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The TalkAbroad case: addressing intercultural communicative competency in FREN311

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Thursday Forum Series

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

Saint Joseph, MN, 26 September 2019

*The TalkAbroad Case:
Addressing Intercultural Communicative
Competency (ICC) in FREN311*

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCY

LINGUISTIC
COMPETENCE

INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE

“Where the **tourist** remains essentially unchanged, the **sojourner** has the opportunity to learn and be educated, acquiring the capacity to critique and improve their own and others’ conditions”

--Michael Byram, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, p. 2)

The TalkAbroad Case: Addressing ICC in FREN311

- I. FREN311 in the French curriculum at CSBSJU
- II. American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards and recommendations
- III. Benefits of and Motivations for use of interactive exchanges
- IV. What is TalkAbroad?
- V. Description of Project in FREN311: Studies in Language and Culture
 - I. Quantitative Results and Content Analysis
 - II. Benefits and Challenges Observed
- VI. Going forth
- VII. Conclusions
- VIII. Q&A

FREN311 in the French curriculum

- I. FREN111-211 sequence (proficiency)
- II. FREN212
- III. FREN311—Studies in Language and Culture (HM, IC)

CSB/SJU Intercultural Learning Goals

Students will demonstrate:

- a level of understanding of another culture, including the awareness that it is neither monolithic nor static.
- an understanding that their perspective on the world is shaped in certain ways by their particular background.
- an awareness that when we encounter another culture, **we filter the new experience through established perspectives**, which makes it more difficult to uncover our common humanity and the reasons for our differences.

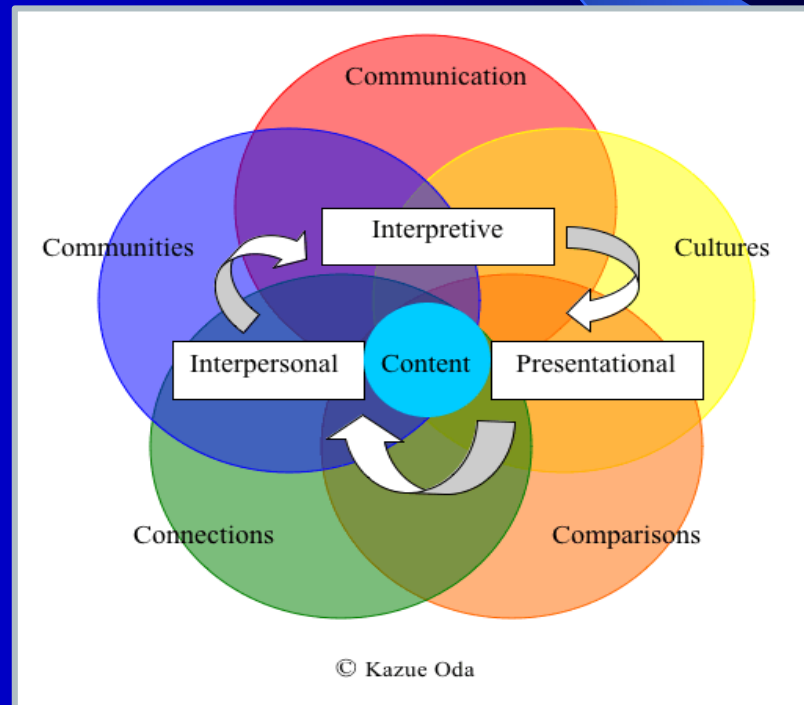
“In order to understand and address global issues, it is important to understand the perspectives on the world that speakers of other languages bring to the table. By learning other languages, students develop respect and openness to those whose culture, religion, and views on the world may be different”.

--Introduction to *Partnership for 21st Century Skills*

World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (W-RSLL)

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) goal areas—the 5 Cs:

- Communication
- Cultures
- Connections
- Communities
- Comparisons



World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (W-RSLL)

ACTFL—the three modes of communication:

- Interpersonal
- Interpretive
- Presentational

Benefits of Interactive Language Exchanges

- Applicability & authenticity
- Experience of cooperative & collaborative learning
- Learning about other cultures & development of intercultural awareness/communicative competence (ICC)
- Motivating outside of the classroom
- Recognition of learning and teaching in the 21st century
- Focus on learner, not on teacher
- Diversification, Differentiation, Personalization & Authenticity of FL teaching

Motivations and Objectives



- Rural Minnesota
- Lack pool of native speakers of French
- Desire for greater exposure to target language and culture outside of the classroom
- [Study Abroad]

Introduction to TalkAbroad: a pedagogy-specific proprietary software

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Spanish, French, English, Mandarin, Arabic, German, Italian and Portuguese

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Malek Abdelhamid	Tunisia

Malek Abdelhamid



Name: Malek Abdelhamid

Country: Tunisia

Profession: étudiante en design

About Me: Je suis une jeune fille de 23 ans, je suis tunisienne et j'adore tout ce qui se rapproche de l'art, de la musique et des jeux vidéos. Je suis guitariste et chanteuse. J'adore aussi écrire! J'écris des histoires, des articles et des chansons en Français et en Anglais. Je joue à trop de jeux vidéos de différent types mais surtout sur pc. J'aime aussi cuisiner, aller avec mes amis et regarder des films et des séries, écouter de la musique, faire du sport, aller dans les parcs, animaux et la nature. J'ai un petit chat, j'aime les chiens.

 [Contact Us](#)

FREN311: Project Learning Goals

- Intercultural Learning Goals:
 - Awareness that culture is neither static nor monolithic
 - Discussion and reflection of Customs, Practices and Perspectives of interlocutors

Overall Study Questions

- Did students learn linguistic and cultural elements?
- Was there development of ICC?

FREN311: Project Description

- Three conversations of 30min & three deadlines
- No specific prompts assigned
- Final oral presentation (17% of grade)

FREN311: Addressing the W-RSLL

ACTFL—the 3 modes of communication:

- Interpersonal (pre-, during and post-)
- Interpretive (during)
- Presentational (post-)

Procedures & Data Collection

Pre-Conversations

- Collection of baseline information in Pre-Conversation Questionnaire and quizzes

Post-Conversations

- Student Debriefing
- Post-Conversation Questionnaire and quizzes
- Student Presentation

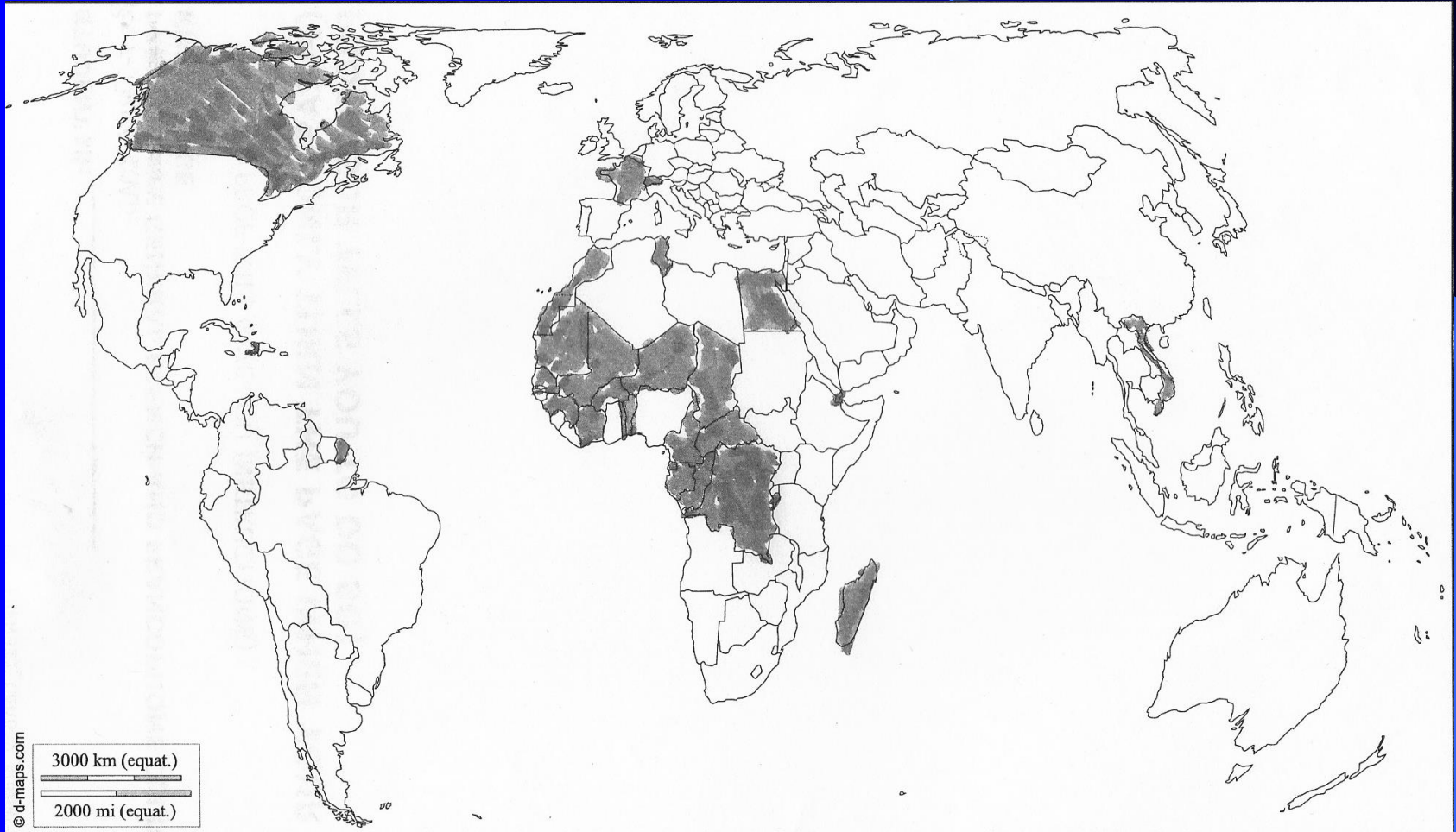
Procedures

- Did students learn new cultural elements?

<p>III. In this section, we would like to know your opinions about the following affirmations related to your perception of the cultural knowledge and competency of the country of your chosen <u>TalkAbroad</u> partner.</p> <p>6 = I Strongly Agree with the affirmation</p> <p>4/5 = I Agree with the affirmation</p> <p>2/3 = I Disagree with the affirmation</p> <p>1 = I Strongly Disagree with the affirmation</p>						
	-Strongly Agree	Agree		Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1. I was aware <u>prior to this study</u> that my partner's country is French-speaking.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I can intelligently address one topic from the recent history of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I can intelligently address one topic from the customs and traditions of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I am familiar with the gastronomy of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I am familiar with the religion of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I am familiar with the fashion trends of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1

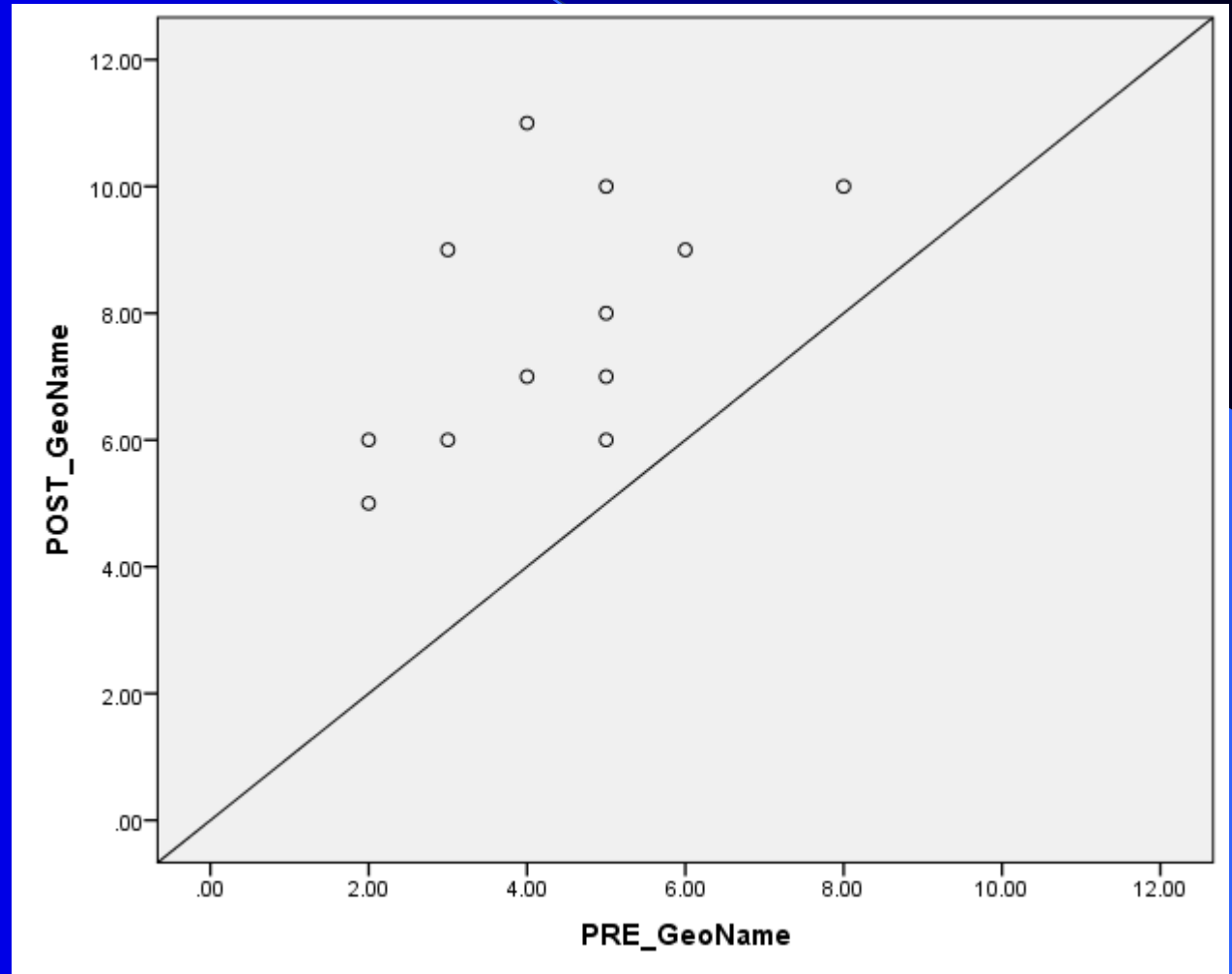
Procedures

Identify Francophone Regions (shaded) on the map in 90 seconds



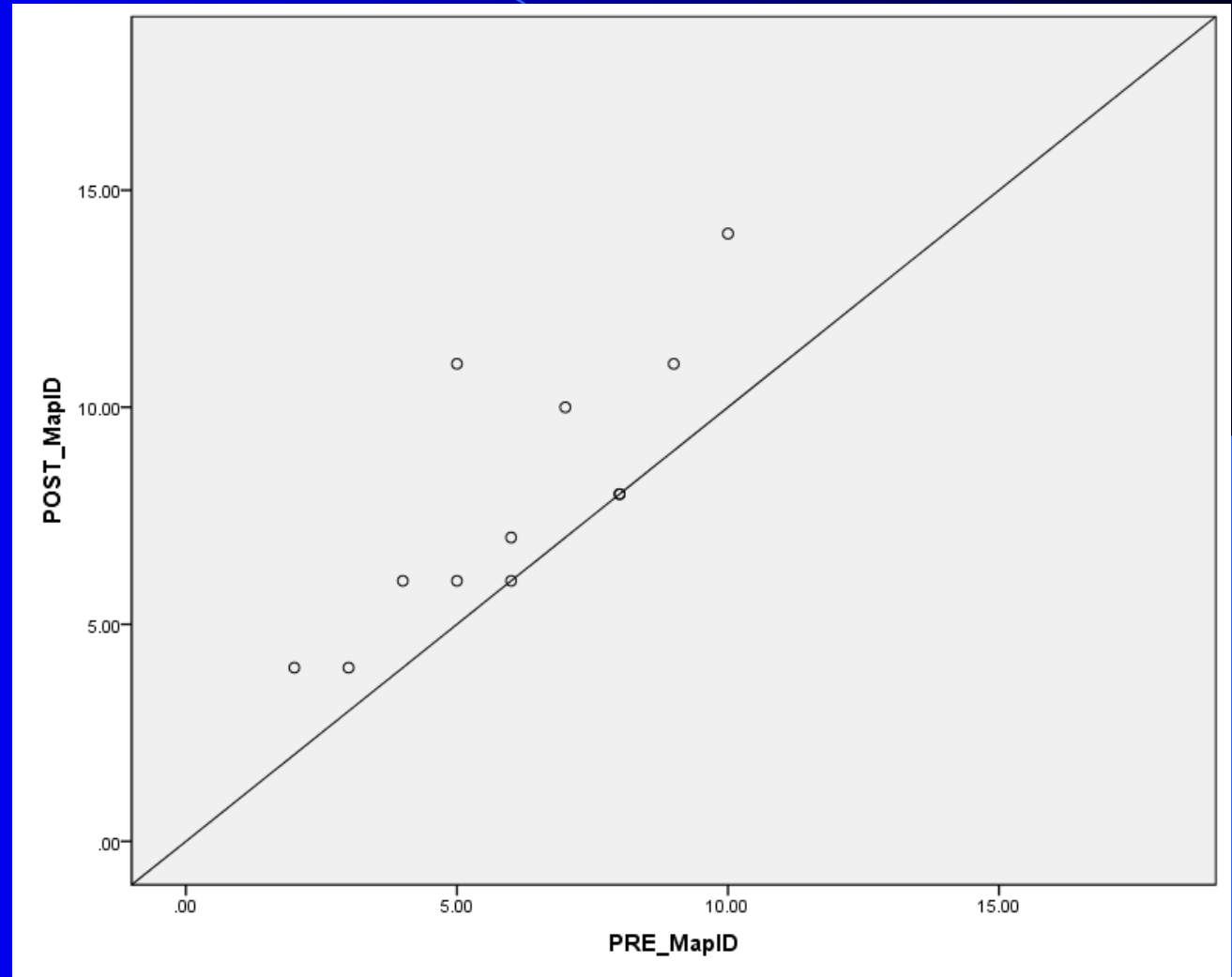
FREN311: Quantitative Results

Name
Francophone
Regions



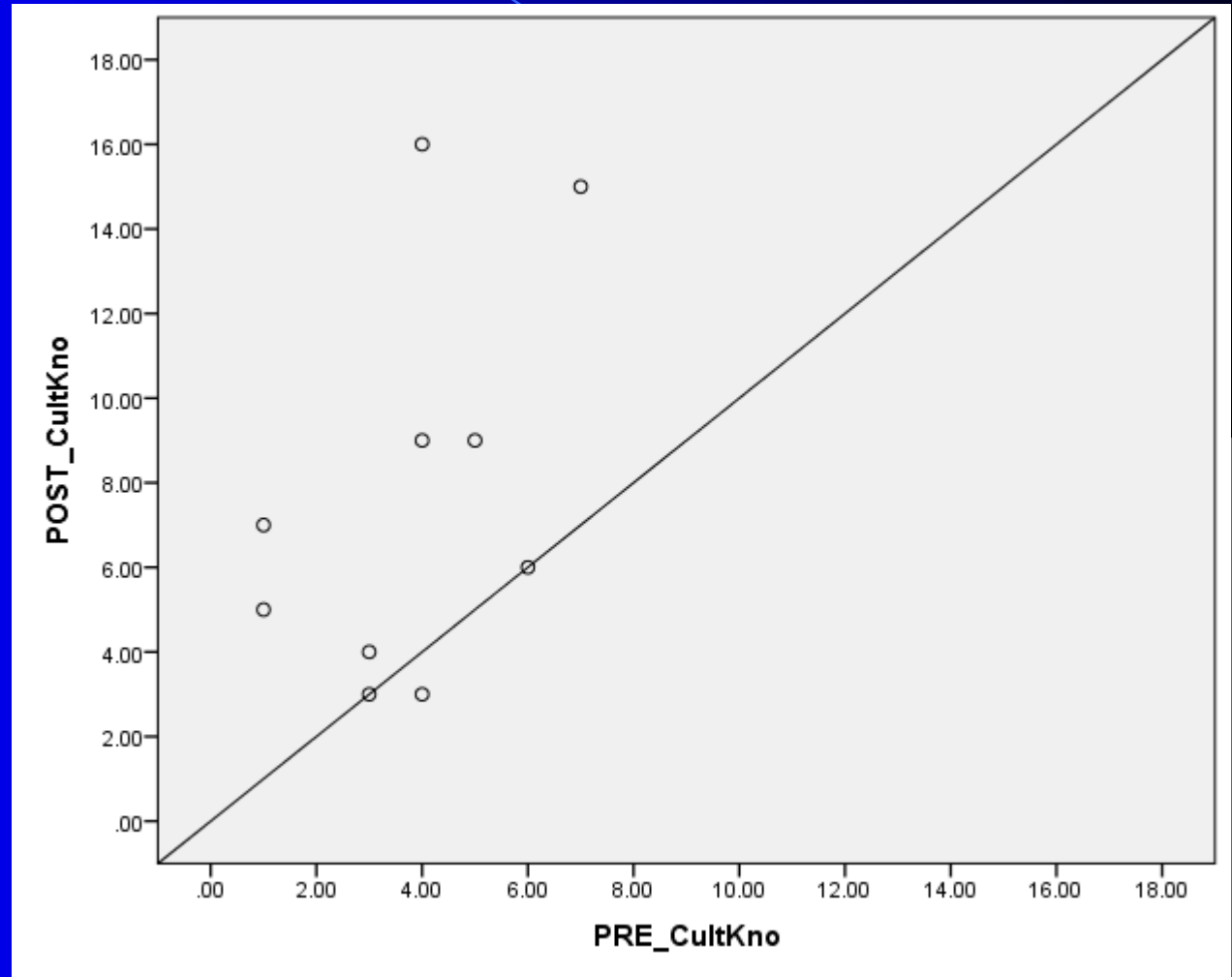
FREN311: Quantitative Results

Identify
Francophone
Regions on the
map



FREN311: Quantitative Results

General Cultural
Knowledge Quiz



III. In this section, we would like to know your opinions about the following affirmations related to your perception of the cultural knowledge and competency of the country of your chosen TalkAbroad partner.

6 = I **Strongly Agree** with the affirmation

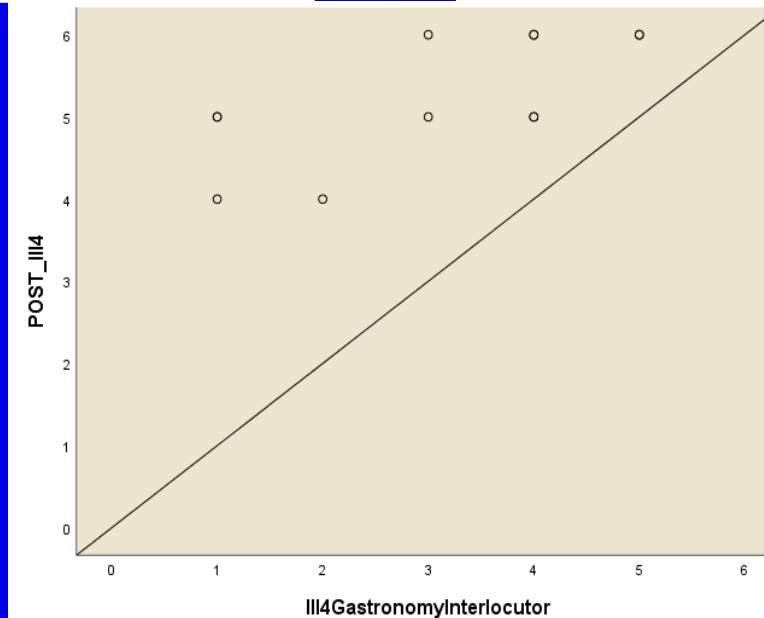
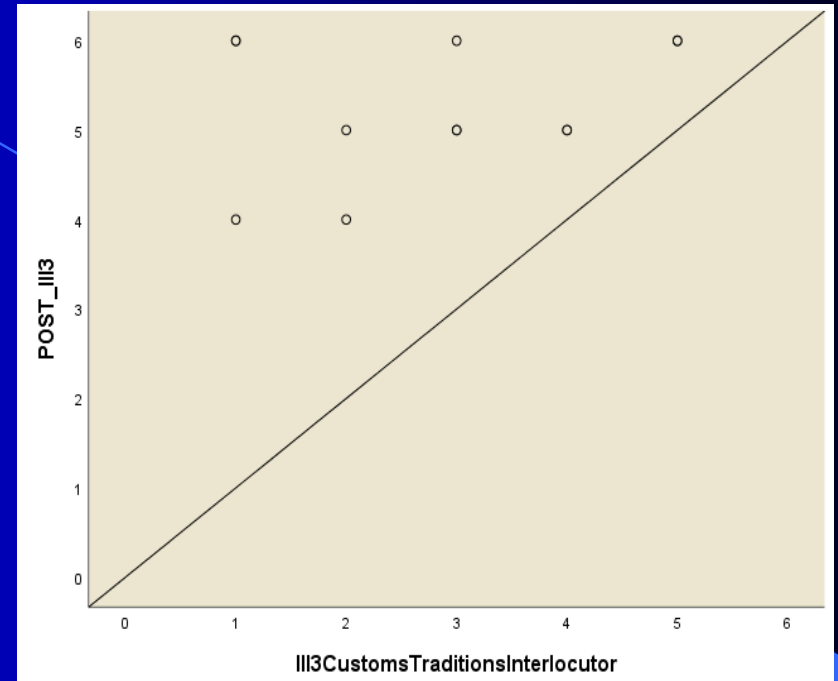
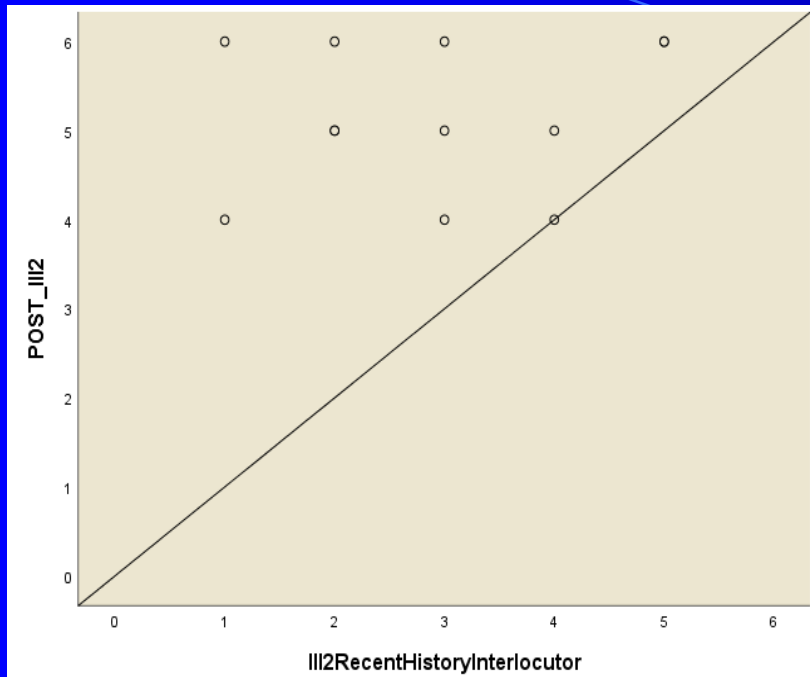
4/5 = I **Agree** with the affirmation

2/3 = I **Disagree** with the affirmation

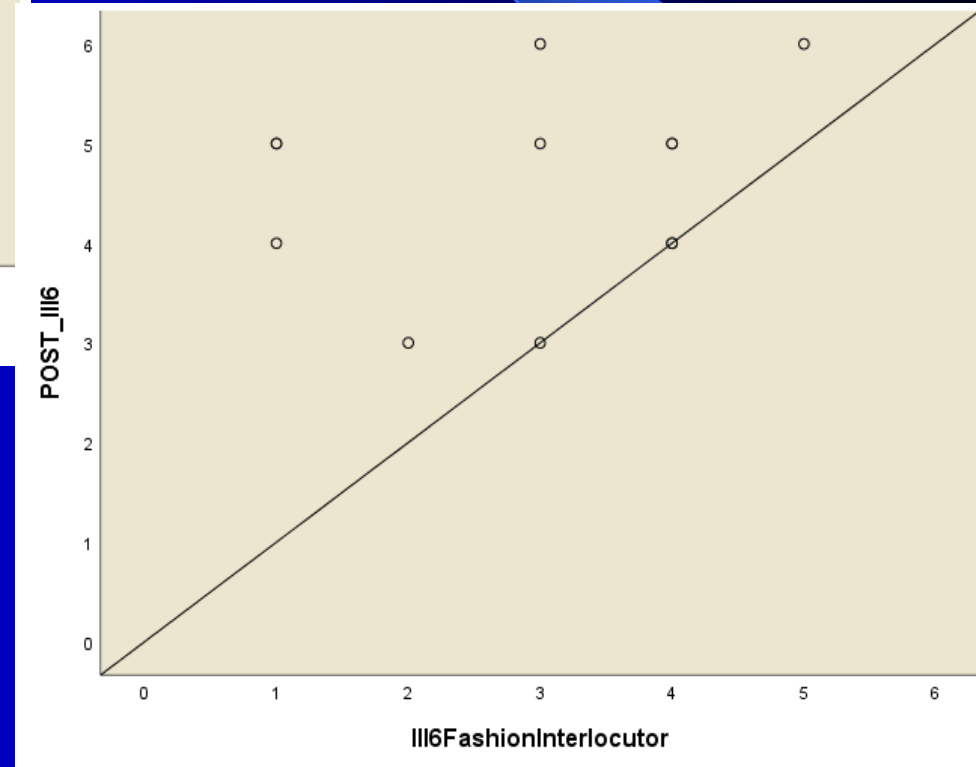
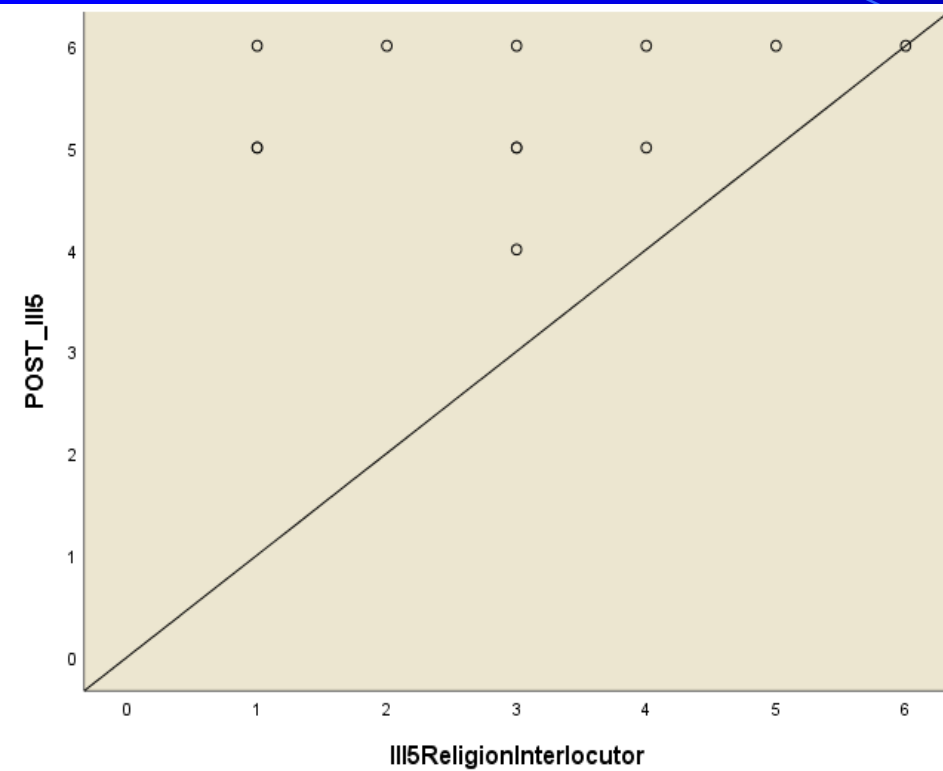
1 = I **Strongly Disagree** with the affirmation

	-Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
1. I was aware <u>prior to this study</u> that my partner's country is French-speaking.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I can intelligently address one topic from the recent history of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I can intelligently address one topic from the customs and traditions of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I am familiar with the gastronomy of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I am familiar with the religion of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I am familiar with the fashion trends of the country of my interlocutor.	6	5	4	3	2	1

FREN311: Quantitative Results



FREN311: Quantitative Results



FREN311: Sample Presentations

Les sentiments politiques

- L'avortement : illégal au Cote d'Ivoire
 - Le médecin doit aller au prison
- Des grands problèmes sociaux
 - Les différences entre les classes sociaux
 - Les riches et les pauvres : une grande séparation
 - La santé
 - L'éducation
- Les manifs
- Pas comme en France!
 - « Ils portent des bus dans les rues! »



TUNISIA

Deblah est un dessert qui est typiquement servi pendant le mois de Ramadan. Le mot "Deblah" est l'arabe pour "la bague de fiançailles".



Couscous est un plat traditionnelle de la Tunisie. C'est très populaire dans les pays Maghreb. Il y a toujours un débat pour décider s'il est une céréale ou un pâte.



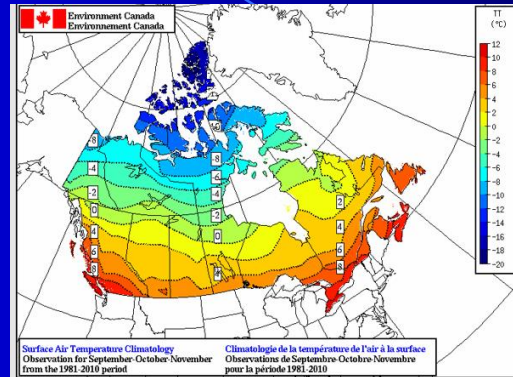
IVORY COAST

FREN311: Sample Presentations

MOROCCO

Le Maroc

- Le Maroc a 35 millions de personnes
- La langue officielle du Maroc est arabe
- La religion principale du Maroc est l'Islam
 - 95% des marocains sont musulmans
- 50% parle français, 25% parle un peu de français



La vie environnementale



- Recyclage et compostage
- Le minimalisme
- Transport en commun
- La nourriture organique - TRÈS CHÈRE!!
- Les vélos

Les parcs nationaux



Pas très populaire
puis qu'ils
sont loin
des villes de
l'est



CANADA (QUÉBEC)

FREN311: Content Analysis

(open ended questions)

“[it was unexpected] just how fast it went by”. (Student #1, FREN311)

“I didn’t expect [my partner and I] to have so much in common and that was really cool”. (Student #2, FREN311)

“...allowing me to exchange cultures with a very intelligent and global-minded person”. (Student #3, FREN311)

FREN311: Content Analysis

(open ended questions)

“It was unexpected how much I learned from [my partner]”.(Student #4, FREN311)

“I didn’t expect to learn more about the U.S.”.(Student #5, FREN311)

“I learned about what wouldn’t necessarily be presented in a textbook/ a deeper understanding of social norms”
(Student #6, FREN311)



Benefits

- A variety of different interlocutors available, ranging from different countries and cultures
- Student accountability and responsibility
- [Good tech support]

Challenges

- Time difference
- Cost
- Only option*: 30min conversations
- Technical difficulties (audiovisual, connectivity)
- [Regional varieties]

*TalkAbroad now offers 10min conversations

Going forth...

- FREN350: French Phonetics?
- Integrations Curriculum : Global Engagement

Going forth...

Global Engagement (GLO) Learning Outcome

Students **develop** awareness of their own and other cultures from outside the U.S. through experiences and **develop strategies** for **adapting effectively and appropriately** to intercultural situations.

General Course Description

In fulfilling the GLO requirement for the Integrations Curriculum, students will **exercise responsibility, initiative, and judgment as they apply their knowledge and skills** within intercultural situations in meaningfully adaptive ways.

Through **structured reflection**, students will be challenged to move beyond the performance of the global engagement task to **discover and internalize knowledge about themselves and the world around them** in a way that is cyclical (think-act-reflect, repeat) and meaningful. [...]

Concluding Remarks

- Interactive exchanges were effective in awakening **cultural sensitivity** and **ICC**.
- More **intercultural curiosity** in students and a **greater awareness** of the Francophone world, including **customs, perspectives and practices**
- Developed **confidence** in L2/personal growth
- As Adair-Hauck and Donato (2002) have suggested, in the interactive exchanges, the native interlocutor may:
 1. Challenge
 2. Support
 3. **Empower** the language learner.

Thank you! Merci!

“L2 development must be understood as essential to a full range of intercultural competence” --Alvino Fantini

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