una fuerte opinión sobre este tema. Aunque es más interesante escuchar las ideas de otros, esta vez, mis opiniones no cambiaron. Pero yo hice tener en cuenta que muchas personas tienen diferentes experiencias de vida por eso este puede seguir opiniones diferentes. Sus experiencias les afecta que vean el mundo.

"I don't think my conversation partners' ideas and opinions made me question or even change my own ideas about social class, systemic inequalities, and solutions because I have a strong opinion on this topic. Although it is more interesting to hear others' ideas, this time, my opinions did not change. But I did keep in mind that many people have different life experiences, and because of this they can have different opinions. Their experiences affect how they see the world" (25, Task 3 Reflection).

Excerpt 63

My peers' answers were a bit different from mine because I grew up in a different part of the country than my peers. I am from the south, so the gender roles are a bit different and more old fashioned there than they are in Arizona. I think we had different ideas because of how we were raised and where we were raised, as the environment that you grow up in has so much effect on what you believe. I think

> that the context of the environment is very important to understand this topic because if I had the same opinions as I do but grew up here it would be very different and unusual, but it is completely normal in Tennessee because of the culture there (29, Task 2 Reflection).

While many participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage with others' ideas, they maintained their perspectives, citing stubbornness or strong opinions tied to culturally informed or experience-derived factors such as upbringing (Excerpts 61 and 63), life experience (Excerpt 62), and geographical roots (Excerpt 63). In some instances, participants might not have modified or added to their meaning schemata because, as previously mentioned, there were instances in which there was a lack of diversity of thought, which limited exposure to differing perspectives. Overall, engagement in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks—which provided the opportunities to learn about others' perspectives—prompted participants to reflect on and assess their own perspectives, experiencing phases 2 and 3 of transformative learning theory.

Research Question 2a: ICC and Transformative Learning Tasks

The second research question (RQ2) aims to investigate participants' changes in ICC, the nature of changes in ICC, and the factors that might have influenced a change in ICC, specifically focusing on participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. Research Question 2a (RQ2a) investigates changes in participants' ICC in each of the domains—cognitive, affective, and behavioral by comparing participants' ICC before and after participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks—thereby investigating the effectiveness of the tasks intended to promote ICC development.

Data Sources for Research Question 2a

To answer RQ2a participants' ICC surveys were analyzed. First, participants' ICC was measured with the ICC survey once at the beginning of the semester before beginning the Task 1 (pre-test), and once at the end of the semester, after having completed Task 5 (post-test). The ICC survey contained 51 randomized Likert scale items pertaining to the three domains of ICC.

Before analyzing the changes in the latent means of the constructs from pre-test to post-test, a structural equation model (SEM) was employed to assess the instrument's validity and reliability. This involved an assessment of the strength of the relationships between latent and observable variables through measurement and structural models as well as an assessment of the consistency of the measurements. Upon confirming the instrument's validity and reliability, a latent means difference test was conducted to identify any statistically significant differences in participants' ICC before and after the intervention.

Results: ICC development

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument. First, within the structure equation modeling (SEM) procedures, a measurement model—a type of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)—was employed to evaluate the validity of the latent variables through the estimated factor loadings (Tables 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18). For each latent variable, or the proposed ICC constructs, goodness of fit statistics were calculated to confirm the validity of the models. As a reminder, an acceptable model is indicated by RMSEA<.06, CFI/TLI>.95, and SRMR<.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Concurrently with the measurement models for the ICC constructs, measurement invariance was assessed to confirm their

consistency over time, enabling comparison of construct means between pre- and post-test.

To satisfy the basic validity requirements of the measurement models, several of the initial constructs were removed. Five constructs remained: (1) cognitive, (2) affective-interaction engagement, (3) affective-interaction confidence, (4) affective-interaction enjoyment, and (5) behavior. For each model, measurement invariance was calculated with comparisons between three different models—configural, metric, and scalar—to ensure each construct represented the same concept across time (pre- and post-test). Statistical insignificance indicated measurement variance that demonstrated equivalence of model form (configural model), equivalence of factor loadings (metric model), and equivalence of item intercepts (scalar model). This indicated ICC construct consistency over time (pre- to post-test).

First, the results revealed an acceptable model fit for the cognitive construct when one of the indicators was deleted from the model (Table 14). A reliability score of 0.8527 indicates a strong correlation between the six survey questions. The standardized estimate loadings from the factor to the observed variables ranged from 0.473 to 0.920, suggesting a small, medium, or large effect size (Gomer, Jiang & Yuan, 2018).[39]

Table 14

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Cognitive Construct

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	p- Value

[39] Gomer, Jiang and Yuan (2018) proposed a set of effect size parameters for SEM, considering the typically non-normal distribution of the data as well as the diverse factors that might convolute fit indices (e.g., model complexity, sample size, ratio of sample size to the number of variables). The parameters are: <0.42 very small, 0.42-0.60 small, 0.60-0.82 medium, and >0.82 large effect size.

Cognitive	(COG1) I know a lot about the cultural products of the target culture(s) (tangible & intangible products) such as social class and inequalities, immigration policies, etc.	0.640	0.000
	(COG2) I am not familiar with cultural products (e.g., how the government works, the preferred characteristics of specific social roles, etc.) of the target culture(s).	0.543	0.000
	(COG3) I know a lot about the cultural perspectives (ideas and attitudes) of the target culture(s), such as values and beliefs.	0.788	0.000
	(COG4) I am familiar with cultural perspectives of the target culture(s), such as values and beliefs related to marriage, trust in the government, etc.	0.826	0.000
	(COG5) I am well aware of the differences between my own culture and the target culture(s).	0.473	0.000
	(COG6) I know a lot about the cultural practices of the target culture(s) (patterns accepted by a society), such as those related to social class, fulfilling social role expectations (e.g., characteristics of a good teacher), etc.	0.920	0.000

Note. Model fit statistics: RMSEA=0.000, CFI/TLI=1.000, SRMR=0.042
Note. Measurement invariance: (1) Metric against configural p-value=0.2713; (2) scalar against configural p-value=0.4632; (3) scalar against metric p-value=0.6433

The results for the affective constructs revealed an acceptable model fit for three of the five affective constructs after the removal of several indicators. The models for the remaining two affective constructs—affective-respect for cultural differences and affective-interaction attentiveness—were not converged. The affective-interaction engagement model revealed an acceptable fit when three of the seven indicators were

removed (Table 15). A reliability score of 0.7179 indicates a moderate correlation between the four survey items. The standardized estimate loadings from the factor to the observed variables were 0.498 to 0.866 suggesting a small to medium effect size (Gomer et al., 2018).

Table 15

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Engagement Construct

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	p-value
Affective-Interaction Engagement (AFFE)	(AFFE1) I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between a person of another culture and me.	0.627	0.000
	(AFFE2) I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with people of another culture.	0.866	0.000
	(AFFE4) I tend to wait before forming an impression of a person of another culture.	0.629	0.000
	(AFFE6) I often show a person of another culture my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.	0.498	0.001

Note. Model Fit Statistics: RMSEA=0.000, CFI/TLI=1.000, SRMR=0.034
Note. Measurement Invariance: (1) Metric Against Configural p-value=0.5231; (2) Scalar Against Configural p-value=0.8823; (3) Scalar Against Metric p-value=0.9882

The affective-interaction confidence model revealed an acceptable fit when two of the indicators were removed (Table 16). A reliability score of 0.7603 indicates a strong correlation between the three ICC survey questions. The standardized estimate loadings from the factor to the observed variables were 0.650 to 0.999 suggesting a medium to large effect size (Gomer et al., 2018).

Table 16

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Confidence Construct

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	p-value
Affective-Interaction Confidence (AFFC)	(AFFC3) I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.781	0.000
	(AFFC4) I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.	0.999	0.000
	(AFFC6) I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.650	0.000

Note. Model Fit Statistics: RMSEA=0.000, CFI/TLI=1.000, SRMR=0.000
Note. Measurement Invariance: (1) Metric Against Configural p-value=0.9321; (2) Scalar Against Configural p-value=0.9857; (3) Scalar Against Metric p-value=0.8967

The affective-interaction enjoyment model revealed an acceptable fit with all three indicators (Table 17). A reliability score of 0.6832 indicates a moderate correlation between the three Likert scale items. The standardized estimate loadings from the factor to the observed variables were 0.656 to 0.821 suggesting a medium to large effect size (Gomer et al., 2018).

Table 17

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Affective-Interaction Enjoyment Construct

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	p-value
Affective-Interaction Enjoyment (AFFIE)	(AFFIE2) I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures	0.656	0.000
	(AFFIE3) I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures	0.767	0.000
	(AFFIE4) I get upset when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.821	0.000

Note. Model Fit Statistics: RMSEA=0.000, CFI/TLI=1.000, SRMR=0.000
Note. Measurement Invariance: (1) Metric Against Configural p-value=0.6919; (2) Scalar Against Configural p-value=0.6546; (3) Scalar Against Metric p-value=0.4257

The model for the behavior domain revealed a potentially acceptable model fit for two of the six constructs—behavior-flexibility and behavior-interaction relaxation—with

one indicator removed. However, a CFI/TLI value below 0.95 for behavior-interaction relaxation model and a p-value of 0.091 for an indicator in the factor loading estimates for the behavior-interaction relaxation construct, an alternative model for the behavior domain was created using exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM). The resulting behavior model included five indicators from diverse proposed behavior latent constructs, which together formed an acceptable model by model fit statistics (Table 18). The indicators were derived from behavior-interaction relaxation (indicators 1 and 4), behavior-identity maintenance (indicator 2), behavior-flexibility (indicator 3), and behavior-message skills (indicator 5). It is important to note indicator 2 of the behavior model has an estimated factor loading of 0.398, which is below 0.42, indicating a very small effect size. However, due the small sample size for the present dissertation, it was deemed acceptable for the behavior construct. A reliability score of 0.7319 indicates a moderate correlation between the five Likert scale items. Other than the 0.398 value, all other estimated factor loadings range from 0.591 to 0.769, indicating a small to medium effect size (Gomer et al., 2018).

Table 18

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Behavioral Construct

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	p-value
Behavioral	(BEHIR2) I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.623	0.000
	(BEHIM1) I find I have a lot in common with people of different cultures during an interaction.	0.398	0.014
	(BEHF4) I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.769	0.000

(BEHIR1) I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.	0.591	0.000
(BEHMS3) I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.	0.586	0.000

Note. BEHIR = Behavior Interaction-Relaxation; BEHIM = Behavior-Identify Maintenance, BEHF = Behavior Flexibility; BEHMS = Behavior-Message Skills
Note. Model Fit Statistics: RMSEA=0.000, CFI/TLI=1.000, SRMR=0. 050
Note. Measurement Invariance: (1) Metric Against Configural p-value=0.6575; (2) Scalar Against Configural p-value=0.9208; (3) Scalar Against Metric p-value=0.9414

The Impact of Transformative Learning Tasks on Participants' ICC. RQ2 examines changes in participants' ICC after participating in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. A latent means difference test was used to determine differences in participants' ICC from pre- to post-test for each ICC construct. The post-test was the outcome, and the pre-test was the predictor. Table 19 shows standardized means at pre- and post-tests for the ICC constructs (scaled as standard deviations).[40] As indicated by an asterisk, the results revealed significant differences between the pre- and post-test for the cognitive, affective-interaction confidence, affective-interaction enjoyment, and behavior constructs. The mean difference between pre- and post-test for affective-interaction engagement construct was not significant.[41] Figure 14 shows the changes in standardized means from pre- to post-test for the constructs for which the change was statistically significant.

Table 19

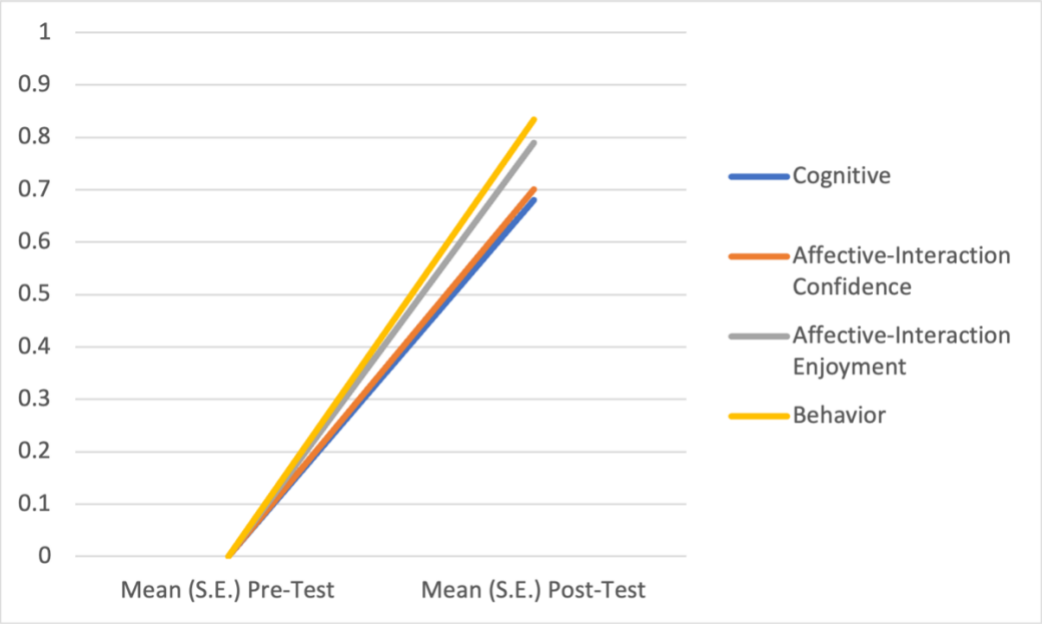
Descriptive Statistics for ICC Survey Pre- and Post-Test

[40] It should be noted that caution should be employed given the use of standard deviations for an ordinal variable (from the 1-6 Likert scale).
[41] Importantly, for affective-interaction engagement, the residual covariance model (theta) is not positive definitive. This could indicate a negative variance/residual variance for an observed variable, a correlation greater or equal to one between two observed variables, or a linear dependency among more than two observed variables. The model could not converge, likely due to low sample size.

Construct	Mean (S.E.) Pre-Test	Mean (S.E.) Post-Test
Cognitive	0	0.68*
Affective-Interaction Engagement	0	-0.222
Affective-Interaction Confidence	0	0.701*
Affective-Interaction Enjoyment	0	0.789*
Behavior	0	0.834*

Figure 14

Representation of Changes in Standardized Mean from Pre- to Post-Test for ICC Constructs



Note. Figure 14: Representation of Standardized Mean Changes from Pre- to Post-Test for Statistically Significant ICC Constructs

Cognitive. As can be seen in Table 19, standardized scores for the cognitive construct at post-test were 0.68 standard deviations greater than at pre-test. The results of the latent mean structure analysis revealed that this difference was significant (z=6.031, p=0.000). That is, participants scored significantly higher at post-test than at pre-test in

the survey questions regarding their knowledge of cultural differences and cultural practices, products, perspectives. This result suggests a positive impact of participation in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks on participants' cognitive domain of ICC.

Affective-Interaction Engagement. As Table 19 demonstrates, the statistical analysis for the affective-interaction engagement construct revealed no significant differences between pre- and post-test (z=-1.932, p=0.053). This indicates there was not a significant change in participants' scores from pre- to post-test.

Affective-Interaction Confidence. As shown in Table 19, standardized means at post-test were 0.701 standard deviations greater than pre-test. The latent mean structure analysis revealed that this difference was significant (z=6.515, p=0.000), indicating participants scored significantly higher at post-test than at pre-test in the survey questions regarding their confidence in intercultural interactions. This finding indicates a positive impact of participation in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks on participants' affective-interaction confidence subdomain of ICC.

Affective-Interaction Enjoyment. Like affective-interaction confidence, standardized means at post-test for affective-interaction enjoyment were greater at post-test. Participants' scores increased on average by 0.789 standard deviations for the affective-interaction enjoyment subdomain, which was statistically significant (z=5.892, p=0.000). This indicates participants scored significantly higher at post-test than at pre-test in the survey questions regarding their enjoyment of intercultural interactions. This suggests a positive impact of participation in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks on participants' affective-interaction enjoyment subdomain of ICC.

Behavior. Lastly, standardized scores for the behavior construct at post-test were 0.834 standard deviations greater than at pre-test. The latent mean structure analysis indicated that this difference was statistically significant (z=8.811., p=0.000). In other words, participants scored significantly higher at post-test than at pre-test in the survey questions regarding their behavior in intercultural interactions. This finding suggests that engaging in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks positively influenced participants' behavioral domain of ICC.

Taken together, these results suggest that after participating in the designed SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks participants' ICC levels were positively affected in terms of their cognitive, affective-confidence, affective-interaction enjoyment, and behavior.

Research Question 2b: Transformative Learning Tasks and ICC Development or Demonstration

Data Sources for Research Question 2b

To support findings from RQ2a and to further investigate the manners in which participants' ICC was affected by the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, participants' reflections and interviews were analyzed. As before, two rounds of coding were employed.

Results: Participants' ICC and its changes

The two rounds of coding resulted in several salient themes, presented below:

1) Participants experienced growth in the cognitive domain by participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, particularly the LinguaMeeting sessions.

2) Participants demonstrated affective-interaction engagement, especially when learning about cross-cultural differences or cultural perspectives from the LinguaMeeting coach.
3) Participants demonstrated affective-interaction enjoyment and affective-confidence in the LinguaMeeting sessions, which seemed to increase as participants gained linguistic skills and familiarity with their LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants.
4) Participants experienced an increase in their behavior-interaction management, behavior-interaction relaxation, and behavior-message skills, which were influenced by a variety of factors.

Notably, while participants reported cognitive or behavior gains in their reflections or interviews (e.g., gained knowledge of a cultural practice, gained vocabulary), their comments rarely communicated growth over time or the addition of something new for the affective domain. Instead, participants' remarks pertaining to the affective domain primarily focused on the reasons why the affective subdomains (e.g., interaction engagement, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment) were pertinent or evoked in the LinguaMeeting sessions. Consequently, the findings on the cognitive and behavioral domains highlighted participants' development and the factors that contributed to it, while the affective domain findings emphasized the actualization of participants' affective subdomains during the LinguaMeeting sessions and the factors influencing the degree of actualization in these subdomains. The salient themes, and their sub-themes, are discussed below.

1) Participants experienced growth in the cognitive domain by participating in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, particularly the LinguaMeeting sessions.

As observed in the results from the quantitative analysis, the data from participants' reflections and interviews demonstrated participants (36/39) experienced growth in the cognitive domain. The results revealed participants gained an awareness of cross-cultural differences and/or others' cultural products, practices, and/or perspectives. Participants credited their new knowledge primarily to the interactions within the LinguaMeeting sessions, particularly with their LinguaMeeting coach (Excerpts 64, 65, and 66).

Excerpt 64

Yo aprendí mucho sobre la confianza del gobierno peruano, y de algunos leyes y iniciativas que el gobierno peruano ha implementado. Para mí, me gusta escuchar a las opiniones y cuentos de la instructora porque por lo general, mis compañeros y yo tenemos las mismas ideas de los Estados Unidos. Nosotros discutimos la corrupción de la policía en América Del Sur. También, yo aprendí que el gobierno peruano ofrece una sistema de salud gratis, aun a los inmigrantes.

"I learned a lot about trust in the Peruvian government, and about some laws and initiatives that the Peruvian government has implemented. As for me, I like to listen to the LinguaMeeting coach's opinions and stories because, generally, my classmates and I have the same ideas about the United States. We talked about

police corruption in South America. Also, I learned that the Peruvian government offers a free health system, even to immigrants" (37, Task 4 Reflection).

Excerpt 65

Sí, tuve la oportunidad de escuchar las perspectivas de mis compañeros de conversación. Ellos, en su mayoría, tenían ideas y opiniones similares a las mías. Generalmente, estuvimos de acuerdo sobre el amor, el matrimonio, el amor verdadero, y el amor a primera vista. Creo que el contexto, como la ciudad, la región, y el país, es fundamental para entender este tema porque en culturas diferentes, las expectativas culturales sobre el matrimonio y otras cosas son diferentes. Por ejemplo, en mi lugar, la mayoría de las personas se casan, pero también es normal nunca casar o divorciar y no buscar otro esposo. Sin embargo, mi coach es de Perú y nos dijo que en Perú, no es normal ser soltero por toda la vida. También, yo dije que en mi lugar, la mayoría de las parejas tienen una boda con una fiesta pero también es aceptado fugarse para casarse. Mi coach nos dijo que en Perú, no es normal fugarse para casarse y que casi todas las personas tienen una boda con una fiesta grande y muchos invitados.

"Yes, I had the opportunity to listen to my fellow LinguaMeeting participants' perspectives. They, for the most part, had similar ideas and opinions to mine. Generally, we agreed about love, marriage, true love, and love at first sight. I think context, such as city, region, and country, is crucial for understanding this topic because in different cultures, expectations about marriage and other things are different. For example, where I'm from, most people get married, but it is also normal to never get married or divorce and not look for another spouse. However,

my coach is from Peru, and she told us that in Peru, it is not normal to be single for life. Also, I said that where I'm from, most couples have a wedding with a party, but it is also acceptable to elope. My coach told us that in Peru, it is not normal to elope and that almost everyone has a wedding with a big party and a lot of guests" (13, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 66

I learned a lot about marriage and relationships in foreign countries during this Lingua Meeting as my instructor was from Spain, and thus knows a lot about the topic. She said that in Spain many people do not get married and it is not as common or necessary as it seems to be in the United States. She believes that this stems back to Spanish dictator in the 20th century who was very conservative and had very strict and offensive marriage laws. For example, divorce was not legal during this time or before it so people had to know exactly what they were doing when getting married. Today, many of the consequences of this are shown as people still do not get married and they have more casual relationships. I found this to be very interesting and basically the opposite of the United States (23, Task 5 Reflection).

As participants reflected on their experiences, they frequently highlighted the information they gained regarding cross-cultural differences and cultural practices, products, and perspectives shared by their LinguaMeeting coach. Participant 37, for instance, learned about general sentiments of trust toward the Peruvian government as well as governmental policies and laws in place. The excerpts from participants 13 and 23 demonstrate increased knowledge regarding marriage in Peru and Spain, respectively,

including the expectations, perspectives, and traditions surrounding marriage. The LinguaMeeting coach often served as the cultural informant for their country, providing "insider" information about cross-cultural differences, and the cultural practices, products, and perspectives.

Beyond the LinguaMeeting session, some participants identified the conjunction of the transformative learning tasks as the contributing factors for cognitive domain development (Excerpts 67, 68, and 69).

Excerpt 67

> Then it was very intriguing to hear the opinion of someone from a foreign country. They are going to have much different social norms and standards of things. My instructor [LinguaMeeting coach] was from Spain and she was able to explain to me how different the work culture is in Spain. It allowed me to better understand why in Spain a situation that happened in Diez Minutos [*cortometraje* for Task 2] is possible (Isabella, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 68

> *Creo que el video y las actividades sobre el video ayudame mucho y informa me sobre la violencia y las noticias terribles es normalmente en muchos parte del mundo. La conversación sobre el video y los eventos en el mundo ayuda a la propia opinión.*
>
> "I think that the video and the activities about the video help[ed] me a lot, and they inform[ed] me about the violence and terrible news that are normal in many partes of the world. The conversation about the video and the world events help[ed] me from my own opinion" (33, Task 4 Reflection).

Excerpt 69

Sí, creo que las actividades de esta unidad me ha ayudado. Me había entendido un poco sobre otras personas perspectivas pero los videos, actividades y las conversaciones me habían ayudado a aprender más sobre personas de países diferentes. No lo había sabido mucho sobre la vida o la clase social en España antes del actividades o LinguaMeeting

"Yes, I think that the activities in this unit have helped me. I [already] understood some about other peoples' perspectives, but the videos, the activities, and the conversations helped me to learn more about people from other countries. I didn't know much about life or social class in Spain before the activities or LinguaMeeting" (Ivy, Task 1 Reflection).

As seen in Excerpt 67, some participants focused on the continuity between the *cortometraje* and the LinguaMeeting session, while others referred to the conjunction of the activities (Excerpts 68 and 69). Isabella (Excerpt 67), for example, focused on how the LinguaMeeting coach's perspective and information served to help her understand the cultural differences showcased in the *cortometraje*, whereas participant 33 and Ivy more generally discussed the activities, noting their gained knowledge of cultural products, practices, perspectives, and/or differences.

(i) Some participants associated an increased knowledge of the LinguaMeeting coach's practices, products, and perspectives with greater global intercultural knowledge.

While not the predominant trend, the results from the coding processes revealed a sub-theme related to cognitive gains: some participants overextended their gained

intercultural knowledge. As can be seen in Excerpts 66 and 70 (below), some participants implied they possessed a greater understanding of many different countries after speaking with their LinguaMeeting coach.

Excerpt 70

Las actividades en esta unidad me han ayudado a obtener una mejor comprensión de las relaciones, así como el matrimonio, ya que me dio tiempo para pensar realmente en ello…Además, me mostró cómo el matrimonio y el amor difieren en otros países, ya que algunos lo tratan más como un derecho de oissage y otros como una decisión muy importante. En general, creo que realmente mejoró mi inteligencia sobre las relaciones y el amor en el mundo.

"The activities in this unit have helped me gain a better understanding of relationships as well as marriage as it gave me time to really think about it. Additionally, it showed me how marriage and love differ in other countries, with some treating it more as a rite of passage and others as a very important decision. Overall, I think it really improved my knowledge about relationships and love in the world" (9, Task 5 Reflection).

For instance, participants' reflections such as "I learned a lot about marriage and relationships in foreign countries during this Lingua Meeting as my instructor was from Spain" (participant 23) and "Overall, I think it really improved my knowledge about relationships and love in the world" (participant 9) present statements in which participants seemed to extend their gained knowledge from the LinguaMeeting coach to be true for a greater cultural community or geographical region. It is possible that participants received perspectives from other countries, as several of their classmates

were not United States natives, but the statements tended to reflect a generalization derived from the LinguaMeeting coach's input.

In sum, while there was a tendency to overgeneralize their gained knowledge, participants demonstrated evidence that they increased their knowledge and awareness of cross-cultural differences, cultural perspectives, cultural practices, and cultural products. Participation in the transformative learning tasks—particularly the LinguaMeeting sessions—contributed to this cognitive domain development.

2) Participants demonstrated affective-interaction engagement, especially when learning about cross-cultural differences or cultural perspectives from the LinguaMeeting coach.

In line with the pre- to post-test quantitative analysis, the qualitative findings revealed participants (30/39) developed or displayed the affective-interaction engagement subdomain of ICC, which entails an open-minded and positive disposition toward interacting with people of different cultures. The analysis of participants' reflections and interviews provided evidence as to how development in affective-interaction engagement might have occurred: participants were intrigued by the novel and/or diverse ideas and information in the LinguaMeeting sessions, fostering their interest in these cross- or multicultural conversations (Excerpts 71, 72, and 73).

Excerpt 71

It was very interesting to see what they [my fellow LinguaMeeting participants] thought and it allowed me to expand my own knowledge and thinking. I also liked that the coach was from Peru, because things are very different there than they are here, so she was able to tell us a little bit of how there are inequalities where she

is, and what they have done to try to improve it. I liked how my classmates gave different ideas that prompted me to think more about the topics, and they all had great ideas that I completely agree with. We all had different knowledge of different subjects so it was really fun and interesting to see what everyone thought (6, Task 1 Reflection)

Excerpt 72

Creo que la reunión me ayudó a entender los roles sociales en diferentes países. La entrenadora de LinguaMeeting es de Perú, y nos contó cómo los roles de los trabajadores, los niños y las mujeres son diferentes a los de los Estados Unidos. No sabía nada de eso, así que fue interesante.

"I think the meeting helped me understand social roles in different countries. The LinguaMeeting trainer is from Peru, and she told us how the roles of workers, kids, and women are different than those in the United States. I didn't know any of that, so it was interesting" (32, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 73

The Lingua Meeting session provided us the opportunity to learn about the context of relationships and marriage between different cultures. In our session we talked with our coach from Peru. She described the traditions associated with marriage in her country. For example, in Peru they are used to big celebrations for weddings. In general, I noticed that there were many connections between both our cultures on this topic that I thought were very interesting. Throughout the conversation I enjoyed sharing my thoughts and experiences (Jonathan, Task 5 Reflection).

Participants' willingness to learn and hold an open mindset enabled them to learn from others. Participants often tied interest in the cross- or multicultural conversations to the presence of new information, often the gained knowledge of others' ideas or perspectives. In his interview, Jonathan expressed he found one of the main benefits of participating in the transformative learning tasks was the opportunity the LinguaMeeting sessions provided to explore others' values with an open mindset (Excerpt 74).

Excerpt 74

> Jonathan: I think that one benefit of the whole LinguaMeeting process was really opening your mindset to explore the values of people from different countries–Spanish speaking countries–I think it's really easy to fall into like the only US-focused mindset, especially if you're growing up here where you don't realize how different other people's perspectives can be, and so getting to hear like that experience and kind of like share, compare, and contrast the two cultures is really interesting (Jonathan, interview).

The results indicated that participants' openness in conversations enabled them to gain insights into others' ideas and perspectives. Evidence of the subdomain of affective-interaction engagement was strongly associated with the LinguaMeeting sessions, as no other task activity was coded for affective-interaction engagement. This, however, is not surprising given this subdomain of ICC pertains to one's engagement within intercultural conversations.

3) Participants demonstrated affective-interaction enjoyment and affective-confidence in the LinguaMeeting sessions.

(i) Participants displayed affective-interaction enjoyment toward the LinguaMeeting sessions.

The analysis of participants' ICC surveys found participants tended to increase in their affective-interaction enjoyment subdomain from pre- to post-test. The results from the analysis of the participants' reflections and interviews showed consistent patterns in which many participants (27/39) displayed the affective-interaction enjoyment subdomain of ICC, especially as they felt more comfortable with the LinguaMeeting coach, their fellow participants, and/or their language skills. This subdomain describes one's experience of positive feelings when engaging in an intercultural conversation. For instance, the interlocutor might feel comfortable, confident, encouraged, or useful. The results revealed participants demonstrated enjoyment when engaging in the cross- or multicultural conversations (Excerpts 75, 76, and 77).

Excerpt 75

Al principio del LinguaMeeting, estuve emocionada. Eso es porque, este tiempo, recordé reservar mi cita temprano para poder reunirme con mi entrenadora favorita. También estaba tan contento de no tener que levantarme temprano esta vez. Mi entrenadora también se alegró de verme, y pasamos la primera parte de la reunión poniéndonos al día. Una vez que empezamos a hablar sobre el tema de la semana, había algunas palabras que quería usar pero yo no sabía cómo decirlas en español en nuestra conversación. La entrenadora me ayudó a encontrar las palabras que necesitaba para discutir el tema de la confianza en el gobierno. Descubrí que era más difícil hablar de este tema porque no sabía tantas palabras relacionadas con él. Sin embargo, me sentí cómodo hablando a

pesar de que cometí algunos errores. Pude comunicar con respeto y sensibilidad a pesar de que teníamos opiniones diferentes sobre la confianza que nuestras países tienen en el gobierno. Estaba orgulloso de poder continuar la conversación sin usar casi nada de inglés.

"I was excited at the beginning of the LinguaMeeting. That's because, this time, I remembered to book my appointment early so I could meet with my favorite coach. I was also so glad I didn't have to get up early this time. My coach was also happy to see me, and we spent the first part of the meeting catching up. Once we started talking about the topic of the week, there were some words I wanted to use in our conversation, but I didn't know how to say them in Spanish. The coach helped me find the words that I needed to discuss the topic of trust in government. I found it was harder to talk about this topic because I didn't know as many words related to it. However, I felt comfortable speaking even though I made some mistakes. I was able to communicate with respect and sensitivity even though we had different opinions about the trust our countries have in the government. I was proud that I could continue the conversation without using almost any English" (22, Task 4 Reflection).

Excerpt 76

I thoroughly enjoyed my latest LinguaMeeting session. I wrote down my thoughts and ideas to prepare for the session and be able to concisely communicate my views and actively participate in the discussion. [Fellow LinguaMeeting participant 1] and [fellow LinguaMeeting participant 2] were also participants in my LinguaMeeting session. They were very polite and attentive listeners and

supported my remarks throughout the discussion. I had no issues expressing my thoughts and my instructor, [name], made the experience very relaxed and interesting. My instructor was very approachable and gave us the confidence to speak our minds each time we spoke (19, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 77

Durante esa sesión de Lingua Meeting, paso tiempo bien. Fue muy divertido y es una pena que fue la última sesión porque fue muy divertida. Todos podemos hablar sobre el tema con detalles únicos sin vergüenza. Durante la sesión, participé mucho porque me sentía confortable hablando con mis compañeros. La directora nos ayuda a hablar sobre el tema mientras nos ayuda con la lengua asi podemos tener una sesión exitosa

"During that LinguaMeeting session, I had a good time. It was a lot of fun and it's a shame it was the last session because it was a lot of fun. We can all talk about the topic in detail without being ashamed [of our thoughts]. During the session, I participated a lot because I felt comfortable talking with my classmates. The LinguaMeeting coach helps us talk about the topic while helping us with the language so we can have a successful session" (24, Task 5 Reflection).

The participants' reflections revealed moments of affective-interaction enjoyment during their LinguaMeeting sessions. This was attributed to positive interpersonal dynamics, a supportive learning environment, and the participants' ability to communicate well (behavior). For example, participant 22 (Excerpt 75) expressed enthusiasm about engaging in intercultural conversations, as she was looking forward to meeting with her LinguaMeeting coach, with whom she had developed a friendship.

Although participant 22 occasionally struggled with finding the right words, she felt comfortable throughout the conversation. By the end, she expressed pride in her ability to navigate the challenging discussion, noting her continued participation, respectfulness, and cultural sensitivity. Participant 22 often connected her positive experiences to the supportive relationship with their LinguaMeeting coach, who fostered a welcoming environment and provided necessary lexical assistance.

Similarly, both participants 19 and 24 found the support of the LinguaMeeting coach contributed to the experience. Participant 19 found the LinguaMeeting coach made the LinguaMeeting session "very relaxed and interesting" and both participants 19 and 24 acknowledged the importance of the language support the LinguaMeeting coach offered. Additionally, participants 19 and 24 both acknowledged the importance of the fellow LinguaMeeting participants in making the conversation enjoyable, sharing their unique perspectives in open and respectful manners. Lastly, the role of preparation prior to the LinguaMeeting session was crucial for some participants, as seen with participant 19, who noted preparation prior to the LinguaMeeting session helped her to enjoy her conversation.

The analysis saw recurring themes of the overlap between ICC domains (e.g., behavior and affective, cognitive and affective) as well as the role of the fellow LinguaMeeting participants in influencing the experience. The LinguaMeeting coach, however, was the most notable influence for prompting participants to develop or display of ICC, including affective-interaction enjoyment.

(ii) Participants displayed affective-confidence in the LinguaMeeting sessions.

The analysis of participants' ICC surveys found participants tended to increase in their affective-confidence subdomain from pre- to post-test. The qualitative analysis aligned with this finding. The subdomain of affective-confidence encompasses self-assurance, knowing what to say, being at ease, and being able to be as sociable as desired in a cross- or multicultural conversation. The results indicated about half of the participants (17/39) reported experiencing this (increased) confidence in the LinguaMeeting sessions. Participants often attributed increased affective-confidence to their (growing) linguistic skills and the familiarity they developed with their LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants (Excerpts 78 and 79).

Excerpt 78

> During this last linguameeting session I felt a lot more confident than in the first one. I felt that I was able to express my ideas well, and the instructor was able to help me when I struggled. I do think talking about love is a lot easier than talking about more complicated topics like injustice and the government…Additionally I learned that while there are differences in the way people think about or talk about love, love is still something that is universal (10, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 79

> I felt good during the LinguaMeeting session. It was easy to maintain my confidence, because this is the fourth session, and I know the instructor and [fellow LinguaMeeting participant] pretty well at this point. I'm getting more comfortable talking about complicated topics such as politics and equality in Spanish, because I know a lot more vocabulary at this point. I can also be general if I don't know how to say the specific thing I want to say. I could easily

> communicate with respect and sensitivity, because I have the vocabulary to give nuance to what I say. That, and I know how to communicate without hurting anyone. I'm glad that it's gotten to the point where I'm more comfortable speaking about difficult topics in Spanish, and I can talk around words that I don't know how to say. I now have the ability to explain myself (28, Task 4 Reflection).

As illustrated in Excerpts 78 and 79, many participants reflected on their gained confidence over the course of several LinguaMeeting sessions. While participants attributed their increased confidence to various factors, they frequently highlighted the expansion of their linguistic abilities and/or their growing comfortability with their LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants. For instance, participant 10 reported feeling more confident due to her ability to articulate ideas effectively, the support from her LinguaMeeting coach, and the more "universal" and less "complicated" topic of discussion. Similarly, participant 28 connected her perceived greater confidence to a stronger rapport with her coach and peers, an expanded vocabulary, greater ease with discussing sensitive topics, and the developed ability to communicate more generally or employ circumlocution when needed. Overall, participants displayed both affective-interaction enjoyment and affective-confidence, which both seemed to benefit from participants' increasingly developed linguistic skills and familiarity with their LinguaMeeting coach and fellow participants.

4) Participants experienced an increase in their interaction management, interaction relaxation, and message skills, which were influenced by a variety of factors.

Reflecting the quantitative results, the qualitative results suggested participants developed their behavior component of ICC; however, the subdomains in which this

growth was observed slightly differed. The behavior construct for quantitative measures consisted of elements from the subdomains of interaction relaxation, identity maintenance, flexibility, and message skills. The qualitative analysis revealed growth in participants' interaction management, interaction relaxation, and message skills, overlapping with interaction relaxation and message skills, but differing with a focus on interaction management rather than identity maintenance and flexibility. This behavioral growth was observed as participants frequently reflected on their conversational skills, noting improvements in their interaction skills as well as the factors that influenced their production or understanding within the LinguaMeeting sessions.

First, participants (36/39) expressed (increased) behavior-interaction relaxation, which encapsulates the ability to be at ease in a cross- or multicultural conversation: initiating conversations, relating to the culturally different interlocutors, and getting along with culturally different interlocutors (Excerpts 80 and 81).

Excerpt 80

Durante mi reunión estaba muy nervioso cuando empezamos. Pero la señora con la que me reuní me hizo sentir cómoda y segura de cometer errores. Pensé que participé mucho en mi reunión. Al principio estaba nerviosa, así que no hablaba mucho, pero me acostumbré rápidamente. Realmente no tuve dificultades para entender a mi tutor, pero tenía que revisar mis notas con frecuencia para responder. Lo que voy a cambiar, es tener mis notas más cerca de mí.

"During my meeting I was very nervous when we started. But the woman I met with made me feel comfortable and safe to make mistakes. I thought I participated

a lot in my meeting. I didn't really have any difficulty understanding my coach, but I had to check my notes frequently to respond" (Nevada, Task 1 Reflection).

Excerpt 81

Finally, LinguaMeeting was a very great opportunity for me not only to improve my skills but also to dispel my anxiety about talking with native speakers and to explore new things in different cultures that I hadn't known before. As I mentioned in the first tarea 3 [Task 1 Reflection], I was nervous before the session started but the session coach was very patient to listen to my poor Spanish and helped me improve (21, Task 5 Reflection).

As can be seen in Excerpts 80 and 81, the role the LinguaMeeting coach was impactful: the LinguaMeeting coach helped participants feel more at ease and facilitated their growth in, or application of, the behavior-interaction relaxation subdomain. For instance, the LinguaMeeting coach helped Nevada to feel "comfortable and safe to make mistakes," and participant 21 reported the LinguaMeeting coach helped to ease his nervousness. The warm and welcoming disposition of the LinguaMeeting coach helped to dispel anxiety participants might have felt, and they demonstrated behavior-interaction relaxation.

Additionally, participants demonstrated behavior-interaction management (32 out of 39 participants) and message skills (21 out of 39 participants), both largely facilitated by the LinguaMeeting coach. Behavior-interaction management can be understood as the ability to express one's ideas and answer questions clearly in intercultural contexts, and behavior-message skills encompass the (pragma)linguistic skills required for cross or multicultural conversations, such as differentiating between informative and persuasive

messages and employing diverse grammatical structures. For instance, the LinguaMeeting coach helped to foster participant 21's message skills (Excerpt 81), as participant 21 wrote the LinguaMeeting coach helped him improve his "poor Spanish." The LinguaMeeting coach's role was pivotal for fostering growth in the behavior domain (Excerpts 82 and 83).

Excerpt 82

Lo que más aprendí de la sesión son los vocabularios nuevos. Por ejemplo, apasionante, aretes, y expresiones nuevas como "las damas primeras". Yo, mis compañeros de la clase, y la maestra hablamos en puro español, y así me ayuda mucho con mi español oral. Este es una buena oportunidad para practicar.

"What I most learned from the [LinguaMeeting] session is the new vocabulary. For example, passionate, earrings, and new expressions like "the first ladies." My classmates, the coach, and I speak only in Spanish, and this helps me a lot with my oral Spanish. This is a good opportunity to practice" (Haoyu, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 83

I felt very confident in my Linguameeting session. Even though my Spanish skills were far from perfect, our instructor was very encouraging and assisted me with any vocabulary or conjugations I was struggling with. There were many moments where I struggled to think of words for how to describe certain ideas, but the instructor would say them out loud and then type them in the chat so they could be saved for future reference. We each were asked to participate around three or four times, and I felt comfortable participating because the instructor was also

very encouraging of the other students. There were moments when I was struggling to explain complex ideas, so next time I will be prepared to answer more concisely with vocab I am comfortable using (10, Task 1 Reflection).

As can be seen in Excerpts 82 and 83, participants appreciated the opportunity to improve their speaking skills, specifically highlighting the LinguaMeeting coach's role in expanding their vocabulary and facilitating conversational practice.

In addition to the LinguaMeeting coach, participants identified preparation prior to the LinguaMeeting session as an important factor in the outcome of their cross- or multicultural conversation (Excerpts 84 and 85).

Excerpt 84

Throughout the Linguameeting it was a little difficult to maintain my confidence in speaking but the instructor was very encouraging. Trying to remember some words and the context of the story was a difficult balance but the instructor was very understanding. I am still able to communicate respectfully remembering it is an academic setting and I am striving to improve my Spanish. I did participate a lot in my Linguameeting, I was confident in introducing myself. We went over material I had already prepared, making it more relaxing to respond to the questions. I was able to compare the social standards and differences between the U.S. and Spain to the instructor. I thankfully did not face any harsh obstacles other than trying to remember keywords. When I did face that problem I would pause and if I could not think of the word I would just find alternatives to tell my explanation. (David, Task 2 Reflection).

Excerpt 85

> I felt pretty confident in this Linguameeting session, which felt very different from the other Linguameeting sessions I have done previously. I came to the meeting adequately prepared, I researched the topics enough beforehand, and I briefly went over the vocabulary as well. I spoke equally with the other person in my group, and in my opinion I felt like it went pretty smoothly. For me, I felt pretty confident, and I was able to maintain this level of confidence because I came to the meeting very prepared and my instructor was incredibly patient with me and the other members in my group. I was able to ask some really interesting questions about Guatemala, which is where my instructor for the meeting is from, which I definitely enjoyed learning about. I definitely participated the most in this particular Linguameeting session compared to the other three sessions I have done in the past. I answered all my questions and really put effort into having a well developed response before answering the question entirely. I found it very easy to interact with my Linguameeting coach, as I was able to ask questions, learn new words, understand different viewpoints, etc. I did not experience any misunderstandings in these sessions because I really took my time answering the questions, asking questions that I didn't understand, and making sure my responses were fully developed before moving on to the next session of the meeting. For next time, I definitely want to continue doing what I did this [time] (17, Task 4 Reflection).

David and participant 17 both acknowledged the role of preparation in contributing to their behavior-relaxation, behavior-management, and/or behavior-message skills. In addition to the encouragement from the LinguaMeeting coach, David

found his preparation made it more relaxing and enabled him to better engage in the conversation. Likewise, participant 17 found, along with the support of the LinguaMeeting coach, the preparation helped her with her behavior relaxation (e.g., maintained her confidence throughout the conversation), behavior-message skills (e.g., used new words and avoided misunderstandings), and behavior-interaction management (e.g., expressed her ideas, understand others' ideas, asked questions). Beyond their LinguaMeeting coach and the preparation they completed prior to the LinguaMeeting session, other factors that affected participants' behavior component of ICC were the LinguaMeeting session group size, the relationship with or disposition of fellow participants, and the task topic. For example, the topic and participants' comfortability discussing it, knowledge about the topic, and/or dominion over relevant words in Spanish for the topic were influential (Excerpts 86, 87, and 88).

Excerpt 86

En el transcurso del semestre, yo he participado más en los linguameetings. A veces es difícil expresar opiniones y conocimientos de un tema en una lengua segunda porque no sabes como decir que quieres mucho del tiempo. Estás limitado por vocabulario y otros factores, y hablas más despacio que estás acostumbrado. Siento que tengo más confianza y más paciencia con mi mismo, he aprendido que necesito tomar tiempo y considerar que voy a decir.

"Over the course of the semester, I have participated more in the LinguaMeeting sessions. Sometimes it's difficult to express opinions and knowledge of a topic in a second language because you don't know how to say what you want to a lot of the time. You are limited by vocabulary and other factors, and you speak more

slowly than you are used to. I feel like I have more confidence and more patience with myself, I have learned that I need to take time and consider what I am going to say" (35, Task 5 Reflection).

Excerpt 87

I am always trying to remain respectful and sensitive which I am able to do but I do not want to accidentally say something bad that I did not realize. I think that mindset is why this was the hardest Lingua Meeting for me. Despite me lacking confidence, I was still able to be respectful to all and not slip up despite thinking I may accidentally. I was trying to maintain a positive mindset and keep talking while being respectful and sensitive. Overall, I am glad we do these meetings because it is a fantastic opportunity to speak with a native speaker and it's a good way of learning to communicate difficult topics in my second language (23, Task 3 Reflection)

Excerpt 88

Durante la sesión de LinguaMeeting, me sentí bien. Me sentí bien preparada para hablar sobre el tema de las relaciones y el matrimonio. No me resultó difícil mantener mi confianza. Esto es porque fue un tema fácil para entender. También, leí las preguntas antes de la sesión y pensé sobre lo que iba a decir

"During the LinguaMeeting session, I felt good. I felt well prepared to talk about the topic of relationships and marriage. It wasn't hard for me to maintain my confidence. This is because it was an easy topic to understand. Also, I read the questions before the session and thought about what I was going to say" (14, Task 5 Reflection).

As observed in the Excerpts 86, 87, and 88, participants found the task topic impacted their confidence and their ability to communicate in the cross- or multicultural conversations. For instance, participant 35 found himself limited by his vocabulary on certain topics—lacking the message skills—yet over time learned to slow down and thoughtfully craft his responses. Participant 23 acknowledged the difficulty in talking about sensitive topics, like immigration (the topic for Task 3). He found his attempt to remain respectful made him less confident, yet the LinguaMeeting session helped him to learn how to communicate on difficult topics in Spanish, bolstering his message skills and interaction management. Lastly, participant 14 found the topic of marriage and relationships (Task 5) was not difficult to discuss because he found it easy to understand and prepared in advance for the LinguaMeeting session.

In sum, participants developed the behavior subdomains of interaction management, interaction relaxation, and message skills. This development was fostered by a number of factors, although the LinguaMeeting coach was the most prominent influence. Another principal factor that contributed to the behavior ICC development was participants' preparation prior to the LinguaMeeting session. Additional factors were the LinguaMeeting session group size, the relationship with or disposition of fellow participants, and the task topic.

Research Question 2c: Factors that Predict ICC Change while Participating in Transformative Learning Tasks

The last sub-question of research question 2—RQ2c—aims to investigate which factors might have influenced a change in ICC, specifically focusing on the participants' participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks and their endogenous

(class, instructor, gender) variables.

Data Sources for Research Question 2c

To answer RQ2c participants' LASs, ICC surveys, and background questionnaires were analyzed. Participants' responses in the LAS surveys were assessed for indicators of transformative learning: highest transformative learning phase selected in all LASs, total number of LASs completed, total number of transformative learning phases selected in all LASs, and the sum of the transformative learning phases selected in all LASs. Additionally, participants' attendance in the LinguaMeeting sessions were extracted from the LinguaMeeting platform: the number of LinguaMeeting sessions attended was also assessed as an indicator of participation in the transformative learning tasks.

The background questionnaire, given in conjunction with the post-test ICC survey, included questions such as participants' gender, academic year, race, and reason for studying Spanish. As shown in Chapter 3, participants' responses to these questions were diverse. Given the small sample size of 39 participants, including categorical predictors that had more than two categories would be problematic. Therefore, those that had more than two categories were excluded from the analysis. It was thus determined that three identifiers were suitable to include in the statistical analysis as predictor variables: course section, gender, and instructor.

Results: Factors affecting ICC development

To investigate the effect of endogenous variables (course section, instructor, and gender) on participants' ICC development, and to further evaluate the impact of participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks on participants' ICC development, data from participants' LASs, participation in the LinguaMeeting sessions,

and the background questionnaires was incorporated into the analysis of changes in participants' ICC as indicators.

After the ICC constructs had been defined and validated (see RQ2a), a comparison of standardized mean differences as a result of the other predictors (those pertaining to participation in the transformative learning tasks and endogenous variables) was calculated using latent means difference test. A comparison of mean differences between pre- and post-test for each construct were assessed with an additional predictor variable, either: (1) total number of LinguaMeeting sessions attended, (2) highest transformative learning phase selected in all LASs, (3) total number of LASs completed, (4) total number of transformative learning phases selected in all LASs, (5) sum of the transformative learning phases selected in all LASs, (6) course section, (7) instructor, or (8) gender. The first five predictor variables were intended to estimate participants' participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks and degree of transformative learning experiences. The last three were included to test the impact of endogenous variables on the participants' scores. The results revealed three predictor variables that had statistically significant effects on participants' ICC: highest transformative learning phase selected in all LASs, total number of transformative learning phases selected in all LASs, and gender.

The predictor variable of highest transformative learning phase selected by participants in all LASs was statistically significant for the cognitive (Table 20), affective-interaction confidence (Table 21), and affective-interaction enjoyment (Table 22) models, although with an inverse effect. On average, an increase of 1 standard deviation in highest transformative learning theory phase selected decreased participants'

cognitive domain score by 0.286 standard deviations, their affective-interaction confidence score by 0.346 standard deviations, and their affective-interaction enjoyment score by 0.392 standard deviations.

Likewise, the predictor variable of the total number of transformative learning phases selected by participants in all LASs was statistically significant and reflected an inverse relationship. An increase of 1 standard deviation in the total number of transformative learning phases selected by participants resulted in a decrease in participants' affective-interaction enjoyment score by 0.314 standard deviations (Table 22).

Lastly, the predictor variable of gender produced statistically significant results for the cognitive domain: males scored 0.452 standard deviations lower (Table 20).[42] Additionally, gender as a predictor approached significance (p=0.091) for the affective-interaction engagement model, but the goodness of fit statistics were not satisfactory. [43]

Therefore, there were two statistically significant predictor variables for the cognitive domain (highest transformative learning phase selected and gender), one statistically significant predictor variable for the affective-interaction subdomain (highest transformative learning phase), and two statistically significant predictor variables for the affective-interaction enjoyment subdomain (highest transformative learning phase selected and total number of transformative learning phases selected).

Table 20

[42] Gender was a categorical variable, coded as binary in which females were assigned the value of "1" (the reference category) and males were assigned the value of "2." Therefore, the inverse relationship demonstrated by the negative estimate value for males suggests the opposite for females.
[43] The goodness of fit statistics for gender on participants' affective-interaction engagement: RMSEA=0.187*, CFI/TLI=0.670*, SRMR=0.163 with an estimate of -0.334 (SE=-.197, p=0.091).

Predictor Variables Affecting the Cognitive Model

Cognitive Predictors	Estimate	SE	Lower	Upper	p-Value	Model Fit Statistics
Highest Transformative Learning Phase Selected	-0.286	0.131	-0.542	-0.031	0.028	RMSEA=0.064*, CFI/TLI=0.948, SRMR=0.083*
Gender	-0.452	0.109	-1.34	-0.519	0.000	RMSEA=0.070*, CFI/TLI=0.940*, SRMR=0.100*

Table 21

A Predictor Variable Affecting the Affective-Interaction Confidence Model

Affective-Interaction Confidence Predictor	Estimate	SE	Lower	Upper	p-Value	Model Fit Statistics
Highest Transformative Learning Phase Selected	-0.346	0.123	-0.176	-0.035	0.005	RMSEA=0.080*, CFI/TLI=0.973, SRMR=0.082

Table 22

Predictor Variables Affecting the Affective-Interaction Enjoyment Model

Affective-Interaction Enjoyment Predictors	Estimate	SE	Lower	Upper	p-Value	Model Fit Statistics
Highest Transformative Learning Phase Selected	-0.392	0.147	-0.68	-0.104	0.008	RMSEA=0.104*, CFI/TLI=0.927*, SRMR=0.115*

Total Number of Transformative Learning Phases Selected	-0.314	0.142	-0.592	-0.036	0.027	RMSEA=0.086, CFI/TLI=0.947*, SRMR=0.068*

In sum, the results highlighted several variables that statistically significantly impacted participants' ICC. First, the results suggest an inverse relationship between the highest transformative learning phase selected by participants and their cognitive, affective-interaction confidence, and affective-interaction enjoyment. Likewise, the data indicates an inverse relationship between the total number of transformative learning phases selected and participants' affective-interaction confidence. Finally, one endogenous variable had a significant effect on participants' change in ICC: females' cognitive scores increased more than males' cognitive scores.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the results for the research questions, highlighting participants' transformative learning experiences and ICC (development), as well as the factors that influenced them. The results suggest the LinguaMeeting sessions were the most impactful activity for fostering transformative learning experiences. However, other activities, such as the *cortometrajes* or preparation questions, also played influential roles for some participants, either independently or in conjunction with other activities. Participants consistently identified the LinguaMeeting coach as the most influential interaction in fostering transformative learning experiences, although fellow LinguaMeeting participants were also perceived to be influential for some participants or in specific tasks. Overall, participants primarily experienced transformative learning

phases 2 (reflection on one's ideas) and 3 (assessment of one's ideas) as a result of participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, primarily from exposure to others' perspectives afforded by the tasks.

In considering participants' ICC, participants demonstrated gains from pre- to post-test, particularly in the cognitive domain and the subdomains of affective-interaction confidence, affective-interaction enjoyment, behavior-interaction relaxation, and behavior-message skills. These gains were supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. Much like the transformative learning experiences, ICC development was attributed primarily to the LinguaMeeting sessions and the LinguaMeeting coach.

Finally, the quantitative analysis revealed several variables that statistically significantly impacted participants' ICC development. These were the highest transformative learning phase selected by participants, the total number of transformative learning phases selected, and gender.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The motivation for this dissertation came from a personal and professional desire to better equip language learners to engage in the increasingly interconnected world. As global communication becomes more essential, fostering the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to effectively and appropriately navigate intercultural interactions is one of the main goals of language education, as emphasized by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Recognizing its significance, educators and scholars have increasingly emphasized intercultural communicative competence (ICC) as a fundamental component of the educational process, and in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), virtual exchange (VE) has gained popularity for its ability to foster language proficiency and ICC through intercultural interaction and cultural richness.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in the use of service provider virtual exchanges (SPVEs), a specific type of VE, due to their practical advantages (e.g., alleviating logistical and technical burdens for educators and guaranteed engagement, preparation, and commitment of native speaker) and their emerging promising potential to foster both language proficiency (e.g., Kessler et al., 2023; Klimanova & Vinokurova, 2021; Warner-Ault, 2020) and ICC (e.g., Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020; Warner-Ault, 2020). However, while there are promising benefits of SPVEs in language education, there is still relatively little known about best pedagogical practices to support second language (L2) learners' development in SPVEs: no established pedagogical model for ICC development in SPVEs currently exists. The prominent VE model for ICC development–

–the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016)—presents both theoretical concerns, such as its reliance on cross-cultural comparisons and minimal attention to reflection, as well as practical challenges in its application to an SPVE, particularly due to participants' inability to engage in collaborative tasks called for by the progressive exchange model. The present dissertation aims to explore the potential of SPVEs for ICC development, and given the increasing use of SPVEs, it was thought imperative to further refine pedagogical practices for fostering ICC.

The alignment and potential of transformative learning theory as a guiding framework for ICC development in L2 learning contexts offered exciting and promising prospects, yet despite findings suggesting language learning contexts provide strong contexts for transformative learning, there is little research on the effects of the application of transformative learning theory as a guiding pedagogical framework for ICC development. This dissertation aims to address these gaps by adopting transformative learning theory within SPVEs, contributing to the field of SLA, and better preparing L2 learners for engagement in multicultural, multilingual communities.

Thus, the overall purposes of this dissertation are to (1) examine how language learners experience perspective transformation with SPVE-centered tasks specifically designed to facilitate transformative learning and (2) explore the relationship between perspective transformation and ICC development. To fulfill these goals, the present dissertation designed and implemented SPVE-centered transformative learning theory tasks in three sections of a third-year Spanish Conversation and Composition course. Participants' transformative learning experiences, the influential activities and interactions, and participants' ICC development after participating in the SPVE-centered

transformative learning tasks were analyzed with a mixed methods approach. Specifically, following research questions were addressed:

(1) How does participating in transformative learning tasks affect learners' experience of transformation?
    a. How do the different activities, including SPVEs, in the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?
    b. How do the different interactions prompted by the transformative learning tasks facilitate transformative learning?
    c. To what extent do fifth-semester Spanish language learners who participate in the transformative learning tasks experience the phases of transformative learning, as outlined in the Learning Activities Survey (LAS) (King, 2009)?

(2) How does participation in transformative learning tasks relate to changes in participants' ICC?
    a. Does participants' ICC change after completing transformative learning tasks?
    b. How did participants demonstrate their ICC, and if changes in ICC occurred, what were the nature of these changes and the factors influencing them?
    c. Which factors predict a change in ICC when participating in transformative learning tasks?

To review, Chapter 1 introduced ICC and how computer-mediated communication (CMC), particularly VE, has fostered ICC development in language

education. While CMC enables unprecedented opportunities for intercultural interaction, factors such as task design, L2 learners' pre-existing ICC, L2 learners' motivation, and the organization of a course can cause failed exchanges (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006). The progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; O'Dowd & Ware, 2009) was then introduced, as a task design framework to promote ICC in VE, but concerns were raised regarding its over-reliance on cultural comparisons and insufficient reflection. Lastly, transformative learning theory was introduced as a promising theoretical and pedagogical guide for ICC development in VE given its positive potential in the L2 learning context and alignment with ICC theory.

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature pertinent to the topics of ICC, CMC for ICC development, and transformative learning theory, noting the need for a pedagogical model to guide ICC development in L2 learning VE contexts. Chapter 3 detailed the methodology and research design of the present dissertation, including the research setting and participants, the instruments used to collect data, and the mixed methods analysis methods. Then, Chapter 4 presented the results of the mixed methods data analysis, providing data to answer each research question.

The present chapter first provides a summary and interpretation of the most significant findings of the study. Then, this chapter highlights conclusions that can be drawn from these results, as related to pedagogical models for ICC development (within VE), transformative learning in L2 contexts, and broader theoretical perspectives on ICC and transformative learning theory. Additionally, the current chapter presents a discussion of some of the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research.

Research Question 1: SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks and Participants' Transformative Learning Experiences

Research question 1 (RQ1) examined how participating in transformative learning tasks affected participants' transformative learning experiences, specifically investigating the impact of the task activities (RQ1a), the impact of various interactions (RQ1b), and the transformative learning phases experienced by participants (RQ1c). The results of the analyses carried out to answer RQ1a revealed that participants frequently emphasized the role of SPVE sessions, or the native speaker (NS)-led small group discussions, as the most influential activity. The results also revealed the activities worked in synergy to foster transformative learning experiences. The main criticisms of the task activities centered on dislike for, or the inability to understand, certain authentic short films and the repetitiveness of the reflections. Additionally, the results for RQ1b found the NS interaction was perceived by participants to be the most influential in fostering transformative learning experiences. Lastly, the analyses for RQ1c revealed participants primarily experienced the transformative learning experiences of reflection on (phase 2) and assessment of (phase 3) their perspectives. The findings from Chapter 4 both align with and diverge from previous literature regarding transformative learning in L2 learning contexts. The following sections will discuss the findings and their relation to previous literature in more detail.

Research Question 1a: Influence of Activities on Transformative Learning Experiences

The key findings regarding RQ1a were:

- Interactions, particularly with native speakers, were the most impactful for prompting transformative learning
    - Aligns with previous research on interactions for transformative learning (Johnson, 2010; Johnson & Nelson, 2010; King, 2000; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022)
    - Unique contribution of the present dissertation: interactions remain impactful within the SPVE environment
- Mixed results on the role of reflection for prompting transformative learning
    - Diverges from previous research (Johnson, 2015; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022; Sosulski, 2013)
- Scaffolded activities, especially those building upon the *cortometrajes* were impactful for prompting transformative learning
    - Aligns with previous research (Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010)

Despite the potential of transformative learning theory, applications in L2 learning contexts have been limited. While some L2 learning studies have examined existing instructional practices and identified resulting transformative learning experiences (Crane, et al., 2017; King, 2000; Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010), the available research on intentionally designed transformative learning instructional approaches in an L2 learning context is limited. There are only two known publications that have reported an intentional incorporation of transformative learning theory tenets to pedagogically guide L2 learning: Crane and Sosulski (2020) and Sosulski (2013). Of these two publications, Crane and Sosulski (2020) conducted the only known empirical study, which focused on implementing structured reflection. In that study, they found

structured reflection was beneficial for prompting metacognition, and in advanced courses, prompting transformative learning. More general research on transformative learning and the L2 learning context have shown that the language learning context can naturally facilitate transformative learning (Crane, et al., 2017; King, 2000; Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010). Together, these studies emphasize the importance of interactions with others (e.g., classmates, instructor, NSs), authentic materials, and critical reflections in facilitating transformative learning. The results of the present dissertation (Chapter 4) support to certain extent prior research in identifying the influential activities for prompting transformative learning experiences.

Similar to previous studies that found interactions with others (e.g., classmates, instructor, NSs), authentic materials, and reflections to be the most influential in prompting transformative experiences for learners, this dissertation found interactions with others were the most impactful. In this dissertation the interactions were operationalized as SPVE sessions in which participants interacted with a NS coach and fellow classmates. These sessions provided exposure to others' ideas, following previous literature regarding the importance of discussions (Johnson, 2010; Johnson & Nelson, 2010; King, 2000; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022) and interpersonal interactions with NSs (Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022).

In these interactions, the NS component emerged as the most influential interlocutor. While participants sometimes attributed transformative learning experiences to their interactions with their fellow classmates, they primarily focused on the role of the NS. This aligns with findings from Johnson and Nelson (2010) and Reisinger and Clifford (2022), who identified NS interactions as one of the most, if not the most,

impactful activities for fostering transformative learning. However, in Johnson and Nelson's (2010) study, participants engaged with NSs in diverse ways: their professor, travel interactions, and working with a NS student. The NSs in Reisinger and Clifford's (2022) study were local community members. A unique contribution of this dissertation is its focus on NS interactions within the SPVE environment. In this dissertation the NSs were the coaches, who were hired by the SPVE company and charged with guiding a culturally focused conversation for L2 learners. This dissertation adds to the literature by showing that engaging with NSs in SPVEs can foster transformative learning experiences through sharing their cultural perspectives. This finding further emphasizes the value of the NS interactions in L2 education and the ability of SPVEs to create a space for them.

Regarding the role of reflection for prompting transformative learning experiences, previous studies have identified reflection as a key activity related to L2 learners' experience of transformative learning in the L2 learning context (e.g., Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Johnson, 2015; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022; Sosulski, 2013), namely for its ability to create a space in which L2 learners critically examine their own and others' perspectives. However, the findings of this dissertation revealed mixed results, diverging from some of the previous findings. While some participants from the present study perceived the reflections to be helpful, others viewed them as repetitive, citing the monotony of the recurring prompts and the mandatory nature of the assignment. The participants' contrasting perceptions about the reflections align with Crane and Sosulski's (2020) observation that reflections were somewhat beneficial for transformative learning, but did not resonate equally for all learners.

In contrast, studies like Reisinger and Clifford (2022) strongly linked reflection to transformative learning. A reasonable explanation for the difference between these results lies in the variation of reflection implementation. Reisinger and Clifford (2022) employed varied forms of reflection: learners engaged in reflective class discussions or conversations in the L2, completed weekly writings in the L2, crafted written reflections in the L1, and composed a final reflection paper in their L2. Interestingly, they found participants viewed the class discussions or conversations in the L2 as the most influential and the written reflections in the L2 as the second most influential activity for prompting a change in perspective.

Different from Reisinger and Clifford (2022), the present dissertation utilized the same reflection method and prompt for all five tasks and offered participants the choice to complete it in English or Spanish. This difference in structure and language choice may explain the differing findings. While the intention of the present dissertation was to maintain consistency for data collection, analysis, and reporting, it might have produced an undesired result, making the reflections a repetitive, mandatory task, rather than an opportunity to engage in critical thinking. Likewise, previous literature on transformative learning in the L2 environment has maintained that students benefit from engaging in reflection in the L1, especially at beginning and intermediate levels (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Reisinger & Clifford, 2018; Johnson, 2015), rather than the L2 as in Reisinger and Clifford's study (2022). These findings highlight the need for further research on effective reflection practices in L2 learning contexts, echoing Crane and Sosulski's (2020) call for identifying key components of successful reflection.

Unique to the present dissertation is the detailed investigation of the interaction between activities and their cumulative effect on transformative learning experiences. The results found the synergy between the activities to be important for fostering or furthering participants' transformative learning experiences. For instance, the comprehension questions helped participants identify linguistic or content-reflated gaps in their understanding from the authentic films (i.e., *cortometrajes*). Having comprehension questions after exposure to authentic films helped participants to deepen their understanding. Additionally, engaging with questions prior to the SPVE sessions (i.e., preparation questions) helped participants begin to recognize their own perspectives. While, for the present dissertation, some of the authentic films were linked to prompting transformative learning experiences on their own, coupling the authentic films with subsequent activities (e.g., comprehension assignment, SPVE sessions) often supported the authentic films' impact.

This finding aligns with previous studies that have found authentic films to be related to transformative learning (Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010). Like both Johnson (2015) and Johnson and Nelson (2010), the authentic films for this study were supported with scaffolded measures. Johnson (2015) reported L2 learners were provided with questions intended to foster comprehension and reflective thinking as they watched the film, and they were provided with instructions on how to view the film more analytically. The L2 learners also wrote a report on the film. Johnson and Nelson (2010) reported more informal scaffolding measures: the professor would pause the movie to add cultural-insider information—explaining and drawing attention to cultural differences—and the class would partake in discussions in the L1 about the films' themes (e.g.,

poverty, love). Similar to Johnson (2015) and Johnson and Nelson (2010), the results of the present dissertation highlight the importance of the additional activities (e.g., questions, discussions) in supporting the transformative learning opportunities afforded by the authentic films.

Overall, findings pertaining to RQ1a demonstrate the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks encouraged transformative learning experiences, with an emphasis on the NS interactions. The results also pointed to the need to further refine reflection practices and the importance of carefully planned tasks that offer appropriate scaffolding.

Research Question 1b: Influence of Interactions on Transformative Learning Experiences

The key findings regarding RQ1b were:

- Interactions with native speakers were the most impactful for prompting transformative learning
    - Aligns with previous research on native speaker interactions for prompting transformative learning (Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022)
    - Unique contribution of the present dissertation: native speaker interactions remain impactful within the SPVE environment

In addition to examining the impact of various activities on Spanish language learners' transformative learning experiences (RQ1a), the present dissertation also investigated how various interactions influenced these experiences (RQ1b). The results revealed that participants frequently emphasized the role of NS in the SPVE sessions as

the most influential interaction, followed by their fellow SPVE session participants. These findings align with previous literature (e.g., Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022), which has emphasized the value of interpersonal interactions—particularly with NSs of the L2—for fostering transformative learning experiences.

For the present dissertation, the role of the NSs was to guide the SPVE sessions: asking prompting questions, encouraging participants responses, sharing their own ideas, and fostering further discussion. Prior to each SPVE session, the NS coaches received the same list of preparation questions provided to the students, which were designed to highlight cultural products, practices, and perspectives, encouraging participants to share their unique experiences, ideas, and beliefs. Additionally, before the first SPVE sessions, the NS coaches were given instructions to center the conversations on the cultural information and to offer their unique ideas.

A plausible explanation for the pronounced impact of the NS coaches on participants' transformative learning experiences is their input, which increased participants' awareness of different cultural products and perspectives and prompted participants to reflect on—and, in some cases, critically assess—their own perspectives considering the new insight. As observed by Johnson and Nelson (2010), NS interactions offer learners both an insider's perspective of the L2 culture and an outsider's perspective on their own L1 culture—an essential dynamic for fostering the critical reflection necessary for transformative learning.

While interactions with fellow SPVE session participants were less frequently highlighted, they nonetheless contributed to transformative learning experiences, whether independently or alongside the NS. The reasoning is the same: in some cases, in the

context of a small group discussion the fellow SPVE session participants shared novel ideas with the group, prompting transformative learning. In line with previous studies that have linked activities like class discussions with transformative learning experiences (e.g., Crane, Fingerhuth & Huenlich, 2017; Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010), the findings of the present dissertation highlight the centrality of human interaction and the exchange of ideas in fostering the awareness and self-reflection necessary for transformative learning.

Research Question 1c: Transformative Learning Tasks and Transformative Learning

The key findings regarding RQ1c were:

- Participants experienced transformative learning
    - Aligns with previous research demonstrating transformative learning can occur in an L2 context (e.g., Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Johnson, 2015; King, 2000; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022; Sosulski, 2013)
    - Unique contribution of the present dissertation: transformative learning can be fostered within the SPVE environment
- Participants experienced phase 2 (reflection)
    - Aligns with Crane and Sosulski (2020), who found reflection as a prominent transformative learning experience
- Participants experienced phase 3 (assessment)
    - Prominence of phase 3b supports ideas about cyclical, ongoing nature of perspective transformation (Calleja, 2014; King, 2008; Taylor, 1997)

In addition to examining the impact of various activities and interactions on Spanish language learners' transformative learning experiences (RQ1a and RQ1b), the present dissertation also investigated the extent to which fifth-semester Spanish learners experienced the phases of transformative learning theory (RQ1c). The results revealed that engagement in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks primarily prompted participants to reflect on (phase 2) and assess (phase 3) their own perspectives. These findings emphasize opportunities to learn about others' perspectives provided through the transformative learning tasks.

Most of the literature on transformative learning theory as a theoretical and pedagogical guide in language learning contexts has provided more general accounts of learners' transformative learning experiences. Rather than provide accounts of unique transformative learning phases experienced by learners, the literature has instead tended to describe learners' experiences by the absence or presence of transformative learning (e.g., Johnson, 2015; King, 2000; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022). For example, in an English as a second language (ESL) study, King (2000), used the Learning Activities Survey (LAS) and categorized participants according to a perspective transformation (PT) index, identifying whether participants experienced (1) a perspective transformation related to ESL classes, (2) a perspective transformation unrelated to the ESL classes, or (3) no perspective transformation. While the reporting methods have varied, many studies have reported that participants experienced transformative learning, either influenced by existing instructional practices and interactions (e.g., Johnson, 2015; Johnson & Nelson, 2010; Reisinger & Clifford, 2022) or influenced by intentionally designed transformative learning tasks (e.g., Crane and Sosulski, 2020; Sosulski, 2013). Like previous studies, the

present dissertation found many participants experienced transformative learning, and unique to this dissertation is a more in-depth examination and reporting of specific transformative learning phases experienced by participants.

Similar to Crane and Sosulski (2020), this dissertation found that (self-)reflection was the most prominent transformative learning experience among L2 learners. It is not surprising, however, that reflection was a predominant experience for participants in Crane and Sosulski's (2020) study, given the intentional use of structured reflections as the primary method to foster transformative learning in the L2 learning context. For the present dissertation, participants strongly identified (self-)reflection as a key outcome of engaging in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, and, while the SPVE sessions were the most common influence, participants also identified other sources that prompted this reflection. This highlights the diverse interactions and activities that facilitated their reflective processes.

Moreover, this dissertation found that through the transformative learning task activities and interactions—either independently or in conjunction with others—participants were not only encouraged to reflect on (phase 2) their perspectives but also to assess them (phase 3). This finding underscores the ability to prompt transformative learning experiences and the diverse pathways through which learners progress through the transformative learning phases. Additionally, it draws attention to possibility that, rather than a comprehensive perspective shift—a restructuring of one's meaning perspectives—, learners might modify or add to an existing meaning schema or add a new meaning schema (Mezirow, 1985). These meaning schemata changes could lead to subsequent changes in their overall meaning perspectives after additional meaning

schemata alterations/additions or with the passage of time. Participants in the present dissertation likely experienced meaning schemata shifts or additions rather than comprehensive perspective shifts, aligning with scholars who have argued the process of perspective transformation is not linear, rather cyclical, and ongoing (Calleja, 2014; King, 2008; Taylor, 1997).

The present dissertation provided important data regarding the phases of transformative learning that participants (perceived to have) experienced. However, inconsistencies emerged between the quantitative and qualitative findings. While the quantitative results suggested participants experienced more advanced phases of transformative learning theory, the qualitative data did not substantiate their experience of the more advanced phases. There were very few instances observed of phases 4-10 in the qualitative data. Several potential explanations may account for this incongruity.

One possibility is that the instruments used to collect qualitative data (i.e., reflection and interview questions) were not structured to elicit responses related to of the later phases of transformative learning, or they did not appropriately capture the later phases. In terms of elicitation, for example, none of the reflection or interview questions directly inquired whether participants had become aware that others also reflect on their perspectives (phase 4). Primarily, participants were asked whether they felt their perspectives had changed and what, or who, had influenced that change. These questions may have constrained opportunities for participants to articulate actions or thoughts linked to the more advanced stages of transformative learning theory. The inability to elicit responses related to the later phases of transformative learning revealed a potential design flaw in the present dissertation. It is also possible that the data collected from the

reflections and interviews did not appropriately capture the later phases. The subtle differences between the transformative learning phases might not have been pronounced enough to be recognized by the researcher.

Another possibility pertains to a concern regarding the reliability of the quantitative data collected through the LAS. The findings may have been skewed by issues such as inconsistent completion of the LAS and additional concerns with data quality. For instance, LAS Question 2 asked participants to identify the transformative learning phrases they felt they experienced. For example, phase 7, a commonly selected phase, read "I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting." However, participants' selection of this phase diverged from the qualitative findings. It is possible that participants misinterpreted this as simply gathering information during the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks rather than actively planning new ways of acting. Such misunderstandings could have led to inflated phase selections, inadvertently leading to seemingly contradictory findings. While King (2009) tested the reliability of the LAS, the hermeneutical reliability check utilized the PT-Index, which categorized participants into broader transformative experience groups rather than assessing the dependability of the individual phases. Additionally, it is worth noting King's (2009) LAS was developed and evaluated in an ESL context, which indicates a notably different context from the L2 learning context: participants' motivation and life experiences might have been drastically different from the L2 participants of the present dissertation.

Overall, findings pertaining to RQ1c demonstrate participants primarily experienced transformative learning experiences of phase 2—reflection on one's perspectives—and phase 3—assessment of one's perspectives. The results also indicate

possible more advanced transformative learning experiences but cannot confirm these experiences due to incongruency between the quantitative and qualitative data. This points to the need to further refine practices for assessing learners' transformative learning experiences.

Research Question 2: SPVE-Centered Transformative Learning Tasks and Language Learners' ICC

The present dissertation examined how participation in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks related to changes in participants' ICC. This study specifically investigated changes in participants' ICC after completing the designed tasks (RQ2a), how participants demonstrated or changed their ICC—and what influenced a change in ICC—(RQ2b), and factors that predicted a change in ICC when participating in transformative learning tasks (RQ2c). A combination of quantitative and qualitative data was used to investigate these topics.

The results revealed that participants demonstrated ICC gains from pre- to post-test, particularly in the cognitive domain and the subdomains of affective-interaction confidence, affective-interaction enjoyment, behavior-interaction relaxation, and behavior-message skills. These gains were supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. Much like the transformative learning experiences, ICC development was attributed primarily to the SPVE sessions and the NS. Lastly, the results highlighted several variables (i.e., the highest transformative learning phase selected by participants, the total number of transformative learning phases selected, and gender) that statistically significantly impacted participants' ICC. These findings support the ability of SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks to foster ICC development, emphasizing the role

of the NS interaction, and they highlight the need for further research regarding the relation between transformative learning and ICC development.

Research Question 2a: ICC and Transformative Learning Tasks and Research Question 2b: Transformative Learning Tasks and ICC Development or Demonstration

The key findings regarding RQ2a and RQ2b were:

- SPVEs can foster ICC development
    - Aligns with previous research (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020; Warner-Ault, 2020)
- SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks can foster ICC development
    - SPVE sessions played a vital role in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral development
        - Raises questions about Bennett's (1986, 1993) recommendation to suspend native speaker interactions
    - Raises questions about ACTFL's emphasis on comparisons as an integral component

Previous research on ICC development in L2 learning contexts has shown that learners can develop ICC, with VE serving as an especially effective tool (e.g., Belz, 2007; O'Dowd, 2005). Building on this work, the present dissertation explored a novel pedagogical approach with SPVEs, a newer form of VE, to investigate its impact on ICC development across cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains—an area that remains underexplored in existing literature. In part due to the novelty of SPVEs, there are not many studies that explore the impact of SPVEs for ICC development, and while the existing literature provides evidence of ICC development (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020;

Warner-Ault, 2020), they used different conceptualizations and operationalizations of ICC.

The present dissertation sought to add to the literature by providing more evidence of ICC development with SPVE-centered tasks and by utilizing qualitative data to identify beneficial components within task design for ICC development in SPVEs. Overall, the results of the present dissertation align with those of Warner-Ault (2020) and Tecedor and Vasseur (2020), reinforcing the potential of SPVE participation to foster ICC development. However, likely because of the differing methodological approaches, the results of the present dissertation are more comparable with Lee and Song's (2019) comparative study on ICC development across study abroad, traditional on-campus, and telecollaborative learning environments, as their study employed a similar conceptualization and operationalization of ICC.

Inspired by Lee and Song (2019), the present dissertation employed a three-pronged approach to conceptualizing and assessing ICC, examining the cognitive, affective, and behavior domains. While prior studies have explored SPVEs' role in ICC development, this dissertation uniquely examined the impact of SPVEs across these three ICC domains and used the qualitative data analysis to help identify specific components of task design that contributed to ICC development, such as the role of the SPVE coach in shaping participants' intercultural understanding.

The results revealed that all three ICC domains showed development, and the qualitative data suggested the SPVE sessions played a vital role in this growth. Notably, the cognitive domain—knowledge of cross-cultural differences and cultural products, practices, and perspectives—was the most recurrently observed area of development in

the quantified qualitative data. Participants largely attributed their increased cultural knowledge to interactions with their SPVE coach, who served as a cultural informant. There was, however, a danger of overgeneralization in which participants associated an increased knowledge of the SPVE coach's products, practices, and perspectives with greater global intercultural knowledge. This finding reiterates the importance of carefully considering the coach's role and training, as well as strategies to help learners critically interpret cultural information. For instance, future SPVE task design might include reflective activities that encourage learners to critically analyze and contextualize their newly gained cultural knowledge, thereby fostering deeper intercultural understanding akin to Byram's (1997) critical cultural awareness.

In addition to these cognitive gains, the present dissertation found participants also demonstrated affective gains. The qualitative investigation revealed participants increased their enjoyment and confidence, especially as they felt more comfortable with the SPVE, their fellow SPVE participants, and/or their language skills. Participants' remarks in their reflections and interviews suggested engagement in multiple SPVE sessions, particularly with the same SPVE coach and fellow participants, might have helped them to grow in their enjoyment and increase their confidence with help from this learning community. While the quantitative analysis of the ICC surveys did not demonstrate a statistically significant gain in affective-interaction engagement, it is worth noting the qualitative data analysis highlighted many participants' open-mindedness when learning about cross-cultural differences or cultural perspectives in the SPVE sessions. The presence of affective-interaction engagement in the qualitative data, despite the absence of its development in the quantitative results, suggests that participants may

have already possessed a certain degree of this disposition. According to Deardorff's (2004; 2006) conceptualization of ICC, attitudes (including open-mindedness) are foundational and facilitate further ICC development. This, furthermore, sheds light on potentially more personal, characteristic traits of ICC (Porto, 2014).

Lastly, the quantitative analysis revealed participants demonstrated growth in behavioral skills, which encompassed the subdomains of behavior-interaction relaxation, behavior-identity maintenance, behavior-flexibility, and behavior-message skills. The qualitative data further supported this development, particularly in the areas of interaction management, interaction relaxation, and message skills, overlapping with the behavior-interaction relaxation and behavior-message skills subdomains. These findings are consistent with Warner-Ault (2020), who found the SPVE sessions fostered development in learners' language skills and ease of conversation in the L2. Similarly, the results resemble findings from Tecedor and Vasseur (2020), who found that SPVE sessions contributed to some participants' Spanish skills and confidence.

This dissertation allowed for a more nuanced investigation into the contributing factors to behavioral development and found the role of the SPVE coach was significant in creating a supportive and interactive environment that facilitated learners' growth. Additional factors included task preparation, SPVE session group size, task topics, and relationships with fellow participants. For instance, completing preparation questions helped equip participants by familiarizing them with key vocabulary and contextual understanding.

The increase in the behavioral domain is particularly noteworthy, as the behavioral domain is typically considered difficult to change (Mendenhall et al., 2004),

as reflected in some conceptualizations of ICC, such as Deardorff's (2004, 2006) process and pyramid models in which the intercultural skills are accompanied by one's knowledge, or cultural awareness, and built upon one's foundational attitudes. While this finding cannot determine a path of acquisition for ICC, it does provide compelling evidence for the effectiveness of the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks in fostering behavioral growth. The findings suggest that the intercultural interpersonal interactions within SPVEs offered valuable opportunities for L2 learners to grow in their behavioral skills.

Overall, the findings suggest that SPVEs, guided by structured tasks and supportive NS interactions, provide a robust space for fostering ICC development across the three domains. While it is difficult to ascertain participants' precise stages within Bennett's (1986, 1993) DMIS, the results bring into question Bennett's (1986, 1993) recommendation of delaying NS interactions until learners reach a specific stage. Contrary to this suggestion, the present findings suggest that engagement in NS interactions, when structured and guided, can be integral to ICC development, challenging this traditional notion of appropriate intercultural learning progression.

Furthermore, these findings highlight the importance of SPVE coach training and carefully scaffolded tasks to maximize SPVE outcomes. The demonstrated effectiveness of the designed SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks in fostering ICC development also raises questions about ACTFL's emphasis on comparison as an integral component of their standards for language learning, suggesting that ICC development can occur even in the absence of compulsory cross-culture comparisons. Taken together, the findings support existing research on the positive potential of SPVEs for ICC

development while also offering new insights into their role in facilitating ICC growth. In sum, the present dissertation suggests that structured, guided conversations with NSs facilitated by the SPVE format can be extraordinarily beneficial for L2 learners' ICC development.

Research Question 2c: Factors that Predict ICC Change while Participating in Transformative Learning Tasks

The key findings regarding RQ2c were:

- More advanced or numerous transformative phases negatively impacted cognitive and affective domains
- Gender was impactful for participants' cognitive domain
    - Aligns with previous research (Tecedor, 2024)

This dissertation uniquely examined how SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks specifically contributed to ICC development, offering fresh insights into both methodology and outcomes. To date, no known studies have specifically measured changes in ICC after participation in SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, making this dissertation a novel contribution to the field. As discussed above, the results revealed significant ICC development in the cognitive, affective, and behavior domains, which participants frequently attributed to the SPVE sessions and the NS SPVE coach. However, additional analyses uncovered several unexpected patterns: (1) an inverse relationship between the highest transformative learning phase selected by participants and their cognitive, affective-interaction confidence, and affective-interaction enjoyment; (2) an inverse relationship between the total number of transformative learning phases selected and participants' affective-interaction confidence; (3) the subsequently

surprising lack of inverse relationship between the highest transformative learning phase or total number of transformative learning phases selected and the behavioral domain; and (4) greater pre- to post-test cognitive ICC scores for females compared to males.

Inverse Relationships in ICC Development. The first two findings suggest that as participants reported experiencing more advanced or numerous transformative phases, their self-perceptions of their ICC, specifically in the cognitive and affective domains, decreased.

One possible explanation for these inverse relationships is the reliability and interpretation of the LAS results. As previously mentioned, the quantitative findings from the LAS may have been skewed by issues such as inconsistent completion of the LAS and concerns with data quality (e.g., misinterpretation of phase meaning). These pose the threat of inflated phase selections, inadvertently leading to seemingly contradictory findings.

Another potential reason for the inverse relationship might be related to the Dunning-Kruger effect (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). That is to say, participants might have overestimated their initial cognitive and affective domains before participating in the transformative learning tasks. Following their transformative experiences, participants may have become more aware of the complexities of ICC, resulting in lower self-assessments in the post-tests. While the exact reasons remain unclear, future research should evaluate the usability of the LAS, particularly Question 2, to determine whether measurement issues contribute to these results.

Notably, the behavioral domain was not inversely impacted, perhaps indicating that participants continued to feel able to communicate as they participated in the

intercultural interactions, even if they were experiencing perspective change. This might indicate participants possessed, or developed, knowledge of "culture-specific patterns of interaction" (Belz, 2003, p. 13), enabling them to alter their strategies and interpret culturally encoded language forms as they engaged in intercultural discussions. In her study on a German and American telecollaboration exchange, Belz (2003) found participants' lack of this pragma-linguistic knowledge prevented them from establishing and maintaining cross-cultural relationships, as they were not equipped to interpret culturally encoded forms nor employ culturally appropriate language to communicate in intercultural interactions.

Another possible explanation as to why the behavioral domain might not have been affected is that the SPVE coach played a crucial role in fostering participation and maintaining a supportive environment, even as participants critically examined their own and others' perspectives. The SPVE coaches might have explicitly drawn attention to the culturally encoded language forms to support learners, or they might have engaged as sympathetic listeners, willing to overlook pragma-linguistic offenses. This again highlights the need to further investigate the role of the SPVE coach and potential training opportunities for the SPVE coaches on how to draw learners' attention to culturally encoded language or form to best support them. Further research is needed to confirm these findings, and caution should be employed in their interpretation due to possible limitations, such as the subjective nature of self-reported LAS responses and the small sample size.

Gender-Based Differences. The third unexpected finding pertained to participants' gender: females scored significantly higher than males from pre- to post-test

for the cognitive domain. Although this pattern has not been widely reported in exisiting ICC literature, similar results were observed by Tecedor (2024a) in a study examining social justice culture curriculum and ICC development. Tecedor (2024a) found that changes in ICC scores were significantly lower for males across several ICC subdomains when compared to females. While the present dissertation cannot fully explain the differences in gains for the cognitive domain between males and females, this result points to broad trends in language learning literature (e.g., Ellis, 1997; Klee, 1987; Shakouri & Saligheh, 2012; van der Slik, van Hout, & Schepens, 2015), which has highlighted differences between genders.[44, 45] The results of the present dissertation highlight the need to examine how transformative learning tasks and SPVE practices can better support male learners, and, in alignment with Tecedor (2024a), the present dissertation recommends further investigation for how curriculum or pedagogical practices changes might reduce this divide.

When taken as a whole, the results from this dissertation support the hypothesis that transformative learning tasks can foster ICC development in an SPVE format, which importantly offers structured and guided intercultural conversations. However, further research is needed on the relationships between transformative learning experiences and ICC development and the endogenous variables (like gender) that might facilitate or

[44] See Shakouri and Saligheh (2012) for a summary of principal arguments presented for and against gender as an influential factor in second language acquisition, and see van der Slik, van Hout, and Schepens (2015) for a large-scale study on "the gender gap in second language acquisition."
[45] It should be noted that female participants performed better, demonstrating greater ICC gains, yet that does not indicate they have, or will, acquire the language better. Performance does not equate to language acquisition.

hinder learners' transformative learning and ICC development as well as methods to create the most fruitful experience for all.

The Use of Transformative Learning Theory for Guiding ICC Development in SPVEs

Driven by a desire to better equip language learners to engage in the increasingly interconnected world, this dissertation examined the effectiveness of a novel pedagogical approach for third-year Spanish language learners. Taking advantage of the promising new form of VE—SPVE—the present dissertation explored the potential of SPVEs for ICC development. In contrast to the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016), with its reliance on cross-cultural comparisons, limited emphasis on reflection, and collaborative nature, the present dissertation created an SPVE-centered task sequence that consisted of authentic materials followed by comprehension questions, preparation questions for the SPVE session, a NS-led SPVE session, and a written reflection. These tasks were pedagogically and theoretically guided by transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978). The findings from implementing the designed SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks among third-year Spanish language learners revealed several practical implications for future SPVE-centered tasks aimed at fostering ICC development.

First, the findings of the present dissertation demonstrate the positive potential and illustrated success of implementing transformative learning theory as a guiding theoretical and pedagogical framework for ICC development in SPVEs. At the outset of this dissertation the common theoretical stances and goals of both transformative learning theory and ICC development that were considered were the emphasis on reflection,

dialog, and open mindedness. Of these shared tenets, dialog—operationalized as the SPVE sessions—proved to be one of the most impactful components of the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. The intercultural interactions allowed learners to engage in conversations that presented conflicting information and viewpoints from their own frames of reference, driving both ICC development and transformative learning. The overall success of these SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks for fostering ICC provides encouraging support for researchers, administrators, and educators seeking to harness the convenience and power of SPVEs for ICC development.

In addition to the encouraging success of the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, an additional implication is the importance of NS interaction within the SPVE sessions. This was evident in the influence of the NS interactions on both participants' transformative learning experiences and their ICC development. The NS fostered an environment conducive to developing important intercultural communication knowledge and skills and offered new perspectives to the Spanish language learners. Given the SPVE coaches' significant influence on participants' transformative learning experiences, it merits consideration of their role as well as further investigation of how they are trained and how they carry out this role in the SPVE sessions. That is to say, if SPVE coaches assume the role of cultural informant, care must be taken to prevent their perspective from morphing into overgeneralizations or stereotypes, as cautioned by scholars of (inter)cultural instruction (e.g., Baker, 2015; Bennett, 1986, 1993; Garrett-Rucks, 2016).

The interactions with fellow SPVE session participants were not as influential overall in fostering transformative learning or ICC development; although, in certain

cases Spanish language learners reported being impacted by their fellow participants' contributions that presented differing ideas. The similar beliefs held by many participants created a void of diversity of thought and isolated the NS SPVE coach as the principal source of differing perspectives. Exposure to others' frames of reference, however, is crucial for fostering an understanding of a cultural group's practices, products, perspectives, and interactional processes, all of which help individuals to engage appropriately and effectively (Byram, 1997). Likewise, recognizing others' perspectives plays an important role in facilitating the subsequent transformative learning experiences of examining one's own perspective and making meaning perspective or schemata shifts in response to this disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1978). Therefore, while the group setting was observed to be beneficial for some participants by lowering their anxiety in the intercultural interactions, this finding draws attention on how educators cannot assume small groups of learners will provide exposure to differing perspectives. Rather, educators should seek to provide opportunities for NS interactions, such as though SPVEs, and they might consider evaluating group dynamics to more purposefully create diverse small groups for discussions.

An additional practical implication derived from the findings of this dissertation is the role and implementation of the reflections. While reflections have been argued to be crucial for language learners' transformational learning (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Kitchenham, 2008) and ICC development (Bennett, 1986, 1993; Byram, 1997; Byram & Wagner, 2018; Fantini & Garrett-Rucks, 2016), the present dissertation found only some of the participants found them to be beneficial for transformative learning or directly linked them to ICC. Given participants' complaints that the reflections were repetitive,

educators might consider employing reflections in different modalities or structures. For example, Reisinger and Clifford (2022) employed a variety of reflection activities including whole class discussion reflections in the L2, informal interpersonal speaking activities in the L2, weekly written blogs in the L2, written reflection assignments in the L1, and a final, longer written reflection in the L2. While Reisinger and Clifford (2022) found the L2 discussions to be the most influential for fostering transformative learning, the other forms in the L2 were also well-perceived. Exploring new modalities or structures for reflections might allow learners to fully embrace the benefits of reflection, such as recognizing their own and others' perspectives.

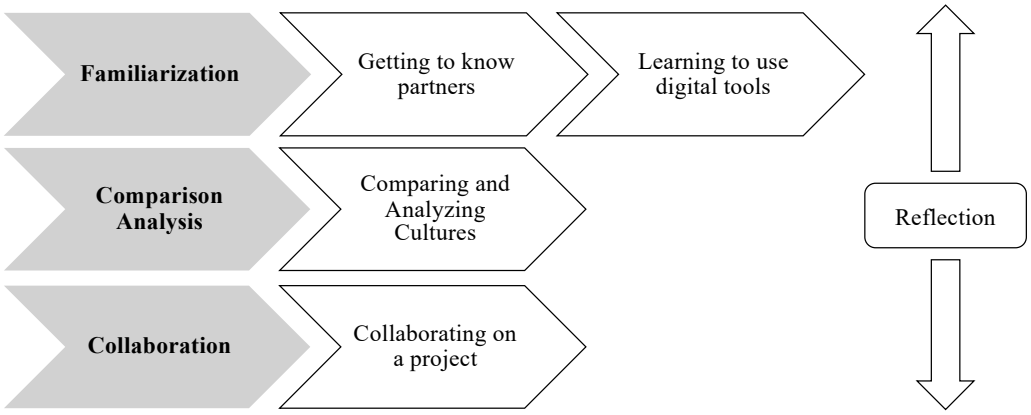
Lastly, the success of the designed SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks demonstrates following the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016) (Figure 15) in the SPVE format is not required to facilitate ICC development.[46] While educators or administrators might attempt to adapt the progressive exchange model for the SPVE environment (Figure 16), they might also consider a reconceptualized task design for L2 learners' ICC development within SPVEs.[47] This dissertation found its reconceptualization of the task design for SPVEs—the transformative learning theory-guided tasks—encouraged participants' ICC development in all three domains. As such, a proposed model for task design is presented (Figure 17).

[46] While reflection was not explicitly incorporated in the original progressive exchange model descriptions (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016), the representation in Figure 15 includes reflection throughout the familiarization, comparison/analysis, and collaboration stages. This comes from O'Dowd and Lewis' (2016) desire to incorporate more reflection in the VE process as well as personal reports of O'Dowd's recent promotion of reflection throughout the progressive exchange model in academic talks and/or conferences.

[47] Tecedor (2024b) proposed an adapted version of the progressive exchange model for the SPVE context. This is the only known proposed model for task design for ICC development specifically for SPVEs, yet it has not been extensively studied.

Figure 15

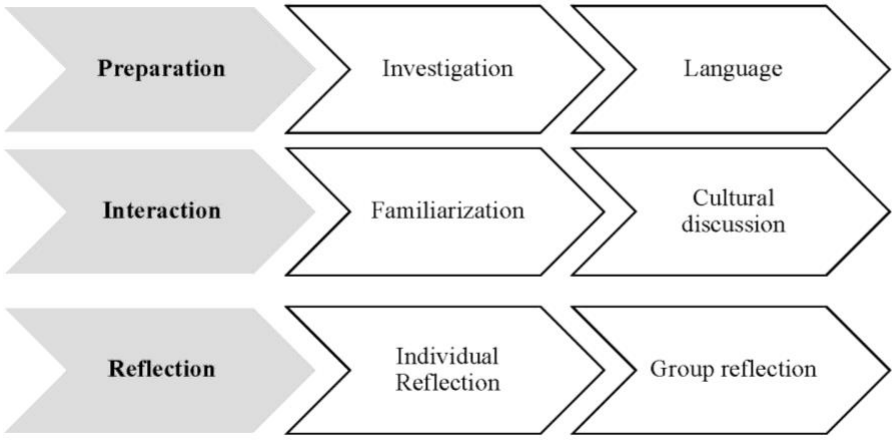
Progressive Exchange Model (Adapted from O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016)



Note. Figure 15: Progressive Exchange Model (Adapted from O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016)

Figure 16

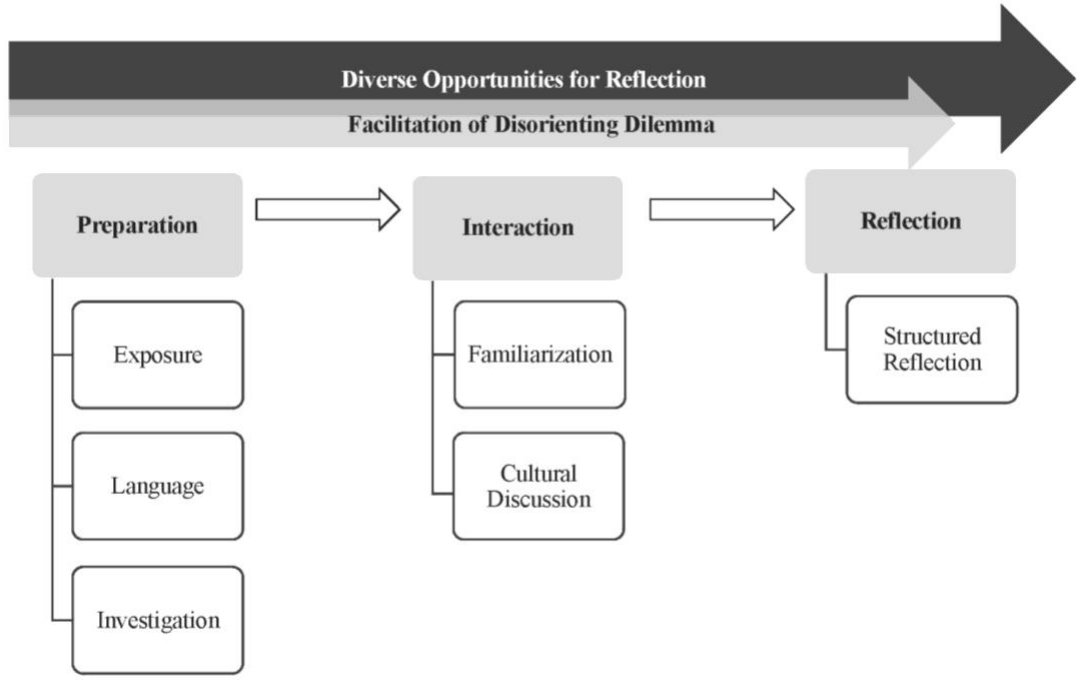
Proposed Adaption of the Progressive Exchange Model for SPVEs (Adapted from Tecedor, 2024b)



Note. Figure 16: Proposed Adaption of the Progressive Exchange Model for SPVEs (Adapted from Tecedor, 2024b)

Figure 17

Proposed Model for Transformative Learning Theory-Guided Tasks for ICC Development in SPVEs



Note. Figure 17: Proposed Model for Transformative Learning Theory-Guided Tasks for ICC Development in SPVEs

Like Tecedor's (2024b) adapted progressive exchange model for SPVEs, the proposed model consists of three stages: preparation, interaction and reflection. The preparation stage of the proposed model focuses on exposure, language, and investigation. Exposure centers on authentic materials that draw L2 learners' attention to a cultural topic. Based on the findings of this dissertation, these materials should be proficiency-level appropriate, engaging, and supported by scaffolding. Engaging with the authentic materials may prompt transformative learning experiences, such as disorienting dilemmas that encourage participants to recognize on their own ideas. Additionally, the preparation stage equips learners for discussion of the cultural topic through activities

that assess their understanding of the authentic material and highlight key lexicon or forms learners might need for communication. Learners should also further explore the cultural topic and begin reflecting on their ideas in preparation for the SPVE session.

The SPVE sessions occur within the interaction stage, which should focus on familiarization and cultural discussion. As initially emphasized by the progressive exchange model (O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016), it is important that learners to get to know one another for the VE, and even the exchange of personal biographical information can provide opportunities to employ ICC, such as intercultural sensitivity. The present dissertation found that to foster transformative learning experiences and ICC development, it is important for participants to gain comfortability, which facilitates their active participation and the sharing of their unique perspectives in the SPVE sessions. The cultural discussion should focus on exposure to others' perspectives, both that of their classmates and the NS SPVE coach. The interaction stage encourages (further) transformative learning experiences and ICC development by, for instance, helping learners to discover others' perspectives in the intercultural conversations.

Lastly, the reflection stage is designed to draw attention to the importance of reflection while providing a structured opportunity for learners to engage in it more deliberately (if they have not already done so). Although the findings of this dissertation revealed that participants had varied perceptions of the reflections, previous research has highlighted the critical role of reflection for both ICC development (e.g., Bennett, 1986, 1993; Byram, 1997) and transformative learning (Crane & Sosulski, 2020; Kitchenham, 2008), warranting its inclusion in the proposed model with modifications to the original

task design. This dissertation follows Crane and Sosulski's (2020) suggestion to incorporate structured reflection, providing an opportunity for learners to actively engage in the reflective process even if they did not naturally engage previously in the sequence of activities. Additionally, informed by the findings of Reisinger and Clifford (2022), the proposed model for task design incorporates diverse reflection opportunities in both the L1 and L2 throughout the task sequence. These reflective activities may occur in various forms—both formal and informal—including whole class discussions, interpersonal reflective speaking activities, or short or long reflective writings. Overall, the proposed model fosters transformative learning experiences, such as disorienting dilemma, reflection, and assessment of one's ideas, throughout the task. By creating several opportunities, or entry points, for transformative learning experiences and ICC development, the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks supports each learner in their personal developmental or learning experience.

This novel approach addresses concerns regarding the use of progressive exchange model with SPVE for ICC development, such as its design for more collaborative learning contexts, in which both, or all, VE participants were attempting to learn something. In contrast, the SPVE context does not inherently facilitate a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, while the progressive exchange model relies heavily on cross-cultural comparisons, guided by national language learning standards, a task sequence guided by transformative learning theory does not explicitly prioritize such comparisons. While there is still a risk of prompting overgeneralizations and othering (Tecedor & Vasseur, 2020), the SPVE-centered transformative learning theory tasks allowed learners to develop ICC without fixating on overgeneralized cross-

cultural comparisons. Lastly, the progressive exchange model's limited emphasis on reflection is addressed through its integration as a core stage in the proposed model, alongside the incorporation of regular and diverse reflection practices throughout the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks. Given the illustrated success of the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, the present dissertation recommends further exploration of transformative learning theory as a pedagogical and theoretical framework for fostering ICC development in SPVE contexts.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

Here, this dissertation presents a discussion of some of the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research. One of the main limitations of the current study is that sample size. The relatively small sample size affected the statistical procedures, limiting their ability to ascertain certain degrees of reliability. This impacts the degree of generalization permitted from the findings and prevented certain conclusions from being drawn. Notably, the data size was especially small for the LASs, which were completed inconsistently by many participants. Additionally, related to the completion of the LASs, another limitation is the potential for self-selection bias, which likely resulted in the underrepresentation of certain student demographics or profiles. Likewise, the convenience subsample selection for the interviews may not have represented the sample, and it is prone to bias overall, limiting the generalizability to the greater L2 learner population.

With regards to the study design, one of the study's limitations was the lack of a control group. Without a control group, it is not possible to ascertain whether participants' transformative learning experiences and development of ICC resulted

specifically from participation in the SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks, as opposed to other factors. Additionally, the data collected from the reflections presents potential limitations. While the specific terminology of "ICC" and "transformative learning" were not used, learners were asked to answer at least one question pertaining to ICC (part A) and one question pertaining to their experience of transformative learning (part B). The prompting questions were nearly the same for each task, only slightly altered to reflect the task topic. This complicated the data analysis and interpretation because not all participants answered all the questions, which created uneven dispersions of data for certain research topics.

While the findings of this dissertation support the ability of SPVE-centered transformative learning tasks to foster ICC development, the findings also highlight the need for more research regarding the relation between transformative learning and ICC development to further refine practices, such as data collection and best pedagogical practices for reflection. Future research should evaluate the usability of the LAS, particularly the results of Question 2, to determine whether the data can be used in non-generalized or PT-index fashions to accurately describe individuals' transformative learning experiences. Additionally, as noted by Garrett-Rucks (2016), there are very few guidelines to assist language educators in determining how to incorporate reflections into intercultural learning. The present dissertation calls for further research on effective reflection practices in L2 learning contexts, echoing Crane and Sosulski's (2020) call for identifying key components of successful reflection.

Additionally, further research is needed on the relationships between transformative learning experiences and ICC development and the endogenous variables

(like gender) that might facilitate or hinder learners' transformative learning and ICC development as well as methods to create the most fruitful experience for all. Lastly, given the impact of the NS SPVE coaches, future research might explore how to train and support the coaches as well as how to encourage students to critically engage with the perspectives shared during these interactions, thereby deepening the transformative potential of the learning experience.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: LIST OF OBJECTIVES

Lección 1 Introducción: La clase social y las desigualdades

Overview:
En esta unidad, vamos a tratar el tema de la desigualdad relacionada con la clase social en diferentes contextos geopolíticos. Además de identificar situaciones en las que se producen desigualdades sistémicas, hablaremos de las soluciones que diversas regiones han implementado para superarlas, y discutiremos la posibilidad de usar esas soluciones en distintos contextos geopolíticos. Finalmente, reflexionaremos sobre lo que hemos aprendido.

Objetivos:

- Identificar algunas de las desigualdades sistémicas relacionadas con las clases sociales en tu ciudad/región/país
- Identificar soluciones que han implementado las instituciones u organismos (públicas o privadas) para superar las desigualdades sistémicas.
- Discutir la posibilidad de incorporar las soluciones identificadas en diferentes contextos.
- Reflexionar sobre lo que has aprendido en relación a las desigualdades y sus posibles soluciones en diferentes contextos.

APPENDIX B

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: COMPREHENSION ASSIGNMENT

Lección 1 Tarea 1: La clase social y las desigualdades

Preguntas sobre el cortometraje "Viaje a Marte"

Después de ver el cortometraje “Viaje a Marte” por Juan Pablo Zaramella y hacer las actividades que corresponden (dentro de VHL), contesta las siguientes preguntas.

1. En el cortometraje Antonio, como niño, dice: “Cuando sea grande, voy a ir yo en un cohete a Marte”. ¿Cuál era tu sueño cuando eras niño? ¿Todavía persigues los sueños de tu infancia? Explica tu respuesta
2. Cuando Antonio se hace adulto, abandona su sueño de niño ¿por qué? ¿Piensas que él mismo se considera una persona exitosa? ¿Por qué?
3. Y en tu ciudad/estado/país ¿Crees que todas las personas tienen la posibilidad de perseguir sus sueños de la infancia? Explica tu respuesta.
4. ¿Cuáles son los factores que en tu opinión determinan que una persona pueda alcanzar esos sueños de infancia?

IMPORTANTE: Recuerda escribir frases completas y explicar tus ideas
FORMATO: Un documento (doc, docx, pdf, txt)
NOMBRE DEL ARCHIVO: Apellido_Lección1Tarea1.docx (e.j., Doe_Lección1Tarea1.docx)

Rúbrica

Criterio	**Ratings**					**Pts**
Content	**5 pts Excellent** Includes ALL elements required	**4 pts Good** Includes MOST elements required	**3 pts Regular** Includes SOME elements required	**2 pts Poor** Includes FEW to NONE elements required	**0 pts Unacceptable** Insufficient material to grade	5 pts
Development	**5 pts Excellent** Is FULLY developed: provides rich information, and the main ideas are supported	**4 pts Good** Is WELL developed: provides information related to the topic, and main idea are	**3 pts Regular** Is SOMEWHAT developed: information is related to the topic, but main	**2 pts Poor** Is NOT developed. Main idea are NOT supported	**0 pts Unacceptable** Insufficient material to grade	5 pts

		MOSTLY supported	ideas are NOT fully supported			

APPENDIX C

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: PREPARATION QUESTIONS

Lección 1 Tarea 2: La clase social y las desigualdades

LinguaMeeting: Sesión 1

En esta primera sesión vas a hablar con un hablante nativo y 1-2 compañeros durante 30 minutos. El tema de la sesión va a ser **la clase social y las desigualdades**. Tus objetivos son:
1) conocer a tus compañeros
2) compartir tu opinión sobre el tema y
3) descubrir la opinión de tus compañeros.

Participarás en la primera sesión de LinguaMeeting entre el 16 y el 22 de enero.

¡Asegúrate de prepararte!

PREPARACIÓN:
En el video "Viaje a Marte" Juan Pablo Zaramella nos muestra la conexión entre la clase social y las desigualdades sociales en Argentina. Después de ver el video, respondiste a una serie de preguntas para reflexionar sobre las desigualdades en tu ciudad/estado/país.

Pensando en el cortometraje y en tus opiniones sobre la situación en tu ciudad/estado/país, responde a las siguientes preguntas:

- En tu opinión ¿cuál(es) es/son la(s) mayor(es) causa(s) de desigualdad en tu ciudad/estado/país? Justifica tu respuesta con ejemplos concretos.
- ¿Qué iniciativas han implementado las instituciones (públicas y/o privadas) de tu ciudad/estado/país para intentar superar las desigualdades? ¿Crees que han funcionado? Explica tu respuesta.
- ¿Qué papel juegan, en tu opinión, los sectores públicos (el gobierno y sus instituciones) y privado (organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro u organizaciones privadas) en el aumento de las desigualdades y en la implementación de las soluciones?
- ¿Crees que funcionarían esas iniciativas en un contexto (ciudad/estado/país; sector público/privado) diferente? Explica tu respuesta.

DURANTE LA CONVERSACIÓN:
Fase 1: Conoce a tus compañeros (5-10 minutos)

- Preséntate (nombre, edad, origen, profesión, estudios, aficiones, etc)
- Conoce a tus compañeros

Fase 2: la clase social y las desigualdades (15-20 minutos)

- Provee tu opinión sobre el tema
- Averigua la opinión de tus compañeros sobre el tema

Fase 3: Cierre de la conversación (5-10 minutos)

- Resumen de las opiniones del grupo.

Rúbrica

Criteria	**Ratings**			**Pts**
Punctuality	**3 pts** **Very Good** The student is on time	**2 pts** **Acceptable** The student is somewhat on time	**1 pt** **Not acceptable** The student is more than 5 minutes late to class	3 pts
Prepared for Class	**3 pts** **Very Good** The student is prepared. The student is familiar with the content and demonstrates they have thought-out their answers.	**2 pts** **Acceptable** The student is somewhat prepared. The student seems to be familiar with some of the content and has somewhat thought about their answers.	**1 pt** **Not acceptable** The student is not prepared. The student does not seem familiar with the content and has not thought about their answers.	3 pts
Participation	**3 pts** **Very Good** The student is a very active participant and provides engaged contributions to questions, conversation or discussion. Interactions show respect for and interest in the viewpoint of others.	**2 pts** **Acceptable** The student participates and contributes to questions, conversation or discussion. Interactions show respect for and some interest in the viewpoint of others.	**1 pt** **Not acceptable** The student does not participate. Contributions are minimal and do not add to the ongoing conversations or respond to peers' contributions.	3 pts

APPENDIX D

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING TASK EXAMPLE: REFLECTION PROMPT

Lección 1 Tarea 3: La clase social y las desigualdades

Preguntas de reflexión
Después de participar en la sesión de LinguaMeeting, usa estas preguntas para guiar tu reflexión. No tienes que contestar todas las preguntas, pero tienes que contestar **por lo menos 1 pregunta de Parte A y 1 pregunta de Parte B.** Contesta las preguntas que corresponden más a tu experiencia.

Escribe, por lo menos, **una página** a doble espacio (≈300 palabras), y sube el documento aquí. Puedes escribir **en inglés o español** (o una combinación).

Puedes ver la versión inglesa de estas preguntas aquí.

PARTE A (contesta por lo menos una de estas preguntas)

1. Define lo que has aprendido de la clase social y las desigualdades en diferentes contextos. ¿Qué más aprendiste de la sesión de LinguaMeeting? Describe brevemente.
2. Durante la sesión de LinguaMeeting, ¿Cómo te sentiste? ¿Te resultó difícil mantener tu confianza? ¿por qué? ¿Pudiste comunicar con respeto y sensibilidad? Explica tu respuesta.
3. Describe tu participación en la sesión de LinguaMeeting. ¿Participaste mucho? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no? ¿Te resultó difícil interactuar con el/la tutor(a)? ¿Experimentaste alguna dificultad o malentendido? ¿por qué? ¿cómo lo solucionaste? ¿Qué vas a cambiar la próxima vez en tu forma de actuar para mejorar tu interacción? Describe brevemente.

PARTE B (contesta por lo menos una de estas preguntas)

4. Para esta unidad viste un video, contestaste unas preguntas sobre el video, y tuviste una conversación con unos compañeros de clase y un hablante nativo. ¿Cómo piensas que cada una de estas actividades te ayudó a formar tu propia opinión? Describe brevemente.
    a. El video
    b. Las actividades sobre el video
    c. La conversación
5. Durante la conversación, tuviste la oportunidad de escuchar las perspectivas de tus compañeros de conversación, ¿tenían ideas y opiniones diferentes a las tuyas? ¿Crees que el contexto (ciudad/región/país) es fundamental para entender este tema? Describe brevemente.
6. ¿Crees que las ideas y opiniones de tus compañeros de conversación te hicieron cuestionar o incluso cambiar tus propias ideas sobre la clase social, las desigualdades sistémicas y las soluciones? Explica tu respuesta.
7. ¿Crees que las actividades de esta unidad (video, actividades, conversación) te han ayudado a entender y valorar las perspectivas de otras personas sobre la clase social, las desigualdades sistémicas y las soluciones o piensas que ya sabías la

información que se presentó en el video y en la conversación? Explica tu respuesta.

IMPORTANTE: Recuerda escribir frases completas y explicar tus ideas
FORMATO: Un documento; 1 página a doble espacio
NOMBRE DEL ARCHIVO: Apellido_Lección1Tarea3.docx (e.j., Doe_Lección1Tarea3.docx)

Rúbrica

Criteria	**Ratings**					**Pts**
Content	**5 pts Excellent** Includes ALL elements required	**4 pts Good** Includes MOST elements required	**3 pts Regular** Includes SOME elements required	**2 pts Poor** Includes a FEW to NONE of elements required	**0 pts Unacceptable** Insufficient material to grade	5 pts
Development	**5 pts Excellent** Is FULLY developed: provides rich information, and the main ideas are supported	**4 pts Good** Is WELL developed: provides information related to the topic, and main idea are MOSTLY supported	**3 pts Regular** Is SOMEWHAT developed: information is related to the topic, but main ideas are NOT fully supported	**2 pts Poor** Is NOT developed. Main ideas are NOT supported	**0 pts Unacceptable** Insufficient material to grade	5 pts

APPENDIX E

ICC SURVEY

Each statement (total 51 items) is a Likert-scale item (1-6).

1: Cognitive-Knowledge (Modified from Lee & Song, 2019)
(1) I know a lot about the cultural products of the target culture(s) (tangible & intangible products) such as social class and inequalities, immigration policies, etc.
(2) I am not familiar with cultural products (e.g., how the government works, the preferred characteristics of specific social roles, etc.) of the target culture(s).
(3) I know a lot about the cultural perspectives (ideas and attitudes) of the target culture(s), such as values and beliefs.
(4) I am familiar with cultural perspectives of the target culture(s), such as values and beliefs related to marriage, trust in the government, etc.
(5) I am well aware of the differences between my own culture and the target culture(s).
(6) I know a lot about the cultural practices of the target culture(s) (patterns accepted by a society), such as those related to social class, fulfilling social role expectations (e.g., characteristics of a good teacher), etc.
(7) I am not familiar with cultural practices (e.g., norms for marriage and relationships, how trust in the government is built, etc.) of the target culture(s).
2: Affective-Interaction Engagement (Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale)
(1) I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between a person of another culture and me.
(2) I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with people of another culture.
(3) I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
(4) I tend to wait before forming an impression of a person of another culture.
(5) I often give positive responses to a person of another culture during interactions.

(6) I often show a person of another culture my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
(7) I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
3: Affective-Respect for Cultural Differences (Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale)
(1) I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.
(2) I respect the values of people from different cultures.
(3) I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
(4) I can tell when I have upset a person of another culture during our interaction.
(5) I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
(6) I think my culture is better than other cultures.
4: Affective-Interaction Confidence (Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale)
(1) I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
(4) I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
(5) I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
5: Affective-Interaction Enjoyment (Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale)
(1) I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
(2) I get upset when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
6: Affective-Interaction Attentiveness (Chen and Starosta's (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale)

(1) I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I am sensitive to a person of another culture's subtle meanings during our interaction.
7: Behavior-Behavioral Flexibility (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.
(4) I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.
8: Behavior-Interaction Relaxation (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.
(2) I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I find it is easy to identify with a person of a different culture during our interaction.
(4) I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures.
(5) I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.
9: Behavior-Interactant Respect (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I always show respect for a person of a different culture during our interaction.
(2) I always show respect for the opinions of a person of a different culture during our interaction.

(3) I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.
10: Behavior-Message Skills (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.
11: Behavior-Identity Maintenance (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I find I have a lot in common with people of different cultures during an interaction.
(2) I find it is difficult to feel people of different cultures are similar to me.
(3) I always feel a sense of distance with people of different cultures during our interaction.
12: Behavior-Interaction Management (Portalla & Chen's (2010) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale)
(1) I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I am able to answer questions effectively when interacting with people from different cultures.

APPENDIX F

A MODIFIED VERSION OF KING'S (2009) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY (LAS)

As adults learn a new language and culture, they often think about how it fits into their way of thinking. This questionnaire is about your experience as an adult Spanish learner. With your help we can assist more Spanish learners. The questionnaire only takes a short time to complete. Thank you for being part of this project.

1. Name: _____
2. Since you participated in the *LinguaMeeting* sessions and related activities, do you think any of your ideas or points of view have changed? (Your ideas about the Spanish-speaking countries, Spanish-speakers, the Spanish language, your native language, or country may be topics of possible change).
    a. Yes
    b. No[48]
3. Here is a list of some of the changes you may have experienced. Please check off any that apply to you.
    a. Something happened that made me think about the way I usually act.
    b. Something happened that made me think about my ideas about social roles. (Examples of social roles include what a mother or father should do and how an adult child should act.)
    c. As I thought about these things, I realized that I did not agree with my previous beliefs or role expectations anymore.
    d. Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations.
    e. I realized that other people also think about their beliefs.
    f. I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.
    g. I tried to think of a way to adopt these new ways of acting.
    h. I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.
    i. I began to try out new ways of acting.
    j. As I tried out new roles, I became more comfortable or confident in them.
    k. I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.
    l. I do not identify with any of the statements above.
4. Many things can influence a change of ideas or points of view. How much did each assignment influence the change?
        i. Watching the *cortometrajes* influenced my change of ideas or points of view.
            1. Likert scale 1-6 (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)
        ii. Completing the comprehension assignments (*Tarea 1*) influenced my change of ideas or points of view.
            1. Likert scale 1-6 (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)
        iii. Preparing for the *LinguaMeeting* sessions (*Tarea 2*) influenced my change of ideas or points of view.
            1. Likert scale 1-6 (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)
        iv. Participating in the *LinguaMeeting* sessions (*Tarea 2*) influenced my change of ideas or points of view.

[48] If "no" is selected, the survey ends

1. Likert scale 1-6 (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)

v. Answering the reflective questions post-*LinguaMeeting* sessions (*Tarea 3*) influenced my change of ideas or points of view.

1. Likert scale 1-6 (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)

5. Did a person influence the change? Who? (Example: another student, *LinguaMeeting* coach, etc.). Explain. _____
6. Anything to add? Comments?: _____

My name is Noelle Kerber, and I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Marta Tecedor Cabrero in the School of International Letters and Cultures at Arizona State University. For my dissertation, I am conducting a research study to better understand how we can use technology to better facilitate impactful language and culture learning experiences.

I am recruiting individuals to participate in an interview about your LinguaMeeting experience. The interview will last about 30 minutes. The interview will be audio-recorded and stored in a password-protected, two factor authentication account and erased after 10 years.

Researchers seek participants who experienced (or did not experience) a transformational learning experience in participating in videoconferencing sessions and completing related activities.

Your participation is voluntary, and you will be gifted a $25 gift card for participation. Your participation will in no way affect your class grade.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please email me at nkerber1@asu.edu.

7. If you are interested, please provide your name and ASU email address. I greatly appreciate it, and I look forward to hearing about your experience![49]
    a. Name: _____
    b. Email: _____

[49] This only appears on the last LAS (for the fifth task).

APPENDIX G

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ SPA 313 Instructor: _____
Gender: _____ Date of birth: ____/____/_____
Race: _____ Your birthplace: _____
Parents' birthplace: _____
What is your cultural background? _____
Native language(s): _____
Language(s) spoken in childhood home(s): _____

List all languages that you speak (other than native language and Spanish):
_____

Have you ever lived abroad? Yes / N
If you answered YES.... What country (or countries) did you live in?
_____ For how long? _____
Major(s) at ASU: _____ Minor(s): _____
Current academic status:

a. 1st year
b. 2nd year
c. 3rd year
d. 4th year
e. 5th year
f. other: _____

Reason for taking Spanish (check all that apply):

- minoring in Spanish
- majoring in Spanish
- undeclared/undecided
- taking Spanish as graduation requirement
- taking Spanish for enjoyment (not a requirement)
- other: _____

Spanish classes <u>prior</u> to this course:
Please indicate how many years or semesters you've studied Spanish.
_____ # years of Spanish classes in <u>elementary and middle school.</u>
_____ # years of Spanish classes <u>in high school.</u>
_____ # semesters of Spanish classes <u>in community college</u>
_____ # semesters of Spanish classes <u>at ASU</u>
_____ # semesters of Spanish classes <u>at different four-year university</u>

APPENDIX H

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

This interview will ask follow-up questions from the answers to reflection questions and the Learning Activities Survey (LAS). This interview should only take half any hour to complete, and your responses will be anonymous. Thank you in advance for being part of this project; your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

1. Have you used *LinguaMeeting* prior to SPA 313? If so, can you describe that experience?
2. Thinking back over your *LinguaMeeting* sessions, the corresponding activities, and the survey you completed, have you experienced a time when you realized that your values, beliefs or perspectives had changed?
3. Can you describe which values, beliefs or perspectives changed?
4. Briefly describe the experience in which your values, ideas or beliefs changed:
5. What do you think triggered it?
    a. Was it a person who influenced the change?
    b. Was it (part of) an assignment that influenced the change? (short films; comprehension questions; preparation for or participation in LinguaMeeting sessions, reflection questions post-LinguaMeeting)
6. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed:
    a. When did you first realize this change had happened? Was it while it was happening, mid-change, or once it had entirely happened (retrospective)?
    b. What made you aware that this change had happened?
    c. What did your participation in *LinguaMeeting* and completing the corresponding activities have to do with it?
    d. What did you do about it?
    e. How did/do you feel about the change?
7. Sometimes students experience a less positive change in values, ideas, or beliefs. Do you think you might have experienced any changes in values, ideas or beliefs that weren't positive?
8. If so, can you describe which values, beliefs or perspectives changed?
9. Briefly describe the experience in which your values, ideas or beliefs changed:
10. What do you think triggered it?
    a. Was it a person who influenced the change?
    b. Was it (part of) an assignment that influenced the change? (short films; comprehension questions; preparation for or participation in LinguaMeeting sessions, reflection questions post-LinguaMeeting)
11. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed:
    a. When did you first realize this change had happened? Was it while it was happening, mid-change, or once it had entirely happened (retrospective)?
    b. What made you aware that this change had happened?
    c. What did your participation in *LinguaMeeting* and completing the corresponding activities have to do with it?
    d. What did you do about it?

e. How did/do you feel about the change?

12. Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX I

LEE AND SONG (2019): COGNITIVE DOMAIN ITEMS

Cognitive-Knowledge
(1) I know a lot about the cultural products of the target culture (tangible & intangible products), such as literature, architecture, art, paintings, song, dance, a system of education, etc.
(2) I know a lot about the cultural perspectives (ideas and attitudes) of the target culture, such as values and beliefs.
(3) I am well aware of the differences between my own culture and the target culture(s).
(4) I know a lot about the cultural practices of the target culture (patterns of behavior accepted by a society), such as turn-taking in conversation, the use of gestures, table-manners, and socially appropriate behaviors for dating or weddings.

APPENDIX J

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE (CHEN & STAROSTA, 2000)

Interaction Engagement
(1) I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.
(2) I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.
(3) I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
(4) I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.
(5) I often give positive responses to my culturally-distinct counterpart during our interactions.
(6) I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
(7) I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
Respect for Cultural Differences
(8) I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.
(9) I respect the values of people from different cultures.
(10) I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
(11) I can tell when I have upset my culturally-distinct counterpart during our interaction.
(12) I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
(13) I think my culture is better than other cultures.
Interaction Confidence
(14) I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
(15) I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
(16) I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
(17) I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.

(18) I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
Interaction Enjoyment
(19) I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
(20) I get upset when interacting with people from different cultures.
(21) I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
Interaction Attentiveness
(22) I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
(23) I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
(24) I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.

APPENDIX K

INTERCULTURAL EFFECTIVNESS SCALE (PORTALLA & CHEN, 2010)

Behavioral Flexibility
(1) I am not always the person I appear to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
(2) I often act like a very different person when interacting with people from different cultures.
(3) I find the best way to act is to be myself when interacting with people from different cultures.
(4) I am afraid to express myself when interacting with people from different cultures.
Interaction Relaxation
(5) I find it is easy to talk with people from different cultures.
(6) I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.
(7) I find it is easy to identify with a person of a different culture during our interaction.
(8) I find it is easy to get along with people from different cultures.
(9) I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.
Interactant Respect
(10) I always show respect for a person of a different culture during our interaction.
(11) I always show respect for the opinions of my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.
(12) I use appropriate eye contact when interacting with people from different cultures.
Message Skills
(13) I have problems with grammar when interacting with people from different cultures.
(14) I often miss parts of what is going on when interacting with people from different cultures.

(15) I have problems distinguishing between informative and persuasive messages when interacting with people from different cultures.
Identity Maintenance
(16) I find I have a lot in common with people of different cultures during our interaction.
(17) I find it is difficult to feel my culturally different counterparts are similar to me.
(18) I always feel a sense of distance with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.
Interaction Management
(19) I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.
(20) I am able to answer questions effectively when interacting with people from different cultures.

APPENDIX L

KING'S (2009) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY: HIGHER ED

This survey helps us learn about the experiences of adult learners. We believe that important things happen when adults learn new things. Only with your help can we learn more about this. The survey only takes a short time to complete, and your responses will be anonymous and confidential. Thank you for being part of this project; your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

1. Thinking about your educational experiences at this institution, check off any statements that may apply.
    a. I had an experience that caused me to question the way I normally act.
    b. I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles. (Examples of social roles include what a mother or father should do and how an adult child should act.)
    c. As I questioned my ideas, I realized that I did not agree with my previous beliefs or role expectations anymore.
    d. Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations.
    e. I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.
    f. I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.
    g. I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.
    h. I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them.
    i. I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.
    j. I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.
    k. I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behavior.
    l. I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.
    m. I do not identify with any of the statements above.
2. Since you have been taking courses at this institution, do you believe you have experienced a time when you realized that your values, beliefs, opinions or expectations and changed?
    a. Yes
    b. No

    If "Yes," please go to question #3 and continue the survey.
    If "No," please go to question #6 and continue the survey.
3. Briefly describe what happened.
4. Which of the following influenced this change (Check all that apply)
    Was it a person who influenced the change?
    a. Yes
    b. No

    If "Yes," was it…(check all that apply)
    a. Another student's support
    b. Your classmates' support
    c. Your advisor's support
    d. A challenge from your teacher
    e. Your teacher's support

f. Other: _____

Was it part of a class assignment that influenced the change?

a. Yes
b. No

If "Yes," what was it? (check all that apply)

g. Class/group project
h. Writing about your concerns
i. Personal journal
j. Nontraditional structure of a course
k. Internship or co-op
l. Deep, concentrated thought
m. Personal learning assessment (PLA)
n. Verbally discussing your concerns
o. Term papers/essays
p. Self-evaluation in a course
q. Class activity/exercise
r. Lab experiences
s. Personal reflection
t. Assigned readings
u. Other: _____

Was it significant change in your life that influenced the change?

a. Yes
b. No

If "Yes," what was it? (check all that apply)

a. Marriage
b. Birth/adoption of a child
c. Moving
d. Divorce/separation
e. Death of a loved one
f. Change of job
g. Loss of job
h. Retirement
i. Other: _____

5. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed, what did your being in school have to do with the experience of change?
6. Would you characterize yourself as one who usually thinks back over previous decisions or past behavior?

a. Yes
b. No

Would you say that you frequently reflect upon the meaning of your studies for yourself, personally?

a. Yes
b. No

7. Which of the following have been a part of your experience at this institution? (Please check all that apply.)
    a. Another student's support
    b. Your classmates' support
    c. Your advisor's support
    d. Class/group project
    e. Writing about your concerns
    f. Personal journal
    g. Nontraditional structure of a course
    h. Internship or co-op
    i. Deep, concentrated thought
    j. Personal learning assessment (PLA)
    k. A challenge from your teacher
    l. Your teacher's support
    m. Other: _____
    n. Verbally discussing your concerns
    o. Term papers/essays
    p. Self-evaluation in a course
    q. Class activity/exercise
    r. Lab experiences
    s. Personal reflection
    t. Assigned readings
    u. Other: _____

    Which of the following occurred while you have been taking courses at this institution?
    a. Marriage
    b. Birth/adoption of a child
    c. Moving
    d. Divorce/separation
    e. Death of a loved one
    f. Change of job
    g. Loss of job
    h. Retirement
    i. Other: _____
8. Sex:
    a. Male
    b. Female
9. Marital Status:
    a. Single
    b. Married
    c. Partner
    d. Divorced/separated
    e. Widowed
10. Race:

a. White, non-Hispanic
b. Black, non-Hispanic
c. Other: _____
d. Hispanic
e. Asian or Pacific Islander

11. Current major:
    a. Allied Health
    b. Business
    c. Computer Science
    d. English
    e. General Arts/Liberal Studies
    f. Nursing
    g. Science/Engineering
    h. Social Sciences (Education, Psychology, Sociology)
    i. Other: _____
12. Prior education:
    a. High school diploma/GED
    b. Associates degree
    c. Bachelors degree
    d. Masters degree
    e. Doctorate
    f. Other: _____
13. How many semesters have you been enrolled at this institution?
    _____
14. Age:
    a. Below 21
    b. 21-24
    c. 25-29
    d. 30-39
    e. 40-49
    f. 50-59
    g. 60-69
    h. Over 70

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

APPENDIX M

KING'S (2009) LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS: HIGHER ED

Name _____ Date _____
School _____ Interviewer _____

This interview is a part of research that included the survey you took. The research is about experiences of adult learners. We believe that important things happen when adults re-enter school and learn new things. Only with your help can we learn more about this. The interview should only take half an hour to complete, and your responses will be anonymous. Thank you in advance for being part of this project; your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

The interview questions are designed to gather further information about the topics covered in the original survey, so some of them may sound familiar to you.

1. Thinking back over your education at your institution, have you experienced a time when you realized that your values, beliefs or expectations had changed?
2. Briefly describe that experience:
3. Do you know what triggered it? If so, please explain:
4. Which of the following influenced this change? (Check all that apply)
    a. Was it a person who influenced the change?
        i. Yes
        ii. No
    b. If "Yes," was it…
        i. Another student's support
        ii. Your classmates' support
        iii. A challenge from your teacher
        iv. Your teacher's support
        v. Your advisor's support
        vi. Other: _____
    c. Was it part of a class assignment that influenced your change?
        i. Yes
        ii. No
    d. If "Yes," what was it?
        i. Class/group project
        ii. Writing about your concerns
        iii. Personal journal
        iv. The format of the course
        v. Internship or co-op
        vi. Deep, concentrated thought
        vii. Assigned readings
        viii. Personal learning assessment (PLA)
        ix. Verbally discussing your concerns
        x. Term papers/essays
        xi. Self-evaluation in a course
        xii. Class activity/exercise
        xiii. Lab experiences
        xiv. Personal reflection
        xv. Other: _____

e. Or was it a significant change in your life that influenced the change?
    i. Yes
    ii. No
f. If "Yes," what was it?
    i. Marriage
    ii. Loss of job
    iii. Moving
    iv. Divorce/separation
    v. Change of job
    vi. Addition of a child
    vii. Death of a loved one
    viii. Retirement
    ix. Other: _____
g. Perhaps it was something else that influenced the change. If so, please describe it:

5. Describe how any of the above educational experiences influenced the change:
6. What could have been done differently in the classes to have helped this change? What specific activities?
7. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed:
    a. When did you first realize this change had happened? Was it while it was happening, mid-change, or once it had entirely happened (retrospective)?
    b. What made you aware that this change had happened?
    c. What did your being in school have to do with it?
    d. What did you do about it?
    e. How did/do you feel about the change?
    f. Do you have any questions?

_____
Interviewer comments:

APPENDIX N

IRB APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Marta Tecedor Cabrero
CLAS-H: International Letters and Cultures, School of (SILC)
(480) 965-4660.
marta.tecedor@asu.edu

Dear Marta Tecedor Cabrero:

On 12/22/2022 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Task Design for Intercultural Communicative Competence: Bridging Transformative Learning and Intercultural Communicative Competence Development
Investigator:	Marta Tecedor Cabrero
IRB ID:	STUDY00017190
Funding:	Name: Graduate College
Grant Title:	
Grant ID:	
Documents Reviewed:	• Appendix A: Demographic Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Appendix B: ICC Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Appendix C: Participation Recruitment, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Appendix D: Surveys and Coursework Consent, Category: Consent Form; • Appendix E: Recruitment Interview, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Appendix F: Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey

	questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Appendix G: Interview Consent, Category: Consent Form; • Appendix H: Heritage Language Learner Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Social Behavioral Procedure Form, Category: IRB Protocol;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (1) Educational settings, (2)(ii) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation (low risk) on 12/22/2022.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Noelle Kerber
Noelle Kerber