

A CASE STUDY OF TEACHER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE FACTORS  
CONTRIBUTING TO THE DE-MOTIVATION OF FORM 5 STUDENTS WHO SELECTED  
SPANISH AT THE CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE (CSEC)  
LEVEL, AT AN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN NORTH TRINIDAD.

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### Abstract

This study examined teacher and students perceptions of the reasons behind the Upper Form de-motivation of Form 5 Spanish students who selected Spanish for the CSEC Examination at St. Mark's Secondary, an urban secondary school in north Trinidad. Both teacher and students, who were interviewed separately, acknowledged that as the students continued to get low grades, they did not really have the desire to choose Spanish, they experienced different stages of motivation as their extrinsic motivation exceeded their intrinsic motivation. As such the students became de-motivated within a system that, despite its eagerness to register them for CSEC Spanish, did not pay attention to their needs and interests in conjunction with the delivery of the Spanish curriculum.

A Case Study of the De-motivation of Spanish Students at St. Mark's Secondary School.<sup>1</sup>

Null's (2010) statement that 'humanists believe that the rigor required to learn a foreign language teaches students discipline, opens their minds to new and different cultures, and trains their God-given ability to reason' captures the inherent beauty and power of foreign languages in any society. Nonetheless, there is an international view that the study of foreign languages is dispensable. For instance, Sizer (2004) articulated this belief in his quest to create and implement the reformation of schools in the United States of America via his 'back-to-basics movement'.

Similarly, throughout the Caribbean, foreign languages' multi-purpose ability to enhance: communication, (Morris, 1985); integration, (Whyte, 1995); universal dissemination of scientific, business and technological knowledge (Whyte, 1995); and anti-monolingualism (Williams and Carter, 2005), is irrefutable. At the same time, Whyte (1995) asserted 'In a world where our official language, English, is also the dominant international language, the motivation to master any other is often lacking' and Whyte (1995) outlined further that there are doubts about foreign languages in terms of its educational role and practical value for secondary school graduates, despite its inbuilt capacity to effect embracing others and guarding against narrow-mindedness.

In terms of Trinidad and Tobago, for a large part of its colonial history, it was a Spanish territory (Robertson, 2010). During colonial times, knowledge of a foreign language 'was considered the hallmark of a truly educated man' (Morris, 1985, p.42). As such, the secondary school curriculum in Trinidad and Tobago promoted the value of Modern Languages in a developing nation, as a gateway to communication, and a means of access to ideas treated with in classical literature (Morris, 1985).

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonym utilized

However these foreign languages, symbols of classical education, were challenged in the advent of industrialization in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Morris, 1985). As a consequence of this, the national curriculum expanded to cater to rising developments in the fields of science, business and technology. Therefore, the society's perception of foreign languages deflated as it was considered generally less useful and less esteemed in a developing country that was beginning to welcome technology (Morris, 1985).

Since that time however, despite the growing development and focus on these non-classical areas, there has been sustained support throughout the Caribbean for the motivation to learn Spanish. In relation to the utility, purpose and relevance of Spanish, the secondary school's curriculum suggested this endorsement. For instance, Whyte (1995) highlighted the positive influence of foreign languages for personal and national development, cultural fortification, interaction and the global sharing of scientific data as proposed in the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) syllabus document for the testing of French and Spanish from May 1991.

Furthermore, as detailed by the Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP) Upper Form curriculum for Spanish (2009, p.27) the value of Spanish in Trinidad and Tobago is evident in its widespread use in the Western Hemisphere, its geo-political importance in connection with Trinidad as the headquarters of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), and its role in the maintenance of our relationship with Venezuela, our neighbour. In fact, on account of these factors, Spanish was declared the First Foreign Language of Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, Spanish culture survives in our country through parang and soca music and food and its language prevails partly due to our contact with Venezuela, and a small contingent of persons for whom Spanish is their first language (Robertson, 2010).

In view of the validation of the worth of foreign languages, in accordance with the curriculum policy, it is necessary to take a look at the site of this study, St. Mark's Secondary School, an urban secondary school in north Trinidad that was established in 1961 as a government-run secondary school. By 1975 in the country's history, the thrust towards free secondary education increased the accessibility of education to all (Morris, 1985). In the pursuit of this goal, through the observation of meticulous standards, St. Mark's Secondary School achieved a prestigious reputation for nurturing citizens whose contributions to Trinidad and Tobago were indisputable, particularly in the areas of Fine Arts, Culture and Sports.

Unfortunately, neither the existing promotion of Spanish education in Trinidad and Tobago nor the past history of St. Mark's Secondary School's performance in the field of Humanities appear to alleviate the current issue that the school is undergoing as regards the study of Spanish as a subject for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) Examinations. Within recent years, the school's Spanish teachers have expressed their frustration and dissatisfaction with the generally low interest and performance of several Form 5 students who study Spanish for the CSEC Examinations.

What's more, the impact of the disinterest and low grades on some students seems to be manifested in their consistent and sometimes brazen display of de-motivation in Spanish classes throughout the Upper Forms. Some Form 5 students' lack-lustre approach to Spanish classes is marked, as for example, they are tardy for classes; they do not bring their Spanish textbooks and notebooks to class; they do not retain, observe or practise knowledge of Spanish grammar and vocabulary; they do not complete or submit homework assignments; they can be found either sleeping or doing assignments for other subjects during Spanish classes; and they skip classes.

Therefore, in an attempt to understand more about why some students would chose to do Spanish, despite their indications of low interest and/or enthusiasm, an investigation into uncovering the factors that surround the students' perceived experience with Spanish, selection of Spanish, and treatment of Spanish at St. Mark's Secondary School is urgent.

### **Statement of the Problem**

I was not aware immediately of the depth of the problem of de-motivated students in the Form 5 Spanish classes at St. Mark's Secondary School. However, my observation that the calibre<sup>2</sup> of the Spanish students seemed to be weakening became obvious to me after having been a Spanish/French teacher at the school since 1998. I was confounded by my yearly lament to my peers, entailing the enjoyment of teaching Form 1 and 2 students, the torture of the customary nonchalance of many Form 3 students, and the disappointment of coming to terms with the fact that several of my most capable students did not choose Spanish for the CSEC Examinations.

Furthermore, I was alarmed at the growing number of Spanish students who, after years of showing neither interest nor aptitude for Spanish in the Lower Forms, were enrolled in the Upper Form Spanish programme. I noticed that this was complicated by the fact that subjects with the School Based Assessment (SBA) component, not including Spanish, became the priority of my students during the crucial last term of Form 4 and the first term of Form 5. After completing their SBA assignments, although some students tried to re-acquaint themselves with the Spanish programme, the CSEC Examination would be close at hand, leaving little room for their comfortable return to their Spanish preparation.

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<sup>2</sup> The researcher interpreted 'calibre' as a term encompassing not only performance, but also dedication of approach to Spanish

Morris and King (1988, as cited by Williams and Carter, 2005) ‘pointed out that although Spanish was the most taught foreign language in Trinidad and Tobago, it had a high failure rate and low status.’ Similarly, St. Mark’s Secondary School experienced a swiftly decreasing pass rate for the period 2006-2010 (see Appendix I), in terms of both quantity and quality of Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) passes in Spanish, as documented by the school’s Principal, in accordance with the annual results prepared and provided by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Moreover, while student enrollment for the Spanish CSEC Examination increased from 17 students to 75 students for the period 2006 to 2009, the pass rate (Grades 1-3) dropped sharply from 82.7% to 30.4% (see Appendix A).

Most significantly for me however, was my detection that this deterioration of passes appeared to be paralleled by Form 5 Spanish students’ prevalent and disconcerting display of waning interest and focus in Spanish. Although the students’ general below average performance in the CSEC Spanish Examination is troubling to me, I am unsettled particularly by the fact that Spanish, though recommended and applauded by the educational policy of Trinidad and Tobago, does not seem to be an inspiration to various students, as signaled by their disinterested actions in Spanish classes. It is my view then that if students do not appear to be experiencing either affective or cognitive advantages of the knowledge of Spanish, that the situation should be addressed.

Given that the year of this research continued in this trend, rather than imagine a conspiracy theory against successful Spanish education at St. Mark’s Secondary School, I found that these deeply troubling factors engulfing Spanish at the school fostered my desire to investigate what I supposed to be the problem. In this venture, I hoped to garner perceptions of both an Upper Form Spanish teacher and some Form 5 Spanish students, since a synthesis of viewpoints could



enhance the holistic nature of the investigation, as each stakeholder could mention the same as well as different points to clarify and/or intensify the findings.

Therefore, by examining the professed influential elements at St. Mark's Secondary School that encouraged students to choose Spanish, then exploring the seeming influential elements that resulted in the students' exhibition of a lack of interest or diligence in Spanish in the Upper Forms, I hoped to understand further the problem of their de-motivation in Upper Form Spanish classes, despite choosing to do Spanish for the CSEC Examinations.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceived circumstances which contributed to students' de-motivation in Upper Form Spanish classes after they elected to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations at St. Mark's Secondary School, an urban secondary school in north Trinidad. I hope that these perceived reasons could shed some light on the validity and importance that is attributed to Spanish in the reality of foreign language study that is experienced by both the teachers and the students at this school.

Therefore, the study is aimed at exposing aspects that provoked these students' de-motivation in Upper Form Spanish classes and at the same time, uncovering alleged factors that encouraged students' to pursue Spanish for the CSEC Examinations. In this way, I intend to delve into the Form 5 Spanish students' de-motivation issue, by finding out more about the disparity of these two points in time where there was possible encouragement then probable discouragement to do Spanish, as this problem at St. Mark's Secondary School appears to illustrate.

At the heart of my interest is the conviction that I should search for ways to motivate my students to pursue the command of Spanish. Like a true 'language' person, besides

understanding the imperative investment in the Spanish language that the various governments of Trinidad and Tobago have declared over the years, in terms of global marketability and communication, I trust that all students could benefit from Spanish in terms of its unique ability to foster and stimulate an open-mindedness to all cultures, a key step towards the appreciation for and engagement in sharing, caring and respecting one another.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the purpose of gaining insight into the de-motivation of Form 5 Spanish Students after they chose to do Spanish for the CSEC Examinations at St. Mark's Secondary School, I formulated the following questions.

1. What do Form 5 students perceive to be the reasons why they chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?
2. What does a Form 5 Spanish teacher perceive to be the reasons why Form 5 students chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?
3. What do Form 5 students perceive to be de-motivating factors in their Upper Form Spanish classes?
4. What does a Form 5 Spanish teacher perceive to be de-motivating factors for Form 5 students in their Upper Form Spanish classes?

For this study, all the questions have been operationalized. I hoped that my decision to investigate all the proposed aspects of this issue of de-motivated Form 5 students, as far as I could within the given time constraints, would help me to gain a thorough appreciation for the teacher and students' experience. Due to my feeling that this might not have been possible had I opted to operationalize some of the questions, and also due to my excitement about actively trying to figure out apparent reasons why students would be de-motivated in Spanish if they were

the ones who chose Spanish in the first place, I decided to construct my study around all the research questions.

### **Significance of the Study**

With respect to the usefulness of the data generated by this investigation, it is possible that the administration and Spanish teachers at St. Mark's Secondary School might be better equipped to treat with the problem of de-motivated Spanish Form 5 students. For instance, this study could encourage the discovery of ways in which the Spanish syllabus can be implemented, in congruence with the sources of motivation that boost students to pursue studying Spanish. Additionally, the data could direct stakeholders to the aspects of influence that play a vital role in the process of de-motivation that students experience after they register for the Spanish CSEC Examination. Perhaps this could promote the investigation and utilization of appropriate methods that teachers and students could pursue in tandem at St. Mark's Secondary School, toward a more positive interaction with Spanish.

Also, outside the scope of this study, its findings might highlight possible shortcomings of the present Spanish curriculum in terms of its application and its ability to cater to the evolving needs of our students in conjunction with their increasing need for survival skills in today's world. Should this be the case, curriculum designers could be challenged to review and improve the Spanish syllabus for the perpetuation of Spanish as an offering at schools, but more importantly, so that every opportunity can be offered to our students to encounter the personal advantages of foreign language competence, which the researcher believes, has the potential to motivate Spanish instructors and learners alike.

### **Literature Review**

With the purpose of creating a foundation for this study, which focussed on the perceived factors that gave rise to de-motivated Spanish students at St. Mark's Secondary School after they chose this subject for the CSEC Examination, I relied on the opinions and findings of experts in the fields of motivation in education and motivation to learn a foreign language (FL). Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of these researchers' views was their seeming unified proposal that motivation, channeled by extrinsic elements (including varied social environments) and intrinsic elements (including subject relevance, self-motivation and gender), functioned within a framework of motivation stages, which could be crucial to the awareness of the intricacies of the problem of de-motivation of the Form 5 students at St. Mark's Secondary School.

Firstly, although there is no specific definition of motivation, Ball (1977, p.2) explained that psychologists define motivation as 'the processes involved in arousing, directing, and sustaining behaviour'. In the same line, in a study about FL motivation, anxiety and emotion MacIntyre (2002, p.49) found that 'as a student progresses through the language learning process, changes in attitudes and motivation are to be expected'. Here, these two researchers proposed the concept of processes or stages as an integral part of motivation as well as the need for motivation in effective FL education.

#### **Extrinsic Motivation**

The numerous references to extrinsic motivational factors made by researchers stemmed from social contexts, in terms of the general society; family and friends within the students' social groups; and the school environment including teachers, classrooms and performance. As regards the society, in their comparison of socially constructed language learning and beliefs in Canada, Japan and France, Kouritzin, Piquemal and Renaud (2009, p.320) found that the support

behind the ‘motivation, beliefs, and attitudes that govern the success or failure of foreign language acquisition’ was a combination of the society’s cultural and historical contexts (Kouritzin, Piquemal & Renaud, 2009, p.320; Nieto, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999). The extrinsic motivation suggestions made by these researchers in terms of the significance of the society’s culture and history, given Trinidad and Tobago’s Spanish heritage cannot be overlooked.

Furthermore, the social groups that are generated from the general society were assessed by some experts to be significant motivating elements in FL education. For example, in their scrutiny of the foreign language motivation of Hungarian students, Csizér and Kormos (2009, p.96) found that ‘secondary school students’ motivation was supported by the environment as the mean values of both the milieu and parental encouragement scale were very high’. Moreover, according to Hull Cortés (2002) the motivating impact of both family and friends on FL interest and enrollment arose in her investigation into the attitudes of youths toward the study of foreign languages.

By the same token, in her examination of the motivations of successful black second language learners, Anya (2011, p.459) avowed that ‘family obligations and pressures were also very strong motivations for studying certain target languages’. Similarly, with reference to student motivation in education, Tileston (2010, p.20) remarked that students would pay attention to learning if it could ‘make them look better in the eyes of their friends or family’. As such, since the reasons why students chose to do Spanish for the CSEC Examination at St. Mark’s Secondary School are a prominent part of this study, the external motivation of both family and friends could be significant, as the students were invited to consult with their parents and friends when they completed their choice of subject forms.

Indeed, within the school environment, Nikolov (2001, as cited by Csizér & Kormos, 2009, p.96) affirmed 'one of the strongest motivating factors is the teacher'. Congruently, both Marzano (2001, as cited in Tileston , 2010, p.23) and Ushioda (2003, as cited by De Saint Léger, 2009, p.160) hinted at the impact of the teacher and classroom on students' motivation levels. Disputing this concept of teacher as motivator in his research on motivation in education, Ball (1977, p. 10) believed that 'even if teachers were to select and use intelligently the potent reinforcement in their control, the changes in behaviour they had hoped to see occur in their students might not occur'.

The possibility that a teacher might not be a motivating factor is supported further by White (1977, p.154) who deduced in her focus on social motivation, that the extent of teacher motivation depended 'on whether the pupil perceives the teacher as relevant and salient'. It is possible that these findings could inform this particular study, which sought to discover the reality of the reasons behind the de-motivation of Upper Form Spanish students at St. Mark's Secondary School: For example, perhaps the Spanish teachers' encouragement did not motivate their older students.

Besides this, the performance of students was cited by several experts as a principal factor in connection with FL motivation. The notion of failure as a de-motivating element of FL students was highlighted by researchers such as Morris (1985, p. 46) who felt that 'large numbers of students opt out of language study or continue in the knowledge that they will inevitably fail to acquire certification in the subject'. This view was supported by Di Fino and Lombardino (2004, p.390) whose focus on foreign language learning disabilities supported their belief that in FL education 'there are students ...who simply cannot succeed despite efforts'.

Conversely, Amend, Whitney, Messuri and Furukawa (2009, p.28) argued that ‘an important distinction between students who pass and those who do not pass a foreign language course may simply be a matter of motivation and persistence’. For this particular study, the researchers’ notion of performance in relation to extrinsic motivation could benefit my analysis of the de-motivation of Spanish students.

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Moreover, as regards the intrinsic motivational factors, these were proposed by FL and education researchers to be manifested in students’ perceptions of the relevance of Spanish; attitudes; beliefs about self (self-confidence); and gender. Generally speaking, Tileston (2010, p.7) described intrinsic motivation as ‘the drive that comes from within; students do something for the sheer joy of doing it or because they want to discover something, answer a question, or experience the feeling of self-accomplishment’.

Hence, the significance and relevance attributed to the study of foreign languages by the students who study them was deemed by experts to be fundamental to successful FL education. For instance, in his exploration on interests, Rust (1977, p.132) deduced that in terms of attention to activities, identifying a student’s interests would predict ‘how long he will spend’ and ‘how frequently the behaviour will occur’. Similarly, Higgs (1988, p.50 as cited by Carter, 2004, p.46) made the connection that intrinsic motivation is intensified in compliance with the student’s perception of the relevance of the task. In conjunction with these findings, Atkinson and Feather (1966, as cited by Cochran, McCallum & Bell, 2010, p.567) believed that ‘a person’s motivation to participate in an activity depends on the person’s expectation for success and the value placed on the task or attitude toward the task’. Thus, the idea of subject relevance in relation to intrinsic motivation contributed to this study’s analysis of the perceived importance of Spanish in the

lives of the students at St. Marks's Secondary School who were exhibiting signs of demotivation.

In union with the students' concept of the relevance of foreign languages, according to researchers, students' attitudes can be involved in intrinsic motivation. Consequently, Gardner (1985, p.56) deduced that 'Attitudes and motivations are important because they determine the extent to which the individuals will actively involve themselves in learning the language'. Likewise, Green (1977, p.112) offered 'if we learn how to develop positive attitudes in students, we can presumably increase the approach behaviour and lessen the avoidance behaviour'. For the purpose of this study, this pronouncement influenced my decision to analyze the relationship between students' attitudes to Spanish and their intrinsic motivation.

Moreover, self-confidence appeared to be a crucial factor influencing intrinsic motivation in education. Tileston (2010, p.21) confirmed 'If a student does not believe that she has the requisite ability, resources, or power to be successful in the new task, then this will greatly lessen her motivation to try'. In relation to FL education, researchers found that the impact of self-confidence figured prominently as well. Csizér and Kormos (2009, p.104) determined that 'students' self-concept plays a highly important role in influencing how much effort the learners are willing to invest'. In agreement with this, Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2006, as cited by De Saint Léger, 2009, p.160) postulated that 'it is students' self-efficacy beliefs, rather than anxiety, that are closely related to academic performance'. Thus, I could consider the worth of self-confidence to the intrinsic motivation of the Upper Form Spanish students in the investigation of the students' feelings of competence in Spanish before choosing Spanish and during the CSEC level.



Interestingly, in conjunction with intrinsic motivating factors in FL education, numerous researchers indicated gender as a pertinent issue. For example, in her study of cognitive, motivational and attitudinal variables on secondary school students' achievement in Spanish, Parchment (1982, p.10) confirmed that 'modern languages are now largely considered the domain of girls, there being increasingly fewer number of boys opting to pursue subjects such as Spanish at this level'. Cochran, McCallum and Bell (2010, p.568) supported this finding, as they noticed in their research on attitudes and aptitude in FL learning that males were less motivated than females to learn a second language. This proposed opinion was shared by other researchers such as Hull Cortés (2002) and Alalou (2001) in her observation of students' perceived foreign language needs. For this study, it would be of interest to observe whether gender would be cited by the participants, as a means of explaining the de-motivation of the Upper Form Spanish students.

### **Stages of Motivation**

In terms of stages of motivation, Dörnyei (2002, p.140) proposed Preactional, Actional and Postactional stages, as the student goes from generated motivation, to maintained motivation in the face of distractions and then decides through retrospection how to act further, once the feedback, such as grades, is received. Additionally, Csizér and Kormos (2009, p.96) stated that 'whereas first year students seemed to be quite confident that they would do well in English, by the fourth form their self-confidence seemed to have dwindled'.

### **Summary**

Finally, according to expert findings and opinions, the relationship between extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and motivation stages with FL education is both intricate and indisputable. I felt that the indication of a symbiotic relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic

motivations within the framework of motivation over time was the most captivating element of the expert opinions. These findings facilitated the focus of my topic, informed my interview protocol and intensified my data analysis. This literature review served to deepen my curiosity as to whether my findings would correspond with the professionals' offerings, and if not, I was eager to discover what that would signify in particular about my Upper Form Spanish students, who chose Spanish for the CSEC Examination, then displayed signs of de-motivation.

### **Methodology**

This study concentrated on the factors contributing to the de-motivation of Spanish students in after they chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level at St. Mark's Secondary, an urban secondary school in north Trinidad.

### **Research Questions**

In congruence with the study's aforementioned objectives, the following research questions were designed:-

1. What do Form 5 students perceive to be the reasons why they chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level? (RQ1)
2. What does a Form 5 Spanish teacher perceive to be the reasons why Form 5 students chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level? (RQ2)
3. What do Form 5 students perceive to be de-motivating factors in their Upper Form Spanish classes? (RQ3)
4. What does a Form 5 Spanish teacher perceive to be de-motivating factors for Form 5 students in their Upper Form Spanish classes? (RQ4)

### **Design of Study**

According to Merriam (2002, p.11), 'If you want to understand a phenomenon, uncover the meaning a situation has for those involved, or delineate process (how things happen), then a qualitative design would be most appropriate.' Given that the focus of this study was concerned with the issue of Form 5 students' de-motivation in Spanish despite registering to complete Spanish for the CSEC level, both teacher and students' perspectives were collected.

In support of a qualitative research design, Maxwell (1996, p.17) stated 'In a qualitative study, you are interested not only in the physical events and behaviour that is taking place, but also in how the participants in your study make sense of this and how their understandings influence their behaviour'. Since the realm of qualitative research encompasses these subjective elements within its design, the purpose of this study, which involved the examination of the development of the de-motivated actions of students, appeared to be suited to the qualitative research design.

Within qualitative research, according to MacDonald and Walker (1975, as cited by Bassey, 1999, p.24), 'Case study is the way of the artist, who achieves greatness when, through the portrayal of a single instance locked in time and circumstance, he communicates enduring truths about the human condition'. Furthermore, case studies are concerned with, according to Stake (1995, p.8) 'particularization, not generalization... There is emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case itself'. Thus, the peculiar situation at St. Mark's Secondary School was analysed in a case study, so that its unique details could be discovered and assessed without making generalizations. In terms of the case study's methods of data collection and presentation, it's reliance on interviews, as guided by Patton (1980,1982 & 2002) and Legard, Keegan and

Ward (2003, as cited in Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003); and documents, served to present the findings of this study thoroughly and adequately.

### **Researcher's Role**

Travers (1969, as cited by Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p. 195) posited 'Researchers generally recognize three sources of bias: those arising from the subject being interviewed, those arising from themselves as researchers and those arising from the subject-researcher interaction.' This declaration prompted me to acknowledge the biases of the interviewed participants in accordance with their specific experiences; and the biases arising out of the interaction between my students and myself, as influenced by our previous interaction at the school.

More importantly however, I recognized my biases as a researcher, especially since (a) this issue is so important to me: The waning motivation of the Form 5 Spanish students at St. Mark's Secondary is of grave interest to me, as I feel that while Spanish is a very useful tool for the multi-faceted development of children, its potential remains untapped due to our current predicament; (b) I constructed the study and its sources of data at my school; (c) the interpretations are my own.

### **Selection of Participants**

Patton (1990, p.169 as cited by Merriam, 2002, p.12) stated 'Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling.' Merriam (2002) explained this statement through her suggestion that a sample from whom the most can be learned should be constructed, since qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants. In the same vein, Weiss (1994, p.17, as cited by Maxwell, 1996, p.70) agreed that the participants should be 'people who are uniquely able to be informative

because they are expert in an area or were privileged witnesses to an event'. Similarly, according to Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p.49), the selection of participants is a process that seeks to identify 'those which, by virtue of their relationship with the research questions, are able to provide the most relevant, comprehensive and rich information'. Therefore, as regards the selection of participants for this study, purposeful sampling was done. For this study, I decided to interview students belonging to the Form 5 Spanish classes, as well as the other Upper Form Spanish teacher, all of whom had experienced or encountered the de-motivation of the students in the Spanish classes at St. Mark's Secondary School.

Furthermore, Merriam (2002) affirmed that purposeful sampling begins with the determination of criteria essential in the selection of the participants to be interviewed. Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p. 79) stated further that the sample must cover 'all the key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter' and must be diverse in order to optimize the 'chance of identifying the full range of factors or features that are associated with a phenomenon'. Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p. 82) stressed also that the participants 'are chosen because they typify a circumstance or hold a characteristic that is expected or known to have salience to the subject matter under study'. Thus, small numbers in qualitative research are acceptable, as long as the selected sample incorporates the constituencies and diversity of the phenomenon.

As a consequence of this, for the purpose of this research, four Form 5 Spanish students and one Form 5 Spanish teacher were invited to participate. Firstly, two students were chosen from each of the two Form 5 Spanish CSEC classes for 2012. In tandem with this, the students were selected after careful examination of Spanish report book comments from Forms 3, 4 and 5 that highlighted consistent references to the students' signs of de-motivation in Spanish classes (see

Appendix B). Although my intention was to select one boy and one girl from each Spanish class, this was impossible to do in my own Spanish class, which consisted of girls only. Thus, two girls from my Spanish class and two boys from the other Spanish teacher's class were chosen for the study. Each student represented one of the four form classes: 5 Science, 5 Business, 5 General and 5 Modern Studies. This was a deliberate action designed to include a variety of characteristics in the Spanish context at the school, which could be contributing to the phenomenon to be studied.

The selected students experienced the CSEC Spanish programme offered at the school, and as such I felt that they would be able to relate a diverse account of the reasons why they opted to select Spanish as a CSEC subject. Additionally, I believed that in the interest of acquiring articulate and truthful responses, these more mature, graduating students would be able to express themselves without fear of reproach for saying what other students, eager to please the teacher, might have felt to be the 'wrong' responses.

One Form 5 Spanish teacher was interviewed because there are only two Form 5 Spanish teachers, including the researcher, at St. Mark's Secondary School. The teacher interviewed had been teaching Spanish at the CSEC level at the school for the past 8 years and had conveyed frequently her frustration with students who had selected Spanish, then showed signs of demotivation in Spanish classes in Form 5.

### **Data Collection**

Bassey (1999, p.81), indicated that data collection was about 'asking questions (and listening intently to the answers), observing events (and noting carefully what happens) and reading documents. The data collecting strategies of this study were in keeping with a reliance on different sources of data. There were four students and one teacher who were interviewed; data

was collected through documents (i.e. report book comments and choice of subject forms) and semi-structured interviews. The responses from the interviews were analyzed via grounded theory methodology and the constant comparative method for the extraction of emergent themes, followed by a process of the researcher's interpretation of these themes.

**Documents.** Stake (1995, p.68) outlined that 'Quite often, documents serve as substitutes for records of activity that the researchers could not observe directly'. Likewise, the documents that were consulted for this study included students' Spanish comments from school reports of their Forms 4 and 5 years (see Appendix B), as well as their choice of subject forms (see Appendix C). While the former provided descriptive teacher recordings and evidence of students' emerging signs of de-motivation; the latter was perused for possible reasons for the selection of Spanish at the CSEC level, as for example, the students would have indicated their various career choices on the forms.

Although the Spanish reports detailed grades, more importantly for this study, they embodied written documentation of students' attitudes towards Spanish and their behaviour in Spanish classes, as assessed by their Spanish teachers after they decided to do Spanish at the CSEC level. These reports provided Spanish teacher perspectives about whether the interviewed students were competent in Spanish; and/or teacher reports of de-motivation in Spanish classes during the Upper Forms, which informed the data collection for RQ2 and RQ4. In terms of supplementing the data collection for RQ1 and RQ3, the students' choice of subject forms helped to establish what the students' job aspirations were and what their initial choice of subjects were, before their applications were inspected by the school's officials.

**Interviews.** With respect to interviewing, Miller and Glasner (2004, as cited by Silverman, 2004, p.127) assessed that qualitative interviewing ‘provides us with a means for exploring the points of view of our research subjects, while granting these points of view the culturally honoured status of reality’. Additionally, Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p.58) determined that ‘understanding motivations and decisions, or exploring impacts and outcomes, generally requires the detailed personal focus that in-depth interviews allow’. In terms of the actual interview questions, Maxwell (1996, p.59) stated that there should be ‘questions about the *meaning* of events and activities to the people involved in these, and questions about the influence of the physical and social *context* on these events and activities’.

Furthermore, in terms of the interview questions, Patton (1982, p.169) affirmed that ‘For purposes of qualitative measurement, good questions should, at a minimum, be open-ended, neutral, sensitive and clear,’ and that ‘the wording of questions will affect the nature and quality of responses received’. Later, Patton (2002, p.56) expressed that ‘An open-ended interview, by way of contrast, permits the respondent to describe what is meaningful and salient without being pigeonholed into standardized categories’. Guided by this, each interview of this case study consisted of carefully designed semi-structured and open-ended questions for a period of 45 minutes to one hour, and was recorded for deeper analysis purposes.

Therefore, for this study, which delved into students’ de-motivation after electing to do Spanish, RQ1 and RQ3 were probed via detailed semi-structured interviews conducted with the students, in a face-to-face format at the beginning of the third term, as sanctioned by the Principal, the students’ parents and the students themselves (see Appendix D). The Upper Form Spanish teacher was interviewed using the same method, but with a separate yet similar interview protocol that sought to elicit information for RQ2 and RQ4 (see Appendix E).



### **Data Analysis**

Maxwell (1996, p.77) commented ‘the experienced qualitative researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation and continues to analyze the data as long as he or she is working on the research’. This consistent and detailed effort of analysis is an integral part of the grounded theory methodology, according to Strauss & Corbin (1990), whereby information was coded; categories were formed and linked; a story was built; and theoretical propositions were formed. In other words, this case study entailed the breaking down of data line by line and reconstructing the information to form theories, as reflected in this case study.

For RQ1 – RQ4 of this study, after the interviews were transcribed (see Appendix F), the grounded theory methodology of analysis was employed, with specific reliance on the constant comparative method as ascribed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In congruence with the constant comparative method designed by Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 102) ‘explicit coding and analytic procedures’ are the foundation of the generation of theory. This method involves the coding of interviews for students (see Appendix G) and the teacher who was interviewed (see Appendix H); incidents for categories; comparison of incidents and categories; memo writing; integration of categories; delimitation of the theory and writing the theory. In this case study, codes were compared; categories made; patterns, contradictions and inconsistencies were identified; and categories were refined. Therefore, comparison of data with data, data with category and category with other categories, resulted in emerging concepts and themes (see Appendix I).

Similarly Patton (1980, p. 246) proposed that inductive data analysis involves, ‘making sense of what people have said, looking for patterns, putting together what is said in one place with what is said in another place, and integrating what different people have said’ so that

according to Guba (1978, as cited by Patton, 1980, p. 312) “recurring regularities”, themes and categories, ‘emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them’. This process was described also by Stake (1995, p.78) who declared ‘We can look for patterns immediately while we are reviewing documents, observing, or interviewing – or we can code the records, aggregate frequencies, and find the patterns that way. Or both’.

**Field notes.** According to Arthur and Nazroo (2003, p.132) ‘field notes provide an opportunity to record what researchers see and hear outside the immediate context of the interview, their thoughts about the dynamic of the encounter, ideas for inclusion in later fieldwork and issues that may be relevant at the analytical stage’. Likewise, in this study, field notes were written both during and immediately after the interviews for the purpose of analysis as suggested by Patton (1980). These field notes, which were taken in relation to the interview questions of this study that centred around RQ1 – RQ4, recorded my observations of the participants’ body language, emotion and other non-verbal signals (see Appendix J). These were indicators of the strength of the interviewees’ beliefs and perceptions expressed throughout the interviews that that could not have been conveyed via interview transcriptions alone.

**Memos.** Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 107) highlighted the significance of memos as they capture the ‘initial freshness of the analyst’s theoretical notions’ and ‘relieve the conflict in his thoughts’; while providing ‘the content behind the categories, which become the major themes of the theory’. Moreover, Maxwell (1996, p.29) suggested ‘You should regularly write memos while you are doing data analysis; memos not only capture your analytic thinking about your data, they facilitate such thinking, stimulating analytic thoughts’. For this research, memos were written before data analysis in accordance with Maxwell (1996) who recommended that the researcher should listen to the interviews before the transcription, in order to write notes and

memos on what is seen or heard in the data; and to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships, during both coding and the formation of categories. These memos were priceless nuggets of reference during the analysis of both the teacher and the students' interviews throughout my writing process (see Appendix K).

***Journal reflections.*** Erickson (1990, p.171) indicated that if a researcher 'was open to perceiving, recording, and reflecting on evidence that would disconfirm the author's preconceived notions and commitments', it would be a good idea to write 'a first-person account of the evolution of inquiry before, during and after fieldwork'. This case study relied on the use of journal reflections in agreement with this suggestion to illustrate clearly the responsible reporting of findings by the researcher (see Appendix L).

### **Credibility / Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited by Bassey, 1999, p.74) support case immersion, careful observation, triangulation and confirmation of data, as well as balanced end reporting as key elements that establish trustworthiness in research. Maxwell (1996, p.89) proposed that the researcher should guard against threats to validity by describing meticulously via recording and transcribing data, and making detailed notes and trying to see the perspectives of the different participants by asking questions that will allow them to express these thoroughly. In conjunction with this, Maxwell (1996, p.92) confirmed that 'Although methods and procedures do not guarantee validity, they are nonetheless essential to the process of ruling out validity threats and increasing the credibility of your conclusions'. For this study therefore, I tried to enhance the credibility of my research by engaging in member checking and peer review, observing triangulation and keeping an audit trail of the processes involved in the investigation of RQ1 - RQ4.

**Member checking.** Stake (1995, p.115) described member checking as a process whereby the ‘actor is asked to review the material for accuracy and palatability’ and that he/she ‘may be encouraged to provide alternative language or interpretation’. Likewise, for cross validation, Patton (1980, p.305) stated that researchers should have the participants read their cases and comment on accuracy of fact and interpretation in the study. Maxwell (1996, p.94) recommended soliciting feedback from the interviewees as ‘It is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what they say and the perspective they have on what is going on’. Therefore, in this case study, the participants were invited, both via letters and e-mails, to review their transcribed interviews as a means of corroboration of the data gathered in the interviews.

**Peer review.** For the purpose of this research, I consulted with two of my colleagues at St. Mark’s Secondary School, both of whom attained postgraduate diplomas in education, as regards the findings and parts of the analysis of my data. Their review resulted in the introduction of other perspectives into the data analysis process, which I had not previously considered, in terms of coding and the formation of categories.

**Triangulation.** As defined by Patton (1980, p.332), triangulation enables the researcher to ‘guard against the accusation that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single data source, or a single investigator’s bias’. Similarly, Maxwell (1996, p.93) proposed that triangulation ‘reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only of systematic biases due to a specific method and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations that you develop’. In this case study, consistency of findings was checked by the comparison of different data sources within the same method, as well as different data collection methods.

**Audit trail.** According to Bassey (1999, p.84), data analysis is ‘an intellectual struggle with an enormous amount of raw data in order to produce a meaningful and trustworthy conclusion which is supported by a concise account of how it was reached’. It is this account of each step of the data collection and analysis that contributes to the accuracy and validity of the audit trail, and in so doing, enhances the credibility of findings (see Appendix M).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p.62) delineated various points of ethical considerations to be observed, including permission to conduct the study, stating objectives and requirements clearly, indicating how findings would be used and reporting information, having regard for sensitivities, maintaining a single point of contact and having a flexible approach to study. In agreement with these suggestions Bassey (1999, p.73) stressed the significance of ‘respect for democracy, respect for truth and respect for persons’. In addition, Bassey (1999, p.77) commented that respect for persons included permission to conduct the study, to use interview material, to maintain confidentiality and to publish the report. Therefore, for this study, permission was sought from various stakeholders for conducting interviews and using interview material; and confidentiality was maintained.

### **Delimitations**

Due to the fact that this study was confined to four Form 5 Spanish students and one Upper Form Spanish teacher at a 5-year urban school in north Trinidad, the results cannot be generalized or applied to other students, teachers, or schools.

## **Limitations**

The limitations of this study stemmed from the possibility that the participants may not have been able to provide honest, articulate responses. The time constraints for the production and delivery of this study also proved to be a limitation to its depth and meticulous delivery.

## **Data Analysis and Findings**

### **Introduction**

The qualitative case study was employed in an effort to explore the phenomenon at St. Mark's Secondary School, as regards teacher and student perceived reasons why students choose to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations. The findings of this case study emerged from the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) supported by grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

For this research, the findings were categorized according to the research questions. In this way, various themes emerged and were documented here. In terms of the interviewed students, all of whom selected their pseudonyms to which they will be referred from this point, the girls were Nicole and Jordan, and the boys were Doe and Sean. The interviewed teacher chose to be named Ms. De Leon.

Additionally, the data analysis for this research has been supplemented by the inclusion of coded interviews for the students (see Appendix G), as well as for the interviewed teacher (see Appendix H).

### **Research question 1: What do Form 5 students perceive to be the reasons why they chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?**

For the purpose of this research question, during each interview, I sought to highlight each participant's experience with Spanish that culminated in his/her selection of Spanish for the

CSEC Examination, at the end of the Form 3 academic year (see Appendix G). In order to expose their unique experiences with Spanish, the researcher enquired about the students' home and school environments as well as the family, friends, teachers and school administration personnel with whom the participants were surrounded. Additionally, the participants' feelings about Spanish were considered by the researcher.

It is imperative to indicate that students stated directly the factors they believed influenced their entrance into the CSEC Spanish programme. Simultaneously however, other reasons surrounding their Lower Form Spanish experience seemed to be implicated in connection with their selection of Spanish as a CSEC subject.

In terms of the implied elements regarding the selection of Spanish for CSEC, I noted that the possible impact of family, friends and teachers was suggested. As for their family environment, all the students interviewed were able to say that they had a family member who appreciated or did well in Spanish. For example, Nicole confirmed "I have a brother dat did Spanish and he actually got a II", and Sean said "my mom like it an meh cousin". Jordan agreed with this family support, but went a step further to include the support of her friends when she related that "meh fren see me wid it an meh sister encourage meh an say well it good because dey did it an dey like it an ah should try wid it an doh drop d subject". Although Doe's report is similar to the other interviewees, his experience of his mother's love for Spanish which made her "ask me questions (in Spanish)<sup>3</sup>", contrasted with his friends' negative responses to the foreign language as he stated he had "frens wanna duck class an ask me like come nah, come nah, dat too hard".

In the same vein, I gleaned that in the Lower Form Spanish classes, although the students declared that they dislike writing stories and letters, failing exams and getting bad grades, they

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<sup>3</sup> Brackets added by researcher for clarification of comment.

remarked that they had an enjoyable experience in the Spanish classroom setting. For instance, Doe liked “learning stuff in Spanish”, Jordan liked “learning to say things in a whole different language”, and Sean mentioned “in the Lower Forms it was much easier”. Both Nicole and Sean hinted that their teachers were positive factors when she said “ah did like meh Spanish teacher” and he liked how Miss “used to teach it”.

Therefore, the students’ initial experience of Spanish transported them from families in which they were introduced to the opinion/belief that Spanish was ‘good’, to a school environment where, with the exception of Doe’s friends, the Lower Form encounter with Spanish appeared to include positive interaction with teachers and learning material. Interestingly however, despite the fact that the interviewed students affirmed that they had family members who liked Spanish and for the most part that they themselves had a favourable encounter with Spanish in the Lower Form classrooms, they did not cite these explicitly as factors that resulted in their selection of Spanish.

Instead, when asked directly about the aspects that influenced them to choose Spanish as a CSEC subject, the interviewed students expressed various ways in which they were led to register for Spanish as, what I interpreted to be, a ‘last resort’. This, they claimed, was due to dynamics such as the intervention of school administration personnel, the constraints of the school’s official choice of subjects form, and their view of the Trinidadian society’s perceived relevance of Spanish due to Trinidad’s proximity to Venezuela.

The following statements made by this study’s participants emphasize this unplanned registration for Spanish. For example, Doe explained that he “didn’t prepare enough in Spanish” and that he wanted to choose Food and Nutrition, “but the teacher like she told me not to pick it” and Spanish “was d only udder subject in d line”. Likewise, Jordan indicated that even though



she was “afraid of failin” Spanish, “when it was time tuh pick subjects ah didn pick enough an d Dean gave me dis subject”. Nicole wanted to do a particular subject, but on the choice of subject form, it was in the same line as Literature, one of her “star” subjects, so since she could only choose one subject per line, she opted to take Literature and then “take d Spanish” in a line that did not contain any of her desired subject choices, even though she “never pass it”. Her statement “I didn’t pick Spanish, it was actually given to me” seems to encompass the general perception of her fellow interviewees, that they were obliged to register for CSEC Spanish.

Perhaps the most nonchalant decision to do Spanish was Sean’s, as he stated that although “I didn’t really like it that much. It didn’t really matter...I jes say well Spanish is a language, so ah say I will try it...meh mom was studying Spanish before and meh cousin...d road signs an all dey in Spanish, probably maybe learn a ting or two in Spanish”. In other words, it seemed that Sean made a decision about Spanish that he thought was best, given his experience with Spanish in his home environment, his school environment and the society in which he was nurtured.

Moreover, the interviewees’ overall indication that the choice to do Spanish at the CSEC level was not of their own volition was supported by their mostly negative response (3 out of 4) when asked whether they would choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level if given the opportunity to go back in time. These three students lamented their experience in Spanish and low performance.

According to Doe, “it wasn’t actually one ah meh choices dat ah had in mind”; Jordan felt that she would “not go thru all d frustration of it an d difficulty an failin it” because “it make meh feel like ah not good in it at all an like it doh make no sense continuin in it, it kinda bring meh dong a lil bit” and Sean believed “it is not a difficult subject but it’s a subject where that I don’t think that I could pass”. On the other hand, Nicole averred optimistically that in her current view

of Spanish “I so getting prepared for the paper feelin so confident that I am goin tuh pass, that ah woulda pick it”.

Indeed, Nicole informed me that she had increased confidence about her possible competence in the CSEC Spanish examination, due to her conviction that she had a positive CSEC Spanish Oral Examination. Her comment brought to light another possible reason for what might have persuaded these students to choose deliberately to do Spanish at the Upper Form level: Good grades. For example, Doe explained that he did not want to do Spanish for exams because “I didn prepare enough in Spanish, but if ah did ah woulda really or ah woulda really make a decision to push mehself in Spanish” and Nicole attested, “within Forms 1 to 3, I tried...well to me I really tried and not one term I ever pass it, so at higher form now I did not pick Spanish”. In the same vein, Jordan bemoaned “when ah was like in Form 3 an ting ah find ah was rel failin it an ah was like why pick ah subject dat ah failin cuz to me it really didn make no sense tuh do dat” and Sean, when asked about what he disliked in the Lower Form Spanish classes stated “Well grades...It wasn’t too good. Because like you know, as ah said, ah never really learn anyting”.

It is worth mentioning that, with respect to their general feeling about the Spanish language, the interviewed girls acknowledged the value of Spanish more than the boys interviewed. For instance, Jordan found that it was a good and handy subject, although “some tings kinda confusin” and Nicole declared that she “actually love it” and chose Spanish, because “thas like d second language after English”. On the other hand, the boys admitted that they were not interested in choosing Spanish for CSEC as Doe stated that he “never really wanted to do Spanish” and Sean said firmly “if it was up to me I doh really like it”. What’s more, in spite of these mixed feelings, all the students interviewed were able to articulate effortlessly the utility of

Spanish in relation to travel, the imminence of Trinidad to Venezuela, communication, interaction and occupations.

Thus, according to the interviewed students, they referred to their families, friends, and an acknowledgement of the usefulness of Spanish as elements that were present in their Lower Form Spanish experience, but indicated that the school administration's actions and their perceived limitations of the choice of subject form together with a perception that Spanish could be helpful in Trinidad, influenced their selection of Spanish for CSEC Examinations, regardless of their low grades. In my view, in order to achieve even greater understanding of the issue of the reasons why students chose Spanish at St. Mark's Secondary School, it was necessary for me to gain insight into teacher perspectives.

**Research question 2: What does a Form 5 Spanish teacher perceive to be the reasons why Form 5 students chose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?**

Ms. De Leon, the interviewed Upper Form Spanish teacher, felt that in general, St. Mark's Secondary School's students registered for the Spanish CSEC examination in accordance with an enjoyable Lower Form experience together with the school administration's encouragement of students to select Spanish at the CSEC level (see Appendix H). Unfortunately, despite the positive nature suggested by all these, Ms. De Leon unearthed the school's disturbing trend to forego a "filter process" and lead students to do Spanish, irrespective of their depth of genuine interest and/or their low grades in Spanish in the Lower Form.

Firstly, since the students chose to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations at the end of Form 3, I felt it was necessary to learn more about the students' Lower Form Spanish experience, to understand whether there might have been possible encouragement to choose Spanish. Thus, at the Lower Form level, even with the challenges of teaching grammar, where Ms. De Leon

confessed that her students “groan and I groan”, she believed that they liked their encounter with Spanish. She was able to detail these positive factors when she explained their interest in activities when she said “I think students enjoy the interaction that we’re able to have uhm...the fun things we’re able to do: chant, sing songs, do things in rote, little quizzes, little games”. In addition, Ms. De Leon remarked about the “healthy competition within the class” where the students participated in the focus on vocabulary and grammar, as they would “enjoy the sound of some of the words” or that “they enjoy the Imperfect Tense”.

However, Ms. De Leon was concerned that the absence of criteria for entry into a foreign language programme at the school, student perceptions, the school’s administrative actions and parents’ wishes, could be held responsible for the CSEC registration of students who did not possess the deep interest or ability in the subject. For instance, Ms. De Leon’s disapproval about the lack of criteria for the CSEC Spanish programme, was laid bare when she commented that the enrollment process entailed that “everyone is recommended”, “they choose it, they get it”. That is to say, in her view, any student whose choice of subject form indicated that Spanish was on his/her list of subjects, could be placed into a Spanish class by senior school officials, irrespective of the students’ aptitude and/or academic grades in Spanish.

Ms. De Leon implied also that it appeared to her that some students were interested superficially in the pursuit of studying Spanish, as for example, they might have chosen Spanish because they believed in terms of a job “it’s necessary for them...they may not like it but they know it’s necessary”. In addition, Ms. De Leon felt that the school’s administration or parents’ wishes could ensure that in terms of the students, Spanish “could be chosen for them” and “that makes the teacher’s job a little bit more difficult, because the person doesn’t want to be there”.

Of these possible reasons for students choosing Spanish, however, Ms. De Leon was troubled the most about the matter of the administration's involvement in the enrollment of CSEC Spanish students at St. Mark's Secondary School. She indicated frankly that while she anticipated that students would have "chosen this subject because they got a particular uhm...uhm...grade, they have a particular aptitude and they are willing to work," she viewed Spanish as "as a dumping ground" where "students are dumped in Spanish when and if they can't do anything else" or if "another teacher has indicated vociferously that this person is not to be considered". Thus, Ms. De Leon perceived that it was a trend at St. Mark's Secondary School that students who had not met the requirements of another subject that he/she was desirous of pursuing, could be placed into a Spanish class by senior school officials, irrespective of the students' aptitude and/or academic grades in Spanish.

Indeed, Ms. De Leon acknowledged that students seemed to enjoy their Lower Form experience despite their low grades, but she did not cite this enjoyment as a reason for the students' pursuit of Spanish at the CSEC level. In fact, her perception of the method of enrollment of students for CSEC Spanish, as treated by St. Mark's Secondary School, could indicate that perhaps students were enrolled regardless of their readiness for the Spanish programme, or that some students were not entirely in control of whether they 'got' Spanish. Given that the Upper Form Spanish teacher proposed this as the basis for the choice of Spanish for CSEC Examinations at St. Mark's Secondary School, I believed it was essential for me to examine whether this impacted on what the students felt could be the reasons for their demotivation in the Upper Forms.

**Research question 3: What do Form 5 students perceive to be de-motivating factors in their Upper Form Spanish classes?**

In tandem with the discussions held with the Form 5 Spanish students interviewed at St. Mark's Secondary School, it was observed yet again that students mentioned directly certain reasons that caused their de-motivation in Spanish classes, yet alluded to other possible reasons in their explanations about their feelings about Spanish and their Upper Form experiences. Therefore, when the student participants of this study were asked explicitly about the elements that they believed contributed to their de-motivation in the Upper Form Spanish classes, they referred to their friends, teachers, low grades and classroom environment (see Appendix G). Interestingly, at the same time, the interviewed students implied that friends and teachers were their main sources of extrinsic motivation as well.

Friends' behaviour in Upper Form Spanish classes was declared directly as a de-motivating factor. For example, according to Sean, during Spanish classes his friends "sleep...whether or not...whenever they get up, they get up" and that while "most of them are like, wha I pick Spanish for? Spanish don't make sense!" other friends would see him trying in Spanish and "may say nah boy he getting higher dan me an dey will try tuh pull yuh back down". Likewise, Doe declared "ah have friends who well, dey don't do Spanish a whole lot" and Jordan said "some of meh frens really really don't like Spanish and they doin it because it was too late fuh dem tuh drop d subject".

This negative influence of friends was implied further in other sections of the interview. For instance, although two students wished to maintain their friendships during their exam preparation time, the other two valued the importance of their examinations above their friendships. For instance, Nicole said she "had to just lock off ah lot of dem because yuh know it

was always a lime”, and Sean noted that with his friends “yuh have tuh push them aside tuh be able tuh focus more on yuh work”.

Still, despite the blunt and implicit declaration of the ‘bad influence’ of friends, friends were mentioned subtly as inspirations in Upper Form Spanish classes, as Doe enjoyed Spanish classes “if meh fren working tings out in Spanish”. Ironically also, the two students who valued examination preparation more than the maintenance of friendships had recollections about motivational friends in Spanish class, as Nicole expressed “ah have ahm a friend that sit next to me for Spanish and sometimes she like ahm lewwe learn to say dis in Spanish nah” and Sean revealed “Well ah had ah fren dat was doin Spanish an she used tuh help meh a lot wid it”.

Strangely, the two students who valued friendships more did not seem to be influenced greatly by their Spanish classmates. For example, Doe noted merely that they “does be dey really in d class, doin work an stuff”; and Jordan implied that *she* was a motivating factor for her Spanish classmates “well like if yuh have ah fren an she doan want tuh do it well yuh could say well yuh could try”.

Moreover, teachers’ influence was deemed candidly as a de-motivating factor as well, according to Nicole, who indicated “Miss ...coulda like talk Spanish tuh we nah, yuh kno?” and Doe who related “the teacher like sometimes when ah set a talking goin on...the teacher tends to...ah wouldn’ say goes on a high, but tends tuh like really be upset and really come down on us”. Indirectly however, according to the female students interviewed, Jordan appreciated “meh teacher, because she does always like talk tuh us and let us kno how tuh manoeuvre in d subject so dat it would be a lil easier fuh us to do” and Nicole indicated that she felt comfortable to ask for both assistance and guidance in her Upper Form Spanish classes because her teacher was “like ah guardian tuh a chile, so it never really had any fear”.

Low grades were pointed out openly as a de-motivating factor according to Jordan when she emphasized that they make me feel like ah not good in it at all an like it doh make no sense continuin in it an, it kinda bring meh dong a lil bit”. This effect of failing grades on effort and interest was reiterated in the negative approach to the CSEC Spanish Examination, as Doe and Sean, the two male student interviewees admitted that they were not studying for Spanish. For instance, Sean communicated clearly “fuh meh other CXC subjects I drill these subjects because I know that these are subjects that I could pass”.

In the same vein, the factors which provoked de-motivation in the Upper Form Spanish classes that I gathered from other responses throughout the interviews included negative feelings which emerged about students’ perceived performance and competence in the Spanish CSEC programme. In this manner, all the students emphasized the difficulty of learning and understanding Spanish, specifically the written and oral components, as the well as their overwhelming discouragement by their low grades in their current performance in Spanish.

Furthermore, these feelings about doing Spanish for the CSEC examination revealed that even though Jordan complained “oh gosh d pressures of goin through d exam it kinda frustratin” she indicated positively “it could come in handy fuh me”. Similarly, Nicole said ruefully “not one term I ever pass it” but she resolved optimistically to “take it an ah say well ah will work wid it”. Conversely Sean and Doe, the male students, stressed that they were not interested in Spanish, which resulted in these boys’ display of more negative than positive actions at the Upper Form level, such as skipping class, not paying attention, sleeping and not studying Spanish. These boys did not see the relevance of the subject to their lives, as Doe remarked that “it hah no purpose for me” and Sean said directly “maybe some people they job they require a



language which is Spanish, but for me, I don't see it as fit to do Spanish as a CXC (CSEC) subject".

Additionally, the classroom environment and the instruction time were revealed straightforwardly as de-motivational elements for the Upper Form Spanish classes. For example, Doe conveyed "Well, it will be how d room does be so hot...ah doesn really feel to go in, because how hot, how hot d place does be. So it really does not motivate me to work". Nicole complained also about "d long periods". Although these factors did not figure prominently in the interviews, their contribution to the de-motivation of Spanish CSEC students cannot be overlooked.

Therefore, the interviewed students seemed to identify the concept of motivation with extrinsic rather than intrinsic forces, as implemented principally by friends, teachers and the school environment. According to these students, their de-motivated actions in the Upper Form Spanish classes at St. Mark's Secondary School, stemmed from their lack of support from friends, low grades and a learning environment that at times was not conducive to learning. For me, what was most notable was the fact that low intrinsic motivation was mentioned rarely in the students' interviews, as the students did not seem to associate this directly with their de-motivation in Upper Form CSEC Spanish classes. Armed with this information, it was prudent to discover the Upper Form Spanish teacher's ideas about the reasons Spanish students were de-motivated.

**Research question 4: What does a Spanish Form 5 teacher perceive to be de-motivating factors for Form 5 students in their Upper Form Spanish classes?**

According to Ms. De Leon, the Spanish CSEC teacher at St. Mark's Secondary School, motivation was defined as either intrinsic (self) or extrinsic, as instituted by the teacher, home

environment and peers. It was her firm opinion that students' motivation should be both internal and external in order to achieve academic success. She noted that "If it is that they don't want to be there, as is frequently the case in this school and in our experience, the motivating factor becomes external". Thus, she felt that many students who were registered for the Spanish CSEC Examination did not possess the combination of both types of motivation, which she deemed crucial to their success.

In conjunction with this, Miss De Leon saw overwhelming signs of the students' lack of motivation when they slept, talked and/or did not participate in class skipped class, did not use their initiative to work at home, achieved low grades, or were absent from the CSEC Oral examination. More significantly, Ms. De Leon believed that the issues of students not wanting to "learn a particular thing", "the distractions, the disrespect, the lack of courtesy", "the lack of civility" and the fact that "you have so much reprimanding to do" all highlighted the vast degree of de-motivation that she believed she witnessed from the Upper Form Spanish students (see Appendix H).

On the other hand, in the Upper Form Spanish classes, Ms. De Leon witnessed rare moments of self-motivation in the form of independent workers, asking questions and completing assignments. Despite this, her opinion about St. Marks's Secondary School's issue of de-motivated Spanish CSEC students became clear when she divulged that even though Spanish "is a difficult subject" and that "Spanish has no relevance in their lives", students were "not giving it a fair chance" supported by her view that "we have a culture in this school where in Form 1 children write off a subject". Due to the fact that Ms. De Leon perceived that the students were "not trying...that leads to them uhm...as I say plugging out, in terms of interest". Additionally,

she believed that the Upper Form Spanish students were “not motivated to want to try. So then it’s reflected in their marks and then, it’s a cycle”.

Furthermore, Ms. De Leon professed that having to teach large and possibly unwieldy classes of Upper Form Spanish students, who displayed these de-motivated actions, was challenging. For example, she said “for me the most challenging thing is dealing with a body of students that have already decided that...this is not for them most of the form 4 form 5 level when they, when the agenda is so much more uhm packed.” Maybe this is the reason why Ms. De Leon conveyed that self-motivation was essential in the Upper Forms.

What’s more, Ms. De Leon attributed these de-motivated actions to the “tonne of work, because some of them, it really takes them by storm” and “I don’t think students go home and do the amount of studying that they are supposed to” as well as “much more complicated” grammar and limited class time in which to complete the syllabus. Here, the teacher hinted at the great negative impact of students’ lack of coping and/or management skills in the face of an expanded workload, more difficult work and intense work schedules on students’ motivation in Spanish Upper Form classes.

Regarding her possible impact on the degree of motivation of her Upper Form Spanish students, Ms. De Leon affirmed that she created “a comfortable learning environment”, and enjoyed the “rapport between student-teacher”. Interestingly however, in the Upper Form Spanish classes, she somewhat acknowledged that her creativity and encouraging capacity were hampered in the implementation of the Upper Form curriculum due to its heavy grammar base, but simultaneously, she recognized also that “maybe it’s a little bit of my fault”.

Furthermore, Ms. De Leon felt that the root of the problem of de-motivation of Upper Form Spanish students at St. Mark’s Secondary School was linked to the fact that the school’s

administration did not put in place any system to make students compete for entrance into the CSEC Spanish programme, and even frustrated some students with assigning them to Spanish classes, whether or not they opted to be there. Due to the lack of competition to gain entrance into Spanish CSEC classes, Ms. De Leon deduced that the subject developed a reputation as an irrelevant, insignificant one.

Therefore, although she recognized the fact that the Spanish workload was difficult and extreme in the Upper Forms, and that she might be culpable for the format of her delivery, Ms. De Leon highlighted the low subject relevance and lack of interest and/or diligence of the Upper Form Spanish students as the reasons supporting their de-motivation. However, she was sure to mention that these reasons were entrenched in the school's lack of criteria used for entry into the Spanish CSEC programme.

### **Summary**

In sum, the interviewed students believed that their families and friends together with their understanding of the usefulness of Spanish were encouraging elements of their Lower Form Spanish experience. Despite this, they felt that the school administration's actions and choice of subject form as well as their perceived notion that Spanish could be helpful in Trinidad, influenced their selection of Spanish for CSEC Examinations, regardless of their low grades. The interviewed Spanish teacher agreed that the students enjoyed their Lower Form experience despite their low grades, but cited mainly the school administration's actions as the reason why students were enrolled in the Spanish programme, regardless of their readiness, or that some students were not entirely in control of whether they 'got' Spanish.

More significantly, students exhibited de-motivation in the Upper Form Spanish classes at St. Mark's Secondary School, due to their feelings of lack of support from friends, low grades

and a learning environment that at times was not conducive to learning. The interviewed Spanish teacher however, felt that de-motivation of the Upper Form Spanish students was due mainly to the school administration's lack of criteria for entry into the CSEC programme, which gave rise to the enrollment of students who she perceived did not persevere in Spanish because of the reasons they chose to do Spanish, which did not really involve their inclination or volition.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

This research attempted to explore reasons influencing the de-motivation of Form 5 Spanish students, after they opted to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations at St. Mark's Secondary School.

#### **Discussion**

To a great extent, the findings of this case study reflected findings and opinions of various researchers in education and foreign language motivation. These included extrinsic motivation factors that were identified such as social contexts, in terms of the general society (Kouritzin, Piquemal & Renaud, 2009), family and friends within the students' social groups (Hull Cortés, 2002), and the school environment including teachers, classrooms and performance (Csizér & Kormos, 2009). Additionally, researchers proposed intrinsic motivation factors were manifested in students' perceptions of the relevance of Spanish, beliefs about self or self-confidence (De Saint Léger, 2009), attitudes (Green, 1977), interests and coping skills (Rust, 1977), and gender (Cooper, 2001). According to Dörnyei (2002, p.140), the impact of both extrinsic and intrinsic factors varied depending on different motivation stages.

In synthesis with these findings, key elements relating specifically to the students' and teacher's experience of (i) the selection of Spanish, and (ii) dealing with de-motivation in the Upper Form Spanish classes at St. Mark's Secondary School, were uncovered and discussed below.

**Selection of Spanish for the CSEC Examination.** For the Upper Form Spanish students of this study, the choice to do Spanish was a question of extrinsic factors: involvement of the school's administration, choice of subject form constraints and/or the historical and cultural context of Spanish influence in Trinidad and Tobago. Still, the girls of the study communicated recognition and respect for the relevance of Spanish, while the boys saw the relevance for others and did not want to opt to do Spanish due to feelings of dislike or lack of interest. The appearance in this study that girls were more motivated to do foreign languages was compatible with research conducted by Hull Cortés (2002, p.321), who cited the same observation as Koizumi (1993), Pritchard (1987) and Sung and Padilla (1998).

It was noticeable that the interviewed students cited these reasons for choosing Spanish for the CSEC Examination, and did not actually refer to other sources of extrinsic motivation that they signified, such as their encouraging family and peer support regarding Spanish. Additionally, the classroom environment was not referred to even though the Lower Form experience of Spanish was described by both students and teacher as one that enabled fun activities with engaging teachers.

It became my quest to understand why intrinsic factors were not cited directly by the interviewed students as support for the selection of Spanish for the CSEC Examination. In this regard, according to the students and teacher, in the Lower Forms the students attained failing grades consistently (see Appendix B) and had difficulty with the written Spanish component. The students declared that these experiences eroded their self-confidence and advanced their desire to avoid Spanish. Thus, I gleaned that the interviewed students believed that extrinsic factors over which they had no control took precedence over their personal dejection or low intrinsic motivation. Consequently, they selected Spanish for the CSEC Examination.

Furthermore, I acknowledged that it seemed that the interviewed students' selection of Spanish for the CSEC Examination was not really in accordance with their desires or preferences or performance. This seemed to validate the interviewed teacher's claim that the school had no criteria for Spanish CSEC registration and that Spanish was a dumping ground for students who were not successful in their pursuit of other subjects in keeping with their interests. In connection with this, Cooper (2001, p.454) advised like Brown (1985) and Schmidt (1981) that 'Although students' perceptions of their learning goals do not provide concrete curricular objectives, assessing these needs is an important step in both curriculum design and the definition of the goals of foreign language programs'.

**De-motivation in the Upper Form.** On the subject of the reasons contributing to the de-motivation of Upper Form Spanish students at St. Mark's Secondary School, the interviewed teacher was of the firm view that both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation were crucial to successful FL education. She expressed firmly her belief, that many students registered to do CSEC Spanish at St. Mark's Secondary School did not possess self-motivation in Spanish.

Like the Spanish teacher, the students identified their low self-motivation and cited their poor performance and minimal competence as highly discouraging and depressing factors influencing their Upper Form de-motivation. However, while the Spanish teacher opined that she established a comfortable learning environment, she admitted that the classes were large and unwieldy.

In the same vein, the students mentioned de-motivating elements of their environment during Spanish classes, as one student remarked that the classroom was too hot and two others hinted that the Spanish triple period was unbearable. Thus, the students implied that there was both low intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in their Upper Form Spanish experience. In this line,

De Saint Léger (2009, p.160) shared the view of Ushioda (2003) that 'if learners perceive the learning environment as supportive rather than inhibiting, their self-confidence and motivation to interact in the classroom will grow accordingly'.

However, although the interviewed students did not cite the following extrinsic motivators directly as reasons for their Upper Form de-motivation, I detected a meagre reference to motivating friends and teachers which was outdone by their outstanding reference to either conflict with friends, or friends who were jealous and trying to bring them down, or friends' encouragement to waste time in Spanish class. This was in proportion to the findings of Green (1997, as cited in Ball 1997, p.126) who commented 'that the peer group becomes a more salient factor with older children'.

Moreover, the reference to friends as more de-motivating than motivating in the Upper forms echoed the description about Spanish teachers. Although there was one allusion to the teacher as a guardian, other references included a criticism of the lack of instruction in the Spanish language and the tendency of a Spanish teacher to be harsh with students. In fact, Harmer (1998, as cited by Banno, 2003, p.340) stressed the 'importance of the relationship between teacher and student, and concluded that good language teachers should be approachable and genuinely interested in their students, have the desire to empathize with students'.

Other hints from the interviewed students and the interviewed teacher as to the reasons behind the students' Upper Form de-motivation included the difficulty of Spanish, especially the grammar at the CSEC level, as well as the issue of relevance of Spanish to their lives. Here the boys maintained their disinterest despite articulating a perceived relevance of Spanish. Gardner (1996, as cited by MacIntyre, 2002, p.48) explained this seemingly strange occurrence when he affirmed 'it is the active learner, the student who engages with the language, who can be



considered motivated. The student who endorses the integrative attitudes...but who does not show effort and engagement with the language, is simply not a motivated learner’.

Conversely, the girls demonstrated both integrative and instrumental orientations to the study of Spanish, as theorized by Gardner (1985, as cited by Cochran, McCallum & Bell 2010, p.568) who indicated that ‘students are often motivated to study a foreign language by a desire to move closer to the target language community - termed an integrative orientation - or by the language being a means to an end - for example, a better job.’ As such, one girl saw it relevant to her plan to travel in the future as part of her job, and another saw it as a means of communication with Spanish-speaking persons for the purpose of facilitating conversion to Jehovah’s Witnesses, her religion. I found this to be fascinating, especially since it was consistent with Tileston (2010, p.17) who proposed that ‘Religion influences our motivation in that one’s religion may reinforce collaboration and sharing or sacrifice. It may set a high value on relationships or on personal best’.

What’s more, the interviewed teacher named other issues that she felt explained the de-motivation of Spanish students in the Upper Form classes. For instance, she acknowledged that the students might not have wanted to do Spanish in the first place, and she also spoke about the students’ lack of coping skills to treat with extensive workloads in the Upper Forms. By the same token, coping skills were found by expert researchers to have a bearing on intrinsic motivation. For example, Tileston (2010, p.30) observed ‘For many of our students, the learned behaviour when something goes wrong is to give up.’

Further confirming Tileston (2010, p.30) who commented ‘when our students do not perceive the information to be important, they may toss it out from the beginning’, the interviewed teacher believed that St. Mark’s Secondary School had a culture of children who

abandoned their efforts in subjects they felt were too hard, that students did not give Spanish a fair chance, since it entailed lots of material and complicated grammar. She referred also to her teaching challenges of hampered creativity with a packed Spanish CSEC agenda, but then she conceded that maybe she had spent too much time on grammar and could be more interactive in her teaching style.

Indeed, although the teacher's emphasis on teaching grammar directly was, in her opinion, an imperative part of her duty as a Spanish teacher, Csizér and Kormos (2009, p.103) believed that in a classroom of traditional teaching methods, 'the students regard themselves as solitary language learners rather than members of a learning group and that group-cohesion and co-operativeness...do not contribute to the increase in students' motivated behaviour'.

### **Recommendations**

In the research done for this study, there were numerous expert recommendations for motivation of students in FL education. These included a focus on improving the classroom setting by integrating interactive teacher practices (Banno, 2003, p.339-340), paying attention to the personal interests of students (Hull Cortés, 2002, p.329), and exploring the use of technology (Carter, 2003). Additionally, Kouritzin, Piquemal and Renaud (2009, p.304) suggested appealing for the implementation of government policy as regards foreign language education.

In order to encourage other students to choose Spanish, the interviewed students and teacher believed that Spanish at the school could be made more lively, fun, and applicable to students' interests; and could incorporate more interaction with native Spanish speaking people. This was in keeping also with Tileston (2010, p.10) who suggested 'Make the learning fun and interesting so that students want to know the information and discover new things'.

The interviewed teacher proposed further that Spanish could be marketed, multimedia could be used, as promoted by Wyatt (2011, p.3). The teacher stressed further that a bi-lingual environment could be established at the school, in harmony with Schwarzer (2001, p.54) who found in his focus on FL learners, that a 'classroom with rich environmental print may also help'.

Probably the most essential point made by the teacher was her offering that the administration should pursue the implementation of a filtering process. She believed that, based on specific criteria for entry into the CSEC Spanish class, this filtering process would be a method of inspiring healthy competition, increasing the performance of students and as a result, engendering students who would develop an aptitude and performance in keeping with successful foreign language education. Further exploration of this filtering concept seemed to me to be necessary.

Moreover, Csizér and Kormos (2009, p.104) declared that 'teachers should pay special attention to motivating fourth year students not to give up learning the language'. In an effort to remedy the de-motivation of the Upper Form Spanish students, the interviewed students felt that more basic work could be done at the CSEC level; material could be more fun and interesting; tenses (grammar) could be taught in detail in the Lower Form and vocabulary could be the main focus in the Upper Form; field trips could be organized; and there could be more oral practice. As for the interviewed teacher however, she reiterated the need for a filter process to encourage students to strive for excellence, as she reasoned that creating a challenge to be permitted to do Spanish would develop interest levels in the language and this she felt would positively affect motivation levels.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this case study required an examination into teacher and students' perceptions about the influencing reasons for the de-motivation of Form 5 Spanish students after they elected to do Spanish for the CSEC Examinations. Their perceptions led me to presume that despite the need to harness the extrinsic motivating power of the students' milieu, in the form of family, friends and teachers in the school environment, intrinsic motivation was crucial to the students' determination to learn Spanish, especially in the face of floundering grades. The high incidence of low grades should be addressed, in an effort to increase students' desire to pursue Spanish beyond Form 3. According to the findings of this study, this would entail more interactive classes, in keeping with students' interests.

More importantly though, I inferred that the interviewed students' could have felt betrayed by the system of assignment of students to Spanish CSEC classes that appeared to be practised at St. Mark's Secondary School. I believed that the lack of filtering of students, as proposed by the interviewed Spanish teacher seemed to have increased the teacher and students' frustration with the intense Spanish CSEC curriculum and sanctioned students' de-motivation in the Upper Form Spanish classes.

Thus, according to the findings of this study it is suggested that perhaps the improvement of both the method of Spanish education as well as the registration of Spanish CSEC students needs to be researched further. The reconstruction of these aspects related to the students' and teacher experience of Spanish at St. Mark's Secondary School, appears to be in the interest of enabling students to benefit more profoundly from the innumerable advantages of Spanish education.



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Appendices



# Appendix B

## Spanish Report Book Comments

Form 4			Form 5	
I	II	III	I	II
61 } 33 } 7	70 Can work when he wants	Not doing enough ABS	0 Does nothing	ABS —
—	21 } Lazy Can work well, but always sleeps in class.	52 } must push 25 } himself more.	29 Apply yourself	—
67 } Passive 22 } attitude	67 Can work when he wants	31 } Push 23 } yourself	11 more to be done	ABS —
47 } Tues! 56 }	73 Keep up effort	65 } You 63 } need to step up effort	42 Apply yourself more	64 } Intensity 57 } efforts.
85 } Great 75 } job	60 Can produce better grades	65 } Push 64 } yourself more	78 Keep up effort.	68 } Intensity 61 } efforts.
77 } Keep up 51 } effort	67 Can get 80s & 90s.	63 } Push 70 } yourself more	75 Keep up effort.	64 } Intensity 57 } efforts.
85 } What 37 } happened	32 Generally does well. Grade does not reflect the ability.	58 } Sleeps 4 } in class	20 Does very little.	—
I	II	III	I	II
55 } Must do 16 } better	38 } Struggling but Capable	49 } Galon 25 } finds this subject difficult	—	3 } 19 } —
12 } Unsettled 7 }	ABS } Skipped ABS } class often	0 } Did not 10 } attend any class this term	0 Avoids work & class.	ABS } has not ABS } attended class this term.
59 } Has 48 } settled Keep revising nicely.	0 } Abs. 26 } top often	39 } Un- 32 } satis- factory	40 Keep working!	30 } Is improving 55 } nicely.
76 } Excell. 34 } term! Revise	75 } Inconsis- 21 } results	42 } Perform- 31 } below her ability.	51 Keep working!	18 } Discouraging 31 } results
52 } 49 } —	77 Keep up the effort	—	—	30 } 45 } T & B

# Appendix C

DOE

Dear Parent / Guardian

## Choice of Subject Form

### "Subject Choices for Form 4 - 2010 / 2011"

At this time we are undertaking our exercise of subject selection. This an opportunity for you to indicate the subjects that you child /ward is desirous of pursuing at the CXC-CSEC level; this information will guide us in formulating the group of subjects that we will be able to offer your child / ward.

Please note the following:

- Students are required to pursue seven ( 7 ) subjects at either the General or Technical Proficiency.
- Students will be selected based on performance, availability of space and on the advice of the subject teachers.
- Our Form 4 programme has two (2) compulsory subjects i.e. English Language ( English A) and Mathematics
- Students are advised to select at least one (1) science subject among the choices
- All students choosing Physics are advised to also choose Additional Mathematics (Ad. Maths)
- Students choosing Food & Nutrition are advised to also select either Chemistry, Biology or Integrated Science .
- Students choosing Clothing & Textiles are advised to also select Chemistry or Integrated Science.
- Students choosing Physical Education are advised to also select Biology or Human & Social Biology.

### Subjects Offered

You are required to choose ONE (1) subject only from each group

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Biology	Chemistry	Physics ✓	Principles Of Business (24)	Information Technology (13)
Principles of Accounts	English Literature (6)	Principles Of Business	French	Integrated Science
Information Technology ✓	Mechanical Engineering Technology (Metals)	Spanish (25)	Social Studies	Spanish ✓
Human & Social Biology (11)	Physical Education	Caribbean History	Additional Mathematics ✓	Principles Of Accounts
Social Studies	Principles of Business ✓	Food & Nutrition	Visual Arts	Geography
Office Administration	Integrated Science	Technical Drawing	Building Technology (Woods)	Technical Drawing
			Geography	Clothing & Textiles

What is your Career Interest /s ? : *Aero... Engineering*

*First Choice*

Please indicate in the table below the subjects that you would like to do in Form 4

First Choice subjects	Second Choice subjects
1 <i>Additional Mathematics</i>	1 <i>Spanish</i>
2 <i>Physics</i>	2 <i>English Literature</i>
3 <i>Food &amp; Nutrition</i>	3 <i>Physical Education</i>
4 <i>Human &amp; Social Biology</i>	4 <i>Human &amp; Social Biology</i>
5 <i>Information Technology</i>	5 <i>Information Technology</i>

- ① Human and Social
- ② English Literature
- ③ Spanish
- ④ PCB
- ⑤ Information Technology

# Appendix C

JORDAN

Dear Parent / Guardian

## Choice of Subject Form

### "Subject Choices for Form"4 - 2010 / 2011"

At this time we are undertaking our exercise of subject selection. This an opportunity for you to indicate the subjects that your child /ward is desirous of pursuing at the CXC-CSEC level; this information will guide us in formulating the group of subjects that we will be able to offer your child / ward.

Please note the following :

- Students are required to pursue seven ( 7) subjects at either the General or Technical Proficiency.
- Students will be selected based on performance, availability of space and on the advice of the subject teachers.
- Our Form 4 programme has two (2) compulsory subjects i.e. English Language ( English A) and Mathematics
- Students are advised to select at least one (1) science subject among the choices
- All students choosing Physics are advised to also choose Additional Mathematics (Ad. Maths)
- Students choosing Food & Nutrition are advised to also select either Chemistry , Biology or Integrated Science .
- Students choosing Clothing & Textiles are advised to also select Chemistry or Integrated Science.
- Students choosing Physical Education are advised to also select Biology or Human & Social Biology.

### Subjects Offered

You are required to choose **ONE (1) subject only from each group**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Biology (P)	Chemistry (K)	Physics (18)	Principles Of Business	Information Technology
Principles of Accounts	English Literature	Principles Of Business	French	Integrated Science
Information Technology	Mechanical Engineering Technology (Metals)	Spanish	Social Studies (28)	Spanish (26)
Human & Social Biology	Physical Education	Caribbean History	Additional Mathematics	Principles Of Accounts
Social Studies	Principles of Business	Food & Nutrition	Visual Arts	Geography
Office Administration	Integrated Science	Technical Drawing	Building Technology (Woods)	Technical Drawing
			Geography	Clothing & Textiles

What is your Career Interest /s? : Psychologist.....

Please indicate in the table below the subjects that you would like to do in Form 4

	First Choice subjects	Second Choice subjects
1	1 Biology	1 Biology
2	2 Chemistry	2 Chemistry
3	3 Physics	3 Physics
4	4 Social Studies	4 Geography
5	5 Spanish	5 Spanish

~~Handwritten scribble~~

# Appendix C

NICOLE

Dear Parent / Guardian

## Choice of Subject Form

### "Subject Choices for Form 4 - 2010 / 2011"

At this time we are undertaking our exercise of subject selection. This an opportunity for you to indicate the subjects that your child / ward is desirous of pursuing at the CXC-CSEC level; this information will guide us in formulating the group of subjects that we will be able to offer your child / ward.

Please note the following :

- Students are required to pursue seven ( 7 ) subjects at either the General or Technical Proficiency.
- Students will be selected based on performance, availability of space and on the advice of the subject teachers.
- Our Form 4 programme has two (2) compulsory subjects i.e. English Language ( English A) and Mathematics
- Students are advised to select at least one (1) science subject among the choices
- All students choosing Physics are advised to also choose Additional Mathematics (Ad. Maths)
- Students choosing Food & Nutrition are advised to also select either Chemistry , Biology or Integrated Science .
- Students choosing Clothing & Textiles are advised to also select Chemistry or Integrated Science.
- Students choosing Physical Education are advised to also select Biology or Human & Social Biology.

### Subjects Offered

You are required to choose **ONE (1) subject only from each group**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Biology (1)	Chemistry	Physics	Principles Of Business	Information Technology
Principles of Accounts	English Literature (6)	Principles Of Business (23)	French	Integrated Science
Information Technology	Mechanical Engineering Technology (Metals)	Spanish	Social Studies (28)	Spanish (26)
Human & Social Biology	Physical Education	Caribbean History	Additional Mathematics	Principles Of Accounts
Social Studies	Principles of Business	Food & Nutrition	Visual Arts	Geography
Office Administration	Integrated Science	Technical Drawing	Building Technology (Woods)	Technical Drawing
			Geography	Clothing & Textiles

What is your Career Interest /s ? : Teaching.....

Please indicate in the table below the subjects that you would like to do in Form 4

First Choice subjects	Second Choice subjects
1 Biology	1 social - studies
2 English Literature	2 english - literature
3 Principles Of Business	3 Spanish
4 French Social - studies	4 Principles of Business
5 Integrated Science Spanish	5 integrated Science

87/5/10



# Appendix C

## Choice of Subject Form

SEAN

Dear Parent / Guardian

### "Subject Choices for Form 4 - 2010 / 2011"

At this time we are undertaking our exercise of subject selection. This is an opportunity for you to indicate the subjects that your child / ward is desirous of pursuing at the CXC-CSEC level; this information will guide us in formulating the group of subjects that we will be able to offer your child / ward.

Please note the following :

- Students are required to pursue seven ( 7 ) subjects at either the General or Technical Proficiency.
- Students will be selected based on performance, availability of space and on the advice of the subject teachers.
- Our Form 4 programme has two (2) compulsory subjects i.e. English Language ( English A) and Mathematics
- Students are advised to select at least one (1) science subject among the choices
- All students choosing Physics are advised to also choose Additional Mathematics (Ad. Maths)
- Students choosing Food & Nutrition are advised to also select either Chemistry , Biology or Integrated Science .
- Students choosing Clothing & Textiles are advised to also select Chemistry or Integrated Science.
- Students choosing Physical Education are advised to also select Biology or Human & Social Biology.

### Subjects Offered

You are required to choose **ONE (1) subject only from each group**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Biology	Chemistry	Physics	Principles Of Business	Information Technology <b>(13)</b>
Principles of Accounts <b>(20)</b>	English Literature	Principles Of Business	French	Integrated Science
Information Technology	Mechanical Engineering Technology (Metals)	Spanish <b>(25)</b>	Social Studies <b>(28)</b>	Spanish
Human & Social Biology	Physical Education	Caribbean History	Additional Mathematics	Principles Of Accounts
Social Studies	Principles of Business <b>(22)</b>	Food & Nutrition	Visual Arts	Geography
Office Administration	Integrated Science	Technical Drawing	Building Technology (Woods)	Technical Drawing
			Geography	Clothing & Textiles

What is your Career Interest /s ? : *Computer System Analysis*

Please indicate in the table below the subjects that you would like to do in Form 4

First Choice subjects	Second Choice subjects
1 PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTS	1 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
2 PRINCIPLE OF BUSINESS	2 PHYSICAL EDUCATION
3 SPANISH	3 CARIBBEAN HISTORY
4 SOCIAL STUDIES	4 GEOGRAPHY
5 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	5 INTEGRATED SCIENCE

# Appendix D

## Interview Questions - Students

1. How old are you?
2. Where do you live?
3. How many siblings do you have?
4. What is your position in the family?
5. What chores do you have to do at home, if any?
6. What is / are your favourite subject(s)? What are the reasons for that?
7. What is / are your least favourite subjects)? What are the reasons for that?
8. What subjects are you doing for CSEC Examinations?
9. How do you feel about your preparations for the upcoming CSEC Examinations?  
Why do you say that?
10. How have your preparations for these exams affected your relationships you're  
your friends?
11. How have your preparations for these exams affected your family members at  
home?
12. What is your general feeling about the Spanish language? Explain further.
13. What do you think about your present performance in Spanish?
14. What is your general feeling about doing Spanish as a subject for the CSEC  
Examination?
15. What factors influenced you to choose Spanish for CSEC Examinations?
16. Were there any reasons you did not want to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations?  
What were they?
17. How are you preparing for your Spanish CSEC Examinations?

18. How does your preparation for Spanish compare to your preparation for your other CSEC subjects?
19. How do you think you will do at the Spanish CSEC Examinations? What makes you say that?
20. To your knowledge, does anyone in your family like Spanish? Why?
21. What do you believe are your friends' feelings about Spanish?
22. What did you like about Spanish in the Lower forms? Why do you say that?
23. What did you dislike about Spanish in the Lower forms? Why do you say that?
24. What do you understand by the concept of motivation?
25. What motivated you in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?
26. What de-motivated you in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?
27. Describe a typical day in the Upper form Spanish class.

How is Spanish taught? / What are the methods used?

28. What do you like about Spanish in the Upper forms? Why?
29. What do you dislike about Spanish in the Upper forms? Why?
30. What do you believe motivates you in the Upper form Spanish classes?
31. What other factors may have affected positively your ability to perform well in the Upper form Spanish classes?
32. What do you believe motivates your friends in the Upper form Spanish classes?
33. What do you believe de-motivates you in the Upper form Spanish classes?
34. What other factors may have affected negatively your ability to perform well in the Upper form Spanish classes?

35. What do you believe de-motivates your friends in the Upper form Spanish classes?
36. Let's imagine you are at the end of Form 3 again. Would you choose to do Spanish for CSEC Examinations? Why do you say that?
37. What is your general feeling about the usefulness of Spanish to your future?
38. What is your opinion about the usefulness of Spanish to anyone's life?
39. What do you think could be done at your school to encourage students to choose Spanish for the CSEC Examinations?
40. What do you think could be done at your school to motivate students in the Upper form Spanish classes?

# Appendix E

## Interview Questions - Teachers

1. For how long have you been teaching?
2. For how long have you been teaching at this school?
3. In your view, what are some of the most rewarding aspects of teaching?
4. In your view, what are some of the least rewarding aspects of teaching?
5. What subjects do you teach?
6. At what levels do you teach this/these subject(s)?
7. What do you believe to be the value of Spanish to anyone's life?
8. Do you prefer to teach Lower form Spanish or Upper form Spanish? What are the reasons for your answer?
9. To your knowledge, how are students granted access to the Spanish CSEC Level programme?
10. To what extent do you agree with this system?
11. What do you believe are some of the reasons why students choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?
12. To what extent do you believe these reasons to be valid ones for studying a foreign language?
13. What do you believe are some of the reasons why students do not choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?
14. To what extent do you believe these reasons to be valid ones for not studying a foreign language?
15. What do you understand by the concept of motivation?
16. Describe the Lower form Spanish curriculum.

17. What is your opinion about the Lower form Spanish curriculum?
18. What do you think Spanish students enjoy the most at the Lower form level?
19. What do you think Spanish students enjoy the least at the Lower form level?
20. Generally, what motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?
21. Generally, what de-motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?
22. In your experience, what are the teaching challenges in Spanish at the Lower form level?
23. Describe the Upper form Spanish curriculum.
24. What is your opinion about the Upper form Spanish curriculum?
25. What do you think Spanish students enjoy the most at the Upper form level?
26. What do you think Spanish students enjoy the least at the Upper form level?
27. Generally, what motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Upper forms?
28. Generally, what de-motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Upper forms?
29. In your experience, what are the teaching challenges in Spanish at the Upper form level?
30. Describe a typical day in the Upper form Spanish class.
  - How is Spanish taught? / What are the methods used?
31. How do you think your Form 5 students will do at the 2012 Spanish CSEC Examinations? What makes you say that?
32. What are the signs of motivation do you observe in your current Form 5 Spanish class?

33. In your opinion, what are the factors that have affected positively your Form 5 students' ability to perform well in the Upper form Spanish classes?
34. What are the signs of de-motivation do you observe in your current Form 5 Spanish class?
35. In your opinion, what are the factors that have affected negatively your Form 5 students' ability to perform well in the Upper form Spanish classes?
36. What is your opinion about the usefulness of Spanish to anyone's life?
37. What changes can be made at your school to encourage students to choose Spanish for the CSEC Examinations?
38. What changes can be made at your school to motivate students in the Upper form Spanish classes?

# Appendix F

## Transcribed Interviews- Students

### 24. What do you understand by the concept of motivation?

D: Ahm... something that drives you...something that moves you to go further.

J: Ahm, well ah guess like encouragin yuh to do things that yuh might find oh gosh dis rel hard...somebody might say, yuh should try, yuh should do it and help motivate yuh an den yuh get enough courage an yuh say hear what ah goin an do dis, ah goin an challenge it an give it meh bes.

N: Well, motivation is ahm...something tuh give yuh ah extra push or tuh give yuh confidence tuh do something...dat yuh tink yuh couldna do.

S: Miss to me motivation is someone that like knows that it have something to do an yuh have frens frens dey may see yuh struggling an they will try tuh help yuh whereas udders may say nah bov he getting higher dan me an dey will trv tuh pull yuh back down.



**25. What motivated you in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?**

D: Ahm... would be like my friends pushin me to continue Spanish, to really stay focussed an learn an stuff.

J: L.ah will have tuh say frens and family. Well, sometimes we would say we would play a game an we would be like yuh cyah say nutting in English, so it would be yeah... it would challenge yuh brain an yuh would be like but what is dis word again? And you would have tuh remember.

N: Ahm well .....nothing really.

S: D ahm... how how Ms. Ramkissoon used tuh teach it...d way ahm, how she used tuh be like Miss she used tuh be like, she used tuh drill us, drill us, drill us all the time. Yeah, because now ah could remember it.

**26. What de-motivated you in Spanish classes in the Lower forms?**

D: Ahm, it'll be some ah meh frens wanna duck class an ask me like come nah, come nah, dat too hard...I didn' really like dat. J:

Ahm...nothing in particular. N:

Nothing else.

S: Some of the words, cause we were... had to... pronunciation of the words.

## Appendix F

### Transcribed Interview-Teacher

I: Okay, do you think that there should be a filter process? Why?

DL: There should be a filter system...uhm of course...because, because you can't let any and everybody into your class. I mean, what's the criteria? If it is that you have a class of CXC from the time someone tells me they want to do a particular subject for CXC immediately I'm thinking... this person has chosen this subject because they got a particular uhm...uhm...grade, they have a particular aptitude and they are willing to work...1 2 and 3, when you get into Form 4 Form 5, it's a lot of work, we all know that, so you have to have an aptitude and some of these children, they don't want to, they don't have the aptitude...when you don't have the correct aptitude, everything is difficult. Right? And...just...some children...choose Spanish because they are doing well in it, they like it...it's gonna get harder...you have to like it to want to be motivated stick with it, to work through the more difficult parts that are coming down the road. Just liking something isn't gonna get you through, so yes, a filter, a filtering factor is necessary based on marks, I think.

I: To what extent do you agree with this system?

DL: I am in total disagreement with this system. It has not been proven to be a uhm...an effective system, uhm...because once you have you...once I had a class of 30...30 people in a Spanish class...and just, I mean the numbers alone. It's a foreign language, you have to do conversation work on a one on one basis...that proved practically impossible. Uhm...I see Spanish sometimes as a dumping ground. Uhm...students are dumped in Spanish when and if they can't do anything else. Right? If there's not enough lab space, they are put into Spanish; if

subjunctive at the end of a 35 minute period saying yes, you know, so... I: To your knowledge, how are students granted access to the Spanish CSEC Level programme? DL:

Could you clarify?

I: Yes, how is it that a student gets into a Form 4 Spanish class at this school?

DL: Well uhm in terms of choosing subjects at the end of Form 3 well, from my experience, they choose it, they get it. You know? My experience has been that even students who...well everyone is recommended...everyone is recommended so you don't have that...you don't have that filter process...uhm...not from my experience. I do not know if something else is happening in another teacher's experience, but in my experience even children who are very weak in a...in a particular area...because I had one case where a young man uhm...has been...has not been performing from 1 to 3...he has no interest in Spanish, but because his mother told him he had to choose it in Form 4, he chose it and he got through despite the fact that he was not performing, was underperforming and his grades reflected that for three years, and for two years he suffered in my class, because his mom said he had to choose it and he indicated to me because I asked at the beginning of a class...Do you want to be here? And he said, no I don't want to be here, but I have to be here...I wanted to do something else...so I mean if it's something...I mean, if it's...what's the criteria I don't know. I mean it can't be marks, because...

# Appendix G- Coding of Students Interviews

12

10

CHOOSING SPANISH FOR CXC

- a) enabled by teacher/Dean
- b) the only subject left in the line
- c) did not choose enough subjects (extra)
- d) family/friend support
- e) had poor grades & didn't want to do it.
- f) had to choose it to keep a desired subject

## 15. What factors influenced you to choose Spanish for CXC (CSEC Examinations)?

g) road signs in T&T (relevance)

- CHOOSING SPANISH

re: T. & COS INFLUENCE

D: Well it didn't have any factors, coz ah wanted to pick Food & Nutrition and the teacher like she told me not to pick it I don't know why, and dah was the only other subject in the line...

10.a

10.b

- CHOOSING SPANISH

re: DEAN INFLUENCE

J: Well at first, ah wanted tuh do it an den ah change meh mind an den it so happen dat when it was time tuh pick subjects ah didn't pick enough an d Dean gave me dis subject an den when ah

10.c

10.a

FAMILY INTL. + FRIENDS INTL. +

geh it ah was like alright ah will try wid it an ah wouldn't drop it so meh fren see me wid it an meh sister encourage meh an say well it good because dey did it an dey like it an ah should try wid it an doh drop d subject. Ahm because like when ah was like in Form 3 an ting ah find ah was rel failin it an ah was like why pick ah subject dat ah failin cuz to me it really didn't make no sense tuh do dat, so ah kinda change meh mind off ah it...

10.c

10.e

- CHOOSING SPA re: grades

- CHOOSING SPANISH

re: COS form

N: Yeah well, the ahm, they had it like columns, subjects in every column and you had to pick only one, so if I had to get Spanish, I had to drop Literature, which ah wasn't goin to do...if ah had to get the other subject, sorry, ah had to drop Literature, yeah, and ah wasn't doin dat with the other language, so ah take d Spanish.

10.f

SPA + ACTION re: effort

FAMILY + INTL.

10.d

S: I jes say well Spanish is a language, so ah say I will try it. Well yeah (meh mom was studying Spanish before and meh cousin...so meh cousin could speak Spanish good), well (d road signs an all dey in Spanish, probably maybe learn a new ting or two in Spanish).

10.g

SPA UTILITY re: T&T.

- ⑪ NO TO CXC SPANISH - a) I never worked at it b) afraid of failing c) never passed it d) didn't like it much e) nonchalance

16. Were there any reasons you did not want to do Spanish for CXC (CSEC Examinations)?

What were they?

SPA - ACTION  
re: effort

D: Ahm...well, not it eh hah no reason. (jus well ah kno is my fault in Form 1) going like comin up to Form 3 an stuff, (Leh really put meh mind to it) so after dat ah jus say will have to say ah goin to fail Spanish. I did n prepare enough in Spanish, but if ah did ah woulda really or ah woulda really make a decision to maybe push mehself in Spanish.

S... - FEELING  
re: ailing x 2 dislike

- J: No besides bein afraid of failin it no. (11.b)  
N: Well because ah never pass it till now. Remained. Yeah. (11.c)  
S: I didn't really like it that much. It didn't really matter... (11.d) (11.e)

17. How are you preparing for your Spanish CXC (CSEC) Examinations?

- ⑫ SPANISH CXC PREP METHODS - a) None b) Past papers & exerci c) Flashcards - tenses d) Lessons e) Church

SPA - ACTION

re: Studying

D: Ahm...well (ah haven really pick up d textbook and learn d work an stuff) udder dan dat, I haven't been... (12.a)

PA + ACTION

re: Studying

J: Hmmm...goin over papers dat ah have home gave meh (ah pass paper booklet so ah do it when ah have time an jes like go over anything hard, read in d book from ah reading ah will pick up a lot ah different tings.) (12.b) (12.c)

PA + ACTION

re: Studying

N: Well, ah made these little cards, Miss that you, that you tell us to do, you know with ahm the Tenses, so ah usin the cards, ah does always have them on me, like, most of the times, anywhere ah goin, ah does jus have them in ma pocket, sit dong in a maxi, a car, pick it up an ah read. An udder dan dat ah do some Spanish lessons an ah go to Spanish church. Yeah. (12.d) (12.e)

PA - ACTION

re: Studying

S: (Ah not really preparing fuh dem now. Ah don't really study it much.) (12.g)

(27) UF LIKES SPANISH - a) friendly competition  
b) nothing with wow factor  
c) T.

LIKES UF SPA + FRIENDS' INFLUENCE P.25

28. What do you like about Spanish in the Upper forms? Why?

D: Ahm...fuh me it might be...well really if meh fren workin tings out in Spanish and to find words, like who could find words faster...Yeah it come like competition, yeah.

(22.a) (see p. 21)

(27.a)

UF SPA DISLIKES

J: Not really, nothing much. Well ah really doan kno, beside d fact dat it interestin but besides it interestin, it doan have nutting dat will pop out loud tuh me. Not really.

(27.b)

N: Well...in the Upper Form ah mean for one the teachers, well, Miss ah could say you, yuh was for me you didn't really come to us like a teacher but rather yuh come tuh us like still not ah friend eh, but like ah guardian tuh a chile so it never really had any fear ah could say dat I doh understand dis, an ah dunno how tuh tell Miss dat ah doan understan yuh kno? We could always like come tuh yuh Miss if yuh could explain dis over yuh kno ah didn really quite get it an yuh would do dat, so, I actually like dat part.

(27.c)

UF SPA LIKES + T. INFLUENCE

S: Nothing.

(27.b)

UF SPA DISLIKES

(27) U7 DISLIKES  
SPANISH

- a) Noise in class
- b) Talking during class
- c) Periods after Break & Lunch
- d) Long periods

e) Letters & Situations

29. What do you dislike about Spanish in the Upper forms? Why?

F. SPA  
DISLIKES

- class noise

D: Ahm...to me all the noise and while Miss in class and (28.a) all the noise and people talking while

(28.b) Miss talking and stuff.

F. SPA  
DISLIKES

- after B & L

J: (28.c) Periods ahm after like Break or Lunch or something cause when yuh done eat yuh tired an (28.c)

yuh does feel a lil restless and it kinda hard tuh pay attention so ah doh really like when ah

have classes like dat...ah radder it like early in d morning whey yuh fresh an in yuh work yuh

might pick up an ting bettah. Is like dis rite, when yuh come tuh school in d mornin not all d

F SPA DISLIKES

FRIENDS  
INFLUENCE

time yuh might see all yuh frens or whateva...so you go tuh class an yuh be fresh, buh aftah

Break, yuh fren and you ole talk, allyuh do dis, allyuh do dat, an wen allyuh come tuh class, (22.b)

yuh might be studyin all dat yuh fren say, an yuh wouldn be payin attention tuh I dunno. So, I (see p. 2)

think fuh ah subject like Spanish dat would be like rel early in d morning...dat would be d firs

classes yuh have, so dat yuh would be good. (28.c)

U7 SPA DISLIKES

re long periods.

N: Hmmm...well ah thought dat (28.d) some ah d periods were really too long...dose 3 periods...fuh

me it was really Miss a lot.

U7 SPA DISLIKES

re letters situations

S: (28.e) Letter writing...and the situations Yuh see like if somebody ask meh a question in Spanish?

Ah could understand it and be able to answer but if yuh ask meh tuh put English to Spanish?

Ah wouldn understand.

29) 117 motivation - a) desire to learn something useful  
b) T.  
c) friend

30. What do you believe motivates you in the Upper form Spanish classes?

117 MOTIVATION  
SPA. UTILITY

D: Because, even though ah haven't really been in the class from Form 1 to Form 4 (29.a) sometimes

yuh does want to learn one or two things that ah would like, ah might use further, like further in d long run.)

117 MOTIVATION  
SPA. UTILITY  
travel

J: Jest uh do well ah guess, right an (29.a) motivation is to pass d subject an fuh furthering it...ah

wanna travel as ah said earlier, so dah would be really useful tuh me) (29.a) so ah would like tuh pass it an do well in it.

117 MOTIVATION  
T.

(29.b) N (Miss, ah have tuh say you.) Not tuh make yuh feel bite up or anyting, but no Miss, serious (yuh

kno d way yuh come an yuh say well we hah dis, yuh kno dis studying ting yuh kno yuh (29.c) always like want to make sure we kno what it is comin) even fuh like d mock exam ah mean I didn pass because ah didn...ah really didn tink ah coulda do it, so Spanish is like a side subject until ah do d Orals eh Miss, ah mus say. So ah never really used tuh take it on, but even dough yuh would still come an yuh would say well dis comin yuh kno? (So it was a motivation tuh do yuh work.)

117 MOTIVATION  
FRIENDS + INFLUENCE

(29.c) S: Well ah had ah fren dat was doin Spanish an she used tuh help meh a lot wid it.



## Appendix H Coding of Teacher's Interview

### • VIEW OF SPANISH

a class is full or another teacher has indicated vociferously that this person is not to be considered...persona non grata in my class, uh...I think the Spanish department uhm...more than the French department...i think the Spanish gets...you know, would get those students.

② I: What do you believe are some of the reasons why students choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?

DL: uh...well as I said before, it could be chosen for them. Right? Uhm...and too, they get put across in Spanish and I mean, that makes the teacher's job a little bit more difficult, because the person doesn't want to be there uhm...of course if the child uhm...you know, you know uhm...wanted to do it because they like it. Now liking something, there are many shades of meaning where that is concerned. Someone can like it and not...and be underperforming but they they really like it...so their aptitude is there but somehow the subject is challenging them. Or they can like, or they can like it and and and be performing well in it...right? So in terms of when you say you like something I think you have to look at the marks and the aptitude that that would go along with that as well. Or sorry...some children do it because uhm...well...uhm it's necessary for them...they may not like it but they know it's necessary so, I think that in this school I think that's a that's a minute minority, but I have encountered one or two students.

• SPANISH  
SELECTION  
REASONS

(five)

chosen for them  
s. liked subj.

↳ & performing.  
↳ & under-  
performing.

because it is necessary.

eg. migrating

PTO.

Q. 12?

I: When you say it's necessary for them, necessary how?

DL: Well I <sup>PTD:</sup> have a student who is saying that they are migrating, they are going to a foreign you know...they are going to a particular country and they need it. They don't well, it's a necessity for them but I think that that's a minority...yes.

13 I: What do you believe are some of the reasons why students do not choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?

DL: Uhm...the feeling that it is a <sup>1</sup> difficult subject. Uhm...and I think, I think we can see evidence of that from Form 1, because we have a culture in this school where in Form 1 <sup>2</sup> children write off a subject...say Miss I not doin that subject, dat hard. And once they sign off something in Form 1 they are not trying, so of course that leads to them uhm...as I say plugging out, in terms of interest. So they are not motivated to want to try. So then it's reflected in their marks and then, it's a cycle. It's a catch 22 kind of thing. Right? Uhm...believing it's difficult, I say believing because they're not giving it a fair chance because they've already, come to that conclusion that it is difficult so they're not trying. Right? So believing Spanish is difficult uhm...in my classrooms I note uhm...a preponderance of girls over boys uhm...doing the language. Uhm...<sup>3</sup> not really, another reason not seeing the relevance...Miss I not doing anything that needs Spanish; I not going anywhere; I not singing, I want to be an engineer; I want to do this, I want to be a mechanic. So, Spanish has no relevance in their lives.

REASONS FOR SPANISH SELECTION: five

\* subject is difficult  
+ early write off  
↓ not trying & low motivation = poor grades

\* Spanish is not relevant to their lives.

✓  
\* GIRLS PREFER SPANISH VS. BOYS

14 I: To what extent do you believe these reasons to be valid ones for not studying a foreign language?

DL: At the CXC level, or at the Lower school?

- UPPER form MOTIVATION
- internal, if S. wants to be there
- external, if S. does not want to be there.

21

I: Generally, what motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Upper forms?

DL: ...Now it depends on why they're there. If it is that they are there because they want to be there, then they are approaching it with a particular mindset. So for the most part, self-motivation. If it is that they don't want to be there, as is frequently the case in this school and in our experience, the motivating factor becomes external: keeping you back in, doing extra work, getting a zero, calling in a parent. Right? So like I said, it depends on on where the student is.

(but both are important!! for all Ss. (? is External motiv. so negative)

22

I: Generally, what de-motivates your students in Spanish classes in the Upper forms?

DL: In terms of motivating, when a child feels that uhm...CXC can be uhm...you know when they come in it can be a, it can be an overwhelming experience initially, right? Uhm...all of a sudden you're dealing with the world of SBAs and this and that and whatever and I think when uhm...when they work and you...you verbally reward them, it's a sense of confidence gained and they are motivated to do more. So it's not only their motivation, but it's it's how you how you challenge and it's how you how you motivate your students as well. If a child could be doing quite poorly or slipping and you just pull the child and say well you know I noticed such and such and such, I know you, you're a really good student, what's going on? Anything I can do to help? Uhm...when you show that you care, they think that they are one in seven hundred and something or how many students we have, but when you know that you are seeing them and they are not going unnoticed, they are not just one in a sea of students, and they tend to rise to the expectations, to your expectations of rather, and then they you know they become a little bit more motivated to want to produce you know?

• UPPER form DE-MOTIVATION

- CXC experience overwhelming eg. SBAs & other requirements.

• MOTIVATION must be external. So that you show that you care for them to rise, to be motivated to produce.

(heavy focus on performance vs. appreciation of FL).

34

• DE-MOTIVATION

- sleeping
- not working / doing h/w
- " showing interest
- " participating

- sitting & chatting or not.
- skipping class.

I: What are the signs of de-motivation do you observe in your current Form 5 Spanish class?

all of these in Upper form?  
From Ss. who chose Spa.?

DL: Students putting their heads on the table and sleeping...sitting, just sitting at the back of the class uhm...not taking part uhm...chatting, talking or just just being there and not doing a thing. And it may be...well, yeah, that's about it. Not doing anything, not showing any interest, or skipping class, not showing up at all.

Not...of course, not presenting themselves for exams and that kind of thing, not handing in your work uhm...yeah.

• NEGATIVE FACTORS

- time (not allotted enough, explanations are lengthy).
- non-consolidation / revision of work at home
- Also, rushing to other points.

35

I: In your opinion, what are the factors that have affected negatively your Form 5 students' ability to perform well in the Upper form Spanish classes?

DL: Uhm...I would always say the time factor, because the time is never enough. It's never enough to really complete what we need to get done. Uhm...time factor in two ways: what we are allotted and in terms of giving an explanation, it...explanations take time because students would tell me to repeat and repeat, so it takes up the time, the limited time that we already have to make it much more difficult...sometimes you have to rush to another point...right? And not really teach it to my satisfaction. Uhm...so that that impinges upon the entire...you know the entire... also, I don't think students go home and do the amount of studying that they are supposed to, because when I ask students how many hours do you put in...Miss, home-work or studying? Studying. Miss, about an hour and a half...and this is CXC...Miss, about an hour, two hours. We all know that that's just not enough. So for me I think it's reinforcing, because they understand the point to some extent in the class but that reinforcing of the point doesn't take

# Appendix I

## Categories of Codes-Students

### CODES

#### BOTH CHOICE AND UPPER FORM

#### LOWER FORM CHOICE

#### MOTIVATION

#### UPPER FORM MOTIVATION

ADMINISTRATION INFLUENCE

CHOOSING SPANISH - Negative

CHOOSING SPANISH - Positive

LOWER FORM- Dislikes

LOWER FORM - Likes

SUBJECT LACK OF

COMPREHENSION

• SUBJECT UTILITY - Negative

• SUBJECT UTILITY - Positive

• DEMOTIVATION

• FAMILY INFLUENCE - Negative

• FAMILY INFLUENCE - Positive

• FRIENDS' INFLUENCE - Negative

• FRIENDS' INFLUENCE - Positive

• GRADES

• MOTIVATION - External (Negative)

• MOTIVATION - External (Positive)

• MOTIVATION - Self (Positive)

• PERSONAL INTEREST - Positive

• PERSONAL INTEREST - Negative

• SPANISH FEELING - Negative

• SPANISH FEELING - Positive

• SUBJECT LACK OF COMPREHENSION

• SUBJECT UTILITY - Negative

• SUBJECT UTILITY - Positive

• TEACHER INFLUENCE - Negative

• TEACHER INFLUENCE - Positive

• EXAM STRESS

• EXAM VALUE

• FRIENDSHIP VALUE -Positive

• SPANISH ACTION -Negative

• SPANISH ACTION -Positive

• UPPER FORM - Dislikes •

UPPER FORM - Likes

• UPPER FORM - Work

# Appendix I

## Categories of Codes-Teacher

### CODES

#### LOWER FORM CHOICE

**SCHOOL PROCEDURE /CHOOSING PROCESS**

**EXPECTED STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

**NEGATIVE STUDENT ACTIONS/BELIEF S**

**SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**LOWER FORM - Likes & Dislikes**

**LOWER FORM --Challenges**

**T. VIEW OF CHOOSING SPANISH**

#### UPPER FORM DE-MOTIVATION

- **GRAMMAR**
- **MOTIVATION**
- **MOTIVATION SUGGESTIONS**
- **UPPER FORM TEACHING DIFFICULTY**
- **UPPER FORM MOTIVATION/DE-MOTIVATION**
- **UPPER FORM POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE**

# Appendix J

## Field Notes

Mrs. De Leon.

### Interview Questions - Teachers

1. For how long have you been teaching?
2. For how long have you been teaching at this school?
3. In your view, what are some of the most rewarding aspects of teaching?
4. In your view, what are some of the least rewarding aspects of teaching? *Very serious.*
5. What subjects do you teach?
6. At what levels do you teach this/these subject(s)?
7. What do you believe to be the value of Spanish to anyone's life? *Got excited here. Vacation. Job. Personality.*
8. Do you prefer to teach Lower form Spanish or Upper form Spanish? What are the reasons for your answer? *(really thinking here).*
9. To your knowledge, how are students granted access to the Spanish CSEC Level programme?
10. To what extent do you agree with this system? *(silly)*
- SQ.15 11. What do you believe are some of the reasons why students choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level?
- X 12. To what extent do you believe these reasons to be valid ones for studying a foreign language?
- SQ.16 13. What do you believe are some of the reasons why students do not choose to do Spanish at the CSEC Level? *(really thinking here). 'Lock off'*
14. To what extent do you believe these reasons to be valid ones for not studying a foreign language?
- SQ.24 15. What do you understand by the concept of motivation?
16. Describe the Lower form Spanish curriculum.

# Appendix K

## Memos

### Memos during Coding (Individually)

1. JORDAN - Support from T.

- Support at home } encourages her to work & discourages her from work

chatting } - Support from friends

peer pressure

#### SUPPORT

- ✓ help to study work (family)
- ✓ to be committed to Spanish (friends)
- to stick with it

#### NON SUPPORT

- to babysit
- vexed when she had to study.

- exam anxiety is very real for her

- failure & fear of failing

- idealistic (trying to give @ subject equal time)

(says that if she pushes herself, she'll do well).

- Oral & Basics ☺ ; <sup>Grammar</sup> writing ☹

- external concept of motivation (ties in with support from family & friends).

- values memory re. Spanish vs. thinking in Spanish.

- very affected by social/personal life. eg. friends can expect concentration ability.

re: chatting bit class ; classroom conflict.

NB: Compare Upper & Lower responses

- relates motivation to what others say / think / do.

- motivation greater in Lower than Upper forms.

- \* "it will come in hardy yuh meh"
- \* "ah doan know wha does happen like ah's yuh get"
- \* "why pick ah subject dat ah failin"
- \* "if ah push mehself"
- \* "it was kinda borin" ; "it coulda been more fun"
- \* "ah doh really like dat"
- \* "challenge yuh brain"





## Appendix L

### Journal Reflections

- Lower forms: SpA has to be more fun & activities, games for motivation to pick it
- Upper form motivation? : make it fun too  
longer periods — smthg. has to be offered in the class to keep your attention.

JORDAN

- A)
- takes friends & family seriously → they influence her thoughts & actions.
  - Knows FL is useful, but it is a lot of work.
  - values oral vs. written aspect; oral is more interactive; can be focused on in games et
  - enjoys when SpA is applicable to her life → eg. gossip/conflikt
  - SpA comes second to socialization issues; concentration issues experienced re. # of periods & when those periods are.
  - grammar is too difficult / challenging.
  - Upper form → tools for success provided by T.
  - external factors affect performance in SpA eg. home / friends / Ts.
  - despite knowing its usefulness, would not choose it vs. depression of nature & nature's frustrating
  - recognizes the fact that learning SpA should be made fun at both levels of the subject
  - honesty was a big factor in this interview — researcher felt it.



## Appendix L

### Journal Reflections

- Make FL more fun/exciting; talk more SPA; increase Ss' curiosity; challenge the Ss to be autonomous learners; more interaction is necessary.
- Tenses to be introduced in Lower Form vs. strictly Upper Form, to build Ss' confidence to form sentences.

Nicole's personality is strong. She is a leader, mature & has a natural love & interest in SPA. Her failing grades have long de-motivated her, but her Oral Exam has now succeeded in breathing new-found confidence in her ability.

- sees beyond the Lang. (hidden curriculum is real to her)
- has a lot of responsibilities at home.
- is ambitious → sees SPA as a vehicle to further herself / for self-dvlpmt.
- is focused despite past failures in SPA. thanks to Oral exam (confidence boosted)
- T. influence was a big factor re: motivation (Nicole managed to keep afloat).
- trust for T. competence & Oral exam boosted self-motivation
- is serious about turning her luck around re: grades
- has a ♥ for humanities & hidden curriculum is real to her i.e. FL to learn/teach FL to reach out to others; FL to overcome barriers; FL to spread Religion. She is responsible at home, in a large family & this translates into her sense of responsibility towards others.
- Important: despite strong love for SPA, grades ruined her spirit; her anticipated high grade in Oral exam has effected a great renewal of her intention to pass SPA & use it in the future. (Domyei).
- Nicole has a clear vision for her future.



## Appendix L

### Journal Reflections

J. SEAN

- lives near school.
- fair amt. of chores.
- does not like Math / Reading.
- acknowledges laziness to study / room for improvement.
- " that pauses trump friendships.
- Spanish is complicated: confusing, difficult ; but is a little necessary for road signs, jobs  
→ don't make sense!
- very nonchalant about Spanish / is not too concerned about his ↓ performance. Has cut his losses  
is focussing on other subject areas.
- poor grades → he never learnt anything → nonchalance.
- the relevance of the subject, if not established → nonchalance.
- values a working knowledge (basics) of Spanish.
- Motivation linked to fun / relevance / usefulness of Spanish.

\* "yuh have to push them aside"

\* "wha I pick Spanish for? Spanish don't make sense!"

\* "whatever stick stick" (via Lower form drilling)

\* "Spanish don't really mean much."

\* "It becomes real to you." (me)

## Appendix L

### Journal Reflections

#### 3. Mrs. DE LEON

- considerable teaching experience

- enjoys enabling understanding

- has a distaste for ↓ interest, ↑ distractions, ↑ discipline actions, ↓ civility.

→ this highlights the problems encountered during the teaching process, which may have a +ive / -ive impact on the effectiveness of instruction & / or learning

" " " " " on T's & other Ss' sense of achievement.

- values Spanish for vacation / job, as well as <sup>understanding &</sup> tolerance building qualities eg. just understand how to formulate sentences in Spanish & dealing with Spanish culture.

- acknowledges that Ss are eccentric 'whatever you do is right', & highlights FL's capacity to increase awareness about the other.

- focuses heavily on grammar & facilitating understanding

- Spanish is acquired → if you choose it without filter

despite poor grades / interest.

→ parental influence.

- does not feel that 'any & everybody' should be allowed to participate. How ethical is this? Shouldn't it be education for all? Is the T. 'right' to say this?

- feels the filtering factor should be based on marks, not just like. But, how fair is this to a weak student with a passion for FL, or a student who needs a FL. Are marks everything?

Or, is poor behaviour / motivation influencing this comment?  
or frustration

- feels that Spanish is a dumping ground (not respected); used to put Ss who could not get through to other classes; other Ts have more of a say? Is this a fault of the administrative process as well?

- teaching difficulty includes → large classes (oral?)

NB: lang. lab is assigned, but can only hold 20 Ss in a cramped setting, so it cannot be used realistically.



# Appendix M

## Audit Trail

(A) Int. Qus. created acc. to experts, with rep. to RQs.  
(B) Qus. sent to Lecturer. SpA  
(C) Qus. given the green light.

### Audit Trail

1. School permission
2. Letter to Daupne
3. Letter of permission to Parents
4. Permission slips returned
5. Reflection by @ Interview & Memos / Field Notes.
6. Field notes during Interview
7. Reflection after @ Interview
8. Reflection during @ Playback Interview
9. Transcriptions ~~done~~ completed & ~~coding done~~ <sup>initial</sup> coding done.
10. Coding done.
11. Transcriptions <sup>Summaries of (initial findings)</sup> emailed to Ss. with request for changes / clarification / permission to print.
12. Transcriptions printed & given to Ss. for perusal / review <sup>initial findings summarised & given</sup>
13. Gentle reminder emailed to Ss. to peruse / review
14. Transcription printed & given to T. for her review / <sup>Data</sup> Transcript okayed & returned & initial finding summarised &
15. Ss. email ok.
16. <sup>Coded</sup> Separate transcripts given to colleagues in education for ~~coding~~ peer review.
17. Colleagues return transcripts with comments.
18. Coding done - individually & altogether.
19. Memos written during coding process - individually & altogether.
20. Categories were re-spined in accordance with Constant Comparative Method.