Second Language Gesture and Acculturation in Study Abroad Contexts

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SECOND LANGUAGE GESTURE AND ACCULTURATION
IN STUDY ABROAD CONTEXTS

by

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Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
California State University San Marcos
2007

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Science - Educational Psychology

Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education
College of Education
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 2013
THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the thesis prepared under our supervision by

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entitled

Second Language Gesture and Acculturation in Study Abroad Contexts

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science- Educational Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education

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December 2013
ABSTRACT

Second Language Gesture and Acculturation in Study Abroad Contexts

by

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Motivation is an integral part of learning; Gestures are an important aspect of human communication, and culture plays a significant role in shaping all of these human elements. This study explores the relationship between social, cultural-historical activity and second language (L2) gesture acquisition as student motivations both drive, and emanate from, the L2 learning process. Six American students participating in a study-abroad program in Chile were evaluated at three different levels of L2 proficiency (beginning, intermediate, and advanced) for L2 gesture articulations and motivational developments. During the semester-long investigation, three audio-video recorded interviews were conducted to observe L2 gestural behaviors, and two e-mail logs were collected to supplement research evaluations of student motivations and activity.

Results from the study's observations indicated that L2 proficiency level did not relate to student motivations, L2 gesture acquisition, or activity with any justifiable support. However, overall findings did reveal a relationship between L2 gesture acquisition and cultural activity, with anxiety and learner agency found to mediate this relationship. Specifically, students who were found to produce the most L2 gesture forms were those who reported having the most frequent
native speaker interactions—a cultural activity that was both pursued and internalized differently as individual learner agency and anxiety influenced student goals. Implications of this investigation maintain that psycholinguistic investigations of L2 learning and development can benefit from the acknowledgment of gesture as a fundamental component of communication as it aids in the illustration of second language development as an emerging process.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the members of my committee; First and foremost, to the chair of my committee: Dr. McCafferty. The time he dedicated to helping me grow as a scholar leave me forever indebted. For various reasons, I was faced with a highly restricted timeframe for which I had to write up the current study and with the added pressures that accompany an academic apprenticeship, I had my moments of doubt. Without even having to relay these thoughts however, Dr. McCafferty was able to somehow give me the clarity and confidence I needed to refocus. Not one day passed me by that his encouragement, patience and support didn’t make me believe that I could make it through to the end.

I am sincerely grateful for Dr. Marchand and Dr. Putney, as well. With Dr. Marchand’s genuine interest in my progress, and recognition of my personhood, she has shown me how to simultaneously balance life and academia. Without her, there may have been a few moments where I would have lost my sanity. Dr. Putney has provided an energetic interest in my research endeavors that has served to keep me motivated, and her innovative mind has inspired me at our every interaction. Most of all, without her earnest dedication, I would have never completed this work on time.

Additionally rewarding is Dr. Garcia’s belief in me, and my development as a scholar. His words will forever serve to guide me through my future path of academia. I have learned a tremendous amount from all of these individuals and
I look forward to our future collaborations so that I can learn how to be the scholar I aspire to be.

I am also very grateful for the love and support from my host family, as well as the time, guidance and support of the USAC staff in Chile. I must also acknowledge all 12 of my participants whose eager demeanor, cooperation and genuine interest for the study supported me in ways I never imagined. My Chilean interviewers must also be mentioned, for they dedicated a tremendous amount of their time and energy to help. Not only did each of these individuals in Chile enlighten my academic experience, they have forever touched my heart. My studies abroad were productive and insightful because of the heart that all these individuals have shown.

A special thank you to my family, as well. The letters, special packages, pictures, and FaceTime chats were especially comforting in times of second language distress while setting up this investigation. And a final acknowledgment to: the GPSA, the department of Educational Psychology in the College of Education and the UNLV International Scholarships Committee for providing me with funding to make this all possible.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The current study attempts to follow the microgenetic development of students’ initial motivations to study abroad in relation to how they participate in the target culture, and how their internalizations of these interactions are reflected in their use of second language (L2) gesture. Drawing upon the work of Siegler and Crowley (1991), a microgenetic analysis in the current investigation allowed for the examination of how students’ goals developed and changed over the course of a semester abroad, as evaluated through a rich collection of data. This approach was used to explore student acculturation as related to second language development through the examination of student goals, actions and operations as emerged through activity from a Vygotskian perspective (1978; 1986). Through student self-reports, goals were identified through student interviews and e-mail logs without the implementation of a quantitative measure (e.g., Gardner, Clement, Smythe, & Smythe’s Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery, 1982) so that I could qualitatively assess emerging motives for each individual language learner, capturing aspects not pre-quantified, and distinct to each learner.

The current study has been specifically designed to investigate the interplay between language learners and their target culture environment as an attempt to discover how sociocultural interactions function together with motivational aspects during second language development (SLD). Specifically, by viewing gesture as an aspect of acculturation, I sought an understanding for
how students acquired L2 gesture forms over the course of a semester in relation to their: initial motivations to study abroad, goals set during the semester, cultural engagement and the agency related; Moreover, if this process unfolds differently by L2 proficiency level of participants—beginning intermediate, and advanced.

Recognizing that learning context is an important aspect of the learning process, I wanted to learn more about how L2 learners in study abroad contexts develop L2 gesture as a reflection of their sociocultural interaction in the foreign context. With a specific interest in the motivational aspects of L2 learners studying abroad, the sociocultural lens employed for this study permitted an exploration of motivation that could be viewed in relation to the dynamic relationship between student activity and SLD.

Language Learning and Acculturation

Vygotsky’s life’s work was in aim to illuminate the workings of the mind, and to illustrate learning as a process that recognizes the role of consciousness without resorting to an explanation of the standard introspective mentalistic psychology of his time. The Vygotskian framework that has resulted reflects that consciousness is generated by socially meaningful activity. With its application to language learning then, researchers have been exploring how the learning process is co-constructed by the individual and his learning environment. Reaching beyond sociocultural theory however, the research paradigm for language development also includes: learning strategies (Donato & McCormick, 1994; Ernst-Slavit, Moore & Maloney, 2002; Osburne & Mulling, 2001; Plonsky, 2011), cognition (Churchill, Nishino, Okada, & Atkinson, 2010; Taguchi, 2008;
Zhengdong, Humphreys, & Hamp-Lyons, 2004) and facilitative and inhibitive factors of SLD (Arteaga, 2000; Elliot, 1997; Hurtado & Estrada, 2010).

**Learning Contexts**

Recently, learning contexts has become of heightened research interest in the field of applied linguistics. Foreign language (FL) learning in a classroom—the typical scenario for American students taking FL courses at their home university—qualitatively differs from the learning process experienced on foreign soil, and has much been debated to be inferior for L2 development (Collentine & Freed, 2004). The SA context has been linked to increases in lexical acquisition and fluidity of speech for L2 learners, but a general comparison of which context produces more linguistic gains differs by individual student. By gaining an understanding in how SLD in a SA context is affected by contextual elements both similar to, and different from a typical FL classroom, researchers may be better equipped to understand L2 learners more holistically by being able to account for patterns of SLD across contexts.

The increased interest in how L2 learning develops as influenced by learning context has prompted a proliferation of studies focused on second language learning in foreign contexts (Abad & Taledo, 2006; Baker & McIntyre, 2003; Pellegrino-Aveni, 2005; Shively, 2013; Watson, Siska, & Wolfel, 2013; Weger, 2013; Yang & Kim, 2011). Due to the unique role that study abroad contexts, particularly, play in a language learner’s formation of identity (Kinginger, 2004; Ochs, 2004; Peirce, 1995; Peltier & McCafferty, 2010), and the psychosocial effects incurred during cultural immersion (Dömyei, 2003; Ellis,
1994; Huebner, 1995; Norton, 2000; Pellegrino-Aveni, 2005), SLD in study-abroad (SA) programs has drawn significant attention in today’s pursuit to understand the language learning process.

The variety of influential factors inherent in such learning contexts of heightened L2 exposure (e.g., cultural differences, increased opportunities for L2 input and output, anxiety of native speaker interaction, etc.) prompts specific investigative inquiry into how SA language learners linguistically develop in foreign contexts. SLD is very dynamic in nature, and being that language, culture and identity are inextricably intertwined (Kramsch, 2002; Tran, 2010), language learners can be impressionable in SA environments particularly. Understandably then, the intricate process of acculturation—the adaptation to a new culture, and the acquisition of foreign aspects of that culture—has been connected to SLD for students in SA programs (Chang, 2000; Kinginger, 2008; Ogulnick, 2000). Particularly, SLD has been most explored in the literature through aspects of: tone (Showalter & Hayes-Harb, 2013), accent (Polat & Schallert, 2013), linguistic competence (Hulstijn, Schoonen, de Jong, Steinel, & Florijn, 2011), and gesture (Stam & Ishino, 2011), but little research has explored how acculturation or foreign contexts affect these constructs outside a measure of L2 oral proficiency.

In relation to second language contexts, Schumann’s (1978) model of acculturation, although focused on immigrants and migrant workers in foreign countries, lends something for consideration on the matter of acculturation and its impact on L2 learning. He posited that the degree to which one acculturates
to the target culture in turn dictates the target language development that ensues. Peirce (1995) also conducted a study on immigrants (women, specifically), and her analysis of power struggle and investment as related to target culture immersion were linked to the L2 learning process. These findings lend to question whether or not a SA student’s engagement with the target culture parallels his SLD, as evaluated by L2 gesture acquisition.

**Gesture and Sociocultural Theory**

Stimulating the onset of the current investigation in particular, is the recent work on gesture (e.g., Brown & Gullberg, 2008; Gullberg & McCafferty, 2008; McCafferty, 2004; McNeill, 2005; Peltier & McCafferty, 2010), which yields evidence for the Vygotskian assertion that gesture is a tool for meaning making. Proceeding from the work of Kendon (1972; 1980), McNeill (1992) describes the function of gesture to be an integral element of our spoken language. The common assertion today by McNeill and most other researchers in the field reflects gesture to be a representation of both the discourse in action, and of the mental operations of thought that are invoked for the purposes of that discourse. The literature substantiates the semiotic function of gesture as serving a dual purpose of meaning-making for both the speaker and the interlocutor (Gullberg, 2010; McCafferty, 2008). Any evaluation of these Vygotskian concepts would be incomplete however, without considerations of the other interactions at play between learners and their learning contexts. For this reason, a sociocultural perspective of analyzing SLD and gesture together, has demonstrated its value
for the Vygotskian principle that learning occurs as a multi-faceted process of mediated interactions.

Vygotsky asserted that higher mental operations (e.g., learning, memory) are mediated by the use of tools (physical and symbolic) and social interactions (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Lantolf, 1994; Vygotsky, 1986). Paramount to sociocultural theory then, is not only an interest in the relationship between an individual and all the elements of his learning context, but the role of mediating artifacts in that interplay.

Gesture then, as a mediating tool in meaning-making, undoubtedly strengthens how we study the development of the human learning process, especially with regards to language. With its particular application to the research on SLD, Antón, Dicamilla, and Lantolf (2003) most effectively state that the sociocultural approach is intended to elucidate “how language activity shapes human behavior on both the social—between individuals—and psychological planes—within individuals” (p. 262), and gesture has come to be considered part of this activity.

**Motivation through Activity**

The process of learning cannot be adequately addressed without discussion of motivation. Inside the scope of activity theory, Leont’ev (1978; 1981) accounts for this psychological construct. He explains that actions have goals, and that these goals are different from the more generalized object that motivates the activity. His depiction of motive can be understood as the answer to the question: “For what overall purpose or function does the goal serve?”
Within this perspective, individuals have initial motive and sometimes the envisioned path of sub goals for how to fulfill it. Their actions in pursuit of these goals are *goal-directed* behaviors, and can change in response to the learner-environment interaction.

In these regards, the current study understands students’ initial goals to study abroad as a general goal, or motivation, and it evaluates students’ actions as being in line with subordinate goals that are set throughout the semester. As Leont’ev’s (1978) work emphasizes: “that which arouses activity and that to which actions are directed are not identical” (p. 63), thus the goals that students set during the semester are recognized to potentially differ from initial motivations before their arrival in Chile.

For the current study then, goals have been acknowledged as a construct sensitive to activity, and thus have been evaluated as they develop in response to sociocultural interaction and learner agency.

Additionally included in the current study’s exploration of student motivations is the work of Gardner and Lambert (1972). These researchers proposed a motivational model in an effort to better understand what influences a learner’s efforts to develop L2 skills, specifically. They devised a general schema in which L2 learner motivations could be defined. The initial goals, or motives, of students in the current study were identified in line with the basic tenets of their model. By design, the current investigation has observed how these initial goals develop (with motivational development being addressed through activity theory) during a SA experience. More specifically, this study was
aimed at tracing language learners’ motivations over time with respect to how they both emerge and guide the sociocultural interplay that occurs in a foreign context, and how this activity relates to L2 gesture acquisition.

**Research Question**

From an activity standpoint, the current psycholinguistic investigation of American SA students in Chile examined SLD with regard to how students acquired L2 gestures over the course of the semester. Specifically, this study was aimed to address the following research question:

Do SA contexts lead to an increase in L2 culturally specific forms of gesture for learners at different levels of proficiency, and if so, how is this related to student activity across the SA experience in relation to linguistic (L), linguistic-professional (LP), and cultural (C) forms of initial motivation?

To my supposition, this research can significantly contribute to our understanding of the second language learning process.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will present an overview of the literature relevant to each concept under examination. The study abroad (SA) population will be described, issues associated with acculturation will be discussed, gesture will be explicated as a tool for learning and communicating, a delineation of the Vygotskian framework shaping the current investigation will be reviewed and motivation will be outlined through the lens of activity theory.

American Study Abroad Population

The number of students pursuing studies abroad has been rapidly increasing (He & Chen, 2010). Although only a small 1.4% of the U.S. student population from Higher Education institutions (college, and graduate/professional schools) was shown to embark in a SA program within the 2009-2010 academic year, this represents a participation rate more than 3 times greater than that exhibited in the 1990’s (Institute of International Education, 2011). It is suggested that institutional efforts to increase student awareness for SA programs and their funding opportunities have attributed to the growth in numbers being demonstrated. Research also points to the societal advancements affecting today’s current market and its pressing need for international experience (Institute of International Education, 2011; Presley, Damron-Martinez, & Zhang, 2010; Relyea, Cocchiara, & Studdard, 2008).

Being that neither the steady increase in SA participation, nor the professional value of a SA can be denied, what is it exactly that motivates
students to leave the country for language learning abroad? And how does their motivation relate to the efforts directed toward L2 communication during that experience? To better understand the motivations behind students who choose to study abroad, it is necessary to begin with a summary of who they are in regards to some of the demographic information provided by the Institute of International Education (2011).

In 2010, more than half of our country’s SA student population came from disciplines outside the Foreign Languages (FL), a field of study represented by a surprisingly low 5.8% of the SA population. Students from the Social Science disciplines accounted for the highest rate of SA participation, representing 22.3%. Business/Management (20.8% of the SA population) and Humanities (12%) account for those students of the next two highest participating disciplines. Even still, Fine or Applied Arts had a participation rate of 8.3%, and Physical or Life Sciences at 7.5% –both also more predominant in SA programs than those from FL departments. Although outside the scope of the current study, it is intriguing as to why more FL focused students are not studying abroad? Something which can be addressed in this study however, is how that 5.8% who do SA differ from those SA students of the more popular disciplines, both motivationally- and communicatively- speaking, in regards to their pursuit of advanced L2 proficiency.

SA programs provide three different options for length of study time: summer sessions (8 week or less programs), one to two quarters (or one semester, depending on the host university), and whole academic year-long
stays. The most enticing program for the American SA student is the summer session (He & Chen, 2010; Institute of International Education, 2011; Lusby & Bandaruk, 2010). Nearly 57% of the SA population was enrolled in this duration of study; Less than 4% were registered for an entire academic year of study, leaving about 39% of the population accounting for those who made the choice to stay 1-2 quarters, or a full semester. Fundamental to the current study’s exploration of motivation is that a SA student has the opportunity to modify his/her choice for program duration.

Additionally, the majority of the 2010 SA population was made up of college students in their junior and senior years, representing a respective 35.8% and 21.8% (Institute of International Education, 2011). It might be that these numbers resemble mostly last-minute program requirement-fulfillers. This would be those who are approaching graduation and have yet to meet minimum language requirements devised by their degree programs. Studying abroad may appeal to students in this predicament because it is the quickest way to obtain the necessary credits considering that one semester of language classes abroad can be equivalent to two years of FL study in the States (University Studies Abroad Consortium-USAC Handbook, 2006, p. 3).

With college sophomores, college freshman, and graduate students accounting for a much smaller percentage of the SA population, a look at motivation for participation in a SA program for these students might reveal some other plausible reasons for the occurrence of such disparities. Perhaps juniors
and seniors are found to participate in SA programs more because they have a better understanding of how they wish to maximize their degree?

**Acculturation Defined**

Typically, a student who studies abroad is subjected to an unfamiliar world—with unfamiliar customs, daily rituals, food, societal norms, behaviors, and in the case of language-learning SA students, language. Exposure to so many different elements, uncharted encounters and an overall foreign way of life, the SA student is inundated with decisions and ubiquitously faces the question: *What do I do?* Quickly, he must learn culture-specific details that will enable him to adjust accordingly in his new setting—facets of life often tied to communication in the L2.

First and foremost, learning about communication is vital for the student (Davis, 1988). Among the many components of communication that vary by culture and powerfully influence any social exchange are: subject addressivity; interlocutor proximity; customary greeting; gesture and body language (Freed, 1995; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). If a student is going to embark on this sojourn, he/she must be informed of these culture specifics because familiarity with the target language will only facilitate the learner’s orientation to a degree; and a lack in L2 knowledge only further presses the immediate need to recognize messages laden in the multimodal systems of human communication outside of verbal language (Smith, Quinn, & Cooper, 1998). At some level, social interaction is required to live among any society, thus regardless of one’s L2 skill upon arrival in a foreign country for a student sojourn, there is much to be learned by the
language learner about the critical components of communication that will facilitate his life in the target culture.

Arriving in a culture where one must face a new way of life in many different ways can undoubtedly be overwhelming. Feeling bereft of all the familiar comforts of home, a learner must find a way to manage. On many psychosocial levels, the L2 learner is inevitably affected, although some more than others (Dörnyei, 2005; Kinginger, 2004; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Adjusting to cultural discord can involve choosing which cultural features he/she will assume. This ongoing process of acquiring different aspects of a foreign culture is referred to as **acculturation**—the social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language group (Schumann, 1986). It is a process unique to every individual, and varies based on motivation, personality, action, the quality and type of cultural engagement and internalization (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Kinginger, 2008; Kramsch, 2002; Norton, 2000). Findings from Kinginger (2008) illustrate how the differences between a student’s efforts toward acculturation vary by the effects of both social and individual elements. Attempts to engage with the target culture’s people, customs, language and activities are influenced just as much by aspects of the learning context as by a learner’s disposition towards language learning.

For example, research conducted by Alfi, Assor, and Katz (2004) has linked high levels of anxiety to inhibitive effects on the learning process, in general. Braun (2005) discusses the anxiety levels of language learning students in relation to the psychosocial model of acculturation proposed by
Schumann (1978). Particularly relevant to the current discussion in Braun’s (2005) review of the literature is her deduction that the FL learning process, itself, is enough to cause debilitating levels of anxiety for L2 progress. In line with Schumann’s (1978) work, Braun illustrates how this pervasive state of disorientation can create varying levels of anxiety—levels that have been shown to impede SLD.

Embarking on terrain more similar to a SA context, the investigation of Polat and Mahalingappa (2010) explored the process of Kurds learning Turkish in a Turkish-dominated setting. Although anxiety was not a focus of their investigation, they found that acculturation of the target community’s identity positively attributed to the learner’s L2 skills. This is relevant to the current discussion in that acculturation would not have occurred if anxiety levels were high according to the literature (Schumann, 1978).

Combined, these findings are significant in support of making the connection between language and culture (Davis, 1988; Kramsch, 2002). As depicted in the literature above, some manifestation of anxiety is inherent in the language learning process, itself. Auxiliary to this finding, there has also been research conducted to show how anxiety takes effect on the language learning endeavor in foreign contexts (Allen & Herron, 2003; Frantzen & Magnan, 2005). Allen and Herron (2003) suggest that anxiety may thwart SLD by governing the student’s choices for how he or she will engage or participate in the learning process, that this can encourage him/her to avoid native speaker (NS) interaction.
The literature above demonstrates the clearly dynamic relationship between language learning, development, and acculturation. Fundamentally contributing to the historical verification of this phenomenon, Schumann (1978) found that the environmental agents in a social learning context significantly factor in to how much exposure to the target language a learner will pursue. With similar conclusions, Ellis (1994) corroborates Schumann’s postulations, both finding that the target language is commensurately acquired in proportion to a student’s extent of acculturation. The language learning process then, as a co-function of social and individual phenomena, embodies that of acculturation.

Employing a sociocultural perspective on the interrelations of language and culture in the L2 learning process allows for a unique examination of learning as a social process. In doing so for the current investigation, I have revealed how learners and their context can function together to mediate the cultural and linguistic gains of students through social interchange. Highly sensitive to social interaction, the endeavors of language learning in the current study are investigated through an evaluation of acculturation. More specifically, this study explores how sociocultural phenomena affect the participation of a SA student in the enterprise of language learning by measure of his or her extent to acculturate. After a review of motivation theory soon to follow, I will describe how the current inquiry relates to the sociocultural exploration of motivational aspects affecting this interplay.
Gestures as Tools

A significant element of human communication to be explored, Ray Birdwhistell (1970, as cited in Davis, 1988) studied the nature of body-speech productions and reported that 55-65% of our interpersonal communication is performed in a nonverbal manner. Inspired by this phenomenon, Davis (1988) set out to investigate the pedagogical relevance of this newly reintroduced research interest. In his work, Davis revealed how classrooms of the time bid no attention to such communicative expression. Emphasizing the prescription of gestural behavior teachings in particular, he suggested that a student’s heightened cultural awareness of the target language could serve to increase his or her interest in acquiring the language. Extending this thought might suggest that L2 development will ensue in part if L2 interest is stimulated.

Following from similar investigative endeavors of the time, an increasing number of researchers began to incorporate gesture into the systematic analysis of language research. Today, gesture is still pedagogically debated with regard to its implementation in a FL learning classroom. Nonetheless, gesture has become a major research facet in the field of second-language learning (Gregerson, Olivares-Cuhat, & Storm, 2009; Gullberg, 2010; Lantolf, 2000; Nagpal, Nicoladis, & Marentette, 2011; Peltier & McCafferty, 2010). As a multidimensional concept, gesture, as examined in the current investigation, most generally refers to “the spontaneous, unwitting, and regular accompaniments of speech that we see in our moving fingers, hands, and arms” (McNeill, 2005, p.3).
The current realm of psycholinguistic inquiries on L2 gesture has extensively been influenced by the works of David McNeill (1982; 1985; 1995; 1997; 1998; 2000; 2003; 2005; 2007). Elaborating on Vygotsky’s (1987) undertakings, McNeill’s research has provided a newfound insight into the function of gesture as a material carrier of meaning in human communication. For example, McNeill proposes that gesture not only serves to “reveal thought and speech” (2003, 2005), but more importantly that it fuels thought and speech” (2005, p. 3). Following this notion, his colleagues have shown gesture to be an inextricable part of language (Lantolf, 2006; McCafferty, 2002; 2004), providing additional literature to inspire further L2 gesture investigations in aim to better understand SLD.

Gesture, evidenced as significant to learning as a whole (Cook, Mitchell, & Goldin-Meadow, 2008; Goldin-Meadow, Levine, & Zinchenko, 2012) has evolved to be very significant in the study of language development in general (Capirci, Contaldo, Caselli, & Volterra, 2005; Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 2005; Tomasello, 2008), and most recently to that of SLD (Gullberg, de Bot, & Volterra, 2008; McCafferty, 2013). Many studies have found that language learners who gesture in the target language may learn more than those who do not incorporate it into their L2 communications (Allen, 1995; Gullberg, 2010). This very discovery stems from the Engelkamp and Krumnacker’s (1980, as cited in Macedonia & Knosche, 2011) enactment effect, which states that speech items, when paired with gestures, promote enhanced memory performance.
Supplementing the research in support of the link between gesture and language task performance (Beattie & Shovelton, 1999; Holler, Shovelton, & Beattie, 2009; Goldin-Meadow, 2010; Macedonia & Knosche, 2011), McCafferty (2008) extends this idea with his exploration of *mimesis*, or gestural imitation, finding it to be an important component in the analysis of gestural expression. His study found this gestural behavior to enhance the acquisition of L2 in the manner of which it functions to make meaning for both learning and communicative purposes. Following McNeill, McCafferty’s work (1998; 2004; 2008; 2013) illustrates the significance of gesture beyond that of speaker and interlocutor meaning-making, extending considerations of gesture to its significance in our production of thought and speech, as well.

Ecological linguistics offers considerable insight into why exactly gestural behavior has been incorporated into the study of language learning and meaning-making. Making sense of this perspective, van Lier (2000) explains how it is an approach to language as a representation of relations (of thought, action and power) rather than objects (words, sentences, rules). Furthermore, it draws the connection between speech and other communicative elements of meaning making—gestures, for instance. Van Lier illustrates this point with a realistic portrayal of normal discourse occurring between two people who are discussing a recent in-home remodeling task.

In an effort to make meaning for the interlocutor, the speaker is told to be supplementing her words with gestures and pen-paper illustrations. During this conversation, her interlocutor supplements his speech with gestures in
confirmation of his comprehension, or to convey some other need relevant to the discourse (e.g., the need for elaboration, etc). By giving this example, van Lier (2000) points out that the “totality of meaning-making in this conversation is not merely linguistic, it is semiotic” (p. 252). With the backdrop of ecological linguistics, van Lier helps to expound the theory of how language learning occurs in part as a result of semiotic activity. In light of this theory then, the importance behind the inclusion of gesture in linguistic research is amplified.

Within the literature, gesture is widely accepted as a social tool that is used between interlocutors to make meaning (Churchill, Nishino, Okada, & Atkinson, 2010; Peltier & McCafferty, 2010). In a study conducted by Peltier & McCafferty (2010), four teachers of either European and/or American nationalities were videotaped while teaching in their FL learning college classrooms of Italian as a L2 in the United States. Over the three hours of recording completed in each classroom, the vantage point of the cameras allowed for both students and teachers to be evaluated. At a later time, teachers were interviewed and asked to reflect on video clips of them teaching.

With Churchill et al’s (2010) depiction of language learning as “a process of building meaningful ways of participating in sociomaterial worlds” (p. 249), the observations noted by Teacher D in Peltier and McCafferty’s (2010) study are to be heavily considered. Reflecting on the varying levels of gesture use employed by different students, Teacher D stakes the following claim:

Usually the people who use gestures also are people who really want to learn the language and they really want to learn the culture. They really love Italy. Usually it’s those kinds of people that use the gestures. The others learn just words.
Unique to the literature, as it draws from teachers’ experiences in the classroom with FL learning students, Peltier and McCafferty’s (2010) study holds dual significance to Churchill et al.’s assessment of the language learning process: (1) gesture is regarded as a meaningful way of participating, and (2) adoption of gesture into L2 practice is shown to correlate with SLD.

Clearly, different customs, modes of thought, ways of life and social norms vary by culture. Moreover, language between cultures can significantly vary. Seeing as to how the elements of life are very different as determined by the needs of a given society, language too is going to reflect the varying cultural faculties. As such, language should be recognized as a function of cultural expression. Accordingly, it may be postulated then that a language learner’s adoption of cultural-specific gesticulations could parallel his L2 development.

Limited research exists in evaluation of this notion; however, other literature with regard to FL learning lends support to the relationship between SLD and gesture. Tellier’s (2008) study of twenty monolingual French-speaking children’s ability to learn eight English words has contributed to the growing investigative interest in the relationship between L2 learning and gesture. In a long-term memory recall exercise, when comparing two groups of students—one presented with a gestural accompaniment to a vocabulary word, and the other presented with a simple illustration of the vocabulary word—those who were exposed to the gesture-word stimulus outperformed those who received the illustration-word stimulus. Although significant in showing that gesture positively correlates to L2 word recognition, more research has been conducted to show
both the relationship between a learner’s general L2 attainment and his exposure to accompanying L2 gestures (Kelly, McDevitt, & Esch, 2009; and Gullberg, Roberts, & Dimroth, 2012, in reference to an artificial language) and that between his L2 knowledge and his use of L2 gesture (van Compernolle & Williams, 2011; Macedonia & Knosche, 2011).

Additional research conducted by Gregerson, Olivares-Cuhat, and Storm (2009) also explored the relationship between SLD and gesture in a FL classroom. Gregerson and his colleagues found that frequency and type of L2 gesture are related to L2 proficiency. In a separate analysis of beginning, intermediate, and advanced learners of the Spanish language at the university level, they found an overall higher frequency of L2 gesture to occur among the advanced students in comparison to those in the beginning and intermediate levels. Additionally, it was found that the advanced group of students could efficiently use their hands with the purpose of meaning-making to enhance communication; Such use of illustrators was not efficiently demonstrated by the less proficient groups of students. However, although their work indicates a mirroring effect between L2 proficiency level, gesture frequency and efficiency, it lacks the sufficient evidence needed to explain the phenomenon.

**Vygotsky and Cultural-Historical Activity Theory**

Critical to the construct of this investigational design is sociocultural theory, more specifically, the cultural-historical approach and the work of Lev Vygotsky. In order to better understand the foundational development of Vygotsky’s work and its significance to the current study’s approach, I must first
describe the social, cultural-historical approach. It is Vygotsky’s theory of personhood; it takes the perspective that learning occurs through a process of interaction between an individual and others, as well as with events and objects within his environment. It holds that people’s behaviors are a manifestation of the culturally-historically constructed norms and values imposed upon them, and thus it illustrates learning and development as a cultural transformation.

Not pleased with the theoretical tendencies in the early 20th century study of the psychology of behavior, Lev Vygotsky set out to reconstruct the tautological explanation tied to the role of consciousness. By positing that socially meaningful behaviors can better explain consciousness as the subject of study than consciousness itself, he sparked new theoretical insight. In this revelation, he proposed that higher mental operations (memory, learning, etc.) are products of mediated activity (Vygotsky, 1986), and that consciousness does not exist apart from interaction, but that it is realized through activity. Within the context of a learner’s environment are the mediating elements of: community, its rules, its cultural tools and divisions of labor that all influence a learner’s agency to achieve the learning objective, or goal. These proclamations have had a lasting impact on the field, and with the collaborative efforts of Aleksei Leont’ev and Alexander Luria, Vygotskian thought has furthered in its development and predominantly has come to be called Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT).

The CHAT perspective recognizes the individual and his social elements to retain a dialectical relationship. Delving deeper into the nature of this tenet of Vygotskian theory is the construct of mediation. As it is often misconstrued,
learning is not just a product of the mediating influences occurring between the individual and his environment, Vygotsky devised the concept of mediation to include what the mediating factors are that act upon this interaction, and how they form. He insisted that the higher mental operations of humans are given meaning from an individual’s social, cultural-historical context, and that learning reflects the dynamic relationship between the individual’s psychological and social aspects.

Vygotsky viewed learning as a socially constructed phenomenon, but also recognized the importance of the biological role of the learner. He described the process of learning to be dialectical in nature, developing as both the individual brings aspects of his personhood to the context in which he engages, and the context itself functions to influence the learner. He further explained it to be a process mediated by the use of psychological tools (Vygotsky, 1978). With specific concentration on the higher mental operations of human beings in general, he posited that cognitive activity (consciousness) emanates initially from cues in the individual’s social world, and that over time it develops to be more internalized and auto-regulated. Language then, in all its dimensions (written, spoken, verbal, nonverbal), as an example of a psychological tool, is acknowledged to be further mediated by social interaction and other environmental/social tools (e.g., books, technology, signs, etc). From this perspective (See Figure 1), learning as mediation, can be understood in part as a collaborative endeavor between: the individual, his psychological tools, members of his social context and cultural tools of this social context.
In sum, CHAT holds that the human mind is mediated by social cues which are internalized, reorganized, and then through interaction, become further mediated by psychosocial aspects related to the learner and his learning context. Second language learning then, is an event that should be studied in such a way that accounts for the dialectical relationship between the learner and his context. 

Being that CHAT is sensitive to cultural variation, the study of language learning
can provide more insight into its development if evaluated as the dynamic sociocultural process that it is.

Influential today, researchers from many disciplines benefit from CHAT’s utility, and it is particularly useful in the field of Education in addition to psychology. As the higher mental operation of learning universally functions as a societal need, it occurs differently among cultures—how it is valued, how it is measured and how it is attained by a society. Accounting for this, Vygotsky’s work recognized human cognition/affect (learning included) as being socially- and culturally- responsive. Consequently then, in acknowledging the different planes by which humans function, the adoption of CHAT in educational research can account for the cultural sensitivity inherent within any learning context. Sociocultural theory today, is driven by these basic Vygotskian concepts.

As seen in the present-day literature, CHAT is widely referenced and drawn upon in various professional fields. Applied linguist, Leo van Lier, has emphasized Vygotskian thought with his research expertise that calls for the consideration and importance of the active learner in his environment (2000). Overall, van Lier asserts that the fundamental avenue to an authentic understanding of language learning is through recognition of the social activity (verbal and nonverbal) in which the learner is engaged. Rather than holding activity as a facilitator of the learning process, he gives activity the cardinal role, defining activity to be the actual learning that occurs.

In relation to activity, motivation is both a cause and consequence of student engagement, or activity (Negueruela-Azarola, 2011; Yang & Kim, 2011).
Lantolf and Genung (2002) explicate this notion well, stating: “Motives, goals, and their affiliated behaviors are very much emergent” (p. 191). Yang and Kim’s (2011) research on SA students illustrates how Vygotsky’s framework can effectively explore the dynamic relationship between the learner and all elements of his learning context to evaluate motivation as it changes and develops in accordance with the dialectical influences of the learner and his environment. Results from their Yang and Kim (2011) found that the learners’ goals changed throughout the SA program in relation to their internalizations of SA experiences, and this was reflected in their goal-directed behaviors. Specifically, for one of the two case studies, the student’s interactions with native speakers failed to meet expectations and resulted in the formation of a different belief system about SA, which in turn, as declared by the participant, shifted his motive and activity. Although activity was internalized differently for both students in the study, findings indicated that for both students, participation in the target culture mediated their experiences, and also influenced student actions based on its effect on their goals.

The research conducted using sociocultural perspectives in SA contexts led me to expect that I would find some relationship between a student’s participation (activity) in the target culture and their self-reported motivations. In fact, Kinginger’s (2008) multiple case-study of SA students in France shows that student achievement is related to participation in the culture and that student activity is dependent not only upon internalizations of social experiences, but also on motivational features such as priorities and goals. Furthermore, other
research has found that increased exposure to the target culture promotes linguistic gains greater than that found for students who have less contact with native speakers (Hernández, 2010; Shively, 2013).

With consideration of the same contextual factors of the learning context (interactions with native speakers), Clement (1986) investigated the social psychological effects of language learning on students at a bilingual university in Canada. With acculturation as a measure of how assimilated Francophones and Anglophones were to the other’s culture based on language chosen in response to a given scenario, he looked at how acculturation functioned differently for the majority and minority groups. Among many of the findings in this study, it was established that increased frequency with native speakers (NSs) was related to a student’s level of acculturation. Presumably then, students who are more motivated to acculturate will be found to participate in the target culture more frequently than those who are less motivated to interact. Findings in the current investigation showed mixed results, but participants who experienced more NS contact did show differences in acculturation as evaluated through gesture.

Moreover, Clement (1986) found that both majority and minority group members who were highly motivated to learn and to use their L2, evidenced a high degree of *integrativeness* and quality of social interaction. However, the majority group showed greater fear of acculturation than did the minority group. Additionally, the minority group exhibited more self-confidence in their L2 ability and was found to have more engagement (participation) in the other culture.

As Clement’s (1986) study had noted the relationship between
acculturation and psychological components (e.g., fear) for L2 learners, other research has supported the same. Baker & MacIntyre (2003) found that students' levels of anxiety and self-confidence in using the L2 can play a role in how much contact a language learner chooses to have with NSs. I believe, however, an activity theoretic perspective can better capture the learning process as related to these same and similar psychological aspects.

**Motivation**

Gardner and Lambert (1972) presented a motivational theory of L2 learning. Although commonly oversimplified in the literature as being a two-dimensional model to define a learner's motivational orientation, the interest of the current study in part reflects the basic principle from which this oversimplification emanates. Their model included a general schema of which L2 learner motivations could be codified. Roughly, a learner could be classified as being driven by *instrumental* and/or *integrative* motivations to learn a second language. They asserted that instrumental motivation—having real-world practicality or application for the L2—could co-exist with integrative motivation—reflecting a personal interest to connect with the culture of the target language. Although not necessarily mutually exclusive orientations, one motivation most typically predominates.

Inherent in the nature of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) model are the restrictive limits set upon understanding the motivation of L2 learners, although such restrictions can be misinterpreted in some of the literature today as mutually exclusive categories of motivation. If close attention is given to this model and
the work that follows (Gardner, 1985; 2000; 2001), it is understood however not
as an attempt to limit a learner’s motivational orientation but to better understand
the origin of a learner’s motivation. Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) theory of
instrumental/integrative motivational orientations then, was used in the current
study to identify students’ initial goals, and through an activity theoretical lens,
subsequent goal formations and goal-directed behaviors of participants were
evaluated.

Applying Aleksei Leont’ev’s Motivation

Much of the literature conducted on second language learning and
motivation is focused on measures of linguistic competence (Hernández, 2010;
Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Kinginger, 2008). As researchers, it is important however
to recognize that language proficiency accounts for only one aspect of language
acquisition. Evaluations of SLD that measure only language proficiency, or only
language competence, may be limited in capturing the developmental process
that significantly contributes to the relationship between learning and motivation.

Some motivational research has been most interested in trying to explain
a language learner’s level of proficiency with a model of motivation that best
captures the learning measured. Activity, however, influences motivation (Lantolf
& Genung, 2002), thus how can motivation be accurately assessed with a
disregard for learning activity? Additionally, the development of motivation and
learning are both ongoing processes in themselves, thus measures of language
proficiency, as fixed variables, seem to be inadequate as measures of SLD for
they appear to overlook motivation and learning as a process. Furthermore,
when research is conducted using measurements of proficiency and competence, it is difficult to capture the ephemeral relation between learning activity and motivation. Moreover, as Leont’ev (1978) describes the function and development of activity, he identifies a learner’s motive as a need, a construct understandably complex for a L2 learner in a foreign context; And as motivation is not a stable psychological aspect (Negueruela-Azarola 2011) either, this fact is accentuated when considering second language learners in SA contexts. Applying motivational theories to linguistic studies apart from a sociocultural perspective then, might undervalue the dynamic relations of social interactions by the language learner as influenced by motivational changes.

In aim to better capture motivation as a process involved in learning outcome then, it should be approached from an activity standpoint which considers how it functions in response to one’s learning endeavors as a function of both the individual and social dimensions. Lantolf and Genung (2004) make an important contribution to this perspective. In describing the work of Lompscher (1999) and Hakkarainen (1994), they explain that motives are impressionable constructs, “not rigid phenomena predetermined prior to engaging in some activity” (p. 177), and quite frequently are emanations of activity itself. For this reason, motivation is approached in the current study from a sociocultural perspective rather than other motivational frameworks so that its effects on- and genesis from- activity can be evaluated.

Additionally, by considering features of the learning context with motivation, research can more justly explain language learning as it occurs over
time. Gillette (1994) applied sociocultural theory to her study of six French language-learning students at an American university. Her analysis of their language learning achievement was assessed through an evaluation of students’ motivations throughout the course. This approach allowed her to understand the developmental process of these students as a function of their context. With more research following suit to consider social factors as mediators of a learner’s motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Hernández, 2010; Negueruela-Azarola, 2011), a clearer view of the second language learning process comes to light.

Particularly insightful to the current study’s exploration of students’ motivational development for their SA is Leont’ev’s explanation of motivation through activity theory. Being that activity is conceptualized as general human behavior, Leont’ev’s work expanded on its dynamic nature in a way that Vygotsky only implied:

Activity usually is accomplished by a certain complex of actions subordinated to particular goals that may be isolated from the general goal; Under these circumstances, what happens that is characteristic for a higher degree of development is that the role of the general purpose is fulfilled by a perceived motive, which is transformed owing to its being perceived as a motive-goal (Leont’ev, 1978, p. 64).

Here, it can be interpreted that the learner has an overall object/objective and his actions are not always in line with these motives. Individuals may change their goal-directed behaviors as a response to shifts in their subordinated goals, which is not always a reflection of a change in overall objective:

The function of excitation [of activity] is...fully preserved in the motive. The function of direction is another matter: The actions that realize activity are aroused by its motive but appear to be directed toward a goal (Leont’ev, 1978, p. 63).
In explication of this differentiation, Leont’ev proposes that activity is driven by motive (need), wherein actions for activity emerge initially from motive but are goal-directed.

Furthermore, Leont’ev proposed constructs of operations and their associated conditions. These describe how an action is performed, as actions being carried out with the intention to achieve a goal, and operations being “unconsciously triggered by the contextual conditions of the task” (Wertsch, 1979, p.88, as cited in McCafferty, Roebuck, Wayland, 2001). Leont’ev associates goals with operations but describes that operations lack any purpose-driven nature, and most directly are related to conditions: “Conditions in which [the goal] is assigned [can] change…then it is specifically and only the operational content of the action that changes” (Leont’ev, 1978, p. 65). The current study considers this dynamic by recognizing that learners have an automatic psychological response to conditions, thus the method (or operation) revealed by a student’s reactions to conditions was evaluated and identified as learner agency—interpreted in line with the automatic, unconscious operations aforementioned. This construct was examined in the current study as related to student experiences and motivational developments during SA to explore how elements of the SA context are internalized both similarly and differently by L2 learners, and how this is reflected in L2 gesture acquisition.

**Purpose**

Thus far, I have depicted how gesture is clearly evidenced to be an integral aspect of our interpersonal communications (Churchill, Nishino, Okada,
& Atkinson, 2010; Lantolf, 2006; Macedonia & Knosche, 2011; McCafferty, 2008; McNeill, 2003; 2005; van Lier, 2000). Moreover, I have described how learning context influences the learning outcome through various aspects of mediation (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Gillette, 1994; Negueruela-Azarola, 2011; Shively, 2013; Yang & Kim, 2011), and that learning and development are situated in distinct ways (Donato, 2000) according to context and learner individuality (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Leont’ev, 1978). Furthermore, being that language and culture are interrelated (Kramsch, 2002; Tran, 2010), I have illustrated that an investigation of the language learning process in a culturally-rich L2 environment can provide an exploratory view into how L2 learning efforts are mediated by sociocultural interactions in relation to gesture.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Design

This research has been designed as a multiple case study. Six students were chosen from a participant sample of 13 students as being those who could best illustrate the findings. Creswell (2007) recommends this approach for studies that have “clearly identifiable cases with boundaries” (p.74). Although all 12 students in this investigative study showed very unique developmental progress, six were chosen for the final write-up as they demonstrated the most evident displays of L2 gesture acquisition in relation to how mediating factors of activity were manifested differently in accordance with goal-directed behaviors and SA experiences.

In choosing cases from the sample, participants were also selected in line with representing one of the three levels of initial motivation: cultural, linguistic-professional, or linguistic-personal, to present two cases for each level of motivation. Furthermore, as L2 proficiency has been of much interest in the SA literature (Allen & Herron, 2003; Hernández, 2010; Yang & Kim, 2011), cases were chosen to represent each level of Spanish proficiency (beginner, intermediate, advanced) as demonstrated in the beginning of the semester.

In line with Creswell’s (2007) description of a multiple case study, analyses focus on a few key themes across each case (e.g., student interaction with the host culture, student actions, student goals, learner agency, L2 gesture features and type, L2 emblems) that both reveal patterns in development and
individual differences between participants for how L2 gesture development occurs in relation to activity and motivation.

The current study, then, examines L2 learning from an activity theoretic standpoint, specifically evaluating the L2 gestural development of students in a SA context in combination with both student motivations and self-asserted goals.

The primary research question is as follows:

Do SA contexts lead to an increase in L2 culturally specific forms of gesture for learners at different levels of proficiency, and if so, how is this related to student activity across the SA experience in relation to linguistic (L), linguistic-professional (LP), and cultural (C) forms of initial motivation?

**Setting**

The data were collected at a prestigious private university in Santiago, Chile. This university has a partnership with the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) program, a non-profit association of U.S. universities with enrollment from students worldwide. One semester of their intensive language-learning tracks is declared to be the equivalent of taking two years of foreign language coursework at the average college level. This university is situated just outside the heart of downtown Santiago alongside several other well-known Chilean universities. Centrally located among: residential life, Chilean street vendors, restaurants, shops, local businesses and the metro, students attending this university are surrounded by the typical everyday Chilean culture; It is a location where the student is potentially well immersed in the target culture.

Student interviews were held in the same building in which they attended language classes, or one nearby which was also part of the university.
Determined by interview time, the use of: classroom, office, or private library room was utilized to hold the interviews. Due to uncontrollable circumstances however, third interviews (final evaluations) could not be administered in the same setting. Still aiming to simulate a culturally-rich environment for the third evaluation nonetheless, students were invited to a Chilean gathering at my host-family’s house where they were to eat, socialize and play word games with local Chileans. One by one, students were interviewed off to the side, with the social chatter and festivities in a not-so distant proximity (Appendix A contains the rough protocols used for each interview session).

**Participants**

Participants came from a population of 36 undergraduate students from varying locations throughout the United States who were all enrolled through the USAC program at the host university in Chile during the Fall 2012 semester. Of the 36 students in the participant pool, 16 met the inclusion criteria: they were English monolinguals, American, had never lived or studied abroad, and had little-to-no significant interaction with the Spanish language outside of any previous academic experiences. Due to participant attrition however, 12 of these 16 students had sufficiently completed the components of this investigation and were considered for the study.

Four of these 12 participants were identified as beginning level L2 learners—gender evenly represented. Four students made up the intermediate level of L2 learners—a group comprised of more female students (N = 3) than male students (N = 1). The remaining five students were those identified as
advanced L2 learners, but the female student (N =1) was outnumbered by male students (N = 4) in this group. A summary of students’ university majors and minors, students’ L2 histories, overall occurrences of participant attrition, and other participant information can be found in Appendix B.

**Procedure**

**From Population to Sample**

Prior to the start of the semester, at the first of three student orientations in Santiago, all students were required to complete a language proficiency exam administered by the USAC program director. Each student’s performance on this assessment was used to determine in which level language track he/she would be placed (I, II, III, or IV). Language Track I consisted of those students with the most novice of L2 abilities, and Tracks II, III and IV intuitively organized by increasing levels of L2 knowledge as demonstrated by performances on the language assessment.

At the end of the first week of classes, students were gathered for their third orientation. Where the second orientation was organized to: introduce students to the campus buildings which they would need to locate, familiarize students with the transportation systems, explore the different institutional settings affiliated with the campus, and survey its surrounding establishments, the third meeting covered more formalities of the language program. The program’s upper administrators presented various information and addressed any questions or concerns held by students. This helped to build and maintain a good support system for the students.
Upon termination of the session, as coordinated ahead of time, I was granted the opportunity to address the students. I took my place in the front of the classroom where I briefly introduced myself and explained my interest in conducting research for which I would need their participation. A brief mention of compensation was noted during this speech so as to heighten student interest. At this time, a flyer, student questionnaire and consent form were handed out to all 36 students. Students were asked to fill out the short questionnaire (and consent) if they were interested in being considered. Twenty-eight of the students immediately filled out both forms and submitted them to me before exiting the room. The remaining students (with the exception of one) turned in their copies over the next few days.

**Procedure: Establishing Participant Eligibility**

The questionnaire (Appendix C) sought out information on foreign language experience both in and out of the classroom, and current program information both of their coursework in the USAC program and of their home universities.

Congenital to my research purpose, the questionnaire inquired on students’ motivation to study abroad (e.g., What is your primary motivation to study abroad?). This query allowed for a semi-open response. In line with the SA literature (Hernández, 2010; Yang & Kim, 2011) for how students are motivated to SA, response option A denoted Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) construct of instrumental motivation (e.g., to better market oneself in the professional world). Response option B reflected Gardner and Lambert’s
opposing motivational construct—integrative motivation (e.g., genuine interest in learning the language). Also available to participants was option C, which allowed them to openly specify some other response. Students were encouraged to choose the best option that reflected their motivations to SA, and were not limited to the selection of only one response type.

All information retained from the questionnaire was used to identify those students who were eligible to participate. To establish the criteria for participant eligibility, all circumstances that may have posed a significant influence on the observations in a detrimental, irrelevant fashion, were considered. To eliminate the effects of such extraneous variables, the following phenomena were controlled: foreign language knowledge outside of English, foreign culture exposure, Spanish language exposure, and native Spanish-speaker status. This allowed for the selection of a sample as homogenous as possible in light of the outlying factors.

**Procedure: Identifying Groups**

With an interest to assess the differences that might be present in students’ L2 activity or acquisition of L2 gesture as related to L2 proficiency level, I first looked at students’ baseline L2 knowledge coming into the program. According to their program-determined proficiency levels, and their L2 histories (provided to me by the students, themselves, Appendix C), I categorized the students into one of three different groups (beginning, intermediate, or advanced). Although Language Track grouping (I, II, III, or IV) was a primary
determinant of their appointment into one of these categories, further information had to be regarded.

Most simply identified were those students representative of the beginning L2 learner level. Track I students from within the 16 student sample who met the above criteria, and had one or less semesters of university study in Spanish were assigned to this group. Of the same 16 qualifying student sample, those who had approximately 1-2 years of university study in the Spanish language, had completed 2-3 years of high school coursework in the language and were enrolled in either Tracks II or III, were selected to represent the intermediate L2 learner level. The advanced group was a classification delegated to those of the 16 who were enrolled in Tracks III or IV and had completed a minimum of three years of college-level coursework and/or had a minimum of four years of academic exposure in the L2 prior to university-level courses.

**Instruments**

**Audio-visual Recorded Interviews**

Three audio-video recorded interviews with participants were conducted over the semester-long SA program. Although I was present during each interview, the first two interviews were directed by personally selected Chilean native speakers to replicate features of the foreign context as closely as possible, keeping in mind that it was a fundamental quality of this investigation. The third interview, to be shortly discussed, had a different purpose, and thus was conducted by myself.
Interviews were structured to roughly replicate the protocol of Seidman (2006). Following his suggestion for attaining an elaborate analysis, three interviews relatively close in time frame were conducted with participants. Also in line with Seidman’s (2006) recommendations: student histories, current SA experiences and reflections of overall experience were regarded in the questions established for all three meetings. The open-ended nature of these interviews allowed for a rich retrieval of qualitative data from the students that allowed for the developmental analysis of students' motivations or goals in relation to activity. For the purpose of evaluating this relationship in accordance to student acquisition of L2 gestural behaviors, all interviews were audio-video recorded.

As all interview content (Appendix A) concentrated on the interplay between student perceptions, motivations and their cultural interactions, narrative-type questions were incorporated with aim to elicit any L2 gesture that might unconsciously accompany the memories being recounted through their retellings (e.g., Walk me through your daily actions of a typical day spent here in Santiago, to include where and with whom your mealtimes are spent).

Interview duration varied based on: content to be covered, how much the students had to share in response to the questioning and how much a student struggled with L2 comprehension or production. The focus of Interview One was to define: (a) the student’s motivations for studying abroad, (b) his intentions for the sojourn, and (c) to gauge his cultural impressions thus far. The average interview time for Interview One was 30 minutes.
Second Interviews required more reflection in order to assess how their goals had been both a consequential factor on-, and an emergent factor of- their activity. In consideration, these interviews lasted for an average of 43 minutes, with sample interview questions being:

Tell me about any memorable encounters you have had since our previous meeting.
What activities do you find most helpful, and which seem to inhibit your development?
Have you been doing what you need to reach the goals you initially set for yourself? Are you satisfied with your efforts thus far?
Are there any adjustments you plan to make before the semester's end?

Moreover, being that the decision to stay abroad for a longer or shorter time period was indeed an option, students’ program plans were addressed in both Interviews One and Two preceding the semester's end. Any report of change in their program plan (a decrease in, or extension of time) was thought to further an understanding of student motivation in relation to activity.

Final interviews were qualitatively different and had a very strict, specific purpose—to assess the emerging theme of L2 stylistic speech recognition and production, and to evaluate how a student defined the Chilean culture after being immersed for 3.5 months (e.g., Students were asked to walk me through a specific time in which something occurred to make them realize they were in a different culture). Completely engrossed in cultural pneuma, the final interview setting required only very brief interview sessions (approximately 6-8 minutes in length). In consideration of the setting, and the narrowed focus, I was the interviewer for this final evaluation. More is discussed on this area of analysis following the complete description of primary interviews.
Instruments: Chilean Interviewer Selection and Protocol

With the help of USAC administrators who offered recommendations for individuals they regarded highly as being potential assets to my investigation, I was introduced to three Chilean natives of whose education, accessibility, personality and experience with foreigners I considered when selecting who would conduct student interviews. Majority of the participants in this study were between the ages of 19 and 22, thus it was preferred that the Chilean interviewer would portray the ideation of both their peer, and someone who might possess a little more experience, or education.

Personality and experience with foreigners was critical in that actual conversation was expected to be a fairly problematic task considering the language barrier between the interviewer and interviewee. A copious manifestation of patience and tolerance was especially necessary in the selection of an interviewer being that the study included students with very limited proficiencies in the language, and differing levels of motivation for the learning endeavor.

In evaluation of the above in line with my concern for time-frame and the accessibility of myself, the students, and the interviewer, I resolved to utilize two of the three Chilean natives—one male, and one female. The 24-year-old male, a senior at the host university due to graduate the following semester, had a reasonable amount of exposure to foreigners. The 24 year-old female was a three-year veteran professor at the host university with a vast amount of interaction with foreigners. Unfortunately, due to the confines inherent of a
naturalistic setting, I had to utilize the third Chilean native as an included interviewer at the time of second meetings.

Throughout the duration of the study, neither participants, nor interviewers, were aware that gestural behaviors were being assessed. Where participants were told that the study was aimed at a simple exploration of their experiences abroad, interviewers were made aware that student motivation and activity were of particular interest. A 15-minute briefing and protocol review between me and the interviewer was arranged prior to students’ arrival times so that the inquiries of focus were clearly understood by the interviewer.

Upon student arrival at each interview session, I briefly primed participants before interviews commenced. A brief synopsis of the content to be covered was explained to the students, as well as a review of the consent form; Interviews promptly proceeded. Both seated at a desk, interviewers sat across from students. Overseeing the interview, I sat adjacent to the two where I took notes of student responses. Mounted on a tripod beside me was the camcorder, which captured a view of both the student and the interviewer.

Both students, and interviewers, were encouraged to express themselves freely, thus interviews carried on as conversations rather than formal interviews. Furthermore, students were advised to use Spanish to communicate as much as possible; if English needed to be used, it was requested to be very limited in frequency. I informed participants that their use of the L2 was important to the study, but that their particular struggles in L2 communication were not under evaluation. In reassuring participants that their L2 proficiency was not under the
microscope, I implored their disregard for any keen focus on L2 accuracy they may have felt compelled to monitor, and I emphasized that it was the content of their interview which was critical to the investigation. Efforts to make such study elements clear to participants was thought to be essential in reducing the pressure of both their witnessed native speaker interaction, and the implementation of video recording.

Although the interviewers had intermediate-to-advanced English language knowledge, they were encouraged to rephrase, reword, and slow their Spanish speech when a student’s comprehension was impaired. The rationale for not wanting interviewers to use English in these situations (particularly with those students identified as beginners) was two-fold: (a) I wanted to simulate features of the foreign context as much as possible, and (b) I did not want students easily resorting to English in their responses, as I was focused on analyzing L2 gesture. When needed, the interviewers directed attention to me so that I could address the student’s inquiry in English. Under these circumstances, student responses were still encouraged to take place in the L2, directly responding to the interviewer.

**Instruments: Logging Student Activity**

In addition to the administration of three audio-video recorded interviews with Chilean native speakers (NSs), students were also prompted to return an e-mail log on two separate occasions during the semester between interview sessions (Appendix D contains a schedule overview of interview sessions and e-mail logs). With the primary objective to monitor students’ experiences, goals,
feelings, and reflections between interview meetings to survey their motivational developments, video recording was not necessary for this ancillary data set.

Four weeks following both first and second interviews, an individually tailored series of questions was devised and sent out to each student. This served in triangulating the data, facilitating a clearer understanding of the students' language learning endeavors. In addition to addressing the concepts divulged below, e-mail logs allowed me to follow up on interview questions of which were not effectively addressed, or of which a student's comprehension (or communicative efforts) were suspected to be deficient. For this reason, English was the language chosen to obtain this data.

Each set of questions in the e-mail logs comprised of a range of questions asking about students' interactions both inside, and outside, the classroom that might elucidate present-time motivations and the mediating elements. Responses to these questions served to customize the subsequent interview protocol for each participant. Sample questions for the first set of ancillary data from the e-mail logs included the following:

What activities do you find most helpful in your learning endeavor? How do you prefer to spend your time here in Chile? How do your experiences and perceptions thus far match up with the expectations held prior to, or upon your arrival here in Chile? What were your first impressions of Chile, and how do those impressions measure today?

Along with efforts to uncover any missing information with regard to their current coursework or academic history, attempts to clarify the possible presence of any credit-seeking motive in their decisions to SA were also addressed in this collection of data.
The second set of e-mail logs included questions that were intended to gauge the student’s overall attitude and impression of the culture. These responses served to gather insight into what the student understood Chilean culture to be, how much he or she was acculturating, and reasons for this level of acculturation (related to both internal and social phenomena, and the interaction between the two). Examples of questions presented in this set of logs included the following:

In your eyes, what makes up the Chilean culture? Do you feel welcomed? What is your overall attitude toward the Chilean culture—did you find living here to be more of a positive, or negative experience? How do you feel about returning home in the next few weeks?

**Emergent Theme: Modismos**

As a qualitative investigation, the analysis of data throughout the data collection process gave rise to an element of speech that I found important to include as an evaluated aspect of L2 development: the use of *modismos*. Also known as *Chilenismos*, these are the idiomatic phrases and words spoken only by Chileans, and they vary by specific region within Chile. I first took notice of the varying levels at which modismos were incorporated into the L2 speech of my participants outside of data collection near the time of Interview Two. As an emerging theme in exposure-related developmental phenomenon then, I decided to formally assess a student’s L2 stylistic speech in their final evaluations (Appendix E contains a list of the modismos utilized by participants). Specifically, I wanted to know how this manner of speech was manifested with relation to the psychosocial phenomena being investigated. To measure this directly in the
third interview (the final meeting), I asked students about their knowledge, impressions, and use (by themselves and others) of modismos. Although L2 gestures did not appear to co-occur with the modismos adopted in this study, participant awareness and personal production of modismos were the elements evaluated in conjunction with students’ SLD as associated with acculturation.

It is important for the reader to understand that the primary focus of Interview Three was not L2 gesture acquisition, but cultural reflection and L2 stylistic speech (modismo evaluation). Due to the significant difference in interview conditions (change in interviewer, interview setting, and interview duration) at Time Three, gestural productions were not included for a comparative analysis as in Interviews One and Two; Gestures were observed at this time however, but not formally addressed in the Analysis or Results.

**Student Privacy & Confidentiality**

To protect student privacy, pseudonyms were assigned as individually chosen by each participant. Each student was addressed during interviews by this name, and is identified as so in all data materials. In respect of anonymity, all identifying information obtained from the participant (e.g., questionnaire, consent form, e-mails) was edited to include his or her pseudonym as well.

Ensuring confidentiality, video material was immediately downloaded onto an external hard drive and deleted from the video camera (and memory card) thereafter. The hard drive was locked away at my residence, in a safe, in my personal room.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative Process

All interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for themes of gestural patterns and participation efforts (Appendix F and Appendix G contain categories of analyzed themes). Both e-mail logs, and interviews, were used to analyze each participant’s motivations throughout the semester with regard to his/her activity. All data were evaluated together to look for paths of goal-directed behaviors in relation to motivation, and development of L2 gestural behaviors over the course of the semester.

Supported by research (Gardner & Lambert, 1985; Allen, 2010), student motivations to study abroad were typically oriented around either: career-based incentives, gaining cultural experience or personal linguistic interests. As such, I classified participants’ initial motivational orientations into two distinct categories: Linguistic or Cultural. The students identified with linguistic-specific motivations for SA were further categorized as being either linguistically driven to learn the target language because of personally-vested interests (L), or linguistically driven for professional, pragmatic reasons (LP). The students identified with culture-specific motivations (C) were those whose intent for SA was mainly for seeking travel and gaining a cultural experience, with second language acquisition being subsidiary or complementary. As Gardner and Lambert point out, however, the distinction of motivational orientation is not necessarily mutually exclusive, as was evidenced in the cases selected for the current investigation.
Interview One and E-mail Log One were used to collect information on students’ goals and plans for the semester, being evaluated in relation to their initial motivations to study abroad. Interview Two and both sets of e-mail logs allowed me to map out what students were actually doing (their activity). Evaluated alongside their: level of satisfaction (in both their efforts and their linguistic gains); current goals; learner agency; and self-proclaimed adjustments needed, participants’ goal-directed behaviors were explored for how cultural tools or interactions mediated how activity was realized, and how subsequent motivations emerged.

A general observation of their overall reflections (of the culture and their experience) was drawn from both second and third interviews, and both sets of e-mail logs so as to add further insight into the mediating factors of their activity, motivation, and self-perceived SLD. All such analyses were considered in relation to their acquisition of L2 gestures so as to assess how the acculturation process relates to the interplay between social and individual aspects of L2 learning, and L2 forms of gesture.

**Identifying and Defining Patterns**

In analysis of all the data (audio-video interviews, interview transcripts, participant information, and email log responses) as both individual and complementary sets of participant evaluations, common phenomena could be found across cases. However, among these elements of commonality, there were individual differences based on how activity was internalized and goals were manifested. Additionally, in accordance with student activity, differences
were also found in L2 gesture acquisition. Particularly, the dynamic elements found to be common across participants that were also seen to vary in developmental dimension as related to individual internalizations of the context, were: activity; self evaluations of efforts and linguistic development; cultural perceptions; agency; and goals. These aspects were explored across participants, and evaluated for individual differences in how these features developed and how they were reflected in the acquisition of L2 gesture forms.

As the commonalities between participants also gave rise to individual differences in how activity was realized in relation to the sociocultural interactions experienced by participants, patterns of SLD were examined in this fashion. The following definitions of the patterns explored not only serve to explicate the methodology and analysis of the current study, but may also inform the field of linguistic research for how these patterns unfold during SLD.

As the concepts are discussed with direct application of the learning and development of participants in the Results, the terms are briefly introduced here so as to facilitate reader comprehension of methodology and design.

Learner agency was the first of the dynamic elements observed in exploration of the individual differences among participant qualities that was shared by other participants. In reflection of a learner’s need to achieve his goals, he exhibits a particular drive, similar to motivation, to fulfill them (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). As it has been interpreted for the current study, this drive represents learner agency. It resembles an individual’s automatic (unconscious) activity, an operation revealed through a learner’s response to conditions as a
reflection on the nature of the goal-directed behaviors that ensue after conditions change. For the current investigation, how students responded in their pursuit to attain defined goals in the presence of linguistic or cultural strife was evaluated along a continuum of learner agency, from: easily defeated → passive → resilient (Appendix H). Depending on where students measured on this continuum, activity was realized differently, and goal-directed behaviors varied.

Outside activity was a term devised to reflect on a participant’s native-speaker (NS) interactions that occurred outside his or her host family. If a student had regular and/or frequent interactions with NSs outside the home of his or her host family, a student was evaluated as high in this category of activity. If there was no frequency or regularity of this interaction, a student was noted as low on this activity.

Holistic activity was used to describe a student’s participation with NSs, as a whole. It included NS contact both inside and outside the home. Overall activity was a term used to capture all language learning efforts apart from NS interaction (activity that could be collaborative, or individual). Participant overall activity was identified as high if he or she frequently engaged with his or her host family in addition to also frequently participating in one or more culture-rich activities outside the home—either interaction with native speakers (NSs) of the target culture, or activities directed towards learning about Chilean culture (e.g., visits to museums or local historical landmarks of Santiago). Participants who did not meet both inside- and outside- the home conditions delineated here, were identified as having low overall activity.
Anxiety represented the students’ feelings of uneasiness and discomfort. Students were identified as having a high, inhibitive display of anxiety if these feelings paralleled some display of reluctance toward, or avoidance of NS interaction; Otherwise, students were identified as having low anxiety.

The term total gesture was devised to refer to the sum of all gesture production (American and Chilean, together). With gestures being separated from non-gestures in the analysis of this non-verbal behavior, the total gestures produced included both American and Chilean forms, and were further separated as only Chilean gestures were to be analyzed for the current investigation. The overall gestural production was important however, in that the total gestures produced at both Time One and Time Two were compared so as to gain more insight into what was observed in the development of L2 gesture in comparison to what was being produced overall. To make this comparison, all gestures produced were counted and compared to the counted Chilean gesture forms that were observed.

L2 gesture variation refers to the sum of how many different L2 gesture forms had been adopted by the student over the course of the semester. It specifically refers to the breadth of L2 gesture forms produced overall by the participant.

Gesture Analysis

Gestures can signify the motion, or simple representation of either: character/subject, object, or concept. “The hand is not a hand but a character, the movement is not a hand in motion but the character in motion, the space is
not the physical space of the narrator but a narrative space” (McNeill, 1992, p. 20), and the nuances of our finger movements are not meaningless but rather an aspect of the character (or object) in action. Interpreting these dimensions of thought and language as illustrated by a speaker is no easy feat; it requires close examination.

**Gesture Types**

To understand the gesticulations in the current study’s evaluation of SLD, I used McNeill’s (1992, chapter 3) suggestions for this particular method of analysis. With an aim to understand how gestures were developing throughout the course of the semester, I had to identify the meaning and purpose for the gesticulations being used by the participants.

To begin, all visible actions of the hands were considered, as instructed by McNeill (1992, p. 78). They were either identified as gestures, or non-gestures. Non-gestures were deemed those movements of: body re-positioning, fidgeting, stroking of the hair, and object manipulation. All non-gestures were disregarded, and gestures were further codified by type: **iconics**, **metaphorics**, emblems, **beats**, **deictics or cohesives**.

Iconic gestures are those which enact something referred to in speech; they are closely related to the semantic content of the verbal communication. An example can be illustrated by where a speaker describes the events that took place in a classroom during an exam. When recounting how the student’s test got thrown away by the teacher, the speaker may say: “she threw it away,” and appear as if to pick something up. However, the speaker may also say: “it got
thrown away,” and appear as if to toss something aside. The manner in which the speaker chooses to express the action of this event denotes a particular perspective—that of either the actor or the object. The gesture which accompanies the phrase follows suit in representation of the speaker’s viewpoint. Furthermore, where iconics are considered, the stroke or gesture movement, replicates an aspect of the verbal context which is semantically equivalent (e.g., *she threw it away*—the speaker acts to be the subject here who is shown to apprehend the object by picking it up).

Metaphoric gestures, also pictorial in nature, however, are abstract representations of some unit of the verbal message. McNeill (1992, p. 14) describes metaphoric gestures as those which portray some concrete metaphor. He provides an example of metaphorics with a speaker who summarizes his recent cartoon viewing: “it was a Sylvester and Tweety cartoon,” says the subject, with his hands raised up during the “was a Sylvester” part of his sentence. Whereas an iconic gesture might be used in the explanation of some particular event within the cartoon, McNeill identifies that here the speaker is using his hands as if to present his listener with an “object,” one which is not verbally present. In doing so, he is representing a “genre” of cartoon to his listener. He takes the abstract concept of genre and illustrates it so as to create a concrete image to supplement his speech.

Typically, but not necessarily smaller movements of the hand, beats refer to the movements that follow the rhythm of speech. As a fleeting event, this dimension of gesture is recognized as a simple flick of the hand, or fingers,
either: up and down, or back and forth. McNeill (1992) denotes the significance of beats as they highlight units of speech for the “discourse-pragmatic content” (p. 15), rather than its semantic content. Serving diverse purposes, they can be used to: signal the introduction of new subjects, summarize the actions of an event, change or revert to another subject, and can be deictic in their form.

*Deictic gestures* are commonly referred to as pointing gestures. Deictics refer to objects or events in the concrete world, and can take the role of an abstract gesture when the object (or event) is not physically present but the space for it is used as if it were in physical presence. *Cohesive gestures* (as iconic, metaphoric, pointing, or beats) are produced with the purpose of making conceptual connections that are separated in the discourse—the linking together of concepts that have been previously referenced by the speaker. Emblems are cultural-specific gestures that carry meaning without the use of a verbal accompaniment, but this meaning often varies across cultural contexts. Although emblems can be similar across cultures in articulation or hand shape, they are recognized as independent of each other for the fact that culture constructs their meaning.

For the current study, these elements were noted in ascertaining the meaning for the gestures produced, but note that not all were formally evaluated in the gestural analysis conducted. Gestures were not analyzed for how the productions of L2 gestures were applied in student speech, but rather were evaluated for what articulations of L2 gestures were being incorporated, and to what extent students acquired L2 gestures (evaluated as L2 gesture variation).
Various aspects of a gesture have to be addressed when coding for gesture type. A rough consideration of McNeill’s (1992, Chapter 3) methodology was followed according to what was most appropriate for my inquiry. I applied a series of questions in line with his recommendations, those of which regarded: the nuances of a participant’s hands, the motion of the gesture and the meaning/purpose of the gesture were considered. Hands were evaluated by notation of: 1) handedness—the use of one- or two-hands, and 2) shape of the hand, palm or finger orientation. Assessment of both: handedness, and the motion of the gesture were considered only in the evaluation of the gesture space that participants utilized. It should be noted however, that although the gesture space inhabited by participants was evaluated, the expanded use of this space that has been referred to in the analyses can not be clearly identified as L2 behavior because there was no use of ELAN software to formally analyze the gesture space that is inhabited by Chileans.

As McNeill’s (1992) delineation of both gesture type and gesture analysis are essential for understanding the gestural manifestations of participants, this analysis specifically focused on how closely participants’ gestures resembled those of Chileans so as to assess SLD as related to acculturation. However, where I did not have the time to formally evaluate Chilean semiotics during my SA, nor have I discovered any formal research on Chilean gesture that could meaningfully contribute to this analysis, I was regretfully unable to conduct a formal comparative analysis. Despite this fact, it was fairly evident which gestures were more American in nature, and which were not. Moreover,
because of my experience living among the culture, I was informed sufficiently enough to make an educated assessment on these behaviors.

Throughout the semester, I spent several hours a week in observation of Chilean gestural behavior patterns. I evaluated the gestures of members in my host family particularly, but also dedicated time to observing Chilean students on campus. Appealing to university staff, Chilean friends of mine, members of my host family and friends of my host family, I was able to make an informed estimation of what was perceived to be Chilean in the nature of observed gesture. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are variations for any one gesture within a culture, that gestures are not completely standardized in this sense, either.

**Chilean Gestures**

Common Chilean features of gestural communication were found to be characterized by the following: (a) open-palmed, bounded container gestures with fingers spread in a claw-like formation, (b) widened finger spans, and (c) tensed finger manipulations—either clenched and stiff at the knuckles or elongated and stiff. A common Chilean gesture type found resembled that of the Italian gesture described by Peltier and McCafferty (2010)—the cupped hand with thumb touching other finger tips (a finger bunch). Additionally, two common Chilean emblems were observed: (a) *upward* flicks away—to signify “forget it” or simply to represent the concept of “away,” and (b) the thumbs up. This emblem (produced with one or both hands) is used very frequently among Chileans as
their physical demonstration of approval or an expression for something “cool” (slang). It seems to accompany a level of heightened enthusiasm.

Additionally, the gesture box, or typical spatial area utilized with gesticulation of Chileans was observed to inhabit a further distance from the body for gesture and motion than that typically utilized by Americans, although again, this was not defined with certainty as a L2 manifestation of gestural behavior. Also, the frequent use of two hands in communication rather than the one hand has been noted as more Chilean-like behavior than American. Beats produced by Chileans were also typically observed as semi-open handed, tense (stiff), with a widened finger span.

In a more specific reflection of the participants, I found that their general use of one or two hands helped in identifying the culture to which that gesture was attached. Illustrating metaphoric and iconic representations of the discourse, two hands are frequently utilized by Chileans in their speech, especially in times of concept differentiation. Also, Chileans use two hands more frequently overall in the presentation of ideas and thoughts than typically found within American gesture. Thus, if a student was using more American-like gestures, but incorporated the second hand to complete that very gesture (or supplement it with a separate aspect of the spoken utterance), it may be inferred that only part of their gestural production was American in thought, with thought simultaneously being represented in part as Chilean, as well.

Considering some of the specific Chilean hand articulations observed and described above, the students’ rendition of the open, bounded container gesture,
appeared mostly in an upside down oriented claw-like grasp, with or without beats. Appearing very frequently in Chilean speech, as upside down or right-side-up, it almost always represents a concept, idea or group. Also found to be Chilean in nature was the quick flipping motion of a semi-open palm from a downward- to upward orientation with a widened finger span. This flipping behavior, associated with a speaker’s indication of the need to draw a conceptual comparison, is qualitatively different when displayed by Americans. For Americans, the equivalent behavior is typically produced with a flatter palm orientation and little-to-no finger span. Another Chilean articulation observed by participants was in the establishment of “himself/herself” in reference to: “me, mine, my, and I.” This was demonstrated with the finger-bunch description provided above. It appeared as a closed palm, elongated finger-bunching on, or toward the chest. In American culture, this reference to the self is often displayed with a flat palm orientation on the chest.

Other hand nuances that were recognized to be Chilean regarded the nature of the hand flick. This emblem produced with the hand flick away is almost always exhibited in an upward motion rather than the lateral trajectory of the flick produced by Americans. This flick can include the whole arm, or can be restricted to just the hand, or just fingers. Participants exhibited some variation in Chilean flicks of the hand by demonstration of an initially closed downward-oriented palm and finger bunch that when flicked upward released the touching of the fingers.
Foci of Gesture Evaluations

As greater linguistic gains have been associated with increased exposure to the target culture (Hernández, 2010; Shively, 2013), and increased L2 knowledge has been linked with increased use of gesture in L2 communicative efforts (Macedonia & Knosche, 2011; van Compernolle & Williams, 2011), it was expected that overall production of gesture (American and Chilean, considered together) would differ with time spent in the target culture. For this reason particularly, across both interviews, overall gesture was counted and compared to the L2 gesticulations counted so as to avoid the interpretation that an increase in L2 gesture observed at Time Two was simply due to acculturation.

As Interview Three had different parameters than the first two interviews, participant gestures could only be formally analyzed for Interviews One and Two. Per estimated advances in L2 proficiency due to the inexorable cultural exposure inherent in the foreign context, participants of the current study were expected to use more L2 gesture for the second session than the first. My particular gestural evaluations then, considered the following: Would participants display more overall gesture, or L2 gesture, as time passed with the semester? What L2 gesture patterns would develop? And would the extent of L2 gestures exhibited by participants (the variation in number of L2 gestures produced) relate to how their motivation and activity could be traced over all the data?
CHAPTER 5
RESULTS

Across participants, each student developed qualitatively different gestural behaviors from Time One to Time Two, but when motivations and activity were considered, there was evidence for a qualitatively different adoption of L2 gesticulation as related to cultural activity and learner agency. The students’ self-reported initial motivations to SA were found to: (a) overlap in instrumental-integrative orientation, (b) manifest in qualitatively different fashions based on how students internalized their SA experiences, and (c) develop differently over time in response to activity and learner agency.

Furthermore, cultural tools and interactions were utilized differently in participants’ goal-directed behaviors and seemed to mediate how activity was realized, and how subsequent motivations or goals emerged. Goal-directed behaviors, as realized through activity, also evidenced a difference both in how L2 gesture was acquired, and how L2 stylistic speech (modismo awareness and production) was realized. Additionally, anxiety and L2 self-confidence seemed to mediate student efforts to engage in the culture regardless of initial motivation for the program.

Language learner proficiency (beginner, intermediate, advanced) did not appear to evidence any relation to student activity, nor how their L2 gestures were acquired. For all students, the extent of cultural interaction seemed to influence how L2 gestures were adopted in their speech, a relationship also further tied to stylistic speech awareness and production. Participants who
interacted most with the host culture were found to: adopt more L2 gesture; report higher levels of awareness for the stylistic speech of Chileans; and produce more modismos in their personal use of the target language.

**John**

John is one of the two cases selected from the beginning level participants. Where some participants expressed having a combination of both integrative and instrumental motivations, his initial motivation to study abroad was clearly asserted as LP-oriented. John’s cultural engagement during the program actually followed this initial motivation as his limited cultural activity paralleled his lack of cultural interest, and the activity he did experience failed to lead to any new goal-directed behaviors.

Although John acknowledged having an interest to set new goals, he never actually committed to setting them as goals, and this was also observed through his cultural activity. At Interview One, he declared that his goal (to practice his current Spanish skills, and add to this existing knowledge base) was driven by its professional application; He wanted to communicate with more guests at his current place of work in the U.S. On the other hand, he was also interested in *experiencia la vida chilena [sic]* (experiencing the Chilean life). His plan to reach both of these goals was to *practicar [su] español y explorar la ciudad* (practice his Spanish and explore the city). However, also during this interview, he admitted that the language barrier put him at an imposition: that *Chilenos* *hablan muy rápido…tan rápido* (Chileans speak so fast) was declared to be a major deterrent for him in envisioning the interaction he felt he needed
with the target culture in order to linguistically advance. This left him undecided as to with whom he would look to spend his time—with Chileans, or gringos (Americans). Ironically nonetheless, he also stated that he did not favor studying with a student population made up of all Americans.

By the time of Interview Two, John reported having met more Chileans, having visited museums and vineyards, and having traveled to nearby cities, yet he did not specify any significant increase in practicing his Spanish. The Chileans that he had met were encountered on viajitos (small trips). Outside these encounters, he did not report any more exposure to NSs, or any increase in L2 practice. His satisfaction level with regard to the efforts he had put forth up to that point was low. Despite the dissatisfaction with himself, he did acknowledge some L2 growth. His goal at this time was to put forth more effort in advancing his L2 skills. In discussing any adjustments he would like to employ in order to do so, he commented: Quiero practicar más con Chilenos (I want to practice more with Chileans), albeit, this never happened by the program’s end.

Throughout the semester, according to Interview Two and both sets of e-mail logs, his cultural activity remained limited to the brief interactions with his host family outside his reported two-hours of practice with them in the evenings, or over lunch on the weekends. He also stated that upon leaving the house “just to get out” (without friends), that he spent his time “people watching;” There was no mention of attempt to interact.

John’s utility of total gesture (American and Chilean, combined), did not seem to increase from Time One to Time Two, however his production of Chilean
gestures did increase; in fact, they tripled even with interview times being consistent across both sessions (Appendix I contains interview durations and frequencies of gesture production). Although there was an increase in frequency where Chilean gesticulations were expressed, there was little variation in those exhibited (Appendix F). At the first interview, L2 gesture articulation was strictly limited to tensed finger manipulations. During the second interview, most of his gesticulations illustrated the same Chilean feature, and also the use of Chilean-like finger bunching. Additionally, John’s typical tensed L2 finger articulation (Figure 2) was used to substitute words that he did not know at Time Two to represent the missing L2 word. Chilean gesticulation was absent at Time One when the Spanish word could not be produced.

Figure 2. Example of L2 Hand Articulation: Tensed Finger Manipulation. These images display two examples of John’s use of tensed finger manipulations, in line with L2 gesture forms produced by Chileans.
Whereas John’s overall use of gestures (American and Chilean) in the first meeting were deictic in purpose, or served as cohesive beats, his gestural expressions in Interview Two included metaphorics and iconics, as well. Strictly American-like deictics (untensed, hands or fingers) were employed during the first interview, but he was shown to express both American-like and Chilean-like deictics (tensed, stiff hands or finger manipulation) at Interview Two. Furthermore, although very prevalent in the first meeting, his utility of multiple beats per gesture seemed to decrease at Time Two. At Time One, he appeared to illustrate a gesture and produce a beat with that same gesticulation for almost every word that followed within that utterance. It seemed as if he had produced the beat to follow rhythm of his every struggled word, as if to mark the successful completion of each spoken word.

No evidence was found for Chilean-like flicks of the hand, and very seldom did John utilize two hands when gesturing—both instances occurring only during the second session. His gesture space remained very confined, very subtle in movement, and was maintained relatively close to the body throughout all observations over the semester with some slight deviation evidenced only during Interview Two. Overall, he did not adopt L2 gestural behaviors to much a varied extent, despite his increase of Chilean gesture frequency that was evidenced from Time One to Two—only finger bunching, and tensed finger manipulations were observed.

At the end of the semester, John rated his L2 abilities to be poor but felt that he had met his goal in that he had learned more Spanish (Aprendo más
Overall, John appeared to maintain his anxiety about the rapid speech of Chileans, which may be related to his lack of engagement with people in the target culture. Furthermore, his reflections on the culture seemed to be noted from a superficial, distant perspective. Other than commenting on the food during Interview Two in that it was Chilean tradition to use *muchos, muchos condimentos*...*demasiado condimentos* (a lot of condiments, and too much), he depicted Chile to be “a culture of odd jobs...with massive street vendors...” in his second e-mail log.

Not much seemed to differ between Chile and the U.S. cultures in John’s perception. This seemingly superficial cultural evaluation did appear to parallel his activity with NS, however. Despite his acknowledgment that conversing with Chileans would allow him the greatest linguistic gains, he showed minimal engagement in this activity. Low levels of engagement can also be extended to the observations recorded for L2 stylistic speech, or modismos (Appendix J contains the modismo evaluations considered alongside participant activity).

During John’s final interview, which focused on overall self-reflections, and both awareness and production of modismos, he displayed minimal awareness of this cultural aspect of the language. He asserted that many Chileans don’t use modismos in their speech—a false observation. Although he lacked linguistic awareness of this speech phenomenon, he did discuss a separate Chilean aspect of discourse—dropping the ‘s’ at the end of words. This was a correct observation, as it is also very common to Chilean Spanish. He reported
practicing this Chilean speech pattern, rather than incorporating modismos in his speech.

**Jane**

Jane is the second of the two beginning level participants. Her initial motivation was identified to be that of gaining a foreign cultural experience (C). Despite her occasional proclamations otherwise, her cultural activity paralleled this motivation to study abroad, and her goal-directed behaviors gave no rise to other motives. Her interests while abroad were limited to traveling and experiencing another way of life, confirming her L2 interest was strictly for reasons of its professional utility: “it looks good on paper, I don’t really want to learn it.” When asked about what her goal was specifically, she mentioned that she wanted to improve her L2 skills with reasons only superficially related to her professional applicability: “It will be useful.”

Additionally, only three weeks into the semester at Interview One, Jane had already planned to change her one-year study plan to a single semester. She reported being frustratingly homesick. Her plans for the semester abroad then, consisted of: dancing, and looking to join a running club. The only linguistic-related goal she mentioned was her desire to be paired with a conversation partner (a fellow Chilean student attending the university who would be practicing his or her English as well as assisting in the USAC student’s aim to learn Spanish).

During Jane’s first interview, she frequently resorted to the use of English and informed me that she was primarily speaking English outside the interview.
sessions, even with Chileans who were conversation partners of her USAC friends. The need to meet more Chileans was mentioned as a way to improve her Spanish, but no real efforts were made to do so throughout the course of the semester.

At Interview Two, Jane mentioned her attempt to contact and meet up with the conversation partner assigned to her through the USAC administration, but communication efforts fell through and no further personal attempts were made to find another. Consequently, she reported L2 practice to take place with her host mom and co-workers, however, the actual amount of Spanish used (or attention given) is suspect in these interactions based on what was displayed and divulged across the interview sessions. As it appeared during all three interviews, to overcome her struggles with L2 communication she very quickly deferred to English in hopes to still effectively communicate with her interviewer. The same quality of L2 practice was expected to occur in her other interactions: “They [Chilean co-workers] speak English,” she confirmed. She even mentioned how her host mom would try to alleviate her strained L2 efforts by using English when possible because “she knows some English, muy poco [very little], but she tries.”

In being asked to further elaborate on her activity in the target culture, Jane reported it being limited to her volunteer work at the “pub crawl.” Her job was to watch over tourists from all over the world “bar hop” in a specific segment of town overrun by some of the most popular clubs and bars in Santiago. She reported that the Chileans with whom she worked, used both Spanish and
English with her. However, it was revealed that English was more predominantly used in this setting since it was most often the lingua franca among the tourists with whom she most closely worked. Confirming Jane’s lack of motivation to learn the L2, she frequently turned to English in the second and third meetings, as well, rather than working through her struggles with Spanish.

Jane described having very little interaction with the target culture outside this social activity at work, and the little engagement she involved herself with among her host family. Although her conversation partner never contacted her to finalize the language practice arrangement, she did report some practice with her USAC friend’s conversation partner “because they [were] always together.” Apart from this, she said that she listened to music in Spanish as well as watched TV. Reporting that she was más o menos (more or less [satisfied]) with her efforts thus far in the semester (at Interview Two), she again asserted that she had no urge to learn the language: “I’ll go to class, do the homework, speak in class, but that’s it. I want to learn it, but just so it looks better on paper.” When asked about her goals at this time in the semester (Time Two), she simply stated: “to improve.” Duly noted however, she stressed that she was not going to put forth any effort to do so—that she was satisfied with how things were going. Also during Interview Two, she still appeared to be very preoccupied by the thought of returning home: “I’m just counting down the days.”

Being that her motivations to learn the language and engage were very trivial (supported by way of her agency and actions), Jane’s gestural transformation seemed to reflect this in that it was not very rich in L2 cultural
expression (L2 gesture variation, Appendix F). Additionally, she exhibited a very low utility of Chilean gesture for all interview sessions despite her high frequency of overall gestural production.

In general, across both interview sessions, Jane’s gesticulations were accompanied by multiple beats each, producing more beats per gesture than separate gestures per utterance—almost all being exclusively American in form. Especially interesting was her use of this behavior as a speech-filler. During Interview One, particularly, she made few attempts to act out or illustrate some iconic representation of the L2 word or concept that she lacked, producing little more than deictics. She was seen to extend her hand in a deictic fashion where she then produced multiple beats as a substitution for the L2 speech that was not produced.

At Interview Two, Jane showed more gestural production of missing speech as if she changed her strategy for communicating her message. Almost always failing to form complete sentences, her use of metaphorics and iconics served to represent the main idea, and beats functioned to emphasize that main idea since she could not communicate in full sentences (e.g., [Tengo] Muchas preguntas “Lots of questions” served as her complete sentence. She raised her hands up on each side of her head with half a dozen beats produced throughout this one utterance.)

Although Jane was substituting L2 words with gesture (American, mostly) at Interview Two, she was seen to fill in the speech gap rather than leave her message incomplete during the second meeting. At this time, her gesture-beat
pairing was accompanied by an English word or words to finish the expression of her thought. This gesture substitution occurred with very high frequency being that L2 production was particularly onerous for Jane, however, very few of her gestures were Chilean. Only occurring during one instance (during Interview One) the Chilean-like finger bunching articulation was produced, and only as a mirror of the interviewer when trying to understand a word used in the question presented to her. This particular L2 gesture was the only gesture produced by Jane at Interview Two, apart from her one-time use of the Chilean “thumbs-up” emblem (Figure 3). Chileans do not typically say that something is cool (bacán) without the use of this emblem (one- or two- handed). As Chileans would say,

Figure 3. Example of L2 Emblem: Thumbs-up. This image shows Jane’s production of the two-handed thumbs-up emblem very common in the target language. It signifies “cool” (slang).
this gesture-speech pairing is *súper Chilean*. Jane uses this emblem while reflecting on her job in Chile, but uses English rather than Spanish: “It’s cool” [thumbs-up given, here], rather than *¡Bacán!*

With no fundamental grasp of *modismos* in relation to the language, Jane reflected on them as just another language’s slang vocabulary. Reporting her frequent use of English slang in the U.S., at Interview Three she said: “I like mismos [sic], I expected Chile to have them, and every language *should* [emphasis added] have them.” However, in reference to the word *modismos*, she struggled to reproduce the term, and looking for reassurance she uttered: *mismos*. With her personal acknowledgment that her L2 vocabulary was very limited, she admitted: “I don’t use *mismos* [sic] very often, but I try to use them.” She reported using *po* (no direct English translation) and *cachaí* (get it?), both correctly referenced.

**Stacey**

Stacey was one of the two cases selected from the intermediate level participants. Her initial motivation to study abroad was declared to be linguistic (*L*), and her deeply engaged cultural activity throughout the program not only corroborated this drive, but also appeared to greatly reflect in both her L2 gesture acquisition, and L2 speech production. Not only was Stacey’s desire to engage with the people of the target culture strongly declared from the beginning, her actual participation throughout the semester mirrored her objective to do just this. Furthermore, her motivation continued to be strong and resilient despite her
struggle in L2 communication activities, reporting that the Chilean people were always very nice—helping her when she struggled.

Stacey’s pursuit to learn the language and the culture were robust and did not deter when undermining influences or challenges were presented. Even though she reported many times of confusion when trying to coordinate or meet up with her Chilean friends, she continued to interact with them on a regular basis all the same: going to bars, going to their homes, watching fútbol on TV, etc. She also negatively reflected on the idea of spending any time with other Americans (her USAC peers), saying: “I don’t want to be seen as a tourist…I don’t want to experience the culture on the surface.” Her desire to tener una experiencia de la vida chilena (to have the experience of the Chilean life), as she reported early on in her first interview, was validated when she spoke of how she planned to spend her time abroad. She perceived spending time with other USAC students to be more of a vacation experience—not something she was interested in; She wanted to get to know and experience the culture, which the only way for doing so to her was to get to know Chileans and spend her time with them. Her actions followed suit, and she wasn’t reticent about interaction in the very least. When asked “which interactions do you prefer—classroom, at home, outside the home, etc.?” She responded by saying that she preferred all of it.

When Stacey was not interacting with her host family, she was spending time with her Chilean friends, and based on how her L2 development transpired from Interview One to Interview Two, her motivation and activity were positively reflected. Her gestural expressions were not just observed to be qualitatively
different from Time One to Time Two, but were found to be very culturally rich over time—adopting a wide range of Chilean gesticulation in comparison to other students. Her overall gesture production (Chilean and American, combined) from Interview One to Interview Two increased in frequency more than 1.5 times, but her use of Chilean-like gestures was found to increase more than four times.

Figure 4. Example of Change in Gesture Space. These images display Stacey at Interview One (on the left) and Interview Two (on the right) in the production of a two-handed gesture in both instances. Her gesture at Time Two can be observed to be a larger production in space, utilizing much more of her arm than at Time One.

Also, Stacey’s deictic gestures reflected a very Chilean nuance of the fingers that was not present during her first interview. She was not found to point with an index finger, but rather utilized a tensed multiple finger approach as found by Chileans, not Americans. Additionally, she was observed to use more gestural space by the time she met for her second interview (Figure 4). At the
start of the semester, her display of confined American-like gestures were frequent but with intermittent, wide expansions in use of space. Although confined gestural behavior was replicated at Interview Two, the proximity of the gestures to her body had changed in general, most of which were displayed further from the body at Time Two—a possible shift into the use of Chilean’s gesture box. Stacey also demonstrated a unique flick of the hand during her second interview that was not present during the first. She was seen to flick her hand upward, as found with Chileans, with an initially closed palm that would open and disperse her originally finger-bunched hand orientation in the upward motion. Moreover, her use of two hands when communicating was much more frequent in the second interview than the first, a behavior exhibited more frequently by Chileans than Americans.

Whereas Stacey’s initial interview displayed gestures that mostly served the purpose of speech substitution when trying to convey meaning as she stumbled upon or looked for the correct Spanish word, her gestures at Time Two appeared to illustrate a complimentary aspect to her spoken utterances (using metaphoricics, iconics and beats that supplemented her speech, rather than replace it). At Interview Two, when Stacey could not immediately produce the word for which she was in search of, she temporarily illustrated the word by holding a marked Chilean hand articulation (either the bounded container gestures with open palm, fingers widely spread in a claw-like formation, or a unique finger nuance tense in nature, Figure 5). A beat almost always accompanied this gestural production as if to represent the ephemerally missing
word; such gestural illustration for word substitution during her first meeting displayed no Chilean characteristics.

Figure 5. Example L2 feature: Bounded Container Gesture with Claw-like Formation. In this image, Stacey is seen to be displaying the claw-like, bounded container. Her fingers are widespread and tensed.

Although Stacey was unavailable to meet for the final evaluation, her spontaneous mention of modismos during the second interview provided sufficient information for assessing her knowledge of this stylistic speech of Chileans. She recounted her own use of modismos when in the presence of her Chilean friends (e.g., po, huevón, cachai, pucha, and one expletive phrase). At this time in the semester (Interview Two), she possessed the most knowledge about modismos in having the most extensive level of awareness for their existence of any of the participants.
Daniel was the second case selected from the intermediate level participants. His initial motivation was identified to be linguistic ($L$), but his cultural experiences were shown to mediate how further activity was realized, and the goal-directed behaviors that emerged were in line with a new proposed motive. Daniel’s case is a good example of someone who shares a personal-vested interest in learning Spanish, and although he clearly pursued this initial motivation throughout the program, his experienced activity functioned to mediate a change in his goal-directed behaviors. Furthermore, despite his linguistic driven motive and great linguistic gains, his L2 gesture acquisition failed to yield development as observed by the other two participants with initial L-oriented motivations.

With the second interview session lasting only five minutes longer than the first, a slight increase in total gestural production was observed, but the small increase in Chilean gesticulation represented a very small portion of Daniel’s total gestures. With the strong initial goal to interact among members of the target culture, his goal-directed activity and subsequent motives, revealed the contrary.

At Interview One, Daniel set three goals in the following order: (1) to learn the language, (2) to make friends/get to know Chilenos and (3) to familiarize himself with Chilean culture. To achieve these goals, he intended to do the following: separate himself from the Americans in the USAC program; interact with his host family; read in Chilean cafes; and meet with a conversation partner.
By Interview Two however, Daniel’s goal-directed behavior seemed to be more distant from the culture than originally declared. His only interaction with people in the Chilean culture was his L2 practice at home with his host family. The rest of his activity was private practice: He changed the language interface on his phone and computer, he reported to frequent cafes for reading and homework, he listened to the radio and went to the movie theatre where he could watch movies in Spanish. He explained that plans to meet with his conversation partner fell through, as did the intentions of his host brothers to spend time together. Despite his firmly asserted goal to meet Chileans, there were no actions taken to pursue this interaction even after the aforementioned events.

Also during Interview Two, Daniel admitted not to have separated himself from the USAC group, as they provided a más cómodo (more comfortable) setting for him. Although conversations with his USAC peers usually took place in English, he made it quite clear that instead of separating himself from the group at this point in time, he just preferred to make more of a personal effort to use Spanish with them. This was the adjustment he saw fit in furthering learning of the target language, something which entirely lacked the cultural element he initially employed.

At the second interview, Daniel also viewed his peer interaction with the other USAC students to be linguistically helpful to him, as he could benefit from assisting others communicate in the L2. Maintaining a cultural interest in his language endeavor, this did not replace his intentions for L2 practice with a conversation partner. However, upon personal communication with the
participant at the semester’s end, one extenuating circumstance after another had left this activity incomplete. He explained that with yet another plan to meet his conversation partner the day following Interview Two, it was again met with disappointment; it failed to happen. The remaining cultural aspect of his goal at Interview Two reflected going out with his host brothers—plans which also failed to work out previously, and regretfully never took place by the semester’s end, either. Noted however, he declared having no intention of making Chilean friends or contacts outside the hopes of meeting his conversation partner and going out with his host brothers.

Figure 6. Example of L2 Gesture Feature: Self-Reference. In this image, Daniel is displaying the L2 gesture articulation for the self. Typically, this is closed palm production with thumb touching elongated fingers.

Mirroring the lack of Chilean interaction outside the home (which was mostly limited to conversation with the host mother because the brothers were rarely home), his gestural development reflected a lack in cultural richness.
(limited L2 gesture variation). His only Chilean gesticulation displayed at Time
One (the finger bunch) was replicated at the second interview, but only
supplementing the use of one other Chilean gesticulation—a similar hand form in
reference to the self (Figure 6). Conversely, this reference to himself was not
continuously Chilean throughout the interview; He varied between American and
Chilean hand articulation in expressing “me,” “my,” “mine,” and “I.”

Over both interviews, Daniel almost exclusively exhibited only deictics and
metaphors. At Interview One, his deictics uniquely varied, utilizing various
different finger manipulations—nothing distinctly Chilean (e.g., no tensed finger
manipulation); The same behavior was observed at Interview Two. His use of
metaphors was mostly always wide open palm, non-tensed hand articulations
over both interviews, as well. Gestures performed per utterance during Interview
One were few, but each gesticulation was accompanied by multiple beats. With
more second language confidence, as noted by the participant himself (and
evidenced in his speech) at Interview Two, he incorporated far fewer beats per
gesture.

Daniel was observed over both interviews to utilize two hands
simultaneously when representing two separate aspects of some utterance—a
quality not exhibited by other participants to the same extent, and a gestural
expression of which seemed not to change over time. It is unclear as to whether
this is particularly Chilean in nature or not, as Autumn also exhibited some of this
behavior. In mention of double hand gesticulation however, he was observed to
represent a concept with two hands rather than one hand more frequently upon 
Interview Two. As for the use of gestural space, no change was observed.

At Daniel’s final interview, his reflection on modismos was informed, yet it 
lacked the context that Autumn and Stacey both applied in their rich reflections. 
He acknowledged the use of four different modismos: cachái, po, huevon, and al 
tiro. Although he had nothing to reveal about any personal encounters with 
Chileans using modismos, he did enthusiastically report the utility of two of these 
modismos within his own L2 discourse (cachái, and al tiro).

**Autumn**

Autumn was one of the two cases selected from the advanced level 
participants. Her motivation type was identified to be L, but her activity was 
inhibited to some extent due to personal comfort factors (to be explained shortly). 
Autumn, having a deeply rooted personal interest in the L2, had specifically 
revealed that it was her passion for learning the language which drove her 
professional interests. Autumn’s goal for the program was to: mejorar [su] 
conocimiento de español mucho (improve her language skills a lot), and “to 
understand it well enough to assist Spanish-speakers in the States who cannot 
speak English.” She planned to practicar, practicar, practicar (practice) with 
Chilenos outside the home in order to reach her goal during this time abroad, 
however, she stated that she wanted to gain comfortability and confidence within 
the home before she ventured off to meet other Chileans. Unfortunately, her 
reticence in leaving the home to “practice, practice, practice” was never resolved 
outside the parameters of her home with her host family.
Very engaged with her host family however, Autumn seemed to display the most activity in the home of all the students in the study. Despite her inability to venture out as she had initially aspired, she pursued her goal for interminable practice within these parameters, reporting to practice with her host family todo el día, todos los días (all day, every day). Apart from this activity, Autumn admitted not to leave the house very much. On the occasion when she did, she would be found with other USAC students. During her outings with other students, although not aimed at practicing with native speakers, she did report that Spanish was the primary language spoken among her peers during these experiences.

In compensating for her lack of native speaker interaction outside the home, Autumn was found to introduce herself to the culture in other ways by visiting museums and typical Santiago sites. Her interest for activity in the culture was evident in her actions throughout the semester. Interested in learning about the national dance (la Cueca), learning about Chilean history from museums, observing typical Chilean life in various parts of Santiago, and visiting local spots central to the area, she can be described as having been linguistically engaged on a very cultural level.

Unfortunately, it was Autumn’s lack of confidence and comfortability to interact with other members of the culture that stifled her efforts and limited her native speaker interaction. Her exposure to the culture was reflected in her gestural transformation over the semester as her Chilean gesticulations seemed to develop in complexity over time. Exhibiting the same Chilean finger bunch
articulation at Times One and Two, it was displayed with an added feature at Interview Two (Figure 7). Additionally, she incorporated more L2 gesture features at Time Two than were produced at Time One.

Whereas the finger bunching articulation was performed at Interview One, it was expanded upon at times during the second interview, being protruded up and outward into an open palm in a single beat (the upward motion illustrative of Chilean gestural behavior). Interview One evidenced Autumn’s use of the

![Figure 7](image_url)

*Figure 7. Example of L2 Hand Articulation: Finger Bunching.* The image on the left displays Autumn producing a finger bunch, but the image on the right shows Autumn’s left hand after releasing the finger bunch, and it is in the upward trajectory.

finger bunch to represent a concept. For example, to illustrate the concept of lacking knowledge (e.g., *no entienden mucho*), she used this gesture in the utterance: *Profesores hablan muy despacio porque los estudiantes no entienden*
mucho (Professors speak slowly because the students don’t understand a lot).

At Interview Two, in describing how she planned to visit other areas of Chile outside of Santiago: *Viajaré a las otras partes afuera de la ciudad de Santiago* (I will go to other parts outside the city of Santiago), she begins with the finger bunch to represent the parameter of “the city,” and expands this gesticulation with an upward beat outward into an open palmed span for representing Santiago, itself.

Overall, Autumn used lots of iconics to reflect actions described in her speech, and many deictic beats, which seemed to function in representing her cognitive mapping out of L2 words in thought expression. Lots of beats per gesture were exhibited at Interview One to accompany the process of verbalizing each thought, nearly one beat per uttered word—iconics and deictics. Her use of beats was found to be less dramatic at Interview Two, where her L2 fluency was also observed to have improved. Interestingly as well, her utilization of two-handed gesticulations increased at Time Two, and instead of serving to represent a concept for a theme, she was seen to use two hands for representing two aspects of speech at the same time. For example, in the utterance:

*Cuando estoy en mi computadora, todo es en inglés, pero tengo que cambiarlo a español para ayudarme* (When I am at my computer, everything is in English but I need to change this to Spanish in order to help me)

she represents the computer (*Cuando estoy en mi computadora…*) with two hands, and moves only one hand up and down to illustrate the content on the computer being in English (…*todo es en inglés…*). She reverts back to the computer illustration with two hands (…*pero tengo que cambiarlo a español…*) to
recreate the concept that needs to be changed (the computer, its settings). She follows this with a one-handed iconic gesticulation of action for changing, while the other remains in the same position to maintain illustration of the computer.

Although the duration of Autumn’s second interview was five minutes shy of the duration of Interview One, there was a slight increase in frequency of total gesture. Additionally, a few more Chilean gesticulations were produced during the second meeting. In addition to the display of the same Chilean gestures found at Interview One, and expanded versions of those (as described), she also adopted the Chilean gesticulation for “myself,” illustrating the finger bunch nearing her chest. Although only evidenced once during this time, the American equivalent (flattened open palm near the chest) was most often expressed in a more subtle fashion. Nothing notable can be mentioned about her use of gesture space. She initially utilized a confined area typical of American gestural expression, and could be seen to intermittently expand the space occupied; this behavior did not appear to change from Time One to Time Two.

During final interviews, Autumn displayed the most unsolicited, naturally-occurring accounts of modismos in comparison to the other participants. She regularly incorporated them into our conversation at the third evaluation, and gave rich examples of both her exposure to, and personal application of them in her every day life in Santiago. Po and súper were frequently incorporated into her discourse at the final interview, but she further reported the use and acknowledgment of two additional modismos, as well (e.g., cachai and me tinka).
Mark

Mark was the second of the two advanced level cases selected for the study. His initial motivation was declared to be linguistic with professionally driven interests (LP), however, he represents a case where integrative and instrumental motivations were difficult to distinguish. He clearly asserted that his initial motive to study abroad had no personal utility outside of the professional advantage it would award him. Mark’s goal-directed behaviors however were very much in line with a cultural commitment to achieve linguistic gains, and his activity realized with an increasing awareness of his advancements in the target language. Despite the self-recognition of his SLD however, no new motives emerged—Mark finished the program without developing any personal interest for learning the target language.

Furthermore, Mark found that cultural immersion was more beneficial in making L2 gains than his LP-oriented counterpart, John. As such, Mark’s goal-directed behaviors paralleled those of participants with L-oriented initial motivations. It should be noted that even in absence of a personal interest for the target language, Mark had no specific practical application for this linguistic knowledge. When asked if there were some specific career-driven advantage for him upon his return to the U.S., he had no reason directly related to some particular career path. He expressed that he just wanted to learn the language, and that it would be professionally helpful being that he lives in California.

Mark was very active with the target culture, exploring, interacting and taking every opportunity to learn something about the language and the culture.
In general, a low-gesture performer, his transformation from Time One to Time Two did reveal some increase in total gestures produced (American and Chilean, combined), as well as an increase in Chilean gesticulations produced.

Furthermore, his initial motivation, activity, and agency display an exemplar case of Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) argument that motivation, and all aspects interrelated, are not simply clear-cut as much as it may first appear.

Mark’s ultimate goal for the program was to learn the target language by: *voy a hacer todo que puedo hacer porque clase no es suficiente* (doing whatever I can because class is not sufficient) for truly acquiring the language. To pursue this endeavor, he sought to explore (both alone and with others) everything in Santiago and travel throughout both Chile, and other parts of South America. Exuding much determination, he planned to *hacer todo que existe* (do everything, whatever is available).

Mark’s actions throughout the semester were vigorously in line with his reported initial intent. His activity was wide in breadth, exhibiting varying degrees of active cultural interaction. As an individually regulated activity, he reported three specific actions: expanding his vocabulary daily by learning one word a day from a Spanish website, composing all of his emails and social media in the target language, and changing the language interfaces on his electronic devices. The more interactive events of participation included: volunteering as a tutor for Chilean children, attending all host family events, venturing out with members of the host family, interacting with the neighbors, and having frequent interactions with his conversation partner. Mark and his conversation partner not only
conversed daily, but also shared weekly excursions both to local and more distant destinations. Mark showed no limitations in his goal-directed actions for communication and gaining cultural exposure.

For being a low-gesture speaker, Mark’s overall gesture production increased four times from the first to second interview. Additionally, he produced far more Chilean gesture the second interview than he did in the first. Qualitatively, his gestures transformed in a very unique manner in comparison to the other students. At Interview One, his gesticulations were mostly single beats, in absence of other gesture form. This changed during Interview Two, as he was observed to produce beats in addition to other gesture articulations, although very conservative in relation to other students. His beats were also used for an utterance rather than just a L2 word. In his phrase comparing the intercultural interaction between sexes: “… creo que las mujeres chilenas no quieren tanto hablar con los hombres de los estados unidos” (I think Chilean women don’t like to talk to American men as much [as Chilean men like to talk to American women], he illustrates one metaphoric representation (bounded container gesture with open palm, fingers widespread in a claw-like formation) for: las mujeres (women), los hombres (men), and tanto (as much), but performs a beat for the demarcation of these words. This was very different from that observed at Time One where he was seen to simply produce a single beat for an entire utterance.

Mark’s use of metaphorics were also produced quite differently at Interview Two in comparison to Interview One. During the first meeting, Mark
represented things mostly with two hands as a rapidly performed container-like gesture for words like: nosotros (we), la cultura (culture), simpatico (nice), la personalidad (personality) etc. At Interview Two he did not perform this gesticulation for concepts, they became one-handed beats instead, sometimes of the Chilean container-like articulation (Figure 8). Throughout both interviews, deictics were seldom used, but iconics were frequently used. Iconic gestures served to describe an action in progress (e.g., mejorar <to improve>, aprendiendo <learning> etc.). He rolls one or two hands in a brief circular motion.

Figure 8. Example of Mark’s One-handed Beat of L2 form (Tensed finger manipulation). This image from Interview Two displays a one-handed beat of Mark’s that demonstrated a L2 hand articulation, as his fingers are shown to be tensed.

Mark’s only Chilean gesticulation at Interview One was the finger bunching to represent el programa (the program). This same gesticulation was evidenced in the second interview in addition to the bounded container gesture with open
palm, finger widespread claw-like formation for metaphoric concept representations (e.g., *es bueno tener ese sentimiento* (it is good to have that feeling), with *este sentimiento* being the stroke of the gesticulation. He also incorporated the Chilean reference to the self (the finger bunch) on various occasions, and even enacted the Chilean emblem in reference to money (thumb and index finger touch, with other fingers closed as fist). This gesticulation has a slight variation in articulation from the American equivalent; it is not just a rubbing of thumb and fingers together. He is seen to rub two tensed fingers together while the rest of his hand is in a closed fist. Although there was a slight tendency to inhabit more gesture space at Interview Two, there was no qualified means (ELAN software) used in this study to make solid conclusions for Mark or any of the participants with regard to this gesture evaluation.
CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION

Intricacies of L2 Learning and Development and its Implications

Activity theory depicts the sociocultural interplay occurring between an individual and his social, cultural-historical contexts. Activity greatly varies by culture, but regardless of the foreign context, all L2 learners will face many of the same challenges. Depending on the extent of differences found between the learner’s native and foreign cultures, the breadth of adjustments will vary. Importantly, however, no two learners are the same in any context; Each has his own personhood which influences language development. Despite this individuality, general patterns of behavior and development can be established between individuals, and similarities can be revealed in how sociocultural interplay shapes learning and development.

Additionally, as activity theory outlines the learning process as a cycle of constant renegotiation between the individual and his environment, the shifts in motivation and activity observed of each participant in the current study illustrate this phenomenon. Evidenced in: 1) their goals for participation in sociocultural activity, 2) their manifestations of L2 gesture forms, and 3) their agency, the dynamic paths of learning and development were more predominantly illustrated for some participants more than others. Activity theory also reflects on the idea that the human mind is mediated by social cues. In qualitatively different fashions, the internalization and reorganization of various social cues by participants in the current study were seen to be renegotiated over time, and the
various outcomes of linguistic and gestural development were explicated as a process of that renegotiation. Having both similar and disparate social, cultural-historical elements is what leads to the observation of moderately harmonious, yet distinctly individualized paths of L2 developments.

Each participant in the current study displayed gestural transformations from Time One to Time Two in a qualitatively different manner (e.g., frequency of overall gesture—American and Chilean combined, use of gesture space, gestural beats, gesture type, and function.) This was to be expected however, considering that the individual differences associated with this personal expression of thought cannot be controlled for (nor would such an approach be necessary or effective for the current investigational interest). The development of L2 gesture, in particular however, was displayed in a uniquely individual manner based on its predominance and variation in relation to student agency, motivation and activity realized. This relationship was observed individually for each participant as each student was seen to approach activity differently: from reserved → limited social → social (with regards to interactions with the host family), and passive → limited active → active (with regards to interactions with NSs outside the home, Appendix K). Implications of the patterns discovered are discussed in terms of how this relationship across social and psychological phenomena varied across participants.

**Range of Activity**

Participants Jane and John, who had the least cultural interactions and shared both common motives, and similar learner agency, displayed such
qualities differently from the other participants. Jane and John reported their motivations to study abroad were for cultural experience and travel, with an interest in pursuing the target language for reasons of practicality. At Interview One, Jane’s self-asserted superficial goal to learn the target language “so it looks good on paper” paralleled John’s enervated goal declaration to pursue L2 practice for career-related reasons. Discovered at Interview Two, Jane’s initial desire to meet a conversation partner was quickly dismissed upon one failed attempt, which similarly mirrored John’s lackadaisical pursuit towards achieving his subordinate goal to practice more with Chileans. Both students were found to be the most easily-defeated, or passive participants in the nature of their goal-directed behaviors (agency), and both exerted limited action for cultural participation. In reflection of this, they were also observed to be among the participants who produced the least variation in L2 gesture acquisition and L2 style of speech, in both awareness and production.

The other participants in the study exercised more cultural activity, but with individual differences in motive and learner agency, activity was realized in different fashions depending on how their SA experiences were internalized, which seemed to be mediated by personal factors, one being level of anxiety. Wherein the other four participants of the current study exhibited high overall activity, Daniel and Autumn were the only two students to counter this with low levels of outside activity. Although Daniel and Autumn were similar in this regard, their cultural activity was realized through different natures of their goal-directed behaviors and SA experiences. Autumn had a passionate personal
interest to learn the target language from which its professional-related utility emanated, but Daniel was linguistically-driven with personally-vested interests not connected to anything in particular. Both participants viewed cultural participation to be of interest for these motives, and declared subordinate goals related to cultural activity accordingly. Adjustments to these goals developed differently however, in relation to the following phenomena.

First, although Daniel and Autumn both began the program with intent to make cultural connections with people of the host culture, neither of them was able to fulfill this goal outside of the home, but with each shift in their goal-directed behaviors emerging differently, and for different reasons. In relation to cultural activity oriented goals for the program, Daniel initially proposed to make friends among the Chilean people but as a result of the disappointing reality when multiple plans to make connections failed to occur, he decided to thwart efforts for meeting Chileans, altogether. He maintained a passive learner agency for goal-directed behaviors, only relying on opportunities for cultural interactions to fall into place, denying himself to take initiative for his motive, elsewhere. In line with this sense of learner agency, and negatively internalized turn of events, Daniel also abandoned his goal to separate himself from the other American students in the program or seek social relations among Chileans.

In line with Baker and MacIntyre (2003) then, who found that anxiety may affect a learner’s willingness to communicate, it might be inferred that this is what was observed with Daniel. He stated that he was more comfortable with the other Americans than with Chileans. This might suggest that to some extent he
did exhibit anxiety for native speaker (NS) interactions, of which may be inferred to have given him reason to alter his goals for making friends among the Chileans, or that perhaps some level of anxiety for NS interaction resulted from the repeated events of social default. Maintaining his motive for making linguistic gains however, Daniel was resourceful through other means of activity, having reported to: read, watch films, change the interface of his devices, write e-mails and post social media in the L2. He also reported to use his increased USAC peer interactions as a resource for L2 practice and self-regulation.

Despite his high overall activity, Daniel’s lack of cultural activity seemed to reflect in his acquisition of L2 gesture. Comparatively, across all participants, he was among the students who acquired the least variation in L2 gesture, and in relation to Autumn specifically, his incorporation of L2 gestures was far less frequent. Both awareness and production of modismos, considered together, seemed to be a function of holistic activity of participants, so across participants Daniel was among the bottom echelon (the lower half) of participants on the holistic activity chart (Appendix K), and this was also reflected in the evaluations of modismos.

Autumn’s initial goal for cultural activity was to pursue opportunities for L2 discourse with Chileans outside of her host family. Admittedly at Interview One, she was reticent about NS interaction outside her home because she was from a very small town in the U.S., so she was planning to allow herself an adjustment period in which she could first become comfortable within the home. In contrast to Daniel, who exercised the same approach to activity (high overall, low outside)
and shared a similar linguistic goal, Autumn’s failure to realize a high outside activity was not a result of her SA experiences, but rather her inability to resolve her own discomfort related to being in a big city. Furthermore, Autumn’s shift in goal-directed behavior was not as divergent from what she initially set, as was seen with Daniel. Although Autumn did not “practice, practice, practice” her L2 speech with NSs outside the home, as initially divulged, she more than compensated for this NS interaction with unabated activity pursued in the home.

In comparison to Daniel, Autumn sought to achieve her linguistic endeavors with cultural interaction (although restricted to one dimension) rather than pursue it from more self-isolated practices that mostly described Daniel’s language learning activity. As a personal observation, Autumn appeared to be a more social individual than Daniel, exhibiting a greater interest for social interaction in general, thus perhaps her agency in achieving NS interaction was more persistent than Daniel’s (passive) because her need (as described through Leont’ev’s perspective) for social interaction was qualitatively different than Daniel’s. This might warrant some truth considering Autumn’s intimate environment in which she is from in the U.S. where her relationships and social interactions foster a unique social dimension of personhood—a social dimension distinct from that of Daniel who did not come from this type of background. This inference, if it holds any truth, would account for the elements that social, cultural-historical activity theory serve to explain in relation to learning and development.
Although Autumn’s outside activity was low, she experienced extensive interaction within the home (e.g., conversing, cooking, baking etc.) and this difference in cultural exposure as compared to Daniel reflected in Autumn’s acquisition of L2 gesture. Autumn evidenced a more frequent display of L2 gesture than Daniel, and included a wider range of variation than Daniel in L2 articulations produced. However, in comparison to the two participants with high overall and high outside activity (Mark and Stacey), Autumn’s acquisition of L2 gesture (frequency and variation) was less developed. This same pattern was revealed in the evaluations made of L2 speech style, where her rating on the holistic activity chart ranked her among the top three of participants, Autumn was also found to be in the top three participants of awareness for- and production of modismos, similarly exhibiting Mark’s evaluations but falling shy of Stacey’s.

Mark and Stacey, alike, also having high overall activity, displayed the highest levels of outside activity. These participants were motivated to study abroad for different reasons; Mark was linguistically driven to learn the target language for some undetermined future professional application, and Stacey was inspired to learn the language to learn more about herself, and experience the L2 culture. Despite their different motives, both participants were observed to spend the most time among same age Chilean peers than found for the other students in the study.

Also, both Mark and Stacey exhibited goal-directed behaviors in line with their motives for the program and subordinate goals they set to attain those objectives—goals and behaviors that mirrored each other despite their different
motives. Although Mark had professional interests in learning the language, his agency in goal-directed behavior was much more persistent than that found of his professionally motivated counterpart, John. In fact, Mark’s actions were highly culture-based in comparison to most of the study’s participants. Early on in the semester when declaring his subordinate goals for the program, he adamantly declared that class was not sufficient for gaining L2 proficiency, and in line with this statement he was observed to take the initiative in seeking every opportunity he could to culturally engage himself. The same behavior was noted for Stacey. She was among a group of students in the study who significantly struggled with the target language, but her motive was so strong and her nature of goal-directed behavior was so persistent that even in the constant face of struggle, her actions and goals were resilient to the strife. Accordingly, these displays for cultural activity and learner agency combined, were reflected in L2 speech style and L2 gesture acquisition. Both Mark and Stacey had the highest levels of reported awareness for modismos, with Stacey found to produce the most modismos in her use of the target language across all participants. Additionally when frequency and variation of L2 gesture were considered together, both Mark and Stacey were among the top L2 gesture performers, producing L2 gestures with the most frequency and variation of all participants.

The anomaly in these findings is that John— with little NS interaction altogether (in and out of the home), low overall activity, and little variation in L2 gesture articulation— was found to produce L2 gesture articulations the most frequently of all participants. This might be a result of his “people watching.”
Although he did not report to have any significant amount of NS interaction, his activity of choice being to observe the Chileans might have been enough to compensate for the interpersonal experience and L2 discourse practice with NSs in which other participants engaged to acquire L2 gesture. It may be then, that NS exposure and NS interaction influence learning and development in qualitatively different ways. Conversely, the work of Gregersen, Olivares-Cuhat, and Storm (2009) has found gesture to be significantly associated with a speaker’s goal to enhance the effectiveness of communication when linguistic competence is impaired.

Although Gregersen, Olivares-Cuhat, and Storm (2009) did not analyze L2 forms of gesture, they did examine the use of L2 learner productions of gesture type (e.g., illustrators, compensatory illustrators, adaptors, emblems, regulators and affect displays), and the frequency of gesture productions in a FL classroom by L2 learning students during a role-play task. Gregersen and colleagues (2009) found that more advanced L2 learners incorporated gestures with a higher frequency than beginner or intermediate L2 learners, and also that gestures were produced in more meaning-enhancing ways for the advanced learners in specific aim to improve meaning-making for the dialogue. For the current study however, the focus was specifically on L2 gesture production and L2 gesture frequency; and being that the current investigation’s concept of L2 gesture variation has yet to be explored in the literature, it might be interpreted that exhibiting a wider range of variation in L2 gesture production could represent a learner’s means to make more meaningful communication.
In line with Gregersen et al.’s (2009) work then, the current investigation’s evaluation of expression of L2 gesture variation may be interpreted to increase with increased learner proficiency. If this were the case, then John’s increased frequency of L2 gesture might be compensatory in function. During both Interviews One and Two, John was observed to substitute L2 words he did not know with gesture—American in nature at Time One, but Chilean in articulation at Time Two. Gregersen et al. (2009) discusses this behavior to occur in aim to compensate for the L2 deficiencies. John’s lack of variation in L2 gesture production then, might serve to corroborate the idea that as a beginner, with little L2 practice and little NS interaction, he was unable to produce a wider variation in L2 gesture articulation despite his increased frequency of L2 gesture forms. Further research should be done on L2 learners in SA contexts with regard to L2 gesture productions before such claims can be asserted, however.

Overall however, foreign and SA contexts have repeatedly evidenced a relationship between NS exposure and a learner’s L2 development in the research literature (Allen & Herron, 2003; Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2010; Schumann, 1978;). McMeekin (2006) argues that foreign settings impose a state of constant renegotiation for the learner with his environment which in turn positively impacts a language learner’s development. As a fundamental phenomenon inherent in activity theory, this process of renegotiation has been illustrated in the current study. The initial goals of participants were seen to change over time in response to both social (e.g., interactional experiences, cultural aspects, etc.) and individual factors (e.g.,
anxiety, agency, personal histories), and can be further linked with their individual L2 paths toward development (Appendix L summarizes this discussion).

Moreover, with regards to motivation, with motive being the need from which an individual’s goals emanate (Leont’ev, 1978), having a more personally-vested interest in learning the target language might lead to different subordinate goals or operations that mediate how activity is realized differently than those with other motives, thus L2 development would be observed differently. In the current study, it does appear that students with deeper linguistically-driven goals exhibited higher levels of overall activity, had the most sociocultural interactions, and were more likely to exude some form of competence even if they failed to overcome anxiety for NS activity outside the home. In this sense, it is plausible that having a personally-vested interest in the language learning enterprise might allow for more L2 internalization (evidenced here as frequency and variation of L2 gesture use) if agency permits activity to be realized in a more socially interactive fashion.

**Anxiety, and Activity Realized**

All but two students (Mark and Stacey) reported some degree of anxiety, which they specifically noted as a deterrent for cultural activity at some level. This psychological component was found to coincide with participants who reported lower levels of activity outside the home. In accordance with the findings from Baker and MacIntyre (2003) that anxiety may affect a learner’s willingness to communicate, it might be interpreted for the current study that activity was not only realized differently by participants as related to agency
associated motivations, but anxiety may further mediate this dynamic. Mark never revealed any feelings of anxiety. Stacey did mention feeling nervous at times when she was trying to coordinate times and places to meet with her Chilean friends, but she was very clear in depicting her resilient determination to not let that impede her efforts. When asked to walk the interviewer through a memorable moment in the culture, she recalled a prime example of this by recounting a night when she was lost, and confused over public transportation. She did not completely understand the directions given to her by her Chilean friends as to how to find her way. However struggling with the language, rather than give up in defeat, she pursued this endeavor until she finally reached her destination, some hours later.

Stacey’s struggles with the language never held her back from her pursuit to learn the language or engage in the culture, but for others, this was not the case. Jane, expressing an overwhelming feeling of being homesick and the inability to “be herself” in Chile, consistently failed to evidence active NS interaction. Moreover, she reported a personal preference to use English with Chileans when possible, a pattern also observed during all three interview sessions. This behavior was confirmed to be motivational by her self-reported heedless desire to engage with the target culture, and her longing for a return to the U.S. Her anxiety was clearly present and appeared to operate as some form of deterrent from activity.

John’s anxiety was specific to how rapidly the pace of speech was spoken among Chileans. This was mentioned throughout the semester, and we can see
from Appendix K that his activity holistically speaking, was also inhibited.

Despite his opportunities outside the home for interaction, he chose to be an observer rather than an active participant. As noted in the Results, John also expressed a seemingly superficial reflection of what made up the Chilean culture. It might be inferred that his lack of NS engagement was related to this detached level of cultural evaluation. Furthermore, in considering both his superficial manifestation of L2 gesture, and his inaccurate perception of the prevalence of modismos in the Chilean culture, it might be interpreted that anxiety may not only be related to his activity but also to his SLD.

On the same Holistic Activity chart, Autumn’s activity in the target culture was fairly high. She reported having significant exposure to L2 practice with her host family, and taking interest in opportunities to learn about the Chilean culture, yet her failure to leave the house was duly noted. Autumn’s self-reported level of anxiety during the first interview was evaluated to be high. She did not feel ready for NS interaction outside the home; she wanted to *estar más cómoda en casa primero* [sic] (feel comfortable at home first). She reported nothing different at the second interview, maintaining her apprehension about leaving home: *Soy de un pueblito; Santiago es una ciudad grande* (I am from a small town; Santiago is a big city). Her anxiety seemed to come not from the culture itself, but from a personal comfort with, and preference for, a quaint, familiar-type of setting. It is possible that her observed differences in learning and development were a reflection of the origin of her anxiety.
Daniel had aspirations of meeting a conversation partner. Due to circumstantial elements beyond his control, this goal was never met. However, there was no effort reported to seek other NS activity outside the home, despite his L2 capabilities, or opportunities to do so. Moreover, he stated his comfortability with Americans over Chileans: Prefiero andar con gringos...soy más cómodo con ellos (I prefer to be with Americans...I am more comfortable with them). Daniel demonstrated strong L2 communicative abilities, and frequently spent time outside the home, but it is unclear whether he neglected to pursue outside activity because of his anxiety, or because of his passive demeanor just awaiting for things to happen (e.g., establishing a conversation partner).

Dörnyei (2005) discusses that linguistic self-confidence has been found in a foreign cultural environment to derive from the quality and quantity of the contact with NSs, and is a key motivational factor in L2 development. Lending support to this tenet is Lantolf and Genung’s (2002) declaration that “the quality of the social framework and the activity carried out within that framework is what determines learning outcomes” (p. 176). In a language immersion program, students are under a sphere of various influences from: within their academic learning context inside the language-learning classroom, community members outside the classroom, host family members, and a multitude of cultural tools (TV, advertisements, media, etc). To varying extents for each student, a cultural difference in social interaction can be expected, in turn influencing his activity. And depending on what the learner brings to the forefront here (anxiety, or other
psychological or cognitive elements), how each student internalizes his experiences will differ and lead to varying paths of realized activity (Appendix L summarizes this discussion).

**Acquiring L2 gesture and L2 speech style**

Mark, Stacey, and Autumn, who all displayed the most active sociocultural engagements and incorporated the most number of modismos in their personal discourse, also showed seemingly significant gains in L2 proficiency. Studies have linked a student’s L2 knowledge with his use of L2 gesture (Macedonia & Knosche, 2011; van Compernolle & Williams, 2011), thus I raise the question as to whether or not L2 awareness for stylistic speech in itself (modismos in this particular study), is enough to estimate L2 gesture acquisition as it was found in the current study that students who used L2 gesture forms more frequently in addition to exhibiting the most variance in L2 gesture articulations were also the same participants who had the highest level of awareness for modismos in the target language. It would be interesting to see if the phenomenon of acquiring L2 gesture forms is extended to other cultural linguistic styles of speech, as well.

**Future Research**

In the Literature Review, I addressed several questions with regard to the study-abroad (SA) population. Firstly, I wanted to know if FL majors differed motivationally or communicatively from non-FL majors. By looking at Appendix B, you can see that Stacey, Autumn, and Mark were all Spanish majors and coincidentally the top performers in many of the categories under analysis. This would be interesting to follow up with future research, especially in considering
that nearly all of this study’s participants shared discipline-related interests (as double major or a minor) in some area of foreign studies. Little research exists in this area.

The second question with respect to the demographics of the SA population reflected my inquiry on student class standing. The literature has consistently shown that juniors and seniors make up the majority of SA participants; the current study’s sample followed suit. Two of the selected cases were high school sophomores—one at the advanced level, and one at the intermediate. Considering the motivation type, class-standing, major/minor, and initial program proficiency level altogether would be an interesting analysis for L2 gesture acquisition.

Earlier on in my investigation, I was also curious about certain gender differences. Kinginger (2004) found that women have more difficulties with social networking when studying abroad, which interferes with their language learning development. Concerning the dynamic of social networking, I was unable to adequately assess any gender differences in the current study. With reasons unknown, it is possible that the construct did not translate with the same meaning, the construct was too difficult to grasp in the L2, or the prompt for this activity was poorly constructed. With much to learn on this however, it would serve to be a meaningful exploration in combination with a detailed evaluation of the discourse that takes place between the language learner and his/her host family.
Disparities found among SA students do not exclude gender: 63% of our country’s SA students are female (International Institute of Education, 2011). In the process of analysis however, a decision to investigate the possibility of a gender difference by motivation type and gestural transformation was rescinded. An evaluation of this would have been menial due to this study’s sample size. With research attention on the difference of L1 gestural development between boys and girls, Ozcaliskan and Goldin-Meadow (2010) found boys to develop slower than girls in gesture-speech combinations. Exploratory gender research in the future might investigate if this pattern of development extends to L2, as well.

A very under-recognized area of L2 research is language play. It is an activity commonly explored in L1 studies; It refers to the behavior in which L1 learning children engage when exploring what they “notice” in their language input. With little prior L2 application, Antón, Dicamilla, and Lantolf (2003) decided to investigate this phenomenon as it occurred among a group of highly proficient ESL learners in comparison to a group of Spanish FL learners (ranging from beginning to advanced proficiencies). In sum, they found that lower proficiency L2 learners engage in language play far less frequently than those more advanced. However, there is a point of language competency at which this activity ceases to occur, or drastically declines. Lantolf hypothesizes that low levels of learner motivation attribute to the less proficient language learners’ lack of language play. Future investigations might explore the use of modismos being employed as examples of such language play practice. It might help to
understand why the current study’s less proficient participants were found to exhibit lower levels of both awareness and production of modismos. Future research could be used to test this theory.

Findings from the current investigation found that personal production of modismos seemed to relate to *overall* activity. Mark, Stacey and Autumn all having displayed the most active sociocultural engagements, also incorporated the most number of modismos in their personal L2 discourse. Findings from Hernández (2010), and Shively (2013) link increased exposure to the target culture with greater linguistic gains for the language learner than instances of reduced NS contact. If “linguistic gain” can be extended to include the awareness and production of modismos as a relevant aspect of the Spanish language in Chile, then the current study lends support. Collier and Sater (1996) give reason to validate this connection, recognizing modismos to be one of the many idiosyncrasies that make up Chilean Spanish. For now, not yet having been pursued in the research literature, the area of modismos (or Chilenismos) is left up to debate as for its relevance to current SLD research.

As illustrated, those participants with higher levels of NS exposure displayed lower levels of anxiety, linguistic-focused motivation, and more eclectic L2 gesture. Schumann (1978) provides that a student will acquire the target language commensurately in proportion to his extent of acculturation, thus through the current investigation’s activity theoretical lens, my suppositions may have some bearing when all elements are considered in relation to one another. Moreover, that the language learning process in a foreign context has been
described to be sufficient on its own in causing debilitating levels of anxiety apart from the challenges associated with acculturation in a foreign country (Braun, 2005), it would be advantageous to investigate how inhibitive expressions of anxiety are remediated differently by learner motivations and learner agency.

**Limitations**

Being that no literature was found to exist on the gesture forms specific to Chileans, my personal observations of these phenomena stand to be the only measure used to evaluate the gestures analyzed as Chilean for the current study. This serves as the biggest limitation in the current study. Furthermore, that a comparative analysis was not conducted between the gesture productions of Chileans and Americans to validate my observations also functions as a limitation to the findings.

Although it was consistent across participants that a different interviewer conducted the second session, using different interviewers for each interview may have increased anxiety for the participant, which might have had an influence in the gestures that were produced (frequency or manner). Additionally, interviewer gesture behaviors were not considered and where some participants were noted on occasion to mirror interviewer gestures, the utility of three interviewers may have elicited gestural behaviors differently across participants.

Moreover, self-reported data does not necessarily reflect reality in its entirety, especially with regard to the beginning level students and those who had severe L2 difficulties. Students may have not been able to report their thoughts
or actions adequately being that Spanish was required for interview sessions either for this reason or simply for the fact that personal accounts are not always representative of the exact reality.

Additionally, the current study had a small sample from which the findings have been discussed. A larger sample size in a similar investigative approach would function to strengthen the paths of development noted from the current data and analyses.

**Conclusion**

The field of SLD has been gradually expanding in paradigm. A lot of focus in the past has been directed towards L2 learning and acquisition. Fortunately, within the last decade the field has been awarded an increasing interest from researchers in gestural communication of L2 in different learning contexts. Although the second language acquisition perspective, the gestural contributions, and the framework of cognitive psychology all offer highly estimable research, the recent sociocultural investigations have offered another lens from which to understand SLD.

Using activity as the investigational lens, the present study explored the relationship of a unique compilation of aspects: motivation, SA context, and gestural communication—all of which have yet to be addressed in conjunction with each other in the development of L2 as this study has approached it. In the case of this investigation, learners had an overall motive/objective and their actions were not always in line with the subordinate goals set to achieve this objective. Some participants were seen to change their goal-directed behaviors
as a response to cultural activity, while others followed the goals they set. The shifts that were observed in participant goals emerged differently for participants as determined by a student’s agency, which mediated how activity was realized. For each student then, agency led to an individualized set of goal-directed behaviors. Furthermore, although initial motives were related to the subordinate goals set, they were inadequate to apply in understanding how activity would be realized in relation to acculturation.

L2 gesture development appeared to be a reflection of how activity was realized, with the most variation in L2 gesticulations acquired by those students who spent more time in cultural engagements. This was not observed to be a direct relation to student motivation, as participant agency mediated how students internalized their SA experiences, to which in turn directed their behaviors. L2 speech style developed in the same fashion, with both the highest productions of- and heightened awareness for modismo being displayed by those students who had the most cultural interactions, again as mediated by agency and internalization of experience.

This application of activity theory reveals its utility as a culturally adaptable model that can evaluate emergent motivational aspects as language development occurs in any context. English second-language learners, for example, struggle in the U.S. educational system, and the national high school dropout rates are high for this population. The more that researchers and educators can understand about SLD across contexts as both a socially-
constructed and biological process, the more enabled we may become as a society to assist those second language learners in our own native country.
APPENDIX A:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview 1 –

1) I’d like to know a little bit about your decision for choosing Chile, in particular:
   • How long are you here to study? And why did you want to study abroad?
   • Why did you choose a Spanish speaking country vs English or other FL-speaking country?

2) What is your current living arrangement: apartment or home-stay? Was that your choice? If so, why not the alternative option?

3) What was your first impression of Chilean culture? Did that differ from your expectations? Do you feel differently now than your first impression?

4) Describe your experience in the first week of classes (a probe for personal placement in the learning environment in hopes to elicit a kind of enactment effect we can observe)

5) Can you tell me about the types of activities you have had in the culture? (shopping, dining, going out, etc.)

5a) In terms of learning the language, what activities have helped you or hurt you?

5b) Have you sought out any activities to help you learn the language? If so, what have you found most helpful in learning the L2—those activities provided to you in the classroom? Or those activities of which you have sought out?

6) Recount one interaction you have had with your host family, tell me about it.

7) Tell me about your first social experience here once you were settled in (an event outside your living space)

8) How do you plan to spend your time here? (volunteer work, sports, organized trips, etc) [social network question]

9) What is your goal for this SA experience?

10) Are you more interested in gaining a cultural experience here, or building linguistic knowledge?

11) What is your plan AFTER studying abroad? (further Spanish coursework? Engagements relevant to this experience? Further travels or SA? etc.) [critical for understanding their motives]
12) Do you have any worries or concerns about your studies abroad? [critical for understanding their mindset; helpful in assessing motivation]

Interview 2 –

1) Could you rate your satisfaction level with your current living arrangements here on a scale of 1-5 (1 being very unsatisfied, 3 being neutral, and 5 reflecting it as a very satisfactory/enriching experience)
   - How would you rate your overall experience in Chile thus far on the same scale? Why?
   [their home-stay experience is essential in making plausible connections between their efforts and their development]

2) What, if anything, do you think could improve your experience here? (classroom-related; culture-related; home-related, etc.)

3) Your first impressions of the Chilean culture were ________ (refer to first interview), how have those impressions changed? (of the people/of their classes/of their host families)

4) Tell me about any local social networking events/activities you have had with Chilenos. Specifically referring to their free time:
   - Chilean peer ESL meets
   - conversation partners
   - organized sports
   - volunteer work / internship
   - other engagements (those sought out through other personal volition)

   [I am interested in knowing the general perception of these events: e.g., Good? Bad? Recurring, or one-time participation? And why that particular engagement?] [critical for understanding their experiences within local social networks]
   - Did you feel welcomed (or well-received)?

   - How accessible are social networking opportunities for you with the locals?

   - Do you think accessibility to these social opportunities differs for the opposite sex?

4a) Also tell me about your experiences with organized USAC trips (recurring interest or one-timers? Why do they participate in these events, or why not?)

5) Walk me through your daily routine here in Chile (ask to be narrated through this)
6) Tell me about any memorable encounters since our previous meeting (among NSs)

7) Can you describe a moment in which you developed an awareness of a specific cultural custom? (ask to be narrated through a specific event in which something was noticed) e.g., tipping procedure, conversational mannerisms, space proximity, dining idiosyncrasies, etc.

8) In reflecting on your overall experience here, how have you benefited or grown? [I am looking for positive aspects of their overall experience thus far, and what sticks out to them]
   • Also, what haven’t you favored? [Looking for negative aspects]

9) Reflecting back on a topic discussed in our first meeting, in terms of learning the language
   • What activities have helped you to learn the language?
   • What has posed a challenge?

[See if there are any activities of which they’ve individually sought out to help them learn Spanish, and which is more helpful: classroom time or outside activity?]

10) How would you describe your progress, or success, thus far in learning the language?

11) Going back to the goal you initially set for yourself, have you done what you wanted to do? Have you accomplished what you’ve wanted to accomplish so far?

12) Are there any adjustments that you plan to make before the semester ends?

13) Returning to the content of our first meeting, you told us how you had planned to spend your time here, have you been doing those things?

14) What aspects of the Chilean culture, or your experience here in general, will you take home with you?

15) To what degree do you feel like you have adopted the Chilean culture during your stay here, thus far?

16) Return to the content of first question—remind them of how they rated their home-stay experience (this is relevant to how they have adopted the culture). Inquire the following:
• Encourage them to reflect on what they have gained/taken from their living experience:
• Have they already described their interaction with their host family? (What do they like/dislike about this arrangement?)
• Frequency of interaction with host family? Is the family helpful? Does the student feel comfortable with them?
• How would the ideal home-stay experience differ from your current home-stay arrangements?

17) Going back to the first meeting we had, has your ultimate purpose for coming to Chile to build linguistic knowledge (or interest for gaining a cultural experience) changed? If so, by what influence?

18) Has there been any change in your plan to extend or minimize your study abroad?

18a) And back to our first meeting, has there been any change in your plans to incorporate something relevant to this experience after your return home? (this latter question will be specifically tailored to each interviewee as appropriate)

19) Have you had to make any adjustments socially as a male/female in this culture? Was any gender-related adjustment expected for males or females? Do you feel like the USAC students of the opposite gender had to make any adjustments?

20) At the present time, what are your worries or concerns?

Interview 3 –

From a broad anthropological view, culture refers to whatever traditions, beliefs, customs, and creative activities characterize a given community and make that community different from others. This means that everyone has culture and it is impossible to be without culture (Castillo-Feliú, G. I., 2000. Culture and Customs of Chile. Greenwood Publishing Group).

• Do you agree with this statement?

• Now, can you walk me through an experience you have had here during your sojourn where you realized you were in a different culture? What happened?

• I am also interested in your thoughts on, and your use of, modismos…. (Consider questions like: What was your first impression when you were first exposed? How do you feel about modismos? Who do you notice to use modismos? Do you, yourself, incorporate them into your own speech? Why do you, or don’t you, use them in your speech?)

• Is there anything else you would like to share?
### APPENDIX B:

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>QR_15</th>
<th>Interview One</th>
<th>Log_1</th>
<th>Interview Two</th>
<th>Interview Change?</th>
<th>Interview Three</th>
<th>Log_2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>AB</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONICA</td>
<td>BC*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
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<td>B</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRUCE</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIEL</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>STACEY</td>
<td>BC*</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>MARK</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>MCKENZIE</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTUMN</td>
<td>AB</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**L2 Proficiency Level**

- **Beginner**
- **Advanced**
- **Intermediate**

**KEY:**

- QR_15 - Response to motivation prompt on Student Questionnaire (question no. 15)

- Log_1 and Log_2 – Response indicates if student completed email logs 1 and 2

- Color of check mark indicated which interviewer conducted the student’s interview

- X = Information not available

**Other responses (Option C) in Student Questionnaire:**

- Monica: travel
- George: live in Latin America
- Stacey: learn more about herself
- Mark: experience
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<thead>
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<th>Pseudonym</th>
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<th>Minor(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANE</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>Business Admin.</td>
<td>Latin American Studies &amp; Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONICA</td>
<td>International Development &amp; Econ.</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td>Int. Relations</td>
<td>Latin American Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRUCE</td>
<td>Pre-med &amp; Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHILLIP</td>
<td>Int. Business &amp; Spanish</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT</td>
<td>Spanish &amp; Comm. *public advocacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIEL</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>STACEY</td>
<td>Multicultural Gender Studies</td>
<td>* Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARK</td>
<td>History &amp; Spanish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCKENZIE</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTUMN</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAUREN</td>
<td>Anthropology &amp; Spanish</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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**KEY:** * -Stacey changed her minor in Spanish to a 2\textsuperscript{nd} major during the SA program

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<th>Track</th>
<th>University Spanish Coursework</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONICA</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 courses (1 in CostaRica)</td>
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<td>Senior</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRUCE</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
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<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3 years (5+ classes)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6 courses</td>
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<td>103</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3 courses</td>
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<td>B.S. -3months past</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Junior</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Senior</td>
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<td>3 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAUREN</td>
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<td>4 courses</td>
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<td>Pseudonym</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Other Academic Spanish</td>
<td>Other FL background</td>
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<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANE</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>HS: 2 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>HS: 3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONICA</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>HS: 3 years German</td>
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<td>HS:</td>
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<td>25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td></td>
<td>HS: 2 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>HS: 3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHILLIP</td>
<td>34</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>HS: 4 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIEL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>HS: 4 semesters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STACEY</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3rd thru 11th grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARK</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Jr High: 2 classes</td>
<td>HS: 4 years</td>
</tr>
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<td>MCKENZIE</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>HS: 3 years</td>
<td>1 semester Arabic</td>
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<td>AUTUMN</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>HS: 4 years</td>
<td>2 semesters Portuguese</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>HS: 2 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAUREN</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>HS: 1 year</td>
<td>HS: 2 years Latin</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Spanish real world exposure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>Grew up in Santa Fe, NM where Span is prevalent; lots of “Spanglish”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONICA</td>
<td>Argentina and Uruguay vacations (1 week each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRUCE</td>
<td>small, insignif. encounters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>minor encounters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHILLIP</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIEL</td>
<td>lived in California; states nothing sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STACEY</td>
<td>sister had bilingual caregiver (L2 not attempted); Spanish skill got worse in HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARK</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCKENZIE</td>
<td>a few songs and movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTUMN</td>
<td>working at Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DROPPED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAUREN</td>
<td>visit to resort in MX; some attempts at communication w/cleaning lady</td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX C:

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____________________________

Major(s): _________________________ Minor(s): __________________

Age: _______ Current GPA: ________

Foreign Language requirements for your major (if applicable); The number of foreign language credits/classes required is sufficient (rather than a detailed list):
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Gender (please circle): Male Female

Previous experience with the Spanish language (inside and outside of school). This can be general; The number of semesters is sufficient for your school exposure):
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Do you speak any other language(s) besides English? (Please Circle): Yes No
If yes, please elaborate by addressing your skill level, or experience, for each; and indicate your native language(s):
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Have you ever studied (or lived) abroad before? (Please Circle): Yes No
If yes, please elaborate:
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

All prior Foreign Language courses taken at the college-level:
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Language Track: _________

Current course enrollment: __________________________________

College standing/ Year of study: _________________________________

Home university: ____________________________________________

What is your primary motivation to study abroad? (Please circle one)

A) to better market oneself in the professional world, or
B) genuine interest in learning the language
C) other (please specify)______________________________

The best way to contact you: E-mail? Cell phone?

___________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX D:
DATA RETRIEVAL

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<th>WEEK NUMBER</th>
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<th>E-mail Log #1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>E-mail Log #2</th>
<th>T3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start of Week 3</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Weeks 9-10</td>
<td>Week 13-14</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>61 mins</td>
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<td>8 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>31 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>32 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>12 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>35 mins</td>
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<td>5.5 mins</td>
</tr>
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<td>Autumn</td>
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<td>28 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 mins</td>
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**Note:** All participants had a switch in interviewer from Interview One to Interview Two

**T1 indicates Interview One** – these took place after two full weeks of immersion

**T2 indicates Interview Two** – these were conducted over Weeks 9 & 10

**T3 indicates Interview Three** – all email logs had been submitted prior to final session interviews
APPENDIX E: MODISMOS IN STUDENT REPORTS

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<th>Modismo, or Chilenismo</th>
<th>English Approximation</th>
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<tr>
<td>cacháí</td>
<td>Get it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po</td>
<td>Various uses (no true English equivalent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huevón</td>
<td>Various meanings (“dude” is approximate) Can be offensive depending on the tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pucha</td>
<td>damn!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacán</td>
<td>cool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al tiro</td>
<td>right now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un rato</td>
<td>in a moment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me tinka</td>
<td>I guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>súper</td>
<td>super</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pata</td>
<td>by foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>an expletive not to be repeated</td>
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MODISMO EVALUATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Number of Modismos Acknowledged</th>
<th>Number of Modismos Personally Adopted in L2 Speech</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (LP)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark (LP)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Stacey (L)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn (L)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Daniel (L)</td>
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### APPENDIX F:

#### L2 GESTURE FORMS AND ANALYSIS

**Descriptions of Chilean gestures can be found in Chapter 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Upward Flicks</th>
<th>Money</th>
<th>Self-Reference</th>
<th>Bounded Container, Claw-like Formation</th>
<th>Elongated Finger Bunch</th>
<th>Increase in Chilean Gesture?</th>
<th>L2 Gesture Variation</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
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<td>T2</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane (C)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (LP)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark (LP)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey (L)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn (L)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel (L)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**L2 Gesture Forms Decoded:**

*Upward Flicks:* of the hand (mostly restricted to fingers)

*Money:* not just a rubbing of the fingers together, but a rubbing of two tensed fingers together while the rest of his hand is in a closed fist

*Self-Reference:* demonstrated with a closed palm and elongated, touching, finger span on, or toward the chest

*Bounded Container, Claw-like Formation:* resembles something similar to a claw (can be palm up- or down- orientation, widespread and tense finger span)

**L2 Gesture Variation:** the sum of how many different L2 gesture forms were produced by the student

*Anxiety:* evaluated as high if their state of anxiety paralleled a reluctance toward NS interaction outside the home

* Indicates that L2 tensed finger manipulations were observed for the participant
### APPENDIX G:

**TRACING ACTIVITY AND SLD THEMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gestures per utterance</th>
<th>Beats per utterance</th>
<th>Overall activity</th>
<th>Outside activity</th>
<th>Double hands</th>
<th>Change in gesture space?</th>
<th>Total gesture production?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>T1</strong></td>
<td><strong>T2</strong></td>
<td><strong>T1</strong></td>
<td><strong>T2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane (C)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (LP)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark (LP)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>---</td>
<td><strong>--</strong></td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey (L)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn (L)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td><em>less</em></td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel (L)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gestures per utterance:** Were there frequent gestures produced per single utterance?

**Beats per utterance:** Were there multiple beats per gesture produced?

**Overall Activity:** captures all language learning efforts (activity that incorporates cultural engagement apart from NS interaction; Activity for advancing in the language learning endeavor)

**Double hands:** In reference to the use of two-hand gestures, was there an increase, decrease, or same frequency from T1 to T2?

**Change in gesture space:** Was there any change in the gesture space utilized from Time1 to Time2?

**Total Gesture:** This refers to the sum of all gesture production (American and Chilean), was there an increase, decrease, or same display of frequency from T1 to T2?

**Denotes that Mark was found to produce American deictic beats without other gesture**
How students pursued their goals was conceptualized on the continuum above, as a representation of the nature of their goal-directed behaviors.

Students who evidenced to be easily defeated in the presence of linguistic challenge were put on the left side of this goal persistence continuum. Students who showed no signs of recoil in the presence of a challenge were representative of the opposite end of the continuum, being described as persistent, resilient. The students who were noted to be directly in the center of this continuum were those participants who just waited for things to happen; they were not entirely active in their pursuit to attain their subordinate goals. Autumn seemed to persist in an active manner, but was not resilient as her range of cultural activity was observed to be restricted, thus she was perceived to behave between passive and persistent.
APPENDIX I:

GESTURE FREQUENCY TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interview One</th>
<th>Interview Two</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time One Interview Duration</td>
<td>Frequency of Total Gesture</td>
<td>Frequency of L2 Gesture</td>
<td>Time Two Interview Duration</td>
<td>Frequency of Total Gesture</td>
<td>Frequency of L2 Gesture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>61 mins</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>31 mins</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32 mins</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>12 mins</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey</td>
<td>41 mins</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>57 mins</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>33 mins</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28 mins</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:

Total Gesture: All gestures produced before L2 gestures were separated

L2 Gesture: All occurrences of Chilean articulations, forms or emblems
APPENDIX J:

MODISMOS AND ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Overall Activity</th>
<th>Holistic – with family-rating</th>
<th>Holistic – with NS outside rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane (C)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited social</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (LP)</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited social</td>
<td>Limited active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark (LP)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey (L)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn (L)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Limited active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel (L)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Limited social</td>
<td>Limited active</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Awareness:_ Number of modismos acknowledged by self-report

_Production:_ Number of modismos a student claimed to adopt in his/her own speech

_Overall Activity:_ captures all language learning efforts (activity that incorporates cultural engagement apart from NS interaction; activity engaged in to advance the language learning endeavor)

_Holistic Ratings:_ represents the degree of interaction with NSs, as a whole (both inside and outside the home). Different from _Overall Activity_ which encompasses language learning activity in general, but apart from NS interaction. Also, see Appendix K for further explanation of the Holistic Activity Chart.
APPENDIX K:

HOLISTIC ACTIVITY CHART

The degree of participation with NSs as a whole, is represented in this conceptualization of activity.

Presented across the top is a continuum which describes student interaction with the host family. Students ranged from having minimal (or Reserved) activity, to considerable amounts. At the higher end of the activity spectrum, students were described as Social. If activity in the home was frequent, but not considerable, the student was denoted in the middle of the spectrum: Limited Social.

Presented on the left is a continuum which describes student interaction with all other NSs outside the host family. Activity ranged from having minimal interactions outside the home (Passive) to having considerable amounts (Active). If activity was not passive, nor active, it was deemed Limited Active.
### APPENDIX L:

### ACTIVITY TRACKING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall Activity</th>
<th>Outside Activity</th>
<th>Holistic Activity Rating</th>
<th>Summed L2 Gesture Variation</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane (C)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited Social – Passive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (LP)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited Social – Limited Active</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark (LP)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social – Active</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey (L)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social – Active</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn (L)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Social – Limited Active</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel (L)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Limited Social – Limited Active</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Activity:** captures all language learning efforts (activity that incorporates cultural engagement apart from NS interaction; activity engaged in to advance the language learning endeavor)

**Outside Activity:** NS interactions taking place outside the home and host family

**Activity Type:** A summed view of overall–outside activity (for easy reference purposes)

**Holistic Activity:** A conceptualization of the summed NS activity (includes host family interaction and outside the home NS interaction) Also, see Appendix K

**Summed L2 Variation:** L2 gesture variation (the number of different L2 gesture forms a participant acquired as a whole over the semester)

**Anxiety:** Reported to be high if the anxiety experienced inhibited student activity

* Daniel’s report of feeling more comfortable with his American peers than Chileans justified his reason for not pursuing NS relationships; Whether or not this was related to anxiety was unclear, so his behavior was not marked in line with the participants who clearly exhibited higher levels of anxiety.
APPENDIX M:

IRB APPROVAL PAGES

TITLE: Motivation and cultural immersion in the study of second language gesture acquisition

INVESTIGATORS: Christie Gardner and Steven McCafferty (advisor)

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore second-language development as it relates to the sociocultural interactions that take place in a study-abroad context.

Participants

As a Track I, II, or III student at Universidad Andrés Bello, your participation in this project will begin with a screening questionnaire for which your eligibility to further participate in the study will be determined based on certain academic criteria (ie: linguistic exposure). Only monolingual English-speaking American students with little-to-no previous Spanish coursework prior to the university-level will be included. For the purpose of maximizing sample homogeneity, bilingual students will be excluded, but no exclusions based on gender will apply. You will be notified within 24 hours on the status of your eligibility for inclusion in this study.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study and you meet the research criteria, you will be asked to participate in 2-3 interviews which will be held in a classroom on campus. Interviews will be informal and function as normal conversation, with each interview being videotaped and lasting approximately 30 minutes.

Approved by the UNLV IRB. Protocol #1204-4131M
Received: 08-09-12 Approved: 08-14-12 Expiration:08-13-13
Benefits of Participation

Know that your participation in this project will contribute to a further understanding of how language learning develops within the contexts of learning the language in an environment in which it is used for everyday purposes.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. Although interviews are video-recorded, the risks associated with participation in this study are minimal; Our conversations will be limited to your language and cultural experiences here in Chile (ie: Recall a memorable experience you have had here thus far, describe this event to me). The content of these conversations will only entail what you feel comfortable sharing, as nothing personal or possibly status-threatening will be asked.

Cost /Compensation

Each interview you participate in (up to 3 total) will require about 30 minutes of your time, after which you will be compensated with a $10 gift card (each interview) as a token of my appreciation for the dedication of your time to this study.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. All identifying information (names and home university of attendance, etc) will be changed to protect your anonymity and ensure complete confidentiality of all data gathered. No one outside the research team will have access to the collected data, and no reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. Additionally, all data will be permanently deleted (or shredded if in tangible form) after 3 years. Until then, all data will be kept secure in a locked office belonging to my thesis advisor at UNLV.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. In the event that an interview needs be cut short after your appearance, you will still receive your gift card. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or during any time throughout this study.

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact myself at higgi107@unlv.nevada.edu or my advisor at mccaffes@unlv.nevada.edu (phone: 702-895-3245). For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

Approved by the UNLV IRB. Protocol #1204-4131M
Received: 08-09-12 Approved: 08-14-12 Expiration:08-13-13
**Participant Consent:**

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

__________________________________________  ____________

Participant Name (Please Print)

__________________________________________

**Audio/Video Taping:**

By signing below, I grant permission for the interviews to be videotaped.

Signature of Participant

Date

__________________________________________  ____________

Participant Name (Please Print)

__________________________________________

*Approved by the UNLV IRB. Protocol #1204-4131M Received: 08-09-12 Approved: 08-14-12 Expiration: 08-13-13*
REFERENCES


Tran, T. H. (2010). Teaching Culture in the EFL/ESL Classroom. *Online Submission*.


VITA

Graduate College
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Christie Gardner

Degrees:
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Special Honors:
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Thesis Title: Second Language Gesture and Acculturation in Study Abroad Contexts

Thesis Examination Committee:
   Chairperson, Steven McCafferty, Ph. D.
   Committee Member, LeAnn Putney, Ph. D.
   Committee Member, Gwen Marchand, Ph. D.
   Graduate Faculty Representative, Jesus Garcia, Ph. D.