THE ACQUISITION OF DISCOURSE MARKERS THROUGH STUDY ABROAD IN SPANISH L2 LEARNERS' ORAL NARRATIVES: *SO* AND ITS POSSIBLE SPANISH EQUIVALENTS

by

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(Under the Direction of Margaret Quesada)

ABSTRACT

Discourse markers (DMs) are invariable linguistic elements existing outside of syntax with the function of guiding and organizing speech. The felicitous use of DMs improves an L2 learners' discourse competence, making DMs an ideal target for studies on second language pragmatics acquisition. Previous studies found that exposure to a target language environment alone can improve L2 learners' pragmatic capabilities. This study addresses the effects of study abroad on the use of DMs in a group of L1 English, L2 Spanish learners' oral narratives.

Using the functions of the prevalent English *so* as a point of departure, this study compares L2 learners' and native speakers' oral narratives, analyzing DMs according to type, phrase position, and function.

L2 learners in this study overused DMs when compared to native speakers. After a study abroad experience, learners employed fewer DMs to fill gaps, showing a decrease in hesitation and a step toward more native-like use of DMs.

INDEX WORDS: Discourse markers, second language acquisition, second language pragmatics, discourse competence, study abroad

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my classmates, whom I have grown to love throughout my time at UGA. I will never forget our times both in Gilberto and outside of Gilberto. I feel like we have become family in the past two years, and I am so grateful for you guys.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Discourse Markers

Discourse markers (henceforward, DMs) are invariable linguistic elements that exist outside of the syntax and have the function of guiding, and often connecting, discourse segments. DMs are restricted morphologically, being invariable items, and syntactically, existing outside of the predication of a discourse segment (Portolés 1998:25). Levinson (1983) claims that this type of speech item communicates "often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse" (1983:87). DMs are important for second language learners to acquire because they assist the speaker in organizing his or her thoughts and ideas, and they aid in comprehension by serving as guides to the listerner about how to interpret the speaker's utterance. DMs help a speaker to avoid confusing his or her listener.

Example (1) shows the English DM *so* in a native English speaker's oral narrative from Buysse.

(1) Yeah, and they had a shortage of actors, **so** they had some actors play several parts (2012:1767).

In example (1), *so* connects two segments of speech and indicates that the second segment is a result of the first, namely, that due to the shortage of actors, some actors played several parts.

Example (2) shows the use of the Spanish DM *entonces* in a similar linguistic situation in the native data of the present study.

(2) NS3: Los padres no fueron a la Universidad y no tienen idea de cómo funciona el sistema, **entonces** no los pueden aconsejar

'The parents didn't go to the University and don't have any idea of how the system works, **so** they can't give them advice.'

In example (2), the native Argentine speaker in this study discusses a program she works with that helps undocumented grade school students apply to college. She states that the parents of these students did not go to college, and using *entonces*, introduces the result that the parents cannot advise their students on these matters. Both examples (1) and (2) retain their communicative meaning when read with the DMs eliminated, which is a defining characteristic of DMs. However, without the DM in these examples, the hearer receives less information on how the two segments that the DM connects are related and how they should be interpreted. The listener has to figure out how the two utterances connected by DMs are related, and their absence may delay processing and understanding of the entire utterance. Additionally, without the DMs, the sentences may come across as brusque or awkward, which one can assume most speakers want to avoid. Therefore, it is important for second language learners to acquire the uses of these DMs in order to sound more native-like and to avoid confusing their listeners.

1.2 Previous Literature

Studies on second language acquisition have neglected the pragmatic aspect of second language acquisition until very recently. Classroom learning alone is often insufficient for second language learners to acquire pragmatic material and, in turn, discourse competence, an important feature of second language acquisition (Trillo 2002;

Polat 2011). Contact with native speakers is cited as the most feasible and most productive manner for second language learners to acquire pragmatic structures, especially when L2 learners have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the target language community (Trillo 2002; Müller 2005; Hellermann and Vergun 2007; Polat 2011). In previous studies, it is noted that the lack of use of DMs, or the use of DMs in pragmatically infelicitous manners in L2 may contribute to a speaker's separation from a target language community and more confusing discourse structure (Casteele and Collewaert 2013; Hellermann and Vergun 2007). Additionally, DMs have been found to aid in second language learners' comprehension, making them a crucial aspect of second language acquisition (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995).

In a study involving role-play with children, Andersen et al. (1999) found that in their native language, children acquire appropriate, as well as sociolinguistic, uses of DMs early in the acquisition process. The authors found that children used lexical DMs such as *well, so,* and *then* more often to mark higher status roles such as teacher, parent, and doctor, and they used non-lexical DMs such as *um* and *uh* to mark lower status roles such as student, child, and patient (Andersen et al. 1999). Because children can and do acquire these structures early on in their native language, one may hope that second language learners can eventually acquire the same structures in their L2. So early on, children equate more sophisticated speech with lexical DMs and less sophisticated speech with non-lexical DMs.

In studies on the use of DMs in native and learner English speech, the DM *so* was the most prevalent in oral data (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995; Fraser 1999; Müller 2005; Buysse 2012). As a highly frequent DM, the functions of English *so* comprise discursive

tasks that native speakers of English would seek to complete in their L2 Spanish. Due to the multifunctionality of these types of DM, direct translation is elusive and varies from situation to situation (Rojo and Valenzuela 1995; Cuenca 2008). Therefore, L1 English L2 Spanish speakers must learn which Spanish DMs are appropriate for which functions of *so* (among other DMs) in order to fulfill these functions in a pragmatically felicitous manner in the L2 Spanish.

There is very little research on the acquisition of DMs in second languages, especially in L2 Spanish, so this study aims to contribute to this little-explored field. Unlike previous studies, the present study examines both lexical DMs and non-lexical DMs such as *eh, um,* and *uh* in order to form a more complete picture of the L2 Spanish learners' oral narrative structure and execution.

1.3 Research Questions and Methodology

Taking the functions of the English DM *so* outlined in Buysse (2012) (to indicate a result, to prompt, to introduce a section of discourse, etc.) as a point of departure, as well as the general functions of DMs outlined in Müller (2005), this study examines the acquisition of DMs, particularly possible Spanish translations of *so* in Spanish L2 learners' oral narratives. Twenty oral narratives were collected from ten Spanish L2 learners, one in the first week of an approximately six-week summer study abroad program in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the second in the fifth and final week of the program. No Spanish language courses were offered in the study abroad program. Additionally, oral narratives were collected from three native Argentines to compare the use of DMs in native speech versus learner speech. DMs were analyzed according to type: lexical or non-lexical; phrase position: initial, medial, or final; and function. DMs

that completed the following functions in the narratives are considered: introduce a new sequence, introduce an elaboration, indicate a result, draw a conclusion, mark self-correction, and fill a gap or pause in the discourse. Focus was also placed on tokens of frequently occurring Spanish DMs that correspond to these functions, including but not limited to *entonces, así que, bueno,* and *pues.*

This study addresses the following questions: Do classroom language learners use DMs at the intermediate language level? How does their use of DMs develop after five weeks of study abroad in the target language community? When compared to native Argentine narratives, do intermediate level L2 Spanish learners use Spanish DMs for the same functions in their narratives? Finally, do participants use more non-lexical markers in the first narrative than in the second?

1.4 Expected Results

Several authors have found that exposure to the target language community alone may help L2 learners acquire pragmatic materials (Rose 2005). Although the study abroad period is rather short, at approximately six weeks, progress in learners' use of DMs were expected in the form of fewer non-lexical DMs, lower use of DMs to fill a gap, and more even distribution of DMs across phrase position and function in the second learner narrative, produced after five weeks of study abroad. Learners were also expected to use lexical DMs less often than native speakers in both narratives, but were predicted to increase their use of lexical DMs in the second narrative.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The next chapter discusses background information on DMs in general (Section 2.1 and 2.2); the multifunctional nature of DMs (Section 2.3); the functions of DMs and a

brief analysis of the English DM *so* (Section 2.4), and a review of previous studies on the effects of study abroad on second language pragmatics acquisition and DMs (Section 2.5). Chapter 3 elaborates the research questions and introduces the hypotheses and methodology of the present study. Examples of DMs completing the six functions explored in the study taken from native speaker data are discussed as well. In Chapter 4, the results of the present study are discussed. Because the development of DM use varied greatly from speaker to speaker, not only were narrative groups analyzed as sets (native speakers versus learners' first narrative A and versus learners' second narrative B), but also data from two individual learners is explored (Section 4.7). The two learners were chosen as representative of opposite ends of the developmental spectrum: Learner 3 showed great development, using DMs in more native-like ways according to type, phrase position, and function in the second narrative. In contrast, Learner 6 showed digression in his use of DMs, using more non-lexical DMs in fewer positions and for fewer functions in the second narrative. The rest of the learner data fell somewhere between these two extremes: notable progress or digression. Conclusions, setbacks, and avenues for future research are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

2.1 The Importance of Second Language Pragmatics and DMs

In the teaching manual *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*[1], Lee and VanPatten (2003) describe the new model of communicative competence, defined as "the ability to function in a communicative setting by using not only grammatical knowledge but also gestures and intonation, strategies for making oneself understood, and risk-taking in attempting communication" (2003:13). At the center of this concept is discourse competence, "which refers to the way in which language elements, such as words and phrases are arranged into utterances in order to express a coherent idea on a particular topic" (2003:13). Discourse competence is placed in the center of the model, occupying a crucial role in language acquisition. The acquisition of discourse markers is thus crucial to the acquisition of discourse competence, and in turn, communicative competence in a second language. Müller (2005) refers to pragmatic competence as follows:

> In the literature on second language acquisition, the field of discourse markers has been largely omitted so far, even though pragmatic competence in terms of knowing the cultural values of the second language, for example, is recognized as being essential for successful communication (1).

[1] *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen* is the textbook used for the Teaching College Spanish course that all graduate teaching assistants have to complete at The University of Georgia prior to teaching undergraduate Spanish courses.

This study aims to contribute to the field of second language acquisition by exploring how the elusive pragmatic material encoded in discourse markers is acquired by L2 learners of Spanish.

2.2 Discourse Markers

In his groundbreaking 1983 work *Pragmatics*, Levinson identified a class of linguistic items worthy of study with the function of indicating "often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse" (Levinson 1983:87). According to Fraser, these items are *discourse markers* that have a core meaning that can be enriched by context, and they signal the relationship the speaker intends between two segments that need not be adjacent. Fraser also implies that the DM in a given utterance is part of the segment it precedes (S2) (1999:936), as in the following example from Buysse (2012:1765).

(3) [S1] I was sick, **so** [DM], [S2] I stayed in bed.

Example (3) shows the structure S1 + DM + S2, where the speaker implies a causal relationship between S1 (the cause: *I was sick*) and S2 (the result: *I stayed in bed*) via the use of the DM *so*. This is one example of the many uses of this particular DM, which will be addressed in Section 2.3. Portolés (1998) proposes the following definition of DMs, translated and paraphrased here: DMs are invariable linguistic entities that do not realize a syntactic function but possess a procedural function of guiding inferences realized in communication (Portolés 1998:25). The invariability of DMs is a morphological restriction, such that DMs are not subject to inflection, while the syntactic restriction on DMs is that they are peripheral to the predicate of the utterance in which they are situated.

Müller (2005) points out that among the distinguishable features of discourse markers, such as invariability, core meaning, and appearance at the beginning of an utterance, few of them are defining criteria for classification as a DM, as the non-satisfaction of one or other of the criteria does not result in the exclusion of an item from a group of DMs (Müller 2005:4). In fact, Müller states that the only consistent distinguishable feature of DMs is optionality: the exclusion of DMs from a section of discourse does not result in loss of the propositional meaning of the discourse, which distinguishes DMs from their non-DM homonymic counterparts (e.g. *well* as an adverb) (2005:6).

DMs are referred to with a variety of terms, including *discourse particles, cue phrases, pragmatic particles, discourse operators,* and *pragmatic connectives.* Nonetheless, many authors reject these terms, especially the term *particle*, which is discarded by Roggia (2012) and Fraser (1999) because, as Fraser states, DMs are "accented and prosodically separated from their surrounding context by pauses, intonation breaks, or both," and *particle* implies a small size for the element, which is not always the case for DMs (1999:933). Portolés rejects the term *connector* due to the difficulty in establishing a connective meaning to some uses of DMs, such as *en realidad* in the following example (1998:36).

(4) Alicia no vendrá con nosotros porque, **en realidad**, no le interesa.
'Alicia will not come with us because, **actually**, she's not interested.'[2]

In (4), *no le interesa* does not correspond directly to another expression in the example and therefore, there is no connective significance. Portolés states that sometimes the

[2] My translation

expression preceding the DM can only be retrieved through a non-discursive context, therefore losing its connective meaning in the textual context (1998:34).

Hummel (2012) considers the terms *discourse marker* and *discourse particle* to be synonymous and proposes the term *discourse signals*, identifying DMs as functional linguistic elements in and of themselves, though their semantic and pragmatic meanings are carried through their relationship with other elements of discourse. Thus, the same DM can be used to convey a variety of functional meanings, as in the examples below from Schiffrin (1987:196).

(5a) And she tried to get other jobs and she couldn't. **So** what she did, she got a job as a bookkeeper in an office.

(5b) I feel that my children should marry within their religion. But, if they chose not to, it wouldn't be the worst thing in the world for me. **So** we had a long discussion, my neighbor's Italian. We had a long discussion a couple weeks ago, all the kids and I were sittin' ... and her, we were sitting on the patio.

The DM *so* in (5a) is used to present the result of *she tried to get other jobs and she couldn't*, which was *she got a job as a bookkeeper in an office*, while in (5b), *so* introduces the conversation with the neighbor as support for the proposition *it wouldn't be the worst things in the world for me* (Schiffrin 1987:196).

Cuenca (2008) points out the fact that DMs are often omitted in translation, which demonstrates their independence from the syntactic structure of an utterance, such as in the following example (6) where *well* in English is translated to *bueno* in Spanish but omitted in the Catalan version of the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (Cuenca 2008:1377).

(6) **Well,** I'm going now.
Sp. **Bueno,** me marcho.

Cat. Ø Me n'haig d'anar.'

Though part of the original dialogue, the DM in (6) is considered non-essential in the Catalan translation, attesting to the independence from syntactic structure and optionality of DMs. This type of difficulty and discrepancy in translation contributes to L2 learners' difficulty in acquiring these structures.

Portolés identifies the functions of DMs as relating, indicating, and making various segments of discourse cohesive (1998:31). Therefore, while DMs may be omitted in translation and are seen as syntactically independent entities, they are employed in achieving one of the most crucial elements of discourse – cohesion – and are important tools for speakers to use.

Casteele and Collewaert (2013) propose that DMs are "cohesive devices with a procedural role. They do not have informational content but instead contribute to this content by establishing links between informational elements" (2013:551). However, different groups of DMs are used to communicate different kinds of relationships between utterances. For example, Spanish *pues* ('so' or 'well') and *así que* ('so' or 'as if') indicate a causal relationship while *no obstante* ('however' or 'even so') and *sin embargo* ('nevertheless') indicate some sort of contrast relationship. The work of identifying groups of DMs is a complicated one, as demonstrated in the example below in which two almost synonymous Spanish DMs, *por tanto* ('therefore' or 'so') and *en consecuencia* ('consequently'), cannot be employed in the same manner (Portolés 1998:80).

(7) a) Se ha ido la luz. **Por tanto**, la televisión no marcha.

'The lights have gone out. **Therefore,** the television doesn't work.'

a') No marcha la televisión y, **por tanto**, se ha ido la luz.

'The television doesn't work and, **therefore**, the lights have gone out.'

b) Se ha ido la luz. **En consecuencia,** la televisión no marcha.

'The lights have gone out. **Consequently**, the television doesn't work.'

b') #No marcha la televisión y, **en consecuencia**, se ha ido la luz.

#'The television doesn't work and, **consequently**, the lights have gone out.'

As Portolés explains, *por tanto* in (7a) does not indicate the relationship that S1 causes S2, and the segments can therefore be inverted (7a') while *en consecuencia* does indicate that causal relationship and its surrounding segments cannot be inverted (7b') (1998:80). The inversion of these elements results in pragmatic infelicity in (7b'), marked with #.

Zorraquino and Durán (1988) describe DMs as tools that are part of a heterogeneous group, taken from traditionally invariable grammatical categories such as conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions, with the function of commenting, specifying, and contrasting (1988:25). The elusive nature of DMs in general, especially multifunctional DMs such as *well* or *so*, has been the cause of much debate over their classification and governing principles of DMs (Cuenca 2008:1373).

It is pertinent here to address the process of DM 'stacking.' Fraser proposes the co-occurence of DMs specifically using *so* (e.g. ***And so**, what are we to do now?*) as an area that requires exploration due to the apparently restricted manifestation of the co-occurence (i.e. ***So and***... is not acceptable though the reverse order is) (1999:950). Although Buysse does not address the possibility of co-occurence of other DMs with *so*, Roggia approaches the issue with the DM *eh* in Spanish, recognizing that DMs are not "stacked" in an arbitrary manner, but rather follow a hierarchy, i.e. the first DM is an interjection, the second a reaction, the third a connection, the fourth agreement or

disagreement, etc. (2012:1794). Roggia uses an extreme example from his data in which the speaker used five DMs in the same utterance, shown in example (8) (2012:1794).

(8) **Eh, bueno, entonces, claro, eh** en el país de los ciegos, el tuerto es rey.

This is an more extreme example of the possibility of DM stacking. Though no such example was present in the data of this study, evidence of DM stacking was present, such as in the following example in which the speaker stacked two lexical DMs.

(9) NS2: **Bueno, entonces**, cómo fue después de que había empezado a estudiar economía internacional.

'**Well, so**, how was it after I had begun to study international economy.'

In (9), the speaker has stacked two DMs to introduce a new sequence. That these DMs can be stacked attests to their elusive significance and high degree of flexibility, as neither DM is necessary for expressing the communicative meaning of the utterance, and both have very similar meanings.

For the purposes of this study, DMs will be identified according to their invariability, or lack of inflection, and their optionality – whether or not the section of discourse in which a DM is situated retains its meaning if the DM is eliminated. Example (10) from NS3 shows an utterance in which the DM *bueno* may be eliminated without affecting the meaning of the utterance.

(10) NS3: estos chicos también tienen muchísimos problemas para solicitar admisión a la Universidad, para llenar los papeles de FAFSA, y, uh, aparte, **(bueno),** los padres no fueron a la Universidad y no tienen idea de cómo funciona el sistema.

'These kids also have a lot of problems in applying for admission to the University, in filling out FAFSA papers, and, aside from this, **(well)**, the parents didn't go to the University and don't have any idea how the system works.'

In example (10), NS3 is talking about how the students she works with have a lot of trouble applying to university, and, she elaborates, aside from that, that their parents did not go to university and do not know how the system works. NS3 originally said *bueno*, but when the utterance is read without the DM, it retains its meaning, especially since NS3 already said *aparte*, or 'aside from this' before elaborating on the students' issues.

Although nonessential syntactically, DMs nevertheless contribute to maintaining the flow of discourse and relate the utterance in which they are situated to the global meaning of the discourse (Rojo and Valenzuela1995:173). It is this type of DM which will be considered in the present study. DMs will be considered 'stacked' when two or more distinct DMs occur consecutively in the data with no information between. More often than not in the data of the present study, the stacks are composed of one or more non-lexical DMs and one lexical DM. Stacking will be addressed further in Chapter 3.

2.3 Multifunctionality and polysemy

In their study on the translation of *pues* from Spanish to English, Rojo and Valenzuela (1995) discuss the difficulty of translating what they term *conectores pragmáticos* and suggest that the best way to translate a DM from a given language is to identify the function of that DM rather than the form: "En el caso de los conectores pragmáticos, nos enfrentamos a signos cuyos significado viene dado por la función pragmática o discursiva que desempeñan" (1995:172). This difficulty in establishing direct translations of DMs between languages makes them elusive to L2 learners. Using a book of short stories in Spanish *El huevo de juicio*, the authors identify nine functions of *pues* in the data and, with the help of native Spanish-speaking and native-English speaking informants, propose possible translations in English for each function that *pues*

fulfills in Spanish. They found that in some cases it is possible to translate *pues*, such as when *pues* completes the regressive function in which a speaker returns to a previous line of argument in the discussion after digressing. In such cases, *pues* may be translated as *anyway, right, right then, all right, OK,* or *well then.* However, for many functions that *pues* carries out, it is either unnecessary to translate because the loss of the DM in translation does not affect the meaning of the utterance (the *feeling* function that indicates an agreement between interlocutors regarding a matter), or that it is impossible to translate because it takes on different meanings even when it is completing the same function (the *intensifier* function that reinforces an affirmation or a negation). Furthermore, they found that within a same example, *pues* may carry out multiple functions simultaneously. The authors conclude that *pues* "no puede ser transferido al inglés de manera efectiva y sistemática"[3] (Rojo 1995:183).

The English DM *so* serves a variety of functions in discourse coherence. *So* is part of a class of what Casteele and Collewaert call "certain highly multifunctional discourse markers" (2013:555). Multifunctional DMs have been viewed in various manners as homonymic (Roggia 2012) or polysemic (Cuenca 1998). Blackwell (2012) distinguishes polysemy from homonymy by the trait that, in addition to sharing etymology, polysemic items share semantic meaning, while homonyms share no such feature. Many authors have approached the task of finding one core meaning for polysemic DMs, as Cuenca proposes that "all uses can be summarized under one general description" and that a DM "can have different functions which are related to a prototype or core in a polysemous way" (Cuenca 1998:1382). Hummel uses the term *polyfunctionality* to refer to DMs that

[3] *cannot be transferred to English in an effective and systematic manner*

share universal discourse functions such as marking reformulation, correction, and turn change (2012:11).

Cuenca approaches the multifunctional English DM *well* from a polysemic framework in which, instead of one core meaning, she proposes a radial category in which two or more functions or interpretations of a DM are interrelated and are therefore part of a unified core meaning. Some interpretations are closely related while others are more peripheral. For example, within the modal function of *well*, you find interpretations of partial agreement, connected to doubt, connected to partial disagreement, connected to contraposition, shown in Cuenca's figure, Figure (2.1) below (2008:1384).

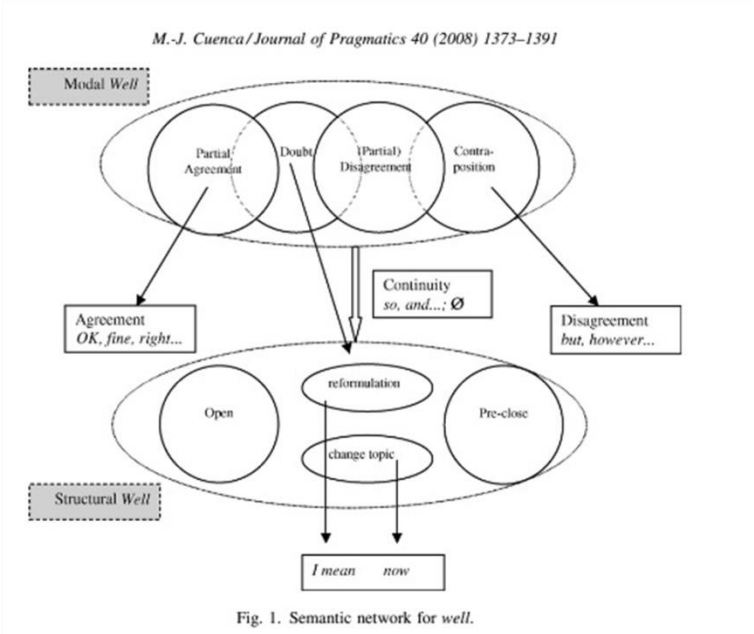

Figure 2.1 Cuenca's Radial Categories of *Well*

Further, the modal functions of *well* (e.g. partial agreement, doubt, partial disagreement, etc.) are connected to the structural functions of well (e.g. opening a statement, closing a statement, etc.) via the interpretation of continuity (Cuenca 1998:1384).

Cuenca (1998) supports the argument for a polysemic radial category for *well* through a contrastive analysis of the translation of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* into Spanish and Catalan. She found that far from being translated directly (e.g. from *well* in English to *bien* in Spanish), translators used various tactics to translate the DM. Most often in Spanish, a directly related, but not directly translated, counterpart was used – *bueno*. She found a tendency in both languages toward non-literal translations, as well as common employment of omission. Another tendency she found that contributes to the argument for a polysemic definition of *well* is the integration of the DM's functional meaning into the translation, as in the example below. (Cuenca 1998:1378).

(11) a) Yes, **well**, I think you're right.
b) Tal vez tengas razón.

Instead of seeking a corresponding Spanish DM to translate from *well,* the functional meaning (e.g. indicating doubt) is expressed through integration into the phrase via *tal vez* ('maybe') and the use of subjunctive in example (11) (1998:1378). Cuenca cites the hypothesis of Aijmer and Vandenbergen: "If an item in the source language is translated by a wide range of target language items, this variety will bring the polysemic nature of the item in question into focus more clearly" (1998:1379).

Cuenca's framework of a radial category for polysemic DMs will be assumed for analysis of English *so,* as various Spanish items are necessary to translate the DM. Therefore, it will not be supposed that all functions of *so* in English can be related back to a single core meaning but rather that the functions are related to one another in varying ways. Müller (2005) rejects the idea of a core meaning for multifunctional DMs, positing that the disparate uses of DMs are just as important to consider as the functions that are

related to a single core meaning (2005:13). Therefore, the functions themselves, as opposed to how they are interrelated, will be the focus of this study.

2.4 The functions of discourse markers: The case of *so*

Müller (2005) identifies the following global functions of DMs: (1) to initiate discourse, (2) to mark a boundary in discourse, (3) to preface a response or a reaction, (4) to serve as a filler or delaying tactic, (5) to aid the speaker in holding the floor, (6) to effect an interaction of sharing between speaker and hearer, (7) to bracket the discourse either cataphorically or anaphorically, and (8) to mark either foregrounded or backgrounded information (2005:9).

Because *so* is an extremely common DM in English, the native language of the Spanish L2 learners in this study, it serves as a relevant example of the multifunctionality of DMs and the way that functions of DMs are interrelated. That *so* belongs in the category of DMs appears unattested, whether referred to explicitly as a *discourse marker*, as do Fraser (1999), Andersen et al. (1999) and Schiffrin (1987), among others, or referred to by some other terminology or description, such as in Levinson (1983). In her study on the acquisition of DMs in L2 learners of English, Müller (2005) found that *so* was the most frequently used DM in both native and learner speech. Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) found that *so* was used more often than any other DM in a corpus of data taken from recorded university lectures (443). *So* serves as a good point of departure in investigating the acquisition of DMs in native English-speaking L2 learners of Spanish, as it is multifunctional and highly prevalent in the native language, so learners will be inclined to use DMs for such functions, and its functions have been delineated in several works.

The DM *so* functions both in monologual and dialogual discourse. Both categories are addressed below, although the use of *so* in monologual discourse is more central to the present research in the oral narratives analyzed and discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Fraser interprets *so* as marking a conclusion from prior discourse or attributing elaboration of meaning in discourse context (1999:945). According to Fraser, the function of elaboration of meaning is the familial element that links the polysemic interpretation of *so* (1999).

Buysse (2012) outlines the following 10 uses of *so* in English:

Table 2.1 Buysse's Functions of *So*

Function	**Example**
(i) Indicate a result	*Yeah, and they had a shortage of actors, **so** they had some actors playing several parts.*
(ii) Draw a conclusion	*He or she asked me **so** he or she must be convinced that it would be beautiful.*
(iii) Prompt	*Well I hate films **so**...*
(iv) Hold the floor	*For me it was enough but but we have an old leaders working now and yeah we meet once in awhile and we help the Chiro ... **so** ... in two weeks it's a party.*
(v) Introduce a summary	*It's a very funny movie ... what I also like about the movie is that there is a severe shortage of good communication ... **so** that's what I really like about movies.*
(vi) Introduce a section of discourse	***So** there's this man painting a woman first he makes a portrait of her which is very realistic.*
(vii) Indicate a shift back to a higher unit of discourse	*We managed to get a rent rebate ... It was like a building for young workers and students ... **so** we managed to get a rent rebate.*
(viii) Introduce a new sequence	*(They have to get the money out of him through the means of physical violence) ... However, it's not him **so** he starts complaining to the millionaire about how the thugs have peed on his rug ...*

(ix) Introduce an elaboration	*(French is quite useful) ... but I'd like just to not learn it artificially as well* ***so*** *I'd just be around lots of French people and sort of ... pick things up.*
(x) Mark self-correction	*No and er, the weak, er,* ***so*** *when you are with a bicycle arm ...*

Buysse examines these ten uses through the relation they describe – ideational (i), interpersonal (ii-iv), and textual (v-x). In her analysis involving Dutch speakers of English and native speakers of English, *so* was most used as an indicator of result (function i) or a prompt (function iii). *So* was least often used to introduce discourse (function vi) and mark self-correction (function x), especially by native speakers of English (Buysse 2012). However, the functions of introduce discourse and mark self-correction are salient and necessary and will therefore be considered in the present analysis.

Müller (2005) offers a case study on four English DMs: *so, well, you know,* and *like.* She explains the necessity of narrowing down the focus for these types of projects, as DMs can be analyzed from a variety of perspectives and are extremely prevalent in speech. In similar studies, researchers limit their analysis to one or few DMs in order to have more feasible undertakings (Cuenca 2008, Buysse 2012, Roggia 2012, etc.). Müller's global functions of DMs and Buysse's functions of *so* were considered in order to identify six functions of DMs to explore in the present study. The data collected in this study is monologic in nature, as participants were asked to tell a story in Spanish. For this study, the following monologic functions of DMs in Spanish will be considered, which were attested in both native and learner data and will be discussed further in Chapter 3:

(1) introduce a new sequence (introduce a section of discourse, initiate discourse), (2) introduce an elaboration, (3) indicate a result, (4) draw a conclusion (introduce a summary), (5) mark self-correction, and (6) fill a gap or pause in the discourse.

2.5 Second language pragmatics and the acquisition of discourse markers

The rather small body of research on the acquisition of DMs in L2 is explored in this section. Although the field of second language pragmatics acquisition is small, it is increasing in importance. Second language pragmatic proficiency is important to acquire, but is often difficult to quantify and seldom taught in the traditional classroom, where language is decontextualized. SLA researchers have been exploring second language pragmatics acquisition more often in recent years, although much of the research is focused on the acquisition of English DMs. Because DMs aid in the comprehension of discourse, DMs are an important target structure to be acquired in the second language, and it is therefore necessary to explore how they are acquired in L2 Spanish.

Hellermann and Vergun (2007) investigated the use of the discourse markers *well, you know,* and *like* in beginning adult learners of English living in the United States. The authors note that DMs are understudied in language learning, as the target of language learning has generally been grammatical proficiency (i.e. correct usage of syntax, phonology, morphology, and semantics), and learners are highly likely to be corrected for incorrect use of verb morphology, for example, but are less likely to be corrected for inappropriate use of DMs (2007:158). Although DMs do not contribute to the propositional content of an utterance, "speakers who do not use these discourse-pragmatic lexical markers or use them in a non-target-like way risk being marked as separate from the target speech community" (2007:160). The authors state that language

learners tend to underutilize DMs, especially for pragmatic functions (2007:161). Their study involved bilingual interviews and classroom interaction with 17 adult learners of L2 English. The authors found that the use of DMs increases not only with a language learners' grammatical proficiency level, but also with increased acculturation into the community of the target language, stating, "The more time students have spent in the U.S. and the more contact that they have had with the target language culture, the more likely it seems that they will use discourse markers in their pragmatic usages" (2007:169). Therefore, their study found a general underuse of DMs for pragmatic usages, which relate the first piece of the utterance to the second in specific, meaningful ways, for language learners, whose use increased with exposure to the target language and community (Hellermann and Vergun 2007).

In his review of the literature on the effects of instruction in second language pragmatics, Rose (2005) addresses the issue of how pragmatics has not figured prominently in SLA research as a target and maintains that this is a "result of a relative neglect of pragmatics in second language acquisition in general" (385). He states that even after long periods of residence in target language contexts, pragmatic infelicities can still occur (2005:391). In the research reviewed, L2 learners who received explicit instruction on pragmatic material in the target language (i.e. metalinguistic generalizations) outperformed their peers who did not receive explicit instruction, although exposure alone also appears to improve learners' use of pragmatic material in the target language. Rose concludes that pragmatics are indeed teachable, and he specifically names DMs as a target structure (2005:396). Exposure to the target language

community is the treatment of the current study, and it is expected that this treatment will produce results in the student participants' oral narratives.

In a study on the acquisition of DMs in native speech, Andersen et al. (1999) investigated the acquisition of DMs in three language groups: American English children, Lyonnais French children, and Chicano Spanish-speaking children. The authors specifically focused on the way that DMs establish social relationships between interlocutors and how children acquire this information in the three different languages. They found that lexical DMs such as *well, now, but, so,* and *then* are used to mark higher status roles, which was reflected in the data of children role-playing with dolls. Specifically, the parent, teacher, and doctor dolls used lexical DMs more often than the child, student, and patient dolls in all three languages. Additionally, what the authors term "non-lexical" DMs such as *oh, uh,* and *um* were used to mark lower status roles in all three languages. The study showed that children pick up on these nuances that are not taught in the classroom (1999). Although L1 learning is inherently different from L2, the fact that children were able to acquire nuances on the use of DMs leads to the conclusion that L2 learners can also acquire these structures. The children in their study used lexical DMs to mark higher status roles and non-lexical DMs to mark lower status roles, even at a very young age.

Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) studied the effect of DMs on ESL students' comprehension of a lecture. They recorded the lecture of a university engineering professor in English and showed two video versions of the lecture to Cantonese ESL engineering students who were not familiar with the content of the lecture prior to the study. The experimental group was shown a version of the lecture where the naturally

occurring DMs were deleted. The control group saw the same lecture, but it was unedited, and the DMs were present. Through three types of assessment (self-assessment of lecture comprehended, partial recall summaries, and true-false questions), the authors discovered that the students who viewed the lecture without DMs had a lower comprehension of the material than the control group who viewed the lecture with DMs, presumably because they had to work harder to process the content of the lecture when DMs were not used to guide the listeners. Although previous studies concluded that DMs do not aid in second language learners' comprehension of target language discourse, the authors attribute this to the methodology of these studies, and they conclude that DMs do indeed aid in L2 learners' comprehension, which is another reason that DMs are important in second language acquisition. Of the results, they state, "Our subjects who heard the deleted version were, presumably, like the drivers on the road without signs. They had to focus closely on each segment of the talk. Only as they came upon a segment and recognized it could they see how it related to previous segments" (1995:451). Therefore, DMs are important target structures for L2 learners to acquire.

Polat (2011) investigated the acquisition of DMs in a developmental study with data collected over a period of one year from one native Turkish participant living in the United States and learning English. Like Hellermann and Vergun (2007), the author found a correlation between increased acculturation into the target language community and increased use of DMs. The L2 learner's use of DMs increased in frequency with acculturation and interaction with native speakers of English. However, it was found that some DMs were overused or associated with functions that were not native-like, and less salient DMs were mostly ignored and not utilized in the learners' speech. Pertinent to the

present study, the author notes that learners seldom acquire DMs in a classroom environment, and although the participant's use of DMs was not entirely native-like, contact with native speakers is the most likely manner for language learners to acquire DMs. The author also notes that non-native speakers often overuse certain expressions such as *well,* which is referred to as a "lexical teddy bear," or an item that language learners overuse, often in unnatural ways when compared to native speakers (2011:3747).

In a study on pragmatic fossilization of DMs, Trillo (2002) investigated the use of DMs in native and non-native (L1 Spanish) English speech "to see to what extent their [L2 learners'] exposure to spoken pragmatic information in a foreign language is sufficient to acquire pragmatic markers coherently" (769). Importantly, he notes that native speakers acquire pragmatic competence prior to linguistic ability, as four-month olds were found to participate in pragmatic exchanges with their mothers, such as turn-taking, pre-linguistically. Conversely, non-native speakers acquire grammatical competence as their main target and rarely acquire native-like use of pragmatic material via classroom input because language learning is decontextualized in nature (771). Non-native children overused the attention-getting marker *listen* in comparison to the data from native English-speaking children, which the author attributes to the direct translation of the common DM *oye* from Spanish. In contrast, non-native adult speakers did not use *look* and *listen*, even though those DMs were present in the adult native speaker data, as the adults appeared to use an avoidance strategy to refrain from appearing impolite. The study demonstrates that although L2 learners may acquire some uses of DMs, their acquisition of DMs often remains variable and unnatural in comparison with native data, resulting in pragmatic fossilization. The author defines

pragmatic fossilization as "the phenomenon by which a non-native speaker systematically uses certain forms inappropriately at the pragmatic level of communication" (Trillo 2002:770).

Müller (2005) used data from corpora to compare the use of English DMs in native English speech and L1 German learners of English. Specifically focusing on the DMs *so, well, you know,* and *like*, the author classifies the DMs according to their functions in both native and learner speech. It was found that interactions with native speakers of English greatly improved L2 learners' proficiency in the appropriate use of DMs. However, the non-native speakers used different DMs to complete functions in a manner not entirely congruent to the use of DMs by native speakers of English. Some functions of the target DMs in native data were absent from the L1 German speakers' data, and vice versa (Müller 2005). Example (12) shows the use of English *so* in a quotative function, which is a function of the German equivalent DM but is not a function of *so* present in native English speaker data. Although the use is natural when translated into German, in English the sentence sounds odd (Müller 2005:71).

(12) And she's **so**, "Oh, lord."

In (12), the non-native speaker of English uses *so* to introduce a quotation, which is not a function of the DM in English. Müller states that it is important to consider these unnatural uses of DMs in learner speech to assess their grasp of the DM (2005:71). Similarly, learners in the present study used Spanish DMs to complete functions that are not present in the native data, such as example 31 in Chapter 4, which shows a learner using *pues* to fulfill the function of drawing a conclusion, which was not present in native data. These unnatural uses show that learners are beginning to take more risks in using

DMs, which may lead to a more-native like use and more use of lexical DMs, as well as increased proficiency and discourse competence.

Casteele and Collewaert (2013) investigated the use of DMs in native Dutch speakers' written Spanish compositions, comparing those with written compositions by native Spanish speakers. The Dutch speakers completed the written composition as part of a grammar course, and they all were at the B1-B2 proficiency level via the Common European Framework, which means the learners were at the intermediate level in their L2 Spanish. The authors state that although it is often not ungrammatical to leave out DMs, their absence may cause a slight shift in meaning of the utterance. Utterances lacking DMs may also be interpreted as awkward, boring, or impolite (Casteele 2013:551). They found that in the consequential relation, native speakers preferred *así que* while learners preferred *entonces*. To mark a reformulation, native speakers preferred *total* and *en fin* while learners preferred *al fin y al cabo.* They also found that while native speakers use "typical Spanish metadiscursive markers" such as *bien* and *pues* often, learners tend to either use these DMs in unnatural ways or to use avoidance strategies where the DMs would be expected but the learner is uncertain of the proper item. (2013:555). Furthermore, the authors state that it appears that unambiguous connective devices, such as *pero* and *o* are easier for learners to acquire than highly multifunctional DMs, such as *así que, entonces,* and *pues* (2013:556). In general, native speakers used DMs more than non-native speakers in their data.

An additional study on the acquisition of DMs in Spanish L2 is that of Hernández (2011), who, continuing his previous work on explicit instruction (EI) and input flood (IF) in SLA, examined the effects of EI + IF versus IF alone in the acquisition of Spanish

discourse markers in adult English speaking L2 Spanish learners. The participants were in their fourth semester of college Spanish at the time of the study. Each participant took a pre-test (one week before instruction), a post-test (24 hours after instruction), and a delayed post-test (four weeks after instruction) involving a picture description task. They were divided into two groups. The first group received EI on the use of DMs in Spanish, as well as IF and feedback. The second group received only IF. The author found that students in the EI + IF group used a greater range of DMs, but that EI + IF was not superior to IF alone in improvement of the use of DM. The study specifically focused on the DMs *entonces, cuando, por lo tanto, sin embargo,* and *por otro lado.* He concludes: "Results indicate that exposure to a rich IF combined with communicative practice and feedback is sufficient to foster acquisition of discourse markers" (Hernández 2011:177). Hernández's study is different from the present study in that he considered the role of instruction on students' use of DMs in L2, while the present study focuses on the acquisition of DMs through mere participation in a study abroad program and consequent immersion into the target language community. Learners in the present study received a rich IF, living in the target language community, but did not receive explicit instruction or necessarily communicative practice and feedback because the classes taught at UGA en Buenos Aires were about culture, film, literature, and the legal system of Argentina, rather than the Spanish language itself.

More directly related to the present study is that of Segalowitz et al. (2004) who examined the effects of study abroad on second language acquisition. The authors compared learners' acquisition of language skills, including proficiency and fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and cognition in a traditional Spanish classroom in Colorado

versus a group of students studying abroad in Alicante, Spain. Overall, the study abroad group outperformed the control group in oral proficiency and fluency, making modest gains in rate of speech, mean length of utterance without fillers, etc. However, the at-home control group showed superior gains in grammatical performance, which the authors attribute to the nature of the traditional classroom, which involves a heavy focus on grammar. The results were in line with previous studies on the effects of study abroad programs on SLA. Study abroad students tend to make greater gains in sociolinguistic abilities, fluency, and oral proficiency than traditional foreign language students, although there appears to be little effect on a learners' acquisition of grammatical principles through study abroad programs (2004). The present study considers DMs, which are within the realm of discourse competence and affect L2 proficiency. According to the findings of Segalowitz et al. (2004), it was hypothesized that the L2 learners in this study would make gains in oral proficiency through study abroad and therefore their use of DMs would be more native-like.

In this study, DMs are identified according to their invariability, or lack of inflection, as well as their optionality, or whether or not the section of discourse in which the DM is situated retains its meaning when the DM is eliminated. Following Müller (2005), this project assumes that DMs are multifunctional and that all the interrelated functions of each DM should be considered individually in order to characterize and classify their behavior. The present study also assumes that multifunctional DMs such as *so* in English and *bueno* in Spanish will be more difficult for L2 learners to acquire as opposed to DMs associated with specific, less variable functions such as *and* and *but*

(Casteele and Collewaert 2013). DMs will also be classified as lexical or non-lexical following Andersen et al. (1999).

The field of second language pragmatics is growing, and Rose (2005) found that second language pragmatics can be teachable. Importantly, Flowerdew and Tauroza found that DMs aid in second language comprehension and are therefore crucial to the acquisition and comprehension of a second language (1995). Although native speakers and non-native speakers use DMs in different ways (Müller 2005; Casteele and Collewaert 2013), and the acquisition and use of DMs in L2 learners' discourse is variable (Trillo 2002), several researchers have found that the use of DMs in second language learners' discourse increases with proficiency, as well as acculturation into the second language environment (Hellermann and Vergun 2007; Polat 2011).

While Hernández (2011) found that a rich input flood in addition to communicative feedback are essential in the acquisition of DMs, Hellermann and Vergun (2007) and Polat (2011) indicate that acculturation into a target language setting is a main driving force behind students' more native-like use of DMs. Segalowitz et al. (2004) found that in study abroad programs, learners often do not show gains in grammatical proficiency, but rather improve in fluency, oral proficiency, and sociolinguistic capabilities. Andersen et al. (1999) point out that social relationships can be established through certain uses of DMs, and DMs certainly aid in fluency and clarity (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995), so it is expected that the learners in this study, as participants in a six-week study abroad program, will acquire more native-like use of DMs through the program. Several studies found gains in second language pragmatics through exposure alone (Rose 2005), which is the treatment in this study. Polat (2011) points out that the

underuse or misuse of DMs can lead to semantic and pragmatic misunderstandings, which a second language learner would aim to avoid.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the development of English L1 Spanish L2 learners' use of DMs in two oral narratives, one recorded at the beginning and another at the end of a six-week study abroad program in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Specifically, lexical as well as non-lexical DMs are considered in this analysis, in contrast to previous studies.In his study on the acquisition of Spanish discourse markers for native speakers of English, Hernández (2011) focuses on the DMs *entonces, cuando, por lo tanto, sin embargo,* and *por otro lado,* stating that "a speaker uses these and other discourse markers to sequence and structure ideas and information in paragraph-length discourse in order to produce a cohesive and coherent narration, which is a critical feature of advanced language competence" (164). The current study addresses the following questions: Do classroom language learners use discourse markers at the intermediate language level? How does their use of discourse markers change after five weeks of study abroad? When compared to native Argentine narratives, do Spanish second language learners use Spanish DMs for the same functions? Do learners use more non-lexical markers in the first narrative, at the beginning of study abroad, than the second narrative, at the end of study abroad?

The following hypotheses were postulated for this study: (1) The L2 learners in this study will use more non-lexical DMs in their first narrative than in the second narrative; (2) The L2 learners will use Spanish DMs for fewer functions than the native Spanish speakers in both narratives, at the beginning and at the end of the study abroad program; (3) The intermediate study abroad participants in this study will use more

Spanish lexical DMs in their second narrative at week 5 of study abroad than in their first narrative at week 1; (4) The L2 learner participants in this study will use DMs for a wider variety of functions in the second narrative than in the first narrative.

The oral narratives analyzed in this study were collected from ten Spanish second language learners participating in a six-week study abroad coursework and internship program in Buenos Aires, Argentina. These narratives were collected on a voluntary basis. All the participants were students at the University of Georgia, including nine undergraduate students and one doctoral student. All of the students had coursework in Spanish at the 3000-intermediate level or equivalent prior to participation in the program. All participants were interviewed in Spanish by UGA en Buenos Aires staff prior to entry in the program, as a basic knowledge of Spanish is a prerequisite for the program due to the nature of the service-learning and internship courses. Throughout the program, students had the opportunity to make contact with native speakers in Buenos Aires through home-stays with native Argentine families, internships, service-learning, and cultural activities organized by the program. Eight participants completed internships or service-learning assignments weekly in Buenos Aires, one participant began doctoral research during the program, and one took two classes as opposed to taking a service-learning or internship position. The first narrative (Narrative A) was recorded within a week of arrival, and learners were instructed to tell a story about an experience that influenced their decision to study in Buenos Aires. The second narrative (Narrative B) was recorded within a week of departure (fifth week of the six-week program), but this time learners were instructed to tell a story about the most memorable experience of the trip to Buenos Aires. The L2 learner narratives were collected in person in Buenos Aires

and recorded using the iPhone 4 Voice Memo application. The student speakers are referred to as S1-S10, and numbers were assigned in the order of collection of the first narrative.

Three oral narratives were collected from native Argentine Spanish speakers to establish a means for comparison with the L2 learners' narratives. The native speaker participants were solicited via email and social media, and they participated on a voluntary basis. Native speakers were asked to tell a story about a powerful memory, whether scary, funny, or exciting. If a speaker could not think of a story, individualized questions were posed to assist the speaker in figuring out what to tell as a narrative. The native speaker narratives were collected after the researcher's return to the United States, either virtually, via Skype and Apple's Garage Band program, or in person, recorded in the same manner as the L2 learners' narratives. The first native speaker (NS1) is a female Argentine from the Chaco Province living in Buenos Aires and working as a radio host, actress, and activities coordinator for the UGA en Buenos Aires program. She told a story she heard on the radio and in the news in Argentina. The second native speaker (NS2) is a male Argentine from Mendoza residing in Athens, GA and working as a professor at the University of Georgia. Upon hearing the prompt given to the study abroad students, he decided to share the story of how he arrived to Buenos Aires and later to the United States. The third native speaker (NS3) is a female Argentine residing in Athens, GA and working as a professor at the University of Georgia. She recounted her experience working with undocumented grade school students, at the prompting and interest of the researcher of this study.

The narratives vary in duration from the shortest (3 minutes, 55 seconds) to the longest (10 minutes, 9 seconds). To account for the difference in narrative duration, data is considered in terms of percentage of word count and percentage of total DMs used. Intervention by the researcher was kept to a minimum except in the case of an extremely short narrative or in a few cases in which the language learners indicated a need for assistance or reassurance in word selection.

The narratives were transcribed and assessed for the presence and DMs. Using the analysis of *so* in English as a point of departure, the study focused on DMs including, but not limited to, *así que, entonces, bueno,* and *bien,* as well as nonlexical markers such as *um, eh,* and *ehm.* DMs used in quotes (e.g. *Ella dice, "Bueno"*) were not considered. Furthermore, DMs used in phrases in which the participant addresses the researcher directly were considered, as this study focused on monologic DMs situated in the ideational and textual, but not interactional, planes of discourse.

The DMs used in all narratives were classified as lexical or non-lexical, as well as according to the phrase position and to the six functions outlined in Section 2, attested in the data of the current study: (1) to introduce a new sequence, (2) to introduce an elaboration, (3) to indicate a result, (4) to draw a conclusion, (5) to mark self-correction, and (6) to fill a gap or pause in the discourse. An example of each function from native speaker data follows. The DMs are marked in bold.

Example (13) demonstrates the use of a DM to introduce a new sequence.

(13) NS2: **Entonces**, en 1986 salió un aviso en el periódico.
‘**So,** in 1986 an ad came out in the newspaper.’

In (13) the speaker is introducing a sequence, specifically introducing his narrative, as this statement occurs at the very beginning of the narrative. Throughout the native and learner data, many speakers began their narratives with a DM, often *entonces* and *bueno,* and for the learners, *OK.*

Example (14) shows the use of a DM to introduce an elaboration.

(14) NS1: Es un caso, fue muy conocido el año pasado aquí en Buenos Aires, se hizo conocido en las redes sociales y en un programa muy importante de radio. **Ehm**, es la historia de esta joven que tiene treinta años que eligió contar su historia personal a través de Twitter.

'It is a case, it was very known last year here in Buenos Aires, it became known through social networks and in a very important radio program. **Ehm**, it's the story of this girl who is thirty years old who chose to tell her personal story through Twitter.

In (14) the speaker uses a non-lexical DM, *ehm*, to introduce an elaboration: she introduces her story, *es un caso ... muy conocido* and after the DM, and begins to elaborate the story with *es la historia de esta joven.*

Example (15) shows the use of a DM to indicate a result.

(15) NS1: Porque la historia del padre es que cuando ella era chica, un día se fue de la casa y nunca más volvió. **Entonces**, ella, toda su vida odió a su padre.

'Because the story of the father is that when she was little, one day he left home and never came back. **So**, she, all her life she hated her father.

In (15), the speaker indicates that the segment following *entonces, toda su vida odió a su padre* is a result of the segment the proceeds the DM, *cuando ella era chica, un día se fue de la casa y nunca más volvió.* This function of DMs is very common for English *so* and for Spanish *entonces.* Another common Spanish DM for this function is *así que*, shown in (16).

(16) NS2: Y yo en ese momento estudiaba economía internacional. **Así que** el único que llevaba traje, saco, corbata, y esas cosas era yo.

'And at this time I studied international economy. **So** I was the only one who wore suit, coat, tie, and those things, it was me.'

In (16), the speaker indicates that a result of studying international economics *así que* he was the only one of his roommates that had to wear a suit and tie.

Example (17) shows the use of a DM, *bueno*, to draw a conclusion.

(17) NS1: Le escribieron de Miami, de Colombia, de montón de países de América y que, que, **bueno**, que esa historia de, con su padre, y que ella lo perdonó, y eligió contarlo a través de Twitter, en 140 caracteres.

'People wrote to her from Miami, from Columbia, from a ton of American countries that, that, **well**, about that story of, about her father, and that she forgave him, and she chose to tell it through Twitter in 140 characters.'

This utterance occurs at the very end of the narrative, where the speaker is talking about all of the people who wrote the young girl who shared her story, and with *bueno*, signals the conclusion that the speaker forgave her father and choose to tell her story via Twitter.

Though less common in native speaker narratives, example (18) shows the use of a DM to mark self-correction, also called reformulation (Portolés 1998).

(18) NS1: El hombre iba muy rápido, **ehm**, muy nervioso.

'The man went very fast, **ehm**, very nervous'

In (18), the speaker begins to say that the man was traveling very fast, but decides that a better description of his movement is *nervioso*, which she indicates with a non-lexical marker *ehm.* The most common DMs for this function in native data were non-lexical. This function was more common in the learner data because learners were more likely to make errors, as they spoke in their L2.

The sixth function of DMs explored in this study is to fill a gap or pause in discourse. This function is less salient, but was identified by a lack of a clear relationship between the segments of discourse that the DM connects, as well as prolonged pronunciation of the sound and surrounding pauses (indicated with commas), demonstrated in example (19).

(19) NS1: Pero luego de unos días, **eh**, ella invitó a su madre y a su hermana a un café y les relató la historia.

'But after some days, **eh**, she invited her mother and sister to have a coffee and she told them the story.'

In (19), there is no need for the speaker to separate the segment *luego de unos días/ella invitó a su madre.* In this example, the DM fills a gap in which the speaker formulates her words.

DMs completing the aforementioned six functions were extracted from the native speaker narratives and the L2 learner narratives in order to compare and contrast the use of DMs and to describe the development of DM acquisition in a second language through a study abroad program. For analysis, the word count of each narrative was considered in the calculations of percentages of DMs, lexical and non-lexical. For phrase-position and function, the total number of DMs, with stacks collapsed into one token, was considered in calculating percentages. Stacks were collapsed into one token for the majority of the analysis to avoid inflation of the data with up to 6 tokens when the DMs occur in long stacks, especially in the learner data, such as in example (20).

(20) S1A: **Bueno, uh, entonces, uh,** yo me encanta viajar
'**Well, uh, so, uh**, I love to travel.'

In example (20), for the count of lexical versus non-lexical DMs, each of the four DMs was considered one token. They were also all counted in the calculation of frequency of DM, discussed further in Chapter 4. For the categories of phrase-position and function, this token was counted as one instance of a DM occurring in phrase-initial position, and one instance of the function introduce a new sequence. This utterance occurs at the very beginning of Learner 1's narrative.

Also in the data were several instances of speakers repeating the same non-lexical DM multiple times in a row. As this repetition may reflect a physical aspect of speech, these tokens were counted as one, as in Example (21) below:

(21) S3A: Tomé, **um, um**, el examen de español
'I took, **um, um**, the Spanish exam.'

Examples like (21) yielded one token for the entirety of the analysis.

The DM *y* was counted as its own token if separated prosodically with pauses, indicated by commas in the transcription. In cases where *y* was used with another DM with no pause, it was counted as part of the DM in which it is situated, for example:

(22) S8A: cuando estuve estudiante de, um, de undergrad fui a, uh, África **y por eso**, um, creo que ahora, um, bueno, me gusta viajar mucho

'When I was an undergraduate student, um, I went, uh, to Africa **and so**, um, I believe that now, um, well, I like to travel a lot.'

In (22), the speaker does not separate *y* and *por eso* prosodically, and therefore the token was counted as one instance of the DM *y por eso.*

Example (23) shows an instance of *y* functioning as its own DM, though as part of a stack:

(23) S5A: Bueno, **y**, um, antes de, um, viajar aquí, uh, hablé con la primera profesora.

> ‘Well, **and,** um, before, um, traveling here, uh, I spoke with the first professor.’

This example shows *y* separated prosodically from the rest of the DMs in the stack and therefore counted as its own DM for calculations of lexical versus non-lexical and frequency of DMs.

The tokens in this study were recorded in Microsoft Excel and analyzed for type: lexical or non-lexical. After initial analysis of type, stacks of DMs were collapsed into one token, as demonstrated in Example 3.8. The stacks were identified as lexical if they contained one or more lexical DMs, and non-lexical if they contained no lexical DMs. After collapsing the DM stacks, tokens were analyzed according to phrase-position: initial, medial, or final; and function: mentioned above. Finally, the raw frequency of each DM was calculated to observe which DMs were used most often in which narratives. The narratives were analyzed individually, then grouped by speaker with mean calculations for native use of DMs versus learner use of DMs in Narrative A versus learner use of DMs in Narrative B. The data were also analyzed by learner, comparing the use of DMs in Narrative A to Narrative B for each learner. Chapter 4 reports the results of the present study and offers discussion of these results.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Native speakers and learners showed different patterns of use of DMs in the data of the present study. Learners tended to overuse DMs in general, while native speakers used DMs for a wider variety of functions and in more phrase-positions, but at a lower overall frequency. The high amount of DMs the learners actually used in both narratives was surprising, but can be explained by the learners' Spanish level going into the program. To participate in the study abroad program, students had to have taken the 3000-level, intermediate Spanish course, or its equivalent. In addition, the investigator of the present study interviewed the candidates for study abroad in person, in Spanish, for twenty to thirty minutes. For a student to participate in an interview in his or her second language, he or she must already have a working knowledge of the language, which the learners involved in the program and the present study demonstrated prior to participation. Therefore, learner data from Narrative A demonstrates that they recognized the need for discourse markers even at the beginning of the study abroad program, with all learners using between 2.326 and 6.431 percent lexical DMs in their first narrative. The pattern of use from the first narrative to the second narrative involved a shift in the percentage of word count of DMs in total, from a mean of 17.319 percent of word count in Narrative A to 13.207 percent in Narrative B. The downward shift in use of non-lexical DMs as a percentage of word count, from 12.454 percent in Narrative A to 9.09 percent in Narrative B, indicates that learners needed hesitation markers and gap-fillers such as *um* and *uh* less in the second narrative. In addition, the percentage of markers completing

the function of filling a gap lowered, often drastically, from the first to the second narrative, including the aforementioned hesitation markers, as well as lexical DMs that the learners used to complete this function. Some of the learner narratives show a development in the use of DMs in more native-like ways in the small span of approximately five weeks.

4.1 Overall Results

The following table (4.1) shows the range and mean values for the use of lexical DMs, non-lexical DMs, total DMs, total DMs with stacks collapsed into one token per stack, and total word count (WC) of the narrative groups: native (NS), learners' first narratives (LNA), and learners' second narratives (LNB). Learners used far more non-lexical DMs in both Narratives A (mean 54.4) and B (mean 37.6) than native speakers (mean 14.33), even though the native mean word count (853) was almost twice as much as the mean word count for both learner narratives (447 and 429.2, respectively). Learners used fewer DMs in Narrative B in general, with a mean total of 55.6 compared to 74.8 in Narrative A.

Table 4.1 Mean Word Count and DM Use

Group	Lexical DMs		Non-Lexical DMs		Total DMs		Stacks Collapsed		Total WC	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
NS	21	17-28	14.333	7-24	34	30-38	31.667	28-36	853	616-1084
LNA	21	8-32	54.4	20-78	74.8	28-103	57.5	26-79	447	299-587
LNB	18	6-27	37.6	13-55	55.6	32-81	44.7	24-63	429.2	289-568

Notably in Table 4.1, the range of use of DMs for the learner narratives became smaller in the second set (SB), such that the range of lexical DMs for LNA was 8-32, then 6-27 in LNB; for non-lexical DMs 20-78 in LNA, and 32-81 in LNB; for total DMs 28-103 in LNA and 32-81 in LNB; and for total DMs with stacks collapsed 26-79 in LNA and 24-63 in LNB. In numeric terms, the learners' narratives showed less variety of use of DMs in the second narrative. Additionally, Table 4.1 demonstrates that although the number of total DMs used by native speakers did not decrease much when stacks were collapsed into one token (mean of 34 without stacks collapsed, 31.677 with stacks collapsed), for the learners, the collapsing of DM stacks into one token caused a more noticeable decline in the number of tokens, from a mean of 74.8 total DMs to 57.5 with stacks collapsed in Narrative A, and from a mean 55.6 total DMs to 44.7 with stacks collapsed in Narrative B.

Because of the wide range in narrative word count and use of DMs in the data, it is considered in terms of percentages. Table 4.2 shows the mean use of DMs as a percentage of the narrative word count for each narrative group.

Table 4.2 Mean Use of DMs as a Percentage of Word Count by Narrative Group

Group	Lexical DMs	Non-Lexical DMs	Total DMs
Native Speakers	2.36	1.941	4.3
Learners Week 1	4.865	12.454	17.319
Learners Week 5	4.117	9.09	13.207

Viewing the data as the mean percentages of use of DMs by word count, one can see that between the first narrative (Week 1/Narrative A) and the second narrative (Week 2/Narrative B), learners' use of DMs lowered overall, as well as their use of lexical DMs

(from 4.865 to 4.117), the use of non-lexical DMs (from 12.454 to 9.09), and the total use of DMs as percentages of word count (from 17.319 to 13.207), all decreased. When compared to native data, learners overuse DMs both in the first and in the second narrative. With such a difference between native frequency of DM use and learner frequency of DM use, learners demonstrated non-native-like use of DMs in both sets of narratives.

Native speakers also use more lexical DMs (mean 2.36 percent of word count) than non-lexical (mean 1.941 percent of word count), while learners use considerably more non-lexical than lexical DMs in both narratives. The decrease in use of lexical DMs in learners' Narrative B was minimal, only falling by about .748 percent; native speakers use more lexical DMs than non-lexical, and learners do not adjust their patterns of speech to a lower frequency of lexical DMs much from week one to week five.

The following table shows the total values for the use of DMs, lexical, non-lexical, and total, as percentages of the total word count for each group. Table 4.3 considers each narrative group as one data set.

Table 4.3 Total Use of DMs as a Percentage of Word Count by Narrative Group

Group	Lexical DMs	Non-Lexical DMs	Total DMs
Native speakers	2.306	1.681	3.987
Learners Week 1	4.877	12.17	16.734
Learners Week 5	4.194	10.415	12.954

Though slightly different from the values in Table 4.2, this table shows that the pattern of lowering of use of DMs, especially non-lexical DMs, from the first learner narrative to the second holds when the data is considered as one set for each group.

Additionally, when considering the three groups as individual data sets, the native speakers still used DMs, lexical, non-lexical, and total, less than the learners in both learner narratives.

The following sections will consider each set of narratives in turn, Native Argentines (Section 4.2), Learners Week 1 (Section 4.3), and Learners Week 5 (Section 4.4). Then, the learner data sets will be compared and contrasted (Section 4.5). Consequently, learner use of DMs for the individual functions considered in this study will be explored (Section 4.6). In Section 4.7, exemplary data from two student participants will be explored, and then the learner data will be compared to the native data as a whole.

4.2 Native Argentines

The following tables indicate the raw numbers for use of DMs for each native speaker and their totals. Table 4.4 shows the raw number of tokens of lexical, non-lexical, total DMs, and total DMs with stacks collapsed from NS1, NS2, and NS3. Overall, native speakers used more lexical than non-lexical DMs.

Table 4.4 Native Argentines' Use of DMs by Speaker

Speaker	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total DMs	Stacks Collapsed
NS1	18	12	30	28
NS2	28	7	34	31
NS3	17	24	38	36
Total	73	43	102	95
Mean	21	14.333	34	31.667

Table 4.4 demonstrates that although the native speakers used a similar number of total DMs, the distribution of lexical versus non-lexical DMs in the native narratives varied from speaker to speaker. The mean use of lexical versus non-lexical DMs for the native speakers shows a preference for the use of lexical DMs in oral narratives.

Table 4.5 shows the use of DMs as a percentage of word count for lexical, non-lexical, and total DMs in the native narratives.

Table 4.5 Native Argentines' Use of DMs as a Percentage of Word Count

Speaker	Word Count	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total
NS1	1084	1.66	1.11	2.768
NS2	858	3.147	.816	3.962
NS3	616	2.36	3.896	6.169
Total	2558	2.306	1.681*	3.987*
Mean	852.667	2.36	1.941**	4.3**

**Taken a percentage of total DMs and total word count all narratives*
***Taken as the mean of the percentages of word count by narrative*

Table 4.5 demonstrates further that the use of DMs varied in the native data from speaker to speaker. NS1 used the fewest DMs total (2.768 percent of word count), and only slightly preferred lexical (1.66 percent) over non-lexical DMs (1.11 percent). NS2 used almost three times as many lexical (3.147 percent) as non-lexical DMs (.816 percent). NS3 showed a difference in pattern, with a much higher use of DMs as a percentage of word count (6.169) than the other two speakers, and a preference for non-lexical DMs at 3.896 percent of word count compared to lexical DMs at 2.36.

The range of patterns of use with regard to discourse markers in the native Argentine narratives demonstrates the variability in speech patterns even for native speakers of the same dialect. Humans behave in a myriad of ways, and speech is a

reflection of this. Furthermore, the native Argentines were from different backgrounds, and while one is from Argentina and a resident of Buenos Aires, the other two are from Argentina but reside in Athens, GA, and have done so for years. The Argentine who resides in Buenos Aires (NS1) studied *locución*, loosely meaning *speech* or *communications* in English, and she is a radio host and actress. As one accustomed to an audience, her speech is practiced in assuring effective and comprehensible communication. NS2 and NS3 are both professors at the University of Georgia, and native Argentines. All three native Argentine speakers also speak English, but with varying degrees of proficiency. For the purposes of this study, the mean values of native use will be considered in order to establish a basis of comparison for the learner narratives, as the mean values are illustrative of native patterns and distinct from learner patterns in the data. Even NS3 uses fewer DMs than most learners.

The following figures demonstrate the total use of DMs for the native Argentines in this study as a group with regards to type, lexical or non-lexical; phrase position, initial, medial, or final; and distribution of function.

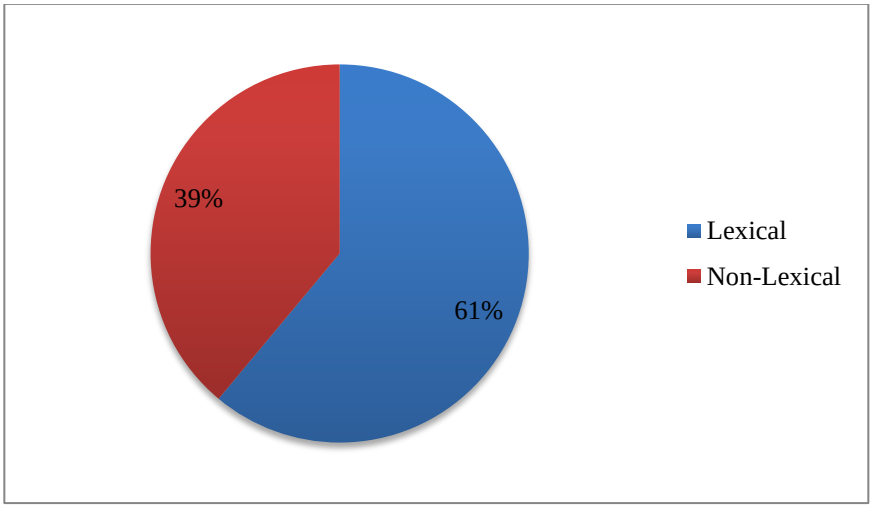

Figure 4.1 Native Argentines - Type of DM

Figure 4.1 demonstrates that overall the native Argentines in this study preferred to use lexical DMs over non-lexical DMs.

Figure 4.2 shows the use of DMs in the native data according to phrase position: initial, medial, or final.

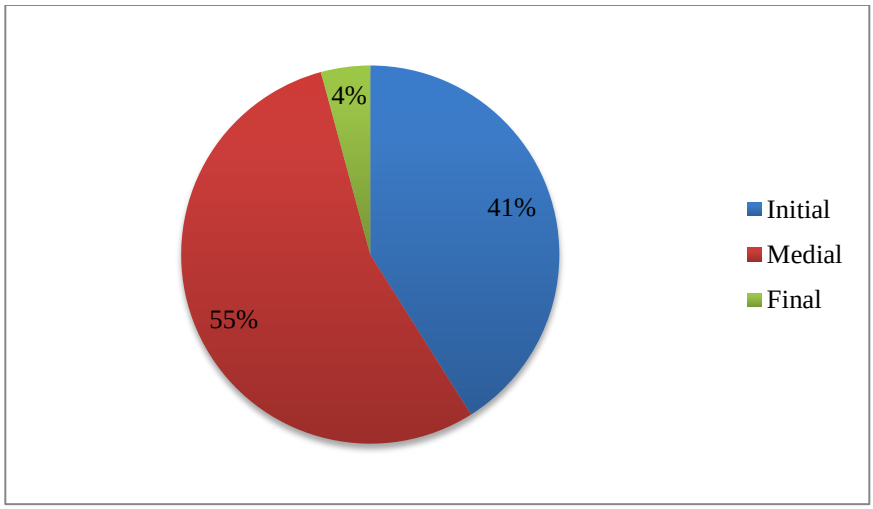

Figure 4.2 Native Argentines - Phrase Position

Figure 4.2 shows that the native speakers in this study most often used DMs in a phrase-medial position, closely followed by phrase-initial position. The phrase-final position was not common, at only four percent of the total native data, but the native speakers' use of DMs demonstrates that phrase-final DMs are possible in the Argentine dialect, and DMs in this position may be expected in proficient learner speech.

Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of the DMs considered in this study according to function for the native Argentine data.

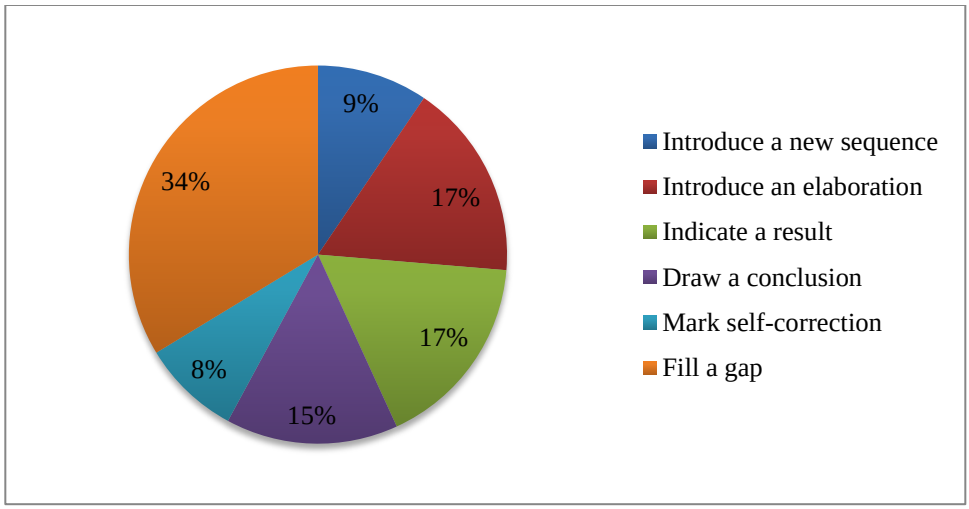

Figure 4.3 - Native Argentines - Distribution of Function

This figure shows that although native speakers tend to use DMs to fulfill fill a gap more than the other functions, they do not prefer to use DMs for this function much more than for the other functions. Their distribution of use of DMs by function is fairly even, with each function attested in the native data.

Table 4.6 shows which DMs the native Argentines used to complete which functions.

Table 4.6 Native Argentines' Use of DMs by Functions

Function	DMs used	Most Used
Introduce a new sequence	bueno, entonces, ehm, [eh]*	bueno/entonces
Introduce an elaboration	entonces, bueno, ehm, así que, eh	entonces
Indicate a result	entonces, por lo que, por eso, eh, así que	entonces
Draw a conclusion	entonces, así que, bueno, y bueno, eh	entonces
Mark self-correction	perdón, bueno, pues, eh, ehm	ehm
Fill a gap	eh, ehm, no, sí, no sé, bueno	eh

**The use of brackets indicates a non-lexical DM that did not complete the function alone, i.e. not as a part of a stack.*

Table 4.6 shows the variety of DMs used by native Argentines to complete the functions considered in this study. Table 4.7 shows the native use of DMs according to frequency, with the most used lexical DM *entonces*, and the most used non-lexical DM *eh*.

Table 4.7 Native Argentines' Use of DMs According to Frequency

entonces	32
eh	27
ehm	18
bueno/y bueno	12
así que	5
no	3
sí	1
pues	1
por lo que	1
por eso	1
perdón	1
no sé	1

Table 4.7 shows that the native speakers used several DMs many times (*entonces, eh, ehm, bueno*) and other DMs were barely present in the data. For the short length of these narratives, native speakers did not need an extensive variety of DMs to complete the discursive functions. However, even though the NS narratives are longer than most of the learner narratives, they used less of a variety of DMs to complete the functions than learners did, and their use is more economical.

4.3 Learners Week One

The narratives designated Narrative A, the first narratives for each learner participant, were collected within the first week of the study abroad program. The following table shows the learners' use of DMs in Narrative A, with mean values for lexical DMs at 21, non-lexical DMs at 54.4, total DMs at 74.8, and total DMs with stacks collapsed into one token at 57.5 per narrative.

Table 4.8 Learners' Use of DMs in Narrative A

Speaker	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total DMs	Stacks Collapsed
LN1A	26	57	80	57
LN2A	26	21	47	37
LN3A	27	77	93	78
LN4A	8	20	28	26
LN5A	21	46	67	51
LN6A	18	43	61	42
LN7A	21	78	99	75
LN8A	19	54	73	53
LN9A	32	71	103	77
LN10A	20	77	97	79
Total	218	544	748	575
Mean	21	54.4	74.8	57.5

The number of DMs used by each learner drops, by as many as 26 DMs for speaker S9, when the stacks of DMs are considered one token each. The learners combine mostly non-lexical DMs with lexical DMs in stacks, so the drop in number of DMs mainly affects the count of non-lexical DMs. Non-lexical DMs were used more often than lexical DMs in Narrative A.

The following table shows the learners' use of DMs as a percentage of word count in Narrative A.

Table 4.9 Learners' Use of DMs as a Percentage of Word Count in Narrative A

Speaker	Word Count	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total
LN1A	546	4.212	10.44	14.652
LN2A	529	4.915	3.97	8.885
LN3A	435	6.207	17.701	23.908
LN4A	344	2.326	5.814	8.14
LN5A	311	6.431	14.791	21.222
LN6A	299	6.02	14.381	20.401
LN7A	488	4.688	17.411	22.098
LN8A	436	4.358	12.385	16.743
LN9A	587	5.451	12.095	17.547
LN10A	495	4.04	15.556	19.596
Total	4470	4.877*	12.17*	16.734*
Mean	447	4.865**	12.454**	17.319**

**Taken as a percentage of total DMs and total word count all narratives*
***Taken as the mean of the percentages of word count by narrative*

Table 4.9 shows that in Narrative A, learners used a large amount of DMs, with a mean percentage of 17.319 percent of the word count comprised of DMs for each narrative. Learners used non-lexical DMs approximately three times as often as lexical DMs, with non-lexicals at a mean of 12.454 percent of word count, and lexicals at a mean of 4.865 percent of word count. Non-lexical DMs were mainly used as filler in the oral data of this study, and their overuse indicates a hesitation on the part of the learners, which may burden the listener (Fehringer and Fry 2007).

Table 4.10 lists the DMs used for each function by all learners in Narrative A.

Table 4.10 Learners' Use of DMs by Functions in Narrative A

Function	DMs Used	Most Used
Introduce a new sequence	um, pues, bueno, entonces, y es, y, *OK*, *anyway*, so, [uh]*, [eh]*	um
Introduce an elaboration	um, mm, y entonces, y, uh, bueno	um
Indicate a result	entonces, y entonces, y por eso, um, y, bueno, por eso, así, y así, así que, pero [mm], bueno, [mm]*, [uh]*, [ehm]*	entonces
Draw a conclusion	entonces, pero, y es, y, pues, y entonces, um (4), y bueno, por eso, no sé, así que, y sí, [uh]*	entonces
Mark self-correction	*or*, um, *I mean*, y, uh, o, eh, pues, O no sé, no, oh, perdón, bueno, *no wait*, *yes*, sí, no sé	or
Fill a gap	um, uh, y, pero, ehm, entonces, no sé, hm, *oh*, sí, y, *so*, *OK*, *whatever*, pues, eh, mm, así, *or*, bueno, así que, y no sé	um

**The use of brackets indicates a non-lexical DM that did not complete the function alone, i.e. not as a part of a stack.*

Speakers used a wider variety of DMs to carry out the six functions explored in this study than did the native speakers. Additionally, many of the DMs used were English, italicized in Table 4.10. This shows that the learners knew they needed to use DMs in these positions, but at week one they did not have the resources in their L2 to fulfill these functions and therefore reverted to their L1.

4.4 Learners Week Five

The second learner narratives, Narrative B, were collected within the last week of the study abroad program, week five. This table shows that learners' use of DMs decreased from Narrative A to Narrative B.

Table 4.11 Learners' Use of DMs in Narrative B

Speaker	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total DMs	Stacks Collapsed
LN1B	21	20	41	35
LN2B	19	13	32	24
LN3B	20	35	55	39
LN4B	6	35	41	36
LN5B	15	45	60	47
LN6B	6	42	48	43
LN7B	24	41	65	55
LN8B	16	37	53	42
LN9B	26	55	81	63
LN10B	27	53	80	63
Total	180	376	556	447
Mean	18	37.6	55.6	44.7

Learners used more non-lexical than lexical DMs in Narrative B, as in Narrative A, but at a lower frequency than in Narrative A. The average word count for Narrative B was slightly lower than Narrative A, at 429.2 words per narrative. However, Table 4.12 shows that even when taken as a percentage of word count, learners used DMs, both lexical and non-lexical, less in Narrative B.

Table 4.12 Learners' Use of DMs as a Percentage of Word Count in Narrative B

Speaker	Word Count	Lexical	Non-Lexical	Total
LN1B	480	4.375	4.167	8.542
LN2B	443	4.289	2.935	7.22
LN3B	484	4.132	7.231	11.364
LN4B	439	1.367	7.972	9.339
LN5B	385	3.896	11.688	15.584
LN6B	289	2.076	14.533	16.609
LN7B	423	5.674	9.693	15.366
LN8B	339	4.72	10.914	15.634
LN9B	442	5.882	12.433	18.326
LN10B	568	4.754	9.331	14.085
Total	4292	4.194*	10.415*	12.954
Mean	429.2	4.117**	9.09**	13.207

**Taken as a percentage of total DMs and total word count all narratives*
***Taken as the mean of the percentages of word count by narrative*

As demonstrated in Table 4.12, learners used less than half as many lexical DMs, at a mean of 4.117 percent of word count, as non-lexical DMs, at a mean of 9.09 percent of word count. Learners' use of non-lexical DMs dropped as a percentage of word count by approximately 3 percent, from a mean of 12.454 percent of word count in Narrative A to 9.09 percent of word count in Narrative B.

Table 4.13 shows the learners' use of DMs for each function in Narrative B.

Table 4.13 Learners' Use of DMs by Functions in Narrative B

Function	DMs	Most Used
Introduce a new sequence	bueno, entonces, y después, pero, um, y, ehm, OK, so, así, así que, [uh], [oh]	bueno
Introduce an elaboration	um, y, y pues, entonces, y um, pero, ehm, eh, [uh],	um
Indicate a result	entonces, y entonces, y por eso, así, así que, y, so, eh, um, y um, [mm], [uh]	entonces
Draw a conclusion	entonces, y, um, pero, así que, y bueno, pues, así, sí, anyhow	entonces
Mark self-correction	uh, pues, um, pero, or, bueno, eh, mm, no sé, y, o, well	uh
Fill a gap	um (202), y (43), uh (61), y entonces (2), entonces, bueno (4), no sé (7), eh (9), mm, ehm (4), pero (2), así (6), y uh (2),y um, así que, yeah, ah, oh gosh, anyhow, o, you know	um

**The use of brackets indicates a non-lexical DM that did not complete the function alone, i.e. not as a part of a stack.*

As in Narrative A, learners used a wide variety of DMs to complete the functions considered in this study, including several English DMs, indicated in italics in Table 4.13. The variety of DMs was unexpected, as native speakers were expected to produce a wider variety of DMs in a wider variety of contexts. However, this study considers much more learner data (10 narratives in each set) than native data (3 narratives), which can contribute to this disparity.

4.5 Learner Narratives A and B

When learner data is considered in two sets, Narrative A at week 1 versus Narrative B at week 5, learners appear to have made little progress in approximating native use of DMs. As in section 4.2, the following tables demonstrate data calculated for each set of narratives according to type of DM, lexical or non-lexical; phrase position, initial, medial, or final; and function, introduce a new sequence, introduce an elaboration, indicate a result, draw a conclusion, mark self-correction, and fill a gap. Although the changes in patterns of use from Narrative A and B are small, all changes approach the more native-like direction, i.e. less non-lexical DMs, more even distribution of phrase-initial and -medial positions, and less use of DMs to fill a gap.

Figure 4.4 shows learner use of DMs according to type, lexical or non-lexical for Narrative A, and Figure 4.5 shows the same for Narrative B.

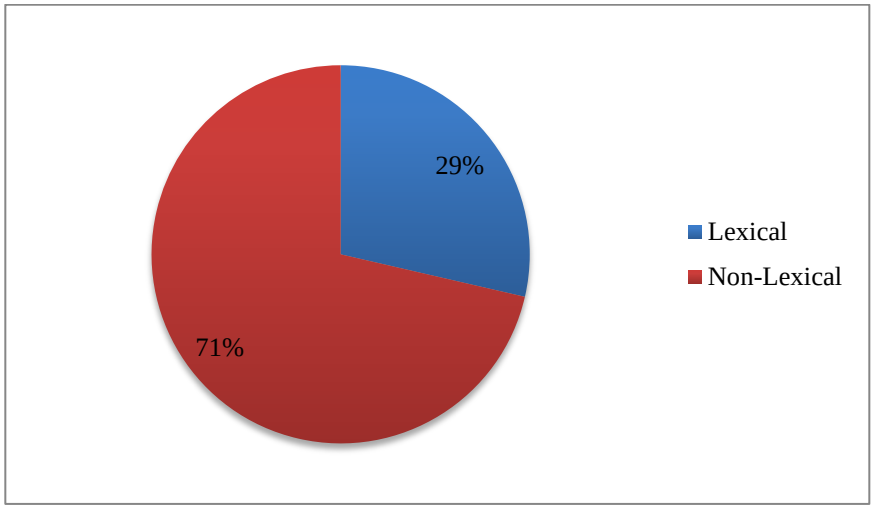

Figure 4.4 Learner Narrative A - Type of DM

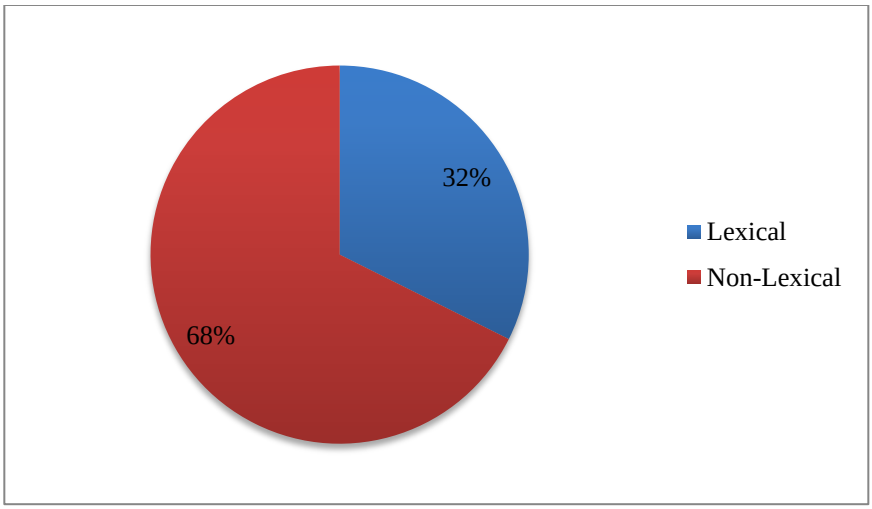

Figure 4.5 Learner Narrative B - Type of DM

In Narrative A, 71 percent of DMs used were non-lexical, while in Narrative B, 68 percent of DMs used were non-lexical, a drop toward more native-like use.

The following figures, 4.6 and 4.7, show learner use of DMs according to phrase position: initial, medial, or final. While native speakers used a rather even distribution of phrase-initial and phrase-medial DMs, 41 and 55 percent, respectively, learners used DMs in phrase-medial position far more than any other position. Native speakers used DMs in phrase-final position at a rate of 4 percent, while learners only used DMs in phrase-final position at 2 percent for both Narratives A and B.

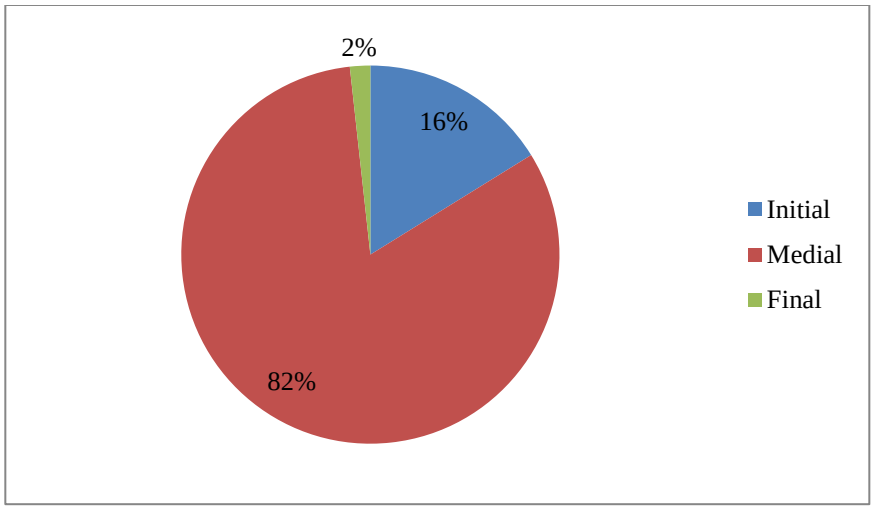

Figure 4.6 Learner Narrative A - Phrase Position

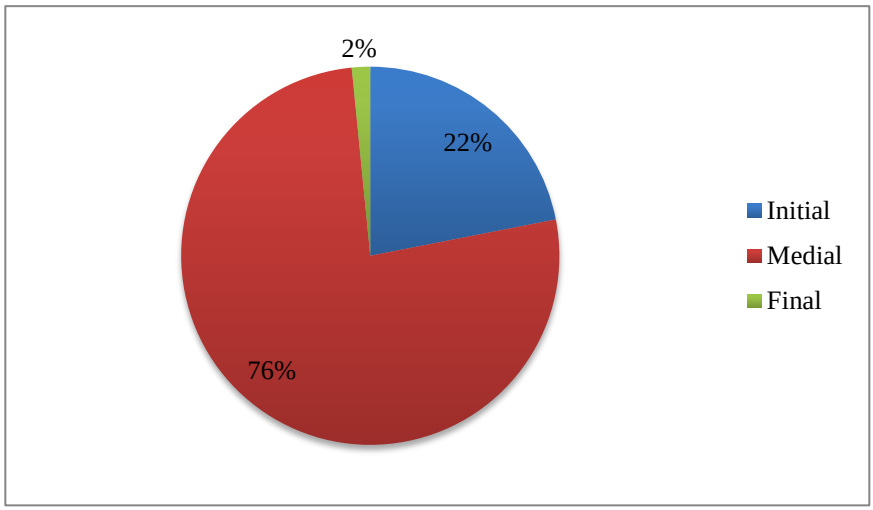

Figure 4.7 Learner Narrative B - Phrase Position

As Figures 4.6 and 4.7 demonstrate, learners mainly used DMs in medial position in both narratives, but began to use more DMs in initial position in Narrative B, as shown by Figure 4.7.

The following figures show learners' use of DMs according to the six functions considered in this study. In Narrative A (Figure 4.8), some 75 percent of learners' use of

DMs was to fill a gap. These markers are often classified as hesitation markers, and their use indicates an uncertainty on the part of the speaker about what he or she is saying (Fehringer and Fry 2007).

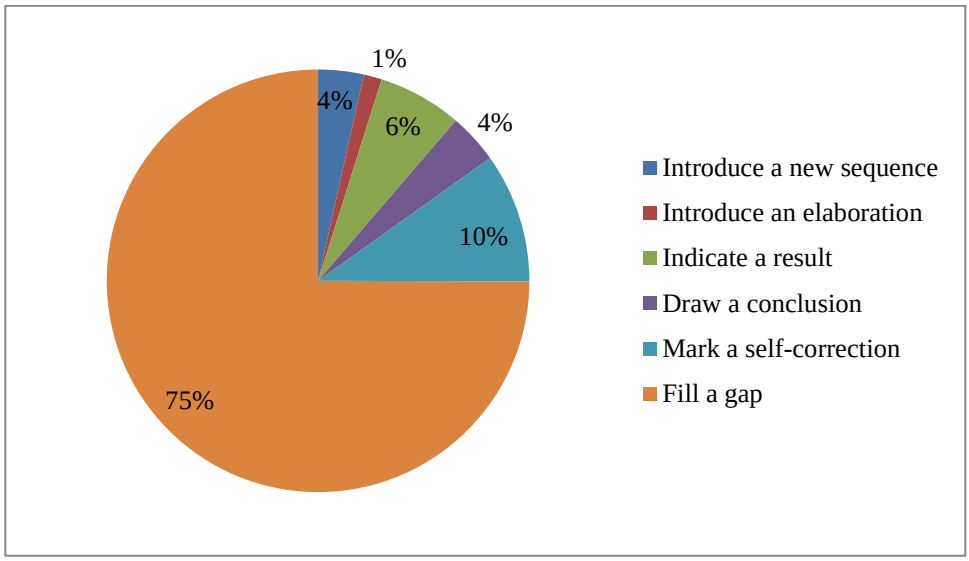

Figure 4.8 - Learner Narrative A - Distribution of Functions

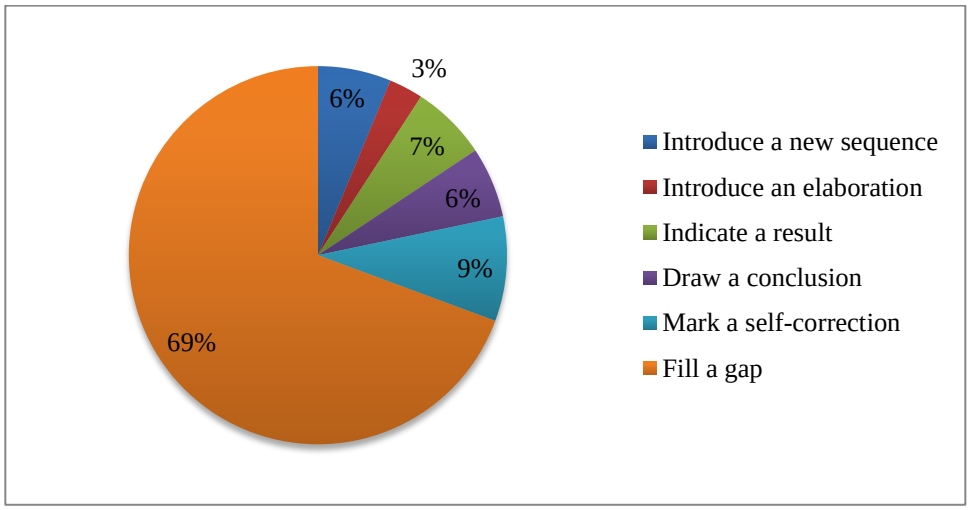

Figure 4.9 - Learner Narrative B - Distribution of Functions

In Narrative B (Figure 4.9), learners used a smaller percentage of DMs to fill a gap, and therefore had less need to fill gaps and indicate hesitation. Additionally, the distribution of use among the other five functions was more even in Narrative B than in Narrative A, approaching the native pattern of fairly even distribution across the functions.

Though as a whole, the learner narratives did not show profound change in patterns of use of DMs, the changes for all three categories above: type, phrase-position, and function, are moving in the native direction, which entails fewer non-lexical DMs, DMs used in more positions, and DMs used for more functions.

4.6 Learner Use of DMs by Function

Learners' development of their use of DMs varied greatly from Narrative A to Narrative B. The following sections show learner examples from both narratives for each function in order to demonstrate the type of development shown in the data according to the functions explored in this study.

In Examples (24a-b), Learner 4 uses *pues* in the first narrative to introduce a new sequence, which was not attested in the native data but does not necessarily reflect a non-native-like use of *pues*. In the second narrative, however, the speaker uses *bueno* for the same function, which was the most common DM used by native speakers for that function.

(24a) LN4A: **Pues**, lo que me trae a Buenos Aires y Argentina ahora empieza cuando era niña.

'**So,** what brings me to Buenos Aires and Argentina now starts when I was a little girl.'

(24b) LN4B: **Bueno**, um, el viaje más memorable para mi durante este viaje, um, era el viaje a Iguazú.

'**So**, um, the most memorable trip for me during this trip, um, was the trip to Iguazú.'

Examples (24a-b) show that the learner learned to use the preferred DM by the native speakers for introducing a new sequence, *bueno*. This function of DMs appears to be the most salient, although there was not a lot of opportunity to use this function in the short span of the narratives considered in this study because speakers did not have time to introduce many new sequences. The function introduce a new sequence was attested in all learner data, though sometimes in a non-native like way such as (24a) or completed with non-lexical DMs.

The following examples show Learner 1's use of DMs to introduce an elaboration. This function is less salient than introduce a new sequence, as it was determined subjectively by the researcher whether the DM was used to introduce an elaboration, versus fill a gap or introduce a new sequence.

(25a) LN1A: Y, um, él traba, I mean, ella, trabajó, um, con las Madres la Plaza de Mayo, un organización que yo, ehm, yo, no sé cómo se dice, uh, me adoro mucho, **um**, porque es tan incre, es increíble y ellos, y, hay, y, esta programa me dia la oportunidad para trabajar con la P... las Madres la Plaza de Mayo.

'And, um, he wo, I mean, she worked, um, with la Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, an organization that I, ehm, I, I don't know how to say it, uh, I adore it a lot, **um**, because it is so incre, it's incredible and they, and, there is, and, this program gave me the opportunity to work with the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo.'

In (25a), Learner 1 is talking about the organization she will be working with in her internship, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, and with *um* she introduces the elaboration that she is excited because the work they do is so incredible. Example (25b) shows the same learners' use of a lexical DM to complete this same function.

(25b) LN1B: Um, y nadie conocen nadie en el apartamento (Laughter) pero estaban juntos y fue un apartamento muy chiquito. **Pero, um**, esto fue muy interesante porque solo hablábamos y aprendemos mucho que, de dónde son y cua... por qué están en Buenos Aires y... um... Fue muy interesante, muy raro.

'Um, and nobody knows nobody in the apartment (Laughter) but they were together and it was a very small apartment. **But, um,** this was very interesting because we just spoke and we learned a lot that, about where they're from and whe, why they are in Buenos Aires and... um... it was very interesting, very weird.'

In (25b), the learner is talking about how one night she and her friends went to a small apartment where they did not know anyone, and with *pero, um,* she introduces the elaboration that the night was very interesting because they learned a lot about the other people present. Although native speakers did not use *pero* to introduce an elaboration in the data, they did tend to use more lexical DMs for this function, and LN1 switches from a non-lexical DM to a lexical DM for this function to in Narrative B.

Indicate a result was also a very salient function, present in most of the learner data. Examples (26a-b) show Learner 9's use of DMs for this function.

(26a) LN9A: OK, um, cuando era niña, um, yo quería ir al Cuba más que todo porque, uh, me gusta mucho la idea que hay un lugar que, um, nadie puede visitar cuando quieres, or cuando quiere pero, um, **así que** para mi fue como una obsesión.

'OK, um, when I was a little girl, um, I wanted to go to Cuba more than anything because, uh, I like a lot the idea that there is a place that, um, nobody can visit when you want, or when one wants because, um, **so** for me it was like an obsession.'

(26b) LN9B: Ella, um, nos dijo que tenemos que jugar con juguentes como un, uh, para recor, recordar nuestra juventud, um, **así que** dijo, uh, dije, OK, bueno, voy a jugar y, um, y primer, um, fue divertido.

'She, um, told us that we have to play with toys like a, um, to reme, remember our youth, um, **so** he said, uh, I said, OK, well, I am going to play and, um, and at first, it was fun.'

In both (26a) and (26b) Learner 9 uses *así que* to indicate a result, a very native-like use of the DM that was salient for this speaker both in the first and the second narrative. In (26a), the learner is explaining that she really liked the idea that she could not visit Cuba, *así que,* as a result, it was like an obsession for her. In (26b), she is telling a story about an experience at her internship, where the person in charge told them all to play with toys to remember their youth, *así que*, as a result, she decided to participate and play with toys. DMs used to indicate a result were attested in the native speaker data, as well as in both sets of the learner data, usually completed via *así que, por eso, y por eso,* and *entonces.*

Examples (27a) and (27b) show Learner 9's use of DMs to draw a conclusion. In such short narratives, speakers did not have the opportunity to draw many conclusions, but the function was attested in the data.

(27a) LN9A: no sé cómo se dice, hay un oportunidad, una oportunidad de interno y cuando, um, había oído de eso, fue como, ah, bueno, bueno, porque fui como eso porque, um, no puedo, um, esperar por oportunidad a trabajar en otro, un otra país, otro país sin, um, sin la presión del, um, un interno en, en inglés (laughter)... porque es más real **y, um, no sé**, ¿cuánto tiempo?

'I don't know how to say it, there is an opportunity, an opportunity for [an internship] and when, um, I had heard about that, it was like, ah, OK, OK, because I went like that because, um, I can't, um, wait for the opportunity to work in another, another country, another country without, um, without the pressure of, um, an [internship] in, in English (laughter)... because it's more real **and, um, I don't know**. How much time?'

In (4.4a), Learner 9 is talking about why she came to Buenos Aires, and how she was very excited about the internship, concluding that the internship in Spanish is more real (than an internship in English), marking this conclusion with *y, um, no sé*, in phrase-final position. She ends her thought thus, and then she asks the researcher how much time is

left in the narrative. Example (27b) shows the same speaker fulfilling the draw a conclusion function with a lexical DM.

(27b) LN9B: OK, así que primer, uh, (Student's Name) y yo almorzamos otra vez, um (laughter) y um, con un grupo de personas normales y simpáticos pero después, um, um, una mujer, um, no sé cómo se dice, hypnotized, hypnotized us, um, con una historia sobre un pantalla blanco y un parte verde que um, aumentaba, um, hasta una parque, **um, y pues**, es todo y fue muy extraño.

'OK, so first, uh, (Student's Name) and I had lunch again, um, (laughter) and um, with a group of normal and nice people, but afterwards, um, um, a woman, um, I don't know how to say it, hypnotized, hypnotized us, um, with a story about a blank screen and a green part that lifted up, um, to a park, **um, and, so,** that's all and it was very weird.'

In Example (27b), Learner 9 is talking about an experience she had at her internship, talking about how a woman hypnotized her and her colleagues, and with *um, y, pues* marks the conclusion that that was it, and that it was very weird. Although native speakers in the present study did not use *pues* to draw a conclusion, the learner's use of a stack with *pues* in Narrative B as opposed to a stack with *no sé* in Narrative A shows that the speaker was more sure of drawing her conclusion and marking it with a DM in the second narrative.

There are two reasons for a speaker to use a DM to mark self-correction. The first reason, shown in examples (28a-b), is for reformulation of an idea, sometimes marked with what Portolés calls *reformulation markers* such as *mejor dicho* ('better said') but mainly marked with non-lexical markers in the data of the present study. Another reason for a speaker to mark self-correction would be when the speaker mispeaks, either informationally (see example 18 in Chapter 3 from native data above), or grammatically,

which was a big necessity for learners but not so for native speakers. This is understandable considering the learners were speaking their second language and had ample opportunity to make and correct errors. Examples (28a-b) show a DM marking self-correction in the speech of Learner 10.

(28a) LN10A: Los estudiantes no pueden, um, tocar los pacientes y no, um, pueden, um, in, **uh, no sé**, para comunicar directamente con los pacientes.

'The students can't, um, touch the patients, and um, can't, um, in, **uh, I don't know**, to communicate directly with the patients.'

(28b) LN10B: Comí mucho para el desayuno (laughter) porque, um, había leído, **um,** había buscado la noche anterior qué puedes hacer para no desmayar.

'I ate a lot for breakfast (laughter) because, um, I had read, **um**, I had searched the night before what you can do to not faint.'

In (28a), Learner 10 begins to start a word beginning with *in-* but corrects herself with *uh, no sé* and changes her phrase to *para comunicar.* Similarly, in (28b), she says *había leído* but decides it would be better to say *había buscado,* and marks this correction with *um*. In the native speaker data, self correction was marked mostly with non-lexical markers, which Learner 10 does in Narrative B, as opposed to Narrative A where she amarks self-correction with *no sé,* an indication of uncertainty.

Sometimes learners corrected themselves in inaccurate ways, as in Example (29) below.

(29) LN9A: Cuando estaba, um, tratando a decidir, um, yo fui al, **oh no, no, no, yes, sí**, fue al sitio de web de Tango.

'When I was, um, trying to decide, um, I went to, **oh no, no, no, yes, yes**, she went to the Tango website.'

In Example (29), Learner 10 is talking about how she visited a website, first using the correct conjugation for the first-person singular for *to go, fui,* then after a long string of

English and Spanish DMs, she corrects herself to the third person singular *fue*, which is not appropriate in this utterance because she is talking about herself. This happened several times in the learner data, but the tokens were still counted in the learner data because they represented learners' attempts to mark self-correction with a DM.

The learners' use of DMs to fill a gap was often in order to mark hesitation on the part of the speaker, which is common in second language speech as the cognitive load for work in L2 is heavier (Fehringer and Fry 2007:37). Examples (30a-b) show Learner 4's use of DMs to fill a gap.

(30a) LN4A: Cuando llegué a la Universidad de Georgia, **um**, s, sabía que, **um**, quería, **um**, ir a un país que habla español.

'When I arrived to the University of Georgia, **um**, I knew that, **um**, I wanted, **um**, to go to a country that speaks Spanish.

(30b) LN4B: Y aprendí sobre, **eh**, las, los otras personas.

'And I learned about, **eh**, the, the other people.'

Not only does Learner 4 use fewer DMs to fill a gap in example (30b) from Narrative B than in example (30a) from Narrative A, but also the speaker switches from the English *um* to the Spanish *eh*, demonstrating her recognition that Spanish speakers say *ehm* and *eh* rather than *um* and *uh.* Overall, learners demonstrated less need for DMs to fill a gap in the second set of narratives, which shows their lessened hesitation and therefore gains in proficiency in L2.

4.7 Individual Learners

The following sections will explore data from two learners. The first, in Section 4.7.1, demonstrates more noticeable progress according to the categories mentioned above. In Section 4.7.2, data from a learner who did not show development from

Narrative A to Narrative B is explored. Data for the other eight learners falls between these two extremes.

4.7.1 Learner 3

Learner 3 is a female student at the University of Georgia. During the UGA en Buenos Aires study abroad program, she completed an internship at a health food clinic. From Narrative A to Narrative B, the learner demonstrates a more native-like use of DMs, lessening her use of non-lexical DMs, more evenly distributing her phrase-initial and phrase-medial DMs, lessening her use of DMs to fill a gap, and using a wider variety of functions in general.

Figures 4.10 and 4.11 show Learner 3's use of lexical versus non-lexical DMs in Narrative A and B, respectively.

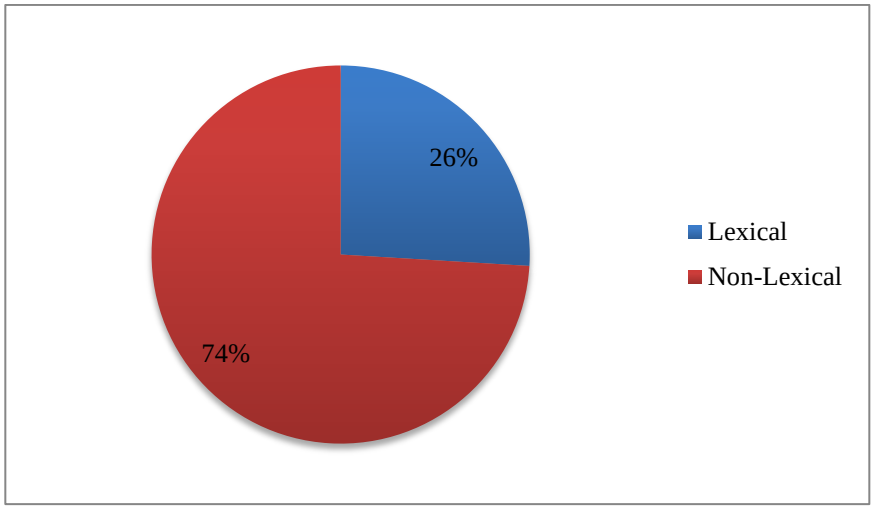

Figure 4.10 Learner 3 Narrative A - Type of DM

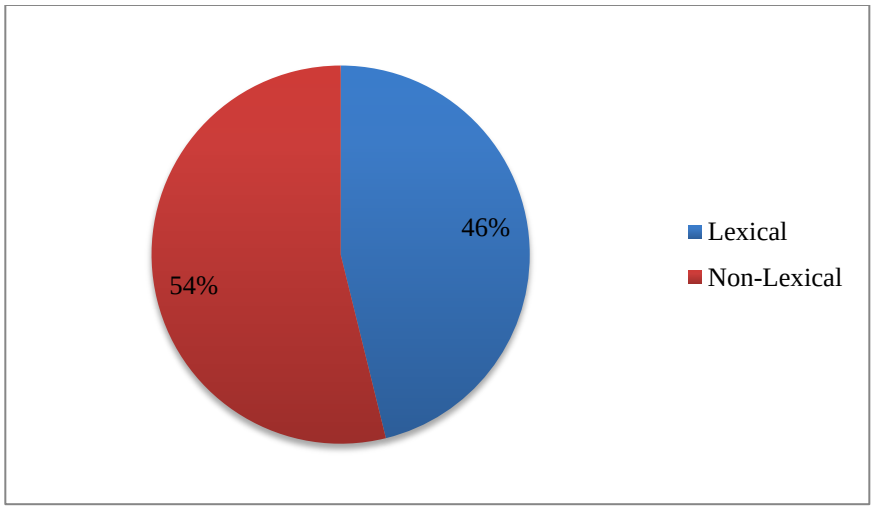

Figure 4.11 Learner 3 Narrative B - Type of DM

As shown, approximately 20 percent of DM use shifts for Learner 3 in Narrative B from non-lexical to lexical. The more even distribution of lexical versus non-lexical DMs approaches native use (fewer non-lexical DMs) in the second narrative.

The following figures show Learner 3's use of DMs according to phrase position: initial, medial, or final. In Narrative A, Learner 3 used DMs in all three positions, but 83 percent of her DMs were in phrase-medial position.

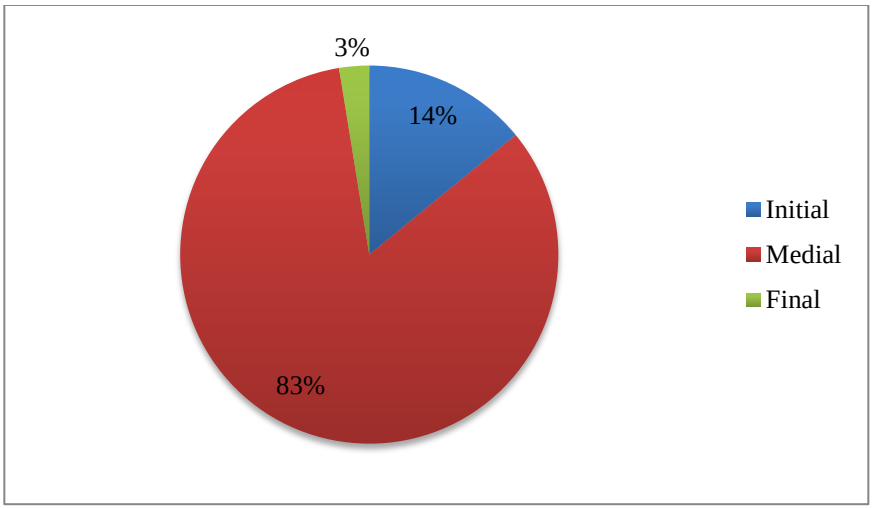

Figure 4.12 Learner 3 Narrative A - Phrase Position

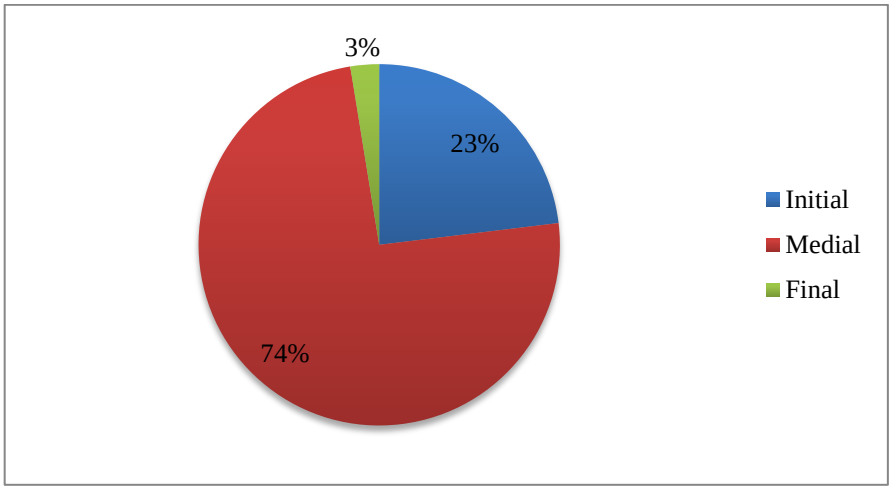

Figure 4.13 Learner 3 Narrative B - Phrase Position

In Narrative B, Learner 3 used DMs in a wider variety of positions, decreasing her use of DMs in medial position from 83 percent in Narrative A to 74 percent in Narrative B. In Narrative B, Learner 3 shows a greater ability to use DMs in positions other than medial, which approximates the native use of DMs with a more even distribution of DMs in phrase-initial and phrase-medial position.

Figures 4.14 and 4.15 show Learner 3's use of DMs according to function in Narratives A and B, respectively. Figure 4.14 shows that in Narrative B Learner 3 used DMs at a rate of 75 percent solely for the purpose of filling a gap). Her second most-used function in Narrative A was to mark self-correction), with the rest of the functions accounting for small percentages (1 to 5 percent) of her use of DMs.

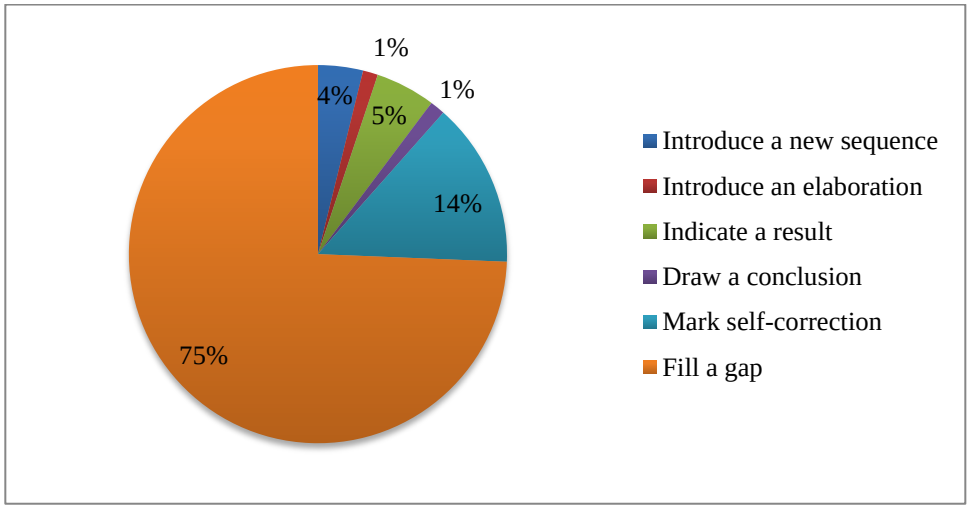

Figure 4.14 Learner 3 Narrative A - Distribution of Functions

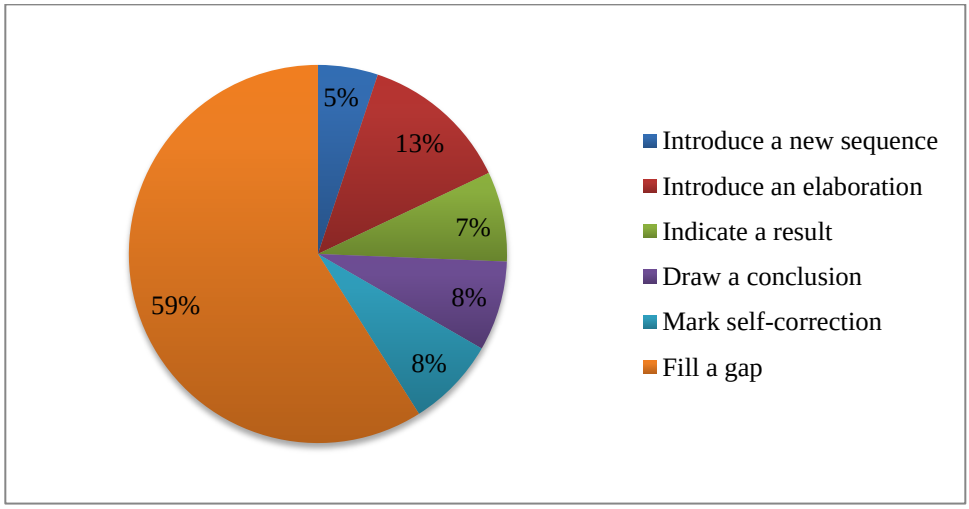

Figure 4.15 Learner 3 Narrative B - Distribution of Functions

Figure 4.15 shows that Learner 3 diversified her use of DMs according to function in Narrative B. Her use of DMs to fill a gap dropped from 75 percent in Narrative A to only 59 percent in Narrative B. For the other functions, Learner 3 shows a more even distribution of use, ranging from 5 percent to introduce a new sequence to 13 percent to introduce an elaboration. She also used DMs to mark self-correction less in Narrative B, a more native-like use of DMs in her L2 in the second narrative. This more even distribution approximates native speaker use of DMs, which show a rather even distribution across all six functions.

The data from Learner 3 demonstrates that in only five short weeks, she learned to use fewer non-lexical DMs and needed fewer DMs to fill gaps, and she learned more ways to use DMs to complete a wider variety of functions. The progress shown by Learner 3 is exemplary of the type of progression hoped for in this study. About half of the learners showed similar development from Narrative A to Narrative B.

Example (31) is from Learner 3 Narrative A. The learner uses a stack with *y, uh, pues* (shown in bold) to draw a conclusion.

(31) Sabía por muchos años que quería ir en una, en una, um, pro, en una programa de, uh, estudiar, uh, afuera, uh, afuera de mi país, en un país hispanohablante. **Y, uh, pues**, casi como un año, um, uh, eh, en mi primero año del universidad, casi, más o menos, um, empecé a buscar por una, or buscar una, un programa que me gusta.

'I knew for many years that I wanted to go on a, on a, um, pro, on a program of, uh, study, uh, outside, uh, outside of my country, in a Spanish-speaking country. **And, uh, so**, almost a year, um, uh, eh, in my first year at the university, almost, more or less, um, I began to look for a, or look for a, a progam that I like.'

Native speakers did not use *y* or *pues* to draw conclusions in the present study, but example (31) is not necessarily a non-native-like use of *pues.* The speaker is talking about how she has known for years that she wanted to study abroad in a Spanish-speaking country, and she draws the conclusion that she thus began to look for a study abroad program in her first year at the university.

In example (32), Learner 3 uses *entonces* to complete the function, both in medial and final position (shown in bold). Not only did native speakers use *entonces* to draw conclusions, but also *entonces* was the most common DM in the native data for this function.

(32) Era una experiencia muy linda para hacer esto en el campo tan bonito y, um, para estar libre, para correr en caballo y todo de esto era muy, muy hermoso y también la comida allá era muy rico, y um, había muchísimo carne pero era muy, muy deliciosa, y, uh, el tiempo era perfecto también y, uh, **entonces** era un día muy lindo, un día muy relejando, para, para yo, pienso que para muchos de nosotros, uh, en la mitad de todo, del las actividades, y las clases, y la tarea y todo, todo, todo del programa. **Entonces...**

'It was a very nice experience to do all of this in the countryside that was so pretty and, um, to be free, to run on horseback and all of this was very, very beautiful, and also the food there was very delicious and, um, there was a lot of meat but it was very, very delicious and, uh, the weather was perfect to, and, uh, **so** it was a very pretty day, a very relaxing day, for, for me, I think for many of us, um, in the half of all, of the activities, and the clases, and the homework, and everything, everything, everything in the program. **So**…

Here Learner 3 is talking about her most memorable experience from the study abroad trip, the day at the ranch. She explains how everything about the day was wonderful, and, much like a native speaker, uses *entonces* to mark the conclusion that the day was very special for all participants.

The following table shows which DMs Learner 3 used to complete which functions in each narrative.

Table 4.14 Learner 3 Use of DMs by Functions

Function	Narrative A	Narrative B
Introduce a new sequence	um, y, pues, [uh]	bueno, entonces, [um]
Introduce an elaboration	y, [um]	um, y, y pues, entonces, y um, [uh]
Indicate a result	um, y por eso, y, [mm]	y entonces, entonces, [mm], [uh]
Draw a conclusion	y, pues, [uh]	entonces, y, [uh], [um]
Mark self-correction	uh, um , o, or, eh, pues, O no sé, no	pues, uh, [um]
Fill a gap	uh, um, y, pues, pero, eh, oh, mm	um, uh, y, y entonces, mm

Table 4.14 shows that Learner 3 used DMs in a more native-like way in Narrative B, using the most-used DMs in the native data for each function: *bueno/entonces* to introduce a new sequence, *entonces* to introduce an elaboration, *entonces* to indicate a result, and *entonces* to draw a conclusion. Native speakers used non-lexical DMs to mark self-correction and fill gaps more often than not, and in the second narrative Learner 3 does the same.

Table 4.15 shows Learner 3's use of DMs by frequency. Notably, Learner 3 used fewer different DMs in Narrative B than in Narrative A, notably using fewer English DMs and fewer non-lexical DMs in Narrative B. This pattern was repeated in most learner data.

Table 4.15 Learner 3 Use of DMs in Narratives A and B by Frequency

Narrative A		Narrative B	
um	38	um/y um	18
uh	36	uh	15
y	9	entonces/y entonces	9
pues	6	y	7
o	3	pues/y pues	3
y por eso	2	mm	2
mm	2	bueno	1
or	2		
pero	2		
eh	1		
oh	1		
O no sé	1		
no	1		
Total	104	Total	55

Learner 3 also used English *or* in Narrative A but no English in Narrative B. In the second narrative she shows a lack of need for English DMs, as she learned to use Spanish DMs for the functions she needed.

4.7.2 Learner 6

Learner 6 is a male undergraduate student at the University of Georgia. During the UGA en Buenos Aires study abroad program, he completed an internship at a hospital in Buenos Aires. Learner 6's use of DMs moved away from native-like use from Narrative A to Narrative B. Figures 4.16 and 4.17 show Learner 6's use of DMs according to type.

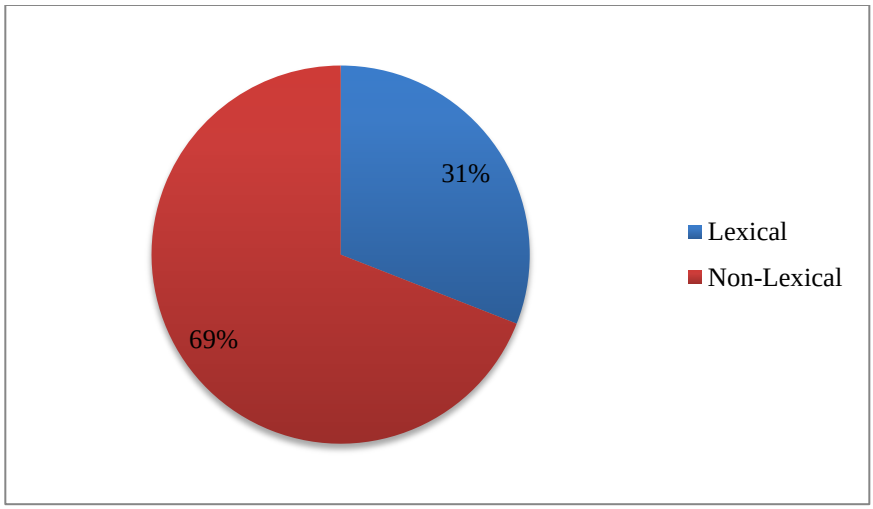

Figure 4.16 Learner 6 Narrative A - Type of DM

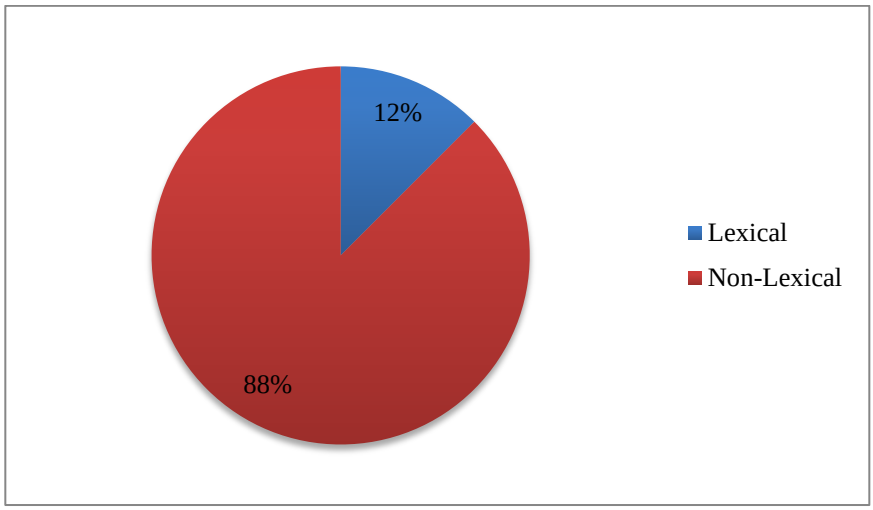

Figure 4.17 Learner 6 Narrative B - Type of DM

In Narrative A, Learner 6 used 69 percent non-lexical out of total DMs, and as Figure 4.17 shows, in Narrative B, this percentage increased to 88 percent of DMs being non-lexical, moving away from native-like use.

The following figures show Learner 6's use of DMs by phrase position. In Narrative A, shown in Figure 4.18, some 88 percent of the DMs used by Learner 6 were in phrase-medial position.

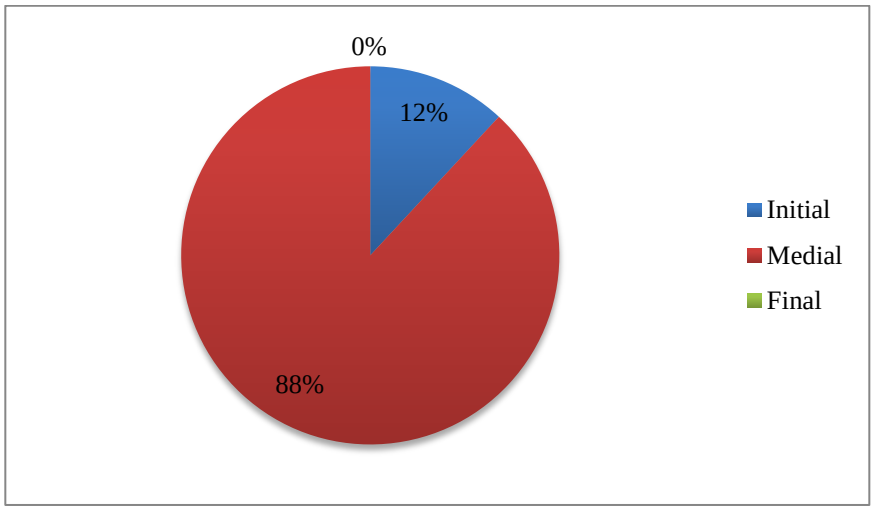

Figure 4.18 Learner 6 Narrative A - Phrase Position

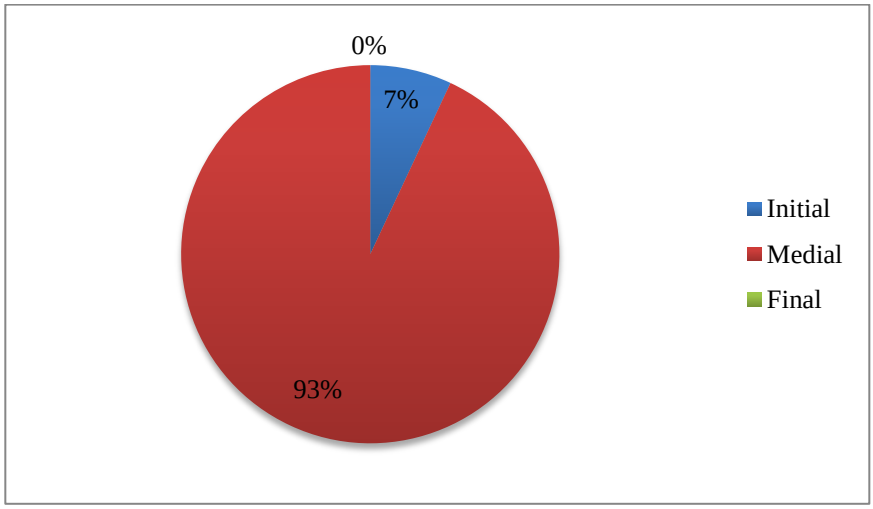

Figure 4.19 Learner 6 Narrative B - Phrase Position

In Narrative B, shown in Figure 4.19, Learner 6 used even more DMs in phrase-medial position, some 93 percent, and used DMs in other positions even less than in Narrative A.

Learner 6 did not use DMs in phrase-final position, although this position is a possibility in the target language community.

With regards to the functions explored in this study, Figure 4.20 shows that Learner 6 used 74 percent of DMs to fill in a gap in Narrative A. Learner 6 did not use DMs to introduce an elaboration in either narrative.

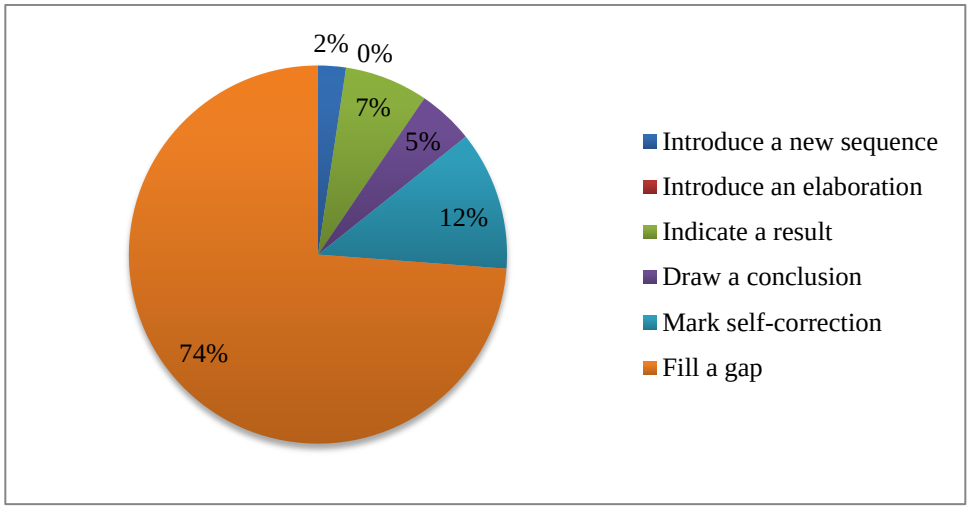

Figure 4.20 Learner 6 Narrative A - Distribution of Functions

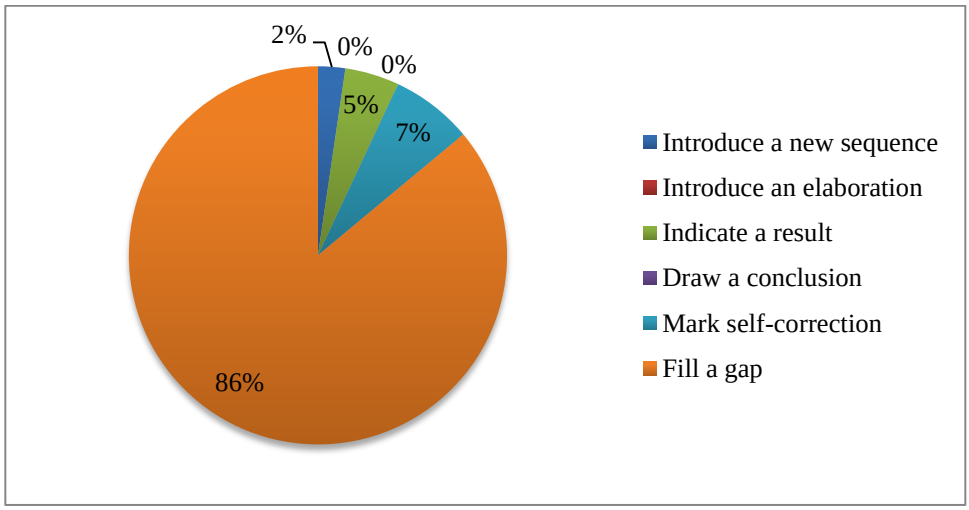

Figure 4.21 Learner 6 Narrative B - Distribution of Functions

Figure 4.21 shows that Learner 6 used even more DMs in Narrative B than in Narrative A to fill a gap. His greater necessity for gap-filling and marking hesitation shows that the speaker did not move toward the native speaker norm in his use of DMs from Narrative A to Narrative B. In Narrative B, Learner 6 used DMs for even fewer functions that in Narrative A, not utilizing DMs to introduce an elaboration, like in Narrative A. He did not use DMs to draw a conclusion in Narrative B, although he did use DMs for that function in Narrative A.

Example (33) shows Learner 6's use of *y por eso* to indicate a result, which is a native-like use of the DM.

(33) Quise aprender un otro lenguaje, lengua, perdón, um, para, uh, para aprender más en la lengua **y por eso**, uh, ehm, empecé a buscar por una, uh, extran, or un extranjero en otro país, uh, y, uh ese, uh, la Universidad de Georgia en Buenos Aires.

'I wanted to learn another speech, language, sorry, um, to, uh, to learn more in the language **and so**, uh, ehm, I began to look for a, uh, for-, or, foreign [study abroad] in another country, uh, and, uh that, uh, the University of Georgia in Buenos Aires.

In example (33), Learner 6 is saying that as a result of his wanting to learn another language, he began to look for a study abroad program in another country.

Example (34) shows Learner 6 using *y por eso* to indicate a result again in Narrative B.

(34) Conocimos un, un miembro de la policía la tarde, uh, a la Boca, um, de Buenos Aires, y, uh, uh nos dijo que había una fiesta al un, uh, boliche, uh, ese noche y, um, debemos venir **y por eso**, eso noche fuimos al boliche.

'We met a, a member of the pólice [that] afternoon, uh, in la Boca, um, in Buenos Aires, and, uh, uh he told us that there was a party at the, uh, boliche, uh, that night and, um, we must come **and so**, that night we went to the boliche.'

Learner 6 says that he and his friend met a police officer who told him there was a party at a *boliche*[4] and as a result, he and his friend went to the *boliche* that night. In example (34) from Narrative B, Learner 6 uses the same DM to complete the same function he uses it for in Narrative A. Learner 6 appears to have acquired this function of *y por eso* prior to the study abroad program, and it is not surprising that he used it in both Narratives A and B.

Table 4.16 shows Learner 6's use of DMs according to function. In Narrative A, Learner 6 did not use DMs to introduce an elaboration. Learner 6 also shows a wider variety of DM use in Narrative A.

Table 4.16 Learner 6 Use of DMs by Functions

Function	Narrative A	Narrative B
Introduce a new sequence	bueno, [uh]	bueno, [uh]
Introduce an elaboration	N/A	N/A
Indicate a result	y por eso, por eso, entonces, y, [uh], [um],[ehm]	y por eso
Draw a conclusion	entonces, y, bueno, [um]	N/A
Mark self-correction	um, uh, perdón, or, y	uh, or
Fill a gap	uh, um, y, eh, OK	uh, um, eh, y uh

In Narrative B, Learner 6 uses fewer distinct DMs and to complete less functions, completely leaving out the introduce an elaboration and draw a conclusion functions in his second narrative.

[4] Argentine word for "club"

Table 4.17 shows Learner 6's use of DMs in both narratives by frequency. Like Learner 3 and many others, Learner 6 used less of a variety of DMs in Narrative B.

Table 4.17 Learner 6 Use of DMs in Narratives A and B by Frequency

Narrative A		Narrative B	
uh	31	uh/y uh	24
um	11	um	17
y	8	y por eso	2
bueno	2	or	2
y por eso/por eso	2	eh	2
entonces	2	bueno	1
ehm	1		
perdón	1		
or	1		
eh	1		
OK	1		
Total	61	Total	48

As Table 4.17 shows, however, Learner 6 used fewer lexical DMs in Narrative B, only including *y por eso* and *bueno* in Spanish, and *or* in English.

Learner 6 is a more extreme case. Lack of progress was fairly common, shown in approximately half of the learner data, but this speaker shows not only a lack of progress, but also movement away from native-like use of DMs. It is possible that the content of Learner 6's Narrative B affected his use of DMs, as the learner was perceivably more affected by Narrative B than Narrative A. The same is true for most of the second learner narratives, which is understandable considering they were asked about their most memorable experience of the study abroad trip in the second narrative.

4.8 Comparing Learners' and Native Argentines' Oral Narratives

Table 4.18 shows that learners used a wider variety of DMs in both Narratives A and B than did native speakers. However, far more data from learners were analyzed than from native speakers. Nevertheless, the word count percentages mentioned above show that learners overused DMs when compared to native speakers.

Table 4.18 Learner and Native Use of DMs According to Frequency

Narrative A		Narrative B		Native Argentines	
DM	N	DM	N	DM	N
um/y um	323	um/y um	259	entonces	32
uh/y uh	195	uh/y uh	93	eh	27
y	56	y	49	ehm	18
entonces/y entonces	25	entonces/y entonces	33	bueno/y bueno	12
or	18	pero	15	así que	5
pero	16	bueno/y bueno	14	no	3
bueno	12	así[5]	13	sí	1
por eso/y por eso	12	eh	12	pues	1
así/y así	12	*or*	11	por lo que	1
pues	11	no sé	8	por eso	1
no sé/y no sé	9	por eso/y por eso	6	perdón	1
o	7	ehm	6	no sé	1
oh	7	así que	5		

[5] All tokens of *así* except for one came from the same speaker. This learner appears to confuse *así* by itself with the DM *así que,* such as in this example from her data:

> *(Student's name) y yo fui a mi apartamento para, um, traer algunas cosas a la previa.* ***Así*** *teníamos que to, traer algo para beber, um, a, para que no, um, parecieramos como, like, extranjeros que no queríamos traer algo.* ***Así*** *cuando llegamos a la apartmento de la previa, um, no, uh, conocimos el ape, apellido del hombre que estaba, um, dando la fiesta.* ***Así****, um, el, oh gosh, portero, um, nos dijo, "Oh, es en la, um, nivel once."* ***Así*** *fuimos al once.*
>
> '(Student's name) and I went to my apartment for, um, to bring some things to the pregame. **So** we had to ta, to bring something to drink, um, a, to not, um, to not appear like, like foreigners who don't want to bring something. **So** when we arrived to the apartment where the pregame was, um, we didn't, uh, know the la, last name of the man that was, um, throwing the party. **So**, um, the, oh gosh, doorman, um, told us, "Oh, it's in the, um, 11th level." **So** we went to the eleventh floor.

OK	7	sí	5		
sí	7	pues/y pues	5		
así que	6	*OK*	4		
ehm	5	mm	3		
mm	4	o	3		
eh	3	y después	2		
no	2	*so*	2		
so	2	*anyhow*	2		
y es	2	*oh*	1		
anyway	1	*yeah*	1		
hm	1	ah	1		
I mean	1	*oh gosh*	1		
whatever	1	*well*	1		
perdón	1	*you know*	1		
no wait	1				
yes	1				
Total	748		556		102

As Table 4.18 shows, in Narrative A, learners used 38 English DMs for some .85 percent of word count, while in Narrative B learners used only 24 English DMs at .559 percent of word count. Learners appear to rely on English less in Narrative B than in Narrative A, thus showing progress in L2 proficiency. With regard to variety, Learner 4 and Learner 8 used an equal variety of DMs in both narratives, Learners 7 and 10 used more DMs in Narrative B, and the rest of the learners used fewer DMs in Narrative B than they did in Narrative A. The overuse of DMs by learners thus diminishes slightly after five weeks of study abroad.

The following table shows the most-used DMs for each function for each narrative group.

Table 4.19 Most Used DMs by Function for Learners and Native speakers

Function	Native Argentines	Learner Narrative A	Learner Narrative B
Introduce a new sequence	bueno/entonces	um	bueno
Introduce an elaboration	entonces	um	um
Indicate a result	entonces	entonces	entonces
Draw a conclusion	entonces	entonces	entonces
Mark self-correction	ehm	or	uh
Fill a gap	eh	um	um

Table 4.19 shows that as a group, the learners progressed between Narrative A and B with regards to which DM they used most often to introduce a new sequence and mark self-correction. To introduce a new sequence, learners used *bueno* most in Narrative B, which is the DM native speakers used most often for this function. To mark self-correction, in Narrative A learners used the English DM *or* most often to mark a correction, but in Narrative B they used *uh* more often, which is a non-lexical DM similar to *ehm*, used most often by native speakers for this function.

Overall learners appear to have progressed in their use of DMs to a more native-like use in Narrative B than in Narrative A. Although the progress is minuscule when the groups are considered as a whole, examining individual learner data shows that some learners made great gains in the short six-week study abroad period, using fewer non-lexical DMs for a wider variety of functions and in a wider variety of phrase positions, and using DMs in more native-like ways to complete the functions considered in this study (e.g. the switch to *bueno* for introducing a new sequence in second learner narratives).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Student participants did use both lexical and non-lexical DMs in their first narrative, which shows that at the intermediate level, Spanish learners recognize the need for DMs in their second language discourse and have begun to use these DMs for discursive functions. In Chapter 3, it was hypothesized that the L2 learners in this study would use more non-lexical DMs in their first narrative than in the second narrative. This study shows that the first hypothesis was satisfied, as overall learners used fewer non-lexical DMs in the second narrative than in the first, both in number and as a percentage of word count.

The second hypothesis was that the L2 learners would use Spanish DMs for fewer functions than the native Spanish speakers. This hypothesis is true, as native speakers used DMs in a rather even distribution across the functions considered in this study and learners used DMs to fill gaps far more than any other function. While learners used DMs to fill a gap at a rate of 75 percent of total DMs in Narrative A and 69 percent of total DMs in Narrative B, native speakers only used DMs for this function at a rate of 34 percent. Though the other five functions considered in this study were present in learner data, they represent a small minority compared to the gap-filling function.

It was expected that the intermediate study abroad participants in this study would use more Spanish lexical DMs in their second narrative at week five of study abroad than in the first narrative at week one. This hypothesis proved untrue, as learners decreased

their use of both lexical and non-lexical DMs in Narrative B. However, the fall in the percentage of lexical DMs in the learner narratives was not drastic, from a mean of 4.865 percent of word count in Narrative A to a mean of 4.117 percent of word count in Narrative B. Native speakers did show a slight preference for lexical DMs in the data of the present study, but they used them at a lower rate than learners did in both narratives. Because learners already overused DMs, a rise in the use of lexical DMs between the two narratives would have been unnatural and non-native like, as learners should have been learning to use lexical DMs less (to approach the native mean of 2.36 percent of word count).

Finally, it was hypothesized that the L2 learner participants in this study would use DMs for a wider variety of functions in the second narrative than in the first. Though slight, learners used DMs to fulfill more functions in Narrative B than in Narrative A as a whole. In Narrative A, 75 percent of learner use of DMs was to fill a gap, with four percent to introduce a new sequence, one percent to introduce an elaboration, six percent to indicate a result, four percent to draw a conclusion, and 10 percent to mark self-correction. In Narrative B, learners used DMs at a rate of 69 percent to fill gaps, six percent to introduce a new sequence, three percent to introduce an elaboration, seven percent to indicate a result, six percent to draw a conclusion, and nine percent to mark self-correction, showing a slightly more even distribution of the functions considered in this study fulfilled by DMs.

Taking the learner narratives as two groups, Narrative A and Narrative B, the progress in use of DMs toward native-like use is minuscule, but in the appropriate

direction. In general, learners used fewer non-lexical DMs, DMs in more phrase positions, and DMs for a wider variety of functions in Narrative B.

5.2 Significance of Findings

DMs are important tools for speakers to use to create cohesion in discourse. As Hellermann and Vergun (2007:160) state, when second language learners do not use DMs, or they use them in non-target-like ways, they may be marked as separate from the target language community. Casteele and Collewaert note that discourse that lacks DMs may be interpreted by a hearer as boring, awkward, or impolite (2013:551). To become proficient in a second language, learners must seek discourse competence (Lee and VanPatten 2003:16), which involves the proper use of DMs.

Several studies (Müller 2005, Fraser 1999, Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995) found that in English, *so* is often the most used DM in oral discourse. Example (35) shows a learners' use of *so* in her oral narrative, demonstrating that this DM and its functions are present and online in the learners' speech.

(35) LN9A: anyway, uh, so cuando, um, estaba en, uh, la Universidad y sabía que tiene, tengo, ooh, tenía ir a un otro lugar, um, para mi especialidad de español pensé ¡oh, Cuba!

In (35) the speaker is searching for the L2 resources she needs to complete her discoursive function, and she fills the consequent gaps in the discourse with DMs, including with English *so.* Because of the prevalence of *so* in the native language of the participants, one may assume that native English speakers will search for ways to complete these same functions in their L2. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider the functions of *so* in L1 English in analyzing the use of DMs in L2 Spanish learners' oral narratives.

Trillo (2002) and Polat (2011) note that second language learners rarely acquire native-like use of pragmatic material because classroom learning is decontextualized in nature. In previous studies, exposure to the target language community alone appears to improve learners' use of pragmatic material, and DMs are considered a viable target structure in second language pragmatics (Rose 2005). Polat (2011) postulates that the most feasible manner for L2 learners to acquire correct use of DMs is through contact with native speakers, which is echoed in Müller (2005), Hellermann and Vergun (2007), Andersen et al. (1999), Casteele and Collewaert (2013), and Trillo (2002).

In the present study, the only treatment to the learners between Narrative A and Narrative B was exposure to the target language community, since learners did not take Spanish language courses during the study abroad program. In research on the effects of study abroad on language learning, Segalowitz et al. (2004) found an increase in learners' oral proficiency and fluency, quantified by a longer mean length of utterance without fillers in data from learners who studied abroad. Similarly, in this study learners used fewer DMs for gap-filling and hesitation after only five short weeks of study abroad. A decrease in the use of non-lexical DMs and DMs to fill gaps shows progress in the L2 learners' capabilities of using DMs in more meaningful and native-like ways. Unlike previous studies, non-lexical DMs enter the present analysis and contribute telling information about the learners' oral proficiency.

Importantly, learners would not have received explicit instruction on DM use in the classroom in Buenos Aires because the courses offered were special topics such as film and human rights, and no courses of Spanish language instruction were offered. This means that any change in patterns of speech would be from learners' noticing of

Argentine patterns of speech and their attempts to assimilate as a fellow Spanish speaker by mimicking what they hear.

5.3 Hesitation Markers and the Gap-filling Function

The decision to include the gap-filling function, which is a function of English *so*, and non-lexical DMs such as *um* and *uh* in the analysis greatly affected the present study. The original targets of the research were translations of *so*, with lexical DMs in focus. However, the data involving non-lexical DMs and the gap-filling function were noteworthy, as learners noticeably used fewer non-lexical DMs and fewer DMs to fill gaps in the discourse in their second oral narratives, and native speakers used considerably fewer DMs in these roles than learners.

In a study on hesitation phenomena in bilingual speakers, Fehringer and Fry (2007) note that hesitation patterns differ between L1 and L2 and that "time buyers" are crucial in L2 (2007:38). The study involved corpus data from twenty highly-proficient, designated bilingual, learners of L1 German L2 English and L1 English L2 German. As in the aforementioned studies, the authors note that learners rarely reach native-like proficiency in discourse competence, and that the structure of L2 hesitation phenomena mirrors that of the speaker's L1. To assess the differences in hesitation phenomena in L1 and L2, the study uses the concept of working memory to measure filled pauses, such as the non-lexical DMs considered in the present study, namely as *um* and *uh*; mazes, involving series of repetitions or corrections such as in Example (36) below (Fehringer and Fry, 2007:42):

(36) I guess it- it must be a -, you know, a crucial er a- a crucial factor;

and automatisms, which are formulaic phrases that are generally "semantically vacuous" such as *you know* (Fehringer and Fry, 2007:41). The authors discuss the fact that hesitation phenomena are tools that buy a speaker time to process and formulate his speech, but at the same time their excessive use can cause a strain on the listener, and a speaker must avoid these devices in order to be well received by his or her listener (2007:43). Fehringer and Fry found that learners rely on hesitation devices such as the non-lexical DMs considered in the present study more than native speakers. The authors note that the task of production is always different in L1 than in L2, and found a quantitative difference (higher) in use of hesitation markers in L2 than in L1, attributing this to the heavier cognitive load of L2 (Fehringer and Fry 2007:58).

In the present study, native speakers used fewer non-lexical DMs and fewer DMs to fill gaps in the discourse than did the learners. Additionally, in the second narrative, most learners used fewer non-lexical DMs and used DMs less often to fill a gap than in the first narrative. As narrative groups, the percentage of word count of non-lexical DMs for learners dropped from approximately 12 percent in Narrative A to approximately 9 percent in Narrative B, which leads to the inference that learners either learned other ways to buy time (such as using lexical DMs to fill gaps) or did not need hesitation markers as much in Narrative B, presumably because they felt more competent and the cognitive load was smaller after five weeks of immersion into the target language community.

5.4 Future Research

Several drawbacks to the present study should be explained. First, the classification of DMs by phrase position and function was decided in a subjective manner

by the researcher. Phrase position was particularly hard to pinpoint but was calculated via notable pauses and transitions in the narratives. In a future study, more researchers could assess the data to establish a less biased analysis. Secondly, only three native Argentine narratives were collected to serve as a comparison with learner data. More native narratives could help strengthen the present description of native use of DMs. Importantly, all native speakers considered in this study were older than the learner participants in this study, and all have jobs that require effective communication strategies (instructors and a radio host). The comparisons between learner data and native data in the present study are questionable, as the speech of the native speakers would presumably be distinct from the learners' speech due to sociolinguistic factors such as age and occupation. Additionally, the analysis did not take into account extra linguistic information such as gestures and intonation, and it is possible that the learners were reacting to facial expressions or other environmental factors in their narratives that could not be accounted for with an audio recording. Information on learners' integration into the target language community was not collected but would have contributed weight to the present analysis, as previous studies found that increased acculturation corresponds to increased use of DMs for pragmatic functions. Furthermore, no independent measure was taken of the learners' L2 proficiency prior to the study abroad program since all participants were required to have intermediate level Spanish. It is possible that the speakers' L2 Spanish proficiency upon entering the program affected their use of DMs in distinct ways. Finally, comparing learner data from traditional foreign language classrooms with data from study abroad participants would help support the conclusion that study abroad does indeed improve L2 learners' discourse competence and

proficiency with regards to DMs. The study abroad period in the present study was short, at less than six weeks, and analysis of narratives from student participants in study abroad programs with longer duration would produce more telling results.

Learners and native speakers used a variety of Spanish DMs to complete the discursive task of English *so* in the present study. The most prevalent and feasible translations for *so* into Spanish via the functions explored here include *entonces, bueno, así que,* and *pues,* as well as non-lexical DMs *eh* or *ehm* in Spanish.

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