L2 Journal, Volume 15 Issue 2 (2023), pp. 110-128 Produced by eScholarship, 2023

When In Rome: Maximizing L2 Pragmatic Development in Study Abroad

KIMBERLY MORRIS

University of Wisconsin, La Crosse
Email: kmorris2@uwlax.edu

The onset of COVID-19 has prompted world language professionals to reconceptualize best practices in second language (L2) teaching and research during a time of limited interaction due to social distancing across the globe (Morris, 2022). Not surprisingly, study abroad programs that once fostered communicative and intercultural development were put on pause, also halting opportunities for the transformative learning that can occur in immersion contexts (Leaver et al., 2021). Because study abroad can provide L2 learners with authentic L2 input and opportunities for meaningful interaction in diverse social contexts in ways that traditional classrooms simply cannot replicate, it provides fertile ground for L2 pragmatic development, particularly when supported with explicit instruction (Morris, 2017). This paper provides evidence from two studies of pragmatics that justifies the importance of getting back abroad to maximize L2 pragmatic development. The first study of 16 advanced L2 Spanish learners at home revealed limited pragmatic knowledge among all participants, including those who had studied abroad, thus pointing out the shortcomings of uninstructed pragmatic development. The second study of beginning L2 Spanish learners abroad confirmed the development of pragmatic competence among all students, particularly those who received a task-based instructional treatment. These studies signal that it is not only important to get back to Rome, per se, but also essential to support students in discovering what the Romans do, along with how, when, and why they do it, thus supporting their communicative effectiveness both in and out of the classroom as we move through and beyond the pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has left no life untouched, reframing history into what occurred pre-pandemic and what has happened since. This major disruption to everyday life has prompted many to reevaluate their daily practices, ultimately revealing what is important and, as a result, creating a new normal. Such an unsettling period can also be harnessed as an opportunity to revisit the main goals of an individual, a community, or even an entire field. For the field of Applied Linguistics, the goal of language learning and teaching has shifted significantly throughout history and will continue to do so as new challenges arise throughout the peaks and valleys of the pandemic.

With the rise of globalization and the resulting culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogies, today's world language classroom seeks to foster learners' ability to "communicate in meaningful and appropriate ways with users of other languages" (National Standards in Foreign Language Education, 1996, p. 3). In short, we use language to connect with other human beings with the end goal of interacting effectively. According to these national standards, which were published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, effective human-to-human interaction can be summed up in just 10 words: "knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom" (p. 3). These components encompass

the five goal areas that make up the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, which are implemented widely in language programs across the country: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). Because these elements deal with appropriate language use in specific contexts for certain communicative functions, they also represent the very essence of ***pragmatics,*** which can be defined as the study of language use within a sociocultural context. Therefore, developing pragmatic competence can be considered the main goal of language learning, or what really lies as the heart of communicating effectively with diverse others.

Prior to COVID-19, many university students looked to study abroad (SA) as one avenue through which they could develop the communicative and intercultural competences that have grown increasingly important with the rise of globalization. In fact, before the pandemic, enrollment in SA programs nearly quintupled from 1990-2019, equaling roughly 11% of U.S. undergraduate students in 2018-19 (Institute of International Education, 2021). However, an overwhelming majority of these students (97%) opted to participate in mid-length or short-term programs of one semester or less, and most (93%) were non-foreign language majors. Thus, even though more students were going abroad before the pandemic, they stayed for shorter periods of time, thus limiting their exposure to the cultural and linguistic experiences that can be so transformative. With the onset of COVID-19, SA enrollment in 2020-2021 declined by 91%, while online global learning experiences grew significantly as the only viable alternative.

Throughout this paper, I highlight the importance of getting back abroad, particularly for the case of L2 pragmatic development. In the next section, I outline a review of the literature related to interlanguage pragmatic development in different contexts (at home and abroad), pointing out the affordances of explicit instruction. I then present findings from two studies that demonstrate the value of teaching pragmatic norms to L2 learners, from beginning to advanced, and both at home and abroad. Finally, I argue that the SA context coupled with task-based pragmatics instruction maximizes the pragmatic development of L2 learners, thereby allowing them to engage more actively in the L2 with diverse members of the host community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In simple terms, pragmatics can be defined as the study of language use in context. Pragmatic competence, then, can be characterized as "knowing how to say what to whom when," (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013, p. 68), which is nearly identical to the goal that was revisited in the previous section. This implies not only knowing the linguistic forms of a language (or pragmalinguistics), but also how to use them appropriately in different social contexts (or sociopragmatics). Such competence also includes the ability to carry out different speech acts such as requesting, inviting, and apologizing, among others. Pragmatics is essentially the reason why we address our close friends differently than our superiors, and why we choose our words carefully when asking for favors. While children are gradually socialized to learn the "rules" of suitable language use in different contexts in their first language (L1), adult L2 learners traditionally do not have the same fortune, as formal instruction tends to focus on linguistic form (i.e., grammar) rather than function (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013).

According to the literature, L2 pragmatic competence is difficult to acquire because it requires extensive time and experiences in different social contexts (Blum-Kulka & Sheffer, 1993). Not surprisingly, pragmatic competence is acquired slowly in naturalistic contexts without instruction (Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). This is problematic for SA students,

considering that 97% of those who go abroad participate in shorter programs. Nevertheless, developing pragmatic competence is extremely important for L2 students abroad, considering that the pragmatic blunders they commit, even unintentionally, could result in them appearing impolite or inappropriate to their interlocutors, and potentially damage their interpersonal relationships with others in the host community (Ishihara, 2010). As such, pragmatics can be deemed high stakes for SA, considering that it lies at the intersection of language and culture and can have very real consequences that impact the success of interactions in the L2.

Despite its importance, pragmatics is traditionally not taught in formal classrooms, (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Ishihara, 2010). In fact, language textbooks rarely contain explanations or lessons on pragmatics, and instructors typically do not receive professional preparation. However, pragmatics is indeed teachable, with explicit methods of instruction being most effective due to learners' increased awareness of pragmatic norms (Langer, 2011; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Schmidt, 1993). Because the SA context is fertile ground for authentic language use in a variety of contexts, it is often assumed that this environment is ideal to foster the development of L2 pragmatic competence. Just as the proverb says, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Nonetheless, research has shown that students often lack awareness of pragmatic norms in the L2, even after having studied abroad (Bataller, 2010; Shively, 2010). Hence, what if students do not actually *know* what the Romans do? Or what if they are uncomfortable with the way the Romans do the things they do? Even if students notice what the Romans do, they may not be aware *how* or *why* they do them, since these norms are deeply embedded within the sociocultural context and may be out of reach to those who are not members of the local community of practice. The social distancing brought about by the pandemic may have exacerbated this unawareness among SA students, particularly those in virtual programs (see Davidson & Garas, this issue; Levine-West et al., this issue).

There is a growing body of literature exploring the topic of uninstructed pragmatic development in a SA context, with a particular focus on speech acts. Many of these studies have examined requests (Barron, 2003, 2006; Bataller, 2008, 2010; Cole & Anderson, 2001; Czerwionka & Cuza, 2017; Rodríguez, 2001; Schauer, 2004, 2009; Shively & Cohen, 2008), refusals (Barron, 2003, 2006; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004, 2013; Ren, 2015; VonCanon, 2006), and apologies (Kondo, 1997; Shively & Cohen, 2008), among others. These studies confirm that although learners tend to make minimal to moderate approximations towards target-like pragmatic norms, they typically do not fully reach these norms during their sojourn abroad (Halenko & Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2022). Nevertheless, it is difficult to compare or generalize the findings from these studies, considering that they differ in languages studied, duration of time abroad, student profile, and even how they operationalized and measured pragmatic development. Different speech acts may even develop at different rates (Li et al., 2022; Taguchi, 2013). The common thread they share is their examination of the development of uninstructed students. However, Shively (2010) warns that "uninstructed L2 learners typically make only minor gains in target-like pragmatic competence" (p. 106), bearing in mind that pragmatic development is dependent on a myriad of complex factors such as L2 proficiency (Barron, 2020; Li et al., 2022), social contact (Sánchez-Hernández & Alcón-Soler, 2019; Taguchi et al., 2016), and identity (Liu et al., 2022; Masuda, 2011; Morris, 2017; Shively, 2011). Adding COVID to this list of factors only further muddies the waters.

Equally multiplying are studies related to the impact of pragmatics instruction in SA. Aside from the handful of studies examining the impact of pre-departure instruction (Cohen & Shively, 2007; Hernández, 2021; Matsumura, 2022), most research focuses on the effectiveness of specific instructional treatments during study abroad programs (Alcón-Soler, 2015; Halenko, 2021; Hernández, 2021; Mir, 2020; Morris, 2017; Pozzi et al., 2021; Shively, 2010; Winke & Teng, 2010).

Nevertheless, because students are social agents who are free to act according to their own backgrounds, values, and identities, instruction on pragmatic norms should not require students to conform to specific conventions or formulas deemed appropriate in the host community, but rather should provide them with a range of linguistic strategies and norms they can put into practice to make meaning in a variety of social situations (Morris, 2017). Even if students are aware of the pragmatic norms of the TL community, they may choose to intentionally not conform to these norms, especially if they conflict with their L1 identity or values (Ishihara, 2006). According to Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003), "The chief goal of instruction in pragmatics is to raise learners' pragmatic awareness and give them choices about their interactions in the target language" (p. 38). This expanded repertoire can help learners align their language use to the social context, communicative function, and interlocutors involved, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their interactions, which is the primary goal for learning another language in the first place.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has recently thrown a wrench into SA programs, the value of international education cannot be discredited, considering the transformative growth that is often experienced by those who have the privilege to immerse themselves in another space, time, language, and culture (see Leaver & Campbell, this issue). Throughout the rest of this paper, I provide research evidence from two studies that justify the importance of getting back abroad, particularly with respect to L2 pragmatic development. The first study serves to show that advanced L2 learners at home can significantly lack pragmatic competence even at the end of their program, whereas the second study demonstrates that beginning L2 learners with no prior knowledge can develop significant pragmatic competence while studying abroad, particularly when supported with instruction.

STUDY 1: ADVANCED L2 LEARNERS AT HOME

The first study was conducted in a traditional university classroom setting, which tends to be restricted to more formal language usage and limited in the exposure to authentic input in different contexts (Xiao, 2015). In this study, I examined the pragmatic competence of 16 advanced L2 learners of Spanish in their final semester of language study at a mid-sized university in the Midwest. Since they were nearing completion of the Spanish major/minor program, one might assume that their pragmatic competence was fairly advanced. However, the preliminary results of the study revealed quite the contrary.

Methods

The 16 student participants in this study were enrolled in an advanced course on Studies in Hispanic Linguistics with a particular focus on pragmatics. All students reported speaking English as their L1 and Spanish as their L2, but because they came from different backgrounds, fields, and a range of proficiencies, it was crucial to gauge their varying levels and goals. Thus, at the beginning of the semester, I conducted a preliminary needs analysis that surveyed students regarding what speech acts, or "tasks," they deemed important to learn in Spanish, taking into consideration what they already knew about interacting appropriately in the L2. Next, I created an oral discourse completion test (DCT) that consisted of 22 scenarios that incorporated the tasks students ranked most important (see Appendix A). This instrument is a commonly utilized production questionnaire that includes descriptions of scenarios and asks participants how they would respond if they were in the given situations, eliciting certain speech acts. Although DCTs have been criticized for not capturing naturalistic language use, they allow learners to rely on explicit

knowledge, thus providing an adequate measure of pragmatic competence (for a further discussion, see Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Pinto & de Pablos-Ortega, 2014; Schauer, 2009).

During the first week of the course, I met individually with each student via Zoom to collect and record their responses to the scenarios presented in the oral DCT. In each meeting, the DCT scenarios were presented to the student both in writing and recorded audio files in a PowerPoint. Afterward, I used these methods to distribute the same oral DCT to five native-speaking Spanish teachers who also taught in the Spanish program to provide a baseline with which to compare students' responses. The teachers were three females (F) and two males (M) from Spain (M, F), Mexico (F), Colombia (F), and Cuba (M). The responses from the five teachers and 16 students were then analyzed qualitatively with respect to the pragmalinguistic forms and sociopragmatic norms used to accomplish the tasks presented in the scenarios.

Results

Although the 16 students had previously taken courses with the five teachers included in this study, their responses on the oral DCT differed significantly, particularly for scenarios involving requests. While a full discussion of the results is beyond the scope of this paper, I provide a detailed overview of one request scenario, highlighting the main differences among teachers' and students' responses. The scenario involves a student and their close friend (Gabriel) out for lunch:

> *Cuando llega la cuenta, te das cuenta de que has dejado tu cartera en casa. Para pedirle a Gabriel que te preste dinero, tú dices:*
>
> (When the bill arrives, you realize you forgot your wallet at home. To ask Gabriel to lend you money, you say:)

In response to this face-threatening scenario that involves requesting money from a close friend, the teachers and students adopted different strategies, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Comparison of Teacher and Student Strategies for Restaurant Bill Scenario

	Teacher (5) Strategies	**Student (16) Strategies**
Request Act	Simple interrogative (2: Mexico, Colombia)	Query ability (9)
	Imperative (1: Spain)	Query possibility (4)
	Query ability with syntactic downgrading (1: Spain)	Simple interrogative (2)
	Need statement (1: Cuba)	Hypothetical statement (1)
Mitigating Support	Grounder (4)	Grounder (11)
	Promise of future compensation (4)	Promise of future compensation (6)
	Regret (1)	Apology (6)

The results collected from the native-speaking teachers in the Spanish program show a preference for fairly direct request acts (particularly by males) that are mitigated by grounders, promise of future compensation, and one statement of regret. With respect to the request act itself, the simple interrogative was used by two female participants from Mexico and Colombia, respectively: *¿Me prestas dinero?* (Will you lend me money?); *¿Me prestas para pagar la cuenta?* (Will you lend me [money] to pay the bill?) The male teacher from Cuba utilized a need statement by uttering: *Me hace falta que me prestes para cubrir esto.* (I need you to lend me [money] to cover this). The most direct response, an imperative, was used by the male teacher from Spain: *Págamelo tú por favor* (You pay it for me please). Interestingly, a conventionally indirect response was provided by the female teacher from Spain: *¿Me podrías prestar dinero para pagar la cuenta?* (Could you lend me money to pay the bill?) These responses from just five teachers in the same program demonstrate the wide variety of options that are available for students to use in this relatively common, yet face-threatening request scenario. The question is: At the end of the Spanish major/minor programs, are students even aware of these options?

Preliminary analyses suggest they are not. Results from the students showed a preference for more indirect request acts, particularly the query ability and possibility strategies: *¿Puedes pagar?* (Can you pay?) *¿Es posible que tú pagas [sic] por este tiempo?* (Is it possible that you pay this time?) Although these strategies are frequently used in English, more direct strategies are preferred in Spanish, as reflected by the native speakers in Table 1. Additionally, 40% of students incorporated an apology to mitigate their request, although this was not the case for any of the teachers. The examples below provide a comparison of full responses to this scenario from a teacher and student:

> **Teacher** (female, Colombia): *Se me quedó la cartera, qué pena. ¿Me prestas para pagar la cuenta?* (I forgot my wallet, what a shame. Will you lend me to pay the bill?)
>
> **Student** (female, U.S.): *Gabriel, lo siento, pero no tengo mi cartera. Puedo darle dinero más tarde, pero ¿puedes pagar por mi comida ahora?* (Gabriel, I'm sorry but I don't have my wallet. I can give you (formal) money later, but can you (informal) pay for my food now?)

Whereas the teacher employed the accidental "se" and a short statement of regret to mitigate the request via a simple interrogative, the student opted for a more indirect request strategy, query ability, mitigated by an apology. While the student's approach was certainly not incorrect, she inconsistently used forms of address in her request, vacillating between the formal and informal you (*usted* versus *tú*). Since her request comes off as more formal, she displays increased social distance between herself and her interlocutor, Gabriel, who may, as a result, be less inclined to lend her money. Nevertheless, she may be successful in her request, depending on how Gabriel interprets it. In any case, this small snapshot of data begs the question of why language programs do not regularly integrate pragmatics instruction to provide students with a wider repertoire of strategies to accomplish such common tasks rather than relying on the strategies they learned from their L1. However, it appears that the students in this study did just that when responding to this DCT scenario in their L2 simply because they did not know the variety of strategies available to them.

What is particularly troublesome is that the student from the example above had spent several months studying abroad in Spain prior to taking this course, yet she admitted not feeling confident in her pragmatic competence largely due to her formal training. In a reflection task, she stated:

> *I've studied Spanish for 7 years, and I think that my pragmatic competence is just okay. I've learned Spanish in a formal context for the majority of my learning, which is why I think my pragmalinguistic competence is more developed than my sociopragmatic competence. In school, the focus was always grammar. Sometimes we learned about culture and social norms, but it was never an authentic experience until I went to Seville, Spain to study abroad for 3 months. It was in Seville that I learned more about social norms and appropriate behaviors in Spanish culture. I developed my sociopragmatic competence more in Seville by taking the metro and bus, going shopping in stores like El Corte Inglés, speaking with locals, living with a host family, and traveling only in Spain. I say that my pragmatic competence is just okay because I was only in Seville for 3 months, while the rest of my learning (7 years) was in a formal context where I learned more about grammar than social norms.*

This reflection demonstrates the limitations of traditional classrooms for developing pragmatics and, at the same time, the valuable authentic contexts that study abroad affords. However, although the SA context is fertile ground for such authentic experiences, is it enough to fully prepare learners to interact successfully in the community? Even this student admits that her pragmatic competence is limited because the duration of her SA program was only three months, whereas the bulk of her L2 learning was in a formal classroom. Imagine if this student's SA program had also supported her pragmatic development with meaningful instruction in the classroom to maximize her interactions outside the classroom. This relates to the second study I conducted about teaching pragmatics in SA, which is described in the following section.

STUDY 2: BEGINNING L2 LEARNERS ABROAD

In contrast to the previous study of advanced L2 learners at home, the second study examined the pragmatic development of beginning L2 learners studying abroad. Unlike most L2 learning contexts at home, developing pragmatic competence abroad is of utmost importance to SA students, particularly among beginning L2 learners with limited linguistic and cultural competence, as it could mean the difference between successful participation in the host community or the contrary. Despite the fact that pragmatics lies at the heart of language and culture, it has typically remained absent from the SA language classroom, forcing students to form their own assumptions of L2 pragmatic behaviors based on observations and interactions with members of the host community, however limited. Considering the consequences that limited pragmatic competence may have on students' communicative success within the host community, it is crucial to equip L2 learners with the pragmatic knowledge they need to actively participate in the community in which they are immersed. For this reason, the second study, which is elaborated in Morris (2017), aimed to support and accelerate the pragmatic development of beginning L2 students abroad through a task-based instructional model that had at its core the students' functional needs in their specific context.

Participants

Treatment Group

The participants who received the instructional treatment for this study were 12 undergraduate students enrolled in a spring quarter abroad program prior to the pandemic in Madrid, Spain for 10. This program was hosted by a large public university in California. The students participated in the beginning track of the program, so no previous experience with

Spanish was required. Of the 12 students, 11 were female and one was male. The participants were between the ages of 19-23, meaning there were students at all university levels (freshman-senior). While the students pursued a variety of majors including communication, psychology, and human development, none of them reported studying Spanish at the major or minor level. All students were beginning L2 learners of Spanish who self-identified as native speakers of English. Four students reported speaking Cantonese (2) or Mandarin (2) along with English at home, yet nobody reported speaking Spanish at home. Thus, for the purposes of this study, none of these participants were identified as heritage learners of Spanish (Valdés, 2005).

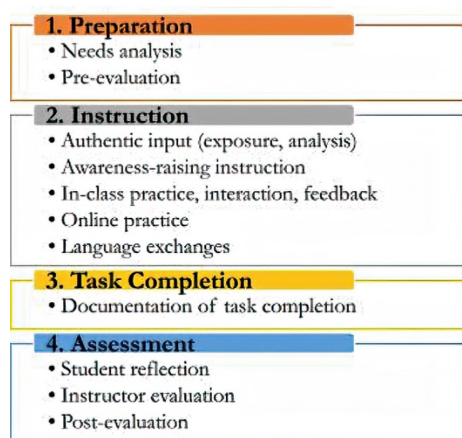
Comparison Groups (Quarter Abroad, At Home)

To corroborate the effectiveness of the instructional treatment, further data were collected from two comparison groups of students studying beginning L2 Spanish, one studying abroad in the same quarter abroad program in Madrid for 10 weeks yet one year later (n = 11) and one studying at the home institution in California during a 10-week summer session (n = 10). I use the term 'comparison groups' because a true control group would consist of SA students who are randomly selected, controlling for their academic and affective profiles, which seems a nearly impossible task in SA research. The two comparison groups of students were asked to complete the same pre-/post-test measure of pragmatic competence during their programs, yet neither of these groups received the instructional treatment.

Procedures

I examined the effectiveness of a task-based model of pragmatics instruction to support the pragmatic development of the 12 students abroad because it focuses on what learners need to be able to *do* in the new language (Long, 2015), such as speech act tasks including greetings, requests, invitations, and more. The task-based model I developed, which is largely informed by Long (2015) and Shively (2010), involves four main stages, as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Task-Based Model of Pragmatics Instruction for Study Abroad



The first stage, Preparation, involves a needs analysis to identify the target tasks that will make up the syllabus as well as a pre-evaluation of students' pragmatic competence (using

role-plays, surveys, etc.). In the second and most important stage, Instruction, students are exposed to samples of authentic input involving the target task and encouraged to analyze the samples for pragmatic behaviors. The teacher then provides awareness-raising instruction on linguistic, cultural, or contextual norms and information related to the task. Afterward, the teacher prepares in-class guided practice, opportunities for interaction with peers, and provides feedback to students on their output. Further practice is carried out online using different multimedia tools such as discussion forums, videos, etc. Students then participate in organized language exchanges with native-speaking locals during which they are guided to discuss and practice the task. In the Task Completion stage, students actually *do* the task in the host community and document their task completion by recording themselves, taking notes, or being observed, etc. For the final stage of Assessment, students reflect on their own performance and are evaluated by their instructor. At the end of the program, a post-evaluation on all tasks is conducted, using a similar instrument as the pre-evaluation.

This study closely aligned with each step of this model, thus examining its effectiveness among the 12 beginning L2 learners in Madrid. Following the needs analysis at the beginning of the program, the tasks outlined in Table 2 were identified by students as important to learn and sequenced by the instructor according to their relevance and complexity.

Table 2
Speech Act Tasks Identified by Needs Analysis for Instructional Treatment

Week	Tasks	Pragmatic Speech Act Involved
2	Greetings and closings	Greetings and leave-taking
3	Asking for directions	Request for help/information
4	Ordering food at a restaurant	Request for service
5	Inviting a friend out	Invitations (offering, accepting, declining)
6	Purchasing a product	Request for information/service
7	Writing email to professor	Request via conventionalized written genre
8	Maintaining a conversation	Conversational management (listener responses, discourse markers, etc.)

To measure students' pragmatic development as they progressed throughout the instructional treatment, data was collected through a pre/post written DCT designed to elicit student responses related to these speech act tasks (see Appendix B). Additional data collection methods included weekly pre-task audio-recordings conducted by students before instruction, naturalistic audio-recordings of task completion in the community following instruction, and self-reflections of task completion. The same pre/post DCT instrument was distributed to the comparison group students at the beginning and end of their respective programs abroad and at home. It was also distributed one year later to eight of the 12 students who received the instructional treatment to measure the retention of their pragmatic competence.

The students' pre/post DCT responses were rated by two native Peninsular Spanish speakers using a holistic 0-5-point scale of alignment that was modified from Taguchi (2006; 2011), as demonstrated in Table 3. This scale measures students' success in aligning their use

of linguistic forms to the social situation at hand with the goal of successfully completing the given tasks. High inter-rater reliability among the two evaluators was confirmed, with correlation coefficients of 0.98 (Spearman's ϱ) and 0.93 (Kendall's τ). The students' scores were compiled to facilitate nonparametric quantitative analyses, which were conducted using the statistical software program R. It is important to note that the three groups of student participants did not significantly differ with respect to pragmatic competence at the beginning of their programs, as confirmed by a Kruskal-Wallis test. To determine whether there was a statistically significant growth in pre/post-DCT scores among each group as well as a significant difference between each group's gain scores, Wilcoxon rank-sum tests were performed using the mean pre/post-test scores for each of the three groups of participants.

Table 3
Holistic Scale of Alignment for Rating DCT Responses

Ratings	**Descriptors**
5 Excellent	--Expressions **fully align** with the situation (directness, politeness, formality). --No or almost no grammatical, lexical, and discourse infelicities.
4 Good	--Expressions **mostly align** with the situation (directness, politeness, formality). --Very few grammatical, lexical, and discourse infelicities.
3 Fair	--Expressions **somewhat align** with the situation (directness, politeness, formality). --Grammatical, lexical, and discourse infelicities are noticeable, but they do not interfere.
2 Poor	--Alignment is difficult to determine due to the interference from many grammatical, lexical, and discourse infelicities.
1 Very Poor	--Expressions are very difficult to understand. There is no evidence that the intended speech acts are performed.
0	--No performance.

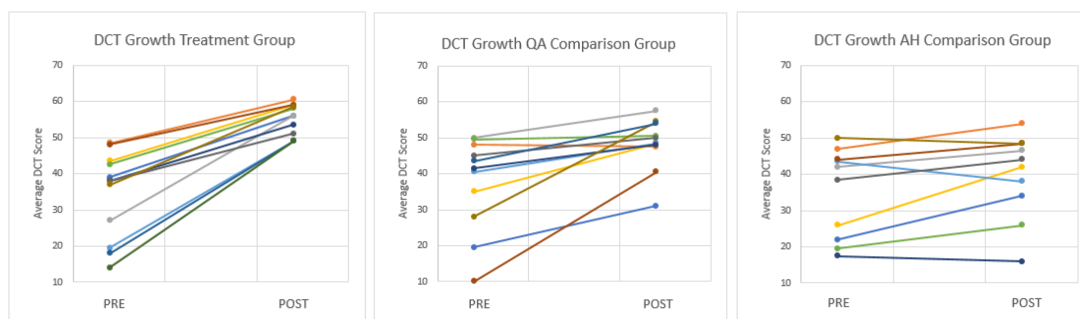
Further qualitative analyses were conducted with the oral and written language produced by the 12 treatment group students before, during, and after task completion. Specifically, the elicited pre-task video recordings and task completion recordings in the community were analyzed qualitatively to determine 1) the extent to which students demonstrated pragmatic growth following instruction and 2) what characterized students' L2 production during task completion. Such qualitative analyses allow for a richer description and interpretation of students' pragmatic competence and performance that numbers alone simply cannot offer.

Results

Quantitative analyses confirmed a significant growth in pragmatic competence among all 12 students who received the instructional treatment. Specifically, the treatment group abroad showed an average growth in scores of 32% relative to pre-test performance. In the comparison group of quarter abroad (QA) students who did not receive instruction, participants demonstrated an average gain of 17% relative to pre-test performance, meaning that they did indeed learn some pragmatic norms related to these speech act tasks, but not nearly as much as the treatment group. In the comparison group of students at home (AH) who did not receive the instruction, participants demonstrated an average gain of just 7%

relative to their pre-test performance, and some even performed inferior on the post-test. This data, as represented in Figure 2 below, clearly show the benefits of the task-based instructional model for pragmatic development while abroad.

Figure 2
Comparison of Pre/Post DCT Performance Among Three Groups of Student Participants



From this descriptive summary alone, two things stand out with respect to the group of students who received the instructional treatment. First, the average, minimum, and maximum post-DCT scores for the treatment group are notably higher than those from both comparison groups. Secondly, the minimum scores for the treatment group show the largest jump between pre-and post-test performance, signifying the most prominent increase in pragmatic competence when compared to the comparison groups. In other words, even the lowest-scoring student in the treatment group had a higher post-DCT score than the average post-test scores from the two comparison groups. This lends support to the effectiveness of the instructional model in introducing the pragmatic features related to the speech act tasks elicited on the DCT instrument.

In addition, statistical analyses revealed a significant growth in pre/post DCT scores among both groups of students abroad, although the same is not true for the comparison group of students at home, as demonstrated in Table 4 below. Although both groups studying abroad made significant gains in pragmatic competence, I sought to determine if the students who received the instructional intervention demonstrated significantly higher gain scores on the DCT instrument compared to students in the comparison group in Madrid, thus lending evidence to the positive impact of the instructional intervention. Not surprisingly, analysis confirmed that the increase in DCT scores is significantly higher for students who received the task-based instructional treatment in Madrid than those students who did not (QA) ($p = 0.002781$).

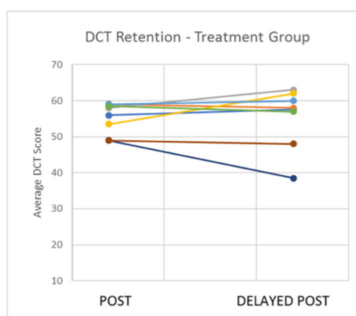
Table 4
Summary of Statistical Analyses for Three Student Participant Groups

Treatment Group (n=12)				**QA Comparison Group (n=11)**				**AH Comparison Group (n=10)**			
Ave Pre	**Ave Post**	**P-value**	**Effect size**	**Ave Pre**	**Ave Post**	**P-value**	**Effect size**	**Ave Pre**	**Ave Post**	**P-value**	**Effect size**
34.4	54.9	3.698×10^-7	0.8498	37.3	48.2	0.008212	0.5046	35	39.8	0.2233	0.1777

In addition to the statistically significant gains demonstrated by the treatment group, these students were also highly successful in applying their knowledge while completing the

real-world tasks in the host community, as evidenced by comparisons of their pre-task and task completion recordings. Similarly, the students' reflections of their own task completion showed increased meta-pragmatic awareness of the features that were introduced in the instructional treatment, which likely explains why they demonstrated high retention of their pragmatic competence one full year after the program, as measured by a delayed post-DCT completed by eight of the 12 students. Although only two-thirds of participants provided responses on the delayed post-DCT, their average score was practically the same as the average score for the post-DCT one year earlier, with a minimal increase of 0.3 points. For the delayed measure, four students demonstrated a decrease in performance, whereas the other four actually increased their scores when compared to the post-DCT (see Figure 3 below). Only one student's score on the delayed post-DCT was notably lower (-10.5 points) than her post-DCT, yet this score was still significantly higher than her original pre-test score. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test confirmed significant retention between students' performance on the post- and delayed post-DCT.

Figure 3
Retention of Pragmatic Competence Among Treatment Group



While it is beyond the scope of this paper to outline all the strategies used by the 12 students who completed the tasks included in this study (see Morris, 2017 for this summary), it is helpful to provide a glimpse into the evolution of one student's performance on just one task, that of ordering food in a restaurant. This student, who I call Alice (pseudonym), demonstrated a variety of strategies to order a meal as she learned more about this task in Madrid. At the beginning of the program, Alice wrote the following response for this restaurant scenario on the pre-DCT:

¿Puedo tener algunas tapas, por favor?

(Can I have some tapas, please?)

From the start, it appears that Alice transfers the permission strategy (Can I have?) from her L1, since this is frequently used in American English when ordering a meal. After a few weeks of the program, it came time to study this task more in depth in class. For her pre-task recording prior to receiving instruction in the third week of the program, Alice said the following:

¿Puedo tener la ensalada de pollo y una agua de gafa [sic], por favor?

(Can I have the chicken salad and a tap water, please?)

From this data alone, it appears that Alice did not 'pick up' any new strategies to order food in Spanish during her three weeks since the program began, considering that she employed the same permission strategy (Can I have?) in her pre-task recording. However, in Week 3, students received instruction on this task of ordering at a restaurant, which exposed them to authentic input of locals engaging in the task, pushed them to analyze what pragmatic strategies they observed, and provided them the space to practice these strategies with peers, language exchange partners, and through an online forum. Following instruction at the end of the week, students performed the task in the host community by going out to eat and audio recording their orders. Interestingly, Alice opted not to use the permission strategy (Can I have?) to order this time, but instead utilized the hearer-oriented query ability strategy (Can you bring me?), which approximates both the pragmatic norms from the host community and one of the options she had learned in class:

> *¿Me puedes traer los [sic] croquetas de jamón y un tinto de verano, por favor?*
>
> (Can you bring me the ham croquettes and a red wine with soda, please?)

In her post-task reflection, she evaluated her performance as highly successful, stating:

> I could successfully complete the task…Instruction in class really helped because before I was saying 'puedo tener' and that is apparently not right [in Peninsular Spanish]. I'm glad I know better now. I still don't like saying "ponme," but I feel comfortable saying "me puedes poner," and that is all that matters.

Could Alice have continued to order food successfully by transferring the permission strategy from her L1? Most likely. But even she admits that she is glad she has learned a wider variety of options that are available to her so that she can choose the one she is most comfortable using the next time she carries out this common task in her L2. As such, this expanded repertoire that was fostered by the task-based pragmatics instruction empowered these beginning L2 students with more ways to do things the madrileños do, thereby enabling them to participate more actively and confidently in the host community.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings from the two studies presented in this paper highlight the importance of getting back abroad after the many disruptions caused by the pandemic, particularly to develop the L2 pragmatic competence that is so crucial for effective interactions with others in our increasingly globalized society. These studies show that, while the learning context is indeed important, it is not everything. It is what happens *within* that context that matters.

For example, the first study provided preliminary evidence that even seemingly 'advanced' students at the end of their formal language study can remain unaware of important pragmatic norms in their L2 because they typically are not taught, aligning with previous insights by Bardovi-Harlig (2013). Even the handful of students who had studied abroad did not fully approximate target-like norms for many of the scenarios on the DCT instrument, either because they did not explicitly notice them while abroad, were never explicitly taught them, or because they once knew them and have since forgotten. These findings support

previous research confirming the limitations of uninstructed pragmatic development in SA (e.g., Bataller, 2008; Shively, 2010). Nevertheless, the second study revealed that the uninstructed comparison group of students abroad did indeed make some gains in pragmatic competence throughout their program, yet not nearly as much as the group of students who received the task-based instructional treatment. This lends further evidence to the existing research confirming the effectiveness of explicit instruction for L2 learning in SA (Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Langer, 2011; Rose, 2005; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Shively, 2008; Taguchi, 2015).

Not surprisingly, the SA context is superior for L2 pragmatic development when compared to language classrooms at home, as evidenced in Study 2. However, the instructional content provided within the SA context has the potential to significantly enhance students' experiences abroad. Since students are already studying while abroad, why not incorporate meaningful L2 instruction as some portion of the curriculum? In fact, the second study confirmed that when SA students received explicit instructional L2 support, they were more equipped to interact successfully once they left the constraints of the classroom and entered the unpredictable realities that the host community offered.

Thus, rather than allowing SA students to form their own conclusions about what, how, when, and why the Romans do what they do, why not mediate their learning to guide them in these discoveries? By adopting a sociocultural perspective (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), the instructor or program leader can scaffold students' learning of important pragmatic features related to meaningful tasks they are interested in carrying out by preparing instructional materials that raise their awareness of these features, eventually leading to the internalization of this knowledge. Trained language professionals can help students not only notice these norms, but also analyze and discuss how they relate to students' own identities, practices, and perspectives in an attempt to better understand the cultural values that are often veiled behind the lexical and grammatical structures that they study in their L2. These are just some of the adjustments that face future SA program designers and world language professionals as we continue to navigate through the pandemic.

The results from these studies have the potential to not only inform the instructional design of language programs, but also provide SA directors, teachers, and students with insights on how to maximize the SA sojourn. Specifically, a task-based approach to teaching pragmatics abroad has revealed multiple advantages for this special learning context. For instance, by beginning with a needs analysis that considers the learners' backgrounds, needs, and interests for their specific situation abroad, the teacher can create a student-centered curriculum that prepares learners to *use* the language meaningfully to *do* things in the community, rather than solely familiarizing them with unrelated vocabulary and decontextualized grammatical forms. Hence, instead of designing SA programs based on the content presented in textbooks, which likely has little connection to the cultural and linguistic context of the host community, I suggest shifting toward a task-based model of language teaching that aligns with the cultural and linguistic contexts as well as the needs of the learners. If organized carefully, such a curriculum could also align with the needs of the host community through an approach more oriented toward service learning.

Adopting a task-based model does not remove the importance of exposing students to important linguistic forms and cultural norms. While presenting students with samples of the pragmatic features in authentic input can indeed push them to notice these behaviors, providing explicit instruction can further raise their awareness of the linguistic structures and expressions that align with speech acts in different social situations. This was evidenced by the students in the second study, who confirmed that they would not have known how to carry out these tasks without having received the explicit instruction. In fact, Alice from Study 2

summarized this notion in her delayed interview one year after completing the program when stating, "I think that going out and doing things helps you with the language, but I think that having a more firm hold on the language helps you to want to go out and do things."

Although pragmatic competence can indeed equip learners with the tools they need to do meaningful things, it does much more than help accomplish everyday tasks. Aside from enhancing linguistic proficiency, the development of L2 pragmatic competence also encompasses the learners' evolving cultural knowledge and ability to navigate interpersonal relationships with others. Thus, in the process of developing L2 pragmatic competence during SA, students learn more about themselves, potentially inciting change in their own identities. In fact, Liu, Lamb, and Chambers (2022) provide longitudinal evidence of the bidirectional relationship between identity and L2 pragmatic development in a SA context. In addition to learning about themselves, those who develop L2 pragmatic competence also gain more intercultural understanding, thus fostering their discovery of new ways to negotiate meaning with diverse others (McConachy & Liddicoat, 2022). Thus, developing L2 pragmatics inherently contributes to our understanding and appreciation of others. In a society that has recently experienced such widespread physical and ideological disruptions, adopting a pragmatic approach to learning can bring about positive transformations both in and out of language classrooms.

CONCLUSION

While the COVID-19 pandemic has shaken the world to its core, it has also prompted many individuals to reconsider how they interact with the world around them. Because effective communication with others relies heavily on pragmatic competence, developing knowledge of both pragmalinguistic forms and sociopragmatic norms should be prioritized in all world language programs, particularly those hosting students abroad. In reviewing the findings from the two studies outlined in this paper, three conclusions can be made: 1) L2 students at home, both novice and advanced, do not explicitly learn a wide variety of pragmatic norms in traditional language programs; 2) Uninstructed SA students do learn some pragmatic norms in the host community, yet not nearly as much as students who also receive explicit instruction; 3) A task-based instructional model is effective in supporting and accelerating the pragmatic development of beginning L2 learners studying abroad, thereby fostering effective interactions in the host community.

Despite the individual differences observed among the SA students who received the instructional treatment, they all made considerable progress not only in their pragmatic knowledge, but also in their ability to put that knowledge into practice while they completed the tasks in the host community. These students with different backgrounds, identities, and motivations to study abroad represent the diversity of students who enroll in language classrooms in universities in the U.S. This highlights the increasing importance of designing language curricula that are differentiated to better fit the students' needs for their specific context, a core tenet of task-based language teaching (Long, 2015). The findings from Study 2 strongly support the implementation of a task-based approach to teaching pragmatics abroad, as it empowered the students with the linguistic and cultural knowledge they needed to actively participate in the host community in ways that are typically not possible for students with limited linguistic abilities.

The research studies presented in this paper signal that it is not only important to get back to Rome, but also essential to support students in discovering what the Romans do, along

with how, when, and why they do it, thus fostering their intercultural understanding and communicative effectiveness both in and out of the classroom as we move through and beyond the pandemic.

REFERENCES

Alcón-Soler, E. (2015). Pragmatic learning and study abroad: Effects of instruction and length of stay. *System*, *48*, 62-74.

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2013). Developing L2 pragmatics. *Language Learning, 63*(1), 68-86.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Mahan-Taylor, R. (2003). *Teaching pragmatics.* U.S. Department of State Office of English Programs. Retrieved September 4, 2015 from http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/pragmatics.htm

Barron, A. (2003). *Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics: Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context.* John Benjamins.

Barron, A. (2006). Learning to say 'you' in German: The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a study abroad context. In M. A. DuFon & E. Churchill (Eds.), *Language learners in study abroad contexts* (pp. 59-88). Multilingual Matters.

Barron, A. (2020). Pragmatic competence in EIL. In Z. Tajeddin & M. Alemi (Eds.), *Pragmatics pedagogy in English as an international language* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003097303

Bataller, R. (2008). *Pragmatic development in the study abroad setting: Requesting a service in Spanish.* Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations. (3323398)

Bataller, R. (2010). Making a request for a service in Spanish: Pragmatic development in the study abroad setting. *Foreign Language Annals*, *43*(1), 160–175.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Sheffer, H. (1993). The metapragmatic discourse of American-Israeli families at dinner. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.) *Interlanguage pragmatics,* (pp. 196-223). Oxford University Press.

Cohen, A. D., & Shively, R. L. (2007). Acquisition of requests and apologies in Spanish and French: Impact of study abroad and strategy-building intervention. *Modern Language Journal, 91*(2), 189–212.

Cole, S., & Anderson, A. (2001). Requests by young Japanese: A longitudinal study. *The Language Teacher Online, 25*(8). Retrieved Sep. 2, 2015, from http://jalt-publications.org/old_tlt/articles/2001/08/anderson

Czerwionka, L. & Cuza, A. (2017). A pragmatic analysis of L2 Spanish requests: Acquisition in three situational contexts during short-term study abroad. *Intercultural Pragmatics, 14*(3), 391–419.

Davidson, D., & Garas, N. (2023). What makes study abroad transformative? Comparing linguistic and cultural learning outcomes in virtual and in-person contexts. *L2 Journal, 15*(2), 71-91.

Félix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2004). Interlanguage refusals: Linguistic politeness and length of residence in the target community. *Language Learning*, *54*(4), 587-653.

Félix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2013). Refusing in L2 Spanish: The effects of the context of learning during a short-term study abroad program. In O. Martí Andándiz & P. Salazar-Campillo (Eds.) *Refusals in instructional contexts and beyond* (pp. 147-173). Rodopi.

Halenko, N. (2021). *Teaching pragmatics and instructed second language learning: Study abroad and technology-enhanced teaching.* Bloomsbury Academic.

Halenko, N., & Economidou-Kogetsidis, M. (2022) Japanese learners' spoken requests in the study abroad context: Appropriateness, speech rate and response time. *The Language Learning Journal, 50*(4), 506-520.

Hernández, T. A. (2021). Explicit instruction for the development of L2 Spanish pragmatic ability during study abroad. *System, 96,* 102395.

Institute of International Education. (2021). *Open doors report.* Accessed on 03 November 2022 from: https://opendoorsdata.org/

Ishihara, N. (2006). *Subjectivity, second/foreign language pragmatic use, and instruction: Evidence of accommodation and resistance* [Doctoral dissertation]. Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations. (3225746).

Ishihara, N. (2010). Instructional pragmatics: Bridging teaching, research, and teacher education. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 4*(10), 938-953.

Jeon, E. H., & Kaya, T. (2006). Effects of L2 instruction on interlanguage pragmatic development: A meta-analysis. In J. M. Norris & L Ortega (Eds.), *Synthesizing research on language learning and teaching* (pp. 165-211). John Benjamins.

Kondo, S. (1997). The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English: Longitudinal study on interlanguage apologies. *Sophia Linguistica, 41*, 265-284.

Langer, B. D. (2011). *The effects of pragmatic instruction in the Spanish language classroom* (3474411). [Doctoral dissertation]. University of California, Davis. ProQuest LLC.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford University Press.

Leaver, B. L., & Campbell, C. (2023). The transformative power of the study abroad experience. *L2 Journal, 15*(2), 129-143.

Leaver, B. L., Davidson, D., & Campbell, C. (2021). Introduction. In B. Leaver, D. Davidson, & C. Campbell (Eds.), *Transformative language learning and teaching* (pp. 1-10). Cambridge University Press.

Levine-West, G., Lam, Y. W., & Schaeffer, G. (2023). Study abroad in a (post-)pandemic world: Our new normal and some reasons for optimism. *L2 Journal, 15*(2), 29-53.

Li, S., Tang, X., Taguchi, N., & Xiao, F. (2022). Effects of linguistic proficiency on speech act development in L2 Chinese during study abroad. *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, *7*(1), 116-151.

Liu, X., Lamb, M., & Chambers, G.N. (2022). Bidirectional relationship between L2 pragmatic development and learner identity in a study abroad context. *System*, *107,* 102823.

Long, M. H. (2015). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Masuda, K. (2011). Acquiring interactional competence in a study abroad context: Japanese language learners' use of the interactional article *ne*. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(4)*,* 519-540.

Matsumura, S. (2022). The impact of predeparture instruction on pragmatic development during study abroad. *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, *7*(1), 152-175.

McConachy, T., & Liddicoat, A.J. (2022). Introduction: Second language pragmatics for intercultural understanding. In T. McConachy & A.J. Liddicoat (Eds.), *Teaching and learning second language pragmatics for intercultural understanding* (pp. 1-18). Routledge.

Mir, M. (2020). Teaching and learning about Spanish L2 compliments in short-term study abroad. *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, *5*(2), 230-257.

Morris, K. (2017). *Learning by doing: The affordances of task-based pragmatics instruction for beginning L2 Spanish learners studying abroad* (10617744.) [Doctoral dissertation]. University of California, Davis. ProQuest LLC.

Morris, K. (2022). Language teaching in the time of COVID-19: Insights from experienced and pre-service teachers. In J. LeLoup & P. Swanson (Eds.), *Handbook of research on effective online language teaching in a disruptive environment* (pp. 1-23). IGI Global.

National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (1996). *Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21st century (SFFLL).* Allen Press.

Olshtain, E., & Blum-Kulka, S. (1985). Degree of approximation: Nonnative reactions to native speech act behavior. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 303-325). Newbury House.

Pinto, D., & de Pablos-Ortega, C. (2014). *Seamos pragmáticos: Introducción a la pragmática española.* Yale University Press.

Pozzi, R., Escalante, C., & Quan, T**.** (2021). The pragmatic development of heritage speakers studying abroad in Argentina. In R. Pozzi, T. Quan, and C. Escalante (Eds.), *Heritage speakers of Spanish and study abroad.* Routledge.

Ren, W. (2015). Sociopragmatic variation in Mainland and Taiwan Chinese refusals. In K. Beeching & H. Woodfield (eds.), *Researching sociopragmatic variability: Perspectives from variational, interlanguage and contrastive pragmatics* (pp. 72–93). Palgrave.

Rodríguez, S. (2001). *The perception of requests in Spanish by instructed learners of Spanish in the second- and foreign-language contexts: A longitudinal study of acquisition patterns* (3005407). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations.

Rose, K. R. (2005). On the effects of instruction in second language pragmatics. *System, 33,* 385-399.

Rose, K. R., & Kasper, G. (Eds). (2001). *Pragmatics in language teaching.* Cambridge University Press.

Sánchez-Hernández, A., & Alcón-Soler, E. (2019). Pragmatic gains in the study abroad context: Learners' experiences and recognition of pragmatic routines. *Journal of Pragmatics, 146*, 54-71.

Schauer, G. A. (2004). May you speak louder maybe? Interlanguage pragmatic development in requests. In S. H. Foster-Cohen, M. Sharwood Smith, A. Sorace, & M. Ota (Eds.), *EUROSLA Yearbook No. 4* (pp. 253-273). John Benjamins.

Schauer, G. A. (2009). *Interlanguage pragmatic development: The study abroad context.* Continuum.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In. G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 21-42). Oxford University Press.

Shively, R. (2008). *Politeness and social interaction in study abroad: Service encounters in L2 Spanish.* Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations. (3311436)

Shively, R. (2010). From the virtual world to the real world: A model of pragmatics instruction for study abroad. *Foreign Language Annals 43*(1), 105-137.

Shively, R. (2011). L2 pragmatic development in study abroad: A longitudinal study of Spanish service encounters. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*(6), 1818-1835.

Shively, R., & Cohen, A. (2008). Development of Spanish requests and apologies during study abroad. *Íkala, revista de lenguaje y cultura*, *13*(20), 57-118.

Taguchi, N. (2006). Analysis of appropriateness in a speech act of request in L2 English. *Pragmatics: Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association, 16*(4), 513-33.
Taguchi, N. (2011). Do proficiency and study-abroad experience affect speech act production? Analysis of appropriateness, accuracy, and fluency. *IRAL - International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 49*(4), 265-293.
Taguchi, N. (2013). Individual differences and development of speech act production. *Applied Research on English Language, 2*(2), 1-16.
Taguchi, N. (2015). Instructed pragmatics at a glance: Where instructional studies were, are, and should be going. *Language Teaching, 48*(1), 1-50.
Taguchi, N., Li, S., & Xiao, F. (2016). Effects of intercultural competence and social contact on speech act production in a Chinese study abroad context. *The Modern Language Journal*, *100*(4), 775–796. http://www.jstor.org/stable/ 44981246
The National Standards Collaborative Board. (2015). *World-readiness standards for learning languages* (4th ed.). Author.
Valdés, G. (2005). Bilingualism, heritage language learners, and SLA research: Opportunities lost or seized? *The Modern Language Journal*, *89*(3), 410–426.
VonCanon, A. (2006). *Just saying 'no': Refusing requests in Spanish as a first and second language.* Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations. (3229707)
Winke, P. M., & Teng, C. (2010). Using task-based pragmatics tutorials while studying abroad in China. *Intercultural Pragmatics, 7*(2), 363-399.
Xiao, F. (2015). Proficiency effect on L2 pragmatic competence. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 5* (4), 557-581.

APPENDIX A
Oral Discourse Completion Test Scenarios for Study 1

Análisis de necesidades | Prueba de discurso oral: SPA 443

Instrucciones: Escucha y lee las siguientes situaciones y responde (en español) con lo que dirías en un contexto real donde se habla español. Di lo que realmente dirías, no lo que crees que alguien debería decir. No hay una respuesta correcta ni incorrecta.

1. Vas a ver a tu amigo Gabriel para almorzar en un restaurante local. Cuando llega Gabriel al restaurante, lo saludas. Tú dices:
2. Gabriel te dice que le gusta tu chaqueta nueva. Para responder, tú dices:
3. Después de mirar el menú, el camarero viene a la mesa para tomar el pedido. Para pedir comida, tú dices:
4. Llega la comida. Mientras ustedes almuerzan, Gabriel te cuenta una historia larga sobre su familia. Para mostrar a Gabriel que escuchas y muestras interés, tú dices:
5. Durante la conversación, Gabriel te dice que está muy estresado con sus clases y te pide consejos. Tú dices:
6. Tú también tienes algunos problemas con tus clases porque hay mucha tarea. Para quejarte sobre la situación, tú dices:
7. El camarero viene a la mesa para preguntar qué tal está la comida. Como te gusta mucho tu plato, tú dices:
8. Gabriel te pregunta qué vas a hacer este fin de semana, pero no tienes planes. Para invitarle a hacer algo, tú dices:
9. Tu profesora de español entra en el restaurante. Viene a la mesa para saludarte. Tú dices:
10. Tu profesora no conoce el restaurante y te pide consejos sobre lo que debería pedir para comer. Tú dices:
11. Terminas el almuerzo y te das cuenta de que tienes que ir a un evento para una de tus clases en la biblioteca pública del centro de la ciudad. Llamas al camarero para pedirle la cuenta. Tú dices:
12. Cuando llega la cuenta, te das cuenta de que has dejado tu cartera en casa. Para pedirle a Gabriel que te preste dinero, tú dices:
13. Gabriel te presta dinero sin problema. Le prometes a Gabriel que le vas a devolver el dinero, diciendo:
14. Después de pagar la cuenta, terminas la conversación con Gabriel, diciendo:
15. Estás yendo al centro cuando te das cuenta de que giraste en una calle equivocada y te perdiste. Ves a un hombre mayor esperando el autobús y le preguntas si te puede indicar cómo llegar a la biblioteca pública. Tú dices:
16. Estás corriendo hacia la biblioteca y por accidente chocas con otra persona en la entrada. Tú dices*:*
17. Cuando llegas al evento, te das cuenta de que tu profesor ha estado esperándote unos minutos para empezar. Llegas tarde. Tú dices:

18. Después del evento, decides hablar con tu profesor en privado porque te dio una mala nota en una de las tareas y crees que la nota no es justa. Tú dices:
19. Estás caminando a casa y recuerdas que necesitas comprar más vitaminas. Vas a la farmacia y le pides ayuda a la farmacéutica. Tú dices:
20. Cuando llegas a casa, tus compañeros de casa te invitan a ver una película, pero tienes mucha tarea que hacer. Para rechazar su invitación, tú dices:
21. Les prometes a tus compañeros de casa que vas a pasar más tiempo con ellos este fin de semana. Tú dices:
22. Mientras haces tu tarea, tienes dificultades con algunos ejercicios y quieres más tiempo para entregar la tarea. Decides escribirle un correo electrónico a tu profesor para pedirle una extensión. Tú dices:

APPENDIX B

Written Discourse Completion Test Scenarios for Study 2 (Pre, Post, and Delayed Post)

[*Participants were given a double-spaced form and additional space to answer these questions. The instrument is in English because students were beginning L2 Spanish learners.]

Discourse Completion Test

Instructions: Read the following situations in English and respond to them the best you can <u>in Spanish</u> as you would in real life. There are no right or wrong answers. Please try to respond with what you would actually say in the situation, not what you think you should say.

1. You are meeting your new Spanish friend Gabriel for lunch at a restaurant in Madrid. When he arrives, you greet him by saying:
2. After browsing the menu, the server comes to your table to take your order. You say:
3. During lunch, Gabriel tells you about his family. To show interest and maintain the conversation, you say:
4. Gabriel asks you what you are doing this weekend and you remember reading that there are a lot of fun events going on in Madrid. To invite Gabriel to join you to do something this weekend, you say:
5. A few of Gabriel's friends walk into the restaurant. They come over to your table, greet you, and introduce themselves. You say:
6. You finish lunch and realize you have to go to your professor's office for a meeting on campus. To end your conversation with Gabriel, you say:
7. On your way back to campus, you realize you accidentally took a wrong turn and got lost. You see an older gentleman waiting for a bus and decide to ask him for directions to the campus. You say:
8. As you're running to your professor's office, you accidentally bump into a new student on campus. You say:
9. When you arrive at your professor's office, you see she has been waiting for you. You say:
10. You've been struggling with the work in your class and want to ask help from the professor. You say:
11. After your professor answers your questions, you close the conversation by saying:
12. You need to take the metro back to your apartment, but you forgot your pass at home. To buy a metro ticket from the clerk, you say:
13. On the metro ride back to your host family's house, you realize you forgot to tell your professor that you will be out of town next week and would like an extension for the homework. You decide to write her an email that says:
14. As you're walking home, you remember that you need to buy more vitamins. You stop at the pharmacy on the corner and say to the clerk:
15. When you arrive back at your host family's house, your younger host brothers greet you and ask you how you're doing. You say:
16. Your host brothers then invite you to see a movie tonight, but you realize you have a lot of homework to do before tomorrow. To decline their invitation, you say: