ABSTRACT

The attitude and motivation of twenty-one Venezuelan students learning English at Boston University was assessed using two means: a controlled interview and a bilingual adaptation of the Gardner et al. 1974, Attitude Scales. Neither measure showed statistically significant correlations between positive attitude or strong motivation and progress in second-language learning over a three or six month period. However, interview scores for motivation and culture shock differentiated between the two best and two worst students, suggesting that further exploration of the interview technique would be of value in the assessment of affective factors. (Author).
TWO MEASURES OF AFFECTIVE FACTORS AS THEY RELATE TO PROGRESS IN ADULT SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING.

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Nancy Backman
Program in Applied Psycholinguistics
Boston University

The attitude and motivation of twenty-one Venezuelan students learning English at Boston University was assessed using two means: a controlled interview and a bilingual adaptation of the Gardner et al. 1974 Attitude Scales. Neither measure showed statistically significant correlations between positive attitude or strong motivation and progress in second-language learning over a three or six month period. However, interview scores for motivation and culture shock differentiated between the two best and two worst students, suggesting that further exploration of the interview technique would be of value in the assessment of affective factors.

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TWO MEASURES OF AFFECTIVE FACTORS
AS THEY RELATE TO PROGRESS IN ADULT SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING

There is no question that adult students learning English as a second language vary in the amount of progress they make. It has been hypothesized that their motivation for learning as well as their attitude towards the target language, culture and people may relate to their differential success. However, can these psychological variables be measured well enough so that their relation to the language learner's progress can be determined?

The purpose of this paper is to report on an exploration of this problem, namely, ways of assessing attitude and motivation in adult second-language acquisition. The research was carried out at Boston University over a six month period. It will be shown that in the sample of twenty-one Venezuelan students learning English an interview technique yielded more insights into the motivation of the best and worst language learners than did a written attitude scale. However, neither measure of these affective factors showed significant correlation with progress in language learning.

What concepts have been included in the domain of affective factors by researchers in second-language acquisition? Felt to be important by Gardner and Lambert (1972) are attitudes towards the native and target language, culture, and people, as well as the nature and strength of the motivation to learn. Two aspects of this motivation were hypothesized, the instrumental versus the integrative orientation. The instrumental motivation characterized those learners who wanted to know the language for external or utilitarian purposes, such as getting a job. The integrative
motivation indicated that the learner wanted to interact with members of the target language group, perhaps integrating with the culture and people of this group. It was felt that a student with an integrative orientation would achieve greater success in language learning. Brown (1973) has outlined egocentric factors such as imitation, egoism, inhibition, social variables such as empathy, introversion, and aggression, and the merging of cognition and affect in "cognitive style" as being of importance for the language learner. Perhaps the broad scope of these theoretical definitions can account, in part, for the variations in the results of empirical research.

Research polarizing the instrumental and integrative orientations was carried out by Gardner and Lambert and others associated with them (Gardner and Lambert 1972). The subjects, in sample sizes often over a hundred, were primarily secondary school students in Montreal, Ontario, Maine, Louisiana and the Phillipines. Conclusions, based on correlations between often-changing attitude scales and a varying selection of achievement measures yielded mixed results, showing no one orientation as consistently accounting for success. The other researchers, Spolsky (1969) and Lukmani (1972) also looked for this dichotimization orientation, Spolsky with three hundred University of Minnesota students, Lukmani with sixty high-school girls in India. The former found evidence for progress if the student wanted to be like a native speaker; the latter found evidence for instrumental orientation as relating to proficiency. A detailed review of this literature may be found in Schumann (1974).

Other studies did not polarize the instrumental versus integrative motive. Eryin-Tripp (1976) assessed the attitudinal variables as measured in an interview and their correlation with English speaking ability of thirty-six Japanese wives of American servicemen. She found the strongest
prediction of simple fluency was the number of years in the United States, rather than any attitudinal factors. Oyama (1973), looking at sixty Italian-born male immigrants found that "neither motivation nor identification with the adopted culture seemed to be powerful determinants of proficiency in the second language, while age of beginning again emerged as the principal factor" (p. 78). Attitude was assessed by a thirty-five item questionnaire filled out by her subjects:

Two recent studies also see no pattern of correlations between affective factors and achievement criterion. Savignon (1972) studying forty-two college students in the Midwest learning French used a selection from standardized scales to assess attitude. She found no significant correlations between these and achievement criteria with the exception that "achievement influences attitude toward learning French" (p. 18). This research documents what could be termed "The Chicken or the Egg Phenomenon" namely the circular effect of success on attitude and attitude on success. Chastain (1975) using scales and a self-rating questionnaire was unable to find consistent correlations between selected affective factors and achievement of approximately two hundred University beginning-language classes, although he did show that teachers' grades correlated positively with outgoing rather than reserved students.

Aware of the inconsistencies in the measurement of affective factors, Gardner et al. (1974) conducted two years of research to create a standardized reliable, valid battery of motivation indices based on a sample size of over 2,000 secondary school students learning French in Canada. This report shifts emphasis to the strength of the integrative motive, which is measured by eight scales: Attitude to French Canadians, Interest in Foreign Languages, Parental Encouragement, Attitude toward Learning French, Attitude to European French People, Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn French, and Evaluation
of the French Course. Two of the specific conclusions he draws regarding
the importance of attitude and motivation as factors in language achievement
are as follows: one, "integratively motivated students plan to continue
studying French, those who are not so motivated would like to withdraw
from the program" (Cpt. 4, p. 20); and two, "students who express favourable
attitudes relating to learning French also tend to be rated highly in their
acquisition of French skills by their teachers" (Cpt. 4, p. 37.). In other
words, attitude and motivation may predict drop-out rate. Furthermore,
high teacher grades correlate with positive attitudes and strong motivation
on the part of the student.

As has been described, most research on affective factors used the
attitude scale as the measure; only Ervin-Tripp used the interview. Unfortunately
she does not discuss this in detail as it was not the main focus of her study.
Thus, no study using the interview as a central technique had been carried
out.¹ The experience of the present investigator as a teacher of ESL
suggested that an interview technique might be successful. Most adult
students are very responsive to a personal approach. They enjoy talking
about their problems and successes in learning a language. They are open
about their backgrounds and happy to reminisce about life in their native
country.

However, it was felt important to balance this relatively untried
approach to assessment of affective factors with a previously-used measure,
an attitude scale. The present investigation hoped to answer the question,
"Would positive attitude and motivation as assessed by either measure
correlate with progress in language learning?" Furthermore, "Would one
measure be better than the other in accounting for differential success?"
METHOD

Subjects. A group of twenty-one Venezuelan men and women, ranging in age from 17 to 25 with one 37 year old were selected from students at the Boston University Center for English Language and Orientation Program. They arrived in January 1975 as part of the Venezuelan government's massive scholarship program, the "Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho." The purpose of the program is to educate 5,000 Venezuelan youth at Universities outside their country in fields which will advance their technology such as petroleum engineering, metallurgy, and computer electronics. The subjects shared the same short term goals, passing the TOEFL, as well as long term goals, getting a degree in their chosen professions. To be eligible for the scholarship they could not have gone to private school or have a high level family income, thus making the socio-economic background of the students relatively homogeneous. Ali had only a few years of English in high school.

The students suffered the same pressure; if they did not pass the TOEFL in one year and get admitted to an American University, their contract stated they would have to return to Venezuela and pay back the government what it had spent on them. In accepting their scholarship, they took the responsibility to work as many years for the Venezuelan government upon completion of their degree as they had taken to finish their education in the United States.

Measures. An oral interview of 18 items was developed with questions pertaining to three areas, attitude towards Americans, strength and type of motivation to learn English, and amount of culture shock. Culture shock, defined as "anxiety resulting from the disorientation encountered upon entering a new culture" (Schumann, 1975, p. 212) has been suggested by Larsen and Smalley (1972) as an impediment to language learning. Its importance became clear after conducting pilot interviews with Venezuelans.
not included in the study. There were many difficulties in adjusting, not only to the language difference, but to the cold, to dormitory living (most were housed in a twenty-story cement-block tower) to American food, the fast pace of life, and the red tape of the University administration (for one week they had no sheets or blankets - the laundry had to be collected over February vacation, although the students could remain in their rooms).

Each of the three areas of the interview contained a question on the subjects' current behavior. Fishman (1969) has stressed the importance of a commitment measure to ascertain the subjects' actions as a truer indication of his attitudes. Attitude scales have been criticized for being unable to take actual behavior into account. (Agheysi and Fishman, 1970). Sample questions from the interview are as follows: For Attitude, "Would you want to live like an American?" For motivation, "Would you have been able to study your chosen profession in your own country?" For Culture Shock, "Would you have been comfortable coming to the United States alone instead of in a group?" (see Appendix A for complete interview questionnaire).

It was decided to conduct the interview in a friendly relaxed atmosphere where the students would be at ease. No tape recording was done as resistance to this approach developed from the students when asked if they would mind being taped. The subjects were visited in their dormitory or apartment at a time of their convenience, usually a Sunday afternoon. The interview lasted from a half-hour to an hour. There were two interviewers, the experimenter and anglo-female fellow student who had gotten to know the subjects on an informal basis over the three month period and a male student, a native Spanish speaker, who had experience doing psychological research with bilinguals. The interview was conducted in English. However, the students could switch to Spanish at any time they wished. Thus there was a flow back and forth between
languages enabling the student to feel no language pressure. Notes were taken by one experimenter as the questions were answered. Whenever it seemed that an answer was being given in a perfunctory manner, it was asked again later in a restated form. When answers looked as though they might be especially interesting, further information was probed for. Students stated that they looked forward to our coming. They were very co-operative and seemed to enjoy the visit. It appeared that this measure of assessment was very well-received.

Immediately following each interview, subjects answers were rated on a seven point rating scale, thus quantifying levels of the affective variables measured. Each interviewer rated the subjects independently making an interrater reliability coefficient possible. The interviewers were in 78% agreement. A mean score was obtained for each item as well as the three subsections of attitude, motivation, and culture shock. (see Appendix B for the interview rating schedule).

After all interviews had been completed, the Backman-Dieppa bilingual adaptation of the Gardner 1974 Scales was administered during a class session. A native Spanish speaker with a graduate degree in testing worked with the experimenter in making the adaptation. It was decided to have the questions in both English and Spanish to be sure the subjects could read it. The orientation of the scales had to be changed to one of a South American looking at the North American culture. Each item was examined for cultural bias and adjusted where necessary; most items were general enough so that an exact translation could be made. Scales which were inappropriate to the young adult age group were omitted such as parental encouragement. Also scales which Gardner had found to be of low predictive value were excluded such as Machiavellianism and Anomie. Eight scales with a total of sixty items were used, and to the best of the adapters' ability the internal consistency
of each of the eight scales was retained; no items were omitted from any scale. The scales were: Interest in foreign languages, Need achievement, Attitudes towards Americans, Attitudes towards learning English, English class anxiety, Motivational Intensity, Instrumental Orientation, Integrative Orientation.

Subjects took the test willingly enough; however it was noted that some students read carefully and tried to vary their answers along the scale; others simply checked at one end or the other, completing the test very quickly.

In addition to the two attitude measures, a means of assessing language progress had to be selected. The Boston University Salit-Hood Placement Test, and an aural comprehension test developed by the Experimenter were administered as soon as the student arrived and again at the close of a three month period. Scores from a more standardized test such as the TOEFL were available for only half the students. Gain scores were calculated from the listening section for these students who took the test two and seven months after arrival. Teacher input was felt to be important. Thus a teacher rating scale emphasizing oral skills was developed. Students were ranked from one to five on the basis of how much progress they had made over the three month period.

Thus, three measures of language ability, the B.U. Placement, the Backman aural comprehension, and the teacher rankings were the progress measures used to assess progress over the three month period; the TOEFL scores for half the students were used for the six month period. These progress scores were then correlated with the interview results and the attitude scale scores.
RESULTS

In the three-month scores with progress measured by teacher rating and Backman gain scores, only three out of a possible 23 variables showed a significant correlation. There was a negative correlation between instrumental motivation on the attitude scale with teacher progress, and positive correlations of two interview items, "Live with an American Family" and Need American University" with the Backman gain score.

In the six-month scores with progress measured by the TOEFL Listening Gain scores, only one out of a possible 23 variables proved significant. This was an interview item "Involvement with American Activities."

This information is summarized in Table I below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table I: Correlations Between Progress and Attitude and Motivation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Progress</strong></td>
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<td>Three Month Scores</td>
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<td>N = 21</td>
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<th>TOEFL Gain</th>
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<tr>
<td>Six Month Scores</td>
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<td>N = 12</td>
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Significant at p < .05.

The three-month scores were divided into three groups of seven, high, average, and low progress groups. Scores of the high and low groups
were then compared on seven items shown to account for a proportion of the variance in a multiple regression analysis. On the scales these were: Attitude towards Americans, Motivation, and Instrumental orientation. In the interview these items were: American Friends (negative correlation), General Impression of Motivation, Comfortable Alone, and Previous Time away from Home. There were no significant differences, using Cochran’s t test, between the high and low progress groups for this three month period.

DISCUSSION

The question investigated in the present research, "would either measure correlate with progress in language learning?" must be answered in the negative. That four items did correlate with progress is insufficient to make any claim, in this Experimenter’s opinion. Furthermore, superiority of the interview cannot be established on the fact that three of the four items were from the interview.

Better results might have been obtained had the sample size been larger. Gardner’s scales were designed to be administered to larger groups. No claim is being made that the bilingual adaptation should have the same reliability or validity as Gardner’s scales. Yet it was hoped that even with the modifications, some insights would have been possible. (see Appendix C for intercorrelations of items on the bilingual adaptation.) Perhaps the Venezuelan sample was too homogeneous. With such unity of purpose, a wide spread of motivational factors might not have occurred.

Was it possible that the interview did not give valid results? Intercorrelations of the items show high internal consistency, (see Appendix D). It is possible that some subjects were more able to express their feelings verbally than others. However, the advantage of the interview situation was that whenever a perfunctory answer was given, both interviewers probed to get
a fuller statement. The addition of the culture shock section on the inter-
view was of great value. This was an aspect omitted from the scales, precisely
because Gardner's subjects were suffering no culture shock—they were within
their native country.

Could the progress measures have been faulty? There was no question
that each subject showed consistent progress throughout his time in the United
States. The tests used tapped certain aspects of this progress; however,
these tests were not specifically designed to assess communicative competence,
a factor which could be of great importance. Would techniques testing this
aspect of language skill such as those used by Savignon or those developed
by the Foreign Service Institute be a better measure of progress, which then
might correlate more highly with affective factors? This is a question which
remains to be explored.

In spite of the above problems, valuable insights were gained from the
interview. It is on the basis of this information that the suggestion is made
that the interview was a superior tool for assessing affective factors for
the young adult Venezuelan population of this research. The interview questions
were aimed at determining the students' identification with the target culture,
language and people, Gardner and Lambert's integrative motivation. What was
brought to light on the interview was that the two superior students did have
a strong integrative motive; furthermore, for the two worst students factors
were isolated which may well have prevented them from having a strong inte-
grative motivation.

The first superior student had an American friend whom he visited on
weekends in Vermont. He also had an American girlfriend, and spent a great
deal of time with her getting to know her friends. He spent a lot of time
listening to American music. When asked if he would like to live the way
he responded, "I want to live like, and even look like, an American while I'm here. While here, I must take the American way of life. I'll look like and live like a Venezuelan when I return to Venezuela." In other words, he was completely assimilating himself into the American culture, and he was doing it in a very conscious way. The interviewers' subjective impressions of him were that he was an active, outgoing, good-looking young man whom you might have mistaken for an American rock star.

The other superior student seemed quiet and gentle with none of the flash and flair of the first superior student. He was, however, very conscious of his motivation to come to this country. He stated he had been very unsatisfied with his life in a small town in Venezuela, and wanted to get as far away from home as possible. He wanted to change his way of living, he stated, by getting to know other people and more about life in general. He said that it had been a hard decision to reach to leave his previous life behind, but once it had been made "the decision was very strong."

Thus, although he had not become nearly as involved in the American way of life as the first student, he was very consciously disassociating himself from his attachments to Venezuela.

These superior students are very different than two of the poorest students. The first of the poor students expressed a lot of desire to learn English, stating that he talked with Americans "all the time." He spend a lot of time studying and seemed to be a very self-confident person with a good sense of humor. However, his ties with Venezuela were very strong. He had a wife in Venezuela who was about to have their first child. He wanted her to remain there rather than join him in the United States. He had a great love of his country and was learning English, he said, so that he could "participate in the technological advances of Venezuela."
said his learning English was a "tool to be better able to help the development of my country." Thus this student was strikingly different from the two superior students in his strong feeling of identification with his native country.

The other poorest student was not only tied to her country but seemed very unhappy here. She said she thought about Venezuela and her parents a lot, and that she didn't want to stay here any longer than she had to. She stated that she had felt previously that Americans were "rich, bad, loose, liberal, with people who smoke too much." She seemed unhappy and lonely and said, "People don't like to speak English to us." She was a quiet person who spent a good deal of time studying, unfortunately with little success.

The observations gained in the interview are reflected in the interview scores. For the two poorest students, the motivation scores were distinctly lower than for the top students. In addition for the woman the effect of culture shock appears. Figure I presents the profiles of the four students as measured in the interview. Figure I also shows the profiles for the scores of these students on the attitude scale. It appears that the interview had a potential for bringing out the integrative motivation that the attitude scale did not. Most attitude scales failed to distinguish in any way between the motivation of the highest and lowest students.

CONCLUSION

Measuring attitude and motivation with an attitude scale and attempting to relate them to progress of adults learning English as a second language met with no success. An alternative assessment technique - the interview - may
provide a better way of measuring affective factors as they relate to second-language learning. However, this experimenter has become convinced of the complexity of attitudinal and motivational variables as well as the difficulty in trying to quantify them. It is possible that continued replication of this type of research will yield little results. It is certain that pat phrases about the relation of affective factors and success in second-language learning need to be very carefully examined.
References


Schumann, John. Affective factors in second language acquisition. (Qualifying paper submitted to Harvard University, 1974).

1 Since the completion of the present research, a study using the interview as a means of assessing affective factors has been published: N. Naiman, K. Frohlich and H. H. Stern, The Good Language Learner. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, December 1975. In the preliminary study, 34 adults chosen as good language learners were interviewed by two research officers at the Modern Language Center. Interviews were conducted at a place convenient to the subject and lasted from one to two hours.

For the main study 72 students were chosen from grades 8, 10, and 12. They were given achievement tests, personality and cognitive style tests, and a composite of the Gardner et al. attitude battery. They were observed in the classroom and interviewed with the interview schedule developed in the preliminary study.

The study concludes, "Positive attitudes to language learning appear to be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for success." (p. 367). "Attitudes to the language learning situation play an important role in successful language learning, perhaps to a greater degree than either the integrative or instrumental orientation, identified in the studies by Gardner and Lambert (1972). (p. 366.)

Regarding the efficacy of the interview technique, the authors state, "A great deal more about language learning may be discovered by consulting learners directly in a carefully constructed interview than by standardized personality and attitude tests." (p. 367).
MEASURES of AFFECTIVE FACTORS
PROFILES of FOUR STUDENTS

ATTITUDE SCALES

INTerviews 10
**APPENDIX B**

**Interview rating scale**

<table>
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<th>S's name</th>
<th>Interviewer</th>
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(Rate "1" for negative or low amount, "7" for positive or high amount)

**I. ATTITUDE TOWARDS AMERICANS**

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**II. MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH**

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**III. CULTURE SHOCK**

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APPENDIX A

Interview form for (J's name)

Date __________________________ Place __________________________ Interviewers

Review background questionnaire for; Geographical area __________________________

Parent's occupation __________________________ Career goals __________________________

Previous language environment __________________________

I. ATTITUDE TOWARDS NORTH AMERICANS

a. How many North Americans have you gotten to know well?

b. Have Americans been helpful to you? When?

c. Are Americans different than what you expected?

   What are their best qualities?

   What are their worst qualities?

d. Would you like to live the way Americans live?

e. Would you like to live with an American family while you are here?

II. MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH

a. Why did you decide to study English?

b. Could you have learned what you needed to by going to Univ. in Venez.?

c. How helpful will English be on your job?

d. How sure are you that you want to be a __________?

e. What would you be doing now if you hadn't gotten your scholarship?

f. If you didn't need English for your job, would you study it?

g. How much time do you spend studying English in extra classes, with tutor, lang. lab, homework, American friends, attending regular classes?

III. CULTURE SHOCK

a. Are you glad you came in a group; would coming alone be better?

b. Was your family glad for you to come? How did you feel about leaving?

c. Have you lived away from home before? Travelled?

d. What kind of difficulties did you have adjusting to the American way of life? What helped most getting over the adjustment?

e. What's the most difficult thing to get used to here?

f. What sport, social, political or academic activities have you become involved in here?
## APPENDIX C

Correlation Matrices - Items on Attitude Scale

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<td>- .10</td>
<td>- .05</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>2. Integrative Orientation</td>
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<td>.30</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>- .38</td>
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<td>3. Interest in Foreign Languages</td>
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<td>.29</td>
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<td>6. Attitudes To North Americans</td>
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<td>8. Motivational Intensity</td>
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- \( p < .05 \)
- \( p < .01 \)
APPENDIX D

SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN INTERVIEW ITEMS AND BETWEEN INTERVIEW AND ATTITUDE SCALE

Interview

Attitudes
1. Americans Helpful
2. Americans have Positive Qualities
3. Want to Live like An American
4. Want to Live with American Family
5. Number of American Friends
6. Why studying English
7. Need American University
8. English helpful on job
9. General Impression of Motivation
10. Time Spent studying English
11. Americans Helpful**
12. Positive Qualities**
13. American Friends**
14. Time studying*
15. American Activities*
16. General Impression of Motivation*

Attitude Scale

1. Americans Helpful**
2. (Neg. Corr.) Integrative Orientation
3. Interest in Foreign Languages
4. Motivational Intensity*
5. American Friends**
6. Why studying*
7. Anxiety*
8. Attitudes towards Americans*
## APPENDIX D (continued)

**SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN INTERVIEW ITEMS AND BETWEEN INTERVIEW AND ATTITUDE SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Shock</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Attitude Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Previous Time Away from Home</td>
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<td>14. Ease of Adjustment**</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Happy Leaving Venezuela</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Happy Leaving*</td>
<td>8. Motivational Intensity*</td>
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<td>7. Need American Univ.*</td>
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<td>10. Time studying**</td>
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<td>11. Comfortable Alone**</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>15. Involvement in American Activities</td>
<td>1. Americans Helpful*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Positive Qualities*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Live like American*</td>
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<td>5. American Friends**</td>
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<td>9. General Impression of Motivation*</td>
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*p < .05; **p < .01