Anne Barron

Developing pragmatic competence in a study abroad context

15. Developing pragmatic competence in a study abroad context

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Abstract: Study abroad is a global phenomenon, with individuals all over the world increasingly spending part of their studies in another country. Since its beginnings in the later years of the last century, there has been an explosion of research on the development of second language pragmatic competence in a study abroad context. The present chapter seeks to synthesise the research conducted to date by presenting a systematic meta-analysis of empirical studies conducted on the development of second language pragmatic competence in a study abroad context. To this aim, a sample of 49 publications is reviewed. Trends in research design, levels of analysis and informant characteristics are sketched and gaps in these areas highlighted. The discussion of findings highlights different development paths and variability in outcomes and investigates the explanatory potential of studies on context, individual differences and learner agency in relation to these variable findings. The chapter closes by highlighting research desiderata and posing further research questions.

1. Introduction

Fuelled – at least partly – by global attempts to internationalise education, and with it university campuses, study abroad is an increasingly popular route today (cf. Isabelli-García et al. 2018:439–441). Student mobility within the Erasmus program, the principal scheme in Europe for providing financial support to enable higher education students to engage on a stay abroad, has reached record numbers, with year-on-year increases (European Commission 2014). Similar increases in student mobility have also been recorded globally (cf. Institute of International Education 2017:4; Nerlich 2015).Traditionally, an underlying assumption has reigned among foreign language learners, language teachers and policy makers alike that study abroad has a positive influence on the development of L2 linguistic competence, and indeed on the face of it, study abroad would appear to offer learners more advantageous input and output opportunities, particularly for L2 pragmatics. Not only would it seem to provide learners with an opportunity to observe language in its social context of use, with all its inherent variability according to social parameters and settings, the stay abroad context also appears to offer learners an opportunity to use language in context and to experiment with the real life consequences of their pragmatic choices. Actual research into the

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effects of study abroad on the development of linguistic competence remained scant for many years and research into the development of pragmatic competence for even longer (cf. Freed 1990:459; Barron 2003:3, 58). In recent years, however, study abroad research has come into its own, as indeed evidenced by the recent appearance of the international peer-reviewed journal *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education* (Benjamins) in 2016, a journal with language development as one of its explicit foci.[1] In addition, in the more specialised area of second language pragmatics, the number of overview articles dedicated to the development of L2 pragmatic competence during study abroad has been steadily increasing, including recently published reviews by Schauer (2010), Hassall (2013b), Xiao (2015), Taguchi (2015c, 2018), Barron (2019a) and Pérez-Vidal and Shively (2019) – a fact which also demonstrates the strength of research in the area.

Research on study abroad now enables a more differentiated view on the benefits of study abroad for developing pragmatic competence. The present paper undertakes a systematic meta-analysis of empirical studies on the development of pragmatic competence in study abroad. In doing so (and unlike other reviews), it focuses on institutional student/school-goer mobility within educational programs, and provides a focused picture of the development of pragmatic competence during this formative time.[2] The review shows that study abroad generally leads to developments on several pragmatic levels over time in the target language community. However, there is a high level of variability in outcomes, many of these related to the study abroad context, individual differences and learner agency.

The chapter begins by delineating the study abroad context and also outlining our understanding of pragmatic competence. It then reports on the sampling procedures of the present meta-analysis before presenting an overview of dominant research designs and levels of analysis adopted by the studies in the sample and then sketching the study abroad informants investigated. The major findings are then discussed from a variety of perspectives, including study abroad context and learner profile. The paper closes by highlighting research desiderata and future potential research questions.

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1 *Frontiers*, an interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed academic journal dedicated to research on education abroad has existed since 1995.

2 Cf. Bardovi-Harlig (2013), Xiao (2015), Taguchi (2015c, 2018) and Pérez Vidal and Shively (2019) for overviews of L2 pragmatic development in study abroad research in which this differentiation between study abroad and long-term resident students is not made.

2. Key concepts

2.1. The study abroad context

The definition of study abroad adopted in the present analysis encompasses limited sojourns abroad by students or school-goers during their studies. It, thus, includes students spending time abroad as part of their studies and school-goers embarking on a stay abroad during high school. It, however, excludes students choosing to study exclusively abroad. Individuals may engage in study abroad in communities in which their target language is spoken as a first language (L1) by the majority of the speech community, as for instance, when students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) study in Australia. However, according to the definition put forward here, and in contrast to other definitions of study abroad (cf., e. g. Hassall 2013b:4516; Taguchi 2018:127), study abroad students may also complete their study abroad in a language which is not the L1 of the majority. In such situations, individuals communicate using a lingua franca, as when French students embark on study abroad in Finland equipped with English but without any knowledge of or motivation to learn Finnish. The English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) context is becoming progressively more important given the status of English as the lingua franca of many disciplines and the increase in courses of study at university level offered in English (cf., e. g., Mitchell 2016; Isabelli-Garcia 2018:440–441).

From a language learning point of view, study abroad has been termed a "special case of second language acquisition" (Freed 1995:4) given that the traditional distinction between natural and educational contexts for the acquisition of a second language becomes blurred in study abroad. On the one hand, study abroad differs from learning in the foreign language classroom since study abroad students/school-goers are exposed to the target language in its full social context during their sojourn abroad, and the context of learning during this time is natural. On the other hand, study abroad differs from second language acquisition in a natural context because of the institutional framework and the limited time-frame (cf. Edmondson 2000:365; Barron 2003:57; Devlin 2014:5). With reference to the institutional framework, students/school-goers will frequently have acquired some prior knowledge of the target language (L2) via formal instruction in a language classroom in their home country, and they will typically aim to increase their competence over time spent abroad and also potentially following their return to the formal language learning classroom. Given the initial institutional framework, students/school-goers tend to initially view the L2 for the most part as subject matter, i. e., as consisting of rules and principles to be attended to in contrast to ESL learners who view the L2 as a social entity although, as mentioned above, the stay abroad allows study abroad learners to experience language in its full social context. A further feature of importance in the stay abroad context is that the limited time-frame of a stay abroad has potential repercussions for individuals' motivations when

embarking on study abroad and also for their identity construction (cf. 6.2.1). Both of these factors in turn have repercussions for their L2 pragmatic competence and differentiate study abroad from language acquisition in a natural context.

As such, study abroad can neither be characterised as educational or natural. As Coleman (1997:4) notes: "Their [the study abroad students'] learning remains instructed, despite incorporating elements of naturalistic L2 acquisition." It is indeed, as Freed points out, a "special case of second language acquisition". Consequently, second language acquisition research on students in long-term programs of study in the second language context or indeed on immigrant groups acquiring language cannot be applied without reservation to study abroad despite the fact that both settings are natural. The same is true of studies relating to research on the development of L2 competence in the foreign language classroom.

2.2. Pragmatic competence

In line with conceptualisations of pragmatic competence in early models of communicative competence, pragmatic competence within second language pragmatics has traditionally been treated as speech act competence.[3] Research focused on learners' knowledge of appropriate realisations of speech acts in context. In other words, second language pragmatics was centered around analyses of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic speech act competence (cf. Leech 1983, Thomas 1983; cf. Marmaridou 2011 for an overview). Pragmalinguistics is the linguistic side of pragmatics and in speech act analysis concerns the analysis of speech act strategies, modification devices and realisations of both. Sociopragmatics, on the other hand, refers to the '… sociological interface of pragmatics' (Leech 1983:10) and is concerned with the interface of linguistic action and social norms. Given, however, that pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics represent points on a continuum, the line between both perspectives is frequently blurred, particularly in empirical research (cf. Marmaridou 2011:77). Traditionally, then, pragmatic competence, or speech act competence, was viewed as a learner-internal L2 competence or in van Compernolle's (2013:327) words as an "acquired toolkit to be applied later in appropriate contexts". There was no concern for how learners actually negotiate speech acts in interaction.

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[3] Speech act competence is referred to in models of communicative competence in the concepts of "illocutionary competence" (Bachman 1990), "functional knowledge" (Bachman and Palmer 1996), "actional knowledge" (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell 1995) and "illocutionary knowledge" (Timpe Laughlin, Wain and Schmidgall 2015). Such competencies refer rather to pragmalinguistic knowledge. Sociopragmatic knowledge is present in these models in concepts, such as "sociolinguistic competence" (Bachman 1990) and "sociocultural competence" (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell 1995) and "sociolinguistic knowledge" (Timpe Laughlin, Wain and Schmidgall 2015).

Recent developments, however, have seen a growing recognition that actions are not individual isolated actions but rather realised in interaction. Hence, in recent years, models of communicative competence, such as that by Celce-Murcia (2007), have broadened to highlight the importance of competence in conversation to empower learners to use speech act knowledge in interaction. In addition, there has been a re-conceptualisation of communicative competence under the umbrella of interactional competence (IC) (cf. He and Young 1998; Young 2013). This approach sees actions not as the locus of individuals alone, but rather jointly constructed in particular contexts. It recognises that competence in interactional practices, such as, for instance, repair, topic management and turn-taking, is an integral part of pragmatic competence.

In line with these developments, a broad view is taken on pragmatic competence in the present analysis. Specifically, the levels of pragmatic analysis introduced in Schneider (1988) and further developed within the field of variational pragmatics (cf. Félix-Brasdefer 2012; Schneider 2019) are adopted (cf. 3.1). These six levels of pragmatic competence include a(n):

– stylistic level
– formal level
– actional level
– interactional level
– topic level
– organisational level

Analyses on the stylistic level examine variation in the tone of interaction, polite/plain styles and choice of address forms (cf. also Félix-Brasdefer 2012). Research on the formal level involve form-function/function-form analyses, recognising that a single form may realise different functions and vice versa that a single function may be realised using different forms. The actional level deals with speech act analyses. Here, analyses centre on pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic questions relating to the appropriate use in context of speech act strategies and their linguistic realisations. Interest at the interactional level extends beyond the individual speech act to deal with sequential patterns. Questions posed relate to how speech acts combine into larger units of discourse, such as adjacency pairs, interchanges, interactional exchanges or phases. The topic level is concerned with discourse content, i. e. with the propositions of individual utterances as well as with macro-propositions. It addresses, in particular, issues of topic selection and topic management. Finally, the organisational level combines ethnomethodological analysis and conversation analysis.[4] The focus

[4] Ethnomethodological analysis may be briefly described as a bottom-up study of social order where social order is viewed as an emergent achievement, with the analysis focus-

is on turn-taking and involves such issues as interrupting behaviour, repair, overlap, minimal responses, back-channels or inter-turn silence.

3. Corpus underlying the meta-analysis

The present paper aims to paint a picture of current research on the development of L2 pragmatic competence in study abroad. The sample design was guided by the following criteria. It was to include studies which were:

– empirical
– focused on study abroad in higher education or in high school/secondary school
– focused on developments in pragmatic competence over time

The exclusive focus on study abroad research as defined in 2.1 meant that the present paper focused not on length of residence or second language acquisition by immigrants, but rather on institutional student mobility within educational programs.

3.1. Sampling procedures

The criteria for inclusion defined, the next step taken was to conduct a database search. The following five databases frequently employed in linguistics or in the Humanities as a whole were chosen and the search was carried out in mid-April 2016.

– The Modern Language Association (MLA) International Bibliography
– Web of Science (Core Collection)
– Scopus (Elsevier)
– Bibliography of Pragmatics Online (John Benjamins)
– Online Contents Linguistik

The database search kept any subjective bias at a minimum. Also, the use of five databases rather than one increased the representativeness of the searches. In addition to the database searches, the new international journals *Chinese as a Second Language Research* (De Gruyter, Mouton, available since 2012) and *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*

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ing on members' local realities (Garfinkel 1967). Conversational analysis, a field of research which developed out of ethnomethodological analysis, involves a bottom-up analysis of the dynamics of talk-in-interaction (Sacks 1995, Schegloff 2007).

(John Benjamins, available since 2016) were also searched as it was too early for these to be included in the databases used. In addition, although not listed in any of the databases, Taguchi's (2015a) monograph entitled *Developing Interactional Competence in a Japanese Study Abroad Context* was added to the sample given its relevance for the analysis.

The search terms employed were *study*, *abroad* and *pragmatics*. A pilot study conducted on alternative keywords, such as *stay abroad*, *year abroad*, *sojourn abroad*, all yielded a more limited selection of publications. In addition, all publications yielded using such search terms were also generated using the chosen search terms, *study*, *abroad* and *pragmatics*. Search terms, such as *length of residence* or *length of exposure* were rejected to avoid yielding studies focusing on speakers' pragmatic development following longer periods of immersion.

All databases and the *Chinese as a Second Language Research* journal were searched via an automatic search function. The journal *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education* was searched by hand as there was only one volume available and no in-journal search at the time. All three search terms were to occur as keywords within an article (where the search functions allowed this possibility).

3.2. The sample

In total, the searches initially yielded a total of 121 hits. After a qualitative viewing of the publications according to the criteria set out in 3, this number was reduced to 49 (all listed and marked with an asterisk (*) in the bibliography). Dissertations listed in the MLA were not included in the final database due to the difficulty of accessing many of these. In addition, in a number of cases, authors had already published the findings of these dissertations in articles also listed in the databases.

Table 1: Overview of publications in sample

Journal articles	37
Articles in edited volumes	8
Monographs	4
Total	49

The total 49 publications in the sample were written by a total of 39 different authors, including authors involved in multiple authorship. The vast majority of publications, 37 articles in total, were published in journals (cf. Table 1). These stem from a wide range of journals, 17 in all. With a total of seven articles (14.28 % of the total sample), *Intercultural Pragmatics* stands out as the journal with most articles in the database. This is not only due to its focus on pragmatics in an inter-

cultural context, but also due to the *Special Issue in Acquisitional Pragmatics* published in the journal (Barron and Warga 2007). Similarly, *System* is well represented with four articles due also to a *Special Issue on Pragmatics* edited by Alcón-Soler and Yates (2015). In addition to the journal articles, eight publications are from edited volumes. Three of these are from Freed (1995) and two from DuFon and Churchill (2006). The remaining four publications in the sample, Barron (2003), Schauer (2009), Ren (2015) and Taguchi (2015a) are monographs (cf. above).[5]

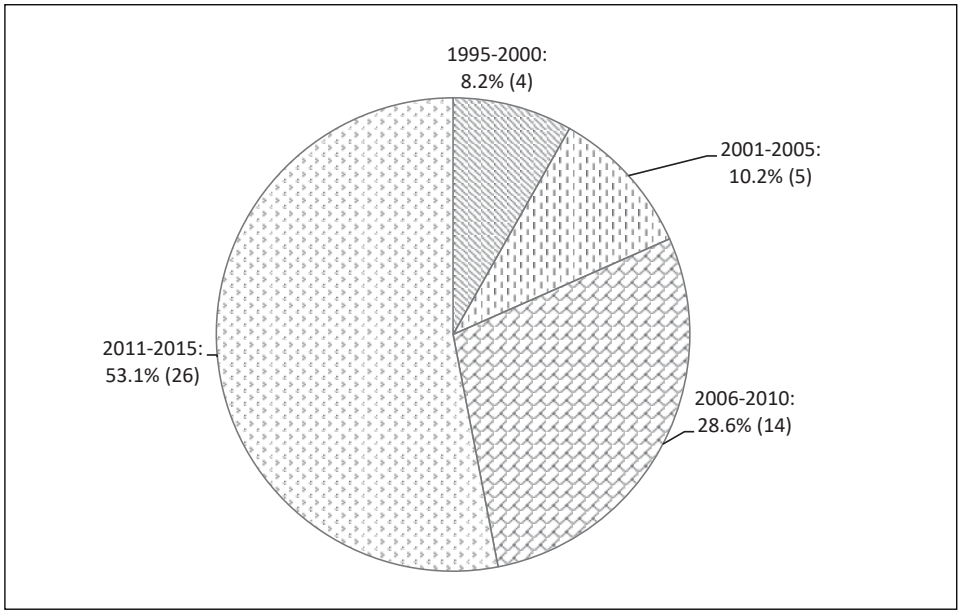

Figure 1: Publication years (n=49)

The details of the year of publication reveal a recent explosion of research on pragmatic development in study abroad. As seen in Figure 1, more than half (53.1 %) of all studies in the sample were published since 2011, with studies up to 2005 only accounting for 18.4 % of all studies.

[5] Two of these monographs, namely Barron (2003) and Ren (2015), were listed in the five databases. Also, reviews of Schauer's (2009) monograph were found in the databases. As mentioned above, Taguchi's (2015a) monograph was added given its relevance.

4. Research design and focus of analysis

In the following, we report on the design of the studies in the database. Following this, focus turns to the features analysed and to the levels of analysis covered.

4.1. Research design

As far as the datasets are concerned, Selinker (1972:214) originally recommended that any investigation into the process of second language acquisition necessitates a contrastive study of three distinct sets of productive data, namely:

– Utterances in the learner's native language produced by the learner (L1)
– Interlanguage utterances produced by the learner (IL)
– Target language utterances produced by native speakers (NS) of that target language (L2)

This three-fold design was adopted in many of the early second language pragmatic studies, although unlike Selinker's conception, the L1 data was produced by L1 speakers other than the exact learners in question. Such data threw light on potential pragmatic transfer, whether positive or negative, from informants' L1. The use of target language NS data served as a kind of baseline against which learner language use was measured. It was seen as a source of information regarding what is different about learner data and where development might be possible. However, in time there arose some debate concerning the suitability of a NS as a yardstick for learners. Researchers put forward several reasons for arguing that NS competence may not be a goal of learners, including the fact that whether adult learners wish to or not, they may not be capable of attaining NS competence, that a deviation from NS norms may be necessary as NS and learners construct meaning jointly, that negative pragmatic transfer may not trigger pragmatic failure particularly given NS lenience towards learners and finally that learners may purposefully exploit their non-native status for a particular end or indeed choose to *do* being different relative to the target language community (cf. House and Kasper 2000; cf. Barron 2003 for an overview).

Several research designs are used in the present sample. Concerning the use of target language data, 30.6 % of studies in the present sample elicit such baseline data and compare learner elicitations to these NS elicitations (cf. Figure 2, narrow understanding). A further 12.3 % of studies in the sample employ target language baseline data indirectly by, for instance, employing NS as judges of appropriateness (e. g. Taguchi 2015b), by referring to baseline data previously reported on (e. g. Vilar-Beltrán and Melchor-Couto 2013), by referring to NS conventions in the learner – NS conversations analysed (e. g. Shively 2014) or indeed by calling on field observations (e. g. Shively 2011). If we take such data sources into

account, baseline data is employed in 42.9 % of studies. Including/excluding target language data does not correlate with year of publication.

L1 data is only referenced by very few studies. Indeed, only 15.6 % (7) of all those studies with single L1 culture informants used comparative L1 data; the remaining 84.4 % (38) focused on development regardless of transfer. Finally, the employment of a control group as evidence of pragmatic development is used in only a small number of studies (22.4 % (11)). Numbers of informants in such control groups range from 12 to 132 with a mean size of 32.2.

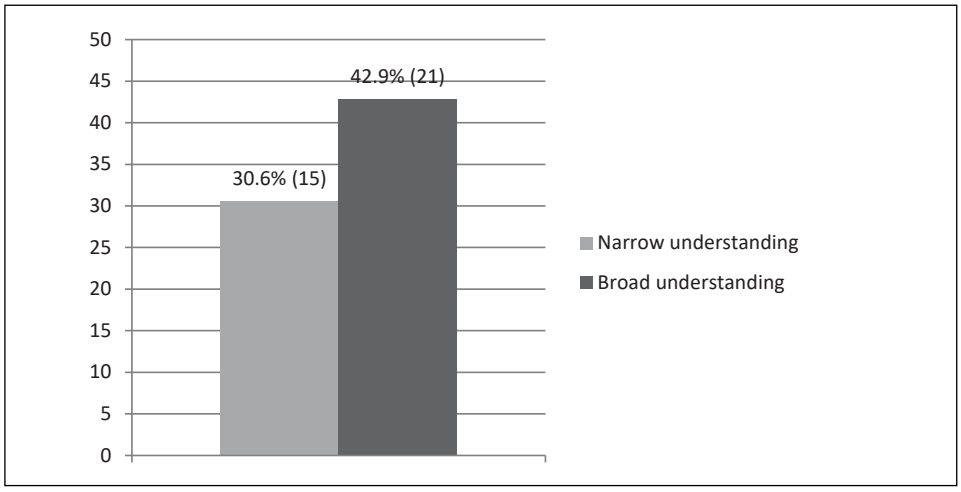

Figure 2: Target norm data employed in research design

As set out in the original criteria (cf. 3), all articles in the present sample focus on development over a study abroad period. Noteworthy is that as many as 95.9 % (47) of the studies are longitudinal in nature, with only 4.1 % (2) cross-sectional in design. In other words, the majority of studies tracked the development of a particular group of learners over time spent in the target language community. This trend contrasts with many studies involving longer-term international students which rather tend to be cross-sectional in design, focused on comparing different groups of students.

The longitudinal nature of the majority of the studies in the sample meant that the research design was predominantly a pre-post design. However, studies differed in the number of times pragmatic competence was measured. 24.5 % (12) of all studies employed a two measure design, with data collected prior to/at the beginning and towards the end/after a study abroad period. Others included several data collection points (67.4 % (33)). Those that used delayed post-stay tests were the exception, with only 4.1 % (2) of all studies including these in their research design (cf. Matsumura 2007; Félix-Brasdefer and Hasler-Barker 2015).

4.2. Pragmatic competence: Focus of analysis

The pragmatic features focused on in the studies at hand varied from forms of address, through to speech act realisations, through to the study of repair. The six levels of analysis, the formal, the actional, the interactional, the topic, the organisational and the stylistic levels introduced in 2.2, are adopted as a means of categorisation. Empirical analyses may also combine a number of levels, as when, for instance, a study such as Barron (2003) analyses internal modification employed in offers and refusals of offers (actional level) while also analysing the exchange structure of offers and refusals of offers in interaction (interactional level). In addition, there is some overlap between levels of analysis. For example, studies on the actional level may also look at routine realisations of speech acts, thus approaching the formal level. However, in the latter case, categorisation will depend on the primary focus of analysis – i. e. whether the focus is on routine realisations of a particular speech act (actional level) or, for instance, on different functions of a particular routine (formal level). Table 2 provides an overview of the features on each level of analysis and Figure 3 shows the analytical focus on each level in quantitative terms.[6]

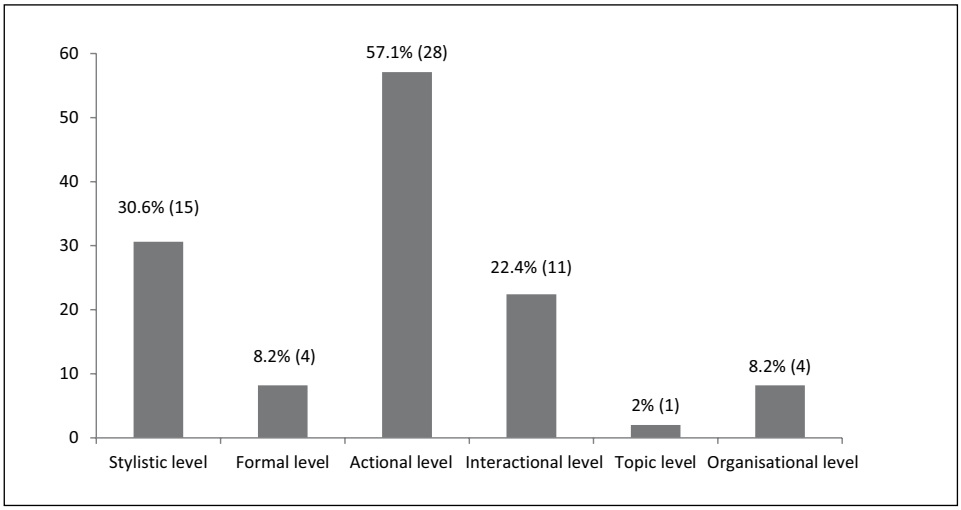

Figure 3: Analytical level of studies in sample as a percentage of 49 studies in the sample[7]

[6] It should be noted that this categorisation includes pragmatic features focused on in studies of learner production, comprehension and meta-pragmatic awareness (cf. Table 4 below for more details).

[7] Figures do not sum to the total numbers given in this table given that multiple levels of analysis are also possible in empirical analyses.

Table 2: Overview of studies in sample on different analytical levels

Stylistic level	adolescent language markers (Grieve 2015)	colloquialisms (Henery 2015)	terms of address (Barron 2006; Kinginger and Farrell 2004; Kinginger and Belz 2005; Kinginger and Blattner 2008; Reynolds-Case 2013; Hassall 2013a, 2015a, 2015b; Henery 2015)	polite and plain styles (Marriott 1995; Siegal 1995; Iwasaki 2010; Taguchi 2015a, 2015b)						
Formal level	pragmatic routines (Taguchi, Li and Xiao 2013; Hassall 2015b)	particles (Japanese *ne*: Ishida 2009; Masuda 2011; Henery 2015)	third person reference forms (Marriott 1995)							

Actional level	apologies (Warga and Schölmberger 2007; Schauer 2009; Winke and Teng 2010; Khorshidi 2013a; Ren 2015; Taguchi 2015b)	complaints (Hassall 2015b)	compliments (Winke and Teng 2010; Félix-Brasdefer and Hasler-Barker 2015; Taguchi 2015b)	compliment responses (Jin 2012; Taguchi 2015b)	offers (Barron 2003; Matsumura 2001, 2007; Winke and Teng 2010)	refusals (Barron 2003, 2007; Taguchi 2008a, 2008b; Schauer 2009; Winke and Teng 2010; Ren 2013a, 2013b, 2015; Vilar-Beltrán and Melchor-Couto 2013)	requests (Marriott 1995; Barron 2000, 2003; Schauer 2007, 2009; Bataller 2010; Winke and Teng 2010; Shively 2011; Khorshidi 2013a, 2013b; Li 2014; Alcón-Soler 2015a, 2015b; Ren 2015; Taguchi 2015b)	thanking (Taguchi 2015b)	suggestions (Schauer 2009; Ren 2015)	opinions (Taguchi 2008a, 2008b)
Interactional level	listener responses (Shively 2014)	exchange structure (Barron 2003, 2007; Pryde 2014)	humour (Shively 2013)	openings (Marriott 1995; Lafford 1995, 2004; Shively 2011)	leave-takings (Marriott 1995; Lafford 1995, 2004; Hassall 2006)	bargaining (Winke and Teng 2010)	gift offering/acceptance (Winke and Teng 2010)			
Topic level	allowable topics for personal remarks (Hassall (2015b)									
Organisational level	repair (Dings 2012)	turn construction (Taguchi 2015a)	back-channels (Lafford 1995, 2004)	self-repairs (Lafford 1995, 2004)	fillers (Lafford 1995, 2004)	connectors (Lafford 1995, 2004)	repeats (Lafford 1995, 2004)			

As seen in Figure 3, all six levels of analysis are represented in the present sample (cf. Kinginger 2009:83–90 and Schauer 2010 for an overview of study abroad research on the actional level only). The actional is the level best represented at 57.1 % of all studies in the sample followed by the stylistic level (30.6 %) (cf. also Pérez Vidal and Shively 2019:359).

Production studies concern the use of pragmatic features, such as the production of compliments in Félix-Brasdefer and Hasler-Barker (2015). The majority of studies (85.7 %) focus on learners' developing productions from a pragmatic perspective (cf. Table 3). The meta-pragmatic awareness category includes studies on sensitivity to pragmatic errors (Ren 2015; Schauer 2009), perceptions of social status (Matsumura 2007) and levels of noticing and awareness of appropriate conventions of and variation in language use (e. g. Barron 2003; Kinginger and Farrell 2004; Kinginger and Belz 2005; Kinginger and Blattner 2008; Hassall 2013a; Alcón-Soler 2015a, 2015b; Henery 2015). It is also a frequent focus in the sample at 40.8 %. In stark contrast, only 4.1 % of studies examine learners' developing pragmatic comprehension. Comprehension studies in the sample deal predominantly with understanding implied meaning (cf. Taguchi 2008a, 2008b).

If we now combine analytical level with production, comprehension or meta-pragmatic awareness (cf. Table 4), we see that the preference for analyses on the actional level followed by the stylistic level remains for production (actional: 54.8 %, stylistic: 31 %) and meta-pragmatic awareness (actional: 50 %, stylistic: 30.6 %). The comprehension data, limited to two studies, focuses only on the actional level.

5. Study abroad informants

Longitudinal study abroad informant numbers range from one to 97 in the sample, with a mean of 21.4 and a median of 18.[8] The amount of variance is high, as evidenced by a high standard deviation (20.854). Studies include case studies of a handful of informants as well as large scale quantitative studies. Grouping the number of informants in categories of ten, we can see that the largest proportion of studies, as many as 40.4 %, investigate the development of pragmatic competence of ten informants or less. Indeed, 61.7 % of all studies have 20 informants or less (cf. Figure 4).

[8] The two cross-sectional studies in the sample were excluded from this analysis given the fact that these studies compare the performance of more than one group of informants. In Vilar-Beltrán and Melchor-Couto (2013), for instance, the performance of three students preparing to go abroad was compared with the competence of six students who had returned from study abroad.

Table 3: Focus of studies in sample across production, comprehension and meta-pragmatic knowledge[9]

	% (n=49)
Production	85.7 % (42)
Comprehension	4.1 % (2)
Meta-pragmatic awareness	40.8 % (20)

Table 4: Analytical level of linguistic data in sample[10]

	Comprehension (n=2)	**Production (n= 42)**	**Meta-pragmatic awareness (n=20)**
Formal level	-	7.1 % (3)	5 % (1)
Actional level	100 % (2)	54.8 % (23)	50 % (10)
Interactional level	-	23.8 % (10)	25 % (5)
Topic level	-	-	5 % (1)
Organisational level	-	9.5 % (4)	-
Stylistic level	-	31 % (13)	40 % (8)

Age-wise, the informants in longitudinal studies are very homogeneous. Thirty-three of the total 47 longitudinal studies gave information on mean informant age or gave sufficient information to calculate the mean age. Based on this data, we have a mean age of 22 years old across studies, and a median of 20.6 years old. The range was 18.2 years to 42 years but variance was low as seen in Figure 5 which groups average informant age into three categories. Only two informants were older than 25, both participants in case studies. This picture is also reflected in the remaining longitudinal studies which give details of age range only and thus insufficient information to calculate a mean value. Here the youngest informant age mentioned is 16 years. The oldest informants in these studies are 27 years/late 20 s. Overall, the figures here are characteristic of the study abroad context given that the mean age for student mobility within the Erasmus scheme between 2012–2013 was 22.5 overall, 22.4 years for studies and 22.9 years for work placements (European Commission 2014). High school/secondary school informants

[9] Figures do not sum to 49 in this table given that multiple foci were also possible.

[10] Figures do not sum to the total numbers provided in this table since multiple levels of analysis are also possible in empirical analyses.

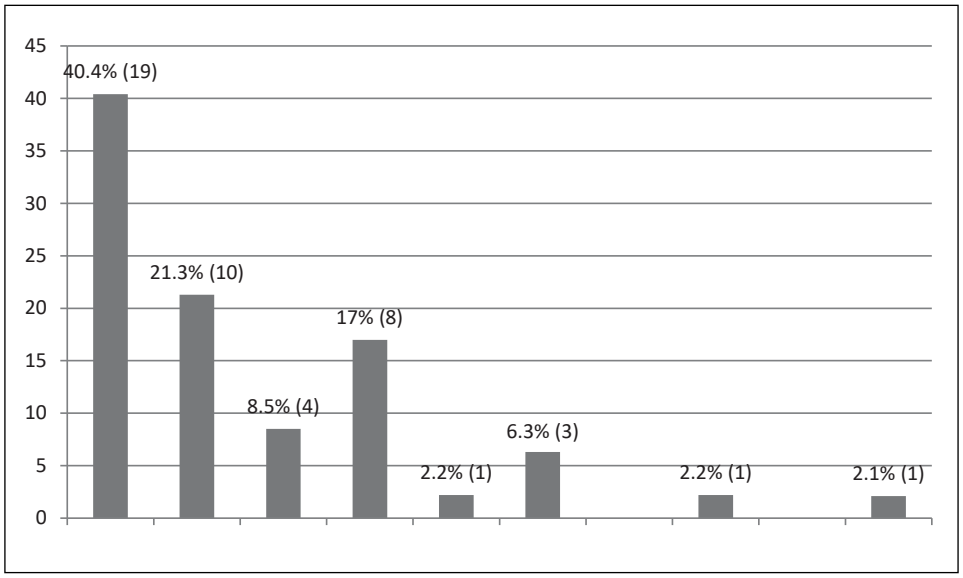

Figure 4: Number of informants in longitudinal studies (n=47)

are also included in the data, but represent a minority group overall in the studies at hand.

There were proportionally slightly more female than male informants in the longitudinal studies in the sample. The mean percentage of females was 60.06 %, the median 66.6 % and percentage values ranged from 0 % where only male informants were included to 100 % where only female informants were included. As such, variation was large, with a standard deviation of 26.71. The slightly higher female values reflect the fact that in general more females embark on study abroad. In Europe, for instance, 60.6 % of students embarking on student mobility between 2012 and 2013 were female (cf. European Commission 2014:7).

The first language of the informants in the studies analysed is predominantly English, with more than 59.2 % (29) of studies focusing on the experiences of English NS (cf. Figure 6). These English-language NS are distributed across the English-speaking world. Most came from the USA (20, 40.8 %), but other countries, such as Australia (5, 10.2 %) and Ireland (4, 8.2 %), were also represented.

Overall, 91.8 % of studies focus on the pragmatic development of groups of individuals from one particular culture, with only 8.2 % focusing on development across a variety of L1 s (cf. Figure 6). Development studies with informants from a variety of L1 s focus exclusively on commonalities of learners across development stages. Those focused on a particular L1 culture have also the potential to investigate the role of pragmatic transfer, whether positive or negative, although, as reported in 4.1, very few make use of this option.

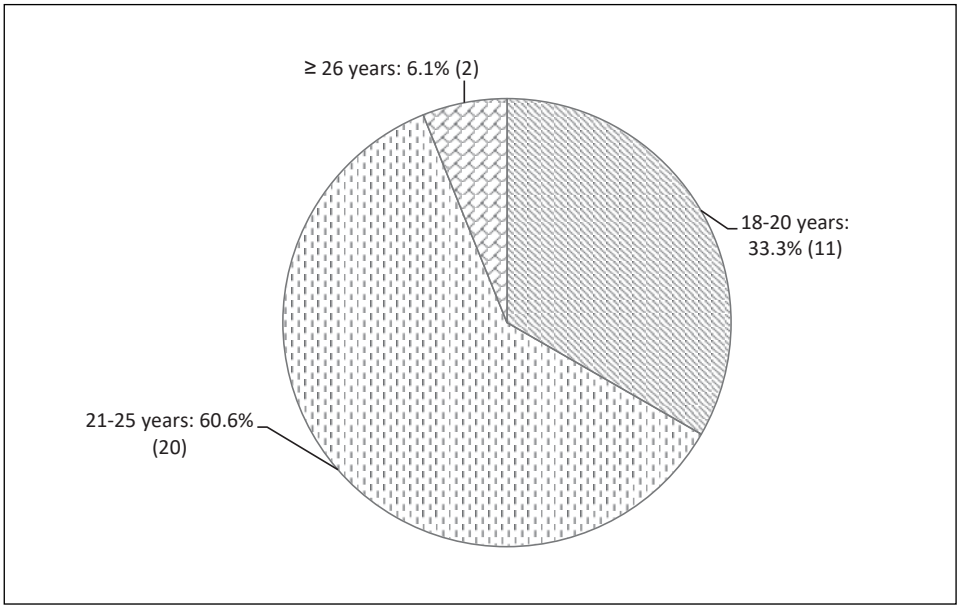

Figure 5: Average age of informants (n=33)

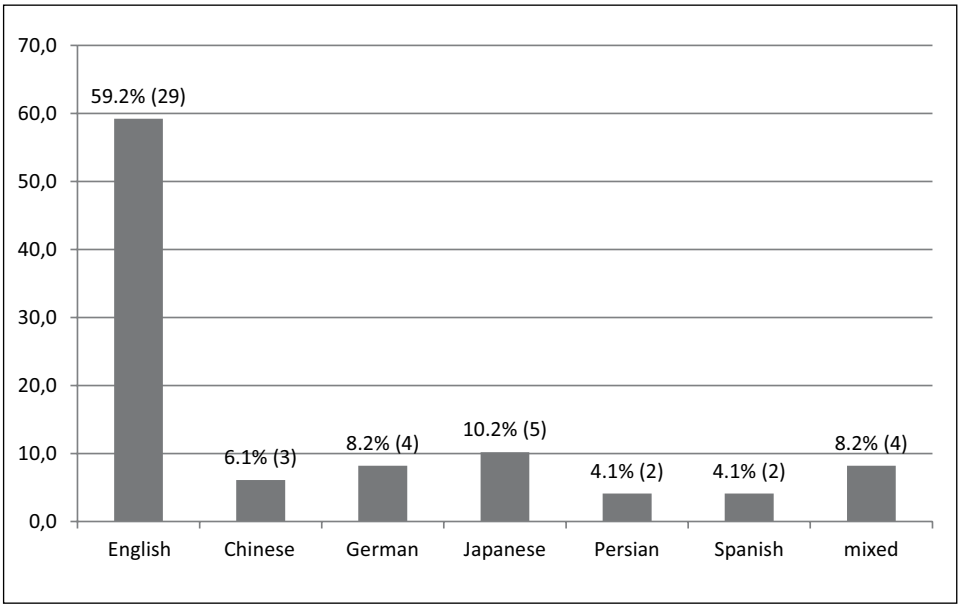

Figure 6: L1 of informants in sample (n=49)

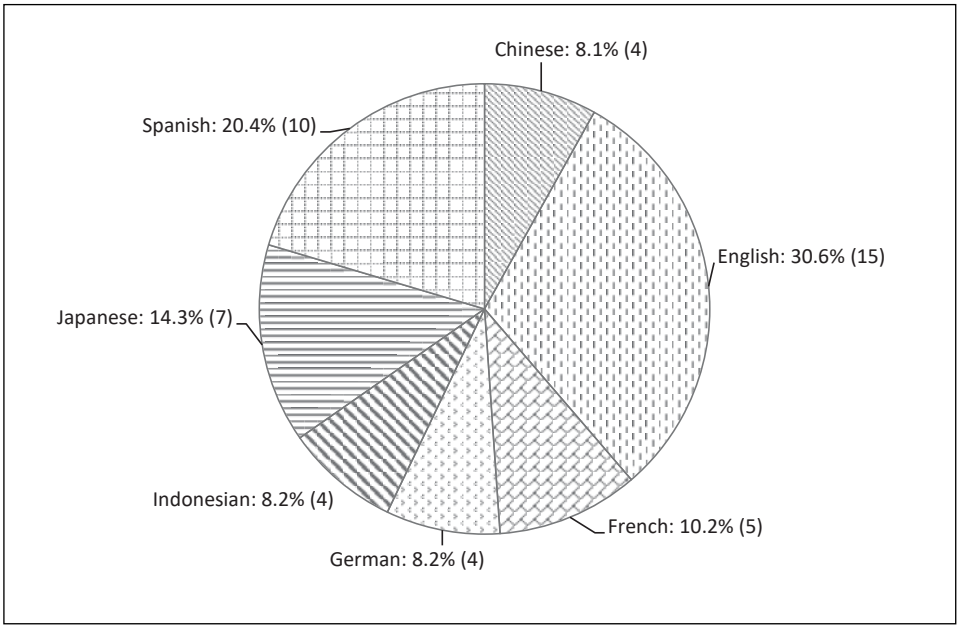

Figure 7: Target language of informants (n=49)

The target language of learners in the present sample included only seven languages in total, with English the language predominantly focused on (30.6% (15)) (cf. Figure 7). If we combine the data on L1 and target language, we see that English is by far the most common target language investigated among those with an L1 other than English (75% (15)) (cf. Figure 8). The English-language target communities visited include Australia (1), English-speaking Canada (2), Great Britain (7), India (2), New Zealand (1) and the USA (2). In contrast, the range of target language communities chosen by those speakers with L1 English is broad (cf. Figure 9), with these including China (4), France (4), Germany (4), Indonesia (4), Japan (4), Spain (7), and the cross-sectional study by Lafford (1995) including informants in Mexico and Spain (1).

Learner proficiency is difficult to compare across studies given that different researchers use different types of evidence of proficiency. While some use standardised tests, such as OPI scores (e. g. Iwasaki 2010), the *test de francais* (e. g. Kinginger and Belz 2005), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) (e. g. Vilar-Beltrán and Melchor-Couto 2013), the TOEFL test (e. g. Matsumura 2007) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (e. g. Ren 2015), others use number of years learning the L2 as a measure of proficiency, while yet others do not attempt a description but simply give details of previous instruction in English and exposure to English. Despite such obstacles to comparability, there is a general concentration on learners with intermediate to

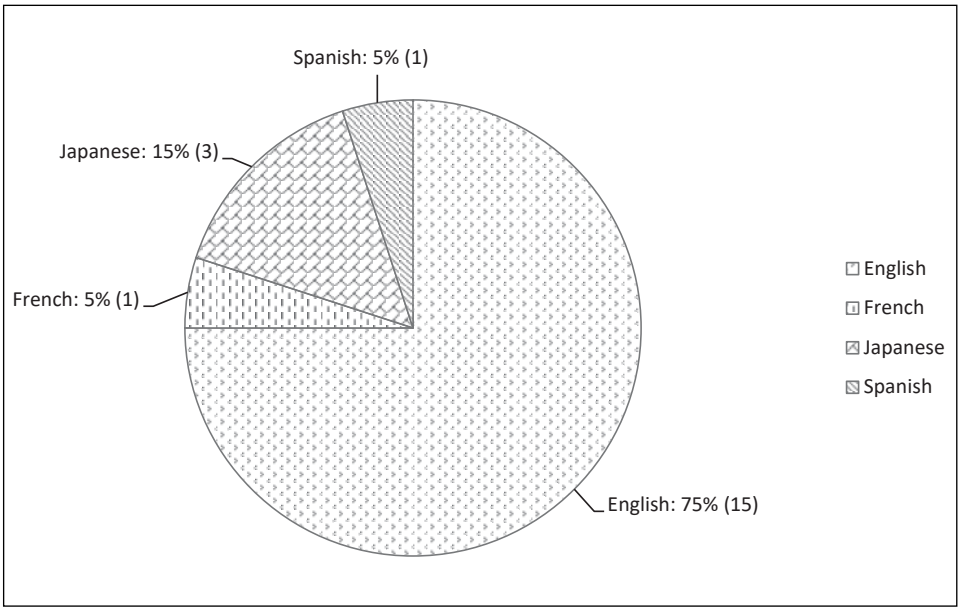

Figure 8: Target language of informants with an L1 other than English (n=20)

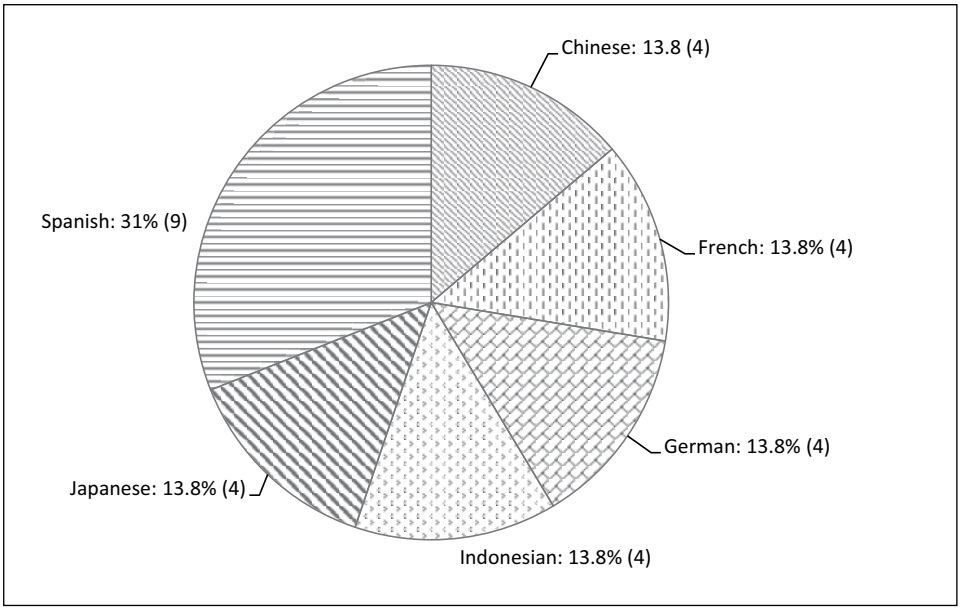

Figure 9: Target language of informants with L1 English (n=29)

higher proficiency evident. Beginning or elementary proficiency is relatively seldom among informants, with only 7.7% (3) of all studies with information given on levels within this group. An additional 10.4% (4) of studies incorporating learners of mixed levels also include beginning/elementary levels.

6. Major findings

Compared to cross-sectional studies, longitudinal studies have the advantage that researchers can investigate the study abroad context itself and identify factors which facilitate or impede L2 pragmatic development. Taguchi (2018) introduces a useful differentiation with regard to the insights offered to the study abroad context. She distinguishes between what she terms black box studies, exposure to input studies and situated pragmatic practice studies (cf. also Taguchi 2015c). Black box studies focus on the question as to whether study abroad is effective for developing L2 pragmatic competence without taking the study abroad context itself into account. Rather, they treat the context as an opaque black box and focus on description rather than on explanation. Table 5 shows that this type of study is most likely to use a control group (p=0.039). Exposure to input studies investigate the linguistic input available to learners on study abroad and examine whether there is a relationship between exposure, interaction and developments in L2 pragmatic competence. Exposure to input studies measure exposure to input indirectly via self-reports of, for instance, hours of target language use by skill, frequency of interactive/non-interactive social contact or perceived frequency of exposure to particular linguistic features. The final category of studies treats study abroad as a site of situated pragmatic practice. They adopt, as Taguchi (2018:133) puts it, a "'context-as-a-glass-box approach' … in which inner components and logic for learning are directly available for inspection." In other words, they look for direct evidence in the study abroad context itself of which aspects of input lead to pragmatic gains and reveal instances of explicit and implicit socialisation. Many such studies are qualitative in nature and focus on interaction in a range of situations, such as in home stay interactions, university settings or service encounters. In the present analysis, studies using meta-pragmatic data, such as journals or blogs, to reflect on encounters were also included in this context given that such studies focus on language use in a particular situation and also allow the relationship between input and L2 pragmatic development to be analysed in a rather direct manner.

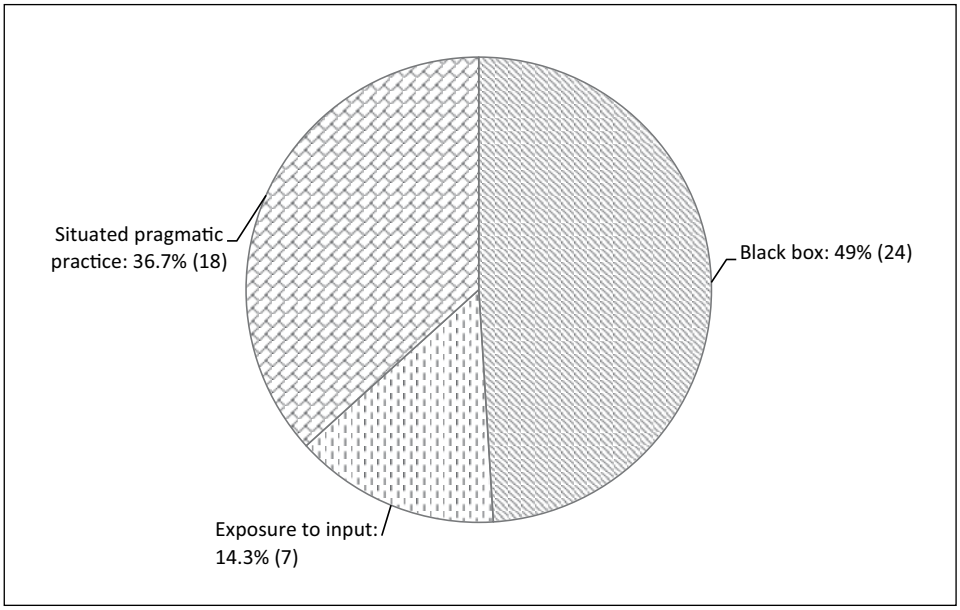

Figure 10: Distribution of study type in sample

Table 5: Relationship between study type and use of a control group

	Control group (n=11)
Black box studies	81.81 % (9)
Exposure to input studies	-
Situated pragmatic practice studies	18.18 % (2)

In the present sample, black box studies were most prominent at 49 % followed by studies of situated pragmatic practice (36.7 %) (cf. Figure 10). Those studies examining the influence of exposure in an indirect manner were least represented (14.3 %). These different types of study deliver distinct findings. It is to these findings which we now turn. Focus is first on the broad question as to the effectiveness of study abroad for developments in L2 pragmatic competence (6.1). Research in this area reveals many developments but also highlights the presence of some lack of development as well as individual variance. It is these which we then attempt to explain in 6.2 focused on the context of stay, in 6.3 focused on differences in learner profiles and finally in 6.4 focused on learner agency.

6.1. Developments in L2 pragmatic competence

Many studies in the sample reveal a positive trend with regard to the effect of study abroad on the development of pragmatic competence and in general, development is not restricted to one particular area of competence, but is rather found on several pragmatic levels (cf. 2.2, 4.2). In a study on the organisational level, for instance, Dings (2012) reports a decline in form-focused repairs over time in the target language speech community. Occasional meaning-based repairs remained over time. This development reflects some recognition among learners that form-related difficulties rarely impact on meaning. Rather both learners and NS are found to concentrate their efforts not on repair but on co-constructing meaning, making the learner status of the learner and the expert status of the NS less important in interaction. Kinginger and Farrell (2004), a study on the stylistic level, reports changes in learners' awareness of the T/V system particularly in peer relationships. Also, Shively (2011) in a study of requests (actional level) [and openings (interactional level)] finds a shift towards an L2-genre-appropriate use of service requests. Specifically, she found learners to use less speaker-oriented verbs and more hearer-oriented verbs over time, to decrease their use of indirect and syntactically complex verb forms and to increase the use of direct and syntactically less complex structures (i. e. imperatives, simple interrogatives, ellipsis).

Frequently, however, a coexistence of target-like and non-target-like developments is recorded in studies, with research pointing to areas of pragmatic competence which do not develop over time, but also to areas of partial development or non-linear developmental paths. A lack of development is recorded by Ren (2013a), for instance, in a study of internal modification of refusals. He finds no significant advantage for study abroad students relative to a control group apart from an advantage in the employment of individual internal modifiers, one an address term, the other the downtoner. On an interactional level, Pryde (2014) looks at Initiate-Respond-Evaluate (I-R-E) patterns over time in the target language community. These patterns, also known as Initiate-Respond-Feedback (I-R-F) patterns, were first introduced by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) to analyse classroom discourse but have been since employed in a range of contexts. Pryde (2014:501) finds that hosts continue to play the dominant role over time, taking charge of "what was talked about, when it was talked about and who should speak." Despite a decrease in host initiations over time, student initiations remained constant.

Partial developments and non-linear developmental paths were also recorded in a number of studies. Barron (2003), for instance, found that despite learners' reoffering developing towards the L2 norm in a lower use of reoffers over time, they still produced more reoffers than target language speakers at the end of the study abroad. In addition, increases in creative use and false overgeneralisations in learner language use has been reported – a finding which would suggest a non-linear developmental path. Barron (2003:226–227), for instance, shows learners'

positioning of *bitte* ('please') in learner requests in German to regress somewhat relative to an L2 norm during study abroad before moving nearer the norm again at the end of the stay. Also, Warga and Schölmberger (2007) in a study of French learner apologies, reports of shifts away from the L2 norm in an increase recorded over time in the use of two upgraders within one IFID and in the increased use of the upgrader *très* ('very') and parallel decrease in the use of the upgrader *vraiment* ('really').

The final question to be addressed here concerns the relative sustainability of developments in L2 pragmatic competence. Studies employing post-delayed tests of development throw light on this matter. However, these are limited. The small number of studies which exist suggests that study abroad developments are by no means static. While some development persists, other areas reverse or develop further in a non-L2-like fashion. Félix-Brasdefer and Hasler-Barker (2015), for example, find learners' compliment strategies to revert to pre-test levels to some degree, but report at the same time that developments, such as learners producing more compliments and more varied compliments in the post-delayed test relative to pre-study abroad, remain. Similarly, Matsumura (2007) reports some gradual divergence from NS use in learners' frequent use of an opting-out strategy in offers of advice particularly with higher-status interlocutors. These changes are, however, interpreted not as complete divergence from L2 norms but rather as reflecting a higher level of context-sensitivity. Further research is required in this area.

6.2. Influence of context of stay

Study abroad experiences differ according to length of stay, context of stay and also as to whether or not they are accompanied by pedagogical interventions focused on L2 pragmatics. Each factor has a potential influence on opportunities for input, interaction and noticing opportunities, and thus also on L2 pragmatic development. We turn to each in the following, beginning with length of stay.

6.2.1. Length of stay

In previous years, study abroad often took the form of a so-called *year abroad*. For some time now, this trend has been changing in countries, such as the USA and Australia, with stays becoming progressively shorter and increasingly taking the form of stays of less than one semester (cf. Hulstrand 2006; Institute of International Education 2019; Nerlich 2015). In Europe, Erasmus-funded student mobility allows stays for study or training for between three and 12 months. The average length of stay within the Erasmus program between 2012 and 2013 was six months, a figure which has remained constant for a decade (European Commission 2014).

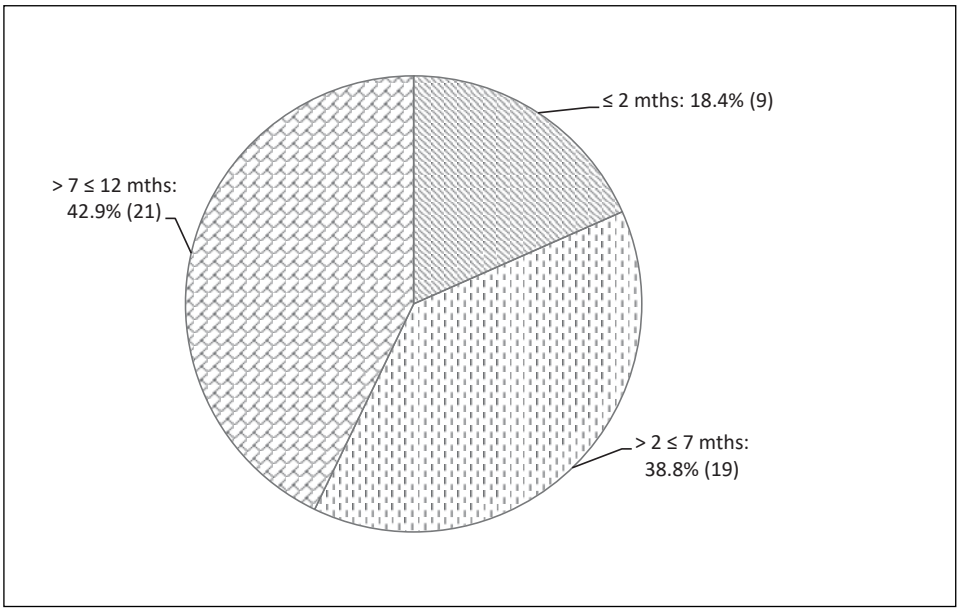

Figure 11: Length of stay (n=49)

Average length of stay in the studies at hand was calculated by number of months.[11] The minimum length of stay was one month, the maximum 12 months and the mean stay 6.1 months. Figure 11 shows how length of stay varies across studies. Most studies, however, are between two and twelve months. However, short term stays of two or less months are also represented (18.4 %). Interestingly, length of stay correlates with L1 culture. Studies with informants from the USA were significantly more likely to focus on developments over a short-term stay of seven months or less than studies with informants from other cultures (Pearson chi square = 0.004). In other words, long term year abroad students are less frequent in the USA in the present studies, with only 15 % of all USA informants in the present corpus engaging in stays more than seven months in length. This finding reflects the trend in the USA mentioned above towards progressively shorter stays.

[11] Where length of stay was mentioned in a study only in terms of a year abroad/an academic year, a period of 10 months was assumed; where length of stay was mentioned in terms of a semester, a period of four months was assumed in line with other studies in which both such terms and number of months were given. In cases where the number of weeks was given, these were calculated in terms of months/fractions of months and a month averaged at four weeks.

Insights into the relative effectiveness of short-term stays comes from a number of sources. On the one hand, there are studies in the present sample which focus on developments in L2 pragmatic competence over a short term stay (e. g. Hassall 2006, 2013a, 2015a, 2015b; Schauer 2007; Taguchi 2008a; Winke and Teng 2010; Shively 2011, 2013, 2014; Jin 2012; Li 2014; Félix-Brasdefer and Hasler-Barker 2015). In addition, studies focusing on longer-term study abroad periods frequently collect data over several points in time (cf. above). Some of these have noted features that develop quicker or slower than others over time (cf. Matsamura 2001; Barron 2003, 2007; Hassall 2013a; Khorshidi 2013b). Overall, both types of studies show that a certain degree of pragmatic knowledge can be acquired in a short time-frame but they also point out that many features remain undeveloped. Grieve (2015) is the only study in the database which systematically compares the development of pragmatic competence over a longer term and shorter term stay abroad. Her study throws interesting light on the effect of length of stay. Using semi-structured conversational interviews, Grieve contrasts informants on a five month exchange with those on a ten month exchange. She finds fewer approximation and intensification markers typical of Australian adolescent language in students on a five month exchange than students on a ten month programme despite the fact that data from both groups of students was collected at the same point in time – at the beginning of the study and after five months in the target language community. Aided by a language contact profile (LCP), she explains her findings with reference to lower levels of motivation and lower investment in integrating into and establishing relationships in the Australian adolescent community among those on a five month stay (cf. also Jin 2012).

6.2.2. Context of stay, input exposure and opportunities for interaction

There is no one study abroad context – rather different students/school-goers have different experiences depending also on their context of stay. We look first at the living accommodation and institutional contexts represented in the studies at hand before then looking at what research concludes regarding the importance of contact opportunities and the relative availability of input for the development of L2 pragmatic competence. Notably, no study in the sample explicitly focuses on the effect of different contexts of stay on pragmatic development.

In the present sample, accommodation was predominantly homestay (51.9 %) at least based on the information available in the studies at hand. Other options include student accommodation, flat-sharing, guest house or indeed living in an apartment alone (cf. Table 6).

Table 6: Living accommodation of study abroad informants in sample (n=27)

Homestay	51.9 % (14)
Student accommodation	22.2 % (6)
Guest house/boarding house	3.7 % (1)
Mixture	22.2 % (6)

In most cases, the institutional context of study abroad, whether university/higher education institution, language school/summer school, high school/secondary school or private study, was mentioned by authors. Most studies focus on students in a higher education institution (59.1 %) (cf. Table 7). Work placements were not represented at all (cf. 7).

Table 7: Institutional context of stay of study abroad informants in sample (n=44)

University/higher education institution	59.1 % (26)
International language school/summer course	31.8 % (14)
School	6.8 % (3)
Private study	2.3 % (1)

Those studies in the sample that go beyond the black box design and search for insights into the developmental processes and circumstances which lead to/hinder L2 pragmatic development show that study abroad students/school-goers enjoy input and interactional opportunities to differing degrees, with resultant consequences for L2 pragmatic development. Taguchi (2008b), for example, finds considerable variation in the reported amount of speaking and reading time, students experiencing unequal opportunities in this regard. She finds gains in comprehension speed to correlate with the reported amount of speaking and reading time spent by students outside of class time. Similarly, a case-study-based analysis by Kinginger and Blattner (2008) on awareness of colloquial phrases and pronouns of address in learner French also finds an advantage for those learners who engage in more interaction with speakers of various ages and backgrounds (cf. also Kinginger and Farrell 2004).

However, it is not only amount of input and interactional opportunities which have repercussions for the development of L2 pragmatic competence, but rather the intensity of contact. In other words, the extent of L2 pragmatic development will depend on whom stay abroad individuals spend time with, how frequent and extensive and close such contact is and in what situations they use the L2. Taguchi (2015a), for example, in four case studies in a Japanese study abroad context, finds social contact to foster integration and cultural adaptation. Specifically, regular,

close and stable social contacts were shown to be vital to pragmatic development. Communication strategies and learner qualities, such as patience, perseverance, flexibility and ambiguity tolerance, support learners in building such relationships. We come back to this latter issue in 6.3.

The importance of enduring relationships with members of the target language speech community is also highlighted by Jin (2012:231) in a case study of four American learners in China. In addition, Jin brings the role of limited input for reasons, such as foreigner talk, to our attention. She notes stay abroad students to have very limited exposure to contexts in which compliment response strategies are used due, she suggests, to the foreign identity of the American informants (as well as to the format and indeed short length of the study abroad program (cf. above)). Specifically, such factors hindered informants developing a close relationship with Chinese NS and accessing input and interaction opportunities in which compliment responses were produced in a target-like manner. Rather, their primary exposure to situations with compliment responses was in interaction with strangers. Compliment responses are generally rare in such interactions in the L2 context. Thus, development of pragmatic competence was impeded by a lack of close contacts.

Similarly, Marriott (1995) reports of limited input of addressee honorifics in the Japanese study abroad context due to the fact that the plain style is predominantly employed in families and among good friends. Also, in situations where stylistic variation is expected, the polite style is non-reciprocal. In addition, Marriott (1995) addresses the fact that negative feedback was limited (cf. also Hassall 2013a and Shively 2011 on lack of corrective feedback).

Finally, Hassall (2015b) is an innovative study focusing on the influence of fellow L2 learners on L2 pragmatic development. Hassall shows – possibly contrary to popular opinion – that fellow learners may facilitate L2 pragmatic development. Not only are their productions a source of input, but learners also discuss L2 pragmatics with each other explicitly and correct each other or plan pragmatic action together.

Thus, overall, research shows that the success of study abroad from a pragmatic developmental point of view appears to depend to a large degree on the amount and type of input available in the study abroad context and on the interactional opportunities open to learners. A lack of integration, foreigner talk and a lack of corrective feedback may hinder progress. However, as Kinginger and Blattner (2008:241) point out, learners themselves also have some personal control over input and interaction opportunities. They write:

> … there is much more to the study abroad experience than meets the eye. The ways in which the sojourn will function as an environment for development of advanced competence will depend on the qualities of the sojourn itself – for example, on the role that the host family elects to take in welcoming, assist in, and instructing newcomers. However, and crucially, it will also depend on the histories of the participants, and how

> they position themselves with respect to the people they meet and the activities that become available to them (Kinginger and Blattner 2008:241)

Whether learners exploit the opportunities available to them or not will also depend on the individuals themselves – our topic in 6.3.

6.2.3. Pedagogical intervention on L2 pragmatics during study abroad

The number of studies tracking learner development during study abroad with pedagogical intervention during a stay abroad is limited (cf. also Pérez Vidal and Shively 2019:361–362). The informants in Shively (2011), for instance, received explicit pragmatic input on requesting in Spanish, also in service encounters. She noted that this intervention, as well as explicit socialisation by the host family and implicit socialisation in the form of reactions from service providers, has an impact on changes in request behaviour. However, the study lacks a control group, as also does Henery (2015), a study of the development of two students' L2 meta-pragmatic awareness over time abroad following pedagogical intervention. The latter study shows that informants notice many pragmatic practices during their sojourn abroad and also acquire a greater insight into the social meaning behind linguistic conventions. Similarly, Winke and Teng (2010) investigate developments in pragmatic competence during study abroad supported by instruction. A control group was employed but this group was not on study abroad and did not take instruction; hence based on the quantitative data alone it is unclear whether the differences should be attributed to either instruction or to the study abroad context. Qualitative data, however, suggest that gains may be rather ascribed to the intervention.

A more suitable control group, i. e. one which was in the study abroad context but did not receive instruction, is provided by Alcón-Soler (2015a) in a study on the influence of instruction on request mitigation in e-mail communication. Mitigation is found to increase immediately after instruction but these increases are not sustained later on in study abroad. Similarly, Alcón-Soler (2015b) looks at learner developments in explicit knowledge of mitigation in email requests. She finds an increase in knowledge of request mitigators from pre-test to post-test for the group who received treatment early on during study abroad. However, these differences had disappeared in the post-delayed test at the end of the year abroad. Data from both studies suggests that knowledge gained via instruction is compared with conventions noticed in the study abroad context and reconstructed accordingly.

6.3. Influence of learner profiles

The pragmatic fruits of a stay in the target language community are not the same for all. Rather, different learners develop their L2 pragmatic competence to differing extents. While context of stay plays a role in determining outcomes (cf. 6.2), the characteristics of the learners themselves also influence outcomes.

In a chapter on individual differences in second language pragmatics (then termed interlanguage pragmatics), Kasper and Rose (2002:275) comment that in research in the area "… individual variation is submerged in the aggregate," a situation which they contrast with the role such variation plays in second language acquisition research (cf., e. g., Dörnyei 2009). There is no doubt that the study of individual differences remains a research gap also in L2 study abroad pragmatic research despite the years that have passed. At the same time, of all areas of second language pragmatics, study abroad research is one of the areas which has looked most at the role of individual differences in acquiring L2 pragmatic competence (cf. also Barron 2012; Taguchi 2013:1). To date, such research has focused on the effect of differences in proficiency, gender, motivation, personality and cognitive factors. We turn now to each factor.

6.3.1. Proficiency

Most study abroad research in second language pragmatics has focused on learners of intermediate to advanced pragmatic competence (cf. 5). However, comparison between these levels are limited. Indeed, in the present data base only Li (2014) compared the respective gains of students of each proficiency level over time spent on study abroad. Findings showed the relative gains in request production to be the same for both intermediate and advanced groups pointing to the preliminary conclusion that there is little difference regarding at which of these levels students engage on study abroad.

The small number of individual studies which have included lower level proficiency learners show contradictory findings as to the effect of proficiency on L2 pragmatic development in study abroad. On the one hand, studies find study abroad to hold particular advantages for lower proficiency learners particularly in the area of routines. A study by Taguchi, Li and Xiao (2013), for instance, found a significant correlation between formulaic competence level and frequency of encounters with target formulae in the study abroad context. This correlation only applied to learners with low initial levels of formulaic competence, pointing to study abroad as particularly beneficial for lower level L2 learners. Similarly, Marriott (1995), in a study of Australian foreign language learners of Japanese, for example, found learners with lower initial proficiency to make the greatest initial gains in their use of formulaic routines and third person reference forms for family members over time. On the other hand, in Marriott's study request production, particularly

the use of supportive moves by these learners, lagged behind. Similarly, Masuda (2011), in a study involving six learners in Japan found competence in the use of the particle *ne* to develop slower at lower proficiency levels, a fact explained with reference to the fact that such learners are only capable of lower levels of interactional involvement. In summary then, and based on this small number of studies, it would appear that L2 pragmatic competence develops at a quicker pace for lower proficiency individuals in the area of formulaic competence and at a slower pace for more complex areas of L2 interaction.

6.3.2. Gender

There is very little research on the influence of gender on developments in L2 pragmatic competence during study abroad. In the database, Khorshidi (2013a), a study of request and apology speech acts among Iranian learners in India, finds no relationship between gender and development. On the other hand, Masuda (2011), a study of six learners in Japan, reports how one male learner's belief that *ne* was a feminine linguistic feature prevented him from acquiring competence in using the particle. Masuda's study reveals the potential effect of psychological distance, i. e., the level of difference which a learner perceives to exist between him/herself and the target culture, on the development of L2 pragmatic competence.

6.3.3. Motivation

Motivations for embarking on study abroad may differ across individuals. While some may be motivated to learn the target language and integrate into the target language community, others may be more interested in having fun and travelling. In the database, studies, such as Kinginger and Belz (2005), a series of case studies of learners in the French L2 context focusing on T/V use, show how a lack of motivation to learn the L2 may negatively affect efforts to engage in interaction and establish personal relationships with target language speakers. As discussed in 6.2.2, this fact itself can lead to a lack of pragmatic development (cf. also Hassall 2006; Schauer 2007; Kinginger and Blattner 2008; Jin 2012; Taguchi 2015a on motivation as a potential factor in L2 pragmatic development). In general, however, the analysis shows a lack of systematic research on the influence of motivation on the development of L2 pragmatic competence during study abroad.

6.3.4. Personality

There is little research on the influence of personality on L2 development in study abroad. However, studies, such as Taguchi (2015a:154–155), suggest that – similar to the case of motivation – openness, positive attitudes and interest in the culture facilitate learners in gaining initial access to the local community. Taguchi (2015a)

adds, however, that gaining access to such community life is insufficient; rather characteristics, such as patience, perseverance, flexibility and ambiguity tolerance, are needed for learners to convert initial acquaintances into more long-term acquaintances (cf. also 6.2.2 on the importance of close contacts for L2 pragmatic development).

The only systematic study in the database is Taguchi (2015b), who investigates the relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and development of speech act production among 22 learners of Japanese in using the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) (Kelley and Meyers 1995). This measure operationalises cross-cultural adaptability via emotional resilience (ability to regulate emotions and maintain emotional equilibrium), flexibility/openness (adaptability to different ways of thinking and acting), perceptual acuity (attentiveness to interpersonal relations, verbal and non-verbal communication, sensitivity to context) and personal autonomy (strong sense of identity, ability to maintain personal values and beliefs). Taguchi finds a significant relationship between cross-cultural adaptability and gains in appropriateness of speech act. She explains her findings with reference to the role that these qualities play in adapting to and integrating into a new culture and in thus providing opportunities to interact with the target language speech community and to use the language. Thus, a high cross-cultural adaptability at the beginning of study abroad facilitates access to opportunities to use the L2 and leads to increased pragmatic development. On the other hand, however, a higher level of cross-cultural adaptability does not lead to increased developments in using speech act style, a finding Taguchi (2015b) explains with reference to the fact that appropriateness of speech act production is more complex and thus judged more holistically, whereas appropriateness of speech style is more grammar-oriented, focused only on learners' sentence-ending forms.

6.3.5. Cognitive factors

The question whether gains in the speed and accuracy of comprehension of implied meaning (indirect opinions, indirect refusals) is related to cognitive processing ability, and in particular, to lexical access speed, is investigated by Taguchi (2008b) in the database. She finds initial lexical access speed to relate to gains in speed measured via response times but not to accuracy. She concludes that speed reflects processing capacity not knowledge and she points out that learners with higher processing ability are likely to improve their speed of comprehension to a larger extent during study abroad than learners with lower abilities. Study abroad does not affect the relationship between processing ability and speed – rather lexical access skill affects pragmatic comprehension regardless of context (cf. Taguchi 2007 on the EFL context).

6.4. Learner agency

Context of study and learner profiles both appear to influence learner outcomes in developing pragmatic competence in study abroad. A further factor is the role of learner agency, several studies having reported of learners' rejection of the target language NS pragmatic norm. Hence, although L2 pragmatic competence in a particular area may be present, this competence may not be reflected in productive data due to a) divergent values and b) the influence of an educational standard.

Concerning a), research shows that learners feeling uncomfortable with target language norms may reject them. Siegal (1995), for instance, reports of a female student's rejection of Japanese norms in style-shifting between polite and plain styles due to the fact that she viewed herself as a competent researcher and did not wish to humble herself when speaking to a Japanese professor (cf. also Iwasaki 2010 on identity concerns with respect to the polite and plain styles in the Japanese context). Reports on learner resistance to target language norms do not only come from studies of more distant languages, such as Japanese. Barron (2003:164–165), for instance, reports of some rejection of the German target language norm in favour of an L1 norm by Irish informants. These students preferred L1 offer-refusal of offer exchange structure patterns, specifically in relation to the presence of ritual reoffers (cf. also Kinginger and Farrell 2004). In addition, Barron (2003:247–249) reports of some learners on study abroad noticing different levels of directness between Irish and German language use and equating these with personality differences which they rejected.

Finally, b) the influence of an educational standard means that pragmatic norms in the stay abroad context may, in the view of study abroad students/school-goers, not reflect the norms of the educational standard. In EFL, the standard learned in an educational context is usually British or American English; in a German as a Foreign Language context German German. This educational standard, which the study abroad learners return to after their stay abroad, may affect learners' acceptance or rejection of pragmatic features of other varieties of English met during study abroad. Davis (2007), for instance, found some resistance to Australian English routines by Korean learners due to a preference for North American English.

7. Conclusion and possible future directions for research

The present meta-analysis reveals an explosion of pragmatic research in the study abroad context in the recent past. The range of studies, predominantly longitudinal in nature, is broad. However, research on comprehension represents a further area of desired research. The overview also revealed a clear concentration on the actional level, with a broad range of speech acts investigated (cf. also Pérez Vidal and Shively 2019:365). On the actional level, the traditional focus is on the level

of the strategy without taking into account how these are formally realised. On the other hand, studies on the formal level which focus on routines frequently do not take the speech act realised into account (Barron 2019c; Sell et al. 2019). Hence, although connected, the interface between the formal and functional level is not attended to to any large extent in practice. Further analyses might go beyond this boundary and investigate formal realisations of speech acts, via routine variants and learner-specific realisations. Two recent studies by Barron (2019c) and Sell et al. (2019) address this research gap, the former advocating the use of corpus linguistic methods, the latter combining functional and lexical analyses.

Analyses on the formal, interactional, topic and organisational levels represent a research gap. To these levels could also be added a genre level, with research focusing on how genre knowledge in a range of domains develops over time in the stay abroad context. Kim and Belcher (2018) is one of the few studies in this area. The study tracked the use and development of genre knowledge of four Korean study abroad students in the USA using semi-structured interviews. Findings showed students' use of prior L1 and L2 genre knowledge along with an increase in L2 genre knowledge triggered by exposure to new genres. Genres of relevance in the study abroad context are likely to include text messages, narratives, essays or project reports. Further research might examine the global structural conventions coupled with an analysis of lexico-grammatical features in learner texts of a selection of genres, but also investigate the range of genre uses during stay abroad.

The L2 investigated in the sample at hand is typically English and the target language analysed is always spoken by the larger speech community in a country. However, the global realities of study abroad in an ELF context (cf. Jenkins 2013) need to be recognised and definitions of study abroad altered accordingly and this context also focused on (cf. 2.1). As Taguchi (2018:135) states "Future research in pragmatics learning in lingua franca will help us move to the new conceptualization of the study abroad context – study abroad programs as a site for multi-cultural communication" (cf. also Isabelli-Garcia et al. 2018:441). Glaser (2017), for instance, is a recent study focusing on students' meta-pragmatic perceptions of pragmatic input in a study abroad lingua franca context compared to a study abroad target language context. Glaser finds the students, who had been exposed to pragmatic input prior to their stay abroad, to find the lingua franca context to be superior for enhancing sociopragmatic awareness and the target language context to be more suitable for applying pragmalinguistic strategies learned in the EFL context.

Also on the topic of stay abroad context, one issue which has not been widely discussed to date in second language pragmatic is L2 users' awareness and production of localised pragmatic features. Students in a foreign language context are generally exposed to a neutral variety or to a standard language variety, such as British English (BrE) or American English (AmE) in the case of English (cf. Forsberg, Mohr and Jansen 2019). Input on further regional varieties (national, sub-national, regional, sub-regional) in an educational context appears to be min-

imal and on the pragmatic level largely non-existent (cf. Bieswanger 2008). On stay abroad, learners are however likely to become exposed to intralingual regional pragmatic variation in the target language. L2 French users on stay abroad in Canada, for instance, may witness speakers of Canadian French producing speech acts of greeting and leave-taking in a different way compared to the speech acts which they are exposed to in the foreign language French classroom; the same L2 French users may also recognise regional pragmatic features in different areas of France, which are not addressed in the classroom due to the focus on a homogeneous norm. Thus, in the stay abroad context L2 speakers may experience a conflict between the particular standard language variety propagated in instructional contexts and the variety of the region in which they find themselves. Much of the research on second language pragmatic L2 users' awareness and production of localised pragmatic features has to date been focused on immigrants. However, Davis' (2007) study shows its relevance for the stay abroad context, where Korean stay abroad students in Australia consciously resisted using Australian English routines (cf. also Magliacane and Howard 2019). Research on the range of factors influencing acceptance or rejection of localised features is in its infancy but they appear to include degree of exposure, complexity of the pragmatic features and learner agency. With regard to learner agency, research shows that L2 speakers may reject localised pragmatic features against the background of a preference for the standardised variety taught in the classroom (cf. Barron 2019b, a review article which examines L2 users' awareness and use of regional pragmatic features).

The prototypical informants in the sample at hand are small groups of study abroad informants of a single L1, typically English, reflecting the Anglo-Saxon bias of researchers' bases. Informants have a mean age of 22 years and typically intermediate to advanced competence. Further research might mirror the heterogeneity of study abroad informants rather than concentrate on this prototypical case. Additional groups which might be investigated include high school/secondary school students (cf. a recent study by Sell et al. 2019), low initial L2 proficiency speakers, students on different degree programs (e. g. social science, modern languages, business, law or engineering) or indeed heritage learners, i. e. those individuals who study abroad because of a connection, be it ethnic, religious, linguistic or national, to a particular ancestral region (cf. Shively 2016). Such a diversification of informants is important since different groups may reveal different development paths. To take one example, future language teachers, for instance, may, with the future language classroom in mind, be potentially more inclined to reject localised pragmatic uses over standard uses than heritage students who may be more open to aligning with target language conventions. These, however, remain mere suppositions. Research is, thus, needed to investigate the L2 pragmatic development of a range of learner profiles.

The prototypical length of stay in the studies in the database is typically between one and two terms and informants characteristically visit a higher education insti-

tution during their stay. In contrast, short-term stays are increasing in many settings (cf. Hulstrand 2006; Nerlich 2015; Institute of International Education 2019) and increased research on short-term sojourns is needed. Hernandez (2018) on L2 Spanish apologies during a short-term four week study abroad sojourn is a recent study. It reports some gains, but also non-linear developments and stable performance (cf. also Hassall 2018). With regard to the type of stay, the importance of work, internships, and volunteering abroad (WIVA) has not been recognised in second language pragmatics research despite the fact that many programs fund international mobility in this area and despite the fact that these are growing in popularity (cf., e. g., European Commission 2014, 2018). The studies in the present sample reflect the traditional concentration on educational contexts abroad and thus underline the desideratum for studies focusing on contexts in which students/school-goers interact in a work placement or volunteering context. Magliacane and Howard (2019) is a recent longitudinal study which addresses this research gap. The study examines pragmatic developments in the use of the pragmatic marker *like*. It contrasts development of this marker by a group of Italian learners undertaking university studies with that of a group of Italian learners in au-pair employment, both over a six-month period in Ireland. Findings point to an increase in the use of the pragmatic marker *like* by both groups and also to similar increases in particular functions of the marker. However, the typology of functions employed by the au pair group was overall more similar to NS use despite the fact that the university group presented more longitudinal changes. The researchers explain these findings with reference to the fact that university stay abroad frequently represents a lingua franca context even when learners are staying in the target language community, and indeed study abroad students in a university context visit similar language classes and frequently share accommodation. Thus, they conclude that students and au pairs have different input and output opportunities. More research is needed in this area. In addition, it is possible that learner profiles differ by programs, an aspect which may also influence L2 pragmatic development.

The present meta-analysis has shown that the most common format of study abroad analyses is the black box format, with its concentration on descriptions of L2 pragmatic development. Black box research views language learners and contexts as largely identical and instead focuses on aggregate developments. Recently, however, there has been a move to seek explanations for inconsistent and variable findings in study abroad research (cf. also Taguchi and Li 2019). Situated pragmatic practice studies and exposure to input studies help to throw light on contextual differences and individual differences which are frequently highlighted but not explained in black box research. Situated pragmatic practice studies and exposure to input studies investigate what goes on in study abroad directly and indirectly respectively. They highlight aspects of the context which can facilitate and impede L2 pragmatic development. In addition, such studies frequently show different learner types to benefit to differing degrees from the study abroad expe-

rience, while at the same time highlighting the importance of learner involvement in assisting integration. Given, however, that the majority of these explanatory studies have been based on case studies, further quantitative research is needed in both areas (cf. Taguchi and Li 2019). In addition, some options for further research on both contextual and individual influences are sketched in the following.

In the case of contextual influences, recent efforts to find out more about the nature of the study abroad context and input and interaction opportunities have highlighted the importance of intensity of interaction, the role of foreigner talk, the lack of feedback and the role which fellow L2 learners play in L2 pragmatic development. In the following, three recently suggested approaches to researching context are presented. Devlin's (2019) research focusing on the concept of micro-learning contexts. Devlin identifies three loci, namely the conversational, institutional and media loci and examines the correlation between the length of stay abroad and informants' relative access to a range of micro-learning contexts (conversational, institutional, media loci). She finds a correlation between length of stay and input type, with informants with more than one year stay abroad experience having access to institutional, conversational and media loci. Stay abroad informants with shorter aggregate stays in contrast show a bias towards the institutional locus. This conceptualisation of context can be used, for instance, to ascertain whether there is a correlation between student profile type and learning context type.

A second potential approach uses the concept of *domain of practice*, defined as domains characterised by particular participant memberships, goals and conventions of interaction (Taguchi and Collentine 2018:555–556). Taguchi and Collentine suggest that future study abroad research might focus on the conventions of interactions in those domains of practice which learners experience when on a sojourn abroad. Common domains of practice in the study abroad context include service encounters (cf., e. g., Shively 2011) and dinner table conversation (cf., e. g., Lee 2017; Greer 2019), but research is needed to identify further domains of practice experienced by learners (e. g. club activities, dorm room interactions, content classroom interactions). Working within the concept of domains of practice, Taguchi and Collentine (2018) suggest that researchers conduct an initial description of the relevant linguistic forms and interactional patterns of a particular domain of practice for L1 speakers and follow this up by pre-/post-tests for learners based on these descriptions combined with interviews. Alternatively, expert NS data might serve as a base-line.

Social network analysis is a third possibility that might be used to shed further light on context in study abroad. Such research, looking at learners' social networks, aims to assess learners' frequency and quality of contact with the target language and also to add to researcher knowledge of the input/output opportunities in various prototypical study abroad contexts. Survey data, also via mobile-phone surveys, combined with big-data analysis of learner writing (e. g. emails, social media posts), represent potential data sources (cf. Taguchi and Collentine

2018:561–563). Finally, it is noticeable that the bulk of research on context concentrates on the students/school-goers on study abroad. Insights from other actors in the study abroad social network, such as by teachers, lecturers, supervisors or host families, might also be researched to provide a more complete picture of the study abroad context (cf. also Isabelli-Garcia et al. 2018).

Research on individual learners is a recent development in second language pragmatics. Black box research views language learners as "homogenous processors of linguistic information" (Isabelli-Garcia et al. 2018: 458). In other words, language learners are seen as broadly similar and aggregate developments measured over time. In recent years, learners have begun to be seen from a more differentiated viewpoint, with the influence of individual differences on the development of L2 pragmatic competence investigated. In second language pragmatics, there is extensive potential for scholarship on the factors mentioned above (proficiency, motivation, personality, gender and cognitive processing (e. g. aptitude, working memory, lexical access skill)). In doing so, these factors need to be viewed as time-varying variables.

The question as to whether individual variables influence levels and intensity of social contact in the study abroad context is one which has been investigated recently. Taguchi, Li and Xiao (2016), for instance, examine the effects of intercultural competence and social contact on the speech act production of a group of American students learning Chinese on a semester-long study abroad program in China. They find that cross-cultural adaptability itself does not directly affect speech gains; rather they find that it directly affects levels of social contact and in this way indirectly influences speech act gains. On the other hand, however, a study by Sánchez-Hernández and Alcón-Soler (2019) into the effect of sociocultural adaptation, a sub-component of intercultural competence, and intensity of contact on recognition of pragmatic routines among Brazilian students in their first semester of study at a US university, does not support such findings. Sánchez-Hernández and Alcón-Soler (2019) find amount and variety of interaction with L2 users to be the primary predictor of pragmatic gains, and for socio-cultural adaptation, i. e. willingness to acculturate, to influence gains on a secondary level. In contrast to Taguchi, Li and Xiao's (2016) study, however, the constructs of adaptation and intensity of interaction were unrelated. Hence, further research is needed to investigate such relationships for a wide variety of linguistic features, users and contexts.

Research on the development of L2 competence in the study abroad context has come into its own in recent years. The present overview has shown that descriptions of L2 pragmatic development on a wide variety of linguistic features are now available and explanations for different development paths and for lack of development are increasing so that a lot more is known about the unique context which is study abroad. At the same time, many questions continue to remain open, questions which when answered can in time guide policy decisions regarding the optimal organisation of study abroad.

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