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## Senior EFL Learners' (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness of Suggestions: A Multiple Case Study on the Role of Audiovisual Materials and Individual Differences

Yashar Khazdouzian

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## Abstract

In today's multilingual and multicultural society, communication has become more dynamic than ever, with people forming international friendships and engaging in conversations across linguistic and cultural boundaries. As a result, second language (L2) pragmatics plays a crucial role in ensuring that speakers can navigate social interactions appropriately and avoid unintentional offense (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). Audiovisual (AV) materials provide learners with access to authentic dialogues, exposing learners to natural language use in diverse contexts (Alcón-Soler & Safont, 2008; Barón & Celaya, 2022; Derakhshan & Zangoei, 2014; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Katchen, 2002; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2021, 2022). Meanwhile, the global demographic shift shows a growing number of healthier, more active seniors (World Health Organization, 2024), challenging outdated assumptions about cognitive decline, language learning, and the constraints of the critical period hypothesis (Muñoz & Singleton, 2011; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017; Ramírez Gómez, 2016).

Given the increasing emphasis on the cognitive and social benefits of language learning, and the importance of pragmatic competence in second language acquisition (SLA), this study investigated the L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness of eight Spanish/Catalan bilingual senior English as a foreign language (EFL) learners (henceforth NNS participants), with a specific focus on the role of AV materials and individual differences (IDs), in shaping (meta)pragmatic awareness of the appropriateness of suggestions, and to what degree these pragmatic judgements aligned with those of seven native speakers of American English (henceforth NS participants). The primary instrument was an online form comprising a questionnaire regarding their personal and professional background, including their history of watching movies and series in English, and their language learning beliefs, strategies and motivations. The form also contained an appropriateness rating task that consisted of 14 video clips depicting suggestion

strategies in various contexts. Participants rated the pragmatic appropriateness of each clip on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *very rude*, 5 = *perfectly appropriate*). The data collected was analyzed to identify patterns and similarities in L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness between groups. Semi-structured interviews provided further insight into the NNS participants' experience with the entire task.

To investigate the first research question aimed at exploring senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions, multiple statistical analyses were conducted. A generalized linear model test explored the effect of group (NS vs. NNS) on (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings, but no significant differences were found. However, a Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between groups for one clip featuring the Conventionalized Form strategy. The findings suggest that NNS participants' (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions closely aligns with that of the NS participants. The second research question examined whether experience with AV materials influences (meta)pragmatic awareness. To address this, the NNS participants were divided into two subgroups: those who regularly watched AV content in English and those who did not. To compare NS participants' ratings with the two NNS groups, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were employed. Results revealed initial statistical differences in two clips, but post hoc pairwise comparisons indicated no significant differences. This suggests that both NNS groups exhibited (meta)pragmatic awareness similar to NS participants across all clips, indicating minimal influence of AV materials on their ratings.

The third research question addressed whether IDs (beliefs, strategies, and motivation) in language learning affect (meta)pragmatic awareness. Data from the background questionnaire, appropriateness rating task and semi-structured interviews were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Findings indicated significant differences between the NNS and NS participants' ratings in several clips featuring different suggestion strategies,

highlighting the complex role of IDs in EFL learners' L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness. Overall, this doctoral dissertation sheds light on the pragmatic competence of senior EFL learners and contributes to the emerging field of L2 pragmatics for this demographic. It also calls for tailored instructional practices that recognize the value of life experience in language learning.

**Keywords:** Audiovisual Materials, EFL, Individual Differences, L2 Pragmatics, Pragmatic Awareness, Senior Learners, Suggestions

## Resum

En la societat actual, multilingüe i multicultural, la comunicació és més dinàmica que mai, amb persones que estableixen amistats internacionals i interactuen més enllà de fronteres lingüístiques i culturals. En aquest context, la pragmàtica en segona llengua (L2) té un paper clau per garantir que els parlants gestionin adequadament les interaccions socials i evitin ofenses involuntàries (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). Els materials audiovisuals (AV) ofereixen als aprenents accés a diàlegs autèntics, exposant-los a l'ús natural de la llengua en contextos diversos (Alcón-Soler & Safont, 2008; Barón & Celaya, 2022; Derakhshan & Zangoei, 2014). Paral·lelament, el canvi demogràfic global mostra un augment de persones grans més sanes i actives (World Health Organization, 2024), qüestionant supòsits sobre el declivi cognitiu i l'aprenentatge de llengües (Muñoz & Singleton, 2011; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017).

Aquest estudi ha analitzat la consciència pragmàtica en L2 de vuit aprenents grans d'anglès com a llengua estrangera (EFL) de primera llengua (L1) espanyol/català (NNS) i set parlants nadius d'anglès (NS) com a línia de base, centrant-se en el paper dels materials AV i les diferències individuals (IDs) en el desenvolupament de la (meta)pragmàtica. L'instrument principal va ser un formulari en línia que incloïa un qüestionari de context i una tasca d'avaluació de 14 vídeos amb suggeriments en diferents contextos. Els participants van valorar l'adequació pragmàtica de cada vídeo en una escala Likert de cinc punts.

La primera pregunta de recerca explorava la consciència pragmàtica dels NNS. L'anàlisi estadística no va mostrar diferències significatives entre NNS i NS, tot i que una prova de Mann-Whitney U va revelar una diferència en un vídeo. La segona pregunta investigava la influència dels materials AV, i els resultats inicials van indicar diferències en dos vídeos, però les proves post hoc no van trobar efectes significatius. Finalment, la tercera pregunta examinava l'efecte de les ID, trobant diferències significatives en les valoracions dels NNS i



NS, subratllant la complexitat del paper de les ID. Aquesta tesi aporta noves perspectives sobre la competència pragmàtica en aprenents grans d'EFL, contribuint a l'àmbit de la pragmàtica en L2 per aquest col·lectiu.

**Paraules clau:** Audiovisual Materials, EFL, Individual Differences, L2 Pragmatics, Pragmatic Awareness, Senior Learners, Suggestions

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تقديم به مادر و پدر عزيزم...

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### List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AV	Audiovisual
BIC	Bayesian Information Criterion
CI	Confidence Interval
D	Distance
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FL	Foreign Language
FTA	Face-Threatening Act
ID	Individual Difference
ILP	Interlanguage Pragmatics
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
NNS	Non-Native Speaker
NS	Native Speaker
P	Power
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TL	Target Language

*“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”*

*Les Brown*

*“Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic.*

*Capable of both inflicting injury, and remedying it.”*

*Dumbledore*



## 1. Introduction

Over the years, definitions of pragmatics have evolved to account for the dynamic and context-dependent nature of meaning in communication, reflecting shifts in linguistic and cognitive approaches (Brown & Levinson; 1978, 1987; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Crystal, 1985; Leech, 1983; Stalnaker, 1972). While early definitions of pragmatics, such as Stalnaker's (1972) emphasis on linguistic acts within context, laid the groundwork for later frameworks, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) expanded this perspective, underscoring the role of speech acts in conveying and interpreting communicative intent. Speech act theory, a cornerstone of pragmatics introduced by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969, 1976), examines how utterances function not only as expressions of meaning but also as actions in their own right. Austin categorized speech acts as follows: locutionary acts (literal utterances), illocutionary acts (the speaker's intent), and perlocutionary acts (the effects on the hearer). Searle refined this framework, proposing five broad categories of illocutionary acts (representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations) each serving distinct communicative functions. Directives, in particular, aim to influence the hearer's behavior and range from impositive forms, such as requests, to non-impositive forms, like suggestions (Haverkate, 1984). Despite its contributions, speech act theory has been critiqued for its limited attention to the sociocultural and contextual dimensions of communication (Levinson, 1981; LoCastro, 2003). Scholars have since advocated for integrating sociopragmatic perspectives, which consider cultural norms, conversational dynamics, and social variables, to provide a more holistic understanding of speech acts (e.g., Huang, 2007; LoCastro, 2003; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2016; Yule, 1996).

Politeness theory, which is closely tied to speech act theory, examines how speakers navigate the delicate balance between expressing intent and maintaining social harmony. Brown and Levinson's (1987) influential model, grounded in Goffman's (1967) concept of

“face,” explores how individuals manage their public self-image during interactions. The theory distinguishes between negative face and positive face and outlines strategies for mitigating face-threatening acts (FTAs) such as directives. These strategies vary from direct, on-record communication to more indirect, off-record approaches, and include the use of positive or negative politeness tactics. Contextual factors, including social distance, power, and the degree of imposition, further influence the choice of strategy. While this model has provided a foundational framework, it has faced criticism for its perceived reliance on Western cultural norms and its tendency to oversimplify the interplay of variables in real-world communication (e.g., McConachy, 2019; Haugh, 2010). Consequently, contemporary scholars advocate for more culturally sensitive approaches that account for subjective social and moral judgments shaped by cultural ideologies (see Cook, 2011; Kádár & Haugh, 2013).

The application of the aforementioned theories to second language (L2) learning has given rise to Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP), a field that investigates how non-native speakers (NNS) acquire, comprehend, and produce pragmatic norms in their target language (TL) (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Unlike syntactic development, which follows relatively predictable stages, pragmatic competence often develops unevenly, with even advanced learners struggling to grasp subtle sociocultural cues or appropriately perform speech acts (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). This disparity underscores the distinction between linguistic competence and pragmatic competence, as the latter involves the ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980). More recently, ILP research has been emphasizing the role of individual differences (IDs), such as exposure to the TL, agency, motivation, and cultural background, in shaping (meta)pragmatic awareness and development (see LoCastro, 2003; Taguchi, 2017; Taguchi, 2019, among others). Speech acts like suggestions are particularly significant, as their successful performance requires sensitivity to both linguistic forms and social appropriateness, underlying the interconnectedness of pragmatics, politeness,



and sociocultural norms. Despite their significance in pragmatic competence, suggestions have not received the same level of scholarly attention as requests over the years (Gu, 2014; Petrey, 2016; Sarkeshikian et al., 2024; Schmidt et al., 1996). Given that effective suggestion-making requires both linguistic and sociocultural awareness, further exploration of this speech act is necessary to understand how learners navigate its pragmatic complexities.

Suggestions present unique challenges for L2 learners and are the focus of this research. They are inherently face-threatening, as they can impose on the hearer's autonomy. To navigate these challenges, learners must employ a range of strategies, from direct expressions to more indirect and mitigated forms. Research in ILP has explored these strategies extensively, highlighting the complexities of mastering the sociocultural and linguistic conventions involved (Chalak & Abbasi, 2015; Martínez-Flor, 2006; Rezvani et al., 2014; Sarkeshikian et al., 2024, to name but a few). However, L2 learners often lack authentic input in their TL, which can hinder their ability to develop pragmatic competence (e.g., Eslami et al., 2022; Kıyançiçek & Karatepe, 2023; Schauer, 2019; Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

Audiovisual (AV) materials, such as movies, TV shows, and videos, have emerged as valuable tools for enhancing L2 learners' pragmatic competence, as they can offer learners exposure to naturally occurring speech acts (e.g., suggestions). Previous studies have highlighted the role of AV materials in developing L2 pragmatic awareness (e.g., Roever, 2011; Washburn, 2001), due to the fact that they provide multimodal input, combining auditory, visual, and contextual information to support language comprehension (see Rodgers, 2013). Research suggests that multimodal exposure can facilitate the acquisition of pragmatic features by allowing learners to observe non-verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, and intonation patterns that accompany speech acts (Derakhshan & Zangoei, 2014). Moreover, AV materials often depict a variety of social interactions across different registers, offering learners a broader range of pragmatic instances that they might not encounter in conventional language

instruction (Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2022). This exposure can be particularly beneficial in fostering awareness of indirectness strategies, politeness strategies, and sociocultural expectations tied to the performance of speech acts like suggestions.

Additionally, studies have indicated that AV input can enhance pragmatic competence by reinforcing incidental learning through repeated exposure to authentic interactions (Barón & Celaya, 2022; Khazdouzian et al., 2021, among others). Unlike explicit instruction, which focuses on direct teaching of pragmatic rules, AV materials could allow learners to develop awareness more organically by engaging with naturally occurring language in meaningful contexts. This incidental learning process can be particularly effective when learners actively process and reflect on the pragmatic features present in AV content, such as noticing variations in how suggestions are formulated depending on factors like social distance and power relations. While extensive research has explored pragmatic awareness in younger learners, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have examined how senior learners perceive and evaluate pragmatic appropriateness in an L2.

Research suggests that longer exposure to a TL could be advantageous for pragmatic development (e.g., Schauer, 2006), making older adults an interesting demographic for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. SLA studies on senior learners, who are typically defined as individuals aged 60 and above, are growing in number (Kliesch et al., 2017; Klímová & de Paula Nascimento E Silva, 2024). While cognitive aging is often associated with declines in processing speed and working memory, research also highlights compensatory mechanisms, such as reliance on accumulated knowledge and life experience, which can support language acquisition later in life (see for example, Bialystok & Hakuta, 1999; Singleton & Pfenninger, 2018). Furthermore, motivation and social engagement play crucial roles in seniors' L2 learning, often differing from younger learners in terms of goals and learning strategies (Mackey & Sachs, 2012).

SLA research has shown the significance of IDs in shaping learning outcomes (see Dörnyei, 2006; Griffiths & Soruç, 2020, 2021). Key variables include beliefs, strategies, and motivations, all of which influence senior learners' language acquisition experiences. According to Barcelos (2003) and Kang and Kim (2022), senior learners often hold preconceived beliefs about their abilities, which can be shaped by cultural stereotypes about aging. Nevertheless, studies have indicated that enthusiasm and recognizing cognitive and social benefits can counteract these negative perceptions (see Berggren et al., 2020; Bubbico et al., 2023). In line with this, motivation has been found to be perhaps the most decisive factor in senior learners' success (Griffiths & Soruç, 2021). Unlike younger learners, older adults are often driven by personal goals such as travel, communicating with others, and cognitive engagement rather than integrative motivations (Pfenninger & Polz, 2018). Finally, learning strategies, particularly compensatory ones, also help seniors navigate challenges in language acquisition (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Ramírez Gómez, 2016). Senior learners tend to rely on metacognitive strategies, such as planning and goal-setting, to optimize their learning process. However, research has shown that they may struggle with listening comprehension, especially when visual cues are absent (Corral-Robles et al., 2023, among others). Perhaps as a way to compensate for this, AV materials have been identified as a commonly used strategy among senior learners (Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024), making their potential impact on (meta)pragmatic awareness particularly relevant to the current study.

Given these findings, both cognitive and motivational factors warrant attention when examining senior learners' language development. Their learning is often driven by a dual purpose: maintaining cognitive health and enhancing social interaction (Cox, 2019). In another vein, as learners often have many opportunities to engage with AV materials recreationally, such exposure may influence their sensitivity to L2 pragmatics. However, little is known about whether AV engagement contributes to their ability to assess pragmatic appropriateness,

particularly in speech acts like suggestions. Thus, this study aims to investigate whether senior L2 learners of EFL demonstrate (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions and to what extent this awareness aligns with native speakers (NSs) of American English. Additionally, it explores whether IDs and exposure to AV materials influence their pragmatic evaluations.

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on ILP, including an overview of speech act theory (Section 2.2.1), politeness theory (Section 2.2.2), L2 pragmatic competence (Section 2.3), (meta)pragmatic awareness (Section 2.4), and the speech act of suggestion (Section 2.5). Chapter 3 highlights previous studies conducted on AV materials (Section 3.2 and Section 3.3). Chapter 4 first defines senior learners (Section 4.2), and then explores the advantages of L2 learning for this demographic (Section 4.3.2). It also discusses IDs and senior learners (Section 4.3.3), and finishes by underscoring the lack of research involving senior learners and L2 pragmatics (Section 4.4). Chapter 5 provides the methodology, introduces the research questions (Section 5.2), describes the participants (Section 5.3) and the instruments used for data collection (Section 5.4), and outlines the procedure employed in data analysis (Section 5.5). Chapter 6 presents the results of the analyses conducted on the findings from the two main instruments (Section 6.2 and Section 6.3). The penultimate chapter, Chapter 7, discusses the results of the first, second and third research questions (Section 7.2, Section 7.3, and Section 7.4, respectively). The final chapter, Chapter 8, addresses the limitations of the study and directions for future research (Section 8.2), and finishes with Section 8.3 which summarizes the key contributions of the study.

## **2. Review of the Literature I: Key Concepts in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter will explore the complex relationship between L2 pragmatics and language learning. It begins by providing an overview of pragmatics in Section 2.2., then it continues to examine key pragmatic theories such as speech act theory in Section 2.2.1 and politeness theory in Section 2.2.2, which also addresses the concept of ILP. These theories highlight the importance of L2 pragmatic competence (in Section 2.3) and (meta)pragmatic awareness (in Section 2.4) in navigating the nuances of politeness and directness which can vary significantly based on cultural norms, language background and context. The chapter then transitions to explore the speech act of suggestion (a non-impositive directive) in Section 2.5.1 as it is the aim of this study. Section 2.5.2 will summarize empirical studies conducted to address the influence of learners' first language (L1), gender, language proficiency and instruction on suggestion strategies.

### **2.2. An Overview of Pragmatics**

During the 1960s, the field of pragmatics did not have a recognized status since, as stated by Leech (1983), it dealt with matters that did not fit into existing linguistic domains (i.e. semantics and syntax). However, in the 1970s, there was a growing interest in language use and context, leading to the establishment of pragmatics as an independent discipline within linguistics. The field was initially defined as “the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed” (Stalnaker, 1972, p. 383). It was hence categorized by Leech (1983) as the manner in which individuals utilize language to accomplish goals, while also considering their interpersonal connections with each other. Additionally, Crystal (1985) further described pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (p. 240). In other

words, pragmatics is “conveying and understanding communicative intent by performing and interpreting speech acts and speech act sets” (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995, p. 9).

### **2.2.1. *Speech Act Theory***

Speech act theory is a concept that originated from the works of Austin (1962) and subsequently, Searle (1969, 1976) in the field of linguistic philosophy. The theory stems from the assumption that, as Austin (1962) stated, when speech is produced, its primary goal is to perform actions through performative verbs. They called such an utterance a *speech act*. Austin (1962) classified utterances into three categories, namely locutionary acts (uttering words), illocutionary acts (intention behind the words uttered), and perlocutionary acts (the effects caused by the utterance). Additionally, Fraser (1975) proposed that a single utterance can serve multiple illocutionary purposes, which means that when a speaker is communicating, the recipient must make pragmatic inferences in order to understand what the speaker is trying to convey. This highlights the importance of being able to interpret the speaker’s intention in order to accurately understand the message. To support the claim that actions are not necessarily carried out through the use of performative verbs, Searle (1969, 1976) outlined a new definition and categorization of illocutionary acts. This classification was organized into five categories (representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations), which were presented as a way to understand the various types and forms of communication. Through their work, Searle provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the nuances of communication and the different types of illocutionary acts. Directives were defined as the speaker's efforts to convince or encourage the hearer to perform specific actions and were classified by Haverkate (1984) into two groups: impositive directives and non-impositive directives. Haverkate (1984) described the former as being actions that are more assertive in nature, such as requests and orders, with the purpose of serving the speaker’s own interests. Conversely, they refer to the latter as actions that are less daunting, such as suggestions, and

are intended to be advantageous to the hearer. As such, according to Thomas (1995), both the hearer and the speaker need to be taken into account since speech act theory explores the correlation between language usage and the conduct of interlocutors involved in social interactions. By using speech acts to manifest diverse intents, a speaker can propose, express regret, give guidance, and more. In doing so, they are able to convey their message clearly, to ensure that they are understood by their audience, and that their objectives are met.

Despite being the most commonly utilized, both Austin's and Searle's classifications of speech acts have been heavily criticized (see Levinson, 1981; LoCastro, 2003; Trosborg, 1995) due to their failure to consider the contextual setting and the communicative purpose underlying speech acts. Searle's taxonomy primarily focuses on individual sentences, resulting in an inadequate representation of the functional, psychological, and affective aspects that impact speech acts. It can be deduced from Levinson (1981), that the critique of the aforementioned taxonomies lies in their emphasis on the pragmalinguistic aspect of pragmatics (i.e., linguistic and structural component of pragmatics) and their shortcomings regarding the sociopragmatic (i.e., context and social component of pragmatics) aspect. Consequently, some studies have proposed that it is necessary to shift the attention toward the dynamics of interaction by adopting a sociopragmatic perspective in order to complement the classifications presented by Austin and Searle, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of utterances in context (i.e., conversation) (see Huang, 2007; LoCastro, 2003; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2016; Yule, 1996). According to Rodríguez-Peñarroja (2016), this perspective considers three crucial aspects. The first is the capability to identify and produce contextually appropriate utterances in order to achieve a goal. The second aspect discusses the pragmatic layer embedded in language usage, which adheres to specific conventions. Lastly, the third involves the impact of politeness on interaction. Therefore, another important factor to consider

when analyzing speech in context, as well as the appropriacy and efficiency of speech act use, has been politeness theory.

### **2.2.2. *Politeness Theory***

According to Lakoff (1973, 1979), (linguistic) politeness is a set of behaviors that are used to reduce friction in interpersonal interactions. It is a way of communicating that builds trust and serves as a safeguard during conflict-prone communication. In other words, politeness plays a significant role in appropriate interpersonal conduct. Three main perspectives have been put forward to clarify this concept. Initially, the conversational-maxim perspective (see Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983) posits that politeness is adjusted by specific regulations or conversational principles. This viewpoint, though, has faced criticism for several reasons, namely for its lack of attention to context, lack of universality, and oversimplification of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Fraser, 1990; Thomas, 1995). Secondly, the conversational-contract perspective, proposed by Fraser (1990), adopts a discourse-centered approach. However, according to Thomas (1995), it is too sociolinguistic in nature to be effectively employed in empirical investigations. Lastly, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1978, 1987), or face-saving view of politeness (Fraser, 1990), is a widely accepted framework for understanding how politeness can be used to create successful communication. In their theory, politeness is presented as a diplomatic protocol which can help reduce the potential for aggression in interactions.

Brown and Levinson's theory is based on the concept of *face* (Goffman, 1967), which they defined as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 311) or "[an] individual's self-esteem" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 2). Face is seen as an important factor in the way that politeness can be used to ensure successful communication. According to them, two components of face are recognized: negative face and positive face. Negative face refers to the need for freedom from imposition, while positive face



is about the appreciation and recognition of one's identity and self-image, and it is important to be aware of both when interacting with others. There are certain speech acts (e.g., directives) which intend to bring about a change in the behavior of another person, and in turn, have the potential to harm the recipient's negative face. Both impositive and non-impositive directives (such as suggestions, requests, orders, threats, etc.) are commonly known as FTAs, and they require the utilization of various politeness strategies to mitigate their negative effects. According to Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), when individuals make a statement, they have the choice to either employ an on-record or off-record strategy. The on-record strategy involves explicitly and unequivocally expressing intentions, whereas the off-record strategy entails conveying intentions through subtle hints or indirect means. Alternatively, they have the option to engage in a FTA with or without a redressive action, which involves considering or disregarding the interlocutor's face. Conducting the FTA in a straightforward manner, without any redressive action, means executing it with maximum directness, clarity, lack of ambiguity, and conciseness (e.g., the use of imperative when making a request in English). In contrast, in situations where redressive action is deemed necessary, speakers have the option to employ either positive or negative politeness tactics. The former approach focuses on preserving the hearers' positive face and seeking their approval, while the latter approach partially addresses the hearer's negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1978).

As previously discussed, Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that speakers are required to employ specific approaches to protect the hearer's face. They further argue that the selection of an appropriate strategy is contingent upon the speaker's evaluation of the magnitude of the FTA, which is influenced by contextual factors. This evaluation is determined by three variables (social distance, social power, and degree of imposition) that ascertain the gravity of the FTA. Social distance (D), demonstrating the degree of familiarity between the two interlocutors, consists of three levels: strangers (high D, D+), acquaintances (medium D) and

friends (low D, D-). Social power (P), which shows the interlocutors' age and position in society, can be of equal status (speaker = hearer, P-) or one overpowering the other (speaker > hearer or speaker < hearer, P+). Finally, the degree, rank or risk of imposition is determined by the weight (or risk) of the action or message the speaker takes or conveys, which can be high or low depending on the speech act or the interlocutors' culture(s) (see Brown & Levinson, 1987; Ogiermann, 2009, 2018). Brown and Levinson's theory has been embraced as a foundational framework for investigating pragmatics, particularly in the context of studying speech acts (Alabdali, 2019; Cook, 2022), but not without critique (e.g., McConachy, 2019).

Nevertheless, McConachy (2019) argues that the interplay between variables in language use is more complex than simply being “appropriate” or “inappropriate.” The author emphasizes that speakers make pragmatic and metapragmatic decisions based on subjective social and moral judgments. These judgments are influenced by cultural discourses and ideologies surrounding interpersonal rights and responsibilities (e.g., kindness, fairness, etc.). According to Haugh (2010), the scope of what can be considered significant and efficient in everyday language usage is considerably more adaptable and primarily reliant on how individuals perceive their connections with others and establish shared understanding during the course of conversation. Therefore, labeling language use as “‘impolite’ is not simply recognising that the language use is unconventional but rather than it commits a moral violation by failing to attend to the ‘face’, ‘dignity’, ‘status’, ‘gender’ etc. of the interlocutor” (McConachy, 2019, p. 170). Furthermore, the understanding of politeness needs to be tailored to align with cultural norms (Cook, 2011; Yule, 1996). According to Pavan (2019), as politeness is influenced by both culture and language, each culture establishes its unique criteria for evaluating the aforementioned three variables. In diverse cultural contexts, scholars (such as Kádár, 2017; Kádár & Haugh, 2013; Van Compernelle, 2014) have highlighted that the politeness theories proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) may not

accurately capture the dynamics of politeness. These approaches to politeness seem to be heavily influenced by Western cultural assumptions about individual rationality, which presumes that each person selects behaviors based on their desired social outcome in a given situation (see Meier, 1997, 2003). According to Mey (2006), the objectives of speech acts and politeness are universal across languages, but their manifestation and contextual usage can vary (see also García-Santillán, 2021). Mey (2006) also posits that interactions between individuals from diverse social and cultural backgrounds invariably entail the potential for misunderstandings to occur. In other words, the utilization and interpretation of speech acts are contingent upon cultural norms and practices. The ability to use and understand speech acts, and in turn politeness, has been deemed crucial for effective communication (Garcia, 2004).

The field of ILP, which is “the study of non-native speakers’ acquisition, comprehension and production of pragmatics” (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p. 215), focuses on examining the manner in which individuals who are not NSs of a particular language engage in the production and comprehension of speech acts (Yule, 1996). Specifically, ILP attempts to explore L2 pragmatic development of speech acts in different contexts (see Kasper & Rose, 2002). More recently, Taguchi (2017) added that this field also attends to IDs among L2 learners, and the factors that influence the process of their pragmatic development. L2 pragmatic development has raised considerable attention in the field of SLA since it does not necessarily align with linguistic development (including grammar and vocabulary). Even proficient learners may struggle to understand or express intended meanings and politeness values (see Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Krisnawati, 2011). Therefore, being grammatically competent does not always entail possessing pragmatic competence. The concept of L2 pragmatic competence will be explored in depth in the following section.

### 2.3. L2 Pragmatic Competence

There have been multiple attempts to explicate the concept of pragmatic competence. Initially it was defined by Chomsky (1980) as the “knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use (of the language), in conformity with various purposes” (p. 224). However, according to Canale and Swain (1980), it should instead be classified as sociolinguistic competence. They define it, by contrast, as the understanding of how language is appropriately used in different contexts. Fraser (1983), on the other hand, claimed that pragmatic competence refers to the comprehension of how a hearer grasps the intended meaning of a speaker and the capacity to discern the speaker’s intended illocutionary force by means of subtle “attitudes” embedded in their speech. Thomas (1983) further added that the ability is used to achieve a specific purpose. According to Thomas (1983), pragmalinguistic competence pertains to using the correct language for performing a speech act, while sociopragmatic competence relates to the suitability of a speech act within a specific (social) context. In other words, “pragmalinguistic competence is the linguistic competence that allows speakers to carry out the speech acts that their sociopragmatic competence tells them are desirable” (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, p. 686). Pragmatic competence can be therefore defined as the ability to convey and interpret contextual meaning. As such, Roever (2004) suggests that L2 learners should possess the capability to employ their sociopragmatic comprehension to pragmalinguistic structures and strategies, and proficiently employ this knowledge in a specific communicative setting. Consequently, as language usage is always influenced by the context, the two competences are closely connected, and are necessary for expressing and comprehending speech intentions (see Eslami et al., 2022; McConachy, 2019; Roever, 2005).

As Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) stated, an adept L2 learner must acquire socio-cultural norms effectively, in addition to grammatical proficiency (see also Kasper & Roever, 2005; Luo & Gao, 2011). It is not enough to simply understand the linguistic structures;

pragmatic competence is also required to navigate the unspoken rules of communication that vary across cultures. The authors emphasize that even proficient L2 learners may experience communication breakdowns if they lack adequate socio-cultural understanding. It follows then, that having cultural knowledge about the TL community is crucial for understanding and applying the appropriate pragmatic norms. This failure can be described as adhering to the conventions and social norms of one's L1 culture when using the L2, even if such behavior may be considered inappropriate (Kasper, 1992; Riley, 1989). These breakdowns can manifest either at a pragmalinguistic level or at a sociopragmatic level (Leech, 1983). To prevent such incidents, it is important for the learner to acquire adequate cultural knowledge of the L2, which will aid in avoiding potential stereotypes (Jung, 2002). Moreover, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) contend that learners need to be conscious of the differences in discourse between their L1 and the L2 in order to attain pragmatic competence. Accordingly, Luo and Gao (2011) suggest that by improving learners' language ability, communication competence, and cultural quality, such failures can be counteracted. The attainment of this competence, however, is further complicated by the potential influence of sociocultural disparities among different groups, each with their own ambiguous conventions (Taguchi, 2010). While pragmalinguistic breakdown might be less challenging to address as it could be a simple grammar mistake, a sociopragmatic breakdown is more likely to be more strenuous to tackle as it stems from cultural perspectives (Stukan, 2018). Given these challenges, it becomes crucial to understand the nature and importance of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication.

Being pragmatically competent enables speakers to choose an appropriate utterance (or a speech act) in various contexts (Kasper & Rose, 2002). The manner in which these acts are carried out, the extent to which they are perceived, and their suitability in a communicative context serve as indicators of a speaker's pragmatic competence (Murray, 2010). However, the question of agency should not be dismissed (see Ishihara, 2019; Lauer, 2013; Taguchi, 2019;

Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Learners are considered to be individuals who have their own set of values, beliefs, and perspectives on the world (LoCastro, 2003). They use their own personal principles to make linguistic decisions, which help them establish their own social identities, even if these choices do not align with the commonly accepted norms within the local community (Ishihara & Tarone, 2009). Consequently, in the analysis of L2 pragmatic competence, it is crucial to take into account the desired social identity of learners and how it influences their pragmatic decision-making. As Taguchi (2019) states, understanding the typical relationships between form, function, and context is one aspect, but determining whether or not to apply this understanding in interactions with others can be an entirely distinct issue. In light of this developing understanding, the comprehension of pragmatic competence in the present age is most effectively perceived as a multifaceted and complex construct encompassing numerous domains of knowledge and skill which are: “(1) linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of what forms to use in what context; (2) interactional abilities to use the knowledge in a flexible, adaptive manner corresponding to changing context; and (3) agency to make an informed decision on whether or not to implement the knowledge in the community” (Taguchi, 2019, p. 4). It is thus necessary to gauge and understand not only L2 learners’ production of pragmatic instances, but also the extent of their awareness of the L2 culture and, in effect, sociopragmatics, as will be discussed in the section to follow.

#### **2.4. (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness**

According to Schmidt (1993), awareness in SLA refers to the understanding and explicit conscious knowledge of language structures, functions, and the processes involved in language use. It plays a crucial role in L2 learning as Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis posits. The hypothesis introduces two cognitive constructs: “noticing” and “understanding.” Noticing refers to the allocation of focal attention to specific features of input during exposure, which is then transformed into intake for cognitive processing. This process aids in acquisition

as the consciously registered input is more likely to be encoded in memory, leading to rule learning over time. Understanding, on the other hand, is a higher-order form of awareness that involves explicit knowledge of linguistic rules. In terms of morphosyntax acquisition, this entails learners being able to detect and explain form-meaning mappings in terms of linguistic rules or principles. In the context of pragmatics, Garcia (2004) suggested that pragmatic awareness is a distinctive capability that emerges autonomously from that of grammatical awareness. In McConachy's words (2012), (meta)pragmatic awareness can be defined as "a view of language as a contextually contingent social tool in which individuals orient towards pragmatic phenomena based on culturally situated frames of reference" (p. 3). The interpretation and contemplation of pragmatic-related matters, as shaped by one's cultural perspectives, constitute the central aspect of this conception of awareness at the individual level. Pragmatic awareness, therefore, aids L2 pragmatic development as learners notice the linguistic construction of speech acts and begin to develop explicit hypotheses regarding how pragmalinguistic choices reflect sociopragmatic norms of appropriateness. In other words, learners must notice features of the input that allow them to associate forms, functions, and context which involves recognizing both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic dimensions of language.

The inclusion of culture in McConachy's (2012) definition above also recognizes the impact of the L1 or other languages on the comprehension of pragmatic aspects in the TL. Thus, according to McConachy (2019), this understanding of awareness moves away from the prevailing view of interlanguage and embraces a more diverse and multicultural perspective. Throughout this study, in line with McConachy and Spencer-Oatey (2020), the term pragmatic awareness is utilized to denote the proficiency of learners in discerning language use that is pragmalinguistically suitable or unsuitable, whereas the term metapragmatic awareness is used

when the emphasis is placed on learners' capability to articulate the sociopragmatics of the language.

Initially, among the researchers who attempted to define metapragmatic awareness, Safont (2003) outlined this concept as the recognition of specific contextual characteristics that can influence the suitability of a linguistic pattern in a particular circumstance. Kinginger and Farrell (2004) described metapragmatic awareness as having an understanding of the social implications of different L2 forms and being aware of how these forms indicate various aspects of social situations. Alcón-Soler and Safont (2008) further explained that pragmatic awareness refers to the explicit knowledge of rules and conventions that govern appropriate language use in specific communicative contexts and speech communities. Subsequently, Van Compernelle and Kinginger (2013) added that it is an awareness of the social meaning of various language forms, and how they are used to mark different aspects of social contexts or personal identities. Accordingly, metapragmatic awareness also started to take into account the individual and social aspects of language and how they are intertwined. McConachy (2019) argued that L2 instruction has largely focused on operationalizing learners' pragmatic awareness in terms of their understanding of L2 pragmatic norms. However, this has resulted in the marginalization of learners' L1-based pragmatic awareness, as well as the impact of any cultural assumptions connected to the L1 on learners' comprehension of L2 pragmatic phenomena. It is important to consider these factors when examining learners' ability to interpret and use pragmatic features of the language.

Research in ILP has largely focused on how to raise pragmatic awareness in learners, looking at how aware they are when it comes to using and understanding the speech acts of a FL. By understanding the complexities of speech acts, language learners can more fully comprehend the communicative context of the language they are learning, making them more effective communicators. One of the most influential studies of such complexities was



conducted by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). As one of the first of its kind, the researchers examined the learners' understanding of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, between English as a second language (ESL) (mean age 24.9) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learners (mean age 18.2) and teachers in various specific situations. The results indicated that EFL learners were more likely to identify grammatical deviations, while ESL learners focused more on pragmatic inappropriateness. Similarly, EFL teachers rated ungrammatical and inappropriate utterances more severely compared to ESL teachers. The authors highlighted the influence of proficiency on grammatical and pragmatic awareness, and concluded that high levels of pragmatic awareness did not always lead to proper pragmatic production and suggested the implementation of awareness-raising and noticing activities in EFL contexts.

Along the same lines, Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin's (2005) research involving high-intermediate ESL learners in the United States provided further evidence to support this conclusion. The study revealed that while learners were capable of identifying pragmalinguistic errors without explicit instruction, their attempts to rectify sociopragmatic errors among given options differed from those of NSs. The authors proposed that learners may have possessed this awareness but struggled to apply it effectively in their own production. The researchers also suggested that learners might have been beginning to recognize the pragmalinguistic patterns of L2 usage, but that further exposure and/or instruction may be required for a more comprehensive understanding of these patterns and how to implement them sociopragmatically, which is in line with Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis.

Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) research was replicated by several researchers, namely Niezgoda and Roever (2001), Schauer (2006), and Cook and Liddicoat (2002). In contrast to the original study, Niezgoda and Roever (2001) discovered that EFL learners (mean age 21) in the Czech Republic had a greater awareness of pragmatic errors compared to ESL learners (mean age 23) in Hawaii. They attributed this difference to the higher proficiency level

of the EFL participants. Schauer's (2006) findings, on the other hand, aligned with the original study, as L1 German EFL learners (mean age 24) displayed less awareness of pragmatic errors compared to ESL learners (mean age 23) in England. Moreover, Schauer's research highlighted that the pragmatic awareness of ESL learners increased during their time in England, emphasizing the influence of the learning environment on awareness. However, in order to further narrow the scope of the study, Cook and Liddicoat (2002) chose to specifically focus on the production and comprehension of requests by NSs of English and ESL learners. Their study involved a written questionnaire which tested participants' ability to interpret the expected meanings of requests in specific contexts. The findings of the study indicated that NSs and individuals with advanced language skills exhibited greater proficiency in comprehending both direct and conventionally indirect requests. Contrastively, learners with lower proficiency levels demonstrated higher performance with direct requests but faced difficulties with indirect requests. The authors ascribed these outcomes to variations in proficiency levels and disparities in the processing and utilization of contextual knowledge between individuals who are NSs and those who are not.

The aforementioned studies highlight the importance of L2 proficiency as a key factor in pragmatic awareness (see also Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2014; Bardovi-Harlig & Su, 2018; Roever & Ikeda, 2023; Wu & Roever, 2021). However, L2 proficiency, which is considered as one of the most investigated ID factors in L2 pragmatics studies (Zhang & Aubrey, 2024), is not the sole determinant of learners' ability to recognize and produce pragmatic forms. Other ID factors, such as age and motivation, although underexplored, also play a role in shaping pragmatic awareness. According to Taguchi and Roever (2017), despite the strong focus on motivation in SLA research, its influence has been largely overlooked in the field of ILP. The authors emphasized that motivation has been typically employed to rationalize inexplicable improvement or outperformance of participants in studies. Conversely, Takahashi (2001)

speculated that motivation could significantly influence how learners notice and process target pragmatic forms. This aligns with earlier work by Schmidt (1993), who argued that learners with strong integrative motivation are more likely to notice the pragmatic aspects of language input. There are several studies that attempted to explore the effect of the aforementioned factor on pragmatic awareness and production (e.g., Chiravate, 2012; LoCastro, 2001; Tajeddin & Moghaddam, 2012; Takahashi, 2005, 2015; Yamato et al., 2013; Yang & Ren, 2019, among others).

Takahashi (2005) investigated how IDs, particularly motivation, affect L2 learners' noticing of pragmalinguistic features. Their study involved 80 L1 Japanese EFL learners (mean age 19.4), whose proficiency ranged from low to high. Participants completed a motivation questionnaire and a proficiency test before undergoing a treatment designed to promote noticing, followed by an awareness test. The results highlighted that intrinsically motivated learners were more likely to notice and retain target pragmalinguistic features. Expanding on this, Takahashi (2015) examined how listening proficiency and motivation impacted learners' awareness of pragmalinguistic features in English requests. Drawing on data from 104 L1 Japanese EFL learners (mean age 18.75), they confirmed a positive association between motivation and pragmatic awareness, although the findings also suggested that neither motivation nor proficiency was sufficient to ensure the acquisition of target forms. Along the same lines, Yamato et al. (2013) conducted a study with 69 L1 Japanese university students who were learning EFL at varying proficiency levels. Their findings indicated that learners with higher levels of intrinsic motivation were better able to notice instances of pragmatic inappropriateness, demonstrating greater awareness of these features compared to their less motivated peers. Similarly, Chiravate (2012) examined 120 L1 Thai EFL learners (mean age 20.26) and found that those with higher motivation not only identified pragmatic errors more effectively but also rated such errors as more severe than grammatical ones. However, while

proficiency alone did not guarantee awareness of pragmatic infelicities, it was more strongly associated with the noticing of grammar-related mistakes.

Adding another dimension to this discussion, LoCastro (2001) and Kim (2014) explored how learners' agency, motivation and identity influence their pragmatic decisions. LoCastro (2001), examined the attitudes, self-identity, and willingness of approximately 146 L1 Japanese university students who were learning EFL to align with L2 pragmatic norms. Their analysis revealed that while learners generally did not resist adopting L2 norms, their efforts to do so were shaped by their personal goals and motivations, suggesting a dynamic interplay between identity construction and pragmatic accommodation. Similarly, Kim (2014) investigated language resistance and agency among L1 Korean ESL learners (aged between 24 and 50 years old) in the United States. The findings revealed that participants' pragmatic choices often reflected a negotiation of multiple identities, with learners exerting agency to appear in ways they deemed socially or personally advantageous. For example, while adopting target norms might foster relationships or recognition, learners (especially older participants) sometimes experienced internal resistance. In a different context, Ying and Ren (2021) found that 11 international advanced learners of Chinese (mean age 29.45) often produced non-target-like greeting responses due to personal perceptions, pragmatic knowledge deficits, and instructional effects. Their study illustrates how learners' agency, rather than strict adherence to native speaker norms, can lead learners to diverge from appropriate choices.

Such findings reflect the socio-dynamic perspective's emphasis on context-sensitive and evolving ID factors (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015), as learners adapt their pragmatic behavior based on their evaluations of context and personal goals. The socio-dynamic view also resonates with Yang and Ren's (2019) study, which identified attitudes toward the L2 community and learning effort as key predictors of pragmatic awareness among 498 L1 Chinese EFL learners (mean age 19.6). While overall motivation was not correlated with

pragmatic awareness, the combination of context-specific attitudes and efforts proved significant. This could align with findings by Tajeddin and Moghadam (2012), who distinguished between general and speech-act-specific motivation among 75 L1 Persian EFL learners (mean age 27.77). While general pragmatic motivation—reflecting learners’ broad desire to communicate appropriately and understand L2 sociocultural variables—did not predict pragmatic production, speech-act-specific motivation was a significant predictor. These studies highlight how learners’ motivation and sense of agency directly influence pragmatic awareness and production.

In this line, Rafieyan et al. (2014) aimed to investigate the impact of awareness of English pragmatic features on the comprehension and production of conventional expressions. The study involved EFL students, and utilized three instruments for data collection: a pragmatic awareness test (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998), a pragmatic comprehension test (Taguchi, 2007; 2008), and a pragmatic production test (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009). However, unlike Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei’s (1998) results, their findings suggested that as learners’ understanding of pragmatic elements improves, their usage of conventional expressions increases proportionally, and that there was a positive correlation indicating that greater awareness leads to better comprehension and production. They believed that this aligned with Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis (1993), suggesting learners who recognize sociolinguistic and sociocultural differences between their L1 and TL perform better on comprehension and production tests. Conversely, those who are unaware tend to rely on their L1 expressions, leading to poorer performance. This is in line with Alcón-Soler and Safont (2008), as they mentioned that learners’ pragmatic awareness seems to play a role in developing pragmatic competence, highlighting the importance of pragmatic comprehension in the language classroom. In order to investigate this matter further through the use of role plays, Li and Gao (2017) carried out a research project involving EFL students who participated in interactions

meant to elicit the speech act of request. Subsequently, retrospective interviews were conducted. The findings revealed that learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness is shaped by their behaviors of self-monitoring and self-evaluation. These behaviors encompass both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic dimensions, and are utilized to evaluate the cognitive demands and subjective viewpoints of the learners. Li and Gao's (2017) study is one example of the exhaustive body of research concerning pragmatic awareness and requests. However, according to several researchers, suggestions have not received the same attention as requests throughout the years (Gu, 2014; Petrey, 2016; Sarkeshikian et al., 2024; Schmidt et al., 1996). The following section will thus review the studies involving the speech act of suggestion.

## **2.5. Suggestions**

### **2.5.1. *Defining Suggestions***

According to Banerjee and Carrell's (1988) definition, "a suggestion is an utterance that the speaker intends the hearer to perceive as a directive to do something that will be to the hearer's benefit" (p. 318). The speech act of suggestion can be studied within the framework of non-impositive directives<sup>1</sup> (see Haverkate, 1984). The nature of suggestions within this framework emphasizes their communicative purpose and the power dynamics between the speaker and hearer necessitating consideration of both (Thomas, 1995). Ergo, the presence and response of the interlocutors to the speaker's intentions are crucial, as the intended action will only be carried out upon the hearer's acceptance of the speaker's intentions (Alcón-Soler & Safont, 2001).

Additionally, according to Banerjee and Carrell (1988), the aforementioned speech act is seen as potentially threatening to the recipient's face (i.e., self-esteem), since the speaker aims for the hearer to take action, thereby encroaching on the hearer's autonomy and freedom

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<sup>1</sup> Speech act theory is discussed in section 2.2.1.

from imposition. As mentioned in Section 2.2.2, a suggestion can be considered as a FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987), and in proportion to the three contextual variables (i.e., social distance, social power, and degree of imposition), the weight of the suggestion can be determined. Accordingly, the speaker has the choice to mitigate the effect of the threat to the hearer's face by utilizing various politeness strategies. Therefore, it is important for NNSs, who may not be aware of the varying impact of direct and indirect suggestions in the TL, to have an understanding of its complexities, and exercise caution when making suggestions.

Martínez-Flor (2004, 2005) has contributed not only to the understanding of suggestions by establishing a taxonomy based on speech act and politeness theories, but also to previous cross-cultural and ILP research. Initially, the author considered explicit and implicit linguistic expressions of the speech act of suggestion as proposed by Kasper and Schmidt (1996), as these were linked to direct and indirect politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Subsequently, they distinguished three main strategies for making suggestions: direct, conventionalized, and indirect. Direct suggestions are explicit and may be perceived as impolite, including the use of *performative verbs* (e.g., “*I suggest...*”), *imperatives*, and direct references to the suggestion itself. Conventionalized suggestions are less direct but still allow the hearer to discern the speaker's intent, often employing interrogative forms, expressions of possibility or probability, the verbs *should* and *need*, and *conditional* structures. Indirect suggestions, conversely, are the most subtle, lacking clear indicators of suggestion in the utterance and requiring the hearer to infer the speaker's intention, often using *impersonal forms* (e.g., “*One possibility would be...*”) or *hints* (e.g., “*I've heard that...*”).

Pattemore (2017), however, discovered several strategies which did not correspond to any of the previous taxonomy categories in their data gathered from four groups of Spanish/Catalan bilingual EFL students (aged 14-50). These strategies include *interrogative possibility*, *passive*, and *request suggestion*. *Interrogative possibility* is defined as standardized

structures integrating components of both interrogative sentences and modal expressions of possibility (e.g., “*Do we have any way of...?*”). A different approach involves employing the passive voice to convey indirect suggestions. This strategy differs significantly in terms of grammar from the existing *impersonal* category within the framework. The passive voice emphasizes the potential action to be taken, shifting the focus away from imposing the action on the individual who may carry it out. Various modal verbs can be utilized within this approach, all of which are regarded as belonging to the same overarching strategy (e.g., “*This step can be taken.*”). Regarding *request suggestions*, the study found that the differentiation between a request and a suggestion was not always distinct. Occasionally, the conceptual distinction between a request being focused on the speaker and a suggestion being focused on the hearer may overlap. Khazdouzian et al. (2021) also found instances of the aforementioned strategies after analyzing data collected from Spanish/Catalan bilingual EFL participants. Hence, the following table (Table 1) reflects the combined taxonomies. It is also worth mentioning that Pattemore (2017) noticed their participants utilizing the modal auxiliary *will* to carry out a suggestion; however, it has been excluded from this list as they only found one instance of the said strategy, and it has not been mentioned in other sources since.



**Table 1***Taxonomy of Suggestion Linguistic Realization Strategies*

Type	Strategy	Example
Direct	(1) <i>Performative Verb</i>	(A) I (would) suggest that you... (B) I (would) advise you to... (C) I (would) recommend (D) I would like to suggest / advise / recommend...
	(2) <i>Noun of Suggestion</i>	(A) My suggestion / advice / recommendation (to you) would be/is... (B) My idea/opinion is...
	(3) <i>Imperative</i>	(A) Try using...; Take my advice; Send your CV
	(4) <i>Negative Imperative</i>	(A) Don't try to...
Conventionalized Forms	(5) <i>Specific Formulae (Interrogative Forms)</i>	(A) Why don't you...? (B) Have you tried...? (C) Have you thought of...? (D) How about...? (E) What about...?
	(6) <i>Possibility/Probability</i>	(A) You can/could/may/might... (B) You might/may want to...
	(7) <i>Interrogative Possibility</i>	(A) Can('t)/could(n't) you...? (B) Do you have any way of...?
	(8) <i>Should</i>	(A) You should... (B) You ought to...
	(9) <i>Need</i>	(A) You need... (B) What you need (to do) is...
	(10) <i>Conditional</i>	(A) If I were you, I would... (B) If I were in your position, I wouldn't...
Indirect	(11) <i>Impersonal</i>	(A) It would/might be helpful/better... (B) A good idea would be... (C) A subject + would be a good idea (D) One possibility would be... (E) One thing (you can do) would be to... (F) There are a number of options that you...
	(12) <i>Passive</i>	(A) ... can/could/should be done
	(13) <i>Hints</i>	(A) I've heard that...
Other Forms	(14) <i>Inclusive We</i>	(A) We can/could... (B) Shall we...? (C) Let's... (D) We'd better (not)...
	(15) <i>Obligation</i>	(A) You must/have to...
	(16) <i>Request Suggestion</i>	

*Note.* Adapted from Martínez-Flor (2004, 2005), Pattemore (2017), and Khazdouzian et al. (2021)

### 2.5.2. *Previous Research on Suggestions*

Even though pragmatics has not garnered the same level of focus as other domains within EFL or ESL settings (Ton-Nu, 2024), there has been a substantial body of research regarding teaching various speech acts (e.g., Derakhshan & Eslami, 2020; Economidou-Koetsidis et al., 2018; Halenko, 2021; Sánchez-Hernández & Martínez-Flor, 2022; Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2021, to name but a few). There are, however, relatively few studies that have focused specifically on suggestions. This includes investigating the differences in learners' comprehension and/or production of suggestions based on language background (e.g., Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; Farnia et al., 2014; Gu, 2014; Li, 2010; Liu & Zhao, 2007; Min, 2019; Pishghadam & Sharafadini, 2011a, 2011b; Shofwan & Mujiyanto, 2018), gender (e.g., Alfghe & Mohammadzadeh, 2021; Pishghadam & Sharafadini, 2011a, 2011b; Şenel, 2021; Sharqawi & Anthony, 2020), their varying levels of language proficiency (e.g., Aminifard et al., 2014; Karimloo, 2022; Pishghadam & Sharafadini, 2011b), and the type of instruction received (e.g., Aufa, 2011; Chalak & Abbasi, 2015; Martínez-Flor, 2004, 2006; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Rajabi & Farahian, 2013; Rezvani et al., 2014; Sarkeshikian et al., 2024). From the aforementioned studies, only those relevant to the purposes of the present dissertation will be reviewed.

The subsequent studies aimed to investigate the relation between NNSs' L1s and English when utilizing the speech act of suggestion. One of the first investigations was carried out by Banerjee and Carrell (1988). They compared 28 L1 Chinese and L1 Malay advanced ESL students with NSs of American English, finding that NSs made suggestions more frequently and their strategies varied with the directness required by the situation. Building upon this, Gu (2014) conducted a corpus study centered on L1 Chinese multi-leveled EFL learners and discovered that they utilized a greater number of modal verbs, explicit performatives, and *conditional* structures in comparison to NSs of English, who demonstrated

a preference for *wh-questions* and *let's* structures. Additionally, they concluded that Chinese speakers tend to employ more Conventionalized Indirect strategies, thereby emphasizing the distinctions in intercultural communication. In a similar vein, Shofwan and Mujiyanto (2018) conducted a study on 20 undergraduate EFL students at Indonesian Universitas Negeri Semarang. Their research unveiled that the students primarily used Conventionalized Forms and Direct strategies in conjunction with *performative verbs*. Modal verbs such as *should* and *need* were also prevalent. This led the researchers to believe that although the students were aware of politeness strategies because of their L1, they failed to use more Indirect strategies compared to their NS counterparts. Min (2019) conducted a comparison between 49 L1 Korean intermediate and upper-intermediate EFL learners (aged 20-25) and NSs of Australian English (aged 27-32), and discovered that the EFL learners exhibited an imbalance in their choice of strategies for making suggestions, as well as variations in their linguistic expressions. They concluded that the Korean participants were most likely influenced by their L1 culture when using more Direct strategies and avoiding more Indirect Non-Conventionalized strategies.

Liu and Zhao (2007) found similar results with six NSs of Cantonese, working as composition instructors who were highly proficient in English. The authors conducted a comparison between these L1 Cantonese instructors' suggestion-making in Australian English and that of L1 Australian English instructors. The Cantonese instructors utilized a smaller variety of sentence structures and were less inclined to employ complex sentences when making suggestions in English. Despite similarities in perspective, directness, and politeness when compared to the NSs of Australian English, the suggestion strategies and redressive actions of the L1 Cantonese instructors sounded more assertive which could have been due to a lack of sociopragmatic or pragmalinguistic knowledge. In Iran, Farnia et al. (2014) investigated the use of suggestions in English among 17 L1 Persian EFL learners (aged 18-25). Their study unexpectedly revealed the predominant reliance of the participants on directive

approaches which is contrary to what is to be predicted given the nature of Iranian culture, and in light of the previously reported results. Nevertheless, the use of mitigating elements to manage face-threatening circumstances seems to be in line with Iranian culture.

In the same context, Pishghadam and Sharafadini (2011a) conducted a comparative analysis of suggestion speech acts in English and Persian to compare the strategies across the two languages. They emphasized that English speakers employ modals and *let's* more frequently, possibly due to the greater variety of modals in English compared to Persian. However, the 150 L1 Persian participants (aged 17-45) preferred the use of *imperatives* and *conditionals* in Persian, reflecting the hierarchical structure and emphasis on respect and face preservation according to the context. In another study, Pishghadam and Sharafadini (2011b) discovered that 150 L1 Persian B1-C1 EFL students (aged 17-50) did utilize modals, albeit not as often. They attributed this phenomenon to the textbooks used at the language school. More recently, Karimloo's (2022) objective was to examine how 105 L1 Persian B1-C1 EFL learners (aged 18-33) produce suggestion speech acts through DCTs, taking into account factors such as language proficiency, gender, and verbal intelligence. The results revealed that gender significantly impacted the preference for *performatives* as a suggestion form, while language proficiency did not influence learners' preference for any specific form. The research also revealed that the learners exhibited a tendency to transfer structures from their L1 when producing suggestion forms. In the Turkish context, after examining 158 19-24-year-old L1 Turkish EFL students' suggestion strategies, Şenel (2021) found a preference for Conventionalized Forms, with Direct strategies being the least used. Additionally, they reported that L1 Turkish students struggle to convert their theoretical understanding into practical skills due to their cultural habits. They concluded that while the participants' inclination to make suggestions may have been influenced by their L1, it could also be attributed to an insufficient grasp of strategic, communicative, and sociolinguistic abilities.

As a whole, the aforementioned research findings highlight the intricate nature of this speech act in various languages and cultural contexts, emphasizing the necessity for language instruction methods that take into account these subtleties in order to improve intercultural communication competence. The following studies are a few of those which tackled different instructional methods regarding the teaching of suggestions in the L2. Martínez-Flor (2006) evaluated 81 L1 Spanish “English for Specific Purposes” learners’ (aged 19-25) ability to judge the appropriateness of suggestions and their confidence within a university context using scenarios that varied by the sociopragmatic factor of power, specifically between students and professors. The study compared explicit and implicit instructions, which was operationalized using input enhancement and recasts without explicit metapragmatic explanations. The study found that both instructional methods significantly improved students’ confidence, aligning with prior research that suggests instruction is effective in teaching different pragmatic aspects. On the other hand, there are a number of other researchers who claim that explicit instruction yields more positive outcomes. Rajabi and Farahian (2013) investigated the impact of pragmatic instruction on the awareness of suggestions among 16 L1 Persian EFL learners (average age 18.4) receiving awareness-raising instruction on main head acts and downgraders in suggestions, while the control group (18 L1 Persian EFL learners with an average age of 18.7) received no such instruction. The results revealed that the group which received explicit pragmatic instruction, demonstrated better awareness of appropriate and accurate suggestions compared to the control group. According to Takimoto (2013), studies suggest that regardless of explicit or implicit instruction, it is crucial to have a pragmatic emphasis in L2 classrooms. This is because without such emphasis, learners might not pay attention to, and in turn, might fail to acquire the target pragmatic features.

However, studies investigating the presence of speech acts, including suggestions, in textbooks and classroom materials have highlighted several weaknesses (see Schauer, 2022).

For example, they report a lack of systematic approach in introducing speech acts (see Kıyanççek & Karatepe, 2023; Ogiermann, 2010; Schauer, 2019), limited exposure to them (Barron, 2016; Kıyanççek & Karatepe, 2023; Martínez-Flor & Fernández Guerra, 2002; Ogiermann, 2010; Schauer, 2019; Vu, 2017) and an absence of authentic conversations which may hinder learners' ability to grasp the context and usage of speech acts (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Eslami et al., 2022; Schauer, 2019). Furthermore, it has been observed that in the classroom, teachers' emphasis tends to be predominantly on grammatical aspects, and pragmatic instruction is oftentimes overlooked, due to the exam-centric nature of educational systems (see Gholami, 2015; Korkmaz & Karatepe, 2023; Mohammad-Bagheri, 2015).

While summarizing that the classroom is not always ideal for learning pragmatics, Taguchi (2011) highlighted that incidental learning could take place through repeated exposure. Incidental learning, according to Hulstijn (1989), can occur in SLA when NNSs unintentionally “pick up” the L2 only through “hearing it being used in their environment” (p. 49). It has also been aptly referred to as “learning without intention” by Schmidt (1993, p. 208). Several researchers have thus intended to investigate its effect on the acquisition of various speech acts (e.g., Barón & Celaya, 2022; Del Bono & Nuzzo, 2021; Khadangi Barani & Mousapour Negari, 2023; Khazdouzian et al., 2021; Myers, 2018; Taguchi, 2012, among others). However, regarding the speech act of suggestion, research is still scarce. Del Bono and Nuzzo's (2021) study recently concluded that through providing peer feedback on Italian grammar to their native English speaker counterparts, L1 Italian participants (aged 20-30) improved their production of English suggestions unintentionally. Another manner through which incidental learning could take place is by the means of AV materials as they seem to provide an abundance of pragmatic instances (e.g., Barón & Celaya, 2022; Khazdouzian et al., 2021).

## 2.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter explored key pragmatic theories and research related to the speech act of suggestion, focusing on politeness, intercultural communication, and L2 pragmatic competence. It highlighted how learners' L1 and cultural backgrounds influence their ability to produce and comprehend suggestions in English, often leading to differences in directness, politeness strategies, and linguistic choices. The chapter also emphasized the importance of L2 pragmatic competence, particularly sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic awareness, in effectively navigating intercultural communication while underscoring the need to research the underexplored effects of IDs (e.g., age and motivation) on (meta)pragmatic awareness. It can be summarized that many learners struggle to adapt their speech act strategies due to insufficient exposure to the nuances of English language politeness norms. Despite this, research shows that learners exhibit varying levels of awareness depending on their language proficiency and cultural context. Research on instructional methods highlights the effectiveness of both explicit and implicit approaches in teaching suggestions, though explicit instruction tends to yield better results. However, while it was demonstrated that educators do not have the necessary materials or time to teach pragmatics in the classroom, it has also been concluded that incidental learning, such as exposure to AV materials, can enhance learners' L2 pragmatic competence. Additionally, considering the importance of recurring utterances in facilitating the noticing of pragmatic features (see Taguchi, 2012), it can be hypothesized that long-term exposure to TV series in the original language may contribute to L2 pragmatic development. The effect of AV materials on the acquisition of L2 pragmatics will be addressed in Chapter 3.

### **3. Review of the Literature II: Audiovisual Materials and Interlanguage Pragmatics**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter delves into the role of AV materials in SLA and, more specifically, L2 pragmatics acquisition. Building on the information summarized in Chapter 2 regarding the importance of authentic language exposure, this chapter explores how AV materials, which combine visual and auditory stimuli, provide learners with naturalistic language input. Section 3.2 defines such materials and discusses their unique advantages in promoting language acquisition through multimodal input, emphasizing the benefits of incidental learning. Subsequently, the effect of visual cues (i.e., captions and subtitles) will be explained through theories, such as Paivio's dual coding theory (1986) and Mayer's multimedia learning theory (2003, 2009) including the advantages and disadvantages they pose. Section 3.3 then narrows the focus to the influence of AV materials on L2 pragmatics, highlighting the ways in which they foster awareness of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic features. As incidental learning is the focus of this research, key studies conducted by Khazdouzian et al. (2021) and Barón and Celaya (2022) will be reviewed.

#### **3.2. Defining Audiovisual Materials**

As discussed in Chapter 2, it can be concluded that engagement with an authentic and substantial source of naturalistic language is necessary for language acquisition, and that “exposure to ‘real’ language presented at a normal speed is emphasized [...] even if this sometimes imposes considerable strain on the learners” (Baltova, 1999, p. 39). According to Muñoz (2022), AV input is a form of multimodal input since, unlike strictly textual or audio input, it is a combination of sound and image (and sometimes text) which serve “to communicate a single, or at least unified, message or meaning” (Dressman, 2020, p. 39). Herron et al. (1995) stated that videos can provide necessary input as they demonstrate culture, behavior, and linguistic interaction between NSs, which mirror that of “everyday



conversational situations” (p. 775). They concluded that this can in turn familiarize learners with the contexts they will most likely find themselves in while offering them much-needed motivation. Rodríguez-Lázaro and Arias-Trejo (2023) summarized that although EFL learners practice English in their academic life frequently, they acquire knowledge beyond the confines of the traditional classroom setting by engaging in activities that offer genuine exposure to the L2, such as listening to podcasts and watching movies (see also Celaya et al., 2023; Martínez-Flor, 2007; Usó-Juan, 2008). The authors found that the leisure pursuit of viewing English-language films is associated with higher proficiency levels, and the frequency of this particular activity tended to rise as individuals grew older. Having such characteristics renders AV materials an effective tool for foreign language (FL) learning (see Baltova, 1999; Bruti, 2016; Danan, 2004, among others).

Researchers have investigated the impact of AV materials on students’ language development using documentaries (e.g., Ahrabi Fakhr et al., 2021; Baltova, 1999; Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011; Markham & Peter, 2003; Montero-Perez, 2020; Peters, 2019; Peters & Webb, 2018; Teng, 2021; Vanderplank, 1988), short clips (e.g., Jernigan, 2012; Kim, 2015; Latifi et al., 2016; Montero-Perez et al., 2014; Montero-Perez et al., 2018; Webb, 2010), TED talks (e.g., Nguyen & Boers, 2019), YouTube videos (e.g., Lin, 2022; Webb, 2010), class recordings (e.g., Kruger & Steyn, 2014), movies (e.g., Abrams, 2014; Birjandi & Derakhshan, 2014; d’Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999; Mardani & Najmabadi, 2016; Naghizadeh & Darabi, 2015; Vanderplank, 2019), and TV series (e.g., Alcón-Soler, 2005; Barón & Celaya, 2022; Birjandi & Derakhshan, 2014; Bisson et al., 2014; Bravo, 2008; Chen et al., 2018; Frumuselu et al., 2015; Khazdouzian et al., 2021; Lekkai, 2014; Matielo et al., 2018; Muñoz, 2017; Puimège & Peters, 2019; Pujadas, 2019; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019; Rodgers, 2013; Vanderplank, 1988; Vulchanova et al., 2015). According to King (2002) and Webb & Nation (2017), watching TV series and movies is already a popular activity, and if learners were to view such AV programs

in their L2 for pleasure, it could serve as a valuable source of input that focuses on conveying meaning. TV exposure, for example, meets the conditions for appropriate input, including being presented in large quantities, being familiar to learners, providing contextual cues, and being comprehensible and engaging (Bruti, 2016; Rodgers, 2013; Rodgers & Webb, 2011). The use of such materials has also attracted considerable attention because of the possibility for incidental learning (see Baltova, 1999; Feng & Webb, 2020; Frumuselu et al., 2015; Long, 2020; Muñoz, 2022; Peters & Webb, 2018; Puimège & Peters, 2019, 2020).

However, Baltova (1999) hypothesized that although some incidental learning may take place through video input, the informative influence of visual cues alone can, in certain cases, surpass the need to actively process language input itself. In other words, often the fast, overlapping, and indistinct speech commonly found in AV content can pose challenges for learners when it comes to comprehension and processing. As a response to this issue, Danan (2004) advised that AV materials have to be chosen carefully to be appropriate to the level of the learner in order for them to be pedagogically effective. Additionally, given that employing unfamiliar or highly demanding tasks with video clips may lead to demotivation and exertion for learners (Guariento & Morley, 2001), several researchers (e.g., Danan, 2004; Talaván, 2007, among others) have suggested that subtitles or captions could be utilized as a solution to this issue.

There are two key theories to understanding the effect of subtitles and AV materials. Paivio (1986) proposed the dual coding theory, which posits that the verbal and imagery systems containing nonverbal objects and events operate independently and are processed differently, despite being interconnected, resulting in separate mental representations. This theory, along with advancements in technology, has spurred numerous researchers to investigate the relationship between subtitles and movies. Subsequently, Mayer (2003) found that individuals have a limited attention span when information is presented through a single

channel, such as auditory input. As a result, they developed the multimedia learning theory which asserts that learners benefit from the integration of words and pictures, as opposed to words alone, since this facilitates the formation of new mental representations or reinforcement of existing ones (see Mayer, 2009). Hence, this led researchers to turn to subtitles in order to aid comprehension of dialogues and learning through films.

Subtitling encompasses various approaches, including intralingual (subtitles in the original language of the film), and interlingual (translated subtitles in other languages for “foreign” viewers). In this current investigation, the term *captions* will henceforth be adopted to refer to same-language subtitles (i.e., intralingual subtitles in the learners’ L2), while *subtitles* will be used to denote interlingual subtitling in the learner’s L1. Even though captions were originally intended for the deaf community of the source language, nowadays even a healthy hearing NS tends to find the need to utilize them. According to Cunningham (2023) with the advancement of technology in cinematography, filmmakers now incorporate more detailed sounds into their work. The intricate sound design, intended for optimal audio experiences such as in cinemas, can be lost when played on smaller devices like laptops, cell phones or televisions. Specifically, dialogues often suffer the most in this process.

Critics of using subtitling have argued that learners may experience overload (Taylor, 2005), distraction (Bairstow & Lavour, 2012), or conversely, become overly reliant on the text, disregarding L2 sound. The last justification is the primary concern regarding the use of subtitles as they are thought to impede the acclimatization and comprehension of the original L2 sound (see Danan, 2004; Steward & Pertusa, 2004; Vanderplank, 2016). However, these objections to subtitles or captions could be lacking empirical evidence (Sergeeva, 2021) or utilizing inconsistent methodologies (Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019). Danan (2004) presented a summary of the advantages of using subtitling in AV, indicating that for interlingual-subtitled visual stimuli, there is an interconnectedness of three distinct systems through triple

associations among visual image, auditory input in one language, and textual content in another language. This interconnectedness may result in improved processing and retention due to the combined influence of both the visual image and the translated text. On the other hand, Borell (2000) mentions that a prevalent objection to using onscreen texts is that it requires a high level of conscious attention from the viewer/reader/listener, resulting in challenges in comprehending the content. Nonetheless, they added that research argues that subtitles (or captions) do not negatively affect the comprehension of the overall message or coherence of AV content. Furthermore, it does not seem to detract from the overall enjoyment of the movie or present excessive cognitive demands (Perego et al., 2015). Cintas and Cruz (2008) further clarified that studies on such texts indicate that individuals possess the capacity to devise techniques for effectively employing subtitles or captions as a means of comprehending the content. Moreover, the researchers claimed that “repeated exposure to subtitles helps minimize the potential distraction of the text” (Cintas & Cruz, 2008, p. 207). When an individual encounters the same word or phrase through both auditory and visual input channels, it is argued that this dual processing will aid in understanding the meanings of unfamiliar words, as both spoken and written words are closely connected to the visual stimuli. In essence, the assertion is that visual input facilitates auditory processing, thereby resulting in improved language acquisition.

While some researchers have previously contended that onscreen texts could hinder students, the prevailing perspective now is that rather than serving as a distraction and fostering laziness, captions could potentially facilitate the process of language acquisition by granting learners access to extensive and readily understandable language input (see Vanderplank, 1988). Engaging with the conversation within its original context while simultaneously listening to the native language, serves to reinforce the learning process for students, thereby enhancing their lexicon and acquainting them with the cultural aspects of the FL in an authentic

environment (see Talaván, 2007; Vanderplank, 2010). These advantages have been observed to be contingent upon the age and proficiency level of FL learners. Markham and Peter (2003) suggested that subtitles could be more beneficial for learners at a lower proficiency level, thereby corroborating Guillory's (1998) argument that if the content in the video surpasses the learners' proficiency level, captions are inadequate in aiding comprehension due to the rapid pace of speech and the complexity of the vocabulary. In general, despite some uncertain findings, there is a widespread agreement that subtitles tend to be advantageous for young and less proficient learners, whereas captions are more suitable for older learners with intermediate to advanced proficiency levels (see Bairstow & Lavour, 2012; Baranowska, 2021; d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel 1999; Gass et al., 2019; Markham & Peter, 2003; Montero-Pérez et al., 2014; Muñoz, 2017; Peters, 2019; Peters et al., 2016; Pujadas, 2019; Rodgers, 2013; Vanderplank, 2016; Winke et al., 2010, among others). Throughout the years, researchers have also provided language instructors with suggestions on how to enhance the advantages of AV materials with or without captions at home and in the classroom (see Bruti, 2016; Celaya et al., 2023; Danan, 2004; Gass et al., 2019; Gesa-Vidal, 2019; Nation, 2007; Pattemore & Muñoz, 2020; Pujadas, 2019; Rodgers, 2013; Teng, 2021; Vanderplank, 1988, 1990; Webb, 2015; Webb & Rodgers, 2009).

A large number of studies have also focused on the effect of AV materials (with or without subtitling) on vocabulary (e.g., Ahrabi Fakhri et al., 2021; Alshumrani, 2019; Bisson et al., 2014; Bravo, 2008; d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999; Lekkai, 2014; Montero-Perez, 2020; Muñoz et al., 2023; Naghizadeh & Darabi, 2015; Okumuş, & Gürbüz, 2023; Peters & Webb, 2018; Puimège & Peters, 2019; Rodgers & Webb, 2020), grammar (e.g., Cintrón-Valentín & Garcíá-Amaya, 2019; Lee & Révész, 2018, 2020; Muñoz et al., 2023; Okumuş, & Gürbüz, 2023; Pattemore & Muñoz, 2020, 2022), and pronunciation (e.g., Galimberti et al., 2023; Wisniewska & Mora, 2020). Research has also revealed that students who have extensively

watched TV with captions, whether in or out of the classroom, perceive it as both engaging, motivating and advantageous for enhancing listening comprehension (see Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Ishihara, 2010; Teng, 2021) and acquiring vocabulary (e.g., Katemba & Ning, 2018; Liando et al., 2018; Pattemore et al., 2020; Teng, 2021). Additionally, their attitudes tend to become more positive over time (Pujadas, 2019; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2017; Rodgers, 2013; Vanderplank, 2019, among others). Although, very few articles have been written regarding the teachers' perspective, instructors tend to use AV materials with captions in class, and also encourage their use at home for several reasons, including: promoting listening comprehension, enhancing motivation, promoting intercultural awareness, and acquiring vocabulary (Alonso-Pérez & Sánchez-Requena, 2018; Kaderoğlu & Romeu, 2021; Sergeeva, 2021, to name but a few).

As to L2 pragmatics, a plethora of articles have emphasized the effectiveness of AV materials in raising (meta)pragmatic awareness, highlighting their advantages over textbooks (Bardovi-Harlig, 2019; Barón & Celaya, 2022; Barón et al., 2023; Bruti, 2016; Derakhshan & Zangoei, 2014; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Khazdouzian et al., 2021; Usó-Juan, 2013; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2022, among others). In the following section, studies on the effect of AV materials on L2 pragmatics will be reviewed in depth.

### **3.3. Previous Research on the Effect of Audiovisual Materials on L2 Pragmatics**

Sykes (2013) summarized eight challenges to pragmatic development, one being lack of authentic input in teaching materials which has also been defined as “the front line of pedagogical revolution” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2020, p. 54). Numerous researchers (e.g., Abrams, 2014, 2016; Bruti, 2016; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Fernández-Guerra & Martínez-Flor, 2003; Kite & Tatsuki, 2005; Martínez-Flor, 2007; Martínez-Flor & Fernández-Guerra, 2002; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2016, 2020a; Rose, 1994, 1997, 2001, among others) have emphasized the potential of films and series as a means of presenting culturally diverse and contextually

appropriate pragmatic input. This, according to Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan (2010, 2020), along with feedback and output, has been named one of the key conditions to development of L2 pragmatic competence. More recently, researchers have also demonstrated positive effects of said materials in additional areas of pragmatics including awareness of pragmalinguistics, sociopragmatics, and formulaic expressions (Bardovi-Harlig, 2019; Barón & Celaya, 2022; Barón et al., 2023; Fernández-Guerra, 2013; Khazdouzian et al., 2021; Usó-Juan, 2013; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2021, 2022, among others). Furthermore, according to Derakhshan and Zangoei (2014), video-driven prompts provide contextual information, including nonverbal cues such as posture, gestures, and intonation, which are crucial for understanding politeness in interactions.

Despite all the advantages, results continue to be split as the challengers of the theory in pragmatics tend to state that filmic material does not portray certain aspects of natural discourse (e.g., Ryan & Granville, 2020, regarding phone call invitation sequences in movies). However, Rose (1997) discovered a close equivalence between the film data (from 46 American movies) and naturally occurring speech in terms of global categories, such as the distribution of syntactic patterns. Rose (2001) further substantiated this finding when they observed similarities between American film data and naturally occurring speech (from previous studies) in terms of syntactic patterns, compliment topics, and compliment strategy responses (pragmalinguistic forms). However, some distinctions were identified in terms of gender distribution (sociopragmatic norms). Other researchers confirmed Rose's (1997, 2001) studies in the case of apologies (e.g., Di Sarno-García, 2018; Kite & Tatsuki, 2005; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2020b), refusals (e.g., Fernández-Guerra, 2013), and request strategies including internal and external modifiers (e.g., Fernández-Guerra, 2008; Fernández-Guerra & Martínez-Flor, 2003; Martínez-Flor, 2007). Katchen (2002) also mentioned that movies and TV shows are specifically created for individuals who are NSs of the language, which means that video

serves as a source of authentic language input. Alcón-Soler and Safont (2008) summarized that research has demonstrated the effectiveness of teaching pragmatics, with some studies suggesting that authentic AV input can enhance learners' pragmatic knowledge and awareness. This approach is considered useful for addressing the complexities of a pragmatic system and its appropriate usage. Furthermore, it provides opportunities to explore language use in various contexts and allows for the selection and analysis of rich language segments for instructional purposes.

Throughout the years, educational settings have thus incorporated AV resources, due to their ability to offer students ample and fitting examples of language usage that resemble real-life scenarios (see Allan, 1985; Bruti, 2016; Danan, 2004; Fernández-Guerra, 2013, Martínez-Flor, 2007; Rose, 1997; Sherman, 2003, among others). Moreover, this resemblance is particularly valuable in the realm of FL acquisition, given the limited opportunities for learners to engage in genuine communication as they do not often reside in a country where the language being learned is spoken (House & Kasper, 1981; Martínez-Flor, 2004; Taguchi, 2015). This signifies that these conversations can be pedagogically valuable in terms of increasing learners' awareness of how language is used in actual communicative events (Abrams, 2014, 2016). Especially due to the fact that previous studies conducted by Grant and Starks (2001) and Washburn (2001) indicated that EFL learners find pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features to be excessively challenging. Arthur (1999) posited that the use of AV materials in classrooms can heighten students' understanding of different cultures through the teaching of appropriate behavior, as well as offer visual reinforcement of the language being learned while providing realistic models to imitate for role plays. To that effect, there have been a number of studies that have attempted to operationalize the use of AV materials in the classroom (e.g., Abrams, 2014; Barón et al., 2023; Bruti, 2016; Omar & Razi, 2022; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2016; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2021, 2022, to name but a few). Additionally,



learners themselves have also reported on the positive effects of AV materials (see Abrams, 2016; Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015; Zangoei et al., 2014).

As previously mentioned, recent studies have indicated that there is a strong correlation between incidental learning and AV materials (e.g., Frumuselu et al., 2015; Muñoz, 2022; Peters & Muñoz, 2020, among others). However, there is still a lack of research on its potential in ILP (Abrams, 2014). To the extent of the author's knowledge only two articles have explored this phenomenon. Khazdouzian et al. (2021) conducted a study to investigate the effect of such materials and captions on the production of requests and suggestions without receiving formal instruction. Their study involved 28 Spanish/Catalan bilingual participants (aged 19-24) completing an out-of-classroom activity involving watching an entire season of a sitcom. Pre/posttest written discourse completion tasks were used in order to assess the participants' pragmatic development. The study found a positive effect of AV support on the use of some suggestion and request strategies, as well as on certain aspects of pragmatic awareness. However, captions did not show any discernible effect and the authors suggested that a more prolonged exposure might yield superior outcomes. Barón and Celaya (2022) achieved similar results in their study as the researchers looked into incidental acquisition of pragmatic appropriateness after participants watched seven video excerpts of various TV series. They concluded, through the use of role play for the posttest, that their Spanish/Catalan bilingual participants (average age 13) produced more polite strategies compared to their pretest, denoting the contribution of AV materials to incidental L2 pragmatic learning. They also mentioned that their non-captioned group used fewer pragmatic expressions compared to the captioned group.

### **3.4. Chapter Summary**

This chapter reviewed the role of AV materials and captions in SLA, emphasizing their importance as authentic sources of language input. It was highlighted that as movies and TV

series provide learners with exposure to real-life linguistic contexts, they are valuable tools for acquiring L2 pragmatics. A few studies have demonstrated the positive impact of AV materials on (meta)pragmatic awareness, although captions have shown limited effects. They have also concluded that longer exposure may enhance learning outcomes. However, as inferred from this and the previous chapter (Chapter 2), L2 pragmatics research has predominantly focused on adult participants (under 40) and adolescents, revealing a notable gap in the field regarding senior learners. Therefore, Chapter 4 will explore this overlooked cohort and shed light on their unique learning experiences and needs.

## 4. Review of the Literature III: Senior Learners and Second Language Acquisition

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter starts by delving into the definition and characteristics of senior learners, and in Section 4.2, it explores how cognitive aging impacts language learning. Subsequently, in Section 4.3.2, the research that emphasizes the potential for successful language acquisition later in life will be highlighted, demonstrating that seniors benefit cognitively and socially from engaging in L2 learning. Section 4.3.3 will examine the impact of key IDs such as belief, strategies, working memory, and motivation on senior learners' L2 acquisition. Finally, Section 4.4 presents a critical review of the minimal existing research on senior learners' development of L2 pragmatics and emphasizes the pressing need to investigate how age might influence L2 pragmatic competence, a field that remains largely unexplored.

### 4.2. Defining Senior Learners

As the World Health Organization (2024) declared, “by 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over” (para. 2), and according to the United Nations (2012), this figure is “projected to increase to one in five by 2050, [which is] a phenomenon that can no longer be ignored” (p. 12). Researchers agree that “old age” or the “third age” more or less starts at the onset of retirement (see Andrew, 2012; de Bot & Van der Hoeven, 2011; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Ramírez Gómez, 2016, among others) which in Spain, according to the European Commission (n.d.), starts at approximately 65 years of age. Previous literature in the field of SLA has referred to this population as *senior learners*, *third age (language) learners*, *third agers*, or *lifelong language learners*, to name but a few (see Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Oxford, 2017; Ramírez Gómez, 2016). However, henceforth the term senior learners will be used throughout the present dissertation, as it has been employed by several recent studies (Borkowska, 2023; Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Schiller & Dorner, 2022, among others). Senior learners are “relatively healthy ‘young old’ people who are now retired, while

feeling energy, excitement, purpose and well-being” (Oxford, 2017, p. 4), and they are “any retired person who is involved in the process of learning either in the various forms of adult education or in the broader sense of lifelong learning” (Grotek, 2017, p. 128). Although, it must be added that according to Oxford (2017), the age of retirement, the cause, and the length of it could vary, and therefore “it is better to consider individual or small-group cases and circumstances than to trust generalized or supposedly universal third-age years” (p. 5).

Aging is controversially accompanied by physical changes which could affect the brain. The United States National Institute on Aging (2023), for example, summarizes these cognitive changes into trouble remembering (names and words), planning and organizing, multitasking or making decisions, and mild decrease in attention span, all of which can affect language use. According to Abrams and Farrell (2011), four primary theories address the alterations in language processing associated with aging. These include (1) the decline in the effectiveness of working memory, (2) difficulties in inhibitory control leading to inadequate filtration of information entering working memory, (3) a general decrease in processing speed, and (4) occurrences related to the transmission deficit hypothesis, which elucidates, for example, the rise in tip-of-the-tongue phenomena due to a weakened connection between the phonological and semantic systems. Computational simulations by Ramscar et al. (2017) suggest that what is often perceived as cognitive decline could be the result of increased knowledge and complexity in the cognitive systems of older adults, leading to slower but not necessarily less capable processing. Such alterations may also lead to changes in speech fluency, which as Abrams and White (2023) state, include “the measures of disfluencies in connected speech, word retrieval failures, lexical diversity and non-normative word use, off-topic speech and communicative goals” (p. 49).

Although age-related cognitive decline is a recurring topic in research on older adults (see Derenowski, 2021), researchers—especially neuroscientists—have shifted toward

understanding how the aging brain adapts to such changes. Scholars have increasingly explored the brain's ability to reorganize and compensate, emphasizing mechanisms like neuroplasticity and strategic adaptation (Muñoz, 2019). This aligns with the concept of cognitive reserve, defined as “the brain's resilience in combating neuropathological damage, resulting from experience-based neural changes associated with a physically and mentally stimulating lifestyle” (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p. 8). Singleton & Pfenninger (2018) summarized the key findings in age-related cognitive studies which indicate that while there are declines in processing speed, working memory, attention, and other cognitive functions, these are often not as severe as once thought. The existing literature also widely concurs on the non-cognitive advantages of L2 learning for senior learners, such as socialization, recreation, and interaction (Oxford, 2017).

However, cognitive aging at any stage is characterized by variations within individuals as well as between individuals. In other words, the progression of different cognitive abilities is not consistent among individuals, and the rate of change or cognitive decline varies significantly when comparing different individuals or groups of individuals (Lemaire, 2015, as cited in Gerstenberg, 2020). It is worth noting that experts in neuropsychology and neuroscience agree that this variation can primarily be based on their training and practice, particularly in the domains of memory (Logie & Morris, 2015) and physical exercise (Muñoz, 2019). This broad observation is attributed to the diverse array of personal and health-related factors that are interconnected with cognitive aging, with biological and cultural systems being perceived as precursors, associated factors, and outcomes of intellectual functioning (Lindenberger & Baltes, 1997, as cited in Gerstenberg, 2020). Having discussed multiple definitions and notions surrounding senior learners, it is important to note that recent studies have attempted to address how the said cohort can successfully learn and retain a new language.

### **4.3. Previous Research on Senior Learners and Second Language Acquisition**

#### ***4.3.1. Introduction***

Nowadays, there is an ongoing debate in the field regarding language learning and the third age. According to Gabryś-Barker (2017), there is a common belief that acquiring an L2 has the potential to enhance cognitive flexibility by increasing memory capacity, concentration, and the structuring of information in the brain while fostering social interaction and autonomy (see Antoniou et al., 2013; Bubbico et al., 2019; Klímová & Pikhart, 2020; Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Valis et al., 2019; Van der Ploeg & Blankinship, 2022; Ware et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2019). Consequently, this improvement can result in more effective verbal and emotional expression, as well as the potential to enhance diminished cognitive capacity, social skills, and emotional competence. Nevertheless, as Ramírez Gómez (2016) discussed, the pervasive and often detrimental belief that senior learners are poorer learners has been perpetuated by theories such as the critical period hypothesis and the loss-deficit perspective. Firstly, the critical period hypothesis suggests that commencing L2 acquisition before a specific critical age leads to optimal proficiency (see Dekeyser, 2013; Muñoz, 2011, 2014; Muñoz & Singleton, 2011; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). On the other hand, the loss-deficit perspective “portrays the normative course of later life as a series of losses” (Knight, 2004, p. 5). That is, it focuses on cognitive decline and biological changes.

#### ***4.3.2. Advantages of Second Language Learning for Senior Learners***

Researchers have attempted to prove the advantageous outcomes of L2 learning for seniors through demonstrating its positive effect on cognitive decline (e.g., Berggren et al., 2020; Bubbico et al., 2019; Bubbico et al., 2023; Klímová et al., 2020; Valis et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2019, among others) and its benefits to linguistic competence and social life (e.g., Escuder-Mollon et al., 2014; Kliesch et al., 2017; Mackey & Sachs, 2012; Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Pikhart & Klímová, 2020; Ware et al., 2017, among others), as well as contesting the

misperception that seniors cannot acquire new vocabulary and grammar (e.g., Cox & Sanz, 2015; Fong et al., 2022; Ramírez Gómez, 2016; Van der Hoeven & de Bot, 2012, among others).

Muñoz and Singleton (2011) and Kliesch et al. (2017) concur that while age is just one factor in third age language acquisition, cognitive decline associated with aging is not universal, and cognitive capacities are more predictive of L2 progress than chronological age (see also Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Pot et al., 2017). In order to delve into the cognitive abilities of senior citizens, Hartshorne and Germine (2015) conducted various studies examining cognitive capacities across the lifespan of 48,000 Americans by means of online memory tests. They mention, in fact, that not only is there no specific age at which individuals excel in all cognitive tests, but there might also not exist an age at which individuals excel in the majority of cognitive tests. As previously discussed, these are a few of the challenges that supposedly affect senior learners due to the consequences of a decrease in L2 acquisition ability associated with aging (see Singleton & Záborská, 2020). Furthermore, studies have shown that language training can improve attentional functions, and it may additionally lead to potential neuroprotective effects of bilingualism in late adulthood (e.g., Bak et al, 2016; Fong et al., 2022; Ramos et al., 2017, among others). This can in turn delay the onset of neurodegenerative diseases commonly associated with aging and offering defense against such issues that accelerate this deterioration, such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia (see Bialystok & Craik, 2010; Bialystok et al., 2016; Costumero et al., 2020; Craik et al., 2010; Gold, 2018; Kim et al., 2019). For instance, Bubbico et al. (2019) examined such effects through the analysis of four months of an EFL program involving 26 L1 Italian senior learners between the ages of 59 and 79. The results from pre and post neuropsychological examinations indicated that the intervention group's brains benefited from the language course vis-à-vis functional reorganization processes which has been proven to delay dementia. In a subsequent

investigation, Bubbico et al. (2023) also demonstrated how a similar four-month extensive English course could affect brain white matter integrity of 13 L1 Italian EFL learners (59-78 years old), leading to an improvement in executive functions. However, there are a number of studies that have failed to produce any significant advantageous outcome (Berggren et al., 2020; Klímová et al., 2020, among others). For example, Berggren et al.'s (2020) analysis, which included 160 L1 Swedish learners of Italian aged between 65 and 75, found little evidence of cognitive gains.

In another vein, research has revealed how learning an L2 can impact the linguistic competence and social life of seniors. For instance, Pfenninger and Polz (2018) mentioned that 12 L1 German EFL students (63-90 years old) attending a four-week intensive course made significant self-reported socio-affective gains. The questionnaire used in the research included overall well-being inside and outside of the classroom, along with the impact of the classes on their communication skills. Most of the participants reported improved focus and cognitive stimulation, and they also felt prouder, happier, more comfortable, and confident. They reported that they enjoyed the classes while expressing the increase in the time they spent conversing with their friends and family members. Similar results were obtained when Pikhart and Klímová (2020) investigated 102 L1 Czech senior EFL learners between the ages of 55 and 80. Even though their participants failed to demonstrate expected linguistic gains, their level of happiness and contentment grew which resulted in an improved overall quality of life including having a larger social network.

Researchers have also found that senior learners are capable of remembering new vocabulary and grammatical structures. Fong et al. (2022) concluded that after five weeks of Italian classes, 20 Cantonese speakers (58-69 years old) managed to learn Italian words and grammar. They demonstrated their results through translation quizzes and retention tests. Conversely, Van der Hoeven and de Bot's (2012) study showed that senior learners had trouble



creating new connections when learning novel words of a previously studied language (French), but they still managed to successfully learn some new vocabulary. The participants, all native Dutch speakers, were divided into three groups (20-30-year-olds, 45-55-year-olds, and 70-85-year-olds), and attended two sessions for learning and relearning French words. Due to the effect of long-term language use, the elderly group was still able to outperform the other two groups on vocabulary size tests. These findings suggest that there is potential for older adults to acquire new FL vocabulary, albeit with challenges. Similarly, Berggren et al.'s (2020) participants demonstrated gains after 11 weeks of vocabulary training. When investigating grammar acquisition, Cox and Sanz (2015) compared 10 young adult learners (19-27 years old) and 11 senior learners (60-82 years old). Both groups were English/Spanish bilingual Americans who were taught Latin grammar and vocabulary through a computer program. The participants first filled in a linguistic background questionnaire, and subsequently completed a pretest, posttest and delayed posttest. The researchers observed no difference between the performance of the two groups, but they noted the senior learners were slower while processing and providing their answers. Cox and Sanz (2015) mentioned that this cohort might benefit more from prior exposure and explicit information about the language before training as their gains depend on each person's individual characteristics and experiences.

#### ***4.3.3. Individual Differences and Senior Learners***

Dörnyei (2006) stressed the importance of IDs in SLA, encompassing fundamental factors such as aptitude, personality, and motivation, along with other elements such as learning strategies, styles, or emotional state, in substantially influencing the diversity of language acquisition results. More recently, Griffiths and Soruç (2020, 2021) summarized previous research on IDs, and considered beliefs, strategies, working memory (as part of aptitude), and motivation as among the most important variables in SLA (see Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Cox, 2013; Dörnyei, 2005; Ellis, 2008; Ghavamnia et al., 2011; Kayaoğlu, 2013; Oxford, 1990;

Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016; Sedighi & Zarafshan, 2006; Tang & Tian, 2014; Ushioda, 2014; Yang, 1999, to name but a few); hence, these are the IDs that will be reviewed below in relation to senior learners.

Barcelos (2003) defines beliefs concerning language acquisition as encompassing preconceived ideas and misunderstandings that have the potential to impact learners' attitudes and strategies in language acquisition. Generally speaking, senior learners may perceive themselves as being at a disadvantage due to their age (Kang & Kim, 2022). Moreover, cultural stereotypes about aging can negatively affect their self-perception, potentially impacting their learning outcomes (see Irni, 2010; Isopahkala-Bouret, 2015). However, they can counteract this by embracing enthusiasm and recognizing the perceived social and cognitive advantages of language learning (see Berggren et al., 2020; Bubbico et al., 2023; Derenowski, 2021; Escuder-Mollon et al., 2014; Kliesch et al., 2017; Mackey & Sachs, 2012; Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Ware et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2019, among others).

Another ID which can help overcome age-related declines in language learning is the use of strategies, especially compensatory ones (see Oxford, 1990). Senior learners demonstrate the ability to effectively incorporate their existing and previous knowledge, thereby developing efficient learning strategies and adjusting their FL learning objectives based on improved self-awareness. An important notion vis-à-vis language retention is compensation theory (see De Frias et al., 2003; Dixon & Bäckman, 1993; Wingfield & Stine-Morrow, 2000) which suggests that older individuals employ various conscious and unconscious strategies to counterbalance age-related declines in competencies. Specifically, according to Ramírez Gómez (2016), senior learners tend to prefer metacognitive strategies, such as goal-setting and planning, to optimize their language learning experience. The aforementioned strategies allow them to effectively plan and monitor their progress, ultimately helping them to achieve their language learning goals despite any age-related challenges (see also Higgins, 2012).

Incorporating such strategies into language learning can be beneficial for senior learners looking to maintain or improve their language skills (see Ho, 2019; Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Piechurska-Kuciel & Szyszka, 2017). Additionally, Ramírez Gómez (2016) posited that senior learners can reevaluate their “preconceptions, attitudes, beliefs regarding FL learning, learning strategies, and needs” (p. 113) when pursuing language acquisition.

In Ramírez Gómez’s (2016) study, participants’ consolidation strategies were investigated in relation to vocabulary learning. Forty-five L1 Japanese learners of Spanish (60-80 years old) attempted to memorize pseudo words, and were asked to explain the strategies they used. It was concluded that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for every senior learner, and there is no reason why senior learners should not reach high proficiency levels regardless of their strengths and weaknesses. Further assessing learning strategies, Mora et al. (2018) conducted an experiment with 66 L1 Spanish EFL students between the ages of 65 and 85 through the means of a questionnaire. They discovered that senior learners make use of metacognitive strategies (e.g., reflecting and planning) irrespective of their levels, while the tendency to use social strategies (learning through interaction with peers) decreased with age. Ohly (2008) investigated the learning strategies of 72 English speaking learners of German (aged 50 and above) while completing tasks in the four skills of speaking, writing, reading and listening. They found that senior learners often do not have appropriate strategies to tackle listening comprehension especially if they miss key points. Another critical issue raised by the participants appeared to be hearing difficulties as most teachers used recorded audios without the aid of visual cues (see also Corral-Robles et al., 2023; Giroud et al., 2017; Słowik, 2017; Weil et al., 2021). In other words, combining listening exertions with complicated tasks in the classroom resulted in a pitfall for older students as it seemed to be taxing on their working memory. This is in line with Kemper’s (2006) stance that the more complicated the linguistic

structures, the more demanding the required processes become, which in turn could overload the working memory of senior learners.

Singleton & Pfenninger (2019) defined working memory as a mechanism accountable for the temporary manipulation and retention of pertinent information during cognitive tasks such as language comprehension. Traditionally viewed as a fixed trait, working memory is now understood to be malleable and capable of improvement through experience and training. Within the SLA domain, this has led to a paradigm shift, with evidence suggesting that formal learning experiences can shape and change working memory capacity (see for example, Bubbico et al., 2023; Mackey and Sachs, 2012). In order to explore the relationship between age and working memory, Kliesch et al. (2017) investigated 10 monolingual German speakers aged between 65 and 74 who were taught English over the course of three weeks. The researchers ascertained that while age was not directly related to learning, working memory was. They advised that even though studying another language at an older age could be a difficult undertaking, senior learners should not be disheartened as the main determining factor for success proved to be motivation (see also Darnault et al., 2024).

Motivation is “perhaps the most important factor in successful language learning” (Griffiths & Soruç, 2021, p. 345) as research has demonstrated throughout the years (see Bernaus & Gardner, 2008; Gardner, 1985; Griffiths, 2018; Griffiths & Soruç, 2020, among others). Presently, numerous researchers, such as Kliesch et al. (2017), Pfenninger and Singleton (2017), and Darnault (2023), concur that cognitive factors and motivation are the primary focal points in current studies, as they have a significant impact on L2 acquisition during late adulthood. According to Pfenninger and Polz (2018), older adults with higher linguistic and socio-affective capacities, such as motivation, tend to have more successful L2 development. Motivation has thus become one of the most instrumental elements linked to favorable outcomes in senior learners’ L2 acquisition (as seen in Borkowska, 2023; Darnault

et al., 2024; Derenowski, 2021; Follett, 2020; Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Schiller & Dorner, 2022; Van der Ploeg & Blankinship, 2022, among others). Studies indicate that senior learners often exhibit motivation by placing less emphasis on integrative aspects (e.g., fitting into a community), and focusing more on personal objectives and interests, such as communication, travel, and intellectual stimulation (see Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024; Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Schiller & Dorner, 2022). Several empirical studies on the interplay between motivation and third age language learning will be reviewed in what follows.

In their study with L1 Chinese ESL learners, Ho (2019) analyzed motivation in six students between the ages of 65 and 89 through questionnaires and oral interviews, and concluded that the personal goal set by the participants themselves was the driving force behind their motivation to continue learning English. Ho (2019) concurred with Ehrman and Oxford (1995) that age is not an absolute obstacle. However, unlike Mackey and Sachs (2012) who discovered that there is a correlation between academic background in senior learners and their success in language learning, Ho (2019) found no such evidence. Derenowski (2021) analyzed the results of a motivation questionnaire given to 200 L1 Polish learners of different languages all between the ages of 55 and 87, and they observed that each age group had distinct reasons for studying a language. While participants in their 50s tended to pursue language learning for professional development, those in their 60s primarily did so for travel purposes or to visit family members living abroad. Additionally, students above the age of 70 seemed to take up language learning mostly in order to tackle cognitive decline and exercise their memories. They also reported receiving positive feedback and emotional support from their teachers, which in turn, increased their self-confidence; however, the 60- and 70-year-old groups also preferred the classes to be structured around cultural and travel-related lessons. Similar conclusions were reached by Follett (2020) as they interviewed and observed nine L1 Spanish EFL instructors and 15 EFL students (aged 58-71). While the teachers and learners agreed on listening

comprehension being one of the most difficult challenges they face (in line with Ohly, 2008), the learners also stated that more time should be dedicated to speaking as their main goal is to be able to communicate verbally.

Similarly, Schiller and Dorner (2022) investigated 30 L1 Hungarian senior EFL learners' motivation for language learning. They emphasized that positive attitudes toward their classes, their desire to learn English, their attention span and their well-defined goals are significant predictors of motivational intensity in senior learners. They also compared the impact of integrative orientation on senior learners' attitudes toward FL learning with that of younger learners, emphasizing the role of integrativeness in the success of senior learners. Additionally, the researchers noted the strong link between performance expectancy or self-efficacy and motivational intensity in senior language learners. The findings also suggested that senior learners' performance expectancy has only an indirect impact on motivational intensity. More recently, Darnault et al. (2024) investigated the motivation of three L1 French EFL students (65, 71 and 80 years old) over the course of three years while exchanging English conversations at a café. The researcher highlighted that the participants not only maintained their individual and group motivation during their language exchanges, but also strived to reach their goals.

It is worth noting that Griffiths and Soruç (2021) emphasize the importance of the dynamic and complex interaction between motivation and all the previously mentioned IDs. For example, Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024) explored beliefs, motivation and strategies used by nine L1 English learners of Spanish (61-81 years old) through questionnaires and interviews. The results demonstrated that the participants viewed learning a FL as a valuable endeavor that enhances their sense of happiness and overall well-being, and believed that learning another language offsets cognitive decline. Additionally, even though the learners encountered difficulties, including memory loss, the positive reactions they received when

traveling outweighed the negative aspects. The researchers summarized that the participants' primary motivations for studying Spanish were for travel purposes and to stay mentally active, particularly during retirement. It was also mentioned that senior learners make use of a variety of strategies to face their struggles, such as goal setting and watching AV materials.

In light of the previous studies, both the cognitive and motivational aspects of language learning in the third age should be given equal attention. As Cox (2019) stated, senior learners' driving force can be summarized in two main goals when learning an L2: to attenuate cognitive decline, and to enhance social interaction. The motivation for learning can be intrinsic and not solely tied to anti-aging or practical needs. Senior learners are more successful at achieving well-being by being selective about their goals and concentrating resources on selected priorities. As senior learners age, they tend to adjust their goals to be more feasible, leading to a higher sense of control and self-efficacy (see Higgins, 2012). After having reviewed all the possible factors involved in language learning for senior learners, for the purpose of the current study, it is also crucial to review the research carried out on senior learners' development of L2 pragmatics.

#### **4.4. Senior Learners and L2 Pragmatics**

Age effects in pragmatics research, particularly in L2 contexts, remain an understudied area despite their potential significance. While the impact of age on L1 pragmatics has received some attention (e.g., Bambini et al., 2020, 2021; Bella & Ogiermann, 2019; Hilviu et al., 2022), research on this issue in L2 pragmatics is notably nonexistent. Angel (2013) attributes this gap to the inherent challenges and complexities involved, such as controlling for varying lengths of L2 exposure and isolating age effects from other factors like cognitive decline or sociocultural differences. Gerstenberg (2020) further highlights that the ages of adult participants are often unspecified in (L2) pragmatics studies. This leads to an implicit assumption that the typical adult age range for linguistic research is between 30 and 60 years,

potentially overlooking important age-related variations in pragmatic competence. In response to this oversight, the field of variational pragmatics emerged (Barron & Schneider, 2009; Schneider, 2010; Schneider & Barron, 2008). This subfield examines intralingual macro-social variation, including age-related differences in pragmatic features. However, variational pragmatics remains underdeveloped, especially in L2 contexts, with its primary focus being on L1 pragmatics. The field explores how age cohorts differ in their use of pragmatic variables such as speech act realizations and discourse marker functions.

Gerstenberg (2020) also states that age has not been adequately treated as an independent variable in such studies, despite its significant impact on language perception and use. Just as gender influences social dynamics (Brown & Levinson, 1987), age should be considered equally important. Social roles, which are often age-dependent, correspond to varying levels of power and status, affecting pragmatic competence throughout life. Perceptions of formality and shifts in speech styles vary by age, reflecting differing definitions of what constitutes a formal situation (Helfrich, 1979, as cited in Gerstenberg, 2020). This variation is crucial in understanding how individuals of different ages interpret and express (im)politeness. Furthermore, Gerstenberg (2020) explains that language change at the pragmatic level is shaped by cultural shifts related to economic and social transformations. For instance, retirement or physical frailty can lead to changes in economic and professional influence, which in turn may affect an individual's language use and perception of (im)politeness. These age-related changes underscore the importance of considering age as a key variable in pragmatic research, particularly when studying intergenerational communication and evolving social norms.

In an era of growing cultural diversity, research in this area is becoming increasingly important. According to the Migration Data Portal (2023) “the estimated number of older migrants aged 65 or above [...] increased by nearly 16 million from mid-1990 to mid-2020”



(para. 8). Moreover, Stroinska and Cecchetto (2007) observed that “aging immigrants appear to be losing their ability to communicate in the second (or host) language earlier or faster than in their native language” (p. 354). This phenomenon underscores the critical need to investigate L2 pragmatic development in senior learners. However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have been conducted on the awareness, comprehension, production, or development of L2 pragmatics of this population.

Taking into account the body of research mentioned in the previous chapters, there is an apparent gap in the field regarding senior learners and the acquisition of L2 pragmatics. From the aforementioned literature in Section 3.3. (Previous Research on the Effect of Audiovisual Materials on L2 Pragmatics), it can be deduced that longer periods of time and more extensive use of AV materials can lead to pragmatic gains. Thus, as senior learners may have spent a substantial part of their lives watching movies and TV series, it could be assumed that this experience can have a positive effect on their pragmatic development.

#### **4.5. Chapter Summary**

Chapter 4 explored the intricacies of SLA among senior learners, focusing on IDs and the development of L2 pragmatics. It examined key factors such as beliefs, learning strategies, working memory, and motivation, highlighting how they can help compensate for age-related challenges in language learning. Beliefs, often shaped by cultural stereotypes and self-perceptions, can hinder or enhance learning, while metacognitive strategies like planning and goal-setting can help senior learners overcome age-related challenges. The research reviewed in this chapter demonstrated the adaptability of working memory through training and its critical role in SLA success, with studies showing motivation being a key factor for achieving favorable outcomes. Lastly, this chapter addressed the limited research on L2 pragmatics among senior learners, setting the foundation for exploring how IDs and AV materials exposure interact in shaping senior learners’ pragmatic competence.

## **5. The Study**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology employed to investigate the (meta)pragmatic awareness of senior EFL learners regarding the speech act of suggestion in English. Following a mixed-methods approach, through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, this research also aimed to provide insights into the role of AV materials and IDs in L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness. The chapter will first present the research questions that guided this study (Section 5.2), a detailed description of the participants (Section 5.3), the instruments used for data collection (Section 5.4), and subsequently, the procedures followed in administering the tests and the way data was analyzed (Section 5.5).

### **5.2. Research Questions**

- 1a. Do senior EFL learners display L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness regarding suggestions in English?
- 1b. If so, to what extent do they resemble native speakers of American English in assessing the appropriateness of suggestions in English?
- 2a. Does watching AV materials in English have an effect on senior EFL learners' awareness of the speech act of suggestion in English?
- 2b. If so, to what extent do they resemble native speakers of American English in assessing the appropriateness of suggestions in English?
3. Which IDs have an impact on senior EFL learners' L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions?

### **5.3. Participants**

The primary criteria to take part in the study was being a Spanish/Catalan bilingual senior citizen (i.e., over the age of 60) and possessing at least a B2 level of English. Initially, 27 senior learners agreed to participate. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most

participants failed to respond to the researcher's follow-up emails. Thus, a new call was carried out through snowball sampling. Subsequently, after the second call, nine participants consented to take part in the study of which one was selected to pilot the online form, and the remaining eight (P2-P9) were designated participants ( $n = 8$ ,  $M = 64.25$ ,  $SD = 3.882$ ).

The eight non-native English speakers in this study (henceforth NNS participants) shared a few commonalities and differences, both in their language backgrounds and engagement with English learning. All participants described themselves as bilingual, speaking both Spanish and Catalan, although some identified one language as more dominant. They varied in educational and professional backgrounds, with some holding advanced degrees in fields such as economics, finance, and medicine. While all participants had studied English, their exposure to it was varied: some studied abroad briefly, others took English courses at different points in their lives, and some used self-study methods. Watching English-language media was another point of distinction; some participants enjoyed movies or TV shows in English (with or without captions and/or subtitles), while others avoided English-language AV input altogether. None of the participants had lived abroad long-term. Table 2 shows a summary of their backgrounds. Each participant will be briefly profiled in what follows.

**Table 2***Participants*

Name	Age	Gender	Retired	Currently studying	Studied Before	Studied Abroad	Qualifications	Movie/Series (Captions/Subtitles)	Length of Viewing	Other Languages
P2	70	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	High school	Yes/Yes (Sp)	Most of her life	N/A
P3	61	Female	No	No	Yes	Yes	Bachelor's	No/No	N/A	N/A
P4	67	Female	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Bachelor's	No/No	N/A	French
P5	67	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	MD	No/No	N/A	French
P6	61	Female	No	Yes	Yes	No	Bachelor's	No/Yes (Eng)	< 5	N/A
P7	60	Female	No	No	Yes	No	Master's	Yes/No (Sp/Cat)	< 2	French
P8	67	Female	Yes	Yes	No	No	Master's	Yes/Yes (Sp/Cat)	< 2	French
P9	61	Male	No	No	Yes	Yes	Master's	No/No	N/A	French

*Note.* This table summarizes the NNS participants' characteristics as collected through the background questionnaire.

*P2 – female – 70 years old – retired:*

P2 identified as a female with Spanish as her L1, but she had a native level of Catalan as she grew up in Catalonia. Her level of English was self-assessed to be C1. P2 mentioned never having finished her university degree although she worked at a university as part of the administration staff. She revealed that she had been watching movies and TV series in English most of her life using Spanish subtitles. She was enrolled in an English course, and prior to that, she had attended over five years of EFL classes. She also stated that she had never studied or lived abroad.

*P3 – female – 61 years old – not retired:*

P3 described herself as a 61-year-old L1 Spanish speaker who grew up in a Spanish-speaking household, but learned Catalan at school. She studied business administration at university. Although she was not attending English classes at the time of the study, she had previously spent a month in London studying English, and prior to that, she was enrolled in several semesters of extracurricular English programs. She stated that she had never watched movies or TV shows in English.

*P4 – female – 67 years old – retired:*

P4 described herself as a retired female who grew up speaking Catalan at home but received her primary education in Spanish. She held a bachelor's degree in economics and also studied French in high school. Although she was not enrolled in any language courses at the time of the study, she had pursued language learning intermittently throughout her life. She shared that she attended an English course in England when she was 19 years old, and she studied English at different points in her life. She did not enjoy watching movies or shows in English.

*P5 – female – 67 years old – retired:*

P5 identified as a balanced Spanish/Catalan bilingual and retired medical doctor. She mentioned she had taken French classes at school. However, she only began studying English at the age of 40 in various classes, and at the time of the study, she was keeping her language active using Duolingo. She was not interested in movies or series in English, but she did watch documentaries and news in English. She had never studied or lived abroad.

*P6 – female – 61 years old – not retired:*

P6 grew up speaking Catalan at home and Spanish at school. She held a bachelor's degree in economics and worked as an auditor. Although she regularly watched captioned series in English, she had developed this habit for less than five years leading up to the study. P6 had "occasionally" taken various English courses in groups or individually, and she was enrolled in a private English class at the time of the study. She had neither studied nor lived abroad.

*P7 – female – 60 years old – not retired:*

P7 described herself as a female psychologist with Catalan as her L1, although she identified as a balanced Spanish/Catalan bilingual speaker. She also studied French and English growing up. However, she was not participating in any English classes at the time of the study. She enjoyed watching movies in English, but felt more comfortable using Spanish or Catalan subtitles. She had never lived nor studied in another country.

*P8 – female – 67 years old – retired:*

P8 introduced herself as a retired teacher who grew up in a Spanish-speaking family. However, she studied Catalan at school and used it to communicate at university and with friends. She held a master's degree in education. She also took a French course at some point in her life. She said she did not recall a lot of her English despite being enrolled in a program for three years. Therefore, she was self-studying the language at the time of the study. She

viewed movies and TV series in English as a hobby, but used Spanish or Catalan subtitles, for two years leading up to the study. She had never lived or studied abroad.

*P9 – male – 61 years old – not retired:*

P9 was the only male participant. He identified as a Catalan speaker who took courses in Spanish at school, in addition to attending French classes. He held an MBA and had attended English classes in the past. He mentioned having a B2-level certificate. He did not watch movies or TV shows at all. He had taken various English courses abroad. He traveled regularly to countries where he had to use his English.

In addition to the NNS participants, seven L1 American English speakers (henceforth NS participants) were approached through snowball sampling in order to create a baseline and be able to compare their responses to those of the NNS participants. They were all above the age of 60 ( $n = 7$ ,  $M = 69.14$ ,  $SD = 3.132$ ) and resided in the United States when the online form was sent. The participants in this group all spoke American English, but they differed in their language experiences and professional backgrounds. Most participants were raised in English-speaking households in the United States, with the exception of N1 and N2, who grew up in Persian- and Chinese-speaking homes, respectively. While many had studied other languages (French, Spanish, or German) during high school or college, most reported limited proficiency in those languages today. Watching movies and TV shows was a common pastime for all, although their use of captions varied: participants like N1, N2, N5, and N7 used captions regularly, while others, like N3 and N6, did not feel the need for them. Additionally, some participants, like N4, had less frequent access to TV or film, contrasting with the regular viewing habits of others. The following table (Table 3) and paragraphs explain their backgrounds.

**Table 3***Native Speakers' Profiles*

Name	Age	Gender	Retired	First Language/Culture	Qualifications	Movie/Series (Captions/Subtitles)	Length of Viewing	Other Languages
N1	71	Female	Yes	English/American	M.D.	Yes/Yes (Eng)	Most of her life	Persian/French
N2	70	Male	Yes	English/American	M.D.	Yes/Yes (Eng)	Most of his life	Spanish
N3	65	Female	No	English/American	High School	Yes/Yes	Most of her life	German/Spanish
N4	66	Female	Yes	English/American	Master's	Yes/No	Most of her life	French/Spanish
N5	73	Male	Yes	English/American	Ph.D.	Yes/Yes (Eng)	Most of his life	French/Spanish/German
N6	72	Female	Yes	English/American	Master's	Yes/Yes	Most of her life	Spanish
N7	67	Male	No	English/American	Master's	Yes/Yes (Eng)	Most of his life	None

*Note.* This table summarizes the NS participants' characteristics as collected through the background questionnaire.



*N1 – female – 71 years old – retired:*

N1 described herself as a 71-year-old female born and raised in the United States. She mentioned being a retired medical doctor but still worked one or two days per week. She reported that although she had been raised in a Persian-speaking household, she always responded in English. She had also studied French and Persian sporadically throughout her life. She had been watching movies and series all her life. At the time of the study, she enjoyed watching AV materials with captions in English while exercising to make sure she did not miss any part of the dialogues.

*N2 – male – 70 years old – retired:*

N2 described himself as a retired male physician. He grew up in a Chinese-speaking household; however, he identified as an American. He attended a few Spanish courses in high school and college, although he felt he was at a beginner level. He had been viewing movies and TV programs most of his life in English, and at the time of the study, he used captions in English to stay focused on the dialogues.

*N3 – female – 65 years old – not retired:*

N3 introduced herself as a female American massage therapist. She grew up only speaking English. However, she took four years of German when attending high school. She reported not recalling any of her German. She had recently started studying Spanish. She had been watching TV and films for as long as she could remember, and she did not use any captions or subtitles.

*N4 – female – 66 years old – retired:*

N4 described herself as a female software engineer. She was raised in an English-speaking household in the United States. She had French classes in high school in order to enter college. However, she felt it had been ineffective and she could not use the language. Although she attempted to learn Spanish approximately 25 years prior to the study, she stated that “by

then the language parts of my brain were refusing to accept any more information.” While she had watched movies most of her life, she did not own a TV at the time of the study and only had the opportunity to go to the cinema three or four times a year.

*N5 – male – 73 years old – retired:*

N5 was a retired male web developer. He grew up speaking English in the United States. He studied French, Spanish and German a long time before the study was carried out. However, he did not feel he was proficient in any of them. He mentioned being a passionate films and series enthusiast. He watched them regularly, and had done so throughout his life. At the time of the study, he used English captions to help keep up with the dialogues.

*N6 – female – 72 years old – retired:*

N6 described herself as a retired educator. She grew up using English at home. She mentioned learning Spanish in high school, but she only recalled a few words. She enjoyed filling her time by watching TV. She had been watching movies and series all her life. She did not feel the need to use captions.

*N7 – male – 67 years old – not retired:*

N7 was a corporate manager who grew up speaking English at home. He had never studied other languages. He had watched TV and films throughout his life. At the time of the study, he stated that he had “watched the majority of the highly-rated adult-oriented movies and series.” He also mentioned that he used captions to be able to follow the dialogues and in order not to miss out on the important points.

All the aforementioned participants read and agreed to a consent form, following the regulations set by the Bioethical Committee of the University of Barcelona (see Section 5.5), when they were approached to take part in the present study. The following section will describe the instruments used to carry out the research, including the consent form, background questionnaire, appropriateness rating task, and semi-structured interviews.

## 5.4. Instruments

The entire task was distributed via a survey form mainly due to the fact that previous researchers have established it as fairly stress-free manner for carrying out studies with older populations, and also suitable to combine with an online platform to reach more participants (e.g., Pikhart & Klímová, 2020). The current study elected to use Microsoft Forms for data collection to cast a wider net and allow participants to fill it out from the comfort of their homes. To cater to the needs of seniors, this online form had no time limit and allowed them to take breaks should they feel fatigued. However, as with any self-reported means to attain information, utilizing a survey form has certain disadvantages, namely, response bias (see Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2022). To minimize the effects of this drawback, data triangulation was employed using the information gathered from semi-structured interviews conducted after the responses to the survey forms were analyzed.

As indicated above, a consent form was also included at the beginning of the online form, preventing the potential participants from continuing if they chose not to agree with the dissemination and data protection policy. The form consisted of two main parts: background questionnaire (personal information and experience with English) and an appropriateness rating task (pragmatic awareness test). The entire survey form was made up of 79 questions (12 for the personal information section, 11 for the experience section, and 56 questions regarding the pragmatic awareness test). All the questions, except for the optional comment space, were marked as “required” to guarantee responses. It was estimated by the platform that it would take the participants no more than 40 minutes to complete.

### 5.4.1. *Background Questionnaire*

In order to obtain appropriate understanding of the participants’ experience with English, a background questionnaire was devised drawing inspiration from GRAL’s (*Grup de Recerca en Adquisició de Llengües*) background questionnaire, Derenowski’s (2021),

Darnault's (2023), and Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya's (2024) motivation questionnaires (the full senior learner online form is provided in Appendix A). The background questionnaire was developed in three languages (English, Spanish, and Catalan) to give the participants the opportunity to respond in the language they felt most comfortable.

The personal information section included 12 pivotal questions (Questions 4-15), regarding age, language background, academic background, and familiarity with viewing AV materials in English (with or without captions). The section focusing on their experience with English contained 11 questions (Questions 16-26), asking about their beliefs, strategies, and motivation regarding their English classes in the past and/or present, a personality evaluation as a language user, the frequency with which they spoke the language and the context in which they used it. The questions concerning motivation were chosen to demonstrate and highlight its fluctuating nature in relation to different periods of one's life (youth, early adulthood, adulthood, mid adulthood, early or pre-retirement, and retirement) while asking the participants to divulge the reason behind studying English in the past and present. A Likert scale was also provided with the designated motivation and belief questions offering the following options: "don't know," "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither agree or disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree." The questions concerning the context and activities in which the language was used helped to further understand the frequency of language use and the motivation or goal-setting strategy supporting it. At the end of the two sections, a blank space was left in case the participants wished to add additional information or comments.

#### **5.4.2. *Appropriateness Rating Task***

The final section was dedicated to the appropriateness rating task which involved 14 video clips taken from seven American shows and one American movie (the full script of each clip along with a link to them can be found in Appendix B). The video excerpts presented were taken from the following sources: First, *Emily in Paris*: a romantic comedy series centered

around a young American woman who moves to Paris to bring an “American” perspective to a newly acquired French marketing firm. Second, *The Big Bang Theory*: a sitcom focusing on the social and professional lives of socially awkward physicists. Third, *Desperate Housewives*: a drama series narrating the lives of suburban neighbors. Fourth, *Modern Family*: a sitcom that revolves around the lives of three family units in a mockumentary style. Fifth, *The Good Doctor*: a medical drama series which follows the challenges an autistic doctor faces. Sixth, *Shrinking*: a comedy series about a grieving therapist finding new ways to help his clients. Seventh, *Shall We Dance?*: a comedy-drama movie portraying the life of an unfulfilled lawyer as he finds a new zest for life. Eighth, *Succession*: a drama series about the children of a media tycoon taking over the family business. The clips chosen provided naturalistic conversations and familiar contexts in which the speech act of suggestion was used in a variety of situations. All the clips had a duration of less than one minute and 44 seconds which was intended to be less taxing on the attention span of the participants. Captions were included in the clips, given that Giroud et al. (2017), Słowik (2017), and Weil et al. (2021) posited that older adults might suffer from hearing difficulties which could potentially hinder their listening comprehension. The description of each scene and the suggestions made by the characters can be found below; Table 4 categorizes the strategies used in the scenes. The taxonomy utilized to categorize the strategies was defined by Martínez-Flor (2004, 2005) and revised by Pattemore (2017) and Khazdouzian et al. (2021).

In Clip 1, taken from *Emily in Paris*, two recently acquainted friends (Emily and Mindy) are seen speaking in the park. Emily has been feeling down as she is constantly being rejected by her new colleagues for not knowing the French language or (business) culture. She is relieved to find another English speaker (Mindy) who has found her way in Paris. Mindy feels empathy for her, which then leads to her suggesting:

“Give me your phone. Okay, so here’s my number. If you’re lonely, you text me, we have dinner. I’m Mindy.”

In Clip 2, taken from *The Big Bang Theory*, four friends and university coworkers (Sheldon, Leonard, Raj, and Howard) are sitting in the university cafeteria when they are greeted by their boss (university president Siebert). Sheldon appears to have been refusing to take his mandatory vacation, angering the head of the department, which in turn has led Siebert to force Sheldon to take his time off:

“Okay, it’s settled then. I’ll see you all on Monday except for you.”

In Clip 3, taken from *Desperate Housewives*, a family of four consisting of a mother (Bree), father (Rex), son (Andrew), and daughter (Danielle) are having a luxurious homemade dinner. Bree has the appearance of an upper-echelon lady who believes in cooking intricate meals for her family. Andrew and Danielle are clearly not enthused with pretending to enjoy the meal when they prefer to have simpler food. When confronted by their mother, Andrew lashes out and says:

“Tim Harper’s mom comes home from work, pops open a can of pork and beans, and boom they’re eating. Everyone’s happy.”

In Clip 4, taken from *Emily in Paris*, Emily is seen taking the keys to her new apartment from a French real estate agent. Emily has just arrived in Paris and is enamored by the city. The real estate agent is clearly flirting with her and inviting her out for a coffee. Emily has a boyfriend and she rejects the offer politely. The agent continues insisting and suggesting that Emily should contact him regardless of her boyfriend since he does not live in Paris:

“My number is on the card if you need me for anything, and in case you change your mind.”

In Clip 5, taken from *Modern Family*, the mother (Gloria) is seen shouting at her son (Manny) during a soccer match because he was not paying attention. Another mother is

overheard speaking to the children's soccer coach asking for Manny to be removed from the team. Hearing this, Gloria is provoked and says:

“You wanna take him out? How about I take you out? Why don't you worry about your son? He spent the first half with his hand in his pants!”

In Clip 6, taken from *Modern Family*, which is the scene following Clip 5 in the show, Gloria and her husband (Jay) are in their car discussing Gloria's inappropriate behavior with the other mom at Manny's soccer game. Gloria does not seem to agree with Jay believing that he is not very passionate when it comes to family and self-expression. Jay suggests that Gloria should calm down, saying:

“I'm just saying you could take it down here a little bit. That's all. [...] Yeah, but you don't have to be emotional all the time. That's all I'm saying. Manny you're with me on this, right?”

In Clip 7, taken from *The Good Doctor*, an intern (Dr. Browne) and her boss and teacher (Dr. Melendez) are discussing a patient. Dr. Melendez seems to have a problem with Dr. Browne's method of approaching the patient to get their consent form signed for a surgery. Dr. Melendez's tone and choice of words appear condescending. They disagree on how to move forward with the patient. Dr. Melendez then exerts his power and suggests how to deal with the patient by saying:

“Do I need to remind you that I am your superior? You do know what the opposite of superior is, right? [...] Sure, subordinate or inferior. Either way.”

In Clip 8, taken from *Modern Family*, the son's (Luke) head is stuck in a railing while the father (Phil) is helping him get free. Phil is very kind and understanding toward Luke who seems to have gone through this mishap for a second time. Phil's daughter (Alex) is passing and she suggests:

“I'm just gonna say it. He needs to be checked by a specialist.”

In Clip 9, taken from *Modern Family*, Gloria and Jay are at the mall observing Manny. Meanwhile, Jay is in a bad mood as it was insinuated earlier that he was too old to be Gloria's husband and that he must be her father. Gloria is trying to make him feel better and she suggests:

“Come on. We're in the mall. Let's get you, like, some younger clothes. There's a store there.”

In Clip 10, taken from *Shrinking*, a therapist (Jimmy) is having a session with his client (Grace). He seems to be having a rough day. Grace appears to be in a toxic relationship and she is telling Jimmy about her abusive husband. Whatever Jimmy says does not have an effect on Grace. This leads to Jimmy saying:

“Your husband is emotionally abusive. [...] Just fucking leave him. [...] Leave him or I'm done being your therapist.”

In Clip 11, taken from *Desperate Housewives*, two new neighbors (Susan and Mike), meeting for the first time at a funeral, are talking about the food being served. Susan, who has made the food, tries to stop Mike from eating it. She says:

“I wouldn't eat that if I were you. [...] I made it. Trust me. Hey! Do you have a death wish?”

In Clip 12, taken from *Shall We Dance?*, a lawyer (John), who has recently started taking dance lessons, is handing his instructor (Paulina) a handkerchief because her coat was stained during class. She has been crying because the coat means a lot to her. During their exchange, John seems to be flirting with her. He suggests they should have dinner by saying:

“I haven't eaten yet. If you haven't eaten yet, maybe we can go and... get a bite someplace close.”



In Clip 13, taken from *Succession*, a husband (Tom) and a wife (Shiv) are seen talking to each other about a gift Tom wants to buy for Shiv's father. He is asking her to give him some options to which she responds:

“Just, look, everything that you get him will mean equal amount of nothing so make sure it looks like 10 to 15 grand's worth and you're good. [...] get him a watch.”

In Clip 14, taken from *Succession*, two brothers (Kendall and Roman) are discussing their next step to take over the family business together and overrule the other potential candidates. The older brother (Kendall) has been working for his father (who is currently unconscious) for years and feels he is more deserving than anyone else, including his younger brother (Roman). However, he needs Roman's help if he is to succeed. This is how Kendall suggests they should proceed:

“We go for it, me and you. [...] I could teach you and you could teach me. [...] we are the ones with the nuts to fucking revolutionize. [...] let's fucking do it.”

**Table 4***Suggestion Strategies Appearing in the Clips*

Clip # – Show	Power/Distance	Suggestion Instance	Strategy
#1 – Emily in Paris	P- D+ (strangers)	Give me your phone.	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> )
#2 – The Big Bang Theory	P+ D+ (boss/employee)	I'll see you all on Monday except for you.	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> )
#3 – Desperate Housewives	P+ D- (parent/child)	Tim Harper's mom comes home from work, pops open a can of pork and beans, and boom they're eating. Everyone's happy.	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> )
#4 – Emily in Paris	P+ D+ (agent/client)	My number is on the card if you need me for anything, and in case you change your mind.	Conventionalized Form ( <i>Conditional</i> )
#5 – Modern Family	P- D+ (strangers)	Why don't you worry about your son?	Conventionalized Form ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> )
#6 – Modern Family	P- D- (partners)	[...] you could take it down here a little bit.	Conventionalized Form ( <i>Possibility</i> )
#7 – The Good Doctor	P+ D+ (mentor/intern)	Do I need to remind you that I am your superior?	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestion</i> )
#8 – Modern Family	P+ D- (child/parent)	He needs to be checked by a specialist	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> )
#9 – Modern Family	P- D- (partners)	Let's get you, like, some younger clothes.	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> )
#10 – Shrinking	P+ D+ (therapist/client)	Just fucking leave him. [...] Leave him.	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> )
#11 – Desperate Housewives	P- D+ (strangers)	I wouldn't eat that if I were you.	Conventionalized Form ( <i>Conditional</i> )
#12 – Shall We Dance?	P+ D+ (teacher/student)	If you haven't eaten yet, maybe we can go and... get a bite some place close.	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> )
#13 – Succession	P- D- (partners)	Get him a watch.	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> )
#14 – Succession	P- D- (brothers)	We go for it, me and you. [...] I could teach you and you could teach me. [...] let's fucking do it.	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) Conventionalized Form ( <i>Possibility</i> )

*Note.* The scripts were analyzed taking into consideration the whole scene. As mentioned earlier, the taxonomy utilized to categorize the strategies was defined by Martínez-Flor (2004, 2005) and revised by Pattemore (2017) and Khazdouzian et al. (2021).

After each video excerpt, the participants were asked to rate the appropriateness of the suggestion strategy used in the scene from one (being *very rude*) to five (being *perfectly appropriate*). They were subsequently requested to mention how many times they had viewed the clip, and if they had watched the scene or the show before. In order to obtain production samples, an empty textbox was provided for the senior learners to write what they would say in the same situation. However, after the data was collected, several participants appeared to have misunderstood the question and provided uninterpretable responses. Some of the answers were regarding their opinion about the clips or the behavior of the characters. Therefore, this item was not considered in the final analysis of the data. The responses collected in this form were further elaborated by the participants during their interviews. The information gathered in the said interviews proved to be essential for the qualitative analysis of this study.

#### **5.4.3. *Semi-structured Interviews***

In order to delve deeper into the experiences, beliefs and motivation of the participants (as in Derenowski, 2021; Montañés-Ballesté & Celaya, 2024), and elicit further elaboration on their responses, semi-structured interviews were conducted within three months of collecting the online forms (the full list of questions is provided in Appendix C). The questions posed to the senior learners were modified individually according to the answers each respondent provided in the online forms. The interviews were carried out in Spanish; however, as the researcher is not fluent in Catalan, they were informed that an interpreter could be present should they feel more comfortable being interviewed in Catalan. The interviews included questions regarding their experience with learning English, their feelings toward the use of the language, their current frequency of use and exposure to the language, the online form itself, and their challenges as senior learners.

Of the eight participants who initially consented to be contacted via the online form and had provided their email addresses, only five responded positively when approached. Two

participants declined the invitation to participate further, citing a decision to withdraw from the remainder of the research, and one failed to respond to the follow-up emails. Although Microsoft Teams was originally selected as the platform for conducting the interviews, technical difficulties and participant preferences necessitated the use of WhatsApp for both video and audio calls. All interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed manually by the researcher. The following figure (Figure 1) demonstrates the data collection timeline.

**Figure 1**

*Procedure Timeline*



## 5.5. Procedure and Data Analysis

In accordance with the recommendation and approval of the Bioethical Committee of the University of Barcelona (CER052410), Microsoft Forms was selected for data collection. To pilot the instrument, a 65-year-old retired senior learner completed the online form in May 2024 to assess its usability. This participant was chosen due to her similarity to the study cohort. She identified as a balanced Spanish/Catalan bilingual, and had a master's degree in finance. In addition to English, she mentioned knowledge of the French language. She watched movies and TV series with captions, but shared that she had been doing this for less than five years. Regarding her English learning experience, she described studying the language “on and off” since childhood, despite not having attended English classes at school, or having lived/studied abroad.

Following the pilot study, minor modifications were made to the wording of certain questions to improve clarity. Once these adjustments were implemented, the potential participants were invited via email to complete the online form. The participants were

approached in June; however, the last form was submitted at the end of August of the same year. In order to protect the privacy of the participants, each was given a code, and subsequently, their contact information and their responses were separated and kept in two distinct physical locations. Similarly, an identical online form (apart from the “experience with English” section of the background questionnaire) was provided to seven Americans of the same age range in order to have a baseline of what constitutes appropriateness for the NS participants (the full NS online form can be found in Appendix D). These volunteers were also asked to mention other languages and cultures they were in contact with when growing up to control for cross-cultural interference. After all the responses were recorded, interviews were held with each participant.

The suggestion strategies were coded, and two inter-raters reviewed the categorizations. The independent raters were linguists from the University of Barcelona and experts in the field of pragmatics. One was a 42-year-old female Spanish/Catalan bilingual speaker, and the other was a 39-year-old male L1 Spanish speaker. Of the 14 clips analyzed, the raters initially disagreed on labeling of one suggestion strategy. After discussion to clarify the criteria and align interpretations, agreement was reached on this clip as well. Thus, after the 93% (13 out of 14) initial agreement, the final consensus was 100%. A mixed-methods approach was utilized to collate and analyze the data following the methodologies of Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024) and Martínez-Flor (2004). SPSS (v.29 on Mac) was used for the statistical analysis of the data to encounter similarities between and among the NS and NNS groups.

The data was normally distributed according to the Shapiro-Wilk test; however, due to the small sample size in the two groups, it could not be assessed reliably. Furthermore, Cronbach’s alpha for the NS participants was  $\alpha = 0.75$ , indicating acceptable internal consistency across the 14 clips. However, for the NNS participants, reliability was much lower ( $\alpha = 0.23$ ), suggesting greater variability in their evaluations. Therefore, parametric tests were

ruled out, and in their stead, following a meeting with a statistician, nonparametric tests were used. Initially, generalized linear models were chosen to explore the effect of group (NSs vs. NNSs), AV materials, and IDs on L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness. Nevertheless, the small sample size in each group rendered the aforementioned test ineffective, ergo other statistical tests had to be chosen, as explained in what follows. In order to answer the first research question regarding the (meta)pragmatic awareness of the NNS participants, a Mann-Whitney U test (a non-parametric alternative to t-test) was selected, as it compares the distributions of the responses provided by the two groups of participants (i.e., NSs and NNSs). This test is accepted to be practical even if the sample size is smaller than six while reporting the exact  $p$  value (Zhu, 2021). As for the second research question regarding the effect of AV materials on the (meta)pragmatic awareness of the NNS participants, a Kruskal-Wallis test was used. This test is a non-parametric alternative to ANOVA, comparing the means of three groups (i.e., the NNSs who watch AV materials, those who do not watch them and the NS baseline). As Kruskal-Wallis is an extension of the Mann-Whitney U test, it is appropriate to use it (when the sample size is too small) in combination with the latter when performing pairwise comparisons after differences are found (Lomuscio, 2021). In order to answer the first two research questions, the data was coded and processed in SPSS, and the significance level was set to  $p < .05$ . Furthermore, to answer the last research question, which intended to explore the effect of IDs (beliefs, strategies, and motivation) on the aforementioned NNS group's (meta)pragmatic awareness, the data was split according to each ID, and subsequently, the aforementioned tests were utilized to investigate the similarities between the groups.

## 5.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the methodological framework for examining pragmatic awareness among senior EFL learners, specifically regarding their evaluation of suggestions in English. Firstly, the research questions were presented. Secondly, the participants section

detailed the NS and NNS participants' profiles, highlighting language backgrounds, diverse experiences with English, and varying engagement with AV materials. Thirdly, the instruments section outlined the design of the online form, the inclusion of 14 video excerpts, and the design of the semi-structured interviews. Finally, the data collection process was explained while ensuring adherence to ethical guidelines for participant privacy. The analytical tools and non-parametric tests were introduced and justified. By integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, the methodology chapter thus lays the groundwork for exploring (meta)pragmatic awareness and its relationship with IDs, AV materials, and NS norms. In the next chapter, the results attained through the aforementioned tests will be explicated.

## 6. Results

### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the current study, organized into two main sections. Section 6.2 reports on the results of the online form (i.e., background questionnaire and appropriateness rating task), focusing on the assessment of suggestion strategies in the clips. This section is further divided into three subsections. The first subsection (6.2.1) analyzes the NNS participants' ratings of pragmatic appropriateness compared to the NS baseline, using a Mann-Whitney U test. The second subsection (6.2.2) examines the influence of exposure to AV materials on (meta)pragmatic awareness, using the Kruskal-Wallis test to compare three groups: the NNS participants who watch AV materials, those who do not, and the NSs. The third subsection (6.2.3) explores the role of IDs in (meta)pragmatic awareness by analyzing the participants' responses to the appropriateness rating task and background questionnaire, including factors such as motivation at different life stages, goal setting, and self-belief (i.e., self-efficacy). Section 6.3 then presents qualitative insights drawn from the semi-structured interviews. These interviews provided a deeper understanding of the participants' language learning experiences. Together, the quantitative and qualitative results address the three research questions mentioned in Section 5.2, namely: (1) to what extent do NNSs show (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions as compared to NSs, (2) what is the effect of exposure to AV materials on their (meta)pragmatic awareness, and (3) how do IDs contribute to this awareness.

### 6.2. Online Form Results

#### 6.2.1. *Research Question 1: Senior EFL Learners' L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness*

The first research question examines whether senior EFL learners demonstrate (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions in English, and if so, the extent to which their assessments align with those of their NS counterparts. To explore this, each participant's Likert



scale rating (1 = *very rude*, 2 = *rude*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *appropriate*, 5 = *perfectly appropriate*) was coded into SPSS. The data was entered separately for NNS and NS participants. In this section, the ratings for each clip<sup>2</sup> will be analyzed through both qualitative and quantitative means.

Initially, a generalized linear model with a cumulative logit link function was conducted to investigate the effect of group (NS vs. NNS) on (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings. The dependent variable was the appropriateness rating of suggestions measured on a Likert scale. The analysis revealed no significant effect of group on (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.83, p = .093$ , with an odds ratio of  $OR = 0.661$ , 95%  $CI = [0.408, 1.071]$ . Although NSs were more likely to assign higher appropriateness ratings compared to NNSs, this difference did not reach statistical significance. The model demonstrated an adequate fit to the data, with a deviance value of 0.563 and  $AIC = 46.593$  and  $BIC = 63.035$ . These findings show that there is no statistical difference in how NS and NNS participants rated the pragmatic appropriateness of the clips. However, to gain more insight into each suggestion strategy and clip, a Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the two groups' responses.

*Clip 1 – Emily in Paris – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

In clip one, Emily and Mindy are portrayed as having equal power, and as they are strangers, their distance is high. The suggestion Mindy uses is:

“Give me your phone.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

There is no clear consensus among the NNS participants ( $M = 2.87, SD = 1.246, n = 8$ ) or the NS participants ( $M = 3.86, SD = 1.068, n = 7$ ) regarding the appropriateness of Mindy's suggestion to Emily. As shown in Figure 2, the majority of NSs rated the suggestion as *appropriate*. NNS P8 is the only participant that agreed with NS ratings, namely those of N3,

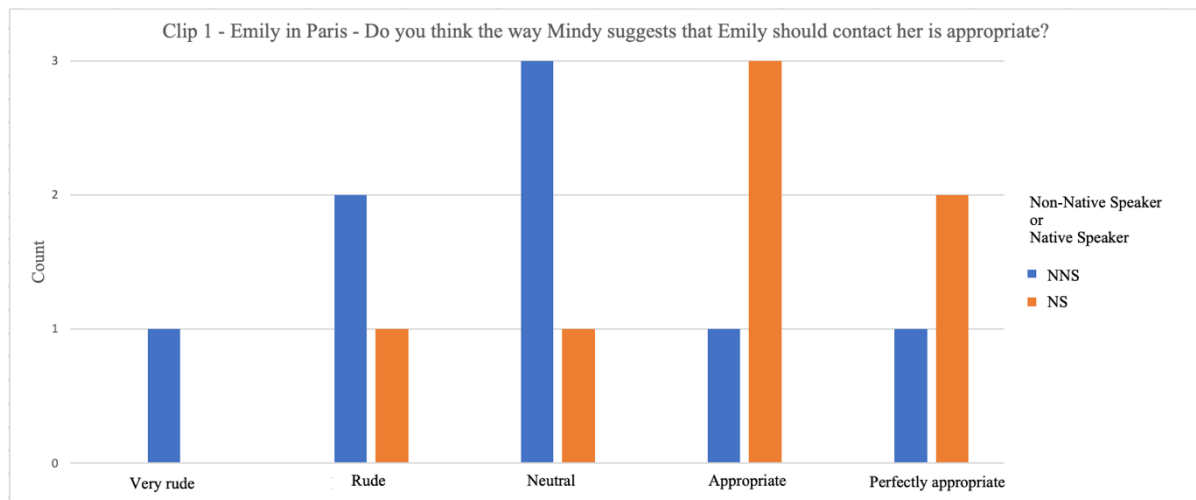
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<sup>2</sup> The description of the appropriateness rating task and the clips are provided in Section 5.4.2. The links to the clips and their scripts are found in Appendix B.

N4 and N6. Most of the NNSs deemed the suggestion *neutral*. Notably, two NS and two NNS participants considered it *perfectly appropriate* and *rude*, respectively. A Mann-Whitney U test further revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in appropriateness ratings between the two groups,  $U = 15.000$ ,  $z = 1.544$ ,  $p = .152^3$ , with a medium effect size,  $r = .40$ . In other words, the two groups demonstrated similar patterns in their appropriateness ratings.

**Figure 2**

*Clip One Appropriateness Ratings*



*Clip 2 – The Big Bang Theory – Boss > Employee – P+ D+*

In clip two, Sheldon and President Siebert are portrayed as having different power status, and, as they are employer and employee, their distance is high. The suggestion President Siebert uses is:

“I’ll see you all on Monday except for you.” - Indirect (*Hint*)

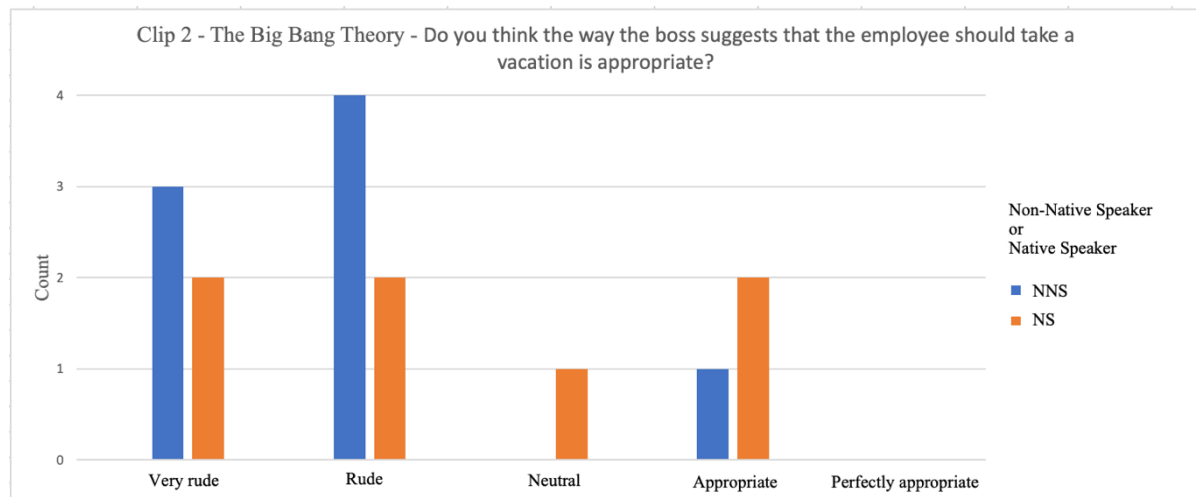
Regarding the ratings, the NNS participants ( $M = 1.88$ ,  $SD = .991$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and the NS participants ( $M = 2.43$ ,  $SD = 1.272$ ,  $n = 7$ ) were not in agreement. As observed in Figure 3, most NNS participants agreed that the suggestion was either *rude* or *very rude*. However, the NS participants showed no clear tendency. It is worth noting that no participant rated the

<sup>3</sup> All  $p$  values reported in this study are exact.

instance as *perfectly appropriate*. A Mann-Whitney U test was run to quantitatively explore the lack of a statistically significant difference between the two groups  $U = 21.000, z = .856, p = .463$ , with a small effect size,  $r = .22$ . These results suggest that the difference in appropriateness ratings between the two groups was not substantial.

**Figure 3**

*Clip Two Appropriateness Ratings*



*Clip 3 – Desperate Housewives – Parent > Child – P+ D-*

In clip three, the characters present different power status as Bree (the mother) maintains more power, and the child (Andrew) has less power. The distance is low as they are family. The suggestion used by Andrew is:

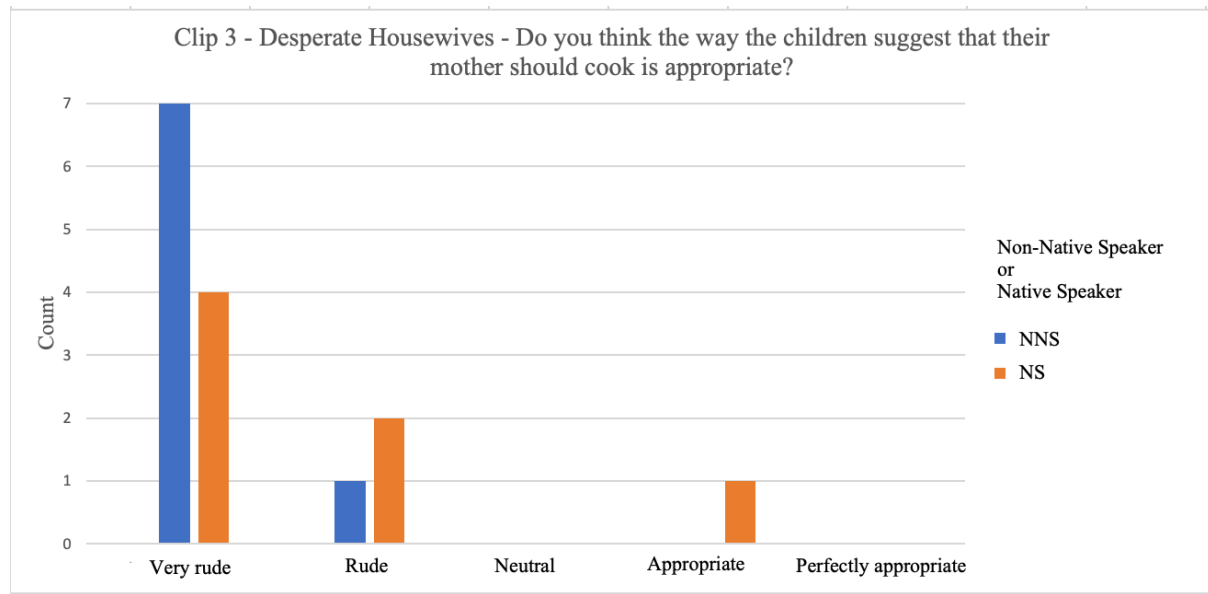
“Tim Harper’s mom comes home from work pops open a can of pork and beans, and boom they’re eating. Everyone’s happy.” - Indirect (*Hint*)

There was more agreement between the NNSs ( $M = 1.13, SD = .354, n = 8$ ) and the NSs ( $M = 1.71, SD = 1.113, n = 7$ ) in this instance. As demonstrated in Figure 4, seven NNS participants and six NS participants agreed that how Andrew verbalized his suggestion was *very rude*. NNS P4 agreed with NS participants N5 and N7 that the suggestion was *rude* but not to the extent that the majority rated it to be. NS N3 is the only participant who did not feel the suggestion to be *rude*, but rather *appropriate*. Regardless of the qualitative similarities, a

Mann-Whitney U test could not ascertain a statistically significant difference between the two groups  $U = 19.000$ ,  $z = 1.345$ ,  $p = .336$ , with a small to medium size effect,  $r = .35$ . This indicates that the two groups rated the appropriateness of this strategy similarly.

**Figure 4**

*Clip Three Appropriateness Ratings*



*Clip 4 – Emily in Paris – Client > Agent – P+ D+*

In clip four, the client (Emily) holds more power over the real estate agent. Thus, the distance is also high. The suggestion used by the real estate agent is:

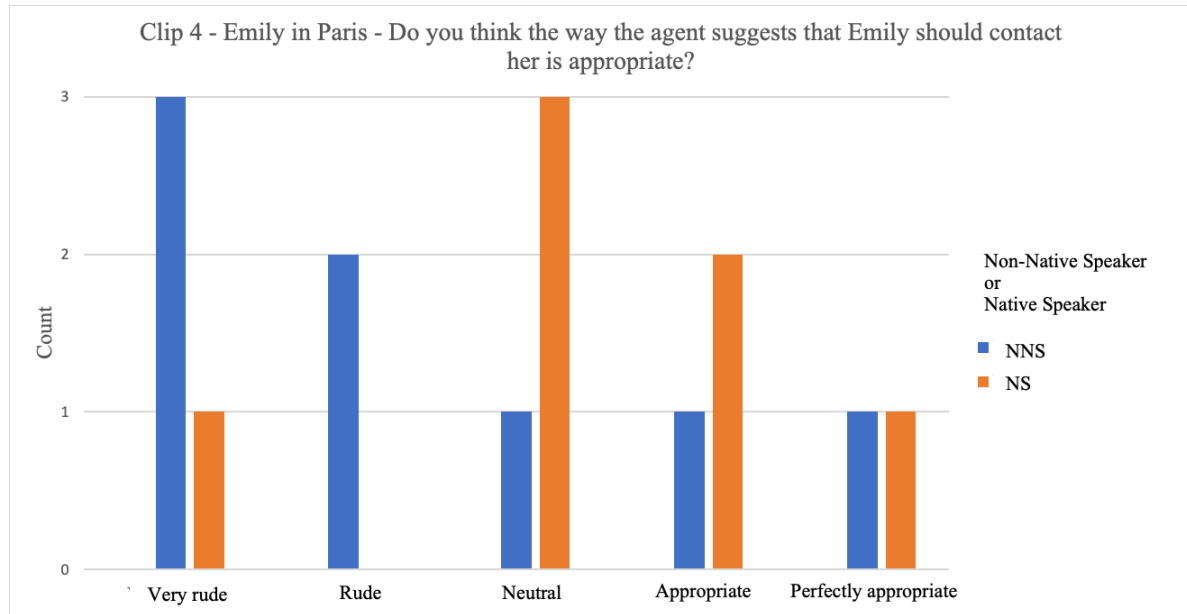
“My number is on the card if you need me for anything, and in case you change your mind.” - Conventionalized Form (*Conditional*)

There appears to be no agreement between the NNSs ( $M = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 1.506$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and the NSs ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 1.254$ ,  $n = 7$ ) in this clip. Figure 5 shows a variety of ratings to this suggestion. The highest agreement was observed among three NNS participants (P2, P3, and P5), who rated it as *very rude*, and three NS participants (N2, N3 and N4), who rated it as *neutral*. Contradictorily, two participants (NNS P9 and NS N7) rated it as *perfectly appropriate*. As expected, a Mann-Whitney U test showed similar results,  $U = 17.500$ ,  $z =$

1.244,  $p = .232$ , with a small to medium size effect,  $r = .32$ . In other words, the two groups are comparable in their ratings of appropriateness.

**Figure 5**

*Clip Four Appropriateness Ratings*

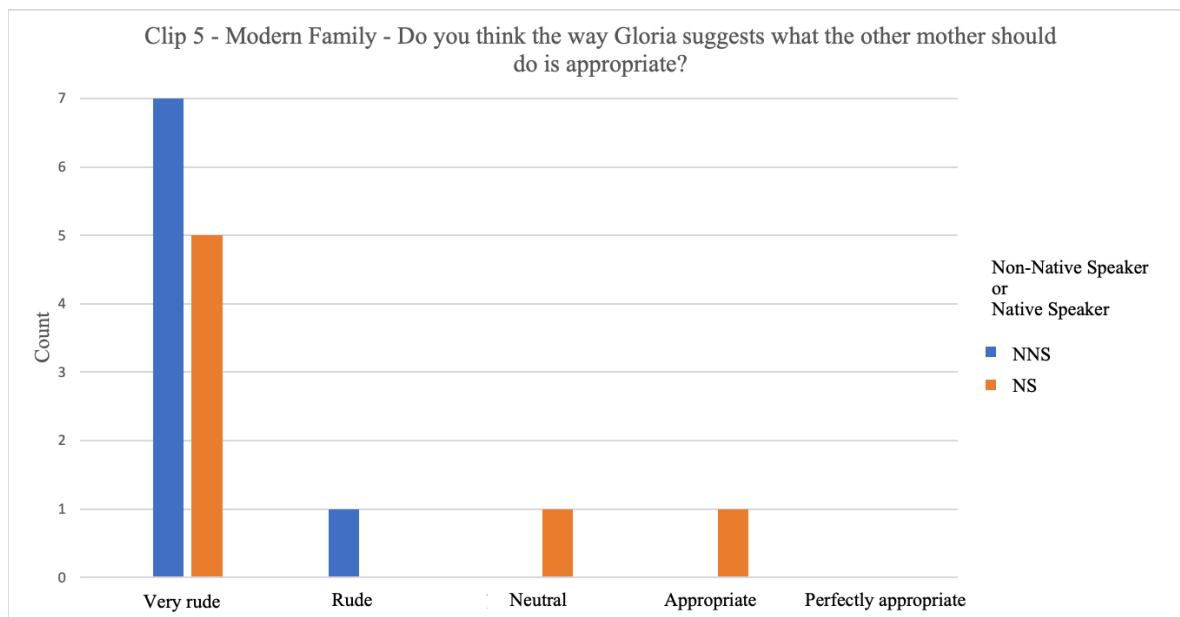


*Clip 5 – Modern Family – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

In clip five, the two mothers share the same power. However, as they are strangers, the distance is high. The suggestion used by one of the mothers (Gloria) is:

“Why don’t you worry about your son?” - Conventionalized Form (*Specific Formulae*)

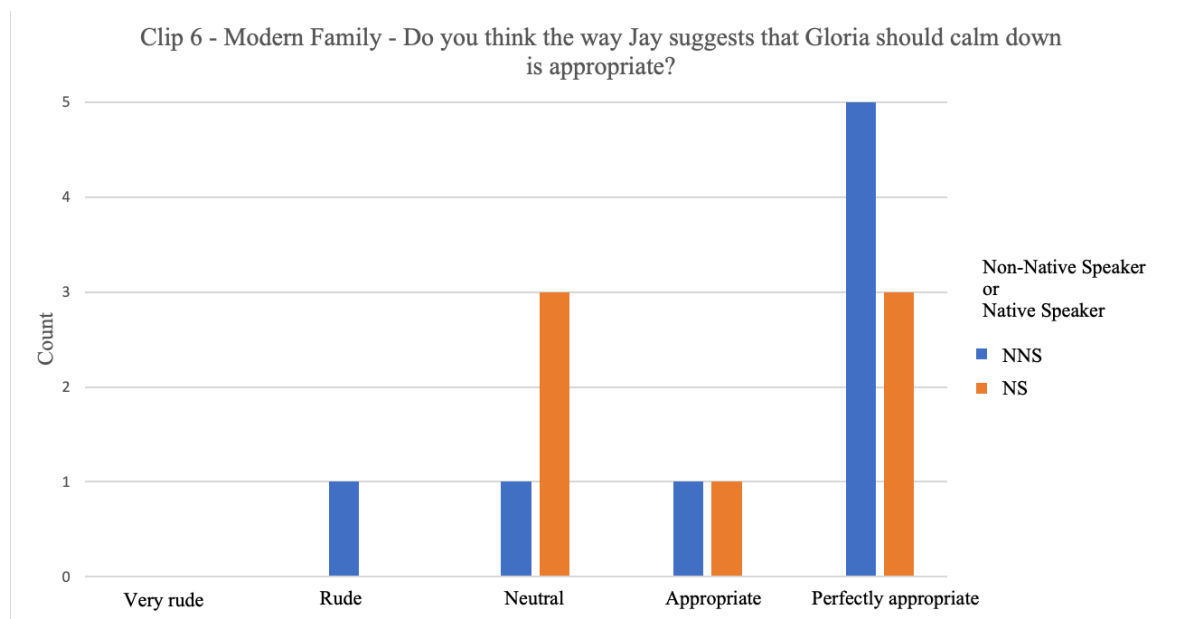
The NNS participants ( $M = 1.13$ ,  $SD = .354$ ,  $n = 8$ ) mostly agreed that the suggestion is *very rude*. However, the NSs ( $M = 1.71$ ,  $SD = 1.254$ ,  $n = 7$ ) held a wider variety of beliefs. As observed in Figure 6, seven NNS and five NS participants rated the suggestion as *very rude*. However, NNS P4, and NS participants N3 and N5 disagreed. P4 found it *rude*, and N3 and N5 rated it as *neutral* and *appropriate*, respectively. A Mann-Whitney U test quantitatively concurred,  $U = 22.500$ ,  $z = .910$ ,  $p = .536$ , with a small to moderate effect size,  $r = .235$ . In simpler terms, the two groups demonstrated similar patterns in their ratings.

**Figure 6***Clip Five Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 6 – Modern Family – Parent = Parent – P- D-*

In clip six, the two parents (Gloria and Jay) share the same power and have low distance as they are partners. Jay makes a suggestion using a Conventionalized Form:

“You could take it down here a little bit.” - Conventionalized Form (*Possibility*)

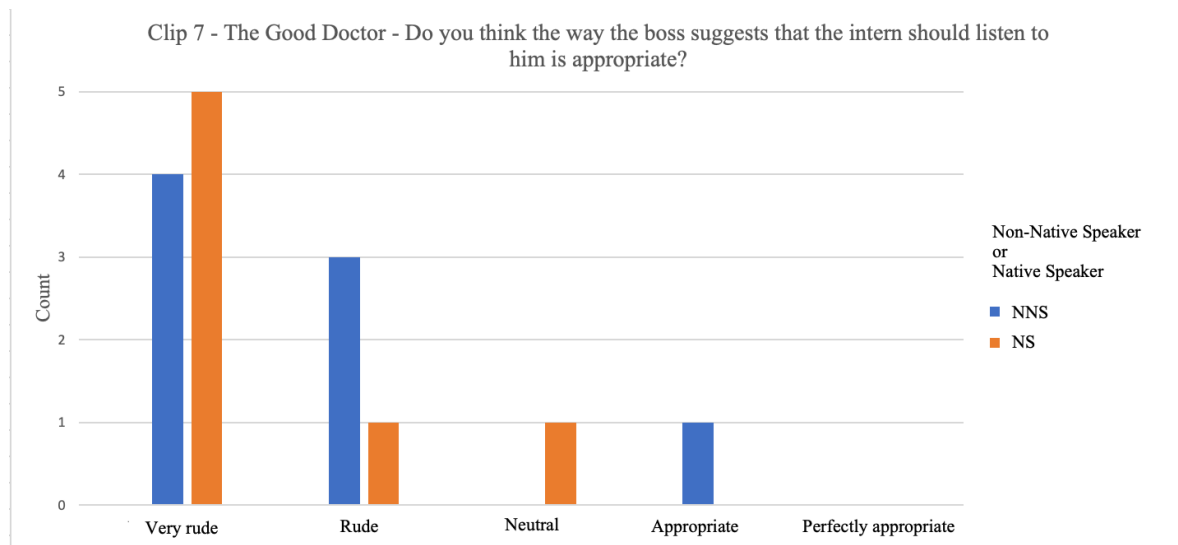
As shown in Figure 7 below, the NNS participants ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = 1.165$ ,  $n = 8$ ) mainly rated the suggestion as *perfectly appropriate*, whereas their NS counterparts ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.000$ ,  $n = 7$ ) were divided mostly between *perfectly appropriate* and *neutral*. Although NNS P5 agreed with the NSs who rated it as *neutral*, NS participant N4 and NNS P7 concurred that the suggestion was *appropriate*. Only one NNS (P3) considered the suggestion *rude*. Running a Mann-Whitney U test did not yield a statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 23.500$ ,  $z = .572$ ,  $p = .613$ , with a small effect size,  $r = .15$ . This indicates a relatively minor difference between the two groups.

**Figure 7***Clip Six Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 7 – The Good Doctor – Mentor > Intern – P+ D+*

In clip seven, the intern (Dr. Browne) and her mentor and boss (Dr. Melendez) have uneven power and distance parameters. As they are boss and employee, Dr. Melendez exhibits more power than Dr. Browne, and they have high distance. The suggestion Dr. Melendez makes is:

“Do I need to remind you that I am your superior?” - Other Forms (*Request Suggestion*)

The NNS participants ( $M = 1.75$ ,  $SD = 1.035$ ,  $n = 8$ ) appear to resemble their NS counterparts ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $SD = .787$ ,  $n = 7$ ) in deeming the suggestion *very rude*, as can be observed in Figure 8. However, three NNS participants (P5, P6 and P9) agreed with one NS participant (N2), rating the suggestion as *rude*. One NNS participant (P3) and one NS participant (N6) did not concur with the rest on how they perceived the speech act. A Mann-Whitney U test,  $U = 22.500$ ,  $z = .726$ ,  $p = .536$ ,  $r = .19$  suggested a small effect size, indicating a negligible difference between the two groups.

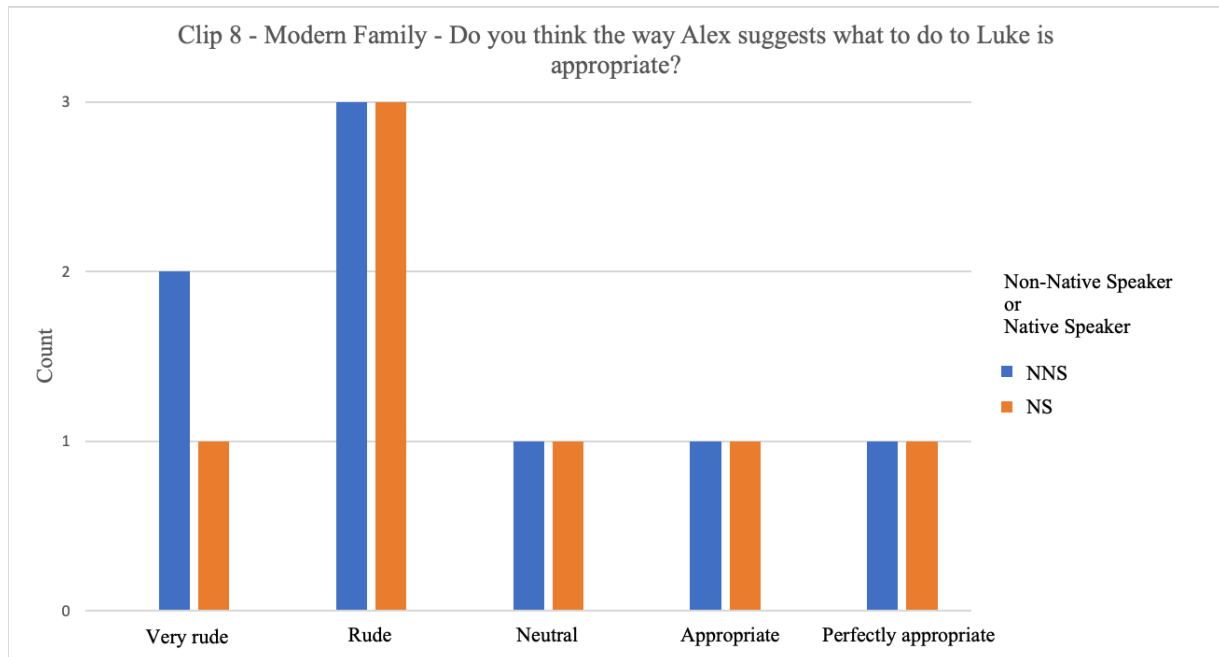
**Figure 8***Clip Seven Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 8 – Modern Family – Father > Daughter – P+ D-*

In clip eight, the father (Phil) has more power than his daughter (Alex). However, as they are parent and child, there is a low distance between them. Even though there is no dialogue between them, Alex suggests:

“He needs to be checked by a specialist.” - Indirect (*Hint*)

The two groups, namely the NNS participants ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = 1.414$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and their NS counterparts ( $M = 2.71$ ,  $SD = 1.380$ ,  $n = 7$ ), appear to be identical when rating the aforementioned suggestion, as shown in Figure 9. A Mann-Whitney U test,  $U = 25.000$ ,  $z = .361$ ,  $p = .779$ ,  $r = .09$  indicated a small effect size. That is to say, the difference between the two groups is insignificant.



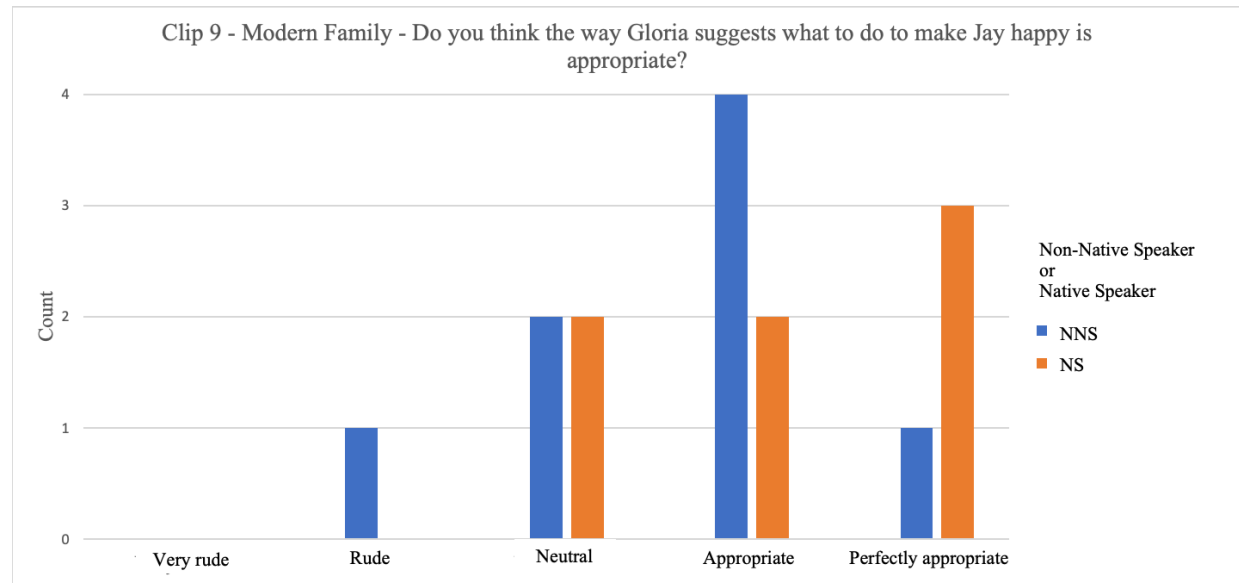
**Figure 9***Clip Eight Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 9 – Modern Family – Husband = Wife – P- D-*

In clip nine, the two partners (Gloria and Jay) share the same power, and low distance.

Gloria's suggestion is:

“Let's get you, like, some younger clothes.” - Other Forms (*Inclusive We*)

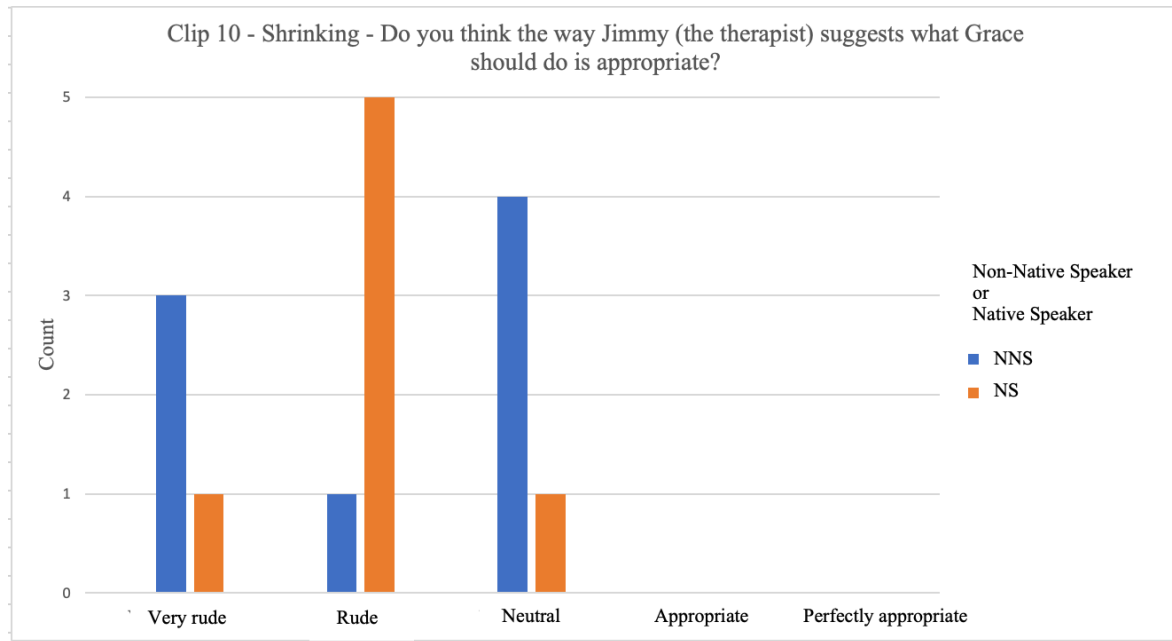
As observed in Figure 10, the NNS participants ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = .916$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and NS participants ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .900$ ,  $n = 7$ ) show a variety of opinions when rating this suggestion. NNS P4 is the only participant who believed this suggestion to be *rude*. A Mann-Whitney U test was run to test the hypothesis with no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 19.500$ ,  $z = 1.036$ ,  $p = .336$ ,  $r = .27$ . In other words, the two groups demonstrated similar patterns in their appropriateness ratings.

**Figure 10***Clip Nine Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 10 – Shrinking – Therapist > Client – P+ D+*

In clip ten, the therapist (Jimmy) exhibits more power over his client (Grace), and consequently, there is high distance between the two. Jimmy's suggestion is:

“Just fucking leave him. [...] Leave him.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

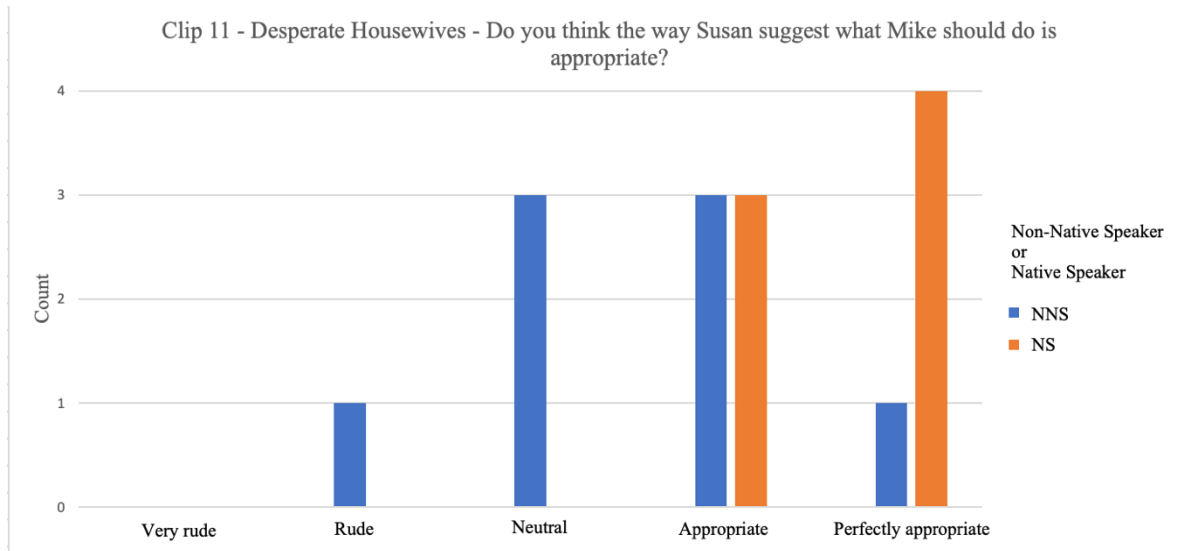
There seems to be more of a consensus between the NNS participants ( $M = 2.13$ ,  $SD = .991$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and NS participants ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .577$ ,  $n = 7$ ), as observed in Figure 11. P4 is the only NNS participant who agreed with the majority of NSs who rated the suggestion as *rude*. After running a Mann-Whitney U test, no statistically significant difference was found between the two groups,  $U = 25.000$ ,  $z = .369$ ,  $p = .779$ ,  $r = .095$ . Furthermore, the small  $r$  value suggests only a small difference between the two cohorts.

**Figure 11***Clip Ten Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 11 – Desperate Housewives – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

In clip eleven, Susan and Mike are new neighbors. Therefore, as strangers, there is a high degree of distance between the two, but they share the same power. Susan's suggestion to Mike is:

“I wouldn't eat that if I were you.” - Conventionalized Form (*Conditional*)

As observed in Figure 12, NNS participants ( $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = .926$ ,  $n = 8$ ) are more varied in their ratings than their NS counterparts ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ). NNS participant P2 believed this suggestion to be *rude* unlike the other NS and NNS participants. However, P8 is the only NNS participant who rated this suggestion *perfectly appropriate*, similar to the majority of NSs. A Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference in appropriateness ratings between the two groups,  $U = 9.500$ ,  $z = 2.264$ ,  $p = .029$ , with a large effect size  $r = .58$ . The significant exact  $p$  value ( $p < .05$ ) and the large effect size suggest that the NS participants generally rated the suggestion as more *appropriate* compared to the NNS participants.

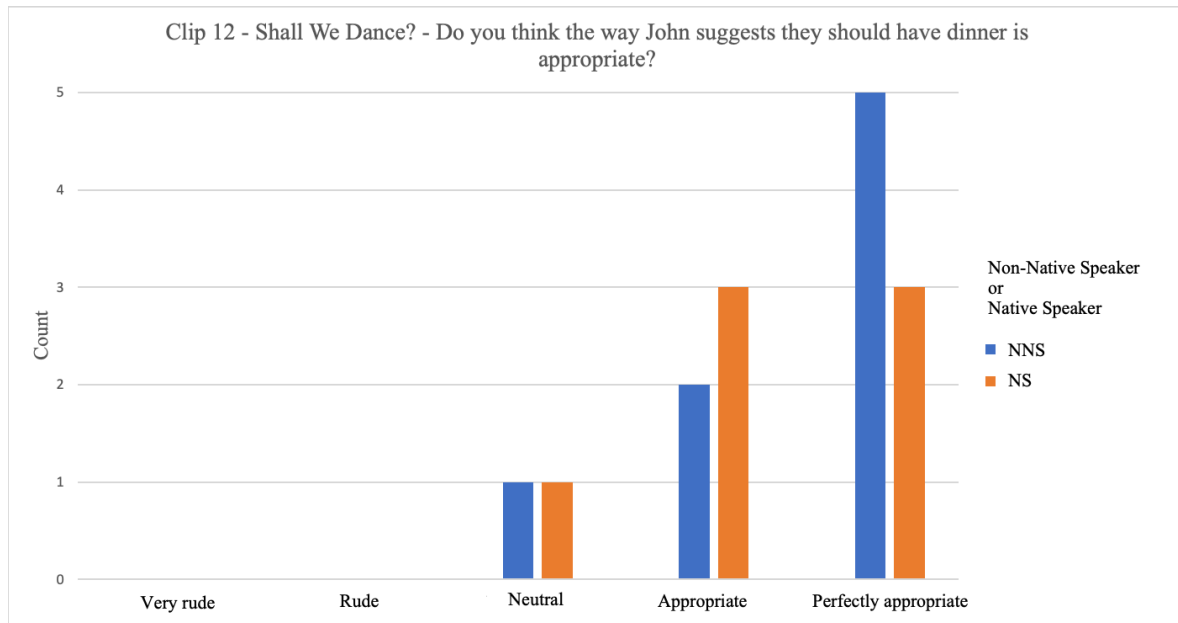
**Figure 12***Clip Eleven Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 12 – Shall We Dance? – Teacher > Student – P+ D+*

In clip twelve, the dance instructor (Paulina) exhibits more power over her student (John). As they are not friends, there is also a high distance between the two. John is flirting with Paulina and suggests:

“If you haven’t eaten yet, maybe we can go and... get a bite some place close.”

- Other Forms (*Inclusive We*)

The ratings from the NNS participants ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = .756$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and NS participants ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = .756$ ,  $n = 7$ ) appear to be approximately identical, as reflected in Figure 13. Mann-Whitney U test results were in line with the qualitative means revealing no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 23.000$ ,  $z = .642$ ,  $p = .613$ , with a small effect size  $r = .17$ . In other words, the groups’ responses are similar.

**Figure 13***Clip Twelve Appropriateness Ratings**Clip 13 – Succession – Husband = Wife – P- D-*

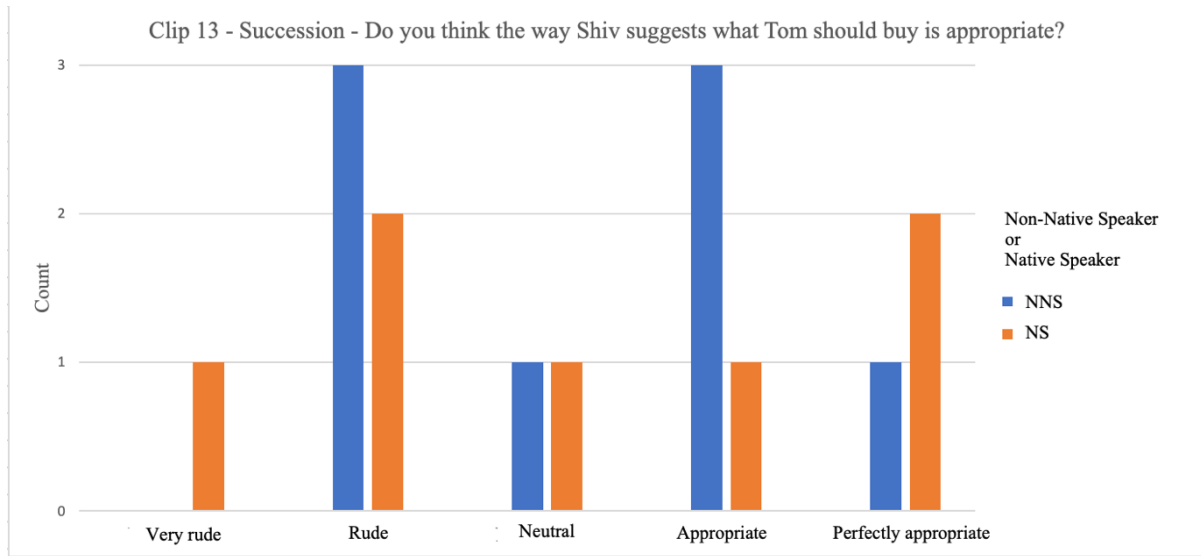
In clip thirteen, the husband (Tom) and the wife (Shiv) share the same power and distance. After Tom asks for Shiv's suggestion, she says:

“Get him a watch.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

As shown in Figure 14, both groups are equally varied in their appropriateness ratings of the suggestion strategy. The NNS participants ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 1.165$ ,  $n = 8$ ) deemed the imperative as *rude*, *neutral*, *appropriate* and *perfectly appropriate*. On the other hand, among the NS participants ( $M = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 1.574$ ,  $n = 7$ ), only one (N1) felt the suggestion was *very rude*. A Mann-Whitney U test quantitatively concurred with the qualitative results,  $U = 27.000$ ,  $z = .120$ ,  $p = .955$ , with a small effect size  $r = .03$ . This indicates a minimal difference between the two groups.

**Figure 14**

*Clip Thirteen Appropriateness Ratings*

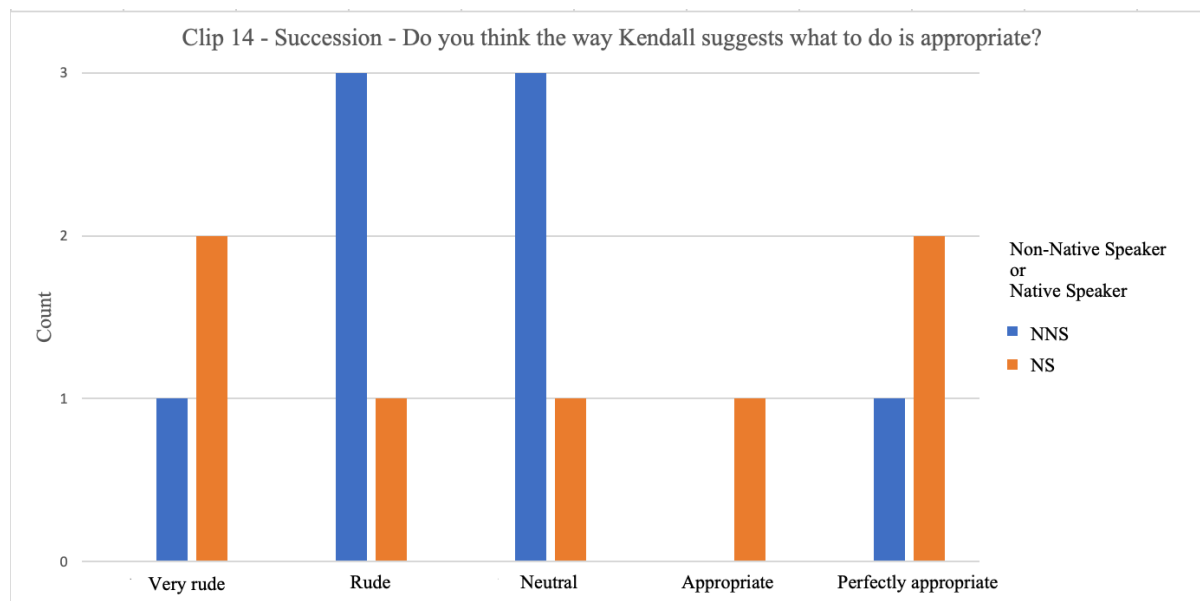


*Clip 14 – Succession – Brother = Brother – P- D-*

In clip fourteen, similar to the previous clip, the two brothers (Kendall and Roman) demonstrate the same power, and as siblings, there is low distance between them. Kendall suggests they should work together by saying:

“We go for it, me and you. [...] I could teach you and you could teach me. [...] let’s fucking do it.” - Other Forms (*Inclusive We*) and Conventionalized Form (*Possibility*)

As shown in Figure 15 below, the two groups share the same opinion on the appropriateness of the speech act of suggestion. However, the NNS participants ( $M = 2.63$ ,  $SD = 1.188$ ,  $n = 8$ ) and their NS counterparts ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.732$ ,  $n = 7$ ) are in disagreement regarding the strategy utilized. One NS participant (N2) was alone in believing that the use of the *inclusive we* in this context is *appropriate*. A Mann-Whitney U test proved the qualitative results,  $U = 25.000$ ,  $z = .356$ ,  $p = .779$ , with a small effect size  $r = .09$ , demonstrating only a slight difference between the two groups.

**Figure 15***Clip Fourteen Appropriateness Ratings*

In summary, after comparing the two groups' clip responses using a Mann-Whitney U test (see Table 5), only Clip 11, where the Conventionalized Form (*conditional*) was used, yielded statistical significance. In other instances, statistical analyses failed to demonstrate any statistically significant difference. To clarify, the NNS participants' awareness of suggestions was similar to that of their NS counterparts.

**Table 5***Mann-Whitney U Test between Non-Native and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Mann-Whitney U	15.000	21.000	19.000	17.500	22.500	23.500	22.500	25.000	19.500	25.000	9.500	23.000	27.000	25.000
Wilcoxon W	51.000	57.000	55.000	53.500	58.500	51.500	50.500	61.000	55.500	53.000	45.500	51.000	55.000	61.000
Z	-1.544	-.856	-1.345	-1.244	-.910	-.572	-.726	-.361	-1.036	-.369	-2.264	-.642	-.120	-.356
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.123	.392	.179	.213	.363	.568	.468	.718	.300	.712	.024*	.521	.905	.722
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.152 <sup>a</sup>	.463 <sup>a</sup>	.336 <sup>a</sup>	.232 <sup>a</sup>	.536 <sup>a</sup>	.613 <sup>a</sup>	.536 <sup>a</sup>	.779 <sup>a</sup>	.336 <sup>a</sup>	.779 <sup>a</sup>	.029 <sup>a*</sup>	.613 <sup>a</sup>	.955 <sup>a</sup>	.779 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.



Additionally, the suggestion strategies were explored separately according to each clip. As mentioned in Section 5.2.1, seven strategies in total were used in the video excerpts: *imperatives* (Clips 1, 10, and 13), *specific formulae* (Clip 5), *possibility* (Clip 6), *conditional* (Clip 4 and 11), *hint* (Clip 2, 3, and 8), *inclusive we* (Clip 9, 12, and 14), and *request suggestion* (Clip 7). The average of each participant's scores for every suggestion strategy was subsequently calculated, and a Mann-Whitney U test was carried out between the NS and NNS participants. The results, as seen in Table 6, show a lack of statistically significant difference between the two groups, apart from the *conditional* under Conventionalized Forms appearing in Clips 4 and 11. In other words,  $U = 9.500$ ,  $z = 2.201$ ,  $p = .029$ , and  $r = .56$  suggest a large effect size, indicating that the ratings the NNS participants ( $M = 2.93$ ,  $SD = .821$ ,  $n = 8$ ) provided for this strategy were significantly different from those of their NS counterparts ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = .786$ ,  $n = 7$ ).

**Table 6***Mann-Whitney U Test of Suggestion Strategies between Non-Native and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Mann-Whitney U	21.500	22.500	23.500	9.500	16.500	23.000	22.500
Wilcoxon W	57.500	58.500	51.500	45.500	52.500	59.000	50.500
Z	.769	-.910	-.572	2.201	1.362	.587	-.726
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.442	.363	.568	.028*	.173	.557	.468
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.463 <sup>a</sup>	.536 <sup>a</sup>	.613 <sup>a</sup>	.029 <sup>a*</sup>	.189 <sup>a</sup>	.613 <sup>a</sup>	.536 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

### 6.2.2. *Research Question 2: The Effect of Audiovisual Materials on L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness*

The second research question aimed to explore whether AV materials have an effect on senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions in English, and if so, the extent to which their ratings were associated with those of their NS counterparts (i.e., Group 3). To that end, the NNS participants were further divided into two groups based on whether they watch AV materials (Group 1: P2, P6, P7, and P8) or do not watch AV materials (Group 2: P3, P4, P5, and P9). Following the previous research question, each clip rating (1 = *very rude*, 2 = *rude*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *appropriate*, 5 = *perfectly appropriate*) was coded into SPSS separately for both NNSs and NSs. In this section, the ratings for each clip<sup>4</sup> will be analyzed through both qualitative and quantitative means. Initially, a generalized linear model with a cumulative logit link function was attempted; however, SPSS failed to compute due to numerical problems caused by the small number of participants. Therefore, a Kruskal-Wallis test was used to compare the three groups (i.e., the NNS participants who watch AV materials, those who do not, and the NS participants). Additionally, a Mann-Whitney U test was used to examine the differences between the two NNS groups (Group 1 and Group 2), and when applicable, to further compare each of the NNS groups with the NS group.

*Clip 1 – Emily in Paris – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

“Give me your phone.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed  $U = 1.000$ ,  $z = 2.084$ ,  $p = .057$ ,  $r = .74$ . The strong effect size of  $r$  suggests a notable difference between Group 1 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ), despite the exact  $p$  value being just above the conventional threshold for significance (.05). Additionally, a Kruskal-Wallis test was used to

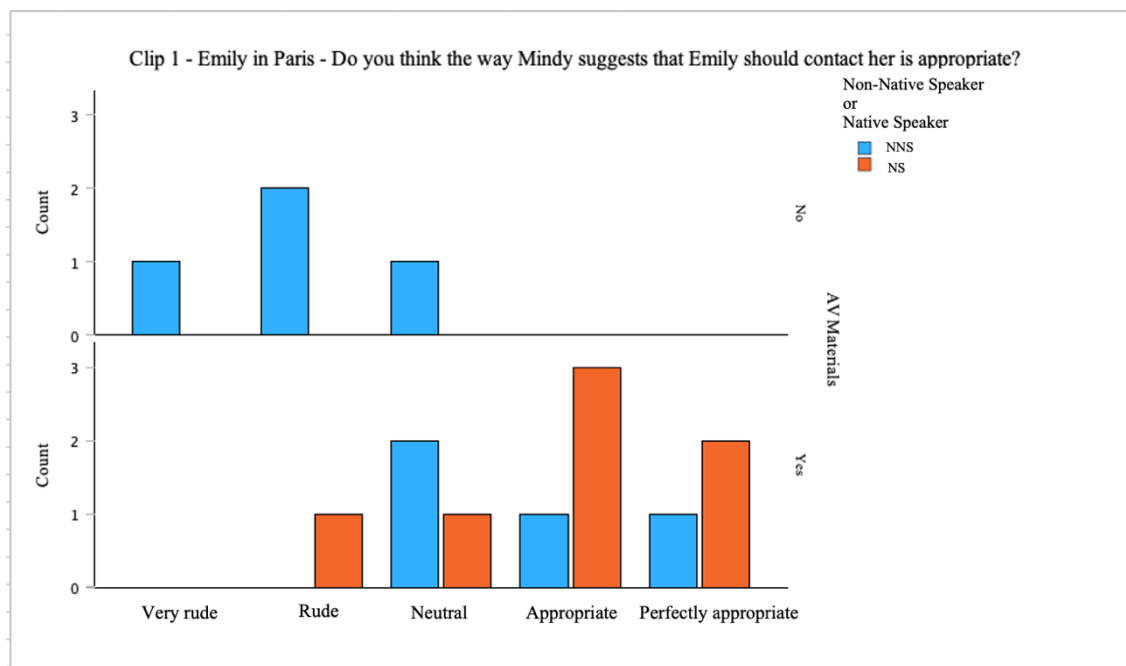
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<sup>4</sup> See section 5.4.2 for full description of the clips and Appendix B for the transcripts.

compare (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings among the three groups. When comparing Group 3 ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 1.069$ ,  $n = 7$ ) with both Group 1 and 2, the test yielded  $H = 6.172$ ,  $p = .046$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .34$ . This demonstrates a statistically significant difference between the three groups and suggests that exposure to AV materials may be a contributing factor in the rating of suggestions. The results are reflected in Figure 16. To identify where the differences lay, post hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted using a Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction to control for multiple comparisons. When comparing Group 1 and Group 3, the exact  $p$  value was  $p = .788$ , whereas the comparison between Group 2 and Group 3 yielded an exact  $p$  value of  $p = .024$ . However, as the threshold for significance was adjusted to  $p < .017$ , neither comparison reached statistical significance.

**Figure 16**

*Clip One Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



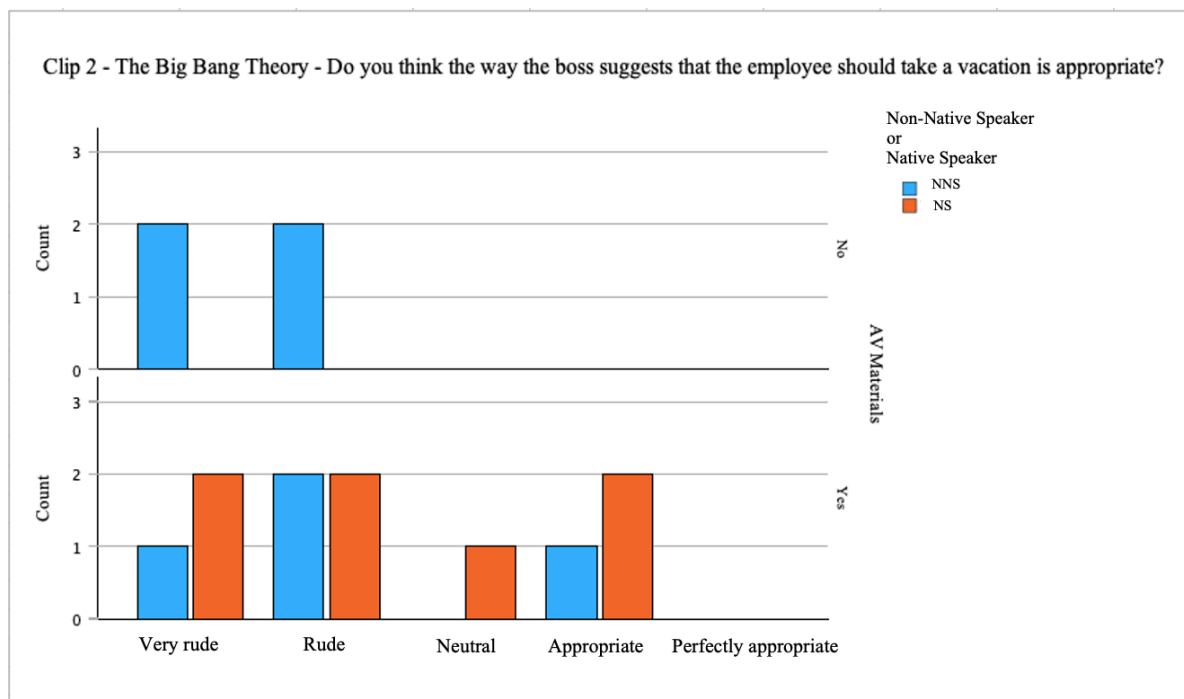
*Clip 2 – The Big Bang Theory – Boss > Employee – P+ D+*

“Okay, it’s settled then. I’ll see you all on Monday except for you.” - Indirect (*Hint*)

As shown in Figure 17, the three groups appear very similar. In order to explore the similarities between Group 1 ( $M = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 1.50$ ,  $SD = .577$ ,  $n = 4$ ), a Mann-Whitney U test was run. The results revealed no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 5.000$ ,  $z = .949$ ,  $p = .486$ , with a medium effect size  $r = .34$ . This indicates the two NNS groups were similar. In order to explore the differences between both NNS groups and the NS participants (Group 3:  $M = 2.43$ ,  $SD = 1.272$ ,  $n = 7$ ), a Kruskal-Wallis test was utilized. The results showed no statistically significant difference among the three groups,  $H = 1.579$ ,  $p = .454$ , with no meaningful effect size  $\eta^2 = .03$ . In other words, the three groups demonstrated similar patterns in their ratings. Therefore, exposure to AV materials do not seem to be a contributing factor.

**Figure 17**

*Clip Two Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



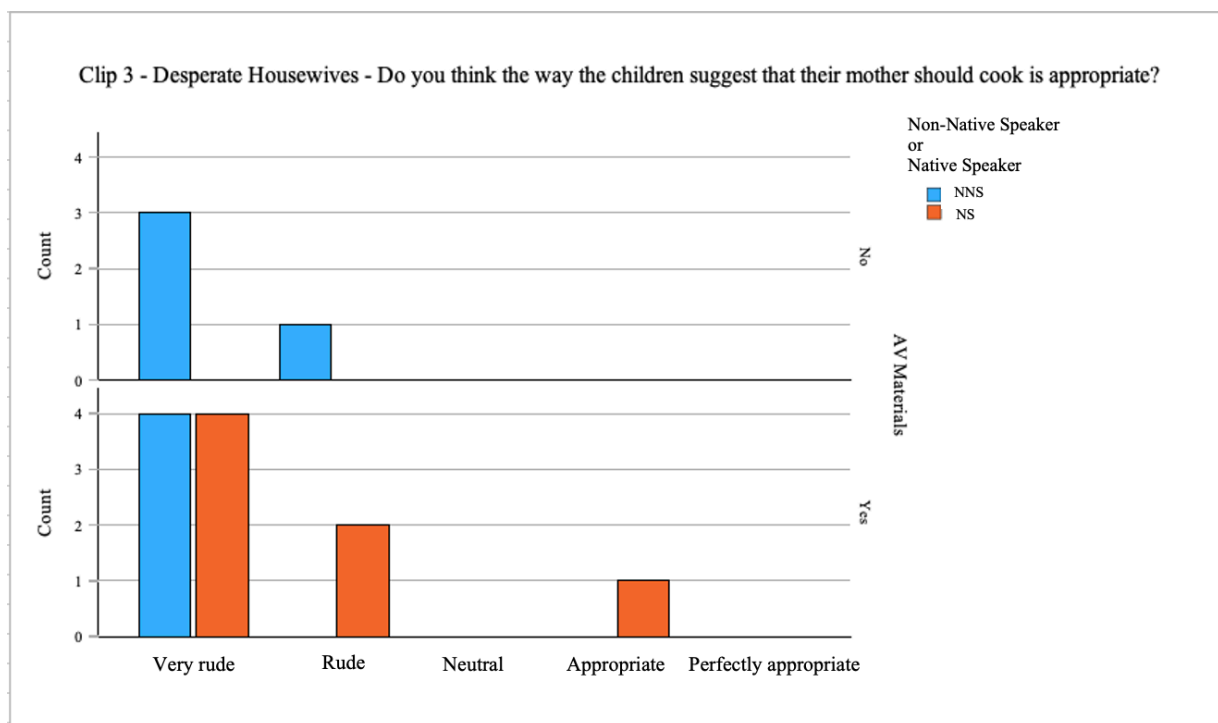
*Clip 3 – Desperate Housewives – Parent > Child – P+ D-*

“Tim Harper’s mom comes home from work pops open a can of pork and beans, and boom they’re eating. Everyone’s happy.” - Indirect (*Hint*)

As observed in Figure 18, Group 1 ( $M = 1.00$ ,  $SD = .000$ ,  $n = 4$ ), Group 2 ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and Group 3 ( $M = 1.71$ ,  $SD = 1.113$ ,  $n = 7$ ) concurred when assessing the appropriateness of *hint* used in this context. A Mann-Whitney U test was used to quantitatively evaluate the difference between the two NNS groups,  $U = 6.000$ ,  $z = 1.000$ ,  $p = .686$ , with a medium effect size  $r = .35$ . The results revealed no statistically significant difference between Group 1 and Group 2. A Kruskal-Wallis test also failed to yield a significant difference between the three groups,  $H = 2.318$ ,  $p = .314$ , with a small effect size  $\eta^2 = .02$ . In other words, the NNS participants (regardless of their experience with AV materials) and the NS participants are similar. Therefore, exposure to AV materials do not seem to be a contributing factor.

**Figure 18**

*Clip Three Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



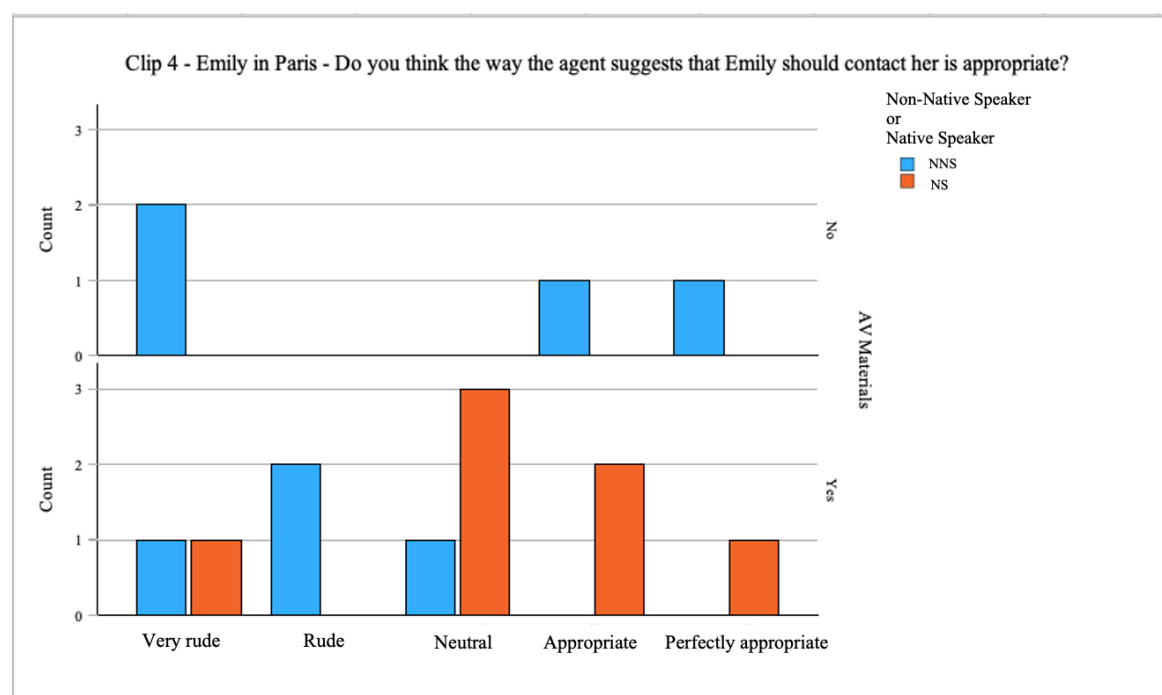
*Clip 4 – Emily in Paris – Client > Agent – P+ D+*

“My number is on the card if you need me for anything, and in case you change your mind.” - Conventionalized Form (*Conditional*)

There was a wide range of responses for this clip among the participants regardless of their L1 or experience with AV materials, as shown in Figure 19. Group 1 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 2.062$ ,  $n = 4$ ) seem to be as dissimilar as Group 3 ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 1.254$ ,  $n = 7$ ). In order to first explore the difference between Group 1 and Group 2, a Mann-Whitney U test was run. The results showed no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 7.000$ ,  $z = .298$ ,  $p = .886$ , with a small effect size  $r = .10$ . There was no statistically significant difference between the NNS participants and their NS counterparts either, according to the Kruskal-Wallis test results,  $H = 2.140$ ,  $p = .343$ , with a small effect size  $\eta^2 = .01$ . To clarify, the tests revealed that AV materials had no effect on NNS participants' appropriateness assessment.

**Figure 19**

*Clip Four Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



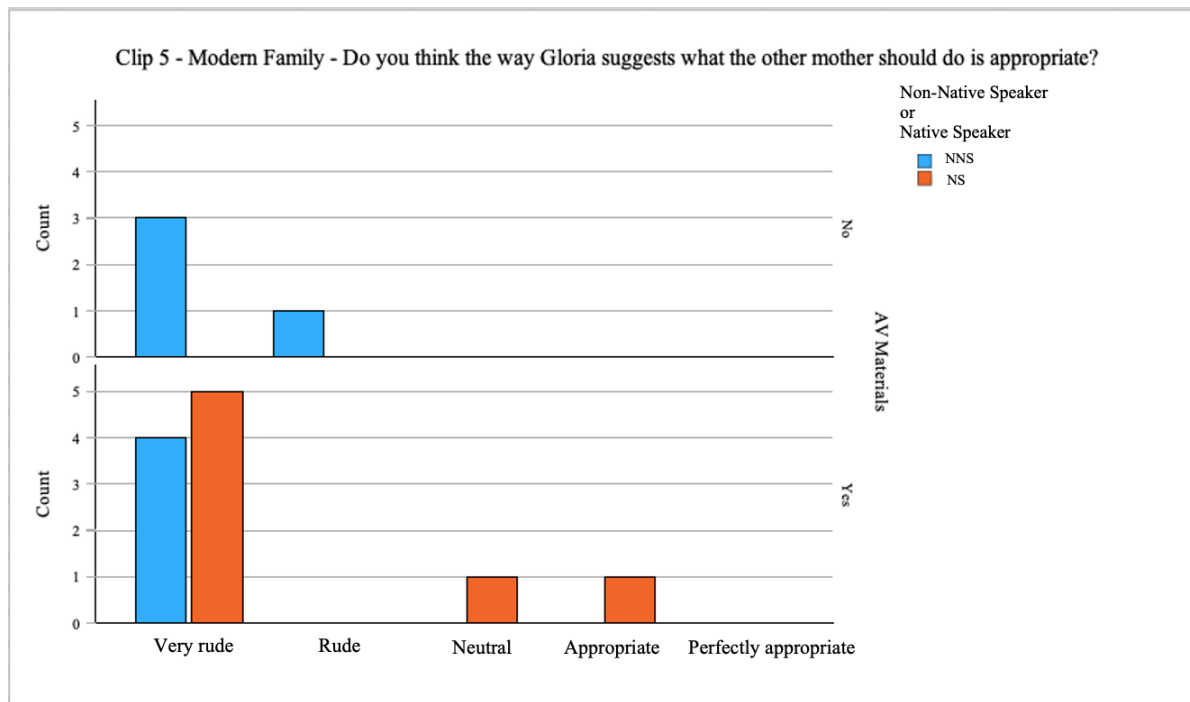
*Clip 5 – Modern Family – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

“Why don’t you worry about your son?” - Conventionalized Form (*Specific Formulae*)

For Clip 5, Group 1 ( $M = 1.00$ ,  $SD = .000$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ) rated *specific formulae* as either *very rude* or *rude*, as shown in Figure 20. Mann-Whitney U test results concurred with the qualitative output,  $U = 6.000$ ,  $z = 1.000$ ,  $p = .686$ , with a medium effect size  $r = .35$ . However, Group 3 ( $M = 1.71$ ,  $SD = 1.254$ ,  $n = 7$ ) showed more versatility in their ratings of the speech act. Regardless, comparing the three groups using a Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a lack of statistically significant differences,  $H = 1.368$ ,  $p = .505$ , with no significant effect size  $\eta^2 = .05$  as the  $H$  value is too low. Both tests indicate that the groups are similar, and that AV materials did not affect the NNS participants’ appropriateness ratings.

**Figure 20**

*Clip Five Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*





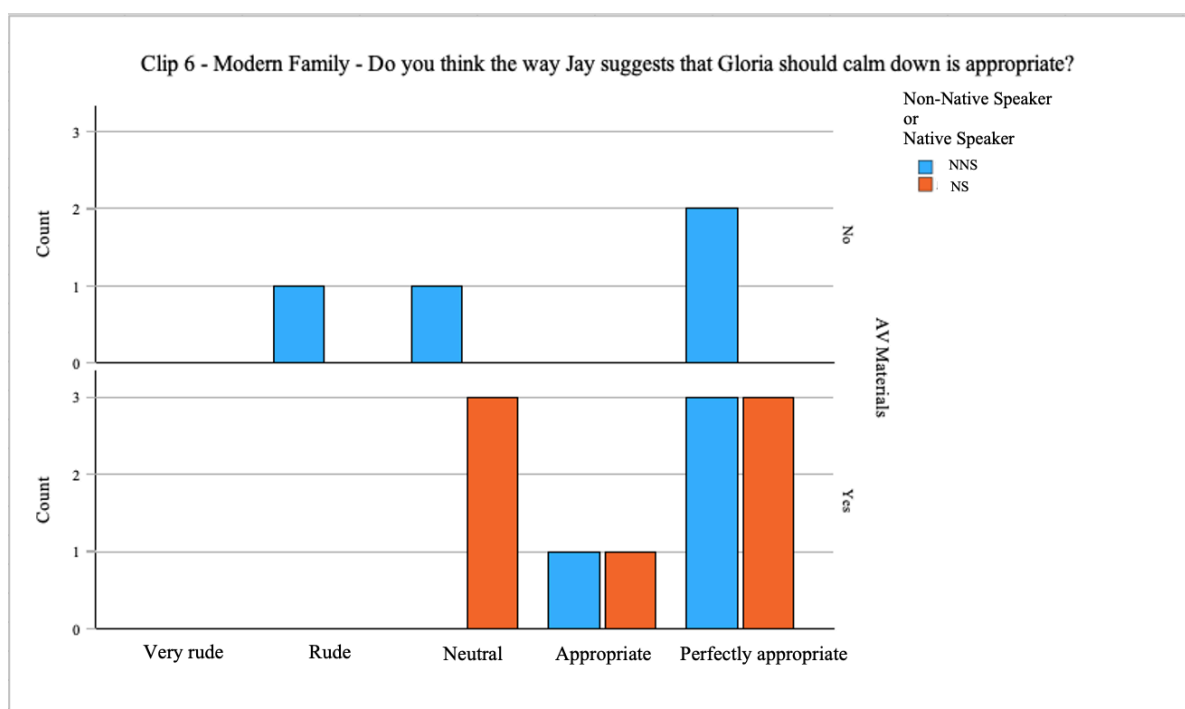
*Clip 6 – Modern Family – Parent = Parent – P- D-*

“I’m just saying you could take it down here a little bit.” - Conventionalized Form  
(Possibility)

As shown in Figure 21, Group 2 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.500$ ,  $n = 4$ ) appears to be more varied in their ratings than Group 1 ( $M = 4.75$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ). However, a Mann-Whitney U test proved that the two groups are not statistically different,  $U = 5.000$ ,  $z = .992$ ,  $p = .486$ , with a medium effect size  $r = .35$ , albeit demonstrating a moderate difference between the two. In order to assess if the NNS groups resemble their NS counterparts (Group 3:  $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.000$ ,  $n = 7$ ), a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted. These results also showed the three groups rated the suggestion strategy in a similar manner,  $H = 1.698$ ,  $p = .428$ , with no significant effect size  $\eta^2 = .02$ . In other words, exposure to AV materials had no effect on NNS participants’ appropriateness assessment.

**Figure 21**

*Clip Six Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



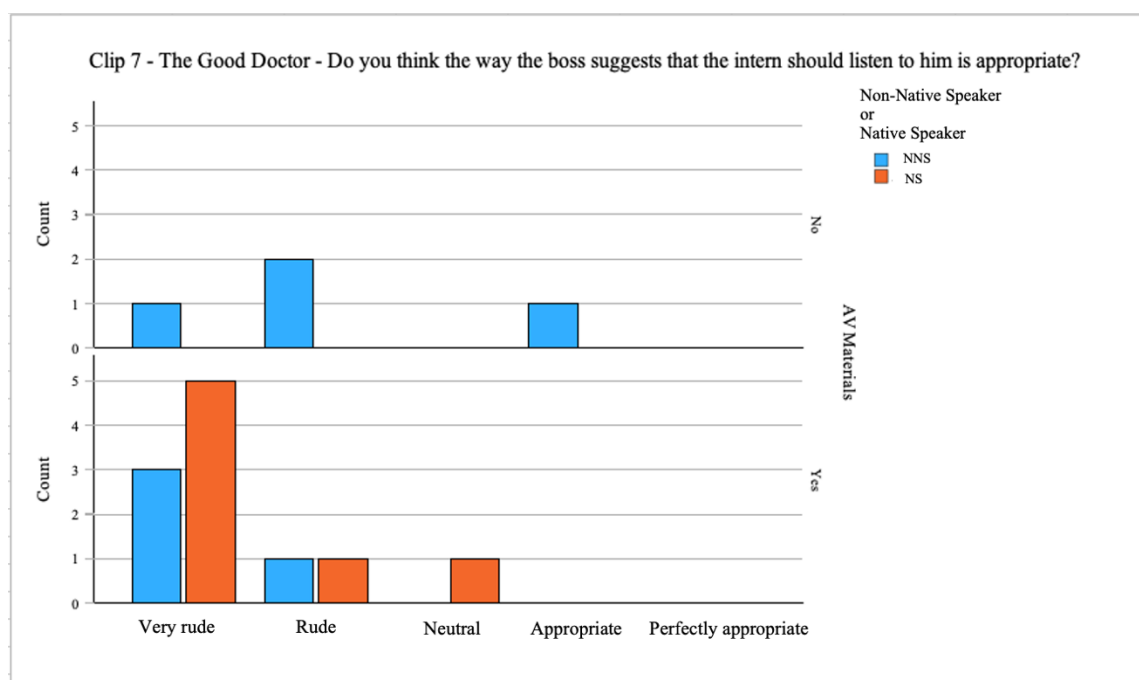
*Clip 7 – The Good Doctor – Mentor > Intern – P+ D+*

“Do I need to remind you that I am your superior? You do know what the opposite of superior is, right?” - Other Forms (*Request Suggestion*)

As shown in Figure 22, Group 1 ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ) resemble one another in their ratings which was reflected in the Mann-Whitney U test,  $U = 3.500$ ,  $z = 1.423$ ,  $p = .200$ , with a medium effect size  $r = .50$ . The results indicate there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups regardless of the moderate difference that the  $r$  value suggests. Comparing the NNS groups' responses with Group 3 ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $SD = .787$ ,  $n = 7$ ), a Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a lack of statistically significant differences between the three groups as well,  $H = 2.744$ ,  $p = .254$ , with a small to moderate effect size  $\eta^2 = .06$ . These results indicate that the three groups were similar in their ratings of appropriateness, and that AV materials did not affect the NNS participants' appropriateness ratings.

**Figure 22**

*Clip Seven Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



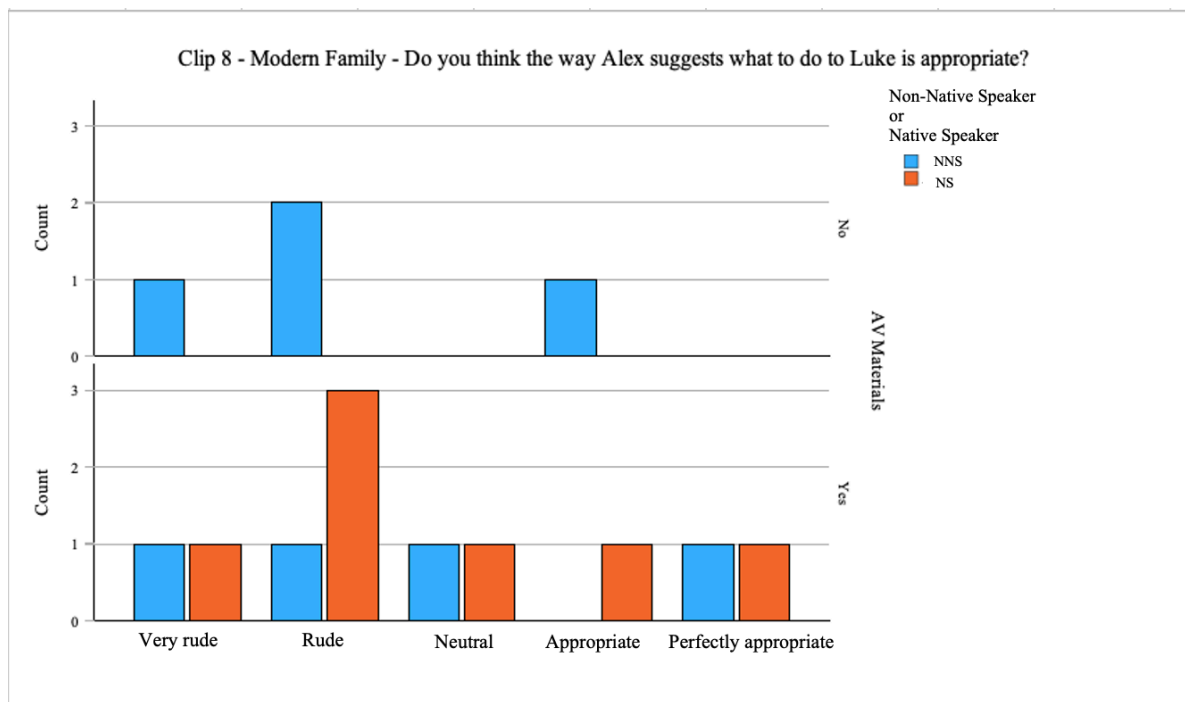
*Clip 8 – Modern Family – Father > Daughter – P+ D-*

“He needs to be checked by a specialist.” -Indirect (*Hint*)

As shown in Figure 23, the responses provided by Group 1 ( $M = 1.75$ ,  $SD = 1.708$ ,  $n = 4$ ) are more varied than those of Group 2 ( $M = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ) when rating this suggestion strategy. However, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups when a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted,  $U = 6.500$ ,  $z = .447$ ,  $p = .686$ , with a small effect size  $r = .15$ . Similarly, no difference was found when compared with Group 3 ( $M = 2.71$ ,  $SD = 1.380$ ,  $n = 7$ ) following a Kruskal-Wallis test,  $H = .374$ ,  $p = .830$ , with no detectable effect size  $\eta^2 = .13$ . That is to say, the three groups are statistically similar, and AV materials did not have a statistically significant effect on NNS participants’ assessments of appropriateness.

**Figure 23**

*Clip Eight Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



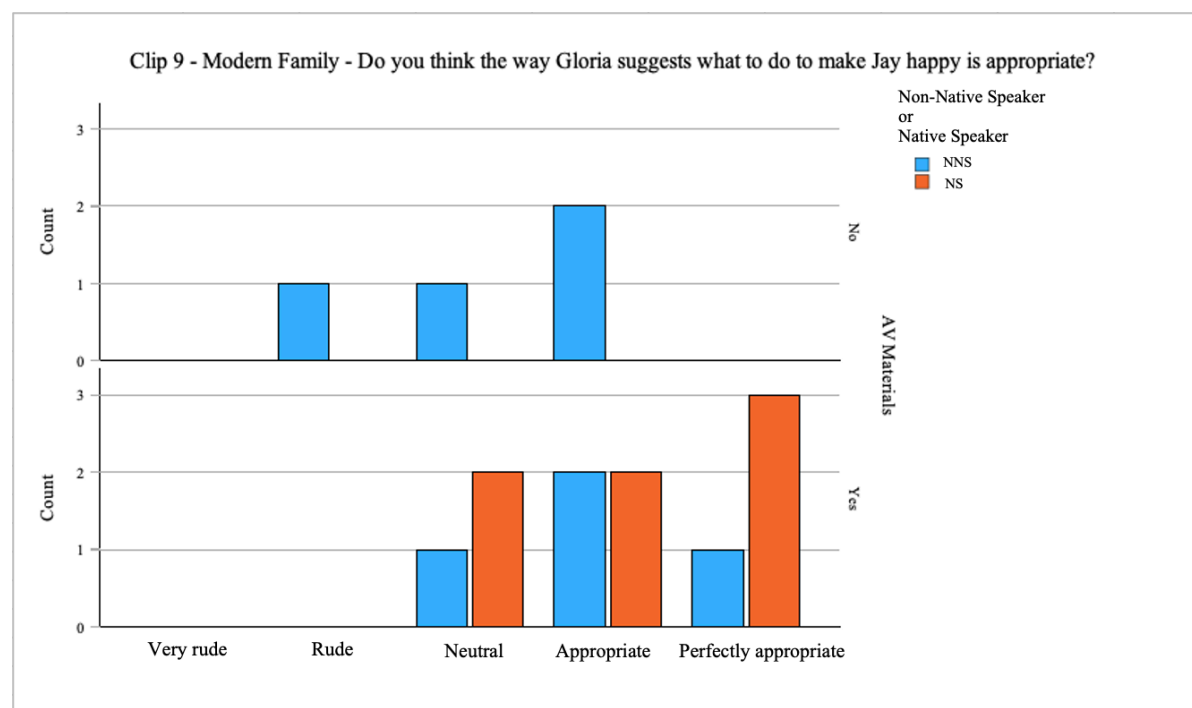
*Clip 9 – Modern Family – Husband = Wife – P- D-*

“Let’s get you, like, some younger clothes.” - Other Forms (*Inclusive We*)

A Mann-Whitney U test comparing Group 1 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ) found no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 4.500$ ,  $z = 1.084$ ,  $p = .343$ , with a moderate effect size  $r = .38$ , as can also be observed in Figure 24. Likewise, when the responses from Group 3 ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = .900$ ,  $n = 7$ ) were compared with those belonging to the NNS participants, the Kruskal-Wallis test results failed to reach a significant difference,  $H = 2.156$ ,  $p = .340$ , with a small effect size  $\eta^2 = .01$ . In other words, the three groups demonstrated similar patterns in their appropriateness ratings, and thus AV materials had no effect on NNS participants’ appropriateness assessment.

**Figure 24**

*Clip Nine Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



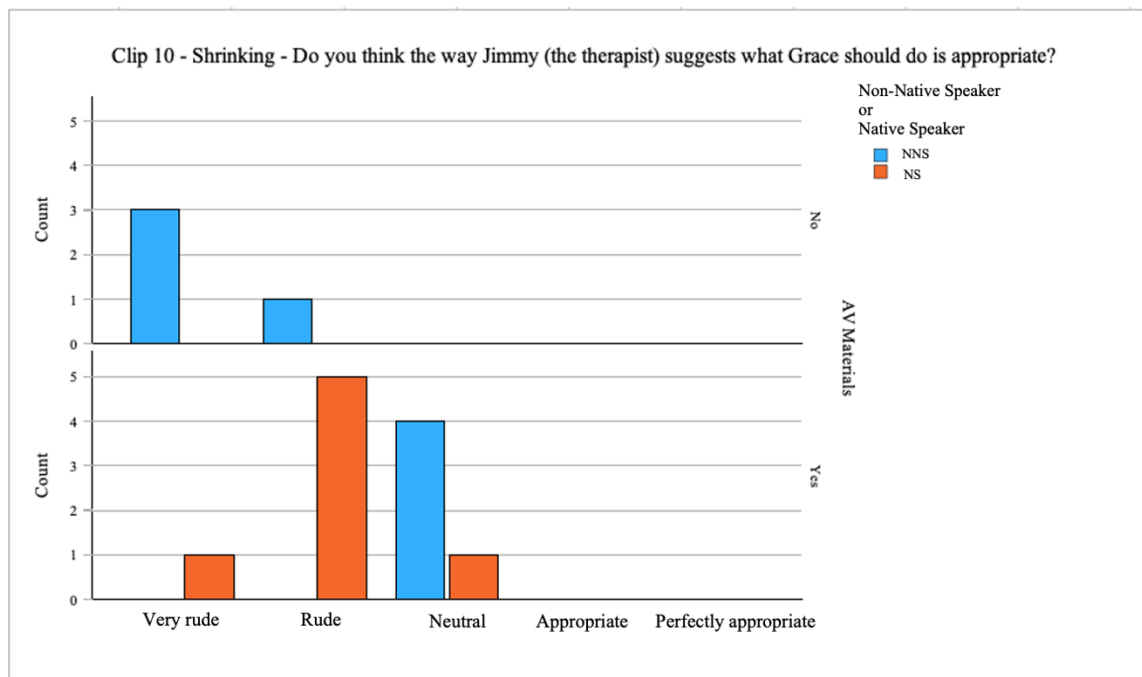
*Clip 10 – Shrinking – Therapist > Client – P+ D+*

“Just fucking leave him. [...] Leave him.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

As shown in Figure 25, Group 2 ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ) was more inclined to rate this suggestion as *rude* or *very rude*, whereas Group 1 ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = .000$ ,  $n = 4$ ) unanimously opted for *neutral*. Mann-Whitney U test results revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = .000$ ,  $z = 2.530$ ,  $p = .029$ , with a large effect size  $r = .89$ . Kruskal-Wallis test results also suggested a significant difference between the three groups when the responses from Group 3 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .577$ ,  $n = 7$ ) were compared,  $H = 9.816$ ,  $p = .007$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .65$ . This indicates that a substantial portion of the variance in scores can be attributed to group differences (i.e., AV materials). Post hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted using a Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction to control for multiple comparisons. Comparing Group 1 and Group 3 yielded  $p = .024$ , while Group 2 and Group 3 resulted in  $p = .109$ . Consequently, no statistically significant difference was found in neither comparison as the threshold for significance was adjusted to  $p < .017$ .

**Figure 25**

*Clip Ten Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



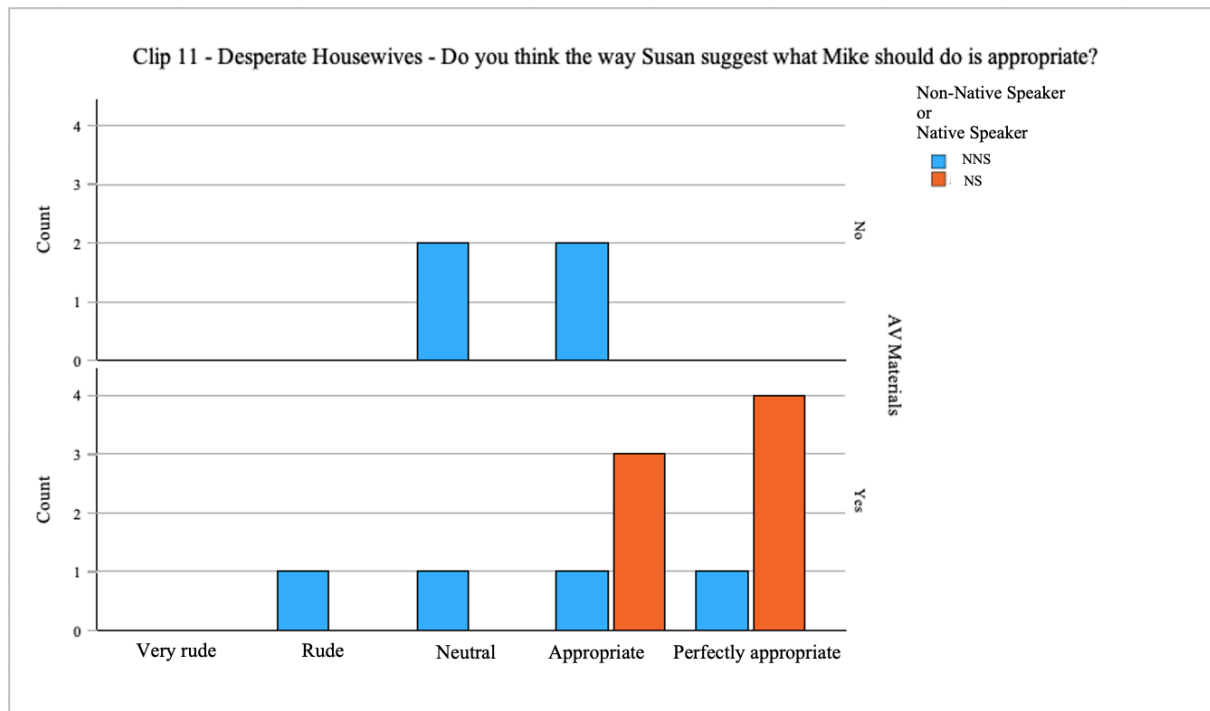
*Clip 11 – Desperate Housewives – Stranger = Stranger – P- D+*

“I wouldn’t eat that if I were you. [...]” - Conventionalized Form (*Conditional*)

As illustrated in Figure 26, Group 1 ( $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 1.291$ ,  $n = 4$ ) does not seem to prefer a specific appropriateness rating unlike Group 2 ( $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = .577$ ,  $n = 4$ ) who tended to rate the speech act as *neutral* or *appropriate*. A Mann-Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 8.000$ ,  $z = .000$ ,  $p = 1.000$ , with no effect size  $r = .00$ . Comparing their responses with those of their NS counterparts (Group 3,  $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ) using a Kruskal-Wallis test, no statistically significant differences were found,  $H = 5.209$ ,  $p = .074$ , with a moderate effect size  $\eta^2 = .26$ . In other words, the three groups rated the *conditional* strategy similarly, suggesting that exposure to AV materials did not substantially influence appropriateness assessment.

**Figure 26**

*Clip Eleven Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



*Clip 12 – Shall We Dance? – Teacher > Student – P+ D+*

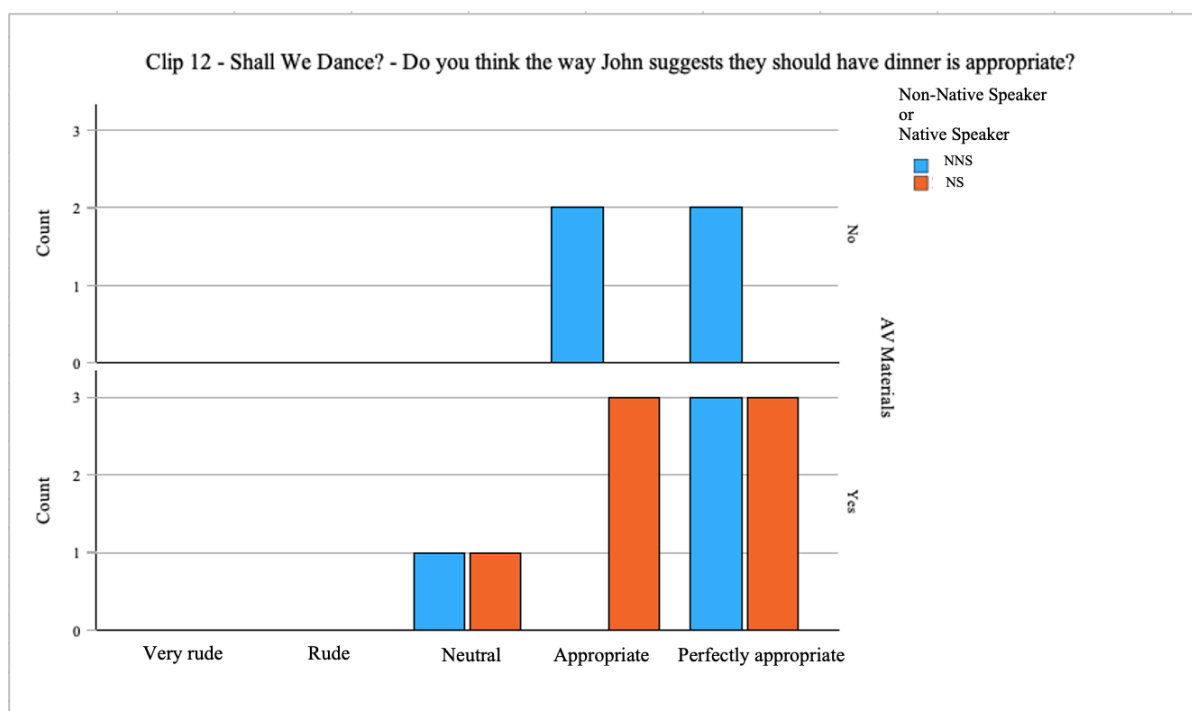
“If you haven’t eaten yet, maybe we can go and... get a bite some place close.”

- Other Forms (*Inclusive We*)

As shown in Figure 27, Group 1 ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 1.000$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = .577$ ,  $n = 4$ ) do not seem to differ to a large extent. This was proven quantitatively using a Mann-Whitney U test which showed no statistically significant difference between the two NNS groups,  $U = 7.000$ ,  $z = .333$ ,  $p = .886$ , with a small effect size  $r = .11$ . Group 3 ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = .756$ ,  $n = 7$ ) did not appear to have rated the speech act much differently either. Kruskal-Wallis test results concurred,  $H = .481$ ,  $p = .786$ , with no meaningful effect size  $\eta^2 = .12$ . Simply put, the three groups are not statistically different, indicating that AV materials were not associated with statistically significant differences in NNS participants’ assessments of appropriateness.

**Figure 27**

*Clip Twelve Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



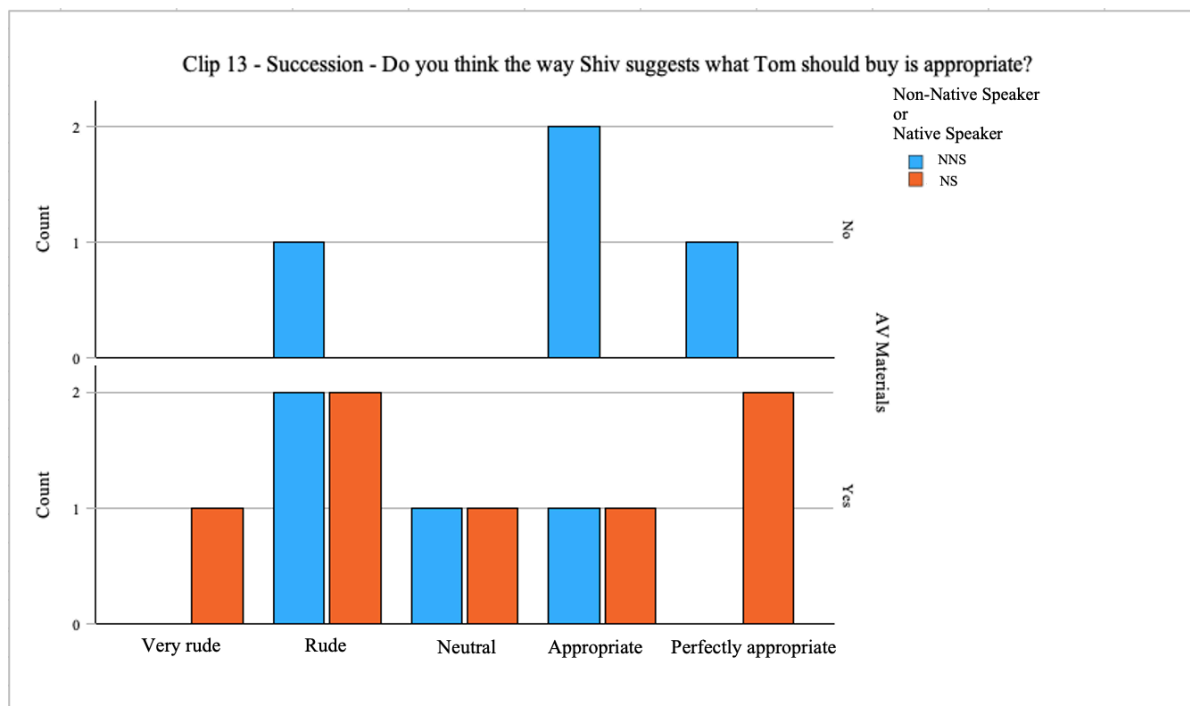
*Clip 13 – Succession – Husband = Wife – P- D-*

“Get him a watch.” - Direct (*Imperative*)

Group 1 ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ) seem to be relatively equal in their diverse ratings, as observed in Figure 28. Mann-Whitney U test results were aligned with the qualitative outcomes between the two groups,  $U = 4.000$ ,  $z = 1.214$ ,  $p = .343$ , with a moderate effect size  $r = .42$ . Running a Kruskal-Wallis test to compare the two NNS groups with Group 3 ( $M = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 1.574$ ,  $n = 7$ ) also failed to reach a significant difference,  $H = 1.141$ ,  $p = .565$ , with no meaningful effect size  $\eta^2 = .07$ . These results suggest that the difference in appropriateness ratings between the three groups was not substantial.

**Figure 28**

*Clip Thirteen Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*





*Clip 14 – Succession – Brother = Brother – P- D-*

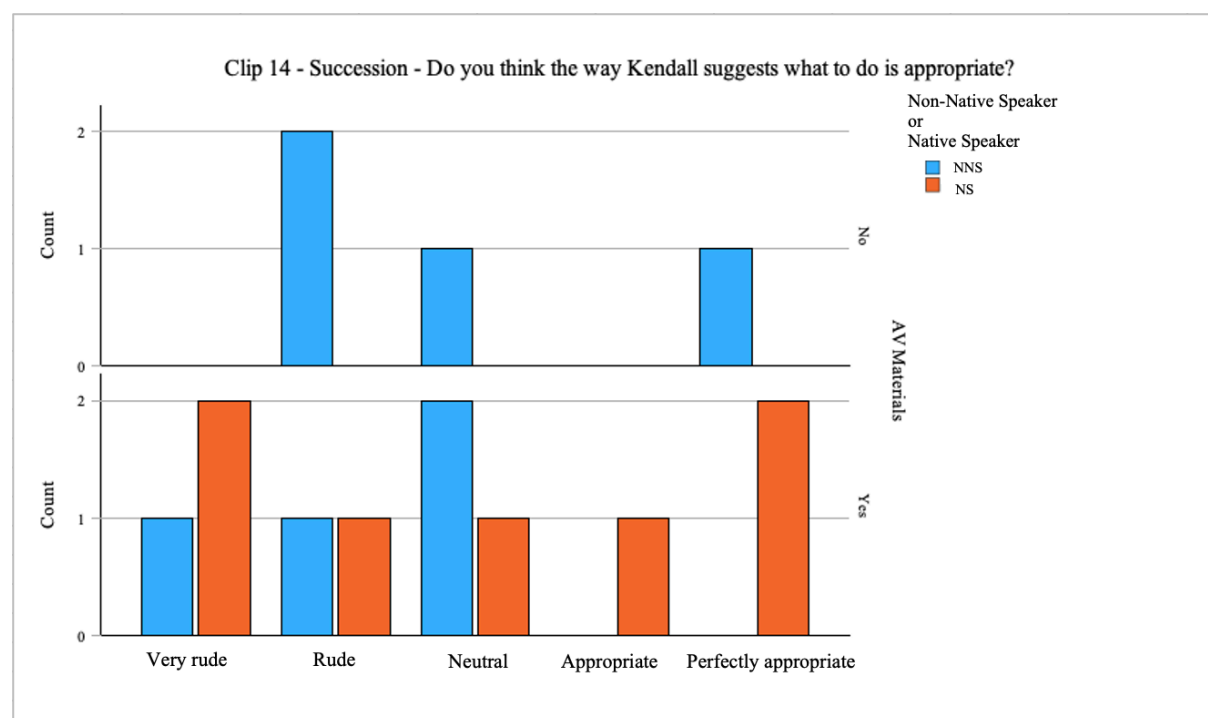
“We go for it, me and you. [...] I could teach you and you could teach me. [...] we are the ones with the nuts to fucking revolutionize. [...] let’s fucking do it.”

- Other Forms (*Inclusive We*) and Conventionalized Form (*Possibility*)

As seen in Figure 29, the two NNS groups (Group 1,  $M = 2.25$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ; and Group 2,  $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.414$ ,  $n = 4$ ) rated the suggestion strategy (*inclusive we*) differently, even among themselves. Quantitatively, no statistically significant differences were found using a Mann-Whitney U test,  $U = 6.000$ ,  $z = .607$ ,  $p = .686$ , with a small effect size  $r = .21$ . In order to explore any difference in ratings between the three groups (including Group 3,  $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.732$ ,  $n = 7$ ), a Kruskal-Wallis test was run. The results showed no statistically significant difference between them,  $H = .548$ ,  $p = .760$ , with no effect size  $\eta^2 = .12$ . In other words, the three groups’ ratings are similar.

**Figure 29**

*Clip Fourteen Appropriateness Ratings Divided by AV Materials*



To summarize, as the number of NNS participants in each group was low, Kruskal-Wallis was chosen as the most suitable statistical test to explore their differences. The findings, presented in Table 7 (page 117), show that the responses collected from the three groups in Clip 1 (Direct Strategy – *imperative*) and Clip 10 (Direct Strategy – *imperative*) were initially statistically different; however, subsequent post hoc pairwise comparisons revealed no statistically significant differences between any specific groups. That is to say, although initial analysis suggested possible group differences, the post hoc results indicated that the two NNS groups provided similar responses to those of their NS counterparts across all clips.

Moreover, suggestion strategies were explored after the NNS group had been separated into two, namely, Group 1 (NNS participants who watch AV materials) and Group 2 (NNS participants who do not watch AV materials). As observed in Table 8 (page 118), after conducting a Kruskal-Wallis test, no statistically significant differences were found when comparing the appropriateness ratings provided by the NS participants (Group 3) and the NNS participants (Group 1 and Group 2) for each suggestion strategy. In other words, exposure to AV materials did not appear to influence how NNS participants evaluated the appropriateness of different suggestion strategies compared to their NS counterparts.

**Table 7**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native and Non-Native Speaker Participants with AV and No-AV*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	6.172	1.579	2.318	2.140	1.368	1.698	2.744	.374	2.156	9.816	5.209	.481	1.141	.548
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.046*	.454	.314	.343	.505	.428	.254	.830	.340	.007*	.074	.786	.565	.760

**Table 8**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Native and Non-Native Speaker Participants with AV and No-AV*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.197	1.368	1.698	5.122	1.986	.345	2.744
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.123	.505	.428	.077	.370	.842	.254

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

### 6.2.3. *Research Question 3: The Effect of Individual Differences on L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness*

The third research question intended to investigate whether IDs (i.e., motivation, strategies, and beliefs) have an effect on senior EFL learners' performance when rating the appropriateness of suggestions in the video excerpts. The data gathered from the background questionnaires was first categorized into separate factors to facilitate the identification of two different groups of NNS participants, based on their responses; this data was subsequently processed in SPSS. Although these three IDs function as a whole and should be studied together, they will be analyzed one by one for the purposes of a quantitative approach. Additionally, in Section 6.3, the qualitative responses gathered from the semi-structured interviews will provide more holistic findings.

To explore the role of motivation in (meta)pragmatic awareness, several questions were posed to the participants (Questions 16, 19, 22, 23, and 24). First, they were asked if they attended English classes at the time of the study (Question 16), and if they felt motivated to learn English at different life stages (Question 19). Then, they provided the frequency of their English use (Question 22), described their traveling habits (Question 23), and listed any activities carried out in English (Question 24).

In order to investigate the effect of attending classes at an older age on the awareness of the speech act of suggestion, the NNS participants were divided into two groups: those who were participating in English classes at the time of the study (Group 1: P2, P5, P6, and P8) and those who were not (Group 2: P3, P4, P7, and P9). The two groups' ratings were then compared with those of Group 3 (NS participants) through a Kruskal-Wallis test. As observed in Table 9 (page 121), the three groups initially showed statistically significant difference in Clip 1 ( $H = 6.172, p = .046$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .348$ ) and Clip 11 ( $H = 6.215, p = .045$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .351$ ). Consequently, post hoc pairwise comparisons using a Mann-

Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction ( $p < .017$ ) were performed. Regarding Clip 1, Group 1 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ) were not statistically different from each other ( $p = .057$ ), and when they were each compared to Group 3 ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 1.069$ ,  $n = 7$ ), the results also failed to reach statistical significance (Group 1 and Group 3,  $p = .788$ ; Group 2 and Group 3,  $p = .024$ ). Similarly in Clip 11, the test did not reveal a notable difference between Group 1 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ),  $p = .486$ . On the other hand, when Group 2 and Group 3 ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ) were compared, the difference was significant ( $p = .012$ ), whereas the same test for Group 1 and Group 3 failed to reach a statistical significance ( $p = .315$ ). In summary, those who were not attending English classes rated the suggestion in Clip 11 differently from NS participants. Nevertheless, there was no statistically significant difference found when comparing the responses grouped by suggestion strategies using a Kruskal-Wallis test, as shown in Table 10 (page 122).

**Table 9***Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable English Classes and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	6.172	.734	2.318	3.123	1.368	.750	.627	.806	1.116	1.946	6.215	1.181	1.141	1.811
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.046*	.693	.314	.210	.505	.687	.731	.668	.572	.378	.045*	.554	.565	.404

**Table 10**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable English Classes and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	1.611	1.368	.750	5.122	1.986	.403	.627
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.447	.505	.687	.077	.370	.818	.731

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.



As people can have different motivation levels throughout their lives, Question 19 aimed to explore this over various life stages. These stages were categorized as follows: before 20, in one's 20s, in one's 30s and 40s, in one's 50s, and during retirement. Ratings were provided on a scale from one (*not motivated at all*) to five (*very motivated*). The NNS participants' self-reported ratings regarding their motivation to learn English varied across the aforementioned life stages, as can be observed in Table 11. Total motivation scores, calculated by summing ratings across all stages, ranged from 14 to 25 ( $M = 18.75$ ).

**Table 11**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Motivation Across Life Stages*

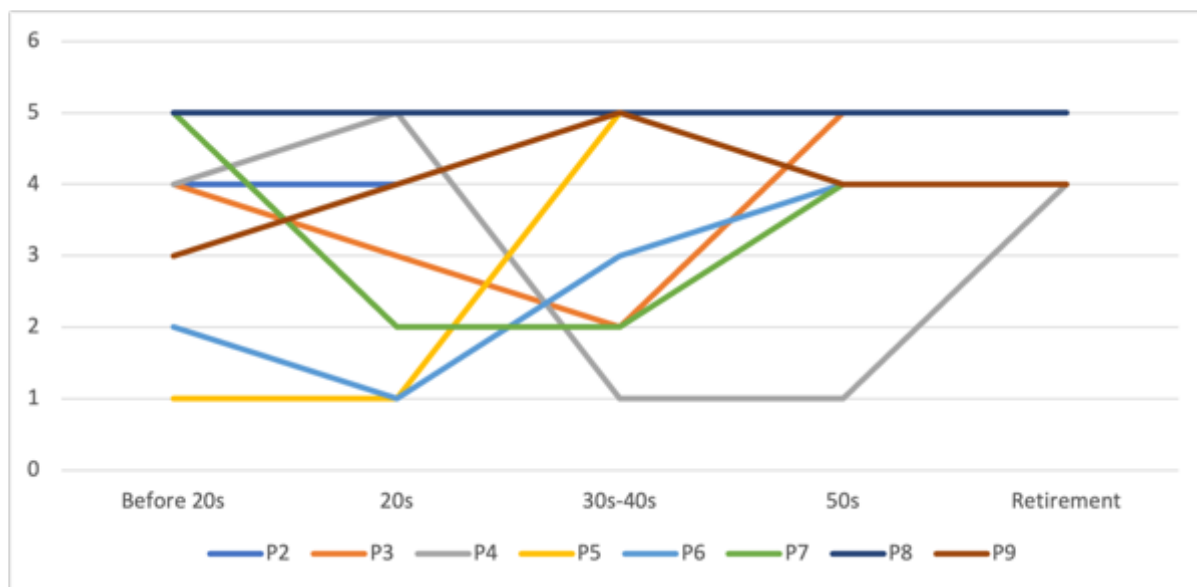
ID	How motivated were/are you at different stages of your life?					Total motivation
	Before 20	20s	30s-40s	50s	Retirement	
P2	4	4	5	5	5	23
P3	4	3	2	5	5	19
P4	4	5	1	1	4	15
P5	1	1	5	5	5	17
P6	2	1	3	4	4	14
P7	5	2	2	4	4	17
P8	5	5	5	5	5	25
P9	3	4	5	4	4	20
	$M = 3.5$	$M = 3.13$	$M = 3.5$	$M = 4.13$	$M = 4.5$	
	$SD = 1.32$	$SD = 1.54$	$SD = 1.58$	$SD = 1.27$	$SD = .50$	

As shown in Table 11, P8 demonstrated consistently high motivation throughout her life, with a maximum score of five reported for all stages, resulting in the highest total score of 25. Conversely, P6 reported the lowest overall motivation, with a total score of 14, including low ratings of one and two in earlier stages, namely before the age of 20 and in her 20s, respectively. Most participants reported an increase in motivation during retirement, as demonstrated in Figure 30 (page 124), which shows how their motivation has changed throughout their lives. For example, P3 and P5 both rated their motivation as five in retirement,

despite lower scores in earlier stages. On average, participants reported the highest motivation during retirement ( $M = 4.5$ ) and the lowest during their 20s ( $M = 3.13$ ).

**Figure 30**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Motivation Across Life Stages*



In order to further investigate the effect of motivation on (meta)pragmatic awareness, the NNS participants with lower-than-average motivation were separated from those with higher motivation to be able to compare the two groups' ratings with those of the NS group (lower motivation, Group 1: P4, P5, P6, and P7; higher motivation, Group 2: P2, P3, P8, and P9). Subsequently, a Kruskal-Wallis test was carried out, comparing Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 (NS participants). However, no statistically significant differences were found between the three groups, and therefore, it can be concluded that they are similar. The full Kruskal-Wallis test report is provided in Table 12 (page 125). Additionally, when responses were grouped by suggestion strategies, no significant differences were found, as observed in Table 13 (page 126). In other words, differences in NNS participants' levels of motivation throughout their lives did not appear to significantly impact how they evaluated the appropriateness of suggestions.

**Table 12***Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Motivation and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.619	1.579	2.318	1.629	1.368	.374	.627	.157	2.156	.313	5.209	4.481	.341	.133
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.270	.454	.314	.443	.505	.830	.731	.924	.340	.855	.074	.106	.843	.935

**Table 13**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Motivation and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	.789	1.368	.374	4.858	1.895	2.667	.627
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.674	.505	.830	.088	.388	.264	.731

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

It was also important to collect information regarding how often the NNS participants used English in different contexts. Table 14 reflects their responses to Question 22 concerning the frequency with which English was used by the participants, and Figure 31 (page 128) summarizes the distribution of responses across six frequency categories: *never, less than once a month, 1-3 times a month, 1-3 times a week, 4-6 times a week and everyday*.

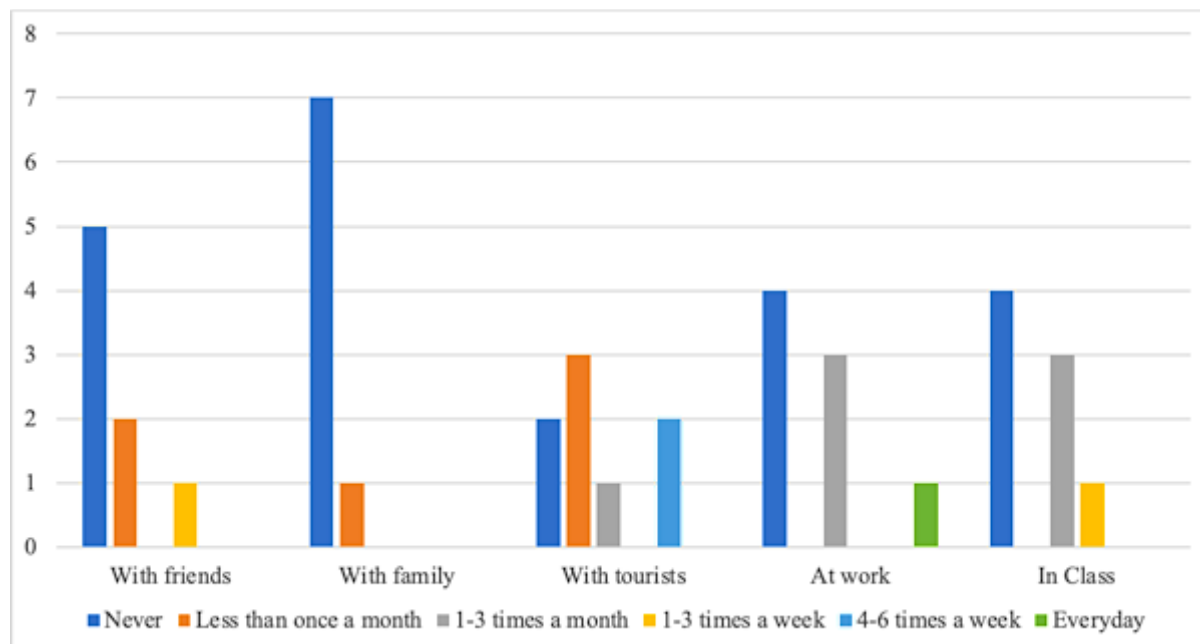
**Table 14**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Frequency of English Use*

Participant	How often do you use English...?				
	With friends	With family	With tourists	At work	In Class
P2	Less than once a month	Never	4-6 times a week	Never	1-3 times a week
P3	Never	Never	Less than once a month	1-3 times a week	Never
P4	Never	Never	Less than once a month	Never	1-3 times a month
P5	Never	Never	4-6 times a week	Everyday	Never
P6	Never	Never	Less than once a month	1-3 times a week	1-3 times a month
P7	1-3 times a week	Never	Never	Never	Never
P8	Never	Never	Never	Never	1-3 times a month
P9	Less than once a month	Less than once a month	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a month	Never

**Figure 31**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Frequency of English Use*



The results indicate that NNS participants primarily used English in interactions with tourists and in class. Two participants (P2 and P5) reported using English with tourists 4–6 times per week, while one (P5) used it daily at work. In contrast, English use with friends and family was minimal; five participants (P3, P4, P5, P6, and P8) never used it with friends, and seven (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P8) never used it with family. Occasional use (*less than once a month* or *1–3 times per month*) was reported in tourist interactions (P3, P4, P6, and P9) and in class (P4, P6, and P8). Regular use (*1–3 times per week*) was rare, with only one participant (P7) using English with friends and another (P2) in class. Overall, English was predominantly used by the NNS participants in professional, educational, and tourist-related contexts, with limited use in social interactions.

In order to quantitatively assess the impact of the frequency of English use in specific contexts on the appropriateness ratings of suggestions, numerical values (scores) were assigned to each frequency (*never* = 0, *less than once a month* = 1, *1–3 times a month* = 2, *1–3 times a week* = 3, *4–6 times a week* = 4, and *everyday* = 5). Table 15 (page 129) reflects the scores

calculated for each participant. The participants with lower-than-average scores ( $M = 5.125$ ), were thus placed in Group 1 (P3, P4, P7, and P8;  $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and those with higher scores were allocated to Group 2 (P2, P5, P6, and P9;  $M = 7.25$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ,  $n = 4$ ). Subsequently, a Kruskal-Wallis test was carried out to measure the effect on each of the 14 clips. However, the results failed to reach significance as observed in Table 16 (page 130). Following the aforementioned test, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted for pairwise comparisons ( $p < .017$ ) between the groups. The findings show that Group 1 and Group 3 evaluated Clip 11 in significantly different ways,  $U = 1.500$ ,  $z = 2.484$ ,  $p = .012$ , with a large effect size  $r = .74$ . In other words, the NNS participants who used English less frequently rated the *conditional* strategy in Clip 11 statistically differently from their NS counterparts. Although, when suggestion strategies were grouped together, the Kruskal-Wallis test failed to reach significance, as seen in Table 17 (page 131).

**Table 15**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Frequency of English Use Scores*

Participant	How often do you use English...?					Total
	With friends	With family	With tourists	At work	In Class	
P2	1	0	4	0	3	8
P3	0	0	1	3	0	4
P4	0	0	1	0	2	3
P5	0	0	4	5	0	9
P6	0	0	1	3	2	6
P7	3	0	0	0	0	3
P8	0	0	0	0	2	2
P9	1	1	2	2	0	6

*Note.* Never = 0, less than once a month = 1, 1-3 times a month = 2, 1-3 times a week = 3, 4-6 times a week = 4, and everyday = 5

**Table 16**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native and Non-Native Speaker Participants with High Score Contexts and Low Score Contexts*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.915	1.579	2.318	1.589	1.368	.750	1.262	.374	1.463	.313	5.516	1.181	.341	.133
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.233	.454	.314	.452	.505	.687	.532	.830	.481	.855	.063	.554	.843	.935



**Table 17**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Non-Native Speakers with High Score Contexts and Low Score Contexts and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	.789	1.368	.750	4.858	2.719	.506	1.262
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.674	.505	.687	.088	.257	.777	.532

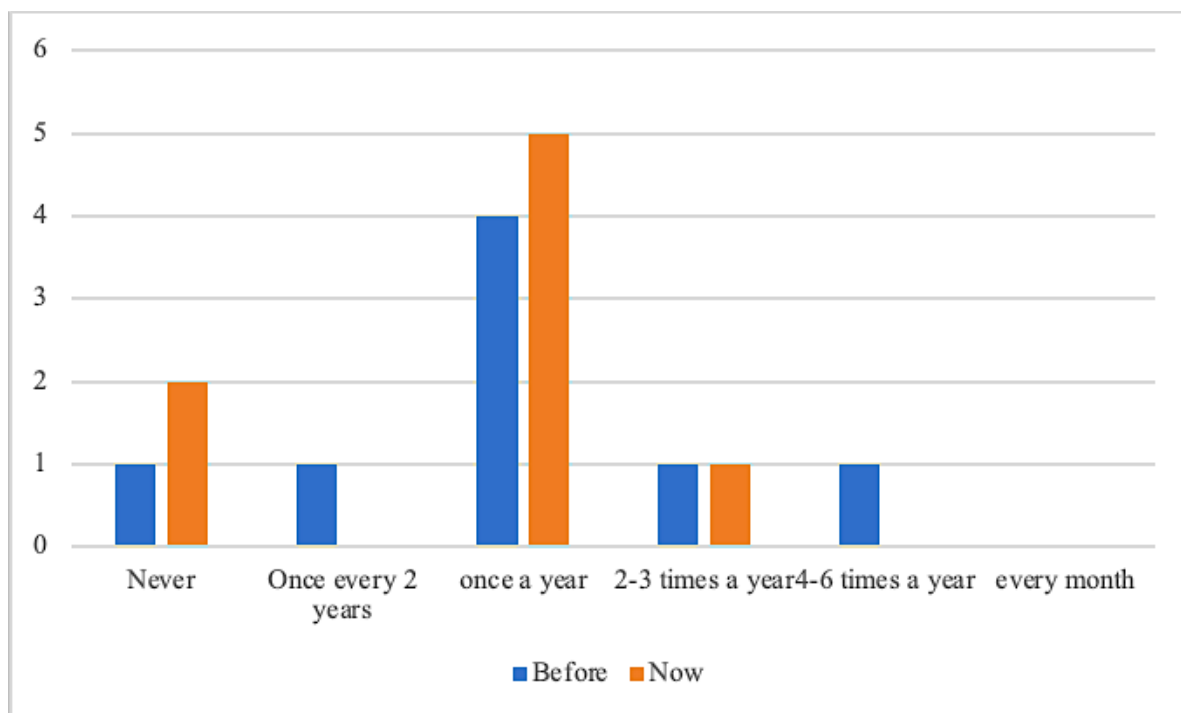
<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

Regarding traveling habits (Question 23), the NNS participants were asked to report how frequently they traveled abroad and spoke English, both prior to and at the time of the study. Table 18 and Figure 32 (page 133) display the frequency of their traveling habits. The most common frequency for traveling in either time frame was *once a year*. Four participants reported traveling *once a year* prior to the study (P2, P3, P4, and P9), and this increased to five participants (P2, P4, P5, P7, and P9) regarding their current habits. Traveling more frequently, such as *2-3 times a year* or *4-6 times a year*, remained relatively rare, with only one participant in each category prior to the study (P5 and P7) and only one participant (P6) who traveled *2-3 times a year* at the time of the study. Conversely, the number of participants who reported never traveling, increased from one (P8) to two (P3 and P8), indicating a slight decrease in overall travel frequency for some individuals. No participants reported traveling as frequently as every month in either time frame.

**Table 18**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Traveling Habits*

Participant	How often do you travel and speak English...?	
	Before	Now
P2	Once a year	Once a year
P3	Once a year	Never
P4	Once a year	Once a year
P5	4-6 times a year	Once a year
P6	Once every 2 years	2-3 times a year
P7	2-3 times a year	Once a year
P8	Never	Never
P9	Once a year	Once a year

**Figure 32***Non-Native Speaker Participants' Traveling Habits*

In order to quantitatively explore the effect of the NNS participants' traveling habits on their (meta)pragmatic awareness, they were first divided into two groups. Group 1 included those who traveled less often than they had prior to the study (P3, P5, P7, and P8), and Group 2 consisted of the participants who traveled more than in previous years or those who had kept their routines compared to the past (P2, P4, P6, and P9). It is important to mention that P8 was assigned to Group 1 as she mentioned she never traveled prior to or during the current study. Following the grouping, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted between the three groups' ratings. As seen in Table 19 (page 134), Clip 11 was the only clip whose test result reached statistical significance ( $H = 7.025$ ,  $p = .030$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .41$ ).

**Table 19**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants Traveling More or Less*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.409	.734	2.318	4.578	1.368	4.483	.627	5.056	2.156	.313	7.025	1.181	.254	.133
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.300	.693	.314	.101	.505	.106	.731	.080	.340	.855	.030*	.554	.881	.935

**Table 20**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Non-Native Speakers Traveling More or Less and Native Speaker Participants*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	.606	1.368	4.483	5.439	4.093	.345	.627
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.739	.505	.106	.066	.129	.842	.731

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

The findings led to a post hoc Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction ( $p < .017$ ) for Clip 11. After comparing Group 1 ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and subsequently Group 1 and Group 3 ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ), no statistically significant difference was found between the ratings of the two sets of groups ( $p = .200$ , and  $p = .315$ , respectively). However, Group 2 and Group 3 were statistically different ( $p = .012$ ), suggesting that those who travel more frequently rated the *conditional* strategy statistically differently from the NS participants. Additionally, as observed in Table 20 (page 135), the Kruskal-Wallis test did not reach significance level after it was conducted on all suggestion strategies.

As another key indicator for motivation can be the activities carried out by learners, the NNS participants were asked to elaborate on pastimes done in English and their frequencies. These activities include reading and writing texts, watching YouTube videos, movies and series, and listening to music. Table 21 (page 137) summarizes their responses across the seven frequency categories (i.e., *never*, *less than once a month*, *1-3 times a month*, *1-3 times a week*, *4-6 times a week*, *everyday for less than an hour*, and *everyday for more than an hour*).

Listening to music in English was the most frequent activity, with five participants (P3, P5, P7, P8, and P9) engaging in this *1-3 times a week*. In contrast, activities such as writing emails, comments and texts were less frequent, with three participants (P3, P4, and P9) never engaging in this activity. Watching YouTube videos showed mixed frequencies, with four participants (P5, P7, P8, and P9) reporting engagement *1-3 times a month*, while one participant (P2) engaged *4-6 times a week*. Watching movies or TV shows in English was fairly evenly distributed across frequencies with two participants (P3 and P9) reporting never doing so, but others engaging at varying intervals. Daily engagement was rare across all activities; only one participant (P5) reported spending more than an hour daily on writing activities and no other participant reported daily activity for other tasks. These findings suggest that participants

tended to use English occasionally for leisure activities like listening to music or watching videos, while more structured tasks such as writing or reading occurred even less frequently.

**Table 21**

*Non-Native Speaker Participants' Activities and Frequencies*

Participants	How often do you...?				
	Write emails, comments, texts...	Read texts (books, blogs, news...)	Watch videos on YouTube	Watch movies/TV shows	Listen to music
P2	1-3 times a week	4-6 times a week	4-6 times a week	1-3 times a week	4-6 times a week
P3	Never	Never	Never	Never	1-3 times a week
P4	Never	Less than once a month	Less than once a month	Less than once a month	Never
P5	Everyday more than an hour	Less than once a month	1-3 times a month	Less than once a month	1-3 times a week
P6	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a month	Less than once a month	1-3 times a month	Less than once a month
P7	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a month	1-3 times a week
P8	Less than once a month	1-3 times a week	1-3 times a month	4-6 times a week	1-3 times a week
P9	Never	1-3 times a week	1-3 times a month	Never	1-3 times a week

In order to quantitatively measure the effect of these activities and their frequencies on the pragmatic awareness ratings of the 14 clips, numerical scores were assigned to each frequency category (*never* = 0, *less than once a month* = 1, *1-3 times a month* = 2, *1-3 times a week* = 3, *4-6 times a week* = 4, *everyday for less than an hour* = 5, and *everyday for more than an hour* = 6). As seen in Table 22 (page 138), each participant was given a score between three and 18 ( $M = 9.87$ ), and subsequently, those with lower-than-average scores were placed in Group 1 (P3, P4, P6, and P9:  $M = 5.75$ ,  $SD = 3.202$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and those with higher scores were placed in Group 2 (P2, P5, P7, and P8:  $M = 14.00$ ,  $SD = 2.708$ ,  $n = 4$ ).

**Table 22***Non-Native Speaker Participants' Activities and Frequencies Scores*

Participants	How often do you...?					Total
	Write emails, comments, texts...	Read texts (books, blogs, news...)	Watch videos on YouTube	Watch movies/TV shows	Listen to music	
P2	3	4	4	3	4	18
P3	0	0	0	0	3	3
P4	0	1	1	1	0	3
P5	6	1	2	1	3	13
P6	3	2	1	2	1	9
P7	3	2	2	2	3	12
P8	1	3	2	4	3	13
P9	0	3	2	0	3	8

*Note.* Never = 0, less than once a month = 1, 1-3 times a month = 2, 1-3 times a week = 3, 4-6 times a week = 4, everyday less than an hour = 5, and everyday more than an hour = 6

Following the conversion, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted between the two NNS groups' and their NS counterparts' awareness responses to each clip. The results revealed statistically significant differences between the three groups, but only in Clip 1 ( $H = 6.172$ ,  $p = .046$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .348$ ), as observed in Table 23 (page 139). Post hoc pairwise comparisons, using a Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction, were conducted to control for multiple comparisons ( $p < .017$ ). Group 1 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = .957$ ,  $n = 4$ ) were not statistically different ( $p = .057$ ), and when comparing either group with the NS participants in Group 3 ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 1.069$ ,  $n = 7$ ), they too failed to reach significance (Group 1 and Group 3,  $p = .024$ ; Group 2 and Group 3,  $p = .788$ ).



**Table 23**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with High Score Activities and Low Score Activities*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	6.172	1.579	2.318	4.578	1.368	.374	2.744	2.319	1.116	1.946	5.209	1.181	.014	1.811
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.046*	.454	.314	.101	.505	.830	.254	.314	.572	.378	.074	.554	.993	.404

In order to verify the previously mentioned effect on suggestion strategies, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted on the three groups. As shown in Table 24 (page 141), only the *conditional* strategy was found to be statistically significant ( $H = 6.232, p = .044$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .35$ ). Therefore, a Mann-Whitney U test was carried out on each of the two groups to find the source of the difference. Group 1 ( $M = 3.37, SD = .629, n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.50, SD = .816, n = 4$ ), and Group 1 and Group 3 ( $M = 3.92, SD = .786, n = 7$ ) were not statistically different ( $p = .200$  and  $p = .230$ , respectively). Although the comparison between Group 2 and Group 3 approached significance ( $p = .024$ ), it did not meet the Bonferroni-adjusted threshold ( $p < .017$ ). In other words, despite the overall statistical analysis result suggesting potential group differences, the post hoc analyses indicated that the three groups performed similarly in their evaluation of the *conditional* strategy.

**Table 24**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with High Score and Low Score Activities*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.197	1.368	.374	6.232	4.093	1.606	2.744
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.123	.505	.830	.044*	.129	.448	.254

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

Another ID explored in the current study was learning strategies. This was operationalized by asking the NNS participants in the background questionnaire about their past and present goal setting (see Questions 19 and 20). As observed in Table 25 (page 143), the majority of the participants (six out of nine: P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P9) mentioned that “work” was the principal goal that led them to study English in the past. The second most popular reason given for studying English in the past was “for travel” (three out of nine: P3, P7, and P9). Following these past goals, three other reasons were shared by two out of nine participants: “to understand movies, news and music” (P2 and P7), “to socialize” (P2 and P7), and “to become more fluent” (P2 and P9). Only one participant (P2) chose the options “for fun,” “to help with cognition,” and “to understand other cultures” as a language learning goal in the past.

On the other hand, Table 26 (page 144) shows the present goals participants had set for themselves regarding studying English. The most popular goal was “to understand movies, news and music” with the majority of the participants (five out of nine: P2, P4, P5, P7, and P8) choosing this option. Four out of nine participants selected two of the other goals, namely, “for travel” (P3, P4, P5, and P8) and “to become more fluent” (P2, P4, P5, and P6). Similarly, two additional goals were also mentioned by three of the nine of the participants, those being “for work” (P3, P5, and P6) and “to help with cognition” (P2, P4, and P5). Three of the goals were selected by two out of nine participants (“for fun”: P2 and P8; “to socialize”: P4 and P7; “to understand another culture”: P2 and P5). Finally, only one participant chose “for self-confidence” as a reason for their current language learning. Notably, three goals were not chosen by anyone (“for love,” “to keep busy,” and “to integrate into a community”). One participant (P9) did not mention any current goals as he was no longer studying English at the time of the study.

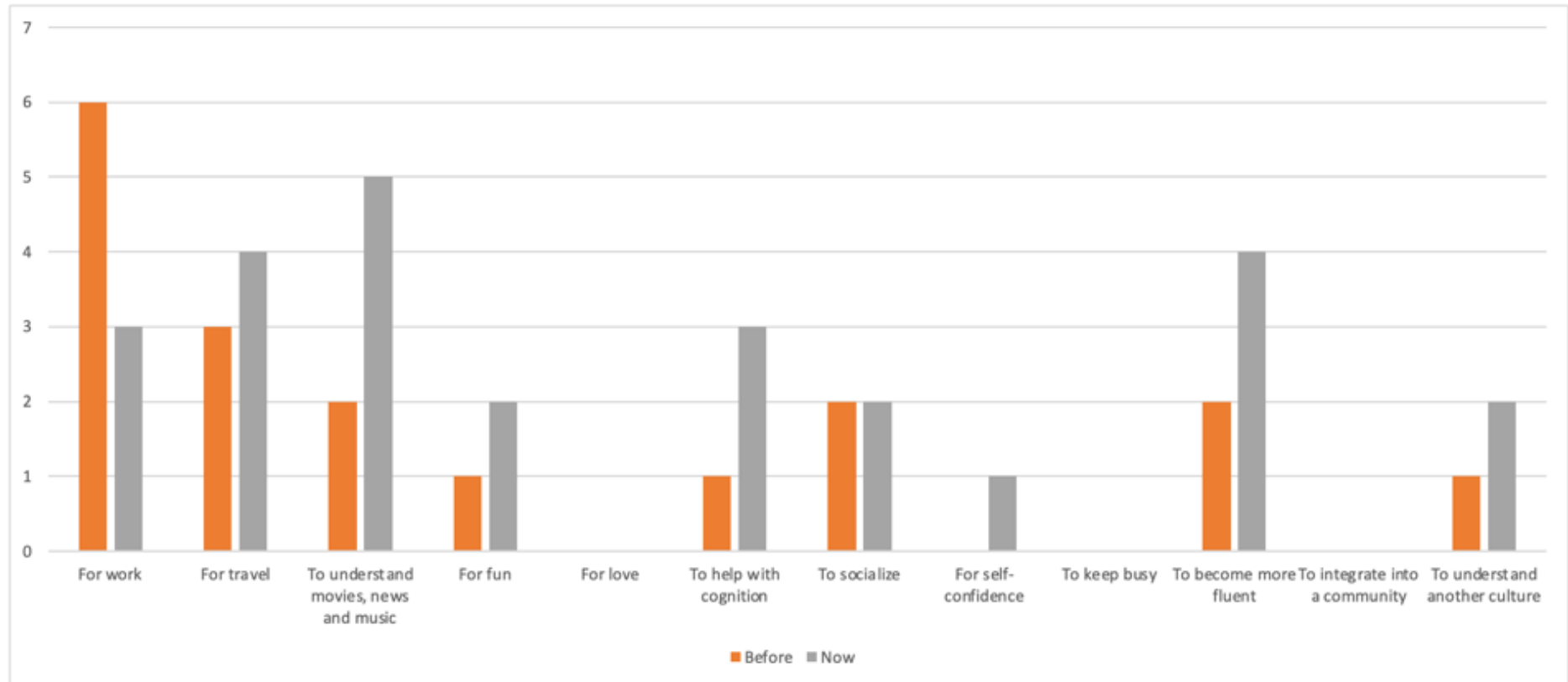




When comparing the participants' past and present language learning goals, it can be deduced that half of them adopted more goals with time, which is also in line with their increasing motivation over time. For example, while only one past goal was mentioned by P4, P5, and P6, they reported having five, seven, and two, respectively. Additionally, P8 had not studied English before, but she mentioned three reasons for going to classes when the study was being carried out. Nonetheless, not all participants increased the number of goals when comparing past to the present; P2 used to have six reasons for studying English, but at the time of the study only had five; P3 reported the same two goals since the past; P7 mentioned four goals in the past, whereas when the study was being carried out, she had fewer reasons to study the language. It is worth noting that P9 mentioned no reasons to go to English classes. A more visual comparison of the goals is provided in Figure 33 (page 146).

**Figure 33**

*Non-Native Speakers Participants' Past and Present Goals*





In order to explore the possibility of any influence of goal setting on the participants' (meta)pragmatic awareness, the NNSs were divided into two groups. Group 1 consisted of the participants who had more reasons to study English than they had in the past (P4, P5, P6, and P8:  $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and Group 2 consisted of the participants who used to have more goals than at the time of the study (P2, P3, P7, and P9:  $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ). When comparing Group 1 and Group 2 with Group 3 ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ), the results from a Kruskal-Wallis test failed to show any statistically significant differences between the three groups' ratings of each clip, except one, as observed in Table 27 (page 148). Clip 11 was the only instance where the  $p$  value reached significance,  $H = 7.025$ ,  $p = .030$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .41$ . Subsequently, post hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted using a Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction ( $p < .017$ ) to control for multiple comparisons. When Group 1 and Group 2 were compared, the  $p$  value achieved was not significant ( $p = .200$ ). Similar results were found when Group 1 and Group 3 were compared,  $p = .315$ . However, after examining the difference between Group 2 and Group 3, the exact  $p$  value appeared significant  $p = .012$ . That is to say, the NNS participants who used to have more goals in the past assessed Clip 11 significantly differently from NS participants. Subsequently, the clips were categorized based on their suggestion strategies, and the same tests were run. This revealed no significant differences between the three groups, as observed in Table 28 (page 149).

**Table 27**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with Contrasting Learning Goals*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.409	.734	2.318	1.629	1.368	.750	.627	.806	1.116	.313	7.025	.481	2.681	.660
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.300	.693	.314	.443	.505	.687	.731	.668	.572	.855	.030*	.786	.262	.719

**Table 28**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with Contrasting Learning Goals*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	1.181	1.368	.750	5.122	2.719	.756	.627
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.554	.505	.687	.077	.257	.685	.731

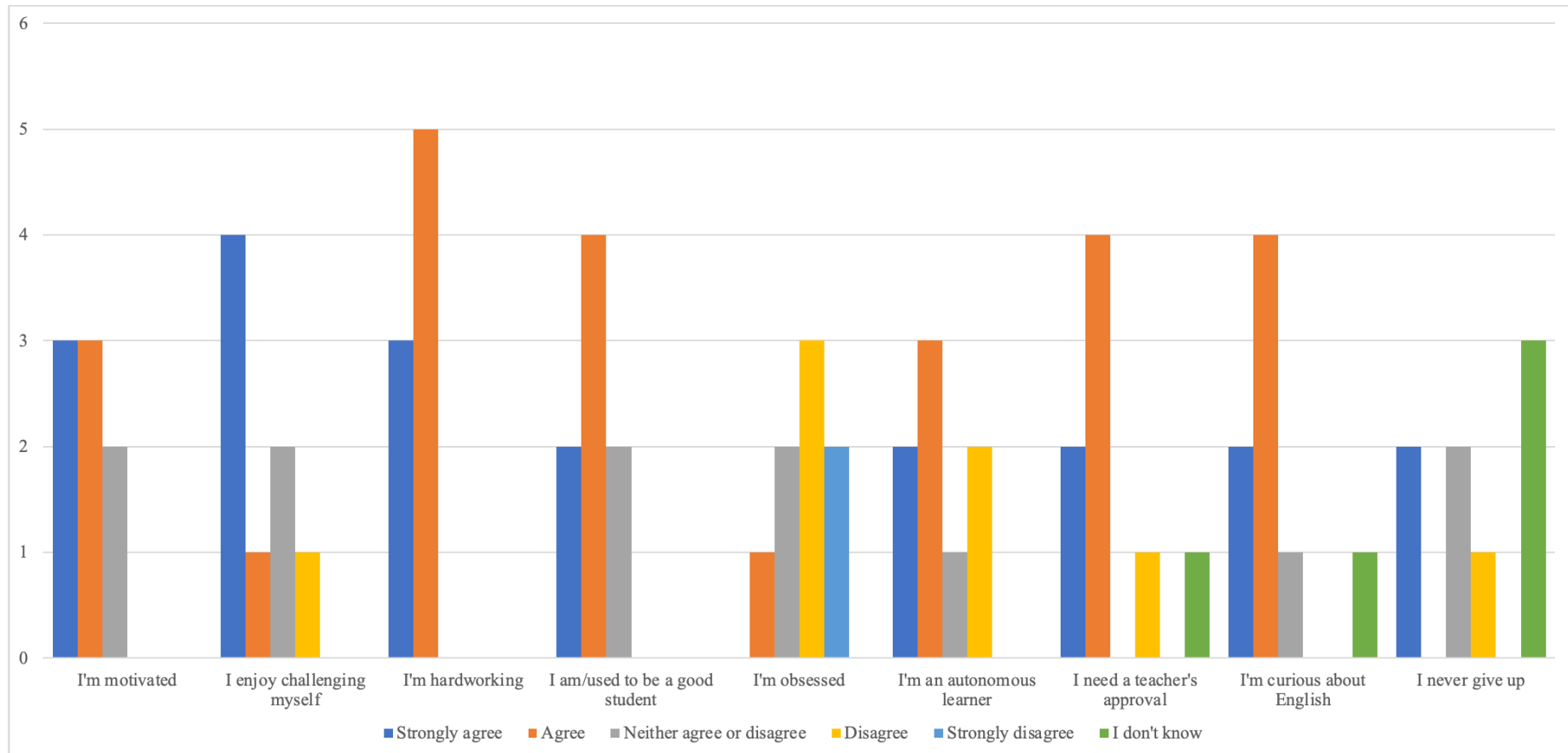
<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties.

Another ID explored in this study was belief (Question 25), which was asked about through the means of nine statements: “I’m motivated,” “I enjoy challenging myself,” “I’m hardworking,” “I am/used to be a good student,” “I’m obsessed [with language learning],” “I’m an autonomous learner,” “I need a teacher’s or a NS’s approval and feedback about my English abilities,” “I’m curious about English,” and “I never give up.” The participants were required to rate their beliefs about each statement from one (“strongly disagree”) to five (“strongly agree”). Zero was also given to represent “I don’t know.” The results are provided in Table 29 (per participant on page 151), and in Figure 34 (per frequency of occurrence on page 152).

By categorizing the NNS participants into two groups (Group 1, lower self-efficacy: P4, P6, P7, and P9,  $M = 29$ ,  $SD = 2.943$ ,  $n = 4$ ; Group 2, higher self-efficacy: P2, P3, P5, and P8,  $M = 29$ ,  $SD = 2.943$ ,  $n = 4$ ), the (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions was compared to Group 3 (the NS baseline). As seen in Table 30 (page 153), the results obtained from Clip 4 and Clip 11 were the only ones showing statistically significant differences (Clip 4:  $H = 6.505$ ,  $p = .039$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .37$ ; Clip 11:  $H = 6.215$ ,  $p = .045$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .35$ ). Therefore, a post hoc analysis was conducted using a Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction ( $p < .017$ ), comparing each group. None of the comparisons in Clip 4 resulted in significance: Group 1 ( $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 1.291$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ),  $p = .029$ ; Group 1 and Group 3 ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 1.254$ ,  $n = 7$ ),  $p = .927$ ; Group 2 and Group 3,  $p = .024$ . In regards to Clip 11, Group 1 and Group 3 were statistically different ( $p = .012$ ). On the other hand, when comparing Group 1 ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = .500$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.258$ ,  $n = 4$ ), and Group 2 and Group 3 ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $SD = .535$ ,  $n = 7$ ), Clip 11 failed to reach significance ( $p = .486$  and  $p = .315$ , respectively). Stated differently, NNS participants who reported lower self-efficacy rated the suggestion strategy occurring in Clip 11 in a significantly different manner than their NS counterparts.

**Table 29***Non-Native Speaker Participants' Belief Statements*

Participant	Belief Statements									Total
	I'm motivated	I enjoy challenging myself	I'm hardworking	I am/used to be a good student	I'm obsessed	I'm an autonomous learner	I need a teacher's approval	I'm curious about English	I never give up	
P2	5	5	5	4	2	5	2	0	5	33
P3	3	3	4	4	1	5	5	5	5	35
P4	4	3	4	5	2	2	4	3	3	30
P5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	38
P6	3	2	5	4	1	2	4	4	0	25
P7	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	2	32
P8	5	5	4	4	3	4	5	5	0	35
P9	4	5	4	3	2	3	4	4	0	29

**Figure 34***Non-Native Speaker Participants' Frequency of Belief Statements*

**Table 30**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with High and Low Self-Efficacy*

Effect	Clip 1	Clip 2	Clip 3	Clip 4	Clip 5	Clip 6	Clip 7	Clip 8	Clip 9	Clip 10	Clip 11	Clip 12	Clip 13	Clip 14
Kruskal-Wallis H	3.494	.734	2.318	6.505	1.368	1.698	.627	.806	1.116	.313	6.215	1.181	.014	1.811
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.174	.693	.314	.039*	.505	.428	.731	.668	.572	.855	.045*	.554	.993	.404

Additionally, when the clips were categorized by seven suggestion strategies, statistically significant differences were found for the *conditional* strategy. A Kruskal-Wallis test carried out for the three groups showed  $H = 6.232$ ,  $p = .044$ , with a large effect size  $\eta^2 = .35$ , as seen in Table 31 (page 155). Even though there were no statistically significant differences found between Group 1 ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = .629$ ,  $n = 4$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = .816$ ,  $n = 4$ ), or Group 1 and Group 3 ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = .786$ ,  $n = 7$ ), a Mann-Whitney U test showed that Group 2 and Group 3 approached statistical significance ( $p = .024$ ) when rating this strategy. However, this result did not meet the Bonferroni-adjusted significance threshold ( $p < .017$ ). In other words, while an overall group difference was observed for the *conditional* strategy, specific group comparisons did not yield statistically significant differences after correction.



**Table 31**

*Kruskal-Wallis Test Suggestion Strategies with Grouping Variable Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Participants with High and Low Self-Efficacy*

Effect	Direct ( <i>Imperative</i> ) (Clips 1, 10, 13)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Specific Formulae</i> ) (Clip 5)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Possibility</i> ) (Clip 6)	Conventionalized Forms ( <i>Conditional</i> ) (Clips 4, 11)	Indirect ( <i>Hint</i> ) (Clips 2, 3, 8)	Other Forms ( <i>Inclusive We</i> ) (Clips 9, 12, 14)	Other Forms ( <i>Request Suggestions</i> ) (Clip 7)
Kruskal-Wallis H	.789	1.368	1.698	6.232	1.986	.403	.627
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.674	.505	.428	.044*	.370	.818	.731

<sup>a</sup> Not corrected for ties

In summary, several individual factors revealed differences between groups in various instances. There were statistically significant differences found in Clips 1 and 11 between those who attended English classes at the time of the study, those who did not, and the NS group. Further analysis showed that the significance for Clip 11 lay between participants who were not attending classes and the NS participants. Regarding belief, significant differences emerged among groups in Clips 4 and 11 containing the *conditional* strategy. Although no post hoc differences were found in Clip 4, participants with lower self-efficacy rated the strategy differently from the NS baseline in Clip 11. When analyzing other IDs, statistically significant differences were found when comparing frequency of English use in different contexts (between NNS participants who use English less frequently and NS participants), traveling habits (between NNS participants who travel more frequently and NS participants), and goal setting (between NNS participants with fewer goals in the present and NS participants). However, there were no differences found in the evaluation of suggestion strategies categorized together. For activities in English and their frequency, Clip 1 showed a significant difference among the three groups, but no significant pairwise differences were found, and no strategy differences emerged. Finally, no significant differences were found when self-rated motivation across life stages or combined strategies were analyzed. In the next section, qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews will be presented to dive deeper into the results achieved from the quantitative tests.

### **6.3. Semi-Structured Interviews Results**

This section presents the findings from the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C for the full list of questions) conducted in Spanish with the five NNS participants (P3, P4, P5, P7, and P9) who agreed to take part in the interviews<sup>5</sup>. Two participants (P2 and P8) turned

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<sup>5</sup> The quotes provided in this section have been translated from Spanish to English by the researcher.

down the offer to divulge more information about their experience with English; whereas P6 did not respond to the follow-up emails.

The first interview question aimed to explore self-efficacy regarding communicating in English. Four participants (P3, P4, P7, and P9) expressed some degree of difficulty in communicating in this language, primarily focusing on their vocabulary skills while emphasizing their lack of contact with and limited use of English. P7 added that she felt “insecure and unsure” when speaking English and that the language was “rusty,” while P5 mentioned that in the past she used to have more difficulties at work, saying:

“When I used to give presentations in English, I feared they wouldn’t understand me.”

The second and third questions focused on the participants’ mindsets and past experiences when engaging with AV materials. The unanimous response was that they had limited contact with the said materials due to comprehension challenges, with negative emotions such as “bad,” “disappointed,” or “uninterested,” being prevalent. However, P7 added that despite watching TV series not being habitual for her, she had noticed that as she binge-watches shows with captions, she “can understand better.” Nevertheless, P3 and P5 emphasized the challenges of understanding slang or idiomatic expressions in English, and similarly P9 mentioned “accents can be difficult” for him especially when he did not use subtitles in Spanish. Another example of negative emotions was when P4 expressed her feelings:

“I don’t have the willpower to go through the disappointment when I don’t understand.”

The fourth, fifth and sixth questions inquired about the participants’ current and past experience with English classes and their potential benefits. Three of the participants (P3, P5, and P9) reported not attending English classes at the time of the current study, attributing it to how uncomfortable it is to return to being a student. P5, on the other hand, stated that she enjoyed using a self-learning app to maintain contact with the language. Similarly, P4 and P7

believed that joining English classes, albeit tough, brought joy to their lives. P7 excitedly explained that starting from the following year, she would return to classes after 15 years. She added that in the past it was just her “duty” to learn, whereas now she was “looking forward to it.” P4 also shared:

“It’s a bit difficult now because the level of the class is higher, but I like going to group conversation classes. I enjoy being in class with all types of people at different ages, especially young people!”

The most commonly mentioned benefit of English classes, or English learning altogether, was traveling. All the participants believed that the primary reason they would like to improve their English was to travel to English speaking countries or places where their dominant languages are not spoken. P4 reported that knowledge of English is considered “basic” for everyone. P7 further explained that she would study any language spoken in a country she was traveling to so that she could “connect with people” because if one does not speak the language, they “can’t socialize” and will not have “freedom.” Additionally, P9 stated that another benefit of learning English is familiarizing oneself with various cultures. He also added: “learning English makes neurons circulate.”

Regarding their intermittent English learning experience over their lifetimes, these five participants mentioned that the main reason behind their English studies was for work. P3 commented that in school she had English classes, and “it was all grammar.” After graduating from high school, she lost contact with English until her workplace paid for English classes for two years. Similarly, P4 started studying English at the age of 18, but stopped going to classes for many years. In contrast, three participants (P5, P7, and P9) took up English classes in their late 20s or 30s. P5 and P7 stated that the driving force behind their need for English was their job. P7 elaborated that she loved the in-company classes as they were centered around conversational English, and therefore, she felt “comfortable.” P9 said his master’s degree

involved obligatory English classes. He also revealed that he stopped classes after that experience only to retake classes in his late 50s when he attended an intensive course in the United States. Although he “loved the experience,” he believed his listening was “still a problem.”

The seventh question explored the first languages the participants had contact with growing up. While all five mentioned being proficient in Catalan, P3 and P5 started learning Catalan later in life, and also, outside of the house. In contrast, P4, P7, and P9 spoke Catalan at home and Spanish at school. P9 shared:

“Sometimes I don’t notice which language I’m speaking!”

Three participants (P4, P7, and P9) also reported having French classes at school, and that they were still using it. They also believed they speak French better than English. P4 stated she still recalls her French classes and what she learned, and P9 scored his French an eight out of 10 while rating his English a six out of 10. Additionally, P7 and P9 indicated they could speak Italian quite well as they traveled to the country often, and “picked it up” just by listening and talking to people.

The eighth interview question aimed to elicit responses regarding the participants’ travel experience. All five participants reported a decline in traveling altogether, especially to countries where they would be forced to speak English. P4 said she used to travel at least once a year but did not travel at the time of the study, unless she “absolutely” had to. She also added that if she went abroad, she feared others would not understand her if she spoke English. P7 and P9 stated that they mostly traveled to France or Italy where they spoke the respective languages.

The next four questions (Question 9-12) inquired about the participants’ impression of the online form they were given. Four participants (P4, P5, P7 and P9) reported they felt satisfied and excited completing the online form. P4 mentioned that she always “enjoy[s] doing

surveys.” P7 added that watching the clips gave her an extra boost of motivation to “go back to English classes.” On the other hand, P3 noted that she felt “tired and lazy” especially toward the end of it.

All the participants, however, divulged that the online form was exceedingly long. P7, while agreeing with P3, further explained that it felt even longer as she had to repeat some clips a few times and that she opened the online form containing the entire task on her phone which was not ideal. The participants were initially told the process would not take longer than 40 minutes, as this time estimate was reported by both the platform (Microsoft Forms), and the pilot participant; nevertheless, it required more than an hour for all the participants to finish the entire task. This required P4, for example, to take a break in the middle of the activity, but this need was not shared by the other four participants.

Regarding the difficulty and the comprehensibility of the dialogues, the five participants reported understanding the dialogues, though not perfectly. However, the existence of captions “definitely helped” for comprehension, as P3 mentioned her listening “is not that great.” The same sentiment was shared by P7, although she added that the captions were not legible on the phone she used to complete the task. Conversely, P5 said she could understand all of the clips even by listening to them only once. Three participants (P3, P4 and P5) also felt the first 11 clips were easier to follow, and the last four were more “complicated.” P9 stated that he could understand 80% of the dialogues, but he looked up a few words in the dictionary to make sure he understood them well.

The thirteenth question aimed to ensure the participants did not suffer from any cognitive impairment due to their ages. None of the participants disclosed challenges on a cognitive level. However, they all mentioned struggling with vocabulary retention or recall as decline in vocabulary usage over time was a recurring theme, particularly due to reduced

practice. While P5 felt that she was recovering some of her English vocabulary due to going to classes, she also shared that she was losing vocabulary in Catalan, saying:

“What you don’t use, the brain says it’s not necessary.”

P7 expressed that when she read, she could understand almost perfectly, whereas if she only listened, she easily lost track of the conversation depending on the accent. P9 reported that he had a lot to say in English, but failed to find the words. Comparing his current state to his past, he felt he used to be “more curious to find the words.” He added that he did not have the chance to speak the language as much as before. However, he said:

“It’s more fun if I use English now, as there are easier ways to translate things.”

Question 14 required participants to recall the clips and how they rated them, but this was more complicated for the participants to carry out than initially anticipated. When they were asked to rely on their memories to clarify their responses to the awareness test, all five participants struggled to provide feedback on several clips. As explained above, the interviews were carried out through WhatsApp to accommodate the participants and, as a result, it was impossible to play the clips again to remind them of the content and the suggestion strategy used in each. The explanations that they provided during the interview are subsequently presented, organized by clip. It is worth noting that these responses were compared and combined with the answers that the NNS participants had mistakenly written in the appropriateness rating task—specifically in the box where they were asked to write what they would say in the same situation, but where many instead expressed their personal opinions about the scenarios.

Regarding Clip 1 (taken from *Emily in Paris*), participants P5 and P7 agreed with the way Mindy suggested that Emily contact her, stating that they would do the same and explaining the reason they rated the strategy as *neutral*. P3, P4 and P9 believed the suggestion

to be *very rude* or *rude* as they mentioned the character sounded “too direct.” P9 said Mindy should have discussed “general topics” before anything else.

In Clip 2 (from *The Big Bang Theory*) where the employer, President Siebert, suggests that Sheldon take a vacation, all five participants agreed that the *hint* used by the boss was *very rude* or *rude*. P3 elaborated that it was inappropriate and “lamentable” for the boss to oblige an employee to go to a “risky” country. P5 concurred that neither the way the character expressed his suggestion nor “the location where [he] communicated the obligation” was appropriate. P4, stated that the boss should have explained the situation more in depth to Sheldon, adding that she “would take the vacation.” P7 and P9 failed to provide a comprehensible response.

Regarding Clip 3 (taken from *Desperate Housewives*), the participants also felt the suggestion strategy used (*hint*) was *very rude*, and in the case of P4, *rude*. P3 stated that she felt the “back and forth of the children with the mother [was] terrible.” Agreeing with P3, P9 mentioned that if he were the mother, he would have just “open[ed] a can of corned beef.” P5 believed that Andrew should not have said anything and should have instead thanked his mother for a “fantastic dinner.”

Clip 4 pertained to the scene in *Emily in Paris* where the French real estate agent suggested that Emily date him. The five participants held different opinions regarding their appropriateness ratings. P3, P5 and P7 believed the *conditional* strategy performed by the agent was *very rude* or *rude*. P3 stated that the context was inappropriate and that the agent “crossed a line” when he asked her out for a coffee knowing she had a boyfriend. P5 said that if she were the character, she would not say “these kinds of things” and that the comment was inappropriate. P4 and P9, on the other hand, rated this strategy as *appropriate* or *perfectly appropriate*.

In Clip 5, which concerned Gloria shouting at another mother in *Modern Family*, four out of five participants rated the *specific formulae* strategy as *very rude*, and P4 rated it as *rude*.



P4 explained that Gloria should not have been so serious as “they are children and [...] they aren’t professional players.” P3 and P7 agreed that the shouting was unnecessary and inappropriate, and she should have been “calmer.” P5 stated that she did not understand the “Colombian mother, but it was too rude.”

In Clip 6 from *Modern Family*, Jay suggests that Gloria calm down. Even though P3 rated the *possibility* strategy used by Jay as *rude*, she added that the conversation was a “typical discussion between partners who have different opinions.” P5 said she would be more empathetic, but she rated it as *neutral*. P4, P7, and P9 stated that they would do the same as Jay, and rated it as *appropriate* or *perfectly appropriate*.

As for Clip 7, where Dr. Melendez suggests that Dr. Browne listen to him and follow his advice, P3 was the only participant that rated the *request suggestion* strategy as *appropriate* as she believed that the “boss doctor has more experience” and that is why he is “imposing” his advice. Conversely, P4, P5, P7, and P9 believed this strategy in this context to be *very rude* or *rude*. P4 explained that she would have required the doctor to “explain the reason” as a professional “if he doesn’t agree.” P5 suggested the use of “need” instead to make the suggestion more appropriate. P9 added that, in his opinion, the focus of the conversation should have been on the “medical aspects and not on hierarchical aspects.”

In Clip 8, an excerpt from *Modern Family*, Alex suggests that her father take her brother to a specialist. There was no clear consensus among the participants as they rated the *hint* strategy used by the character as *very rude*, *rude*, *neutral*, or *appropriate*. P3 and P9 both said the suggestion was *rude*; P9 said he would not say anything in this situation, and P3 stated this is a “typical reaction from a sister.” P4 believed this strategy was *very rude* even though she was understanding of them just being children and that the older sister is “probably jealous.” However, P5 rated this as *appropriate* adding that she would say the same.

Regarding Clip 9 (from *Modern Family*) where Gloria is attempting to cheer up her husband Jay, by suggesting that he buy younger-looking clothes, the participants mainly rated the suggestion as *appropriate*. P3, P7, and P9 mentioned they would use the same strategy (*inclusive we*) to convince him. P3 added that the character suggests this for him not to “look like her dad.” On the other hand, P4 believed this strategy to be *rude* as she mentioned “[Gloria] cares about [Jay’s] age” which makes the suggestion inappropriate. P5 rated this clip as *neutral*, and expressed that she was aware of Gloria’s intentions.

In Clip 10 (taken from *Shrinking*) which took place in a therapist’s office, the therapist (Jimmy) suggests that his patient (Grace) leave her husband. All of the participants, except P7, reported that the *imperative* strategy was *very rude* or *rude*. P3 added that what the character said was “really inappropriate for a doctor/patient relationship” which is why she rated it *very rude*. Similarly, P9 suggested that Jimmy should have used different words to help Grace “draw her own conclusions.” However, P4 was more sympathetic toward the therapist explaining that “he has had a very bad day, but [he] can’t speak like [that] to a patient,” which led him to rate the strategy as *rude*. P7 said the suggestion was *neutral* and that she would not know how to explain the situation.

In Clip 11, the scene from *Desperate Housewives*, where Susan suggests that Mike not eat the food she had prepared using a *conditional* strategy, participants P4, P7 and P9 rated it as *neutral*, whereas P3 and P5 said it was *appropriate*. However, all of the participants added that they would “say the same,” and that what Susan says is “correct” and “ok.”

Clip 12 was taken from *Shall We Dance?* where John suggests that he and Paulina eat dinner together using *inclusive we*. P3 and P9 believed this strategy was *perfectly appropriate*; P4 and P5 rated it as *appropriate*, whereas P7 believed it to be *neutral*. P3 added that the proposal was “not very professional.” On the other hand, P9 said he would have probably used “other arguments” in this situation. P4, P5, and P7 failed to elaborate further on this clip.

Unfortunately, the participants provided very little information about their thought process in this instance as they initially had focused more on Paulina's response to John's suggestion instead of replying to the question about the task.

Regarding the suggestion strategy *imperative* that Shiv uses in response to Tom's question about shopping in Clip 13 (from *Succession*), only P4 believed this strategy was *rude*, but the rest of the participants rated this as *appropriate*. P4 stated that as Shiv is aware that her dad does not like "material gifts," she should not have suggested that her husband buy a watch. P3 and P5 mentioned that the suggestion sounds "correct," and they would behave the same way. P9 added that he would not have asked anybody for advice, and instead would buy something that he likes.

In the last clip taken from *Succession* (Clip 14), the two brothers, Kendall and Roman, are discussing doing business together when Kendall uses *inclusive we* to suggest how to proceed. P4 and P5 felt this was *rude* as P5 believed the character was being "manipulative" and that he was hiding his true intentions. P3 and P7 rated the strategy as *neutral* while slightly elaborating that the situation was unfamiliar for them and that they would not know how to respond. P3 added that she thought the suggestion was not successful regardless as Roman was not willing to follow his brother's advice. On the other hand, P9 stated that the strategy was *perfectly appropriate*. He mentioned that this was a "conspiracy moment" and that, although he believed it was *appropriate*, it depended on the "previous context."

In summary, this section presented the responses provided by five NNS participants during their semi-structured interviews. The interviews revealed diverse perspectives among the participants regarding their self-efficacy in communicating in English, experience with AV materials, experience regarding English classes, language learning history, multilingual backgrounds, travel experiences, and cognitive challenges. Most participants expressed difficulty communicating in English, while stating their lack of contact with the language. The

participants also mentioned that vocabulary retention and recall has weakened mainly due to reduced use. They also reported minimal engagement with AV materials in English due to comprehension challenges, leading to negative emotions like frustration and disappointment. While some no longer attended English classes, others said they felt enthusiastic about going back to classes. All five of the participants were aware of the benefits of learning English, the primary being traveling and socializing. While their experiences varied, the majority started learning English for work or academic purposes. Regarding their travel experiences, they all reported a decline in international travel, particularly to English-speaking countries. Although most of them enjoyed the task and felt motivated by it, all agreed it was excessively long.

The semi-structured interviews provided insight into the participants' perceptions of pragmatic strategies and their appropriateness in various clips despite their struggle to recall specific parts when relying solely on memory. Notwithstanding this limitation, their responses revealed diverse opinions and nuanced reasoning for their ratings. There was consensus among the participants that the clips containing clear power imbalances (Clip 2 and Clip 10) were deemed inappropriate. Similarly, aggressive use of the *specific formulae* strategy (Clip 5) was rated *very rude* or *rude*. On the other hand, ratings varied for clips involving social dynamics, such as family (Clip 8) or between strangers (Clip 4). Additionally, two of the three *inclusive we* strategies (Clip 9 and Clip 12) were generally rated as *appropriate*. Thus, it appears context and perceived intentions significantly influenced judgements.

#### **6.4. Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, quantitative and qualitative tests were carried out on responses provided by the participants and subsequently analyzed. The results were intended to elucidate the three research questions regarding senior EFL learners' L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness, and the effect of AV materials and IDs on the said phenomenon. To summarize, it was found that Clip 11 contributed the most to the differences found between the NNS and NS participants'

awareness of appropriateness in L2 English pragmatics. When the appropriateness ratings for Clip 4 and Clip 11 (both featuring the *conditional* strategy) were analyzed together, statistically significant differences were found between the NNS and NS participants. On the other hand, when the NNS participants were divided into two groups based on their experiences with AV materials, statistically significant differences among the three groups emerged in Clip 1 and Clip 10, although no significant differences were found in the pairwise comparisons. Additionally, no strategy-level differences were observed. Several ID factors, including attending classes, self-efficacy, motivation, frequency of English use, traveling habits, and goal setting, were also associated with significant group differences among and between groups, particularly in Clip 11.

The qualitative analysis demonstrated commonalities and dissimilarities among the NNS participants regarding their language learning journey, AV materials, and feedback on the task as a whole. Additionally, the five participants who agreed to the interview elaborated on their appropriateness ratings of the 14 clips, providing insight into their (meta)pragmatic awareness. In the next chapter, the aforementioned results will be addressed and interpreted.

## 7. Discussion

### 7.1. Introduction

Chapter 7 provides a comprehensive analysis of the findings and their implications, addressing the research questions of the study. Section 7.2 focuses on the first research question, investigating whether senior EFL learners demonstrate L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness of the speech act of suggestion and to what extent their evaluations align with those of NSs of American English. This section discusses the operationalization of (meta)pragmatic awareness, the statistical analyses conducted, and the interpretation of the overall similarities and differences between the NS and NNS participants' ratings. Section 7.3 explores the second research question, which addresses the potential influence of AV materials on the (meta)pragmatic awareness of NNS participants. Here, the findings for the two NNS groups—those who regularly consumed AV materials and those who did not—are compared, with particular attention to key clips where group differences emerged. Section 7.4 shifts the focus to the third research question, examining how IDs (i.e., motivation, strategies, and beliefs) shape senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness.

### 7.2. Research Question 1: Senior EFL Learners' L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness

The first research question investigated whether senior EFL learners show (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions in English and the extent to which their evaluations align with those of NSs of American English. To address this, (meta)pragmatic awareness was operationalized as learners' assessment of the appropriateness of suggestion strategies found in 14 clips. The NS and NNS participants rated the utterances on a Likert scale, and subsequently, statistical analyses were conducted to compare the ratings of both groups. The tests revealed no significant group effect on (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings, suggesting that both groups assessed the appropriateness of the speech act similarly.

To explore potential differences further, individual clips and suggestion strategies were analyzed. The tests revealed no significant differences between the two groups for the majority of the clips. However, a notable exception was observed regarding the *conditional* strategy, as featured in Clip 11 (P- D+). For this clip, the NNS participants rated the appropriateness significantly lower than their NS counterparts, marking it as *rude*, *neutral* or *appropriate*. Similarly, when ratings were aggregated by strategy, the same pattern emerged for the aforementioned strategy overall (Clip 4, with P+ D+, and Clip 11), further underscoring this difference.

The absence of a significant group effect partially aligns with previous findings which noted that higher proficiency tends to correlate with greater pragmatic competence and awareness (e.g., Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2014; Bardovi-Harlig & Su, 2018; Cook and Liddicoat, 2002; Niezgoda & Roever, 2001; Roever & Ikeda, 2023; Wu & Roever, 2021). While proficiency was not directly measured in this study, the NNS participants self-reported their level to be intermediate or upper-intermediate according to their current or former English classes. The similarities between the two groups, however, could be in line with Karimloo's (2022) study, which found no proficiency effects on suggestion production. Although their findings suggest that proficiency alone may not determine learners' ability to produce pragmatically appropriate suggestions, their study focused on EFL learners aged 18-33, whereas the present study examines senior learners. While the present study did not include production samples, the results indicate that senior learners exhibit (meta)pragmatic awareness comparable to their NS counterparts. This aligns with Liu and Zhao's (2007) study, which also found no significant differences between advanced NNSs and NSs in suggestion production that involved high power and distance. Even though their two groups performed similarly, their NNS participants failed to reach the exact (meta)pragmatic awareness of their NS baseline; it should be noted that the age of these participants was never disclosed. This suggests that

awareness and production may not always develop in parallel (Kasper & Rose, 2002). However, it is imperative to note that the low number of participants in the current study does not allow for generalization, which was also the case in Liu and Zhao's (2007) study.

In another vein, other factors, such as L1 influence or exposure, could also contribute to the similarities and differences found between the two groups. Koike (1996) argued that transfer occurs at various proficiency levels, indicating that (meta)pragmatic awareness might develop independently of language proficiency. This notion resonates with the present findings, as the senior learners' overall ratings suggest a nuanced understanding of pragmatics beyond proficiency effects. Koike (1996) and Martínez-Flor (2006) highlight the influence of L1 knowledge on learners' assessments of speech acts. The divergence observed in how participants rated the *conditional* strategy—or how they agreed on other strategies—may reflect pragmatic transfer, as some learners could rely on their L1 norms when interpreting these strategies. Gu (2014), Min (2019), and Shofwan and Mujiyanto (2018) similarly observed that while learners are aware of politeness strategies, they may struggle with production due to L1 influence. However, these studies focused on younger learners; Min's (2019) participants were under 33 years old, and Shofwan and Mujiyanto (2018) examined undergraduates, while Gu's (2014) corpus study did not specify participants' ages. Although this study did not evaluate production or senior NNSs' L1 suggestion samples, the findings suggest that comprehension and awareness might also be shaped by L1 transfer.

The results may also be in line with Li and Gao (2017) and Rafieyan et al. (2014), who observed that (meta)pragmatic awareness enhances pragmatic comprehension. While their findings were based on younger adult learners, the present study extends this discussion to senior learners. However, the variability in the NS and NNS participants' ratings of politeness strategies observed in this study aligns with the concept of agency in pragmatics (Ishihara, 2019; Ishihara & Tarone, 2009; Kim, 2014; Taguchi, 2017; Ying & Ren, 2021). Pragmatic



agency emphasizes the active role individuals play in interpreting and producing speech acts, influenced by personal, contextual, and cultural factors. The lack of consensus among the two groups suggests that pragmatic judgments are not fixed but rather shaped by individual interpretations of appropriateness, context, and relational dynamics. This variability highlights the fluid and context-dependent nature of pragmatic competence, even among NSs. Such findings underscore the importance of recognizing pragmatics as a dynamic, agentive process rather than a uniform set of rules (Lauer, 2013; Taguchi & Roever, 2017). This offers further insight into the findings of the current study, or rather why the NNS participants' ratings aligned with the NSs' in general but diverged in specific instances. In the next section, one of the differences among senior learners (i.e., the use of AV materials), and its effect on (meta)pragmatic awareness will be discussed.

### **7.3. Research Question 2: The Effect of Audiovisual Materials on L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness**

The second research question sought to determine whether AV materials influence senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions in English, and to what extent their ratings aligned with those of the NSs. To explore this, the NNS participants were divided into two groups based on their AV consumption habits: those who regularly watched AV materials (Group 1) and those who did not (Group 2). These groups were analyzed alongside a group of NS of American English (Group 3) using statistical tests. Although overall ratings for 12 of the 14 clips, and all grouped strategies, showed no statistically significant differences, notable distinctions emerged in Clip 1 (*imperative*, P- D+) and Clip 10 (*imperative*, P+ D+), where Group 1 and Group 2 slightly diverged from Group 3 in Clip 10 and Clip 1, respectively. However, post hoc pairwise comparisons did not reveal statistically significant differences between specific groups after correction, suggesting that the observed variability may not

reflect robust group-level effects. In other words, the three groups showed overall similarity in their appropriateness ratings of the suggestions made in these clips.

Although Derakhshan and Zangoei (2014) emphasized the significance of contextual information in AV materials, the absence of significant differences (qualitatively or quantitatively) in the current study suggests that other factors beyond AV exposure may play a role in shaping (meta)pragmatic awareness. For instance, senior learners may draw on life experiences, their L1 and general exposure to language use in other contexts as a form of strategy to evaluate appropriateness, in compensation for any lack of AV input. This could be in line with previous research into compensatory strategies of senior learners (e.g., Cox & Sanz, 2015; Oxford, 1990; Piechurska-Kuciel & Szyszka, 2017; Ramírez Gómez, 2016).

An important dimension that should be addressed again is agency (Ishihara & Tarone, 2009; Taguchi, 2019). The findings of this study suggest that both groups of NNS participants demonstrated similar appropriateness ratings to their NS counterparts, which may indicate that they relied on their own agency and interpretive abilities rather than solely on external input from AV materials. This reliance on personal judgment could reflect the learners' accumulated life experiences and exposure to pragmatic conventions through diverse sources, including social interactions and previous learning. Furthermore, this could also be in line with Cox and Sanz's (2015) study, where they concluded that advanced senior learners can adapt their processing strategies effectively due to their prior exposure and experiences. This, in turn, can positively affect learners' performance. That is to say, while AV materials can offer rich, contextualized examples, the present participants' internalized frameworks and language skills appear to have played a more crucial role in their pragmatic competence.

Along the same lines, while the potential for incidental learning from AV materials, as highlighted by Frumuselu et al. (2015) and Peters and Muñoz (2020), supports learners in acquiring pragmatic norms, the lack of significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2

in this study indicates that AV materials may not always lead to measurable improvements in (meta)pragmatic awareness ratings. It is important to mention that among the four NNS participants in Group 1, only P2 mentioned having watched AV materials “most of her life,” while the others only viewed such materials a maximum of five years. Thus, even within Group 1, the amount and consistency of AV exposure varied considerably. Studies on incidental learning and AV materials, such as Barón and Celaya (2022) and Khazdouzian et al. (2021), have indeed demonstrated that movies and TV series can positively influence pragmatic competence. However, according to these studies, these effects require specific conditions, such as “prolonged exposure” or regular use of captions over a lifetime, in order for acquisition to take place; this might be a reason for why the current study did not result in similar findings. In addition to frequency and length of use, the absence of differences between groups could be due to the type of materials consumed, or perhaps learners’ attentiveness to pragmatic features during viewing. In the present study, the NNS senior learners may not have engaged with such content in ways that implicitly enhanced their (meta)pragmatic awareness.

While AV materials have been shown to contribute to (meta)pragmatic awareness and competence in other studies (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2019; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010, 2020), the present findings suggest that for senior learners, other factors such as life experience, agency and cognitive factors may contribute more substantially to (meta)pragmatic awareness than exposure to AV materials alone. Such factors will be discussed in the following section.

#### **7.4. Research Question 3: The Effect of Individual Differences on L2 (Meta)Pragmatic Awareness**

The third research question explored whether IDs (i.e., motivation, strategies, and beliefs) affected senior EFL learners’ ability to rate the pragmatic appropriateness of suggestions in various clips. Data collected through the background questionnaire, appropriateness rating task, and semi-structured interviews were analyzed, both quantitatively

and qualitatively. While IDs function as an interconnected whole, each factor was examined independently for quantitative analysis. The qualitative data provided additional insights into the various manners these factors could have influenced participants' (meta)pragmatic awareness. In this section, each factor will be summarized and explored individually.

Firstly, motivation was assessed through participants' engagement with English across various life stages, their frequency of English use, activities performed using English, ongoing participation in English classes, and travel habits. The background questionnaire revealed that participants' lifelong motivation (measured as the self-reported desire to learn English across different age periods) illustrated how learners' histories and experiences might have influenced their (meta)pragmatic awareness. Participants rated their motivation at five stages: before 20, in their 20s, in their 30s–40s, in their 50s, and during retirement. Motivation was generally perceived high in early adulthood (20s) and during retirement, with a slight dip in the middle stages of life. While quantitative data showed no statistically significant effect between these motivation trends and ratings of pragmatic appropriateness, qualitative data indicated that several participants with higher motivation engaged in English-related activities more frequently, examples being watching AV materials and reading. Regardless of the negligible differences between the two NNS groups, their agreement in the appropriateness task with the NSs could be due to their high motivation. In other words, most of the participants were motivated during their retirement (or pre-retirement), and they rated the pragmatic appropriateness of suggestions similarly to their NS counterparts. This phenomenon is in line with Pfenninger and Polz (2018), who reported that older individuals with higher motivation tend to be more successful in the L2. Along the same lines, Takahashi (2005) noticed that learners with intrinsic motivation are more likely to pay attention to target features which is essential for implicit L2 pragmatic development.

Additionally, the statistical analysis revealed significant differences between NNS participants who attended English classes at the time of the study and those who did not, particularly in their evaluations of suggestions in two specific clips (Clip 1, *imperative*, P- D+; and Clip 11, *conditional*, P- D+). Slight differences appeared in Clip 1 among the three groups, although post hoc comparisons did not confirm the significance. However, Clip 11 demonstrated significant divergence between NSs and the NNS participants who did not attend classes. Senior learners who attend classes tend to show high motivation, as explained by Pfenninger and Polz (2018), and thus, according to Takahashi (2005), are more pragmatically aware. Similarly, Takahashi (2015) also posited that pragmalinguistic awareness correlates positively with motivation. Furthermore, extensive research on L2 pragmatic instruction has successfully demonstrated favorable outcomes using diverse methods (e.g., Martínez-Flor, 2006; Rajabi & Farahian, 2013; Takimoto, 2013, among others). For instance, Rajabi and Farahian (2013) observed higher awareness of appropriate suggestions in their instructed group over the control group. Therefore, it may be possible that the *conditional* strategy appearing in Clip 11 had been taught in the classes the NNSs attended. Nonetheless, it was more likely for the more motivated participants who attended English classes more regularly to resemble NSs in their rating of the said clip. This finding also seems to be consistent with Yang and Ren's (2019) study, where they posited that a combination of learning attitude and effort put into education, along with students' behavior within the L2 community, may predict L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness. They also mentioned that learners' lack of sociopragmatic knowledge and understanding of politeness markers could lead to different performances when contextual and social factors (i.e., power, distance and degree of imposition) vary. This contrast is evident in the participants' responses, with a statistically significant difference between the three groups only appearing in Clip 11 (P- and D+).

In another vein, the analysis of travel habits revealed an unexpected pattern in the participants' exposure to environments where they could be compelled to use English. The senior learners exhibited varying degrees of international travel experiences, yet those who traveled less frequently to countries where they would use English demonstrated slightly higher (meta)pragmatic awareness scores in their evaluations of *conditionals* (in Clip 11), aligning more closely with NS ratings. In contrast, NNS participants who traveled more frequently tended to exhibit greater variability in their ratings of the same clip. This finding suggests that frequent travel does not necessarily lead to greater alignment with native norms. A potential explanation for this pattern lies in the nature of their travel: those who traveled more often in this study typically visited countries such as France or Italy, where they already spoke the local languages and thus had limited need to use English during their stays. It is worth noting, however, that this pattern was observed in only one clip, while in the majority of other clips, the ratings of both groups—NNS participants who traveled more and those who traveled less at the time of the study—generally aligned with NS judgments.

Nonetheless, it is important to consider the role of travel in fostering motivation even if it does not directly correlate with higher pragmatic awareness in the current study. Previous research on senior learners has shown that travel experiences can significantly enhance learners' motivation to study languages. Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024), for instance, examined senior L1 English learners of Spanish and found that positive feedback received while traveling contributed to their motivation to continue learning. While their study focused on L2 Spanish rather than English, the underlying connection between travel experiences and motivation remains relevant. Similarly, Pfenninger and Polz (2018) also highlighted that external validation (i.e., being praised by others) played an effective role in sustaining motivation among senior participants learning English. They further explained that traveling to English-speaking countries further boosted learners' motivation to improve their

proficiency. Along the same lines, Derenowski (2021) noted that older adult learners in their 60s were often driven to learn English specifically for travel purposes, reinforcing the link between real-world necessity and language acquisition. Taken together, the aforementioned studies suggest that frequent travel can lead to higher motivation, which, in turn, supports sustained language learning efforts. Thus, motivation has the potential to foster the development of L2 (meta)pragmatic awareness (Takahashi, 2005), even if the immediate effects on pragmatic awareness are not always straightforward.

On the other hand, the NNS participants who performed more activities in English rated *conditional* suggestions (in Clip 4, P+ D+; and Clip 11, P- D+) statistically differently from the NS participants. The discrepancies in the responses provided by the three groups could be in line with Kim (2014) and Ying and Ren (2021), who discovered that their participants' performance was affected by their sense of self identification or agency rather than external factors such as age, background, or length of stay abroad. Kim (2014) emphasized that pragmatic choices are not always determined by a learner's proficiency or exposure to the TL but by their evaluation of the social context and the identity they wish to construct. Older learners, in particular, were found to be more aware of their multiple identities and exercised agency differently than younger learners. Although Kim's (2014) older participants were younger than those in the present study, the findings align. The NNS participants who engaged more frequently in English-related activities did not always conform to NS norms but instead perhaps demonstrated strategic decisions about how to position themselves in the interaction. Similarly, Ying and Ren (2021) noted that while learners often strive to adopt TL norms, they do not do so uncritically. Instead, they selectively invest in strategies that align with their perceived identity and relational goals. This could be seen in the interviews conducted in the present study, where the NNS participants showed sensitivity to power dynamics and relational contexts when justifying their ratings. Their (meta)pragmatic awareness of these factors may

have influenced their assessments of pragmatic appropriateness, leading to variability in their responses that reflects their agency in pragmatic decision-making. In other words, the participants used their self-awareness and their sense of agency to deem a situation or strategy appropriate or not, as was further corroborated through their interviews.

Secondly, strategies, operationalized through the participants' past and present goals for studying English, were analyzed to determine their influence on appropriateness ratings and their similarities with the NS baseline. While no statistically significant differences were found in overall performance across clips, participants who formerly held more diverse goals differed slightly from NS participants in Clip 11 once again. In other words, despite slight shifts in their learning goals, the NNSs largely resembled the NSs in their evaluations. According to Mora et al. (2018), senior EFL learners, regardless of their proficiency level, tend to rely on metacognitive strategies such as reflection and planning, while their use of social strategies declines with age. The majority of the NNS participants' strategies in the present study seem to align with those reported by Mora et al.'s (2018) participants, reflecting identical goal-setting strategies. The current results suggest that evolving learning objectives may moderately influence how learners internalize and apply pragmatic knowledge, ultimately leading to more native-like (meta)pragmatic awareness.

In another light, Griffiths and Soruç (2021) consider individual factors to be interrelated. Therefore, the current outcome may be consistent with Ho (2019), who stated that the sheer act of setting personal goals may increase the motivation of senior learners, which could explain why the participants from the current study appear to be highly motivated. Qualitative responses highlighted shifts in learning priorities over time, with recent goals focusing more on understanding media and travel-related communication when compared to work-related goals in the past. This finding aligns with Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024), who observed that senior learners of Spanish as a FL prioritized social interaction and travel



over other purposes. Similarly, Derenoswki (2021) found that seniors learning English frequently cited travel as a key motivation, an aspect also mentioned by Pfenninger and Polz (2018), who found that positive reinforcement during travel experiences increased motivation to study and improve English. In further support of this perspective, Schiller and Dorner (2022) emphasized the evolving nature of language learning motivation (and strategies) and its cyclical relationship with learners' experiences. Moreover, Cox (2019) stated that senior learners achieve greater well-being by being selective about their learning goals and concentrating their efforts on specific priorities. In the context of the present study, this could explain why some participants with a clearer focus on travel-related objectives appeared more engaged with pragmatic aspects of language use. Their ability to prioritize meaningful goals could have enabled them to allocate cognitive and emotional resources more effectively. However, this was not consistently reflected in higher (meta)pragmatic awareness scores, suggesting that while goal setting may support engagement, it does not necessarily guarantee closer alignment with native speaker norms.

Despite the motivation and goal-setting strategy to learn and engage with the language, however, some participants in the present study reported difficulties in vocabulary retention and listening comprehension. The interviews conducted revealed that these difficulties were often attributed to limited use and exposure, particularly when it came to AV materials. As Follett (2020), Corral-Robles et al. (2023) and Ohly (2008) noted, senior learners may encounter challenges in developing effective listening strategies due to less frequent exposure to authentic language environments, which might explain the participants' minimal engagement with AV materials. The findings of Mora et al. (2018) further support this, suggesting that as learners age, they may shift away from interactive social learning strategies, potentially reducing their exposure to naturally occurring pragmatic input.

Thirdly, personal beliefs about learning and self-efficacy as English learners were also explored, with participants grouped based on self-assessment ratings. Clip 11 (P- D+), containing the *conditional* strategy, emerged again as statistically different between groups. Analyzing the clips separately and together, however, had contradicting outcomes. The participants who rated their self-efficacy lower than those who rated it higher, opted for a different appropriateness score for Clip 11 from their NS counterparts. In contrast, when the results from both clips with *conditional* strategy were combined, although the differences between the three groups (i.e., NNS participants with high self-efficacy, NNS participants with low self-efficacy, and NS participants) approached significance, the three groups were similar in their ratings of the *conditional* strategy. This varied pattern suggests that self-perception may influence pragmatic judgment in complex ways, potentially interacting with other motivational and identity-related factors.

The role of self-efficacy in seniors' language learning has been explored in prior research, with both Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024) and Darnault et al. (2024) highlighting its significance. Montañés-Ballesté and Celaya (2024) found that their senior participants generally exhibited strong self-efficacy, describing themselves as “hardworking,” “autonomous,” and “motivated” learners. Similarly, the qualitative data of the present study indicates that most NNS participants viewed themselves as dedicated students who take an active role in their own learning process. This sense of self-efficacy may explain why most of NNS participants' (meta)pragmatic awareness closely resembled the NS baseline, as greater confidence in their learning ability might have led to greater engagement with linguistic and pragmatic input. In another vein, Darnault et al. (2024) further demonstrated that senior learners' self-perceptions evolve throughout their lives. Their study mentioned that later in life, the concept of *self* aligns with well-being and self-concordant goals. In the present study, the variation in ratings between participants may be reflective of this evolving self-concept, with

learners positioning themselves differently in relation to the TL and its pragmatic norms, further supporting the notion of agency in L2 pragmatics.

To sum up, the findings in the present study intended to shed light on several important insights related to the interplay between senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions, the role of AV materials, and the impact of IDs. Regarding the first research question, the results showed that senior learners demonstrated (meta)pragmatic awareness comparable to NSs, as evidenced by their similar appropriateness ratings for most clips and strategies. While the study's small sample size limits generalizability, the nuanced understanding exhibited by the learners reinforces the theory that individuals exert their agency when using L2 pragmatics. The second research question explored whether AV materials influence senior EFL learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness. Despite the potential for AV materials to enrich pragmatic input, no significant differences were observed between learners who regularly consumed such materials and those who did not. This suggests that factors beyond AV exposure, such as life experiences, L1 influence, and agency, may compensate for differences in input. Finally, the third research question highlighted the role of IDs (i.e., motivation, strategies, and beliefs) in shaping (meta)pragmatic awareness. While quantitative results showed limited overall effects, qualitative insights revealed that the ratings of motivated NNS participants, particularly those attending English classes or having more goals and activities in English, tended to align more closely with NS ratings in specific contexts (e.g., Clip 11). Meanwhile, NNS participants with higher self-efficacy displayed more variability in their evaluation of *conditional* strategies. These patterns suggest that while learners' IDs did not have a widespread statistical impact across all contexts and strategies, they might have influenced their (meta)pragmatic awareness, but only minimally. Having discussed the possible factors contributing to the findings, Chapter 8 will present concluding remarks while exploring the limitations and their potential for addressing them in future research.

## 8. Conclusions

### 8.1. Introduction

The final chapter of this dissertation starts by considering the limitations of the study, highlighting issues such as sample size and gender imbalance, while raising future methodological considerations in Section 8.2. The chapter concludes with Section 8.3, which presents the pedagogical implications and concluding remarks of the study. This chapter reflects on the contributions of the study to the field, particularly its exploration of senior learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness and the influence of AV materials and IDs.

### 8.2. Limitations and Further Research

The present study has several limitations that may provide direction for future research, beginning with sample size and gender composition. As a multiple case study, the research offers an in-depth perspective on individual learners; however, a broader and more gender-balanced participant pool could provide additional insights and enhance the applicability of the findings. This, in turn, could allow for the exploration of potential gender-related differences in (meta)pragmatic awareness, which was not an aim of this study.

Another factor is the contextual understanding of the AV materials used. Although the clips were taken from the first episodes of TV series to minimize reliance on prior knowledge, participants might have benefited from additional background information. However, incorporating this within the current research design was challenging. Given the online format, asking senior learners to engage with longer video segments or supplementary materials would have been impractical, as extended screen time can pose difficulties for this demographic (see Weil et al., 2021).

Moreover, although this study did not control for participants' proficiency as it "is [...] less important in more sociopragmatic tasks (such as appropriateness judgments of speech acts)" (Taguchi & Roever 2017, p. 228), investigating how linguistic competence interacts with

(meta)pragmatic awareness could yield further insights. Similarly, beyond individual differences and proficiency, life stage and generational influences may shape pragmatic evaluations. Research comparing (meta)pragmatic awareness across different age groups could determine whether the patterns observed in senior learners are unique to their cohort or part of a broader developmental trend, as also suggested by Kim (2014). Along the same lines, collecting baseline data on participants' L1 pragmatic behavior could provide insights into the overall understanding of senior learners' behavior when recognizing appropriateness. Such comparisons could shed light on cross-linguistic influence and generational variations in pragmatic competence; however, these aspects were beyond the scope of the present study.

Finally, while this study focused on suggestions, exploring other speech acts would further enrich our understanding of senior learners' pragmatic competence. Speech acts that are more face-threatening or require greater mitigation, such as requests, refusals or complaints, may elicit different levels of (meta)pragmatic awareness and strategy use. Furthermore, since IDs, such as motivation, anxiety, agency, and personal goals play a role in pragmatic awareness (Tajeddin & Moghaddam, 2012), future research could further examine how these factors interact with other speech acts. To better understand how certain factors affect learners' noticing and application of pragmatic norms, subsequent studies could also differentiate between general pragmatic motivation and speech-act-specific motivation (see Tajeddin & Moghaddam, 2012).

### **8.3. Pedagogical Implications and Concluding Remarks**

This study investigated the (meta)pragmatic awareness of suggestions among senior EFL learners, highlighting the effect of both engagement with AV materials as well as IDs (i.e., motivation, strategies, belief) on pragmatic competence. Findings reveal that while the two NNS groups of senior learners' evaluations largely aligned with the NSs' ratings, only minor statistical variability emerged, as influenced by their exposure to AV materials. In contrast, IDs

and agency were shown to play significant roles in shaping (meta)pragmatic awareness. These results emphasize the importance of contextual and individual variables in shaping pragmatic competence in senior learners.

To the extent of the researcher's knowledge, this study represents an initial step into exploring (meta)pragmatic awareness in senior learners, while highlighting IDs as a crucial component of pragmatics research. Although IDs have been examined in relation to adult learners' (meta)pragmatic awareness, research on senior learners remains underexplored. According to Darnault (2023), researchers in the field of SLA are currently showing "a renewed interest [...] to combat vernacular representations and negative stereotypes of ageing" (p. 17) (see also Cox, 2019; Derenowski, 2021; Gabryś-Barker, 2017; Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Van der Ploeg & Blankinship, 2022). Therefore, there is a need for L2 pragmatic studies to also be aligned with mainstream SLA research (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). There is indeed a growing interest in conducting research that adopts a more reconciliatory perspective, acknowledging the positive impact of life experience on language learning in later stages of life (Muñoz, 2019). Similarly, Cox (2019) emphasized the need for research on multilingualism among senior language learners across diverse populations and locations.

Age-related changes in pragmatic norms, as noted by Kim (2014), suggest that older adults may interpret or utilize L1 norms differently from younger generations. Similarly, Núñez Pertejo and Palacios Martínez (2025) found that teenagers exhibit distinct pragmatic tendencies compared to adults. This underscores the need for future research to address these gaps, enhance understanding of senior learners' L2 pragmatic development, and contribute to instructional practices tailored to this demographic. Singleton and Pfenninger (2018) and Pikhart and Klímová (2020) claim that, considering all the advantages of language learning for seniors (see Section 4.3.2), pedagogically relevant results should inform educators and policy-makers to develop appropriate materials and instruction methods for these individuals. The

authors also agreed with Ramírez Gómez (2016), warning that given the diversity among senior learners, a one-size-fits-all approach is not suitable, and tailored approaches are necessary.

Thus, research has proposed a critical FL pedagogy: a theory that posits that older individuals possess distinct characteristics that justify the need for an educational theory specifically tailored to their needs (Formosa, 2012; Johnson, 2016). Critical FL pedagogy, as put forth by Ramírez Gómez (2016), aims to transform learners' attitudes, remove negativity, and guide instructors in adjusting their FL teaching techniques to suit senior learners. This includes modifying instructional practices and classroom atmosphere. The curricula and coursebooks should be evidence-based, content-focused, and adapted to the cognitive, psychological, and social needs of senior learners. According to Ramírez Gómez (2016), the most commonly used textbooks often incorporate popular culture references which may be unfamiliar or irrelevant to senior learners. Consequently, a number of researchers have provided educators with apt suggestions when teaching senior learners (e.g., Cox, 2019; Cox & Sanz, 2015; Follett, 2020; Gabryś-Barker, 2017; Ho, 2019; Oxford, 2017; Pfenninger & Polz, 2018; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Pikhart & Klímová, 2020; Ramírez Gómez, 2016; Singleton & Pfenninger, 2018; Van der Ploeg & Blankinship, 2022). For example, textbooks could prioritize the acquisition of commonly used words and facilitate their retention, all while providing content that aligns with their level of development (see also Ramírez Gómez & Sanz, 2017).

A growing body of research, including that of Park and Bischof (2013) and Singleton and Pfenninger (2018), further emphasizes that age does not prevent successful L2 learning as the brain retains significant plasticity. Instead, senior learners bring unique experiences and motivations that can enrich the learning process. The current research intends to contribute to this academic discourse with possible pedagogical implications for the L2 classroom. Interviews with the NNS participants clearly aligned with the aforementioned issues senior

learners face, one of which being vocabulary retention. Instructional strategies could focus on mitigating such challenges while reinforcing their exposure to naturalistic conversations. The interviews also revealed limited consumption of AV materials, and hesitancy to travel to countries where the participants would be forced to speak in English, which could affect senior learners' ability to notice and apply pragmatic norms (Bardovi-Harlig, 2020; Martínez-Flor, 2020; Sykes, 2013). Therefore, balancing explicit instruction with AV materials, used not only as interesting conversation starters but also as opportunities for authentic communication in the classroom, could foster both linguistic and pragmatic growth. However, it is worth mentioning, as noted by Taguchi and Roever (2017), that “development is not always signaled by an increase in numerical data, or approximation toward the native-speaker norm” (p. 218). Along the same lines, the findings also suggest that pragmatic norms in English are not universally agreed upon, even among NSs. Variability exists in how individuals perceive and evaluate appropriateness, which means rigid assumptions about such cases should be avoided. To ensure robust comparisons of pragmatic evaluations, a diverse and sufficiently large pool of NSs is necessary as a baseline.

As Taguchi and Roever (2017) further highlighted, pragmatic performance in SLA is uniquely shaped by the concept of agency, as learners actively make decisions and exercise control over their communicative behaviors. This emphasizes the distinctive nature of pragmatics within language acquisition, where learners are not simply absorbing rules but are also adapting their language use based on personal intentions, cultural norms, and contextual factors. Such agency allows for a degree of individuality in how pragmatic knowledge is demonstrated, setting pragmatics apart from other linguistic domains. Moreover, the manner in which L2 learners navigate appropriateness and formality is deeply interconnected with their personal attributes, such as personality traits and communication preferences. These choices extend beyond linguistic ability, reflecting the learners' subjective styles and social identities.



Therefore, in language classrooms, open conversations regarding individuals' L1s and the target culture(s), along with their distinctive perspectives, may be beneficial for developing (meta)pragmatic awareness. Future studies should continue exploring how these factors influence (meta)pragmatic awareness, aiming to develop inclusive and effective pedagogical frameworks for aging learners. By embracing the strengths of this demographic and addressing their specific needs, we can foster a better and more equitable understanding of L2 pragmatics in later life.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Senior Learner Online Form

##### Questionnaire Ph.D. OL



\* Required

1

What language do you prefer to answer in? / ¿En qué idioma prefiere responder? / En quina llengua prefereix respondre? \*

- ☐ English
- ☐ Español
- ☐ Català

## English

You are invited to participate in a study investigating **pragmatic knowledge of English**. Your participation will help the researcher to understand better the processes involved in foreign language acquisition. You have been selected as a potential candidate because you are **a senior citizen and studying or have previously studied English as a foreign language**. Please read this document and ask any questions you feel necessary before consenting to participate in the study.

### STUDY PROCEDURE:

The research will be carried out by **Yashar Khazdouzian**, PhD student in Cognitive Science and Language (Universitat de Barcelona), under the supervision of Professors **Maria Luz Celaya Villanueva** and **Júlia Barón Parés** (Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and English Studies, Universitat de Barcelona).

The study will be conducted **on dates arranged with the researcher**. The **estimated duration** of your participation is approximately **30 minutes in a one-day session and, if selected, an interview of no more than 15 minutes**. The researcher, Yashar Khazdouzian, will be responsible for presenting the study information to participants, collecting signed online consents, and conducting all the tests described below if you wish to participate in the study. If you agree to participate in the study, you will perform the following tasks on a questionnaire:

#### Session 1 (30 minutes):

1. Questionnaire about your data (age, educational background, languages you speak), your experience learning English, and your motivation to continue learning English to be completed through Microsoft Forms (15 minutes).
2. Test of knowledge and adequacy of speech (15 minutes).

#### Session 2 (if applicable) (15 minutes):

1. Interview via Microsoft Teams about your detailed experience with English (15 minutes).

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Your personal data will be kept confidential. Your **anonymity will also be maintained** in the reports related to the publications resulting from this study and in the databases in which your data will be stored. To maintain the anonymity of the participants, names will be replaced by codes. Names and e-mail addresses are necessary to communicate the results (if desired) and to contact you in case you are selected. The names will be replaced later, and the data will be stored **on a researcher's external device. Only the main researcher** (Yashar Khazdouzian, [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)) **and the supervisors** (Maria Luz Celaya Villanueva, [mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu) and Júlia Barón Parés [juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)) **will have access** to your data and responses. The information collected **will only be used in a completely anonymous way for publications derived from this study**. At the end of the study, all your personal information and the questionnaires in Microsoft Forms will be deleted.

2

### COMPENSATION

**You will not receive any monetary compensation.** The researcher will inform participants of their individual results and provide them with information of interest about the English pragmatics under investigation in this study if they wish.

### CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

For questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher Yashar Khazdouzian at [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). For questions about your rights as a research participant, to raise possible problems, complaints, or concerns about this study, to obtain more information, or to offer your opinion, please contact Maria Luz Celaya ([mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu)) or Júlia Barón Parés ([juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)).

### VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to take part or drop out at any time. Refusal to continue to participate in this study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

### Right of Information

**Data Controller:** Yashar Khazdouzian (NIE: Y4351444-L), [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Purpose of data processing:** doctoral thesis.

**Legal basis:** in accordance with Regulation (EU) No. 2016/679, General Data Protection and the LO 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights, and the supervisory authority for data protection in Catalonia, which is the Catalan Data Protection Agency (APDCAT) you can exercise completely free of charge the rights of access, information, rectification, deletion and oblivion, limitation of processing, opposition, portability and not to be subject to automated individual decisions by sending an e-mail to [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Data retention period:** subject to the provisions of the Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights (LOPDGDD), which incorporates the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union, for this doctoral thesis is 5 years.

**Recipients:** participants of the study.

**Rights of data subjects:** You can access your data, request its rectification, deletion, portability or limitation, by sending an email to [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). It will be necessary to attach a photocopy of your ID card or other valid identification document that identifies you.

**Supervisory authority:** Catalan Data Protection Agency (APDCAT).

Do you agree? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

3

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my questionnaire. Do you give me permission to use the results in my study and contact you if I need more information? (your personal details, i.e., your name and email, will not be used in the study) \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

## Personal Information

4

Name \*

5

Age \*

6

Gender \*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

7

Email or telephone number \*

8

Are you currently retired? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9

What is/are your first language(s)? \*

10

What other languages do you know? and what languages have you studied? (Please write the languages, how did you study them, and state your level and a short explanation) \*

11

What is your academic and profession background? (high school diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree? what jobs have you had?) \*

12

Do you watch series and movies in English? \*

- ☐ Yes TV series, No movies
- ☐ No TV series, Yes movies
- ☐ Yes TV series, Yes movies
- ☐ No TV series, No movies

13

If you watch movies and/or TV series, do you watch them in English with English subtitles, subtitles in your first language(s) or without any subtitles? \*

- ☐ With English subtitles
- ☐ With other subtitles
- ☐ Without subtitles
- ☐ I don't watch them



14

How long have you been watching TV series and movies in English? \*

- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 10-20 years
- ☐ Most of my life
- ☐ I don't watch them (in English)

15

Please mention (a) some of the series you are watching at the moment and (b) you watched before and when. \*

## Experience with English

16

Are you studying English now? If so, how long have you been studying English? \*

17

Did you attend English classes at school, college, university, and/or language school before? If so, could you explain how many times and how long it lasted every time? \*

18

Have you ever lived or studied abroad before? If so, could you explain where, when and how long you stayed and if you spoke in English or other languages? \*

19

How motivated were you in language learning each period of your life? (1 not motivated at all - 5 very motivated) \*

	1	2	3	4	5
Youth (before 20s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Early adulthood (20s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mid adulthood (30s and 40s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Early/pre-retirement (50s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retirement (60s and above)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20

Why do you study English now? \*

- ☐ For work
- ☐ To travel
- ☐ To understand movies/news/music
- ☐ For fun
- ☐ For love
- ☐ To help with cognition
- ☐ To socialize
- ☐ For self-confidence
- ☐ To keep busy
- ☐ To become more fluent
- ☐ To integrate into another community
- ☐ To understand another culture
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_





25

How much do you agree with these statements about your experience with learning/using English? \*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I'm motivated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy challenging myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm hardworking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am/used to be a good student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm obsessed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm an autonomous learner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I need a teacher's/native speaker's approval and feedback about my English abilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm curious about English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I never give up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26

Any comments or ideas you would like to add?

## Español

Se le invita a participar en un estudio en el que se investiga **el conocimiento pragmático del inglés**. Su participación ayudará al investigador a comprender mejor los procesos relacionados con la adquisición de una lengua extranjera. Usted ha sido seleccionado/a como posible candidato o candidata porque **pertenece a la tercera edad y porque estudia inglés como lengua extranjera o ha estudiado inglés como lengua extranjera en el pasado**. Le rogamos que lea este documento y que haga las preguntas que considere necesarias antes de dar su consentimiento para formar parte del estudio.

La investigación será llevada a cabo por **Yashar Khazdouzian**, estudiante de doctorado en Ciencia Cognitiva y Lenguaje (Universitat de Barcelona), bajo la supervisión de las profesoras **María Luz Celaya Villanueva** y **Júlia Barón Parés** (Departamento de Lenguas y Literaturas Modernas y de Estudios Ingleses, Universitat de Barcelona).

### PROCEDIMIENTO DEL ESTUDIO:

El estudio se llevará a cabo **en las fechas concertadas con el investigador**. La **duración estimada** de su participación es de aproximadamente **30 minutos en una sesión a lo largo de un día y si está seleccionado/a, una entrevista de no más de 15 minutos**. El investigador, Yashar Khazdouzian, será el responsable de presentar la información del estudio a los y las participantes, de recoger los consentimientos firmados online, y de hacer todas las pruebas que se describen a continuación en caso de que quiera participar en el estudio. Si está de acuerdo en participar en el estudio, usted realizará las siguientes tareas en un cuestionario:

#### Sesión 1 (30 minutos):

1. Cuestionario sobre sus datos (edad, formación académica, idiomas que habla), su experiencia de aprendizaje del inglés, y su motivación para continuar aprendiéndolo que se completará a través de Microsoft Forms (15 minutos).
2. Prueba de conocimiento y adecuación del discurso (15 minutos).

#### Sesión 2 (si procede) (15 minutos):

1. Entrevista a través de Microsoft Teams sobre su experiencia detallada con el inglés (15 minutos).

27

### CONFIDENCIALIDAD

Se mantendrá la confidencialidad de sus datos personales. También **se mantendrá su anonimidad** en los informes relacionados con las publicaciones que se deriven de este estudio y en las bases de datos en las que se almacenarán sus datos. Para mantener la anonimidad de los participantes se sustituirán los nombres por códigos. Los nombres y correos son necesarios para comunicar los resultados (si así lo desea) y para contactar en el caso de que esté seleccionado/a. Los nombres serán sustituidos posteriormente y los **datos** se almacenarán en **un dispositivo externo del investigador. Únicamente el investigador principal** (Yashar Khazdouzian, [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)) **y las supervisoras** (María Luz Celaya Villanueva, [mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu) y Júlia Barón Parés [juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)) **tendrán acceso** a sus datos y respuestas. La información recogida **solo se utilizará de forma totalmente anónima para publicaciones que se deriven de este estudio**. Al final del estudio, toda su información personal y los cuestionarios en Microsoft Forms serán eliminados.

### COMPENSACIÓN

Usted **no recibirá ninguna compensación monetaria**. El investigador informará a los/as participantes de sus resultados individuales y les facilitará información de interés sobre la pragmática inglesa bajo investigación en este estudio, si lo desean.

Está de acuerdo? \*

☐ Sí

☐ No

28

**CONTACTOS PARA PREGUNTAS O PROBLEMAS**

Para preguntas relacionadas con este estudio, contacte con el investigador Yashar Khazdouzian a través de la dirección de correo [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). Para preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en la investigación, plantear posibles problemas, quejas o inquietudes sobre este estudio, obtener más información u ofrecer su opinión, póngase en contacto con María Luz Celaya ([mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu)) o Júlia Barón Parés ([juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)).

**NATURALEZA VOLUNTARIA DEL ESTUDIO**

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Usted puede decidir no tomar parte o abandonarlo en cualquier momento. El hecho de rechazar seguir participando en este estudio no resultará en penalización alguna o en la pérdida de los beneficios a los que usted tiene derecho.

**Derecho de Información**

**Responsable del tratamiento de los datos:** Yashar Khazdouzian (NIE: Y4351444-L), [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Finalidad del tratamiento de los datos:** *tesis doctoral*.

**Base legal:** De conformidad con el Reglamento (UE) núm. 2016/679, General de Protección de Datos y la LO 3/2018, de 5 de diciembre, de Protección de Datos Personales y garantía de los derechos digitales, y la autoridad de control de protección de datos en Cataluña, que es la Agencia Catalana de Protección de Datos (APDCAT) puede ejercer de forma totalmente gratuita los derechos de acceso, información, rectificación, supresión y olvido, limitación del tratamiento, oposición, portabilidad y a no ser objeto de decisiones individuales automatizadas enviando un e-mail a [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Plazo de conservación de los datos:** sujeto a las disposiciones de la Ley Orgánica 3/2018, de 5 de diciembre, de Protección de Datos Personales y garantía de los derechos digitales (LOPDGDD), que incorpora las disposiciones del Reglamento General de Protección de Datos (GDPR) de la Unión Europea, para esta tesis doctoral es 5 años.

**Destinatarios:** *participantes del estudio*.

**Derechos de los interesados:** Puede acceder a sus datos, solicitar su rectificación, supresión, portabilidad o limitación, enviando un correo electrónico a [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). Será necesario adjuntar una fotocopia de su DNI u otro documento de identificación válido que le identifique..

**Autoridad de control:** Agencia Catalana de Protección de Datos (APDCAT).

Está de acuerdo? \*

☐ Sí

☐ No

29

Gracias por aceptar participar en mi estudio. ¿Me da su consentimiento para usar sus resultados en mi estudio y contactarle para más información si fuera necesario? (Recuerde que sus datos personales como su nombre y correo electrónico no se utilizarán en el estudio) \*

☐ Sí

☐ No



### Información Personal

30

Nombre \*

31

Edad \*

32

Sexo \*

- ☐ Hombre
- ☐ Mujer
- ☐ Prefiero no responder

33

Correo electrónico o número de teléfono \*

34

Está jubilado/a actualmente? \*

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

35

¿Cuál es/son su(s) primera(s) lengua(s)? \*

36

¿Qué otros idiomas conoce? ¿Cuáles ha estudiado? (Por favor especifique los idiomas, cómo los estudió, indique su nivel y aporte una breve explicación) \*

37

¿Cuál es su formación académica y profesional? (diploma de escuela secundaria, licenciatura, máster/ ¿Qué trabajos ha tenido?) \*

38

¿Ve series o películas en inglés? \*

- ☐ Sí, sólo películas
- ☐ Sí, sólo series
- ☐ Sí, series y películas
- ☐ Ninguna

39

Si ve películas y/o series de televisión, ¿las ve en inglés con subtítulos en inglés, subtítulos en su(s) lengua(s) materna(s) o sin subtítulos? \*

- ☐ Con subtítulos en inglés
- ☐ Con otros subtítulos
- ☐ Sin subtítulos
- ☐ No veo ni series ni películas

40

¿Cuánto tiempo lleva viendo series de televisión y películas en inglés? \*

- ☐ 1-2 años
- ☐ 3-5 años
- ☐ 5-10 años
- ☐ 10-20 años
- ☐ La mayor parte de mi vida
- ☐ No las veo (en inglés)

41

Mencione (a) algunas de las series que está viendo actualmente y (b) aquellas que haya visto anteriormente y cuándo. \*

Experiencia con el inglés

42

¿Está estudiando inglés en este momento? Si es así, ¿desde hace cuánto? \*

43

¿Asistió a clases de inglés en la escuela, colegio, universidad, y/o escuelas de idiomas anteriormente? Si es así, ¿puede explicar el número de veces y la duración? \*

44

¿Ha vivido/estudiado alguna vez en el extranjero? Si es así, ¿puede explicar cuándo, dónde, y cuánto duró y si hablaba en inglés o en otros idiomas? \*


45

Evalúe de 1 a 5 el grado de motivación (siendo 1 nada motivado/a y 5 muy motivado/a) que tuvo respecto al aprendizaje de idiomas en cada período de su vida \*

	1	2	3	4	5
Joven (antes de los 20 años)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entre los 20 y 30 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entre 30 y 40 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prejubilación (50 años)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jubilación (60 años y más)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

46

¿Por qué estudia inglés? \*

- ☐ Por trabajo
- ☐ Para viajar
- ☐ Para entender películas/noticias/música
- ☐ Para diversión
- ☐ Por amor
- ☐ Para facilitar la capacidad cognitiva
- ☐ Para socializarme
- ☐ Para ganar autoconfianza
- ☐ Para mantenerme ocupado/a
- ☐ Para ganar mayor fluidez
- ☐ Para integrarme en otra comunidad
- ☐ Para entender otra cultura
- ☐ 





51

¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones sobre su experiencia con el aprendizaje/uso del inglés? \*

	Totalmente en desacuerdo	Desacuerdo	Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo	No sé
Estoy motivado/a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me gusta desafiarme a mi mismo/a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soy trabajador/a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Suelo/Solia ser un buen estudiante.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Estoy obsesionado/a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aprendo de manera autónoma	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Necesito la aprobación y comentarios de un profesor/a o hablante nativo/a sobre mis habilidades en inglés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tengo curiosidad por el inglés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nunca me rindo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

52

¿Algún comentario o idea que le gustaría añadir?



## Català

Se'l convida a participar en un estudi en el qual s'investiga el **coneixement pragmàtic de l'anglès**. La seva participació ajudarà l'investigador a comprendre millor els processos relacionats amb l'adquisició d'una llengua estrangera. Vostè ha estat seleccionat/a com a possible candidat o candidata perquè **pertany a la tercera edat i perquè estudia anglès com a llengua estrangera o ha estudiat anglès com a llengua estrangera en el passat**. Li preguem que llegeixi aquest document i que faci les preguntes que consideri necessàries abans de donar el seu consentiment per a formar part de l'estudi.

La recerca serà duta a terme pel **Yashar Khazdouzian**, estudiant de doctorat en Ciència Cognitiva i Llenguatge (Universitat de Barcelona), sota la supervisió de les professores **Mària Luz Celaya Villanueva** i **Júlia Barón Parés** (Departament de Llengües i Literatures Modernes i d'Estudis Anglesos, Universitat de Barcelona).

### PROCEDIMENT DE L'ESTUDI:

L'estudi es durà a terme **en les dates concertades amb l'investigador**. La **durada estimada** de la seva participació és d'aproximadament **30 minuts en una sessió al llarg d'un dia i si està seleccionat/a, una entrevista de no més de 15 minuts**. L'investigador, Yashar Khazdouzian, serà el responsable de presentar la informació de l'estudi als i les participants, de recollir els consentiments signats en línia, i de fer totes les proves que es descriuen a continuació en cas que vulgui participar en l'estudi. Si està d'acord a participar en l'estudi, vostè farà les següents tasques en un qüestionari:

#### Sessió 1 (30 minuts):

1. Qüestionari sobre les seves dades (edat, formació acadèmica, idiomes que parla), la seva experiència d'aprenentatge de l'anglès, i la seva motivació per a continuar aprenent-lo que es completarà a través de Microsoft Forms (15 minuts).
2. Prova de coneixement i adequació del discurs (15 minuts).

#### Sessió 2 (si escau) (15 minuts):

1. Entrevista a través de Microsoft Teams sobre la seva experiència detallada amb l'anglès (15 minuts).

53

### CONFIDENCIALITAT

Es mantindrà la confidencialitat de les seves dades personals. També **es mantindrà el seu anonimat** en els informes relacionats amb les publicacions que es derivin d'aquest estudi i en les bases de dades en les quals s'emmagatzemaran les seves dades. Per a mantenir l'anonimat dels participants se substituiran els noms per codis. Els noms i correus són necessaris per a comunicar els resultats (si així ho desitgi) i per a contactar en el cas que estigui seleccionat/a. Els noms seran substituïts posteriorment i les **dades** s'emmagatzemaran **en un dispositiu extern de l'investigador. Únicament l'investigador principal** (el Yashar Khazdouzian, [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)) i **les supervidores** (la Mària Luz Celaya Villanueva, [mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu) i la Júlia Barón Parés [juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)) **tindran accés** a les seves dades i respostes. La informació recollida **només s'utilitzarà de forma totalment anònima per a publicacions que es derivin d'aquest estudi**. Al final de l'estudi, tota la seva informació personal i els qüestionaris en Microsoft Forms seran eliminats.

### COMPENSACIÓ

Vostè **no rebrà cap compensació monetària**. L'investigador informará els/as participants dels seus resultats individuals i els facilitarà informació d'interès sobre la pragmàtica anglesa sota recerca en aquest estudi, si ho desitgen.

Està d'acord vostè?

\*

☐ Sí

☐ No

54

**CONTACTES PER A PREGUNTES O PROBLEMES**

Per a preguntes relacionades amb aquest estudi, contacti amb l'investigador Yashar Khazdouzian a través de l'adreça de correu [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). Per a preguntes sobre els seus drets com a participant en la recerca, plantejar possibles problemes, queixes o inquietuds sobre aquest estudi, obtenir més informació o oferir la seva opinió, posi's en contacte amb la Maria Luz Celaya ([mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu)) o la Júlia Barón Parés ([juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)).

**NATURALESA VOLUNTÀRIA DE L'ESTUDI**

La participació en aquest estudi és voluntària. Vostè pot decidir no prendre part o abandonar-ho en qualsevol moment. El fet de rebutjar continuar participant en aquest estudi no resultarà en cap penalització o en la pèrdua dels beneficis als quals vostè té dret.

**Dret d'Informació**

**Responsable del tractament de les dades:** Yashar Khazdouzian (NIE: Y4351444-L), [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Finalitat del tractament de les dades:** tesi doctoral.

**Base legal:** De conformitat amb el Reglament (UE) núm. 2016/679, General de Protecció de Dades i l'EL 3/2018, de 5 de desembre, de Protecció de Dades Personals i garantia dels drets digitals, i l'autoritat de control de protecció de dades a Catalunya, que és l'Agència Catalana de Protecció de Dades (APDCAT) pot exercir de forma totalment gratuïta els drets d'accés, informació, rectificació, supressió i oblit, limitació del tractament, oposició, portabilitat i a no ser objecte de decisions individuals automatitzades enviant un e-mail a [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Termini de conservació de les dades:** subjecte a les disposicions de la Llei orgànica 3/2018, de 5 de desembre, de Protecció de Dades Personals i garantia dels drets digitals (LOPDGDD), que incorpora les disposicions del Reglament General de Protecció de Dades (GDPR) de la Unió Europea, per a aquesta tesi doctoral és 5 anys.

**Destinatari:** participants de l'estudi.

**Drets dels interessats:** Pot accedir a les seves dades, sol·licitar la seva rectificació, supressió, portabilitat o limitació, enviant un correu electrònic a [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). Serà necessari adjuntar una fotocòpia del seu DNI o un altre document d'identificació vàlid que li identifiqui..

**Autoritat de control:** Agència Catalana de Protecció de Dades (APDCAT)

Està d'acord vostè?

\*

☐ Sí

☐ No

55

Gràcies per acceptar participar en el meu estudi. Em dona permís per utilitzar aquests resultats en la meua tesi i contactar amb vostè en cas de necessitar més informació? (Les dades personals, és a dir, el seu nom i correu electrònic, no s'utilitzaran en l'estudi) \*

☐ Sí

☐ No

## Informació Personal

56

Nom \*

57

Edat \*

58

Sexe \*

- ☐ Home
- ☐ Done
- ☐ Prefereixo no respondre

59

Correu electrònic o número de telèfon \*

60

Està jubilat/da actualment? \*

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

61

Quina és la seva primera llengua o les seves primeres llengües? \*

62

Quins altres idiomes coneix? I quins idiomes ha estudiat? (Si us plau, escriu els idiomes, com els va estudiar, indiqui el seu nivell i una breu explicació) \*

63

Quina és la seva formació acadèmica i professional? (diploma d'escola secundària, llicenciatura, màster/ Quines feines ha tingut?) \*

64

Veu sèries o pel·lícules en anglès? \*

- ☐ Sí, només pel·lícules
- ☐ Sí, només sèries
- ☐ Sí, sèries i pel·lícules
- ☐ Cap

65

Si veu pel·lícules i/o sèries de televisió, ho fa en anglès amb subtítols en anglès, subtítols en el(s) idioma(s) matern(s) o sense subtítols? \*

- ☐ Amb subtítols en anglès
- ☐ Amb altres subtítols
- ☐ Sense subtítols
- ☐ No veig ni sèries ni pel·lícules

66

Quant de temps porta veient sèries de televisió i pel·lícules en anglès? \*

- ☐ 1-2 anys
- ☐ 3-5 anys
- ☐ 5-10 anys
- ☐ 10-20 anys
- ☐ La major part de la meua vida
- ☐ No les veig (en anglès)

67

Esmenteu a) algunes de les sèries que està veient actualment i (b) que va veure anteriorment i quan.

## Experiència amb l'anglès

68

Està estudiant anglès actualment? Si és així, des de fa quant temps? \*

69

Va assistir a classes d'anglès a l'escola, escola, universitat, i/o escoles d'idiomes abans? Si és així, pot explicar quantes vegades i quant va durar cada vegada? \*

70

Ha viscut/estudiat mai a l'estranger? Si és així, pot explicar quan, on, i quant va durar i si parlava en anglès o en altres idiomes? \*

71

Avalui d'1 a 5 el grau de motivació (sent 1 gens motivat/da i 5 molt motivat/ada) que va tenir respecte a l'aprenentatge d'idiomes en cada període de la seva vida \*

	1	2	3	4	5
Jove (fins a 20 anys)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entre els 20 i 30 anys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entre els 30 i 40 anys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prejubilació (50 anys)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jubilació (60 anys i més)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

72

Per què estudia anglès? \*

- ☐ Per treballar
- ☐ Per viatjar
- ☐ Per entendre pel·lícules / notícies / música
- ☐ Per diversió
- ☐ Per amor
- ☐ Per afavorir la capacitat cognitiva
- ☐ Per socialitzar-me
- ☐ Per guanyar autoconfiança
- ☐ Per mantenir-me ocupat/da
- ☐ Per guanyar més fluïdesa
- ☐ Per integrar-me a una altra comunitat
- ☐ Per entendre una altra cultura
- ☐







77

Fins a quin punt està d'acord amb les següents afirmacions pel que fa a l'experiència amb l'aprenentatge/ús de l'anglès \*

	Totalment en desacord	Desacord	Ni d'acord ni desacord	D'acord	Totalment d'acord	No ho sé
Estic motivat/da	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gaudeixo desafiant-me a mi mateix	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sóc treballador/a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sóc/Solia ser un/a bon/a estudiant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Estic obsessionat/da	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aprenc de manera autònoma	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Necessito l'aprovació i els comentaris d'un professor/a o parlant nadiu/va sobre les meves habilitats en anglès	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tinc curiositat per l'anglès	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

78

Algun comentari o idea que voldria afegir?

## Videos

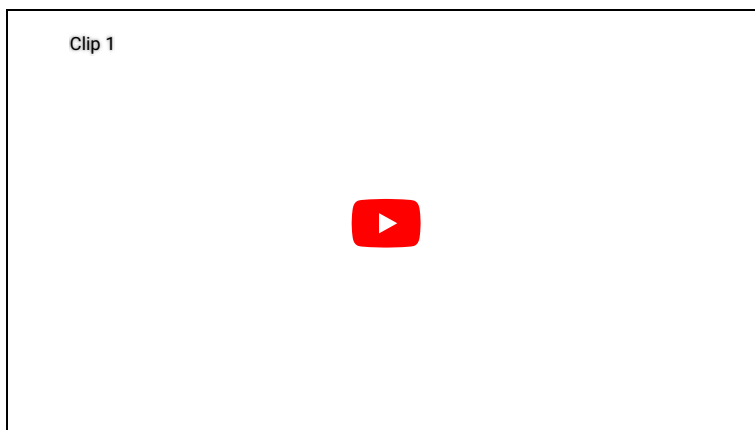
79

## Clip 1 - New Friends

In "Clip 1", you see Emily and Mindy talking. Emily has just arrived in Paris and Mindy has lived there for a long time. This is the first time they are meeting.

Do you think the way Mindy suggests that Emily should contact her is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

80

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

81

What would you say in this situation? \*

82

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

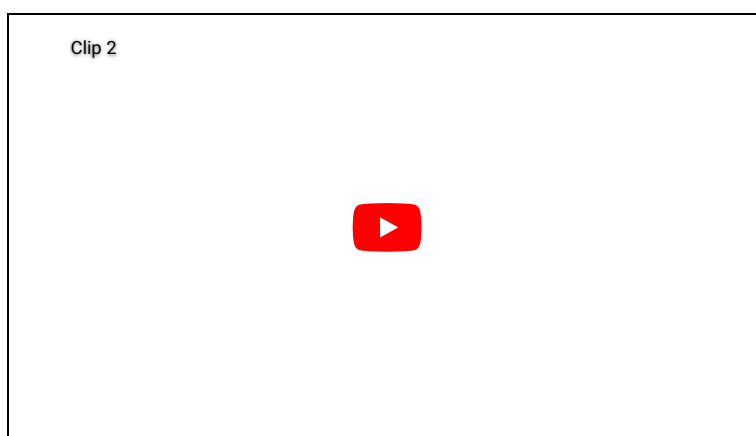
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

83

Clip 2 - boss / employee

In "Clip 2", you see President Siebert (the boss), and Dr. Sheldon Cooper (the employee) talking.  
Do you think the way the boss suggests that the employee should take a vacation is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

84

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

85

What would you say in this situation? \*

86

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

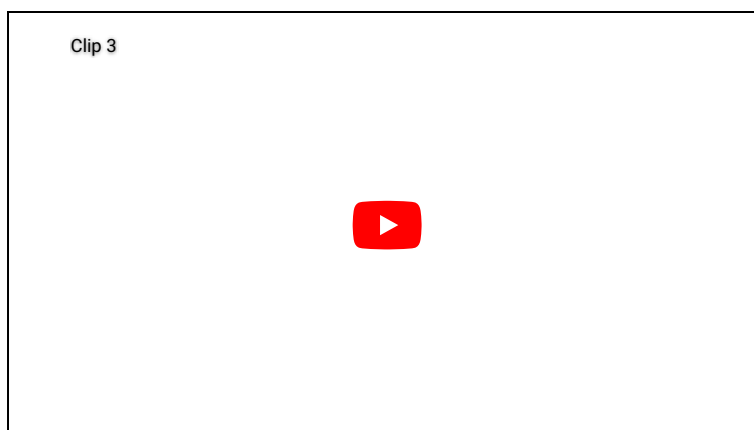
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

87

Clip 3 - mom/children

In "Clip 3", you see Bree (the mother), Danielle (the daughter) and Andrew (the son) talking. Do you think the way the children suggest that their mother should cook is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

88

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

89

What would you say in this situation? \*

90

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

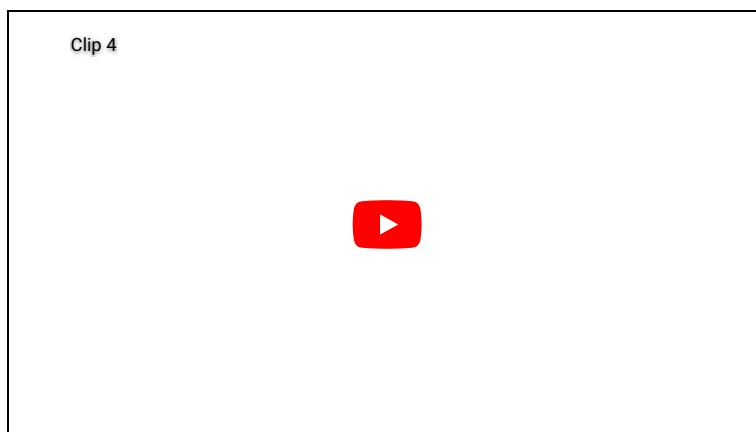
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

91

## Clip 4 - client/agent

In "Clip 4", you see Emily (American) and a real estate agent (French) talking. Emily has just arrived in Paris and the agent has just shown her the apartment.  
Do you think the way the agent suggests that Emily should contact her is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

92

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

93

What would you say in this situation? \*

94

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

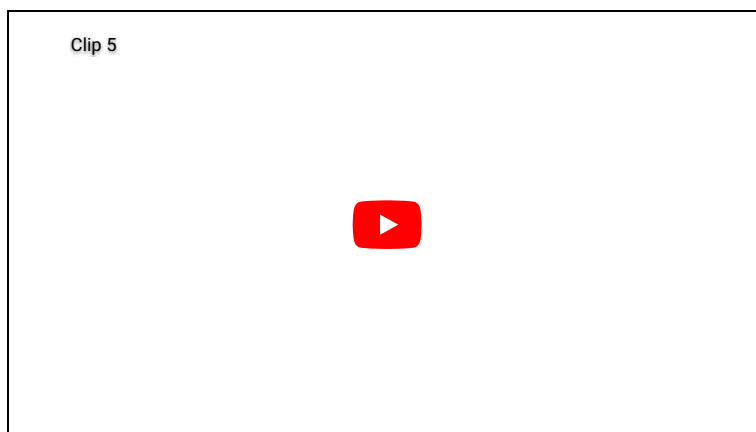
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

95

Clip 5 - mothers (strangers)

In "Clip 5", you see Gloria (the Colombian mother) and the other mother (American) arguing about their children playing football. They don't know each other.  
Do you think the way Gloria suggests what the other mother should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

96

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times



97

What would you say in this situation? \*

98

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

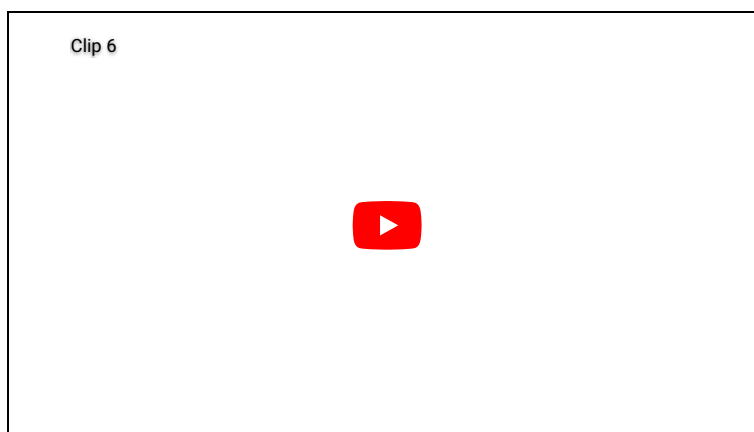
99

Clip 6 - husband/wife

In "Clip 6", you see Gloria (the wife) and Jay (the husband) talking. Gloria has just had angry discussion with another mom.

Do you think the way Jay suggests that Gloria should calm down is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

100

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

101

What would you say in this situation? \*

102

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

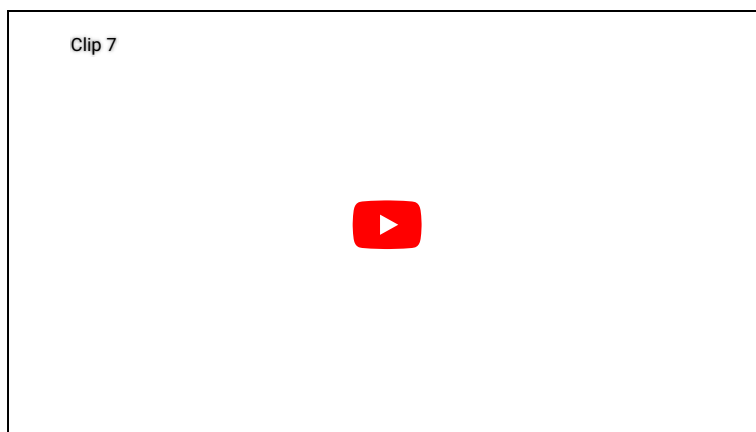
103

## Clip 7 - boss/employee

In "Clip 7", you see Dr. Browne (the intern - woman) and Dr. Melendez (the boss - man) talking about a patient who needs a surgery. The woman thinks the patient needs some time to process the surgery, but the boss disagrees.

Do you think the way the boss suggests that the intern should listen to him is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

104

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

105

What would you say in this situation? \*

106

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

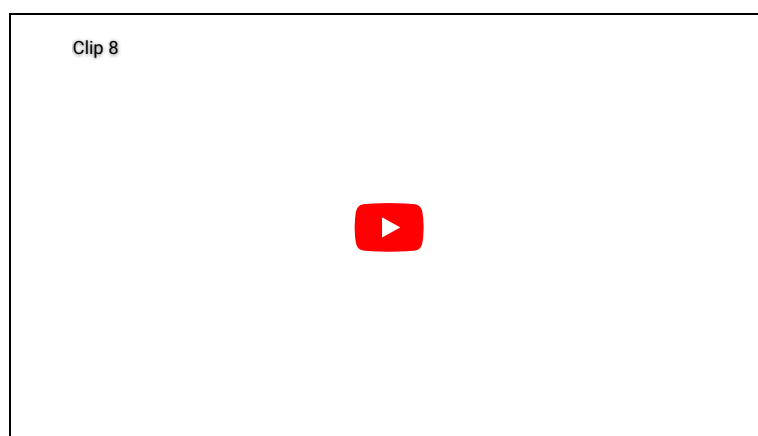
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

107

Clip 8 - parent/child

In "Clip 8", you see Phil (the dad), Luke (the son), and Alex (the sister) talking.  
Do you think the way Alex suggests what to do to Luke is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

108

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

109

What would you say in this situation? \*

110

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

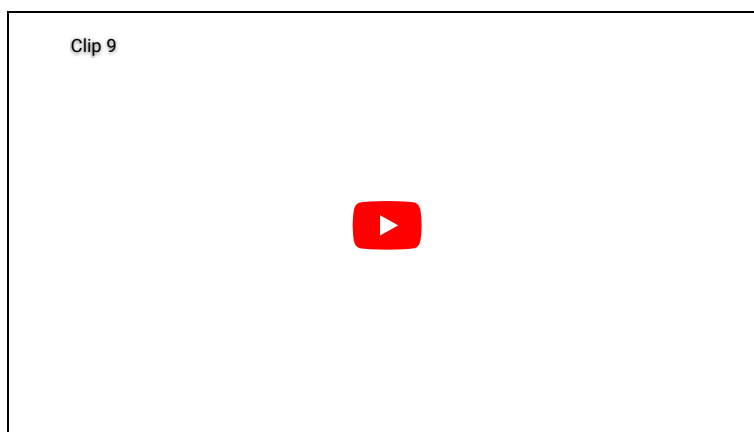
111

Clip 9 - husband/wife

In "Clip 9", you see Gloria (the wife) and Jay (the husband) talking. Someone thought Jay is Gloria's dad, and he seems upset.

Do you think the way Gloria suggests what to do to make Jay happy is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1

2

3

4

5

112

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

113

What would you say in this situation? \*

114

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

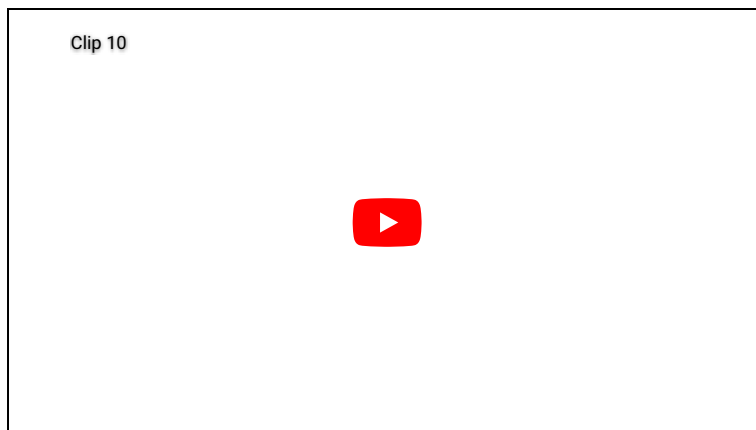
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

115

Clip 10 - therapist/patient

In "Clip 10", you see Jimmy (the therapist) and Grace (the patient) talking about Grace's relationship. Jimmy has had a very difficult day. Do you think the way Jimmy (the therapist) suggests what Grace should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

116

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

117

What would you say in this situation? \*

118

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

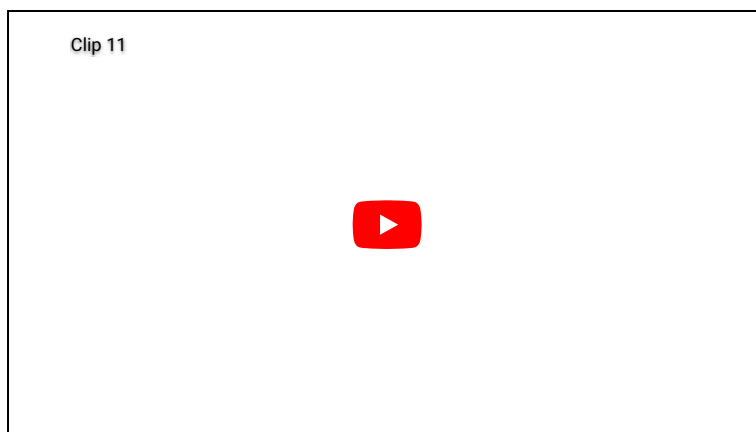
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

119

Clip 11 - new neighbors

In "Clip 11", you see Susan and Mike talking at a funeral. This is the first time they're meeting. They're new neighbors. They're at a funeral where Susan brought macaroni and cheese. Do you think the way Susan suggest what Mike should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

120

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times



121

What would you say in this situation? \*

122

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

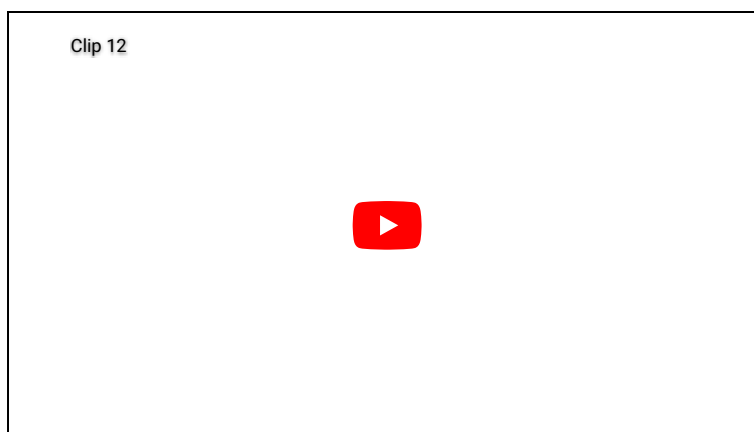
123

Clip 12 - teacher/student

In "Clip 12", you see Paulina (dance teacher) and John (her student) talking. Paulina has a stain on her coat and John has just offered her a handkerchief.

Do you think the way John suggests they should have dinner is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1

2

3

4

5

124

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

125

What would you say in this situation? \*

126

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

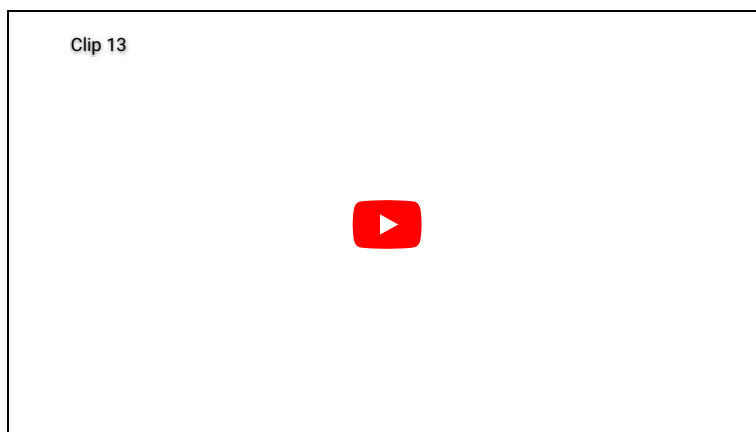
127

Clip 13 - husband/wife

In "Clip 13", you see Shiv (the wife) and Tom (the husband) talking. Tom wants to buy a birthday gift for Shiv's father.

Do you think the way Shiv suggests what Tom should buy is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

128

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

129

What would you say in this situation? \*

130

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

131

Clip 14 - brothers (partners)

In "Clip 14", you see Kendall and Roman talking. They are brothers. Kendall (the older brother in a suit) is working for his dad's company, and he wants to become the CEO because his dad is unconscious, but he needs Roman's (the younger brother's) help.

Do you think the way Kendall suggests what to do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*

Clip 14



1

2

3

4

5

132

How many times did you watch this clip? \*

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-3 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ More than 5 times

133

What would you say in this situation? \*

134

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

---

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

 Microsoft Forms

## Appendix B

### Clips and Full Scripts

#### **Clip 1 – Emily in Paris – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D+**

<https://youtu.be/EGb-DkNisal>

Mindy: Do you have any friends in Paris?

Emily: Uh, no. Um... but my boyfriend's coming next week to visit, so...

Mindy: Are you lonely?

Emily: No... uh... Sometimes.

Mindy: Give me your phone.

Emily: Uh...

Mindy: Okay, so here's my number. If you're lonely, you text me, we have dinner. I'm Mindy.

Emily: Emily. Nice to meet you.

Mindy: French people do this.

Emily: Oh.

#### **Clip 2 – The Big Bang Theory – Season 5 Episode 16 – P+ D+**

<https://youtu.be/UFvzoWsLfd4>

Raj: Hey, guys, guys, President Siebert is headed this way.

Howard: I wonder what he wants.

Leonard: Doesn't look happy, so I'm guessing he wants to talk to Sheldon.

Seibert: Dr. Cooper?

Leonard: Told ya.

Sheldon: Oh, President Siebert, I assume you'd like to respond to one of the suggestions I put in the box by your office.

Seibert: No, and stop installing suggestion boxes everywhere.

Sheldon: You don't like written suggestions. You don't like when I give them to you while we're urinating in the men's room. If I didn't know any better, I'd say that you're one of those stubborn people who are not open to suggestions.

Seibert: Dr. Cooper, the physics department chair tells me you're refusing to take your vacation.

Sheldon: I don't need a vacation.

Seibert: You're obligated to take one. And I'd also like you to know the most-often received suggestion in my suggestion box you installed without asking me is can Dr. Cooper take a vacation? Okay, settled, then. I'll see you all on Monday, except for you.

Sheldon: But if I don't come into work, what am I supposed to do with myself?

Seibert: Read, rest, travel. I hear Afghanistan is nice this time of year.

Sheldon: Sarcasm?

Howard: No. You should go.

### **Clip 3 – Desperate Housewives – Season 1 Episode 1 – P+ D-**

<https://youtu.be/GOd4VOa3b-o>

Danielle: Why can't we ever have normal soup?

Brie: Danielle, there is nothing abnormal about basil purée.

Danielle: Once, can we have a soup people have heard of? Like French onion or navy bean?

Brie: Your father can't eat onions. He's deathly allergic. And I won't even dignify your navy bean suggestion. So, how's the osso buco?

Andrew: It's OK.

Brie: It's OK? I spent three hours cooking this meal. How do you think it feels when you say, "It's OK" in that sullen tone?

Andrew: Who asked you to spend three hours on dinner?

Brie: Excuse me?

Andrew: Tim Harper's mom gets home from work, pops open a can of pork and beans, and boom! They're eating, everyone's happy.

Brie: You'd rather I served pork and beans?

Danielle: Apologize now, I'm begging.

Andrew: I'm saying do you always have to serve cuisine? Can't we ever just have food?

**Clip 4 – Emily in Paris – Season 1 Episode 1 – P+ D+**

<https://youtu.be/gEO2aE9033c>

-Are you hungry? Would you like to have a coffee or ...?

-Oh, actually, I have to get to my office.

-Oh. Maybe you want to have a drink tonight?

-I have a boyfriend.

- In Paris?

-In Chicago.

-So, you don't have a boyfriend in Paris.

- Can I just get my keys, s'il vous plaît?

- Yeah. Um, my number is on the card if you need me for anything, and in case you change your mind.

- I won't. Bye-bye, now.

- Yeah.

**Clip 5 – Modern Family – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D+**

[https://youtu.be/n7Z\\_qTeAqtY](https://youtu.be/n7Z_qTeAqtY)

Gloria: Manny, stop him! Stop him! You can do it!

Boy: Damn it, Manny!

Mother: Come on, Coach. You gotta take that kid out.

Gloria: You wanna take him out? How about I take you out?



Jay: Honey, honey.

Gloria: Why don't you worry about your son? He spent the first half with his hand in his pants!

Father: I've wanted to tell her off for the last six weeks.

**Clip 6 – Modern Family – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D-**

<https://youtu.be/eclyMLytJKU>

Jay: You know, Gloria, that little blowup with that other mom- Why do you have to do things like that?

Gloria: If somebody says something about my family, I'm going to-

Jay: I'm just saying. You could take it down here a little bit. That's all.

Gloria: Oh, yeah. 'Cause that's where you live, down here. But I live up here!

Jay: Yeah, but you don't have to be so emotional all the time. That's all I'm saying. Manny, you're with me on this, right?

Manny: I wanna tell Brenda Feldman I love her.

Jay: Oh, for God sakes.

**Clip 7 – The Good Doctor – Season 1 Episode 1 – P+ D+**

<https://youtu.be/VZQcoTLQDeY>

Dr. Melendez: You get that consent on 104?

Dr. Browne: Well, I made him a deal. He's got a meeting with Dr. Max from psychiatry at 6:00, we'll get the consent by 8:00, we can operate first thing in the morning.

Dr. Melendez: You did pass anatomy, right, Dr. Browne? His problem's in his heart, not his head.

Dr. Browne: He's not psychologically ready for surgery. He will be. Soon.

Dr. Melendez: Well, he is physically ready. So, get the consent. We're prepping O.R. 6 now.

Dr. Browne: Do I need to cite you the 17 studies that show a correlation between attitude and

outcome in surgical patients?

Dr. Melendez: Do I need to remind you that I am your superior? You do know what the opposite of superior is, right?

Dr. Browne: Subordinate. Doesn't...

Dr. Melendez: Sure. Subordinate. Or... inferior. Either way.

Dr. Browne: It doesn't mean I'm wrong.

Dr. Melendez: I suppose not. But it does mean you have to act like you're wrong.

**Clip 8 – Modern Family – Season 1 Episode 1 – P+ D-**

<https://youtu.be/9zvb7vNhUxk>

Phil: Buddy. Why do you keep getting stuck like this?

Luke: I thought I could get out this time.

Alex: I'm just gonna say it. He needs to be checked by a specialist.

Luke: Ow!

Phil: There. Be free. Excalibur!

**Clip 9 – Modern Family – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D-**

<https://youtu.be/cRngAIfPMWA>

Jay: I can't watch this.

Gloria: You're in such a bad mood. And I know why. It's because that man thought you were my father.

Jay: No.

Gloria: Yes.

Jay: No.

Gloria: When you say "No" like that, it's always "Yes." Come on. We're in the mall. Let's get you, like, some younger clothes. There's a store there.

Jay: I don't need any younger clothes. And I don't care what some jackass in a pair of ripped

jeans thinks about me.

Gloria: Good. You shouldn't. You should only care what I think. I love you, and I don't care how old you are.

**Clip 10 – Shrinking – Season 1 Episode 1 – P+ D+**

[https://youtu.be/9ZmPKvj2a\\_c](https://youtu.be/9ZmPKvj2a_c)

Grace: And he just kept on going on and on about how dumb I am.

Jimmy: You're not dumb, Grace.

Grace: He said if I weren't from my great tits, no one would wanna take care of me, so, that's almost nice.

Jimmy: It's not nice.

Grace: I know, but he loves me.

Jimmy: Enough! Grace, we've been doing this for two years. Two years of your life. I have never seen a guy tell a woman that she is dumb and lucky she has great tits and thought to myself, "Wow, they must really be in love." And you keep telling me how great he is. Well, I saw him. He's not that great. His muscles are too big. His shirts are too tight. Nobody likes that. It's gross. And what's the word? What's that word? What's the word?

Grace: I don't know what word you're talking about.

Jimmy: Fugly! He's fugly. He's a fugly, fugly man. Fugly inside and out.

Grace: I'm sorry, I don't know what's happening. 'Cause I was talking and...

Jimmy: Grace, your husband is emotionally abusive. He's not working on it. He doesn't intend to. He's made you think it's all you deserve. It's not. Just fucking leave him.

Grace: It's not that easy.

Jimmy: It is that easy. You don't have any kids. Just go to your sister's in Vancouver.

Grace: But then...

Jimmy: Leave him or I'm done being your therapist. Look...

Grace: Okay. Okay.

**Clip 11 – Desperate Housewives – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D+**

<https://youtu.be/RJqBcKLs8bY>

Susan: I wouldn't eat that if I were you.

Mike: Why?

Susan: I made it. Trust me. Hey, hey, do you have a death wish?

Mike: No, I just don't believe that anybody can screw up macaroni and cheese. Oh, my God.

How did you...? It tastes like it's burnt and undercooked.

Susan: Yeah, I get that a lot. Here you go.

**Clip 12 – Shall We Dance? – P+ D+**

[https://youtu.be/1igXihD\\_Jrc](https://youtu.be/1igXihD_Jrc)

John: Just to wipe your coat, or... Go ahead, just take it. Please. Go ahead.

Paulina: It's silly, but it's my favorite coat.

John: I'm sorry.

Paulina: It's vintage. But this part's real suede, so now it's ruined.

John: You sure? Maybe they can fix that.

Paulina: No. I know about stains. It's...

John: You know, I never understood that. I never understood- live cows get dirty all the time, they don't get stained. All that leather stands in the mud, nothing happens. Go figure. What is that?

Paulina: Exactly. Get a little sauce on your coat and look. Why is that?

John: I don't know. We'll have to ask the next cow that comes by.

Paulina: A man with a handkerchief. Wow. I didn't know they made those anymore.

John: I haven't eaten yet. If you haven't eaten yet, maybe we can go and... get a bite.

Someplace close. You know, I saw a Chinese over here. We could use chopsticks and drop an endless variety of things on our clothes.

Paulina: I'm sorry, I prefer not to socialize with students.

John: Oh. OK. All right.

Paulina: You know, I shouldn't have taken this from you. I'll buy you a new one.

John: Please. I didn't... I didn't mean anything by that.

Paulina: I'll buy you a new one.

**Clip 13 – Succession – Season 1 Episode 1 – P- D-**

<https://youtu.be/DV-7bMVy8WI>

Tom: I got to strategize my gift. What can I get him he'll love?

Shiv: I don't know. My dad doesn't really like things.

He doesn't like things?

Shiv: No, not really.

Tom: It needs to say that “I respect you, but I'm not awed by you. And that I-- I like you, but I need you to like me before I can love you.” So what says that?

Shiv: Just, look, everything that you get him will mean an equal amount of nothing, so make sure it looks like 10 to 15 grand's worth and you're good.

Tom: Will you come in here and help me?

Shiv: Yes.

Tom: Please help me.

Shiv: Yes. Get him a watch.

**Clip 14 – Succession – Season 1 Episode 2 – P- D-**

<https://youtu.be/DV-7bMVy8WI>

Kendall: Yo, come here for a second. So, listen. I've been thinking, and this is my vision. We go for it, me and you. CEO and COO.

Roman: Oh.

Kendall: Me and my homey Romey.

Roman: I thought I was a fuckhead.

Kendall: Uh, dipshit, and you said that.

Roman: You said I wasn't serious.

Kendall: Sorry. It's been a long day.

Roman: Yeah.

Kendall: But, dude, seriously. Me and you, bro. Like, I could teach you. And you could, you know, teach me.

Roman: And Shiv?

Kendall: I mean, you know what Shiv's like. Ultimately, She's a daddy's girl. Right? I mean, she wants to play it safe. We're the ones with the nuts to fucking revolutionize.

Roman: Okay, I'm not uninterested.

Kendall: All right, then, let's fucking do it.

-Well, here's the thing. Gerri just turned down the top job. So does that mean something?

## Appendix C

### Interview Questions

1. Do you feel like you cannot communicate or express what you really want to say in English?
  - a. ¿Siente Vd. que no puede comunicarse o expresar lo que realmente quiere decir en inglés?
2. How do you feel when you watch movies and series?
  - a. ¿Cómo se siente Vd. cuando ve películas y series?
3. Can you tell me a little about your experience watching movies and tv shows?
  - a. ¿Me puede hablar Vd. sobre su experiencia con películas y series?
4. How do you feel when you are in your English class?
  - a. ¿Cómo se siente Vd. cuando está en clase de inglés?
5. What are the benefits of English classes in your opinion?  
(traveling/socializing/knowing about other cultures...)
  - a. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de las clases de inglés en su opinión?  
(viajar/socializar/conocer otras culturas...)
6. You mentioned you have studied English “on and off” for many years. Could you elaborate more on this?
  - a. Ha mencionado Vd. que ha estudiado inglés de manera discontinua durante muchos años. ¿Podría dar más detalles al respecto?
7. Can you tell me more about your experience with all languages growing up?  
(Were you speaking in Spanish or Catalan at home? How many years did you study English? How about at school?)

- a. ¿Me puede hablar Vd. un poco sobre su experiencia con las lenguas? (¿en casa hablaban en español o catalán? ¿Cuántos años estudió inglés? ¿En la escuela?)
8. How many times do you travel and speak English nowadays? And in the past?
  - a. ¿Cuántas veces al año viaja y habla Vd. en inglés actualmente? ¿Y antes?
9. How did you feel after finishing the questionnaire? Tired? Accomplished? Bored?
  - a. ¿Cómo se sintió al terminar el cuestionario? ¿Cansado? ¿Satisfecho? ¿Aburrido?
10. Was the questionnaire too long? Too difficult?
  - a. ¿El cuestionario le pareció demasiado largo? ¿Demasiado difícil?
11. Did you take a break while you were doing your questionnaire?
  - a. ¿Se tomó algún descanso mientras realizaba el cuestionario?
12. Did you understand the dialogs well?
  - a. ¿Ha entendido bien los diálogos?
13. Are there any challenges with thinking and memory that you would like to share, e.g., early-onset Alzheimer's disease?
  - a. ¿Le gustaría compartir alguna reflexión sobre trastornos cognitivos como falta de memoria (, como, por ejemplo, el Alzheimer precoz)?
14. Could you tell me why you think the way this character made a suggestion is appropriate?
  - a. ¿Podría decirme por qué le parece apropiada la forma en que este personaje hizo una sugerencia?



## Appendix D

### Native Speaker Online Form

#### Questionnaire Ph.D. Baseline

\* Required

#### Consent form

You are invited to participate in a study investigating **pragmatic knowledge of English**. Your participation will help the researcher to understand better the processes involved in foreign language acquisition. You have been selected as a potential candidate because you are **a senior citizen and English native speaker**. Please read this document and ask any questions you feel necessary before consenting to participate in the study.

##### STUDY PROCEDURE:

The research will be carried out by **Yashar Khazdouzian**, PhD student in Cognitive Science and Language (Universitat de Barcelona), under the supervision of Professors **Maria Luz Celaya Villanueva** and **Júlia Barón Parés** (Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and English Studies, Universitat de Barcelona).

The study will be conducted **on dates arranged with the researcher**. The **estimated duration** of your participation is approximately **10 minutes in a one-day session and, if selected, an interview of no more than 10 minutes**. The researcher, Yashar Khazdouzian, will be responsible for presenting the study information to participants, collecting signed online consents, and conducting all the tests described below if you wish to participate in the study. If you agree to participate in the study, you will perform the following tasks on a questionnaire:

##### Session 1 (10 minutes):

1. Questionnaire about your data (age, educational background, languages you speak)
2. Appropriateness of speech.

##### Session 2 (if applicable) (10 minutes):

1. Interview via Microsoft Teams about your detailed experience with English (10 minutes).

##### CONFIDENTIALITY

Your personal data will be kept confidential. Your **anonymity will also be maintained** in the reports related to the publications resulting from this study and in the databases in which your data will be stored. To maintain the anonymity of the participants, names will be replaced by codes. Names and e-mail addresses are necessary to communicate the results (if desired) and to contact you in case you are selected. The names will be replaced later, and the data will be stored **on a researcher's external device. Only the main researcher** (Yashar Khazdouzian, [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)) **and the supervisors** (Maria Luz Celaya Villanueva, [mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu) and Júlia Barón Parés [juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)) **will have access** to your data and responses. The information collected **will only be used in a completely anonymous way for publications derived from this study**. At the end of the study, all your personal information and the questionnaires in Microsoft Forms will be deleted.

1

**COMPENSATION**

**You will not receive any monetary compensation.** The researcher will inform participants of their individual results and provide them with information of interest about the English pragmatics under investigation in this study if they wish.

**CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

For questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher Yashar Khazdouzian at [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). For questions about your rights as a research participant, to raise possible problems, complaints, or concerns about this study, to obtain more information, or to offer your opinion, please contact Maria Luz Celaya ([mluzcelaya@ub.edu](mailto:mluzcelaya@ub.edu)) or Júlia Barón Parés ([juliabaron@ub.edu](mailto:juliabaron@ub.edu)).

**VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to take part or drop out at any time. Refusal to continue to participate in this study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

**Right of Information**

**Data Controller:** Yashar Khazdouzian (NIE: Y4351444-L), [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Purpose of data processing:** doctoral thesis.

**Legal basis:** in accordance with Regulation (EU) No. 2016/679, General Data Protection and the LO 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights, and the supervisory authority for data protection in Catalonia, which is the Catalan Data Protection Agency (APDCAT) you can exercise completely free of charge the rights of access, information, rectification, deletion and oblivion, limitation of processing, opposition, portability and not to be subject to automated individual decisions by sending an e-mail to [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu)

**Data retention period:** subject to the provisions of the Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights (LOPDGDD), which incorporates the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union, for this doctoral thesis is 5 years.

**Recipients:** participants of the study.

**Rights of data subjects:** You can access your data, request its rectification, deletion, portability or limitation, by sending an email to [ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu](mailto:ykhazdkh7@alumnes.ub.edu). It will be necessary to attach a photocopy of your ID card or other valid identification document that identifies you.

**Supervisory authority:** Catalan Data Protection Agency (APDCAT).

Do you agree? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

2

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my questionnaire. Do you give me permission to use the results in my study and contact you if I need more information? (your personal details, i.e., your name and email, will not be used in the study) \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

## Personal Information

3

Name \*

4

Age \*

5

Gender \*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

6

Email or telephone number \*

7

What is/are your first language(s) and culture(s)? \*

8

What other languages do you know? and what languages have you studied? (Please write the languages, how did you study them, and state your level and a short explanation) \*

9

What is your academic and profession background? (high school diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree? what jobs have you had?) \*

10

Do you watch series and movies in English? \*

- ☐ Yes TV series, No movies
- ☐ No TV series, Yes movies
- ☐ Yes TV series, Yes movies
- ☐ No TV series, No movies

11

If you watch movies and/or TV series, do you watch them in English with English subtitles, subtitles in your first language(s) or without any subtitles? \*

- ☐ With English subtitles
- ☐ With other subtitles
- ☐ Without subtitles
- ☐ I don't watch them

12

How long have you been watching TV series and movies in English? \*

- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 10-20 years
- ☐ Most of my life
- ☐ I don't watch them (in English)

13

Please mention (a) some of the series you are watching at the moment and (b) you watched before and when. \*

## Videos

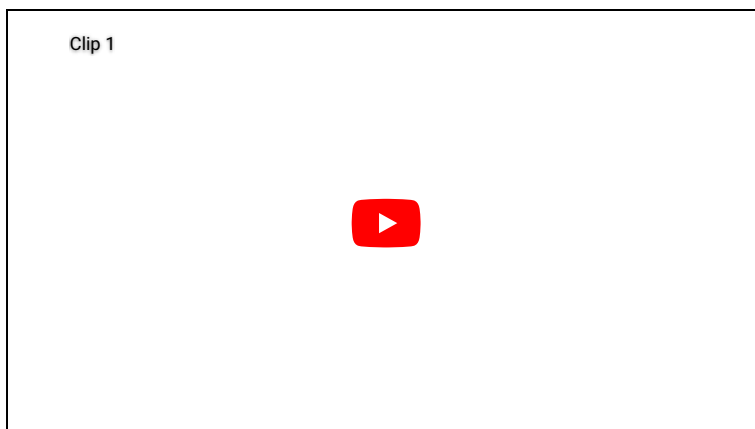
14

## Clip 1 - New Friends

In "Clip 1", you see Emily and Mindy talking. Emily has just arrived in Paris and Mindy has lived there for a long time. This is the first time they are meeting.

Do you think the way Mindy suggests that Emily should contact her is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1

2

3

4

5

15

What would you say in this situation? \*

16

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

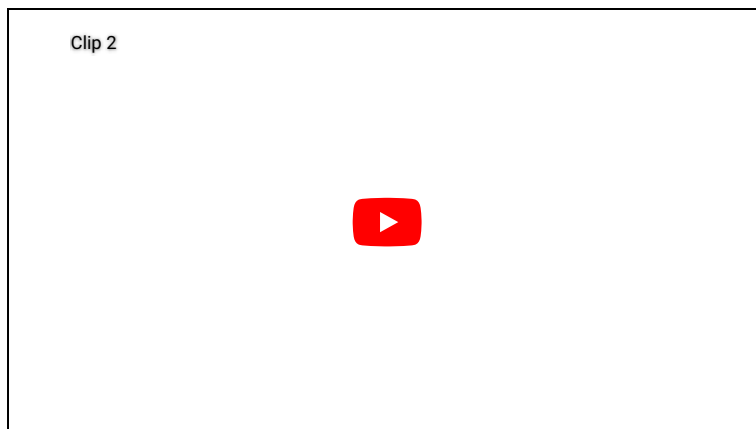
☐ Maybe

17

Clip 2 - boss / employee

In "Clip 2", you see President Siebert (the boss), and Dr. Sheldon Cooper (the employee) talking.  
Do you think the way the boss suggests that the employee should take a vacation is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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18

What would you say in this situation? \*

19

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

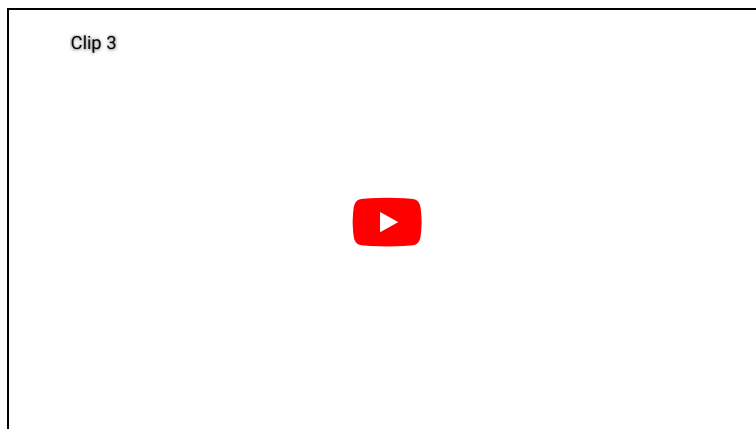
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

20

Clip 3 - mom/children

In "Clip 3", you see Bree (the mother), Danielle (the daughter) and Andrew (the son) talking. Do you think the way the children suggest that their mother should cook is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

21

What would you say in this situation? \*

22

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

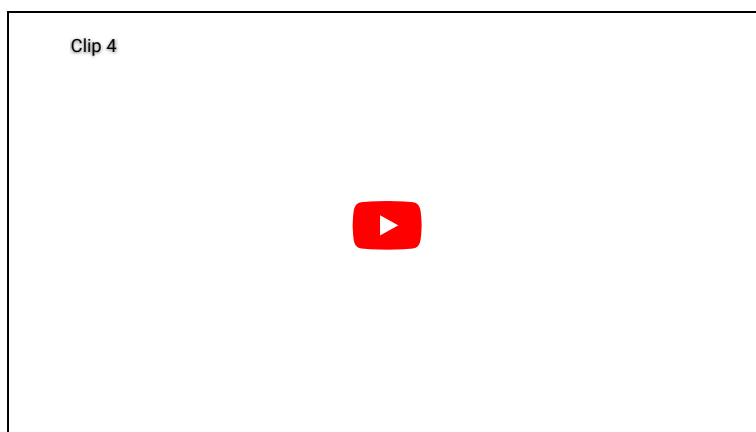


23

## Clip 4 - client/agent

In "Clip 4", you see Emily (American) and a real estate agent (French) talking. Emily has just arrived in Paris and the agent has just shown her the apartment.  
Do you think the way the agent suggests that Emily should contact her is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

24

What would you say in this situation? \*

25

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

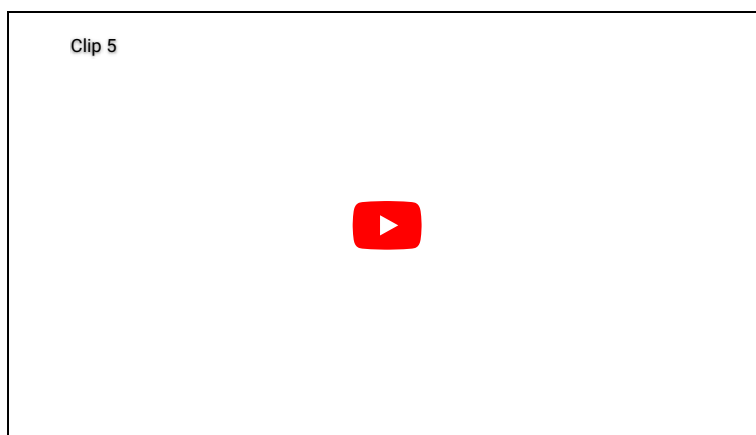
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

26

Clip 5 - mothers (strangers)

In "Clip 5", you see Gloria (the Colombian mother) and the other mother (American) arguing about their children playing football. They don't know each other.  
Do you think the way Gloria suggests what the other mother should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

27

What would you say in this situation? \*

28

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

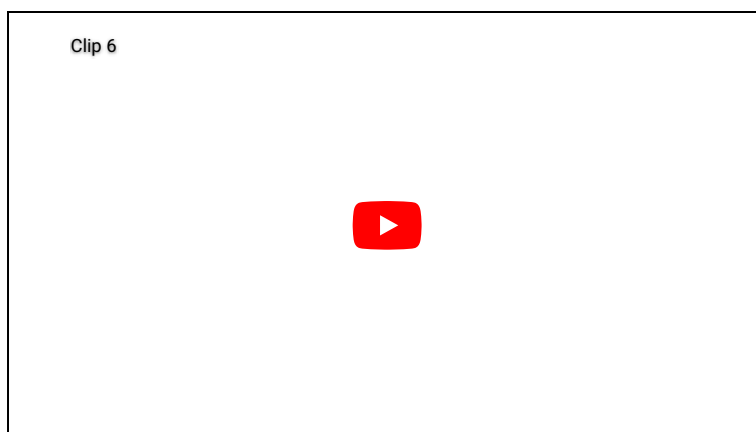
29

## Clip 6 - husband/wife

In "Clip 6", you see Gloria (the wife) and Jay (the husband) talking. Gloria has just had angry discussion with another mom.

Do you think the way Jay suggests that Gloria should calm down is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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30

What would you say in this situation? \*

31

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

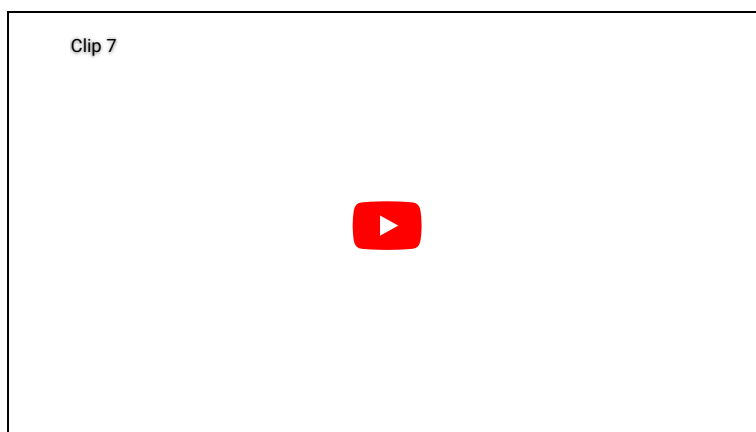
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

32

## Clip 7 - boss/employee

In "Clip 7", you see Dr. Browne (the intern - woman) and Dr. Melendez (the boss - man) talking about a patient who needs a surgery. The woman thinks the patient needs some time to process the surgery, but the boss disagrees.  
Do you think the way the boss suggests that the intern should listen to him is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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33

What would you say in this situation? \*

34

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

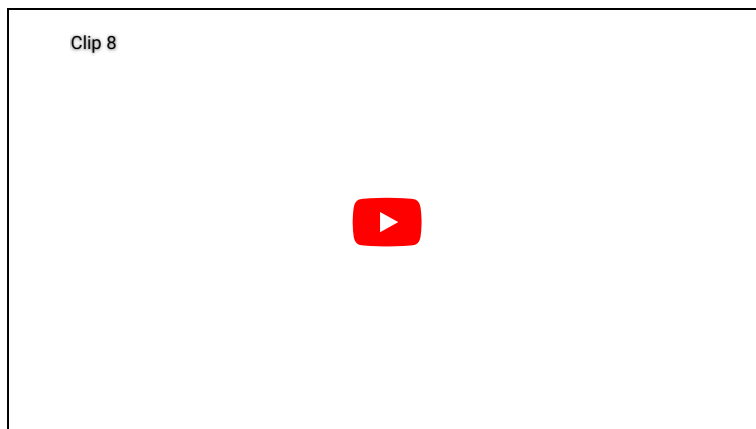
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

35

Clip 8 - parent/child

In "Clip 8", you see Phil (the dad), Luke (the son), and Alex (the sister) talking.  
Do you think the way Alex suggests what to do to Luke is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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36

What would you say in this situation? \*

37

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

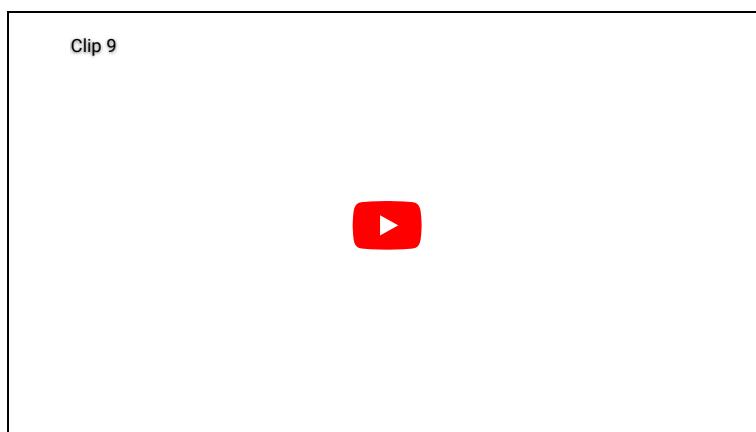
38

## Clip 9 - husband/wife

In "Clip 9", you see Gloria (the wife) and Jay (the husband) talking. Someone thought Jay is Gloria's dad, and he seems upset.

Do you think the way Gloria suggests what to do to make Jay happy is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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39

What would you say in this situation? \*

40

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

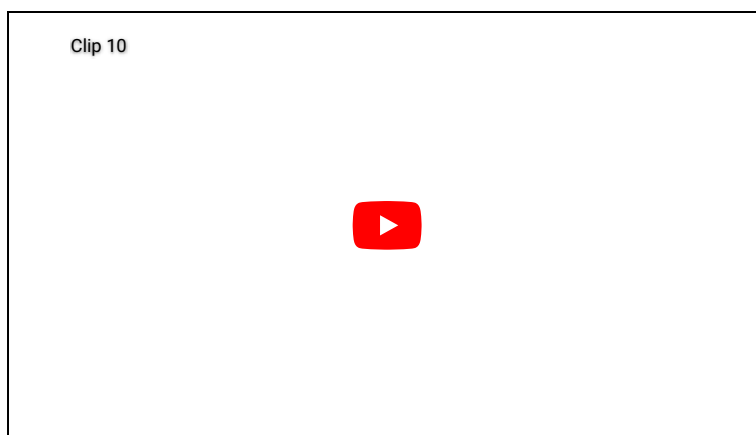
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

41

Clip 10 - therapist/patient

In "Clip 10", you see Jimmy (the therapist) and Grace (the patient) talking about Grace's relationship. Jimmy has had a very difficult day. Do you think the way Jimmy (the therapist) suggests what Grace should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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42

What would you say in this situation? \*

43

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

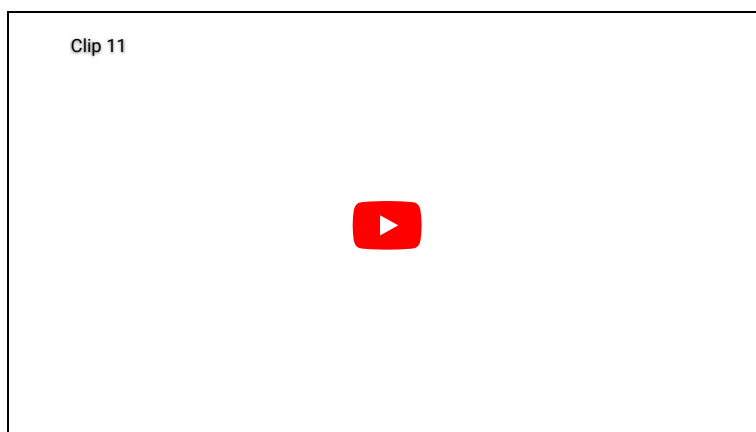
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

44

## Clip 11 - new neighbors

In "Clip 11", you see Susan and Mike talking at a funeral. This is the first time they're meeting. They're new neighbors. They're at a funeral where Susan brought macaroni and cheese. Do you think the way Susan suggest what Mike should do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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45

What would you say in this situation? \*

46

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe



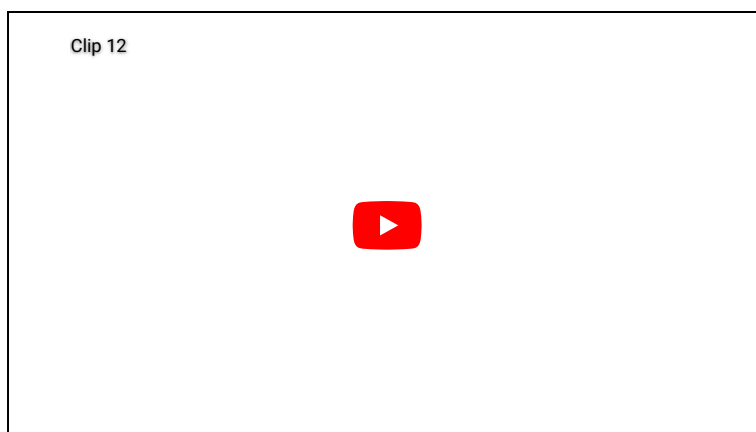
47

Clip 12 - teacher/student

In "Clip 12", you see Paulina (dance teacher) and John (her student) talking. Paulina has a stain on her coat and John has just offered her a handkerchief.

Do you think the way John suggests they should have dinner is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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48

What would you say in this situation? \*

49

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

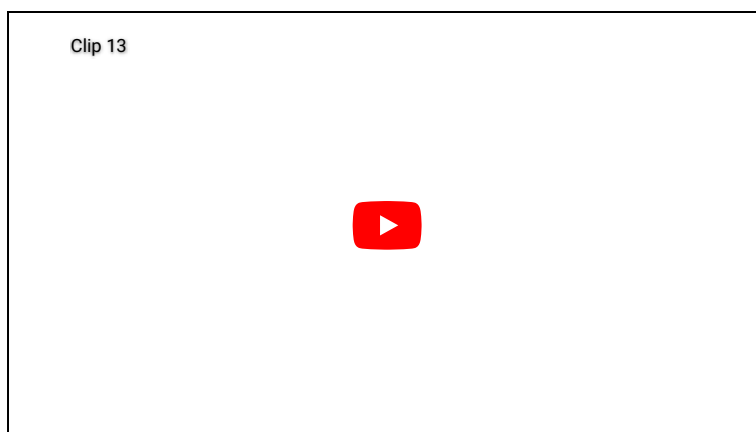
50

Clip 13 - husband/wife

In "Clip 13", you see Shiv (the wife) and Tom (the husband) talking. Tom wants to buy a birthday gift for Shiv's father.

Do you think the way Shiv suggests what Tom should buy is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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51

What would you say in this situation? \*

52

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

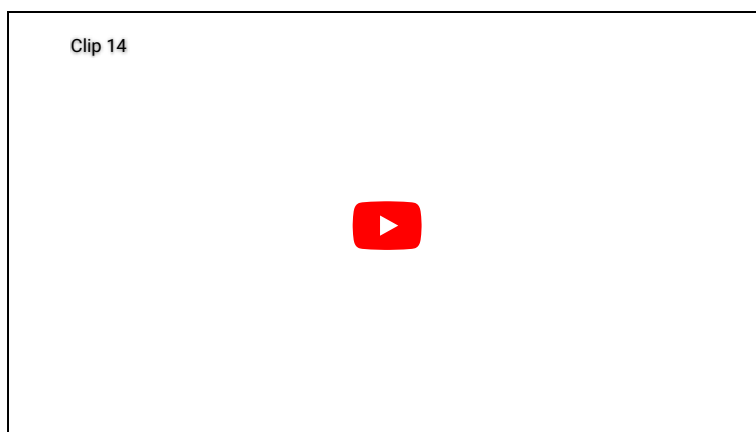
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

53

## Clip 14 - brothers (partners)

In "Clip 14", you see Kendall and Roman talking. They are brothers. Kendall (the older brother in a suit) is working for his dad's company, and he wants to become the CEO because his dad is unconscious, but he needs Roman's (the younger brother's) help. Do you think the way Kendall suggests what to do is appropriate?

1-Very rude - 5-Perfectly appropriate \*



1	2	3	4	5
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54

What would you say in this situation? \*

55

Have you watched this show/episode before? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

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