

Politeness and social interaction in study abroad:
Service encounters in L2 Spanish

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Abstract

This study examines the second language (L2) learning of politeness and social interaction in study abroad within a sociocultural and rapport management framework, reporting on longitudinal, ethnographic research of service encounters recorded *in situ* between L2 learners of Spanish and local Spanish service providers in Toledo, Spain. Service encounters are defined as interactions between a customer and a service provider in which some commodity will potentially be exchanged.

The participants in the study were seven U.S. American students who studied abroad for one semester in Spain during 2007. The data consist of naturalistic digital recordings that participants made of themselves while visiting local stores, banks, information desks, and other service providers. The study was longitudinal with five recordings made at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester by each student, for 113 recordings total. Other sources of data included students' weekly journals describing their service encounters and learning of politeness, interviews with participants and local Spaniards, and the researcher's field notes as a participant observer.

The findings indicate that, during the semester abroad, participants learned target language norms of politeness regarding requests, openings, and discourse markers. These developments over time in L2 politeness were connected to students' descriptions about how they learned specific politeness features, namely, through explicit instruction, observation of Spaniards, participation in service encounters, and reactions of

interlocutors. Learners managed rapport in service encounters through tone of voice, positive assessments, and other face-enhancing moves.

Table of Contents

I. Chapter 1: Introduction.....	9
Background and rationale for the study	9
Research questions.....	14
Significance of the study	14
Organization of the dissertation.....	16
II. Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of the Literature	17
Language socialization.....	18
Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory.....	33
Politeness Theory.....	52
Empirical Research.....	72
Conclusion: Review of the literature.....	109
III. Chapter 3: Method.....	110
Description of the Research Site.....	110
Participants.....	115
Recruitment and participant orientation.....	130
Data collection tools and procedures.....	131
Data analysis.....	143
IV. Chapter 4: Results.....	145
Overview of the characteristics of students' service encounter interactions.	145
Research Question 1: How do L2 learners' interactions in service encounters change over the course of one semester studying abroad? What politeness features do they acquire? Do their interactions become more similar to those of the target speech community?.....	187

Research Question 2: How do students report learning about the politeness features of service encounters?.....	238
Research Question 3: What is the role of the interlocutor and the social context in L2 learners' performance of service encounters?.....	259
Research Question 4: How do students manage rapport in service encounter interactions?.....	322
V. Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions.....	358
Research Question 1: Changes in politeness behavior over time.....	359
Research Question 2: Learning politeness features.....	385
Research Question 3: Role of the social context.....	398
Research Question 4: Rapport management.....	407
Limitations of the study.....	416
Pedagogical implications.....	419
Conclusions.....	433
VI. Appendices.....	436
Appendix A: Materials used to teach requests in the Maximizing Study Abroad class.....	436
Appendix B: Student recording assignment.....	438
Appendix C: Service Encounter Information Form.....	441
Appendix D: Description of journal assignments.....	442
Appendix E: Weekly journal assignment.....	443
Appendix F: Background questionnaire.....	444
Appendix G: Language contact questionnaire.....	448
Appendix H: Student interview questions.....	456
VII. Bibliography.....	457

List of Tables

Table 1: Cultural contents of autonomy and affiliation face (p. 59)

Table 2: Stages of request development (p. 100)

Table 3: Topics and sequence for Maximizing Study Abroad course (p. 106)

Table 4: Summary of the background characteristics of the participants (p. 108)

Table 5: Calendar of recording assignments for students (p. 130)

Table 6: Summary of service encounters recorded by students by week (p. 138)

Table 7: Students' frequency of use of the informal (*tú*) and formal (*usted*) pronouns by week (p. 143)

Table 8: Frequency of greeting types by student (p. 145)

Table 9: Strategies students used to request services or information (p. 150)

Table 10: Frequency of request strategy types by students in food, retail, and information desk service encounters (p. 183)

Table 11: Instances of relational talk in the service encounters by student (p. 252)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and rationale for the study

While early research in second language acquisition (SLA) emphasized cognitivist approaches to understanding the processes involved in learning a second language (L2), the last decade has seen a “social turn” in SLA (Block, 2003; Ortega, 2006), that is, a rise in the number of studies examining SLA from approaches that situate learning in the social and cultural sphere. One area of investigation that can benefit from a sociocultural approach is the learning of L2 pragmatics in study abroad contexts (Kasper, 2001). With several notable exceptions (cf. DuFon, 1999; Siegal, 1994; 1995; 1996) most previous research on the learning of pragmatics (i.e., interlanguage pragmatics) by study abroad students has not taken a sociocultural approach.

Findings from previous interlanguage pragmatics studies in study abroad contexts indicate that in many cases, during a stay abroad, learners become somewhat more native-like in their use of the L2 with regard to perception and/or production of routine formulae (Barron, 2003; DuFon, 1999; Hoffman-Hicks, 1999; Kondo, 1997; Marriott, 1995; Owen, 2002; Rodríguez, 2001), terms of address (Kinginger & Belz, 2005; Marriott, 1995), implicatures (Bouton, 1999), lexical and phrasal mitigation (Barron, 2003), internal morphosyntactic mitigation (Cohen & Shively, 2007), upgraders (Barron, 2007), and semantic strategies (Barron, 2003; Kondo, 1997; Matsumura, 2001; Rodríguez, 2001; Schauer, 2004; 2007). In addition to these issues, a few studies have

addressed the issue of communicative or interactional competence (Lafford, 1995; Dings, 2006), with findings suggesting overall that study abroad learners make gains in their ability to carry on a conversation in the target language (TL), which includes issues such as opening a conversation, providing backchannel responses, and using cohesive devices (e.g., *entonces*, *después*).

On the other hand, learners do not always move in the direction of becoming more target-like in their speech behavior, and movement away from target language norms during study abroad is also attested (Barron, 2003; DuFon, 1999; Hoffman-Hicks, 1999; Kondo, 1997). Furthermore, pragmatic development varies among individual learners (Barron, 2003; Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert, & Hoff, 2005; DuFon, 1999; Kinginger & Belz, 2005; Siegal, 1996).

While more studies are needed on interlanguage pragmatics in study abroad (Lafford, 2006), previous research generally suggests that study abroad students improve their pragmatic behaviors to some extent over the course of four to ten months of study in an L2-speaking country (Barron & Warga, 2007; Churchill & DuFon, 2006). What many previous studies do not provide, however, is an analysis of how and why students' pragmatic abilities do or do not change over time, the answers to which can be found—in part—through a closer examination of learning over time in the larger social context.

Indeed, the social aspect of learning is the feature that has perhaps most attracted SLA researchers to investigate study abroad. What is special about study abroad is its status as a second- rather than a foreign-language (FL) learning context, one in which L2

learners presumably have opportunities to interact *socially* with members of the target culture in authentic, everyday discourse contexts outside of the L2 classroom. From a language socialization perspective, everyday interactions in the L2 culture have the potential to socialize language learners into cultural modes of thinking and forms of discourse appropriate to specific contexts (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005). In the FL context, learners may not have many opportunities to participate in social activities in the L2 outside of class. Thus, given that opportunities for authentic everyday social interaction in the L2 set study abroad apart from L2 classrooms and FL contexts, socially-situated theories of learning and interaction are particularly useful.

With regard to which pragmatic abilities L2 learners acquire, a great deal of previous research on interlanguage pragmatics in study abroad has focused on the acquisition of speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies, compliments). Other researchers (cf. DuFon, 1999; Kasper, 2006; Spencer-Oatey, 2001) have advocated a movement away from a narrow focus on speech acts to a more holistic approach that examines the processes by which L2 learners acquire the speech norms of the L2 community. Politeness theory is one framework that can be used to approach the study of speech norms.

Although the nature of politeness has been in dispute among theorists for some time, this study will understand politeness to be “the subjective judgments that people make about the social appropriateness of verbal and nonverbal behavior...people’s judgments about social appropriateness are based primarily on their expectations, which

in turn are derived from their beliefs about behavior: what is prescribed, what is permitted and what is proscribed.” (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 97). Within this definition and other similar ones (see discussion in Chapter 2; cf. Hernández-Flores, 1999; Escandell-Vidal, 1996), politeness is viewed as what is socially appropriate or socially expected behavior which, in turn, is connected to *face concerns* (Hernández-Flores, 2005; Spencer-Oatey, 2005) and *relational work* (Locher & Watts, 2005; Spencer-Oatey, 2005). In studying the development of politeness in an L2, the focus is on the degree to which L2 learners adopt the expected speech practices of the L2 speech community and the processes by which they do or do not become socialized into those behaviors.

One type of out-of-class interaction in which learners in the study abroad environment frequently participate is service encounters. Daily life in the host country often necessitates going out into the community to acquire goods and services. Students participate in service-oriented activities such as adding money to their cell phones, buying snacks at the grocery store, purchasing stamps at the tobacco store, mailing letters at the post office, changing money at the bank, getting a haircut, reserving bus, train, and airline tickets, and asking for information at the tourist information office. A service encounter is understood to be “an instance of face-to-face interaction between a server who is ‘officially posted’ in some service area and a customer who is present in that... area, that interaction being oriented to the satisfaction of the customer’s presumed desire for some service and the server’s obligation to provide that service.” (Merritt, 1976, p. 321). Despite the fact that interacting in the L2 in service encounters is part of daily life

for study abroad students, only one study (Kidwell, 2000) has examined L2 learners' interactions with service providers in the target language community.

This study takes an ethnographic approach to examining the L2 learning of politeness in service encounters in Spanish by seven study abroad learners who spent one semester in Toledo, Spain. The theoretical framework draws on language socialization theory, Vygotskian sociocultural theory, and rapport management theory in examining the macro- and micro-contexts of L2 learning and interaction in this study abroad setting. The primary data consist of naturalistic recordings of L2 learners speaking Spanish in service encounters. The researcher was also a participant observer in the community of L2 learners and Toledo in general. Additional sources of data were weekly language-learning journals written by students focusing on their acquisition of politeness in Spanish and interviews with students and local Spaniards who interacted with the participants.

In total, these data allow the researcher to discover both "emic" explanations (i.e., from the participants' perspectives) and "etic" explanations (i.e., from the analyst's perspective). The goal in doing so is to provide "thick explanation" which "takes into account all relevant and theoretically salient micro- and macro-contextual influences that stand in a systematic relationship to the behavior or events" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992, p. 54) involved in these L2 learners' experiences as study abroad students in Spain and their specific interactions in service encounters in that community.

The focus of this analysis is two-fold: developmental and interactional. Within the framework of Vygotskian sociocultural theory, “interaction is viewed as a tool for L2 learning and as a competency in its own right” (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 33). Therefore, this analysis examines both the L2 development of politeness over time, as well as learners’ participation in service encounter interactions. The following research questions were developed to address these issues:

Research questions

1. How do L2 learners’ interactions in service encounters change over the course of one semester studying abroad? What politeness features do they acquire? Do their interactions become more similar to those of the target speech community?
2. How do students report learning about the politeness features of service encounters?
3. What is the role of the interlocutor and the social context in L2 learners’ performance of service encounters?
4. How do students manage rapport in service encounter interactions?

Significance of the study

Although a growing number of studies have examined the L2 acquisition of pragmatics in the study abroad setting, few studies have done so using an ethnographic

and sociocultural approach and only a handful of prior studies have investigated pragmatic development in *Spanish* in study abroad (Cohen & Shively, 2007; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Rodríguez, 2001). There has also been a call in interlanguage pragmatics research for the use of naturalistic conversation data and a movement away from a limited focus on speech acts and elicited data (Kasper, 2006).

Despite this call for naturalistic studies, elicited data still continues to dominate the field of research on L2 pragmatic development in study abroad. Thus, this study is significant in that the speech data collected was from naturalistic interactions. Scholars have also suggested that more studies provide a more detailed developmental picture of the L2 acquisition of pragmatics rather than relying on a pretest/posttest research design (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Finally, only one prior study (Kidwell, 2000) has specifically examined the interactions of L2 learners in service encounters.

The theoretical framework of this dissertation is also unique in that it will examine L2 pragmatic development in study abroad drawing on both language socialization theory and Vygotskian sociocultural theory. That these approaches are compatible and, in fact, particularly useful for L2 pragmatics research has been suggested in the literature (Kasper, 2001). Some researchers have also advocated the incorporation of Vygotskian sociocultural theory into language socialization studies in order to augment the social perspective with an analysis of cognitive processes (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005). Finally, this study fills a gap in the literature with regard to the fact that studies that have applied sociocultural perspectives to L2 acquisition have largely been focused

on L2 classroom contexts, on teachers' practices rather than on learners' behaviors, and on L1 rather than L2 acquisition (Kasper, 2001).

Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized as follows: the second chapter provides the reader with an overview of the theories and research that has informed this study. First, the theoretical framework is presented, with descriptions of the relevant concepts underlying language socialization processes and Vygotskian sociocultural theory. Next, a theoretical framework for understanding politeness is discussed, with a specific focus on the learning of politeness in study abroad. Integrated into the discussion of the various approaches is empirical research on the acquisition of politeness in a second language and research concerning social interaction in the study abroad context. Finally, previous research in service encounters is presented.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design of this study. A description of the setting and the participants is followed by the presentation of the instruments and data collection procedures employed in the study. This chapter ends with an explanation of the data analysis procedures. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and Chapter 5 provides a discussion of those results, presents the limitations, offers some pedagogical implications, and provides conclusions.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of the Literature

This study draws on two sociocultural theories on L2 learning and on politeness theory in order to examine the L2 development and social interaction in Spanish by study abroad students. Language socialization theory and Vygotskian sociocultural theory compliment each other by providing different perspectives on how social interaction, situated in concrete specific cultural contexts, is the source of knowledge and learning.

Both sociocultural approaches reject the view in SLA that the object of study should be how knowledge, including language, is acquired and processed solely “in the head” of the individual (Thorne, 2000; Zuengler & Miller, 2006). This perspective harkens back to the distinction made by Saussure between language as an abstract system (*langue*) and actual language use (*parole*), in which *langue* was designated as the appropriate object of linguistic study (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). Within a Vygotskian sociocultural framework, the object of study must be the situated person, the “individual-in-society-in-history,” not the isolated individual (Newman & Holzman, 1993, p. 85). The use of language is the use of signs and, as Volosinov (1973, p. 52) argues,

[S]igns can arise only on interindividual territory...it is essential that the individuals be organized socially, that they compose a group (a social unit); only then can the medium of signs take shape between them. The individual consciousness not only cannot be used to explain anything, but, on the contrary, is itself in need of explanation from the vantage point of the social, ideological medium.

This perspective takes the position that all knowledge is transmitted and constructed among individuals in social interactions; knowledge and cognition cannot be

explained independently of their origins in social life. All learning and practice is situated in a social context in which “agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 33). Consequently, in order to understand how and to what extent individuals acquire knowledge, including language, the social context that shapes and constitutes that acquisition must be the subject of study.

At least a few authors have advocated combining language socialization theory with Vygotskian sociocultural theory in second language acquisition studies (Kasper, 2001; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005). For example, Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2005, p. 166) lament that one of the most common problems with language socialization research is the “failure to address cognitive implications,” in studies where the focus is entirely on social factors. Vygotskian sociocultural theory offers a framework for understanding how social interaction is related to cognitive processes, providing a missing link in language socialization studies. In this section, the main insights from each of these theoretical approaches will be described.

Language socialization

Although a relatively small number of studies have applied language socialization to *second* language acquisition (cf. Duff, 1995; DuFon, 1999; Poole, 1992; Siegal, 1994; Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo, 1994; Willet, 1997; Wong Fillmore, 1976), a greater number have applied this theory to *first* language acquisition (cf. Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). This approach takes language and culture to be inseparable, positing that culture shapes

language and vice versa, along the lines of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Whorf, 1941). Thus, *language socialization* emerges from a larger concept of *socialization*, which is defined as “an interactional display (covert or overt) to a novice of expected ways of thinking, feeling, and acting...[and] through their participation in social interactions, children [or other novices] come to internalize and gain performance competence in these sociocultural defined contexts” (Ochs, 1986, p. 2). In this view, although knowledge and ways of thinking are transferred from more competent members of society to learners (i.e., novices) in social interactions, learners do not passively receive cultural and linguistic knowledge, but rather, are agents who act upon that knowledge and contribute themselves to the construction of knowledge (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005). As Arundale (2006, p. 198) argues,

Societies and cultures are not collections of “judgmental dopes” who simply reproduce rituals following rules or scripts imposed on them during their socialization...instead, as social actors go about the largely ordinary affairs of everyday life, they continually produce accountable social actions, and in doing so reflexively reproduce the normative framework within which such social action is carried out.

Following the interconnected nature of language and culture that underlies this approach, language socialization is conceived of as “the process whereby children and other novices are socialized through language, part of such socialization being a socialization to use language meaningfully, appropriately, and effectively” (Ochs, 1996, p. 408). Through language-mediated activities, which are always situated in culturally-specific contexts, learners acquire cultural beliefs, systems of meaning and organization

of knowledge, and the cultural frames or schema that organize everyday experience.

Likewise, through participation in social events, learners become aware of how language forms and discourse structures are used in a particular contexts in a community to create meaning, to express cultural values and beliefs, and to index social roles, relationships, and individual and group identities—a relationship between linguistic forms and social contexts and meanings that Ochs (1996) refers to as the Indexicality Principle.

A basic tenet of language socialization that is a significant part of the process of learning language and culture is learning to assign features of the context to particular linguistic forms, that is, to index situational meanings in language. Aspects of a situation that may be indexed include *social identity* (i.e., social roles, relationships, group identity, and rank), *social act* (i.e., goal-directed behavior such as requesting and offering), *activity* (i.e., a sequence of social acts), *affective stance* (i.e., mood, attitude, emotion, intensity), and *epistemic stance* (e.g., degree of certainty, sources of knowledge) (Ochs, 1996, p. 410). Indexicality is performed in language typically by the use of a linguistic structure such as an affix, intonation, voice, verb morphology, and so forth.

The principle of how linguistic forms index social identities within particular contexts is exemplified in the use of the formal (*usted*) and informal (*tú*) second person pronouns in Spanish. Traditional analyses of the use of the formal (V) and informal (T) pronouns in European languages have posited that T/V variation can be explained by fixed sociolinguistic categories of power, solidarity (or social distance), and symmetric relations (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Therefore, in relations in

which one speaker has power over another (e.g., through social rank or position), there are two options for T/V usage: (1) “asymmetric treatment” in which the superior uses T with the inferior and the inferior uses V with the superior and (2) “symmetric treatment” in which both superior and inferior use V with each other.

Alternatively, in relations in which power is not a factor (i.e., between social equals) there are two parallel options for the use of T/V: (1) “solidarity (low social distance)” in which both speakers use T and (2) “no solidarity (high social distance)” in which both speakers use V (Blas Arroyo, 1995). Within this framework, social categories and relationships such as age, social status, profession, and closeness of the interlocutors are indicated by the choice of the second person pronoun, indexing these social roles. Historically speaking, the apparent shift over time in Peninsular Spanish to a predominance of the use of *tú* in non-traditional contexts may reflect a spreading ideology of democracy and egalitarianism in the society as a whole (Braun, 1988), as well as a growing preference for address terms that mark solidarity and in-group membership rather than deference and social distance (Recuero, 2007).

In Spain, *tú* is typically used in contexts involving solidarity and in-group membership, such as in the family, in school, among friends and neighbors, and between work colleagues. However, *usted* is still found in some contexts in which the interlocutors do not know each other, when there is an age differential, and to mark social inequality (Blas Arroyo, 1994).

While these descriptions may capture some of the indexical meanings that the T/V pronouns convey with regard to relationships and social roles among speakers, it is clearly too simplistic and static to account for actual use of *usted* and *tú* in conversational interactions (Blas Arroyo, 1995). For example, Blas Arroyo presents naturalistic conversational data from Spain in which a customer and a salesperson at a car dealership shift their use of T and V over the course of a single interaction. The speakers started out with the mutual use of *usted*, which is typically the formulaic starting point in these types of encounters in Spain (Blas Arroyo, 1995). Not long into the conversational exchange, the customer began to use *tú* to address the salesperson, but the salesperson continued addressing the customer with *usted* for many more turns. Finally, towards the end of the interaction, the speakers were both addressing each other mutually with *tú*.

This example demonstrates the non-categorical and dynamic nature of the T/V distinction. That is, social relationships are continually negotiated and constructed within an interaction. What traditional explanatory frameworks of T/V did not take into consideration were local contextual factors—such as setting, participants, purpose, key, topic, among others (Hymes, 1972)—that influence the use of linguistic forms. In addition, Braun (1998), for example, points out that the characteristics of individual participants also have an influence in pronoun choice.

Given the complexities, how are novices socialized into appropriately using indexical language? Two important types of interactions within the speech community have been proposed to contribute to the language socialization of novices: experience

participating in everyday activities with more competent members of the community and explicit instruction on the use of language by more competent individuals.

With regard to the first type of interaction, through participation in everyday activities that involve language, learners develop the ability to identify what event is taking place and to associate certain ways of speaking with that particular activity and context. Since everyday activities are by nature recurring events, the novice receives reinforcement through constant exposure to cultural definitions of events and appropriate language use in those contexts. Furthermore, Norrick (1993, pp. 100-101) argues that a great deal of everyday talk is actually directed at language forms themselves:

We are at pains to agree on names and terminology; we work to clarify errors, contradictions, and misunderstandings; we negotiate grammar and meaning, turn-taking and topic choice; we take note of apt phrases and incorporate them into our own talk, while we poke fun at inept phrasing and out-group (non-standard) forms. Much correction and clarification, as well as apparently frivolous joking, helps us home in on an appropriate register, vocabulary, and grammar.

Cognitively speaking, through everyday experiences, learners develop culturally-specific prototypical representations of specific activities and events that serve to structure how learners view the world, their role in relation to others, and how language is used in those activities and events. A number of different terms have been used to describe this structuring of experiences as prototypical sequences: *frame*¹ (Bateson, 1973; Goffman, 1974; Hymes, 1974), *schema* (Rumelhart, 1976; 1980), *script* (Schank & Abelson, 1977), *scenario* (Sanford & Garrod, 1981), and *cultural routines* (Platt, 2005).

¹ Within Vygotskian sociocultural theory, the notion of *activity* has been likened to Goffman's (1974) understanding of frame (Wertsch, 1985).

Underlying the concept of a frame is the notion of “structures of expectations” (Tannen, 1993, p. 15), that is, the idea that “one organizes knowledge on the basis of one’s experience of the world, and uses this knowledge to predict interpretations and relationships regarding new information, events, and experiences” (Escandell-Vidal, 1996, pp. 634-635). With regard to how linguistic forms fit into the notion of frames, Escandell-Vidal (1996, p. 635) explains:

The main concepts in an utterance activate their corresponding frames, and set the cognitive foundations needed for subsequent concepts to appear. Not only a word, but also an extralinguistic situation can serve as a trigger. For example, whenever we enter a restaurant we retrieve its corresponding frame. Thus, all the information related to prototypical participants, activities and circumstances in this particular frame is brought into focus, and can be effortlessly activated when necessary. In this way, linguistic data are automatically interpreted in terms of a particular set of representations.

Experience in everyday routines in particular cultural contexts provides the material with which novices develop these cognitive structures that organize expectations or assumptions about behavior, or norms, including norms for language use. Due to their basis in everyday behavior, which varies across cultures and speech communities, frames or scripts are necessarily culturally specific (Escandell-Vidal, 1996; Hall, 1993).

An example of how differing cultural frames organize language use in everyday activity comes from contrastive research on service encounters in corner stores and at hospital information desks in Spain and Ecuador (Placencia, 1998; 2005). In Ecuador, in the case of the corner store interactions, verbal encounters between the shopkeeper and customer were characterized by long, ritualistic preambles to the transaction, including

many turns containing greetings and how-are-you inquiries. In Spain, however, openings to the transactions were typically very short and oriented to the task of making a purchase. Placencia (2005) interpreted these different orientations to service encounters as Ecuadorians being more oriented to the person and Spaniards being more focused on the task. Considering this data with an analysis of cultural frames/scripts, novices in each culture would, through repeated participation in such service encounters, learn what the expected linguistic and non-linguistic behaviors (i.e., norms) are for that speech community and consequently, develop a prototypical mental representation for how future interactions of that type should be conducted.

A second aspect of socialization—which is not isolated from experience in everyday activities—consists of explicit instruction in the norms of a speech community. In L1 language socialization, the primary focus has been on the explicit instruction given to children by caregivers (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Explicit instruction refers to a more competent member of the community directly telling a novice how and when to speak in specific contexts, as well as explaining when events and activities happen. Ochs (1986, p. 6) provides several examples of specific methods of explicit instruction by caregivers including: (1) announcing that an event is occurring (e.g., “We are going to say grace now.”) or that an event should or should not be occurring (e.g., “Don’t tease your sister.”); (2) prompting routines (e.g., “What do you say when someone gives you a gift?”); and (3) modifying a child’s utterance in order to make it into an activity-appropriate contribution (e.g., Child: “Trick treat” Mother: “Trick or treat”).

For L2 learners who acquire another language as adults, there are additional issues that must be considered in applying a language socialization perspective to their learning. First, L2 adult learners have presumably already developed cultural scripts or frames from their native speech community. Thus, experience in the L2 speech community means that L2 learners may begin to acquire new frames to their interactions in that community in order to behave and speak appropriately based on the L2 community's norms. Using the example of service encounters, when U.S. American students interact with shopkeepers in Spain, to act according to the norms of that community, it is not enough that they know the greetings (e.g., *hola*, *buenos días*, 'hi, good morning') and request forms (e.g., *deme un pancito*, 'give me a piece of bread'), but they must also know the cultural scripts that inform individuals about the expectations for those interactions. Is there a ritualistic exchange of greetings lasting a number of turns? Do customer and shopkeeper ask each other how they are doing? Does the shopkeeper open the transaction with an offer to serve (e.g., *¿En qué le puedo servir?*, 'How can I help you?') or is the customer expected to state his or her request immediately?

For those L2 learners who want to be appropriate in service encounters, the task is to learn how Spanish cultural scripts are different from U.S. American cultural scripts in this context. This learning process, or language socialization, can happen in the same ways suggested for children acquiring their L1. First, by participation in everyday activities such as shopping, L2 learners can begin to create frames that represent an organization of customer-shopkeeper behavior in Spain. Second, learners may also be

explicitly instructed about what to say to whom and when in Spanish. For example, Cohen et al. (2005) describe the experience of a study abroad student in Seville, Spain who reported asking her host mother in which service encounters *usted* and *tú* were used. The host mother instructed the student that in more “important” stores, such as in pharmacies, it was necessary to use *usted*, but that in “less important” stores, it was common to use *tú*. The acquisition of frames of expected behavior in the L2 speech community may represent a shift in worldview on the part of the student. In this example, in order to know which term of address to use in service encounters, the student must begin to see the world as the residents of Seville do, that is, in terms of “more important” and “less important” stores.

One finding that has been common to research in study abroad is that while host country natives may provide corrective feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, they tend to provide very little feedback on sociolinguistic and pragmatic behavior, including issues of politeness (Barron, 2003; DuFon, 1999; Iino, 1996; Siegal, 1994). The reasons for this lack of corrective feedback about pragmatics may be related to questions of *face*, both for the learner and for the host country native (see discussion on face below). Without corrective feedback, L2 learners may believe that their inappropriate behaviors are in fact, acceptable in the L2 community (DuFon, 1999; Iino, 1996; Siegal, 1994). In spite of this, explicit instruction may not be accessible or widely available to L2 adult learners in all areas of L2 use.

On the other hand, there is evidence that corrective feedback by expert speakers may occur implicitly. In the example of the study abroad student in Seville provided above, the student was prompted to ask her host mother about the use of *usted* and *tú* due to a negative reaction (in the form of angry body language) that she had received from a pharmacist after the student had addressed her with *tú*. It might be suggested that the pharmacist in Seville had a frame of expectations that included people of her profession being addressed as *usted* in the context of the workplace. When the student's behavior did not correspond to those assumptions about behavior in the frame of pharmacist-customer interactions, her interpretation may have been that the student intentionally meant to offend by using the informal pronoun, and she reacted accordingly by evaluating the student's behavior negatively. Alternatively, the pharmacist may have assumed that the student did not mean to offend, but simply was not aware of the social norms. The behavior could have been annoying the pharmacist, even if she did not interpret the students' pronoun use as an intentional affront.

This interpretation follows Escandell-Vidal's (1996) arguments about politeness which, in this area, are informed by Fraser's (1990) Conversational Contract Model of politeness. In Fraser's model, expected or normative behavior is automatic and goes unrecognized. It is only when behavior does not follow the expectations for a frame—that is, when it violates norms and expectations—that behavior is consciously attended to by speakers. The pharmacist may have been operating under the assumptions of one cultural script, and the student under another; or to carry the metaphor farther, the student may

have not yet had access to the Spanish script, although she knew that it was different from her L1 scripts. To explain such examples of intercultural miscommunication, Escandell-Vidal notes the following:

Since the [conversation] partners assume they have reached a basic agreement regarding what kind of scene they are acting out, and since more of the scripts correspond to well-known situations, which they have successfully overcome thousands of times, the hypothesis that the partner is following a somewhat different script does not seem very likely, and the unexpected behavior [e.g., the use of *tú* to address the pharmacist] is interpreted as fully intentional.

Thus, some intercultural miscommunication could be interpreted as two people reading from different cultural scripts and having mismatched expectations about behavior.

If we assume that the Seville example from Cohen et al. (2005) is representative of behavior in that speech community, it could be concluded that study abroad students—who are foreigners in that context—are, at least at times, treated as any other speech community member in terms of expectations for their behavior. There is evidence from Japan and Indonesia, however, that foreigners may be treated very differently from local people in some speech communities. For example, DuFon's (1999) study abroad student participants were often greeted by Indonesians with formulaic expressions in English or Japanese. This behavior was only directed to the foreign students and was not appropriate among Indonesians. Consequently, such greetings served to index study abroad students as non-members of Indonesian society. As DuFon (p. 326) comments, those Indonesians who greeted students with non-Indonesian effectively

exempt themselves and their addressees from the politeness norms extant in Indonesian interaction. They send a very strong indexical message, which several of the learners remarked on very perceptively. In term of language socialization [this behavior] carries an anti-acculturation message—you're not one of us and I do not have to treat you with the same respect that 'real' humans (i.e., 'normal' cultural members) deserve.

In another study, Iino (1996) reported that study abroad students in Japan were commonly addressed with modified Japanese (“foreigner talk”) that would have been inappropriate among Japanese. Furthermore, foreigners who become too proficient in the Japanese language are viewed negatively by many Japanese and are given the label “strange foreigners” (Iino, 1996). These behaviors, described by Iino, suggest that an ideology exists within that speech community that there are certain aspects of group membership not accessible to foreigners. Thus, in some situations, L2 learners may not have access to a full range of appropriate L2 behaviors—due to their ascribed identity as outgroup members—as would children in that community learning their L1.

Finally, research on language socialization of adult L2 learners suggests that the learners themselves may resist using language in a way that is appropriate in the L2 speech community. Siegal (1994) and Ishihara (2006) both give examples of U.S. American and European learners in Japan who refused to use certain gendered linguistic forms and ways of speaking in Japanese that, from their perspectives, were demeaning to women, even though they knew from everyday experience in the culture that native Japanese speakers used those forms and that gendered language was appropriate in that society.

DuFon (1999) reported a similar attitude towards hierarchical address forms by one of the learners of Indonesian in her study. That learner reported using the address term *anda* with all interlocutors indiscriminately because he believed (incorrectly) that using the same term of address with everyone would minimize differences between himself and his interlocutors. Maintaining an egalitarian attitude was important to this learner and shaped the extent to which he was willing or able to acquire a complex system of terms of address in Indonesian. Barron (2003) also reported that some Irish L2 learners of German studying in Germany came to recognize that a ritual re-offer to buy someone a drink was inappropriate in German culture, but that they resisted omitting a re-offer in German because they attributed that cultural behavior to their own *personality*, feeling that making re-offers had to do with being a nice person, rather than a product of cultural norms. In sum, these studies provide evidence that learners may deliberately resist conforming to native speaker norms due to personality, identities, and values that reflect learner subjectivity (cf. Norton, 2000).

Despite the fact that language socialization approaches admit that individuals who are socialized into language practices have agency and do not mindlessly imitate the cultural behaviors into which they are socialized, in my opinion, there is an unresolved tension in studies of L2 acquisition between learners adopting the language practices of the L2 speech community and resistance to the adoption of L2 norms, often resulting in the transference of L1 speech behaviors into the L2. Learners who have not come to understand another culture from its own perspective are sometimes considered

ethnocentric when they resist adoption of speech community norms, as in the example of the Irish students learning German.

On the other hand, those same learners could be seen as exercising agency in their learning of the L2, by taking in new knowledge and actively constructing their own identity as an emergent bilingual speaker of the L2, what Bakhtinian scholars have referred to as the individual's own "accent." Based on Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, Vitanova (2005, p. 154; my emphasis) argues that "It is impossible to voice oneself without appropriating others' words...linguistic forms have already been used in a variety of settings, and *language users have to make them their own, to populate them with their own accents.*"

What is difficult to assess when examining L2 socialization and learning is to what extent L2 learners are able to view the world from the other culture's perspective and through their non-target-like behavior are agents in their linguistic choices. On the one hand, language learners may create a "third place" (Kramsch, 1993) in which they actively construct a self and an identity based on their multiple language and culture experiences, a self and identity which may represent divergence from cultural and linguistic norms in both the L1 and the L2. On the other hand, learners may continue to view L2 behaviors from the lens of their first culture and therefore, resist L2 speech behaviors because of an ethnocentric orientation.

In sum, a language socialization approach emphasizes the dynamic relationship between learning language and learning culture. It also has something to say about the

ways that knowledge of language and other culturally-bound practices is transmitted from more competent members to novices through experience participating in everyday activities. This framework is especially appropriate for the study abroad context in which L2 learners may, for the first time, have the opportunity to participate in everyday activities in the L2 speech community and be exposed to the language that accompanies and structures those activities.

Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory

A growing body of research has examined L2 learning within Vygotsky's sociocultural framework (cf. Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Antón & DiCamilla, 1999; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Storch, 2002). A primary tenet of sociocultural theory is that all knowledge has its origins in social interaction and collaboration between individuals. That knowledge is essentially social, meant for Vygotsky that all types of mental functioning—such as attention, volition, and the use of language—appear first in the social or *interpsychological* plane (i.e., between individuals) and move to the internal or *intrapsychological* plane through the process of internalization (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, in sociocultural theory, the individual is not an autonomous knower or an autonomous language learner, but rather, a social being situated within a particular cultural and historical context. At the same time, it is clear in Vygotskian thought that although an individual learns through interactions with others, he or she does not mindlessly receive

knowledge and imitate others, but rather, acts upon that knowledge according to his or her own motives and goals (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001).

The social basis for learning goes beyond interaction in and of itself. Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) argued that learning occurs through interaction within an individual's *zone of proximal development* (ZPD), defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.” In expert-novice interactions, the more capable person provides assistance which is appropriate to the learner's ZPD in order to support the learner's development.

There are a number of concepts that are fundamental to a Vygotskian sociocultural approach to examining L2 learning. This section provides an overview of some of the key concepts relevant to the present study, namely: mediation, zone of proximal development, intersubjectivity, and appropriation. In addition, Hopper's (1998) emergent grammar and its connection to formulaic speech is discussed as an approach to language commensurate with Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2005).

Mediation

The notion that the human mind is mediated by “symbolic tools” is the most fundamental concept in Vygotskian thought (Lantolf, 2000, p. 1). Vygotsky claimed that

humans do not *directly* act on or perceive the physical world, but rather, use physical and symbolic tools to mediate thoughts, actions, and relationships with others. Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p. 79) summarize this concept in the following way: “Mediation is the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other’s social and mental activity.” Symbolic tools come into use and are passed down through time in specific cultures and include mathematic systems, computers, and, most importantly, language.

Of particular interest to the current study is the notion that individuals in a social interaction mediate each other’s experience through the use of language as a symbolic tool. As Lantolf (2000, p. 1) describes, “we also use symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves and thus change the nature of those relationships.” More specifically, language is a mediational tool: “Linguistic signs may also be outwardly directed toward other individuals and may influence, or regulate in some way, those who are the object of our speaking.” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Shea (1994, p. 362) further argues that “interaction can be analyzed as the character or quality of engagement wherein speakers mediate each other’s participation, creating ‘localized collectives’ of shared activity (Wertsch et al. 1984) in which the discourse of one speaker is shaped by the interactive responses of the other.” Thus, the learner cannot be viewed as an autonomous being who perceives and produces target language utterances from inside his or her mind through a monolithic, hardwired

computational language device. Instead, the learner's perception and production in the L2 is altered (i.e., mediated) by the learner's participation in a specific activity (e.g., having a spontaneous conversation in his or her L2) and by involvement in a specific social interaction (e.g., a particular conversation with a particular interlocutor).

An implication of the notion of mediated interaction is that L2 "proficiency" (or more concretely, an individual's ability to comprehend and produce utterances in the L2) cannot be conceived of as being a "static knowledge base" which is unchanging across different social situations and different tasks (Frawley & Lantolf, 1985, p. 23). An example of L2 proficiency that changes across interactions comes from Shea's (1994) study with an advanced Japanese-speaking learner of English ("Kazuko"). In his study, Shea (1994) provides evidence that in two different interactional contexts, Kazuko has varying proficiency in her L2, as well as varying opportunities to develop her L2. The first interactional context is between Kazuko and two NSs of English (colleagues of hers) at a dinner table conversation. In that conversation, the two NSs dominate the floor so completely by cutting Kazuko off when she is speaking and by changing topics in such a way as to prevent Kazuko from fully developing her ideas, that Kazuko appears inarticulate and somewhat incoherent (Shea, 1994, p. 378).

In contrast, in a conversation with another colleague ("Lilly"), Kazuko is articulate and easily expresses herself in English at an advanced level. Shea attributes this difference in "proficiency" to the mediated nature of social interaction. Lilly interacts with Kazuko in such a way as to allow Kazuko to extend her abilities to speak the L2. For

example, in her own contributions to the talk, Lilly expanded on the ideas that Kazuko had expressed rather than—as had been the case in the dinnertime interaction—shifting topics in a way that would downplay the importance of Kazuko’s opinions. Shea’s work highlights the importance of the interlocutor in shaping the learner’s interaction and in determining learning opportunities (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

On the basis of conversational interactions between L2 learners and native speakers of English, Shea (1994) constructed four interactional patterns based on the notions of “perspective” and “production.” “Perspective” refers to the degree of intersubjectivity between the participants (i.e., extent to which the participants have a shared perspective) and “production” relates to a participant’s control over the floor, ability to make contributions, and to express his or her own ideas. The four interactional patterns are described below:

1. **Incongruous perspective and asymmetric production** (i.e., there is little intersubjectivity between participants and the L2 learner is severely circumscribed in production)
2. **Incongruous perspective and symmetric production** (i.e., there is little intersubjectivity between participants but the L2 learner is able to control the floor to a greater extent and to express his or her ideas)
3. **Congruent perspective and asymmetric production** (i.e., there is a high degree of intersubjectivity between participants, but the L2 learner is not

able to control production in the conversation, such as in the example above of Kazuko speaking with English-speaking colleagues at dinner)

4. **Congruent perspective and symmetric production** (i.e., there is a high degree of intersubjectivity between participants and the L2 learner is able to make significant contributions to the conversation, such as in the example above of Kazuko speaking with Lilly)

These four interactional patterns described by Shea are useful in analyzing the role of the interlocutor in shaping L2 learners' interactions and learning. As Shea's work indicates, interacting in an L2 is a mediated experience, as are all human activities in the Vygotskian perspective.

Zone of proximal development

The previous example provides a segue into the discussion of a second relevant Vygotskian concept: the zone of proximal development (ZPD). As described above, through collaborative topic development and supportive comments, Lilly helped Kazuko to speak at a level which Shea (1994) argues was beyond her current level of L2 development. In Vygotskian thought, a learner has two developmental levels: the actual developmental level, consisting of what the learner can do alone, and the potential developmental level, consisting of what the learner can do when assisted by a more capable person or a peer (Vygotsky, 1978). The potential developmental level represents a higher level of development in the learner, for example, the greater ability to speak and

comprehend an L2. Through the assistance of a more expert person, the learner can develop his or her potential ability.

Vygotsky also made a distinction between *learning* and *development* with regard to the ZPD. As Lantolf (2005, p. 336) describes, “Learning for Vygotsky is assisted performance, whereas development is the ability to regulate mental and social activity as a consequence of having appropriated, or internalized, that assistance.” In the context of an L2, assistance from another person helps the learner perform at a higher level than his or her current level of development, but for the learner to move to the next level of L2 development, he or she must internalize the necessary linguistic knowledge and be able to produce or perceive that knowledge on his or her own—in Vygotskian terms, the learner must move from being other-regulated (i.e., dependent on others to perform an activity) to being self-regulated (i.e., independently capable of performing an activity).

Although learning occurs in the realm of socially mediated interaction, learners are not viewed as passive recipients of knowledge and assistance from others, but rather as agents in their learning. Consistent with Vygotskian philosophy concerning the agency of learners, Kinginger (2002, p. 246) argues that learners should not be viewed as passively acquiring and internalizing linguistic knowledge, but rather, as actively “entering into a dialectical relationship with the new material,” that is, transforming that knowledge based on his or her previous knowledge states and on his or her goals and motivations. Critical to understanding how knowledge is internalized, in the Vygotskian perspective, learners *imitate* what they have learned from others, but they do not simply

mimic or *emulate* what they have learned. In contrast to mimicry or emulation, in this approach, imitation implies agency and intentionality on the part of the learner, whereby what is imitated is transformed by the learner (Lantolf, 2003; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). As Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p. 179) describe, imitation is “a potentially transformative process that entails selective attention resulting in reduction, expansion, and repetition of social models.” Imitation, for Vygotsky, constitutes the mechanism by which internalization occurs.

With regard to the type of assistance that will help learners move toward higher levels of L2 development in their ZPD, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994, p. 468) present several “mechanisms of effective help in the ZPD.” These mechanisms include assistance which is *graduated*, meaning that the more capable individual should discover the least amount of assistance that will allow the learner to function at his or her potential level of L2 ability. Furthermore, assistance should be *contingent*, in other words, help should only be provided by the expert to the novice when it is needed, and help should be withdrawn as soon as the learner is able to complete the task on his or her own. In addition, the person providing the assistance should continually *assess* the learner’s needs and *tailor* his or her help to those specific needs. For example, more explicit linguistic assistance (e.g., explicitly correcting a learner error) may be needed by learners who are at some point other-regulated with regard to a specific linguistic form, whereas as learners become more self-regulated, implicit assistance (e.g., expert focuses learner’s attention on specific problem area) is more appropriate. Finally, these characteristics of

assistance in the ZPD are all carried out by means of *dialogue* between the expert and the novice.

The types of assistance described by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) that are effective in moving learners to higher levels of L2 development in their ZPD require, at the minimum, an individual in the role of expert who is sensitive to the needs of the learner. It is noteworthy that the expert in their study was an English-language tutor, a person who is trained to assist learners with their L2 language needs. However, linguistically untrained NSs will not necessarily be able to provide such fine-tuned assistance and, in the study abroad context, learners are likely to interact with many non-expert native speakers. The importance of effective assistance is critical, considering that not all social interactions lead to development (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000)—as the example from Shea’s (1994) study of Kazuko suggests.

At the same time that assistance by an expert in the ZPD can help a learner move to higher performance, other researchers (cf. Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999) have pointed out that the asymmetric roles of expert and novice do not always result in a positive experience for the learner. Cheyne and Tarulli (1999) argue that in the ZPD “there are asymmetries of knowledge, expertise, resources, and, ultimately, power... In the developmental literature the ZPD is almost invariably presented as a rather cozy, nurturant, extended “womb,” but, as we, and others, have argued, it also has the capacity to dominant, discourage, and oppress.”

While the ZPD is perhaps the most frequently cited Vygotskian concept in language education, it is also arguably the most contested (Kinginger, 2002). Part of the problem with the idea of the ZPD lies in the fact that Vygotsky himself did not fully develop the theoretical and practical implications of the ZPD in his writings, leaving the field open to disparate interpretations and uses of the concept (see Kinginger, 2002 for a discussion of different interpretations of the ZPD concept).

Intersubjectivity

Intersubjectivity refers to a shared perspective on a problem between the expert and the novice, in which the novice comes to define the objects, activities, and goals of the task in the same way as the expert—when the two interlocutors enter “temporarily shared social world(s)” (Rommetviet, 1974, p. 29). The term intersubjectivity is also employed to talk about mutual hearer and speaker perspective-taking in language without the assumption of expert and novice roles (Clarke & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1992; Holgraves, 2002; Platt, 2005).

In Vygotskian thought, intersubjectivity is developed through collaboration and, more specifically, arises as a result of the process of the expert providing the novice with assistance (Antón, DiCamilla, & Lantolf, 2003; Rommetveit, 1985; Wertsch, 1985). In the context of L2 learning, the creation of intersubjectivity allows the learner to take the perspective of the expert speaker with regard to how he or she views and approaches talk and language-related actions in the TL. Vygotsky (1987) argued that intersubjectivity was

realized through language by means of speech abbreviation and extremely simplified syntax. Linguistic manifestations of intersubjectivity between participants in conversational data have been argued to include repetition (DiCamilla & Antón, 1997), omission of given information (Wertsch, 1985), ellipsis, and prolepsis (Antón, DiCamilla, & Lantolf, 2002; Platt, 2005).

More specifically, in the case of politeness, as intersubjectivity develops, the L2 learner may be able to take the perspective of the expert speaker in seeing how speech community norms are viewed from the perspective of a member of the target language and culture. As Tomasello, Kruger, and Ratner (1993, p. 233) argue, the perspective of the interactional partner may stay with the learner in future interactions: “the cognitive representation resulting from cultural learning includes something of the perspective of the interactional partner, and this perspective continues to guide the learner even after the original learning experience is over.” Thus, creating intersubjectivity among the two participants is hypothesized to be an important aspect of the assistance that the expert speaker can provide to the L2 learner. As with any type of assistance, however, the novice must be open-minded and willing to receive assistance from the expert, which may not always be the case in expert-novice interactions (Litowitz, 1993; Vocate, 1994).

However, it is not a given that participants in a task or a conversation will develop intersubjectivity. As Storch’s (2002) study of learner pair work in an English as a Second Language classroom setting demonstrated, some dyads do not develop a shared perspective on approaching or carrying out a task. In fact, the very opposite can occur:

one of the pairs in Storch's study developed a relationship of animosity in which each learner actively constructed the task to take the *opposite* perspective of the other person. Storch argued that this type of "dysfunctional" dyadic relationship—in which intersubjectivity was not created—was the least effective in terms of the participants learning the L2 from each other. The potential for miscommunication and thus, the lack of intersubjectivity, is particularly high in interactions between individuals from different cultures, since it cannot be assumed that the participants share the same meanings. Miscommunication can result from the participants assuming that their interlocutor shares a meaning from his or her first culture, when, in fact, that meaning is not shared or communicated in the same way by the different cultures in question.

Appropriation of cultural concepts

In addition to intersubjectivity, the Vygotskian concept of appropriation can be useful in understanding a cognitive perspective on the learning of cultural frames, a concept which was discussed previously in relation to language socialization. In Vygotskian thought, children learn or *appropriate* (Lantolf, 2000) cultural ways of thinking and organizing the world through dialogic interactions between themselves and more competent members of society, such as adults or older children. This perspective is consistent with a language socialization view of how novices learn to be members of a community. However, a Vygotskian analysis provides an additional perspective for understanding the cognitive processes involved in appropriation cultural frames.

Vygotsky posited that the central driving force in the formation of concepts in the mind was the word. For Vygotsky (1986, pp. 106-107), “words and others signs are those means that direct our mental operations, control their course, and channel them toward the solution of the problem confronting us.” In L1 acquisition, children first acquire words only to refer to specific objects in their environment, but over time, words are used to conceptually group objects and are connected in the brain in webs of association. In the beginning, words that appear in the child’s vocabulary only refer to concrete instances of objects rather than abstract concepts. Thus, for example, if a child acquires the word *flower* before words such as *rose* and *daisy*, the child will apply the word *flower* to all types of flowers in their concrete realization. It is only at a later stage of thinking that the child will be able to conceptualize roses and daisies as specific examples in the larger, abstract category of *flower* (Lantolf, 2000).

A significant amount of work has been done cross-culturally showing that different societies conceptualize and organize their environments in different ways. For example, Lucy (1996, as cited in Lantolf, 2000) conducted experiments with object classification between Mayans and Americans and found that Americans preferred to classify objects by shape, whereas Mayans favored a classification based on the material of which they were made. Research on color terms has also shown that there are cross-cultural differences with regard to categorization of color (Taylor, 2003).

Based on experiments with children, Vygotsky (1986) further argued that in the early stages of development, children group objects creatively—such as those designated

by the word *block*—according to a certain salient feature such as color or shape.

However, as children participate in interactions with adults, their groupings of objects becomes less creative and more constrained by the adults' ways of conceptualizing and organizing the environment. The appropriation of cultural concepts occurs during dialogue between children and adults as the child begins use the words of the adults himself or herself.

In Vygotskian thought, the dialogue that begins between individuals in the social realm eventually moves to the plane of private speech and ultimately to inner speech. Private speech refers to speech that is directed at the self as interlocutor rather than another person, for the purposes of thinking (Frawley, 1997). At a later stage of development, private speech becomes internalized as inner speech—a continued dialogue with self that is not vocalized. Although in many contexts adults do not engage in private speech, inner speech may reemerge as private speech at times when adults are faced with a cognitively difficult task. In those cases, adults use private speech as a means to “self-regulate” and to mediate their thinking. In research with adult L2 learners, Frawley and Lantolf (1985) found that learners used private speech to mediate their use of the L2.

Unlike children acquiring their L1, adult L2 learners already have a highly-developed conceptual organization of the world based on their first language and culture. Therefore, as adult learners acquire the L2, they may begin to restructure the way they organize concepts in a way that is in line with the way individuals in the L2 speech community view the world. Following the Vygotskian focus on the word as the central

focus of concept development, Lantolf (2000) reports on research from word association experiments conducted with adult L2 learners. Lantolf (2000, p. 37) argues that “given that conceptual organization is semiotically based, patterns of word affiliations should provide insight into the conceptual organization of the individuals or groups that generate the affiliation.”

The findings on word association studies summarized by Lantolf suggest that advanced L2 learners with significant immersion experience in the L2 do, in fact, restructure their conceptual organization to be in line with monolinguals of the L2. For example, Grabois (1997, as cited in Lantolf, 2000) researched word associations in Spanish and English by native Spanish speakers, native English speakers, intermediate learners of Spanish in a FL classroom environment, and advanced learners of Spanish immersed in the language and culture for a long period of time (an average length of residency in Spain of 10 years). Grabois determined that the advanced L2 learners’ conceptual organization was more similar to that of the native speakers of Spanish than to that of the native speakers of English. However, the intermediate classroom L2 learners made word associations that were most similar to the monolingual English speakers’ patterns. Pavlenko (1997, as cited in Lantolf, 2000) reports similar findings for English-speaking learners of Russian.

Such studies suggest that only after prolonged exposure and experience immersed in another culture do L2 learners begin to restructure their conceptual models of the world, in terms of lexical organization. In a Vygotskian framework, this process of lexical

restructuring takes place as novices participate in dialogic interactions with more competent members of the speech community.

Formulaic speech and emergent grammar

Formulaic speech refers to sequences of words, “multi-word units” (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008), collocations, routine phrases and the like. In research on L1 acquisition, it has been proposed that children use such formulaic speech as prefabricated chunks long before they have any understanding of what the individual components mean (Wong Fillmore, 1976). Studies on L2 acquisition have also suggested that the use of formulaic speech is found in the early stages of learning a second language (Ellis, 1994). Some authors posit that formulaic speech is a precursor to the use of creative speech and fully analyzed sequences and serves as a tool for learners in learning linguistic features (Myles, Hooper, & Mitchell, 1998; Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005; Weinert, 1995; Wong Fillmore, 1976). In this way, formulaic phrases may provide L2 learners with syntactic and morphological models for creative speech.

The use of formulaic speech, however, has not only been observed in learners acquiring their L1 or L2. Studies of L1 speech (Girard & Sionis, 2004; Howarth, 1998; Erman & Warren, 2000; Foster, 2001) have determined that adult native speakers produce a high frequency of formulaic sequences, suggesting that the use of routine phrases does not disappear as speakers begin to be able to analyze the formulaic chunks. For example, work on the analysis of small talk among native speakers has also found that many of the

structural and stylistic features of small talk involve routines, such as conversational openings and closings (Coupland, 2000).

Conklin and Schmitt (2008) point out the pragmatic value of formulaic speech in everyday speech events such as apologies, which often include conventionalized forms. A number of authors (cf. Conklin & Schmitt, 2008; Gibbs, Bogadanovich, Sykes, & Barr, 1997; Pawley & Syder, 1983) have argued that the use of formulas both by native speakers and by learners serves to reduce the processing load on memory and contributes to economy in language. Conklin and Schmitt (2008, p. 75) explain how formulaic speech eases processing: “the mind uses an abundant resource (long-term memory) to store a number of prefabricated chunks of language that can be used ‘ready made’ in language production. This compensates for a limited resource (working memory), which can potentially be overloaded when generating language on-line from individual lexical items and syntactic/discourse rules.” In addition, use of routines may also serve the sociolinguistic function of signaling group membership among native speakers (Coulmas, 1981).

For second language learners, the use of formulaic speech provide may time to plan future utterances and reduce the effort it takes to produce a “creative” utterance, since a ready-made formulaic phrase can be stored in memory and ready to go. In addition, the fact that, by their nature, formulaic phrases are frequently repeated facilitates the learning of formulas through constant exposure (Skehan, 1998).

Formulaic utterances may also play an important role in social interaction.

Nattinger and De Carrico (1992) propose that formulaic phrases are learned in terms of their functions in social interactions and therefore are particularly relevant to the study of pragmatics. For example, a learner may acquire the formulaic phrase *lo siento* in Spanish as a means to apologize without being able to analyze the first-person morphology of the verb (*siento*) and the direct object pronoun (*lo*). Kuiper and Flindall (2000) analyzed the speech of service encounters at the supermarket checkout in New Zealand and determined that rituals of greeting and leave-taking were very formulaic, supporting their hypothesis that when routine actions are accompanied by routine speech, that speech will for the most part be formulaic.

Wray (2000) has put forth the idea that while formulaic speech eases processing demands on the speaker, it also reduces processing demands on the hearer. By employing a formulaic utterance that is associated with a specific function and context, a speaker can be sure that his or her intention will be quickly and effectively understood by the hearer. In the context of L2 acquisition, Girard and Sionis (2004, p. 48) contend that “Formulaic sequences are efficient tools that allow learners to make themselves understood quickly and easily by native hearers.” Yotsukura (2005, p. 212) has expressed a similar position with respect to the Bakhtinian notion of *speech genres*—which often include formulaic speech—stating that:

The better one’s mastery of speech genres [such as greetings, leave-takings, requests, etc.] of a given language, the better one’s ability to participate in the activities of a given society. One may better express oneself, and one will be better understood by the members of the culture

who speak that language. This ensures smooth communication among participants, both native and non-native alike.

Thus, Girard and Sionis (2004, p. 48) argue that formulaic speech is a result of “communicative pressure,” both to be effectively understood but also to follow the speech norms of a community. By using the formulaic speech that is expected in specific situations, a speaker demonstrates that he or she belongs to the speech community.

Lantolf (2005) has proposed that Hopper’s (1998) theory of *emergent grammar* could serve as a theory of language to complement the psychological approach outlined by Vygotsky. Hopper’s theory relies on the notion of formulaic speech as the basis for the development of grammar, which, as the term “emergent” implies, never reaches a fixed end point of competence (even for speakers in the first language), but rather, is constantly developing and changing². This perspective of grammar as continually emergent is parallel to Vygotsky’s view of the development of thinking as never complete and always having the potential to develop further (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Quoting Hopper (1998, p. 163) Lantolf explains that “emergent grammar is ‘a set of sedimented conventions that have been routinized out of the more frequently occurring ways of saying things’, and is assembled ‘fragment by fragment’ as we increasingly participate more extensively and intensively in social activities.” Thus, learning a language involves accumulating more and more “fragments” of speech that can be used in similar situations later on. In

² Note that despite some similarities between Hopper’s “emergent grammar” and what has been termed “emergentism” or “cognitive emergentism” as put forth by authors such as N. Ellis (1998, 2003), Lantolf and Thorne (2006, p. 22) have argued that the two approaches do not have much in common with regard to their position on acquisition.

addition, Hopper (1998) argues that utterances are not generated by a speaker based on a system of rules, but instead, are based on real and often formulaic utterances that an individual has heard previously and uses as patterns from which to create new utterances. In Hopper's (1998) approach, formulaic speech takes on an even larger role in the process of acquisition.

Hopper's theory of emergent grammar fits into a larger tradition of cognitive and functionalist linguistics (cf. Tomasello, 1998; 2003). Lantolf and Thorne (2006) and Lantolf and Johnson (2008) have recently suggested that cognitive and functionalist approaches to language that emphasize meaning over form are most closely aligned with a Vygotskian view of language.

Politeness Theory

This focus on the social nature of human interaction and learning in this study will be carried into the framework employed to understand and analyze politeness. Much previous research in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics has been based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness universals. Despite useful insights provided by this model and by the empirical research informed by it, critics have argued that Brown and Levinson's framework does not provide the analytical tools needed to describe politeness in a socially-contextualized and discourse-based study (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2006; Meier, 2004; Spencer-Oatey, 2003).

The problem primarily resides in the fact that speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969)—which is assumed in Brown and Levinson’s model—focuses on single utterances out of context rather than on discourse. In this approach, meaning is assigned to individual utterances based on linguistic form, following the notion of one form/one function. What is not recognized is that a given utterance can perform more than one communicative action and conversely, a given communicative action can be performed by an infinite number of linguistic forms, as well as through nonverbal communication. The intention of the speaker is understood by the listener in the discourse context through the human capacity to make inference. Speech act theory is essentially speaker- and production-based, meaning that the role of the listener and the dynamics between the speaker and listener are not taken into account (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2006).

Brown and Levinson’s theory has also been criticized on the grounds that it is ethnocentric and biased by intuitions and research based on English (Escandell-Vidal, 1996; Spencer-Oatey, 2003). The two main components of this theory that have been charged with ethnocentrism are their concept of face and their assertion that there is a one-to-one relationship between directness and politeness. With regard to the former, Brown and Levinson define *face* as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (1987, p. 61). In this view, face consists of two oppositional and universal concerns: “the desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions (negative face) and the desire (in some respects) to be approved of (positive face)” (p. 13). As mentioned, Brown and Levinson argued that these concepts were universal and applied to all languages.

However, research in languages other than English have found that these conceptions of face do not fit with the way personal relations are viewed in other cultures.

Although some researchers have suggested that the notion of face is ethnocentric in itself and is an emic category originating in English (Wierzbicka, 1991), others have used the concept as a starting point for examining how face works in non-Anglo cultures. For example, Mao (1994) argued that in Chinese society, the concept of face has different meanings than those that the concepts of negative and positive face convey in the Brown and Levinson approach. Mao proposed that Chinese face be understood in terms of *miànzi* and *lian*. The concept *miànzi* refers to the desire of individuals to be recognized by society and *lian* conveys the idea of the desire to be liked and approved of by others. Despite the apparent similarity between negative and positive face, *miànzi* does not refer to an individualistic sense of territory as does negative face and *lian* does not refer to closeness between individuals, as in positive face, but rather, it is connected to morality and is ascribed by one's position in society.

The concept of face has also been adjusted for work in Spanish-speaking cultures, including Placencia's (1996) study of Ecuadorian Spanish and Bravo's (1996; 1999) and Hernández-Flores' (1999; 2004) work on Peninsular Spanish. Placencia argued that in Ecuador, face concerns did not include a desire to act unimpeded (negative face), but instead, a desire to follow social rules in order to convey status to members of the group. Work in Peninsular Spanish suggests that negative face is not an operative concept among

Spaniards and that the categories of *autonomy* and *affiliation* are more relevant to understanding face (see discussion below on face in Peninsular Spanish).

In Brown and Levinson's approach, face has been connected to politeness as it is used strategically in individual speech acts. They argue that the reason that speakers use politeness is to mitigate or avoid the threat to face that particular speech acts inherently present. "Face-threatening acts" are speech acts such as requests that, according to them, inherently represent potential conflict in interaction. Apart from the argument that Brown and Levinson's notion of face is not universally relevant, this perspective has also been criticized for proposing *a priori* that certain speech acts will threaten face, especially negative face (Hernández-Flores, 1999). Indeed, a request need not be inherently face-threatening, depending on the social and discourse context. In this approach, other variables such as power, social distance, and imposition are also assumed to be given *a priori*. Aston (1995, p. 58) argues that in Brown and Levinson's theory, "power differentials and social distance or familiarity, along with cultural rankings of imposition-types, are essentially considered as social facts which pre-date the particular speech event in question. However, some relevant variables may be less predetermined, being more 'context-internal'." In other words, some factors that shape speaker and listener behavior in speech events may be determined locally vis-à-vis negotiation between individual participants.

The second general area in which Brown and Levinson have been largely criticized regards their postulation of indirectness as universally more polite. They argue

that the reason that speakers are indirect is to be polite. If there were no necessity to be polite, a speaker who is assumed to be following Grice's (1975) conversational maxims, would simply be direct in conveying his or her message. Therefore, they conclude that the more indirect an utterance is, the more polite it is. In reference to Brown and Levinson's arguments regarding indirectness, Escandell-Vidal (1996, p. 630) points out that "the relationship between indirectness and politeness is one of iconicity: the longer the inferential path, the higher the degree of politeness."

The nature of indirectness has been challenged on several fronts. First, researchers have found that indirect utterances are not universally more polite from the point of view of the speakers (Wierzbicka, 1991). For example, Márquez-Reiter (2000), Mir (1993), and Le Pair (1996) point out that direct requests are quite common in Peninsular Spanish and are not less polite or less appropriate than indirect requests in certain contexts.

A qualitatively different criticism of the directness-indirectness contrast is articulated by Saville-Troike (2003), who compares strategies used in U.S. and Japanese television commercials to exemplify her argument. A common strategy in U.S. commercials is for advertisers to tell the consumer to "buy this product," whereas in Japanese commercials, a common strategy is to surround a product with "pleasant sensory images" (p. 149). Both approaches represent attempts to persuade the consumer to buy the product. As Saville-Troike describes, U.S. analysts would very likely describe the U.S. approach as more "direct" and the Japanese approach as more "indirect," to which she argues the following:

The notion that an imperative form in syntax is more direct in pragmatic intent and effect than evocation of satisfying sensory experiences is itself a cultural artifact. From a different cultural point of view, there may be reasons to consider appeals to sensory experiences as more “direct” than those that require verbal mediation. We must also consider the possibility that the US analysts’ valued notions of directness are even considered offensive in certain cultures or are not viewed as important categories/ dimensions of analysis or evaluation. (p. 151-152)

Thus, the notion of what is “indirect” and what is “direct” must be called into question in a framework that is not ethnocentric.

Although Meier (2004, p. 12-13) has argued that the term ‘politeness’ should be done away with in pragmatics research, stating that “the research objective regarding those linguistic phenomena heretofore subsumed under “politeness phenomena” should be to identify, describe, and explain patterns of effective linguistic communication in situational discourse contexts,” other scholars in the field (cf. Chodorowska-Pilch, 2004; Escandell-Vidal, 2004; Hernández-Flores, 2004; Spencer-Oatey, 2005) continue employing the term *politeness*, albeit in significantly different ways than did Brown and Levinson.

Meier advocates for subsuming issues relating to what has been investigated as politeness under the rubric of culture. In her view, the goal of research in this area should be to identify how underlying cultural values and beliefs and perceptions of contextual variables are related to linguistic choices in non-rigid ways. For example, linguistic interactions can be analyzed in terms of different cultural orientations reported by cultural anthropologists and others (cf. Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1980), such as the binary constructs

of high context vs. low context communication, individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures, small power distance vs. large power distance, and weak uncertainty avoidance vs. strong uncertainty avoidance (Meier, 2004). This line of thinking is consistent with the sociocultural theories presented in the previous section, which propose that the social context of learning must be taken into account in order to understand learning and development, including use of language.

Another benefit of disposing with the term politeness is to escape from the baggage associated with the term both in the field of pragmatics and in lay concepts of the term, at least in American English. In the first place, Brown and Levinson have been the “deictic center” (LoCastro, 2003, p. 128) of politeness research for so long, that the term politeness is not neutral; it is imbued with that particular theory of politeness. Another reason for discarding the term politeness is that what politeness means in lay terms in English differs from what linguists mean by this word, a fact that contributes to the ambiguity and confusion around the term (Meier, 2004).

Regardless of the fact that I agree with Meier (2004) about the problematic nature of the term politeness, in this study I will continue to use the term within a particular theoretical framework. And, for better or for worse, politeness is still a relevant category in linguistics. For example, the year 2005 saw the inception of a new scholarly journal entitled the *Journal of Politeness Research*.

Rapport management as a framework for politeness

The approach for analyzing politeness that will be applied in this study is Spencer-Oatey's (2000; 2005) concept of *rappport management*. This approach was chosen because it integrates the crucial concepts of socially acceptable behavior, face, and individuals' interactional goals into one conceptual framework and because it is informed by research in intercultural communication. Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 96) defines *rappport* as the "relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people, and rapport management refers to the management (or mismanagement) of relations between people." This definition of rapport reflects perhaps the one common component of a number of previous definitions of politeness (cf. Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983; Fraser, 1990; Gu, 1990; Locher, 2004; Watts, 2003): everyone seems to agree that politeness has to do with maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships and doing what is socially appropriate (Spencer-Oatey, 2005). In this approach, language is a significant part of how people manage rapport in interpersonal relations. However, individual utterances cannot be labeled as "polite" or "impolite" prior to their use in a specific social and discourse context.

Despite the fact that rapport is related to harmonious relations, Spencer-Oatey argues that people have different orientations to rapport and proposes four ways to describe these perspectives: in a *rappport-enhancement orientation*, there is desire among participants to enhance or strengthen harmonious relations; a *rappport-maintenance orientation* shows a desire to maintain or protect harmonious relationships; a *rappport-neglect orientation* indicates a lack of concern or interest in rapport on the part of the

participants; and finally, a *rapport-challenge orientation* refers to a desire to damage harmonious relations (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 96). The latter component of this framework recognizes that people may not always desire harmonious relations with others.

As stated above, for Spencer-Oatey, rapport management has three components: (1) behavioral expectations (i.e., politeness), (2) face sensitivities, and (3) interactional wants. The first aspect, behavioral expectations, is also referred to Spencer-Oatey as *politeness*, which is defined as “the subjective judgments that people make about the social appropriateness of verbal and non-verbal behavior” (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 97). Furthermore, in this view, “people’s judgments about social appropriateness are based primarily on their expectations, which in turn are derived from their beliefs about behavior: what is prescribed, what is permitted, and what is proscribed” (p. 97). In its focus on socially acceptable behavior, this definition of politeness is similar to definitions of politeness put forth by other authors (cf. Escandell-Vidal, 1996; Fraser, 1990; Hernández-Flores, 1999; 2004; Meier, 1995). Politeness, therefore, has to do with the types of behavior that are expected and considered socially appropriate in particular contexts, in specific speech communities.

Social norms and conventions are often (but not always) the basis of what is expected behavior (Spencer-Oatey, 2000; 2005). An example of a social norm is the expectation that if two people who know each other pass in the hallway at work, they minimally recognize each other’s presence by exchanging greetings. Spencer-Oatey

(2000; 2005) argues that conventions and norms can be divided into categories, which she calls domains. She lists five possible domains for social conventions (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 19-20):

1. **The illocutionary domain** (the performance of speech acts such as apologies, requests, and compliments)
2. **The discourse domain** (the discourse content and structure of an interchange, including topic choice and the organization and sequencing of information)
3. **The participation domain** (the procedural aspects of an interchange, such as turn-taking [overlaps and inter-turn pauses, turn-taking rights and obligations], the inclusion/exclusion of people present, and the use/non-use of listener responses [verbal and nonverbal])
4. **The stylistic domain** (the stylistic aspects of an interchange, such as choice of tone (for example, serious or joking), choice of genre-appropriate lexis and syntax, and choice of genre-appropriate terms of address or use of honorifics)
5. **The nonverbal domain** (the nonverbal aspects of an interchange, such as gestures and other body movements, eye contact, and proxemics)

To these domains might be added the perception of sociolinguistic variables such as age, gender, social status, and social distance. These domains of social norms effectively provide an outline of many of the linguistic aspects of politeness that L2 learners need to acquire in order to be able to observe behavioral expectations in the second language and culture and therefore, effectively manage rapport.

Face

The second component of rapport management is face sensitivity. Spencer-Oatey bases her definitions on work with face in cross-cultural psychology and cross-cultural pragmatics, particularly research in Japanese and Chinese (cf. Ide, 1989; Ho, 1994; Gu, 1998; Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1988). These and other studies had challenged Goffman's (1967) concept of face, which forms the basis for face in Brown and Levinson's (1987) approach. Spencer-Oatey (2000; 2005) proposes two fundamental categories of face: *respectability face* and *identity face*. Respectability face "refers to the prestige, honor, or 'good name' that a person or a social group holds and claims within a (broader) community" (2005, p. 102). The nature of respectability face is related to judgments of an individual or group's ability to function competently in his or her social position. It also has to do with biographical variables such as age and sex, social status such as education and occupation, formal rank or title, personal reputation, and integrity (p. 103). An important feature of respectability face is that it is not situation specific, but rather, stable across different situations, even though it can change over time.

This type of face contrasts with identity face, which Spencer-Oatey defines as situationally-specific and based on Goffman's (1967, p. 5) understanding of face:

The term face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of

approved social attributes—albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself.

As Goffman's definition suggests, face can apply both to individuals and to groups of people. Another important point is that identity face is relevant to a specific interactional context and thus more variable across time and space than is respectability face. Identity face is also proposed to include claims to group membership (Spencer-Oatey, 2005).

Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 104) suggests some of the types of “positive social values” that people claim for themselves and that are implicated in the enhancement and threatening of face. First, face sensitivities develop based on those elements that are important to a person's self-aspect. These elements may include the following areas:

- bodily features and control (e. g., skin blemishes, burping)
- possessions and belongings (material and affiliative)
- performance/skills (e. g., musical performance)
- social behavior (e. g., gift giving, rude gestures)
- verbal behavior (e. g., wording of illocutionary acts, stylistic choice)

Other types of social values may also be relevant to face sensitivities. Spencer-Oatey (2005) takes work in cross-cultural psychology from Schwartz (1992, p. 44; as cited in Spencer-Oatey, 2005), who constructed a list of ten values that are common among a large number cultures:

Independent value constructs

1. Power: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
2. Achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards
3. Hedonism: pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself
4. Stimulation: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
5. Self-direction: independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring

Interdependent value constructs

6. Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature
7. Benevolence: preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact
8. Tradition: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self
9. Conformity: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms
10. Security: safety, harmony, and stability or society, relationships, and of self.

The values are divided into those that have more to do with individual fulfillment (independent) and values concerning relationships to other people (interdependent). Importantly, according to this approach, both individuals and cultures are likely to vary in the weight they place on each of these values. For example, in survey research with Hong Kong and Philippine participants, Chan et al. (2004) found that the value dimensions of “conservation” (consisting of Schwartz’s conformity, tradition, and security value constructs) and “self-transcendence” (consisting of Schwartz’s benevolence and universalism value constructs) predicted participants’ concern for promoting rapport in a hypothetical customer/service provider relationship. Chan et al.’s study suggests that in cultures where such value dimensions are important, concern for rapport and face enhancement and maintenance will be higher than in cultures where these value dimensions are less salient. This research emphasizes the importance of considering cultural variation in developing and employing concepts such as face.

Work done on politeness and face in Peninsular Spanish (c.f., Bravo 1996, 1999; Fant, 1989; 2007; Hernández-Flores, 1999; 2002; 2003; 2004) has some parallels with the social value constructs proposed by Schwartz, described above. Based on linguistic and cultural research on business negotiations between Spaniards and Swedes (Bravo, 1996; Fant, 1989), Bravo proposed that face³ can be divided into the universal categories *autonomy* and *affiliation*. Hernández-Flores (1999, p. 39) describes these two constructs

³ Note that neither Bravo nor Hernández-Flores makes the distinction between identity face and respectability face, but according to the distinction made by Spencer-Oatey, the type of face both authors describe would be categorized as identity face.

succinctly: *autonomy* “refers to the fact of perceiving, and to be perceived by people, as someone with his/her own surroundings inside the group” and, citing Bravo (1996), “*el deseo de verse frente al grupo como un individuo original y consciente de sus cualidades sociales positivas*” (‘The individual’s wish to be seen as an original person and conscious of his/her positive social qualities’) and *affiliation* “refers to the fact of perceiving, and to be perceived by people, as an integrated part of the group.”

In this framework, there is an explicit move to disassociate these categories from Brown and Levinson’s (1987) positive and negative face by calling these constructs “empty methodological categories” (p. 40). That is, unlike Brown and Levinson’s conceptualization of face, this approach does not propose to describe *a priori* the kind of meaning and values that people in different cultures associate with these aspects of face; the important distinction that is made is that one category has to do with individual or group autonomy and the other with individual or group affiliation. What Brown and Levinson’s theory may provide, however, is the content for the empty categories of autonomy and affiliation for some English-speaking communities, in which *autonomy* is related to the desire to unimpeded and not be imposed on by others and to have the freedom to act as s/he chooses (related to negative politeness) and *affiliation* refers to the desire to be appreciated and approved of by others (related to positive politeness).

Bravo (1996) argues that the specific cultural contents of Peninsular Spanish face in terms of autonomy and affiliation are *self-affirmation* and *confianza*, respectively. In the first case, self-affirmation (autonomy) refers to the individual’s desire to emphasize

his or her own positive social qualities in order to stand out in the group (Bravo, 1996, p. 63). *Confianza*, on the other hand, refers to a closeness or “deep familiarity” between people which is viewed as very positive, in the sense of close friendships (Thurén, 1988, p. 222-223; as cited in Bravo, 1996). The lack of *confianza* means that there is a distance between people which, if describing a relationship between family or friends, is evaluated negatively in Spanish society. According to Hernández-Flores (1999, p. 41), unlike positive face in the Brown and Levinson (1987) approach, *confianza* (affiliation) “does not refer to the wish of being appreciated and approved of (positive face) but to the wish of achieving closeness, because closeness in the Spanish setting allows the possibility of acting and talking in an open way, as in familial background (this is valued as positive because of the social importance of family in the Spanish model of society).” The following table sums up the comparison between the contents of autonomy face and affiliation face as theorized for Peninsular Spanish and English:

Table 1: Cultural Contents of Autonomy and Affiliation Face

	Autonomy Face	Affiliation Face
Peninsular Spanish (Bravo, 1996; Hernández-Flores, 1999; 2002; 2003; 2004; Fant, 1989; 2007)	Desire to be seen as an original person with positive social values; self-affirmation; self-confidence; assertiveness	Desire for <i>confianza</i> , or ability to speak and act in an open way; closeness and familiarity; perceived as an integrated part of the group
English (Brown & Levinson, 1987)	Desire to be unimpeded and imposed on by others and to act as s/he chooses (negative politeness)	Desire to be appreciated and approved of by others (positive politeness)

Hernández-Flores (1999; 2002; 2003; 2004) found that the categories of self-affiliation and *confianza* were useful in understanding the giving of advice, making compliments, and other types of interactions among Spanish friends and family in informal conversations at the dinner table. Based on this conversational data, she also argues that the participants were not oriented to face in order to prevent or mitigate actual or potential conflicts, as in Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, but rather, they were primarily oriented to "enhancing" and affirming both the speakers' and the hearers' face wants related to *confianza* and self-affirmation (Hernández-Flores, 2004). For example, insistence that guests eat more food, requests for more food from the hostess, and compliments about the food were seen as moves that enhanced the hostess' and the guests' face both in terms of self-affirmation and *confianza*. Specific linguistic features that were used by the participants to enhance each others' face wants were use of vocatives and diminutives (Hernández-Flores, 2004). This work on face in the context of Peninsular Spanish is useful for this study in that it provides sociocultural information about the target speech community and is compatible with the larger model of politeness proposed by Spencer-Oatey (2005). An important caveat to consider, however, is that within a particular culture there will be a variety of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) which, as Lorenzo-Dus (2007) suggests in her study of the discourse of a Spanish talk show, manifest their own norms for interaction and politeness.

Fant (2007, pp. 340-342) expands on Spencer-Oatey's description of face to create a classification system of face which he argues is compatible with Spencer-Oatey's

rapport management theory. Fant's model includes five aspects of face: likeness, cooperativeness, excellence, roles, and hierarchy. The first, *likeness face*, relates to the individuals' need to be included in a group, which could be seen as similar to affiliation face. *Cooperativeness face* refers to "willingness to cooperate with the other group members, and to play by the rules" (p. 341). Fant argues that the third element, *excellence face*, which overlaps with Spencer-Oatey's (2000) notion of quality face, describes an individual's desire to be seen as possessing some socially-desirable quality (e.g., competent, reliable, credible) which is relevant to the interaction. *Role face*, Fant argues, coincides with Spencer-Oatey's concept of identity face, as described above. Finally, *hierarchy face* is associated with the social status and power that a person may have in a given social situation. Fant (2007) applies these five categories of face to an analysis of discourse moves in Peninsular Spanish interactions, finding that these classifications are relevant to understanding face concerns in that culture. These five fine-tuned categories of face fit into the larger categories proposed by Bravo (1996) of autonomy and affiliation. Fant's likeness and cooperativeness face are associated with group membership, while excellence, role, and hierarchy face are connected to individuality.

Interactional goals

The final element of the rapport management framework is interactional goals. This aspect of Spencer-Oatey's (2005) politeness approach refers to the objectives that people bring to an interaction and has been formulated in terms of a binary distinction:

transactional versus relational goals. Goals can be categorized as “transactional” or task-focused, in which the primary goal is achieving a particular task such as buying a gallon of milk, making an appointment with the dentist, or getting an extension on a homework assignment. On the other hand, the goals of individuals in interactions may be considered “relational,” in that the main purpose of the interaction is to work on a relationship, for example, building a friendship. While the distinction is made between the two goals, Spencer-Oatey (2005) argues that in many interactions both goals may be operative at the same time and, in fact, may be interconnected. For example, to achieve a particular task, relational goals may need to be addressed as well. Tracy and Coupland (1990) add a third type of goal that may be present, namely “identity goals,” which have to do with self-presentation and personal and institutional roles.

The type of interactional goals that are relevant in an interaction can influence the way rapport is managed and consequently, an individual’s linguistic choices. For example, in an emergency (e.g., a building is on fire) where certain tasks urgently need to be addressed (e.g., getting people out of the burning building), people may make allowances for behavior that otherwise would be inappropriate (e.g., barking orders).

In the context of Spanish, Placencia (2005) has employed a similar distinction between task- and people-orientations based on Fant (2005; as cited in Placencia) to describe cross-cultural variation in linguistic behavior in corner store interactions in Madrid and Quito. Considering how the participants in her study managed the interactions in the corner stores, Placencia argued that Spaniards tended to be more task-

focused and Ecuadorians were, in general, more people-focused. Another study further demonstrated that Ecuadorians tend to orient to corner store interactions with the relational goal of maintaining rapport (Placencia, 2004). Evidence of these different orientations to comparable types of interactions (i.e., client-shopkeeper interactions) was demonstrated in the amount of time spent between the client and the shopkeeper in greeting each other and exchanging how-are-you's before dealing with the task of the commercial transaction. Openings between shopkeepers and clients in Madrid were very brief and informal, whereas openings in Quito were relatively lengthy and ritualistic. Placencia's (2005) analysis takes interactional goals beyond the specific interactions to the level of social norms and expected behavior, explaining how different cultures approach corner store interactions. Both levels of analysis may be useful in understanding rapport management and politeness.

In sum, Spencer-Oatey's (2005) framework for analyzing rapport management is useful to this analysis because it incorporates crucial elements from politeness research (i.e., face, social norms and expectations, and interactional goals) into a coherent framework—rapport management—that can be applied to interpret interpersonal interactions. The way that face is managed, the observance of social norms, and the orientation to an interaction in terms of goals are all aspects that will affect linguistic choices. Therefore, this approach is relevant not only to cultural studies, but to linguistic analysis.

Furthermore, Spencer-Oatey's framework is particularly relevant to intercultural interactions because an effort has been made to design the categories of analysis in a culturally-neutral, non-ethnocentric way. Etic categories such as identity face and respectability face are based on cross-cultural research and these categories are open to emic content, allowing for analysis of variation among cultures.

Empirical Research

Acquiring politeness in the study abroad context

To my knowledge, there are two previous studies that have examined the acquisition of L2 sociolinguistic competence and politeness in the study abroad context using a sociocultural framework and therefore are of particular relevance to the current study. Both Siegal's (1994; 1995; 1996) and DuFon's (1999; 2000) studies employed an ethnographic approach and a language socialization perspective to analyze the development of politeness by study abroad students.

Siegal (1994) followed the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by four female learners of Japanese who studied in Japan for one academic year. Three of the learners were native English speakers and one was a native speaker of Hungarian. Two learners were young undergraduate students in a year-long study abroad program in Japan. Both had studied Japanese for three to four years prior to the study. The third

learner was a forty-something high school teacher of Japanese who spent one year studying at a university in Japan. These three were all intermediate-advanced learners at the initiation of the study. The fourth learner was different from the other three by virtue of her position as a professor of English at a Japanese university and her lower proficiency in Japanese, being that she was a beginning-level learner. Although she studied Japanese extensively while in Japan, she was not a university student like the others. The learners' differing social positions and personal interests gave them access to different social contexts and opportunities to interact in Japanese.

Siegal's (1994) study took an ethnographic approach. Data from the study were collected from journals written by the four participants, naturalistic recordings of the learners conversing with native speakers of Japanese, the researcher's observations, formal pre- and post-interviews with the participants, and interviews with native speakers of Japanese, some of whom had had contact with the learners. The linguistic features under examination were honorifics, donatory verbs, modality, pragmatic particles, and use of idiomatic speech, such as collocations.

The findings of the study indicated that all four learners improved their Japanese language skills during their sojourn in Japan, albeit in differing ways. Arina, the Hungarian speaker, gained in her ability to sound more native-like such as by learning collocations, changing from English to Japanese fillers (i.e., from English "uh" to Japanese "ano"), and by omitting subject pronouns (Siegal, 1994; p. 397). Sally, the other young student, overused the plain style and in general, did not attribute much importance

to polite language, including honorifics. Mary, the high school teacher, primarily improved her vocabulary, her use of conversational fillers, knowledge of formulaic speech, and literacy skills. Finally, the fact that Karen, the English professor, did not make much progress in sociolinguistic abilities in Japanese was attributed to her status as a beginning-level learner of the language. All four of the learners struggled with the complex system of honorifics and the use of polite language in different social contexts. For example, Mary attempted to compensate for her lack of knowledge of honorifics by using pragmatic particles associated with polite speech (Siegal, 1995). However, those polite particles were in fact inappropriate in many contexts in which Japanese use honorific language to be polite.

Participation in social activities was determined to relate to participants' learning of Japanese. For example, through participation in the specific speech event of giving speeches, Arina learned the contextually-appropriate formulaic speech associated with that context. Sally's interactions were primarily with family, which may explain her overgeneralization of the plain form, since the plain form is appropriate in the context of family interactions. This finding is consistent with what Marriott (1994) and Regan (1995) discovered, namely, that when students' interactions in study abroad are overwhelmingly informal, they learn and overgeneralize informal registers. Another participant, Mary, made great efforts to practice conversational Japanese with Japanese language partners on a regular basis. Siegal (1994) argues that those one-on-one conversations provided Mary with an important source of knowledge about Japanese

language and culture, despite the fact that mutual understanding between Mary and her conversation partners was often lacking.

An important finding of Siegal's (1994) study was the relationship between learner identity and being polite in Japanese. Siegal (1994, p. 398) argued that, "The learners in this study were not passive recipients of the language they were immersed in, but rather continuously processed their experiences and perceptions of the world around them, eyeing language use with discernment." In some cases, sociolinguistic appropriateness came into conflict with the learners' own identities and the way that they wanted to portray themselves in Japanese. For example, some learners avoided "female" ways of speaking, which from their western cultural perspective appeared to be demeaning to women and indicative of women's secondary position in Japanese society. Thus, some of the learners actively resisted being sociolinguistically appropriate by using features of speech typically associated with male conversational style (Siegal, 1994, p. 335). Therefore, learners resisted imitating a speech community norm and actively tried to construct their own identity in Japanese by their use of language. On the other hand, the learners may not have fully understood how certain ways of speaking are viewed in a Japanese cultural framework, and may have interpreted such sociolinguistic norms from an ethnocentric perspective. Without an understanding of the world view of the other culture, the learners cannot be viewed as constructing a "third place," a concept which Kramsch (1993) has put forth to describe how, as a result of experiencing other cultures, learners come to take both an insider's and an outsider's view about their first culture

(C1) and their second culture (C2). The resulting perspective cannot be described as either C1 or C2, but rather, a third position from which both C1 and C2 can be critically understood.

Siegal (1994) also determined that learners constructed their identities in the context of being the “other” in Japan, referring to the fact that there is a strong sense in Japanese society of in-group identity. Their social position as “other” had an impact on the type of speech that learners were exposed to in social interactions and the speech that was viewed by native Japanese speakers as socially appropriate for learners. For example, Siegal (p. 401) reports that “learners were told that they were ‘foreigners’ and therefore did not need to be concerned with honorific or appropriate sociolinguistic usage.” That Japanese reserved special social norms for foreigners was also evidenced in the predominance of foreigner talk that learners experienced in social interactions. Foreigners are addressed by Japanese in ways that are pragmatically and sociolinguistically inappropriate among native speakers. The presence of foreigner talk provided learners with inconsistent input regarding social norms and would have made their development of native-like politeness that much more difficult. In sum, Siegal’s study suggests that learners’ position in society, their access to social interactions, and their own identities are important to take into consideration in the study of the L2 learning of politeness in the study abroad context.

In the second study, DuFon (1999) concentrated on the development of linguistic politeness by six Japanese and American learners of Indonesian who spent one academic

year studying in Indonesia. At the time of their arrival in Indonesia, three of the learners were beginning-level speakers and three were intermediate-level. The study was ethnographic and the data consisted of the researcher's observations as a participant at the study abroad site, weekly audio recordings that learners made of themselves speaking Indonesian with native speakers in naturalistic interactions, student journals about the learning of politeness in Indonesian, and interviews with the students and with the students' local host families, tutors, instructors, and program administrators.

Three politeness features of Indonesian were found to be significant in the students' L2 acquisition. The first feature was "experience questions"—interrogatives concerning participation or observation of an event or an occurrence—that are marked by adverbs (e.g., *sudah*, *belum*, *tidak*, zero form) to convey the epistemic stance of the speaker with regard to whether an event had already occurred and the certainty with which it was expected to occur at some point in the future. The adverbs also indicate whether the speaker thinks that the experience will occur within a specific or a more ambiguous time frame. DuFon (1999) described how cultural norms influence the use of adverbs accompanying experience questions. For example, marriage in Indonesian culture is assumed to be an event that will eventually happen in someone's life, albeit sometimes in an ambiguous period of time in the future. Therefore, when talking about marriage in the future, Indonesians choose an adverb that fits with their cultural expectations concerning this social institution. In answering experience questions, these adverbs can also be manipulated by speakers by producing an unexpected response,

which serves to convey to the questioner that his or her assumptions about the experience were not correct.

Two of the three intermediate learners learned to use adverbs in response to experience questions in a way that was consistent with the social norms of Indonesian, despite the fact that none of the learners was able to master the full range of options available in the language. However, none of the beginning level learners acquired this aspect of linguistic politeness and instead, tended to overgeneralize the zero form in response to experience questions. Responses using the zero form often went against the expectations of the Indonesian speakers and in turn, made learners' utterances pragmatically inappropriate and confusing for their interlocutors. DuFon posited that those learners that developed an understanding of these forms beyond the zero form did so in a series of stages. In part, the acquisition of these adverbs was furthered by the acquisition of certain formulaic phrases, suggesting the learning of formulaic speech aided acquisition of this politeness feature.

A second feature of linguistic politeness that was explored in DuFon's study was greetings. In Indonesia, greetings index in-group and out-group membership along lines of ethnicity, religion, and nationality. For example, Muslims tend to greet each other with a formulaic greeting in Arabic, which indexes their shared religious identity. It appeared from the interviews and journal data that the students became aware of the different social identities that were indexed in greetings during their stay in Indonesia. This awareness was evident, for example, when learners would avoid responding with the

second pair part of greetings that indexed themselves inappropriately in their eyes as either in-group or out-group members. For example, students did not provide the second pair part to a greeting in Arabic in order not to give the impression that they were Muslim, when they were not. In similar situations, this behavior was also observed among Indonesians who were non-Muslims. Students also resisted being indexed as foreigners, by not responding with the expected second pair part of greetings in English or Japanese, but rather, by providing a response in Indonesian.

The learners also needed to acquire the illocutionary force of greetings that were unlike those in English. For example, in Indonesian, *Mau ke mana?* ('Where are you going?') is a common greeting. At first, learners misunderstood the illocutionary force of this greeting and interpreted the question literally. After discovering the illocutionary force of greeting that this and other utterances convey, the learners began to respond appropriately to such greetings.

Terms of address constituted the third aspect of linguistic politeness considered in this study. In Indonesian, terms of address are quite complex and index a number of social identities such as nationality, religion, gender, age, and social status and serve to indicate respect and intimacy among speakers. In the beginning, all learners tended to overgeneralize one particular term of address, *anda*, probably because it was the closest to an all-purpose term of address. Some students learned to use other terms of address, however, that use was not always appropriate with respect to the social norms of

Indonesian. For example, one learner identified intimacy with an address term that indicated distance for Indonesians.

Considerable individual variation was found among the learners with regard to their development of terms of address. As discussed previously, the variation could be partly explained by the personal values of the learners with regard to politeness norms. One of the learners reported being very concerned about showing respect to her Indonesian hosts and, consequently, she paid a great deal of attention to how terms of address were used by Indonesians. Another learner used only one term of address with everyone he spoke to, even after one year in Indonesia, perhaps as a result of U.S. American cultural values related to egalitarianism. Even the learner who was very concerned about being polite never acquired the full system of address terms, in large part because the learners were not exposed to situations in which the full range of address terms were employed.

In DuFon's study, four linguistic factors were found to influence learners' learning of politeness: grammatical complexity, distribution of forms in interaction, L1 transfer, and language proficiency. In the first case, politeness features that were grammatically simpler were acquired first. Second, forms that had a more extended range of use were acquired earlier. For example, *anda* is a term of address that can be broadly applied to various speakers (although not always appropriately) and was found to be used early on in the semester by the learners. Third, transfer from English affected the learners' politeness in Indonesian. In the use of experience questions, learners appeared to be

influenced by the fact that English does not use adverbs to express epistemic stance with regard to events. Finally, language proficiency played a role in the acquisition of politeness. It appeared that the learners' initial proficiency affected the quality of the talk of their Indonesian interlocutors; beginning-level learners were exposed to more foreigner talk, which lacked some politeness features of Indonesian. Proficiency was especially important in the acquisition of experience questions, in part because of being able to comprehend the question in the first place.

The intercultural skills of the learners were also important to acquiring linguistic politeness. Learners reported in their journals that as they began to see language forms from the cultural point of view of their hosts, they were able to interpret and use linguistic forms more appropriately. For example, in order to understand experience questions, they had to understand the cultural frame of the question in a way that differed from their first culture.

According to DuFon, an important social factor in the acquisition of politeness was the presence or lack of corrective feedback from native speakers. Indonesians provided learners with negative feedback about their responses to experience questions, but did not correct learners in their use of terms of address. DuFon comments that this tendency was probably related to the fact that the use of adverbs in experience questions is a grammar issue, whereas terms of address relate to sociolinguistic issues and concepts of face. That is, correcting a learner's grammar was not seen by native speakers as problematic with regard to face, but that correcting sociolinguistic issues could have had

negative consequences for either the speaker's or listener's relationship. This difference in corrective feedback was related to students' lack of ability to follow politeness norms in the L2.

In both Siegal's and DuFon's studies, social interactions and cultural knowledge were determined to be important factors in the learning of linguistic politeness. Despite the fact that learners did make progress in their use of politeness forms, the learners did not acquire a native-like ability to follow the social norms of the speech communities.

Social interactions in the study abroad context

One of the assumed benefits of learning a second language in a country in which that language is commonly spoken is that one has the opportunity to experience a wide range of social interactions (e.g., with a family, with friends, in restaurants, in pharmacies, on the bus) as well as repeated experiences interacting in those contexts. Indeed, research suggests that learners in study abroad contexts do have many opportunities to participate in social interactions in the L2 and to thereby learn the politeness norms of the speech community. However, a number of studies have also discovered that, for a variety of reasons, L2 learners who participate in study abroad programs may not participate as frequently as might be expected in the types of interactions that would assist them in learning L2 politeness. This section describes a variety of factors that may influence students' access to and participation in social interactions in the L2 during the sojourn abroad.

In the first place, gender and race may influence access to social interaction in the study abroad context. Polanyi (1995) reanalyzed data from Brecht and Davidson's (1995) research on U.S. American study abroad students in Russia. In that study, it had been reported that although upon arrival in Russia there was no statistical difference in speaking and listening skills among the male and female students, after returning to the U.S., the male students were found to have improved significantly more than the female students. Polanyi (1995) analyzed the students' journals and concluded that the sexual harassment that the females reported experiencing in the TL community restricted their full participation in that community. The lack of full participation on the part of the female students helps explain why the male students were able to make greater gains in Russian in comparison with the females.

The relation between gender and participation in study abroad was also identified by Kline (1993) in a study with American students living in France. Kline's study reported that females improved their literacy skills more than males, which the author interpreted as being a result of different levels of participation in oral interactions. The female students in Kline's study reported that they faced sexist and hostile attitudes in the TL community and, as a result, they focused on learning French not through oral interaction, but through reading.

In addition to issues of gender, exclusion from participation in the host community may result from racial discrimination by the TL community. Talburt and Stewart's (1999) study documented the experiences of an African-American student in

Spain who developed negative attitudes towards Spaniards because of the racial harassment that she reported facing on a daily basis.

Research on study abroad students in Japan (Iino, 1996; Siegal, 1994) also suggests that the TL community may restrict participation by study abroad students based on their status as foreigners. Both Siegal (1994) and Iino (1996) found that dominant cultural ideologies held in Japan essentially do not allow full participation in the language and culture by out-group members. For example, when L2 learners of Japanese gain advanced proficiency in Japanese, instead of being labeled as successful, they are labeled as “strange foreigners” and viewed as odd (Iino, 1996). Siegal (1994) also reported that politeness norms were described to L2 learners as simply Japanese customs that foreigners need not adopt, a move which effectively discourages full participation in the speech community.

Another issue to consider is that students may not interact with expert speakers of the target language with great frequency, due to the fact that they spend more time hanging out with other L1 peers (Barron, 2003; Cohen, et al., 2005; Hoffman-Hicks, 1999; Isabelli-García, 2006). Living accommodations and program type likely have a significant influence on students’ opportunities for interactions with expert speakers and creating “dense social networks” of individuals from the target culture (Isabelli-García, 2006). Students who live with host families in the community may have opportunities to use the L2 with greater frequency than students who live in dormitories with L1 peers and/or other international students. For example, students in Law’s (2003) study of a

program of study abroad in Mexico reported having extended conversations with their host mothers.

On the other hand, there is not a one-to-one relationship between accommodations and quantity of interactions. While on the surface the host family appears to be the ideal living situation for students in terms of opportunities to interact with expert speakers, Rivers (1998) compared students living in the dormitory to those living with host families and found that while host family students improved more in their reading skills, dormitory students gained more in speaking ability. This finding suggests that students living with host families actually spent more time reading on their own than interacting orally with their host family. Interpersonal dynamics and the fact that host families may be leading busy lives provide some explanation for the lack of interactions between students and their host families (Churchill, 2003; Cohen et al., 2005).

Apart from the host family's efforts at communicating, students' own attitudes, motivations, and behaviors can have an impact on they quality and quantity of interactions with the host family (Isabelli-García, 2006). For example, Yashima et al. (2004) posited that the student's willingness to communicate resulted in behaviors that promoted more extensive interactions between the host family and the student. In another study, Knight and Schmidt-Rinehart (2002) reported that, from the observations of Mexican host mothers, study abroad students who had frequent contact with their friends and family back home in the U.S. were less likely to engage in extended interactions with the host family. Learners' "openness" to the host culture has also been suggested as a

factor in how much social interaction learners have with members of the TL culture (Isabelli-García, 2006; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002).

This notion of intercultural “openness” can be described using Bennett’s (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, which proposes that individuals go through stages as they have experiences with other cultures and develop their intercultural communication skills. Individuals start in the ethnocentric stages, by first denying that cultural differences exist (Denial), then recognizing cultural differences but privileging one culture over the other (Defense), and finally minimizing cultural differences in order to impose equality among cultures (Minimization). After moving through these stages, the model suggests that individuals go on the ethnorelative stages of acknowledging cultural differences (Acceptance), adapting to cultural differences (Adaptation), and finally, accepting cultural differences as an essential part of one’s identity (Integration). The primary aspect of having an ethnorelative worldview is being able to see the world through the eyes of other cultures. Bennett (1993) and others using this model have suggested that many people do not make it through all of the stages, since integrating multiple cultures into one’s own identity suggests significant investment and experience with other cultures as a result of years of living in intercultural environments. However, there is evidence that even one semester of experience in study abroad does help L2 learners move through Bennett’s stages towards a more ethnorelative worldview (Cohen, et al., 2005). In Cohen et al.’s study, students in a variety of French- and Spanish-speaking countries moved through the ethnocentric stages over the course of

one semester abroad, as measured by the *Intercultural Development Inventory* (Hammer, 1998), a survey instrument designed to measure growth in the Bennett model.

Students' expectations regarding the roles that they and their host families and friends should and will play may also affect the types of interactions that students have in the study abroad context. In an analysis of conversational interactions between L2 learners' of French and their French host families, Wilkinson (2002) argued that students actively attempted to recreate the teacher-student relationship with their host families. L2 study abroad students, who are accustomed to speaking the L2 in the classroom setting, had expectations that their host families would be play supportive roles in the students' language learning, just as L2 language teachers do. However, host families were not always willing or able to take on the role of language teacher in their interactions with study abroad students.

Program type may also influence the types of social interactions learners have during the stay abroad. In some cases, students take classes with host country nationals and therefore, have the opportunity to meet and interact with age-peers who are expert speakers of the target language. In other programs, such as the one being examined in this study, L2 learners take content and language classes which are primarily intended for and populated almost entirely by international students. During participation in a program of study abroad, classroom interactions are likely to constitute a major source of actual and potential social interaction.

At the same time, taking classes with L2 host country nationals in no way guarantees that learners will have social interactions with their peers. In the first place, classroom interactions may be limited to lecture by the professor. Secondly, learners have reported feeling intimidated by their L2 language abilities in classes with expert speakers of the L2, such that they did not speak very much when speaking opportunities were available, nor did they make friends with students from those classes (Cohen et al., 2005). Indeed, a few studies have pointed out that students who are grouped together with L1 peers benefit from emotional and social support (Calvin, 1999; Wilkinson, 1998a), but may be disadvantaged in terms of language development due to the lack of opportunities to interact with expert speakers (Allen, 2002; Churchill, 2003; Freed, Segalowitz, & Dewey, 2004; Wilkinson, 1998b).

In some cases, study abroad students may also not have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of speech events and to be exposed to the language appropriate in those contexts. Marriott (1995) reported that study abroad students in Japan increased their use of the “plain style” in inappropriate contexts over the course of a year in Japan. Marriott asserts that because the students participated in social interactions primarily in the home and school contexts—in which the plain style is appropriate—they did not have much experience using honorifics, which are a necessary feature of politeness in some contexts.

In addition, the fact that the students overgeneralized the plain style may be related to social hierarchies that are indexed in Japanese. Due to their social status as

young adults and students, higher status Japanese speakers would have addressed those students appropriately in the plain style. However, those students would have been expected to address their higher status interlocutors, such as a university professor, with honorifics. In another study, Regan (1995) determined that study abroad students in France began omitting the negative word *ne* more frequently after living in France. *Ne*-deletion is common among French speakers, but only in informal contexts. The study abroad students in Regan's research primarily interacted in informal situations with age-peers and, as a result, did not learn the sociolinguistic variation of this feature.

In examining language learning in the social context, it is critical to keep in mind the nature of the social interactions that study abroad students are involved in. Furthermore, the experience with respect to social interaction is likely to be different for each student, highlighting the importance of considering individual differences in L2 learning outcomes.

Service encounters

During their time in the host country, study abroad students typically have many opportunities to interact in service encounters. As at home, daily life in the host country often necessitates going out into the community to acquire goods and services. Study abroad students participate in service-oriented activities such as adding money to their cell phones, buying snacks at the grocery store, purchasing stamps at the tobacco store, mailing letters at the post office, changing money at the bank, getting one's hair cut,

reserving bus, train, and airline tickets, and asking for information at the tourist information office.

Service encounters are understood to be “an instance of face-to-face interaction between a server who is ‘officially posted’ in some service area and a customer who is present in that...area, that interaction being oriented to the satisfaction of the customer’s presumed desire for some service and the server’s obligation to provide that service.” (Merritt, 1976, p. 321). In addition to the transactional goals (i.e., business or task-related talk) that the participants bring to a service encounter, as described in Merritt’s definition, other authors have shown that service providers and customers also pursue relational goals (i.e., relationship-oriented talk) in the interaction (McCarthy, 2000; Placencia, 2004). However, relational goals are more likely to be pursued by participants in those service encounters in which the interactants have an established and long-term relationship (e.g., a customer who sees the same hairdresser every time she cuts her hair), in contrast to those encounters in which the participants are complete strangers (McCarthy, 2000).

Service encounters have been analyzed for their structural elements as way to describe similarities among specific interactions within one speech community as well as to compare service encounter behavior among cultures (Hasan, 1985; Kidwell, 2000; Lamoureux, 1988; Ventola, 1987; 1999). As research indicates, the types of structural elements present in a service encounter can vary due to the context of the encounter, including the institutional setting (e.g., a 911 operator expects a caller to make a request

for help), the physical setting (e.g., a self-check-out counter at a grocery store vs. a person who rings up a sale), and the length of the interaction (e.g., getting a haircut involves much more time for potential interaction than checking out in the supermarket).

Lamoureux (1988, p. 93) describes the structural elements that may be present in a retail sales encounter: greetings, allocations of server attention, bids for service, service, resolutions of the service, payment and change-making, the handing-over of goods, closings, and goodbyes. As Lamoureux argues, all of these elements may be present in a particular service encounter or some may be omitted, repeated, or expanded. Hasan (1985) creates a similar list of structural elements for supermarket services encounters, but proposes that they are obligatory to the service encounter genre, a position that Ventola (1987; 1999) argues against. Hasan's service encounter features are the following: sale request, sale compliance, sale, purchase, and purchase closure. Ventola (1987) presents data from a travel agency, a post office, and a gift shop to argue that these elements do not always obligatorily appear in service encounters. Ventola, who bases her work on Halliday's model of Field, Tone, and Mode, uses a flowchart to propose that each action in a service encounter can lead to different potential paths of interaction, each of which may involve the presence of different structural elements.

Kidwell (2000, p. 20-21) describes services encounters at a front desk at a university, arguing that in her data, the organization of the structural elements, or sequential "slots," was "remarkably stable," despite different local contingencies such as the presence of a group of students at the desk or an individual student's lower English

proficiency. The sequential organization that Kidwell found was the following: (1) opening, (2) request for service, (3) optional interrogative series, (4) provision, or not, of service, and (4) closing. The basic format of these elements is the adjacency pair, in which a request for service is treated as the first pair part of the adjacency pair. The participants do not move to close the interaction until the second pair part, the attempt to provide service, is complete.

Cross-cultural comparisons regarding the structure of service encounters have been made by a group of studies based on data from server-customer interactions in English and Italian bookshops. For example, Aston (1995) examines the use of thanking in service encounters in the England and Italy. First, as the author points out, thanking plays more of a role in conversational management and closings than as a genuine expression of gratitude. In both English and Italian, participants used expressions of thanks (*grazie, thanks*) as a way to demonstrate alignment and shared knowledge regarding a particular referent mentioned previously in the conversation (e.g., alignment concerning a server's comment that the customer can find a certain type of book "over there" or in a specific section) and as a move to close the conversation.

Where English and Italian appeared to differ most significantly, however, was the negotiation of roles that occurred when the service provider could not fulfill a customer request. English service providers tended to volunteer remedies to the problem without further prompting or questioning by the customer, whereas Italian service providers preferred to offer remedies only after they were explicitly elicited by the customer. As

Aston (1995) points out, second language learners need to be aware of cross-cultural differences such as this one, but, at the same time, the appropriateness of a speech act or conversational move in a given situation cannot solely be determined by broad tendencies such as the one described in this study. Rather, speakers must also take into account local contingencies as they manage a conversation in their second language.

A second study on service encounters in English and Italian bookshops by Gavioli (1995) investigated cases in which service providers were not able to comply with customer requests. Non-compliance with customer requests was a dispreferred response in both English and Italian. However, the two languages differed with regard to the features and placement of features used to structurally mark a dispreferred response. In English, dispreferred responses were marked by delay, hesitation, and laughter at the beginning of the dispreferred utterance. In Italian, on the other hand, hesitation was completely absent from dispreferred responses and laughter tended to occur at the end of the dispreferred utterance. As Gavioli (1995, p. 378) describes, “Whereas laughter in English usually prefaces some forthcoming excuse or account within the same turn, in Italian it marks the point where turn transition is to take place, and it is left to the customer to elicit the remedy.” Despite these structural differences in the placement of laughter, laughter functions as a resource to conversationalists to signal conversational trouble and to initiate a remedial sequence (Gavioli, 1995).

The last two studies illustrate that the conversational structure of service encounters may be different across cultures. Other studies indicate that cross-cultural

differences also exist with regard to whether participants orient to the encounter as primarily a transaction or as an opportunity to do relational work. Bailey's (2000) work on service encounters between Korean store owners and African-American customers in Los Angeles suggests that while African-American customers "take the initiative to frame service encounters as opportunities for sociable, interpersonal talk" (p. 97), Korean store owners view such interactions primarily as a business transaction and therefore, tend not to participate in doing relational work in service encounters. For example, Bailey reports that, in one service encounter, a customer makes a joke about being unemployed and initiates a play frame, to which the store owner responds by failing to laugh or smile and reframes the interaction as a serious discussion on unemployment. Korean employees also did not tend to participate in small talk sequences initiated by African-American customers.

Bailey argues that cultural differences can help explain this different orientation to service encounters between the two ethnic groups. Ethnographic evidence suggests that Korean-Korean service encounters tend to be focused solely on the business transaction and to be brief and impersonal (Bailey, 2000). On the other hand, evidence from service encounters between African-American service providers and customers suggests that participants often pursue both transactional and relational goals in their interactions. Far from being a neutral cross-cultural difference, in the context of Los Angeles, where long-standing ethnic and class tensions between these two groups exist, the differences in

orientation to service encounters serve to “enact pre-existing social conflicts” (Bailey, 2000, 104).

One consideration in analyzing service encounters in which the service provider and the service seeker come from different cultural backgrounds is whether one group accommodates or adjusts its communication style to match that of the other group. In Bailey’s (2000) study, neither Koreans nor African-Americans changed their communication styles to accommodate to the other. In a study of service encounters in New York City, however, Callahan (2006) discovered that 86% of the time, Spanish-speaking service providers accommodated their use of Spanish or English to the customer’s language choice, whether that customer was Latino or non-Latino. In the majority of cases, when customers addressed a service provider in Spanish the service provider answered the customer in Spanish. Even when the service provider had addressed the customer first in English, he or she would switch to Spanish in the subsequent turn if the customer addressed him or her in Spanish. In the remaining 14% of the cases, service providers did not accommodate to the customer’s use of Spanish and, instead, spoke only in English. Callahan provides several examples from the data in which the service encounter proceeds with customer and employee each speaking a different language throughout. Non-accommodation was not totally random; customers who were non-Latino were twice as likely to experience non-accommodation and younger service providers were more likely to continue to speak in English than older ones.

Callahan (2006) suggests that one reason why employees accommodated to outgroup (i.e., non-Latino) customers' language choices was due to the special status that a customer has in a business context. "Outgroup members may attempt to use Spanish in commercial encounters, and their status as customers assures them a higher rate of success than they may enjoy in other situations." (Callahan, 2006, p. 47). In other contexts in U.S. society, Spanish speakers may not be willing to speak Spanish with non-Latinos, a stance which may be viewed as an act of resistance and as a means to withhold in-group membership by refusing them rights to speak the in-group language (Callahan, 2006).

That language choice may index political or ideological factors as well as social identities, is also seen in the use of Catalan in service encounters in Barcelona (Torrás & Gafaranga, 2002). The authors suggest that the use of Catalan instead of Spanish is one way that speakers in service encounters demonstrate their "sociolinguistic allegiances" (p. 541). Torrás and Gafaranga also argue that language choices by workers in service encounters are motivated by language proficiency. For example, during a conversation in English, a service provider at a university office briefly switches to Spanish and then Catalan. The switch from English into Spanish was apparently due to lack of knowledge of the appropriate word in English for the word *foresee*. The service provider inserts the Spanish translation *prever* and then immediately repairs that code-switch by saying the same word, but in Catalan, *preveure*. While both language competence and political affiliation may motivate language preference, choice to use one

language or another cannot be viewed as fixed, but rather, as a factor that is negotiated in the interactions as participants “do” their social and personal identities (Torrás & Gafaranga, 2002).

Another aspect by which services encounters have been analyzed is through the types of talk that participants are found to use. As suggested above, verbal exchange in a service encounter may be oriented to both transactional and relational goals. McCarthy (2000, p. 104) expands this binary distinction to identify four types of talk:

1. Phatic exchanges (greetings, partings)
2. Transactional talk (requests, enquiries, instructions)
3. Transactional-plus-relational talk (non-obligatory task evaluations and other comments)
4. Relational talk (small talk, anecdotes, wider topics of mutual interest)

McCarthy examines service encounters in two settings, a hairdresser and a lesson at a driving school, and is particularly interested in relational talk. In general, McCarthy finds that in these service encounters, participants look for opportunities for “lightheartedness” and use relational talk to make the interaction a pleasant experience for both parties.

Topics of small talk—including humorous sequences—that were common included the weather, vacations, evaluations and “noticings” of the immediate surroundings, and personal anecdotes (McCarthy, 2000, p. 94).

Ylänne-McEwen (2004) makes the case that switching between transactional and relational talk can be an example of participant alignment in different roles. Ylänne-

McEwen (2004, p. 525) examines data from travel agency interactions and finds, for example, that a travel agent shifts in and out of her role as a service provider, sometimes aligning with the customer in the role of “fellow holidaymaker.” In this role, the travel agent changes the footing of the conversation, leaving aside talk that identifies her asymmetrically vis-à-vis the customer as the provider of travel services, and takes up the symmetrical role of a fellow traveler, sharing stories and advice about places she had been, what clothes she takes on a trips, and how unpredictable weather can make packing difficult (Ylänne-McEwen, 2004). This study emphasizes that service provider and customer roles are not totally fixed and that participants in service encounters may align themselves to roles other than those assigned to them institutionally by the service encounter context.

Service Encounters in Spanish

A growing number of studies have examined service encounters in the Spanish-speaking world, including interactions in travel agencies, shops, and hospital information desks in Spain (Chodorowska-Pilch, 2004; Placencia, 1998; 2005); service encounters in a variety of settings in Cuba (Ruzickova, 2007); hospital information desk and store interactions in Ecuador (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2004; Placencia, 1998; 2001; 2004; 2005); server-customer interactions in a university registration office and stores in Puerto Rico (Vélez, 1987); service encounters in stores in Uruguay (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2004) and Argentina (Ferrer & Sánchez Lanza, 2002). In most cases, these

studies have compared service encounter behavior cross-culturally and have identified important cross-dialectal differences in how Spanish-speaking participants negotiate service encounters (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2004; Placencia, 1998; 2005) as well as cross-linguistic differences between English and Spanish (Vélez, 1987). Of particular interest to the present study is the research from Spain as well as Vélez's (1987) ethnographic study comparing service encounters in Puerto Rican Spanish and American English.

Placencia's (2005) study of corner shop interactions in Madrid suggests that in this context, Spaniards tend to focus on the task at hand—the business of the service encounter—and thus engage primarily in transactional talk during service encounters. For example, *Madrileños* tended to initiate their requests with little preamble, typically immediately after one or two turns of greetings opening the interaction. The lack of relational talk in these types of service encounters was not necessarily due to the fact that service providers and customers were not familiar with one another. The author comments that in many cases, there was regular contact between customers and employees, made evident by the fact that employees could predict what their customers wanted to buy without the customer having to explicitly make the request.

Corner store encounters in Madrid were found to be relatively short, with little talk between the greeting and the request. The informal greeting adjacency pair *hola-hola* ('hi-hi') was the most frequent opening sequence. Most often the employee initiated the interaction by providing the first pair part of the greeting sequence. There was some

variation on this opening: in some cases the first *hola* was not followed by the second-pair part of the greeting, but rather, by the request. In other cases, *hola* was the second pair part to the more formal greeting *buenos días* ('good morning'). How-are-you inquiries such as *buenos días-cómo está* ('good morning-how are you') were not attested in the Madrid corner shop data (Placencia, 2005).

In Placencia's study, *Madrileños* overwhelmingly made requests using direct forms, which made up 76% of all requests. Direct forms that were found in Placencia's (2005) Madrid data included want statements (e.g., *quiero dos de esos*, 'I want two of those'), imperatives (e.g., *dame un croissant*, 'give me a croissant'), assertives (e.g., *me pones una barra de pan*, 'you give me a stick of bread') and elliptical⁴ (i.e., verbless) requests (e.g., *tres barras de pan*, 'three sticks of bread'). However, want statements—which include different forms of the verb *querer* ('to want'; i.e., *quiero*, *quería*, *quisiera*) only made up 2.5% of the requests in service encounters in corner stores in Madrid. Imperatives, assertives, and elliptical forms were the most frequent direct request types in the corner store interactions in Madrid. Previous literature on requests suggests that direct requests are generally more common in Spanish than in English (Félix-Brasdefer, 2005; Márquez Reiter, 2000; Mir, 1993).

Internal modification of requests occurred infrequently in the Madrid corner store service encounters. Spanish has a number of resources for internally modifying direct

⁴ Note that, while I follow previous research in this analysis by continuing to use the terms "ellipsis" and "elliptical forms," I do not assume that there is an underlying form that is missing or deleted in the so-called elliptical utterances. Following Lantolf and Thorne (2006), I argue that there is nothing missing in verbless utterances and that the elliptical form is what the speaker intended to produce.

requests, such as using a diminutive (e.g., *pancito*), including a politeness formula (e.g., *por favor*), lexical downgrading of the main verb (e.g., using *regalar* instead of *dar*), and hedging (e.g., *unos seis de esos*). Of the few cases in which internal modification occurred in the Madrid corner store encounters, Spaniards only used diminutives and politeness formulas as mitigators, not hedges or lexical downgrading (Placencia, 2005, 588-589). On the infrequent use of politeness formulas such as *por favor* and *gracias*, Hickey (1991) argues that Spaniards tend to reserve politeness formulas for asking or receiving personal favors rather than use them in situations such as service encounters where it is expected and assumed that the employee will provide the service requested by the customer.

In those interactions in Madrid that contained an address pronoun, the preference for the informal *tú* was found. The use of the informal address term may reflect an egalitarian attitude toward interactions in public and an orientation by Spaniards to service encounters as contexts of low social distance and solidarity. At the same time, due to the presence of a significant number of elliptical requests and the absence of how-are-you inquiries, in many cases neither party to the interaction actually used an address pronoun (Placencia, 2005).

A final feature of interest reported in Placencia's (2005) study is that customers in the shop felt free to join in conversations with other customers and the employee without being invited to participate. The author argues that this "collective construction of

interaction” (p. 594) may reflect the cultural value suggested by Thurén (1988) to be held among Spaniards that talkativeness is a sign of friendliness.

Another study by Placencia (1998) examined service encounters at an information desk in a hospital in Madrid. As with the shop encounters described above, the linguistic features of the interactions suggest that Spaniards orient towards these service encounters as an informal context. In the hospital encounters in Madrid, Spaniards were found to prefer the informal pronoun *tú*, to open the interaction with an informal greeting (i.e., *hola*), to frequently employ elliptical forms, to not use formal request formulas, and to be brief in their interactions, all of which, according to Placencia (1998), point to an orientation towards informality, egalitarianism, and low social distance, and towards an emphasis on in-group membership. An additional finding in this study was that terms of endearment (e.g., *cariño*) were sometimes used between employees who knew each other, but not between employees and unfamiliar customers (Placencia, 1998).

The research described above provides a starting point for understanding how Spaniards—specifically *Madrileños*—tend to participate in two types of service encounters. A final study that is relevant to the current analysis is that conducted by Vélez (1987) comparing service encounters and cultural norms in American English and Puerto Rican Spanish. Vélez collected naturalistic data in two similar settings in Austin, Texas and San Juan, Puerto Rico. The first setting was a registration office at the local university and the second was the retail store environment.

A number of comparisons between behavior in Spanish and English can be made. First, Vélez points out that many of the requests in the English service encounters tended to have speaker-oriented (e.g., I want...) rather than hearer-oriented (e.g., can you...) verbs. Speaker-oriented verbs involve the speaker (i.e., first-person) as the grammatical subject, whereas hearer-oriented verbs have the hearer (i.e., second person) as the grammatical subject. Márquez Reiter (2002) found a similar difference between British English and Uruguayan Spanish, namely that the British used significantly more speaker-oriented requests and the Uruguayans used relatively more hearer-oriented requests. Blum-Kulka & House (1989) also report on the use of hearer-oriented verb forms in Spanish requests. An example in Vélez's (1987) study was the use of the phrase "I need..." in the U.S. service encounters. This need statement was very common in the U.S. service encounter data, while the equivalent in Spanish "*Yo necesito...*" was only rarely used in Puerto Rico. Need and want statements were, in general, much more frequently employed in English compared to Spanish.

The service encounters as a whole tended to be less ritualized in Puerto Rico compared to the U.S. In the U.S., mutual verbal greetings between service provider and customer were typically employed to open the interaction; service providers frequently made explicit offers of assistance during the opening; politeness formulas such as "excuse me," "please," and "thank you" were often observed in the data; and finally, service encounters were almost always closed with a "thank you." In comparison, service encounters in Puerto Rico commonly lacked verbal greetings in the opening sequence;

service providers almost never made an explicit offer of assistance; politeness formulas were much less frequent compared to the English data; and lastly, Vélez reports that over one third of the service encounters ended without the customer providing an expression of thanks.

Another area of comparison between service encounters in the U.S. and Puerto Rico related to the verbal explicitness of the interactions. Vélez (1987) argues that service encounters in English depended extensively on the verbal channel and on making information verbally explicit, whereas service encounters in Puerto Rico involved the nonverbal channel more frequently and had a tendency for verbal implicitness. In the U.S. context, greetings, requests, and closings were all done primarily by the use of linguistic expressions that explicitly conveyed the meaning of the utterance in words. In Puerto Rico, on the other hand, “the findings clearly show a strong tendency...toward implicitness in speech on the part of interlocutors. This is possibly due to the reliance that Puerto Ricans have on gestures, facial expressions, and intonation to communicate message and social content. There is an expectation also that listeners, in this case servers, will understand speaker intent without the latter having to directly and explicitly refer to specific details.” (Vélez, 1987, p. 151). Implicitness in speech functions in the Puerto Rican context because listeners are highly attuned to the extralinguistic context and are ready to make inferences about the speaker’s meaning, relying on an assumption of shared knowledge between participants.

A contrastive example of how Puerto Ricans were more implicit and U.S. Americans more explicit was in the use of elliptical forms for requests. Whereas U.S. Americans never used elliptical requests in the service encounters recorded by Vélez, Puerto Rican customers made frequent use of ellipsis in their requests, as shown in the following examples from Vélez (1987, p. 119-120):

(1) Customer: *¿para buscar las notas?*

(2) Customer: *dos solicitudes de readmission*

(3) Customer: *para solicitar una transcripción de crédito*

Vélez argues that what is missing in these elliptical requests are those elements that the participants assume are evident by the linguistic and extralinguistic context. A more verbally explicit version of these requests might include the following additions (Vélez, 1987, p. 119-120):

(1) Customer: [yo vine] *¿para buscar las notas?*

(2) Customer: [Por favor deme] *dos solicitudes de readmission*

(3) Customer: [Estoy aquí] *para solicitar una transcripción de crédito*

Note that the missing verb can either be hearer-oriented (e.g., *deme*, ‘give me’) or speaker-oriented (e.g., *yo vine*, ‘I came’). As Vélez (p. 120) suggests, “speakers typically make use of ellipses when they feel that the overall context is so information laden that verbal explicitness is not required to convey speaker intent...many of the Puerto Rican subjects did not feel that verbal explicitness, or, at the very least, syntactic explicitness, was required when realizing their requests—an assumption that was not shared by their

Austin counterparts.” The fact that elliptical requests were never found in the service encounters recorded in the U.S. and that they were very common in the service encounters in Puerto Rico suggests that the two groups may differ significantly with regard to how much information the participants want to assume and leave verbally implicit and how much information the participants desire to make verbally explicit.

L2 Learners Doing Service Encounters

Only one study to date has conducted research focusing on service encounters that involve L2 learners. Kidwell (2000) made video recordings of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners participating in service encounters at an information desk at a university in the U.S. Instead of orienting to the problems that L2 learners might encounter in service interactions, Kidwell focused on how learners were successful in pursuing their goals.

What Kidwell’s findings suggest is that while ESL learners’ utterances may not have been linguistically correct and, in some cases, even difficult to understand, the service providers made use of the institutional context in order to interpret L2 learners’ requests and to fulfill their roles as providers of information and services. As Kidwell (2000, p. 26) states,

The native/nonnative aspect of these data make especially visible the contextual, extralinguistic resources—specifically sequential and institutional resources—that participants employ to make sense of one another’s actions, and provide evidence of the processes by which context indexes language and renders recognizable

speakers' utterances within activity types, regardless of speakers' native or nonnative speaking abilities.

Thus, success in service encounters—as defined by the fulfillment of server and customer roles and the realization of interactional goals—is not contingent upon target-like use of the second language. Participants rely on the social and institutional context in order to understand each other and to carry out the tasks made relevant in service encounters.

While not directly related to service encounters, the literature on developmental interlanguage pragmatics has provided insights into the acquisition of requests, which are one of the communicative actions typically found in service encounters. Thus, a discussion of some of the most important findings from that body of literature is in order. Overall, it has been hypothesized that as learners improve in their L2 proficiency, their requests feature less repetition, less dependency on unanalyzed formulaic expressions, and less overgeneralization of linguistic forms or strategies (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Based on data from two longitudinal studies on the development of requesting in English (Achiba, 2002; Ellis, 1992), Kasper and Rose (2002) propose that learners go through five stages in their development of requests. Félix-Brasdefer (2007) provides additional evidence with L2 learners of Spanish that he argues support these five proposed stages of development. Kasper and Rose's (2002, p. 140) table describing the five stages of request development is reproduced below:

Table 2: Stages of request development (based on data from Ellis, 1992 and Achiba, 2002)

Stage	Characteristics	Examples
1: Pre-basic	Highly context-dependent, no syntax, no relational goals	“Me no blue”, “Sir”
2: Formulaic	Reliance on unanalyzed formulas and imperatives	“Let’s play the game”, “Let’s eat breakfast”, “Don’t look”
3: Unpacking	Formulas incorporated into productive language use, shift to conventional indirectness	“Can you pass the pencil please?”, “Can you do another one for me?”
4: Pragmatic expansion	Addition of new forms to pragmalinguistic repertoire, increased use of mitigation, more complex syntax	“Could I have another chocolate because my children—I have five children.”, “Can I see it so I can copy it?”
5: Fine-tuning	Fine-tuning of requestive force to participants, goals, and contexts	“You could put some blue tack down there”, “Is there any more white?”

An important finding that is reflected in these stages is the tendency for direct requests (e.g., imperatives) to give way to conventionally indirect requests (e.g., “Can you...”) over time as learners’ proficiency increases and they move through these stages of request development (Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000), including for L2 learners of Spanish (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007). Despite this apparent tendency to move from direct to indirect requests⁵, in some cases that movement is not in the direction of becoming more native-like in request behavior. As Félix-Brasdefer (2007) points out, in certain situations, direct requests rather than conventionally indirect requests are the expected behavior among

⁵ Although see Trosborg (1995) for the opposite trend in which Danish learners of English increased their use of direct requests over time.

Spanish native speakers (see also Félix-Brasdefer, 2005; Márquez Reiter, 2000; Mir, 1993). As discussed above, direct requests are common in service encounters in Peninsular Spanish and can be considered the norm for those interactions.⁶

Furthermore, the stages proposed by Kasper and Rose (2002) suggest that the use of formulaic speech is more indicative of the earlier stages of development. Bardovi-Harlig (2002) argues, however, that formulaic sequences may also be found at more advanced levels of interlanguage development.

Conclusion: Review of the literature

A review of the literature suggests that more research is needed to examine issues such as the following: (1) L2 learning and interaction in natural settings, (2) L2 development of politeness in study abroad, (3) L2 learning and performance in the context of service encounter interactions, (4) L2 learning of politeness from a sociocultural perspective. This study fills a gap in the literature with regard to these areas by providing a longitudinal and sociocultural analysis of naturalistically-collected data from service encounters between L2 learners of Spanish and Spanish service providers during a semester abroad in Toledo, Spain.

⁶ Note, however, that direct requests may not be the norm in some dialects in Latin America.

Chapter 3: Method

Description of the Research Site

The research site for this study was an institute for international studies in the town of Toledo, Spain. The town itself is located close to Spain's capital, Madrid, and is the capital of the autonomous community of Castilla-La Mancha. With a population of approximately 70,000 people, Toledo is a medium-sized town that receives a significant number of tourists each year. Toledo is referred to as *la ciudad de las tres culturas* ('city of three cultures') due to the convergence of Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the city at different periods of history, all of whom have left their mark.

The institute for international studies in Toledo is not a university, but it offers classes for study abroad students that are taught by professors from universities in Toledo and nearby Madrid. The classes are taught exclusively in Spanish and cover a relatively wide range of topics related to Spain and Spanish culture including literature, history, politics, economics, marketing, and anthropology. Although the classes were taught in Spanish, they were primarily intended for international students who are L2 learners of Spanish. Puerto Rican international students also took classes with the U.S. American study abroad students at the institute, but the Puerto Ricans made up only about 10% of the student body during the semester of study. Spanish language classes focusing on grammar, pronunciation, conversation, reading, and writing are also offered to students in this program.

During the first week of classes, L2 learners were required to take a placement test for the purposes of advising. The placement test consisted of a paper-and-pencil grammar assessment and an informal oral interview with one of the advisors on staff. On the basis of the placement test and students' previous studies, the advisors helped students choose appropriate classes to take at the institute according to their proficiency and interests. Some classes are taught for students with a more intermediate-level proficiency and others are taught at a more advanced level. Lower-proficiency students are advised to take the intermediate-level content courses and strongly encouraged to take grammar and conversation courses, whereas more advanced students are advised to take courses at the highest level and are not necessarily encouraged to take grammar courses. Finally, the semester-long program in Toledo follows the academic calendar of universities on the semester system in the U.S., with classes lasting 14 weeks.

The Toledo institute also provided students with the opportunity to participate in an *intercambio* ('exchange', conversation partner exchange) with a local Spaniard who was interested in learning English. The institute matched the study abroad students with their *intercambio* partners, but after that, it was the responsibility of the two partners to arrange meetings and to practice their languages. The *intercambio* program was one of the only ways that many U.S. students at the institute were able to meet locals from Toledo aside from the host families. Locals and international inhabitants alike commented that it is difficult to meet local people in Toledo and to develop long-lasting relationships.

With regard to the living situation in Toledo, approximately two-thirds of the study abroad students each semester opt to stay in the home of a local family in Toledo, rather than live in the dormitory housed at the institute. Staying with a host family costs the student more money than living in the dormitory, so some students may choose the dormitory for financial reasons. Although the majority of students residing in the dormitory were English-speaking, all of the Puerto Rican students also lived in the dormitories. Only one of the seven participants in this study lived in the dormitory (i.e., Greta).

Host families are carefully selected by the staff at the institute. With the exception of Kyle's family, all of the Spanish families who hosted the participants of this study had been hosting U.S. students for five or more years and were quite accustomed to U.S. students and their lifestyles and with working with the Toledo institute. The families are instructed to speak only Spanish with the students. All of the participants in this study indicated that they never spoke English with their host families. Furthermore, only one U.S. student is placed with a single host family, so the opportunities to speak English in the home are limited. On the weekdays, students eat two meals per day at their host family's home and eat lunch at the institute. Students eat with the host family on the weekends if they are not traveling.

During the course of the data collection for this study, I myself lived in the dormitory at the institute and was able to observe students in their classes as well as in out-of-class interactions that took place at the institute. Apart from the role of researcher,

I also had the role of visiting instructor in one particular class that all students in Toledo were required to take. That class was a one-credit course, taught in Spanish, with a curriculum based on the textbook *Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use (Second edition)* (Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2006). The *Maximizing* text focuses on providing students with practical tools and strategies to improve their L2 language skills, their understanding of culture, and their intercultural competence.

All of the students who participated in this research project also took the Maximizing Study Abroad course with the researcher as the instructor. Given that the U.S. study abroad program office required students to take this course, regardless of my research project, I do not consider this course to be an intervention for the purposes of the research study. However, at least one of the topics covered in the Maximizing Study Abroad class may have had an impact on students' behavior in a way that is relevant for this study, which is discussed below.

The Maximizing Study Abroad course consisted of 12 sessions, each lasting one hour, taught as a one-credit class at the institute in Toledo where students were studying. Each week's session focused on a different topic and included readings in the textbook and discussion and activities in class. Table 3 shows the topic for each of the 12 sessions of the class. The topics and sequence originate from the standardized syllabus that was developed by the U.S. study abroad program for this course.

Table 3: Topics and sequence for Maximizing Study Abroad course

Session	Topic
1	Preparing for study abroad
2	Culture learning during study abroad
3	Listening strategies
4	Adjusting to a new culture: Culture shock and coping strategies
5	Vocabulary learning strategies
6	Strategies for social relations: Interacting with hosts
7	Writing strategies
8	Strategies for making cultural inferences to enhance your culture learning
9	Speaking strategies
10	Strategies for developing intercultural competence and nonverbal communication
11	Communication styles
12	Preparing to return home

The most important topic to mention here was that addressed in week six, “Strategies for social relations: Interacting with hosts.” During that week, students read four pages about pragmatics and speech acts in the *Maximizing Study Abroad Students’ Guide* (second edition) textbook (pp. 217-223) and, during class, participated in two activities related to apologies and requests in Spanish. These activities were taken from the *Maximizing Study Abroad* guide for language instructors (Cohen, Paige, Kappler, Demmessie, Weaver, Chi, & Lassegard, 2003) that is intended to complement the students’ guide. The two activities conducted in class are shown in Appendix A.

In the second activity, one of the request scenarios that students were asked to analyze was a service encounter, in which they rated the appropriateness of the different

request utterances in that encounter. The students completed the activity in class, participated in a class discussion of the results, and then two Toledo natives provided their own appropriateness ratings. The class then discussed the differences between the students' and Spaniards' ratings, touching upon both linguistic and cultural differences between the U.S. and Spain. One issue that was surprising to a number of the students in the class was that the utterance “*¿Puedo tener un café con leche, por favor?*” (‘Can I have a coffee with milk, please?’) was not considered to be an appropriate way to make a request in Spanish. The Spanish informants said that “*Hola. Un café con leche, por favor.*” (‘Hi. A coffee with milk, please.’), “*Ponme un café con leche.*” (‘Give me a coffee with milk.’ [minus the term of address *tío*]) and “*¿Me puedes poner un café con leche?*” (‘Can you put me a coffee with milk?’) were the most common and appropriate request options in the context of Toledo.

The activity described above is the only one that was directly related to the focus of this research. The other topics of the class were concerned more generally with language and culture learning in the study abroad context.

Participants

The participants in this research were seven undergraduate students from a large public university in the Midwest U.S. who chose to spend spring semester (14 weeks) during 2007 studying in the Toledo program. Of the seven students, five were female and

two were male. Table 4 below provides a summary of the background characteristics of the student participants. Note that students are given pseudonyms.

Table 4: Summary of the background characteristics of the participants

	Chloe	Greta	Jared	Kyle	Megan	Miranda	Samantha
Age	20	21	21	21	20	20	20
Year at university	Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	Sophomore	Sophomore	Sophomore
Major/Minor	Spanish (major) / Sociology (minor)	Social work (major) / Spanish (minor)	Spanish and Economics (majors)	Spanish	Psychology (major) / Spanish (minor)	Retail Merchandising (major) / Spanish (minor)	Spanish and Communications (majors)
Age at which study of Spanish began	15 years	18 years	6 years (Spanish elementary immersion)	15 years	13 years	13 years	14 years
Years studying Spanish prior to study abroad in Toledo	4 years	2.5 years	12.5 years	6 years	7 years	7 years	3.5 years
Number of semesters studying Spanish at the university prior to study abroad	4 semesters	3 semesters	5 semesters	3 semesters	3 semesters	3 semesters	3 semesters
Highest Spanish class taken at the university prior to study abroad	Fifth semester composition course	Fourth semester basic language course	Four upper-division Spanish courses	Two upper-division Spanish courses	Fifth semester composition course	Fifth semester composition course	Fifth semester composition course
Amount of time spent in Spanish-speaking countries prior to study abroad	No previous trips	1 month	2 weeks	3 weeks	No previous trips	3 weeks	1 week
Toledo institute assessment level	Intermediate track	Intermediate track	Advanced track	Advanced track	Intermediate track	Intermediate track	Intermediate track

As can be seen in Table 4, the study participants were all between the ages of 20 and 21 and were either in their second (sophomore) or third (junior) year at the university.

All students were either Spanish majors or minors and, as a requirement for participation in the Toledo program, all students had to have completed the first four semesters of language classes at the university level, or their equivalent. Five students began their study of Spanish between the ages of 13 and 15. Jared was unique in that he started his study of Spanish in a Spanish immersion program in elementary school, at the age of six. Greta's background also differed from that of the others because of her late start studying Spanish at age 18. The range of years spent studying Spanish prior to the trip to Toledo was quite large with Greta having studied only 2.5 years and Jared 12.5 years. The other five participants had studied Spanish from 3.5 to 7 years. None of the participants had spent a significant amount of time living or traveling in a Spanish-speaking country prior to their trip to Toledo for study abroad and none of the students had participated in a study abroad program prior to the semester in Toledo.

The final element in the table above is the assessment from the Toledo institute. As mentioned above, students were given a grammar test and an informal oral interview at the start of the semester for the purposes of advising about the types of classes (intermediate-level or advanced-level) that would be appropriate for them to take, based on the language proficiency needed to do well in the classes. Students who scored low on the grammar test were advised to take grammar and conversation classes in addition to lower-level content classes, although students could opt not to follow that advice and take only content classes and/or higher-level content classes. Five of the students were advised to take the lower-level classes and language classes—which I call the “intermediate

track”—and two students (Jared and Kyle) were advised to take the upper-level classes (exclusively content classes), which I call the “advanced track.”

In addition to these background characteristics, each student is described in greater detail below. The descriptions are based on the following data sources: my own observations and interactions with the participants, the perception of the students by staff at the institute, and students’ journals and interviews.

Chloe

Chloe was a very bubbly and cheerful young woman, although she was not extremely outgoing. She was a pleasant person, friendly, respectful and, for the most part, responsible and mature. When she walked around the institute she almost always had a smile on her face, although she also seemed to be somewhat shy. Chloe’s level of Spanish was among the lowest of the seven participants, but she seemed to always be eager to make the effort to improve. For example, she always spoke to me in Spanish. Chloe was a fairly dedicated student who made the effort to do well in her classes. While in Toledo, Chloe took two literature courses, a conversation course, and two linguistics courses. She was well-liked by the staff at the institute, who thought that she was polite and had a good attitude towards learning Spanish language and culture.

Chloe lived with a host family, although the only person around the house on a daily basis was her host mother, a sixty-year-old widow with grown children. The two grown children of the family lived in the house, but they did not interact frequently with

Chloe, according to her. Chloe identified with her host mother particularly with regard to religion, since both Chloe and her host mother were practicing Catholics and both professed to be deeply religious. Chloe's host mother often brought Chloe with her to church and sometimes introduced her to her church friends. Chloe reported speaking Spanish with her host mother an average of three to four hours per week.

During the semester abroad, Chloe spent a lot of time with other U.S. American students also studying at the institute and often spoke English with them. However, she also reported spending three to five hours per week on average speaking Spanish with several of the Puerto Rican students at the institute and with her *intercambio* partner, who was approximately the same age as Chloe and with whom Chloe got along very well. Chloe did not make any friends in Toledo who were not from the institute. When she went out with friends, she tended to stick to her group of U.S. American friends and not talk to strangers.

As was common among the students at the Toledo institute, many weekends Chloe traveled outside of Toledo to other cities in Spain or even to other European countries. Many of those trips were taken with other U.S. American students and, as a result, Chloe spent much of her weekends speaking English almost exclusively.

Greta

I got to know Greta better than most of the other participants because she was the only one who also lived in the dormitory. As a result of our common living arrangement,

we sometimes ate dinner together in the cafeteria or ran into each other in the hall. Greta was very talkative with people that she knew, including with me. She reported enjoying striking up conversations in Spanish with people that she met in service encounters and outings to bars, cafés, and the like.

Part of her motivation for speaking Spanish with strangers was that she felt that she did not have enough opportunities at the institute to speak Spanish outside of class. Greta expressed to me many times her frustration about the lack of being able to find Spaniards with whom to practice Spanish. Greta regretted not having stayed with a host family in order to have more opportunities to speak Spanish, but the additional cost of living with a host family had apparently been prohibitive for her. Although she signed up for the *intercambio* program, Greta reported that none of the people with whom she was matched as a partner were willing to meet with her on a regular basis. Despite these difficulties, Greta reported speaking Spanish outside of class between five to seven hours per week on average with staff, friends from the institute (U.S. American and Puerto Rican students), and in encounters with strangers.

Greta was friendly and well-liked by most of the people at the institute, including staff and students. However, Greta seemed to have more emotional ups and downs during the semester abroad than the average student. She was often frustrated with her level of Spanish and, by my estimation, she had the lowest proficiency of the study participants and among the lowest of the group of U.S. students who studied in Toledo that semester. In her defense, Greta had only studied Spanish for two and a half years before coming to

Spain and had completed only the minimum number of courses to qualify for the Toledo study abroad program. Because of her lower proficiency, Greta struggled in her classes, by her own admission; she did not understand much of the Spanish, she felt intimidated about participating orally in class, and academic writing for her was difficult. I suspected that the difficulty that she faced in her classes was also, in part, due to her lack of focus on her studies. Greta often went out in the evenings with friends to bars or clubs and on one occasion she asked me for help with a ten-page paper that was due the next day and which she had barely started. The classes that Greta took in Toledo included a course on women in Spain, a conversation class, a basic literature course, and an art history course.

Like other students, Greta traveled fairly frequently on the weekends, although she never went outside of Spain like others did, but rather, took trips to other cities in Spain. Those trips were with other U.S. Americans and occasionally a Puerto Rican student. Most of her time traveling was spent speaking English. Both on the weekends and in general, Greta spoke a lot of English with her fellow students. She often spoke English with me, even though I would start out in Spanish.

Jared

Jared was a nice person, very careful to be respectful of others, and always spoke in a sincere and serious manner. The staff at the institute who knew Jared had respect for his positive attitude towards learning, his maturity, and appreciated the way that he treated others with interest and respect. Jared also had very high expectations for himself

with regard to his abilities, including his ability to speak Spanish, as one staff member pointed out. For example, once he asked me if the Spanish verb *olvidar* meant ‘to miss’ in English. When I said no, that it was typically translated as ‘to forget’ he seemed very upset with himself and said to himself something to the extent of “How could I forget that word?” Despite this experience, in general, Jared seemed quite confident about himself and about his abilities in Spanish.

Jared’s Spanish proficiency was one of the highest of the L2 learners at the institute. At the same time, Jared expressed an attitude toward speaking and learning Spanish that reminded me of other post-immersion students that I have met. He professed to not like using a dictionary, to not care about verb endings and whether he was using them correctly, and to want to simply communicate his message in Spanish in a way that was understood by others. That is, his focus was on communication and not on form. Jared reported that he did not consciously understand Spanish grammar very well, but said things on the basis of what sounded right to him intuitively. With regard to his studies in Toledo, Jared took the following classes: literature, art history, film studies, phonetics, and history.

Despite his relatively high proficiency, Jared reported not spending much time per week outside of class speaking Spanish with his host family or with Spanish-speaking friends—only between one to three hours. He did not have many friends who were expert Spanish speakers and no friends from Spain. He did spend some time each week with one of the Puerto Rican students at the institute, a male student with whom Jared felt very

comfortable speaking informally. Jared reported speaking only one hour or less each week with his host family. While he indicated that he enjoyed speaking with his host family, he did not spend very much time at home while the family members were also home or not otherwise occupied. His host family's household consisted of two parents and their daughter, who was in her late twenties.

Finally, Jared indicated that he spoke English frequently every week, particularly during weekend trips. Jared took trips outside of Toledo with U.S. American friends from the institute many weekends during the semester. He often went to other cities in Spain, but also took trips to other European countries.

Kyle

The staff at the Toledo institute was enamored with Kyle because of his friendliness and respectfulness, the great effort he made to learn Spanish language and culture while studying in Toledo, and his seriousness as a student. Several staff members commented on the great improvements that Kyle had made with regard to his language abilities and attributed that improvement to Kyle's efforts and positive attitude. He had come to Toledo with a relatively advanced level, having studied Spanish for six years prior to his sojourn abroad and having taken two upper-division courses in Spanish at his home university. While in Toledo, Kyle took two literature classes, two history classes, and an art history class.

Kyle was somewhat unusual compared to the other U.S. students at the institute in that he quickly made friends with three of the Puerto Rican students and the Mexican student who were also studying at the institute and spent a great deal of time with them speaking Spanish over the course of the semester. Kyle reported speaking Spanish with the Puerto Rican and Mexican students more than seven hours per week on average. He reported spending an equal time speaking English on average as well, similar to other U.S. students, but the amount of time that he indicated speaking Spanish was unusual. Kyle also reported speaking seven or more hours on average per week with his Spanish host family. Most of those hours were spent speaking with his host father, who liked to talk to Kyle, but dinnertime interactions also included his host mother. His host parents also had two daughters in their twenties living at home, but Kyle did not interact frequently with them. No other members of the family lived in the house and Kyle did not get to know any local Spaniards apart from his host family.

Kyle traveled frequently on the weekends during his semester in Toledo, a fact that his host family complained about since, in their opinion, his travels often limited his opportunities for practicing Spanish. He took trips with other U.S. American students and sometimes with the Puerto Rican and Mexican students.

Megan

In her interactions with me and others at the institute, Megan appeared to be a serious person who was somewhat high strung in general and nervous about her use of

Spanish in particular. In some ways, it appeared that Megan's perception of herself and what others saw in her was incongruous. For example, the times that I interacted with Megan and saw her interacting with others gave me the impression that she was a very serious person who did not smile very often. However, Megan told me one day that she was surprised that, from her perspective, Spaniards did not smile very much in public, whereas she herself was a person who was always smiling.

Megan was not well-liked by the staff members of the institute who had contact with her. The collective opinion of the staff people that I talked to was that Megan was rude, unfriendly, disrespectful of others' feelings, and unappreciative of the help that others gave her. A staff member also confided that Megan's host family had expressed that they had problems getting along with her, although when I interviewed the host family they did not express this opinion. One staff person gave an example of how Megan earned this reputation. When the staff member was observing a class at the institute in which Megan was a student, he noticed that when the instructor asked students to discuss an issue, Megan directed a scowl and a look of disdain at the instructor (which the instructor apparently did not see). Another person mentioned that when Megan had come to him for help, that she treated him with a lack of appreciation for the help that he gave and reported that Megan acted as if he were her servant. It is difficult to assess the exact nature of why Megan was perceived negatively by institute staff and to isolate whether her behavior was related to difficulties with politeness in the L2 or to her personality.

Megan had U.S. American friends at the institute and sometimes spent time with several of the Puerto Rican students from the institute as well. However, Megan differed from the other participants in the study and the general student population at the institute in that she reported having a number of Spanish friends with whom she spent time with on a regular basis. Her entrance into a community of Spanish peers was facilitated by her *intercambio* partner who introduced Megan to her Spanish friends and invited her to go out with them. Megan reported speaking three to five hours per week with these Spanish friends.

In addition, Megan indicated that she spoke more than seven hours per week on average with her host family, which consisted of her host mother and father and their teenage son. Megan indicated that she got along better with her host mother than with her host father, the latter of whom she felt did not understand her. Although it would appear that Megan spent a lot of time speaking Spanish each week while studying in Toledo, she also reported speaking seven or more hours per week of English with her U.S. friends, part of which was due to the fact that Megan frequently traveled on the weekends, almost always with other U.S. friends, speaking mostly English.

Megan expressed great frustration with her level of Spanish because her actual ability to speak did not reach her own expectations for herself. While she made an effort to practice Spanish with her friends and host family, she did not seem satisfied with the progress that she made during the semester abroad. A particular worry for Megan was her ability to be polite in Spanish. Megan told me that she had been raised to be polite and

wanted to be polite in Spanish, but in many cases was not sure how to be polite in Spanish. Unfortunately for Megan, her expressed desire to be polite in Spanish was apparently not fulfilled because, as mentioned above, staff members at the institute perceived her as being particularly rude.

The classes that Megan took at the Toledo institute included history, culture, women in Spain, and Spanish for business. Most of these classes were intended for intermediate-level students.

Miranda

Although shy, Miranda was a friendly, pleasant, and unassuming person. According to some staff members at the institute, Miranda gave the impression that she was unfriendly, but her perceived unfriendliness was probably a result of her shyness and lack of confidence speaking Spanish. Miranda was one of the most thoughtful participants in my study and her language journals always reflected this characteristic. In her journals, Miranda expressed a strong desire to improve her Spanish and by what she reported and through my interactions with her, her desire to improve was evident in her actions. Miranda always spoke to me in Spanish and always wrote her language journals in Spanish, although she had the option to write in English. Many times I observed her making the attempt to speak Spanish with other U.S. students at the institute, when many other students automatically spoke in English with each other.

Unlike the other participants in the study, Miranda did not report spending much time speaking English each week during her semester in Toledo. Miranda indicated that she only spoke English a total of three to five hours per week, whereas all of the other participants spoke English more than seven hours per week on average. With regard to Spanish, Miranda reported speaking Spanish one to three hours per week with her host family and the same amount of time with Spanish-speaking friends. Miranda's host family consisted of her host mother and father and their two children (18 and 20) who also lived with them. Miranda did not interact as frequently with her host siblings as with her host parents. Her only Spanish-speaking friends were a local Spanish woman who was her *intercambio* partner and one of the female Puerto Rican students at the institute. Also unlike the other study participants, Miranda did not travel as frequently on the weekends. She reported spending a good deal of time watching television and movies and tried to learn Spanish through this medium.

Miranda was a responsible and dedicated student. Her course load consisted of a history class, a culture class, a conversation class, and Spanish for business, all of which were at the intermediate level. Like other participants, Miranda expressed a great deal of frustration at not being able to speak Spanish at the level that she expected of herself, but she gave the impression that she was very motivated and determined to improve.

Samantha

Samantha was bubbly young woman who generally exuded a great deal of confidence. Her intermediate ability in speaking Spanish did not stop her from speaking with a certain degree of confidence. On the other hand, Samantha was described by one of the institute staff as *una rosa con muchas espinas* ('a rose with many thorns'), a characterization about which other staff members agreed, referring to their impression that, deep down, Samantha was a nice person but that, in a number of ways, she was not an easy person to deal with. Staff members viewed Samantha as a bossy and unappreciative person who was only interested in getting her way.

In part because Samantha came to the institute with some of her friends from her home university, Samantha spent a great deal of time speaking English; she reported speaking English more than seven hours per week, particularly on the weekends when she would travel with these and other U.S. American friends that she had met in Toledo. Samantha traveled just about every weekend during the semester in Toledo, almost always with U.S. American friends. The opportunity to travel around Europe on the weekends was one of Samantha's primary reasons for wanting to study abroad in Toledo, according to her.

Samantha's Spanish proficiency was at an intermediate level. The coursework that she did in Toledo included a history class, two linguistics classes, a conversation course, and an art history course. She expressed having particular difficulty with L2 comprehension, and she was the only participant in the study that had difficulty

understanding what I would say to her in Spanish. In my interactions with her, Samantha almost always lapsed into English after the first few turns of talk in Spanish.

Apart from speaking with her host family five to seven hours per week on average, Samantha also spoke to her *intercambio* partner one to three hours per week and with one of the Puerto Rican students for the same amount of time. Samantha's host family consisted of her two host parents and their six-year-old son. Samantha spoke most frequently with her host mother, but also reported that she really enjoyed speaking Spanish with her young host brother. Samantha did not make friends with other local Spaniards apart from her host family and her *intercambio* partner.

Recruitment and participant orientation

Participants were recruited at the home university during November of 2006, prior to students' departure for Spain. The researcher arrived in Toledo at the same time as the students and established contact with them immediately. During the second week that students were in Toledo, the researcher officially began the study, giving each of the students an individual orientation to the research. Each student's orientation lasted for two hours and consisted of the following: (1) introduction to the objectives of the research project, (2) explanation of the tasks involved in the research, (3) acquisition of students' informed consent, (4) delivery of one Marantz PMD660 digital tape recorder to

each student and demonstrations on how to use the recorder, (5) and an introduction to politeness and pragmatics.

The rationale for providing students with an introduction to pragmatics was to assist them in knowing what features of language were being examined in this research. Students were asked to write language-learning journals each week, specifically describing their learning of politeness and pragmatics during study abroad. An introduction to the topic was deemed necessary so that students would be more aware of what the terms politeness and pragmatics referred to so as to be able to talk about these issues in their journals. During the orientation session, the researcher first briefly introduced the topic and then asked students to complete the “Introduction to Pragmatics” unit on the *Dancing with Words* website (http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/sp_pragmatics/home.html), a project developed by researchers associated with the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota. Students completed the website unit in 20 to 30 minutes and then briefly discussed what they learned with the researcher.

Data collection tools and procedures

Following an ethnographic approach, the goal in this study was to arrive at “thick explanation” (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2005) of students’ performance and to examine L2 learning of politeness in service encounters by triangulating the data collection

methods. In this approach, observational, interview, and journal data are collected and analyzed holistically in order to uncover the lived reality of participants (Spradley 1979).

The following methods were used to collect data: participant observation, field notes, audio recordings, journals, interviews with participants, interviews with local Spaniards, a background questionnaire, and a language contact questionnaire. The analysis of service encounters was part of a larger data collection effort to examine the learning of politeness in Spanish more generally. Consequently, not all aspects of the data collected and the data collection techniques are relevant to the study of service encounters, but those data collection methods are reported here to provide the reader with background information about the context of the study.

Participant observation

Participant observation is the primary data collection method in ethnographic research and refers to the participation of the researcher in the daily life and community of the research subjects. I lived at the Toledo institute and therefore was able to participate to some extent in the lives of the learners in my study, since much of their daily life was spent taking classes, using the computer lab, browsing the library, and studying at the institute. Since I was present at the institute nearly every day, I was able to observe their interactions with others and to speak with them myself on a regular basis.

More specifically, I observed and talked to students outside of class at the institute and I also visited students' classes in order to observe what students were being taught

and how they participated in classroom interactions. I ate lunch in the cafeteria with the study abroad students every weekday, although I did not always sit and talk with the specific students who were the participants in my research. I also ate dinner in the cafeteria with the students and sometimes had the chance to sit with Greta during this meal. I made every effort to observe students in as many other contexts as possible. For example, the institute sponsored a number of out-of-class activities that I attended such as excursions to nearby towns (El Escorial, Madrid, and Segóbriga), evening guest lectures, a “get-to-know-you dinner” (“*Cena rompehielos*”), and an end-of-semester party.

In addition to being a participant observer with the study abroad student participants, I was also a participant observer in the larger Toledo community. I interacted a great deal with the staff at the institute and I participated in many service encounter interactions in Toledo myself. I made observations about Spaniards’ behavior in service encounters and included those observations in my field notes.

Field notes

In order to record my observations as a participant in the lives of the students at the institute and in Toledo in general, I carried a notebook with me and took notes whenever possible. At the end of each day, if I had notes, I then expanded on the basic field notes by writing more formal field note entries. Each day in which I interacted with the participants or local Spaniards, I also reflected upon the issues brought out in the field notes and in my unwritten observations in an attempt to link my observations to the

theoretical frameworks proposed in this dissertation as well as to other theoretical issues in the SLA and politeness literature.

Audio recordings

The primary data collection method for speech data in this study was audio recordings of students speaking in Spanish with local Spaniards. Recording of conversations began during the second week that students were in Toledo (January 29th to February 2nd). Starting the second week, students were asked to record themselves speaking in Spanish once per week for a total of 11 weeks over the course of the semester. Students made audio recordings of themselves using Marantz PMD660 digital recorders that the researcher provided to them. The purpose in spreading out the recordings once per week throughout the semester was to be able to observe their development and use of Spanish over time.

There were two types of recording assignments throughout the 11 weeks of data collection (see Appendix B for the description of the assignments that was provided to students). The first assignment type was recording a one-half-hour to hour-long conversation with the host family or host country language partner or friend. This assignment type involved students in informal social interactions with somewhat intimate acquaintances (i.e., host family, language partner and/or Spanish-speaking friends). Out of the 11 total recordings, the students were asked to make four with their host families and four with their language partners or Spanish friends. The student and/or the

researcher received the written consent of the students' interlocutors being recorded before making the recordings. The data from the host family and conversation partner recordings will not be discussed in this analysis, as the focus here is on service encounters.

The second type of recording assignment—which constitutes the primary data set analyzed here—involved students recording themselves speaking Spanish during service encounters in Toledo in which they participated. These service encounters refer to interactions with Spaniards who provided a service to the student, in the role of customer, and included service providers such as pharmacists, hairdressers, shopkeepers, cashiers, bus drivers, tourist information clerks, and travel agents. Students were directed to record only those service encounters in which there would likely be at least a few conversational turns between students and service providers.

In Spain, there are many small retail shops that specialize in specific products such as stationary, tobacco, home electronics, cell phones, clothing, and shoes. In many of those stores, products are behind the counter or otherwise positioned such that customers must ask for assistance from a store employee in order to pick up the item that they want to buy. Due to this spatial positioning of products, customers must interact verbally with employees in order to fulfill their service encounter needs. Verbal interaction is typically also required in food-related service encounters in cafés, restaurants, and bars in Spain. Therefore, the context of service encounters in Spain

provided ample opportunity for students to participate in service encounters in which they would need to verbally address the service provider.

Students recorded at least five service encounters that they participated in during weeks two, six, and eleven, resulting in a minimum of 15 recorded service encounters per student. In order to record the service encounters, participants were instructed to carry the Marantz digital recorder with them in a purse, backpack, or pocket and to record the whole service transaction, with the recorder hidden. This innovative data collection method permitted the most naturalistic data collection possible. The Institutional Review Board of the researcher's home university approved this method of data collection based on the principle that the speech of the Spaniards who were unknowingly recorded along with the students were speaking in a public place and that anyone in the vicinity would be able to overhear what they said. Public speech does not carry the same risks to the speaker as does private speech, which may contain elements that a person may not want other people to hear.

For each encounter, the student also wrote down pertinent information about the encounter on a form provided by the researcher (see Appendix C). This information included the name of the shop, the reason for the encounter, personal characteristics of the interlocutor (e.g., age, sex), and date and time. Students also commented briefly on how they felt the interaction went (e.g., it was smooth, it was difficult, the clerk had a negative reaction) and why. Students were required to make the five service encounter

recordings over the course of one week; they were not required to do them all on the same day.

In order to maintain the naturalistic nature of the data, the researcher informed the students that they were to record the service encounters that they would have needed to do, regardless of the research. Therefore, the researcher did not require students to make all of their recordings in specific locations, but rather, told participants to record service encounters that they would have participated in anyway, by virtue of their individual needs. However, in order to have one site that would be somewhat comparable between students and comparable over time, the researcher asked all students to record at least one service encounter interaction per week with the receptionist at the Toledo institute where they were studying.

While for comparison purposes, it would have been ideal to have students record their service encounters in the same places each week, there were two primary reasons why it was decided not to do so: (1) logistically speaking, it would have been difficult to require that students to go to a particular retail establishment and buy something, since that would have necessitated that they spend their own money for the purposes of the study; (2) if students went to specific establishments predetermined by the researcher, they may not have had a real reason to be there, apart from the research, and therefore their interactions may have been forced, taking away from the naturalistic quality of the data.

The reception desk of the Toledo institute was in the lobby of the building and was staffed 22 hours per day by three different receptionists, all Spanish males in their twenties and thirties. Students who study at the institute interact with the receptionists on a regular basis in order to ask questions about institute policies, travel plans, getting around Toledo, getting things done in Toledo, to name a few of the topics. Therefore, the reception desk was chosen as the common site among student participants because it was easily accessible and a likely place that students would need to go to for information, regardless of this research project.

The recording assignment types were spread out over the semester. Students were given a schedule to follow to complete the assignments (shown in Table 5 below).

Table 5: Calendar of recording assignments for students

Week	Recording assignment
1	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
2	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)
3	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
4	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
5	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
6	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)
7	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
8	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
9	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
10	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)

11	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)
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Students completed the service encounter recordings during the weeks assigned. For the most part, recordings with host families and conversation partners or friends also occurred during the weeks assigned, however, in some cases, due to scheduling difficulties, students interchanged host family for conversation partner, or vice versa. Also, because there were 15 weeks in the semester and only 11 weeks of recordings, students were allowed to skip a week for spring break and several students skipped weeks if they were sick or traveling. However, for the most part, the students made their recordings following the schedule in Table 5.

Journals

Students wrote one journal entry each week during the 11 weeks that they made recordings (see Appendix D for the description of the journaling assignment given to students). Students were given the option of writing in either Spanish or English, although Miranda was the only participant who chose to write in Spanish. Students were asked to write a minimum of two double-spaced pages per week for their journal entries.

The purpose of the journals was to get students' emic perspective about their language learning experiences and, in particular, how and what they learned about politeness in Spanish. Another goal was to elicit responses that included specific

examples and incidents, not just general impressions. Appendix E displays the journal questions that served as the prompts for students' journals each week.

Interviews with participants

I conducted one individual interview with each of the participants immediately after the final week of recordings. The purpose of the interviews was to find out in more depth the experiences of the students learning Spanish politeness in Toledo and to ask follow-up questions about issues brought up in the recordings or journals. In planning for the interview, the researcher made a list of interview questions (see Appendix H), however, following Boxer (1996), the questions served only as a guide and not every student was asked every single question on the list. The interview was left somewhat more open-ended to allow for the students and the researcher to talk about what they thought was most salient about each student's experience, but with an expressed focus on the objectives of the research. Each interview was recorded with a Marantz digital recorder.

Background Questionnaire

In order to find out about the students' background, a questionnaire (see Appendix F) was administered to participants at the beginning of the semester in Toledo. The questionnaire included items related to demographics, language and culture background,

language education, and previous sojourns abroad. The questionnaire was modified from one used in a previous research project with study abroad students (Cohen et al., 2005).

Language Contact Questionnaire

A language contact questionnaire was administered to the student participants (see Appendix G) immediately following the last week of recordings that students made. The purpose of this questionnaire was to quantify the amount of time students reported speaking Spanish during their semester in Toledo. The survey included questions regarding how often students spoke Spanish with their host family, how often they spoke Spanish with their friends, how many of their friends were Spanish native speakers, the types of out-of-class activities that they participated in, and the classes they took in Toledo. The survey also asked students to provide some description about the usefulness of in-class and out-of-class activities and interactions. This questionnaire was also modified from the one used in Cohen et al. (2005).

Interviews with host families and program staff

In addition to student interviews, the researcher also interviewed students' host parents and three staff people at the Toledo institute. In four out of six cases, both host parents (mother and father) were interviewed and in the two other cases only the host mother was interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain the families'

impressions of individual students with regard to their degree of appropriateness speaking Spanish and the progress that the students made during the semester, in addition to asking specific questions about issues that came up in the recordings that students made with their host families. The researcher conducted all of the interviews in Spanish following the interview guide included in Appendix G. Each interview was recorded with a Marantz digital recorder.

The researcher also asked three staff members from the Toledo institute to participate in a group interview. The three staff members were the student coordinators at the institute, whose job it was to organize student events, assist students with travel plans, schedule classes, help students with medical issues, provide students with logistical information about Toledo and the institute, and assist students with any other needs that arose. The coordinators always used Spanish with students. Two of the coordinators were natives of Spain and one coordinator was from Japan, but she had been living in Spain for about twenty years at the time of the research and was an expert speaker of Spanish. At least one of the coordinators was always present Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the institute. As a result of the duties of their job, the three coordinators had frequent contact with all of the students in the program, including the seven participants in this study. The researcher conducted an open-ended interview with all three student coordinators in order to find out their impressions of how polite and appropriate the participants in this study were in speaking Spanish. The interview lasted about one hour. The researcher took notes but did not record the interview.

Data analysis

Students recorded a total of 113 naturalistic service encounter interactions, all of which were transcribed and analyzed by the researcher in detail, using transcription techniques informed by research in conversation analysis. In a Vygotskian framework, the approach to the analysis of the data taken in this study is referred to as microgenetic, a term which originates in Vygotsky's (1978) genetic approach to cognition. A genetic approach highlights the importance of analyzing the history of some development as emergent from the social and material world in which it originates (Wertsch, 1985). A microgenetic approach refers to the close examination of the development of a particular phenomena situated in the context of a specific task, over a relatively short period of time. In this study, the microgenetic analysis consisted of examining students' development of politeness in the L2 in the context of participation in service encounters, during one semester abroad.

Additional sources of data—student journals, interviews, and ethnographic field notes—were analyzed qualitatively based on the research questions in order to supplement the analysis of the conversational data and to help to understand students' experiences and learning in the service encounters. Finally, in addition to drawing on previous research studies as the basis for understanding politeness in Peninsular Spanish, the researcher also consulted with local informants from Toledo about the social appropriateness of specific linguistic behaviors related to service encounters.

Transcription conventions

:	lengthening of a consonant or vowel
-	cut off
,	continuing intonation
.	final intonation
?	rising intonation
hh	aspiration (i.e., breathing, laughter)
tch	speaker makes a clicking noise with the tongue
(.)	micropause
(1.2)	pause length
=	very brief overlap
[overlap
(())	additional information provided by the researcher
<< >>	spoken softly
> <	spoken rapidly
< >	spoken slowly
<u>but</u>	particularly prominent stress

Chapter 4: Results

Originally, the intention of this study was to include an analysis of all of the conversational data collected by the research participants, which included over 40 hours of recordings with host families, language partners, and service providers. However, after examining the service encounter data, it was clear that this data was rich in its own right and deserved an in-depth analysis. Therefore, the results presented in the present study relate only to those recordings that students made in service encounter interactions. Journal entries, interviews, local informants' perspectives, and researcher observations are also presented as they relate to the analysis of the service encounter data and to the research questions. This section begins with an overview of the characteristics of the service encounters that students recorded and then reports on the results concerning each of the research questions for the study.

Overview of the characteristics of students' service encounter interactions

All of the service encounter recordings that students collected took place in establishments in Toledo, with expert-Spanish-speaking interlocutors. The most frequent recording sites included a convenience store where students could go to recharge their bus passes, add minutes to their cell phones, and buy tickets to various local activities. The central post office, the tobacconist (for stamps and phone cards), and various local

banks were also common sites for participant recordings. All students made at least one recording in a souvenir shop, of which there are many in Toledo.

Students were asked to record one interaction during each week of recording at the reception desk of the Toledo international studies institute. Due to the fact that students frequently went to the reception desk at the institute to get information and services, in some cases students recorded more than one interaction per week at that site. In addition to the reception desk, students also made recordings in the cafeteria of the Toledo institute (to order coffee) and in the advising center of the institute (to inquire about volunteer opportunities and travel planning). Table 6 provides a summary of the service encounters recorded by each student during each week of recordings, in the order in which they were recorded. A total of 113 service encounters were recorded by students.

Table 6: Summary of service encounters recorded by students by week

Student	Week of recording and location of recordings		
	Week two	Week six	Week eleven
Chloe	- Coffee shop - Bank - Convenience store - Hair salon - Clothing store - Reception desk	- Reception desk - Bank - Convenience store - Reception desk - Reception desk	- Reception desk - Convenience store - Convenience store - Bar - Convenience store
Greta	- Souvenir shop - Tobacco shop - Pharmacy - Churro shop - Coffee shop - Coffee shop	- Novelty shop - Post office - Café/restaurant - Café/restaurant - Café/restaurant	- Café/restaurant - Café/restaurant - Coffee shop - Souvenir shop - Souvenir shop

Jared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank - Bank for discount card ('<i>carnet joven</i>') - Reception desk - Post office - Meat stand - Asking directions of policeman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotel reception desk - Advising center at the institute - Library at the institute - Reception desk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception desk - Meat stand - Bakery - Bar - Souvenir shop
Kyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Souvenir shop - Reception desk - Watch store - Post office - Corner shop - Watch shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cell phone shop - Newspaper stand - Reception desk - Convenience store - Reception desk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bar - Pharmacy - Cell phone shop - Reception desk - Reception desk
Megan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank for discount card ('<i>carnet joven</i>') - Shoe store - Clothing store - Reception desk - Reception desk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Novelty shop - Hair salon - Pharmacy - Reception desk - Bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jewelry shop - Reception desk - Souvenir shop - Bookstore - Shoe store
Miranda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception desk - Bank - Tourist office - Cell phone shop - Paper store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception desk - Post office - Cell phone shop - Pharmacy - Tourist office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jewelry shop - Bakery - Post office - Convenience store - Jewelry shop
Samantha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newspaper stand - Convenience store - Reception desk - Advising center at the institute - Reception desk - Convenience store - Reception desk - Convenience store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tobacco shop - Cafeteria at institute - Reception desk - Cafeteria at institute - Convenience store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bar - Bar - Convenience store - Reception desk - Bar - Tobacco store

Students were asked to make at least five recordings during each of the three weeks assigned to service encounters. With the exception of Jared in week six, all students recorded the required number of interactions. Although students were also

instructed to make a recording at the reception desk of the Toledo institute each week, Greta did not follow through with this request and made no recordings at the reception desk, even though the researcher reminded her to do so.

The majority of the recordings that students made lasted from one to five minutes. There were also some exchanges that were less than one minute in length, and several verbal interactions that were up to ten minutes long. The students were instructed to turn on the recorder before beginning the service encounter and to turn it off after the interaction was completed and, as a result, the majority of the recordings begin before the interaction was initiated and end after the last words were exchanged between students and service providers. However, in a few cases students did not turn on the tape recorder before the initiation of the encounter or they turned it off before the end of the interaction, resulting in some recordings that were missing the beginning or end of the verbal interaction.

With a few exceptions (discussed below), in the majority of the recordings the students did not personally know the service providers with whom they were interacting. By the end of the semester, some of the students began to recognize particular employees in stores to which they went with some frequency (e.g., the convenience store, the supermarket near the institute, the post office), but in no case did students develop a personal relationship with the employees with whom they interacted. Thus, all of the service encounters conducted outside of the Toledo institute were between strangers.

All students made grammar and pronunciation errors in the service encounter interactions that they recorded. Lower-proficiency students (Chloe, Megan, Miranda, Samantha) tended to make more errors than higher-proficiency students (Jared, Kyle). Non-target-like morphological markings on verbs were a particularly frequent cause of grammar errors. For example, instead of saying *¿puedo probar ésta en uh cuarenta?* ('Can I try on this one in forty?') when requesting to try on a pair of shoes, Megan used the incorrect verb ending for the first person, employing the second person ending instead: *¿puedes probar ésta en uh cuarenta?* ('Can you try on this one in forty?'). Despite this error, the service provider understood immediately and brought Megan the shoes.

Overall, grammar and pronunciation rarely got in the way of students making themselves understood in the service encounter interactions. In a few cases, students' lack of knowledge of lexical items and, perhaps, the service provider's inability to figure out from context the item that the student desired, caused miscommunication. For example, Greta wanted to ask for a glass of tap water in a bar, but could not remember the phrase for tap water (*agua del grifo*). The bartenders did not understand at first what Greta wanted, but after a relatively long negotiation about what she was asking for, the employees finally understood and Greta received her tap water. The fact that grammar, pronunciation, and lexical errors rarely caused miscommunication in the recordings reflects Kidwell's (2000) argument that customers and service providers use the

institutional and locally-relevant contexts to help communicate, to interpret needs, and to provide services, regardless of non-target-like speech on the part of learners.

There was only one recording in which a service provider explicitly corrected a student's language error. That encounter was recorded by Jared at the Toledo institute while speaking with a staff person and was a correction of an irregular verb form. Jared said *he *descubrido* ('I have *discovered'), an incorrect past participle which the staff person corrected by saying *descubierto* ('discovered') in the next turn. In no other recorded interactions did service providers provide corrective feedback about students' L2 speech with regard to grammar, pronunciation, lexical items, or politeness issues. Employees in the service encounters did, however, volunteer lexical items in Spanish in a few cases when it appeared to the employee that the student did not know the word (e.g., when the student hesitated before producing a lexical item).

With regard to the use of informal and formal pronouns (i.e., *tú* and *usted*) in the service encounters, when a pronoun was present in the interaction, students overwhelmingly employed the informal *tú* form, as can be seen in Table 7 below. Only three cases were found in which the formal *usted* form was used: Greta used *usted* once in week two and Megan did so twice in week eleven. In the three cases in which students employed *usted*, the service provider was an older person, suggesting sociolinguistic variation in the use of this form. There were also many instances in which no term of address was used by students in the service encounters. In those cases, students made speaker-oriented requests (e.g., *Quiero X...*, 'I want X...'), elliptical requests (e.g., *Un*

café, por favor, ‘A coffee, please’), or otherwise did not need to address the employee directly, an example of which can be seen in (5) below. There was only one example in the data in which a student (Megan) mixed *tú* and *usted* in the same interaction. In one interaction between Megan and a female employee at a jewelry store, Megan self-corrected her use of the informal possessive pronoun *tu* (‘your’), cutting off and switching to the formal pronoun *su* (‘your’) in the same turn.

Table 7: Students’ frequency of use of the informal (*tú*) and formal (*usted*) pronouns by week

Week and pronoun		Chloe	Greta	Jared	Kyle	Megan	Miranda	Samantha
Week two	<i>tú</i>	2	3	2	2	3	1	2
	<i>usted</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	No 2 nd person pronoun	3	2	3	3	1	4	5
Week six	<i>tú</i>	1	2	3	4	1	1	1
	<i>usted</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	No 2 nd person pronoun	4	3	1	1	4	4	5
Week eleven	<i>tú</i>	5	0	4	3	2	0	5
	<i>usted</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
	No 2 nd person pronoun	0	4	2	2	2	5	1

Considering that the service encounters under examination in this study were recorded in a wide variety of service contexts (banks, shops, hair salons, etc.), there were certain conditions that were specific to each service site. For example, in some sites,

customers had to wait in line, such as at the bank or at the counter of a shop, whereas in other sites, customers were called on to be served, such as in the hair salon. The amount of time dedicated to the service encounter also varied depending on the local conditions. For example, in the cell phone store, customers approached the counter, gave the employee their phone number, paid the desired amount, and frequently ended the exchange in under a minute. Exchanging foreign currency in the bank, however, required more time spent waiting to allow for the bank employee to process the financial transaction (i.e., entering data into the computer, waiting for the computer to process the information, filing the foreign currency, discussing the commission and exchange rate).

These situational differences in service encounters will be addressed in the following sections insofar as they relate to the research questions of the study. Despite local contingencies, the service encounters also showed structural and sequential similarities, reflecting those reported previously in the literature. Structural elements (1), (2), (3), and (5) were present in the majority of the service interactions in this data set, in the order indicated below. Element (4), labeled “additional transactional or relational talk,” did not appear in the majority of the interactions, but when present, could occur at any point in the sequence after the opening but before the closing. These categories emerged out of an analysis of the data in this study, but were also informed by previous literature on the structural and sequential elements of service encounters (cf. Hasan, 1985; Kidwell, 2000; Lamoureux, 1988; Ventola, 1987; 1999). Each of the elements listed below are discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

- (1) Opening
- (2) Request for service / information
- (3) Provision or not of service / information
- (4) Additional transactional or relational talk (optional)
- (5) Closing

Openings

Looking first at openings, the service encounters almost always were initiated with greetings, the most common being the informal greeting sequence *hola-hola* ('hi-hi') or a single *hola* followed immediately by the request for service, as shown respectively in (1) and (2) below. Although *hola* was overwhelmingly the most common greeting, *buenos días* ('good morning'), and the combinations *hola buenas tardes* ('hi good afternoon') and *hola buenas* were also found in the data. Both service providers and students initiated opening sequences. Table 8 below summarizes the frequencies for each type of greeting that was used by the students, suggesting the relative frequency of each.

Table 8: Frequency of greeting types by student

	Chloe	Greta	Jared	Kyle	Megan	Miranda	Samantha
<i>hola</i>	13	5	5	13	6	11	16
<i>buenos días</i>		1					
<i>hola buenas tardes</i>	1						
<i>hola buenas</i>				1			

(1) Miranda (M) and male employee (E) at cell phone shop (week six)

- 1 E: hola
2 M: hola
3 M: quiero más diner- dinero en mi teléfono
- 1 E: hi
2 M: hi
3 M: I want more mon- money on my telephone

(2) Samantha (S) and receptionist (R) at the reception desk (week two)

- 1 S: hola
2 S: um (.) me olvidó mi::: chaqueta? (.) en uno de los (.) de mis clases
3 R: en cuál?
- 1 S: hi
2 S: um (.) I forgot my::: jacket? (.) in one of the (.) of my classes
3 R: in which one?

As the frequencies in Table 8 indicate, in some cases service encounter openings did not include greetings. For example, Jared had been waiting in line at a bank in order to get a special identification card for young people—called the *carnet joven*—that provided discounts on travel and tourist activities in Spain. The following is the beginning of the conversation between Jared and the service provider for the *carnet joven*:

(3) Jared (J) obtaining *carnet joven* from male bank employee (E) (week two)

- 1 UF: pasa pasa
2 J: oh heh heh

- 3 E: I need your passport and n:: uh photo⁷
- 1 UF: go ahead go ahead
- 2 J: oh heh heh
- 3 E: I need your passport and n:: uh photo
- UF=unknown female (either another customer or another employee of the bank)

When openings did not include a greeting, as in (3) above, the most common way to open up a service encounter in the data was by the service provider indicating that he or she was ready to help the customer. Two strategies appeared in the data, including *¿a quién atiendo?* ('Who do I help?') and *dime* ('tell me'). *Dime* was overwhelmingly the most frequent of these two strategies in this data set. Examples (4) and (5) provide instances of the use of *dime* as a service encounter opener on the part of the employee. The service encounter interaction between a Spanish customer and a Spanish service provider shown in (5) indicates that *dime* was not only used with students, but also with local Spanish customers. Although *dime* literally means 'tell me' in English, it functions in much the same way that "How can I help you?" does in English; that is, *dime* indicates that the service provider is ready to attend to the needs of the customer.

⁷ Note that the employee opened up this interaction speaking English to Jared.

(4) Miranda in a stationary store with female employee (E) (Week two)

1	→E:	dime	1	E:	tell me
2	M:	hola. necesito una carpeta?	2	M:	hi. I need a folder?
3	E:	cómo	3	E:	what type
4	M:	um (.)	4	M:	um (.)
5	E:	azul?	5	E:	blue?
6	M:	sí	6	M:	yes
((long pause))			((long pause))		
7	E:	noventa	7	E:	ninety
((long pause))			((long pause))		
8	M:	muchas gracias	8	M:	thanks a lot

(5) Native Spanish speaker customer (C) adding money to cell phone in convenience store with female employee (E) (recorded incidentally by Samantha while waiting in line)

1	→E:	dime	1	E:	tell me
2	C:	hola (.) Vodafone	2	C:	hi (.) Vodafone
3	E:	cinco?	3	E:	five?
4	C:	sí	4	C:	yes
(8.0)			(8.0)		
5	C:	gracias	5	C:	thanks

Apart from the use of *dime*, there were other ways in which participants opened service encounters. For example, in a few cases, students used the opening line *tengo una pregunta* ('I have a question'). In other rare cases, recorded service encounters did not include verbal openings, but rather, began with the second structural element, the request for service or information. In cases in which a verbal opening was lacking, there was likely a nonverbal opening, for example, a nod of the head or use of gaze by the service

provider to indicate that he or she was ready to attend to the needs of the customer.

However, the audio data does not permit analysis of nonverbal elements—a limitation of this data collection method.

Finally, there was limited sociolinguistic variation observed with regard to openings and how-are-you inquiries. Three students (Jared, Megan, Samantha) used the how-are-you inquiry *qué tal* ('how's it going') in their opening sequence. However, these students only employed this form with service providers that were familiar to them. Jared, Megan, and Samantha each used *qué tal* once with staff at the Toledo institute who they knew and Jared used *qué tal* with a bartender that he recognized and who he wanted to flirt with and get to know better.⁸

Request for service / information

Openings of the service encounters were typically followed by requests for service or information, which were present in the majority of the service encounters. Students, in the role of customer, were the ones who made requests. Examples of requests for service or information are shown in (6) below.

(6) Requests for service or information

Chloe (week six): hola (0.5) puedo cambiar mi dinero (.) americana a los euros:?
hi (0.5) can I exchange my American (.) money to the euros?
Megan (week eleven):uh::: tiene libros en inglés?

⁸ Note that Jared did not end up having the chance to flirt with the bartender, nor to get to know her better.

- uh::: do you have books in English?
Kyle (week two): quisiera comprar una pila para ese reloj
 I would like to buy a battery for that watch
- Jared (week six): um (.) sabes si::: la oficina de correos está abierto ahora?
 um (.) do you know if::: the post office is open now?
- Miranda (week two): necesito una carpeta
 I need a folder
- Samantha (week six): puedes ponerme un café, por favor?
 Can you give me a coffee, please?

The request utterances that students employed can be categorized into different types, as shown in Table 9 below. Note that the last two strategies listed in the table, which I call *query of knowledge* and *informational request*, were only used as requests for information. Strategies two through six were most frequently found in service encounters in which students requested a specific service or product. However, participants also employed want statements, need statements, and conventional indirectness in requests for information.

Table 9: Strategies students used to request services or information

REQUEST FOR SERVICE OR INFORMATION		
Strategy type	Structure	Example
1. Need statement	Necesito X 'I need X'	Necesito una carpeta 'I need a folder'
2. Want statement	Quiero X 'I want X'	Quiero enviar éstas a los Estados Unidos 'I want to send these to the United States'
	Quisiera X 'I would like X'	Quisiera comprar una pila para ese reloj 'I would like to buy a battery for that watch'
3. Conventional indirectness	Puedo hacer X 'Can I do X'	¿Puedo comprar eso? 'Can I buy that?'
	Me puedes hacer X 'Can you do X (for me)'	¿Me puedes poner un café? 'Can you give me a coffee?'

4. Imperative	Ponme X 'Give me X'	Ponme una barra de pan 'Give me a stick of bread'
5. Assertive	Me pones X 'you give me X'	¿Me pones dos cervezas? 'You give me two beers'
6. Ellipsis	Un X 'An X'	Un café con leche 'A coffee with milk'
7. Query of availability	Tiene(s) X 'Do you have X'	¿Tienes libros en inglés? 'Do you have books in English?'
8. Query of knowledge	Sabe(s) X 'Do you know X'	¿Sabes dónde puedo enviar estos? 'Do you know where I can send these?'
9. Informational request	No fixed structure	¿Tus rebajas cuándo terminan? 'Your sales, when are they over?'
		¿Dónde está la oficina de correo? 'Where is the post office?'

Strategy seven, query of availability, was only found in situations in which—as the example indicates—students were not sure if a particular establishment had an item available. In the instances in the data in which a query of availability was employed, the service provider understood the meaning to be that the student was making a request to obtain the item. When students in this study employed a query of availability, they always used the affirmative structure as shown in Table 9 (i.e., *¿tienes X?*). Spaniards were also recorded using this request strategy in a similar way, but the Spaniards used the verb in its negated form (i.e., *¿no tienes X?*), as shown in example (7) below. The exchange in (7) is between two Spaniards and was recorded incidentally as Miranda was waiting in line at a pharmacy.

(7) Spanish customer (C) and Spanish employee in a pharmacy (recorded by Miranda)

((there are other transactions going on when Miranda enters))

1 E: a quien atiendo?
 2 C: hola
 3 E: dígame
 ((there is some talking, but it's not quite audible))
 4 → C: **no tienes** un líquido algo así como (...)
 ((pause))
 5 E: una cucharada sopera con cada comida
 6 C: una cucharada sopera [con cada comida
 7 E: [de la grande
 8 C: sí
 ((pause))
 9 E: dos sesenta
 ((pause))
 10 E: (...)
 11 E: hasta luego
 12 C: hasta luego

 ((there are other transactions going on when Miranda enters))
 1 E: who's next?
 2 C: hi
 3 E: tell me
 ((there is some talking, but it's not quite audible))
 4 → C: **you don't have** a liquid something like (...)
 ((pause))
 5 E: a soup spoon with each meal
 6 C: a soup spoon [with each meal
 7 E: [the big one
 8 C: yes
 ((pause))
 9 E: two seventy
 ((pause))
 10 E: (...)
 11 E: see you later
 12 C: see you later

According to local Spanish informants, the difference between the affirmative (*¿tienes X?*) and the negated form (*¿no tienes X?*) is a matter of certainty. Use of the

negated form indicates more certainty on the part of the speaker that the item in question is available or should be available in that establishment and functions as a request for that item. The affirmative form indicates uncertainty on the part of the speaker regarding whether a particular product is available and functions as a request if, indeed, the establishment does sell the item. Students did not employ the negated form in the recordings and, consequently, there is no strong evidence regarding whether students understood this distinction. Data from several recordings, however, suggest that students did not understand the distinction between the negative and positive forms of this request strategy, since the items that students asked about in the interactions was quite obviously available in those establishments. For example, in a café, Greta asked *¿Tienes un menú?* ('Do you have a menu?'). According to a local informant from Toledo, cafés in Spain can frequently be expected to have a menu and thus, the affirmative request *¿tienes un menú?* would not be the most appropriate option.⁹

With regard to requests for information (i.e., query of knowledge and informational request), students in this study always used verbs in their requests and never ellipsis. In Peninsular Spanish, however, elliptical requests for information appear to be frequent, based on research by Placencia (1998) at a hospital information desk in Madrid and the researcher's own observations in the Toledo speech community. Students' informational requests usually followed one of two formats: query of knowledge with the verb *saber* such as *¿Sabes si hay un autobús a Sevilla?* ('Do you

⁹ Note that this distinction may not be relevant in other dialects of Spanish.

know if there's a bus to Seville?') or an information-getting question such as *¿Dónde está la oficina de correos?* ('Where's the post office?'). In a few cases, students produced speaker-oriented requests for information. For example, when Samantha asked a newspaper vendor how to find a specific store, she employed a need statement, saying the following: *yo necesito encontrar *la lugar dónde puedo poner dinero para autobús* ('I need to find the place where I can put money for the bus'). In another instance, Jared used the want statement *quiero saber* ('I want to know') in requesting information from a Toledo institute staff member about a trip he was going to take. Unlike some Spaniards in Placencia's (1998) research on information desk service encounters, students in this study never downgraded want statements with the imperfect past tense in the form of *quería saber* ('I wanted to know') in requests for information.

The strategies described in Table 9 were explicit request strategies; that is, those strategies were found in the data when requests were present in a verbal form. In some cases, however, students did not make explicit verbal requests for service or information. In certain interactions, the service provider preempted the request by indicating that he or she knew what service the student needed. In (3) above, the bank employee knew or guessed prior to the verbal interaction that Jared was at the bank to order the *carnet joven* and did not wait for Jared to make the service request before beginning the sequence necessary to fulfill the student's service needs. The interaction between Kyle and a convenience store employee in (8) shows a similar pattern. Kyle was waiting in line behind another foreign student from the Toledo institute, both were recharging their bus

cards, and the employee guessed that Kyle needed the same service as his friend. The employee simply fulfilled Kyle's service need without waiting for him to request it of her.

**(8) Kyle (K) recharging bus card in a convenience store with female employee (E)
(week six)**

1	K:	hola	1	K:	hi
(7.6)			(7.6)		
2	C:	de {la academia}?	2	E:	from the Toledo institute?
3	K:	sí	3	K:	yes
4	K:	gracias ah sí heh	4	K:	thanks oh yeah heh
(8.7)			(8.7)		
5	K:	necesitas ver esto?	5	K:	do you need to see this?
6	C:	no,	6	C:	no,
7	K:	no?	7	K:	no?
8	C:	ya tengo la foto	8	C:	I already have the photo
9	K:	vale heh heh	9	K:	OK heh heh
((long pause))			((long pause))		
10	C:	aquí, gracias=	10	C:	here, thanks=
11	K:	=muchas gracias	11	K:	=thanks a lot
(3.7)			(3.7)		
12	K:	hasta luego	12	K:	see you later

An additional aspect of the service encounter requests was the fact that students did not use the politeness formula *por favor* ('please') with great frequency. Jared and Megan used *por favor* three times in their recorded service encounters over the course of semester, and each of the students used *por favor* two or fewer times in all of the service encounter recordings. The relatively low frequency of *por favor* in students' requests is similar to what Placencia (2005) reported for Spanish corner store encounters—namely, that Spaniards use *por favor* infrequently in retail service encounters. Data from

American English also suggests that the politeness formula please is rare in front desk and retail service encounters in the U.S. (Vélez, 1987). However, Mir's (1993) research found that intermediate to advanced L2 learners of English (Spanish L1) used the politeness formula please more frequently in requests than did natives of either Spanish or English. Mir (1993) suggests that this result reflects the relative ease of use (i.e., low propositional content) of please and the desire of learners to be polite in the second language. The present data does not indicate a similar interlanguage tendency on the part of the students of this study.

A final observation is that participants in this study did not appear to vary their use of specific requesting strategies according to the age or sex of the interlocutor. Development over time in the use of request strategies did appear to be related to service encounter type (i.e., food-related encounters), a finding which will be examined in the discussion of Research Question 1 below.

Provision or not of service / information

Requests for service or information were followed by either the provision of the service or, in rare cases, the inability of the service provider to fulfill the student's request. Examples (4) and (8) display provision of the service desired by the customer. In (9) below, one of the few examples of the service provider not being able to provide the requested service is presented. In that case, Megan asked if the front desk receptionist of the Toledo institute had a map of Germany and he did not have one to give to her.

(9) Megan (M) asking for a map from receptionist (R) at the Toledo institute (week six)

- 1 M: hola
2 R: hola, lo encontraste.
3 M: lo encontró um::: (0.4)
4 →M: tienes una mapa de Alemania?
5 R: ah: de Alemania?
6 M: sí
7 R: yo no sé si vamos a tener algo pero espera ((shuffling))
(2.2)
8 M: porque yo::: tengo: parientes ahí y necesito encontrar hh su::: (.) ciudad
9 M: pero es (.) pequeño y no- puedo (.) hh um
10 R: vamos que yo te voy a dar para que busques en internet
(0.5)
11 M: sí
12 R: una página
13 M: sí
14 R: que es ésta
(3.4)
15 M: también: um:: quiero:: a saber co- cómo yo puedo::: tocar el piano (.)
16 M: [en la escuela
17 R: [ah:::
18 R: mira. hay un:: (0.4) intenta esta página.
19 M: sí. no funciona para mi.
20 R: no funciona?
21 M: yo:
22 R: intentaste pero no::
23 M: yo: uh pru- uh no
24 M: el internet funciona: pero: las mapas no
25 R: los mapas no funcionan? (.) bueno
26 M: no
27 →R: es que aquí (0.4) yo no tengo mapas que: (0.5) de Alemania
28 M: vale
29 R: sabes? entonces tiene que ser a través de Internet
30 M: vale
...
1 M: hi

2 R: hi, you found it.
 3 M: he found it um::: (0.4)
 4 →M: do you have a map of Germany?
 5 R: ah: of Germany?
 6 M: yes
 7 R: I don't know if we're going to have something but wait ((shuffling))
 (2.2)
 8 M: because I::: have relatives there and I need to find hh their::: (.) city
 9 M: but it is (.) small and I can't (.) hh um
 10 R: OK I'm going to tell you how to look on the internet
 (0.5)
 11 M: yes
 12 R: a webpage
 13 M: yes
 14 R: which is this one
 (3.4)
 15 M: also: um:: I want:: to know ho- how I can play the piano
 16 M: [in the school
 17 R: [ah:::
 18 R: look, there's a (0.4) try this webpage.
 19 M: yes. it doesn't work for me.
 20 R: it doesn't work?
 21 M: I:
 22 R: you tried but no::
 23 M: I: uh tri- uh no
 24 M: the internet works: but the maps don't
 25 R: the maps don't work? (.) OK
 26 M: no
 27 →R: it's that here (0.4) I don't have any maps that (0.5) of Germany
 28 M: OK
 29 R: you know? so it has to be through the internet
 30 M: OK
 ...

Additional transactional or relational talk (optional)

The provision of service also optionally involved a more extensive exchange of information that was related to the product or service. In some cases, such as example (5), very little exchange of information about the service was required to complete the service request. In other instances, however, either the service provider offered additional information, gave background information about the product or service, evaluated the virtues of the product, or asked questions in order to find out more information about what students' needs were regarding the service or product. Students also sometimes made comments about the product or service that went beyond the talk that was obligatory in order to carry out the service encounter. In (10) below, Megan made an evaluative comment about the color of the shoes that she was trying on (i.e., *me encanta el color*, 'I love the color') and the employee expanded on that comment by agreeing that the color was pretty, mentioning that the color is worn a lot in Spain, and giving the name of the color in Spanish. Note that the phrase *es muy bonito, se lleva mucho* ('it's very nice, it's worn a lot') in line 11 below is a common phrase in Spanish used by salespeople to promote their merchandise.

**(10) Megan (M) trying on shoes in a shoe store, talking with female employee (E1)
(Week two)**

- 1 E1: qué tal?
(5.6)
2 M: puedes probar esta en uh (.) cuarenta?
3 E1: éste en cuarenta?

4 M: sí
 5 E1: (...)
 ((I think they walked away from the recorder and talk where I can't hear))
 6 E1: e:: pruebas el otro?
 (1.2)
 7 M: qué?
 8 E1: el otro?
 9 M: sí (.) uh:: por favor
 (1.9)
 10 →M: me encanta:- e:l color
 (1.1)
 11 →E1: es muy bonito, se lleva mucho
 12 →E1: aquí en España es el color de trigo en castellano=
 13 M: =sí ((very curt "sí"; she probably didn't understand what the person said))
 (2.5)
 14 →M: qué bonita: ((sing songy voice))
 15 M: y cuánto cuesta?
 (1.2)
 ...

1 E1: how's it going?
 (5.6)
 2 M: can you try this in uh (.) forty?
 3 E1: this one in forty?
 4 M: yes
 5 E1: (...)
 ((I think they walked away from the recorder and talk where I can't hear))
 6 E1: uh:: are you trying the other one?
 (1.2)
 7 M: what?
 8 E1: the other one?
 9 M: yes (.) uh:: please
 (1.9)
 10 M: I love:- the: color
 (1.1)
 11 E1: it's very pretty, it's worn a lot
 12 E1: here in Spain it's wheat color in Spanish=
 13 M: =yes ((very curt "yes"; perhaps she didn't understand what the person said))
 (2.5)

- 14 M: how pretty: ((sing songy voice))
15 M: and how much is it?
(1.2)
...

The above example, in which the service provider and customer engage in talk that focuses on the product or service as the topic, but goes beyond the obligatory transactional talk, fits into what McCarthy (2000) terms as “transactional-plus-relational talk.” As the term suggests, there is a transactional component to this talk, in which the task of the encounter is being addressed (e.g., selling shoes), but also an orientation to relational goals. In the case of (10), employee and customer do not know each other, so they probably do not have the goal of developing a friendly, long-term relationship, but as McCarthy (2000) argues, participants in service encounters may have the relational goal to make the interaction a friendly and pleasant exchange—the creation and maintenance of harmonious relations and rapport, in Spencer-Oatey’s (2001) terms.

In interactions recorded by four different students, service providers briefly took on the role of cultural informants, describing the product or service in terms of some aspect of Spanish society or culture. Example (10) above shows the employee describing the name of the color in Spain. In all four such cases, including (10) above, the service provider marks the taking on of the role of cultural informant by the phrase *aquí en España* (‘here in Spain’). In another example that Greta recorded in a small café, a question that Greta asked about *torrijas*—a type of sweet bread similar to French toast that is eaten around Easter in Spain—initiated an extended explanation by the employee of how *torrijas* are made and a story about making homemade *torrijas* for the employee’s

grandson. Prior to line 55 shown in (11) below (an extract of the longer exchange), Greta had ordered several types of pastries, including a *torrija*. Up until this point, the interaction had involved only transactional talk.

**(11) Greta (G) ordering in a café and discussion of *torrijas* by female employee (E)
(week six)**

- 55 E: otra torrija para llevar?
56 G: sí
(6.0)
57 G: a mí yo tengo:- esto y::: (.) un gofre
(2.0)
58 E: un gofre para comer aquí o para llevar?
59 G: para aquí
(3.3)
60 →G: y- en- en- cuál sitio::: (.) um: (3.0) consigues estos?
61 E: estas torrijas son caseras
62 E: hechas en casa.
63 G: oh en un casa?
64 E: ésas se hacen en la casa
65 E: porque va llegando::: (.) semana santa
66 G: uh huh
67 →E: es costumbre aquí en España empezar a comer torrijas
68 E: para [empezar la semana santa
69 G: [sí::?
70 E: entonces se ha- hay muchas torrijas ahora
71 E: que seguramente- (.) los primeros días que estabas aquí no las viste, no?
72 G: uh:
73 E: primera vez que las ves, no?
74 G: m (.) mhm ((with uncertainty))
75 E: sí::: es pan
76 E: es pan especial- lo hacen para torrijas
77 E: que es ancho
78 G: sí
79 E: pan ancho
(0.7)
80 E: y: se deja dos días:

(1.4)
81 E: no puede ser pan fresco
82 E: tiene que ser pan de dos días por lo menos
(0.6)
83 E: o tres
(0.9)
84 E: pan viejo ((said more slowly and emphatically))
85 G: sí
86 E: y se pican (.) rodajas::
(1.5)
87 E: y se moja con le:che, cane:la_
88 G: wow (.) de[liciosa
89 E: [y- y huevo
90 G: oh [sí?
91 E: [y- y se fríe
92 E: y se hace el almíbar
93 E: y se ducha por encima
94 E: así se hace
95 G: sí:ya
96 E: es una comida pa' ser aquí
97 G: qué rica::
98 G: um- cómo se llama?
99 E: torrija
(0.9)
100 E: >torrija< ((said very slowly and well-enunciated, especially strong rolling of r's))
101 G: torrij[a ((said slowly in repetition with perfect rolling of the r's))
102 E: [ja
103 G: torrija
104 G: hum::
(1.4)
105 E: tómate una bolsita?
106 G: sí, por favor
(1.2)
106 E: está muy buena para engordar, oh?
107 G: yeah, sí ((in a commiserating tone))
108 S: heh heh
109 E: está riquísima hehe
110 G: yo sé
111 E: a mí me gustan pero no la como porque engorda mucho
112 G: es más:: um::
113 E: la comí:: (.) el sábado (.) no

114 E: la comí (.) el miércoles de la semana pasada
115 G: sí?
116 E: porque a mi nieto le enca:nta
117 G: heh heh heh
118 E: le enca:nta
119 E: entonces yo cuando voy a ver:lo?
120 G: sí
121 E: él estaba pa' el colegio
122 G: oh
123 E: yo tomo Franco e:l miércoles
124 E: vive en Talavera
125 E: sabes dónde es Talavera?
126 G: no
127 E: es un pueblo muy boni:to
128 G: [aquí en Toledo? (.) er?
129 E: [(...)
130 E: sí:: y se va el autobús
131 E: va el- vas en autobús y se- se va a Talavera
132 G: un pueblo (0.8) es como más moderno que Toledo
133 E: pues tiene una parte antigua y:: (0.4)
134 E: y es un pueblo muy- con mucha vi:da
135 E: mucho comercio, mucho:: (.) no es turístico como Toledo
136 E: pero es una ciudad::
137 G: oh:: es lo:- es lo [qu- es lo quiero
138 E: [muy agradable
139 G: me- me gusta:: sitios que: no hay mucho turismo?
140 E: sí
141 E: ésa- ay mi amor- mira (.) yo voy mañana
142 G: sí
143 E: yo voy mañana
144 E: 'tonces yo llego (.) y:: bue-
145 G: tienes amigo::s que:: [viven?
146 E: [mi hijo vive allí y mis niños o mis nietos
147 E: y yo voy (1.1)
148 E: y:: yo hago comidas ca- e- caseras
149 E: porque dulces caseros que le encantan (.) a mi nieto
150 G: sí
151 E: a él le gustan más los dulces caseros que los dulces de:- de- (.) [de panadería
152 G: [mhm
153 E: entonces yo fui día miércoles
154 E: compré:: pan (.)

155 G: [sí
 156 E: [que ya había ya especial cortado en una bolsa?
 157 G: [sí
 158 E: [y fui a la casa y hice torrijas
 159 E: y cuando llega del colegio u:::[:::
 160 G: [heh heh [ah:::
 161 E: [contento
 162 E: de once años
 163 G: o:::y
 164 E: entonces contentísimo con las torrijas
 165 E1: y la- la vez anterior le hizo arroz con leche
 166 E1: sabes lo que es el arroz con leche?
 167 G: n::: oh >sí sí sí<
 168 G: hh u:m
 169 E1: que se cocina el arroz muy blandito y se le echa [leche condensada
 ...

55 E: another torrija to go?
 56 G: yes
 (6.0)
 57 G: to me I have:- this and::: (.) a waffle
 (2.0)
 58 E: a waffle for here or to go?
 59 G: for here
 (3.3)
 60 →G: and- in- in- which place::: (.) um: (3.0) do you get these?
 61 E: these torrijas are homemade
 62 E: made at home.
 63 G: oh in a home?
 64 E: these are homemade
 65 E: because Holy Week is arriving:::
 66 G: uh huh
 67 →E: it is a custom here in Spain to begin to eat torrijas
 68 E: to [begin Holy Week
 69 G: [yes::?
 70 E: so there- there are a lot of torrijas now
 71 E: that surely- (.) the first days that you were here you didn't see them, did you?
 72 G: uh:
 73 E: first time you saw them, right?

74 G: m(.) mhm ((with uncertainty))
 75 E: yes:: it's bread
 76 E: it's special bread- they make it for torrijas
 77 E: that is wide
 78 G: yes
 79 E: wide bread
 (0.7)
 80 E: and: you let it sit two days:
 (1.4)
 81 E: it can't be fresh bread
 82 E: it has to be two-days-old bread at the least
 (0.6)
 83 E: or three
 (0.9)
 84 E: old bread ((said more slowly and emphatically))
 85 G: yes
 86 E: and you cut (.) slices::
 (1.5)
 87 E: and you soak it in mi:lk, cinne:mon
 88 G: wow (.) de[licious
 89 E: [and- and egg
 90 G: oh [yes?
 91 E: [and- and you fry it
 92 E: and you make the syrup
 93 E: and you shower it from above
 94 E: that's how it's done
 95 G: yes:ya
 96 E: it's a food to be here
 97 G: how delicious::
 98 G: um- what's it called?
 99 E: torrija
 (0.9)
 100 E: >torrija< ((said very slowly and well-enunciated, especially strong rolling of r's))
 101 G: torrij[a ((said slowly in repetition with perfect rolling of the r's))
 102 E: [ja
 103 G: torrija
 104 G: hum::
 (1.4)
 105 E: take a bag?
 106 G: yes, please
 (1.2)

106 E: it's really good for getting fat, no?
107 G: yeah, yes ((in a commiserating tone))
108 S: heh heh
109 E: it's really delicious heh heh
110 G: I know
111 E: I really like them but I don't eat it because it really gets you fat
112 G: it's more:: um:::
113 E: I ate it:: (.) Saturday (.) no
114 E: I ate it (.) Wednesday of last week
115 G: yes?
116 E: because my grandson lo:ves it
117 G: heh heh heh
118 E: he lo:ves it
119 E: so when I go to see him?
120 G: yes
121 E: he was about to go to school
122 G: oh
123 E: I take Franco Wednesdays
124 E: he lives in Talavera
125 E: do you know where Talavera is?
126 G: no
127 E: it's a very ni:ce town
128 G: [here in Toledo? (.) er?
129 E: [(...)
130 E: yes::: and you go on the bus
131 E: it goes- you go by bus and you- you go to Talavera
132 G: a town (0.8) it is more modern than Toledo
133 E: well it has an old part and:: (0.4)
134 E: and it's a very- very lively town
135 E: a lot of business, a lot of::: (.) it's not touristy like Toledo
136 E: but it's a city::
137 G: oh:: it is what:- it is what [th- it what I like
138 E: [very pleasant
139 G: I- I like:: places that: there isn't much tourism?
140 E: yes
141 E: that- there is dear- look (.) I go tomorrow
142 G: yes
143 E: I go tomorrow
144 E: so I arrive (.) and::: we-
145 G: you have friend::s that:: [live?
146 E: [my son lives there and my children or my grandchildren

147 E: and I go (1.1)
 148 E: and:: I make ho- e- homemade foods
 149 E: because my grandson he loves homemade sweets
 150 G: yes
 151 E: he likes homemade sweets more than sweets from::- from- (.) [from the bakery
 152 G: [mhm
 153 E: so I went on Wednesday
 154 E: I bought:: bread (.)
 155 G: [yes
 156 E: [that there was there already was specially cut in the bag?
 157 G: [yes
 158 E: [and I went to the house and made torrijas
 159 E: and when he gets home from school ooh:::[:::
 160 G: [heh heh[ah:::
 161 E: [happy
 162 E: eleven years
 163 G: o:::y
 164 E: so he was really happy with the torrijas
 165 E1: and the- the previous time I made him arroz con leche
 166 E1: do you know what arroz con leche is?
 167 G: n::: oh >yes yes yes<
 168 G: hh u:m
 169 E1: you cook the rice until it's very soft and you add [condensed milk

Greta begins this extended discussion of *torrijas* by asking in line 60 where the employee had obtained the *torrijas*. The employee responds that her *torrijas* are homemade and then moves into her role as cultural informant, explaining that *torrijas* are eaten around the time of Holy Week and describing how they are made. In taking on the role of cultural informant, the employee orients to Greta's status as a foreigner, someone who is presumably not aware of the traditions, customs, and foods of Spain. In comparison to example (9), the interaction in (10) goes much farther away from transactional talk. While the discourse topic remains focused on the product being sold,

the *torrijas*, the story about making *torrijas* for her grandson is much farther removed from the immediate transaction than the comments about the color of the shoes in (10).

The goal of much of the talk in (11) is relational. First, the employee takes on the role of an expert in Spanish culture to provide information to a presumed novice, Greta. The employee not only provides information about a cultural item, *torrijas*. In describing in detail the ingredients and procedure of making *torrijas*, the employee acts in a culturally typical manner: food is a central element in Spanish culture and cooking, food, and recipes are common topics of conversation between friends and acquaintances in Spain. In addition, the story about the grandson enhances the employee's own face by presenting herself as a good cook and a caring, loving grandmother—both of which are positive personal characteristics.

While the majority of the service encounters recorded between students and service providers consisted predominantly of transactional talk, in some cases, as in (10) and (11) above, relational talk was also present to a greater or lesser extent. Examples (10) and (11) show relational talk that is *topically* connected to the service transaction (i.e., color of the shoes, *torrijas*). In other cases, service encounters included relational talk that was not related topically to the product or information being exchanged in the transaction. Topics of non-transactional talk included the following:

- weather
- what students were doing in Toledo

- how long students were staying in Toledo and how much time they had left in Toledo
- what students thought about Spain
- cultural information about Spain not directly related to the product or service being exchanged
- comparisons between Spain and the U.S.
- language learning
- problems with translation of names for cocktails
- invitations to be the employee's conversation partner (i.e., one male tobacco shop employee invited two different female students to be his conversation partner)
- references to knowledge about the U.S., friends living in the U.S., and questions about the U.S. on the part of service providers
- weekend activities
- saying goodbye to friends

The most common topic was related to students' presence in Toledo and their status as foreigners (i.e., stay in Toledo, perceptions of Spain), with the weather being mentioned in only one interaction, which is shown in (12). As can be seen by the list above, the topics of non-transactional talk in these service encounters primarily centered on students' status as foreign visitors to Spain, suggesting that this identity was salient for service providers in Toledo.

Non-transactional talk could occur sequentially at any point after the opening of the encounter and before the closing. The excerpt in (12) is an example of relational talk that was not topically related to the transaction.

(12) Chloe changing currency in bank with male employee (E) (week two)

- 62 B: veinte seis ((placing coins on the counter))
(0.7)
- 63 C: um[::
- 64 B: [esto es tuyo
- 65 C: muchas gracias (0.5) [y
- 66 B: [qué tal eres turista por aquí (.) en Toledo?
- 67 C: sí en la Fundación [ah (.) por (.) el semest[re
- 68 B: [muy bien [es hoy es un mal día hoy
- 69 B: mucha agua
- 70 C: ah ((commiserating))
- 71 B: mucha [lluvia, eh
- 72 C: [sí::: mis- za- zapatos son=
- 73 B: =mal día [mal día
- 74 C: [hhheh heh sí
(0.5)
- 75 C: y cua- si necesito cambiar más um dinero (.) puedo regresar?=
76 B: =sí
- 77 C: OK, muchas gracias
- 78 B: de nada
- 79 C: tenga un buen día heh
- 80 B: igualmente (.) hasta luego
- 81 C: hasta luego

- 62 B: twenty six ((placing coins on the counter))
(0.7)
- 63 C: um[::
- 64 B: [this is yours
- 65 C: thanks a lot (0.5) [and
- 66 B: [how's it going are you a tourist here (.) in Toledo?

67 C: yes in the Fundación [ah (.) for (.) the semes[ter
68 B: [great [today is- today is a bad day
69 B: a lot of water
70 C: ah ((commiserating))
71 B: a lot of [rain, eh
72 C: [yes:::: my- sh- shoes are=
73 B: =bad day [bad day
74 C: [hhheh heh sí
(0.5)
75 C: and how mu- if I need to exchange more money (.) can I come back?=
76 B: =yes
77 C: OK, thanks a lot
78 B: you're welcome
79 C: have a good day heh
80 B: you too (.) see you later
81 C: see you later

The service provider initiates the non-transactional talk in line 66 by asking Chloe whether she is a tourist in Toledo, which she affirms adding that she is at the Toledo institute for the semester. In line 65, Chloe had begun the closing of the conversation by saying *muchas gracias* ('thanks a lot') when the employee interrupted her and asked her about her status in Toledo. Immediately after she answered, the employee inserted a comment about the bad weather, to which Chloe responded with a commiserating tone in line 70 and with laughter and the affirmative token *sí* ('yes') in line 74.

The non-transactional, relational talk that focused on topics other than those that were directly related to the product or service—such as in example (12)—was initiated by the Spanish service providers in all cases but one, in which Samantha initiated non-transactional talk with a cafeteria barista at the Toledo institute (see example [20] below). While both students and service providers were found to initiate relational talk that was

topically related to the product or service being sought, service providers were the ones who most frequently initiated non-transaction-focused relational talk. Non-transactional relational talk has also been reported to occur in service encounters between Spanish service providers and customers in corner shop interactions (Placencia, 2005), suggesting that the occurrence of relational talk in this data is not unique to interactions with foreign students, although some small talk topics appeared to be influenced by students' status as foreigners (e.g., making comparisons between Spain and the US).

In some cases, students did not participate actively in maintaining and extending the relational talk of the interaction, providing only minimal responses and not building on what the service provider had said. Example (13) shows an extract from an interaction between Jared and the bank employee helping him with obtaining the *carnet joven*. In line 43, the bank employee makes a statement about how Americans have both a first and a middle name, but only one last name; this naming system contrasts with Spaniards who typically have a first name and two last names. Jared responds to the employee's observation with a minimal *sí sí sí* ('yes yes yes') in line 44 and, immediately thereafter, the topic is terminated.

(13) Jared (J) getting *carnet joven* from male employee (E) (Week two)

...
39 E: yo tengo un amigo (1.7)
40 E: de Tuscaloosa, Alabama
41 J: heh
42 E: que dice (.) en Estados Unidos
43 E: todo el mundo tiene (.) dos nombres pero un sólo apellido

44 J: sí sí sí
 (5.8)
 45 E: here you are Jared
 46 J: gracias=
 47 E: =it was nice to speak to you
 48 J: ten un buen día
 49 E: gracias

...

...

39 E: I have a friend (1.7)
 40 E: from Tuscaloosa, Alabama
 41 J: heh
 42 E: that says (.) in the United States
 43 E: everyone has (.) two names but only one last name
 44 J: yes yes yes
 (5.8)
 45 E: here you are Jared
 46 J: thanks=
 47 E: =it was nice to speak to you
 48 J: have a good day
 49 E: thanks

...

Jared's turn in 44 and the silence that follows effectively indicates that Jared does not want to comment on the employee's comparison about last names in Spain and the U.S. or perhaps that he has nothing to say about the matter. The tone of voice that Jared uses in line 44 is that of matter-of-fact agreement with what the employee has said, but gives no indication that he will comment further on the issue. Considering ethnographic research by Thurén (1988) and research on service encounters by Placencia (2005), Jared's lack of extension and continuation of the relational talk initiated by the employee

in (13) could be perceived by Spaniards as unfriendly, if, as it is suggested, “not being talkative is to be unfriendly” (Thurén, 1988, p. 222). The employee’s code switch to English in line 45 may further indicate a lack of solidarity between the two interactants.

Closings

The final structural element that was present in most¹⁰ of the service encounters recorded by the study participants was a closing of the interaction. Closings were initiated both by students and by service providers, but more frequently by students. The overwhelmingly most frequent way to make a move to close the interaction was through the use of the word *gracias* (‘thanks’) or other expressions of gratitude with *gracias* such as *muchas gracias* (‘thanks a lot’) and *muchísimas gracias* (‘thanks very much’). While the word *gracias* is generally used for the purpose of thanking in Spanish, its use in these service encounter interactions is not primarily as a sincere expression of gratitude, but rather, as Aston (1995) discovered in service encounters in Britain and Italy, the equivalents of *gracias* in English and Italian are ritual expressions of gratitude that function most importantly as a move to close the conversation.

Examples of students employing *gracias* for the purposes of closing the conversation are presented in examples (4), (8), (12), and (13) above. Example (5) shows a native Spanish speaker customer also using *gracias* to close the conversation. Previous research on service encounters in Spain (Placencia, 1998; 2005) does not address

¹⁰ In a few cases, students’ recordings were terminated prior to the end of the interaction. All of the recordings that were complete contained closings.

closings, however, the researcher's field observations of local Spaniards in Toledo doing service encounters suggest that the use of *gracias* as a closing move was common in that speech community. Work on other dialects of Spanish also indicates the use of the ritual expression of gratitude with *gracias* as a closing device (Reiter & Placencia, 2004; Vélez, 1987).

Expressions of gratitude with *gracias* also co-occurred with pre-closing devices that Schegloff and Sacks (1973) call *warrants*, that is expressions that indicate that the speaker desires to close the conversation. Warrants that were found in these data—used by both students and service providers—included *bueno* ('OK') and *vale* ('OK'). In this data, warrants always co-occurred with expressions of gratitude, such as in example (14) below with the utterance *vale, gracias* ('OK, thanks') produced by the employee in lines 12 and 23.

(14) Miranda (M) in the cell phone store with a friend (F) and employee (E) (Week two)

1 E: hola
2 F: um (.) hola
(3.9) ((sounds of typing at the counter))
3 E: número
4 F: uh:: heh seis tres ocho
5 E: seis tres ocho
6 F: seis tres cuatro
7 E: seis tres cuatro
8 F: seis cuatro siete
9 E: seis cuatro siete
10 E: cuánto?
11 F: uh (...)
((pause and printing noise))

12 →E: vale, gracias
(2.5)
13 M: yo también: (.) pero (.) más euros
14 E: dime el número
15 M: el número es: seis tres ocho?
16 E: seis tres ocho
17 M: um (.) tres cuatro [tres ocho
18 E: [tres cuatro tres ocho
19 M: ocho cinco
20 E: ocho cinco?
(1.5)
21 E: cuánto quieres?
22 M: cinco
((pause with typing and printing noises))
23 →E: vale, gracias=
24 M: =muchas gracias
(8.0)
25 E: hasta luego:

1 E: hi
2 F: um (.) hi
(3.9) ((sounds of typing at the counter))
3 E: number
4 F: uh:: heh six three eight
5 E: six three eight
6 F: six three four
7 E: six three four
8 F: six four seven
9 E: six four seven
10 E: how much?
11 F: uh (...)
((pause and printing noise))
12 →E: OK, thanks
(2.5)
13 M: me too: (.) but (.) more Euros
14 E: tell me the number
15 M: the number is: six three eight?
16 E: six three eight
17 M: um (.) three four [three eight
18 E: [three four three eight

19 M: eight five
 20 E: eight five?
 (1.5)
 21 E: how much do you want?
 22 M: five
 ((pause with typing and printing noises))
 23 →E: OK, thanks=
 24 M: =thanks a lot
 (8.0)
 25 E: see you later:

Students also produced the non-Spanish warrant OK, as is shown in Chloe's interaction in the bank in example (12).

In the case of the interaction in (14), it was the employee who initiated the closing sequence with a warrant and a ritual expression of gratitude. An expression of gratitude with *gracias* on the part of the service provider was always met by another expression of gratitude with *gracias* by the student, such as the case shown in (14). However, in this data set, it was the students, in the role of customers, who most frequently initiated closing sequences. When the customer initiated a closing sequence with *gracias*, the replies by service providers ranged from silence—although they may have responded nonverbally—to ritual rejections of thanks such as *de nada* or *nada* ('don't mention it'), *nada, a ti* ('don't mention it, (thank) you') or a reciprocal expression of thanks such as *gracias* ('thanks') or *gracias a ti* ('thank you').

Expressions of gratitude often served as terminal exchanges (i.e., the concluding turns in the interaction), as shown in (4) above. In other cases, such as in (12) and (14), partings such as *hasta luego* ('until then') functioned as the terminal exchange. Other

partings used by students and service providers that also functioned to close the interaction were *adios* ('goodbye'), *chau* ('ciao'), *adios buenos días* ('goodbye good day'). It is worth pointing out that expressions of gratitude with *gracias* could either be non-terminal utterances in the closing sequence or terminal utterances, while the uttering of partings was always terminal to the interaction.

In sum, it has been argued that while each type of service encounter (i.e., bank, café, bar, information desk) may have created certain local conditions unique to that type of interaction, there were also structural and sequential similarities between the various types of service encounters that follow what has been described previously in the literature with regard to service encounters. The descriptive results contained in this section help set the stage for understanding the results presented in the following sections, which focus specifically on the research questions of the study.

Research Question 1: How do L2 learners' interactions in service encounters change over the course of one semester studying abroad? What politeness features do they acquire? Do their interactions become more similar to those of the target speech community?

The goal of this section is to determine whether the participants in this study changed in the way that they performed service encounters in Spanish from the beginning to the middle and end of the semester abroad, with regard to politeness features. In doing so, the spotlight is both on how individual students developed in their use of politeness in Spanish over time and on the commonalities that existed among students. Data from

previous research focusing on the politeness norms of Spaniards in service encounters (e.g., Placencia, 1998; 2005) will be used as the primary baseline for comparison.

The analysis of this section focuses on changes in students' L2 performance with regard to specific features of politeness and is organized by categories or "domains" of social norms or conventions relevant to behavioral expectations as outlined by Spencer-Oatey (2000; 2005). As discussed above, those domains include: (1) **illocutionary domain** (the performance of speech acts such as apologies, requests, and compliments); (2) **discourse domain** (the discourse content and structure of an interchange, including topic choice and the organization and sequencing of information); (3) **participation domain** (the procedural aspects of an interchange, such as turn-taking [overlaps and inter-turn pauses, turn-taking rights and obligations], the inclusion/exclusion of people present, and the use/non-use of listener responses [verbal and nonverbal]); (4) **stylistic domain** (the stylistic aspects of an interchange, such as choice of tone (for example, serious or joking), choice of genre-appropriate lexis and syntax, and choice of genre-appropriate terms of address or use of honorifics); (5) **nonverbal domain** (the nonverbal aspects of an interchange, such as gestures and other body movements, eye contact, and proxemics) (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, pp. 19-20). The analysis of the data indicates that developments in learners' L2 politeness behavior occurred in the illocutionary and

discourse domains, but not in the participation or stylistic¹¹ domains. The audio recordings did not permit an analysis of the nonverbal domain.

Illocutionary domain

Requests proved to be the primary aspect of the illocutionary domain for which change was observed in students' service encounter behavior. In those food and retail service encounters in which students made a request to receive a product or service, evidence from the data pointed towards two general types of development over time: movement from speaker-oriented verbs to hearer-oriented verbs and movement from request forms with verbs to verbless request forms (i.e., ellipsis).

Development of hearer-oriented verbs

With regard to the first development—the orientation or perspective of the verb—the reader is reminded that, as described above, speaker-oriented verbs are the most frequent type in English requests (Márquez Reiter, 2002; Vélez, 1987) and hearer-oriented verbs are the most frequent type in Spanish requests (Márquez Reiter, 2002; Mir, 1993; Placencia, 2005; Vélez, 1987). Speaker-oriented verbs carry the verb morphology

¹¹ Some of the issues discussed with regard to the speech act of requesting—which I categorize in the illocutionary domain—may actually overlap with features described by Spencer-Oatey as being part of the stylistic domain. I view Spencer-Oatey's categorization system of domains as a useful schema for analysis to keep in mind the various aspects that may play a role in the perception of politeness and not as a strict division of the different features of politeness. Therefore, any overlap between the domains or questions about whether a particular feature of politeness should be considered illocutionary or stylistic is not problematic for the purposes of this analysis.

of the speaker (e.g., *Puedo comprar un libro?* ‘**Can I** buy this book?’), while hearer-oriented verbs address the hearer directly and are conjugated with second-person verb morphology (e.g., *Ponme un café*, ‘**(You) Give** me a coffee’). Furthermore, previous research suggests that the inclusion of the speaker in the request in Spanish by means of inserting the indirect object pronoun *me* (‘to me’) along with a hearer-oriented verb is considered polite in Spanish, whereas in English, the inclusion of the speaker with a hearer-oriented verb may actually be less polite and more imposing (Mir, 1993).

Excluding requests for information or queries of availability (i.e., *¿Tienes X?*, ‘Do you have X?’), in the first week of recording (week two), all seven students exclusively used speaker-oriented verbs in their requests for specific products in retail and food service encounters. The types of speaker-oriented verbs that students used in requests for specific services or products included need statements, want statements, and conventional indirectness (see Table 9 above for descriptions), all of which are very frequent request types in service encounter requests in American English (Vélez, 1987). By the middle and end of the semester abroad (weeks six and eleven) hearer-oriented verbs began to appear in the speech of four learners (Chloe, Jared, Kyle, Samantha). Table 10 below summarizes the request strategies used by students at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester in all recorded service encounters in which verbal requests were present.

Table 10: Frequency of request strategy types by students in food, retail, and information desk service encounters¹²

Week	Verb perspective	Strategy type used	Student						
			Chloe	Greta	Jared	Kyle	Megan	Miranda	Samantha
Week 2	Speaker-oriented verbs	Need statement		1	1			2	4
		Want statement			1	4			1
		Conventional indirectness	2	4	1		1		
	Hearer-oriented verbs	Imperative							
		Assertive							
		Conventional indirectness							
		Query of availability						1	
	NA	Ellipsis		1					1

¹² Note that the data in Table 9 excludes requests for information (e.g., *¿Sabes X?*, ‘Do you know X?’; *¿Dónde está X?*, ‘Where is X?’) and situations in which a verbal request is not present. Also note that in some cases, more than one request strategy was used by a student in a single service encounter. Therefore, the total number of request strategies may be greater than the total number of service encounters in a particular week for a particular individual.

Week 6	Speaker-oriented verbs	Need statement						2		
		Want statement					1	3	1	
		Conventional indirectness		1	1				1	
	Hearer-oriented verbs	Imperative								
		Assertive				2				
		Conventional indirectness								1
		Query of availability		1			1	1		
NA	Ellipsis		2			1		1		
Week 11	Speaker-oriented verbs	Need statement					1	2	2	
		Want statement			1		1	2		
		Conventional indirectness		1						
	Hearer-oriented verbs	Imperative	2							
		Assertive			1	2				1
		Conventional indirectness			1					1
		Query of availability	3					2		
NA	Ellipsis		1	5				2		

The request strategies listed in the table were from a variety of service encounter contexts in which students requested a specific product or service, including cafés, bars, small shops, banks, and the institute’s reception desk. Due to the variety of locations, Table 10 is not intended to be interpreted as if the request strategies represented there

within were from a more uniform and controlled context. However, the table serves to visually present a pattern that was observed in the data indicating a development over time towards the more frequent use of hearer-oriented verbs by four of the students.

Movement towards the use of hearer-oriented verbs was linked to two specific lexical items: the verbs *poner* and *cobrar*. Furthermore, the observed change towards these hearer-oriented verbs was exclusively in food and retail service encounters in which specific products were requested.

Looking first at *poner* ('to put', 'to give'), the use of this verb in the hearer-oriented perspective in retail service encounter requests in Spain is attested in Placencia (2005). In addition, the use of *poner* was observed frequently by the researcher in service encounters in Toledo, and was cited by local informants as a common and socially appropriate requesting strategy in this context. This evidence suggests that *poner* in the hearer-oriented perspective is viewed as a polite and expected way to make service encounter requests in this speech community. The use of *poner* in service encounters is restricted to situations in which the customer asks the employee to give him or her a specific item (i.e., food, beverage, consumer good) and would not be employed in a request for information or services.

Chloe, Kyle, and Samantha all began to use *poner* in the hearer-oriented perspective with the pronoun *me* in the sixth and eleventh weeks of the semester. Chloe was found to use *poner* twice (week eleven), in both cases in food service contexts; Kyle employed *poner* four times (weeks six and eleven), in both food and retail service

encounters; and Samantha applied this strategy twice (weeks six and eleven) only in food-related service encounters. Looking first at Chloe, example (15) shows a week two interaction in a café and (16) provides a week eleven interaction in similar type of service encounter context: a bar.

(15) Chloe (C) and U.S. American friend (F) in a café ordering food and drinks with a female employee (E) (week two)

- 1 → C: Ho::la: uh- **puedo tener** café con leche y:
2 C: qué: es (.) eso?
(1.2)
3 C: es- qu- qué se llama- or cómo se llama?
4 E: caracola
5 C: caracola
6 C: u:: (.) una::: croissant
7 E: croissant sí
((pause))
8 C: gra:cias
(3.2)
9 C: oh- y- ca- café con leche?
10 F: un café
11 E: con leche también

1 → C: hi uh- **can I have** coffee with milk and
2 C: what is (.) that?
(1.2)
3 C: is- wh- what it is called- or how is it called?
4 E: conch
5 C: conch
6 C: u:: (.) a croissant
7 E: croissant yes
((pause))
8 C: thanks
(3.2)
9 C: oh- and- co- coffee with milk?
10 F: a coffee
11 E: with milk also

(16) Chloe (C) in a bar ordering wine with a female employee (E) (week eleven)

1 E: hola
2 C: hola
3 → C: **ponme** un tinto de verano por favor
4 E: cada uno::?
5 C: sí (.) y pon tapas? (1.1) tapas bien
6 E: sí sí que sí
7 C: bueno (.) gracias

1 E: hi
2 C: hi
3 → C: **give me** a summer red please
4 E: each one?
5 C: yes (.) and give tapas? (1.1) tapas OK
6 E: yes yes yes
7 C: OK (.) thanks

In the interaction in (15), Chloe makes her request for coffee using the phrase *puedo tener* ('can I have'). This phrase does not have the same conventionalized illocutionary force in Spanish as it does in English. While conventional indirectness with the verb *poder* is frequent in Spanish, the use of *tener* ('to have') in conventionally indirect requests is inappropriate. In the context of a service encounter, the meaning is understood, but because this particular phrase is not conventionalized, it is inappropriate as a polite request strategy. In addition to the inappropriateness of the phrase *puedo tener*, conventional indirectness with the verb *poder* ('to be able to')—while common in other types of request situations in Spanish (cf. Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989)—was quite infrequently used (in only 5% of requests) in service encounters in Madrid (Placencia, 2005). On the other hand, direct strategies, which include imperatives, assertives, and ellipsis, constituted 76% of all request types in service encounters in Madrid (Placencia, 2005). In week eleven, Chloe used the imperative form of the verb *poner* with the pronoun *me* to make her request.

In the data, Chloe moved from an inappropriate use of conventional indirectness in week two to an appropriate and polite request using the hearer-oriented, imperative form of the verb *poner*. Further evidence of Chloe's pragmatic development in request forms was found in her journals. In her journal for week seven, Chloe wrote that she was aware of a change in her request behavior and stated that she had learned that *puedo tener* was inappropriate and that *ponme* was an appropriate requesting strategy when requesting food or products in a service encounter. Chloe reported learning this information about

appropriate request forms from the Maximizing Study Abroad class lesson about requests that occurred in the week prior to the week six service encounter recordings.

In the case of Kyle, week two recordings indicated that, in situations in which he needed to request a specific product or service, he exclusively used a want statement with the verb *querer* ('to want') in the past subjunctive form *quisiera* ('I would like'), as shown in (17) below. By week six and continuing into week eleven, Kyle began to use the assertive structure with the verb *poner* in similar types of service encounters, as in example (18).

(17) Kyle (K) buying a watch battery in a watch shop with male employee (W) (week two)

- 1 K: hola
2 W: hola
3 → K: **quisiera** comprar una pila para ese reloj
4 K: sí para ese
5 W: sí, la tenemos, sí
6 W: vente en un ratito
7 K: [OK
8 W: [y la coges
9 K: vale, [gracias
10 W: [eh?
11 W: date una vuelteci:ta y dentro de:: cuarto hora la coges
12 K: bueno, muchas gracias
13 W: de nada
(2.0)
14 W: ahora cuando venga mijo, te la bajo.
(1.4)
15 K: cuánto cuesta, sabes?
16 W: cuatro euros
17 K: cuatro? vale, gracias.

1 K: hi
 2 W: hi
 3 → K: **I would like** to buy a battery for that watch
 4 K: yes for that one
 5 W: yes we have it yes
 6 W: come back in a bit
 7 K: [OK
 8 W: [and you get it
 9 K: OK, [thanks
 10 W: [OK?
 11 W: take a stroll around and in a quarter of an hour you get it
 12 K: OK, thanks a lot
 13 W: don't mention it
 (2.0)
 14 W: when my son comes, I'll get it down for you.
 (1.4)
 15 K: how much does it cost, do you know?
 16 W: four euros
 17 K: four? OK, thanks.

(18) Kyle (K) in a small shop buying batteries with male employee (E) (week six)

((prior to E addressing K, which happens for the first time in line 1, E was conversing with other people in the store))

1 E: venís juntos?
 2 → K: sí. **me pones** un- paquete de::
 3 E: de p[ilas
 4 K: [pilas, sí
 5 E: hay Calina::s? dos noventa y cinco y ((Kin Cornobales)) uno setenta
 (0.4)
 6 E: es for camara?
 7 K: huh?
 8 E: for camara?
 9 K: sí
 10 E: two ninety five, please.
 ((pause with coins moving and cash register opening and closing))
 11 K: gracias
 12 E: three, five

((prior to E addressing K, which happens for the first time in line 1, E was conversing with other people in the store))

- 1 E: did you come together?
2 → K: yes. **you give me** a- packet of::
3 E: of b[atteries
4 K: [batteries, yes
5 E: there are Calina::s? two ninety five and ((Kin Cornobales)) one seventy
(0.4)
6 E: is it for camara?
7 K: huh?
8 E: for camara?
9 K : yes
10 E: two ninety five, please.
((pause with coins moving and cash register opening and closing))
11 K: thanks
12 E: three, five

The form *quisiera* ('I would like') is often taught in Spanish textbooks and foreign language courses as an appropriate way to soften a request. Indeed, in some dialects of Spanish (e.g., Mexican Spanish), *quisiera* is used in service encounters as a polite requesting strategy. However, *quisiera* is not frequently, if ever, heard in retail and food service encounters in Spain. For example, Placencia (2005) reports that want statements—which include different forms of the verb *querer* ('to want'; i.e., *quiero*, *quería*, *quisiera*) only made up 2.5% of the requests in service encounters in corner stores in Madrid. The researcher's own observations and information from local informants confirm that want statements with *quisiera* are not the expected linguistic behavior in these types of service encounters in Toledo.

The assertive with *poner* as shown in line 2 of (18), on the other hand, is an expected linguistic form in service encounter interactions. According to Placencia (2005), the assertive form *me pones* ('you give me') has a similar illocutionary force in requests as the imperative construction *ponme* ('give me'). In using the assertive form, the hearer essentially describes the action that the hearer will take. Both the assertive and the imperative forms were found in Placencia's study of service encounter requests in Madrid. In weeks six and eleven, Kyle exclusively employed assertive request forms when asking for specific products, using *me pones* on four occasions in food and retail service encounters.

As with Chloe, Kyle moved from using a request strategy that was not the expected behavior in Spain to using one that was appropriate. Kyle recognized his own linguistic development in this respect and commented in his journal that he had learned that *me pones* is a more socially appropriate request strategy than *quisiera* in service encounters. Kyle explained that he learned about appropriate request strategies in retail and food service encounters from asking his host father. In the cases of both students, the development could arguably be considered as movement from more indirect strategies (i.e., conventional indirectness, downgraded want statement) to more direct request strategies (i.e., imperative, assertive).

Samantha also employed a hearer-oriented request with *poner* for the first time in week six and then used this form again in week eleven. The example from week six is displayed in (19) below:

**(19) Samantha (S) ordering coffee in the institute café with a female barista (B)
(week six)**

1 S: hola
2 B: hola
3 → S: **puedes ponerme** un café (.) por favor?
4 B: con leche?=
5 S: =con leche, sí
5 B: para tomártelo aquí?
6 S: n- no, [para llevar
7 B: [para llevar
8 S: <<para llevar>>

...

1 S: hi
2 B: hi
3 → S: **can you give me** a coffee (.) please?
4 B: with milk?=
5 S: =with milk, yes
5 B: for here?
6 S: n- no, [to go
7 B: [to go
8 S: <<to go>>

...

Both cases in which Samantha used *poner* occurred in food service encounters. In the week eleven example, however, Samantha made a grammatical error with the requesting verb, saying *puedes *ponme* instead of *puedes ponerme*, the grammatical error being the main verb, *poner*, conjugated in the imperative rather than the infinitive form following the modal verb *poder*. Unlike the other two students, in neither case did

Samantha use the imperative or assertive form of *poner*, but rather *poner* with conventional indirectness. While the phrase *puedes ponerme un café por favor* ('can you give me a coffee please?') is semantically appropriate (unlike *puedo tener*) for the context of a food service encounter, conventional indirectness was found to be relatively infrequent in the Madrid corner shop data, occurring only 5% of the time (Placencia, 2005). Local informants agreed that while socially appropriate, conventionally indirect requests were not typical in service encounters in Toledo. Samantha indicated in her weekly journal that she had learned in the Maximizing Study Abroad class that it was appropriate to make requests with *poner*, but did not talk about the specific tenses or auxiliaries (i.e., *poder*) with which this verb would typically be used. Samantha did not record any food-related service encounters in week two, thus it is impossible to compare her development from the beginning of the semester in the recorded data in this particular context, but her journals indicated that she was aware of a change in her requesting behavior over time as a result of in-class learning about request forms.

Both Jared and Samantha indicated that they learned to use the verb *cobrar* ('to charge') in the hearer-oriented perspective during their semester in Toledo. Based on the researcher's observations, the phrase *me cobras* ('you charge me') is commonly employed in Toledo by customers in retail and food-service interactions as a means to tell the service provider that the customer is ready to pay the money that is owed for products or services. Recordings from week eleven in (20) and (21) show both Jared and Samantha students using the verb *cobrar* in the assertive *me cobras* form. In week six, Jared had

recorded a request to pay a bill in which he used conventional indirectness and a speaker-oriented verb, saying *podemos pagar la cuenta* ('can we pay the bill?'). For Samantha, no recordings in weeks two or six in this context were available to compare with her use of *me cobras* in week eleven, but Samantha mentioned in her journal that she had learned this phrase in Toledo. Both Samantha and Jared commented that they had learned to use the phrase *me cobras* by observing Spaniards in service encounters. In his interview, Jared noted that in the past, he would have said *puedo pagar la cuenta* ('can I pay the bill?') instead of *me cobras*, again suggesting development towards the use of hearer-oriented instead of speaker-oriented verb forms and from conventional indirectness with *poder* to a direct form such as an assertive.

(20) Jared (J) asking to pay the bill in a bar with a female bartender (B) (week eleven)

1 → J:	bueno, me cobras	1 → J:	OK, you charge me
(13.0)		(13.0)	
2 J:	son sesenta? o-	2 J:	it's sixty? or-
3 B:	(...)	3 B:	(...)
(6.0)		(6.0)	
4 J:	gracias	4 J:	thanks

(21) Samantha (S) asking to pay the bill in a bar with a male bartender (B) (week eleven)

C = another customer

1 B: ahora te cobro ‘spera ‘spera ‘spera ((speaking to C))
 (1:00)
 ((S is talking to her American boyfriend while waiting to pay her bill))
 2 C: dos cervezas
 (4.5)
 3 C: gracias
 4 → S: uh: **me cobras** para:: (.) cuatro cañas
 5 B: seis, siete- seis, verdad? ((speaking to someone else other than S))
 6 S: aquí está
 7 B: gracias
 8 S: gracias
 9 B: hasta luego

1 B: in a sec I’ll charge you wait wait wait ((speaking to C))
 (1:00)
 ((S is talking to her American boyfriend while waiting to pay her bill))
 2 C: two beers
 (4.5)
 3 C: thanks
 4 → S: uh: **you charge me** for:: (.) four beers
 5 B: six, seven- six, right? ((speaking to someone else other than S))
 6 S: here it is
 7 B: thanks
 8 S: thanks
 9 B: see you later

In sum, the data from the recorded service encounters combined with students’ journal and interview comments indicate that, during their stay in Toledo, Chloe, Kyle, and Samantha learned to use the verb *poner* to ask for food and drinks in an appropriate way and, in the case of Kyle, for non-edible retail products as well. Jared and Samantha began using the verb *cobrar* to ask for the service provider to charge them for their food purchases. In the cases of Chloe, Kyle, and Jared, these students shifted from using more

indirect request strategies to more direct strategies. All four students moved from speaker-oriented to more frequent use of hearer-oriented verbs over time. As described above, hearer-oriented verbs are more frequent in Spanish than in English and are considered to be polite, appropriate request forms. Taken together, this evidence suggests pragmatic development in these students in the direction of the politeness norms of the target speech community. The sources of this information about these politeness forms came from explicit instruction (i.e., class instructor and host family) and observation of Spaniards interacting in natural settings.

Development of elliptical requests

A movement towards more frequent use of elliptical requests marked a second development over time. Elliptical requests appeared more frequently over time in the food-related service encounters of four students: Greta, Jared, Megan, and Samantha. As described earlier, hearer-oriented verbs are the most frequent type of verb form in requests in Spanish. However, 33% of corner store requests in Madrid (Placencia, 2005) and 43% of requests at an information desk in Madrid (Placencia, 1998) included no verb at all in the request. These types of requests have been termed elliptical, which Placencia (2005, p. 587) classifies as a direct or “quasi-imperative” request strategy. Despite their apparent frequency in Peninsular Spanish, elliptical requests appear to be relatively

infrequent in American English service encounters (Vélez, 1987), in which request forms that include a verb seem to be preferred.

As Table 10 indicates, only two elliptical requests were produced in the first week of recordings, by Greta and Samantha, both in retail service encounters. Samantha used an elliptical request at a convenience store that many students from the Toledo institute frequented. However, it is perhaps significant to point out that she made the elliptical request in week two in a second try at adding minutes to her cell phone. On one day during week two, Samantha went to the convenience store to add minutes on her phone, but was not able to complete the transaction because she did not know her phone number and did not know that she needed to know it in order to add the minutes. Samantha returned the next day and successfully added minutes to her phone. Examples (22) and (23) display the interactions from the first day and the second day of going to the convenience store to buy cell minutes.

(22) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell minutes with female employee (E) (week two, day 1)

1 S: hola
2 E: hola
3 → S: necesito más minutos en mi móvil
4 E: cargar?
5 S: sí (.) para cargarlo
6 E: qué número?
7 S: u::m (.) mi número?
(1.5)
8 S: uh oh (.) t: heh heh
9 S: um:::
(4.5)
10 S: no puedo recordar(hh)lo(hh)
11 E: hm heh
12 S: necesito saberlo?
13 E: claro
14 S: sí::? OK, gracias

1 S: hi
2 E: hi
3 → S: I need more minutes on my cell
4 E: to charge?
5 S: yes (.) to charge it
6 E: what number?
7 S: u::m (.) my number?
(1.5)
8 S: uh oh (.) t: heh heh
9 S: um:::
(4.5)
10 S: I can't remember (hh)it(hh)
11 E: hm heh
12 S: do I need to know it?
13 E: of course
14 S: yeah::? OK, thanks

(23) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell minutes with a (different) female employee (E) (week two, day 2)

1	E:	dime	1	E:	tell me
2	S:	hola	2	S:	hi
(1.2)			(1.2)		
3 →	S:	para acargarlo?	3 →	S:	to *charge it?
(1.5)			(1.5)		
4	E:	Movistar o Vodafone?	4	E:	Movistar or Vodafone?
5	S:	Vodafone	5	S:	Vodafone
6	E:	cuánto?	6	E:	how much?
7	S:	tch um: veinte?	7	S:	tch um: twenty?
(35.0)			(35.0)		
8	S:	gracias	8	S:	thanks
(20.0)			(20.0)		
9	S:	gracias	9	S:	thanks

The first time that Samantha went to the store, in (22) above, she used a need statement (i.e., *necesito más minutos en mi móvil*) to make her request in line 3. In line 4 of the same example, the employee checked to make sure that Samantha wanted to “charge” her phone (i.e., add minutes to it), to which Samantha agreed, repeating the verb *cargar* in line 5 after the employee in the utterance *sí, para cargarlo* (‘yes, to charge it’). When Samantha went to the store the next day, in (23), she employed the same structure as in the previous day as her main request strategy, saying in line 3 *para *acargarlo* (‘to charge it?’), although incorrectly adding an epenthetic *a* to the verb which should be *cargar* not **acargar*. While Samantha did not comment in her journal on her use of the elliptical request in this situation, the similarity of these two interactions suggests that some learning took place on day one with regard to the verb *cargar* and the elliptical

structure, which was transferred to Samantha's behavior on day two in the convenience store.

On another day in the same shop, Samantha incidentally recorded an interaction between two Spaniards while waiting in line to process her new bus card for the month. The Spanish customer in (24) was also adding minutes to her cell phone:

(24) Spanish-Spanish customer-employee interaction in convenience store

13	E:	dime	13	E:	tell me
14	→C:	hola (.) Vodafone	14	→C:	hi (.) Vodafone
15	E:	cinco?	15	E:	five?
16	C:	sí	16	C:	yes
(8.0)			(8.0)		
17	C:	gracias	17	C:	thanks

The Spanish customer employed an elliptical request, simply saying the name of the cell phone company, Vodafone, in line 14. This data is further evidence of the presence of elliptical requests in service encounters in Peninsular Spanish.

Greta used an elliptical request in week two in a souvenir shop buying postcards. She put her postcards on the counter and uttered only *éestas* ('these'), which was understood by the service provider as an indication that she wanted to buy the items. In the food service encounters that Greta participated in during week two, she never used an elliptical request.

Elliptical requests in food-related service encounters only appeared in weeks six and eleven in the data of four students: Greta, Jared, Megan, and Samantha. Comparable

food service situations from weeks two and six or eleven are available in the data for Greta and Jared, but not for Megan or Samantha. Neither Megan nor Samantha recorded food-related service encounters in week two, but in weeks six and eleven, both students recorded themselves making elliptical requests in cafés or bars ordering drinks. With Greta and Jared, however, comparable situations were discovered in the data that suggest a movement over time from request forms with verbs to verbless, elliptical forms in food-related service encounters.

Greta reported spending a great deal of time in cafés and bars studying and also trying to meet people in order to practice Spanish. Because Greta lived in the dormitory, she did not have easy access to expert speakers of Spanish with on a regular basis as did the other participants in the study who lived with host families. Given her situation, it is not surprising that Greta recorded more service encounters in bars and cafés than the other participants. Greta's recording in (25) is from week two and the encounter in (26) is from week eleven.

(25) Greta (G) at a churro shop with male (A1) and female (A2) employees (week two)

32 →G: y **puedo tener** agua de:: (1.2)
33 A2: agua (0.5) mineral? (.) de botella?
34 G: no::
35 A2: normal
36 G: de::
37 G: sí, te- de:: um (3.0)
38 A2: de gri:fo:
39 G: yeah de grifo:: sí
40 A2: con hielo?
41 G: sí (.) con hielo
...

32 →G: and **can I have** water from:: (1.2)
33 A2: mineral (0.5) water? (.) bottled?
34 G: no::
35 A2: normal
36 G: from::
37 G: yes, te- from:: um (3.0)
38 A2: from the tap
39 G: yeah from the tap yes
40 A2: with ice?
41 G: yes (.) with ice
...

(26) Greta (G) in a café ordering waffles with female employees (E and E1) (week six)

S=friend of Greta's

1 → G: um tch h (.) **un gofre con chocolat y- y nata**
(2.8)
2 E: [algo más?
3 S: [y- y- dos: gofres co:n chocolate y nata
4 G: pero todo seperados: y (.) [a mi (.) café con leche?
5 S: [(...)
6 E1: café (...)

- 1 → G: um tch h (.) a waffle with chocolate and- and whipped cream
(2.8)
- 2 E: [anything else?
- 3 S: [and- and- two waffles with chocolate and whipped cream
- 4 G: but all separate: and (.) [to me (.) coffee with milk?
- 5 S: [(...)
- 6 E1: coffee (...)

In three cases in week two recordings, Greta used the phrase *puedo tener* ('can I have') to make food-related requests, which was discussed above as being an inappropriate request strategy in Spanish. During weeks six and eleven, however, Greta used only elliptical requests in all of her food-related service encounters. This data suggests that, in this context, Greta moved from using an inappropriate verb (*tener*) and conventionally indirect requests with *poder* to a more appropriate and direct strategy using elliptical requests.

A similar pattern is found in Jared's service encounter data. In week two, Jared ordered several different types of ham from a meat shop using a conventionally indirect request with *puedo comprar* ('can I buy'), shown in (27). He goes to the same meat shop in week eleven and orders his ham with elliptical requests, presented in (28).

(27) Jared (J) ordering ham at a meat shop with a male employee (E) (week two)

- 1 E: hola
- 2 J: es posible sólo comprar un poquito como:: ciento gramos?
(0.6)
- 3 J: de:: algunos

(1.1)
4 J: o no
5 E: a ver
6 → J: como: **puedo: comprar**:: ciento gramos de: jamón especial de la casa?
7 E: sí
8 J: y:: también e:: lo-
9 E: este es por entero
10 J: oh, por enteras, bueno
11 E: los precios son de esto
12 J: sí bueno:: (0.4) uh ciento cincuenta gramos de: (.) jamon especial de la casa
13 E: vale
(30.0)
14 E: vale?
15 J: perfecto
(3.4)
16 J: vale
17 E: tres con quince
(1.0)
18 J: bueno

1 E: hi
2 J: is it possible to buy just a little bit like:: a hundred grams?
(0.6)
3 J: of:: some
(1.1)
4 J: or not
5 E: let's see
6 → J: like: **can: I buy** a hundred grams of: the special house ham?
7 E: yes
8 J: and:: also e:: it-
9 E: this one is by the whole piece
10 J: oh, by the whole, OK
11 E: the prices are from this one
12 J: yes OK:: (0.4) uh a hundred and fifty grams of: (.) special house ham
13 E: OK
(30.0)
14 E: OK?
15 J: perfect
(3.4)

16 J: OK
17 E: three fifteen
(1.0)
18 J: OK

**(28) Jared (J) ordering salami at a meat shop with male employees (B1 and B2)
(week eleven)**

1 B1: hola dime
2 → J: hola=uh:: cien gramos de:: este salchichón
(34.0)
3 B1: algo más?
4 → J: uh:: (.) cien gramos de este chorizo de bellota
(6.0)
5 B2: quién es el último?
6 J: uh: yo
(15.0)
((long pause with another customer being helped))
7 B1: algo más?
8 → J: uh:: cien gramos de:: este chorizo blanco
(16.0)
9 B1: (...)
10 J: y:: (1.0) un queso:: como ella
(1.1)
11 J: un-
12 B2: (...)
13 J: sí sí
(10.0)
14 B1: así está bien?
(1.3)
15 J: sí
(11.0)
16 B1: algo más?
17 J: uh nope, es todo
(2.2)
18 B1: cuatro cincuenta

1 B1: hi tell me
2 → J: hi=uh:: a hundred grams of this salami

(34.0)
 3 B1: anything else?
 4 → J: uh:: (.) a hundred grams of acorn chorizo
 (6.0)
 5 B2: who's the last one?
 6 J: uh: I am
 (15.0)
 ((long pause with another customer being helped))
 7 B1: anything else?
 8 → J: uh:: a hundred grams of this white chorizo
 (16.0)
 9 B1: (...)
 10 J: and:: (1.0) a cheese:: like it
 (1.1)
 11 J: a-
 12 B2: (...)
 13 J: yes yes
 (10.0)
 14 B1: like this is OK?
 (1.3)
 15 J: yes
 (11.0)
 16 B1: anything else?
 17 J: uh nope, that's all
 (2.2)
 18 B1: four forty

The data from Jared's and Greta's recordings suggest that over the course of the semester in Toledo, these students began to use more direct, elliptical requests in food-related service encounters instead of conventionally indirect requests. Megan's and Samantha's data also indicate that a similar tendency may have been at work with those two students, since elliptical verbs were found in their data in weeks six and eleven. However, neither Megan nor Samantha made food-service recordings in week two. The

suggestion that Megan and Samantha began using elliptical requests over the course of the semester is supported by these two participants' journal entries. Both women wrote specifically in their journals that, during their stay in Toledo, they had learned to use request forms that, in this analysis are categorized as elliptical,¹³ although neither specified how or where they learned this request form. A likely source of this knowledge about elliptical requests as appropriate verb forms is the Maximizing Study Abroad course in which an elliptical request was provided as a model (see further discussion below).

Summary: Developments over time in requests

Overall, the changes in students' requests from the beginning to the end of their semester abroad in Toledo suggest a movement from speaker- to hearer-oriented verbs in requests that included verbs and from requests with verbs to verbless, elliptical requests. Chloe, Jared, Kyle, and Samantha began to use hearer-oriented requests in weeks six and eleven, and Greta, Jared, Megan, and Samantha made elliptical requests by the middle and end of the semester. Both of these developments move in the direction of the politeness norms of the speech community, in which requests with imperatives, assertives, and ellipsis are the expected behavior in retail service encounters, as reported by Placencia (2005) and local Toledo informants.

¹³ Note that neither student employed the terminology "elliptical request." However, in their journals, Megan and Samantha gave examples of what they viewed as appropriate Spanish request forms, including verbless requests which, in the present study, are referred to as elliptical requests.

Discourse domain

The second of Spencer-Oatey's (2000, p. 19-20) domains of politeness is the discourse domain, which includes elements such as "the discourse content and structure of an interchange, including topic choice and the organization and sequencing of information." While the structural elements (i.e., opening, request, provision of request, optional talk, closing) and sequencing of these elements in students' service encounters did not change in a noticeable way over time, there were two ways in which individual participants developed over the course of the semester with regard to this domain of politeness: the use of discourse markers and the content of openings and closings.

Discourse markers

Discourse markers are expressions such as well, oh, y'know, and so in English and *bueno*, *pues*, *o sea*, and *claro* in Spanish that serve a variety of functions in creating connected and coherent discourse and in managing a conversation. A great deal of research has been conducted with discourse markers in many languages (cf. Schiffrin, 2003), including Spanish (cf. Martín Zorraquino & Montolío Durán, 1998; Portolés, 1998; Travis, 2005). Although little research has been carried out regarding the L2 acquisition of discourse markers in Spanish, a study by Lindqvist (2005) indicated that study abroad students increased their frequency of use of Spanish discourse markers such

as *bueno* ('well', 'good', 'OK') and *pues* ('well') over the course of one semester studying abroad in Spain. However, an increase in frequency of use does not necessarily mean that students learn to employ discourse markers in a target-like fashion.

Considering an example from this study, Kyle employed the discourse marker *pues* somewhat frequently in the first week of service encounter recordings, but by the sixth and eleventh weeks he stopped using *pues* altogether. Regarding this decrease in the use of *pues*, Kyle commented in his interview that his host father had told him that he was using *pues* incorrectly and, since Kyle could not figure out what the appropriate contexts were for use of *pues*, he consciously stopped inserting this marker into his speech.

The students in this study were found to use discourse markers in different ways. However, one trend was common to the data of three students (Chloe, Greta, Samantha): these three learners eliminated their use of the English marker OK in service encounters over the course of the semester abroad. There were two primary functions that OK served in the speech of these learners in week two: to show acceptance or acknowledgment of what was previously said and to close the interaction. By weeks six and eleven, the learners began to replace the English OK with Spanish discourse markers including *bueno* and *vale*. The development of each of these three students with regard to OK is examined below.

In weeks two and six, Chloe employed the marker OK in both contexts described above: as a marker of acceptance or acknowledgment and as a *warrant* to close the interaction. Both of these functions are present in the following interaction shown in (29).

(29) Chloe (C) changing money in a bank with male banker (B) (week two)

- 1 B: hola
(0.7)
- 2 B: pásale
3 C: hola=
4 B: =dime
5 C: soy una estudiante de la Fundación de los e- estados unidos=
6 C: =y puedo- cambiar mis um dolares americano a euros?
7 B: vamos
(3.5)
- 8 B: la comisión minima son seis euros lo que cobramos
9 C: seis?
10 B: seis euros
11 C: OK
12 B: vale?
(0.7)
- 13 B: ‘spera ((says something brief to himself which is inaudible))
(5.9)
- 14 B: cuánto has contado tú? ((very rapidly))
15 C: cuánto?
16 B: cuánto has contado tú? ((spoken at the same speed as in previous))
17 C: hh um: todos
18 B: cuánto?
19 C: hh um::=
20 B: =lo sabes decir en español?
21 C: sí:
22 B: a ver
23 C: um (.) cuánto dinero está aquí?
24 C: oh [no?
25 B: [sí
26 C: twenty, fo[rty, sixty, eighty
27 B: [one hundred [y veinte
28 C: [un- sí
29 B: ciento veinte
30 C: y [seis
31 B: [cinco y seis
32 C: sí
33 B: ciento veinte seis ((in a didactic way))

34 C: OK
 35 B: vale?
 36 C: ciento veinte- veinte seis heh heh
 (10.3)
 37 B: tienes un pasaporte un documento donde vengan tus datos?
 38 C: um creo que (2.7) es (.) una fotocopia? oh no (4.1)
 39 C: es un fotocopia está aquí? er- [está buena?
 40 B: [vamos
 (2.6) ((unfolding of piece of paper))
 41 B: Este es el pasaporte, no?
 42 C: sí
 (1.9)
 43 B: vamos
 ((long pause while banker is typing at the computer))
 44 B: Chloe Rae ((spoken in Spanish phonology))
 45 C: sí
 46 B: y Kramer (0.6) e::: apellidos ((name spoken in Spanish phonology))
 47 C: Kramer sí
 ((long pause while banker is typing at the computer))
 48 B: mira
 49 C: OK
 (1.0)
 50 B: son (0.8) ciento veinte seis
 51 C: OK
 52 B: el cambio (0.7) la comisión
 53 C: OK
 54 B: euros (.) ochenta y ocho con veinte seis
 55 C: OK
 (0.5)
 56 C: y firma? (0.9) aquí?
 57 B: sí, sí sí=
 58 C: =OK
 (5.6)
 59 B: eso es para ti
 60 C: oh gracias
 (5.4) ((Chloe shuffling with her bag and papers))
 61 B: vamos
 (18.1) ((Chloe shuffling things and change rattling in the background))
 62 B: veinte seis ((placing coins on the counter))
 (0.7)
 63 C: um[:

64 B: [esto es tuyo
65 C: muchas gracias (0.5) [y
66 B: [qué tal eres turista por aquí (.) en Toledo?
67 C: sí en la Fundación [ah (.) por (.) el semest[re
68 B: [muy bien [es hoy es un mal día hoy
69 B: mucha agua
70 C: ah ((commiserating))
71 B: mucha [lluvia, eh
72 C: [sí::: mis- za- zapatos son=
73 B: =mal día [mal día
74 C: [hhheh heh sí
(0.5)
75 C: y cua- si necesito cambiar más um dinero (.) puedo regresar?=
76 B: =sí
77 C: OK, muchas gracias
78 B: de nada
79 C: tenga un buen día heh
80 B: igualmente (.) hasta luego
81 C: hasta luego

1 B: hi
(0.7)
2 B: go ahead
3 C: hi=
4 B: =tell me
5 C: I'm a student at the Fundación from the United States=
6 C: =and can I- change my dollars to euros?
7 B: sure
(3.5)
8 B: the minimum commission that we charge is six euros
9 C: six?
10 B: six euros
11 C: OK
12 B: OK?
(0.7)
13 B: hang on ((says something brief to himself which is inaudible))
(5.9)
14 B: how much have you counted? ((very rapidly))
15 C: how much?

16 B: how much have you counted? ((spoken at the same speed as in previous))
 17 C: hh um: all
 18 B: how much?
 19 C: hh um::=
 20 B: =do you know how to say it in Spanish?
 21 C: yes:
 22 B: let's hear it
 23 C: um (.) how much money is here?
 24 C: oh [no?
 25 B: [yes
 26 C: twenty, fo[rty, sixty, eighty
 27 B: [one hundred [and twenty
 28 C: [un- yes
 29 B: one hundred and twenty
 30 C: and [six
 31 B: [five and six
 32 C: yes
 33 B: one hundred and twenty six ((in a didactic way))
 34 C: OK
 35 B: OK?
 36 C: one hundred twenty- twenty six heh heh
 (10.3)
 37 B: do you have a passport a document with your personal information?
 38 C: um I think that (2.7) is (.) a photocopy? oh no (4.1)
 39 C: is a photocopy here? er- [is it good?
 40 B: [sure
 (2.6) ((unfolding of piece of paper))
 41 B: this is the passport, right?
 42 C: yes
 (1.9)
 43 B: OK
 ((long pause while banker is typing at the computer))
 44 B: Chloe Rae ((spoken in Spanish phonology))
 45 C: yes
 46 B: and Kramer (0.6) e::: last names ((name spoken in Spanish phonology))
 47 C: Kramer yes
 ((long pause while banker is typing at the computer))
 48 B: look
 49 C: OK
 (1.0)
 50 B: it's (0.8) one hundred and twenty six

51 C: OK
 52 B: the change (0.7) the commission
 53 C: OK
 54 B: euros (.) eighty-eight twenty six
 55 C: OK
 (0.5)
 56 C: and signature? (0.9) here?
 57 B: yes yes yes=
 58 C: =OK
 (5.6)
 59 B: that is for you
 60 C: oh thanks
 (5.4) ((Chloe shuffling with her bag and papers))
 61 B: sure
 (18.1) ((Chloe shuffling things and change rattling in the background))
 62 B: twenty six ((placing coins on the counter))
 (0.7)
 63 C: um[:
 64 B: [this is yours
 65 C: thanks a lot (0.5) [and
 66 B: [how's it going are you a tourist here (.) in Toledo?
 67 C: yes in the Fundación [ah (.) for (.) the semest[er
 68 B: [great [it's a bad day today
 69 B: a lot of water
 70 C: ah ((commiserating))
 71 B: a lot of [rain, eh
 72 C: [yes::: my- sh- shoes are=
 73 B: =bad day [bad day
 74 C: [hhheh heh yes
 (0.5)
 75 C: and whe- if I need to change more money (.) can I come back?=
 76 B: =yes
 77 C: OK, thanks a lot
 78 B: don't mention it
 79 C: have a good day heh
 80 B: you too (.) see you later
 81 C: see you later

Lines 11, 34, 49, 51, 53, 55, and 58 all contain tokens of OK in its function as a marker to show acceptance of what has been said in previous turns in the interaction. The uses of OK in turns 51, 53, and 55 also function as listener responses, which Chloe employs to show that she is listening and understanding what the banker tells her. This use of OK as a marker of acceptance, as shown in example (29), is representative of Chloe's use of OK in the other service encounters that she recorded in week two.

With regard to the second use of OK, shown in line 77, Chloe uses the phrase *OK, gracias* to initiate a termination of the interaction. OK in this case serves as what Schegloff and Sacks (1973) have called a *warrant*, that is, a signal that the speaker wants to end the interaction. In week two, Chloe uses *OK, gracias* as a warrant to close the service encounter in four instances.

In Chloe's week six and eleven data, there were no instances of OK as an acceptance/acknowledgment marker or as a listener response device in the recorded service encounters, suggesting that Chloe stopped using this English marker for those functions. Chloe began using the Spanish marker *bueno* to indicate acceptance/acknowledgment and perhaps also *sí* ('yes') and silence or nonverbal acceptance. *Bueno* has been described as being used for the function of acceptance and acknowledgment in oral Peninsular Spanish discourse (Bauhr, 1994; Fuentes, 1999), among the many other functions that this marker also has (cf. Bauhr, 1994; Fuentes, 1999; García Vizcaíno & Martínez-Cabeza, 2005; Ocampo, 2006; Serrano, 1999; Travis, 1998; 2005). Example

(30) below is the transcript of an interaction in a bank in which Chloe was changing money, recorded in week six.

(30) Chloe (C) changing money in a bank with a male banker (B) (week six)

1 C: hola (0.5) puedo cambiar mi dinero (.) americana a los euros:?? (0.4)
2 B: sí (0.5) te digo que lleva comisión
(0.7)
3 C: oh [sí
4 B: [cinco coma cero uno
5 → C: oh **bueno**, sí
(long pause with shuffling and typing))
6 C: gracias
7 B: gracias
(1.1)
8 C: y tu cajeros acepten Visa?
9 B: el cajero sí que [admita Visa, sí
10 →C: [sí? oh **bueno**
(8.2)
11 B: cuatro, seis, ocho, noventa
12 C: sí, noventa
(long pause with computer and typing sounds and B talking to himself a little))
13 B: mira
(1.6)
14 B: (...)
15 B: son noventa
16 C: mhm
17 B: y la comisión es esto
18 B: se queda en esto en euros
19 →C: **bueno** heh heh heh
(long pause))
20 C: gracias ((sing songy voice))
21 B: ve[inte, cuarenta, cincuenta, sesenta
22 C: [heh heh
(4.4)
23 B: veinte, veintitrés, veinte ((banker putting coins on the counter))
24 C: muchas gracias señor
(3.8) ((Chloe picking up and dropping coins on counter))

25 C: adios
26 B: adios buenos días

1 C: hi (0.5) can I change my American money (.) to the euros:?(0.4)
2 B: yes (0.5) I tell you that it carries a commission
(0.7)

3 C: oh [yes
4 B: [fīve comma zero one
5 → C: oh **bueno**, yes

((long pause with shuffling and typing))

6 C: thanks
7 B: thanks

(1.1)

8 C: and your ATMs accept Visa?
9 B: the ATM yes [admits Visa, yes
10 →C: [yes? oh **bueno**

(8.2)

11 B: four, six, eight, ninety
12 C: yes, ninety

((long pause with computer and typing sounds and B talking to himself a little))

13 B: look
(1.6)

14 B: (...)
15 B: it's ninety
16 C: mhm

17 B: and the commission is this
18 B: it ends up being this in euros
19 →C: **bueno** heh heh heh

((long pause))

20 C: thanks ((sing songy voice))
21 B: tw[enty, forty, fifty, sixty
22 C: [heh heh

(4.4)

23 B: twenty, twenty three, twenty ((banker putting coins on the counter))
24 C: thanks a lot sir

(3.8) ((Chloe picking up and dropping coins on counter))

25 C: bye
26 B: bye good day

The interaction in (30) is representative of Chloe's use of *bueno* as a marker of acceptance in weeks six and eleven. In lines 5, 10, and 19 in (30) above Chloe employs the marker *bueno* as a means of indicating acceptance of what the banker has said instead of employing OK for this function. According to Travis (2005) when *bueno* occurs by itself in a turn, in similar discourse contexts as in line 19, it indicates acceptance of the previous turn. Research by Travis (2005) and Ocampo (2006) indicate that the use of *bueno* as an acceptance marker by itself, in one turn is attested in native speaker speech (Colombian and Argentine Spanish). However, although local informants in Toledo indicated that Chloe's use of *bueno* in line 19 was acceptable, but that it would not be the most expected response given the discourse context. Finally, the use of two markers together in *oh bueno*, as in lines 5 and 10, was perceived by local informants as decidedly non-Spanish-like. Chloe began using *oh bueno* in week six and continued employing these markers together in similar discourse contexts in week eleven.

The second function for which *bueno* appeared to replace the use of OK in Chloe's speech was as a warrant to initiate the closing of the interaction. In a piecemeal fashion, Chloe moved from using *OK, gracias* to *bueno, gracias* as a means to initiate closings. Her use of these two phrases in closings is presented by week below:

Week Two

Bank: OK, muchas gracias

Grocery: OK, muchas gracias

Hair salon: OK, gracias

Clothing store: OK, gracias

Week Six

Reception: oh bue- OK, gracias

Reception: oh bueno OK, gracias

Week Eleven

Bar: bueno, gracias

The week eleven service encounter interaction in which Chloe used the phrase *bueno, gracias* is shown in its entirety in example (16) above. Note that in weeks six and eleven Chloe also closed some interactions without OK or *bueno* as a warrant, saying simply *gracias* or *muchas gracias*, a closing type which did not occur in her week two recordings.

Chloe's use of the warrant with *gracias* over time suggests that in week two, Chloe only used OK as a warrant. In week six, Chloe was moving towards using *bueno* in this position, (accompanied by *oh*), but was still using OK in a similar way as in week two. By week eleven, Chloe had completely eliminated OK from her speech in service encounters, including its function as a warrant. Indeed, there is a notable reduction over time of OK, from its frequent use in week two (16 tokens), to its less frequent use in week six (2 tokens), and to its elimination by week eleven (0 tokens). Concerning the conventionality of *bueno, gracias* to open up closings, three surreptitious recordings of local Spaniards from Toledo and the researcher's own observations in the community indicate that the use of *bueno, gracias* to initiate closings was not an uncommon practice

in Toledo. The phrase *bueno, gracias* as a closing is also attested in other dialects of Spanish (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2004).

Greta's development followed a similar pattern as Chloe's with regard to the elimination of the marker OK from her service encounter speech: Greta used eight tokens of OK in week two, one token of OK in week six, and never used OK in week eleven. In week two, most of those tokens served the function of acceptance of what had been said in a prior turn, similar to how Chloe employed OK as described above. In addition, Greta employed the marker *vale* ('OK' or literally, 'it's worth it') a total of nine times in week two recordings in similar discourse contexts as OK, as an acceptance marker. Both uses of OK and *vale* are shown in (31) below. The background of (31) is that Greta was buying postcards in a souvenir shop in Toledo, but then while paying for her merchandise, she asked the employee if he knew how late the banks were open.

(31) Greta (G) in a souvenir shop buying postcards from a male employee (E) (week two)

- 15 E: por la tarde no abren los bancos
16 G: no:
17 E: no
18 E: tiene un banco- tiene un banco al fondo
19 E: final de la calle a la mano izquierda
20 → G: **OK**
21 E: abajo
22 → G: **vale**
- 15 E: in the afternoon the banks don't open
16 G: no:
17 E: no
18 E: there's a bank- there's a bank at the end

19 E: end of the street on the lefthand side
20 → G: **OK**
21 E: down there
22 → G: **vale**

In week two, Greta used OK and *vale* in similar discourse contexts as in (31), and then in weeks six and eleven employed one token each of *bien* and *bueno* in the function of an acceptance marker, similar to how she had employed OK and *vale* in week two. Apart from these two discourse markers and one token of OK, Greta did not utter any other markers during weeks six and eleven. While Greta was similar to Chloe in eliminating OK from her speech over time, Greta was also quite different in that she also simply reduced the frequency of discourse markers in her service encounter speech in weeks six and eleven.

Greta only employed the phrase *bueno, muchas gracias* as an initiation for closing in one instance in week six and never used OK or any other marker as a warrant for closing. Thus, unlike Chloe, nothing can be said about her development in this area. In sum, the only change observed over time in Greta's data was the elimination in her speech of OK as a discourse marker indicating acceptance.

The final student to follow a similar pattern with regard to OK was Samantha. Samantha's data indicates a very similar development as Chloe, both with respect to the use of OK as marker of acceptance and as a warrant in initiating closings. As was seen with Chloe, Samantha frequently used OK as an acceptance marker in week two (12 tokens), greatly reduced her use of OK by week six (2 tokens), and completely eliminated

OK by week eleven (0 tokens). In week six, two uses of OK appeared alongside four uses of *bueno* as an acceptance marker and one use of *vale* in the same function. During week eleven, OK and *bueno* disappeared from Samantha's service encounters and only *vale* was left in the role of acceptance marker. Based on the researcher's observations as a participant observer and evidence in the recorded data, the marker *vale* was frequently employed in the Toledo speech community in the function of an acceptance marker. Thus, the data suggest that Samantha moved towards a target-language norm with respect to her use of acceptance markers. As further evidence of this development, Samantha reported in her week six journal that she had realized in a conversation with Spaniards that she had been using *bueno* when *vale* would have been more appropriate and said that she wanted to replace her use of *bueno* with *vale*. Her service encounter recordings would suggest that she was successful in this conscious development.

Finally, just like Chloe, Samantha started out using *OK, gracias* in week two in two service encounters as a way to open up closings. In week six, Samantha employed the phrase *bueno, gracias* once and another phrase *muy bien, gracias* two times in the same context of closings. In week eleven, however, Samantha closed all of her service encounters with no warrant and just a *gracias*. As with Chloe, Samantha moved away from OK in the role of warrant over time but in contrast, appeared not to continue using warrants in closings in the final week, or at least not frequently enough to be recorded doing so. The use of *gracias* without a warrant to close service encounters is a target-like alternative to *bueno, gracias* or *vale, gracias*.

To summarize the findings with regard to the English discourse marker OK and the Spanish markers *bueno*, *bien*, and *vale*, it was found that Chloe, Greta, and Samantha eliminated the use of OK as an acceptance marker and warrant in closings from their speech by the eleventh week of the study. Students used the discourse markers *bueno*, *bien*, and *vale* in similar functions as the English OK, although not always in a prototypically native-like fashion.

These discourse markers were also found in the service encounter recordings of the other participants in the study. Kyle and Jared frequently employed *bueno* and *vale* as warrants in closings during all three weeks of recordings. Miranda and Megan used the phrase *vale, gracias* one time each in week six. Jared, Kyle, and Megan were also found to use *bueno* and *vale* as markers of acceptance similar to the way that Chloe, Greta, and Samantha used these markers. Kyle and Jared used the markers *bueno* and *vale* to indicate acceptance with some frequency during the whole semester, with no changes over time evident. Megan employed *vale* relatively infrequently in this function and Miranda never used this form as an acceptance marker.

Another observation to be made is that none of the participants in this study used *bueno* in the service encounter interactions for any function other than the two described above: acceptance marker and warrant in closings. *Bueno* does have other functions in Spanish such as prefacing a dispreferred response, managing topics (e.g., to start or end a topic), self-correcting, and introducing direct speech (Travis, 2005). The question remains whether these other uses of *bueno* would likely be infrequent in the context of service

encounters or whether students had not yet learned or controlled these other functions in oral discourse.

Finally, it is worth noting that students exhibited very little use of other discourse markers in Spanish such as *pues*, *o sea*, *venga*, and *vamos*, and made no observable progress in the use of these markers in service encounters. On the other hand, these markers were present in the speech of the Spanish service providers in these interactions and thus, students were exposed to these forms. If Kyle's confusion with *pues* is any indication, it may be the case that certain discourse markers or particular functions of discourse markers—since one marker may have a variety of functions—are more difficult to learn than others.

Content of openings

A final development over time relates to the content of the openings of the service encounters that Greta recorded. Greta started off the semester in week two using how-are-you inquiries in three recorded service encounters, as well as others that were not recorded, as reported in a personal communication. In three recordings, Greta directed the phrase *¿cómo está(s)?* ('how are you?') to the employee in different establishments: a grocery store, a souvenir shop, and a pharmacy. In each case, her how-are-you inquiry was met with silence in the data. Two examples are included in (32) below:

(32) How-are-you inquiries by Greta (G) in week two (E=employee in souvenir shop; P1=employee in pharmacy)

1	E:	ho[la	1	E:	h[i
2	G:	[hola	2	G:	[hi
3	E:	buenos días	3	E:	good day
4	G:	buenos día::s	4	G:	good da::y
5	G:	cómo está?	5	G:	how are you?
(2.0)			(2.0)		
6	G:	um (.) éstas	6	G:	um (.) these
...			...		
1	G:	hola	1	G:	hi
2	P1:	hola	2	P1:	hi
3	G:	cómo estás?	3	G:	how are you?
(4.5)			(4.5)		
4	G:	uh:::	4	G:	uh:::
(2.4)			(2.4)		
5	G:	uh- yo necesito:: (.) medicina?	5	G:	uh- I need:: (.) medicine?
(6.2)			(6.2)		
6	G:	solamente uno	6	G:	only one

Greta commented in her journal that after producing her how-are-you inquiry in these service encounters, the employees in those stores simply stared at her with, from her perspective, unfriendly expressions on their faces. The silence in the data indicates a lack of a verbal response, but Greta's account fills in the nonverbal context, at least from her own perspective. After Greta noticed that her how-are-you inquiries were not having the desired effect on her interlocutors, she reported that she consciously decided to stop using that strategy and her openings in weeks six and eleven reflect this decision. In weeks six and eleven Greta only used *hola*, *buenas* and *buenos días* in the opening slot of her service encounters and never produced *¿cómo estás?* in recordings after week two.

While how-are-you inquiries are pragmatically appropriate as openers to service encounters in other dialects of Spanish, such as Ecuadorian Spanish, service encounters in Madrid do not typically feature how-are-you's in the opening sequence (Placencia, 1998; 2005). The researcher's field observations suggest that this trend holds true for service encounters in Toledo as well. Thus, the politeness norms of Peninsular Spanish do not call for such a personalized opening to what is viewed as primarily a transaction, especially when the two people involved are strangers. After week two, Greta changed her behavior in openings in a way that matched the politeness norm of the speech community.

Stylistic domain

As mentioned above, there were no observed developments in the stylistic domain, which Spencer-Oatey (1999, p. 19-20) describes as including "choice of tone (for example, serious or joking), choice of genre-appropriate lexis and syntax, and choice of genre-appropriate terms of address or use of honorifics." However, it is worth pointing out the absence of development with regard to terms of address. When students did address the speaker directly in their service encounters, they did so overwhelmingly with the informal *tú* form. Greta and Megan were the only participants found to use the formal *usted* form in three cases, all instances with employees in their fifties or sixties. Furthermore, the possibilities to analyze terms of address in this data are further limited by the fact that students did not always address their interlocutors directly and thus, did

not always employ address terms in the encounters. Notably, when employees addressed students directly in the second person, in all but two cases they used the informal *tú*. The overwhelming use of *tú* in Peninsular Spanish retail and information desk service encounters is reflected in Placencia's (1998; 2005) studies.

Summary of Research Question 1

This section reported on the first research question regarding whether or not students made changes to their service encounter behavior with regard to politeness norms and whether any changes moved toward the politeness norms of the speech community. Developments in four students' behavior (i.e., Chloe, Jared, Kyle, Samantha) in service encounters included a movement from the dependence on speaker-oriented verbs in requests for specific products (*ponme, me pones*) or actions (*me cobras*)—particularly in the food-related service encounters—to use of hearer-oriented verbs in requests. In addition, Greta, Jared, and Samantha began to use elliptical requests more frequently over the course of the semester abroad. In both cases, these developments were argued to go in the direction of the politeness norms of the speech community in which the students were living.

In addition to changes in request strategies, it was discovered that three students (Chloe, Greta, Samantha) changed in their use of discourse markers from using the English marker OK in the function of acceptance and warrant in pre-closings to using Spanish markers such as *bueno, vale, and bien* for the same functions. The students

moved from using a non-target-like form, OK, to employing more target-like discourse markers. Despite the shift to Spanish markers, students may not have always used those markers in prototypically target-like ways.

A final development was discovered in just one learner, Greta, who changed her behavior with regard to the content of openings. Greta started off the semester using how-are-you inquiries but, after observing negative reactions from service providers, she moved to using more target-like openings in the form of greetings such as *hola* and *buenos días*. In the next section, how students reported learning these and other politeness features is explored.

There were two learners, Megan and Miranda, whose recorded data did not exhibit any of the changes in politeness observed in the other learners, nor were there individual developments evident over time. Despite the lack of notable developments in the recordings, there was some evidence that both Megan and Miranda learned about the use of imperatives and assertives with *poner*, as well as elliptical requests as appropriate ways to make requests in service encounters. Both learners indicated in their journals that they had learned about appropriate request forms from the Maximizing Study Abroad class session on requesting in an L2, with both women explicitly describing elliptical requests or imperative requests with *poner*. The fact that Megan and Miranda recorded few food service encounters (Megan recorded one and Miranda recorded none) may explain the lack of observed change in behavior, given that food service encounters appeared to be the primary site in which students began to use assertives, imperatives,

and elliptical requests. Thus, it may be the case that Megan and Miranda also progressed in a similar way as other participants in this study with regard to requests, despite the lack of evidence to this effect in the recordings.

Research Question 2: How do students report learning about the politeness features of service encounters?

The previous section reported on the developments that were observed in students' service encounters over the course of the semester with regards to politeness features. The goal of this section is to examine how students reported learning about these and other politeness features during their time in Toledo.

Students indicated in their journals and interviews that they learned about politeness using the following methods: explicit instruction, observation of Spaniards, reactions of service providers, and participation in service encounters. Each of the methods reported by students is discussed below.

Explicit instruction

All seven students reported receiving at least some explicit instruction from either host families, friends, or classes at the institute about politeness features in Spanish that was relevant for service encounter interactions. The specific politeness features that were the object of instruction consisted of request strategies, discourse markers, and the address forms *tú* and *usted*.

With regard to request strategies, Chloe, Megan, Miranda, and Samantha commented in their journals that the Maximizing Study Abroad class had helped them to know how to make requests for food items in an appropriate way. The reader is reminded that the Maximizing Study Abroad class included a short lesson on pragmatics, focusing on requests in general in Spanish (see Appendix A for the activities). One brief exercise within that lesson asked students to determine the types of request utterances that were appropriate in asking for a coffee in a café in Spain. Local Spaniards then discussed the request strategies that they felt were appropriate for that context in Spain. The mini-lesson on requests included models for requests with the lexical item *poner* in both the imperative, assertive, and conventionally indirect forms as well as an elliptical request. Imperatives, assertives, and conventionally indirect forms with *poner* and elliptical requests were all rated as socially appropriate by the Spanish informants in the Maximizing Study Abroad class lesson. This lesson occurred chronologically one week prior to the week six recordings of the service encounters. Since all of the participants in this study were present in class during that lesson, they all received identical instruction about requests prior to making their second round of service encounter recordings in week six.

As described in the previous section, Chloe began using an imperative with *poner* in a week eleven food service encounter, Megan used an elliptical request for a drink in week six, and Samantha used both elliptical and hearer-oriented requests with *poner* in food service encounters in weeks six and eleven. Miranda never recorded herself in a

food-related service counter and was not found to use imperatives, assertives, or elliptical requests. However, all four of these students wrote in their journals that the Maximizing Study Abroad class lesson on requests had taught them some requests that were and were not appropriate in Spanish. For example, in her journal, Samantha described the influence of this class lesson on her shift from speaker-oriented to hearer-oriented verbs (although she does not couch the issue in those terms):

I learned [from the Maximizing class] how to properly request for something to eat in a café/restaurant. I never had known to use the verb *poner* before this week...I bought a *café con leche* at the [Toledo institute] cafeteria. I was able to ask for it correctly with *ponme*¹⁴ instead of how I usually say it with *quiero*.

(week five)

A quote from Megan in week five suggests a similar perspective:

I finished going over that sheet that we got in [the Maximizing Study Abroad] class about what is appropriate in Spain and what isn't [regarding request utterances]. I found it really helpful to finally have guidelines. For example when I went to [a bar] for a coffee I was able to order one the way we talked about in class.

Megan did not record the encounter that she mentions in the quote from her journal, but in week six she did record an elliptical request in the same bar that she refers to in this quote.

¹⁴ Note that the interaction that Samantha refers to was not recorded.

Finally, in addition to Samantha's and Megan's entries, Miranda and Chloe both mentioned specifically in their journals that, prior to the Maximizing class, they had been using what they later realized were pragmatically inappropriate requests with the form *puedo tener* ('can I have'). They both commented that they learned other, more pragmatically appropriate strategies in that class lesson.

Kyle reported that he learned about appropriate request strategies from explicitly asking his host father how to ask for things in service encounters. In his journal entry from week four he remarked:

This week I learned a little more about requests when ordering. I asked my host dad how I should order things because I learned [in previous Spanish classes] that I should say *quisiera* or *me gustaria* and he said that *dame* or *me pones* is much better. It wasn't that *quisiera* and *me gustaria* were too formal but he viewed it as "who are you to tell me what you would like?", which I found strange but he said that I need to tell them what I want and that is all.

Not only did Kyle learn which request forms are and are not appropriate, he also received the rationale for why a Spaniard viewed one strategy as more appropriate than another.

The host father's explanation, as reported by Kyle, reflects the preference for hearer-oriented requesting verbs in Spanish, which was described above. However, Kyle did not indicate that he viewed requests in terms of the speaker-oriented/hearer-oriented categorization.

Students also reported both seeking and being given explicit instruction by their host families about other politeness features, namely, discourse markers and formal and informal forms of address. Kyle, for example, reported asking his host parents about how to use *pues* ('well') in correct ways after they mentioned to him that he often did not use the marker correctly. They gave him examples of how to use *pues*, but they were apparently not able to describe specific rules. It was after this conversation with his host parents that *pues* disappeared completely from Kyle's service encounter speech. Kyle mentioned that he consciously stopped using that marker because he was unsure about how to employ it correctly. In another example, Chloe wrote in her journal that her host mother commented to her about the listener responses that Chloe would use in conversation. In week three, Chloe commented: "My mother told me not to say 'OK OK' but 'sí,' because I am in Spain." By weeks six and eleven, the use of OK as a discourse marker had disappeared from Chloe's recorded service encounters, perhaps in part because of this instruction from her host mother.

A final politeness feature that students reported learning about through explicit instruction was the use of the formal and informal forms of address *tú* and *usted*. All seven students reported paying attention to this feature in their performance of service encounters, suggesting that forms of address were a salient feature for these learners. Students reported that they were instructed by their host families and by their instructors at the institute regarding what form to address them with, which in all cases, was the *tú* form. At the start of the semester, all seven students wrote that they thought that they

should use the *usted* form with their instructors at the Toledo institute, but found out in class that the *tú* form was what was expected. Local informants in Toledo confirmed that *tú* was the most frequent form of address by university students to professors in Spanish universities.

Outside of the home and the classroom contexts, students described being less sure about the use of *tú* and *usted*. Only one student reported asking her host family about this distinction. Megan felt frustrated about not knowing when to use *tú* and *usted* and asked her host mother to clarify this issue during week nine of the semester. Megan wrote: “My host mom just said continue with what I’ve been trying. Speak to everyone in the *usted* form, unless they say that I should use the *tú* form. She said that it’s not really anything that’s written down, it’s more something that you just are raised to know.” Unfortunately, Megan’s host mother did not provide Megan with more specific guidelines for the use of *tú* and *usted*, perhaps because Spanish politeness norms were not something to which she gave much thought.

With regard to Megan’s use of *tú* and *usted* in the recorded service encounters, apparently Megan did not take her host mother’s advice considering that, when an address term was present in the talk, Megan used *tú* in every encounter with both older and younger employees, with the exception of the use of the formal pronoun marking in two interactions in week eleven, one with an older employee and the other with a middle-aged employee. At the same time, address terms were often not present in her recorded encounters, which prevents drawing firm conclusions about Megan’s use of this feature.

Students reported that, for the most part, their host parents did not provide them with unsolicited instruction about politeness issues—despite the fact that host parents were reported to frequently correct students’ grammar errors. For example, Jared described a conversation with his host mother: “Grammatically yesterday during the conversation [with my host mom], I think about 5-10 minutes into it I said something that my mother had corrected me on recently a few times in the past. When I got it right she rewarded me...[but] she rarely teaches me lessons about [pragmatic] appropriateness.”

This lack of feedback on politeness issues may be explained by face concerns on the part of the host parents, as has been suggested previously in the literature (cf. DuFon, 1999). That is, host parents may not want to embarrass students or themselves by pointing out social inappropriateness, whereas grammar errors may be perceived to be less of a threat to face. Another possibility is that the host families did not see pragmatics as an important issue about which to instruct students, perhaps thinking that students needed first to improve their grammar and pronunciation or, as in Iino’s (1996) study, not expecting students to conform to Japanese speech community social norms regarding politeness.

The need to maintain harmonious relations between students and their host parents may also have prevented students from soliciting information from their host families about politeness issues. For example, Kyle turned to one of the Puerto Rican students for advice about apologies because he wanted to know if he had apologized

appropriately to his host father for leaving the computer turned on by accident. The situation was described by Kyle:

[My host dad] chewed me out again for leaving my computer on by accident.

After he was done saying what he had to say I said “*lo siento.*” I’m not sure if that was the right circumstance to say it but I did and he said “*no, no te sientas nada, está bien*” [‘no, don’t feel bad about anything, it’s fine’]. He kind of remained grumpy for a while after that but after a little bit of time he was back to normal.

Considering that Kyle’s offense angered his host father, it would have potentially been a threat to his or his father’s face to ask his father what type of apology he should have used in that situation. Instead, Kyle described turning to his Puerto Rican friend to find out about how to make apologies in Spanish in situations such as this one. What Kyle likely did not understand about the situation with his host father was that the father was not looking for an expression of apology such as *lo siento* (‘I’m sorry’), but rather, a solution to the cause of the recurring problem, namely, Kyle’s forgetfulness in turning off his computer. The primary problem that Kyle faced in the apology was not the particular expression of apology that he chose, but his strategy for dealing with the situation.

Jared also reported discussing politeness norms with a U.S. American student who had been in Spain a semester longer than he had and was, in Jared’s opinion, an “extremely fluent” speaker of Spanish. Specifically, Jared discussed the use of *tú* and *usted* with the other student, writing:

This week I learned a bit from a friend. She was at the [Toledo institute] last fall and in my opinion is extremely fluent. She explained to my friends and I a little bit about *tú* and *usted*...She said here in Spain if you don't know someone, it has a lot more to do with age than it does to do with class or job. I think this makes sense because talking to a lot of people here it seems that the people who sweep the streets and the construction worker and the bartenders are all treated with respect more equally to the lawyers and business men than in the U.S. This can be seen in example of service and concept of time as well. You never hurry anyone in Spain, even if they're providing you a service. So, if everyone is "equal," then the only way to differentiate is by age...I may ask my family about this.

This excerpt suggests that in reflecting on the issue, Jared tried to connect the use of *tú* and *usted* in Spain with cultural values relating to equality and to sociolinguistic variables such as age and occupation. However, while issues of age and equality are certainly important variables in speakers' selection of *tú* and *usted*, these are not the only variables, as research on terms of address in Peninsular Spanish service encounters indicates (Blas Arroyo, 1995; Ardila, 2003). For example, speakers may shift from using *usted* to using *tú* in the same conversation, as Blas Arroyo (1995) reports in his study of an interaction regarding the purchase of an automobile. In other cases, specific business establishments may want to convey greater or lesser degrees of formality consistent with their business practices and the image that they want to convey (Ardila, 2003). Thus, the

student that Jared consults only provides part of the picture of the politeness norms regarding *tú* and *usted* in Spain, at least as reported by Jared.

Finally, neither in the recorded data nor in students' journals or interviews was there any indication that service providers themselves explicitly instructed students with regard to politeness norms. Although there was evidence in the recordings that Spanish service providers oriented to the fact that the students were foreigners and L2 learners of Spanish, service providers rarely took on a didactic role vis-à-vis students in the service encounter interactions. There were only two recordings—one by Chloe and one by Jared—in which service providers momentarily took on a didactic role regarding students' linguistic behavior. In Chloe's interaction in the bank shown in (29) above, the banker briefly assumed a didactic role towards Chloe in lines 20 and 33, asking her if she knew how to say a large number in Spanish (line 20) and then modeling that number for her in a didactic tone of voice reminiscent of a language teacher (line 33). In addition, in one interaction at the Toledo institute, a staff member corrected a grammar error in Jared's speech. Finally, although not recorded, Greta reported in her week nine journal that she participated in one interaction in which an employee corrected her speaking:

I am still learning ways to say things in Spanish. One time I was corrected by this one guy from Toledo who owns a pottery shop [in town]. We were talking about art and traveling and I said something really wrong and he corrected me. I thanked him and said I don't mind when people correct me because it helps me more than it offends me. After that, he started correcting my minor mistakes or

suggesting I use different verbs or phrases than what I was using. It was funny and extremely helpful.

This type of interaction, in which a service provider provides linguistic corrections, was not the norm either for Greta—as she reported in her interview—or for other students in the study. Thus, this data indicates that students cannot typically expect to receive explicit instruction regarding politeness norms (or other features of the language) in the service encounter interactions.

Observation of Spaniards doing service encounters

All seven students reported that one way that they learned about politeness features was through observation of Spaniards in service encounters or observation of Spaniards interacting in general. Kyle went so far as to say in his journal that, “The vast majority of what I learn about appropriate use of Spanish I learn through observation, but if something strikes me as weird or confusing I ask.” However, the data from the journals and interviews suggest that relatively few of the developments described in the previous section (i.e., Research Question 1) are attributable to students’ observations and subsequent imitation of native speakers’ politeness behavior.

Samantha and Jared were the only students whose observations of Spaniards could be linked directly to developments in service encounter behavior. First, Samantha and Jared both reported that they had learned to use the assertive requesting phrase *me cobras* (‘you charge me’) from observing Spaniards in service encounter interactions. In

addition, Samantha mentioned having observed the use of the discourse markers *bueno* and *vale* while speaking with Spaniards and realized that she had been using *bueno* when *vale* would be more appropriate. As described above, Samantha had begun using *bueno* as an acceptance marker in week six but, by week eleven, was exclusively using the marker *vale* for this purpose, suggesting that her observation and desire to be more Spanish-like led her to change her behavior.

Greta was the only student who mentioned having observed a difference between requesting behavior in English and Spanish prior to receiving instruction about requesting in Spanish in the Maximizing Study Abroad course. In week four, Greta wrote:

There are definitely many major differences between the people of Spain and the people of America in terms of asking for things. They are more authoritarian here and in my opinion they make their orders (for coffee in this example) into a sort of command: “Give me coffee.” I have been taught to say, “May I please have a coffee?” It’s just so different here.

What can be observed in Greta’s quote is that while she has noticed a difference between English and Spanish requests and accurately observed that Spanish requests often include imperatives rather than conventional indirectness, as in English, Greta did not view this difference from the perspective of a Spaniard, but from her own cultural point of reference. Spaniards do not themselves view imperatives as “authoritarian” or impolite, but rather, as an efficient and direct way of getting things done without a lot of—from their perspective—unnecessary niceties. The service provider is there to serve and the

customer is expected to tell him or her directly what it is that he or she wants. From a U.S. American cultural standpoint, however, unmitigated imperative requests can have the force of being “authoritarian.” The apparent lack of understanding of the politeness norms of requests in Spain may explain why Greta reported noticing that imperatives were a frequent request form in Spain, but yet, never employed imperative forms in her own recorded service encounters.

All of the students commented on the fact that they paid attention to the use of *tú* and *usted* in service encounters as a way to learn when each term of address was appropriate, suggesting that this politeness distinction was particularly salient for the learners. However, in all but a few cases, the seven students employed *tú* in the service encounter recordings and there was no observable change in this behavior over the course of the semester abroad. Megan commented in her week one journal that she was paying attention to the use of *tú* and *usted* and had noticed that at the mall the salespeople addressed her with *usted*.

I am still working out the appropriate use of Spanish, but I think I have figured out that with strangers you use *usted* form and family/friends/etc. you use *tú*. I use *usted* with anyone who has not yet told me that I can use the *tú* form with them. I learned that from my Spanish classes, but it was further realized here with interactions with strangers and my family. I have been paying attention to how teachers treat students; customers treat shop owners, etc; in hopes of understanding more. I still haven't figured it out completely since it changes from

time to time, depending on the speaker. For example, when I was spoken to by shop owners, I noticed that they used the *usted* form. It seemed to be the same for every shop that I went into today at [the mall]. I would receive a “*hola*” and when I decided on something “¿*estas todas para usted?* [‘all these for you?’]

It is clear from this journal entry that Megan was making the effort to observe the terms of address used in a variety of situations. However, what was observed in her service encounter recordings was the use of *tú* throughout the entire semester—with older and younger employees alike—with the exception of two service encounters in week eleven in which she employed *usted* with an older bookstore employee and a middle-aged jewelry shop worker. Thus, despite the distinctions that she describes, in practice, Megan did not always follow those rules or, perhaps, did not have control over the verb and pronoun forms to be able to clearly distinguish between *tú* and *usted* in speaking.

By week three, Megan mentions again in her journal that she is still trying to figure out the social meanings expressed with the terms of address in Spanish: “I don’t want to appear cold or standoffish, which happens when I use the formal [*usted*] form too often. I think I’m going to see how everyone greets me from now on to distinguish the differences between those who regard me as a *tú* and those who regard me as an *usted*.” Megan did not indicate how she came to understand *usted* as being cold and standoffish, but it appears again that she was making the attempt through observation to unravel the politeness norms and social meanings conveyed by the terms of address in Spanish.

Kyle also made the effort to observe the use of *tú* and *usted*, but after week three, he concluded that, “I’ve observed that people don’t really use the *usted* form very much. The main area I hear it is over the phone when people answer “*dígame*” (‘tell me’) but after that most everybody switches to the *tú* form. I don’t use the *usted* form much here because I never really hear it.” Considering the contexts in which students spent most of their time in Toledo, it is not surprising that Kyle would have rarely heard the *usted* form being used. At the institute, staff and professors addressed students with *tú* and directed students to reciprocate with the informal pronoun. In all of the recordings between students and their Spanish language partners and host families—all of which were informal contexts—the students were directed to use *tú* and were addressed by Spaniards with *tú*.

A final vehicle for observation of politeness norms, that only Miranda mentioned, was the cinema. In two instances in weeks seven and eleven, Miranda commented that she had paid attention to the use of *tú* and *usted* in a movie and the use of apologies in another. In the case of the former, Miranda wrote:

I went to see the movie *Velo Pintado* [‘Painted Veil’] and I observed something about the use of *tú* and *usted*. The movie is set in China in 1925 and Kitty, the protagonist, is the wife of a doctor during an outbreak of cholera. One of his friends is an American chef. Although they are friends, she always used the *usted* form with him. I think that she used *usted* because men had more power in that

time. Also, the chef was close to her husband. The use of *usted* is really interesting.

Although the example that Miranda writes in her journal regarding the politeness norms of *tú* and *usted* was perhaps a bit far removed from her daily life in the twenty-first century, Miranda commented in her interview that she used movies as a source of information about politeness norms in general, and did, in fact, watch movies set in the modern day as well.

Despite the fact that all participants reported observing Spaniards as a way to learn politeness norms, students' reports and the researcher's experience in the host community indicate that observation as a learning strategy was difficult in some service encounters. In many establishments in Spain—such as the post office, the supermarket, and the train station—customers are expected to do their business and finish the transaction as soon as possible so as to allow the next person waiting to have his or her turn. Thus, in many service encounter sites there is pressure to complete the transaction as quickly as possible, which may not give learners much time for observation. In addition, students are not simply observers in service encounters, but participants who need to focus their energy on carrying out their business in Spanish. Chloe and Megan commented that it was difficult for them to observe what Spanish customers and employees were doing when they had to think about what they were going to say and trying to understand what the employee would say to them.

Another difficulty in some service encounter sites was the lack of opportunity to observe Spaniards in the role of customers. In some establishments (e.g., post office, bank) each customer goes to the counter one by one to speak to an employee by himself or herself while the other customers wait in line away from the counter. Megan commented in her journal that due to some of these difficulties of observation, she was grateful to receive explicit instruction in the Maximizing Study Abroad class about how to make requests in service encounters.

Reactions of service providers

An additional source of information about politeness norms that two students reported was the reaction of service providers to what students said. In her journal and in a conversation with the researcher, Greta discussed her use of *¿cómo está(s)?* ('how are you?') as part of the way that she opened service encounters in week two of the semester. The reactions that she received to *¿cómo está(s)?* from three different service providers were what she perceived to be unfriendly in all cases, based on the absence of response and the individuals' facial expressions. In the recorded data, these how-are-you inquiries were met with silence on the part of the service provider. In her journal for week two, Greta made the following comment about her use of *¿cómo está(s)?* as an opening in the checkout line at a grocery store: "From this experience at the checkout counter I will know better next time that [the cashiers] really don't care and that [the grocery store] is just a place to get what you need and leave. Next time I will say '*hola, buenos días*', give

them my money, and say ‘*gracias, adios*’.” Indeed, as described above, in service encounters after this first week, Greta never employed *¿cómo está(s)?* or any other how-are-you inquiry in her opening sequence.

Jared mentioned a similar observation that he made about the reaction of a Spaniard to a how-are-you inquiry. As described in his journal, in week eleven, Jared went into the same souvenir shop two days in a row. On his second visit to the shop, Jared explained: “I did notice that when I talked to the guy at the souvenir shop I said ‘*¿qué tal?*’ and he acted like it was out of place. I’d met him yesterday so I didn’t think it would be weird to greet him that way but apparently it was.” How-are-you inquiries, even among customers and service providers who know each other only casually are not the norm in Madrid (Placencia, 2005) and, according to local informants, not the norm in Toledo. Jared’s comments indicate that he became aware that how-are-you inquiries are not expected in the service encounter context among strangers.

Participation in specific service encounters

By the end of the semester in Toledo, all seven students commented in their journals and interviews that they felt more confident participating in service encounters after having done so for the whole semester. Part of the confidence that students felt was based on the simple fact of being familiar with using Spanish in service encounters, something which none of the participants had done frequently prior to their stay in

Toledo. Chloe described this sentiment in her week eleven journal: “During the service encounters [this week], I felt like I was finally expressing what I wanted to say! I didn’t feel intimidated or anything, I did have to go look up some vocabulary before I went in, so I felt prepared.” When asked why she felt confident in week eleven, Chloe responded that she had done those types of service encounters a number of times over the semester and was used to that type of interaction by week eleven.

The case of Jared ordering ham at the meat stand is one example from the recorded data, shown in examples (27) and (28) above. In the week two meat stand encounter, Jared did not know how it worked to order meat by weight and he tried to ask the employee if it was possible to buy just a small amount. Jared’s pronunciation is fairly target-like and he makes a nearly grammatically correct utterance saying, *¿Es posible sólo comprar un poquito como *ciento gramos?* (‘Is it possible only to buy a little bit like a *hundred grams?’). The meat stand attendant does not quite grasp what Jared means, apparent by his lack of response to Jared’s question. Perhaps the one grammatical error in the sentence, *ciento* instead of the correct form *cien* (‘one hundred’), caused the miscommunication. Alternatively, the employee may just not be accustomed to answering that type of question, the answer to which may seem evident to the employee. By week eleven, however, Jared’s meat stand encounter, in (28), goes smoothly; he orders his meat and finishes the encounter without any misunderstandings.

In his journal for week eleven, Jared explained how he felt about this type of service encounter: “Out of the service encounters [for this week], I think the most

successful one is the meat stand. I got pretty good at getting meat at the meat stand like a Spaniard. I feel like I was good enough at it by the end of the semester that they didn't really know a difference in the way that I would order something and the way that a Spaniard would order something." Indeed, in the meat stand recording week eleven, Jared is informal, direct, uses elliptical requests to order his salami and chorizo, and employs typical openings and closings—the expected behaviors for this type of interaction in Peninsular Spanish. Jared's comment that "I got pretty good at getting meat...like a Spaniard" suggest that, through practice and participation in this type of interaction, Jared was able to discover the behavioral expectations and appropriate linguistic forms for this service encounter.

Another example was that of Samantha adding minutes to her cell phone. In the first interaction of this type that she participates in during week two (shown in (22) above), Samantha does not realize that she needs to know her phone number in order to add minutes. She had thought that bringing the actual cell phone would be sufficient. In subsequent interactions with the same purpose (displayed in (23), (36), and (37)), Samantha's verbal behavior approximates that of the Spaniard in the same type of interaction (shown in (24) above). Thus, these examples suggest that the act of participating in service encounters and learning the behavioral expectations for customers and employees was another source of knowledge about the social norms of the target speech community.

Summary of Research Question 2

Students' reports on how they learned about politeness are helpful in making the connections between the specific developments in politeness over time in students' audio recordings and the sources of learning for those pragmatic developments. Five students, Chloe, Kyle, Megan, Miranda, and Samantha reported in their journals and interviews that explicit instruction in class or by the host family helped them to learn the appropriate request strategies for food and retail service encounters. More specifically, explicit instruction helps to explain the development in some students toward the use of hearer-oriented and elliptical requests, indicated by the recorded service encounter data described in the previous section.

Another strategy for learning about politeness norms that students revealed was observation of the behavior of Spanish customers and employees, as well as Spaniards in other roles. Samantha reported learning about the assertive request *me cobras* ('you charge me') and about the appropriate use of the discourse markers *bueno* and *vale* by observing Spaniards. Samantha's recorded data suggested that she had indeed developed in the use of these linguistic features, and her journals indicate that this development was due to observation and conscious adoption of the norms that she observed. Although all of the participants in this study reported using observation as a means to learn about politeness, no other explicit connections could be made between learning and performance in service encounters. For example, students reported paying attention to the use of *tú* and *usted* in service encounters or in other interactions among Spaniards, yet

students did not change their use of *tú* and *usted* over time, due, to a great extent, to the overwhelming use of *tú* in Peninsular Spanish in the contexts in which students interacted. Finally, becoming familiar with service encounters through repeated participation in these types of interactions was another way in which students reported learning politeness norms.

Research Question 3: What is the role of the interlocutor and the social context in L2 learners' performance of service encounters?

This research question was motivated by one of the primary tenets of Vygotskian sociocultural theory, namely, that symbolic tools—most importantly, language—mediate one's interaction with the world and interactions with other people. This section examines students' performance in the service encounter interactions from a sociocultural perspective, considering the ways in which the social context and the interlocutor had a role in shaping learners' performance of service encounters. More specifically, this section examines two issues: first, how opportunities for relational talk were shaped by the type of service encounter and the interlocutor and second, how learners' reported comfort level was related to performance in service encounters.

Opportunities for relational talk

While the majority of the talk in the service encounters was focused on the relevant transaction, in ten¹⁵ out of the 113 recorded encounters students and service provides also shared relational talk, that is, talk that goes beyond the speech necessary to carry out the service transaction. Table 11 below summarizes the features of those instances of relational talk in the data.

Table 11: Instances of relational talk in the service encounters by student

Student	Location	Week	Relational talk topic(s)	Approx. length	Who initiated?
Chloe	Bank	Two	What she's doing in Toledo; bad weather	< 30 seconds	Employee
Greta	Tobacco shop	Two	Employee flirting with Greta	Several minutes	Employee
	Café	Six	Typical Spanish foods	5 minutes	Employee
Jared	Bank (<i>carnet joven</i>)	Two	Last names	< 30 seconds	Employee
	Hotel	Six	Travel plans, language learning	5 minutes	Employee
	Toledo institute travel assistance staff	Six	Difficulty of translating things such as names of cocktails	Several minutes	Employee
Kyle	NONE				
Megan	Jewelry shop	Six	Megan's perceptions of Spain and travel plans	Several minutes	Employee
	Toledo institute reception desk	Eleven	Travel plans; goodbyes	1 minute	Employee

¹⁵ Relational talk contained in openings and closings (i.e., how-are-you inquiries and well-wishing) was not included in this count due to the brevity of the talk.

Miranda	NONE				
Samantha	Tobacco shop	Six	Employee flirting with Samantha	Several minutes	Employee
	Toledo institute cafeteria	Six	Weekend traveling activities	< 30 seconds	Student

In nine out of ten instances, relational talk was initiated by the Spanish service provider. While students did participate in the service encounters beyond the required transactional talk, they did so primarily by asking questions about products and services rather than by initiating non-transactional relational talk. As a result, the initiative of the Spanish service providers in pursuing relational talk with students was the primary factor explaining the presence of these non-transactional exchanges in the data.

The fact that more instances of relational talk did not occur in the data is related both to differences between the individual Spanish service providers and to differences in the local conditions of each service encounter. Clearly, some settings were not conducive to talk beyond the transaction because the employees needed to help each customer as quickly as possible in order to keep up with demand. Among other sites, the post office, bars, cafés, banks, and grocery stores were frequently busy places with more than one customer waiting for service, and both customer and service provider would have felt pressure to finish the transaction as soon as possible. Short exchanges of relational talk did occur in typically busy contexts such as the bank in which Jared obtained his *carnet joven*. In Jared's case, in Greta's encounter in the café, and in Samantha's interaction in the cafeteria, service providers engaged in small talk at the same time as they were

completing their duties in the role of employee (i.e., filling out the paperwork, bagging pastries, and making coffee) or during gaps in the transactional procedures (e.g., bank employee waiting for the computer to process the transaction). Extended small talk only occurred in situations in which the service provider did not have other customers waiting or other duties to attend to that would take him or her away from participating in the interaction.

However, a facilitative environment was not enough for a service provider to initiate small talk; engagement in small talk was also based on individual motivations on the part of the service providers. For example, the context of a hair salon is conducive to small talk between hair stylist and customer during the course of the hair cutting, given the relatively long period of time that customer and employee spend in close proximity. Despite this facilitative context, Megan and her hair stylist did not engage in small talk during her haircut; neither she nor the hair stylist initiated non-transaction-related talk.

The initiative of the nine Spanish service providers who did pursue relational talk with students opened up opportunities for learners to participate in interactions that went beyond the routine verbal exchanges associated with transaction-based talk. However, the service providers also shaped students' production in the small talk exchanges, influencing through their own talk students' opportunities to control the floor, to make contributions, and to express their own ideas. Similar to what Shea (1994) discovered in his study, the interlocutors in these service encounters were found to create participant

structures in which students' contributions to the relational talk were more or less symmetric or asymmetric vis-à-vis the contributions of the service provider.

Symmetric interactions between students and employees were characterized by students producing significant numbers of turns in the interaction that consisted of more than listener responses (e.g., *sí* ('yes'), *mhm*), having opportunities to take the floor without interrupting, and developing their own topics and interactional goals. In more symmetric interactions, service providers asked students questions, let students develop their own topics, did not frequently interrupt while students had the floor, provided continuers and listener responses, and asked follow-up questions about what students had said. On the other hand, in more asymmetric interactions, students produced little talk apart from listener responses and had difficulty controlling the floor or the topic. Furthermore, asymmetric interactions were characterized by service providers focused on developing their own topics, maintaining control over the floor, interrupting students frequently, and not collaborating with students to develop their own topics through supportive moves such as follow-up questions.

Symmetric interactions

Two examples of the more symmetric relational talk interactions come from recordings made by Megan and Samantha. The first example is an interaction that Megan recorded during week two between herself and a male jewelry shop owner in his forties.

Megan had visited the jewelry store earlier the same day of the recording and was making a return visit with the purpose of asking a question. In the end, Megan did not ask her question, but she spent several minutes conversing with the jeweler, primarily about non-transactional topics.

(33) Megan (M) speaking with a male employee (E) of a jewelry store (week two)

- 1 M: yo tengo una pregunta hhheh
2 E: ah:: muy bien
3 E: pues puedes mirar todo lo que necesites heh heh
4 M: heh heh heh (1.0) sí
5 E: que yo tengo más tiempo aun
6 E: yo tengo hasta las dos hh[heh heh heh
7 M: [heh heh (0.4) sí
(0.8)
8 E: estás en la Fundación? o-
9 M: sí yo estudio en Fundación (0.4) uh=
10 E: =cuánto tiempo llevas?
(2.0)
11 M: uh:: diecisiete de enero hasta:: (.)
12 E: hasta hoy
13 M: mayo
14 E: hasta mayo. cuatro meses o así, no?
(0.9)
15 E: mhm
16 M: más o menos
(3.8)
17 E: contenta?
18 M: me encanta España ((said in a very monotone, unexcited voice; matter-of-fact))
(1.7)
19 M: um:: (0.4)
20 E: aquí se pue- lo bueno es que aquí en España se puede hacer de todo, cierto?
21 M: qué?
22 E: que se puede hacer de todo ((a little louder))

23 E: se puede salir, se puede beber, se puede fumar, se- todo, no?
 24 E: no hay ningún problema heh heh heh
 25 M: no me gusta fumar a-
 26 E: bueno yo no digo que te guste fumar
 27 M: hh[heh heh
 28 E: [pero me refiero a que aquí en España se puede hacer de todo o sea
 29 E: que es libre (.) se puede hacer lo que uno quiere, no?
 30 M: sí es muy libre me gusta
 31 E: hasta luego ((spoken to another customer))
 32 M: mucha gente piensa que:: Estados Unidos es::
 33 E: mhm
 34 M: libre pero:: um (0.3) a veces no.
 35 E: no, ya (.) heh heh
 36 E: beber hasta los veintiún años, no?
 37 M: qué?
 38 E: no se puede beber hasta los veintiuno (.) la edad.
 39 M: ah
 40 E: veintiún- veintiún años (.) para poder beber, no?
 (0.4)
 41 M: sí. yo tengo veinte
 42 E: ay: no puedes heh
 43 E: y en España llevar dos años bebiendo heh heh heh desde los dieciocho.
 44 M: sí::
 45 E: bueno desde los dieciséis ya se bebe heh heh heh
 46 M: hhheh
 (3.3)
 47 M: pienso:: que mi hermana va a encon:: (0.4)
 48 M: encon:: (.) en- canta si viene también
 49 E: mhm
 (1.4)
 50 E: me alegro
 51 M: heh heh
 52 E: yo de todas formas te digo una cosa
 53 E: todo lo que ves (.) todo lo que ves únicamente es plata
 54 M: sí
 55 E: no lo verás como amari:llo:
 56 E: porque la plata se ensucia
 57 M: sí
 58 E: yo antes de entregarla la li:mpio
 59 E: se tiene que quedar (.) flama::nte
 60 E: niquelada, vamos

61 E: como el primer día.
62 E: y ésta se- se ve como amarillenta (.) no te preocupes
63 E: se tiene que quedar perfecta antes de entregarla
(2.2)
64 E: date cuenta que lo que está dentro de las bolsas de plástico
65 E: está limpio (.) porque no les entra la humedad.
66 M: sí
67 E: no les- no les da la luz
68 E: entonces por eso (1.1)
69 M: yo sé porque::
70 E: mhm (lle) a trabajar la joyería, claro.
71 M: sí
72 E: hhh heh
73 M: yo necesito limpiar [toda la plata (.) cada día
74 E: [mhm uhuh mhm
(5.4)
75 M: vale:
76 E: y yo aquí con el vicio
77 M: qué?
78 E: y yo con el vicio
(1.2)
79 E: yo fumando
80 M: oh, sí
81 E: heh
82 M: vale creo que: (.) (...)
83 E: mhm (.) mira por aquí
((pause; sounds like they went outside because of shuffling and lots of background noise))
84 E: (...)
85 M: heh heh
(3.0)
86 E: y cuándo (...) vienes con tu hermana.
87 M: um::: (.) vamos a viajar a::: (.) a: Europa
88 E: mhm
89 M: juntos (.) para::: um (.) mayo (0.7) y::
90 E: cuándo- después de terminar la Fundación (.) [viajáis por Europa.
91 M: [sí sí
(4.0)
92 M: vale
93 E: bueno (.) (...)
94 M: muchas gracias

95 E: hasta luego::

1 M: I have a question hhheh

2 E: ah:: very good

3 E: well you can look at everything you need to heh heh

4 M: heh heh heh (1.0) yes

5 E: I have even more time

6 E: I have until two o'clock hh[heh heh heh

7 M: [heh heh (0.4) yes

(0.8)

8 E: are you at the Toledo institute? or-

9 M: yes I study at the institute (0.4) uh=

10 E: =how long have you been here?

(2.0)

11 M: uh:: sixteenth of January until:: (.)

12 E: until today

13 M: May

14 E: until May. about four months, no?

(0.9)

15 E: mhm

16 M: more or less

(3.8)

17 E: are you happy?

18 M: I love Spain ((said in a very monotone, unexcited voice; matter-of-fact))

(1.7)

19 M: um:: (0.4)

20 E: here you ca- the good thing is that here in Spain you can do everything, right?

21 M: what?

22 E: you can do everything ((a little louder))

23 E: you can go out, you can drink, you can smoke, yo- everything, no?

24 E: there's no problem heh heh heh

25 M: I don't like to smoke t-

26 E: well I didn't say that you like to smoke

27 M: hh[heh heh

28 E: [but I mean here in Spain you can do everything I mean

29 E: that it's free (.) you can do what you want, no?

30 M: yes it's really free I like it

31 E: see you later ((spoken to another customer))

32 M: many people think that:: the United States is::
 33 E: mhm
 34 M: free but:: um (0.3) sometimes not.
 35 E: no, right (.) heh heh
 36 E: drink not until twenty one years, right?
 37 M: what?
 38 E: you can't drink until twenty one (.) years old.
 39 M: ah
 40 E: twenty one- twenty one years (.) to be able to drink, no?
 (0.4)
 41 M: yes. I'm twenty
 42 E: oh: you can't heh
 43 E: and in Spain you'd have been doing it for two years heh heh heh since
 eighteen.
 44 M: yes::
 45 E: well from sixteen you drink heh heh heh
 46 M: hhheh
 (3.3)
 47 M: I think:: that my sister is going to fin:: (0.4)
 48 M: fin:: (.) lo-ve if she comes too
 49 E: mhm
 (1.4)
 50 E: I'm glad
 51 M: heh heh
 52 E: anyway I'll tell you something
 53 E: everything you see (.) everything thing you see is pure silver
 54 M: yes
 55 E: you don't see it yellowed
 56 E: because silver gets tarnished
 57 M: yes
 58 E: before I sell it I clean it
 59 E: it has to be (.) brillante
 60 E: shiny, of course
 61 E: like the first day.
 62 E: and it's- it looks yellowed (.) don't worry
 63 E: it'll be perfect before handing it over
 (2.2)
 64 E: you can see that what's in these plastic bags
 65 E: is clean (.) because the humidity doesn't get in.
 66 M: yes
 67 E: it doesn't- they don't get the light

68 E: so for that reason (1.1)
69 M: I know because::
70 E: mhm (Ile) work on jewelry, of course.
71 M: yes
72 E: hhh heh
73 M: I need to clean [all of the silver (.) every day
74 E: [mhm uhuh mhm
(5.4)
75 M: OK:
76 E: and me here with my bad habit
77 M: what?
78 E: and me with my bad habit
(1.2)
79 E: I'm smoking
80 M: oh, yes
81 E: heh
82 M: OK I think that: (.) (...)
83 E: mhm (.) look over here
((pause; sounds like they went outside because of shuffling and lots of background noise))
84 E: (...)
85 M: heh heh
(3.0)
86 E: and when (...) you come with your sister.
87 M: um::: (.) we're going to travel::: (.) to: Europe
88 E: mhm
89 M: together (.) for::: um (.) May (0.7) and::
90 E: when- after finishing at the institute (.) [you'll travel in Europe.
91 M: [yes yes
(4.0)
92 M: OK
93 E: OK (.) (...)
94 M: thanks a lot
95 E: see you later::

Throughout the interaction, the jeweler asked Megan questions, starting in line 8, with a question about whether Megan was studying at the Toledo institute. He then asked

her questions about how long she had been in Spain (lines 10 and 14) and whether she was happy in Spain (line 17). The other questions that he asked in lines 20, 23, 29, 26, and 40 are all in the format of a statement with the tag question *¿no?* or *¿cierto?* ('right?') at the end of the turn. These tag questions have the function of drawing Megan into the conversation by asking if she agrees with speaker's evaluation or presumed knowledge—in the first case the jeweler's evaluation that life in Spain is free and in the second case his belief that the drinking age in the U.S. is twenty-one. These tag questions are not interactionally or value neutral, since in using this structure, the speaker displays that he assumes that the listener agrees with him and checks to verify that agreement. Furthermore, his statements about Spain paint the country in a positive light and ask Megan, as a foreigner in Spain, to agree with his positive evaluation of his country.

The jeweler's questions do elicit answers from Megan at which point she has the opportunity to produce talk, although she does not continue her talk for more than a few brief turns at a time. Megan also develops her own topics in the conversation or takes the current topic in a new direction. In line 30, Megan agrees with the jeweler's evaluation that in Spain one is free to do as one pleases and then continues in lines 32 and 34 with a new direction on the same topic, namely her own parallel, but counter-evaluation that in the U.S. it is sometimes not free. Later, after a 3 second lapse in the talk, Megan introduces a new topic in lines 47 and 48 in which she states that her sister will love this jewelry store when she comes to visit.

The shopkeeper provides numerous continuers and listener responses that function to tell Megan that he is interested in what she is saying, that he is listening, and that he wants her to continue talking. For example, the jeweler uses the continuer *mhm* in lines 15, 33, 49, 70, 74, 83, and 88 as a response to Megan's previous turns. The rising tone of voice that the shopkeeper uses in uttering *mhm* functions to further show interest in what she is saying. The service provider also legitimizes Megan's contributions by asking follow-up questions (e.g., line 14) and making comments about what Megan has said (e.g., lines 42, 50, and 90). Furthermore, there are instances in which the jeweler finishes Megan's sentences (e.g., line 12), collaboratively constructing the turn.

There is only one instance in which the jeweler interrupts Megan while she is talking, occurring in line 26. In that turn, the shopkeeper indicates that he thinks that Megan's utterance *no me gusta fumar a-* ('I don't like to smoke to-') reveals that she did not understand the point of his four previous turns (lines 20, 22, 23, 24) regarding freedom to do what one pleases in Spain. His interruption serves to indicate that she has misunderstood the message of his previous turns, clarifying in lines 28 and 29 that his point has nothing to do with whether she likes to smoke or not, but rather, whether people have the right to smoke if they choose to do so. Other than this particular interruption, the only other instance in which Megan does not complete a turn is in line 89 when she pauses and then lengthens the vowel of the word *y* ('and'), at which point the service provider takes his turn in line 90.

Despite the fact that the jeweler does most of the talking in this interaction, the difference in the amount of talk is due more to Megan not actively taking the opportunity to talk than to the jeweler not allowing her ample space in the interaction to initiate talk without having to interrupt him. In fact, quite the opposite occurs: the jeweler gives Megan many opportunities to talk by asking her questions, by not interrupting her when she speaks, by pausing to let Megan speak, by collaboratively constructing turns, and by providing continuers and making comments about Megan's contributions. These supportive moves on the part of the jewelry store employee provide assistance to Megan to enter into the interaction and continue her talk, giving her the opportunity to participate more fully as a speaker in the talk.

Another more symmetric interaction was that of Samantha interacting with the barista in the Toledo institute cafeteria while ordering coffee. In this case, unlike any of the other examples of interactions involving relational talk, the student was the one who initiated the small talk. Samantha had just returned to Toledo from spending the weekend in another Spanish city, Valencia, where she had attended a well-known cultural event called *Las Fallas*. Samantha mentioned in her journal that she felt comfortable enough with her Spanish and with this particular interlocutor to make small talk while waiting for her coffee. The interlocutor was a woman in her forties who worked in the cafeteria nearly every day and was loved by many students at the institute for the patience and cheerfulness that she showed towards the foreign students. The interaction is shown in (34) below.

(34) Samantha (S) ordering coffee with a female barista (B) in the Toledo institute cafeteria (week six)

- 1 S: hola
2 B: hola
3 S: puedes ponerme un café (.) por favor?
4 B: con leche?=
5 S: =con leche, sí
6 B: para tomártelo aquí?
7 S: n- no, [para llevar
8 B: [para llevar
9 S: <<para llevar>>
(2.3)
10 S: es que tengo mucho sueño hoy heh heh
11 B: sí::
12 S: fui a la- las fallas (.) [en Valencia
13 B: [a:y las fallas
14 B: te gustaron?
15 S: sí::=
16 B: =sí?=
17 S: =pero son locos heh heh
18 B: sí: a que sí [heh heh heh
19 S: [heh heh heh
20 B: mucho ruido, verdad?=
21 S: =sí, mucho
(0.5)
22 S: y fui a un- a un prime:ro- primera corrida (.) [después
23 B: [ah::
24 S: eso también es l(hh)oco(hh)[heh heh heh
25 B: [sí::
(7.0)
26 S: cuánto cuesta?
27 B: un euro
28 S: un euro
(49.0) ((sounds of the very noisy espresso machine))
29 S: muy bien (.) gracias

1 S: hi
 2 B: hi
 3 S: can you give me a coffee (.) please?
 4 B: with milk?=
 5 S: =with milk, yes
 6 B: to drink it here?
 7 S: n- no, [to take away
 8 B: [to take away
 9 S: <<to take away>>
 (2.3)
 10 S: it's that I'm really tired today heh heh
 11 B: yes::
 12 S: I went to th- las fallas (.) [in Valencia
 13 B: [a:y las fallas
 14 B: did you like them?
 15 S: yes::
 16 B: =yes?=
 17 S: =but they're crazy heh heh
 18 B: yes: that's right [heh heh heh
 19 S: [heh heh heh
 20 B: a lot of noise, right?=
 21 S: =yes, a lot
 (0.5)
 22 S: and I went to a- a first- first bull fight (.) [afterwards
 23 B: [ah::
 24 S: that also is c(hh)razy(hh)[heh heh heh
 25 B: [yes::
 (7.0)
 26 S: how much does it cost?
 27 B: one euro
 28 S: one euro
 (49.0) ((sounds of the very noisy espresso machine))
 29 S: great (.) thanks

As in Megan's interaction with the jewelry store employee, Samantha's interlocutor in the interaction in (34) provides supportive moves to show interest in what Samantha says and to encourage her to say more. The barista makes comments to show

agreement with Samantha's evaluations of her experience in Valencia (lines 18 and 25), asks follow-up questions about *Las Fallas* (lines 14 and 20), and inserts tokens of appreciation (*ah:::* and *ay:::*) in lines 13 and 23 showing interest for Samantha's topic. These moves encourage Samantha to talk and participate equally in the interaction.

Asymmetric interactions

Two other interactions in which relational talk was present occurred in recordings made by Greta and Samantha. In the interactions presented in (11) and (35), however, there is a more asymmetric relation between the student and the service provider in terms of production and opportunities for production on the part of the student. The first interaction, shown in (11), is one discussed previously in which Greta orders waffles and *torrijas* in a café. Spurred by Greta's questions in lines 60 and 63 about the origin of the *torrijas* that she was selling, the service provider, an older Spanish woman, begins a discussion about *torrijas* that later leads into other Spanish desserts including rice pudding and Catalan pudding. The segment of the interaction which consists of relational talk lasts for over five minutes, however, only an excerpt of the entire interaction is shown in (11) below.

(11) Greta (G) ordering waffles and *torrijas* in a café with female employee (E) (week six)

...

55 E: otra torrija para llevar?
56 G: sí
(6.0)
57 G: a mí yo tengo:- esto y::: (.) un gofre
(2.0)
58 E: un gofre para comer aquí o para llevar?
59 G: para aquí
(3.3)
60 G: y- en- en- cuál sitio::: (.) um: (3.0) consigues estos?
61 E: estas torrijas son caseras
62 E: hechas en casa.
63 G: oh en un casa?
64 E: ésas se hacen en la casa
65 E: porque va llegando::: (.) semana santa
66 G: uh huh
67 E: es costumbre aquí en España empezar a comer torrijas
68 E: para [empezar la semana santa
69 G: [sí::?
70 E: entonces se ha- hay muchas torrijas ahora
71 E: que seguramente- (.) los primeros días que estabas aquí no las viste, no?
72 G: uh:
73 E: primera vez que las ves, no?
74 G: m (.) mhm ((with uncertainty))
75 E: sí::: es pan
76 E: es pan especial- lo hacen para torrijas
77 E: que es ancho
78 G: sí
79 E: pan ancho
(0.7)
80 E: y: se deja dos días:
(1.4)
81 E: no puede ser pan fresco
82 E: tiene que ser pan de dos días por lo menos
(0.6)
83 E: o tres
(0.9)
84 E: pan viejo ((said more slowly and emphatically))
85 G: sí
86 E: y se pican (.) rodajas:::
(1.5)
87 E: y se moja con le:che, cane:la

88 G: wow (.) de[lícosa
 89 E: [y- y huevo
 90 G: oh [sí?
 91 E: [y- y se fríe
 92 E: y se hace el almíbar
 93 E: y se ducha por encima
 94 E: así se hace
 95 G: sí:ya
 96 E: es una comida pa' ser aquí
 97 G: qué rica::
 98 G: um- cómo se llama?
 99 E: torrija
 (0.9)
 100 E: >torrija< ((said very slowly and well-enunciated, especially strong rolling of r's))
 101 G: torrij[a ((said slowly in repetition with perfect rolling of the r's))
 102 E: [ja
 103 G: torrija
 104 G: hum::
 (1.4)
 105 E: tómate una bolsita?
 106 G: sí, por favor
 (1.2)
 106 E: está muy buena para engordar, oh?
 107 G: yeah, sí ((in a commiserating tone))
 108 S: heh heh
 109 E: está riquísima hehe
 110 G: yo sé
 111 E: a mí me gustan pero no la como porque engorda mucho
 112 G: es más:: um::
 113 E: la comí:: (.) el sábado (.) no
 114 E: la comí (.) el miércoles de la semana pasada
 115 G: sí?
 116 E: porque a mi nieto le enca:nta
 117 G: heh heh heh
 118 E: le enca:nta
 119 E: entonces yo cuando voy a ver:lo?
 120 G: sí
 121 E: él estaba pa' el colegio
 122 G: oh
 123 E: yo tomo Franco e:l miércoles

124 E: vive en Talavera
 125 E: sabes dónde es Talavera?
 126 G: no
 127 E: es un pueblo muy bonito
 128 G: [aquí en Toledo? (.) er?
 129 E: [(...)
 130 E: sí:: y se va el autobús
 131 E: va el- vas en autobús y se- se va a Talavera
 132 G: un pueblo (0.8) es como más moderno que Toledo
 133 E: pues tiene una parte antigua y:: (0.4)
 134 E: y es un pueblo muy- con mucha vi:da
 135 E: mucho comercio, mucho:: (.) no es turístico como Toledo
 136 E: pero es una ciudad::
 137 G: oh:: es lo:- es lo [qu- es lo quiero
 138 E: [muy agradable
 139 G: me- me gusta:: sitios que: no hay mucho turismo?
 140 E: sí
 141 E: ésa- ay mi amor- mira (.) yo voy mañana
 142 G: sí
 143 E: yo voy mañana
 144 E: ‘tonces yo llego (.) y:: bue-
 145 G: tienes amigo::s que:: [viven?
 146 E: [mi hijo vive allí y mis niños o mis nietos
 147 E: y yo voy (1.1)
 148 E: y:: yo hago comidas ca- e- caseras
 149 E: porque dulces caseros que le encantan (.) a mi nieto
 150 G: sí
 151 E: a él le gustan más los dulces caseros que los dulces de::- de- (.) [de
 panadería
 152 G: [mhm
 153 E: entonces yo fui día miércoles
 154 E: compré:: pan (.)
 155 G: [sí
 156 E: [que ya había ya especial cortado en una bolsa?
 157 G: [sí
 158 E: [y fui a la casa y hice torrijas
 159 E: y cuando llega del colegio u:::[::
 160 G: [heh heh [ah:::
 161 E: [contento
 162 E: de once años
 163 G: o:::y

164 E: entonces contentísimo con las torrijas
165 E1: y la- la vez anterior le hizo arroz con leche
166 E1: sabes lo que es el arroz con leche?
167 G: n::: oh >sí sí sí<
168 G: hh u:m
169 E1: que se cocina el arroz muy blandito y se le echa [leche condensada
...

55 E: another torrija to go?
56 G: yes
(6.0)
57 G: to me I have:- this and::: (.) a waffle
(2.0)
58 E: a waffle for here or to go?
59 G: for here
(3.3)
60 G: and- in- in- which place::: (.) um: (3.0) do you get these?
61 E: these torrijas are homemade
62 E: made at home.
63 G: oh in a home?
64 E: these are homemade
65 E: because Holy Week is arriving:::
66 G: uh huh
67 E: it is a custom here in Spain to begin to eat torrijas
68 E: to [begin Holy Week
69 G: [yes::?
70 E: so there- there are a lot of torrijas now
71 E: that surely- (.) the first days that you were here you didn't see them, did
you?
72 G: uh:
73 E: first time you saw them, right?
74 G: m (.) mhm ((with uncertainty))
75 E: yes::: it's bread
76 E: it's special bread- they make it for torrijas
77 E: that is wide
78 G: yes
79 E: wide bread
(0.7)
80 E: and: you let it sit two days:

(1.4)
81 E: it can't be fresh bread
82 E: it has to be two-days-old bread at the least
(0.6)
83 E: or three
(0.9)
84 E: old bread ((said more slowly and emphatically))
85 G: yes
86 E: and you cut (.) slices::
(1.5)
87 E: and you soak it in mi:lk, cinne:mon
88 G: wow (.) de[licious
89 E: [and- and egg
90 G: oh [yes?
91 E: [and- and you fry it
92 E: and you make the syrup
93 E: and you shower it from above
94 E: that's how it's done
95 G: yes:ya
96 E: it's a food to be here
97 G: how delicious::
98 G: um- what's it called?
99 E: torrija
(0.9)
100 E: >torrija< ((said very slowly and well-enunciated, especially strong rolling
of r's))
101 G: torrij[a ((said slowly in repetition with perfect rolling of the r's))
102 E: [ja
103 G: torrija
104 G: hum::
(1.4)
105 E: take a bag?
106 G: yes, please
(1.2)
106 E: it's really good for getting fat, no?
107 G: yeah, yes ((in a commiserating tone))
108 S: heh heh
109 E: it's really delicious heh heh
110 G: I know
111 E: I really like them but I don't eat it because it really gets you fat
112 G: it's more:: um:::

113 E: I ate it:: (.) Saturday (.) no
114 E: I ate it (.) Wednesday of last week
115 G: yes?
116 E: because my grandson lo:ves it
117 G: heh heh heh
118 E: he lo:ves it
119 E: so when I go to see him?
120 G: yes
121 E: he was about to go to school
122 G: oh
123 E: I take Franco Wednesdays
124 E: he lives in Talavera
125 E: do you know where Talavera is?
126 G: no
127 E: it's a very ni:ce town
128 G: [here in Toledo? (.) er?
129 E: [(...)
130 E: yes:: and you go on the bus
131 E: it goes- you go by bus and you- you go to Talavera
132 G: a town (0.8) it is more modern than Toledo
133 E: well it has an old part and:: (0.4)
134 E: and it's a very- very lively town
135 E: a lot of business, a lot of:: (.) it's not touristy like Toledo
136 E: but it's a city::
137 G: oh:: it is what:- it is what [th- it what I like
138 E: [very pleasant
139 G: I- I like:: places that: there isn't much tourism?
140 E: yes
141 E: that- there is dear- look (.) I go tomorrow
142 G: yes
143 E: I go tomorrow
144 E: so I arrive (.) and:: we-
145 G: you have friend::s that:: [live?
146 E: [my son lives there and my children or my
grandchildren
147 E: and I go (1.1)
148 E: and:: I make ho- e- homemade foods
149 E: because my grandson he loves homemade sweets
150 G: yes
151 E: he likes homemade sweets more than sweets from::- from- (.) [from the
bakery

152 G: [mhm
 153 E: so I went on Wednesday
 154 E: I bought:: bread (.)
 155 G: [yes
 156 E: [that there was there already was specially cut in the bag?
 157 G: [yes
 158 E: [and I went to the house and made torrijas
 159 E: and when he gets home from school ooh::[:
 160 G: [heh heh[ah::
 161 E: [happy
 162 E: eleven years
 163 G: o:::y
 164 E: so he was really happy with the torrijas
 165 E1: and the- the previous time I made him arroz con leche
 166 E1: do you know what arroz con leche is?
 167 G: n::: oh >yes yes yes<
 168 G: hh u:m
 169 E1: you cook the rice until it's very soft and you add [condensed milk
 ...

With regard to the relational talk in (11), Greta's contributions are minimal and primarily consist of continuers (e.g., uh huh, mhm), agreement and acknowledgment markers (e.g., *sí*, 'yes'), and brief utterances showing surprise or interest (e.g., line 90, *oh sí?*, 'oh yes?') about what the woman says. Greta also makes comments to display alignment with the service provider, such as in the case of her interjections *wow* (.) *deliciosa* ('wow, delicious') in line 88 and *qué rica* ('how delicious') in line 97. Greta asks questions relating to the topics of food (lines 98, 145, and 188) and the town where the woman's children and grandchildren live.

The café employee does ask Greta questions, but the questions are not primarily a way for the service provider to give Greta a space to speak, as questions were in the

interactions between Megan and the jeweler in (33) and (34). The employee's questions in lines 71, 125, and 166 function primarily to check Greta's understanding of the cultural, culinary, and geographical references that are relevant to the speaker's topic and perhaps as an opening for herself to provide Greta with new cultural information when Greta lacks the appropriate knowledge. The employee continued in this way asking two similar questions to check Greta's knowledge later on in the recorded interaction (not shown in the excerpt above).

While these questions do not effectively open up a space for Greta to speak, they do reflect the fact that the service provider clearly designs her questions taking the hearer's (i.e., Greta's) perspective into account; that is, the café woman assumes that Greta, as a foreigner, may not know the necessary references to understand the service provider's talk. In this way, the Spanish employee's recipient-designed talk demonstrates a high degree of intersubjectivity: she provides assistance to help Greta to be able to understand the talk in Spanish and to learn about cultural references, by checking with Greta about her knowledge state with regard to specific information relevant to the employee's topic. This assistance allows Greta to understand the talk at a higher level of development than she would be able to do without the employee's support. Greta would not have understood some of the references that the employee made without this assistance. However, the support that the employee provides relates only to the comprehension of the topics that the service provider puts forth, and the employee does

not provide supportive moves that would assist Greta in contributing her own ideas to the talk or her production of a greater number of turns.

Greta's contributions to the talk are not taken up by the café employee.

Throughout the interaction, the woman maintains the floor and controls the topic. For example, Greta's utterance in 139 shows alignment with the service provider by positively evaluating non-tourist cities, which is how the woman had described the town of Talavera in line 135. The employee's response in line 140 acknowledges what Greta said, but then in the next line the woman continues with her story about going to Talavera to make homemade *torrijas* for her grandson.

It is worth noting that Greta reported enjoying this conversation and thought that the café employee was very kind for taking the time to tell her about *torrijas* and other Spanish desserts. Regardless of the intentions of the service provider, the data indicate that because the café employee dominated the floor, Greta had little opportunity to produce talk apart from listener responses and clarification questions, reflecting the asymmetric nature of speech production this interaction. While Greta may not have desired to talk more than she did in the café, the interlocutor also did not facilitate Greta's greater participation in the talk.

Another interaction in which relational talk was present was that of Samantha buying a phone card in a tobacco store. From the beginning of the interaction in (35), it is clear that the tobacconist and his friend—two young men in their twenties—were flirting

with Samantha and perhaps making fun of her (e.g., their “god bless America” and laughter may not just be flirtatious or good natured).

(35) Samantha (S) buying a phone card in a tobacco shop with a male tobacconist (T1) and his friend (T) (week six)

1 S: hola
2 S: um quiero (...)
3 T: ay:: sí sí hombre
4 T1: heh heh oh my god
5 T: oh:: god bless America
6 T1: sí sí sí hhhh[heh heh heh
7 T: [heh heh heh heh heh
8 S: no entiendo
9 T: no
10 T1: sí
11 T: god bless America
12 T1: >sí sí [sí sí sí sí sí<
13 S: [sí? heh heh
14 S: y también quiero-
15 T: estamos muy emocionados (.) [con Estados Unidos
16 T1: [sí sí sí
17 T: sí por las chicas (.) sobre todo
18 S: [oh- uh heh heh
19 T1: [sí sí sí
20 T: a mí, sí [hhh heh heh
21 S: [oh heh heh oh hhh heh vale
22 T: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh ((laughing like he really enjoys it))
23 T1: [m m m m [m m m m m m m ((humming American national anthem))
24 S: [um

(4.0)

((during this pause, the T1 continues humming the song and T continues laughing))

((when there is a lull in the laughing, S jumps in))

25 S: um y también quiero [comprar un:: tarjeta para llamar heh heh heh
26 T: [hhhh[heh heh heh heh heh
27 T1: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
28 T1: tú tienes [intercambio?
29 S: [lo mismo que Marisol compró- lo compró

30 T1: oh la de Marisol (.) ésta
 31 S: sí
 32 T1: exacto
 33 T1: pero tienes que usarla local, vale?
 34 S: hay- [m:::.....
 35 T1: [is loca:::l ((in English phonology))
 36 T1: dónde está local?
 37 T1: local options=
 38 S: sí (.) bueno
 39 T1: da más minutos, vale?
 40 S: sí y:: (.) cuántos minutos hay?
 41 T1: pues, me- mejor que (...) más de-
 42 T1: si utilizas local access? pero desde es- teléfono así (.) no móvil?
 43 T1: pues tienes (.) más de tres ciento::s cincuenta o::
 44 S: sí? (.) bueno
 45 S: h el otro:: que yo:: compré (.) cuesta seis
 46 T1: sí
 47 S: [este es diferente (.) pero
 48 T1: [es un- sí
 49 T1: no, ésta es mejor que
 50 S: sí? bueno (.) OK
 (2.4)
 51 T1: tienes intercambio o no
 52 S: sí
 53 T1: sí tienes?
 (0.4)
 54 T1: m:::[::..... ((a sound like he is sad))
 55 S: [heh heh[heh heh
 56 T1: [lleg[amos tarde
 57 T: [oh::: llegamos tarde
 58 T1: heh heh [heh heh
 59 S: [lo siento [heh heh heh
 60 T1: [hhhhheh heh heh heh heh heh
 61 T: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
 (7.0)
 62 S: y es un chica heh heh heh heh
 63 T1: es una chica?
 64 S: sí heh heh
 65 T1: ah pues podríamos ir-
 66 T: ya
 67 T1: ir [los cuatro (.) no? (0.4) no? (.) fifty fifty (.) no sé

68 T: [heh[heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
69 S: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
(1.5)
70 T: ay, qué recuerdos, tío
(1.3)
71 T1: sí, con las- con las chicas de:: que- que fuimos de intercambio (.) te
acuerdas?=
72 T: =sí=
73 T1: =joder lo pasamos bien con las chicas
(0.6)
74 T1: e::::: (.) a ver a ver (.) yo:: y: la otra de::- bueno era de::- de (1.2)
75 T1: no sé- damos un viaje (.) con las chicas de
76 T: alcázares
77 C: hola, [buenos días
78 T1: [a unos alcázares
79 C: mira, te dejo:: el dinero y cogo de aquí, vale?
80 T: [está bien
81 T1: [hemos viajado (.) hh (...) con las chicas
82 S: con [las chic-
83 T1: [de la Fundación, sí, sí sí sí sí
84 S: sí?
85 T1: sí sí (.) porque [les damos-
86 S: [dónde? heh heh
87 T1: les damos una sorpresa cuando-
88 C2: hola
89 T: [hola
90 T1: [tenemos chicas intercambio les damos una sorpresa
(0.7)
91 T1: y nos vamos de: fin de semana: (.) a Granada::
92 S: mhm
93 T1: a alcázares::s
94 S: fui a Grana:da
95 T1: sí sí sí sí=
96 S: =el fin de semana pasado
97 T1: sí
98 T1: entonces [(...)
99 T: [y esto nos indica (...)
100 S: y esta fin:: me voy a::: (1.2) a Valencia para los- [los fallas
101 T1: [las fallas?
102 S: sí:::
(1.1)

103 S: bueno:
 104 T1: (...)
 105 S: heh[heh no tengo miedo (.) no heh heh
 106 T1: [heh heh heh heh heh
 107 S: adio::s, [gracias
 108 T: [hasta luego

1 S: hi
 2 S: um I want (...)
 3 T: ay:: yes yes man
 4 T1: heh heh oh my god
 5 T: oh:: god bless America
 6 T1: yes yes yes heh hhh[heh heh heh heh
 7 T: [heh heh heh heh heh
 8 S: I don't understand
 9 T: no
 10 T1: yes
 11 T: god bless America
 12 T1: >yes yes [yes yes yes<
 13 S: [yes? heh heh
 14 S: and also I want-
 15 T: we're very excited (.) [with the United States
 16 T1: [yes yes yes
 17 T: yes because of the girls (.) especially
 18 S: [oh- uh heh heh
 19 T1: [yes yes yes
 20 T: I am, yes [hhh heh heh heh heh
 21 S: [oh heh heh oh hhh heh OK
 22 T: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh ((laughing like he really enjoys it))
 23 T1: [m m m m [m m m m m m m ((humming American national anthem))
 24 S: [um

(4.0)

((during this pause, the T1 continues humming the song and T continues laughing))
 ((when there is a lull in the laughing, S jumps in))

25 S: um and also I want [to buy a:: card to call heh heh heh
 26 T: [hhhh[heh heh heh heh heh
 27 T1: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
 28 T1: do you have an [intercambio?
 29 S: [the same one that Marisol- she bought it
 30 T1: oh Marisol's (.) this one

31 S: yes
32 T1: exactly
33 T1: but you have to use it locally, OK?
34 S: there is- [m:.....
35 T1: [is loca::l ((in English phonology))
36 T1: where is the local?
37 T1: local options=
38 S: yes (.) OK
39 T1: it gives more minutes, OK?
40 S: yes and: (.) how many minutes are there?
41 T1: well, bet- better than (...) more than-
42 T1: if you use local access? but from is- telephone like this (.) not a cell?
43 T1: well you have (.) more than three hundred and fifty or::
44 S: yes? (.) OK
45 S: h the other:: that I:: bought (.) costs six
46 T1: yes
47 S: [this is different (.) but
48 T1: [it's a- yes
49 T1: no, this one is better than-
50 S: yes? OK (.) OK
(2.4)
51 T1: do you have an intercambio or not
52 S: yes
53 T1: you have one?
(0.4)
54 T1: m:..... ((a sound like he is sad))
55 S: [heh heh[heh heh
56 T1: [we arr[ived late
57 T: [oh:..... we arrived late
58 T1: heh heh[heh heh
59 S: [sorry [heh heh heh
60 T1: [hhhhheh heh heh heh heh
61 T: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
(7.0)
62 S: and it's a girl heh heh heh heh
63 T1: it's a girl?
64 S: yes heh heh
65 T1: well then we could go-
66 T: yeah
67 T1: go [the four of us (.) no? (0.4) no? (.) fifty fifty (.) I don't know
68 T: [heh[heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh

69 S: [heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh er:::heh
(1.5)

70 T: ay, what memories, dude
(1.3)

71 T1: yes, with the- with the girls of:: that- that we did intercambio (.)
remember?=
72 T: =yes=
73 T1: =shit we had a good time with the girls
(0.6)

74 T1: e::: (.) let's see let's see (.) I:: and: the other from::- well she was
from::- from (1.2)

75 T1: I don't know- we took a trip (.) with the girls from
76 T: castles
77 C: hi, [good morning
78 T1: [to some castles
79 C: look, I leave you:: the money and take from here, OK?
80 T: [fine
81 T1: [we have traveled (.) hh (...) with the girls
82 S: with [the gir-
83 T1: [from the Toledo institute, yes, yes yes yes
84 S: yes?
85 T1: yes yes (.) because [we give them-
86 S: [where? heh heh
87 T1: we give them a surprise when-
88 C2: hi
89 T: [hi
90 T1: [we give a suprise to our intercambio girls
(0.7)

91 T1: and we take a weekend: (.) to Granada::
92 S: mhm
93 T1: to castle::s
94 S: I went to Grana:da
95 T1: yes yes yes yes=
96 S: =last weekend
97 T1: yes
98 T1: so [(...)
99 T: [and this tells us (...)
100 S: and this weekend:: I'm going to::: (1.2) to Valencia for los- [los fallas
101 T1: [las fallas?
102 S: yes:::
(1.1)

103 S: OK:
104 T1: (...)
105 S: heh[heh I'm not afraid (.) no heh heh
106 T1: [heh heh heh heh heh heh
107 S: bye::, [thanks
108 T: [see you later

While the employee and his friend are mainly interested in relational talk, in the beginning Samantha primarily focuses on the transactional talk. Samantha wrote in her journal about this encounter that she felt quite uncomfortable and wanted to finish her business there as soon as possible. Samantha's first three attempts at making her request to buy a phone card are not successful. In lines 3 and 15, the tobacconist cuts off Samantha's requests (lines 2 and 14) and then in line 25, Samantha's full request is met only with laughter by the two men. Samantha then, in line 28, cuts off the tobacconist's question about whether she has a language partner and continues with her request which, this time, moves the interaction into transactional talk. Once the talk is focused on the transaction, Samantha has a few turns discussing the phone card. Her first question attempt at taking a turn in line 34 is interrupted by the tobacconist, but then in lines 40 and 45 Samantha asks a question and makes a comment.

The rest of the recording was spent with the two men telling Samantha about trips they had taken with other female language partners. From line 51 on, Samantha barely produces any talk apart from the acknowledgment marker *sí* ('yes'). However, she does jump in several times with turns in lines 62, 82, 94, 96, and 100. All of her turns relate to the topic of language partners and travel to other cities in Spain. Apart from the

tobacconist's question in line 28 about whether or not Samantha had a language partner, repeated in line 51, he does not engage her in the talk but rather, he and his friend maintain control of the floor, taking turns telling Samantha what they would do for her as her language partner. In order to take a turn, Samantha must interrupt, as she does in line 86, or quickly jump into the interaction (e.g., lines 94 and 96). Samantha's production is clearly asymmetric in comparison to that of the tobacconist and his friend; Samantha did not control the floor and had difficulty getting the floor to take a turn, including those turns focused on transactional talk.

Production and perspective

The previous analysis argues that students' production in the L2 in service encounter interactions including small talk was influenced by the interlocutors' actions in the talk and how facilitative their conversational moves were in bringing students into the interaction as speakers. The categories symmetric and asymmetric production were taken from Shea (1994) to describe the differences in students' production discovered in this data set. In addition to production, Shea (1994) argued that the use of "perspective," or the intersubjectivity between participants (in Shea's terms "congruent" or "incongruent"), helped describe the interactional patterns emergent in his data. An analysis of intersubjectivity is also relevant to the current study. Intersubjectivity has been described in the Vygotskian tradition as a shared perspective on a problem between the expert and

the novice, in which the novice comes to define the objects, activities, and goals of the task in the same way as the expert—when the two interlocutors enter “temporarily shared social world(s)” (Rommetviet, 1974, p. 29). In part, intersubjectivity between the expert and the novice is created through assistance on the part of the expert. The term intersubjectivity has also been used more generally as a shared perspective between individuals without the assumption of expert-novice roles (Holtgraves, 2002; Rommetveit, 1974).

In three of the interactions described above, the participants displayed congruent perspectives. In Megan’s encounter with the jewelry store employee, in Samantha’s small talk episode with the barista, and in Greta’s interaction with the café worker, the students and service providers demonstrate a high level of shared perspective (i.e., intersubjectivity) in their contributions to the topics of the talk. That is, students and Spaniards displayed through affirmative responses, positive assessments, follow-up comments, confirmation checks, collective turn construction, and alignment with the other participant that they oriented to many of the issues raised in the talk from a similar point of view. Megan’s jewelry store interaction provides an example of a case in which the service provider—in the role of an expert of Spanish culture—leads the novice to share his perspective on an issue. The jewelry store employee interrupted Megan and disagreed with her when he perceived that she had not understood his point with regard to the freedom to smoke in Spain. This intervention on the part of the service provider leads Megan to view the issue from his perspective, indicating intersubjectivity.

Despite the relatively high level of intersubjectivity between students and service providers that characterized the first three encounters, the degree of production by students was not the same in all three interactions. As argued previously, in Megan's and Samantha's interactions, the student's participation in the talk was relatively symmetric to the service provider's, whereas in Greta's interaction with the café employee, her participation was asymmetric compared to the service provider's. The difference between asymmetric and symmetric interactions is argued here to be related, at least in part, to the degree of assistance that the employee provided in order to facilitate the learners' entrance into the interaction as a speaker and the development of learners' own topics.

An incongruent perspective between interactants was found in Samantha's service encounter in the tobacco store. In that interaction, Samantha did not share the perspective of the tobacconist and his friend regarding the desire to become the tobacconist's conversation partner. Samantha employed several strategies to show that her perspective was incongruent, namely, stating that she already had a language partner and that she had already traveled to some of the places that they had taken previous language partners.

Thus, Shea's (1994) categories of production and perspective are useful in understanding how the interlocutor had a role in shaping students' opportunities for producing talk in service encounter small talk. Three types of interactional patterns were present in this data: incongruent perspective and asymmetric production (Samantha in the tobacco store); congruent perspective and asymmetric production (Greta in the café); and

congruent perspective and symmetric production (Megan in the jewelry store and Samantha in the cafeteria).

In addition to the ways in which participants mediate each others' participation in talk, the role of culture and culturally-distinct conversational styles must also be taken into account. Previous research suggests that conversational styles generally differ in English and Spanish¹⁶ with regard to the relative frequency of overlap between speakers' turns (Berry, 1994) and the number and duration of pauses (Ardila, 2004). In many Spanish interactions, participants tend to speak quickly and with shorter pauses and other participants are expected to jump into the talk without waiting for current speaker to stop talking, which often means interrupting other speakers in order to take a turn at talk. This "high involvement" (Tannen, 1984) or "positive politeness" (Ardila, 2004) conversational style is considered cooperative and polite by Spaniards (Ardila, 2004).

Many English speakers, on the other hand, tend towards a conversational style in which intended interruption is considered rude (Ardila, 2004; Edstrom, 2000; Kilpatrick, 1986). These cultural differences regarding interruption and conversational style may help explain why, in some cases, students' production was restricted. As Ardila (2004, p. 647) comments, "applying English conversational etiquette to Spanish may hinder a participant from speaking in many instances." A further cultural norm that may have come into play in these interactions is that talkativeness is perceived by Spaniards as demonstrating friendliness (Thurén, 1988). Service providers may have viewed their

¹⁶ Note that there are not only *intercultural* differences in conversational style, but also *intracultural* differences. That is, there are diverse conversational styles in both languages.

dominance of the conversational floor as a way to demonstrate friendliness. Thus, in examining the level of symmetry regarding students' production, the larger cultural context and cultural differences in conversational style must also be taken into account.

Students' comfort level¹⁷ in service encounters

An ethnographic approach to social interaction and learning includes both emic and etic perspectives in the analysis. A finding that emerged from the journals of six students (Chloe, Greta, Jared, Megan, Miranda, Samantha) was a belief that when students felt comfortable speaking with a particular person or in a specific situation, that they spoke Spanish better. Conversely, students reported that when they felt intimidated or uncomfortable with an individual or in a situation, they spoke Spanish more poorly or did not participate as actively in an interaction. Consider the following quotes from students' journals:

Jared (week two)

The conversation at the [Toledo institute reception] desk was a good example of my ability to speak Spanish. I would say that that's close to about as good as I can speak Spanish. My comfort is high at the [Toledo institute] because I know there are many

¹⁷ I use the phrase "comfort level" instead of a more widely-used term such as "anxiety" for several reasons: first, because this was the terminology employed by some students and this term seemed to best describe students' reported experiences; second, because no students actually used the word "anxiety" to explain their subjective experience of the situations in question, it is not clear that the terms "anxiety" or "language anxiety" apply in the contexts that the students described.

students there who are not as proficient in Spanish as I am. We talked about many topics without confusion and the topics flowed from one to the next nicely.

Megan (week six)

I felt pretty comfortable in all of [this week's service encounter] conversations except the one [in the hair salon] with Felipe¹⁸. Felipe is just intimidating as a person. He doesn't really speak and just walks up and says "*dime*." I wasn't sure what to say. I got really flustered.

Miranda (week three)

I think that my use of Spanish in [this week's conversation with my language partner] is much better than my other conversations. With her, I am very relaxed and I can observe a difference in my speech. [my translation]

Greta (week two)

I enjoyed talking [in Spanish this week], minus the awkward conversations with my *profesoras*. I really just don't enjoy those. I don't know if I am building confidence talking to my professors or not. They seem really nice and patient, but I can't help wanting to speak in the right tenses and at the same time smoothly. Yet, when I try this hard it is when I mess up the most! I do get frustrated and I know that doesn't help my

¹⁸ A pseudonym

Spanish at all. Being with people who will have informal and random conversations with me [as in the service encounters] is when I do my best Spanish speaking¹⁹.

Greta (week four)

The more relaxed I am in a conversation, the easier it is for me to communicate.

Greta (week six)

I think for me, it is also has a lot to do with their personality as well. For me to feel comfortable, it helps when the other person is friendly and is a good listener. If they are interested in what I am saying and intent on hearing what I have to say, it makes it easier for me to hold the conversation and it makes it easier for me to feel right speaking Spanish.

Samantha (week two)

Normally, I like to go out in the public and speak, but only if the person I'm speaking to doesn't treat me like I'm dumb and only if they are friendly in return to my attempt communicating with them. This week, the lady at the store where I wanted to recharge my cell phone was not at all friendly, and even glared at me when I couldn't remember my phone number. I felt very uncomfortable, and when I am uncomfortable, I have a lot

¹⁹ Note that the conversations with her professors that Greta mentions in this quote are not part of the database of recordings in this study.

of trouble getting the words out. I really hope I don't have to go back there—I will recharge my minutes elsewhere if possible.

Samantha (week six)

I went to put more minutes on my phone, and to recharge my bus pass. The lady was not friendly (yet again), so I wasn't very comfortable. Everything went fine and my task was completed, but I stuttered a bit.

Samantha (week eleven)

I went to recharge my cell phone. The lady that helped me this time was much nicer than the lady I usually encounter, so I felt comfortable asking about how many minutes 5 euros would get me.

Chloe (week eight)

[My host mother] makes me nervous because she has said comments like “*no me entiendes*” [‘you don't understand me’] and sometimes becomes frustrated with me.

Because of this, I don't really like to talk to her because I think she will make fun of me or get frustrated, but, *está bien* [it's OK], it's not really that bad, she just makes me nervous and I fumble more with her than other people.

Chloe (week eleven)

I sort of know the [convenience store] lady, don't know her name but we recognize each other, so I definitely have no qualms about talking with her, the receptionists [at the institute] are all so nice and they all know my name, so I am definitely more comfortable with them as well. The man at the grocery store was easy to speak to, the woman at [the bar] sees me everyday, and the woman at the other grocery store was very helpful and didn't make me feel stupid.

From students' perspectives, the characteristics of the interactions that led to them to feel "comfortable," "relaxed" or, on the contrary, "uncomfortable", "nervous", or "intimidated" and to speak Spanish well or poorly included the following: the perceived attitude of the interlocutor (e.g., friendly, helpful, intimidating, easily frustrated), level of intimacy (e.g., Greta enjoyed talking to strangers informally, Chloe felt comfortable with service providers she knew), and self-perceived ability in relation to others (i.e., Jared felt his proficiency was higher than other students' which gave him confidence speaking within the confines of the institute). Not only did some students believe that their L2 speaking ability was affected by the interlocutor and situation, but several students also reported that their active participation in the interaction was influenced by the interlocutor or the situation. For example, Samantha asked a question about her cell phone which, she reported, she would not have asked of an employee who she did not perceive as friendly and helpful. During her hair salon encounter, Megan reported not

initiating small talk with her hairdresser because she perceived him to be intimidating. In a stationary store, Miranda settled for a folder that was not the kind that she wanted because she felt pressure to finish her encounter as quickly as possible due to the fact that there was a long line of customers in the store. In this situation, Miranda did not feel empowered to explain in Spanish what type of folder she actually did want.

From the emic point of view of students, the interlocutor sometimes had an affect on their speaking and participation in service encounters. However, the question arises from the analyst or etic point of view as to whether there is any evidence in the talk itself that students' speaking abilities varied according to the affective factor of how comfortable or uncomfortable they reported feeling during the interaction. In order to explore the question of how reported comfortability and performance might be related, the cases of two students are considered. First, Samantha's interactions in weeks two, six, and eleven charging her cell phone are examined and second, Jared's interactions at the Toledo institute reception desk in week two are compared to his interactions in other service encounters during week two. These particular students' data were chosen to analyze because of the availability of comparable recordings in both contexts, the "more comfortable" and "less comfortable" service encounters, as indicated by the students themselves.

Samantha

Samantha recorded herself adding minutes to her cell phone in the same convenience store twice in week two and once each in weeks six and eleven. In her journals, Samantha expressed the belief that when she perceived the store attendant to be unfriendly, that she felt uncomfortable and, as a result, “stuttered” or was not able to get her words out. In the transcripts shown below, the interactions in (22) and (36) are with “unfriendly” employees that she felt uncomfortable with and those in (23) and (37) are with “friendly” employees that she felt comfortable talking with.

(22) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell phone minutes with female employee (E) (week two, day 1)

- 1 S: hola
2 E: hola
3 → S: necesito más minutos en mi móvil
4 E: cargar?
5 S: sí (.) para cargarlo
6 E: qué número?
7 S: u::m (.) mi número?
(1.5)
8 S: uh oh (.) t: heh heh
9 S: um::
(4.5)
10 S: no puedo recordar(hh)lo(hh)
11 E: hm heh
12 S: necesito saberlo?
13 E: claro
14 S: sí::? OK, gracias

1 S: hi
 2 E: hi
 3 → S: I need more minutes on my cell phone
 4 E: to charge?
 5 S: yes (.) to charge it
 6 E: what number?
 7 S: u::m (.) my number?
 (1.5)
 8 S: uh oh (.) t: heh heh
 9 S: um:::
 (4.5)
 10 S: I can't remember (hh)it(hh)
 11 E: hm heh
 12 S: do I need to know it?
 13 E: of course
 14 S: yeah::? OK, thanks

(23) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell phone minutes with a (different) female employee (E) (week two, day 2)

1 E: dime	1 E: tell me
2 S: hola	2 S: hi
(1.2)	(1.2)
3 → S: para acargarlo?	3 → S: to *charge it?
(1.5)	(1.5)
4 E: Movistar o Vodafone?	4 E: Movistar or Vodafone?
5 S: Vodafone	5 S: Vodafone
6 E: cuánto?	6 E: how much?
7 S: tch um: veinte?	7 S: tch um: twenty?
(35.0)	(35.0)
8 S: gracias	8 S: thanks
(20.0)	(20.0)
9 S: gracias	9 S: thanks

(36) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell phone minutes with female employee (E) (week six)

U=unknown person

1 E: a quién atiendo?
2 S: hola
3 S: (...)
4 E: (...)
5 E: (...)
6 U: sí, ya ya ya ya (.) ya lo he::
7 E: de qué compañía es?
8 S: um:::: Vodafone
9 E: y cuánto?
10 S: veinte euros?
11 E: veinte?
12 S: veinte.

1 E: who do I attend to?
2 S: hi
3 S: (...)
4 E: (...)
5 E: (...)
6 U: yes, ya ya ya ya (.) ya I have::
7 E: what company is it from?
8 S: um:::: Vodafone
9 E: and how much?
10 S: twenty euros?
11 E: twenty?
12 S: twenty.

(37) Samantha (S) at the convenience store to buy cell phone minutes with female employee (C) (week eleven)

1 S: hola
2 C: hola
3 S: tengo que entregarlo?
4 C: cargarlo?
5 S: sí

(4.0)

- 6 C: dime el número
7 S: mi número es (.) seiscientos
8 C: seiscientos?
9 S: sí (.) uh doscientos cuarenta y cuatro
10 C: doscientos cuarenta y cuatro
11 S: cient- ciento dos
12 C: ciento doce
13 S: nope (.) ciento dos

(0.8)

- 14 C: dos::
15 S: sí

(0.6)

- 16 C: compañía?
17 S: um:: (.) Vodafone heh
18 C: cuánto?
19 S: um (.) hh uh:: s- sabes cuántos minutos voy a:: (0.9) tener con cinco? (.) euros heh

(0.8)

- 20 S: porque sólo- sólo tengo: dos más (.) semanas aquí:? (.) h y::
21 C: ah:
22 S: no us- no lo uso mucho
23 C: cinco euros
24 S: cinco euros?
25 C: sí
26 S: vale
27 C: prueba así sí no:: (.) vuelves a cargar cinco=
28 S: =gracias, sí=
29 C: =pero así te- sabes cuánto te cuesta
30 S: sí

(2.2)

- 31 C: acuérdate que hay un mapa (...) ((spoken to someone else in another direction))
(1:20) ((during some of this pause C is talking with other employees))
32 S: gracias

- 1 S: hi
2 C: hi
3 S: do I have to turn it in?
4 C: to charge it?
5 S: yes

(4.0)

6 C: tell me the number

7 S: my number is (.) six hundred

8 C: six hundred?

9 S: yes (.) uh two hundred forty four

10 C: two hundred forty four

11 S: one hund- one hundred and two

12 C: one hundred and twelve

13 S: nope (.) one hundred and two

(0.8)

14 C: two::

15 S: yes

(0.6)

16 C: company?

17 S: um:: (.) Vodafone heh

18 C: how much?

19 S: um (.) hh uh:: d- do you know how many minutes I'm going to:: (0.9) have with five? (.) euros heh

(0.8)

20 S: because I only- only have: two more (.) weeks here:? (.) h and::

21 C: ah:

22 S: I don't us- I don't use it much

23 C: five euros

24 S: five euros?

25 C: yes

26 S: OK

27 C: try it like that if not::: (.) you charge five again=

28 S: =thanks, yes=

29 C: =but that way- you know how much it costs you

30 S: yes

(2.2)

31 C: remember that there's a map (...) ((spoken to someone else in another direction))

(1:20) ((during some of this pause C is talking with other employees))

32 S: thanks

Despite Samantha's perception that her performance was affected by her lack of comfort with attendants that she perceived to be unfriendly, the data does not provide any indication that Samantha's linguistic performance differed according to the perceived

attitude of the interlocutor. In the interaction in (22), which was deemed to be with the unfriendly interlocutor, Samantha is more disfluent than in any of the other interactions. However, that disfluency appears to be related more to the fact that Samantha was previously unaware of the necessity to know her phone number in order to be able to add minutes to her phone and is not sure how to react to the unexpected information that she will not be able to complete the transaction in that moment. The only apparent difference between the interactions is the fact that Samantha reported feeling comfortable enough to ask a question of the employee in the interaction during week eleven in (37). In that case, Samantha wrote in her journal that she would not have asked the question if she had not judged the employee to be friendly. In addition to her question, Samantha follows up in line 20 of (37) above with an explanation about why she asked her question in line 19. In producing both the question and the explanation, Samantha produces more talk with the “friendly” service provider than with the “unfriendly” employees.

Jared

In his quote from week two above, Jared reported that he spoke Spanish best in the service encounter at the Toledo institute reception desk compared to interactions in service encounter sites outside of the institute. Jared attributed this difference to the fact that he was more confident and comfortable speaking Spanish at the Toledo institute because he felt that his proficiency was higher than that of most of the other foreign

students at the institute. The contrast that Jared makes between the context of the Toledo institute and the community at large reflects the fact that the reception desk at the institute primarily served a relatively small group of foreign students while business establishments outside of the institute primarily served customers who were not foreign study abroad students, but rather, local Spaniards, Spanish tourists, and foreign tourists.

In order to evaluate Jared's perception about the effect of the service encounter context on his speaking, three of Jared's service encounters from week two are shown below in (38), (39), and (40). The first two are service encounters that took place in the larger Toledo community at two different banks. In (38), Jared changed dollars to euros and in (39), he completed the paperwork to obtain the *carnet joven* discount card. The transcript in (40) is Jared's interaction at the Toledo institute reception desk in which he believed he spoke his best service encounter Spanish during week two.

(38) Jared (J) changing money in a bank with male banker (B) (week two)

UF = unknown female employee

UM = unknown male employee

((J didn't turn on the taperecorder at the very beginning of the interaction, so no opening))

- 1 J: uh euro a este al dolar?- dólar
2 B: la comisión mínima son (.) tres euros
(2.2)
4 J: sí sí sí pero uh sabes si (.) cómo-
5 B: a cómo están?
6 J: sí sí
(20.0)
7 B: uno treinta y tres
8 J: uno treinta y tres?

9 B: uno treinta y tres (...) ((B seems to walk away from the counter))
(3.4)

10 B: uno treinta y tres? ((seems to be asking someone else, no J))

11 B: uno treinta y tres ((to J))

12 J: bueno

13 B: puede cambiar (.) [un poco

14 J: [sí sí

15 J: yo quiero cambiar un poquito de dinero.
(2.3)

16 J: un momento
(4.5)

17 B: sí es (.) cincuenta y tres cuarenta y nueve ((speaking to someone else, not J))
(55.0) ((opening and closing of bag and opening of a sealed envelope))

18 J: bueno
(9.5)

19 B: mira, ésta es la comisión que te cobran
(2.3)

20 B: ésta es la comisión mínima, eh?

21 B: cuánto más: [va subiendo

22 J: [sí sí

23 B: vamos
(50.0)

24 B: mira

25 J: sí?
(11.0)

26 B: (...)

27 J: sí sí
(1.2)

28 J: muchísimas gracias para demostrarlo
(4.6)

29 B: (...)

30 J: entonces es mejor cambiar más dinero

31 B: e- e:- e::- más dinero que esto, eh?
(35.0)

32 B: firmas aquí, por favor

33 B: ahora te doy (el cambio)
(5.6)

34 B: ah- que lo quieres en billetes de cincuenta:: o de veinte?

35 J: ah:: no importa

36 B: (no importa)

(3.2)

36 J: más cincuentas, por favor

37 B: de cincuenta, vale?

38 J: sí

(10.5)

39 B: llegó ((speaking to someone else))

40 J: gracias

41 B: se los doy a Juan (.) Antonio ((speaking to a female employee))

42 UF: sí (.) vale

(0.8)

43 B: toma (.) cinco eran, no?

44 UF: sí

(12.4)

45 B: cien, doscientos, trescientos, cuatro, veinte, treinta y cinco ((in the background))

46 B: ochenta y cinco con sesenta y nueve

47 J: gracias

48 B: de nada

1 J: uh euro to this to the dollar?- dollar ((mispronunciation of dollar the first time))

2 B: the minimum commission is (.) three euros

(2.2)

4 J: yes yes yes but uh do you know if (.) how-

5 B: what they're at?

6 J: yes yes

(20.0)

7 B: one thirty three

8 J: one thirty three?

9 B: one thirty three (...) ((B seems to walk away from the counter))

(3.4)

10 B: one thirty three? ((seems to be asking someone else, no J))

11 B: one thirty three ((to J))

12 J: OK

13 B: you can change (.) [a little

14 J: [yes yes

15 J: I want to change a little bit of money.

(2.3)

16 J: one moment

(4.5)
17 B: yes it is (.) fifty three forty nine ((speaking to someone else, not J))
(55.0) ((opening and closing of bag and opening of a sealed envelope))
18 J: OK
(9.5)
19 B: look, this is the commission that they charge you
(2.3)
20 B: this is the minimum commission, eh?
21 B: the more [it increases
22 J: [yes yes
23 B: alrighty
(50.0)
24 B: look
25 J: yes?
(11.0)
26 B: (...)
27 J: yes yes
(1.2)
28 J: thank you very much for demonstrating it
(4.6)
29 B: (...)
30 J: so it is better to change more money
31 B: e- e:- e::- more money than this, eh?
(35.0)
32 B: you sign here, please
33 B: now I give you (the change)
(5.6)
34 B: ah- do you want it in bills of fifty or twenty?
35 J: ah:: it doesn't matter
36 B: (it doesn't matter)
(3.2)
36 J: more fifties, please
37 B: fifties, OK?
38 J: yes
(10.5)
39 B: he arrived ((speaking to someone else))
40 J: thanks
41 B: I give them to Juan (.) Antonio ((speaking to a female employee))
42 UF: yes (.) OK
(0.8)
43 B: here you go (.) it was five, no?

44 UF: yes
 (12.4)
 45 B: one hundred, two hundred, three hundred, four, twenty, thirty five ((in the background))
 46 B: eighty five sixty nine
 47 J: thanks
 48 B: don't mention it

**(39) Jared (J) obtaining the carnet joven from a bank with a male employee (E)
 (week two)**

UF = unknown female

1 UF: pasa pasa
 2 J: oh heh heh
 3 E: I need your passport and n:: uh photo
 (2.2)
 4 J: sí, aquí lo tengo (.) el pasaporte?
 5 E: it's for- on- only liars ((referring to a magazine he was reading))
 6 J: qué?
 7 E: only liars
 8 J: hh heh heh
 9 E: only liars
 10 J: heh heh dicen mentiras, no?
 11 E: (...) todo es mentira
 12 J: heh heh bueno, no hay problema
 13 J: uh:: y aquí tengo (.) mi foto
 14 J: tienes- tienes
 15 E: una tijera
 (0.6)
 16 J: uh::
 17 E: tengo dinero
 18 J: sí, tijeras
 19 E: scissors
 20 J: gracias
 (4.6)
 21 J: necesita:: (.) estar más pequeño que eso o-
 22 E: sí
 (10.0)
 23 E: éste es un apellido escocés, no?

24 E: McDougal ((pseudonym))
 (0.8)
 25 E: es- es- escocés? Scottish?
 26 J: sí sí (.) sí
 27 J: muy: es- cómo se dice?
 28 J: es- es[cocés?
 29 E: [escocés
 (1.1)
 30 J: es suficiente pequeño o más?
 31 E: ahora cortes
 (1.0)
 32 E: ahora
 (12.3)
 33 J: había mucha gente de la Fundación que quieren ir (0.4)
 34 E: sí
 35 J: ah (.) duran- er- (0.3) uh (0.5) cuando yo regre- cuando yo regrese
 36 J: ellos dice, “no tienen ahora, regresar an.:” (0.2) y regreso heh
 37 E: sí
 (2.4)
 38 E: quieren ir
 (48.0)
 39 E: yo tengo un amigo (1.7)
 40 E: de Tuskaloosa, Alabama
 41 J: heh
 42 E: que dice (.) en Estados Unidos
 43 E: todo el mundo tiene (.) dos nombres pero un sólo apellido
 44 J: sí sí sí
 (5.8)
 45 E: here you are Jared
 46 J: gracias=
 47 E: =it was nice to speak to you
 48 J: ten un buen día
 49 E: gracias

1 UF: go ahead go ahead
 2 J: oh heh heh
 3 E: I need your passport and n:: uh photo
 (2.2)
 4 J: yes, here I have it (.) the passport?
 5 E: it's for- on- only liars ((referring to a magazine he was reading))

6 J: what?
 7 E: only liars
 8 J: hh heh heh
 9 E: only liars
 10 J: heh heh they tell lies, no?
 11 E: (...) everything's a lie
 12 J: heh heh OK, there's no problem
 13 J: uh:: and here I have (.) my photo
 14 J: do you have- do you have
 15 E: scissors
 (0.6)
 16 J: uh::
 17 E: I have money
 18 J: yes, scissors
 19 E: scissors
 20 J: thanks
 (4.6)
 21 J: does it need::: (.) to be smaller or-
 22 E: yes
 (10.0)
 23 E: this is a Scottish last name, no?
 24 E: McDougal ((pseudonym))
 (0.8)
 25 E: Sc- Sc- Scottish? Scottish?
 26 J: yes yes (.) yes
 27 J: very: Sc- how do you say it?
 28 J: Sc- Sc[ottish?
 29 E: [Scottish
 (1.1)
 30 J: is it enough small or more?
 31 E: now cut
 (1.0)
 32 E: now
 (12.3)
 33 J: there was a lot of people at the Toledo institute that want to go (0.4)
 34 E: yes
 35 J: ah (.) duri- er- (0.3) uh (0.5) when I we- when I come back
 36 J: they say, "they don't have it now, come back an:::" (0.2) and I come back heh
 37 E: yes
 (2.4)
 38 E: they want to go

(48.0)
 39 E: I have a friend
 (1.7)
 40 E: from Tuscaloosa, Alabama
 41 J: heh
 42 E: that says (.) in the United States
 43 E: everyone has (.) two names and only one last name
 44 J: yes yes yes
 (5.8)
 45 E: here you are Jared
 46 J: thanks=
 47 E: =it was nice to speak to you
 48 J: have a good day
 49 E: thanks

(40) Jared (J) asking a question at the Toledo institute reception desk with male receptionist (week two)

1 J: hola qué tal:
 (2.5)
 2 J: he imprimido algo
 3 R: bien
 (2.1)
 4 J: entregamos los (...)
 (3.5)
 5 J: tengo- mi tarjeta
 6 R: bueno
 (14.0)
 7 J: y también necesito: uh: la dirección aquí
 (2.3)
 8 J: perfecto, gracias
 (2.9)
 9 J: y:: (0.4) hay algún lugar (.) do- uh donde puedo::
 10 J: en los: (.) tiendas de cigarillos, no?
 11 R: sí [(...) los sellos
 12 J: [de- de tabaco?
 13 J: sí sí y también puedo: (.) dejarlos
 14 R: no. entonces (.) e-

15 J: después necesito:
 16 R: necesitas un buzón um box (.) [amarilla
 17 J: [sí sí sí
 18 R: pero:: (0.2) tienes los sellos?
 19 J: los sellos no no, yo voy a [(.) conseguir
 20 R: [ah pues entonces es-
 21 R: es más fácil si quieres ir a la oficina de correos
 22 J: sí?
 23 R: está cerca=
 24 R: =tú sabes dónde está:: el círculo? de arte
 25 J: e:: n- no recuerdo pero yo-
 26 R: ah sí, no huh huh [huh ((making a noise))
 27 J: [heh heh heh hh
 (1.4)
 28 J: estamos aquí uh, no?
 29 R: estamos aquí
 30 R: a ver aquí
 31 R: bueno vale vas a Zocodover?
 32 J: sí sí
 33 R: antes- antes de llegar a Zara
 34 J: sí
 35 R: a mano iz- quierda=
 36 J: =sí sí yo he-
 37 R: hay una cuesta
 38 J: sí
 39 R: pues al final de esa cuesta
 40 R: ahí está Correos y ahí está el círculo
 41 R: [(...))
 42 J: [sí sí
 43 J: es ésta:: la Caixa Madrid?
 (0.5)
 44 J: la:: [(.) Caixa?
 45 R: [sí ahí- ahí es eso
 46 J: y:=
 47 R: =Caja Madrid y [para arriba arriba arriba arriba arriba
 48 J: [sí sí sí sí sí
 49 R: hasta el final
 50 J: hasta el final
 51 J: hasta aquí? o hasta-
 52 R: hasta ahí (.) ahí
 53 J: [y

54 R: [y hay una puerta muy grande
55 J: puerta muy grande
56 R: y ahí es la oficina
57 J: bueno
58 R: ahí puedes poner los sellos y las dejás (...)
59 J: muchísimas gracias
60 R: vale?
61 J: adios
62 R: adios

1 J: hi how are you:
(2.5)
2 J: I have printed something
3 R: OK
(2.1)
4 J: we turn in the (...)
(3.5)
5 J: I have- my card
6 R: OK
(14.0)
7 J: and also I need: uh: the address here
(2.3)
8 J: perfect, thanks
(2.9)
9 J: and:: (0.4) is there a place (.) whe- uh where I can::
10 J: in the: (.) cigarette stores, no?
11 R: yes [(...) stamps
12 J: [of- of tobacco?
13 J: yes yes and also I can (.) leave them
14 R: no. so (.) e-
15 J: afterwards I need to:
16 R: you need a mailbox um box (.) [yellow
17 J: [yes yes yes
18 R: but:: (0.2) do you have the stamps?
19 J: the stamps no no, I'm going to [(.) get
20 R: [ah well the it's-
21 R: it's easier if you want to go to the post office
22 J: yes?
23 R: it's close=
24 R: =do you know where is::: the Circle? of Art

25 J: e:: n- I don't remember but I-
 26 R: ah yes, no huh huh [huh ((making a noise))
 27 J: [heh heh heh hh
 (1.4)
 28 J: we're here, no? ((looking at a map))
 29 R: we're here
 30 R: let's see here
 31 R: OK OK you go to Zocodover?
 32 J: yes yes
 33 R: before- before arriving at Zara
 34 J: yes
 35 R: on the lefthand side=
 36 J: =yes yes I have-
 37 R: there's a hill
 38 J: yes
 39 R: well at the end of the hill
 40 R: there is the post office and there is the Circle
 41 R: [(...)]
 42 J: [yes yes
 43 J: is this:: the Caixa Madrid?
 (0.5)
 44 J: the:: [(.) Caixa?
 45 R: [yes there- there is that
 46 J: and:=
 47 R: =Caja Madrid and [and up up up up up up
 48 J: [yes yes yes yes
 49 R: until the end
 50 J: until the end
 51 J: until here? or until-
 52 R: until there (.) there
 53 J: [and
 54 R: [and there is a very big door
 55 J: very big door
 56 R: and there is the office
 57 J: OK
 58 R: there you can put the stamps y and leave them (...)
 59 J: thank you very much
 60 R: OK?
 61 J: bye
 62 R: bye

Comparing these three service encounters from Jared's week two recordings, very few linguistic differences can be observed in Jared's use of Spanish in each interaction with regard to the number and length of pauses, the instances of vowel lengthening, grammar and pronunciation accuracy, the number of self-repairs, the rate of speech, or the degree to which he actively participates in the interaction. In all three service encounters, Jared asks questions, provides listener responses (e.g., *sí*, repetition of previous turn), and completes the transactions successfully. He makes only minor grammar or pronunciation errors in each of the interactions. All of the encounters also involved the service provider supplying Jared with a word or phrase in Spanish that he did not know or did not produce without pausing, cutting-off, or lengthening vowels. In line 5 of (38), the service provider responded to Jared's cut-off in line 4, jumping in to provide Jared with the phrase *a cómo están?* ('What are (the currencies) at?' or 'What is the exchange rate?'). In (39), the service provider for the *carpet joven* took a similar action to provide Jared with the lexical item *tijera* ('scissors') in line 15 immediately after Jared self-corrected and cut-off in line 14. Finally, in line 16 of (40), the receptionist similarly supplied what was likely an unknown word to Jared—the word for mailbox ('*buzón*').

The most significant difference between the two encounters in the banks and the encounter at the institute reception desk relates to the nature of the service that is being provided in each encounter and the impact that that service type has on verbal interaction. In the reception desk encounter, there are very few pauses between turns and turn-taking

moves in rapid succession with relatively frequent overlap between speakers. In (38) and (39), in comparison, due to the nature of the encounter, there are long pauses between turns while the service provider or the customer completes a task which does not require verbal interaction (e.g., the banker entering data into the computer, the employee filling out the paperwork for the *carnet joven*). In some cases in the *carnet joven* interaction, both Jared and the employee filled the silence with small talk. Thus, despite Jared's belief that he spoke Spanish better at the Toledo institute with the receptionist, there is no evidence in the recorded data described above to suggest that the specific service encounter context had an impact on his L2 production.

The cases of Samantha and Jared suggest that these students' perceptions about how comfortable they felt in an interaction are not necessarily connected to tangible linguistic differences in their L2 performance in service encounters. There is no doubt that students experienced psychologically different levels of comfort as a result of the interlocutor and the social and physical environment of the encounter, but there is no strong evidence in the recorded data to conclude that the effect of the context on students' comfort level was linked directly to L2 linguistic performance. However, Samantha reported that feeling comfortable in a service encounter empowered her to ask a question about her phone that she wanted to know, that she would not have asked if she had judged the service provider to be unfriendly.

Another influence on students' behavior of the perceived attitude of the service provider was related to the desire to avoid future interactions with employees who were

not friendly. Three students (Chloe, Miranda, Samantha) commented in their journals that they would make an effort not to return to particular establishments when they perceived that the service providers were unfriendly, unhelpful, or disrespectful. In sum, while the data examined did not show that the comfort level had an impact on students' linguistic performance in service encounters, the perceived attitude of the service provider did have an effect on students' psychological experience of feeling comfortable or uncomfortable and on some students' behavior with regard to being empowered to speak more and to fulfill one's interactional goals in the target language (i.e., Samantha's willingness to ask a question) and with regard to future choices about where to obtain goods and services.

Summary of research question 3

The results for the third research question suggest that the social context and the interlocutor did exert an influence on students in performing their service encounters. Firstly, students' production in Spanish was argued to be influenced by the conversational moves made by interlocutors in the service encounters. Secondly, students reported in their journals and interviews that the attitude of the interlocutor (e.g., whether he or she was perceived as friendly) and the setting of the service encounter (e.g., Toledo institute reception desk versus the larger Toledo community) had an impact on their comfort level and, from students' perspective, the interlocutor and the setting influenced how well they were able to speak Spanish. An analysis of service encounter interactions, however, did not provide evidence supporting students' belief that interlocutor and setting directly

influenced how well they spoke Spanish, which was assessed by the frequency of grammatical errors and fluency. Despite the apparent lack of influence on performance, perceived treatment by employees did have an influence on students' behavior, not only with respect to students' comfort level but also regarding empowerment to ask questions and plans to avoid establishments with unfriendly employees.

Research Question 4: How do students manage rapport in service encounter interactions?

The framework for understanding politeness and rapport employed for this study is Spencer-Oatey's (2000; 2005) concept of rapport management. In this approach, *rapport* is defined as the "relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people, and rapport management refers to the management (or mismanagement) of relations between people." (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 96). Further, rapport management has three interconnected components: (1) behavioral expectations (i.e., politeness), (2) face sensitivities, and (3) interactional wants. The goal of this section is to examine the service encounter interactions within this framework by describing students' interactional wants and detailing the types of moves that students made in discourse to manage face, within the context of the behavioral expectations of the target speech community and the foreign students' position within that community.

Interactional wants

Within the framework of rapport management, interactional wants have been defined as the objectives that people bring to an interaction, which include transactional, relational, and identity goals. With regard to the service encounters, students reported pursuing all of these goal types in their interactions with Spanish service providers. In most cases, participants' primary goal and personal measure of success in the service encounters was to obtain the sought-after product or service. That the transactional goal was most often foremost in students' minds was evident by the fact that, in answer to the question on the service encounter information form (see Appendix C) "What was your purpose for the service encounter? (Why did you go there?)", in most cases, students indicated that their purpose was to procure a product or service. However, additional goals that students commented on were speaking and understanding Spanish well and having a comfortable and friendly interaction.

Examples of comments from students regarding performance in the L2 included one by Megan, who responded to the question "How do you feel the service encounter went?" (on the service encounter information form) with the following assessment: "[The service encounter] was good. My Spanish was bad, but I managed to learn a lot about the swords" (week eleven). Her reported purpose for engaging in this service encounter in a small tourist shop was to find out information about the swords that were made in Toledo. Megan's comment about the encounter indicates that she considered the interaction to be successful with regards to the transaction (i.e., she obtained information about swords),

but that she was not happy with the way that she spoke Spanish. In another example, Jared said in week eleven about an interaction in a souvenir shop that, “I felt like [the encounter] went well because I got everything I needed and there were no communication errors.” Here again, Jared reports that the transaction was the primary goal, but that his performance in Spanish was also an element that related to how successful he felt in the encounter. Needless to say, in students’ accounts of their use of the L2, speaking well was viewed positively and speaking poorly was viewed negatively, as the above quotes suggest. This desire for self-presentation as a proficient speaker of Spanish indicated that students also pursued identity goals in the service encounter interactions. I argue below that students’ expressed wish to speak Spanish well is, in part, related to their face wants and the desire to be perceived and to perceive themselves as a competent speakers of Spanish.

Other responses to the question “How do you feel the service encounter went?” frequently included comments regarding how the student felt that the service provider treated him or her—whether the employee was friendly, helpful, rude, among other descriptors. As described above, Samantha wrote in week six about an encounter at a convenience store: “I went to put more minutes on my phone, and to recharge my bus pass. The lady was not friendly (yet again), so I wasn’t very comfortable. Everything went fine and my task was completed, but I stuttered a bit.” In this comment, it is clear that Samantha felt that she was successful with regard to the goal of completing the transaction (i.e., charging her bus pass and adding minutes to her cell phone), but that she

felt that the service provider was not friendly. In an interaction at a bank in week six, Chloe answered the same question saying, “[The banker] was very nice and helpful, although I felt a little stupid for not understanding him.” Miranda reported that based on the attitude of individual service providers, she would decide to return to the store or not in the future: “I think that I will return to all of these places because everyone helped me without any lack of respect due to my use of Spanish” (my translation).

The fact that students’ comments about the success of the service encounters frequently included assessments regarding their perceived ability to speak and comprehend Spanish and the perceived attitude of the interlocutor suggests that students’ interactional wants in the service encounters were not only transactional, but also included relational and identity goals. Beyond the exchange of goods and services, participants in this study paid attention to how they believed that they were treated and how they believed that they performed in the L2. Students all expressed a desire that the service encounters be pleasant interactions in which the interlocutor treated them with a friendly and helpful attitude.

There were only a few cases in which students’ primary goal in the service encounter was not obtaining products or services. For example, Jared mentioned that he went to a bar and ordered a drink so that he could sit at the bar and flirt with the female bartender whom he had seen previously at that establishment. Although a commercial transaction was involved, Jared’s primary goal for the interaction was relational—

developing a relationship with the employee.²⁰ In one of the interactions that Greta recorded, her reported goal was to practice Spanish with Spaniards. Since she was not living with a Spanish host family, Greta struggled throughout the semester to find Spaniards to talk to outside of class. She wrote that one of her strategies to use Spanish was to strike up conversations in service encounters. In one of the recorded service encounters, in a coffee shop, Greta's primary goal for the interaction was to initiate conversation by sitting at the counter and chatting with the barista. Although Greta also ordered a beverage in that encounter, her stated reason for engaging in the encounter was not primarily to buy a drink. The goal of L2 practice can be conceived as transactional in the sense of being task-focused or instrumental, but not transactional in the same way as the exchange of goods and services.

In general, Greta's interactional want to practice Spanish may have affected her behavior in the service encounter interactions. Compared with the other six participants, Greta was the student who most frequently asked questions of service providers—questions which were typically related to the products or services potentially to be exchanged. Greta reported that she was motivated to ask questions and to engage in talk that went beyond the obligatory transactional language of service encounters as a way to practice Spanish. In some cases, Greta's interactional goal of practicing Spanish in service encounters may have had an influence on her rapport management in these interactions. In the example provided in (41), Greta is in a souvenir shop helping a U.S.

²⁰ Jared was not recorded flirting with the bartender because he reported later that he did not have the opportunity to do so. During the time that he was sitting at the counter, the female bartender was too busy serving customers for him to be able to engage her in conversation.

American friend look for a gift from her grandmother. Prior to the start of the transcript in line 82, Greta and her friend had been talking to each other while looking around the store, codeswitching between English and Spanish. Greta had asked the shopkeeper several questions about items in the store and had asked what he would recommend as a gift for her friend's grandmother. The example in (41) begins with a humorous turn by Greta's friend suggesting (jokingly) to Greta in English that maybe she could buy her grandmother one of the famous Toledo swords.

(41) Greta (G) in a souvenir shop helping a friend (S) buy a gift with male shopkeeper (E) (week eleven)

- 82 S: hey grandma, here's a sword ((speaking to G))
 83 G: heh heh heh heh
 84 G: para- una abuela? ((speaking to E))
 (1.0)
 85 E: ay para [abuela eso no: eso (.) va a ser demasiado heh heh
 86 G: [e? heh heh heh heh heh
 87 E: va a ser demasiado
 88 G: heh heh heh
 89 E: a lo mejor si:: si es una abuela guerrera?
 90 G: heh heh heh heh
 91 S: heh heh heh heh
 92 E: e:: amigo
 93 G: (hh)uh huh heh heh
 (9.0)
 ...
 82 S: hey grandma, here's a sword ((speaking to G))
 83 G: heh heh heh heh
 84 G: for- a grandmother? ((speaking to E))
 (1.0)
 85 E: ay for [grandmother not that (.) it's going to be too much heh heh
 86 G: [e? heh heh heh heh heh
 87 E: it's going to be too much

88 G: heh heh heh
89 E: maybe if:: if she's a warrior grandmother?
90 G: heh heh heh heh
91 S: heh heh heh heh
92 E: e:: friend
93 G: (hh)uh huh heh heh
(9.0)
...

In line 82, Greta's friend humorously identifies a sword as a potential gift for her grandmother. However, the friend makes the comment in English, which the shopkeeper gives no indication of understanding. Greta laughs at her friend's joke and then points out the sword to the shopkeeper, asking him if that item is *para una abuela* ('for a grandmother') in line 84. Greta's code switch functions to involve the shopkeeper in the conversation. The shopkeeper aligns with the play frame that Greta and her friend have initiated in his turn in 85, laughing and taking an exaggerated tone of voice indicating amusement. Greta overlaps with laughter in her turn in 86 and laughs again in 88. Finally, the shopkeeper utters line 89, suggesting ironically that maybe the grandmother will like the sword if she is a warrior grandmother. His tone of voice in 89 and 92 is amused, continuing in the play frame. Both Greta and her friend laugh at his joke in lines 90 and 91.

For a brief time, Greta engages the shopkeeper in a humorous interaction which both parties appear to enjoy, making the service encounter more pleasant and harmonious. Based on the recorded data and students' journals, the other participants in the study were much less likely to initiate an interaction such as this one. The fact that other students were reportedly less interested in using service encounters as a way to

practice Spanish helps explain why they did not initiate non-obligatory talk as frequently as Greta did. Although Greta may have had other motivations for engaging in non-obligatory transactional and relational talk in her service encounters, one motivation appeared to be her desire to speak Spanish with local Spaniards. This interactional goal led her to produce non-obligatory talk, which in cases such as the example in (41), served to create rapport between herself and the service providers.

Managing face sensitivities

In addition to interactional wants and behavioral expectations, face sensitivities constitute the third element involved in the management of rapport. In Spencer-Oatey's (2005) framework, face sensitivities are based on the positive social values that individuals or groups claim for themselves as part of identity face, which can either be enhanced or threatened in a given interaction. Within identity face, positive social values can relate to individual qualities or claims to group membership. This section examines students' management of face sensitivities within Spencer-Oatey's (2005) concept of identity face, considering both students' management of their own face sensitivities (self-orientation) and their management of the perceived face sensitivities of their interlocutors (other-orientation). Clearly, the students managed face in a variety of ways, but the focus here is on the following elements: tone of voice, greetings, compliments, assessments, language choice, and request strategies.

Tone of voice

All of the participants in this study used a “friendly” tone of voice as a way to manage face in at least one recorded service encounter interaction. How a friendly tone of voice was conveyed prosodically varied among the students and from interaction to interaction, but some examples included vowel lengthening, wider ranges of pitch than normal, and higher-than-normal pitch. In addition, part of giving an impression of “friendliness” with prosody came from increased energy expended in the speech on the part of the student, a characteristic that has been linked to how attitudes are conveyed through prosody (Gussenhoven, 2002).

Chloe was the only student who used a friendly tone of voice frequently in the service encounters, particularly in openings and closings. The other participants used this special tone of voice with less frequency and in a less exaggerated manner. An interaction from week two in which Chloe used a friendly tone of voice several times is shown in (42) below.

(42) Chloe (C) asking for directions to a bank with a female employee (E) in a clothing store (week two)

- 1 → C: ho:la uh tengo una pregunta
2 C: dónde está el banco BV um BA?
(1.9)
3 E: Zara
4 C: Zara? OK=
5 E: =en frente
6 C: oh (.) [en frente?

7 E: [en frente
 8 C: OK
 ((long pause and sound of walking))
 9 E: there it is
 10 →C: oh hhheh heh gracias
 11 C: cua- tus rebajas cuándo um (.) terminan?
 12 E: a final de este mes
 13 C: el fin de este mes?
 14 C: OK, gracias.

1 → C: he:llo uh I have a question
 2 C: where is the BV um BA bank?
 (1.9)
 3 E: Zara
 4 C: Zara? OK=
 5 E: =across the street
 6 C: oh (.) [across the street?
 7 E: [across the street
 8 C: OK
 ((long pause and sound of walking))
 9 E: there it is
 10 →C: oh hheh heh thanks
 11 C: whe- your sales when um (.) do they end?
 12 E: a final de este mes
 13 C: el fin de este mes?
 14 C: OK, gracias.

As is the case in the interaction in (42), Chloe rather frequently opened service encounters with the greeting *hola* using an extra friendly tone of voice. Prosodically speaking, her friendly tone of voice typically consisted of a wider range of pitch variation between the first and last syllable, with a higher pitch on the first syllable and a lower pitch on the second syllable. Vowel lengthening was also common in Chloe's friendly

productions of *hola*. In line 10, Chloe also produces the word *gracias* with similar prosodic features indicating friendliness.

Chloe used a friendly tone of voice to enhance both her own and the interlocutor's identity face. By presenting herself as a friendly person, Chloe claimed for herself what she saw as the positive social value of showing friendliness, thus enhancing her own face. Chloe's journals indicate that she clearly valued friendliness in other people in their interactions with her. From Chloe's perspective, her act of friendliness also enhanced the face of the service provider. By opening the interaction with a friendly greeting, Chloe effectively framed the service encounter as a pleasant interaction in which she was willing to make the extra effort to treat the employee with respect and kindness, as she would a friend. This move, from Chloe's perspective, enhanced the employee's face by indicating that the employee was worthy of being treated as a friend, satisfying a perceived face need for social acceptance and affiliation. The friendly tone of voice in line 10 again enhanced Chloe's own face in her self-presentation as a friendly person and served to enhance the face of the service provider by demonstrating appreciation for the employee's helpfulness.

Based on previous research and on the researcher's observations in the speech community, the degree of friendliness that Chloe imparted with her tone of voice in this and other recordings was not an expected behavior in service encounters between strangers in Spain. In Spencer-Oatey's (2000; 2005) framework, behavioral expectations have an effect on rapport management. As a result, Chloe's move to enhance the service

provider's face by being friendly, and thus enhance rapport, may not have had the desired effect in the hearer. For example, Chloe's "friendliness" may have been interpreted as insincere since the two interactants did not know each other and Chloe's interactional wants did not include striking up a friendship with the employee. The employee's reaction in the talk does not indicate that she treated Chloe with above-average friendliness or framed the interaction as a particularly friendly one. The employee provided assistance to Chloe by pointing out the location of the bank when asked, but her tone of voice remained matter-of-fact throughout the recording and she did not say anything beyond the necessary transactional talk.

Apart from Chloe, Greta and Jared were the students who most frequently employed a more-than-average degree of friendliness in their interactions. Other participants in the study included this strategy less frequently. Among all students, the most frequent contexts for a friendly tone of voice were openings, particularly greetings, and closings, especially the expression of thanks *gracias* or, in the case of Jared, the upgraded version, *muchísimas gracias* ('thanks so much').

No patterns were observed in the data of individual students or the sample as a whole regarding variation in use of a friendly tone of voice based on service encounter type (i.e., bank, grocery store, cell phone store) or the social characteristics of the service providers (i.e., age, sex), except in the case of interactions at the reception desk of the Toledo institute. Students more often employed a friendly tone of voice with the Toledo institute receptionists than with service providers in establishments outside the institute.

Due to the fact that students saw the receptionists on a daily basis and receptionists were staff at the institute, whose job it was to help the foreign students, the use of a friendly tone of voice in that context reflected the lower social distance between students and receptionists as well as the friendly atmosphere that the staff tried to create within the institute. Students' use of a friendly tone of voice in this context reflected an other-orientation to the face of the receptionists to be treated not anonymously, as a stranger, but rather, served to convey that students viewed receptionists as acquaintances with whom they had contact on a regular basis.

Greetings

Several students employed greetings as a way to show closeness or affiliation with service providers. In some cases, the use of greetings to show closeness enhanced rapport between students and employees and in other cases, this move did not seem to have that effect. As was discussed in the results for Research Question 1, Greta started out the semester using the how-are-you inquiry *cómo está(s)* ('how are you') as part of her opening sequence. Greta reportedly intended this move to be friendly and to enhance rapport with the service provider but, since how-are-you inquiries do not follow the behavioral expectations in Spain for service encounters between strangers, the use of this type of greeting did not fulfill the intended function of framing the encounter as a friendly one. As described above, Jared also used a similar move with the greeting *qué tal*

(‘how’s it going’) in a situation in which behavioral expectations did not call for this type of inquiry between non-intimates.

In two particular contexts, however, students’ greetings did serve the intended function of enhancing rapport in service encounters between students and service providers. In both contexts, students knew the service provider that they greeted. In the first case, two students, Jared and Megan, greeted the receptionist at the Toledo institute with *qué tal* (‘how’s it going’). Megan’s greeting from week eleven is shown in (43) below.

(43) Megan (M) greeting the receptionist (R) at the Toledo institute (week eleven)

1 M: hola qué tal
2 R: eh?
3 M: qué tal
4 R: bien y tú?
5 M: hhh ((sighing)) bien
6 R: los últimos días
7 M: sí: (.) mañana me voy a Portugal

1 M: hi how’s it going
2 R: eh?
3 M: how’s it going
4 R: good and you?
5 M: hhh ((sighing)) good
6 R: the last days
7 M: yes: (.) tomorrow I go to Portugal

As Megan described in her journal, by week eleven she had spoken to this particular receptionist fairly frequently over the course of the semester and felt that she knew him well enough to converse with him as a friend. Megan never used *qué tal* as a

greeting in any other service encounter during the semester, all of which, apart from the encounters with the Toledo institute receptionists, were with individuals that she did not know. This difference indicates that Megan varied her greeting behavior based on social distance and level of intimacy between participants. The greeting in (43) serves to enhance the hearer's affiliation face by indicating that Megan treats the receptionist as a person and as someone who she knows as part of the social group at the Toledo institute—effectively personalizing the interaction. Megan did have a transactional goal in this interaction (to ask about a room reservation that she had made), but much of the encounter is spent on relational talk, primarily about Megan's travel plans.

In another interaction, Jared used the same greeting, *qué tal*, with a female bartender that he had talked to before and wanted to flirt with and get to know better. His greeting in that interaction is shown in (44) below.

(44) Jared (J) greeting a female bartender (B) and ordering a coffee (week eleven)

1	J:	hola::: qué tal	1	J:	hi::: how's it going
2	B:	bie::n y tú?	2	B:	goo::d and you?
3	J:	muy bien	3	J:	great
4	J:	un café dolesón	4	J:	a dolesón coffee

Jared reported in his journals that he used *qué tal* in some cases to greet service providers that he recognized. The only other time that Jared used this particular greeting in the recordings was with a receptionist at the Toledo institute in week two. He also reported employing *qué tal* in one service encounter with an employee that he had

interacted with the day before, but when the employee reacted strangely to that greeting, Jared wrote that he must not have known that person well enough to employ *qué tal*. Jared's stated interactional goal in (44) was to get to know the bartender better and as a result, he personalized his greeting to enhance the affiliation face of the bartender and to frame the interaction as a friendly one.

Compliments

Two students (Greta and Megan) used compliments in a few service encounters as an other-oriented, face-enhancing move. Consider the following extracts in examples (45) and (46).

(45) Extract of Greta (G) in a small shop complimenting the items in the store with a male employee (E) (week six)

- 24 G: y- de dónde son?
25 E: de la India
26 G: oh sí?
27 G: todo:: de la: tienda?
28 E: sí
29 →G: me gustan mucho:
(2.1)
30 G: mucho mucho::
(2.2)
31 G: y quién viar:::-ja a India (.) para conseguir estas cosas
32 E: bueno yo:, mi pareja:
33 G: mhm
(2.2)
34 G: qué divertido

24 G: and- where are they from?
 25 E: from India
 26 G: oh yeah?
 27 G: everything::: of the: store?
 28 E: yes
 29 →G: I like them a lot:
 (2.1)
 30 G: a lot a lot::
 (2.2)
 31 G: and who trav:::-els to India (.) to get these things
 32 E: well myself:, my wife:
 33 G: mhm
 (2.2)
 34 G: how fun

(46) Extract of Megan (M) in a jewelry shop with a female employee (E) (week eleven)

61 M: lo siento no tengo más
 62 E: sí (.) tengo tengo
 (1.0)
 63 M: muy bien
 64 →M: me gusta tu::: uh su::
 65 E: tienda
 66 M: tienda, sí
 67 E: muchas (cosas) ((very quietly))
 (3.0)
 68 M: muchas gracias
 69 E: a ti
 (3.6)
 70 M: hasta luego=
 71 E: =gracia:s

61 M: I'm sorry I don't have anything else
 62 E: yes (.) I have I have
 (1.0)

63 M: very good
 64 →M: I like your::: uh your::
 65 E: store
 66 M: store, yes
 67 E: many (things) ((very quietly))
 (3.0)
 68 M: thanks a lot
 69 E: to you
 (3.6)
 70 M: see you later=
 71 E: =thank:s

In both (45) and (46), Greta and Megan use the structure *me gusta* ('I like') to compliment the store owner or employee on the products in his or her store. In Greta's example in (45), prior to her compliment, she had asked the service provider about the purpose of an item in the store that was unknown to her (a fabric stamp) and then had queried him about where his products had come from. After those questions, Greta complimented the store owner in line 29, saying that she liked the things in the store a lot. Her first turn complimenting in line 29 is met with silence in the recording and, after a lapse in talk of 2.1 seconds, Greta upgraded her compliment in line 30 saying *mucho mucho* ('a lot a lot'). Again, her compliment is met with silence by the service provider, although he may have reacted nonverbally.

In Megan's interaction in (46), her compliment with *me gusta* is preceded by a search for a ring during the previous 60 lines of talk, a search that the store employee had assisted her with. In line 61, buying the ring that she picked out, Megan apologizes for not having a smaller bill with which to pay. Waiting at the counter for the purchase to be

completed, Megan made her compliment. Megan was somewhat disfluent in producing the compliment in line 64, in part, because she decides to change from the informal possessive pronoun *tu* ('your') to the formal possessive pronoun *su* ('your'). The employee anticipates the object of Megan's compliment and completes Megan's turn, saying *tienda* ('store') in line 65.

In both cases, Greta and Megan used a compliment as a move to enhance the face of the service provider by showing appreciation for the products that he or she had decided to sell and, by extension, suggesting that he or she had good taste in selecting retail merchandise. Considering the Spencer-Oatey's (2005) framework, the compliments served to enhance the employees' face sensitivities in the areas of material possessions (i.e., nice products) and skills (i.e., the ability to know what items to sell). The reactions of the service providers do not provide any evidence that the move of complimenting had the desired effect of enhancing the employee's face. In the case of the male employee, the response to Greta's compliment was silence and in the case of the jewelry store employee, the reaction to Megan's compliment was the provision of a lexical item (*tienda*) and then a comment *muchas cosas* ('many things').

These types of responses to a compliment in Peninsular Spanish are not common based on one previous study. Lorenzo-Dus's (2001) research on compliment responses among undergraduate students in Spain found that typical compliment responses included humor and irony, comments about the complimenter's hidden agenda, upgrades, and reassignments of the object of the compliment. It is likely that compliments by customers

to employees about the products of a store are not a common occurrence in service encounters, considering previous research on service encounters and the researcher's observations in the target speech community. As a result, the employees in those two encounters may not have responded to compliments in a typical fashion because they were not in a social context in which the possibility of receiving compliments was expected. Furthermore, the employees may not have possessed face sensitivities related to the selection of products in the store. If the employees did not derive positive social characteristics from the ability to choose appropriate products, then the compliments about the items in the store may not have had the desired face-enhancing effect.

Assessments

An assessment “articulates a stance taken up—ordinarily by the first pair part speaker—toward what the second pair part speaker has said or done in the prior turn” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 124). One student, Greta, used assessments in the recordings as a move to enhance the interlocutor's face. Extract (47) was taken from Greta's encounter in the café in which the employee explained to Greta how the Spanish sweet bread *torrija* is made.

(47) Greta (G) ordering waffles and torrijas and talking with a female employee (E) in a café (week six)

81 E: no puede ser pan fresco

82 E: tiene que ser pan de dos días por lo menos
(0.6)
83 E: o tres
(0.9)
84 E: <pan viejo>
85 G: sí
86 E: y se pican (.) rodajas::
(1.5)
87 E: y se moja con le:che cane:la
88→ G: wow (.) de[liciosa
89 E: [y- y huevo
90 G: oh [sí?
91 E: [y- y se fríe
92 E: y se hace el almíbar
93 E: y se ducha por encima
94 E: así se hace
95 G: sí:ya
96 E: es una comida pa' ser aquí
97→ G: qué rica::
98 G: um- cómo se llama?
99 E: torrija

81 E: it can't be fresh bread
82 E: it has to be two-days-old bread at least
(0.6)
83 E: or three
(0.9)
84 E: old bread ((said more slowly and emphatically))
85 G: yes
86 E: and you cut (.) strips::
(1.5)
87 E: and you soak them in milk cinnemon
88→ G: wow (.) de[licious
89 E: [and- and egg
90 G: oh [yes?
91 E: [and- and you fry it
92 E: and you make the syrup
93 E: and you drizzle it on top
94 E: that's how you make it
95 G: yes: yes

96 E: it's a food to be here for
97→ G: how delicious::
98 G: um- what's it called?
99 E: torrija

In this excerpt, Greta aligned with the attitude of the café employee by providing two positive assessments regarding *torrijas* in lines 88 (*wow deliciosa*) and 97 (*qué rica*). These assessments were produced with exaggerated intonation indicating sincerity and appreciation and, in the case of line 97, with vowel lengthening. These assessments served to enhance the employee's face by aligning with the positive stance that the employee took towards *torrijas*. It is clear from the way that the café employee talks about *torrijas* that she thinks that they are something special and, in particular, that *torrijas* are something typically Spanish, to appreciate as a unique cultural food tradition from Spain. Greta expresses her similar appreciation and interest in *torrijas* through her positive assessments, enhancing the café employee's face claims as a member of Spanish and Toledo cultures. Later in the interaction (shown in excerpt (11) above), the café employee talked about how she made *torrijas* for her grandson, who reportedly loves his grandmother's homemade desserts. Thus, Greta's comments expressing a positive stance towards *torrijas* also enhanced the employee's face in terms of her own skills as a cook and grandmother who prepares homemade *torrijas* for her grandson.

Language choice

All of the students except Megan made one recording in which a service provider addressed the student in English in at least one turn. A total of six out of the 113 service encounters recorded contained some English spoken by a service provider. In no case in the recordings did the students respond in English when spoken to in that language, nor did students ever address the Spanish service providers in English. Students responded to turns in English by speaking in Spanish. In some cases, only one of the employee's turns in the encounter was in English, as in Chloe's interaction with the banker in (29).

However, in some interactions, such as Jared's in (39), the service provider's use of English was more extensive, occurring in a few turns. The most extensive use of English in the participants' recordings was that of a female employee in a café who spoke with Greta about what type of food that she wanted to order. The transcript of that interaction in its entirety is found in (48).

(48) Greta (G) and friend (S) ordering food in a café with female employees (E and E2) (week six)

- 1 G: hola
2 G: tienes un menú?
3 E: sí::
(0.8)
4 G: oh, claro
5 G: y- h um (0.3) cuánto cuesta:: los Risketos? (.) Risketos?
6 E: twenty five (.) veinticinco
7 G: ah:: (...)
8 G: es barato que en:: la::- los- las (.) máquinas (.) de:- de vende?

9 E: generalmente, [sí
 10 S: [heh heh heh[heh heh
 11 G: [heh heh heh
 12 E: I ((magic))
 13 G: sí:: (.) sí sí sí
 14 E: ya
 (0.5)
 15 G: y-
 16 E: maybe I'm a (...)
 17 G: heh heh
 18 G: me::- yo s::é qué:: [yo quiero
 19 E: [mira (.) if you want this (.) [it's- it's very easy this
 20 G: [oh::
 21 E: don't worry
 22 G: oh::: ya he- fotos:
 (2.5)
 23 G: qué me: recomiendes para:: comer?
 24 E: para comer::
 25 G: porque:: yo soy:: (.) una: vegetariana
 26 E: oah: (.) puede ser un::- is possible e:: (.) sandwich vegetal
 27 G: uh huh h [yo como:: um: (.) pescado
 28 E: [yes
 (0.4)
 29 E: ah:: (.) OK (.) bien
 30 G: y- [um
 31 E: [comes fish?
 32 E: comes pescado?
 33 G: sí
 34 E: OK, puede ser vegetal con atún
 35 G: sí
 36 E: [tuna
 37 G: [te- tengo interés en:: pan y pizza?
 38 E: ya, this is ham and cheese
 39 G: no tienes [um queso y atún?
 40 E: [e- e- e- e-
 41 E: no- tomorrow
 42 G: oy::: OK
 43 S: heh heh heh
 (3.1)
 44 G: entonce::s
 45 E: is possible- e:- is e:- tomato:, cheese, and e:: (.) like an onion an a::

46 E2: tuna
 47 G: uh huh
 48 E2: if you want
 (3.0)
 49 G: bueno
 (0.5)
 50 G: sí, eso- [esto está bien
 51 E: [OK muy bien
 52 G: um:: (.) h necesitas um:: tch um:: (0.4) hamburguesas de vegetal
 53 E: ah::
 54 G: y: cada día: (.) voy a:: (.) estar aquí
 55 S: heh heh
 56 G: sí::
 57 E: e:- after
 58 G: sí
 59 E: I:: spare- e- e- [I ((think)) it out
 60 G: [yo- yo en- (.) yo enten-
 61 E: yo tengo vegetal
 62 E: yo tengo vegetal
 63 E: ahora te voy a mostrar
 64 G: sí, sí sí
 65 E: sit down
 66 G: entiendo español pero no puedo hablar heh heh
 67 E: muy bien
 68 E: un momentito
 69 E: (...)
 70 G: oh sí sí
 (2.5)
 71 G: that was fun

(Original English in bold letters)

1 G: hi
 2 G: do you have a menu?
 3 E: yes::
 (0.8)
 4 G: oh, of course
 5 G: and- h um (0.3) how much do:: the Risketos? (.) Risketos cost?
 6 E: **twenty five** (.) twenty five
 7 G: ah:: (...)

8 G: it is cheap than in:: the::- the- the (.) machines (.) of:- of sell?
 9 E: generally, [yes
 10 S: [heh heh heh[heh heh
 11 G: [heh heh heh
 12 E: **I ((magic))**
 13 G: yes:: (.) yes yes yes
 14 E: ya
 (0.5)
 15 G: and-
 16 E: **maybe I'm a (...)**
 17 G: heh heh
 18 G: to me::- I kn::ow what:: [I want
 19 E: [look (.) if you want this (.) [it's- it's very easy
 this
 20 G: [oh::
 21 E: **don't worry**
 22 G: oh::: already I hav- photos:
 (2.5)
 23 G: what do you *recommend me to:: eat?
 24 E: to eat::
 25 G: because:: I am:: (.) a: vegetarian
 26 E: oah: (.) it can be a::- **is possible** e:: (.) tuna and vegetable sandwich
 27 G: uh huh h [I eat:: um: (.) fist
 28 E: [yes
 (0.4)
 29 E: ah:: (.) **OK** (.) OK
 30 G: and- [um
 31 E: [do you eat **fish**?
 32 E: do you eat fish?
 33 G: yes
 34 E: **OK**, it can be a vegetable sandwich with tuna
 35 G: yes
 36 E: [**tuna**
 37 G: [I have- have interest in:: bread and pizza?
 38 E: yes, **this is ham and cheese**
 39 G: you don't have [um cheese and tuna?
 40 E: [e- e- e- e-
 41 E: no- **tomorrow**
 42 G: oy::: **OK**
 43 S: heh heh heh
 (3.1)

44 G: so::
 45 E: **is possible-** e:- is e:- **tomato:, cheese, and e:: (.) like an onion an a::**
 46 E2: **tuna**
 47 G: uh huh
 48 E2: **if you want**
 (3.0)
 49 G: OK
 (0.5)
 50 G: yes, that- [that's fine
 51 E: [OK great
 52 G: um:: (.) h you need um:: tch um:: (0.4) vegetable hamburgers
 53 E: ah::
 54 G: and: each day: (.) I'm going to:: (.) be here
 55 S: heh heh
 56 G: yes::
 57 E: e:- **after**
 58 G: yes
 59 E: **I:: spare-** e- e- **[I ((think)) it out**
 60 G: [I- I un- (.) I unders-
 61 E: I have tuna sandwiches
 62 E: I have tuna sandwiches
 63 E: now I'll show you
 64 G: yes yes yes
 65 E: **sit down**
 66 G: I understand Spanish but I can't speak heh heh
 67 E: very good
 68 E: just a sec
 69 E: (...)
 70 G: oh yes yes
 (2.5)
 71 G: **that was fun**

From the beginning of this interaction, the service provider inserts English words and phrases into her speech, effectively indexing Greta as a foreigner and non-member of the in-group. That is not to say that the service provider's attitude was one of hostility towards Greta—quite the contrary given the available data—the café employee's tone of

voice and attitude was friendly and helpful throughout the interaction and Greta left this encounter with the impression that the woman was kind. The service provider's motivations for speaking English with Greta may have ranged from wanting to accommodate to the linguistic needs of foreigners—who are part of her customer base and who do not always speak Spanish well—to wanting to practice her English with Greta or to demonstrate her command of English.

Research on *foreigner talk* (Ferguson, 1975) and *over-accommodation* (Ylänne-McEwen & Coupland, 2000) suggests that in multicultural interactions, individuals may over-adapt to their interlocutors, making linguistic modifications that are unnecessary and which may be interpreted as “patronizing and deindividuating (treating individuals as social or cultural prototypes rather than attending to their individual competences and needs)...[even] ‘with the best of intentions’” (Ylänne-McEwen & Coupland, 2000, p. 196). From the beginning, Greta demonstrated enough proficiency in Spanish in this interaction to be able to carry out the transaction in Spanish, without resorting to English. Therefore, the service provider's use of English could be interpreted as over-accommodating to a stereotype that foreigners cannot speak Spanish or that they prefer to be spoken to in English. Another possible interpretation of the café employee's behavior is that, in speaking English, she made a move to enhance her own face as a Spaniard who could speak English, arguably a positive social value in a town with a high volume of tourists. Yet another explanation might be that the service provider withheld access to Spanish and, symbolically, in-group membership in the speech community.

The behavioral expectations for intercultural interactions between Spaniards and foreigners may have also been different than those expectations for Spaniard-Spaniard interactions. Toledo is a town which many tourists visit each year, a number of whom do not speak Spanish. Therefore, the service provider's use of English should be understood within this intercultural context in which those who know how to speak English may accommodate to foreigners by adopting that language for the interaction.

Service providers in Toledo may also have a more nuanced view of foreigners than the previous analysis would suggest. For example, the researcher, who was an advanced speaker of Spanish, was never spoken to in English by service providers during the same amount of time living in Toledo as the students. Therefore, servers' judgments about language choice may also be based on perceived language proficiency or perhaps age, physical appearance, and attire. Previous research on language choice in service encounters in New York City indicate that physical appearance indicating in-group or out-group membership influenced accommodation to language choice (Callahan, 2006). In this case, the researcher differed from the students with regard to both age and also style of dress; while the participants in this study tended to dress rather informally by Spanish standards (e.g., sweatshirt and jeans), the researcher was likely to wear relatively more formal attire.

Going back to the encounter in (45), Greta addressed the use of English by the café employee in the talk itself. In line 66, she says (in Spanish) *entiendo español pero no puedo hablar* ('I understand Spanish but I can't speak'). This comment indicates that

Greta was oriented to the service provider's use of English as an index of her L2 proficiency. With her turn in line 66, Greta implies that it is not necessary for the woman to speak to her in English, since she understands Spanish. Paradoxically, by claiming that she does not speak Spanish, Greta may have both weakened and strengthened her own face with regards to her L2 Spanish proficiency. In the first place, this move damages Greta's face by claiming that she is not a proficient speaker of Spanish. At the same time, this statement functions as an excuse for any errors that Greta might have made in speaking Spanish by drastically lowering the proficiency expectations. That is, if Greta "does not speak Spanish" then any attempt that she makes to speak that language will be viewed as exceeding expectations.

In this encounter, Greta does not accommodate to the language choice of the service provider. In fact, none of the students in this study switched to English when spoken to in English. Non-accommodation or *contra-accommodation*—to use Ylänne-McEwen & Coupland's (2000) term referring to conscious non-accommodation—in language choice in this data may serve several functions. First, sticking to Spanish may be a way for students to disassociate themselves from other foreigners, namely tourists. Toledo is a town which many foreign tourists visit and one aspect of some of the Toledo study abroad students' face sensitivities was a claim to be different from the stereotypical foreign tourist who did not speak Spanish and did not have any connection to the local community. Not acting like a tourist was viewed as positive social value from the point of view of many students at the Toledo institute.

Another function that non-accommodation to English may serve is to enhance students' own face sensitivities with regard to their performance and skills in their L2. Not switching to English demonstrates that students are competent enough in Spanish to continue interacting in that language, without resorting to English, and effectively communicates to the service provider that his or her assumption about language proficiency or language preference was incorrect (i.e., that the student cannot speak Spanish or prefers to speak English). The students in this study were high-performers who all had high standards for their own L2 proficiency. Due to the fact that they were all Spanish majors or minors, part of their face sensitivities revolved around demonstrating an appropriately high proficiency in Spanish. In their journals, students frequently commented about their insecurities about their L2 proficiency and it was clear that their self-aspect while in Spain was connected strongly to their own and others' perception about how well they were able to speak and comprehend Spanish. The following journal comment by Greta (week four) is representative of this group of students: "I like myself better when I speak in Spanish and can go for a while without stumbling or having to ask about a word or even when I don't have them repeat or slow down for me. That tells me I have improved and it makes me happy." Thus, non-accommodation to use of English enabled students to enhance their own face sensitivities by demonstrating proficiency in using Spanish in service encounters.

A question that is raised from this analysis is whether language choice and accommodation or non-accommodation damages rapport. Greta's perception of the

interaction in (48) is captured in line 71 in a comment in English to her friend: “that was fun.” The tone of voice with which she utters this line suggests that she meant this comment sincerely, not ironically. With other students, it was evident from journal entries that they did not like being spoken to in English. For example, Miranda wrote the following in her service encounter information form regarding an interaction with an employee in a jewelry store in week eleven: “I didn’t like this conversation because he kept answering me in English even though I kept speaking in Spanish.” Similarly, Kyle wrote the following about an interaction in a cell phone shop in week six: “[It was] bad: I spoke in Spanish and he spoke back to me in English.” Jared described his interaction in the bank to obtain the *carnet joven* as “successful when [the employee] was willing to speak Spanish.”

From the perspectives of Miranda, Kyle, and Jared, being spoken to in English damaged the rapport of the service encounter. The proposed explanation for this negative attitude toward being addressed in English is that this move on the part of service providers threatened students’ face as proficient speakers of Spanish and as non-tourist foreigners living in Toledo. In the case of Greta, if her “that was fun” comment can be taken at face value, use of English did not damage rapport in that service encounter. What may be different about Greta’s service encounter was the perceived attitude and motives of the service provider for speaking English. As Ylänné-McEwen and Coupland (2000, p. 201) argue, “addressees’ responses to foreigner talk can be variable, depending on normative expectations and on how the strategy is ‘attributed’—what motive is ascribed

to the speaker.” The café employee’s tone of voice and attitude in the encounter with Greta were pleasant and helpful, which may have contributed to Greta’s positive perception of the encounter, despite the employee’s use of English.

Finally, there was little evidence that, on the other side of the coin, students’ non-accommodation was damaging to rapport with the service providers. Service providers’ attitudes towards students in the interactions in which employees spoke to students in English did not undergo any apparent change based on students’ non-accommodation to language choice. For example, the café employee in Greta’s recording maintained a friendly tone of voice throughout the service encounter, despite Greta’s persistence in using Spanish. However, no other data is available to determine how service providers perceived this behavior and consequently, this aspect cannot be fully explored.

Development over time in request strategies: Relevancy to face and rapport management

In the discussion for Research Question 1, it was argued that some students moved towards using request strategies that were more appropriate given the behavioral expectations for Spaniards in service encounters in Toledo. That is, six students began to use more Spanish-like request strategies (i.e., imperative, assertive, and elliptical requests) more frequently over time in certain contexts. While this change in students’ behavior can be understood as part of their L2 pragmatic development, it can also be framed in the context of rapport management and face sensitivities.

It was argued previously that one of students' face sensitivities related to their own L2 proficiency and wanting to speak Spanish in a native-like (i.e., highly proficient) manner. Viewed in this light, movement towards more Spanish-like request strategies can be seen as a way that students enhanced their own face with regard to abilities to speak like a Spaniard. For example, as cited earlier, Jared had this to say about his performance at the meat stand in week eleven: "Out of the service encounters [for this week], I think the most successful one is the meat stand. I got pretty good at getting meat at the meat stand like a Spaniard. I feel like I was good enough at it by the end of the semester that they didn't really know a difference in the way that I would order something and the way that a Spaniard would order something." By ordering meat "like a Spaniard," Jared enhanced his own face with regard to performance and skills in the L2. At the same time, his knowledge of local behavioral expectations made the service encounter flow smoothly and harmoniously.

Summary of results for research question 4

In this section, the connection was made between interactional wants, face sensitivities, and behavioral expectations with regard to students' performance in service encounter interactions and management of rapport. With regard to face sensitivities, different students were found to use tone of voice, greetings, compliments, and assessments to enhance the face of the service providers. Students enhanced their own face, it was argued, by not accommodating to use of English by service providers in a

small number of interactions and by using more Spanish-like request strategies over time.

In certain cases, interactional wants affected rapport management, for example, in the case of Greta whose motives in general went beyond obtaining products and services to using service encounters as a means to practice Spanish. Greta's interactional wants may also have affected how much effort she invested in rapport management. A notable observation that can be made from the analysis above was that Greta was the student who used the widest range of face-enhancing moves in service encounters. She employed friendly tone of voice, greetings, compliments, and assessments as face-enhancing strategies. While in most cases, the other study participants viewed service encounters from a primarily transactional standpoint, Greta was interested in initiating and participating in talk beyond that required to complete the transaction.

Although not examined theoretically, personality may have also come into play in the management of rapport. For example, Chloe was a very bubbly and friendly person in general, which might help to explain the high degree of frequency with which she used a more-than-normal friendly tone of voice in service encounters. Miranda was a very shy person and wrote in her journal that she felt nervous and shy in service encounters, perhaps shedding light on the fact that Miranda rarely used the rapport management strategies described above.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the rapport orientation of students was most often either rapport-enhancement or rapport-neglect. In brief, routinized interactions in

this data, there was what would appear to be a rapport-neglect orientation, that is, little expressed concern with establishing and maintaining rapport. But this rapport-neglect orientation is the behavioral expectation in Spain given that service encounter interactions between non-intimates are focused primarily on the transaction, rather than on personal relationship-building. However, counter examples, such as the use of a friendly tone of voice with specific greetings and in closings provide instances of an orientation towards rapport-enhancement even in brief exchanges. Some students (Chloe, Greta, Jared, Miranda) mentioned specifically in their journals that they desired smooth, harmonious, and friendly interactions in service encounters. The only examples in which a rapport-challenging orientation was found were in some of the encounters in which non-accommodation to language choice occurred. Use of English on the part of service providers damaged rapport with students in some cases, although not in all (e.g., Greta's café encounter). It is not known how service providers interpreted students' non-accommodation to language choice, but it may have been damaging to rapport in some instances.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Summarizing the results, an examination of participants' interactions in service encounters over the course of one semester studying abroad suggest that there was development over time with regard to L2 politeness norms in some participants, specifically with regard to requests, discourse markers, and openings. Participants in this study described learning about politeness features in the L2 by means of explicit instruction in and out of class, observation of Spaniards, reactions of service providers to what students said, and participation in service encounters.

In addition to these findings on pragmatic learning and development, it was argued that the social context and specifically, the interactional pattern of the interlocutor, was important in understanding the amount of L2 speech produced by students. There was also a common belief among the participants in this study that the level of comfort that students felt with specific interlocutors had an impact on how well they spoke the L2 in a given situation. While little evidence was found in the recorded data to support linguistic differences based on comfort level, the interlocutor had an impact on one student's willingness to speak. Finally, the ways in which students managed rapport in the service encounter interactions was reported through an analysis of the interactional wants and face sensitivities in the context of the behavioral expectations of the target speech community. A particular face sensitivity observed among most of the participants of the study was that of wanting to present oneself and to be perceived as a proficient speaker of Spanish, a desire that, it was argued, led six students not to accommodate to being spoken

to in English by service providers. In this section, these findings will be discussed in light of previous research and interpreted within the proposed theoretical frameworks.

Research Question 1: Changes in politeness behavior over time

The purpose of this research question was to examine changes over time with regard to politeness norms in the L2. As in previous studies on L2 pragmatic acquisition in study abroad, the developments that participants made in L2 politeness were rather modest. In this study, changes were observed in individual students with regard to request forms, discourse markers, and openings.

Looking first at the developments over time in requests, all of the students in the study started out in week two exclusively using speaker-oriented verbs when a verb was present in the request. Arguably, the predominance of speaker-oriented verbs can be traced to students' L1. According to data from Vélez's (1987) study of American English service encounters, speaker-oriented requests such as I need..., I want..., and Can I... were the most frequent request types in English in requests at a university registrar's office and in retail sales interactions in Texas. Students in this study were recorded using need statements (*necesito...*), want statements (*quiero...*), and conventional indirection (*puedo tener...*) in their Spanish service encounters. Although need statements, want statements, and conventional indirectness are possible request strategies in Peninsular Spanish service encounters, these strategies are not the norm in that context (Placencia, 2005; local informants). L1 transfer was particularly evident in the use by two students

(Chloe and Greta) of the phrase *puedo tener...*, which is not conventionalized in requests in Spanish as its literal equivalent is in English. *Puedo tener* can literally be translated as ‘can I have...’ but the unconventionality in Spanish is better conveyed by the translation ‘am I capable of having...’. Indeed, Chloe mentioned that in using *puedo tener* for requests, she was translating literally from what she would say in English.

By weeks six and eleven, four students (Chloe, Kyle, Jared, Samantha) began using hearer-oriented verb forms with two lexical items, *poner* and *cobrar*, in their recorded data. Table 10 shows that during the semester abroad, these four students used more hearer-oriented requests, but did not stop using speaker-oriented requests entirely. The observation that students did not eliminate the use of speaker-oriented verbs from their service encounter requests is explained by the fact that the shift toward hearer-oriented request types was restricted to these two verbs and to requests for specific products (*ponme, me pones*) or requests for the employee to charge them for their purchases (*me cobras*). In contexts in which Chloe, Kyle, Jared, and Samantha made a request for a specific product, their request behavior shifted to using *poner* and *cobrar* with hearer-oriented verbs in weeks six and eleven, in comparison to the exclusive use of speaker-oriented verbs in week two.

More specifically, in requests for specific products, Chloe shifted from one use of the conventionally indirect and speaker-oriented *puedo tener* (‘can I have’) to two uses of the hearer-oriented imperative form *ponme*. Kyle moved from exclusively using the want statement *quisiera* (‘I would like’) to exclusively employing the assertive *me pones* (‘you

give me’) in a number of interactions. Jared also changed from an instance of speaker-oriented conventional indirectness in which he uttered *podemos pagar la cuenta* (‘can we pay the bill’) to the conventionalized hearer-oriented assertive form *me cobras* (‘you charge me’) in similar situations. Finally, Samantha did not make any recordings in which she asked for specific products or to pay the bill in week two, but two instances of a conventionally indirect and hearer-oriented request with *poner*, *puedes ponerme* (‘can you give me’), and one example of the hearer-oriented *me cobras* occurred in Samantha’s recordings in weeks six and eleven. Samantha’s journal indicated that she had learned to make requests with *poner* while in Toledo.

This observed movement from speaker-oriented verbs to hearer-oriented verbs with the lexical items *poner* and *cobrar* suggests L2 development in the direction of a politeness norm for requests in Spanish. Hearer-oriented verb forms seem to be preferred in requests in Spanish that contain a verb (Márquez Reiter, 2002; Mir, 1993; Vélez, 1987) and may be made more polite with the inclusion of the speaker through the pronoun *me* (Mir, 1993). Furthermore, *poner* and *cobrar* are appropriate lexical items for service encounter requests in Spain. In a cross-sectional study of requests by beginning, intermediate, and advanced English-speaking learners of Spanish, Félix-Brasdefer (2007) reported a similar L2 development with respect to the perspective of the verb: as proficiency increased from the intermediate to the advanced level, L2 learners employed more hearer-oriented requests and fewer speaker-oriented requests. Similarly, students in the present study began to use hearer-oriented requests more frequently over time.

Another development that was observed in the recorded data was the greater frequency of use of elliptical requests over time by four students (Greta, Jared, Megan, Samantha) in food-related service encounters. In interactions in which students ordered food or drinks, the week two recordings indicated that Greta and Jared both made requests using conventional indirectness with the modal verb *poder*. In week two, Greta ordered food and drinks three times using the inappropriate phrase *puedo tener* and Jared ordered salami at a meat stand using the phrase *puedo comprar* as his request. In weeks six and eleven, both Greta and Jared made all of their food-related requests using an elliptical construction. Elliptical requests also appeared in the food-related service encounters of Megan and Samantha in weeks six and eleven, and both learners reported in their journals that they had learned to make requests with elliptical forms in Toledo. Despite the fact that no food-related service encounters were recorded for Megan and Samantha in week two that would permit comparison, their journal data provides evidence that these two students followed a similar pattern as Greta and Jared, learning these request forms during study abroad. Finally, two recordings by Samantha in a convenience store suggested she learned to use an elliptical request in that context as well.

The absence of elliptical requests in week two food-related service encounters is proposed to result from L1 transfer. Vélez (1987) reported that in retail and registration desk service encounters in American English (Texas), elliptical requests were infrequent; requests with verbs were preferred by U.S. American customers. However, elliptical

requests are common in service encounters in Peninsular Spanish, found in 33% of corner store requests (Placencia, 2005) and 43% of hospital information desk requests (Placencia, 1998). Thus, the more frequent use of elliptical requests, instead of speaker-oriented request forms, in food-related service encounters suggests that students moved toward politeness norms in the target language during the semester abroad.

Considering these findings in light of the literature on the L2 development of requests, some observations can be made. First, request development has been proposed to occur in stages, as Kasper and Rose (2002) have argued. The five stages are presented again for the reader in Table 2, which is reproduced from Kasper and Rose (p. 140). These stages were originally based on developmental pragmatics data from learners of English. However, Félix-Brasdefer (2007) has more recently applied these stages to data regarding the development of L2 pragmatics in Spanish, the suggestion being that these categories may be relevant to the learning of languages other than English.

Table 2: Stages of request development (based on data from Ellis, 1992 and Achiba, 2002; as cited in Kasper and Rose, p. 140)

Stage	Characteristics	Examples
1: Pre-basic	Highly context-dependent, no syntax, no relational goals	“Me no blue”, “Sir”
2: Formulaic	Reliance on unanalyzed formulas and imperatives	“Let’s play the game”, “Let’s eat breakfast”, “Don’t look”
3: Unpacking	Formulas incorporated into productive language use, shift to conventional indirectness	“Can you pass the pencil please?”, “Can you do another one for me?”

4: Pragmatic expansion	Addition of new forms to pragmalinguistic repertoire, increased use of mitigation, more complex syntax	“Could I have another chocolate because my children—I have five children.”, “Can I see it so I can copy it?”
5: Fine-tuning	Fine-tuning of requestive force to participants, goals, and contexts	“You could put some blue tack down there”, “Is there any more white?”

Considering these proposed stages, the question arises as to what extent do the changes over time observed in this study fit into the proposed stages of request development. First, it was observed that four students (Chloe, Greta, Jared, Kyle) began the semester using conventionally indirect forms (*poder* + verb) and the syntactically downgraded want statement (*quisiera*) and by weeks six and eleven, had all shifted to exclusive use of direct forms (i.e., imperatives, assertives, and ellipsis) to request specific products in food and retail service encounters. This direction of development is divergent from the proposed stages in Table 2 in various ways. First, these students arguably moved from more complicated syntax and greater mitigation (i.e., conventional indirectness, downgraded want statement) to less complicated syntax and less mitigation (i.e., imperatives, assertives, and ellipsis). Consequently, development over time is in the direction of becoming more direct rather than less direct in making requests. Trosberg (1995) also reported that her Danish learners of English moved towards direct requests over time.

In addition, participants in this study incorporated the formulaic sequences *ponme*, *me pones*, and *me cobras* into their requests over time. There was no evidence

that these formulas became productive, as students were not found to transfer by analogy the imperative or assertive structures to verbs other than the formulaic *poner* and *cobrar*. However, because these students were at an intermediate to advanced level of Spanish, it is likely that students did not incorporate these formulas as unanalyzed chunks, but rather, used these formulas because they had learned—through explicit instruction and observation—that they were appropriate forms for service encounter requests. Elliptical requests, on the other hand, did offer a productive format for requesting food-related products. By using a verbless request, learners could simply plug in any product into the request utterance: *dos cervezas* (‘two beers’), *un gofre con chocolate* (‘a waffle with chocolate’), *cien gramos de salchichón* (‘one hundred grams of salami’).

Strictly speaking, there was little evidence that individual learners added new forms to their pragmatic repertoire for service encounter requests. Instead, learners tended to replace one request type with another in requests for products. Kyle stopped using *quisiera* and switched to exclusive use of *me pones*. Chloe moved from *puedo tener* to the use of *ponme*. Greta changed from *puedo tener* to elliptical requests. Nor did these students fine tune their request strategies based on contextual and sociolinguistic factors, since no sociolinguistic variation with respect to request strategies was found.

Given the request developments observed in the students in this study, it is difficult to place individual learners in the proposed stages shown in Table 2 or to suggest that developments over time represented a progression from one stage to the next. At the same time, there was clearly progress in some of the students’ request behavior in the

direction of L2 politeness norms. An issue that must be reconciled between the results of this study and the proposed stages of request development is the fact that to acquire target language norms in Peninsular Spanish service encounters, students must use more direct requests, not indirect requests—an issue that has also been brought up by Félix-Brasdefer (2007).

Explanatory factors for the observed developments in students' requests in this study include the following: L1 transfer, overgeneralization, and prior instruction help explain students' use of indirect strategies in the beginning of the semester and explicit instruction, observation of Spaniards, and use of formulaic speech help explain why students developed towards the target language norm of direct request strategies. Firstly, the use of the phrase *puedo tener* by Chloe and Greta was most likely a literal translation from English requests, something that Chloe explicitly recognized in her own speech. Other examples of conventional indirectness may also be the result of L1 transfer, since this strategy is common in English service encounter requests (Vélez, 1987).

On the other hand, the use of conventional indirectness may not strictly be the result of L1 transfer, since conventional indirectness with the modal verb *poder* is, in fact, a common requesting strategy in many dialects of Spanish, including Peninsular Spanish (cf. Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Chodorowska-Pilch, 2004; Placencia, 1998). However, conventional indirectness has been reported to be infrequent in requests in corner store interactions in Spain (Placencia, 2005). Therefore, Jared's use of conventional indirectness in requests, for example, may be also explained by

overgeneralization of this strategy from other requesting contexts. Jared's movement towards assertives and ellipsis in service encounters may be an indication that he was fine-tuning his requests to match that specific context, learning that conventional indirectness was not the expected behavior in that situation. In the case of Kyle's use of *quisiera* in the beginning of the semester, Kyle reported that he had been previously taught in Spanish language classes that the downgraded want statement *quisiera* was an appropriate way to make requests in Spanish. He found out through explicit instruction from his host father in Toledo that this request strategy was not the expected behavior in service encounters in Spain.

A question that arises with regard to the changes over time observed in students' requesting strategies is why request developments were almost exclusively in food service encounters. Except in the case of Kyle and Samantha, who were found to use hearer-oriented verbs and an elliptical request, respectively, in non-food retail service encounters, all of the other request developments during the semester abroad were discovered specifically in food-related service encounters. This difference cannot simply be explained by differences in politeness norms according to the type of service encounter, since Placencia (1998), for example, found elliptical requests to also be frequent (43% of all request types) in hospital information desk service encounters in Madrid. Learners in this study never used elliptical requests in their requests for information, but rather, requests with verbs such as *¿sabes si...?* ('do you know...?'),

questions such as *¿A qué hora se cierra el banco?* ('What time does the bank close?'), or need or want statements including *quiero saber* ('I want to know').

Part of the explanation may be that elliptical requests and requests with the verb *poner* were shown as appropriate Spanish requesting strategies in the Maximizing Study Abroad class. Indeed, Chloe, Megan, Miranda, and Samantha mentioned in their journal entries that they had learned how to appropriately order a drink with imperatives and assertives with *poner* and with elliptical requests from the lesson on requests in the Maximizing Study Abroad class. Likewise, Kyle reported learning how to ask for specific products with *poner* through explicit instruction from his host father. The verb *poner* in both the imperative and assertive forms is limited to requesting specific products and not to requesting information or making other types of requests. Thus, the observed changes in the use of *poner* appeared to be a result of explicit instruction. The in-class instruction was limited to an example in a food-related service encounter context, suggesting that what students learned with regard to requests with *poner* was also restricted to this particular context.

On the other hand, in-class instruction also showed an elliptical request in a food-related service encounter situation. While hearer-oriented requests with *poner* are restricted to asking for specific products, elliptical requests can be made in a wide variety of service encounter situations, as described above. The fact that, for the most part, students did not extend elliptical requests to other contexts (e.g., informational requests) may be another indication that explicit instruction was the most important factor

influencing students' behavior over time, given that explicit instruction was limited to modeling requests for specific food products.

Another possible explanation might be related to the frequency of students' participation in food-related service encounters compared to other types. The researcher observed that students at the Toledo institute frequently went out with friends to cafés, bars, and restaurants. In comparison, students likely did not participate as frequently in retail and information desk service encounters and, as a result, may not have had as much practice or opportunities for observation of Spaniards in those contexts. Clearly, observation was also another strategy that students reported using to learn about politeness norms, such as Jared's and Samantha's learning of the phrase *me cobras* through observation.

The fact that one student, Miranda, did not appear to change her request behavior over time may also be explained by the fact that she did not record herself in any food-related encounters in which an explicit request was made.²¹ If students' development was limited primarily to food service encounters, Miranda's apparent lack of development similar to the other students may be an artifact of the absence of recordings in that context. Indeed, there is evidence in Miranda's journals that she developed in a similar way to other students, at least in terms of her declarative knowledge about requesting. She wrote in her week five journal that, "For example when someone asks for a coffee in a bar, in English we say "Can I have a coffee, please?" but in Spain this is not

²¹ Miranda's service encounter in the bakery in week eleven did not include a verbally explicit request.

appropriate. It's better to say, "*Hola. Un café con leche, por favor* ['Hi. A coffee with milk, please.']." There are other appropriate phrases as well." Miranda made this comment in the context of discussing what she had learned from the lesson described above in the Maximizing Study Abroad class. This journal excerpt indicates that Miranda realized that elliptical requests were appropriate in Peninsular Spanish in food-related service encounters. She may not have realized, however, that elliptical requests are also appropriate in other service encounter contexts, since in-class instruction did not specifically mention that fact.

Overall language proficiency—as suggested by students' scores on the entrance test at the Toledo institute and the researcher's observations—did not appear to be connected to the observed developments over time in requesting strategies. The students who were found to move towards target language politeness norms with regard to hearer-oriented and elliptical requests were both more advanced learners (Jared, Kyle) and less advanced learners (Chloe, Greta, Samantha). However, given that language proficiency was not measured with a valid and reliable instrument, this observation is merely suggestive.

A final observation with regard to requests relates to the role of formulaic sequences in pragmatic development. Previous research on L2 pragmatics in study abroad has indicated that one of the ways that learners become more native-like is through the incorporation of formulaic sequences into their performance of speech acts (Barron, 2003; Hoffman-Hicks, 1999). For example, Hoffman-Hicks (1999) discovered that after a

year abroad, learners increased their use of expressions of well-wishing such as *Bonne journée!* ('Have a good day!') and *Bonne soirée!* ('Have a good night!') in their performance of leave-takings. Barron (2003) found that Irish learners of German increased their use of the formulaic expression *Ich wollte fragen, ob...* ('I wanted to ask if...') which is a pragmatically appropriate way to initiate a request in German. Learners have also been shown to reduce the amount of non-target-like formulaic expressions that are the result of L1 transfer in their speech act production (Barron, 2003; Hoffman-Hicks, 1999), for example, English-speaking learners of German were found to employ the literal translation of the L1 formula "No problem" (*Kein problem*) to minimize expressions of gratitude, which is pragmatically inappropriate in German (Barron, 2003).

In this study, formulaic speech also appeared to play an important role in students' developments over time in requests in service encounters. Various authors have pointed out the importance of formulaic speech in pragmatics, since speech events often involve conventionalized and formulaic forms (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008; Coupland, 2000; Kuiper & Flindall, 2000). The formulaic sequences that students learned in Toledo (i.e., *ponme, me pones, puedes ponerme, me cobras*) made students' requests sound more Spanish-like. Elimination of the literally translated sequence *puedo tener* in two learners' speech (Chloe, Greta) also contributed to more target-like requests.

Apart from more closely approximating Peninsular Spanish expectations for how requests are done in Spain, formulaic sequences have also been proposed to reduce the processing demands of language. The fact that formulaic sequences are involved in

routines that are repeated over and over again reinforces and automatizes these chunks in speech. Because formulas are ready-made, prefabricated utterances stored in long-term memory, speakers can rely on these chunks of speech to reduce the processing demands on working memory, thus giving learners more time to plan “creative” utterances (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008).

Formulaic sequences form the backbone for Hopper’s (1998) theory of emergent grammar, a linguistic theory that has been argued to be commensurate with Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). From this view, an emergent grammar is one that is constructed “fragment by fragment” as a result of participation in social interaction. Learning a language involves accumulating more and more fragments of speech that can be used in similar situations later on. Thus, a person’s grammatical system is not built through following grammatical rules, but rather, by collecting fragments of language that have been spoken by others in social interactions and in specific social contexts.

The learners in this study were found to learn formulaic request utterances through explicit instruction by more knowledgeable individuals (i.e., host family, instructor) and through observation of what Spaniards said in similar situations (e.g., *me cobras*) and to incorporate those formulas into their speech. As Hopper (p. 171) argues, “speaking is more similar to remembering procedures and things than it is to following rules. It is a question of possessing a repertoire of strategies for building discourses and reaching into memory in order to improvise and assemble them...[in specific]

communicative contexts.” Students’ learning of target-like request forms in service encounters was reflective of a piecemeal accumulation of phrases that could be employed in very specific contexts, such as the use of *me pones* to request a product in food and retail service encounters and the learning of *me cobras* as a way to request that the employee ring up the customer. Furthermore, each student had his or her own trajectory with regard to the learning of these formulas. Again, following Hopper (p. 164): grammar is “an emergent fact having its source in each individual’s experience and life history and in the struggle to accomplish successful communication.”

While there was no evidence in the data that the acquisition of formulaic hearer-oriented verbs with *poner* and *cobrar* provided structural models or templates for creative language production—which is a function of formulas in Hopper’s theory—the elliptical request structure did prove to be productive in requests for specific products. That is, students who adopted elliptical requests into their speech were able to use them to ask for any variety of products.

Another proposed benefit of formulaic sequences is the easing of processing on the part of the hearer (Girard & Sionis, 2004; Wray, 2000). By employing a formulaic utterance that is associated with a specific function and situation, the hearer is able to quickly and efficiently understand the speaker. This idea reflects a “communicative pressure” to be efficient in speaking (Girard & Sionis, 2004). While students’ incorporation of formulaic request forms in service encounters may have reduced the processing load for the service providers, it was clear from the data that, in most cases,

the Spanish expert speakers had no difficulty processing learners' non-formulaic requests, even when those were pragmatically inappropriate (e.g., *puedo tener*). For example, Chloe's and Greta's requests with *puedo tener* were understood without any problem by the employees in those service encounters. As Kidwell (2000) has argued, service providers rely on the institutional context in order to understand the needs of L2 speaker customers. In the case of the service encounters, the institutional context was rich enough in most cases for students to make themselves easily understood despite some instances of non-target-like pronunciation and grammar, as well as non-formulaic ways of making requests.

Moving from requests to the findings on discourse markers, three students (Chloe, Greta, Samantha) eliminated the English marker OK from their speech over the course of the semester. It was argued that this marker served the function in these learners' speech as an acceptance or acknowledgment of what another participant said in the previous turn and as a warrant to initiate a closing sequence. By the end of the semester, all three students began using Spanish discourse markers *bueno*, *bien*, and *vale* as acceptance markers, although with different degrees of frequency. After eliminating relatively frequent use of OK from her speech, Greta used Spanish discourse markers rather infrequently. Chloe and Samantha continued using discourse markers in their role of acceptance and warrant with some frequency, replacing OK with *bueno* and *vale* and, in many instances, using these markers in a target-like manner. The use of OK as a warrant was either replaced by the Spanish markers *bueno* or *vale* in the closing phrase *bueno/*

vale, gracias or the warrant was eliminated entirely leaving *gracias* or *muchas gracias* as the initiation of the closing sequence, also a target-like closing. Apart from the inappropriate use of *bueno* and *oh bueno* by Chloe in certain discourse contexts, the changes in use of discourse markers OK, *bueno, vale, bien,* and *muy bien* by Chloe, Greta, and Samantha was in the direction of target language norms.

The fact that the two most proficient students in the group overall²² (Jared and Kyle) never used the marker OK in their recordings and that lower-proficiency learners stopped using this marker over time suggests that through increased proficiency and experience with the language, the non-target-like marker OK²³ disappears from spontaneous, oral speech. In the study abroad environment, in which students are exposed to a great deal of oral discourse in natural settings, the acquisition of Spanish discourse markers is likely facilitated. As was seen, three students began to use Spanish discourse markers in oral interactions over the course of the semester. Learning Spanish discourse markers allowed students to move toward managing talk in the service encounter interactions in a target-like way. The use of *bueno* as an acceptance marker was useful to demonstrate acceptance and acknowledgment of previous utterances by the service provider. *Bueno* as a warrant functioned as an appropriate strategy to initiate closing sequences in service encounters.

²² Again, comments about proficiency are merely suggestive, given the absence of a systematic measurement of proficiency.

²³ Note that OK is considered non-target-like as a discourse marker, since it was only very rarely found in oral data from Spaniards in the Toledo speech community. However, by all accounts, OK is understood in many languages worldwide, including Spanish.

However, other Spanish discourse markers such as *pues*, *o sea*, and *bueno* in its other discourse functions—while present in the input that students received from service providers—were by and large not used by students in the service encounters and no development over time was observed with regard to students' use of these markers. These markers also provide tools to manage the flow, sequencing, and coherence of utterances in verbal interactions. Kyle's experience with *pues* and the lack of overall development in this area may be an indication that certain markers or certain functions of markers in discourse may be more difficult to learn than others.

A final finding with respect to development over time was that of Greta, in which a change was observed in her openings in service encounters. In the first week of recordings, Greta used how-are-you inquiries (*¿cómo está(s)?*) in the opening sequence of three encounters. After receiving negative reactions from service providers to the how-are-you inquiry, Greta changed her behavior in weeks six and eleven to using greetings such as *hola* and *buenas* that are more target-like in the context of opening service encounters. Greta herself reported that she opened service encounters with the how-are-you inquiry as a means to present herself as a friendly person.

While Greta realized through the less-than-positive reactions that she received that how-are-you inquiries were not appropriate and stopped using this strategy in her service encounters by week six, there is evidence suggesting that she may not have been able to see this behavior from the Spanish cultural perspective. Greta commented in her journal that she perceived the lack of response to how-are-you inquiries as unfriendliness

on the part of the service providers. In Spanish service encounters, how-are-you inquiries between strangers are not the expected behavior and the lack of use of this move does not convey unfriendliness from a Spanish point of view. In this way, Greta may have adopted the politeness norms of service encounter openings, but not learned the cultural point of view and the cultural values informing the behavior, suggesting that L2 learning does not always go hand in hand with C2 (second culture) learning.

A similar observation can be made about Greta's perspective on imperative forms in Spanish requests. According to her journal, Greta viewed imperative requests in service encounters as authoritarian, reflecting an interpretation from the world view of a U.S. American. Spaniards do not view imperative requests as authoritarian, but rather, as verbal means of demonstrating low social distance and in-group membership (Mir, 1993). Greta's interpretation of requests with imperatives reflects the Anglo-Saxon cultural value placing great importance on the freedom of action of the individual and a resulting dispreference for imperative forms in requests. Mediterranean cultures such as that of Spain, on the other hand, tend to place a greater cultural value on in-group solidarity and group involvement, represented by the use of direct forms such as imperatives, assertives, and ellipsis (Mir, 1993; Wierzbicka, 1985).

Despite the changes over time towards target language norms for politeness, students in the study still remained non-target-like in certain ways by the end of the semester abroad. Three students continued using need statements with *necesito* in service encounters in week eleven, which is an inappropriate request strategy in the target speech

community. While Samantha had acquired the strategy of making hearer-oriented requests with *poner* for specific products by weeks six and eleven, her control of the grammatical forms was not consistent, resulting in an incorrect morphological marking on the verb in a request in week eleven in which she said *puedes ponme* instead of *puedes ponerme*. Chloe's use of the imperative of *poner* with the pronoun *me* was also apparently not consistent, since in week eleven, in the same interaction, she first said *ponme* and then in a second request, just *pon* ('put'). With regard to discourse markers, students did not always use markers in appropriate discourse contexts, even by week eleven. For example, Chloe continued into week eleven using the phrase *oh bueno* where it was inappropriate as an acceptance marker. Kyle remarked in his journal that he had stopped using the marker *pues* altogether by week six because he was confused about how to use it and had been told by his host parents that he was employing *pues* incorrectly.

With the exception of Greta's inappropriate how-are-you inquiries, students' openings in service encounters were, for the most part, target-like from the beginning of the semester. However, there were some aspects of closings that were non-target-like even by the end of the semester. Jared, for example, frequently upgraded the ritualized expression of gratitude, *gracias*, to *muchísimas gracias* ('thank you very much' with exaggerated intonation on the penultimate syllabus of the *muchísimas*) in his closings throughout the semester, an unexpected behavior for a closing sequence in service encounters. In addition, on several occasions throughout the semester, Miranda and

Samantha did not provide the second pair part of the leave-taking sequence *hasta luego-hasta luego* ('see you later-see you later'), in interactions at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. While Spanish interactions in service encounters do not always conclude with leave-takings, if one participant utters a leave-taking expression, that token serves as a first pair part (*hasta luego*) making relevant a response from the other participant, who must provide the second pair part (*hasta luego*).

It is also worth pointing out two areas in which there were no notable developments over time in the recordings of any students: sociolinguistic variation and terms of address. Considering students' behavior overall in the recorded service encounters, there was little observable sociolinguistic variation with regard to the features of students' speech and no changes over time. The only notable variation based on age, sex, or type of business establishment was seen in openings and in the use of the informal and formal pronouns. With regard to greetings, three students (Jared, Megan, Samantha) employed the how-are-you inquiry *qué tal* as a greeting with a staff member at the institute who they knew. Jared also used this form to greet a bartender who he recognized and wanted to get to know better. These students did not use *qué tal* with strangers in service encounters, suggesting that they varied their greeting type based on social distance. Although how-are-you inquiries are not the norm in Peninsular Spanish service encounters, the use of this form with Toledo institute staff at the reception desk was pragmatically appropriate given that the students knew the staff, frequently interacted with them, and the behavior matched the friendly environment cultivated by

the Toledo institute staff. Jared's use of *qué tal* with the bartender was pragmatically appropriate given his interactional goal of flirting and getting to know the bartender better.

Sociolinguistic variation was also observed in the use of the formal second person pronoun *usted* by Greta in week two and Megan in week eleven, in both cases with older individuals. In all other recordings, students either used the informal pronoun *tú* (or the informal possessive pronoun *tu*, 'your') or did not directly address the service provider, using instead speaker-oriented or elliptical requests that do not require the use of a second person pronoun or verb morphology for the second person. In other instances, address forms were not needed because students' requests were anticipated by the service provider (e.g., example (8) above). However, no changes over time with regard to address forms were observed in the recorded data.

The extensive use of *tú* by students in the retail, food, and information desk service encounters can be considered a target-like politeness behavior. In corner store service encounters in Madrid (Placencia, 2005), *tú* was the preferred form among Spaniards, although *usted* was also present in 16% of the interactions when an address term was used. In this data, there was only one recorded service encounter (i.e., Miranda in the post office) in which the service provider addressed a student with the formal pronoun *usted*. The researcher's own observations in the host community and local informants' reports suggest that both service providers and customers in Toledo

overwhelmingly employ the informal pronoun in a reciprocal fashion to address each other.

Historically speaking, the informal T address form has been gaining ground in Peninsular Spanish, as it has in other European languages (cf. Kinginger & Farrell, 2004), reflecting the growing predominance of an attitude of egalitarianism, solidarity, and in-group membership rather than deference and social distance (Braun, 1988; Recuero, 2007). However, the formal pronoun *usted* is still encountered in service encounter interactions in Spain in which differentials in social distance, age, or social status exist (Blas Arroyo, 1994; 1995; Placencia, 2005), as well as in certain establishments that, for example, want to convey an atmosphere of formality (Ardila, 2004).

The lack of change over time in students' use of the T/V distinction can be attributed to the fact that the informal pronoun was the most frequent form present in the L2 interactions in which students participated, both in service encounters and in other verbal encounters in the L2. As a result, students had relatively little evidence in social interactions about how, when, and with whom to use *usted*. Indeed, based on the way that students talked about *tú* and *usted* in their journal entries, students demonstrated a somewhat simplified view of the T/V distinction, viewing sociolinguistic characteristics (e.g., age, social status, gender) as categorically determining use of the terms of address. Students did not express a more nuanced understanding that terms of address were negotiable within a single interaction (cf. Blas Arroyo, 1995; 2005), or that a speaker may choose a formal address pronoun on a particular occasion to convey an attitude of

distance or formality. Instead, students tended to view T/V as connected to immutable characteristics of the individual.

This exclusive focus on speaker characteristics such as age and social status may be an artifact of the way in which the T/V distinction is typically taught in Spanish language textbooks in the U.S.—that is, in a simplified and categorical fashion. Blas Arroyo (2005) argues that actual use of the address terms in Peninsular Spanish does not follow the rigid dichotomy of distance and respect (*usted*) versus solidarity and closeness (*tú*) described in traditional grammars.

The finding that students did not make any notable changes in their use of address terms over the course of the semester would seem to differ from previous research on changes over time in the use of T and V pronouns in French by study abroad students (Kingtoner & Farrell, 2004; Kingtoner & Belz, 2005). Based on data from sociolinguistic interviews, Kingtoner and Farrell reported that students' metapragmatic ability to select the appropriate address term in a given context—including two service encounter situations—changed over time, with students giving more nuanced justifications for the selection of either T or V in a specific situation after one semester studying in France.

The journal entries of some participants in the present study (Jared, Megan, Miranda) do indicate that students were thinking about the T/V distinction, making observations of Spaniards (Megan, Miranda), asking other students (Jared) or host parents (Megan) about address terms, and actively trying to figure out the appropriate contexts for each form and the types of meanings that address forms conveyed in social

interactions. Thus, while students' actual use of address forms in the service encounter interactions did not shift notably over time, some students' metapragmatic awareness about T and V clearly changed in certain ways as a result of participation in social interactions in the study abroad environment.

The predominance of the informal register in students' speech in service encounters can also be interpreted in light of previous research on study abroad. Several authors (Marriott, 1995; Regan, 1995; Siegal, 1994) have reported that study abroad students tend to acquire and, in some cases, overgeneralize the informal register, primarily as a result of the fact that, in their role as foreign students, L2 learners in the study abroad context do not always have access to more formal contexts for L2 interaction. The participants in this study rarely had the opportunity to interact in formal contexts; their exposure to the L2 was typically limited to interactions with the host family, language partner, Spanish friends (in the case of Megan), staff at the Toledo institute, classroom interactions with instructors, and service encounters—all of which generally required reciprocal use of *tú*. Based on my own observations at the research site, a number of students at the Toledo institute (including some of the participants in this study) began the semester abroad addressing their professors with *usted*, but were informed explicitly by the professors that they should address them as *tú*. Additionally, although some students at the Toledo institute participated in internships in the community, which, in some cases, may have placed students in more formal contexts, none of the students in this study chose to do an internship.

The overwhelming use of *tú* in service encounters is one of the ways in which students behaved similarly to Spaniards from the very beginning of the semester. Students' openings and closings were, for the most part, target-like from the beginning of the semester, with the *hola-hola* pattern predominant in the opening greeting sequence and *gracias* as the ritualized closing. Furthermore, students most often were transaction-oriented and kept their interactions brief, as Spaniards have been shown to do (Placencia, 2005). In other dialects of Spanish, in contrast, customers and service providers may tend to focus more on relational concerns in certain situations (Placencia, 2005).

Students' focus on the transaction in the service encounters may be influenced by different factors. First and foremost, the genre of service encounters is predominantly transactional; that is, the central element is the provision of service and the carrying out of a transaction. Additionally, in most cases, students did not personally know the service providers with whom they interacted, although by the end of the semester they came to recognize certain employees in the stores that they frequented. The absence of a relationship between customers and employees may have made relational talk less likely.

Another factor may have been L1 transfer with regard to the transactional nature of service encounters in the U.S. Data presented in a few studies suggest that service encounters in American English among strangers are focused on the transaction.²⁴ Service encounters reported in Vélez (1987) at a university registrar desk in Texas and in retail stores in Texas, retail encounters in New York reported by Callahan (2006), and food-

²⁴ Note that it was not the objective of the studies listed here to argue that U.S. American service encounters are transaction-oriented. Based on the data presented in those studies from American English, I am making that observation.

related encounters described in Schau, Dellande, and Gilly (2007) all present data suggesting that customers and employees in the U.S. are primarily focused on the transaction in many food and retail service encounters. One reason for a focus on the transaction may be the perceived need for efficiency in serving customers on the part of the employees and their managers (Schau et al., 2007). On the other hand, U.S. society is not homogenous. Bailey's (2000) research on service encounters between Korean corner store owners and African-American customers indicates that in some speech communities in the U.S.—in this case, a community of African Americans in Los Angeles—there may be a greater orientation to relational talk.

A final factor that may have shaped students' orientation to the transaction is related to interlanguage and interactional goals. The journals indicated that some students felt uncomfortable or nervous speaking Spanish in service encounters and therefore, wanted to complete the transactions as quickly as possible. With the exception of Greta, students primarily viewed service encounters not as opportunities to speak Spanish or to develop relationships with Spaniards, but as necessary interactions to fulfill their consumer needs. This desire to conduct one's business and then terminate the interaction as quickly as possible would have translated into a focus on the transaction and not on the relational aspects of the encounter.

Research Question 2: Learning politeness features

The purpose of this research question was to examine how students' in-class and out-of-class interactions were related to their learning of politeness features during their semester abroad. Learning of politeness was reported both inside and outside of class through explicit instruction, observation of Spaniards, reactions of service providers, and participation in service encounters. In some cases, students' reported learning strategies could be connected explicitly to gains observed in the recorded data. For example, Chloe, Megan, and Samantha attributed their learning of the request forms *ponme* and *puedes ponerme*, as well as elliptical requests (in the case of Samantha) from the Maximizing Study Abroad class lesson on requests. All three of these students were found to use one or more of these request forms in the recorded data. Kyle reported being instructed by his host father about the use of *me pones* and indeed, this form was found in his week six and eleven recordings. Chloe also described an interaction with her host mother in which her mother instructed Chloe not to use the marker OK, a comment which may have had an impact on the fact that OK disappeared from Chloe's speech over time.

Observation of Spaniards was a second means for learning. Samantha reported that she learned how to say *me cobras* in service encounters through observation of Spaniards. Students reported paying attention to the use of the pronouns *tú* and *usted* by observing Spaniards in real life and, for one student (Miranda), in Spanish-language film and television as well. However, because students' behavior with *tú* and *usted* did not undergo any observable developments over time—primarily due to the overwhelming use of *tú* from the beginning to the end of the semester—none of students' reported

observations about terms of address had any relation to developments in the recorded data.

Two students (Greta, Jared) reported learning about politeness norms by observing service providers' reactions. Greta's how-are-you inquiries in several encounters engendered silence and "unfriendly" stares, from which Greta learned that her how-are-you inquiry was not pragmatically appropriate. Jared had a similar experience inappropriately using a how-are-you inquiry with an employee who he had previously talked to and thought that he knew well enough to make *qué tal* ('how's it going') appropriate. The reaction that Jared perceived from the employee was that this move was not a socially appropriate course of action on his part. Thus, students' perceptions about how employees reacted to what they said were registered as learning experiences in these cases.

However, not all observations of Spaniards resulted in a change in politeness behavior. In week four of the semester, Greta mentioned in her journal that she had noticed that Spaniards made requests differently in service encounters than U.S. Americans. What Greta focused on was the use of imperatives, which she perceived as "authoritarian" and which went against what she "had been taught to say" back home in the United States. Several weeks after this journal entry, Greta received the in-class instruction which indicated that imperatives were an appropriate strategy in Spain. Despite noticing and receiving explicit instruction, at no time during the semester abroad did Greta record herself using an imperative form in a request.

Although Greta did not explicitly state why she did not adopt the use of imperatives, the negative way that she viewed these forms in her journal suggests that Greta resisted employing this form in requests because she viewed this form as impolite. Resistance to L2 pragmatic norms has also been found in learners of English, Indonesian, and Japanese (Davis, 2007; DuFon, 1999; Ishihara, 2005; Siegal, 1994). In those studies, learners resisted following pragmatic norms, for example, because of cultural values about the role of women in society and beliefs about egalitarianism. As suggested above, Greta interpreted imperatives (at least at that point in the semester) from a U.S. American point of view, viewing that request form as impolite and too imposing on the hearer. Spaniards, however, do not view imperatives in the same way, seeing them in the light of solidarity, in-group membership, and low social distance.

The association of authoritarianism that Greta had with the imperative form in requests was based on the meaning that this grammatical form conveys in social interaction in her first culture, not on the perception of this form by members of the target culture. On the other hand, the fact that Greta moved towards target-language norms in request forms, but did not adopt imperatives, may reflect her agency in the L2. Greta was found to use elliptical requests (a target-like request form) more frequently over time, but never used imperative or assertive requests. Thus, Greta incorporated one appropriate pragmatic request form into her interactions but may have avoided other appropriate ones that, from her perspective, conveyed a meaning (i.e., authoritarianism) that went against what she saw as polite behavior.

A final source of learning about politeness was through participation in service encounters. Through doing service encounters, participants expressed that they “learned the ropes,” figuring out how specific types of interactions worked in Spain that were either unfamiliar to students or different from service encounters in the U.S. For example, Jared had never ordered meat by weight before going to Spain and so the first time he ordered it in Toledo (shown in [27] above) he was unsure about how ordering by weight worked. By the end of the semester, Jared felt that he could “get meat at a meat stand like a Spaniard.” This general sentiment was echoed by Chloe who felt more confident in service encounters by the end of the semester, since she had done the same service encounters many times over the course of her sojourn in Toledo.

Considering the experiences of the participants in this study within the framework of language socialization, it appeared that two sources were relevant to students’ learning of politeness in service encounters: explicit instruction by more competent members of the community and participation in daily life in the target speech community. The opportunities for explicit instruction on politeness issues, however, were rather limited. Ochs (1986, p. 6) reported on a variety of explicit instruction types by caregivers to novices: (1) announcing that an event is occurring (e.g., “We are going to say grace now.”) or that an event should or should not be occurring (e.g., “Don’t tease your sister.”); (2) prompting routines (e.g., “What do you say when someone gives you a gift?”); and (3) modifying a child’s utterance in order to make it into an activity-appropriate contribution (e.g., Child: “Trick treat” Mother: “Trick or treat”).

In this study, explicit instruction was primarily restricted to formal in-class instruction and students specifically asking their host families or age peers about politeness issues. Furthermore, more expert members of the community (e.g., host families, service providers) did not volunteer corrective feedback about politeness to students, as may be more commonly the case with children who are socialized into the language practices of their L1 speech community. This study indicates that the opportunities for explicit instruction in politeness issues related to service encounters were somewhat limited for study abroad student L2 learners in this community.

Despite the fact that explicit instruction was limited in students' daily lives, when it did occur it appeared to be an effective method for influencing students' pragmatic behavior in the L2. The Maximizing Study Abroad lesson on service encounters lasted only about five to ten minutes, and the lesson on pragmatics in general took about 45 minutes. Although in-class instruction was relatively brief, there was evidence in the recordings that the lesson influenced the requesting behavior of Chloe, Megan, and Samantha in the direction of target language norms. In addition, Kyle's instruction from his host father makes a total of at least four students who changed their behavior as a result of explicit instruction.

In a language socialization framework, participation in the everyday activities is a powerful way that novices are socialized into the practices of the speech community. This study found that, in small ways, the L2 learners were socialized into specific politeness norms of the host culture through their participation in service encounters. Greta and

Jared learned that how-are-you inquiries are not the expected behavior for customers and employees. Through repeated participation in these activities, Chloe and Jared reported gaining a greater level of confidence in performing service encounters, knowing what was expected and how they could convey their needs through the L2. Samantha learned about how to charge her cell phone and the L2 forms that were expected in that context. Samantha discovered through observation of Spaniards—while they participated in service encounters—that *me cobras* was an expected way to ask to pay.

Previous research on social interaction in study abroad indicates that in some cases, host country natives do not treat foreign students with the same politeness norms and do not expect the same behavior from study abroad students that is expected from host community members (Iino, 1996; Siegal, 1994). Considering how Spanish service providers treated the participants in this study, for the most part, the Spanish that they used was similar to what would be expected with Spanish customers. For example, service providers' routine openings and closings were similar in both interactions with other Spaniards and with students. A primary focus on the transaction on the part of the service providers is also expected in Spain and was observed in the majority of students' recordings.

In some cases, the recorded data and students' journal accounts suggest that individual service providers made modifications to their speech to accommodate students. The interaction between Megan and the jewelry store employee was an example of a service provider who modified his speech for Megan's benefit. The modifications

that he made included speaking more slowly, enunciating clearly, and repeating himself so that Megan could understand. The interaction between Chloe and the banker in week two also indicated speech modifications by the service provider through reduction in the rate of speech, repetition, and simplification of a question (i.e., moving from *¿Cuánto has contado tú?*, ‘How much have you counted?’, to simply *¿Cuánto?*, ‘How much?’).

Despite the efforts of some employees to modify their speech, there were others who did not do so and seemingly spoke as rapidly to learners as they would to other Spaniards.

Some students (Chloe, Greta, Megan, Miranda) mentioned that they were grateful for individuals who accommodated to their level of ability in the L2 by modifying their speech. Jared and Kyle, however, expressed annoyance at times with being accommodated to, saying that they would rather struggle to understand the Spanish that would be directed to expert speakers. This difference between learners is likely related to proficiency, since the two more advanced learners were the ones who expressed a desire for less accommodation in the L2.

Service providers’ speech modifications, when they occurred, reflected an orientation to students as foreigners and L2 learners of Spanish. However, a more extreme accommodation to students’ status as foreigners was the use of English by service providers in six recorded interactions. This type of speech accommodation was not appreciated by any of the students in this study. Specific linguistic forms as well as the linguistic code have the property of indexing social identity, that is, social roles and group membership (Ochs, 1996). The use of English as the linguistic code in service

encounters had the effect of emphasizing students' social identity as foreigners and, from their perspective, as non-proficient speakers of Spanish. Even the most advanced learner in the study, Jared, was spoken to in English in one case. However, use of English may have also served to index service providers' own social identities as members of a group of Spaniards who could speak another language, English, and also, may have reinforced the employee's service role by accommodating to the perceived needs of the customer. In the role of service provider, the employee is charged with meeting the needs of the customer, which may have been conceived as including an accommodation to the perceived *linguistic* needs of the students.

As was discussed previously, cultural frames are structures organizing reality and shaping the types of behaviors that are expected in a particular speech event. Was there evidence that students acquired or shifted their own cultural frames for service encounters in a way that reflected a target culture organization of reality? The answer seems to be yes, but only in minor ways and only for specific students. For example, Greta's experience with how-are-you inquiries was one example of the shifting of frames for expected behavior in service encounters. Greta began the semester using how-are-you inquiries as a means to frame—through language—a friendly interaction between herself and the service provider. She quickly learned that Spanish service providers did not want to participate in the frame that she initiated.

Although Greta appeared to interpret what was essentially a cultural difference in the framing of service encounter interactions as “unfriendliness” on the part of the

Spaniards, she modified her behavior to match the more transactional frame that is the norm for customers and employees who do not know each other. In employing a how-are-you inquiry, Greta attempted to frame the encounter as, in part, an interaction with relational goals, whereas in that context, the Spaniards were more focused on transactional goals. In some cases, the service providers' interactions with students may also have been shaped by the fact that Toledo is a tourist town and local residents may have an even stronger desire not to invest in relational goals with foreigners who will only be there for a short time.

Moving to a consideration of the extent to which learners received assistance and corrective feedback with regard to the learning of politeness in service encounters, the data indicates that both were limited to the classroom and to the home. As described above, a short lesson on requesting in service encounters was included in the Maximizing Study Abroad class that all research participants took. In-class assistance was provided by offering students a range of possible request forms appropriate for the service encounter context and asking Spaniards to give their perspective on requests in Spanish. Corrective feedback in the class included pointing out to students that the phrase *puedo tener* as a requesting strategy does not have the same conventionalized meaning in requests in Spanish as it does in English, a fact that surprised some students, including Chloe.

What was seen in students' recordings made after the Maximizing Study Abroad class session on requests was students' independent use of the very same request forms that were presented in class. Chloe, Megan, and Samantha specifically indicated that it

was the class that influenced their change in request behavior and their choice of particular request strategies in the recorded service encounters. Likewise, Kyle learned a specific request form from his host father. These four students were able to internalize the request forms taught in class or in the host family and independently produce such forms in on-line, real-time service encounter interactions. Imitation is argued to be a key mechanism of internalization, representing “the process through which socioculturally constructed forms of mediation are internalized” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 166).

The fact that outside of the classroom and the host family instruction, students experienced no explicit assistance or corrective feedback related to the learning of politeness features comes as no surprise, considering that service providers and customers in service encounters are not primarily oriented to L2 learning, but to a commercial or informational transaction. Although in a relatively larger number of cases Spanish service providers oriented to students’ status as foreigners and non-expert speakers of Spanish (evidenced in small talk topics, use of English, and speech modifications), there were only rare instances in the recordings in which service providers took on a didactic role with regard to the L2. The most obvious example is that of Chloe in the bank in week two in which the banker briefly oriented to her in the role of language instructor, prompting her to attempt to say a large number in Spanish and then repeating the number for her to hear, using a didactic tone of voice. Jared was also explicitly corrected on a verb form in an interaction with a staff member at the Toledo institute while discussing travel plans.

However, in the few instances in which service providers temporarily played the role of language instructor, that instruction was never related to politeness issues, but rather to lexical or grammatical features. The fact that service providers never provided explicit instruction or corrective feedback on politeness features in the recorded data follows what has been found in previous research (cf. DuFon, 1999), and has been posited to relate to the face sensitivities that pragmatic corrections would potentially threaten. In sum, this study indicates that there is an absence of assistance for L2 learning and corrective feedback directed at politeness issues available for students in service encounter interactions in Spain.

This discussion brings up the larger issue of service encounters as a site for learning. Despite the potential for learning through observation that participating in service encounters offers, in some cases observation was limited in this environment. First, not all service encounter sites were conducive to making observations. In banks, for example, customers often wait in line to be served in a position that is far enough away from the counter that the talk between customer and employee is inaudible. In the supermarket, the pharmacy, the post office, and in many of the small retail shops, at certain times of day the number of customers is high and as a result, there is pressure for customers to do their business as quickly as possible so that the employee can move on to the next person. In this rushed atmosphere, in which students not only need to figure out what they need to buy or what they need to ask, but also how to express their needs using the target language, there may not be enough time or cognitive resources on the part of

the students to both pay attention to other speakers' interactions and to stay on task to conduct their own business at the same time.

The speech itself that is involved in service encounters is frequently routinized. In some ways, this characteristic of the service encounter genre is limiting with regard to opportunities to use more creative speech. In some cases, very little verbal interaction was even necessary to carry out service encounter transactions (e.g., adding minutes to a cell phone). While students had the opportunity to observe and practice the routines that are associated with particular service encounters, they did not frequently use the target language beyond the minimal talk required to carry out the transaction, limiting the range of language used.

A final issue with regard to service encounters as a learning context was students' attitudes towards these interactions. With the exception of Greta, students did not place particular importance on service encounters as an opportunity for learning. Because Greta found it difficult to practice her Spanish outside of the classroom, she reported using service encounters as a way to speak Spanish with the locals from Toledo. Other students, on the other hand, saw these interactions as insignificant. Samantha, for example, commented: "I don't think that any of these encounters/conversations were particularly significant. It is always good to go out in the public and speak, because it helps your confidence when speaking, but none of the conversations were long and I didn't find them to be very important." (week two). Jared indicated that he did not learn anything from service encounters because they were too short and he was not usually able to notice

any important features of the language. The data presented in Research Question 4 indicated that Greta invested a great deal more energy into the service encounters, which was argued to reflect her desire to practice Spanish in that context. However, the other students did not place much importance on service encounter interactions as a site for learning.

Considering the potential difficulties with observation in some establishments, the overall absence of an orientation towards explicit language instruction and explicit corrective feedback on the part of the service providers, and the utilitarian attitude of some students towards service encounters indicate that this environment is not always an ideal site for L2 learning. This observation does not necessarily come as a surprise, considering that the institutional context of service encounters is not primarily educational. Despite the potential constraints on learning, there was evidence in the data that students did learn about politeness through observation, participation, and interaction in service encounters.

Research Question 3: Role of the social context

The findings for this research question indicated several ways in which the social context and the interlocutor mediated students' L2 production, experience, and behavior in service encounters. An analysis of small talk interactions between students and service providers found that service providers had a role in shaping L2 learners' opportunities for producing talk in the L2, either by creating a space for learners to enter into the

interaction, to speak more, and to pursue their own topics and ideas (i.e., symmetric interactions) or, conversely, by dominating the floor and controlling topics (i.e., asymmetric interactions). From students' own perspectives, the interlocutor and the social situation had an impact on how comfortable they felt speaking Spanish. While students believed that their level of comfort translated into how well they spoke Spanish, no strong evidence was found in the data to support a connection between comfort level and linguistic features of L2 production in service encounters. However, the perceived attitude of the interlocutor did have an influence on how students felt, on one student's empowerment to ask a question, and on three students' decisions to avoid establishments with "unfriendly" service providers in future service encounters.

The categories "symmetric" and "asymmetric" production were taken from Shea's (1994) analysis, in which that author argued that the expert speaker interlocutor mediated the degree to which L2 learners of English produced talk and were able to express their ideas. In Shea's symmetric production, students produced a roughly equal amount of talk as the expert speaker and in asymmetric production, the expert speaker dominated the floor and control of topics. In this study, these categories were extended to encompass the opportunities for talk, not only the instances in which students actually spoke.

In the jewelry store interaction, Megan's production was more equal to the service provider's production than in other small talk exchanges found in the data, but Megan still produced less speech than the service provider. However, the opportunities for participation by the learner in the interaction were more symmetrical, because the service

provider continuously made moves that invited Megan to speak more and gave her the space to enter into the conversation comfortably (i.e., without having to interrupt her interlocutor in order to take a turn), so that she could develop her own topics.

Asymmetric interactions were those in which the service provider dominated the floor, controlled the topics, and did not facilitate students' production of L2 talk or entrance into the interaction. It is worth noting that the only interactions that were analyzed as either symmetric or asymmetric were those in which relational talk was present. However, it is worth pointing out that the majority of the service encounter interactions recorded by students featured only transactional talk and those interactions tended to be symmetric.

Another feature of the small talk interactions that was discussed was the issue of intersubjectivity or perspective, relating to the degree to which students and service providers demonstrated a shared perspective on an issue. Perspective is proposed to be independent from production, in that interactants can have a high degree of intersubjectivity regardless of the level of a student's production. For example, Greta's interaction in the café was an instance in which the student's production was asymmetric but the degree of intersubjectivity was high. Conversely, Samantha's encounter in the tobacco shop displayed an incongruent perspective and asymmetric production; Samantha did not share the service provider's view that it would be beneficial for her to become his language partner. A high degree of intersubjectivity was found in interactions both with and without assistance on the part of the service provider, but assistance from

an expert has been proposed to be one source of intersubjectivity in interactions between an expert and novice.

Assistance for speaking, comprehension, and cultural information occurred in both asymmetric and symmetric small talk interactions. What has been proposed to be beneficial for development in the L2 is an expert who is sensitive to the types and amount of assistance needed by the learner (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). In the case of Megan's interaction in the jewelry store (symmetric), the employee acted in a way that was sensitive to Megan's needs as a conversational partner by providing supportive moves for Megan to enter into the conversation and for her to comprehend what was said. The employee provided continuers (e.g., mhm), showed interest in what Megan said, asked her questions, gave her space to answer those questions, and paused between turns so that she could speak. These moves on the part of the service provider facilitated Megan's entrance into the talk and allowed Megan to control the topic to some extent. Thus, the employee's assistance provided Megan with the opportunity to participate verbally in the small talk to a greater extent than she would likely have been able to without these supportive behaviors.

Because verbal interaction in Spanish is typically characterized by a "high involvement" conversation style, L1 speakers of English may be hindered in speaking because of norms in the L1 discouraging interruption and overlap of other speakers' turns. In Spanish, on the contrary, speakers are generally expected to jump into the talk without waiting for a pause or waiting to be selected by current speaker (Ardila, 2004;

Berry, 1994). The fact that the jewelry store employee facilitated Megan's entry into the talk indicates a sensitivity to the needs of a learner of Spanish with regard to turn-taking. The jewelry store employee also provided assistance for comprehension of the L2, using repetition and reformulation to help Megan understand what he had said. Without this assistance, Megan would not have been able to participate in the talk to the extent that she did because she would not have understood what the employee was saying in some cases. In sum, the employee's assistance helped Megan reach a higher level of involvement in the small talk interaction than she would have been able to achieve without his supportive conversational moves.

Analysis of the asymmetric interaction between Greta and the café employee did not reveal the presence of the same types of supportive behaviors on the part of the service provider. In that example, the service provider dominated the floor and did not assist Greta in participating in the talk. The service provider controlled the topics, only asked Greta yes/no questions, and did not display much interest in hearing what Greta had to say. These behaviors seem to be related to how much talk Greta produced in the interaction, that is, very little talk. On the other hand, the questions that the service provider asked Greta indicated that the employee was sensitive to Greta's needs as a foreigner and learner of Spanish. By checking with Greta to see if she understood cultural references to foods and places, the service provider allowed Greta to comprehend the talk more fully and to acquire new information about the host culture that Greta may

otherwise not have understood. Despite the asymmetric nature of production by the L2 learner, the expert speaker did provide support for culture learning.

Out of this discussion, the question arises as to the role that opportunities to produce more talk in the L2 in symmetric interactions might play in students' L2 development. Do increased opportunities for speaking lead to greater L2 development? Swain (1985; 1995; 2000) has proposed that opportunities for speaking (i.e., what has commonly been called *output*²⁵) are an essential part of L2 acquisition. Swain's argument centers on the idea that L2 production requires learners to process language more deeply than they do when comprehending the L2. Furthermore, production pushes learners to discover what they can and cannot do in the creation of linguistic form and meaning (Swain, 2000). Following Swain, having more opportunities to speak the L2 may be important for development in the target language.

In addition, greater opportunities for speaking allow L2 learners to develop and express their own ideas rather than remaining in the role of listening to the interlocutor's experiences and thoughts. The expression of one's own thoughts is one way that learners can use the target language to express meaning and agency. Learners may not always want to talk to more, but the jewelry store employee's supportive moves that encouraged Megan to enter into the talk and participate more fully in the interaction effectively pushed her to speak and to express her own ideas more than she might have done had he consistently maintained the floor.

²⁵ Note that Swain (2000) moves away from the term *output* because of the potentially limiting aspect of the "conduit metaphor" expressed by the terms input and output.

The second finding with regard to the role of the interlocutor and the social context in students' interactions in service encounters related to a belief held by six of the students that their level of comfort was related to how well they spoke Spanish. Students wrote in their journals that certain perceived characteristics of interlocutors such as being friendly, helpful, or, on the contrary, unfriendly or intimidating, made them feel either comfortable or uncomfortable speaking Spanish. Despite students' beliefs regarding the connection between comfort level and speaking ability, little linguistic evidence was found that indicated that the students' reported psychological states were connected to L2 linguistic performance. No differences in linguistic performance based on the context were found with regard to grammar, pronunciation, lexical access and richness, frequency of self-repair, degree of participation, or rate of speech.

It is not clear whether the affective factor that here is termed "comfort level"—a label that is based on students' emic descriptions of their experiences—could be labeled anxiety or even more specifically, language anxiety. *Anxiety* is defined as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." (Spielberger, 1983, p. 1). The term *language anxiety* has been distinguished from anxiety in general and described as "the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 27). Rather than considering language anxiety to be a personality trait, in more recent years, scholars have linked language anxiety to specific activities and situations in which the L2 is used (Djigunović, 2006).

If it is assumed for the moment that students' comfort level could be termed anxiety, what does research have to say about the relationship between anxiety and L2 performance? The findings appear to be mixed. In an older review of the literature, Young (1991) reported that previous research was inconsistent, with findings indicating negative, positive, and neutral relationships between anxiety and L2 performance, suggesting that anxiety could increase, decrease, or have no relation to performance. Such inconsistencies between research results may be explained, in part, by different approaches to defining and studying anxiety, such as studies looking at anxiety as a personality trait rather than as a situation-specific state. However, the preponderance of more recent studies conducted to determine the relationship between anxiety and use of the L2 suggest that situation-specific anxiety is related to lower L2 performance (see Tallon [2006] for a review).

Attitude and treatment by an interlocutor has been used to attempt to induce anxiety in L2 learners in experimental studies (cf. Djigunović, 2006; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986). In Djigunović's (2006) recent research, for example, the experimental group of learners underwent the "anxiety-inducing condition," in which they were treated in a "cold and official manner" by an interlocutor, whereas the control group was treated in a "friendly and warm manner" by the interlocutor (p. 198). Djigunović did not find any statistically significant differences in level of anxiety, suggesting no relation between "interpersonal style" and learners' anxiety. However, in conditions that did produce high anxiety (e.g., the presence of a researcher taking notes) linguistic features such as pauses,

fillers, and self-repairs were found to be affected, with anxiety apparently related to reduced L2 fluency.

While students in this study indicated feeling uncomfortable in certain service encounter interactions, it is possible that the level of discomfort was not large enough to have an impact on the features of students' L2 production, as Djigunović (2006) found in the study cited above. However, students' behavior was reportedly influenced by the interlocutor's attitude and treatment of students in some cases. Samantha described that her willingness to communicate (i.e., ask a question) was affected and three students commented that, in the future, they would avoid establishments where they did not feel comfortable. The fact that there was not much evidence of an impact on L2 speech performance based on perceived comfort level could also have been related to the fact that these encounters were very routine. There may be more impact on linguistic production in uncomfortable encounters in which students have to produce more speech or less routinized speech. For example, Samantha's talk with the cell phone store employee was very brief and routinized.

A final observation with respect to this research question relates to the role of cultural differences in service encounters. A local informant from Toledo who had spent a significant amount of time in the U.S. suggested to the researcher that norms regarding customer service are different between Spain and the U.S. From his perspective, U.S. American service providers often go out of their way to treat customers in a friendly, helpful, and respectful manner. This normative relationship between customers and

service providers in the U.S. was encapsulated for this informant by the phrase “the customer is always right.” In Spain, on the other hand, the customer is not first, is not always right, and is frequently treated as if the service provider is doing him or her the favor of offering a service and thus, the customer should be grateful for the service, regardless of how he or she is treated. These observations resonated to some degree with the researcher’s experiences participating in service encounters in Toledo, although there were clearly friendly and helpful service providers in Toledo as well. The informant noted, however, that in recent years the traditional Spanish attitude was giving way to the U.S. model of customer service in some contexts.

Given these differences in service encounters in the U.S. and Spain, the participants in this study may have had expectations about how customers should be treated based on first culture norms for interaction in service encounters. “Service with a smile,” “the customer is always right,” and the types of behaviors that those attitudes entail did not appear to be the norm in Toledo. That some students expected to be treated with friendly service may be evidence that they viewed the social activity of service encounters through the cultural frame predominant in their home country and expected certain behaviors on the part of the service provider and themselves to conform to that first culture frame of reference.

Research Question 4: Rapport management

Students' interactions in the service encounters was interpreted using Spencer-Oatey's (2000; 2005) politeness framework, including the three components: interactional wants, face sensitivities, and behavioral expectations. Participants employed a variety of strategies to manage their own and their interlocutors' face sensitivities, including tone of voice, greetings, compliments, assessments, and choice of language. Interactional wants such as practicing Spanish and flirting with a bartender were found to be related to management of rapport. Finally, facework must be interpreted within the behavioral expectations of the host culture.

Students' interactional wants had an influence on students' behavior in certain cases. The most exceptional case was that of Greta who, because she did not live with a host family, had fewer opportunities to speak Spanish outside of class. As a result, Greta looked to service encounters as an opportunity to speak Spanish. Her investment in L2 language practice helps explain why she, more than any other participant in this study, asked non-obligatory questions rather frequently and oriented to face sensitivities in order to create harmonious relations with the service providers.

The notion in Spencer-Oatey's theory that interactional wants influence politeness behavior finds a parallel in the Vygotskian tradition under the rubric of activity theory. A fundamental insight from activity theory²⁶ is the notion that while individuals may be involved in carrying out the same task, or "behavioral blue print" (Coughlan & Duff, 1994, p. 174), they are not necessarily participating in the same activity. For example,

²⁶ See Lantolf & Thorne (2006) for an overview of activity theory and its application to L2 learning.

although Chloe, Greta, and Samantha all recorded themselves participating in the same overt behaviors (i.e., ordering drinks in a café in Spain) their motives in participating in the service encounters were not the same. Greta, in particular, reported that she participated in service encounters to not only meet her needs as a consumer, but also to serve her own goal of L2 language practice. To use terminology from activity theory, Greta's *object* (i.e., "focus of activity") in certain service encounters was L2 language practice and the *motive* (i.e., "cultural-psychological-institutional impetus that guides human activity toward a particular object") was to enhance her L2 skills (Lantolf & Thorne, p. 218). Thus, it can be argued that in some cases, Greta was participating in a different activity from that of other students by being oriented in service encounters not only to the exchange of goods or services, but also to the creation of opportunities for L2 use.

Looking at the management of face sensitivities, it was argued previously that students used tone of voice strategically as a means to indicate friendliness and thus, enhance their own and the service providers' face. Students' use of a friendly tone of voice framed the interaction as a friendly one. However, the framing of service encounters between non-intimates as extraordinarily friendly through the use of tone of voice is generally not part of the behavioral expectations (i.e., norms of politeness) in Spain. The friendly tone of voice that students sometimes expressed in their greetings, closings, partings, and other utterances would be more appropriate for use in Spain with a friend or acquaintance, not a stranger. Students' compliments to service providers,

intended to enhance the face of the service provider, also did not obtain a particularly amiable reception from Spaniards. In most cases, service providers did not reciprocate the friendly tone of voice by participating in the friendly frame created by students. This observation is particularly evident in the reactions to Greta's how-are-you inquiries, but also in the responses to Greta's and Megan's compliments.

Why were some students sometimes overly friendly in certain service encounters? One possible explanation is a difference in service encounter norms between the L1 and the L2 with regard to the degree of friendliness that is appropriate to convey between strangers. The Toledo informant who had spent time in the U.S. commented that, in his experience, U.S. Americans were generally more friendly in service encounters than Spaniards. Indeed, some students expressed the desire to be treated in a friendly manner in the service encounters, suggesting that students may have been transferring this politeness norm from their L1.

However, another possible explanation is that more-than-average friendliness on the part of some students in service encounters with strangers is an interlanguage phenomenon. Previous interlanguage pragmatics research has long reported on the so-called "waffle phenomenon" (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; House & Kasper, 1987; Færch & Kasper, 1989), also referred to as "verbosity," which results from the oversuppliance of politeness markers and supportive moves on the part of L2 learners. For example, Mir (1993) reported that L2 learners used more instances of the politeness

formula please in their L2 than was the norm in either the L2 or in the L1 (i.e., use of the Spanish equivalent *por favor*), prompting an interlanguage explanation.

A common explanation for this waffling behavior is that learners want to “play it safe” and avoid miscommunication by making politeness markers in speech as obvious as possible to the hearer. Learners who do not know the “quick and dirty” conventional ways that expert speakers use to convey politeness, may tend to include more verbose utterances to make sure that they get their meaning across. Extraordinary friendliness, as conveyed through tone of voice and compliments, may be another way in which students “played it safe” and made their good will as transparent as possible. Another motivation may have been students’ desire to be liked and accepted by members of the host community.

As opposed to an other-orientation to face (i.e., concern about the face sensitivities of an interlocutor), students’ choice of language was argued to reflect concerns about students’ own face sensitivities (i.e., self-orientation). Furthermore, the use of two linguistic codes (i.e., Spanish and English) in a single interaction was examined from the point of view of communication accommodation theory, the central tenet of which is based on the following insight:

Speakers are motivated to reduce linguistic or communicative differences between themselves and their speaking partners under specifiable circumstances, principally when they want to be approved of and when they want their communication to be more effective. Correspondingly, speakers will be motivated to resist ‘accommodating’, and will even accentuate differences between themselves and their listeners, when approval and effectiveness are less important to them, and when they want to symbolize and emphasize difference and distance (Ylänne-McEwen & Coupland, 2000).

Further terminology in this theory includes *convergence*, which is the minimization of communicative differences, and *divergence*, which refers to the accentuation of differences between interactants. Any aspect of verbal and nonverbal communication can be the object of convergent or divergent behavior: rate of speech, gesture, gaze, interruption, and linguistic code, among others. The psychological basis of the communicative accommodation theory is that a speaker who converges with the communication style of a listener is more likely to be accepted and approved of by the listener, following the notion of “similarity attraction” (Byrne, 1971; cited in Yläänne-McEwen & Coupland, 2000). Speakers use strategies of convergence and divergence—either consciously or unconsciously—to pursue social and relational goals. However, Yläänne-McEwen & Coupland (2000) point out that speakers in intercultural interactions may not always be fully aware of the affect that their accommodation has on a listener and that this accommodation may result in miscommunication. For example, the service providers who spoke English with the participants in this study may have done so with good intentions, but students generally perceived this practice in a negative way.

The findings with regard to language choice in service encounters indicated that, in 5% of cases (6/113), service providers chose to speak English with the study participants. In the majority of those six recordings, the use of English was relatively brief, but the interaction showed non-accommodation and divergence in language choice on the part of both participants. That is, students did not accommodate to the language

choice of the service provider, staying exclusively in Spanish, and service providers did not switch to exclusive use of Spanish to accommodate to students' language choice. Service providers may have over-accommodated to students based on their status as foreigners or assumptions about their Spanish proficiency, in the context of a town which receives a high volume of foreign tourists each year, many of whom cannot speak Spanish proficiently and whose language preference is often English. Tourism effectively creates an international environment in which English as a *lingua franca* is relevant. On several occasions the researcher spoke to local service providers in Toledo who expressed the desire to improve and practice their English language skills so as to be able to better communicate with their international customers.

Other reasons for divergent use of English on the part of the service providers may have been related to their own face sensitivities with regard to their ability to speak English, wanting to demonstrate proficiency in that language, or an unwillingness to speak Spanish with students to emphasize in-group and out-group differences and to restrict students' access to in-group membership via use of the in-group language. With regard to the latter explanation, a similar argument was made by Lo (1999) in the analysis of discourse between a Korean-American and a Chinese-American learner of Korean in which the Korean-American consistently responded in English to attempts by the learner to speak Korean. Lo (p. 472) argued that the Korean-American speaker "withholds validation of [the learner] as a competent speaker of Korean and as an ingroup member of the Korean-American community."

Callahan's (2006) research on language accommodation in service encounters in New York City documented some parallel findings. In that study, 14% of the time the service provider did not accommodate to the customer's persistent use of Spanish. In cases of non-accommodation on the part of the service provider, similar to the interactions recorded in this study, customer and employee spoke two different languages (English and Spanish) for the duration of the interaction. However, the context of Callahan's research site is quite different from that of the present study. Spanish is a minority language in the U.S., present alongside English, which is the language of power and prestige. In Spain as a whole, Spanish (Castilian) occupies the position of social power vis-à-vis other Peninsular languages such as Catalán, Basque, and Galician. Thus, Callahan's (p. 45) argument that "a Latino's refusal to accommodate to the Spanish of an outgroup member is an assertion of control, a refusal to accept what in popular terms is sometimes described as 'slumming'" does not resonate as an explanation within the larger sociopolitical context of service encounters in Toledo.

Turning to students' motives for divergence with regard to language code, it was argued above that language preference was related to their own face sensitivities. All of the students in this study were constantly concerned about their proficiency in Spanish and expressed the desire to present themselves and to be perceived as competent speakers of that language. The persistent speaking of English in those service encounters was perceived negatively by students because it was an affront to the positive social value of L2 proficiency that students claimed for themselves. The employees, by speaking in

English, challenged students' claims to be recognized as speakers of Spanish who were able to communicate effectively in Spanish. In addition, there was a strong sentiment among students at the institute, including the study participants, that study abroad students were qualitatively different from other foreign visitors to Toledo because they spoke Spanish and were living for an extended period of time in the city. The use of English by service providers served to index students as foreigners, lumping study abroad students in with the masses of other foreigners. "Non-tourist" was an identity that students claimed for themselves and which was threatened by use of English. Non-accommodation to English on the part of the study participants can be viewed as an exercise of agency in pursuit of their own identity claims and self-presentational goals.

That students did not like being spoken to in English may also be related to ideas about the roles of customers and employees. Callahan (2006, p. 31) argues that "in the United States, the relationship between service provider and service consumer is inherently non-reciprocal, with the worker having an obligation to show deference to the customer." Part of how an employee can show deference is to behave in such a way as to please the customer. Citing a study on language selection in a bilingual community by Pedraza (1987), Callahan argues that non-accommodation to language choice may be viewed as an insult when the level of intimacy between parties is low. In a situation in which the customer has power over the employee, it would be predicted, all else being neutral, that the customer's choice of language would be attended to by the employee. This prediction is largely born out in this study (i.e., only 5% of the service encounters

involved the use of English), although not necessarily because of deference to the customer, since lack of English proficiency was also likely a factor in service providers' use of Spanish. However, in Spain, the roles of customer and employee are somewhat different, with customers typically enjoying less power over employees than in the U.S. Differences in ideology about customer-employee relations between Spain and the U.S. may also help explain why service providers did not always accommodate to students' language preference. Students, on the other hand, may have expected such deference, based on how customers can expect to be treated in the U.S.

As Torras and Gafaranga (2002) argue in their study of service encounters in the multilingual setting of Barcelona, participants in service encounters enact their identities in interaction through choice of language code. Through language choice, speakers categorize themselves and their interlocutors on the basis of group membership. These identities are related to face sensitivities, which concern how individuals present themselves and the positive social values—including group membership—to which they make claim.

Limitations of the study

Certain methodological limitations should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results from this study. First, although the recordings were of real-life interactions between students and service providers, students were aware that they were being recorded. This awareness may have altered their behavior in certain ways. For

example, Chloe mentioned that, had she not been recording herself, she might have used more gestures instead of verbal interaction in the service encounters. In addition—although none of the students mentioned this issue specifically—students may have also been monitoring their Spanish more closely because of the presence of the recorder. Despite this type of effect, the data collection method used in this study is probably the closest at being able to capture students' actual behavior than other methods used in L2 pragmatics research, such as production surveys and role plays.

Clearly, the strength of data such as that collected in this study is that it more closely reflects actual behavior than elicited data. However, this method also has weaknesses. The fact that the participants were asked to record in the establishments to which they would go regardless of the study maintained the naturalistic quality of the data, by allowing students to engage in the interactions that they would normally do, but made comparisons between students and an analysis of development over time much more tenuous. For the purposes of comparison, future research with a similar data collection method may consider finding out the types of places that research participants typically go and then ask them to go to those same places at each point during the period of study, so as to have more comparable data over time and among different students with regard to research site. However, if students were to go to the same service encounter sites over the course of the sojourn abroad, they may begin to develop familiarity with those particular service providers, meaning that an additional variable (i.e., increased familiarity over time) would be introduced into the analysis.

Future research in the development of L2 politeness may benefit from the inclusion of reliable and valid measures of proficiency to triangulate with naturalistic data collection. This study did not focus on the relationship between proficiency and development over time, an issue that is clearly of interest in the field of L2 pragmatics.

An additional limitation of the data collection was the use of audio rather than video recordings. Despite their potential intrusiveness, video recordings of the service encounter interactions would have permitted a more complete analysis of communication through the inclusion of nonverbal interaction. Future research may want to consider the feasibility of employing video rather than audio.

Apart from these methodological limitations, several other analytical tools need to be problematized. First, the use of a monolingual native speaker baseline with which to compare learners is problematic. Ortega (2006) has argued that comparing bilinguals to monolinguals is unfair to the former and that emerging bilinguals should be compared to superadvanced bilingual speakers rather than monolingual speakers. Of course, the absence of data from superadvanced bilinguals makes the use of bilingual data impossible in this study.

One difference that might come to light if the participants in this study were compared to superadvanced bilingual speakers rather than monolingual speakers is the issue of identity. While in Toledo, the researcher had the opportunity to meet a U.S. American ex-pat who had spent the last twenty-four years living continuously in Spain. In the researcher's opinion, that individual's pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and

grasp of idiomatic and colloquial language was extraordinarily similar to that of monolingual Spanish speakers. Despite the superadvanced level of this individual and the level of acquisition of the target speech community norms, when the researcher accompanied her in a service encounter at a mall in Toledo, a service provider oriented to her identity as a foreigner, asking her where she was from and commenting on how well she spoke Spanish. The woman commented later to the researcher that this type of experience happened to her on a regular basis. Thus, despite a high level of proficiency and pragmatic appropriateness, this superadvanced bilingual speaker still experienced reactions to her identity as a nonnative of Spain.

Pedagogical implications

The study abroad context offers a unique opportunity for learners of a language to receive guided language and culture instruction from a more expert individual in the classroom, as well as to leave the classroom and immediately put that knowledge about language and culture into practice in the community in a variety of different situations and with different individuals. While the literature on study abroad abounds with descriptions of out-of-class interactions, in-class instruction during study abroad or in-country pedagogical interventions for study abroad students are often ignored²⁷. In one study, however, Cohen et al. (2005) found that a relatively low-intensity, instructional intervention had an impact on study abroad students' learning of pragmatics.

²⁷ However, see, for example, Ceteno-Cortés (2003) for a sociocultural analysis of L2 learners of Spanish in a language classroom during a sojourn abroad in Spain.

Furthermore, explicit instruction in pragmatics has been argued to be effective in increasing learners' pragmatic abilities (Kasper, 2001). The findings from the present study also present more evidence suggesting the benefits that explicit instruction, both in the classroom and from the host family, can provide to study abroad students. In this section, I will first discuss ideas for explicit in-class instruction on politeness issues and then put forth ideas for out-of-class instruction.

Based on the findings of this study and drawing on a Vygotskian framework for language instruction (Lantolf & Johnson, 2008), I present some implications for L2 pedagogy. Lantolf and Johnson (2008, p. 878) argue that from a Vygotskian perspective, "the goal of L2 classroom praxis is for learners to develop a conceptual understanding of how meaning gets expressed through the L2 in concrete everyday activity and to build their capacity to make choices about how to function in and potentially alter that activity to suit their needs and goals." In this view, language and culture are "reunited" (p. 879) into one concept in which meaning and form are interconnected and words are imbued with their cultural meanings, a notion that Agar (1994) has termed *languaculture*. The role of education and the language classroom in Vygotskian thought, however, is not to "reproduce the empirically based learning typical of the everyday world" (Lantolf & Johnson, p. 881), but rather, to instruct students in the concepts and principles that have been developed by human cultures. At the same time, classroom instruction must make the practical application of conceptual information relevant and provide students with the

tools and skills necessary to go into the world and apply the knowledge gained through formal education to some end.

Given this framework, instruction about politeness in the study abroad environment might focus on guiding students in the learning of concepts relevant for conveying particular social meanings and assist students in developing their knowledge and understanding about the target culture and their own culture specifically, as well as culture more generally. For example, pragmatics instruction might discuss how specific linguistic forms and nonverbal communication are related to how social relationships are displayed with regard to formality, intimacy, and recognition of social status. Taking Spanish service encounters as an example, in Spain, the use of imperative request forms conveys a get-to-the-point attitude, informality, in-group identity, and social solidarity, not an authoritarian attitude, as Greta believed. Students can be introduced to a range of linguistic strategies that serve mitigating functions in the target language, such as the conditional, the imperfect, elliptical forms, and the diminutive, and link these specific forms to the meanings that they can convey in specific social contexts. Openings, closings, sequencing, speech acts, prosody, and initiation of and response to non-transactional talk are all additional issues related to service encounters that might be explored during in-class instruction about politeness.

The importance of framing explicit pragmatic instruction in real-life discourse contexts is highlighted by Davies (2004), who argues that pragmatic training should not be organized around isolated speech acts such as requests, apologies, and compliments,

but rather, should be based on the speech activities that constitute social practice, of which service encounters are one example. Davies further advises that providing students with decontextualized generalizations about pragmatics such as “Spaniards are direct” may have limited usefulness. Instead, generalizations about cultural patterns should be connected with specific examples of language use in situated social interaction.

Other, more general areas that might be discussed include communication styles (e.g., linear, circular) and cultural values and beliefs and how these issues are connected to linguistic forms in specific social contexts. Comparisons between students’ first and second cultures with regard to politeness issues can provide learners with insights into how distinct cultural world views can be both similar as well as different. Instruction might also have as an aim to guide students in exploring their identities as participants in intercultural interactions and as emergent bilinguals and multicultural actors.

The teaching of linguistic and cultural concepts in an interconnected fashion could use as examples transcripts of recorded data, audio or video recordings, movies and television programs, or written texts (literary or popular). Such data can serve as a source to engage students in a discussion of the pragmatic and cultural concepts being taught. In part, the value of in-class instruction with respect to pragmatics is that through observation in the host community exclusively, students of a language may not have access to data from enough different or similar situations to see larger patterns in language use and cultural activities. For example, if students are only exposed to *tú* because they are in contexts in which the informal pronoun is the norm, they may come

away from study abroad believing erroneously that *usted* is never used in Spain, such as was the case with Kyle.

Thus, one area in which in-class instruction can assist students is in providing the bigger picture about the social meanings that each address pronoun conveys, given a specific situation and particular speakers. A discussion of the fact that the second person pronoun use is negotiable would provide students with a more nuanced concept of politeness, namely, that pronoun use is not categorically determined by social factors such as age, sex, and social status. As Belz and Kinginger (2003, p. 599) argue, “learners must see that differential use of these forms offers a significant communicative resource conveying a range of meanings about the relationships between interlocutors, the context of the interaction, and the standing of the interactants in the wider social order.”

Culturally specific ways of framing interactions and physical spaces is another conceptual area that might be covered and that has implications for politeness. For example, customer-server roles and responsibilities are viewed somewhat differently in Spain than in the U.S. The use of *tú* and *usted* can vary because a particular service establishment tends to be viewed in the culture as a more formal space. Physical spaces that seem familiar may be quite different: bars in Spain are places that children can go, even late at night, and are places to drink coffee as well as alcohol—arguably a different concept of *bar* than that commonly held in the U.S.

In a language such as Spanish, which is used in many different cultures, students should also be made aware that linguistic forms convey different meanings depending on

the country or region. A few students in this study seemed to be unaware that issues related to politeness were culturally variable. For example, Kyle thought that he had been using an incorrect form (*quisiera*) and that he had acquired the correct one, *me pones*, while in Spain. However, *quisiera* is a relatively common requesting form in some other Spanish-speaking countries, while, conversely, requests for products with the lexical item *poner* are unique to Spain.

Several students (Miranda and Megan) mentioned that they had learned in a conversation class at the Toledo institute that the greeting *mucho gusto* ('much pleasure', 'pleased to meet you') was too formal and stuffy and that *qué tal* ('how's it going') or *encantado* ('enchanted') were the appropriate greetings. The students came away from that class lesson with the expressed intention to stop using *mucho gusto*, which they had been taught in Spanish classes at home, apparently not realizing that they had not learned or been taught incorrectly, but rather, that they had simply been taught another dialect of Spanish. The concept of pragmatic variation can also be used as a jumping off point to explore and demonstrate how different cultural values are connected to ways of speaking. For example, Ecuadorians tend to view service encounters with acquaintances as an opportunity to focus on the person more than do Spaniards, who follow a more transactional orientation; each orientation is reflected in the language used in interactions in each culture.

Another point to consider is the need to emphasize to students that both inter- and intracultural interactions are mediated by the microcontext (i.e., interlocutor, situation,

location) and that, while general cultural patterns of interaction can be outlined, each social encounter can be different. As Davies (2004, p. 211) points out, in pragmatics instruction, “we need to highlight the idea that each cross-cultural encounter is a new context. Understanding typical cultural patterns and interpretations of the target culture does not mean that one can predict the behavior of interlocutors; human beings are not cultural robots.” Thus, while instruction can provide learners with guidelines, generalizations, and metacognitive concepts for understanding politeness, learners must also be reminded that participants in talk mediate each others’ interactions.

Finally, it is important to point out that, in the approach to learning being put forth here, that the goal of L2 pragmatics instruction should not be to encourage students to blindly reproduce the established target culture norms and politeness behaviors. Rather, the goal of such instruction should be to engage learners in critically thinking about issues that have relevance for politeness. Some such issues include: how cultures can differ with regard to the social meanings attached to specific linguistic forms, how cultural values and beliefs inform behavior, how power relations are displayed, negotiated, and resisted in different cultures, and how cultures contain a range of beliefs and behaviors, to name a few. In reference to Newman and Holzman (1999), Kinginger (2002, p. 247) describes that “learners should not be seen as acquiring new material, but as entering into a dialectal relationship with new material, a process that inevitably leads to transformation of both the learner and the material.” As L2 learners engage in understanding their own culture and the target culture from its own point of view, they

are in a position to think critically about both C1 and C2, to make informed linguistic and behavioral choices, and to pursue identity goals from an emergent “third place,” in the sense that Kramsch (1993) put forth. Creating a third place may include a decision on the part of the student, for example, not to adopt a linguistic form or politeness strategy that is the expected behavior in the target culture (what some have termed *resistance*). In this way, the developmental outcome of instruction is never predetermined, but rather, creatively “authored” by students in collaboration with others (Kozulin, 1998).

According to the Vygotskian model put forth by Lantolf and Johnson (2008), in-class knowledge then must be connected to practice. Of course, the great advantage of study abroad is that students have the opportunity to immediately apply their knowledge to their interactions in the target community. However, in addition, students can be encouraged to make the most of their out-of-class interactions, for example, by observing or asking host country natives about the politeness concepts learned in class in order to gather more information. As students gather ethnographic data about politeness issues, they can bring it back to class (perhaps each student is assigned to a particular issue) and then share that information with other students. For instance, students can be encouraged to analyze critical incidents²⁸ that happen to them and to bring them to class to share and discuss. Critical incidents are a good source of data about cultural beliefs, values, and behaviors and, in many cases, about language and pragmatics. In addition, the discussion

²⁸ Critical incidents are brief accounts of a situation in which cultural difference is brought to the forefront through some behavior that is either not understood or misunderstood intercultural. In discussion, students analyze critical incidents and use critical thinking skills to make hypotheses about the cultural beliefs and values that underly externally observable behavior, including use of language. See Fowler and Mumford (1995) for an overview of critical incidents and their use in intercultural education.

of critical incidents can encourage critical thinking and the building of hypotheses for future ethnographic data gathering in the target culture. By encouraging students to become ethnographers of language and culture, students have greater opportunities to become active and engaged in their learning.

Thus, the role of the classroom in study abroad can be to provide students with an understanding of some fundamental concepts in politeness, assist students in seeing patterns of language use and the cultural meanings that specific forms convey, give students the tools to continue their own learning outside in the host community, and then bring that out-of-class learning back into the classroom with learners as the experts. This process follows from a Vygotskian and progressive approach to education in which instruction is not defined as “delivering” knowledge to students, but rather, “building the student’s learning potential” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 154). Furthermore, an emphasis on connecting in-class and out-of-class learning in a framework in which new questions and new problems are discovered, introduced into the classroom, and solved by students themselves, working collaboratively, is consistent with a Vygotskian approach to learning (Engeström, 1987).

In addition to the opportunities for in-class instruction at the study abroad site, the findings of this study also have implications for study abroad program administrators with regard to assisting students in making the most out of the out-of-class interactions that the sojourn abroad affords. This study provided evidence that some students learned about politeness from their host families and transferred that learning to their

performance in service encounters. However, the findings suggest that host families did not typically volunteer information about politeness features, nor did they give students negative feedback about politeness. Learning about politeness in the home occurred primarily as result of students asking their host families questions about how things are done in the host culture. As previous research suggests, interlocutors from the host country may not offer corrective feedback to study abroad students about politeness issues due to concerns of damaging one's own or another's face. One way to move beyond the paradoxical situation that it is sometimes impolite to talk about politeness, would be for study abroad program administrators to intervene and make the learning of politeness an important part of the host family experience.

For example, a study abroad program might provide both students and host families with a written guide with ideas for conversations at the dinner table about language and culture. Such a guide might include specific questions that students could ask of their host families about social norms for interacting in particular speech activities (e.g., service encounters), critical incidents that reflect potential areas for intercultural miscommunication, and general topics that encourage discussion about politeness and intercultural communication. The following are two example topics, informed by the results of this study, that might be included in such a discussion guide.

Discussion guide for study abroad students and host families

At dinnertime, discuss one or more of the following questions and issues. The objectives of these activities are (1) to give you practice speaking and listening in the target language, (2) to encourage meaningful discussion between you and your host family, and (3) to help you to learn more about the language and culture of the host country.

Discussion #1

What are the different words and phrases that I can use when I need to ask for something in a store? Are there differences in what I say depending on the type of store that I'm in (e.g., pharmacy, department store, hardware store)? Does what I say change if the person is older / younger or if s/he is a man / a woman? You might want to ask your host family to act out a service encounter either among themselves or with you in the role of customer. Take note of the words and language forms used. What terms of address are used (i.e., *usted* or *tú*)? Is what they would say and do with the target language similar or different to what you would say and do in your home country and in what way? Discuss these differences and similarities with your host family.

Discussion #2

The following is an incident that happened to a U.S. American study abroad student. Read the description to your host family and then discuss the situation. Make sure to ask them questions if there is some issue that they bring up that you are unsure of or that you do not understand.

One night, Matt's Spanish host father came up to him and very angrily chided Matt for once again leaving his computer turned on when he wasn't using it. Matt felt really bad and said "*lo siento*" several times in order to apologize, to which his host father said "*No, no te sientas nada, está bien.*" Despite the fact that Matt's host father said everything was OK, his father didn't seem to be satisfied with Matt's apology and remained grumpy for awhile longer.

Questions about this situation:

What do you think Matt was thinking?

What do you think Matt's host father was thinking?

Was he happy with Matt's apology? Why or why not?

What could Matt have done differently in this situation?

Have you had to make an apology since you've been in the host country? If so, describe how you apologized to your host family and ask them for their reactions.

These types of conversation starters for students and host families have a number of potential benefits. First of all, some students in this study mentioned that they did not always have much to say to their host parents when they sat down to talk to them or that they tended to discuss the same topics day after day (e.g., what they did in class, where they traveled on the weekend). Providing students and host families with a discussion guide could help to provide both parties with something meaningful to talk about and to lead conversations in different directions than those that they might normally take.

Furthermore, as stated previously, providing an external guide helps to bridge the barriers that politeness concerns create. For example, host families could safely comment on Matt's potentially inappropriate apology in the situation described above without personally insulting their host student and study abroad students could ask questions about everyday issues that come up while living with a host family (e.g., how to apologize to your host parents) in the context of discussing the mishaps of a fictional individual and fictional host parents.

This type of guide could serve to encourage explicit instruction about politeness in the informal context of the host family and, as a result, assist students in making the most of the L2 learning opportunities that living with a local family afford. As was found in this study, talking about politeness issues with host parents can have a positive impact on students' learning. However, students and host families may not always know which issues to focus on as potential politeness concerns. Therefore, a discussion guide should bring into focus issues that are likely to be of concern for students in that particular cultural context. In addition, a guide should present the issues in such a way that neither students nor host families need to be experts in linguistics, pragmatics, or intercultural education in order to understand and comment on interculturally-relevant topics.

Finally, the format of the discussion questions would encourage students to become data gatherers in the study abroad context and to ask questions and make observations in order to learn about the target language and culture. One of the benefits of staying with a host family is that the family represents the built-in opportunity to interact

and develop a relationship with members of the target culture. The benefit of having the opportunity to ask local people about language and culture issues was highlighted in students' response to the Maximizing Study Abroad class. That is, students reported that one of the most useful and rewarding aspects of the Maximizing Study Abroad class was when questions such as the ones listed above were posed to local Spanish informants who would then discuss with students their perspectives on the issues.

For example, in-class instruction in the Maximizing Study Abroad class included the use of critical incidents, similar to the one shown in Discussion #2 above. Students in the class were asked to read and think about critical incidents and to make informed hypotheses about the cultural issues involved in the incident, through discussion in small groups, and then to report on their answers to the large group. After the students reported on their hypotheses, locals from Toledo were asked to provide their perspectives on the critical incidents. Through that discussion, students could ask the local informants further questions that they had about the issues raised and contrast the views expressed by the Toledo locals with their own points of view. This lesson additionally gave students the chance to practice drawing hypotheses about behavior in another culture. Given that students will not always have the opportunity as culture learners to ask an informed individual for his or her interpretation of behavior in another culture, an important skill for intercultural competency is the ability to consider several hypotheses that might explain an observed behavior from the host culture's point of view.

The encouragement of similar types of discussions in the context of the host family could serve the same purpose as the in-class exercise of focusing students' and local families' attention on issues that are relevant to students' learning of the target culture norms of politeness and of stimulating a forum for discussion of such topics. This measure would assist study abroad students in making the most of their out-of-class interactions in the study abroad context.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that the idea of a discussion guide for the host family hinges on the desires of both students and host families to engage in discussions about politeness at the dinner table or during some other occasion at home. However, it cannot be assumed that host families will be at the beckon call of students to take a didactic role with regard to their language and culture learning, nor can it be assumed that all study abroad students are highly motivated to make the effort to learn about politeness issues in the home. The idea of the discussion guide was informed by the fact that the students in this study gave the indication that they were interested in learning about politeness, that they greatly appreciated the guidance about politeness that they received both in and out of class, and that they would have liked to have had even more guidance on such issues.

Conclusions

The goal of this study has been to provide a holistic view or “thick description” of the learning of politeness and social interaction by study abroad students of Spanish. To

this end, two sociocultural theories (i.e., language socialization, Vygotskian sociocultural theory) and Spencer-Oatey's (2000; 2005) rapport management theory were employed to frame and interpret the data from different angles. Fundamental to this approach has been the focus on both the micro and macro social, historical, and political contexts of service encounter interactions. The underlying assumptions of the theories employed in this study are commensurate with the fundamental sociocultural claim that learning and use of language must be understood within the context of social interaction and the relationships and meanings that people create with each other.

This examination of learning and interaction in service encounters has provided insights into the learning of politeness features, the ways in which service providers mediate students' interactions, the strategies that students use to manage rapport, and the identities that students claim for themselves in these interactions. Students generally expressed a desire to move towards the politeness norms of the target speech community, although in at least one case, a student resisted adopting a norm because it did not conform to her L1 definition of politeness. In other cases, students incorporated target-like ways of speaking that they learned through explicit instruction, observation, and participation in the host community.

Individual service providers had a role to play in opening up opportunities for students to speak and to take a more active role in shaping the talk or effectively circumscribing students' participation through specific and culturally-bound discourse practices. The orientation that students displayed with regard to managing rapport was

often one of enhancement, reflecting a desire to make service encounter interactions harmonious and pleasant, although due to the brief and routinized nature of service encounters a rapport-neglect orientation was also observed in some cases. A rapport-challenging orientation was only observed in cases of non-accommodation to language choice.

In sum, this study has argued that learning and interaction must be examined by understanding the individual as a social being situated in socially organized and mediated activities. This framework provides the means to better understand the opportunities for learning, development, and social interaction that study abroad students experience during their sojourn abroad.

Appendices

Appendix A: Materials used to teach requests in the Maximizing Study Abroad class

Una de las experiencias que pueden resultar más frustrantes es la de intentar pedir a alguien que haga algo específico. En este ejercicio se practica con destrezas lingüísticas y culturales necesarias en situaciones concretas:

Situación 1

Tu familia viene a visitarte. No hay transporte público desde el aeropuerto y debes pedirle a tu familia española (o tus amigos españoles) que te lleven al aeropuerto.

¿Qué dirías en tu país?	¿Qué diferencias en normas/ costumbres puede haber en España?	¿Qué dirías en español?

Situación 2

Tu familia viene a visitarte. Te gustaría viajar con ellos y no ir esa semana a trabajar, pero recuperar el trabajo otros días.

¿Qué dirías en tu país?	¿Qué diferencias en normas/ costumbres puede haber en España?	¿Qué dirías en español?

Situación 3

Tu amigo/a español/a suele llegar tarde a vuestras citas. Varias veces has llegado tarde a clase, al cine o a comer a tu casa por esperarla/le. Te gustaría quedar otras veces con él/ella pero no te sientes cómoda/o llegando tarde. Quieres pedirle que llegue a tiempo.

¿Qué dirías en tu país?	¿Qué diferencias en normas/ costumbres puede haber en España?	¿Qué dirías en español?

Actos comunicativos: ¿Qué es aceptable?

En este ejercicio se les darán una situación y muchas posibles emisiones de actos comunicativos (*communicative acts*). Evalúan las emisiones (*phrases*) y decidan si son aceptables (A), más o menos aceptables (M) o inaceptables (I) en el contexto de España.

A = Aceptable

M = Más o menos aceptable

I = Inaceptable

Situación 1 (petición)

Un estudiante quiere pedir un café con leche en un bar. Se acerca al mostrador y dice al camarero:

- Dame un café con leche.
- ¿Puedo tener un café con leche, por favor?
- ¿Me puedes poner un café con leche?
- Oye, tío, ponme un café con leche.
- Hola. Un café con leche, por favor.
- Señor, ¿sería tan amable de ponerme un café con leche?
- ¡Coño, tío! ¿Me vas a poner un café con leche o qué?

Situación 2 (disculpa)

A una estudiante se le ha olvidado devolverle un libro a una profesora. La profesora le pregunta por el libro. La estudiante dice:

- Lo siento. Lo olvidé.
- ¡Joder! Se me olvidó.
- Perdona, profesora. Se me olvidó.
- Ay, lo siento mucho. Se me olvidó por completo.
- Bueno, pues, estos días he estado muy ocupada.
- Me siento realmente consternada.
- Lo siento, de verdad. ¿Aun estoy a tiempo para entregarlo?
- Lo siento, pero presté el libro a un amigo y no me lo ha devuelto.
- No dice nada.

Situación 3 (disculpa)

Estás en el supermercado y una mujer joven chocó contra tu carrito. Algunas cosas se caen del carrito al suelo. La mujer te dice:

- Perdón.
- ¿Estás bien?
- Perdóname, por favor.
- Que pena.
- Lo siento mucho.
- Ay, lo siento mucho. ¿Puedo ayudarte?
- Me da mucha pena. ¿Te hiciste daño?
- No dice nada.

Appendix B: Student recording assignment

Your assignment is to make a total of 11 audio recordings of yourself speaking in Spanish with native speakers of Spanish over the course of semester in Toledo. There will be three different types of recordings that you are asked to make: (1) recordings with your host family; (2) recordings with your language partner or native Spanish speaker friend; and (3) recordings in “service encounters” (e.g., in a pharmacy, hairdresser, bookstore, travel agency, corner store, information desk). Each of these recordings is described below.

The following schedule tells you which week you should make each recording type:

Week	Recording assignment
1	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
2	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)
3	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
4	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
5	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
6	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)
7	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
8	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
9	Host family (30 minutes to 1 hour)
10	Language partner or Spanish-speaking friend (30 minutes to 1 hour)
11	Service encounter (at least 5 different service encounters)

Each week you should meet briefly with me to give me your digital recordings. You need only to bring your Compact Flash card to the *Fundación* and I can download the audio files to my computer.

Host family

You will make a total of four recordings of you speaking with your host family for the duration of one half-hour to one hour per recording. It is preferable that there be no more than three people being recorded. Before you start recording, you should first get permission from your host family members and have them sign the consent form that I will provide. Your host family should already know that you are participating in the research project and should know some of the details about the project (they were sent a letter explaining the project).

Follow the schedule above to know which weeks to make recordings with your host family. You can record on the day of that week that is best for you and your host family, but make sure to do the recording during the week in which it is assigned.

When you are ready to record, place the tape recorder in the middle of all of the speakers, as best you can. Refer to the instruction sheet for operating the recorder if you need to.

Language partner or Spanish native speaker friend

The second type of recording that you will make is with your language partner (*intercambio*) or with a friend who is a native speaker of Spanish. You will make four recordings with this person, spread out over the semester. Each recording should be for the duration of one half-hour to one hour. As with the host family, you need to get permission from this person before doing recordings. If you would like, I can come to your meeting, explain the research project, and obtain your partner's consent.

Follow the schedule above to know which weeks to make recordings with your language partner/Spanish friend. You can record on the day of that week that is best for you and your partner/friend, but make sure to do the recording during the week in which it is assigned.

When you are ready to record, place the tape recorder in between you and your partner/friend. Refer to the instruction sheet for operating the recorder if you need to.

Service encounters

The third type of recording is of you speaking Spanish with people in Toledo who provide a service in the public sector and with whom you interact *verbally*. I provided examples above such as your hairdresser, a travel agent, a shopkeeper, or anywhere in which you need to ask for information or receive a service. For each week of this type of recording, you need to record yourself speaking Spanish in at least five different service encounters. You do not need to make the recordings all on one day; you can spread them throughout the week if you want.

You should choose carefully which types of service encounters you choose to record. Some service encounters don't involve much speaking, so they would not count for this assignment. For example, if you go to the supermarket to buy a candy bar and all you say is *hola* to the cashier, that does not count as one of the five recorded service encounters. If it turns out that there is little or no speaking in an encounter that you thought would involve speaking, that is OK, it just won't count as one of your five recordings. You can simply discard it and do a different one instead.

One of the five service encounter recordings for each week that you do the service encounter recording should be at the Recepción of the Fundación. You can ask for any type of information from the receptionist or complete any type of task that you might need done at the reception.

Unlike the recordings with your host family and language partner/friend you do not need to get the permission of the individuals involved in the service encounters, nor do you need to tell them that you are recording. You should simply carry the tape recorder in your purse or bag and turn it on before you enter the establishment in which you are going to record yourself. Then, after you leave, save the file and turn the recorder off again. The tape recorder should be hidden from view.

After you leave the shop you should immediately fill out the *Service Encounter Information Form* that will be provided to you by the researcher. This form will allow me to know some information about the service encounter that you had. It is very important that you fill it out immediately for each service encounter so that you do not forget any relevant information.

Appendix C: Service Encounter Information Form

Please make sure to fill out this form immediately after each service encounter. This will ensure that you don't forget any important information.

WEEK _____

Track number	Time and date	Name of establishment	Description of the person(s) you talked to (include age, sex, and other relevant characteristics)	Purpose for the service encounter (why did you go there?)	How you felt that the encounter went and why (briefly)

Appendix D: Description of journal assignments

For this assignment you will write a journal entry every week for 11 weeks, during the same time that you are making recordings of yourself speaking Spanish. Each journal entry should be a minimum of two pages typed double-spaced. You are welcome to write your journal in English or Spanish. I will provide you with the week's journal questions at least one week before they journal should be submitted. The questions will ask you to talk about your experiences learning Spanish. You can either email your finished journal entry to me or give me a hard copy at the *Fundación*.

Apart from being a required part of your participation in the research project, you may find that keeping a journal can enrich your study abroad experience by providing insights into your language and culture learning. In addition, the journal will give you a permanent record of your semester in Toledo that you can look back on after you've returned home.

The primary issue that I am interested in for my research relates to the idea of "appropriate use of Spanish" (i.e., "pragmatics," "politeness"). This term means, for example, using Spanish in a way that Spaniards would expect, that follows the social norms of the community, that shows the right amount of respect and/or friendliness, that takes into account the context (e.g., person's age, social status, how well you know the person), that allows you to develop rapport with the other person, and that does not offend the other person. An example would be knowing with whom to use *tú* and *usted*. In your journals, please make sure to comment on issues related to your learning of the appropriate use of Spanish.

Appendix E: Weekly journal assignment

Please answer all of the following questions in your journal entry. In addition to your answers to these questions, feel free to add any additional comments that you think are relevant.

1. Please make a list of the native speakers of Spanish that you've spoken Spanish with this week, for how long you spoke with each of those people, and the topics you talked about. Include both native and non-native speakers of Spanish in your list.
2. Consider the list you just made. Were any of those interactions particularly significant and why? Which ones do you think helped you in your learning of Spanish?
3. Continue considering the list of people above. Did you like talking to these people in Spanish? Why or why not? What is your relationship with these individuals like and how might that impact your learning of Spanish when you talk with them?
4. What have you learned about the appropriate use of Spanish with native Spanish speakers? How did you learn it? What aspects have you paid attention to this week? Please give specific examples and be as descriptive as possible.

Note: "appropriate use of Spanish" (i.e., "pragmatics," "politeness") means, for example, using Spanish in a way that Spaniards would expect, that follows the social norms of the community, that shows the right amount of respect and/or friendliness, that takes into account the context (e.g., person's age, social status, how well you know the person), that allows you to develop rapport with the other person, and that does not offend the other person. An example would be knowing with whom to use *tú* and *usted*.

5. Please answer these questions specifically about the recording you made this week:
 - a. How do you feel about your use of Spanish in this conversation? For example, were you able to express yourself?
 - b. How did you feel during this conversation?
 - c. How well do you know the person?
 - d. How do you think the other person(s) felt during this conversation? How did that person(s) react to what you said?
 - e. How does this conversation reflect your personal relationship with the other person(s)?

Appendix F: Background questionnaire

NAME _____

Background Questionnaire

I. BASIC INFORMATION

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: Female Male
3. What level in school are you? Undergraduate Graduate Other:

4. Year in school: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior
Graduate Other: _____
5. Major: _____
6. Minor: _____

II. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

7. First (native) language: English Other:

8. If one or both of your parents are native speakers of a language (or languages) other than English, please indicate what their native language(s) are:

- 7a. If your parents are native speakers of languages other than English, did they speak
those languages with you at home? Yes No

III. LANGUAGE EDUCATION

9. Age at which you started studying Spanish in school: _____

10. Did you attend immersion school in Spanish? Yes No

9a. If you answered “yes” above, please indicate during which years you attended immersion school in Spanish: Elementary school Middle school High school

10. Please indicate for how many **semesters** you have taken Spanish classes at each of the following levels: Elementary & Middle school: _____ High school: _____ University: _____

11. How many university Spanish classes did you taking during the Fall 2006 semester?

12. List all of the university-level Spanish courses that you have taken:

13. In your Spanish classes at any level, what national dialect(s) of Spanish did your instructors speak? (“National dialects” refers to dialects of Spanish from different countries, for example, Mexican Spanish, Spain/Peninsular Spanish, Argentine Spanish, Cuban Spanish, etc.)

14. Other languages you have studied formally (e.g., in school) at any level:

IV. FOREIGN STUDY AND TRAVEL

15. Have you ever **previously** studied, traveled or lived in a Spanish-speaking country?
 Yes No

If you answered “no” to Question #15, then you are finished with this survey.

16. **In total**, how many months have you spent studying, traveling and/or living in a Spanish-speaking country or countries?
- _____

17. For each of the times you have studied, traveled or lived in a Spanish-speaking country (up to three separate trips), indicate (1) whether you took Spanish language classes, and (2) how often on average you had an extended conversation (i.e., for 30 minutes or more) in Spanish with native or fluent speakers of Spanish.

Trip #1

- a. Country: _____ b. Length of stay:
- _____

- c. Did you take Spanish language classes during this trip? Yes No

- d. On average, how often did you have an extended conversation (i.e., for 30 minutes or more) in Spanish with native or fluent speakers of Spanish?

- Every day Every couple of days Once per week Once per month Infrequently

Trip #2

- a. Country: _____ b. Length of stay:
- _____

- c. Did you take Spanish language classes during this trip? Yes No

- d. On average, how often did you have an extended conversation (i.e., for 30 minutes or more) in Spanish with native or fluent speakers of Spanish?

- Every day Every couple of days Once per week Once per month Infrequently

Trip #3

- a. Country: _____ b. Length of stay:
- _____

- c. Did you take Spanish language classes during this trip? Yes No

d. On average, how often did you have an extended conversation (i.e., for 30 minutes or more) in Spanish with native or fluent speakers of Spanish?

- Every day Every couple of days Once per week Once per month Infrequently

Appendix G: Language contact questionnaire

NAME _____

Language Contact Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions concerning your contact with Spanish in different situations during your semester in Toledo.

I. SPEAKING SPANISH WITH YOUR HOST FAMILY

1. On average, how many total hours per week did you spend speaking in Spanish with members of your host family?
 - 0-1 hours
 - 1-3 hours
 - 3-5 hours
 - 5-7 hours
 - 7 or more hours
2. In the space provide below, please answer the questions about the members of your host family.

Host mother

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Host father

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Other host family member:

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Other host family member:

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

3. Did you speak English with any of the members of your host family?
 Yes No

4. If you answered “yes” to Question #3, on average, how many hours per week did you spend speaking English with any member of your host family?
_____ hours

5. Did living with your host family help in your learning of Spanish language and culture? If so, in what ways specifically? Please describe and give examples.

II. SPEAKING SPANISH OUTSIDE OF CLASS AND WITH FRIENDS

6. On average, how many hours per week did you spend speaking Spanish with Spaniards **outside of class, but NOT including talking with your host family**?
 0-1 hours
 1-3 hours
 3-5 hours
 5-7 hours
 7 or more hours

7. On average, how many hours per week did you spend speaking Spanish with Spanish native speakers NOT from Spain (e.g., the Puerto Rican and Mexican students at the Fundación) **outside of class**?
 0-1 hours
 1-3 hours
 3-5 hours
 5-7 hours
 7 or more hours

8. On average, how many hours per week did you spend speaking Spanish with other non-native speakers of Spanish (e.g., other American students) **outside of class**?

- 0-1 hours
- 1-3 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 7 or more hours

9. In what contexts did you speak Spanish outside of class? Please list as many contexts as you can think of (e.g., bar, coffee shop, parties, intercambio, etc.).

10. On average, how many hours per week did you spend hanging out and speaking Spanish with **FRIENDS** who were **Spaniards**?

- 0-1 hours
- 1-3 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 7 or more hours

11. On average, how many hours per week did you spend hanging out and speaking Spanish with **FRIENDS** who were **native Spanish speakers NOT from Spain**?

- 0-1 hours
- 1-3 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 7 or more hours

12. In the space provide below, please list up to four of your **Spanish native speaker friends** (including Spaniards and other nationalities) and answer the questions about those friends.

Friend #1

Nationality: _____

Gender: Male Female

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____ hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Friend #2

Nationality: _____

Gender: Male Female

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Friend #3

Nationality: _____

Gender: Male Female

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

Friend #4

Nationality: _____

Gender: Male Female

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

13. Did hanging out with native Spanish-speaking friends help in your learning of Spanish language and culture? If so, in what ways specifically? Please describe and give examples.

14. Did you have a significant other (i.e., boyfriend, girlfriend) and/or a very close friend in Toledo who was a native Spanish speaker? If so, did having a significant other and/or a very close friend affect your learning of Spanish?

15. On average, how many hours per week did you spend hanging out and speaking **ENGLISH** with **friends of any nationality**?

- 0-1 hours
- 1-3 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 7 or more hours

16. What kind(s) of **structured** out-of-class activities involving the use of Spanish did you participate in during your stay in Toledo?

Please check all that apply:

Volunteer position (Please describe):

Curso de prácticas (Please describe):

Other (Please describe):

17. Did the structured activities in which you participated help in your learning of Spanish language and culture? If so, in what ways specifically? Please describe and give examples.

18. In the space provide below, please answer the questions about your **Intercambio conversation partner**.

Gender: Male Female

Approximate age: _____

Average time per week that you spoke Spanish with this person: _____
hours

What topics did you typically talk about with this person?

What was your relationship like with this person?

How did you feel about speaking in Spanish with this person?

III. COURSES AT THE TOLEDO INSTITUTE

19. Please list names of all of the courses that you took while studying in Toledo:

20. Do you feel these courses helped you in your learning of Spanish language and culture? Why or why not? Please describe and give examples.

Appendix H: Student interview questions

1. How do you feel about your semester in Toledo?
2. Do you feel that your Spanish skills have improved over the semester? In what ways, in particular?
3. What were the important factors regarding your semester in Toledo that either helped or hindered your learning of Spanish? What things that you did helped your language learning the most?
4. Do you feel that you improved in your pragmatic abilities in Spanish? If so, in what ways? What factors helped you to improve? Please give examples. If not, why do you think you did not improve?
5. Do you think that participating in an *intercambio* helped you improve your learning of Spanish? Did it help you with pragmatics? What was your relationship like with your *intercambio* partner?
6. Do you think that living with a host family helped you improve your learning of Spanish? Did it help you with pragmatics? What was your relationship like with your family?
7. What interactions with native speakers of Spanish were most important in helping you learn Spanish? Which helped you with learning pragmatics?
8. In what contexts did you feel most comfortable speaking Spanish? In which contexts do you feel that you were able to speak Spanish the best?
9. Did you want to speak Spanish like a Spaniard? If so, in what ways did you try to talk like native speakers from Spain?
10. To what extent do you feel that you integrated into the larger Toledo community? What influenced this extent of integration?
11. Can you think of any incidents where you offended someone without wanting to because of the way you said something in Spanish?
12. To what extent do you feel that you integrated into the community at the Fundación (including students, professors, and staff)? What influenced this extent of integration?
13. How do you feel about your Spanish in service encounters? Do you feel that you have made improvements in your ability to negotiate service encounters appropriately? If so, what helped you to improve?
14. Is there anything else that would help me understand your learning of Spanish and Spanish pragmatics during this semester?

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