

The Effects of TV Series on Pragmatic Development

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Abstract

The aim of this study is two-fold: first, it explores the effects of captions in audiovisual support in pragmatic development; and second, it investigates the role of proficiency when learning pragmatics with captioned/non-captioned audiovisual material. This study was triggered by the increasing interest in ILP in bringing together both theoretical and practical frameworks in the study of pragmatics. Twenty-nine EFL learners were assigned to two groups (captioned/non-captioned). The participants were exposed to one season of a TV show; however, neither of the groups received instruction on pragmatics. In order to test pragmatic development (requests and suggestions), a WDCT was used before and after watching the show. Although the results showed a significant change in some of the request and suggestion strategies, captions did not seem to have a significant effect on the participants' responses. Regarding proficiency, no conclusive results could be drawn from the data of the present study.

Keywords: Pragmatics, ILP, WDCT, Audiovisual aid, Captions

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1. Introduction

In recent years it has become evident that we live in a multilingual society in which speakers of different languages communicate with each other using a common language, in many cases English (Crystal, 2003). Non-native speakers (NNS) of English learn this language either in English as a Second Language (ESL) environments where English plays an institutional and social role in the community or in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) conditions where English plays no major role in community and is primarily learned in the classroom (Ellis, 1994). Therefore, in order to achieve successful communication, there is a need for NNS to be competent in the second language (L2). Pragmatics, the study of “how-to-say-what-to-whom-when” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013), has explored how linguistic competence is also affected by cultural and social norms (Yule, 1996). However, it has been the field of Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) which has aimed at investigating the learners’ development and use of pragmatic knowledge in second [or foreign] language contexts (Yazdanfar & Bonyadi, 2016). What many ILP studies have shown is that being competent in a language does not only imply being grammatically competent but also pragmatically competent (Krisnawati, 2011). This has thus created the need to explore the value and effects of pragmatic development on language education (Li, 2013; Takkaç Tulgar, 2016). There are numerous studies that have looked at how beneficial pragmatic instruction can be, among them House & Kasper (1981), Rose & Kwai-fun (2001) and Martínez-flor (2004). However, as a number of researches have shown, pragmatic competence continues to be hindered – especially in EFL classrooms – due to time, methodological constraints and lack of genuine situations (Alcón & Safont, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Rose, 1999). Consequently, authentic audiovisual input in the classroom has received substantial attention since it creates abundant opportunities for the learners to tackle various pragmatic features (Alcón, 2005). Nevertheless, to our knowledge, there is a shortage of studies which observe if pragmatic competence can be influenced without receiving instruction through audiovisual input with or without captions support. This study aims to shed light on this gap in the literature. The speech acts examined in the present study are suggestions and requests, mainly because of their abundance and the importance of using appropriate strategies in daily conversations (Gilabert & Barón, 2013). We will first take a look at the previous literature on pragmatics and audiovisual support and

afterwards we will explain the methodology. Subsequently, we will examine the results and discuss our findings and their implication for future studies.

2. Literature Review

2.1. ILP and Speech Act Theory

Most ILP studies have focused on Speech Act Theory (Kasper, 1989) which can be traced back to Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) in linguistic philosophy. This attention is due to the necessity of understanding intercultural behavior. According to Speech Act Theory, speakers perform illocutionary acts by producing utterances. An illocutionary act is a language function performed by an utterance conveying communicative intentions (e.g. suggestions, apologies, requests, advice, etc.). An utterance is hence used to show a speaker's intention in a particular situation. As Fraser (1975) suggests, a single utterance can and often does serve a number of illocutionary acts. Therefore, an addressee has to draw pragmatic inferences to comprehend the speaker's intention.

Searle later in his "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts" (1976) defined and divided illocutionary acts into five categories: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations. Searle defined directives as attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. Later, Haverkate (1984) proposed two categories for the directives: impositive and non-impositive directives. According to Haverkate, the impositive directives are more threatening acts, e.g. requests and ordering, which are made in the best interest of the speaker (Trosborg, 1995) and the latter, non-impositive directives, are less threatening acts like suggestions that benefit the hearer (Rintell, 1979). As stated by Brown & Levinson (1987), directives attempt to alter the behavior of another actor and, by doing so, threaten the hearer's face. Therefore, directives have been called face-threatening acts (FTAs), which require the use of various politeness strategies to mitigate the effect of the FTAs.

Due to the relevance of speech act theory in the field of pragmatics, ILP researchers have examined speech act realization in second and foreign language contexts. Requesting has been one of the most studied speech acts, mainly due to the fact that it is by nature, face-threatening (Kasper, 1994) and it can impede appropriate communication if proper strategies are not used in specific situations. In the following section, there will be a review of previous studies on the acquisition of request strategies.

2.1.1. Requesting in ILP

Trosborg (1995: 187) defined requests as “an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (i.e. requester) conveys to a hearer (i.e. requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is of the benefit of the speaker”. The same speech act can be performed either directly or indirectly. A request strategy is defined as “the obligatory choice of the level of directness by which the request is realized. By directness is meant the degree to which the speaker’s illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution” (Blum-kulka et al., 1989a: 278). Therefore, when using a direct strategy, the speaker’s intention is explicit but with indirect strategies their intention is conveyed implicitly. According to Holtgraves (1986), it is easier to understand the speaker’s intentions through direct strategies but such strategies can sometimes lead to pragmatic failure in conversation. That is the reason why indirect strategies have also been considered as an alternative to direct strategies in order to achieve less face-threatening sequences. Hence, the degree of politeness can increase by using indirect strategies. In line with this, many studies in ILP have explored the development of requests in language learning.

Scarcella (1979) analyzed the development of polite features in English requests among adults in a beginner and an advanced ESL group through role-plays. He observed that adults started using some of the politeness features quite early in L2 acquisition, but that imperatives were favored by beginners. Along the same line, Hassall (2003) elicited requests through role-plays among Australian learners of Indonesian in Indonesia and discovered that direct requests decreased as their proficiency rose, even though NNS tended to overuse Want and Hint Statements. Similarly, Ellis (1992) carried out a longitudinal study on two ESL students over a period of two years. He reported a growth in the knowledge of request strategies but the use of imperatives outweighed other strategies. Furthermore, Trosborg (1995) examined the development of requests, complaints, and apologies among three Danish ESL groups including students from secondary school, high school, and university. Analyzing requests, she found that conventional indirectness increased with higher proficiency. Achiba (2003), who studied her 7-year-old child in a stay-abroad context in Australia, reported a fast decrease in choosing imperatives and an increase in conventional indirectness. In a FL context, Félix-Brasdefer (2007) investigated requests via four open role-plays among forty-five learners of Spanish in the United States. He concluded that sociopragmatic knowledge seemed to follow grammatical

competence in the performance of requests, namely in the preference of using conventionally indirect strategies over direct ones. In addition, Félix-Brasdefer stated the fact that request strategies used by the intermediate and advanced students failed to reach native Spanish ones was in itself proof that pragmatic instruction was necessary. In Iran, Jalilifar (2009) conducted a study on sixty-nine BA and MA Persian EFL learners and ten Australian native speakers of English to find strategies used by each group. To obtain data, he used a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The results revealed that as proficiency level increased, learners' use of direct requests decreased, but conventional and non-conventional types of requesting increase. As observed in the previous literature on requests, higher level NNS tend to use more indirect strategies and polite features.

2.1.2. Suggesting in ILP

As Searle (1976) pointed out, suggestions imply that the hearer commits to some future course of action suggested by the speaker. Suggestions are considered FTAs as well, since the speaker intends the hearer to do something. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) carried out a longitudinal study examining suggestions and rejections. The participants were taped in thirty-five advising sessions to observe their pragmatic competence development over time. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford concluded that NNSs made more appropriate suggestions over time. Koike (1996) examined learners of Spanish in their understanding of speech acts and transfer from English to Spanish after watching videotaped dialogues produced by native Spanish speakers (seven speech acts four of which were suggestions) and discovered that more proficient learners were better at recognizing the speech acts. She concluded that learners needed contextualized language to develop their sociopragmatic competence. Subsequently, Alcón (2001) studied Spanish students in an ESL setting of academic advising sessions. She found that even though the learners had input from teachers, they were still lacking pragmatic competence since the participants were using inappropriate suggestion forms. Alcón concluded that exposure alone was not enough to develop pragmatic competence, but pedagogical intervention was required in academic advising sessions. Moreover, in a different context, Liu and Wang (2012) conducted a stay-abroad case study to analyze the development of suggestion strategies for a Chinese doctoral student at an American university over a semester.

They found that he used similar pragmalinguistic forms at the start and end of the semester, but his sociopragmatic awareness had increased.

Apart from looking at developmental patterns and how speech acts are acquired, studies in ILP have also explored the effects of instruction on pragmatic development. The following section thus seeks to review previous literature on that issue.

2.2. Learning Pragmatics in EFL Contexts

Research in EFL contexts demonstrates that many factors contribute to the restriction of pragmatic learning in such context (Lörscher & Schulze, 1988). First, as the instructors have limited time and a controlled syllabus, there is little opportunity for more intercultural teaching (Rose, 1999) and when dealt with in class, teachers don't seem to offer authentic or direct model for the students (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1996). Another aspect that seems to hinder pragmatic learning is the input provided in pedagogical materials. In fact, Alcón and Safont (2001) concluded that pedagogical materials were not sufficient since a list of linguistic forms presented in course books were highly unlikely to bring pragmatic development. The third factor that should also be mentioned here is that, even when naturalistic input is available, certain pragmatic features may not be adequately salient for learners to be noticed (Schmidt, 1993). Finally, pragmatic transfer may also play a role when acquiring the L2 pragmatics (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). Due to all the aforementioned factors, many studies carried out in ILP which have explored the effects of instruction in FL contexts have specifically focused on implicit and explicit methods of teaching.

One of the earliest studies was conducted by House and Kasper (1981) with German EFL learners which focused on a variety of discourse markers and gambits. The authors used two versions of the same communicative course, one provided learners with metapragmatic information (explicit) and one received none (implicit). Results of the study showed that both groups improved but the former group had an advantage over the latter. Similarly, Takahashi (2001) studied the effect of explicit teaching and other enhancement conditions on Japanese EFL learners' development of request strategies and also reported explicit instruction as being more effective. In Martínez-Flor's (2004) doctoral dissertation she used a variety of implicit techniques to examine the effect of implicit and explicit teaching on suggestions. She discovered that both implicit and explicit treatment groups outperformed the control group in

awareness and production of the speech act of suggestion. Similarly, Alcón (2005) investigated the effect of implicit and explicit instruction on pragmatic awareness of 132 students of EFL in Spain and concluded that instruction, especially explicit instruction, was more beneficial to learners' pragmatic competence. In contrast with Alcon's study, Dastjerdi and Rezvani (2010) likewise discovered the positive effects of explicit instruction on ninety Iranian EFL students but they failed to obtain significant difference between explicit and implicit treatments. Furthermore, Abdollahizadeh et al. (2014) implemented a combination of implicit and explicit methods to teach request strategies and observed a significant growth in the learners' pragmatic awareness in the post-test. Additionally, Rafieyan et al. (2014) conducted a research on sixty Iranian EFL students in order to observe pragmatic awareness sustainability after a four-week explicit instruction intervention. The participants gained pragmatic awareness in the post-test, however they failed to show any significant change in the delayed post-test. In addition to his 2011 article, Rezvani et al. (2014) attempted to examine the difference between implicit and explicit treatments through video excerpts. However, they were unsuccessful in finding a statistically significant difference between the two. Taking a step back from the two methods of teaching, Sarab and Reza (2015) focused solely on the effect of pragmatic instruction in EFL context and also found positive growth in the production and recognition of request strategies. In a distance learning context, Chalak and Abbasi (2015) carried out their research on sixty female Iranian participants and reported that a combination of explicit and implicit teaching techniques proved more effective than using either one individually in facilitating the production of suggestion.

As seen in this section, most of the research on the effect of instruction on the speech acts of requests and suggestions conclude that the benefits of explicit pragmatic instruction generally tend to outweigh its implicit counterpart. A distinction between incidental and intentional language acquisition should therefore be made at this point. Intentional learning can be associated with formal, classroom based environment contrary to incidental learning which takes place outside the formal institution of learning and people are believed to unconsciously acquire it (Pemberton, Fallahkhair, & Masthoff, 2005). In other words, as Schmidt (1990) stated, learning something incidentally is when you acquire it unintentionally while doing something else. However, Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1993, 2001) which claims that learners must notice features in the L2 in order for acquisition to take place, has "the strongest

impetus for pragmatic intervention” (Taguchi, 2011: 291). Therefore, students would have to pay attention to the relevant pragmatic features to learn them. In line with this, Frumuselu et al. stated that watching TV programs and movies is associated with incidental learning, and that it can lead to an increase of the learners’ motivation (Frumuselu et al., 2015)

2.3. Audiovisual Input and Language Learning

A commonly used teaching method has been using audiovisual excerpts in classrooms. This method has also been implemented in pragmatic instruction, which has been considered as positive input in the FL classroom, as claimed by Martínez-Flor and Fernández Guerra (2002).

For decades, audiovisual materials have been used in classrooms since it was established that by doing so, ‘slices of language’ could be brought into the classroom (Allan, 1985: 48). Arthur (1999) stated that in classrooms audiovisuals can increase awareness of other cultures by teaching appropriateness and suitability, and can offer a visual reinforcement of the target language. Researchers reported that sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistic awareness are too demanding for EFL learners (Grant & Starks, 2001; Washburn, 2001) and studies by Rose (1997, 2001) confirmed that authentic audiovisual input, while originally aimed at native speakers, shows language use in different contexts. As he reports, “in foreign language contexts, exposure to film is generally the closest that language learners will ever get to witnessing or participating in native speaker interaction” (Rose, 1997: 283). As an example, in the study of pragmatics, Martínez-Flor & Fernández Guerra (2002) analyzed pragmatic strategies (requests, suggestions and advice) presented in three course books and three movies. They concluded that the EFL course books studied did not provide appropriate pragmatic instances for learners. Authentic input and audiovisual materials are also believed to be more motivating than videos made for EFL teaching situations because they provide students with a film to be enjoyed rather than a lesson that needs to be tested on (King, 2002). Despite these positive aspects, audiovisual excerpts have also been criticized for showing unauthentic pieces of interaction (Alcón, 2005).

Since using unfamiliar or highly-demanding activities with video clips can be demotivating and strenuous for learners, some researchers have put forth that subtitles or captions can be used to overcome this problem (e.g. Talaván, 2007). Even though a

few investigators have argued that subtitles can be a disadvantage for students, nowadays the more accepted view is that “far from being a distraction and a source of laziness, subtitles might have a potential value in helping the learning acquisition process by providing learners with the key to massive quantities of authentic and comprehensible language input” (Vanderplank, 1988: 272–273). Reading the dialogue in context while listening to the original language stimulates learners to consolidate what they are learning, enriching their vocabulary and making them become familiar with the culture of the foreign language in an authentic setting (Talaván, 2007; Vanderplank, 2010). Below, various studies on the effects of subtitles and captions on language learning will be reviewed.

2.3.1. Captions in Audiovisual Input

Paivio (1986) Bilingual Dual Coding Theory suggested that the verbal and imagery systems which contain nonverbal objects and events are independent and they are processed differently and even though they are linked, they create separate representations in the mind. Paivio’s theory and the abundance of technology sparked the interest of several researchers to carry out various studies on subtitles and movies. Later on, Mayer (2003) discovered that people can pay attention for a limited span of time if the information they receive comes via only one channel (e.g. auditory). Subsequently, he developed the Multimedia Learning Theory which states that learners learn better from words and pictures than from words alone, since learning takes place through the formation of new mental representations or strengthening of existing ones (Mayer, 2009).

To provide assistance for learning and understanding movies, subtitles have been used. There are multiple options for subtitling, two of which are: intralingual, when the subtitles are in the original language of the movie (initially used for the deaf community of the source language); and interlingual, when the subtitles are translated into other languages to fit the needs of “foreign” audiences. In the present study, henceforth, ‘captions’ will be the term used for same-language subtitles (i.e. intralingual subtitles, in the learners’ L2) and ‘subtitles’ for interlingual subtitling in the learner’s L1. Investigators have been conducting research to analyze the benefits of inter/intralingual subtitling for ESL and EFL learners. Danan (2004) provided an overview of these studies, stating that in the case of interlingual subtitled visual input “three independent systems are interconnected through triple associations between

image, sound in one language, and text in another, which may lead to better processing and recall because of the additive effects of both image and translation” (p. 72). Meanwhile, Markham & Peter (2003) proposed that L1 subtitles may be more useful to low-level learners, which in turn supported Guillory's (1998) theory that if the material in the video is too advanced for the learners' proficiency level, L2 subtitles cannot sufficiently compensate for the fast rate of speech and the difficulty of the vocabulary. Similarly, based on the studies carried out by Bairstow and Lavour (2012), the interlingual condition appeared to lead to better comprehension across different proficiency levels, whereas the intralingual condition seemed to promote lexical learning.

In contrast, Montero Pérez et al., (2013) concluded that L2 subtitling may be equally effective for all proficiency levels as long as the video materials match learners' actual level. Frumuselu et al.'s (2015) study established that intralingual subtitles were more beneficial in the field of vocabulary, idioms and expressions to their participants regardless of their level after watching the sitcom “Friends” with English captions without receiving instruction. Muñoz (2017) carried out research using eye-tracking on three different age groups while watching 2 episodes of *The Simpsons* with subtitles and she discovered that children or beginner ESL learners fixate more on words than adults, adolescents or more proficient learners who skipped words in the subtitles more in their L1 than the L2. She concluded that L1 subtitles may be more appropriate for learners whose vocabulary size is small and higher proficiency levels can use L2 subtitles to aid L2 learning. Furthermore, Barón and Levkina (2018) examined the effects of captioned audiovisual support on EFL learners' pragmatic development after watching video excerpts in the classroom. They concluded that audiovisual aid was beneficial to the participants, however, captions only led to significant differences in some of pragmatic moves analyzed.

Having reviewed the mentioned articles, to the knowledge of the researcher, there have been no studies focusing on the acquisition of pragmatics through audiovisual input without any instruction. Therefore, the following research questions have guided this study:

- 1- Do captions play a role in pragmatic development when watching TV shows at home?
- 2- What is the role of proficiency in pragmatic development when watching TV shows at home?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

49 students at Universitat de Barcelona were approached. The participants were second and third year students studying English Studies or Modern Languages. In the first session, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (Allan, 1992), both the grammar and the listening parts, was used to evaluate the participants' level of English placing them in four different levels, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced (A2, B1, B2 and C2, respectively, as described in the CEF). The test was carried out during one session of their class and took approximately 40 minutes. The treatment took place during Spring vacations, consequently, not all the participants completed the tests. Finally, only 29 participants out of the original 49 students were included in the study (26 females and 3 males, aged 19-24, mean 20.07), as seen in Table 1 below. 20 participants declared they were raised with Spanish and Catalan, 4 with Catalan, 4 with Spanish and the only C2 user noted she was raised with exposure to Spanish and English.

Table 1. Participants

<i>Level</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Mean age</i>	<i>Sex</i>
<i>A2</i>	2	21	2 females
<i>B1</i>	3	21	2 females 1 males
<i>B2</i>	8	20.75	8 females
<i>C1</i>	15	19.20	13 females 2 males
<i>C2</i>	1	23	1 female

3.2. Research Design

Taking into consideration the research questions, this study was given a pre/post-test design. Between the pre-test and the post-test, the participants were asked to watch a series of episodes from a TV show. They were divided into two groups: Group A watched the series with captions while Group B watched it without.

The show chosen was the hit sitcom *Modern Family*. Firstly, due to the fact that there are a substantial number of interactional exchanges between different

characters which provide an excellent resource of familiar interaction for the learners. Secondly, it is a well-known popular American sitcom which is an appropriate sample of an international show that people from around the world have access to. Thirdly, each episode of the show is approximately 21.5 minutes, relatively short and not arduous for the students' schedules.

3.3. Procedure

After the OPT, the participants received the questionnaire designed and used by the GRAL research group to assess English exposure. The same Written Discourse Completion Task (WDCT) was used as the pre-test and the post-test. The participants were then asked to complete the situations provided in the WDCT at home through a link provided online via Google Form. A consent form was provided in the first part of the Google Form that prevented the participants from going forward with the task if they did not agree with the terms. The WDCT was piloted with 17 people and after receiving feedback, changes were made to the WDCT.

The students were provided with the link to the form in which they were also asked whether they had already watched *Modern Family*. The table below presents the distribution of all the 29 participants (Table 2).

Table 2. Background

<i>History with the show</i>	<i>Level (Number of participants)</i>
<i>Never</i>	B2 (2), C1 (2)
<i>English without captions</i>	B2 (1), C1 (3), C2 (1)
<i>English with English captions</i>	B1 (1), C1 (2)
<i>English with Spanish captions</i>	A2 (1), B1 (1), C1 (2)
<i>Spanish dubbed</i>	A2 (1), B1 (1), B2 (5), C1 (6)

After the background questionnaire was collected, the participants were divided into two balanced groups. Subsequently, the data from the WDCT were gathered and coded. The participants were then given a deadline to watch all 24 episodes of *Modern Family* season six (14 participants in Group A, to watch the show

with captions and 15 participants in Group B to watch the show without captions), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Groups

<i>Group</i>	<i>Level (Number of participants)</i>
<i>A (with captions)</i>	A2(2), B1(2), B2(4), C1(6) Total: 14
<i>B (without captions)</i>	B1(1), B2(4), C1(9), C2(1) Total: 15

After 45 days, the participants were asked to take the same WDCT again. The data were collected and categorized in SPSS. Two inter-raters agreed to review the data and the disagreements were discussed and clarified in the coding. Additionally, the participants were asked about their experience watching the show. Moreover, six participants were chosen to do a more in-depth investigation into their time watching the show (Table 4).

Table 4. Focal Participants

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>History with the show</i>	<i>Treatment</i>
212	B1	English with Spanish subtitles	With subtitles
222	B2	Spanish	Without subtitles
223	B2	No	With subtitles
3111	C1	English with English subtitles	Without subtitles
3121	C1	Spanish	With subtitles
3122	C1	English without subtitles	Without subtitles

3.4. Instruments

3.4.1. Background questionnaire

The background questionnaire which was used in this study was designed and used by the GRAL research group. This questionnaire contains five parts and it is available in Spanish and Catalan. In this study, the former version was used. The background questionnaire inquired about general and detailed language exposure, namely how frequently the participants watch movies and TV shows with subtitles, without subtitles, in their original language or dubbed, it also asked about reading books, listening to music, going abroad, taking English classes and even attending language camps.

3.4.2. WDCT

A Written Discourse Completion Task (WDCT) was devised to assess and measure the participants' pragmatic performance after the show was selected and the scripts were analyzed (Appendix 1). As defined by Jianda (2006) WDCTs can be considered "written questionnaires including a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under study" (p. 4). WDCTs have been widely used as the elicitation instrument in various studies of pragmatics. Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin (2005) reported that DCTs provide the researcher with data of high comparability, due to the controlled nature of the task. WDCTs are an appropriate means to measure spoken language but in written form (Cohen & Shively, 2007). Bardovi-Harlig (2013) confirmed that WDCTs provide opportunities to draw on explicit pragmatic knowledge, in addition, they explain that this type of task allows researchers to control different variables as well as giving them the ability to compare the participants' answers. Even though oral DCTs and role-plays are reported to provide more naturalistic conditions, the researcher's focus was not on interaction but comparing pragmatic gains while controlling the situations, therefore, WDCTs were considered to be more suitable. The situations mentioned in the WDCT were developed based on those appearing in the series. After analyzing the sixth season of the series, twenty situations were chosen for the WDCTs to be presented through Google Forms which shuffled the situations (Appendix 1). The WDCTs included ten suggestions (henceforth, SS1-10) and ten requests (henceforth, RS1-10), with low social distance, i.e. between parents and children, siblings and partners. In 17 out of 20 situations the prompt "you say" was used for its ambiguity since it allows learners

to demonstrate their sociopragmatic knowledge by providing the speech act that best fits the scenario, whereas the more directive prompt eliminates the learner choice in the matter (Bardovi-Harlig, 2015). However, after piloting the WDCT, it proved to be difficult to understand the speech act necessary without using “you suggest” in 3 of the situations.

3.4.3. Oral Interview

To provide more support to the WDCT and to observe the learners’ experience more profoundly, a series of in-depth questions were created for six students who were selected for a short interview to talk about their involvement with the study (Appendix 2). The interview was carried out after the post-test.

3.5. Measures

When *Modern Family* script was coded, all the request and suggestion speech acts presented on the show fit Achiba's (2003) taxonomy of request and the taxonomy of suggestion from Martínez-Flor (2004). Hence, the answers provided by the students in Google Form were also coded using the mentioned taxonomies.

Regarding requests, there are two highly used taxonomies. The first, developed by Trosborg (1995), was based on Austin's (1962), Searle's (1976) and reformulated by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) and Brown and Levinson (1987). The second, Achiba (2003) which followed Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-kulka et al., 1989a) and Weizman (1993) hint taxonomy. CCSARP is an effort to empirically study the speech acts of requests and apologies in eight languages (Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian French, Danish, German, Hebrew, and Russian). The goal of the project was to compare across these languages with respect to these speech acts and establish native speakers’ patterns and also find similarities and differences between native and non-native speakers of mentioned languages.

Achiba's (2003) taxonomy was chosen for this study because it covers all the examples which emerged in this study (Appendix 3). This taxonomy classifies requests into:

- 1- Direct. The most explicit strategy in which the speaker expresses a request to the hearer.
 - a. Mood Derivable (e.g. Give me a hand, come on!)
 - b. Obligation Statements (e.g. You can't tell mom!)

- c. Want Statements (e.g. I want you to think about it tomorrow)
- 2- Conventionally indirect (hearer-based). Strategies conventionalized by the language which take reference to contextual preconditions necessary for its performance.
 - a. Suggestory Formulae (e.g. You should help me do it.)
 - b. Stating Preparatory (e.g. I would appreciate it if you would not tell mom.)
 - c. Query Preparatory (e.g. Could you help me please?)
- 3- Nonconventionally indirect strategies. When a speaker uses a hint to imply a request, the hearer has to infer from that expression what the speaker means.
 - a. Hints (Is it necessary to bring him?)

Martínez-Flor's (2004) categorization of suggestions (Appendix 4) brought together the direct and indirect strategy of Kasper & Schmidt (1996), on record off record based on politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) and the appropriateness strategies of Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's (1996) to develop her taxonomy. The taxonomy is divided into four main categories:

- 1- Direct strategies show directly what the speaker means.
 - a. Performative verb (e.g. I would suggest you to get that tattoo.)
 - b. A noun of suggestion (e.g. My suggestion/recommendation/advice would be to take it slow.)
 - c. Imperative (e.g. Try to talk to her.)
 - d. Negative imperative (e.g. Don't be sad!)
- 2- Conventionalized forms are specific linguistic formulae that prevents the hearer from misinterpreting the intention of the suggestion directly uttered while being on some level, indirect. In this section there are five subcategories:
 - a. Specific formulae (e.g. Why don't you call a friend?)
 - b. Possibility or probability (e.g. You could try to listen to them.)
 - c. Should (e.g. You should think this through.)
 - d. Need (e.g. You need to make sure you want to break up with her.)
 - e. Conditional (e.g. If I were you, I would tell her in the best way possible.)

- 3- Indirect forms are classified into
 - a. Impersonal (e.g. It could be the best option for us.)
 - b. Hints (e.g. There's a shop I know where they are on sale.)
- 4- Other forms row were placed into a new section when the examples did not fit into prior categories
 - a. Inclusive We (e.g. Let's take a picture!)
 - b. Obligation (e.g. You must choose something you like.)
- 5- Another suggestion strategy was added to this list by Pattemore (2017) when in his research he discovered that the boundary between a request and a suggestion was not clear. At times the theoretical distinction of request being speaker-oriented and suggestion being hearer-oriented may intersect.
 - a. Request Suggestion (e.g. Could you take a picture of us, please?)

4. Results

In this section, the results of the gathered data will be reported. Firstly, the quantitative results from the WDCT will be examined and secondly, the six participants' responses to the oral interview will be reported

4.1. WDCT

There were several approaches taken to deal with the data. Firstly, the data were explored quantitatively using SPSS and secondly, they were examined in a more qualitative manner using frequencies. After coding the pre-test and post-test results into SPSS (V.21 for Mac), two sets of matrices were created: one to compare the differences between the situations in time one and time two, and the other to compare the changes in the strategies used by each participant in the two tests.

One way of approaching the data analysis was to analyze the changes in the strategies between the tests in each situation. Therefore, a Marginal Homogeneity test was applied since the data were not normally distributed and the strategies were coded nominally. Marginal Homogeneity explores if there is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test answers in the WDCT. In five of the situations (2 requests and 3 suggestions) the changes were significant; in Request Situation 1 (RS1) $p = .050$, RS5 $p = .050$, Suggestion Situation 1 (SS1) $p < .005$, SS5 $p < .050$, and SS9 $p = .050$. These results show there was a statistically significant change in request and

suggestion strategies between the pre-test and the post-test in the mentioned situations, i.e. a significant number of participants changed their answers in the WDCT.

In order to answer the first research question which asks if captions play a role in pragmatic development when watching TV shows at home, the differences between time 1 and time 2 while accounting for the influence of captions had to be analyzed. Therefore, the data were split by selecting the particular participants. In the case of the participants who watched the series with captions, in SS1 and SS3 significant changes could be observed ($p < .050$ and $p = .050$ respectively) and SS5 was marginally significant ($p = .059$) which indicated a change in suggestion strategies used by the participants in the post-test. Whereas in the case of participants who had no captions, RS1 ($p < .050$), SS1 ($p < .050$) and SS9 ($p < .050$) were significantly different and in SS3 ($p = .063$) the difference was marginally significant. These results imply that the participants who watched the series without captions also changed some of their answers in the mentioned situations in the post-test WDCT.

The matrix was changed and the data were screened for normal distribution and, as it was not normally distributed, the Wilcoxon signed rank test was run in order to analyze the potential differences in every request and suggestion strategy for each participant. In requests, Mood Derivable (Pre $M = .79$, $SD = .774$ vs. Post $M = 1.34$, $SD = 1.045$; $z = 2.818$, $p = .005$) and Stating Preparatory (Pre $M = .03$, $SD = .186$ vs. Post $M = .38$, $SD = .820$; $z = 2.309$, $p = .021$) were the only two with statistically significant changes from the pre-test to the post-test which means the participants showed a tendency to use the mentioned request strategies more in the post-test, as in example 1 and 2, respectively:

1. RS4: You're cleaning the house and you want to ask your partner to help you out. You say:
2212 – Pre-test: I need you help with this! (Want Statements)
2212 – Post-test: help me with the household, please. (Mood Derivable)
2. RS8: Your friend asked to stay with you for a couple of days because she had problems with her wife at home. What would you say to your own partner to see if it's ok? You say:
318 – Pre-test: Would you mind if my friend stayed here for a while? (Query Preparatory)

318 – Post-test: You see, I know this person and she's having some problems, so I was wondering if it would be okay if she stayed here for a while. (Stating Preparatory)

As for suggestions, Imperatives, Need and No Suggestion were the only strategies that showed significant changes. Example 3 below demonstrates the increase shown by, Imperatives (Pre M = .93, SD = 1.334 vs. Post M = 1.62, SD = 1.399; $z = 2.297, p = .022$) showed an increase:

3. SS8: You want to ask your child to invite his/her friend over for dinner.
You suggest:

213 – Pre-test: Why don't you invite? (Specific Formulae)

213 – Post-test: Tell Sara to come. (Imperatives)

Whereas, Need (Pre M = .14, SD = .351 vs. Post M = .00, SD = .000; $z = -2.00, p = .046$) and No Suggestion (Pre M = 1.62, SD = 1.426 vs. Post M = 1.28, SD = 1.066, $z = -2.431, p = .015$) indicated a decline in use, so the participants used these strategies less in the post-test as in example 4:

4. SS5: Your friend wants to break up with his girlfriend and asks for your suggestion. You say:

215 – Pre-test: Have you thought this through? (No suggestion)

215 – Post-test: Talk with her and explain. (Imperatives)

The data were then analyzed under captioned and non-captioned conditions. Participants in Group A, who watched the show with captions, only showed marginally significant changes in request strategy, Mood Derivable (Pre M = .75, SD = .250 vs. Post M = 1.42, SD = .358; $z = 1.930, p = .054$) and in Group B, without captions, Mood Derivable requests (Pre M = .92, SD = .211 vs. Post M = 1.46, SD = .268; $z = 1.890, p = .059$) and Imperatives suggestions (Pre M = .62, SD = .266 vs. Post M = 1.38, SD = .290; $z = 1.897, p = .058$) both approached significance. The results indicate that after watching *Modern Family*, learners changed their responses to the WDCT in the post-test. However, when captions were screened, the significance of the changes decreased and most of the strategies failed to show any statistically significant change.

In order to compare the participants' answers with the input, the *Modern Family* season six script was analyzed and all the request and suggestion strategies were counted (Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively). As shown in Figure 1, on the show,

Mood Derivable (72%) and Query Preparatory (15%) are the most used request strategies, whereas, Want Statements (5%), Hints (3%), Stating Preparatory (2%), Suggestory Formulae (2%) and Obligation Statements (1%) are the least used.

Figure 1. Requests

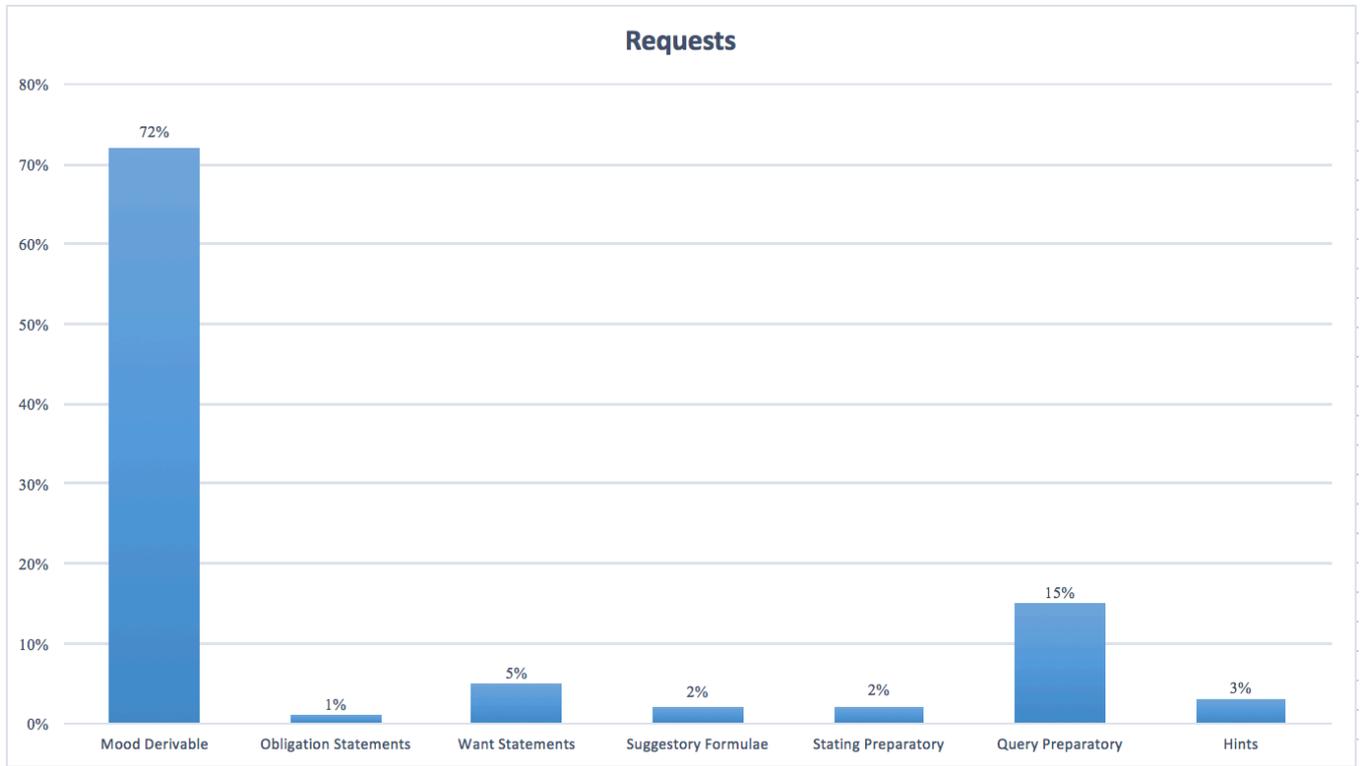
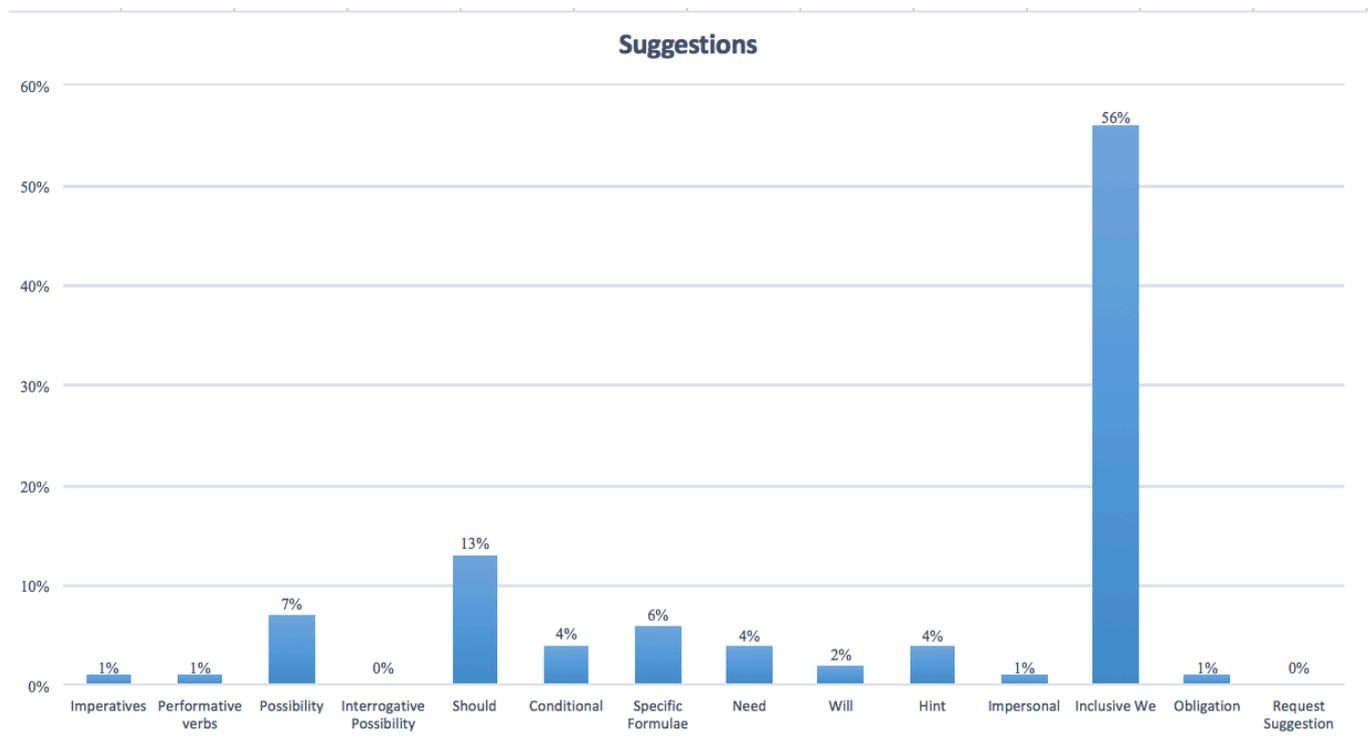


Figure 2 demonstrates, on Modern Family season 6, Inclusive We (56%) and Should (13%) were the most used suggestion strategies, followed by Possibility (7%), Specific Formulae (6%), Conditional (4%), Hint (4%) and Need (4%), while the rest are Will (2%), Impersonal (1%), Obligation (1%), Imperatives (1%), Interrogative Possibility (0%), and Request Suggestion (0%). Subsequently, the participants' responses were counted.

Figure 2. Suggestions



All the request and suggestion strategies in the pre and post-test were collected and counted. Figure 3 shows which request strategies were used in the pre-test and post-test. Mood Derivable rose from 8% to 14%, and Stating Preparatory gained 4% from 0% in the pre-test are the most obvious changes, e.g. example 5:

5. RS1: You want water and you want to ask your son or daughter to bring it for you. You say:

315 – Pre-test: Honey, can you bring me a glass of water please? (Query Preparatory)

315 – Post-test: Bring some water for me, please. (Mood Derivable)

Obligation Statement was not used anymore in the post-test, Want Statement dropped from 4% to 2%, Suggestory Formulae was used unlike in the pre-test, the use of Query Preparatory decreased by 4% to 63%, Hints by 3% to 14% and the percentage of participants who failed to use any request strategies dropped by 1%.

Figure 3. Request strategies separated by time

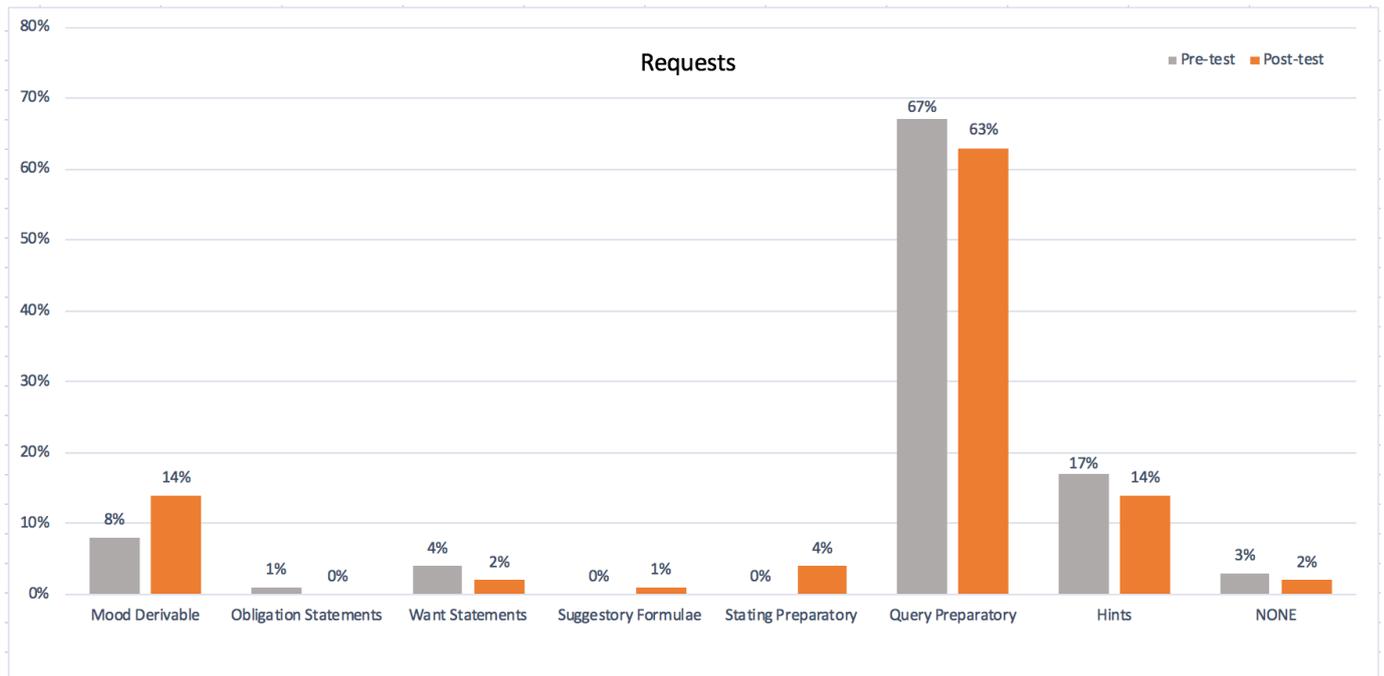


Figure 4 shows which suggestion strategies were more popular among the participants in the pre-test and the post-test. The most apparent changes were Imperatives and No Suggestions. Imperatives rose from 9% to 16% for instance in examples 6 and 7 below:

6. SS5: Your friend wants to break up with his girlfriend and asks for your suggestion. You say:

312 – Pre-test: If I were you I would tell him that things have changed with time, and that you are no longer the person you were when both of you started the relationship. (Conditional)

312 – Post-test: Deep in you[r] heart you know the right thing to do, just go ahead and do it. (Imperatives)

7. SS9: Your friend wants to get a tattoo but isn't sure what to get and asks for your suggestion. You say:

3122 – Pre-test: I would suggest you to get that cat silhouette tattoo. (Performative Verb)

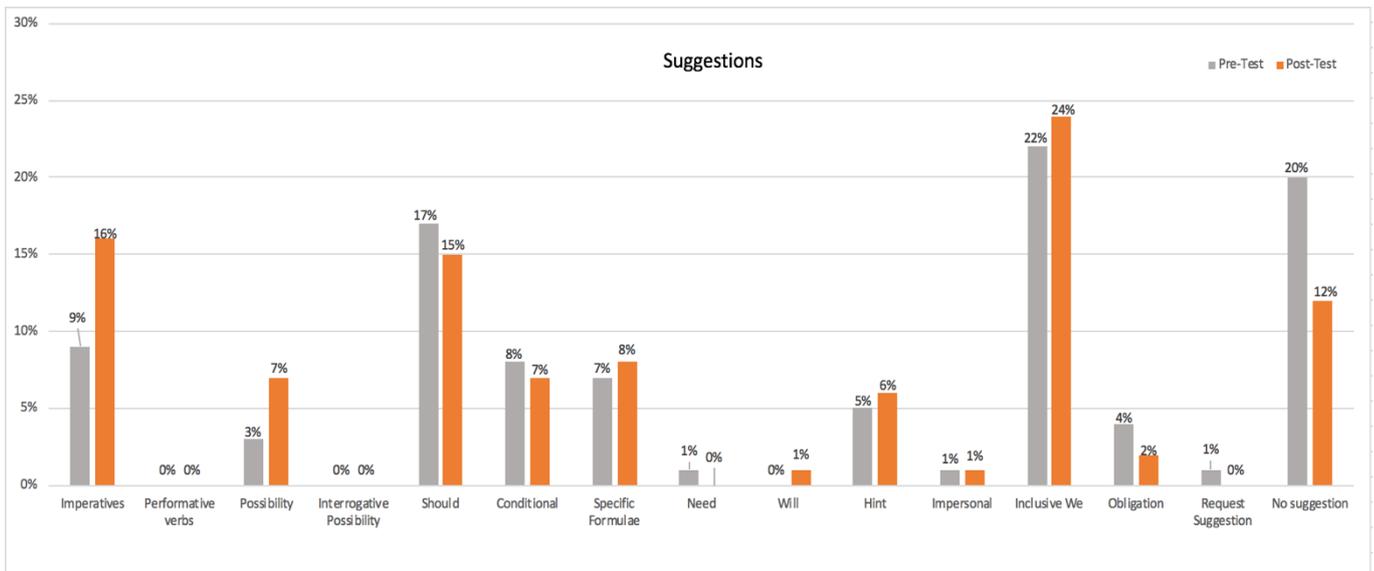
3122 – Post-test: Choose something that has a sentimental meaning but choose it faster at the same time. (Imperatives)

Additionally, Possibility rose from 3% to 7%, and Should dropped by 2% to 15%. The use of Conditional decreased by 1% to 7%, while Specific Formulae

increased by 1% to 8%. Need was no longer used, but Will increased to 1%. Hint rose by 1% to 6%, Inclusive We rose by 2% to 24%, Obligation dropped to 2%, Request Suggestion was used unlike in the pre-test, and participants who failed to use any sort of suggestion strategies dropped from 20% to 12%, as in example 8.

8. SS10: You are planning your Valentine’s day with your partner and you are checking different options. You say:
 312 – Pre-test: I'm checking different options for Saint Valentine's Day. (No Suggestion)
 312 – Post-test: We should also consider the option to travel to two of us alone. (Should)

Figure 4. Suggestion strategies separated by time



However, Performative verbs (0%), Interrogative Possibilities (0%) and Impersonal (1%) did not show any change. These results confirmed the statistical analysis from SPSS. Furthermore, as the strategies appearing on the show and the strategies used in the WDCT were compared, the slight alteration in the post-test percentages illustrated how the strategies were similar to those used on Modern Family (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

Figure 5. Request strategies compared

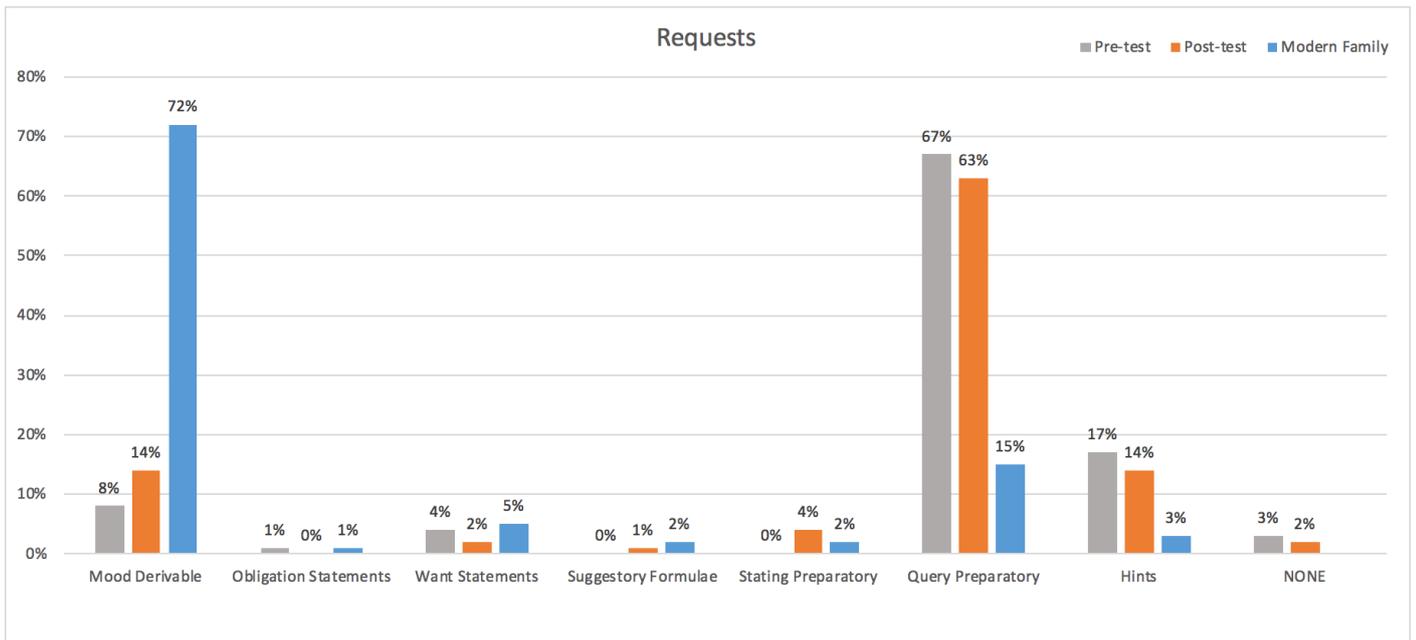
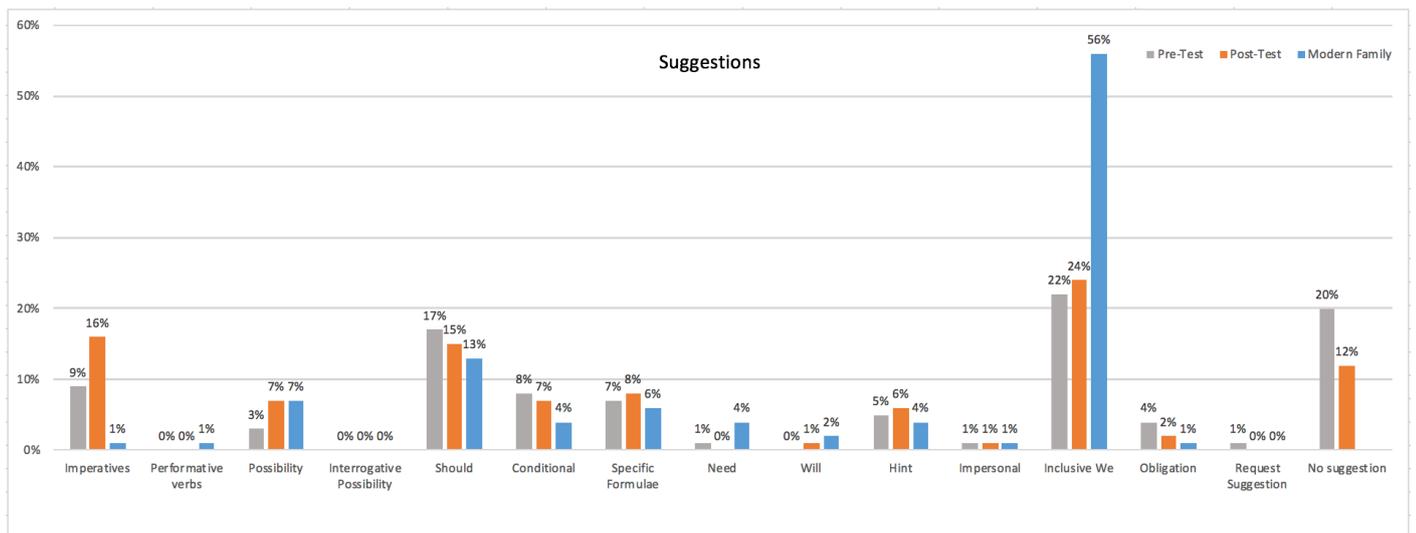


Figure 6. Suggestion strategies compared



Considering the second research question, to observe the role of proficiency in pragmatic development when watching TV shows at home, Marginal Homogeneity was run for each selected group. However, none of the situations brought about a significant change in requests or suggestions or there were not enough valid cases for A2, B1 and C2 levels. However, for B2 and C1 participants (disregarding the captioned condition), there were some changes observed, regardless of the captioned condition.

The B2 participants showed significant change in SS1 $p < .05$ and in RS5 marginally significant change $p = .056$. The C1 participants showed significant change

in RS1, $p < .05$ and SS1 ($p < .05$). These results indicate that the B2 participants changed their answers in the WDCT statistically significantly in SS1 and RS5 and C1 participants in SS1 and RS1. However, when the captioned condition was introduced to the formula, none of the levels showed any significant change or most of the cases were not valid.

When attempting to run Marginal Homogeneity tests on the data by proficiency level under each captioned and non-captioned condition, no significant differences were found or there were not enough valid cases to run the test. This could indicate that there were not enough participants under each level and/or each condition to gather appropriate or significant results.

The matrix was again changed into strategy-based to observe the differences between the pre-test and the post-test. The data were found to be not normally distributed. The only levels with enough valid cases for the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test to analyze were B2 and C1.

B2 participants showed marginally significant change under the Hint request strategy (Pre $M = 1.50$, $SD = .267$ vs. Post $M = .88$, $SD = .125$; $z = -1.890$, $p = .059$) and statistically significant difference in the Possibility suggestion strategy (Pre $M = .13$, $SD = .125$ vs. Post $M = .88$, $SD = .227$; $z = 2.449$, $p = .014$). C1 participants, however, showed marginally statistically significant changes under the request strategy, Mood Derivable (Pre $M = .67$, $SD = .187$ vs. Post $M = 1.20$, $SD = .262$; $z = 1.933$, $p = .054$), while Stating Preparatory (Pre $M = 0$, $SD = 0$ vs. Post $M = .53$, $SD = .274$; $z = 2.121$, $p = .034$) demonstrated statistically significant change in the post-test. In suggestion strategies, the C1 participants showed marginally statistically significant change in Imperatives (Pre $M = .73$, $SD = .248$ vs. Post $M = 1.33$, $SD = .386$; $z = 1.930$, $p = .054$). These results show that in the second WDCT, B2 participants tended to use Possibility more whereas they used Hints less. However, the C1 participants were more inclined to use Imperatives, Mood Derivable, and Stating Preparatory strategies.

Finally, in the post-test, participants were asked about their overall experience of watching Modern Family season 6. They were allowed to choose multiple options from the list provided or fill in their own answer if it wasn't available. 24 participants reported that they enjoyed watching the show. Two expressed that they felt bored as they were re-watching the show. However, another two said they enjoyed watching

the show for a second time and that they felt they had understood more. Lastly, 12 learners reported learning more with captions but 13 preferred without.

4.2. Oral Interview

The six participants who took part in the personal one-on-one interviews were given five open questions (Appendix 2) and they were asked about each answer they provided for a sample 20 questions from the pre-test and the post-test in order to obtain a more in-depth knowledge into their choices.

When asked if they paid attention to the suggestions and requests while watching the show, all six participants unanimously reported they did not think they did so. For the second question concerning if they changed their answers after learning a specific strategy, four of the learners stated they might have learned some strategies in class or through other TV shows which might have affected their answers in the post-test and the other two did not recall the process. When the participants were asked if they had learned anything from the show in the third question, participants 212 and 223 stated that they believed they had learned vocabulary by watching *Modern Family*, while participant 222 recalled learning pronunciation, participants 3111 and 3122 said they were used to watching TV series and they reported that they were probably unaware of any acquisition. Participant 3121 expressed uncertainty. Concerning whether they would have learned more if they had been given more time in question four, all of the participants were convinced they would have learned more if they had continued watching the series. In question five, when the participants who watched the show with captions were asked if they paid attention to them, they stated they had focused on the written form, on some expressions and they seemed to provide further help when they could not understand the accent. Meanwhile when the other participants, who watched the show without captions, were asked if they felt the need to have them, two reported they would have learned more because they struggled with the accents. While on the other hand, the other participant mentioned no problems with the accent since she understood everything. The students then were asked why they changed their answers to some of the situations.

When participant 3111 was asked why she changed her answer to SS2, in which she needed to suggest alone time with her partner, she replied: "Through the exposure while watching. You see how they speak". In the same situation, participant 222 mentioned her personal life played a role in her different answers. Similarly,

participant 223 also mentioned her personal life having an effect on her answers when she was asked to suggest her son or daughter to do something with his/her life in SS4.

In another instant, participant 3122 was asked to suggest a change in her brother's attitude towards people in SS3 and she reported not seeing a difference between her two suggestions one using *could* and the other *should*. Furthermore, she emphasized that she liked changing her strategies even in the same situations so as not to repeat herself for example in RS1 when she had to ask her son or daughter to bring her a glass of water. Finally, in RS10 where learners had to ask their friend not to bring his/her annoying friend, participant 3111 expressed how she thought she could be more polite depending on the situation by using *Query Preparatory* instead of *Stating Preparatory*.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Regarding the first research question about the effect of captions on pragmatic acquisition, it was inferred that, in the captioned condition, only 3 suggestion situations resulted in a significant change in the participants' responses in the WDCT. This might show that these specific situations (SS1, SS3 and SS5) might have been more tangible through *Modern Family*. However, after examining the answers to the mentioned situations in detail, none of the answers matched the script used in the show. Hence, in these situations the participants did not seem to use the strategies appearing in the episodes. This could be due to the fact that captions tend to promote lexical learning (Bairstow & Lavaur, 2012; Frumuselu et al., 2015) and the intralingual subtitles might have not aided the learners to focus on pragmatic forms. However, in this study no tests were run to examine the effect of captions on lexical learning. Likewise, when the none-captioned condition was analyzed, although RS1, SS1, SS3 and SS9 showed significant difference, there was no similarity between the participants' answers and the strategies used in the series. Despite these outcomes, statistics show the learners did change their responses, even though they were not the same as what the characters used on the show in the specific situations.

In order to approach the same research question from another angle, strategies were analyzed for each participant. In doing so, request strategies *Mood Derivable* and *Stating Preparatory*, suggestion strategies *Imperatives* and *Need* showed statistically significant changes, along with learners who made no suggestions. It was shown that the participants used more *Stating Preparatory*, *Imperatives* and *Mood Derivable* in the

post-test but showed less tendency to use Need. The number of No Suggestions used in the post-test also decreased in Time 2, in other words, there were fewer instances of participants failing to use any suggestion strategies in the post-test. However, when the data were split into the two conditions, under the captioned condition, only request strategy Mood Derivable showed marginally significant difference in the post-test. Moreover, in the group without captions, Mood Derivable (request) and Imperatives (suggestion) exhibited marginally significant changes in the post-test. This shows that the mentioned strategies were used only slightly more after the treatment. Consequently, in this study the changes in Group A participants' responses could not be traced to captions. This could be due to the lack of instruction or the absence of attention on pragmatics from the researcher or the teacher. These results seem to go in line with Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1993) which states that little or no intake without the learners noticing the L2 features.

In a more qualitative manner, after counting the strategies used in *Modern Family* and the suggestion and request strategies in the pre-test and the post-test, the percentages were compared. The figures reconfirmed the statistics and as the situations and interactions on *Modern Family* were completely familiar, the family members on the show tended to produce excessive instances of request Direct Strategies (Mood Derivable, in particular, as shown in Figure 2). Furthermore, a mild tendency towards the strategies used on *Modern Family* could be identified. This could be caused by the repetition of the strategies and the tangibility of the contexts in question. Hence, according to Rose (1997, 2001) and Arthur (1999), the situations might have triggered an awareness of how the characters used different request and suggestion strategies in various situations which led to a slight alteration of their answers in the post-test towards the strategies more implemented on the show.

The second research question was aimed at the effect of proficiency in pragmatic acquisition through watching TV shows. However, the B2 and C1 participants were the only valid levels for statistical analysis. On the one hand, certain situations affected the participants' answers (SS1, RS1 and RS5) and on the other, considering the strategies, B2 learners exhibited a high tendency to use Possibility (suggestion) but they showed a low usage of Hint (suggestion). In lines with Liu and Wang (2012), even after sociopragmatic and proficiency development, learners were more inclined to use similar strategies in the pre-test and the post-test. Moreover, C1 learners continued using more request strategies Mood Derivable and Stating

Preparatory, and suggestion strategy Imperatives, in the final WDCT. This is along the same lines as in Ellis (1992) who showed that even with knowledge of request and suggestion strategies, Direct strategies, e.g. Imperatives, were still highly preferred as proficiency increased. However, as opposed to Scarcella (1979), Trosborg (1995), Félix-Brasdefer (2007) and Jalilifar (2009), the participants of this study seemed to have failed to follow the pattern from Direct to Conventionally indirect strategies. Such finding might be due to the familiar situations among family members they were exposed to in the TV series or even the influence of their L1 pragmatics (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). However, Félix-Brasdefer (2007) expressed how advanced students' responses still failed to reach native-like strategies. In this context, the strategies appearing in the show could be deemed as the criteria and the some differences between the participants' answers and the series can be observed. It could be concluded that 552 minutes of one season of *Modern Family* in one month may not have been sufficient for acquisition to take place without instruction. Conversely, the lack of variety in the post-test responses can also be explained through the monotonous familiar situations observed in the series and in the WDCT. Hence, the participants failed to see a purpose in changing their answers. Moreover, because of the participants' levels, they might have already known the strategies, therefore, no acquisition would have taken place.

The interviews demonstrated that the 6 learners did not notice or pay attention to the appointed strategies. The marginally statistical difference observed in the post-test could be the result of the appearance of the request and suggestion strategies in their university philology classes, books, songs or other TV shows they are surrounded by in their day-to-day lives. Many of these participants believed they consciously or subconsciously learned pronunciation and vocabulary while watching the series. However, they also believed they would have learned more if they had continued the treatment. The captions seem to have been a necessity for some participants because they had problems with the characters' accents and the learners who watched *Modern Family* with the aid of captions reported understanding the series better, consequently, as stated in Mayer (2009), this may show learners learn better from words and pictures.

This study focused on pragmatic acquisition through watching one season of a TV show without instruction with or without the aid of captions. The results indicated a certain change in the learners' post-test WDCT. These changes could have been due to some strategies appearing more frequently on *Modern Family*, even though there

are only a small number of suggestion and request strategies showing statistically significant changes. Furthermore, the participants seemed to be using more suggestion strategies in the post-test than in the pre-test. As a result, an effect of audiovisual support on suggestion and request strategies could be observed. However, in line with Barón and Levkina (2018), there seems to be no evident advantage in pragmatic acquisition in favor of the participants who watched the show with captions. Considering proficiency, as there were not enough participants in all four levels, the only valid participants belonged to the B2 and C1 levels. Apart from over-using the Imperatives (Suggestion, Direct Strategies), an inclination towards the strategies appearing on the show can be seen.

In conclusion, this study seems to suggest that audiovisual support without any instruction may lead to changes in students' pragmatic knowledge regardless of captions. However, due to the low number of participants, we could not find conclusive evidence for audiovisual support to have gains for lower level participants, although B2 and C1 learners seemed to be slightly affected by the TV show.

All in all, this research has aimed to contribute to the gap in the study of pragmatics in SLA on the acquisition of speech acts via audiovisual support without instruction by showing the effect of watching series at home.

6. Limitations and Further Research

The present study presents several limitations. A restriction encountered in this study was the number of participants, the dispersion in the levels and their field of study. Among 29 participants, 23 of them were B2 and C1 learners, all philology students. Consequently, it proved to be difficult to statistically analyze the participants and their changes. Moreover, some of the daily classes that the participants attended were conducted in English and they were taught English structures regularly. Hence, a larger sample of participants with more varied background could corroborate the findings. Furthermore, the treatment in this study only provided the learners with 24 episodes to watch in 40 days. This could have been too limited for any pragmatic acquisition to take place. Thus, an investigation into the same effects after a longer exposure to TV shows would be highly beneficial. Moreover, the TV show used in this study only provided the students with familiar situations with no power or distance change. This information would help explain the responses in the study. Furthermore, additional studies into the participants' suggestion and request strategies in their L1s

might clarify if there is a pragmatic transfer which could have an effect on the learners' responses.

Written DCTs were used in this research and due to the method of their presentation online, there was no time limitations or control over their answers. Oral DCTs and more naturalistic situations might provide more realistic answers. Moreover, little evidence could be traced to how participants changed their answers in the post-test since it could have been unrelated to *Modern Family* and people would naturally change their responses at different times. Additionally, due to time constraints, modifiers were not analyzed in this study. Studying modifiers might be able to shed more light on pragmatic acquisition in further researches.

In this study there was not sufficient time nor enough participants to have a controlled group with explicit instruction. Had there been explicit teaching of suggestion and request strategy forms parallel to watching the show at home, we might have expected to see responses more similar to the strategies used on *Modern Family*. Nevertheless, the purpose of this study was to see if learners acquire suggestion and request strategies by watching a number of episodes on their own. Future research could help investigate the difference between the two groups.

Word Count: 9764

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8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1 – WDCT Form

Dear student,

You are invited to participate in a research study for my Master's Thesis. The purpose of this research is to observe your responses in different situations.

Your participation will involve filling out this form and watching a TV show over a short period of time.

There are no known risks associated with this research.

This study will help us linguists, and also you, future teachers, to better understand language learning.

The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential and your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

This form consists of 20 situations and takes approximately 20 minutes. The questions are all on the second page of the form.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact me at yashar.khazdouzian@gmail.com

I have read this consent form and I accept to participate in this study.

Yes/No

Suggestions

- 1- Your friend is sad about something s/he's done. You want to cheer him/her up.
You say:
- 2- You never have free time for your boy/girlfriend. You want to suggest some alone time with him/her. You say:
- 3- Your brother is always having fights with his friends and he seems to have problems with them. He doesn't usually listen to criticism. You want to help him. You suggest:
- 4- Your son/daughter is not doing anything special with his/her life and has spent most of his/her day sitting on a couch. You suggest:
- 5- Your friend wants to break up with his girlfriend and asks for your suggestion.
You say:

- 6- Your friend is looking for a nice dress for Christmas. You know a good place she could go to that is having a sale. You say:
- 7- You want to take a picture with your friends. You say:
- 8- You want to ask your child to invite his/her friend over for dinner. You suggest:
- 9- Your friend wants to get a tattoo but isn't sure what to get and asks for your suggestion. You say:
- 10- You are planning your Valentine's day with your partner and you are checking different options. You say:

Requests

- 1- You want water and you want to ask your son or daughter to bring it for you. You say:
- 2- You live with your partner and you had a fight now you're breaking up. You want to ask your friend if you can stay with them. You say:
- 3- You need help with writing your homework. You want to ask your friend for help. You say:
- 4- You're cleaning the house and you want to ask your partner to help you out. You say:
- 5- The power is out at your house and you want to ask your roommate for some candles. You say:
- 6- You want to ask your dad to keep a secret from your mom. You say:
- 7- You want some help from strangers on the streets. You say:
- 8- Your friend asked to stay with you for a couple of days because she had problems with her wife at home. What would you say to your own partner to see if it's ok? You say:
- 9- You want to ask someone next to you to throw out your piece of paper. You say:
- 10- Your friend always brings a very annoying friend with him and you want to tell him. You say:

Personal Information

In this section you should fill in your personal information, all the information provided will be anonymous. Your names won't be mentioned anywhere.

Name:

Surname:

Age:

What languages were you raised with?

- a) Spanish & Catalan
- b) Just Spanish
- c) Just Catalan
- d) My parents talked in English with me
- e) Other:

Email:

Have you watched/Did you watch Modern Family season 6?

- a) Yes. All episodes in English without subtitles.
- b) Yes. All episodes in English with subtitles.
- c) Not completely.
- d) I had already watched it in Spanish/English with/out subtitles.

When did you finish watching season 6?

Did you enjoy watching it?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Second time watching it and I was bored.
- d) Second time watching it and I enjoyed it the same.
- e) I feel like I understood more this time around.
- f) I feel like I learn English watching TV shows with subtitles.
- g) I feel like I learn English watching TV shows without subtitles.
- h) Other

8.2. Appendix 2 - Oral Interview

1. Did you pay attention to suggestions and requests on Modern Family?
2. Did you change your answers after learning a specific strategy (because of Modern Family or other reasons)?
3. Do you think you learned anything from Modern Family?
4. Do you think you would have learned more if you had more episodes or more time?
5. Were you paying attention to the subtitles?/Would you have learned more if you had watched the show with subtitles?

8.3. Appendix 3 –Taxonomy of Request Forms

From Achiba (2003)

Types	Strategies	Examples
Direct Strategies	1. Mood Derivable	Take off your rings.
		Don't move my fish.
		Choco chip, please.
	2. Obligation Statements	Mom, you have to help us.
		You better stay at our house.
	3. Want Statements	I want a circle.
I need a garbage bin mom.		
Conventionally Indirect Strategies	4. Suggestory Formulae	Let's put this over here.
		Why don't you make a chair?
	5. Stating Preparatory	You could put some blue tack down there.
		If you cannot draw a shark, you can draw a whale.
	6. Query Preparatory	Could you please pass me the glue?
		Would you please hold this like this?
Nonconventionally Indirect Strategies	7. Hints	My hands get sore.
		Maybe it takes a long time to do it with this one.

8.4. Appendix 4 - Taxonomy of Suggestion Forms

Adapted from Martínez-Flor (2004) and Pattermore (2017)

Type	Strategy	Linguistic Forms
Direct	(1) Performative Verb	(A) I (would) suggest that you...
		(B) I (would) advise you to...
		(C) I (would) recommend that you...
		(D) I (would) recommend you to...
		(E) I (would) recommend you + noun
		(F) I would like to suggest (advise, recommend)
	(2) Noun of Suggestion	(A) My suggestion (to you) would be/is...
		(B) My advice (to you) would be/is...
		(C) My recommendation (to you) would be/is
		(D) My idea/opinion is...
	(3) Imperative	Try using...; Take my advice; Send you CV;
	(4) Negative Imperative	Don't try to...
Conventionalized Forms	(5) Specific Formulae (Interrogative Forms)	(A) Why don't you...?
		(B) Have you tried...?
		(C) Have you thought of...?
		(D) How about...?
		(E) What about...?
	(6) Possibility/Probability	(A) You can...
		(B) You could...
		(C) You might want to...
		(D) You might...
		(E) You may
		(F) You may want to...
	(7) Should	(A) You should...
		(B) You ought to...
	(8) Need	(A) You need...
		(B) What you need (to do) is...
	(9) Conditional	(A) If I were you, I would...
		(B) If I were in your position, I wouldn't...

Indirect	(10) Impersonal	(A) It would be helpful if you...
		(B) It might be better to...
		(C) A good idea would be...
		(D) It would be a good idea to...
		(E) A subject + would be a good idea.
		(F) It would be nice if you...
		(G) One possibility would be...
		(H) One thing (you can do) would be to...
		(I) There are a number of options that you...
	(11) Hints	
Other Forms	(12) Inclusive We	(A) We can...
		(B) We could...
		(C) Shall we...?
		(D) Let's...
		(E) We'd better (not)...
	(13) Obligation	(A) You must...
		(B) You have to...
	(14) Request Suggestion	(A) Go here please
		(B) Could you...?