Second Language Spanish Refusals: The Effectiveness of Explicit and Implicit Teaching Methods

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SECOND LANGUAGE SPANISH REFUSALS:
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT
TEACHING METHODS

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
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Abstract

This study investigates the effects of pragmatic instruction on two experimental groups in order to analyze participants’ pragmatic ability of producing culturally and situationally appropriate refusals in Spanish. The three groups include an in-class group, a tandem group, and a control group. Using pre and post written discourse completion tasks (DCTs), this study analyzes participants’ first turn in making a refusal of a friend’s invitation (-P, -D) and a professor or advisor’s suggestion (+P, +D). Based on tokens elicited for each group, it will be demonstrated that 1) both experimental groups increased in their ability of producing appropriate refusal strategies, while the control group did not 2) the English baseline data reflects the influence of the treatment on participants' refusals in their first language (L1). While the data suggest that teaching the speech act (SA) of refusals in the Spanish foreign language (FL) classroom is effective for both experimental groups, the data also suggests that participants may have misunderstood certain aspects of instruction. The data show the complexity of learning second language (L2) pragmatics in the FL classroom and suggest that future study in utilizing tandem learning for teaching the SA of refusals is in order.
Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

There is a rich history of the investigation of teaching pragmatics in the foreign language classroom. The topic finds its origin in the “Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project” (CCSRAP) by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989). One result of the CCSRAP is the conviction that “cross-cultural pragmatic analysis can and should form part of the content of foreign/second language courses from the beginning, but particularly at more advanced levels of instruction” (Blum-Kulka, 1989, p. 27). This kind of analysis holds value because “learners tend to struggle more with the larger cultural (or sociopragmatic) than with pragmalinguistic learning tasks” (Kasper and Rose, 2005, p. 255). Their research gives “[ample] support for the benefit of instruction in pragmatics” (p. 258). The role of implicit and explicit instruction in pragmatics resonates with the current study. DeKeyser (1995) states that pragmatic instruction is considered explicit teaching “if rule explanation [comprises] part of the instruction ... or if learners [are] directly asked to attend to particular forms and to try to arrive at metalinguistic generalizations of their own” (p. 437). The current project demonstrates the benefits of explicit pragmatic teaching, specifically the speech act of refusals, in the Spanish FL classroom to intermediate learners.

1.2. Rationale

Experts in every field of research are forerunners in innovating novel ways to further their field of study. Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen, among others, are at the forefront
of research in the field of teaching Spanish refusals in the Spanish FL classroom. In their 2012 publication, *Teaching Pragmatics in the Foreign Language Classroom: Grammar as a Communicative Resource*, Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen state that

> it would be beneficial to determine the impact both of a four-stage model of FL pragmatics instruction in the classroom and of websites on pragmatics such as those mentioned above ... More importantly, teachers need to provide students with a wide range of communicative activities for developing pragmatic ability, using the information in the aforementioned websites (2012, p. 665).

Similar to the teaching model mentioned above, a variation of Indiana University’s pragmatic teacher resource (Félix-Brasdefefer, 2011) is employed in both experimental groups because the investigator seeks to test the usefulness of this model both in an online-teaching model and an e-tandem learning context. By doing so, this study seeks to further validate this pedagogical resource so that teachers can confidently advise their students to use the online resources provided. Learning pragmatics online is a pertinent area of study especially during a public health crisis, such as the pandemic the world currently faces.

This project incorporates e-tandem learning as another method of online-learning. The four-step model from Félix-Brasdefefer (2011) still serves as the base for the tandem group. Similar to Billmyer (1990), conversations between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) are also discussed. E-tandem learning is growing in popularity in the United States and is having overall positive effects on language learners as will be discussed. However, no studies have focused on the correlation of e-tandem learning and teaching the SA of refusals in the Spanish FL classroom. This study seeks to fill in this gap in research.

The fact that “[instruction] specifically aiming at improving learners’ pragmatic comprehension has received far less attention” in the literature makes the present study
timely in the field of L2 pedagogy (Kasper & Rose, 2005, p. 243). Even more specifically, the current project seeks to analyze pragmatic transfer in the Spanish FL classroom through looking at refusals. Blum-Kulka states, “many more theoretical and empirical studies of interlanguage pragmatics [are] needed in order to discover how learners do things with words in a second language” (1989, p. 9). More emphatically, Chang (2009, p. 480) states “[it] is clear that research on the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer in the speech act of refusal is in its infancy”. Hence, this interdisciplinary project intends to contribute to the growing areas of research mentioned: interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), second language acquisition (SLA), online teaching, pragmatic transfer and e-tandem learning. Chapter two will review the literature of these topics in order to lay a foundation for the current study. Afterwards, chapter three explains the methodology underlying the three groups involved in the study. Finally, chapter four reviews the results of the study while chapter five draws conclusions and places them in the wider context of the importance of the current study.
Chapter 2. Review of Literature

2.1. Second Language Acquisition

Some go as far as to say that teaching pragmatics in the foreign language setting has “come into vogue in recent decades” (Zhu, 2019, p. 1111). At the same time, teaching pragmatics is a complex task involving different disciplines. The existing literature on SLA, pragmatics and online teaching will help bring about an understanding of what has already been discovered and the gaps that exist in the literature.

The field of SLA seeks to understand the underlying processes of learning a second language (L2) and learners’ level of appropriateness in using their L2 in various situations. As an interdisciplinary field, SLA has been closely related to language teaching, linguistics, child language acquisition, and psychology, and more recently to bilingualism, psycholinguistics, education, anthropology, and sociology (Ortega, 2013). It most generally has to do with learning an L2 after a first language (L1) has already been learned whether in a classroom setting or in a more natural setting (Gass et al., 2013). Ortega (2013, p. 2) additionally states that, starting from late childhood, “[SLA] studies a wide variety of complex influences and phenomena that contribute to the puzzling range of possible outcomes when learning an additional language in a variety of contexts”. For example, foreign language learning (FLL) takes place when one learns an L2 in their native language context, usually in a classroom setting. To successfully learn an L2, one must learn different aspects such as the sound system, syntax, morphology, semantics
and pragmatics. This is challenging, yet many people learn one or more languages to varying degrees.

2.1.1. Instructed Second Language Acquisition

It is notable that instructed second language acquisition (ISLA) is gaining more attention as it relates to the foreign language classroom (Han and Nassaji, 2019, p. 399). It is “an area of SLA that investigates … [any] processes and mechanisms [social and cognitive] involved in any form-focused intervention (explicit or implicit)” (Nassaji, 2016, p. 13). Another definition of ISLA is a “theoretically and empirically based field of academic inquiry that aims to understand how the systematic manipulation of the mechanisms of learning or the conditions under which they occur enable or facilitate the development and acquisition of an additional language” (Han & Nassaji, 2019, p. 395 from Loewen, 2015, p. 2). According to Leow (2019), the goal of ISLA research is to make the most of the resources in the FL classroom setting within the designated curriculum; researchers ought to pay attention to the cognitive processes occurring in L2 learners as they are exposed to explicit teaching. He also observes that cognitive processes such as processing information, storing information, and the production of knowledge are the emphasis of ISLA research at this point.

The field of SLA seeks to answer many practical matters when it comes to teaching/learning an L2. For example, how long does it take to learn an L2 in a natural setting versus in a classroom setting? How can one speak an L2 in a context-specific, socially acceptable way?
Can different aspects of linguistics be acquired in a FL classroom, or does one need to be immersed to truly learn an L2?

2.1.2. Interlanguage

During language acquisition, learners naturally mix elements of their L1 with their L2, forming an interlanguage (IL). An IL is what the learner uses as they seek to acquire an L2 under the influence of their L1. It is noteworthy that “[a]ll studies of L2 pragmatics belong to interlanguage pragmatics, but not all interlanguage pragmatic studies are acquisitional” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013, p. 69). Studying different aspects of an IL differs from studying how an IL is created and develops in language learners. This is an important area of study, but “[d]espite the interactive nature of refusals and their prominence in everyday communication, few studies in ILP have analyzed the effects of instruction using refusals as a learning target” (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008b, p. 51). The current study seeks to teach refusals expecting the outcomes to reveal the learners’ IL, so it is an interlanguage pragmatic study that is acquisitional.

2.1.3. Schmidt’s Noticing Hypothesis

In order to help L2 learners overcome pragmatic failure, attention must be paid to how they are taught pragmatics. Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis (1990) proposes that learners’ attention must be drawn to the specific item being taught in order for them to adequately acquire the new aspect of their second language. Schmidt states that “for the learning of pragmatics in a second language, attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and the relevant contextual features is required” (1993a, p. 35). In the same way, “[a] further extension of the noticing hypothesis is that what must be attended to and
noticed is not just the input in a global sense but whatever features of the input are relevant to the target system” (Schmidt, 1993b, p. 209). For example, teaching a specific speech act (SA) such as apologizing, offering, or refusing an invitation could be the target system. Kasper and Rose (2005) are proponents of the noticing hypothesis. They state “simple exposure to the target language is insufficient - pragmatic functions and relevant contextual factors are often not salient to learners and are not likely to be noticed despite prolonged exposure” (Kasper & Rose, 2005, p. 237). It is a language teacher’s responsibility to ensure that learners receive more than general L2 input. The possibility that “[i]t may be necessary [to] ... draw learners’ conscious attention to the way in which language is used to encode social meaning” also aligns with the necessity of teaching pragmatics (Ellis, 1992, p. 21). This is also proposed in the studies below.

Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis is central to L2 pedagogical discussions. For example, Han and Nassaji note that “[at] the center of the [explicit versus implicit] controversy is the role of awareness” (2019, p. 398). The varying degrees of students’ awareness of a target feature in their L2 fall into an implicit/explicit continuum.

2.1.4. Explicit vs. Implicit Instruction

According to Leow (2019, p. 481) two important indicators of implicit learning are “an absence of awareness and a low depth of metalinguistic processing during the learning process”. Implicit teaching, then, could be more closely tied to the work of Krashen (1982), who emphasized the necessity of comprehensive input (CI) in the FL classroom. Based on the research of DeKeyser (1995) and Norris and Ortega (2000), Leow defines instruction as “explicit if rule explanation formed part of the instruction (deductive instruction) or if participants’ attention was drawn to specific target items in the
L2 input and they were requested to arrive at some metalinguistic rule on their own (explicit inductive instruction)” (2019, p. 484). Explicit instruction makes a certain form of the language salient to raise the learners’ awareness of the form being taught. Implicit instruction, on the other hand, is instruction that does not obviously draw learners’ attention to a specific form of the L2.

There has been ample research comparing the outcomes of explicit and implicit instruction. Leow (2019) presents strong evidence for the greater overall impact of explicit instruction in SLA in the FL classroom. He compares the results from four meta-analyses (Kang, Sok, & Han, 2018; Goo, Granena, Yilmaz, & Novella, 2015; Norris & Ortega, 2000). In summary, he found that “[three] of the meta-analyses supported the use of explicit instruction over implicit instruction” (Leow, 2019, p. 483). Kasper and Rose (2005) emphasize that the meta-analysis by Norris and Ortega (2000) has made a significant contribution to the field of ISLA, yet future, qualitative research is needed (p. 239). Han and Nassaji (2019, p. 483) comment on Leow’s (2000) study, stating that he “reported gain scores of 55% and 44.4% (aware group) versus 5% and 1.8% (unaware group) on a recognition and controlled written production assessment task, respectively”, expressing their agreement on the greater benefit of explicit teaching in the FL classroom.

The explicit-implicit continuum is seen in a number of studies covering different areas of linguistic knowledge in an L2. Phonetics instruction is one frequently studied area of SLA. Kissling (2013) did a follow-up study on the role of explicit phonetic instruction for Spanish FL learners. The study included three groups of learners: first, second- and third-year college students. Native speakers of Spanish were recruited to provide baseline data, although they were from different countries which provided a rather unstable baseline for the data to be compared with. The three levels of Spanish learners were
randomly assigned to a computer-based phonetics module, one using explicit teaching (+PI), the other using implicit teaching (-PI). Learners in both conditions made small improvements between the pre and post-test, but the improvements did not last for the delayed post-test three weeks later. Therefore, “the data did not suggest that the phonetics instruction provided any advantage in the production test, either for individual phones or for all the phones analyzed together” (p. 734). Explicit teaching is thus not always effective.

Elliot (1997) conducted explicit phonological instruction for intermediate Spanish learners. The explicit instruction groups received 10 to 15 minutes of instruction over the course of the semester. All learners took a pronunciation test two weeks into the semester and at the end of the semester which tested specific pronunciation skills: accuracy in mimicking pronunciation at a discrete word level, accuracy in mimicking pronunciation at a sentence level, accuracy of pronunciation of isolated written words, and a free elicitation exercise where learners described a picture in Spanish for a minute and a half. The results reveal that phonological instruction had the most significant outcomes when participants read Spanish words on a discrete-word level. The explicit-teaching groups had an overall improvement in their Spanish pronunciation, including the trill [r]. The study calls for more formal phonological instruction at the intermediate level.

Peltekov (2020) conducted implicit and explicit phonological instruction for fifteen beginning German learners. The experimental groups received 10 to 15 minutes of instruction over ten weeks. The explicit group was taught pronunciation rules and formal phonetic explanations while the implicit group was exposed to recordings of native speakers and tried to imitate them without any metalinguistic explanations. The control group received listening and speaking communicative activities without any focus on
pronunciation. However, there were no statistically significant improvements for either accent or comprehensibility in the experimental groups. Even without statistically significant results, it is still worth the researcher’s time to explore possible effects of teaching methods for different areas of linguistic knowledge.

Teaching semantics is another area of interest in the FL classroom. Le-Thi, Rodgers, and Pellicer-Sánchez (2017) compare explicit and textbook instruction of formulaic sequences in English language classes in Vietnam. Three groups were randomly assigned to either the control group, the no-context learning group or the sentence-context learning. The study confirms that explicit teaching combined with the normative course material was the most effective teaching strategy and that context was insignificant.

Zaferanieh, Tavakoli, and Rasekh agree with Jeon and Kaya (2006), who state, “[they] warned that the inconclusiveness observed in the results of these studies could relate to the explicit and implicit types of instruction that had been operationalized differently in different studies because explicit/implicit instruction is a continuum rather than a clear-cut dichotomy of methods” (2019, p. 115). The study of Zaferanieh, Tavakoli, and Rasekh (2019) tests three types of teaching techniques found on the continuum rather than strictly implicit and explicit teaching strategies. Input-enhancement, consciousness-raising, and zone of proximal development (ZPD) comprised the three test groups, and there was one control group. The ZPD is defined by Vygotsky as

the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (1978, p. 86).
They tested 100 Iranian learners of English in their ability to produce the SA of criticizing according to each group’s instruction. In order to collect data, they conducted pre-tests, immediate and delayed post-tests, performance of a discourse completion test and a role-play. While all three groups with instruction improved more than the control group, the results reveal that the group who improved the most was the ZPD group, then the consciousness raising instruction group and lastly, the input-enhancement method groups which did not receive any form of metalinguistic instruction. This project supports the greater usefulness of metalinguistic instruction which is closer to the explicit side of the implicit/explicit continuum.

Billmyer (1990) tested the effect of tutored instruction of compliments for female Japanese EFL learners. Both groups of learners participated in 140 hours of ESL courses and participated in weekly meetings with a conversation partner who was learning Japanese. The tutored group received an additional six hours of instruction “biased toward the explicit presentation of the rules for complimenting and replying to compliments” which included a mixture of implicit and explicit instruction, role-plays, and authentic sources (p. 34-37). Data was collected for both groups during the first thirty minutes of the conversation partner interactions where compliment-inducing tasks made up part of the interactions. The results reveal that five out of seven of the measures of performance showed significant improvement by the tutored group. For example, the tutored group produced significantly more spontaneous compliments that were self-initiated. In addition, the tutored group closely approximated NS length and strategy (deflection) in their compliments and compliment-responses. This study indicates the positive effect of mainly explicit instruction in helping the tutored ESL learners acquire L2 pragmatic competence in giving and receiving compliments.
These studies reveal the varying effects of explicit instruction in L2 acquisition in the classroom, but a discussion of online learning is needed due to the current circumstances.

2.1.5. Online Learning and SLA

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many language teachers have been forced to offer their classes at least partially online. Effective teaching strategies within the classroom are being modified for online formats. The current study is no exception. This section covers relevant differences between in-person and online teaching as well as helpful resources used for crafting the in-class lesson plans and the e-tandem learning activities which took place over a university Zoom account.

Kern (2006) offers a comprehensive, albeit dated review of L2 learning and technology. It is interesting to note that online L2 learning has aimed to help immigrants learn in a less intimidating environment (Koutsogiannis & Mitsikopoulou, 2004; Lam, 2000, 2004). Kern highlights the need to know how to use the technology, stating, “as Zhao himself points out and others have echoed (e.g., C. Jones, 1986), it is not the technology per se that is effective or ineffective but the particular ways in which technology is used” (p. 189). He reviews technology through the metaphor of medium for learning an L2 primarily through text-based online interaction like email and chat rooms. He makes a valid point that “if we look at language learning from a broad semiotic perspective, we will be ... more interested in how they attempt to deal ... with specific communicative situations” (p. 189). Teachers can use online platforms to facilitate communication that is applicable to real-life scenarios. However, his review does not include the most current uses of technology in the FL classroom.
The rapidly evolving nature of technology is evident in that, only fourteen years after his publication, there are more face-to-face learning resources and opportunities online. The section on tandem learning will go more in depth on this topic. Félix-Brasdefer (2011), whose online teaching model is referenced in this study, uses the computer as a tool on the Indiana University Bloomington website. Lessons for different SAs include downloadable PowerPoint presentations and interactive activities like recordings of NS conversations, etc. Pedagogical resources such as this can be helpful but need to be considered along with other teaching methods from a theoretical perspective.

2.1.6. Sociocultural Theory and Tandem Learning

The idea for the current study was hatched when, during an SLA course, the author’s professor was puzzled over her mention of the concept of intercambio as an enjoyable way to acquire language. The author took part in an intercambio, which in Spain refers to partnership between a Spanish learner and a NS each aiming to teach the other both their L2 and culture. It was not until researching for this study that the author found that e-tandem learning was an online version of intercambios. It can be frustrating when one desires to be fully immersed in an L2 but lacks the means. Even formal tutoring can be expensive for a student’s budget. One feasible solution is tandem learning, which has also been referred to as e-tandem language learning, online collaboration, and telecollaboration (El-Hariri, 2016; Resnick & Schallmoser, 2019). Tandem learning finds its theoretical underpinnings in the sociocultural theory.

Long and Vygotsky believed that language is learned in the context of cultural interaction. In fact, Vygotsky formed the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987; Frawley & Lantolf, 1985; Lantolf, 2012). The sociocultural theory emphasizes “that one
does not interact with the outside social world straightaway, [but] rather circuitously through mediational signs and tools” such as language (Ansari, 2016, p. 184). In other words, “any knowledge and any capacity to engage in regulated activity appears always first at the social, interpersonal level during activity with others and only later can be seen to operate also at the psychological, intrapersonal level (Ortega, 2013, p. 224). Without social interaction, no one can fully learn an L2 in all its complexity. Integral concepts of the sociocultural theory are as follows.

Vygotsky’s concept of ZPD underscores the need for interpersonal collaboration in order for L2 learning to take place. A language learner working with a NS of their L2 is one scenario where ZPD can unfold; the NS guides the learner from their actual development to achieve their potential development. Wells notes that the ZPD “constitutes a potential for learning that is created in the interaction between participants in particular settings” (1999, p. 249). The potential becomes a learned reality as the peers work together. In the ZPD, as learners and their more capable peers work together, scaffolding often takes place (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). Morley and Truscott describe scaffolding as involving “simplifying the task, promoting and maintaining interest in the task and the pursuit of its goals, and marking critical features and discrepancies between what has been produced and the ideal solution” (2003, p. 54). Learner tasks can be simplified by chunking, or “prefabricated patterns where the learner may not know how to ‘unpackage’ the component parts...[Chunks reduce] the learner burden, in that storage is often limited to a small number of items, and, if some are multiword, less processing time is presumably involved” (Gass et al., 2013, p. 205). Sociocultural theory with ZPD, scaffolding and chunking serve as part of the theoretical underpinning for the activities in both experimental groups in this study. Most importantly, this theory underlies tandem learning.
Along with this theory, Krashen’s Input Hypothesis (1985) stresses that learners should receive target language input slightly more advanced than the learner’s current level, which is expressed as i+1. On the other hand, Long’s (1981) Interaction Hypothesis emphasizes the need for comprehensible input (CI) along with negotiation in the L2 for acquisition of an L2 to take place. An example of the Interaction Hypothesis is a conversation between a NS and a NNS (Long, 1983). The main difference between the two hypotheses are as follows:

In Krashen’s input hypothesis, comprehensible input itself remains the main causal variable, while Long claims that a crucial element in the language acquisition process is the modified input that learners are exposed to and the way in which other speakers interact in conversations with learners. (Kurani & Muho, 2014, p. 47).

Building on Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, both Krashen’s input hypothesis and Long’s interaction hypothesis also seem to support tandem learning as one way for language learners to negotiate in their L2 with a NS.

According to Calvert (1992, p. 17), tandem learning is a reciprocal learning scheme in which native speakers of two different languages work together to further their understanding of each other’s language and culture. The origin of tandem learning, as Calvert’s research shows, dates back to the early 1800s and is “well established in most European countries” (p. 17). Overall, Calvert is very positive about the usefulness of tandem learning and emphasizes how much participants enjoyed their experience (p. 18). He defines three approaches as follows:

A. Directed Learning: communicative language teaching by a native speaker teacher in a classroom situation;
B. Autonomous learning: extracurricular learning ‘in tandem’. There are two variations: a. Free conversation tending to promote non-directional language acquisition and b. directed learning through alternating the role of teacher and student;
C. Intercultural learning: can be introduced through directed learning, autonomous and binational (bicultural) learning. This last option involves a bilingual teaching team
providing the framework for topics and activities of the students working in pairs or in groups. Sometimes these lessons are preceded by a mononational phase where grammar and subject matter can be prepared. This is particularly valuable for less experienced learners.

Calvert (1992, p. 17)

Calvert notes that factors ensuring success include an overall commitment to encourage your partner by giving them helpful feedback during the activities; potential problems include a failure to correct and a misinterpretation of the role of the NS as teacher (p. 18). Both errors are easily committed.

In addition to the three versions of tandem learning mentioned above, Conico (2019) notes that tandem learning ranges from being a mandatory part of a curriculum to an independent option. Morely and Truscott designed and revised a Tandem course offered at Manchester University (2001, 2003). The additional course sought to give students greater opportunity for autonomous interaction including negotiation and innovation with their partner as they collaborate in reciprocal-language learning tasks. A few of the advantages of a program like this are opportunities for students to be learner mentors, receive corrective feedback, lower learner anxiety, and increase cross-cultural awareness (p. 52). For those wanting to enroll in this re-engineered tandem experience, the program is designed to accomplish three goals: 1) boost learner motivation, 2) increase learner responsibility and involvement in collaboration and 3) have information found apart from the partner (p. 53). They propose that enquiry-based learning leads to lifelong learning, lending itself also to collaborative learning such as their tandem course (p. 54). This method of learning attracted highly motivated learners, giving students the opportunity “to engage in using the higher order cognitive and interactive skills or planning, decision making, innovation, selecting and working with data, analyzing systematically and working toward the achievement of shared goals” (p. 56).
On the other hand, Cunico (2019) discusses an optional tandem learning experience offered by European Universities Language Tandem (EUniTa) and hosted by the University of Frankfurt. This initiative is designed to help students develop their Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) through available resources, accessible by content (society, daily life, health, sports, etc.) and level of language proficiency. It also seeks to develop their Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) through “meaningful and purposeful encounters between L1/L2 students with common discipline backgrounds” (p. 60). Compared to Morely and Truscott (2003), this tandem language program is an informal way for students to gain L2 acquisition without earning credit.

Both mandatory and optional tandem experiences are beneficial, but it is helpful to recall that “[w]hat all tandem language schemes have in common is that they create social contexts in which genuine communicative needs arise equally for both participants, and language learning is socially motivated and socially-mediated (Lantolf, 2000)” (Cunico, 2019, p. 55). Tandem learning is increasingly being researched as people realize its benefits in different areas of SLA. Resnick and Schallmoser (2019, p. 544) include a fairly comprehensive list of studies done in this area of research including:

[investigations of] the effects of learning a language through an e-Tandem exchange scheme on learner autonomy (e.g., Little, 2001, 2016; Schwienhorst, 2003). Other studies focused on peer feedback within e-Tandem settings (e.g., Fondo Garcia & Appel, 2016; Sotillo, 2005; Ware & O’Dowd, 2008), task design (e.g., Fondo Garcia & Appel, 2016), and the advantages of telecollaboration as preparation for study abroad programs (e.g., Kinginger, 2016). Its opportunities for fostering intercultural learning and cross-cultural communication (e.g., Hedderich, 1996; Jin & Erben, 2007; O’Dowd, 2003, 2013; Ware & Kramsch, 2005) have been widely researched too and so have been learners’ perspectives on e-Tandem learning (e.g., El-Hariri, 2016; Tian & Wang, 2010). It has also been approached with a social-interactive view of autonomy based on Vygotsky’s perspective of sociocultural theory (e.g., Schwienhorst, 2003; Sung & Poole, 2017), and the affective dimension of e-Tandem language learning was also discussed in papers with a focus on motivation (e.g., Appel & Gilabert, 2002; Little, 2006; Turula, 2017; Ushioda, 2000); however, to our knowledge, no studies to date have investigated
the links between learning through such an exchange scheme and FLE (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2016), which is the focus of our study.

In addition, Rensik and Schallmoser (2019) studied the link between e-tandem learning and foreign language enjoyment (FLE) through in-depth interviews. Similarly, Litzler, Huguet-Jeréz and Bakieva (2018) studied the correlation between both prior experience with technology (Facebook © and Skype ©) and speaking an L2 outside the classroom with the e-tandem experience through a questionnaire. There is still a need for empirical studies that analyze the usefulness of e-tandem learning in L2 pragmatic acquisition, which is one goal of the current thesis.

2.1.7. Motivation

No matter how much effort a teacher puts into perfecting their teaching methods or implementing enjoyable learning experiences like tandem learning, students will experience difficulty in acquiring an L2 without motivation, especially in the FL classroom setting. Understanding the socio-psychological concept of learner motivation is important as it is “a central source of individual difference in L2 learning” (Ortega, 2013, p. 184). Motivation is generally “understood to refer to the desire to initiate L2 learning and the efforts employed to sustain it ... [It] is indeed central in explaining L2 learning, but it cannot be reduced to a few variables, nor can it be exhausted with just a few questionnaires and group data” (p. 189). There are different types of motivation; the concept of integration “refers to an individual’s disposition toward the L2 group and the extent to which he or she desires to interact with, and even become similar to, that group” (Gass et al., 2013, p. 453). On the other hand, instrumental motivation has more to do with personal gain achieved from learning an L2 like a better job. Related to motivation is willingness to
communicate (WTC), which is “predicted to a large extent by L2 communicative confidence and to a lesser extent by L2 attitudes” (Ortega, 2013, p. 202). Literature indicates that WTC is negatively affected by anxiety in settings where L2 use is high, such as when they are speaking with a native speaker (Ortega, 2013; Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Yashima, 2002). The e-tandem learning group in the current study will bring about interesting observations about learners’ WTC when speaking with native speakers of Spanish. This will be covered in the discussion section.

This section has provided an overview of issues pertaining to SLA and teaching both in the FL classroom and online. The following section seeks to review literature on the field of pragmatics as it relates to the current study.

2.2. Pragmatics

2.2.1. Definitions of Pragmatics

The pragmatic approach to linguistics began to surface in the late sixties and early seventies as paradoxes began to surface in the existing theories such as Chomsky’s ‘syntax-only’ approach (Mey, 2001). Mey explains this shift as one from the “paradigm of theoretical grammar (in particular, syntax) to the paradigm of the language user” and “[t]hus, we can talk about the ‘user’s point of view’ as a common orienting feature for pragmatic research” (p. 4-5). In general, pragmatics takes as the object of its study how language is used in its social context (Gass et al., 2013). The language user and how they are influenced by various factors is of interest in this field. Levinson defines pragmatics as “the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded, in the structure of a language” (1983, p. 9). However, Mey (2001, p. 6) emphasizes that pragmatics entails anything related to people as language users who do
things with language, stating that “[p]ragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society”. In addition, Bardovi-Harlig (2013) states that “L2 pragmatics is the study of how learners come to know how-to-say-what-to-whom-when” (p. 68-9). The society in which one lives creates norms at the discourse level which guide social interaction. In other words, as social-beings, humans communicate through language within the constraints of their linguistic and cultural context. They also learn an L2 within these constraints.

Pragmatics is closely related to and often a compliment to other fields, such as semantics (Leech, 1983, p. 6). The field of pragmatics is also pertinent in ILP (Alcón & Martínez-Flor, 2008). However, instruction in the FL classroom is generally not enough for students to grasp the full range of speaking an L2 appropriately. Two related, yet distinct, aspects of this field are sociopragmatics, where pragmatics and social organization overlap, and pragmalinguistics, where pragmatics and linguistic forms overlap (Brown, 2007). Both are necessary parts of learning a second language.

2.3. Speech Act Theory

Examining language in its social context is a major concern of sociopragmatics. Speech acts (SA) are “verbal actions happening in the world. Uttering a speech act, I do something with my words” (Mey, 2001, p. 95). This definition of SAs is reminiscent of the original work of Austin (1962, p. 21) who claimed that words actually ‘do’ things instead of merely describe them, that the words one utters perform a specific, identifiable function if they abide by “the appropriate circumstances”. Austin developed speech act theory which asserts the existence of three components of SAs: A locutionary act, the actual words of an utterance; an illocutionary act, the intended force of an utterance; and a perlocutionary
act, the effect brought about by the utterance. He also coined the term “uptake” which refers to a necessary condition for the felicity of SAs (Austin, 1962, p. 10). When a hearer understands the illocutionary act, they will respond with appropriate ‘uptake’, but if they do not then the SA is infelicitous. ‘Uptake’ takes into account the importance of context in determining the effectiveness of a SA (Mey, 2001, p. 163).

For example, one performs a locutionary act when he describes the room’s temperature by saying *it is cold in here*. In this description, the temperature of the room is described by *cold*, and the room itself is referred to by the word *here*. However, if one says the same thing, but desires the hearer, for example a friend, to change the thermostat or close the vent to bring the room to a more agreeable temperature, then an illocutionary act has been performed. The changing of the thermostat or closing of the vent on the part of the hearer is the effect of the utterance and thus is a perlocutionary act. In this scenario, correct verbal ‘uptake’ from the friend would be ‘I’ll turn it warmer for you!’ while incorrect ‘uptake’ would be ‘I’d rather be cold than hot, wouldn’t you?’

Speech acts hold the power to communicate more than is explicitly stated even though the hearer may not always understand the illocutionary force. This can make categorizing such utterances problematic, which is one reason Searle expanded upon Austin’s original work (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005). While Austin focused on SAs occurring in specific social situations such as weddings and the christening of ships, Searle visualized SAs in a broader sense within a particular language and culture’s underlying rules (p. 20-21). He claimed that just as rules make football and chess possible, so do the underlying, “constitutive” rules of language. He states, “[my] knowledge of how to speak the language involves a mastery of a system of rules which renders my use of the elements of that language [including speech acts] regular and
systematic” (Searle, 1969, p. 13). The system of rules for each cultural context vary, even within different contexts of the same language. Thus, a single illocutionary force, or speech act, in one context can have an entirely different outcome, or perlocutionary force, than that same speech act in a different context (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 21). These rules are constituted by a set of conditions “which is one of the ways through which Searle systemizes Austin’s work (makes it rigid)” (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 21). Hardin elaborates:

Speech acts are primarily understood in terms of felicity conditions and illocutionary force, the conventional way that a speaker communicates an intent. Drawing from Austin’s idea, Searle (1969) proposed a number of felicity conditions for speech acts. Each speech act contains a proposition and an illocutionary force expressing the speaker’s psychological state (the sincerity condition), the speaker’s linguistic goal (the essential condition), and the relation of the speaker’s words to the state of the world (direction of fit) (2001, p. 199).

Take the example above and this time suppose the hearer is one’s professor and the context the professor’s office. It would be considered inappropriate to expect one’s professor to adjust the room’s temperature as it is usually not possible to control the thermostat in a university setting, nor would it generally be considered appropriate to ask one’s professor to do so. The comment ‘it is cold in here’ would be acceptable if it were simply an expression of empathy for the professor’s discomfort. The first instance would be an indirect command which falls into the category of directives. The second would be an assertive SA, merely describing the reality with no hidden agenda. These two categories belong to Searle’s revised taxonomy below.

The following is Searle’s revised taxonomy of SAs (Thomas, 1995, p. 102):

1. Representatives (or assertives) are speech acts in which the speaker tells how things are (e.g., describes or states said reality).
2. Directives are speech acts in which the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something (e.g., commands, requests, asks).
3. Commissives are speech acts in which the speaker commits to a future action (e.g., promises, pledges, vows).
4. Expressives are speech acts in which the speaker expresses their feelings or attitudes (e.g., praise, complement, congratulate, apologize, welcome).
5. Declarations are speech acts in which the speaker brings about change through their utterance (e.g., appointing, declaring, christening, nominating).

Some argue that a taxonomy of SAs will always be incomplete and not completely accurate (Kannetzky, 2002). However, Searle’s taxonomy and variations of it have been employed in multiple SA studies, including studies conducted on Spanish SAs (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 26).

The complexity of SAs not only lies in categorization but in discerning the varying levels of indirectness used. According to Blum-Kulka et al., SAs can be broadly categorized into direct and indirect SAs (1989, p. 2). Simply stated, “[the] notion of indirectness is employed to denote cases where the surface or literal meaning of an utterance does not correspond to its illocutionary force” (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 26). When the speaker says ‘It is cold in here’, expecting the hearer to take action and fix the problem, they are indirectly suggesting the future action to take place.

Márquez Reiter & Placencia suggest the relevance of Searle’s (1975) classification of conventional and non-conventional (2005, p. 27). Conventional indirectness is appropriated when utterances have become the norm through repeated use. For example, ‘Can I be excused?’ seems to call into question the speaker’s ability to be excused when in actuality it expresses the speaker’s desire to leave the table. On the other hand, Hardin states that “[non conventional indirectness] ... is pragmatically ambiguous and forces the hearer to rely on knowledge other than conventions” (2001, p. 203). It can be expressed through an indirect refusal such as the response ‘During such a hectic week?’ to the question ‘Do you want to go shopping with me?’ … Thus, SAs are determined not by their
semantic makeup, but by the manner in which they fit into the expected social norms of a speech community (Mey, 2001, p. 94).

Keep in mind, however, that there is not always a direct relation of language function and form (Bilbow, 2002, p. 289). Categorizing SAs is not always as straightforward as one would hope. Take the example of commissives. By committing to, or committing not to doing something, the speaker attempts to align the circumstance with what they intend, which may or may not be explicitly communicated. In other words, “[c]ommissives commit the speaker to doing some future action and the direction-of-fit is world-to-words” (Hardin, 2001, p. 201).

2.3.1. Commissive Speech Acts

Indirectness in performing commissive SAs is common. Commissives in a broad sense are SAs that commit the speaker to a future action (Searle, 1976, p. 7). Examples of commissives include promises, pledges and vows (Thomas, 1995). Hardin argues that they also include threats, refusals, offers and guarantees (2001, p. 200). Bilbow notes that commissive SAs can be classified as promises when the speaker initiates the SA and as offers when the speaker does not initiate (2002, p. 295). Mey adds that “[l]ike directives, commissives operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation; however, this obligation is created in the speaker, not in the hearer, as in the case of the directives” (2001, p. 121). The speaker bears the obligation of fulfilling whatever task they commit themselves to doing. Commissives, then, seem to be dependent upon the sincerity of the speaker and their ability to carry out the action in question.

However, it has been debated whether the sincerity condition is assumed in the SA itself. While some argue that sincerity and the ability to carry out the act are prerequisites,
others argue that insincerity does not disqualify a SA from being a commissive (Tiersma, 1986). Take, for example, the study of Eslami (2005) that compares different cultural perceptions of the sincerity of the commissive SA of invitations. The study reveals the possibility of cultural misunderstandings in invitation interactions between English and Persian speakers. The Persian term, *ta’arof*, “can mean any number of things: to offer, to compliment, to exchange pleasantries, and/or to invite” (Eslami, 2005, p. 456). The negative view of the term is that of an ‘empty flattery’ connoting insincerity. When used, this creates the need to refuse the invitation multiple times to validate the speaker’s sincerity (p. 457). This can also be seen in contexts such as television. Hardin (2001, p. 64) notes that “[s]ince commissives [in Spanish ads] force advertisers to be accountable to the audience, they are relatively infrequent ... when compared to representatives and directives”. Sincerity is connected here with being held accountable. The creators of the ads consider viewers’ perceptions and decide on appropriate levels of (in)directness to persuade them most effectively. In the context of work, Bilbow (1998) gathers that commissives are replacing more direct SAs in business meetings because one is perceived as part of the group when one volunteers for a task. Again, sincerity is assumed as no one would appreciate false promises to complete a task.

Categorizing commissives, however, is not always straightforward. Take for example, invitations. Within the discussion on invitations, a hybrid category of SAs referred to as commissive-directives is proposed by Pérez Hernández (2001). According to this author, invitations fall in the middle of this continuum, suggesting that an invitation necessitates a certain level of pressure on the hearer to respond in a positive way. Because invitations have almost equal qualities of commissives and directives, responding can be a complex task, especially in a second language. However, King notes
that “most studies (including García, 1999; Sitter & Stein, 1992; Trosborg, 1995) follow the Searlian model in classifying these acts [invitations] as commissives, as their primary purpose appears to be a self-commitment” (2019, p. 151).

One is left with the question of how commissives are performed linguistically. Promises may be expressed saliently through minimal responses in terms such as ‘certainly’ and ‘OK’, or they may be expressed through modal verbs such as ‘will’ or ‘shall’ (Bilbow, 2002, p. 296). Invitations may be expressed unambiguously, such as ‘Do you want to have lunch tomorrow?’ or, more ambiguously, such as ‘We should get together sometime’ (Eslami, 2005, p. 455). Refusals can be expressed through many semantic formulas such as ‘I’d love to … but …’ (Beebe et al., 1990, p. 57). These are only a few lexico-grammatical ways these selected SAs can be performed. As the reader can gather, the way in which commissives are performed is dependent upon the principle of politeness.

2.3.2. Politeness

King (2018, 2019) argues that commissives have not experienced as much attention as other SAs, such as directives, possibly because they are less frequent in naturalistic data or because they are not as interesting due to their assumed intrinsic politeness. The concept of politeness is complex and highly important in understanding cultural expectations in language exchange. In this section, important aspects of politeness will be introduced. Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) are the main source of expertise in this area. They argue that Grice’s Maxims (Grice, 1975) lay out “guidelines for achieving maximally efficient communication” (p. 95). To speak “Maxim-wise” would be to speak the truth and be sincere, not saying more or less than is required, being relevant
and avoiding ambiguity (p. 95). Thus, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 95) argue that politeness itself bears witness to the fact that speakers stray from purely efficient ways of communicating; to only speak in an efficient manner would impede politeness. Producing SAs has much to do with this concept of politeness. For example, commissives have the potential of offending or of increasing solidarity. Bilbow makes the observation within the work environment that commissive SAs can improve how one is viewed by their colleagues as showing commitment and responsibility are positive traits (2002, p. 302). On the other hand, a lack of willingness to commit to a task could cause the speaker to lose face among his or her colleagues. In this way, SAs can alter relational dynamics. Márquez Reiter and Placencia summarize Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) concept of face which is integral to their politeness theory:

[negative] face is described as a person’s desire to be unimpeded by others; that is to be free to act without being imposed upon. Positive face, on the other hand, is defined as a person’s wish to be desirable to at least some other person who will appreciate and approve of one’s self and personality (2005, p. 154).

The desire for autonomy without offending others (negative face) and the desire to be appreciated without impeding others (positive face) are reflected in communication simultaneously (Scollon & Scollon, 2001). Scollon and Scollon discuss the concept of face at length, explaining that “face relationships between and among participants consist of two elements: an unmarked set of initial assumptions and a series of negotiations in which those unmarked assumptions are either ratified or altered in some way” (2001, p. 51). They discuss the reality that anytime we communicate with someone we risk not only our own face, but that of whomever we are talking to. Communication consists of a complex negotiation of both our positive and negative faces and those of whoever we are talking with. Involvement is also referred to as positive face or solidarity politeness because it
focuses on what the speakers have in common, for example when someone agrees about
something. On the other hand, independence is referred to as negative politeness or
deferece politeness because in it, speakers communicate their own autonomy and
respect for their interlocutor’s autonomy.

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987), Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012) created
the three politeness (or face) systems based on the normative conditions of power (P),
distance (D), and weight of imposition (W). By normative, it is meant that these systems
are created through expected relational interactions such as an employer-employee
relationship which assumes the boss as having more power, or a friendship which
assumes there is no distance nor power difference. Thus, power (P) refers to the “vertical
disparity between the participants in a hierarchical structure” (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p.
52). This would be expected between close friends, co-workers, or classmates. Distance
(D) refers to having a relational distance, such as two prime ministers from different
nations. Weight of imposition (W) refers to the level of importance of the topic being
discussed. While P and D fairly stable, weight of imposition (W) changes depending on
what is being communicated (p. 53). The weightier the imposition, the greater the
independence strategies employed because the speaker wished to create distance
between himself and his interlocutor.

These factors create the structure of three politeness systems: deference,
solidarity, and hierarchical. An example of a deference politeness system (symmetrical -P,
distant +D) is two university professors from different cities who express “mutual but
distant independence” (p. 54). An example of a solidarity politeness system (symmetrical -P,
close -D) would be two close friends talking (p. 55). An example of a hierarchical
politeness system (asymmetrical +P, +/-D) would be an employer and an employee
conversing, where the employer ‘talks down’ to the employee and the employee in turn ‘talks up’ to the employer (p. 56). In turn, the higher the cost and social distance, the more options and indirectness are provided by the speaker (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 151). Indirectness is expected, especially in a hierarchical politeness system. Pérez Hernández states that “the stronger the speaker, the more compelled the addressee will feel to carry out the specified action. Refusing to do something which benefits someone who is more powerful may result in some form of retaliation which is best avoided” (2001, p. 86). The three politeness systems are determined within and across cultures in terms of age, gender, socioeconomic status, etc. (Scollon & Scollon, 2001).

After the degree of face threat (FT) is determined in a particular politeness system, the speaker, according to Márquez Reiter and Placencia (2005), naturally chooses from Brown and Levinson’s (1987) five strategies in deciding on how to respond. ‘Bald-on-record’ refers to a speaker stating plainly what they mean with sincerity, relevance, clarity and directness. For example, ‘Come in!’ or ‘Eat!’ In the case of refusing an invitation, one could say ‘I can’t stay’. The speaker cares more about stating their thoughts plainly than they do about preserving the hearer’s positive face. ‘Positive politeness’ refers to a scenario when the speaker wants to improve the hearer’s positive face (p. 103). This is accomplished through finding common ground, conveying that both speaker and hearer are cooperating. In other words, it is the “kernel of ‘familiar’ and ‘joking’ behaviour” (p. 129). ‘Negative politeness’ is what one thinks of in the West when referring to politeness as the concept is rooted in the notion of respect (p. 129-130). It aims at minimizing imposition brought on by face threatening acts (FTAs) and increasing social distance between interlocutors. Indirect SAs are a common form of conventional indirectness and fall into this category (p. 132). Brown and Levinson emphasize that “the universality of indirect
speech acts follows from the basic service they perform with respect to universal strategies of politeness” (p. 142). In social terms, greater energy spent toward preserving face means one will be perceived as polite (p. 143). Apologizing for not being able to accept an invitation is an example of negative politeness. ‘Off record’ is for cases when a speaker wants to evade the consequences of making a FTA (p. 211). Like negative politeness, its strategies (metaphor, irony, understatement, rhetorical questions, etc.) achieve “contextually ambiguous indirection”, calling for the hearer to infer the intended meaning (p. 212-213). Finally, ‘don’t do the FTA’ refers to scenarios where the risk of making a FTA is too great so nothing is communicated (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005, p. 156).

2.3.3. Refusals

The politeness strategies mentioned above apply to all SAs. Specifically, because refusals are FTAs, they require such strategies to mitigate possible negative outcomes. Just as one can commit themselves to a particular action at a later date, one can also commit themselves to not completing an action or accepting an invitation. Refusals, then, belong to the category of commissive SAs. According to Félix-Brasdefer (2009), refusals are one type of dispreferred response which “function as a response to an initiating act”, in this case an invitation (p. 3).

Stated another way, “[if] a refusal is expressed indirectly, the degree of complexity increases as the speaker has to choose the appropriate form in order to soften the negative effects of a direct refusal” (Félix-Brasdefer, 2009, p. 3). There are numerous ways speakers go about softening, or mitigating, refusals. Nine possible components of making an indirect refusal are identified by Félix-Brasdefer as follows: a mitigated refusal,
a reason or explanation, an indefinite reply, an alternative, a postponement, requests for clarification or additional information, a promise to comply, partial repeats of previous utterance, or an expression of regret or apology (2009, p. 3). Accordingly, he concludes that “refusals are complex speech acts that require not only long sequences of negotiation, but also ‘face-saving maneuvers to accommodate the noncompliant nature of the act’” (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 2 as found in Félix-Brasdefer, 2009, p. 3). Pérez Hernández argues that, “[a] rejection of an invitation ... may bring about a negative state of affairs for the speaker ... In this way, the addressee’s freedom to accept or reject an invitation is found to be constrained by the workings of the convention of politeness” (2001, p. 85). Chang (2009) describes refusals as responses to other SAs like requests, offers, invitations or suggestions (p. 478). He goes on to discuss how successfully communicating a refusal requires a delicate balance and high pragmatic competence. This is especially the case when performing refusals in an L2. Because refusals “preclude extensive planning” they are even more complex than other SAs (Gass and Houck, 1999, p. 2).

Now we turn to the question of what strategies are used to perform refusals. Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) extensive taxonomy of politeness strategies serves as a foundation for answering this question. One common way of classifying refusal strategies is the following: direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies and adjuncts to refusals (Beebe et al. 1990; Félix-Brasdefer, 2002, 2003, 2006; Félix-Brasdefer & Cohen, 2012; Voncanon, 2006). Examples of direct refusal strategies might be a direct ‘No’, or ‘I can’t come to the party’. Examples of indirect refusal strategies can include mitigation, apologies and indefinite replies like ‘I don’t think I have time that day’. Adjuncts, or “reactions of solidarity before or after refusing” may also be performed in refusal
negotiations (Félix-Brasdefer, 2011). Examples of adjunct refusal strategies could be willingness, agreement or gratitude such as ‘Thanks for the invitation’. These strategies and others can be seen across cultures and languages.

2.4. Cross-Cultural Refusal Studies

Chang (2009) claims the SA of refusals is understudied in cross-cultural SA studies. He comments on the universality of refusals as follows:

Several researchers compared the speech act of refusals across cultural groups and found that while the refusal strategies are universal, the frequency of the refusal strategies used and the content of the strategies are culture specific (p. 478).

This in turn reveals the politeness norms of different cultures. As mentioned previously, Eslami (2005) found that Persian refusals to invitations are part of a dance-like exchange where the invited tests the sincerity of the invitation. In Peru, García (1992) found that insistence is culturally expected when an invitation is refused. Beebe et al. (1990) is a notable study when it comes to looking at refusals in different cultural contexts. Its focus on Japanese learners of ESL was the first of many focusing on the Japanese language. As such, its categorization of refusal strategies has served many following studies including the current thesis.

Chang (2009) conducted a comparison study of Beebe et al. (1900) in order to analyze pragmatic transfer of refusals in NSs of Mandarin learning English. Four groups of speakers made up this study: American college students, English-major seniors, English-major freshmen, and Chinese-major sophomores. The participants completed the discourse completion questionnaire created by Beebe et al. (1990) which included three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions including contexts of
differing social status between interlocutors; in contrast, they also took it in Chinese to
gather L1 refusal strategies. The refusal responses were categorized according to the
taxonomy of Beebe et al. (1990). The responses were analyzed according to frequency
and content (i.e., reasons/excuses).

The results show that while all groups used similar strategies, the frequency and
content of the semantic formulas varied. The native speakers of English used significantly
more direct refusal strategies and adjuncts than the native speakers of Chinese. The
percentage of “apology/regret” in the status equal situation was higher among the Chinese
(lending notes to a classmate). In contrast, the Americans showed most regret when
refusing the boss’ request to stay late at the office. In all three request situations, the
English learners used more regret formulas than they did in Chinese, revealing L1
transfer. Cultural differences in privacy expectations were revealed in the finding that
Americans used a higher frequency of vague excuses versus the specific excuses of the
Chinese. In the scenario of refusing a classmate’s request for notes, the Chinese were
more indirect, while the Americans were very direct, even using ‘No’ at times.

Demirkol (2019) conducted a study that aimed to gain insight into the refusal
performances of intermediate level Turkish EFL learners. The participants completed four
DCTs and used the same scenarios for four role plays. The data was categorized into
head acts in refusals, external modification tools, and internal modification tools. The
participants used ‘reason/explanation’ as their main way of refusing requests, which is
native-like to English speakers. However, the results show that their level of
pragmalinguistic knowledge limited the refusal strategies employed. For example, ‘I’m
sorry’ was the only way they showed regret, and ‘I can’t’ for negating the request, and a
high frequency of ‘No’ in the role play performances. Overall, the study suggests the need
for pragmalinguistic teaching among intermediate Turkish EFL learners to help them achieve native-like pragmatic competence.

Boonsuk and Ambele (2019) analyze Thai university students’ use of English refusals to requests and the effect of the SA on the hearer’s face. A DCT was used to collect oral data in elicited situations and transcribed using Beebe et al.’s (1990) classification of refusals. Although the study does not take into account the effect of P and D, the results show that these Thai learners overwhelmingly prefer indirect refusal strategies when refusing requests. The participants also used two novel categories of 1) ‘giving advice/explanation’ and 2) ‘lack of empathy’ such as ‘That’s not my problem’. The authors conclude that “distinct cultures, based on their own contextual experiences, have a very special and distinctive way of stating no in English” (p. 221). As one can see, these strategies do not always coincide with politeness norms in English.

In this section, we have seen that frequency and content in refusal strategies both vary across cultures depending on cultural norms often transferred from an L1 to an L2. This is evident in the SA studies reviewed that compared SA performances in English as an L2. The next section will focus more specifically on studies that reveal pragmatic variation in the Spanish speaking world.

2.4.1. Pragmatic Variation in the Spanish Speaking World

In her empirical study of conventional indirect requests in Peninsular and Uruguayan Spanish, Márquez Reiter brings to light the reality that few investigations have been done on pragmatic variation in Spanish. She points out that studies of this kind are important because of “misunderstandings between speakers of different linguistic varieties” (2002, p. 136). Not only do speakers of different languages run into pragmatic
miscommunication, but speakers of different variations of the same language do as well. Thus, she points out the problem of overgeneralizing speech patterns in Latin American Spanish without sufficient empirical evidence. Similarly, García (1999, p. 394) states “[the] Spanish-speaking world is not linguistically homogeneous in any sense of the word”, although many think this is the case. Márquez Reiter (2002) found requests to be more tentative among Uruguayan Spanish speakers than speakers of Peninsular Spanish. It is important to communicate these differences in the FL classroom so that students understand the sociopragmatic diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

García’s (1999) study with Venezuelan Spanish speakers supports this argument as it relates to the influence of gender. Ten female and ten male native Spanish speakers participated in the first role play where they made an invitation. The second group had the same number of female and male Venezuelan native speakers, but they responded to an invitation. In both groups, the participants were instructed to hold a regular conversation with the interlocutor, a 40-year-old Venezuelan Spanish teacher known to the participants. The data was analyzed according to the head act-supporting move categorization of Blum Kulka et al. (1989) and further categorized by Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theoretical framework of deference and solidarity politeness strategies. Terminology for the analysis was borrowed from Scollon and Scollon (1983) and Lakoff (1990): deference politeness strategies (DPS) and solidarity politeness strategies (SPS). She found that the males used less variety of strategies in making invitations than did the females. Her results also suggest that the males preferred DPS strategies in making invitations, while the females did not. In the insistence-response stage, the speaker responded to the refusal of the invitation. The males used SPS significantly more than the females, suggesting that males are more aggressive in their insistence than females. In the third stage, male and female
participants accepted the refusals with an overall preference for SPS. This study reveals the diversity of speakers from one community with identifiable patterns among gender in the second stage of the invitation-refusal interaction. On the other hand, in García’s 1992 study with Peruvian Spanish speakers, there were no statistically significant patterns in the insistence and refusal sequences among men and women. Overall, the Venezuelans in this study expressed sorrow and regret for having to refuse the birthday party invitation.

Félix-Brasdefer (2006) conducted a study among Mexican university students in Tlaxcala City, Mexico studying the difference in refusal strategies among four refusal scenarios: invitation-farewell (hierarchical, +P, +D), suggestion-advisor (hierarchical, +P, +D), invitation-birthday (solidarity, -P, -D) and request-notes (deference, -P, +D). The 80 role-play interactions were categorized according to a modified version of Beebe et al. (1990), including direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies and adjuncts to refusals. The results show that P and D condition the refusal strategies in this community. In a solidarity politeness system in this community, a preference for direct refusals represents camaraderie, and as such does not infringe on the interlocutor’s negative face. In a deference politeness system, the perception of a greater social distance leads to the use of indirect strategies. The role-plays and verbal report data challenge Brown and Levinson’s finding that insistence between equal and unequal status interlocutors are FTAs. In all situations for this study, insistence was expected, aligning with García’s finding of insistence as a cultural expectation among Peruvian speakers in her study (1992, p. 234). The Mexican participants in Félix-Brasdefer’s study exemplify directness as “a way of expressing closeness” rather than a form of impoliteness (2006, p. 2177). Politeness systems in speech communities become one context where cultural values are expressed linguistically. His study found a higher number of indirect linguistic strategies.
employed using the same role-play as García (2007). García (1992) found that, among male and female Peruvian speakers refusing an invitation, both had two stages: 1) invitation-response, and 2) insistence-response. However, in the second stage, the males were more direct in their refusals, while the females responded more vaguely. García (1993) found that in one role-play where Peruvian male and female speakers had the choice of refusing or accepting a request, only one male refused, while a few females first refused before accepting. Overall, speakers preferred DPS in refusing out of the desire to avoid offending the interlocutor. García (2007) found that, among Argentinian adults, direct refusals were dispreferred while mitigated refusals were preferred. The context of this study was a role-play where a birthday invitation was given. Félix-Brasdefer (2008c) found regional pragmatic variation of refusals among Spanish speakers from Mexico and the Dominican Republic. The Mexicans employed a significantly higher number of refusal strategies and showed a preference for independence politeness (Scollon and Scollon, 2001) through indirect refusals and mitigation. On the other hand, the Dominicans had a preference for involvement politeness, expressed through direct, unmitigated refusals.

The above studies reveal that among Spanish speakers, sociopragmatic variation exists among males and females and between speakers from different geographical locations. Apart from these, other variational studies of Spanish pragmatic phenomena have been conducted (Márquez Reiter & Placencia, 2005; Márquez Reiter, 2002; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008d, 2009b). One implication of these findings is that when teaching L2 Spanish refusals, it is important to discuss empirically proven pragmatic variation within
the Spanish speaking world so that learners are aware of the skills necessary to perform refusals successfully in a particular context.

2.4.2. Teaching L2 Pragmatics

Let us not forget that learning an L2 is more than learning a language; it is learning to see the world from a new perspective and learning how to be a viable individual in a different linguistic and cultural context. As mentioned earlier, language learners’ IL often include elements from their L1 and their L2. Within an IL, positive and negative pragmatic transfer takes place as seen in learner production. In positive pragmatic transfer, the learner’s L1 norm aligns with the L2 norm. However, in negative pragmatic transfer, the L1 conflicts with the L2 norm, often leading to miscommunication or pragmatic failure.

Consider the following example of negative pragmatic transfer found in Harlow (1990, p. 328): American: ‘Would you like to read?’; Russian student: ‘No, I would not.’ This example reveals negative pragmatic transfer that resulted in pragmatic failure. Although the Russian student understood the English words, they misinterpreted the intention (assumption the student would read) behind what was being said. Anyone who has learned or is learning an L2 knows that it can be intimidating and often confusing to converse in an appropriate manner. Errors are inevitable as learners struggle with various aspects of their L2. Research in teaching L2 pragmatics is of great importance if learners are going to approach NS norms in the area of refusals.

In light of this, Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen emphasize that “the main goal for teaching pragmatics in the classroom is to focus on developing learners’ pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge by supplying them with appropriate input related to communicative actions at the discourse level” (2012, p. 659). They emphasize language
learning within cultural context in order to communicate. Kasper and Rose (2005, p. 249) indicate three primary areas of investigation formulated in these relevant questions: 1) Is the targeted pragmatic feature teachable at all?; 2) Is instruction in the targeted feature more effective than no instruction?; 3) Are different teaching approaches differentially effective? The current investigation has most to do with the third question because it compares the outcomes of three teaching scenarios. Félix-Brasdefer (2006, p. 175) notes that “[t]eachers are constantly looking for various ways to implement effective teaching techniques and strategies to improve learners’ pragmatic competence”. While grammatical instruction is often the main emphasis in the FL classroom, pragmatic instruction can easily be overlooked. Anyone who has learned an L2 in a FL classroom is aware of this lack of communicative, real-world methods of learning an L2, as will be seen in the discussion Section 5.1. Félix-Brasdefer (2006) has conducted extensive research on how to provide useful tools for teachers to teach L2 Spanish pragmatics in the FL classroom. He has created pedagogical resources and conducted studies with them which shed light on this topic. Following is a review of a few key studies, including some of his, that test teaching methods for Spanish L2 pragmatics in the Spanish FL classroom. Keep in mind that teaching methodologies do not necessarily ensure positive outcomes.

Pearson (2006) conducted a study with novice learners of Spanish, teaching directives such as commands and polite requests. She analyzed factors affecting L2 pragmatic competence such as the effect of SA instruction, the effect of L2 grammatical competence, and the influence of L1 pragmatic norms. The lessons included video segments and role-plays focusing on the target forms. In addition, group A had metapragmatic discussion, while group B watched the pedagogical video segments a second time. Group C completed the course as usual with no extra instruction. While
pretests were elicited in written form, the posttests were oral in order to reflect the oral format of the roleplays during instruction. The posttests did not reveal any quantitatively significant improvement among the experimental groups in their head act variation, but there are some qualitative differences like a higher use of *poder* in making requests in the intervention groups (p. 479). Overall, the study reveals that even though learners noticed the SA, pragmatic instruction did not directly translate into L2 acquisition. Possibilities for these outcomes may be limited time frame for the lessons and the study at large.

A similar study by Huth (2006) sought to teach certain aspects of German compliment-acceptances to American learners of German. The results conclude that participants were able to acquire and use German compliment responses as shown in conversation analysis of conversations over the phone. Participants either resisted their L1 pragmatic knowledge or they did not, which led to the need for repair. Huth found that “even after instruction in target language pragmatics, pragmatic transfer is relevant in L2 learners’ talk on the sequential level when using an L2” (p. 2038). Although the tokens for the current study only elicit the first turn of a hypothetical conversation, thereby testing participants’ pragmatic knowledge, the participants nonetheless had to resist pragmatic transfer in order to arrive closer to NS norms in refusals. This will be discussed in Section 5.2.

2.4.3. Teaching Spanish L2 Refusals

It is important to consider the effect of different teaching methods when helping L2 learners acquire pragmatic competence. Hilliard (2017) discusses different methods for teaching complaints to ESL learners which can be adapted to other L2s and other SAs. One activity is a role play with discussion. Hilliard emphasizes that “role plays are a great
way for students to practice completing the speech act in a variety of situations” (p. 10).

Role plays seem to be a reliable form of instruction when teaching L2 SAs. Another activity seeks to develop pragmalinguistics through grammar and vocabulary instruction. It gives L2 learners complaints in the form of phrasal chunks which they can use according to the provided situation. In a similar way, the current study uses specific refusal strategies from Félix-Brasdefer (2011) for the lesson taught to the in-class group and the PowerPoint guiding language partner conversations and activities. In order to focus on the current thesis project, this section discusses teaching Spanish L2 refusals in the FL classroom. Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen argue that

> Spanish learners are still memorizing grammatical forms without necessarily having control over the pragmatic functions of these forms in discourse. Even when learners have gained the pragmatic niceties, they may not have been taught how these can be different from one Spanish dialect to another (2012, p. 665).

They understand the importance of teachers’ roles in teaching pragmatics, proposing that “[b]oth NS and NNS teachers need to be familiar with the grammatical structures of the target language as well as with the pragmatic and discourse functions of these forms” (p. 654). It is not enough to only teach the grammatical forms to L2 learners. There are not many studies in this area, but the studies that exist are insightful in their teaching methodology and general insights into the effects on Spanish L2 refusal acquisition in the FL classroom.

García emphasizes the importance of teaching students the proper frame of participation and how this influences the appropriate politeness strategies and speech acts (1996, p. 270). She described an example in which the speaker, in a ‘friendly’ frame, interacted with a cashier who was in a ‘business’ frame; pragmatic failure resulted when the speaker failed to realize the different frames, which revealed her lack of L2
sociolinguistic competence (p. 267-268). Her teaching method for L2 refusals emphasizes the big picture goal of teaching “awareness and understanding of [varying sociocultural expectations that] will contribute to comprehend other cultures and their people, and to communicate with them appropriately and effectively” (p. 276).

In Félix-Brasdefer (2008b), the author tested the explicit teaching of refusals to invitations. This study included one experimental group, one control group, and baseline data from Mexican university students as well as L1 English. Intervention was given to both the experimental group and control group and consisted of cross-cultural comparison of refusals. However, the experimental group took part in metapragmatic instruction, in which they discussed the refusal responses covered in the intervention. In order to make key forms salient to learners, words in the PowerPoint were highlighted and bolded. Two days after, both groups practiced open-role plays; the experimental group received feedback, while the control group did not. Data for the pretest, and posttest 1 and 2 were collected using role plays. Results reveal that the experimental group acquired a greater approximation to NSs of Spanish with a preference for indirect refusal strategies with adjuncts. The control group did not show signs of improvement. His (2008a) study had a similar design but focused on analyzing the mitigators employed in the role play situations. The results showed that the experimental group used different kinds and a higher frequency of lexical and syntactic mitigators in both posttests. For example, the frequency of mitigators in the experimental posttest was 19% (n: 301) but only 5% (n: 80) in the control posttest. Interestingly, the delayed posttest a month after showed that students had retained what they had learned.

Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen (2012) proposed a model for teaching the SA of refusals intended to be delivered to Spanish intermediate learners. The model includes
aural and written NS input in the form of role play invitations and refusals to invitations, cross-cultural difference, and grammar as a communicative resource. It consists of four main units: 1) raising awareness of contextual variables in communicative actions, 2) pragmatic input from NSs including direct and indirect refusal strategies and insistence as a positive politeness strategy (García, 1999), 3) teaching grammar as a communicative resource, and 4) practice with the first three steps through role-play situations on Indiana University’s website (Félix-Brasdefer, 2011). This model was developed for teaching Spanish L2 refusals in the FL context. In light of the mentioned research on teaching methods and goals of L2 Spanish refusals, the current thesis seeks to assess the acquisition of intermediate Spanish learners in the FL classroom. The methodology draws from the online pedagogical resources mentioned previously (Félix-Brasdefer, 2011) to a limited extent.
Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Method

The methodological framework of this study is based on a comparison between explicit pragmatic instruction for one experimental group and a more implicit methodological approach in a tandem learning group. The design of this study responds to the debate on best practices for testing pragmatic pedagogical methodologies in the Spanish FL classroom. It also seeks to address how to best gather data that demonstrates participants’ pragmatic competence. Taking into account the complexity of gathering naturally occurring data of SAs, the current study collects data through pre and post written discourse completion tasks (DCTs). In a DCT, participants respond to a scenario where the context and the social power and distance between interlocutors is communicated. DCTs generally test what learners know rather than what they use when interacting with an interlocutor (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). While García (1992, 1999) points out that refusals in Spanish are often multi-turn acts, the present study seeks to elicit the first turn from participants. Sufficient context was added to the DCTs to elicit valid responses (Félix-Brasdefe, 2010). Overall, DCTs enable a limited understanding of results of pragmatic intervention on learners’ pragmatic competence.

The literature in ILP suggests that students acquire L2 SAs more effectively through explicit instruction as opposed to fully implicit acquisition (Leow, 2019). Further, various pedagogical methods have been formed that seek to aid FL teachers in teaching SAs (Félix-Brasdefe, 2008b, 2011). The current empirical study seeks, in part, to test the usefulness of a pedagogical model found on the Indiana University pragmatics website (http://www.indiana.edu/~discprag/spch_refusals.html; Félix-Brasdefe, 2011).
The second methodological foundation for this study is an e-tandem model, or an online version of a culture and language exchange between a NS volunteer and a language learning participant where both partners benefit linguistically. It finds its theoretical underpinnings in the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987). This format creates more opportunity for language learners to be tutored by a NS in a social context as opposed to the in-class group where the researcher explicitly taught the information in a teacher-centered manner. A comparison of the data from each group was intended for triangulation; because there is not ample literature on teaching SAs through e-tandem interactions, the researcher also thought it would add a novel element to the study.

In both experimental groups, participants received SA instruction, but the in-class group had more explicit instruction from the researcher over Zoom while the participants in the tandem group underwent more implicit learning in the context of face-to-face interaction with a NS volunteer over Zoom. The results of this study will contribute to the growing number of pedagogical SA studies which seek to implement teaching methodologies into the FL classroom. It will also contribute to the increasing number of studies on the usefulness of e-tandem learning of pragmatics for FL learners, and is one of the first studies teaching the SA of refusals in this context. In the next section, the participants are discussed followed by an overview of the procedures implemented from Indiana University’s website (http://www.indiana.edu/~discprag/spch_refusals.html; Félix-Brasdefer, 2011).

3.2. Participants

The current study features three groups of university learners made up of two experimental groups and a control group. All learners who volunteered to take part in this
study provided consent in written form. A $25 Amazon gift card raffle was offered to all participants in the Fall semester because it was near or during exams for some of them. The data from the experimental groups of L2 Spanish speakers was compared to baseline data from a control group of NSs of American English. All groups consisted of intermediate Spanish FL learners. The explicit experimental group consisted of 35 participants who underwent explicit instruction during two 45-minute class periods over Zoom. Participants were enrolled in one of three intermediate Spanish courses chosen by the researcher and her PI for the explicit group. The first lesson was a distractor lesson about giving and receiving compliments in Spanish. The second lesson on Spanish refusals focused on making culturally appropriate refusals in formal and informal situations. This intervention is described in detail below. The tandem groups consisted of eight participants who participated in four 30-minute sessions with a NS volunteer to guide the conversations. The first two conversations were distractor conversations focusing on giving and receiving compliments, while the latter two focused on making appropriate refusals in Spanish in formal and informal situations. The same refusal strategies were taught for both experimental groups, but the tandem group received instruction in a more implicit, naturalistic setting. The participants in both experimental groups were exposed to the interventions described below. The control group consisted of 48 participants who participated in an intermediate Spanish course with no pedagogical intervention outside of the standardized course content. All subjects participated in a pretest and posttest questionnaire which will be explained below.

It was difficult to keep group sizes consistent for the pre and post questionnaires partially because the study was conducted at the very end of an academic semester; however, all data collected were analyzed and are reported on in the next chapter. To
ensure that the post questionnaires for the explicit group only included data for participants who had undergone intervention, the researcher emailed the post questionnaire to participants who were present during the refusals lesson. Because of this, there is a larger amount of data in the pre-questionnaire for the experimental groups. To determine whether L1 pragmatic transfer influenced L2 production of the experimental groups and whether change in pragmatic behavior occurred as a result of the interventions, the L1 English baseline data were collected from all participants.

Additionally, a group of nine NS volunteers guided the tandem conversations over Zoom. Eight of the participants have lived in the United States for an average of 1.5 years and are graduate students at the university. One participant has lived in the United States for thirteen years and is a senior in her undergraduate degree. The NS volunteers were originally from five different countries in Central and South America. Due to the diversity of origins represented, baseline Spanish data was employed from the Indiana University website’s teaching resource. Section 3.6 goes into detail about their participation.

3.3. Instrumentation and Procedures

The data for the present investigation were collected using a DCT. Six scenarios were employed in the pre-questionnaire task, including two situations designed to elicit refusals and one distractor (compliment) in the English language portion, and two refusals and one compliment in the Spanish language portion. In the post-questionnaire, six new scenarios were chosen. The refusal situations are briefly described below.
Each description, written in English, contained who the participant was refusing, what they were refusing and why they had to refuse (the final scenario did not provide a reason).

Pre-Questionnaire:
(English) Refusing a friend’s invitation to an annual fall party (-P, -D)
(English) Refusing an advisor’s suggestion to take an extra course (+P, +D)
(Spanish) Refusing a friend’s invitation to a game night (-P, -D)
(Spanish) Refusing a professor’s suggestion for a final paper topic (+P, +D)

Post-Questionnaire:
(English) Refusing a friend’s invitation to a Christmas party (-P, -D)
(English) Refusing an advisor’s suggestion to participate in Spanish Heritage Month activities (+P, +D)
(Spanish) Refusing a friend’s invitation to go on a road trip (-P, -D)
(Spanish) Refusing a professor’s suggestion to take an independent study (+P, +D)

3.4. Pretest and Posttest

The pretest was administered two weeks prior to intervention for the two experimental groups near the end of the Fall semester and the posttest was administered one week after intervention. The same pretest was administered one week before the posttest for the control group during the third and fourth weeks of the Spring semester. This decision was made due to an insufficient number of volunteers during the Fall semester. See Appendix A for the pre and post DCTs.

3.5. Pedagogical Intervention

This section will review the methodology employed in the explicit experimental group. The intervention for this group was offered during two class periods lasting 45 minutes each. The instruction was given by the researcher in Spanish and in English. Following a modified version of the procedures of Indiana University’s teacher resource (http://www.indiana.edu/~discprag/spch_refusals.html; Félix-Brasdefer, 2011) the lesson was divided into three sections: 1) an identification of communicative actions segment to
raise learners’ awareness; 2) a cross-cultural comparison segment; 3) exposure to pragmatic input (of refusal strategies chosen for intervention); and 4) communicative practice of refusals. More clearly, during the pedagogical interventions, the explicit experimental group was made aware of the functions of chosen refusal strategies in formal (+P, +D) and informal (-P, -D) situations. Each section is described below. See Appendix B for the refusal strategies chosen for both experimental groups.

3.5.1. Identification of Communicative Actions

In this segment, an introduction was given about the use of different SAs in daily conversation, emphasizing that the situation, the relationship between participants and participants’ ages determine the appropriateness of when to use a given SA. Afterwards, English and Spanish language examples were given where participants helped identify the SAs in question. From here, the instructor directed participants’ attention to the SA of refusals.

3.5.2. Cross-Cultural Comparison

The purpose of this activity is to increase learners’ awareness of cross-cultural differences between Spanish and English in refusing a friend’s invitation. Participants simultaneously listened to and read the role-plays. In addition to the suggested pedagogical model on the website noted above, participants were instructed to write down
two specific expressions of politeness for the English and the Spanish role-plays to further build their cross-cultural awareness.

3.5.3. Exposure to Pragmatic Input

The scenario “Refusing a friend’s invitation” (-P, -D) was the first part of this segment. Participants were presented with a PowerPoint slide containing five refusal strategies written in blue and the SA classification categories written in red to draw their attention to these, as opposed to the other strategies included, as examples. Participants were instructed to write down the phrases in blue to confirm they were taking in the pragmatic input (no se puede, no podría asistir, no creo poder ir/ asistir, te aviso, me da mucha pena contigo). Directly after the refusal strategies were explained as appropriate for refusing a friend’s invitation, participants practiced the information, which is described in the next section.

The second portion of this segment was presented in the same way. It included pragmatic input for refusing a professor’s advice (voy a pensarlo, prefiero tomar esta clase el próximo semestre, si me hubiera dicho antes, habría aceptado). Participants were reminded that greater politeness is normative when refusing a professor’s advice than when refusing a friend’s invitation.

3.5.4. Communicative Practice

Communicative practice directly followed each segment of pragmatic input, first for the (-P, -D) scenario and then for the (+P, +D) scenario. Two activities made up this section. The first, created by the researcher, was a role-play DCT where the researcher role-played the friend/professor making an invitation/offer. A participant volunteer(s) was
chosen to respond to the invitation and to the “professor/friend’s” insistence in order to
demonstrate that refusals are often multi-turn SAs.

In the second activity, participants were given a refusal situation and were
instructed to conduct a role-play with another classmate(s). They were encouraged to
practice the refusal strategies that had been covered in the refusals lesson. Upon
completion, participants modeled their role-play and were affirmed when they used the
refusal strategies that were explicitly taught. If they failed to implement any refusal
strategies discussed during the lesson, they were gently redirected to other possible
strategies. The purpose of this activity was to reinforce the pragmatic input and cross-
cultural comparison instruction segments of the lesson.

3.6. Native Speakers’ Role in Tandem Group

This section explains the methodology employed to find and train NS volunteers. A
flyer was created and disseminated advertising the opportunity for intercambios with NSs
of Spanish. The nine NS volunteers committed to a pre-training where the investigator
shared important details about what each session would look like, including role-plays to
demonstrate how a conversation should typically go. NS volunteers were instructed to
meet four times with their partner over Zoom before a certain date; they were instructed to
carry out sessions involving two distractor conversations focusing on compliments and
two on refusals. After each session, the researcher reviewed the recordings and
communicated via email any ways in which they were not complying with study design
expectations. The researcher endeavored to have NS volunteers keep each conversation
as streamlined as possible so that data from the post DCT would be valid.
NSs were instructed to guide the conversations using a PowerPoint created for them, which was not shared with participants. They were instructed to share a separate activities PowerPoint with the participants which included pictures for each activity and the same pragmatic input that was used in the explicit instruction group. The researcher emphasized that these conversations were to be as natural as possible and that the refusal strategies included were the only ones to be discussed and that this should be done as implicitly as possible. The questionnaire given to the NS volunteers is found in Appendix C. The next section goes into detail about the methodology for the tandem group.

3.7. Tandem Group

This section explains the methodology employed for the tandem group. The purpose of the tandem group was to have participants learn the same material as the explicit experimental groups but in a more implicit way. Participants in the tandem group took part in four thirty-minute conversations with a NS volunteer who was chosen for them by the researcher. During each conversation, they went through three segments: 1) an introductory conversation introducing the SA in a cross-cultural way, 2) pragmatic input, 3) practice activities.

3.7.1. Introductory Conversation

Introductory conversations were designed to help partners get to know each other through discussing each other’s language and culture; a secondary purpose was to lower learner anxiety. This segment facilitated a metapragmatic conversation about the SA being discussed. Although metapragmatic discussion is more closely related to the explicit
learning side of the continuum, it was included in these sessions as NSs would likely give some sort of explanation to a learner when correcting them in a real-life scenario.

3.7.2. Pragmatic Input

The next segment consisted of the NS volunteer emphasizing appropriate ways of performing the SA in formal and informal scenarios. The same refusal strategies employed in the explicit instruction group were used in this portion of the study to ensure continuity across the data. The PowerPoint shared with participants through Zoom included the activity prompts and the refusal strategies. During this portion, participants were also encouraged to share insights into how they make refusals in English, helping the NS volunteer increase their pragmatic competence.

3.7.3. Practice Activities

The purpose of this segment was to give NS volunteers and participants opportunities to perform Spanish refusals in formal and informal scenarios. Considering the linguistic diversity of the NS volunteers, NS volunteers were instructed to guide the learners back toward the provided refusal strategies instead of offering their own preferred regional variations. The activities were similar to those on the pre and post DCT so that participants were practicing a similar format across all groups.

3.7.4. Data Analysis

Although each participant usually produced more than one refusal token in the DCT, individual tokens were counted to display the overall trends of the individual refusal strategies. The tokens were coded according to a modified version of the classification of
Spanish refusal strategies on Indiana University’s website of pragmatic resources cited above (Appendix D). The English strategies were coded according to a modified version of the classification of English refusal strategies by Félix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig (2010) (Appendix E). In order to fulfill the need for inter-coder reliability, the learner data were coded by the researcher and checked by her PI. The data was inputted into Language Variation Suite in order to ensure correct frequency for each refusal strategy.
Chapter 4. Results

4.1. Results

The purpose of the present study was to examine the effects of instruction on participants' ability to produce culturally and contextually appropriate refusals resulting from two different interventions: in-class explicit refusals lesson and e-tandem conversations about refusals with a NS. Thus, three research questions were posed to explore the different aspects of the study. They are as follows:

1. What are the effects of the explicit teaching of refusals on participants' ability to produce culturally and contextually appropriate refusals, namely on their pragmatic appropriateness and type of refusal strategy?
2. What are the effects of e-tandem learning on participants' ability to produce refusals?
3. What evidence is there of pragmatic transfer in learners' production of L2 refusals?

To answer the first question, the frequency and type of refusal strategies are analyzed in the pre and post DCTs in relation to what was taught in the lessons on refusals. Keep in mind that the in-class groups received two 45-minute refusal lessons while the tandem group participated in two 30-minute sessions using and discussing the same refusal strategies. First, the English baseline data is summarized to make general observations that will help the reader understand pragmatic norms and potential transfer for the current study.

4.2. English Baseline Data

In Table 4.1, the English baseline data reveals that across the board, there is sparse use of the ‘flat no’ strategy. The other direct refusal strategy, ‘negation of a proposition’, seems to undergo the greatest change in the pre and post DCT (-P, -D)
scenarios. In the explicit group, this strategy decreased from 26 (18%) to 10 (12.5%); in the tandem group, it increased slightly from 1 (4.8%) to 3 (12%); in the control group, it increased from 17 (11.6%) to 17 (14.9%). When refusing a friend in English, participants tended to avoid using a ‘flat no’ but they did use phrases like ‘I can’t’ or ‘I won’t be able to’.

In the (+P, +D) scenarios a notable change took place in the tandem group before and after; the pre DCT elicited no tokens of ‘negation of a proposition’, but the post DCT elicited 4 (14.3%) mainly expressed as ‘I cannot’. The participants refused more directly in English in the post DCT. Across the board, there was also a decrease in the use of ‘mitigated refusals’ in the English (+P, +D) scenarios which also signifies an increase in directness. In the explicit group, there was a decrease from 10 (10.8%) to 1 (1.4%); in the tandem group 1 (7.1%) to 0%; in the control group 10 (10.6%) to 3 (3%). The increase in directness for the tandem group’s English (+P, +D) scenario was not reflected in Spanish: tokens for ‘negation of a proposition’ barely increased from 0% to 1 (3.3%) and ‘mitigated refusals’ increased in frequency but decreased in average from 2 (14.3%) to 4 (13.3%).

For the strategy of ‘regret/apology’ there were more tokens for the (-P, -D) scenarios than there were for the (+P, +D) scenarios. Considering changes from the pre and post DCT, the greatest difference in frequency for the (+P, +D) scenarios was found in the explicit group which underwent an increase from 3 (3.3%) to 11 (15.9%). The greatest difference in the (-P, -D) was in the tandem group which underwent a decrease from 5 (23.8) to 4 (16%). The data suggest that participants prefer using ‘regret/apology’ when responding to a friend versus a professor or advisor in English.
Table 4.1. English Baseline Data: Raw Frequencies and Percentages

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<td>Negation of a proposition</td>
<td>26 (18%)</td>
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<td>10 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
<td>1 (4.8%)</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
<td>4 (14.3%)</td>
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<td>Reasons/ Explanations</td>
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<td>3 (14.3%)</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
<td>7 (25%)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7 (8.8%)</td>
<td>3 (4.3%)</td>
<td>1 (4.8%)</td>
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<td>3 (12%)</td>
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<td>Adjunct:</td>
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<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
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<td>1 (7.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5 (3.5%)</td>
<td>6 (6.5%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
<td>5 (7.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (7.1%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>13 (8.8%)</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>94</td>
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</table>
There was a decrease in ‘alternative’ tokens for both experimental groups and the control group in the (+P, +D) scenarios. The explicit group decreased from 12 (13%) tokens to none; the tandem group decreased from 1 (7.1%) to none and the control group decreased from 9 (9.6%) to none. This might suggest that the scenarios presented impacted the strategies employed in English because even though they had the same P and D dynamics at play, participants preferred using ‘alternative’ strategies in refusing the advisor’s class suggestion over the professor’s suggestion to participate in Spanish Heritage Month activities. In the related group of ‘mitigated alternative’ the explicit group decreased from 5 (5.4%) to none and the control group decreased from 8 (8.5%) to 1 (1%).

Across the board, there was a decrease in ‘request for information’ in the (+P, +D) scenarios for all English baseline data: the explicit group decreased from 10 (10.9%) to 1 (1.4%); the tandem group decreased from 3 (21.4%) to none; the control group went from 7 (7.4%) to 1 (1%). Again, this may suggest that the constraints of the scenario itself may have affected the participants’ responses. Asking for more information seems more appropriate when class suggestions are being offered, but when being invited to join an activity, participants seemed less likely to ask for more information.

In all three groups, there was an increase in the use of ‘adjunct: willingness’ in the (+P, +D) scenarios: the explicit group increased from 3 (3.3%) to 10 (14.5%); the tandem group increased from 1 (7.1%) to 7 (25%); the control group increased from 3 (3.2%) to 17 (17%). Examples for the pre DCT (refusing an advisor’s course suggestion) were more along the lines of ‘I will if it’s a requirement, because I have to take the course, I will challenge myself to do so; I will take it if I must’. In contrast, willingness to participate in
the Hispanic Heritage Month activities were more along the lines of ‘I wish I could, I would love to’.

4.3. In-Class Group

Table 4.2 displays the distribution of refusal strategies for English and Spanish in each scenario in the explicit teaching experimental group. This section seeks to analyze the effects of explicit teaching on participants’ ability to produce culturally and contextually appropriate refusal strategies in Spanish (Research Question 1). Due to the disparity between pre and post group sizes, a table format was chosen to most precisely represent the data. Table 4.2 includes the frequency and average according to the total number of tokens coded for the explicit group.

According to Table 4.2, the distribution of the 717 refusal tokens in the explicit instruction group reveals insightful trends before and after intervention took place. One effect of intervention in the (-P, -D) scenarios is an increase of ‘mitigated refusals’ which seem to have replaced the ‘negation of a proposition’ strategy. Before intervention, the average for ‘mitigated refusals’ was 0% but after it was 10%. Examples include no se puede, no podría, no creo que podría asistir, no creo poder ir. This suggests that in-class explicit instruction was successful in increasing participants’ ability to perform more indirect refusal strategies when refusing a friend’s invitation.

Similarly, after the explicit instruction, the Spanish (-P, -D) scenario underwent a decrease in use of ‘negation of a proposition’ from 30 (24.8%) before intervention 10 (14.9%) after. Examples of this strategy include no puedo in Spanish and ‘I can’t’ or ‘I will not be able to’ in English.
A similar trend is apparent in the English baseline data: frequency decreased from 26 (18%) to 10 (14.9%). This signals an increase in indirectness for both the English and Spanish DCTs in the (-P, -D). This is an example of cross-linguistic influence because the L2 norms the participants learned during instruction were reflected in their L1.

Surprisingly, there was a slight increase in ‘negation of a proposition’ for the (+P, +D) scenario from 2 (2.5%) to 5 (7.7%). The English baseline reveals that participants used no instances of ‘negation of a proposition’ before intervention and only 2 (2.9%) after intervention.

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<tr>
<td>Negation of a proposition</td>
<td>26 (18%)</td>
<td>30 (24.8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
<td>10 (12.5%)</td>
<td>10 (14.9%)</td>
<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
<td>5 (7.7%)</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>7 (10.4%)</td>
<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
<td>5 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons/Explanations</td>
<td>43 (29%)</td>
<td>46 (38%)</td>
<td>34 (36.9%)</td>
<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
<td>25 (31.3%)</td>
<td>24 (35.8%)</td>
<td>25 (36%)</td>
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<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>4 (5.8%)</td>
<td>2 (3.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regret/Apology</td>
<td>41 (29%)</td>
<td>37 (30.6%)</td>
<td>3 (3.3%)</td>
<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
<td>19 (23.8%)</td>
<td>19 (28.4%)</td>
<td>11 (15.9%)</td>
<td>14 (21.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>12 (13%)</td>
<td>14 (17.5%)</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>35 (43.6%)</td>
<td>2 (2.5%)</td>
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<td>Postponement</td>
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<td>4 (4.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>3 (4.3%)</td>
<td>9 (13.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Request for Information</td>
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<td>10 (10.9%)</td>
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<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
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<td>Adjunct: Positive Opinion</td>
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<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>4 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
<td>3 (4.6%)</td>
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<td>Adjunct: Willingness</td>
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<td>3 (3.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (6.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (14.5%)</td>
<td>2 (3.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Gratitude</td>
<td>3 (2.1%)</td>
<td>3 (2.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (8.8%)</td>
<td>3 (4.4%)</td>
<td>3 (4.3%)</td>
<td>3 (4.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Agreement</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>4 (5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (7.2%)</td>
<td>3 (4.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Tokens</td>
<td>143 (92%)</td>
<td>121 (80)</td>
<td>92 (67)</td>
<td>80 (69)</td>
<td>80 (65)</td>
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</table>
in the (+P, +D) scenario. The increase in direct Spanish refusal strategies when refusing a professor or advisor’s suggestion may indicate that some participants did not grasp the material being taught. However, the increase is so slight, it is hard to tell if this is a significant change.

Before instruction, the English (+P, +D) scenario demonstrated much higher average of ‘reason/explanation’ 34 (36.9%) than the Spanish (+P, +D) scenario 2 (2.5%). It appears that participants had a preference in Spanish for ‘mitigated alternative’ before instruction took place because the average began at 35 (43.6%) and decreased to 0% after intervention. Refusal strategies were redistributed to a preference for ‘reasons/explanations’ 22 (33.8%), ‘regret/apology’ 14 (21.5%), and ‘postponement’ 9 (13.8%). This finding suggests that participants felt more comfortable using the Spanish ‘mitigated alternatives’ when refusing a professor’s suggestion for a paper topic before intervention.

There was a consistently very low frequency of ‘adjunct: willingness’ in the Spanish tokens across both scenarios. However, in the Post DCT, the ‘adjunct: willingness’ strategy decreased in English from 12 (8.4%) when refusing a friend’s invitation to 5 (6.3%) which suggests that there was not pragmatic transfer in this case. The ‘adjunct: willingness’ *me gustaría ir, pero* was not produced by participants, but in the (+P, +D) scenario, there was one instance of *me encantaría* and one of *Espero que tuvo más tiempo en mi día*.

There was not a numerically noteworthy change in the use of ‘indefinite reply’, but on a qualitative note, all three instances used in the post DCT were *te aviso*, which was one strategy taught in the lesson. However, because there were two tokens in the (+P, +D)...
+D) it seems participants did not fully grasp that this is usually an informal refusal strategy.

For the ‘regret/apology’ strategy, there were only 2 (2.5%) in the pre DCT for the (+P, +D) scenario but 14 (21.5%) in the post DCT. In the pre DCT for the (-P, -D), there were 37 (30.6%) and a similar amount in the post DCT of 19 (28.4%). However, when refusing a friend’s invitation, there was more variety in how the participants expressed ‘regret/apology’ after intervention. While 15/19 (79%) of the ‘regret/apology’ strategies were lo siento, additional variations included disculpe, disculpame, hay que triste, and lo lamento mucho. In refusing a professor’s suggestion for an independent study, one participant even used ¡Que horrible! After intervention. Although no participants in the explicit group used the instructed phrase me da mucha pena, these variations show that a few participants attempted to express more emotion in their regret after instruction.

After intervention, the (+P, +D) scenario in Spanish reveals an increased use of ‘postponement’ (0% to 9 (13.8%)). The examples reveal that participants acquired what was taught in class; voy a pensar lo was used for five of these instances and some variation of wanting to take the class the next semester comprised the other four instances. The strategy of ‘postponement’ became the third most used strategy after instruction in the (+P, +D) scenario.

4.4. Tandem Group

Participants in the tandem group preferred the following refusal strategies in the (-P, -D) scenario before intervention: ‘negation of a proposition’ 4 (21.1%), ‘reason/explanation’ 5 (26.3%), and ‘regret/apology’ 6 (31.6%). After participation with a NS volunteer, ‘negation of a proposition’ decreased to 3 (14.3%) and ‘regret/apology’
decreased to 2 (9.5%). Thus, it appears the initial strategies used for refusing a friend’s invitation to a game night were redistributed to strategies participants acquired during intervention. For example, while ‘mitigated refusals’ were nonexistent before intervention, there were 4 (19%) afterwards. This might be explained by the fact that no podría (3) and no se puede (1) were acquired during conversations with participants’ NS partners. Although there was no significant change in the frequency of ‘mitigated refusals’ before and after for the (+P, +D) scenarios (2 (14.3%) to 4 (13.3%)), the participants were able to produce strategies discussed after intervention, including one use of no podría and three of no se puede. Before intervention, they only used no me gustaría escribir sobre este tema and no lo creo que me gusta este tema.

There were very few uses of ‘indefinite replies’ across the board, but in the post DCT, one use of te aviso appeared for each scenario, revealing that one participant thought it appropriate to use with a professor. Le aviso would be closer to NS norms in a (+P, +D) system, but this was not emphasized during conversation. In this scenario, an increase in ‘adjunct: gratitude’ was evident in the increase from 1 (7.1%) to 4 (13.3%) which evidences a redistribution of indirect refusal strategies.

In the pre DCT (-P, -D) scenario, there was 6 (31.6%) for ‘regret/apology’, 100% being expressed as lo siento. In the post DCT, this decreased to 2 (9.5%) with one instance of lo siento and one of me da mucha pena, which was most likely acquired through interaction with a NS volunteer. In (+P, +D), the participants nearly doubled their use of ‘regret/apology’ which began at 1 (7.1%) and rose to 4 (13.3%). Four instances in the post DCT included me da mucha pena which were acquired during the intervention. It is interesting to note here that the post DCT for the tandem group is the only place where tokens of me da mucha pena were elicited.
In the pre DCT for the (-P, -D) scenario, *me gustaría* and *me encantaría* were used once, which indicates that the participants drew on previous knowledge of the conditional mood which is normative at the intermediate level. In the post DCT, the frequency did not change, but both tokens were more emphatic, using *me encantaría*. There were no instances of the ‘adjunct: willingness in the (+P, +D) scenario before or after intervention.
In the pre DCT for the (+P, +D) scenario, there were no instances of ‘postponement’, but in the post DCT there were three tokens (10%), including two expressions of a version of *Tal vez pueda tomar esa clase el proximo semestre* and one of *voy a pensarlo*. Both strategies were communicated during tandem partnerships. On the contrary, there were 5 (35.7%) ‘mitigated alternative’ tokens and 2 (14.3%) ‘alternative’ tokens before intervention but only 1 (3.3%) ‘mitigated alternative’ and no ‘alternative’ strategies afterwards.

### 4.5. Control Group

The direct refusal strategy of ‘negation of a proposition’ did not undergo notable change in the pre and post DCT for the control group. In the (-P, -D) scenario, there were 22 (19.1%) before and 15 (16%) afterwards. In the (+P, +D) scenario there were 2 (2.2%) before and 6 (6%) afterwards. ‘Negation of a proposition’ in the English baseline data also remained about the same in the pre and post DCT suggesting that the control group maintained their level of directness in their preferred refusal strategies for both the pre and post DCT.

However, there was noticeable variation in the indirect strategies employed in the pre and post DCT for the (+P, +D) scenario. Preference for ‘reasons/explanations’ increased from 2 (2.3%) to 41 (41%). There was a decrease in ‘mitigated refusals’ from 11 (12.6%) to 1 (1%). It is interesting to note that of the mitigated refusals used in the pre DCT, there was a strong preference for *no me gusta / no me interesa este tema*. There was an increase in ‘regret/apology’ from 6 (6.9%) to 20 (20%) with a strong preference for *lo siento* in the pre and post DCT. The ‘alternative’ strategy decreased from 12 (13.8%) to
2 (2%) and the 'mitigated alternative' strategies decreased significantly from 36 (41.4%) to 1 (1%). Because the participants in this group did not receive instruction, this suggests that the specific scenario prompted participants to answer differently.

Table 4.4. Control Group Data: Raw Frequencies and Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refusal Strategy</th>
<th>Pre English (-P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Pre Spanish (-P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Pre English (+P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Pre Spanish (+P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Post English (-P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Post Spanish (-P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Post English (+P, D) f (%)</th>
<th>Post Spanish (+P, D) f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat no</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (2.6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (5.7%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>2 (2.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negation of a proposition</td>
<td>17 (11.6%)</td>
<td>22 (19.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2.3%)</td>
<td>17 (14.9%)</td>
<td>15 (16%)</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigated Refusal</td>
<td>5 (3.4%)</td>
<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
<td>10 (10.6%)</td>
<td>11 (12.6%)</td>
<td>8 (7%)</td>
<td>2 (2.1%)</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons/Explanations</td>
<td>44 (29.9%)</td>
<td>44 (38.3%)</td>
<td>45 (47.9%)</td>
<td>2 (2.3%)</td>
<td>35 (30.1%)</td>
<td>37 (39.4%)</td>
<td>38 (38%)</td>
<td>41 (41%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indefinite Reply</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regret/Apology</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28 (24.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>6 (6.9%)</td>
<td>32 (28.1%)</td>
<td>27 (28.7%)</td>
<td>11 (11%)</td>
<td>20 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
<td>9 (9.6%)</td>
<td>12 (13.8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigated Alternative</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (8.5%)</td>
<td>36 (41.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postponement</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>2 (1.7%)</td>
<td>2 (2.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Information</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (7.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification Request</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wish</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Positive Opinion</td>
<td>6 (4.1%)</td>
<td>7 (6.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (4.6%)</td>
<td>4 (3.5%)</td>
<td>3 (3.2%)</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Willingness</td>
<td>11 (7.5%)</td>
<td>3 (2.6%)</td>
<td>3 (3.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (5.3%)</td>
<td>4 (4.3%)</td>
<td>17 (17%)</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Gratitude</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2.1%)</td>
<td>8 (9.2%)</td>
<td>3 (2.6%)</td>
<td>2 (2.1%)</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>7 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct: Agreement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13 (8.8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (4.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>7 (7%)</td>
<td>11 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Tokens</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There was no noticeable change in strategy frequency for the (-P, -D) scenario. The preferred strategies in this scenario for the pre and post DCT were some formulation of ‘negation of a proposition’, ‘reasons/explanations’, ‘regret/apology’. One example from the pre DCT is *Lo siento, no puedo ir, tengo una examen muy importante*. A similar example from the post DCT is *Lo siento, no puedo atender porque tengo un vuelo para ir a casa*. Of the 28 tokens of ‘regret/apology’, 27 were *lo siento* in the pre DCT and 24 of the 27 tokens remained *lo siento* in the post DCT. The strategy of ‘postponement’ was less frequent in the control group than in the experimental groups.

### 4.6. Responses to Research Questions

What are the effects of the explicit teaching of refusals on participants’ ability to produce culturally and contextually appropriate refusals, namely their pragmatic appropriateness and type of refusal strategy? The data reveal that the current model for explicitly teaching refusals, adapted from Indiana University’s pragmatic website, led to an increase in participants’ pragmatic appropriateness when producing L2 Spanish refusals in certain scenarios and to a limited degree. In the (+P, +D) scenario, participants increased in the types of strategies used, but used slightly more ‘negation of a proposition’ after instruction, revealing that they did not fully grasp the politeness norm of avoiding direct refusals with a professor/advisor. They were able to produce more strategies that were explicitly taught in class, such as ‘postponement’. In the (-P, -D) scenario, participants did increase in their preference for mitigated refusals after instruction, revealing that the instruction was salient to the point that all four mitigated refusal strategies were evidenced. Even if they did not adapt all of the instructed strategies, the
instruction was helpful for participants to grasp the cultural norms and ways to fulfill them especially when refusing a friend’s invitation.

What are the effects of e-tandem learning on participants’ ability to produce refusals? Overall, it seems that participants benefited from tandem partners as evidenced in the decrease of direct refusal strategies (‘no’ and ‘negation of a proposition’) and the simultaneous increase in ‘mitigated refusals’ when refusing a friend’s invitation. The fact that participants produced specific content that was covered during sessions, especially ‘mitigated refusals’, shows that learning SAs in this format is beneficial at the minimum for completing a post DCT one week after finishing intervention. A related instance unique to the tandem group was the production of the only four tokens of *me da mucha pena*. Another way that the tandem learning seemed to boost participants’ refusal vocabulary was expressing ‘postponement’ to a professor or advisor. Before intervention, there were no tokens, but afterwards participants produced two strategies learned with their NS partner: *voy a pensarlo* (1) and *…el próximo semestre* (3). In general, it seems that one main effect that tandem learning had on the participants was that of increasing their vocabulary base for making refusals in a native-like way and greater levels of indirectness when refusing a friend’s invitation.

The final research question seeks to analyze evidence of pragmatic transfer in the participants’ Spanish L2 refusals. Keep in mind that the researcher chose to teach refusal strategies that participants would not likely choose coming from English as their L1. Strategies such as *lo siento*, for example, would be considered evidence of pragmatic transfer because *I’m sorry* is a common refusal strategy in English. In order to answer this question, English baseline data is compared with the post DCT Spanish responses.
It is interesting to note that there were similar trends in both the English and Spanish tokens before and after intervention for certain refusal strategies. In the (-P, -D) scenario for the explicit group, ‘negation of a proposition’ decreased after intervention. In the (+P, +D) scenario for the explicit group, ‘regret/apology’ increased after intervention. In the (-P, -D) scenario for the tandem group, ‘regret/apology’ decreased. Both experimental groups and the control group underwent a decrease in ‘alternative’ when refusing a professor or advisor’s suggestion. The control group and explicit group underwent a slight increase in Spanish tokens of ‘adjunct: willingness’ in the (+P, +D) scenario, while the increase was more dramatic for the English tokens.

On the contrary, while English tokens for ‘negation of a proposition’ increased in the tandem group for the (+P, +D) scenario, they did not in Spanish. While ‘request for more information’ decreased for the (+P, +D) scenario in English for all groups, it did not in Spanish. Lastly, all English tokens for ‘mitigated refusals’ in the (+P, +D) scenario decreased after intervention, but the Spanish tokens only decreased in the control group after instruction.

Lastly, although participants in both experimental groups were able to produce specific phrases they learned during intervention, no one used *si me hubiera dicho antes, habría aceptado* which was taught as an appropriate refusal strategy in a (+P, +D) scenario. It is perhaps the most complex strategy due to its length and its grammatical structure.
Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

In this section, a brief discussion about secondary issues will be covered before the final section which will conclude the study. First, it should be noted that the classification of refusals Félix-Brasdefer (2011) adapted from Beebe et al. (1990) was also minorly adapted for the current study. The researcher created the combined category of 'mitigated alternative', combining elements from 'mitigated refusals' and 'alternative' strategies. This strategy was mainly elicited in the Spanish tokens for the explicit group’s pre DCT. Some examples of the ‘alternative’ strategy in this scenario were *Yo prefiero escribir sobre este otro tema* and *Quiero hacer algo diferente*. Examples of the 'mitigated refusal' strategy included some variation of *No me gusta esta temá*. A few examples of the new category of ‘mitigated alternative’ were *espero que mi papel final sea un tema diferente*, *realmente estaba pensando en este otro tópico*, and *¿Hay alguna forma de que pueda hacer algo un poco diferente?* The distinction between levels of directness when expressing the preference for an alternate option shows the need for this new category for the current study.

Secondly, as mentioned in the literature review, motivation is one necessary element of learning an L2. The comments of a few of the tandem group participants reveal that integrative motivation was their main source of motivation and also shed light on the current state of L2 teaching in the FL classroom from these participants’ perspective. During one participant’s first tandem conversation, he said, “*Quería ir a un otro país durante un verano … pero no podía ir porque el Corona virus … Quiero mejorar en mi hablar…En mis clases no hablo mucho…Solo me preocupo sobre hablar*”. His desire to improve his speaking skills is obvious. At the end of the final session, he explicitly
expressed what he perceived to be a limitation of in-class learning. Keep in mind that he had a NS instructor at the time. In describing his tandem experience to his NS partner, the same participant said

Ayudó más que la mayoría de mis clases...La forma de aprender en esta manera, como hablar no solo escribir una prueba...Es la manera para aprender más eficiente y es...la mejor forma de aprender español para mí porque ya sé la gramática...pero necesito aprender como usar y pensar durante una conversación y 'expand' mi vocabulario. Es las dos cosas importantes. Y en esa manera puedo mejorar en las dos cosas, pero en clase de español en la universidad, no puedo.

It is clear that this participant desired a higher conversational proficiency and increased vocabulary, both goals he didn't believe he could accomplish in the FL classroom even with a NS teacher.

Another participant, whose mother was from Chile, said “The reason I am taking Spanish is so that when I see my cousins, I can communicate with them...I understand [my mom] but I'm not good at speaking it”. This reveals that this participant’s motivation was tied to her motivation to communicate with family in Chile. Another participant, who started learning Spanish in the 8th grade, did not enjoy learning Spanish until after her first trip to Guatemala, where she discovered that “it was very cool to actually speak to people that spoke Spanish”. In the final session, one participant expressed his opinion about the need for tandem learning in the university setting. He said, Si la Universidad hice mas trabajos por las conversaciones como esto, sería más fácil para los personajes de tener un mejor nivel de español. The opinions of these participants highlight their unanimous desire for more communicative methods of learning Spanish with a strong preference for speaking with NSs. The participants’ comments reveal that they were highly motivated upon volunteering for the tandem group. The researcher believes that this evidence supports the notion that tandem learning ought to be explored further as a viable method.
for teaching L2 pragmatics in the FL classroom, especially for highly motivated learners. The current study, which sought to improve one aspect of participants’ pragmatic competence, namely that of making Spanish refusals in a culturally appropriate way, helped these participants progress toward their expressed goals. In the next section, the study will be summarized along with salient results for each group.

5.2. Conclusion

The current study employed the pragmatic teaching methodology of Félix-Brasdefer (2011) in two experimental groups in order to find out if participants would improve in their sociopragmatic competence in the performance of the SA of refusals. The explicit experimental group employed a more teacher-centered approach while the tandem group employed a more implicit, communicative approach with a NS volunteer being the source of cultural and pragmatic information. The control group data provided a baseline to compare the results from the two experimental groups. The English baseline data served as a point of reference to compare the Spanish data elicited from all three groups. The researcher investigated the impact of these different learning contexts in order to determine if future research in the area of teaching pragmatics in a tandem setting would profit FL learners’ acquisition of L2 pragmatics, specifically the SA of refusals. The research questions were the following:

1. What are the effects of the explicit teaching of refusals on participants’ ability to produce culturally and contextually appropriate refusals, namely on their pragmatic appropriateness and type of refusal strategy?
2. What are the effects of e-tandem learning on participants’ ability to produce refusals?
3. What evidence is there of pragmatic transfer in learners’ production of L2 refusals?
The current study reveals that the effects of the explicit teaching and the effects of the e-tandem learning varied for each scenario (refusing a friend’s invitation, refusing a professor or advisor’s suggestion). However, both experimental groups showed evidence that the intervention was beneficial to participants’ growth in making appropriate Spanish refusals. The greatest impact of the explicit teaching in the (-P, -D) scenario was an increase in the use of ‘mitigated refusals’ and a decrease in ‘negation of a proposition’ revealing that participants’ pragmatic appropriateness improved when refusing a friend’s invitation. The greatest impact of instruction in the (+P, +D) was an increase in participants’ use of ‘postponement’ using strategies that were explicitly taught during the lesson. Overall, the intervention seemed to prove more effective for the (-P, -D) scenario.

The most salient effect of tandem learning in the (-P, -D) scenario was an increase in ‘mitigated refusals’, which is similar to the explicit group results. There was also a steep decrease of ‘regret/apology’ and one use of me da mucha pena. In the both scenarios participants were able to express specific strategies of ‘mitigated refusals’ that were not produced before intervention. ‘Regret/apology’ increased in the (+P, +D) group with instances of me da mucha pena. Only the tandem group elicited me da mucha pena after intervention. It appears that tandem learning was also effective to some degree in increasing participants’ appropriateness in producing refusal strategies.

Overall, the study reveals evidence of positive pragmatic transfer from the English to Spanish, which is not surprising. The results also reveal participants’ low level of resistance to transfer from their L1. For example, lo siento was the most common phrase used for expressing ‘regret/apology’ across the board for Spanish data, which reflects positive transfer from I’m sorry in the English baseline data. The only group that resisted this to a limited degree was the tandem group, who produced five tokens of me da mucha
pena. Although this is not a large number of tokens, this is interesting because, of the refusal strategies included in the intervention for the experimental groups, this phrase is the least transferable from English.

The use of ‘negation of a proposition’ was a salient form of positive transfer from English because ‘I can’t come’ is a common direct refusal strategy in English while no puedo is also a direct strategy in Spanish (Félix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig, 2010). Participants resisted employing this direct strategy after intervention to varying degrees, but the experimental groups resisted more than the control group. This suggests that the intervention for the experimental groups helped the participants refuse in more native-like ways according to the baseline Spanish data employed for this study.

Other phrases that were taught are transferable to some degree from English. For instance, voy a pensar lo is easily understood to be the Spanish translation of ‘I’m going to think about it’, and te aviso can be understood to mean ‘I’ll let you know’. However, one phrase that no participants produced was si me hubiera dicho antes, habría aceptado, pero… Although one can say ‘If you would have told me earlier, I would have accepted, but…’ to refuse a suggestion in English, participants may not have chosen this strategy because it was more complex in its semantic makeup.

There was an unexpected impact of L2 experimental instruction on L1 behavior which was evidenced in three ways. There was a decrease in the direct strategy of ‘negation of a proposition’ in the Spanish and English tokens when refusing a friend’s invitation in the explicit group. In the same group, ‘regret/apology’ increased when refusing the suggestion of a professor or advisor as evidenced by the Spanish and English tokens. However, in the tandem group, ‘regret/apology’ decreased only when participants refused a friend’s invitation for Spanish and English tokens. This result begs
the question of why only certain strategies that were learned reflected onto the L1 production after intervention.

5.3. Study Limitations

This section discusses the limitations of the current study, its overall contribution, and ideas for future study. First, it should be kept in mind that the data for the tandem group is limited, which limits the comparability of the tandem group data with the explicit group and the control group. If this study were done again, the researcher would give the tandem group more DCTs to complete in order to elicit more data from such a small group of participants. Another way to ameliorate this would be to conduct the study at the beginning of the semester when participants generally are willing to commit more time to extra activities.

Second, the NS tandem volunteers taught the material in a more explicit manner than anticipated. Their more explicit teaching of the refusal strategies is likely a result of the researcher’s overcommunication that the NS volunteers should only communicate the chosen refusal strategies and not add their own personal input. Possibly too much was expected from them in order to maintain continuity among the nine different tandem partnerships. However, this group still serves to show that training NSs to facilitate instructional conversations is worth the time if novel ways of teaching pragmatics are going to be developed. In fact, many education-related companies worldwide are realizing direct, even virtual interactions with NSs are crucial to L2 learners’ increased realization of L2 acquisition. Linguameeting is one program through which teachers can assign students to meet with a NS language coach in order for students to practice speaking Spanish while learning about culture. The language coaches are from universities in Spain or
language schools in Latin America and are trained and paid to meet with students. The researcher of this study thinks conducting empirical studies using the recordings from these sessions would prove beneficial in tracking student performance, specifically in pragmatics, over time.

After the researcher reviewed the first two distractor conversations about giving and receiving compliments, it became apparent that the NS volunteers were not directing the conversation strictly enough. However, the problem may have been overcorrected. In sum, the design of the activities PowerPoint that was visible to participants should have withheld the refusal strategies to make the NS participant interaction even more implicit than the in-class lesson. Lastly, for the explicit instruction group, it would have been more beneficial to teach the lesson in the classroom. Due to the global pandemic, the lessons were taught over Zoom where participants did partner activities in breakout rooms. This limited the researcher’s ability to observe learner to learner interactions.

Even with the limitation of an unprecedented global pandemic, this study is unique in that it has not only one but two experimental groups and a control group. Of the experimental groups, the tandem group represents a unique way of teaching participants pragmatic skills. The fact that the participants in both experimental groups increased in their ability to make culturally and situationally appropriate Spanish refusals shows that tandem learning is a valid way to teach SAs. Although the data for compliments was not included in this study, it could be analyzed separately to see if participants also benefited from these distractor lessons. Not only this, but the study highlighted a potential new category of refusal strategy which can be of use to future research. Another interesting
point is that the data suggests that the L2 experimental instruction resulted in a change of the participants’ L1 behavior in a few instances.

The results of this study describe the first turn of refusals participants produced, but the same data could be analyzed for patterns of strategies appear most-often together. Longitudinal studies tracing the same participants over several semesters could provide valuable insight into the pragmatic development of the SA of refusals. Thus, aspects of this study that need to be further researched also include the training of NSs for coaching participants in producing culturally and situationally acceptable refusal strategies. Overall, a strength of this study is the creativity of its design. It is the researcher’s hope that future empirical studies will test the same and other pragmatic teaching methods in an e-tandem versus in-class format, possibly employing other methods like retrospective verbal reports and role plays.
Appendix A. Participant Questionnaires

Participant Questionnaires
Instructions: The purpose of this experiment is to examine the way speakers respond in certain situations. It should take you about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please read the following instructions before you proceed: In this study, you will be asked to read the descriptions of 6 situations. After each situation you will be asked to write a response in the blank after ‘You say:_______’. Please read the text BEFORE and AFTER the blank carefully. Respond as you would in actual conversation. Please respond as naturally as possible, without analyzing too much what your answer should be. There are no right or wrong answers. Once you have given your answer, click on 'Next' to proceed to the next situation. At the end of the questionnaire, click on 'Submit'. We are now ready to get started with the study! To begin, click on 'Next'.

Consent
Have you already given your consent to take part in this study? (yes, no)

Personal Information
In order for me to be able to analyze the results better, please provide some basic information about yourself. The questionnaire is anonymous, and every attempt will be made to keep all the information collected in this study strictly confidential.
Age (18-24, 25-30, 31 or older)
What Spanish class(es) are you currently enrolled in? (short answer)
Gender (male, female, other)
What is your mother tongue? (short answer)
What other languages do you speak? (short answer)
Where did you grow up? (short answer)
How long have you lived in the U.S.? (short answer)
What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (high school diploma or the equivalent, professional degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree)
What is your current proficiency level in speaking Spanish? (advanced, intermediate, novice)
What is your current proficiency level in writing in Spanish? (advanced, intermediate, novice)

Scenarios (Pre DCT)
In this section, you will be asked to read the descriptions of 6 situations. After each situation you will be asked to write a response in the blank after ‘You say:_______’. Please read the text BEFORE and AFTER the blank carefully. Respond as you would in actual conversation. Please respond as naturally as possible, without analyzing too much what your answer should be. There are no right or wrong answers. Once you
have given your answer, click on 'Next' to proceed to the next situation. At the end of the questionnaire, click on 'Submit'.

*Example from Bardovi-Harlig (1999, p. 242)

Respond in English for this section:

(-D,-P refusal)
Fall is in the air! Your friend is throwing her annual fall party to celebrate the cooling weather. You usually go, but this year you will be out of town for a conference. So, when your friend invites you, you must decline. You say:

(+P, +D refusal)
*Your advisor suggests that you take a course which you would rather not take because you think that it will be too difficult for you. He does not know you feel this way.
Advisor: If you are registered in our program you must take Syntax.
You say:

(-D, -P compliment)
Your friend walks into the room with a dress on that you know she got for her birthday last week. It looks flattering on her and you want to compliment the dress. You say:

Respond in Spanish for this section (-D, -P refusal)
Your friend asks you if you want to come to a game night at his house with a few of your mutual friends, but you have an exam you really need to study for. You need to tell him you can't join. Tú dices:

(+P, +D refusal)
Your professor suggests that you write your final paper on a topic which has nothing to do with the topic you were hoping to pick. You want to politely refuse his suggestion. Tú dices:

(-D, -P compliment)
Your friend just dyed her hair blonde after having had naturally brown hair her entire life. It looks great on her, so you want to compliment her new hair. Tú dices:

Scenarios (Post DCT)
In this section, you will be asked to read the descriptions of 6 situations. After each situation you will be asked to write a response in the blank after 'You'. Please read the text BEFORE and AFTER the blank carefully. Respond as you would in actual conversation. Please respond as naturally as possible, without analyzing too much what your answer should be. There are no right or wrong answers. Once you have
given your answer, click on 'Next' to proceed to the next situation. At the end of the questionnaire, click on 'Submit'.

Respond in English for this section:
(-P, -D refusal)
Your friend invites you to her Christmas party Saturday night, but you will be traveling home that evening for Christmas break. So, when your friend invites you, you must decline. You say:

(+P, +D refusal)
Your professor suggests that you participate in the events for Spanish Heritage Month, but you don't have extra time for these activities. Professor: These activities will help you understand Latin American culture. You say:

(-D -P compliment)
Your friend comes over to study, and when she walks in, you notice she is wearing new boots. You think they are really neat and want to compliment her on her new boots. You say:

Respond in Spanish for this section (-D, -P refusal)
Your friend invites you to join him and a small group of your friends for a road-trip during Christmas break. As much as you want to join, you already bought a flight to visit your cousins. Tú dices:

(+P, +D refusal)
Your professor suggests that you take an independent study with her next semester on a topic that interests you. However, your schedule is already completely full, so you need to politely refuse her suggestion. Tú dices:

(-D -P compliment)
Your friend baked you cookies for your birthday and they were delicious! You want to compliment her on the cookies and her baking skills. Tú dices:
Appendix B. Refusal Strategies in Intervention

Refusal Strategies Employed for Experimental Groups
(Adapted from Félix-Brasdefer (2011))

(-P, -D) Scenario
1. Rechazos
Pues, tengo un compromiso, y no se puede, de veras que no se puede. No podría asistir, porque tengo...
No creo poder ir/asistir...pero posiblemente...
2. Respuestas Indefinidas
Te aviso.
3. Disculpas
Me da mucha pena contigo, me gustaría ir, pero...

(+P, +D) Scenario
1. Respuesta Indefinida
...voy a pensar... 
2. Posposición (Postponement)
...prefiero tomar esta clase el próximo semestre...
3. Aceptación
Si me hubiera dicho antes, habría aceptado, pero...
Appendix C. Native Speaker Questionnaire

Native Speaker Volunteer Questionnaire
Age (18-24, 25-30, 31 or older)
Is Spanish your mother tongue? (Long answer)
What other languages, if any, do you speak? (Short answer)
Where did you grow up? (Short answer)
How long have you lived in the U.S.A.? (Short answer)
What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? (High school diploma or the equivalent, Professional degree, Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree, PhD or higher)
Do you have formal training in the field of linguistics? (Yes or No)
Have you participated in language-exchange partners before? (Yes or No)
Appendix D. Spanish Refusal Strategies

Classifications of Spanish Refusal Strategies
(Adapted from Félix-Brasdefer (2011))

I. Direct strategies
1. Flat ‘No’: no
2. Negation of a Proposition: no puedo venir a la fiesta (‘I can't come to the party.’)

II. Indirect strategies
1. Mitigated Refusal: creo que no es posible (‘I don't think it's possible’), no podría asistir (‘I wouldn't be able to attend’), no se puede (‘It's not possible’)
2. Reasons/Explanations: tengo planes/tengo un compromiso (‘I have plans / I have a commitment’)
3. Indefinite Reply: no sé si tendré tiempo (‘I don't know if I'll have time’), voy a tratar de estar ahí, pero no te prometo nada (‘I'll try to be there, but I can't promise you anything’)
4. Regret/Apology: discúlpame (‘Forgive me’), lo siento mucho (‘I'm really sorry’)
5. Alternative: Quiero hacer un tema diferente. (‘I want to do a different topic’) ¿puedo venir a tu casa mañana? (‘Can I come to your house tomorrow?’)
6. Mitigated Alternative: ¿por qué no salimos a comer la próxima semana? (‘Why don't we go out for dinner next week?’) ¿está bien se elijo otro tema? (‘Is it okay if I choose a different topic?’)
7. Postponement: prefiero tomar esta clase el próximo semestre (‘I'd rather take this class next semester’), voy a pensararlo (‘I'll think about it’)
8. Repetition: ¿el lunes a las 2:00 p.m.? (‘Monday at 2:00 p.m.?’)
9. Request for Information: ¿A qué hora es la fiesta? (‘What time is the party?’)
10. Set Condition for Future or Past
11. Acceptance: si tengo que tomar la clase después, pues la tomo, (‘If I have to take the class later, I'll take it then’), si me hubiera dicho antes, habría aceptado (‘If you had told me earlier, I would have accepted’)
12. Clarification Request: ¿dijo composición en español? (‘Did you say Spanish composition?’)
13. Wish: ojalá pudiera quedarme (‘I wish I could stay’)

III. Adjuncts to refusals
1. Positive Opinion: felicidades por su ascenso. Me da mucho gusto! (‘Congratulations on your promotion. I'm very glad!’)
2. Willingness: me encantaría, pero… (‘I'd love to, but…’)

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3. Gratitude: gracias por la invitación (‘Thanks for the invitation’)  
4. Agreement: sí, de acuerdo, pero… (Yes, I agree, but…)  
5. Empathy: entiendo que está en un aprieto, pero…(‘I understand you are in a bind, but…)
Appendix E. English Refusal Strategies

Classifications of English Refusal Strategies
(Adapted from Félix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig (2010))

I. Direct Strategies
1. Flat ‘no’ ("No.")
2. Negation of a proposition ("I can’t.")

II. Indirect Strategies
1. Reason or explanation ("But-the problem is that summer classes meet daily.")
2. Alternatives ("We can hang out when I get back." “Are there any alternative courses I can take?”)
3. Mitigated Alternatives ("Is there any way I could please take a different class?"
   “Maybe we can do something else before I leave for my trip?”)
4. Expression of regret or apology ("I’m really sorry." “I apologize.”)
5. Avoidance Strategies
   a) Postponement ("Can I think about it?")
   b) Hedging (“I don’t know.”)
   c) Request for clarification (“Did you say Saturday?”)
   d) Request for additional information (“Can you tell me more about the class?”)
   e) Partial repeats of previous utterance (A: “I’m having a party on Monday and I would love it if you could come.” B: “Monday?” [partial repeat in italics])
6. Indefinite Response (“Maybe.” “That’s a possibility.”)
7. Mitigated refusal (“Unfortunately, I don’t think I’ll be able to come.” [mitigated refusal in italics])

III. Adjuncts to Refusals
1. Gratitude (“Thanks for the information, but…”)  
2. Positive opinion (“That’s a good idea, but…”)
3. Willingness (“I’d love to, but…”)
4. Agreement (“Yes, I agree, but…”)
Appendix F. IRB Form

IRB Approval

To: King, Jeremy W  
LSUAM | Col of HSS | Foreign Languages and Literatures
From: Alex Cohen, Chair, Institutional Review Board
Date: 12-Nov-2020
Re: IRBAM-20-0401
Title: Teaching the Speech Act of Refusals to Learners of Spanish
Submission Type: Initial Application
Review Type: Exempt
Risk Factor: Minimal
Review Date: 12-Nov-2020
Status: Approved
Approval Date: 12-Nov-2020
Approval Expiration Date: 11-Nov-2023
Re-review frequency: Three Years
Number of subjects approved: 140
LSU Proposal Number:
By: Alex Cohen, Chairman

Continuing approval is Conditional on:

- Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
- Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
- Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
- Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
- Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
- A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
- Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.

Special Note: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI
requests a continuation.

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/research

Louisiana State University 131 David Boyd Hall Baton Rouge, LA 70803, 225-578-5833, 225-578-5983 http://www.lsu.edu/research
References


Cunico, S. (2019). The EUniTA project: working with international partners to develop language, intercultural, and professional competencies in European university students. In C. Goria, L. Guetta, N. Hughes, S. Reisenleutner & O. Speicher (Eds.), *Professional competencies in language learning and teaching* (pp. 53-64). Voillanse, France: Researchpublishing.net.


Vita

Hannah Rose McIntire, born in Ruston, Louisiana, taught in India for three years after receiving her bachelor’s degree from John Brown University in Fine Arts and Spanish. As her interest in Spanish continued to grow, she decided to enter the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Louisiana State University. She anticipates graduation with her master's degree and plans to begin a career in bilingual education. She plans to receive her Master’s this May 2021.