

LANGUAGE AND DIALECTAL VARIATION IN REQUEST STRUCTURES:
AN ANALYSIS OF COSTA RICAN SPANISH AND SOUTHERN AMERICAN
ENGLISH

by

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(Under the Direction of Sarah E. Blackwell)

ABSTRACT

Request structures vary considerably between languages and among the dialects of a language in both their level of directness and the ways in which they are mitigated. Variation in requests is realized through differing uses of lexical and syntactic mitigators, as well as through a range of request strategies that vary in their level of directness. The present study describes and compares variation found in the requests of Spanish speakers from Costa Rica and English speakers from the Southern United States through analysis of requests elicited using a discourse completion test (DCT). Tendencies for conventional politeness through the use of indirect request strategies were found across languages.

INDEX WORDS: Requests, Mitigation, Spanish Requests, English Requests,
discourse completion test

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A.B., The University of Georgia, 2011

B.S.Ed, The University of Georgia 2011

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER

OF

ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2015

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May 2015

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Problem to be studied

This study examines the production of requests by native speakers of Spanish in comparison with native speakers of English. Through the comparison, this study will describe and compare the forms that requests take in terms of the level of directness and the way in which requests are mitigated between the Costa Rican dialect of Spanish and the Southern American dialect of English

1.2 Justification

Requests vary greatly between languages in both the structure that they take and the pragmatic meanings that they express. As a speech act, requests, and speech acts in general, have been studied extensively; however, few studies exist analyzing Costa Rican speech acts, especially in relation to the mitigation of requests. Currently studies have been completed analyzing verbal courtesy through the use of the *voseo* and *ustedeo* pronoun forms (Murillo Medrano, 2010; Moser, 2008), pragmatic variation between the Mexican and Costa Rican dialects of Spanish in the requests produced by females (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010), the level of directness of the request head of Costa Rican requests in comparison with those of Dominican and Mexican requests (Félix-Brasdefer, 2009), and a popular linguistics perspective of the Costa Rican dialect (Murillo, 2008).

Much attention has been paid to dialectal markers of southern American English in regard to phonetics and phonology (Phillips, 1994; Underwood, 1982) and syntax (Trüb, 2006; Webelhuth and Dannenburg, 2006); however, the pragmatics of Southern American English lack extensive research. In the study of Southern English pragmatics,

the majority of the focus has been given to the use of multiple modals such as *might* *could* (Mishoe and Montgomery, 1994) and African American English in the south (Billings, 2005; Wolfram, 2003; Mallinson and Wolfram, 2002).

While the study of requests has been given attention in both Spanish and English, Félix-Brasdefer (2008) states that “little systematic attention has been given to (socio)pragmatic intra-lingual variation during the negotiation of speech acts in diverse varieties of one language.” Further study of requests across dialects of both Spanish and English are needed. This study seeks to provide a more in depth analysis of requests in Costa Rican Spanish and Southern American English to account for differences in request production cross-linguistically.

The need to understand differences in languages and cultures is ever more present given the changes that have occurred in the population of the United States over the last decade. According to the most recent census, the Latino population in the United States grew by 15.2 million between the year 2000 and 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This growth represents an increase in interaction by native speakers of Spanish and native speakers of English. Differences in the ways in which speakers of each language form requests can lead to misunderstandings between individuals. Increased understanding of these differences may lead to ways in which misunderstandings can be diminished. Increased metalinguistic awareness, through the teaching of request structures in Spanish and English, can help learners understand and respond appropriately to linguistic and cultural differences that may exist between speakers.

The importance of speech acts and request structures has also been seen in the field of second language acquisition and the teaching of pragmatics in the classroom.

Recently, increased attention has been paid to processing differences between L1 and L2 speakers in relation to pragmatics (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008; Márquez Reiter, 1997; Takahashi & Roitblat, 1994). The present study will build a foundation that can then be applied to extend the research and teaching of pragmatics in the classroom setting.

1.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Mitigation, as described by Caffi (1999), “smooth[s] interactional management in that it reduces risks for participants at various levels, e.g. risks of self-contradiction, refusal, losing face, conflict, and so forth” (p.882). Mitigation is realized through the addition of lexical or morphological elements to the head of the request. This results in a lessening of the overall force of the utterance (Thaler, 2012). Differences in the amount of mitigation and the level of overall directness of requests has been shown to exist cross-linguistically (Pinto and Raschio, 2007; Ballesteros Martin, 2001; Márquez Reiter, 2000; Le Pair, 1996; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; García, 1989). These differences in mitigation and request structure do not stop at language borders, but are also present across dialects and cultures in a given language (Felix-Brasdefer, 2010; Wigglesworth et al., 2007; Márquez Reiter, 2002). In light of this, it is important to account for tendencies that arise in individual dialects and culture groups of each language in the way in which requests are mitigated and how requests function in that space. Some attention has been paid to Costa Rican mitigation in regard to the use of the *ustedeo* and *voseo* as a mitigator (Moser, 2008). However, much is still left unaccounted for in relation to request structures of the Costa Rican dialect of Spanish.

In order to explore this topic in more depth, two main questions will be addressed. First, “How do the requests of native speakers of Spanish from Costa Rica differ from

native English speakers from the southern United States?” This question will be explored through the analysis of three elements: (1) the ways in which requests are mitigated, (2) the level of directness expressed in the request, and (3) the pragmatic motivation of the selection of the structure of the request. That is to say, what motivates the speaker to choose one level of directness over another and/or one type of mitigation over another? The second question explored in this study is, “How can Lakoff’s (1977) Maxims of Politeness be used as a framework model the differences that exist between the request structures of Spanish and English?”

Requests are an extremely complex speech act. They require of the speaker a high level of linguistic competence, since there are a range of syntactic structures, lexical devices, and a variety of rules for appropriate usages in the target language and in individual cultures (Bataller, 2010). In this study, I will propose a ranking of Lakoff’s (1977) Maxims of Politeness to analyze and model the tendencies that occur across languages and cultures in terms of appropriate formation and mitigation of requests.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Speech Acts

Speech acts, also called illocutionary acts, are utterances that seek to perform an act through saying something (Austin, 1962). These acts contain two parts: the meaning or propositional content and the illocutionary force (Austin, 1962). The illocutionary force is the purpose for which the utterance was made or the desired interpretation of the utterance. Examples of this are commands, questions, and declarations. Each type of illocutionary force seeks to accomplish a different task in a given context and conversation.

Building off of the work of J.L. Austin, namely his *How to do things with words* (1962) lectures given at Harvard University in 1955, John R. Searle has given an extensive account of speech acts in discourse in his work *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* (1979). Searle (1979) provides a taxonomy of illocutionary acts comprised of five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. The categories of illocutionary acts differ in their purpose, relationship between the words and the world, propositional content, and force of the illocution among other variables (Searle, 1979).

In this framework, assertives, as their name implies, assert the truth of a proposition. Commissives commit the speaker to some course of action. Expressives express the psychological state of the speaker in relation to the proposition of the utterance. Declaratives create a correspondence between the content of the proposition

and the physical world. Finally, directives seek to get the recipient of the utterance to do something (Searle, 1979). Requests form a part of the directives category.

2.2 Indirectness in Requests

Searle asserts that speech acts have both propositional content and an illocutionary force with “varying degrees of strength or commitment” (Searle, 1979, p. 5). The speaker can require more or less commitment from the hearer through the use of requests that are more or less direct. In cases of less direct speech acts (indirect speech acts), “the speaker means what he says, but he also means something more” (Searle, 1979). Changes in the illocutionary force of an utterance may change the interpretation of the otherwise stable propositional content of the utterance. This places a high level of importance on the context in which the utterance is produced. The context of the utterance can help to fill in the additional content that the speaker desires to communicate through the use of a less direct form.

Márquez Reiter (2002), Leech (1983) and Blum-Kulka (1987) have shown that the level of directness of a request can form a connection between the structure of the utterance and the “something more” described by Searle (1979). Márquez Reiter (2002), in her analysis of Peninsular and Uruguayan Spanish, states that there is a connection between the form of an utterance and the function that the utterance has in a given context. This connection between context and the desired effect of the utterance determines the level of directness of the request form. This additional content not encoded in the structure of the utterance can in some cases be politeness. Leech (1983) states that one can “increase the degree of politeness by using a more and more indirect kind of illocution. Indirect illocutions tend to be more polite (a) because they increase the

degree of optionality, and (b) because the more indirect an illocution is, the more diminished and tentative its force tends to be” (p.108). Requests in discourse can be viewed as scalar forming a continuum that ranges between more or less direct forms.

In this continuum, indirect requests are divided into two distinct categories: conventionally indirect requests and non-conventionally indirect requests. Conventionally indirect requests are realized through the questioning of the hearer’s ability to perform the given task (Márquez Reiter, 2002). Non-conventionally indirect requests act more as hints that point towards the speaker’s desire for the act to be completed. While increased levels of indirectness tend to be associated with a higher level of politeness in conventionally indirect requests, this is not always true for non-conventionally indirect requests (Blum-Kulka, 1987). The desire to be polite manifests itself through the use of less direct utterances. The distinction between direct and indirect requests is used to classify the requests that are represented in this study. Blum-Kulka (1987) proposes a taxonomy to account for her analysis of English and Hebrew requests. The table below, taken from Blum-Kulka (1987), lists nine different categories of requests ordered from most direct to least direct along with an example of each (p.133).

Descriptive category	Examples
1. Mood Derivable	Clean up the kitchen. Move your car.
2. Performative	I'm asking you to move your car.
3. Hedged Performative	I would like to ask you to move your car.
4. Obligation Statement	You'll have to move your car.
5. Want Statement	I would like you to clean the kitchen. I want you to move your car.
6. Suggestory Formulae	How about cleaning up? Why don't you come and clean up the mess you made last night?
7. Query Preparatory	Could you clean up the mess in kitchen? Would you mind moving your car?
8. Strong Hints (A)	You've left the kitchen in a right mess.
9. Mild Hints (B)	We don't want any crowding (as a request to move the car).

Figure 1 - Categories of Request Varieties (Blum-Kulka, 1987)

Based on the argument of Leech (1983), more indirect requests are interpreted by the recipient of the request as more polite than direct requests. By using Blum-Kulka's (1987) proposed list as a continuum in which level 1 'mood derivable' requests considered to be less polite and level 9 'mild hints' are considered to be more polite by the recipient of the request, we can anticipate the level of perceived politeness. Blum-Kulka's (1987) states that pragmatic clarity or directness is important in interaction between individuals; however, the importance of clarity differs between languages and cultures. This is referred to as "cultural relativity" (Blum-Kulka 1985). Whereby, "cultures differ in the relative importance attached to pragmatic clarity, and thus on a very general level, there will be cross-cultural differences in the degree to which considerations of clarity are allowed to dominate and affect notions of politeness." (Blum-Kulka 1987, p.145). Cultural differences in the importance of pragmatic clarity in requests will affect the production of requests in each language. It is to be expected that languages and cultures in which clarity is more important will have more direct requests.

Mir (1993) and Bataller (2010) have modified the original taxonomy of requests to include additional request varieties for a more detailed account of request types cross-linguistically. The adjusted taxonomy is divided into two categories based on the level of directness of the utterance. The chart below taken from Bataller (2010) represents the hierarchy of requests based on level of directness.

Direct Request Strategies	Indirect Request Strategies
1. Mood Derivable (MD)	7. Query Ability (QA)
2. Elliptical Phrase (EllP)	8. Query Willingness (QW)
3. Explicit/Hedged Performative (ExP/HP)	9. Query Permission (QP)
4. Obligation Statement (OS)	10. Query Possibility (QPoss)
5. Want Statement/Need Statement (WS/NS)	11. Hint (H)
6. Simple Interrogative (SI)	

Figure 2 - Taxonomy of Request Strategies (Bataller, 2010)

This taxonomy divides the query preparatory category into four distinct categories based on purpose of the query. Additionally, the categories of elliptical phrase and simple interrogative were added. Elliptical phrase requests only include the object that is being requested, as in, *un café con leche* (Bataller, 2010). The simple interrogative variety does not exist in English. This category utilizes an indirect object pronoun as the recipient of the action with the main verb of the sentence conjugated for the individual performing the act (e.g. *¿Me guarda el espacio en la fila?*) (Carduner, 1998).

Differences between languages in the level of directness of requests have been shown in a variety of studies. Pinto (2002) and Carduner (1998) in studies comparing

Spanish and English requests, elicited through a discourse completion test, found that English speakers produced overall fewer direct requests than Spanish speakers (Bataller, 2010). In both studies, native speakers of Spanish frequently used query of willingness structures such as “Te importaría” (Would you mind?), whereas native speakers of English tended to use query of possibility “Is it possible” (Bataller, 2010). The native Spanish speakers also used the query ability structure as one of their main request structure options, for example, “¿Me podría poner una Coca-Cola?” (Bataller, 2010, p.166). This request type rarely occurred in the responses of native English speakers.

Increased levels of directness are a tendency that has been shown to exist across varieties of Spanish. Pinto and Raschio (2007) found that native speakers of Spanish from Mexico produced more direct requests than both native speakers of English from the United States and heritage speakers of Spanish from the United States. Heritage speakers of Spanish produced requests that were more direct than native speakers of English but less so than the native Spanish group. (Pinto and Raschio, 2007). This would indicate that the heritage language group through interaction with English has adopted some of the tendencies of native English requests while still retaining the tendency toward using more direct requests that exists in Spanish. The same patterns exist for the amount of mitigating devices used by each group. The native Spanish group used fewer mitigating devices than the heritage and native English groups (Pinto and Raschio, 2007). Márquez Reiter (2002) states that the tendency to use fewer mitigating devices produces requests that are less tentative. This would indicate that overall, English speakers produce more tentative requests than native Spanish.

These results corroborated the results found by Mir (1993) in a comparison of native Peninsular Spanish speakers, English speaking American students, and native speakers of Spanish learning English as a second language in Spain. She found that the Peninsular Spanish speakers used more direct requests overall than did the native English speakers; however, all groups used more conventionally indirect requests (Mir, 1993). Mir also challenges the conclusions reached by Leech (1983) that to be more indirect is to be more polite (Mir, 1993). In her findings, Spanish speakers used more direct requests in order to include the recipient in the speech act, thus making the speech act more personal. Mir (1993) states that this “is an attempt to personalize the action being requested by referring to the hearer and the speaker as real individuals in the interaction” (p. 18). The native English speakers; however, used more indirect requests (Mir, 1993).

The effect of increased contact with English that caused an increase in the number of indirect requests seen in Pinto and Raschio’s (2007) heritage speaker group has also been shown in contact with English in the study abroad setting. Code and Anderson (2001), in a 10 month longitudinal study of Japanese students of English in New Zealand and Canada, showed a significant drop in the number of direct requests used between the pre and post discourse completion tests (Cohen and Shively, 2007). The movement towards indirectness by the Japanese students would indicate that the native speakers who serve as English language models for the Japanese students also produced indirect requests.

2.3 Mitigation

Requests can also be modified through mitigation or weakening of one of the elements in the request (Caffi, 1999). The weakening of a request decreases the risk of the speaker and allows for smoother interaction between participants involved in the request (Caffi, 1999). While both mitigation and level of directness of the request have an influence on the way that a request is perceived by the recipient, “mitigation can index politeness regardless of levels of directness” (Blum-Kulka 2005 [1992], p. 266). This allows for the use of a more direct form of request while still maintaining the perception of politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987 [1978]) propose in their model of politeness that the greater the social distance, social power and imposition of the requested act the more indirect a speech act will be through the process of mitigation. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of politeness presents requests as being acts that are inherently imposing and impede on the individual’s freedom and space. However, not included in this framework is the potential for the speaker to be also negatively affected through the creation of negative perceptions of him or her. Implications that the speaker does not care about the desires or feelings of the hearer can cause the speaker to lose face in the request interaction (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2008). This desire to prevent what Brown and Levinson (1987) calls “face threatening acts” brings about an increase in the level of mitigation of the request.

The findings of Linde (1988) in a study of mitigation in relation to accidents in the field of aviation supports this perspective. She found that interpersonal relationships play a heavy role in the effectiveness of an utterance. As might be expected, utterances produced by subordinates in the chain of command were more mitigated when addressing

someone of higher rank (Linde, 1988). Additionally, suggestions by a crew member to a captain with more mitigation failed more often than less mitigated suggestions (Linde, 1988). The pragmatic failure of these suggestions can be attributed to the decrease in the level of clarity of the utterance due to higher levels of mitigation. Mitigation may take the form of lexical mitigators or syntactic mitigators (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). Lexical mitigators include words or phrases (and diminutives in Spanish) that reduce the force of an utterance (e.g. *maybe, might, I believe, favorcito*) (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). Syntactic mitigators are grammaticalized elements in the structure of the language such as the conditional to reflect politeness (Chodorowska-Pilch, 2004). Studies have shown that the manner in which requests are formed in Spanish and in English differ considerably with the tendency for more direct requests for native-speakers of Spanish and less direct requests for native-speakers of English (Ballesteros Martín, 2001; Blum-Kulka, 1989; García, 1989; Márquez Reiter, 1997, 2000, 2002; Pinto, 2005; Placencia, 1995).

2.4 Studies of Spanish Requests

Dialectal variation across varieties of Spanish has been shown in a number of studies. García (1993), in an analysis requests in Peruvian Spanish and the corresponding responses to those requests, found that Peruvian speakers tended to use more conventionally indirect forms. Using the same method of analysis, García (2002) found the opposite for Venezuelan speakers of Spanish as the Venezuelan speakers tended towards more direct requests than conventionally indirect requests. Similarly, Placencia (1996) analyzed the telephone conversations of Ecuadorian speakers of Spanish and found that Ecuadorian speakers used more indirect requests and utilized diminutives to create higher levels of intimacy.

Márquez Reiter (2002) and Félix-Brasdefer (2005), in analyses of Uruguayan Spanish and Mexican Spanish in role-play tasks, respectively, found a preference for conventionally indirect requests over other forms of request. However, in naturally occurring conversations from Central Mexico a tendency to use imperative forms or elliptical forms of requests, which focus solely on the desired object (e.g. '*a glass of water please*'), were the preferred request structure (Félix-Brasdefer, 2009, p.476). Ruzickova (2007), in analysis of requests made in the context of service encounters represented in a corpus of requests from Havana, Cuba, found that conventionally indirect requests were the preferred form in that context (Ruzickova, 2007). In this study, gender differences were also noted. Ruzickova (2007) found that Cuban men used more indirect request strategies; however, women showed a preference for direct requests.

Placencia (1994), in a comparison of Ecuadorian Spanish and Peninsular Spanish, found pragmatic variation in the context of telephone conversations. In their phone call requests, the Spaniards used more direct requests. By contrast, the Ecuadorian speakers preferred to use more indirect request strategies. This tendency is present in other contexts as is shown in Placencia's (1998) study of requests for information in hospitals in Quito, Ecuador and Madrid, Spain. While both groups showed a preference for direct requests over indirect requests, the speakers from Spain used a higher frequency of elliptical requests and informal requests than the speakers from Ecuador. The Ecuadorians used more formal forms of request utilizing the formal *usted* form. Pragmatic differences between Peninsular Spanish and Ecuadorian Spanish have also been identified in more informal interactions. Placencia (2005) in an analysis of store interactions in Quito and Madrid found that there was a greater preference for internal

modification of the request head as well as longer introductions to the request for the Ecuadorian speakers. The Peninsular speakers almost never had an introduction to their requests. This indicates a more person oriented perspective for the Ecuadorians and a task oriented perspective for the Peninsular speakers. Delgado (1994) also shows a preference towards more direct requests by Peninsular speakers of Spanish from Madrid in comparison with Colombian speakers from Pasto. While the Spaniards produced more direct requests, the Colombian speakers showed more deference and formality. This again was found in studies by Márquez Reiter (2002) and Puga Larraín (1997) in a comparison of Peninsular speakers with speakers from Uruguay and Chile respectively. Both the Chilean and Uruguayan speakers showed more varied use of internal and external modifiers than the Peninsular speakers. These studies show that there is much variation between dialects of Spanish in regard to the level of directness of requests. The chart below summarizes the studies conducted on requests in Spanish by dialect.

Table (1) Studies on Requests by Dialect

Study	Dialect	Findings
García (1993)	Peruvian Spanish	Preference for conventionally indirect forms
García (2002)	Venezuelan Spanish	Preference for direct requests
Placencia (1996)	Ecuadorian Spanish	In telephone interviews, indirect requests and the use of diminutives were preferred
Márquez Reiter (2002)	Uruguayan Spanish	In role-play scenarios, participants used more conventionally indirect forms.
Félix-Brasdefer (2005)	Mexican Spanish	In role-play scenarios, participants used more conventionally indirect forms.
Félix-Brasdefer (2007)	Mexican Spanish	In naturally occurring speech, imperative and elliptical forms were preferred.
Ruzickova (2007)	Cuban Spanish (Havana)	In service encounters, conventionally indirect forms preferred. Gender differences: Men used more conventionally indirect forms. Women preferred more direct forms.
Placencia (1994)	Ecuadorian and Peninsular Spanish	Dialectal variation in telephone conversations – Peninsular speakers showed a preference for more direct requests. Ecuadorian speakers showed a preference for indirect forms.
Placencia (1998)	Ecuadorian and Peninsular Spanish (Quito and Madrid)	In hospital encounters, both groups showed a preference for direct requests. Peninsular speakers preferred more elliptical and informal requests than Ecuadorian speakers. Ecuadorian speakers used more formal addresses.
Placencia (2005)	Ecuadorian and Peninsular Spanish (Quito and Madrid)	Speakers from Quito used more internal modification and longer introductions than the Peninsular speakers in store interactions.
Delgado (1994)	Peninsular and Colombian Spanish (Madrid and Pasto)	Peninsular speakers used more direct forms. The Colombian speakers used more deferred and formal forms.
Márquez Reiter (2002)	Peninsular and Uruguayan Spanish	Uruguayan speakers used more modifiers than the Peninsular speakers
Puga Larrín (1997)	Peninsular and Chilean Spanish	Chilean speakers used more modifiers than the speakers from Spain.

2.5 Studies of Requests in Cross-Cultural Contexts

Márquez Reiter (2000), Mir-Fernández (1994), and Vásquez Orta (1995) found that, in comparison with British English speakers, Spanish speakers from Spain used more direct and less tentative forms of requests (Félix-Brasdefer, 2009). British English speakers used more indirect forms and were more tentative in their requests. The focus of the request also differed between the two groups. The Spaniards tended to be more hearer oriented, while the British speakers tended to be more speaker oriented. The Spaniards also showed a lower frequency of internal modification of the request head.

Requests made by British speakers of English in a study of telephone conversations were associated with indirectness and equality by Placencia (1995). In the same study, requests of Ecuadorian speakers of Spanish were associated with respect and a deference to the hearer as well as formality. However, Placencia (1995) found that in the context of telephone conversations, British English speakers showed a preference for explicit or full requests. By contrast, Ecuadorians were more inclined to use elliptical requests.

Blum-Kulka and House (1989), in a study of requests of five languages, found that Argentinian speakers of Spanish used a higher frequency of direct requests than the other groups. Pinto (2005) in a comparison of Spanish from Mexico and Spain with English from the United States showed that the Spanish speakers used more requests of permission than their American counterparts. The American speakers were more likely to use conventional indirect strategies and had a higher frequency of internal mitigation of the request head in an informal setting. Fitch (1994) in an analysis of corpora of requests from Bogotá, Colombia and Boulder, Colorado found a preference for the use of

directives (commands) by the Colombian speakers. The table below summarizes the studies that have been conducted on Spanish in cross-cultural contexts.

Table (2) – Studies of Requests in Cross-Cultural Contexts by Dialect

Study	Dialects	Findings
Márquez Reiter (2000) Mir-Fernández (1994) Vásquez Orta (1995)	British English and Peninsular Spanish	Peninsular requests are more hearer oriented, less tentative and more direct with a lower frequency of internal modification. British requests are more speaker oriented with a higher rate of internal modification.
Placencia (1995)	British English and Ecuadorian Spanish	British speakers showed a preference for explicit or full requests in telephone conversations. Ecuadorians used more elliptical requests.
Blum-Kulka and House (1989)	Argentinian Spanish	Argentinian speakers had a higher frequency of direct requests.
Pinto (2005)	Mexican Spanish and American English	Americans used more conventionally indirect requests with higher levels of mitigation.
Fitch (1994)	Colombian Spanish and American English	More use of direct forms from Colombian Spanish speakers than from American English speakers

2.6 Request Studies of Spanish in Contact with Other Languages

Variation in the use of request forms has also been shown in studies in which Spanish was in contact with indigenous languages. Bustamante-López and Niño-Murcia (1995) in a study of impositive speech acts, in which the speaker asks the hearer to perform an action, found that Northern Andean speakers of Spanish showed variation on both the grammatical and pragmatic levels in their production of requests. Relational hierarchical structures in the communities in the study as well as contact with Quechua influenced the production of requests in Spanish by these populations.

In a study of interactions between white funcionarios and the Aymara indigenous population and mestizo-blancos (individuals with indigenous and European ancestry), carried out in La Paz, Bolivia, Placencia (2001) found the *funcionarios* used more informal forms of address as well as more direct requests in interactions with the Aymara population. However, in their interactions with the *mestizo-blancos* they used more differential and politeness forms. Hurley (1995) in an analysis of Quechua speaking Indians and Spanish speaking Mestizos in Ecuador found the most frequent request variety to be the imperative, and that this selection was influenced by the contact with Quechua. The table below summarizes the studies performed on Spanish requests in contact with other languages.

Table (3) Spanish requests in contact with other languages

Study	Dialect	Findings
Bustamante-López and Niño-Murcia (1995)	Northern Andean Spanish	Grammatical and pragmatic variation in requests based on contact with Quechua
Placencia (2002)	Bolivian Spanish (La Paz)	More direct forms were used when speaking with Aymara Indians than with Mestizos
Hurley (1995)	Ecuadorian Spanish	More frequent use of imperative forms connected with contact with Quechua.

2.7 Inter-dialectal Variation in Request Forms

Placencia (2008) found that variation within a dialect also occurs. She analyzed data from corner store interactions in Quito and Manta, Ecuador. Both groups had a higher incidence of direct requests over conventionally indirect requests; however, the speakers from Quito used more internal modification of the request head with diminutives and other modifiers.

2.8 Studies on Costa Rican Requests

Félix-Brasdefer (2009) conducted a study of requests produced by Spanish speakers from Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico. The data was collected through a series of role-play scenarios with three request items that were analyzed and four distracter items (three apologies and one invitation). All items were given detailed contextual information including demographic information of the participants in the interaction, social distance between the participants, and the formality of the interaction. The data were coded using a modified version of the taxonomy of requests originally presented by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). Additionally, syntactical, lexical, and prosodic mitigation were coded.

Félix-Brasdefer (2009) found that the Costa Rican participants produced more requests during the role-plays than did the other two groups. Of the Costa Rican requests, imperatives were the preferred request form followed by query preparatory, which includes query ability, query willingness, query permission, and query possibility request forms. However, in a series of requests, the preferred form was to use a conventionally indirect request. This was also true for the Mexican speakers but not for the Dominican speakers. Non-conventionally indirect requests (hints) were the least preferred for all three groups, and they were completely absent in the Dominican requests.

Félix-Brasdefer's (2009) findings indicated that Costa Rican requests pattern closely to those seen by García (1993) in an analysis of Peruvian requests in that there is a preference towards deferential politeness. Lexical and syntactic downgraders, such as the conditional and the imperfect to convey deference and politeness, were used extensively by the Costa Rican speakers (Félix-Brasdefer, 2009). The Costa Rican

requests in the study were more tentative and deferential than those of the other groups, which is indicated by the more extensive use of lexical and syntactic downgraders. However, the results found in this study cannot be generalized to the entire Costa Rican dialect as it only included male university students.

2.9 Summary of Previous Research

Studies of requests in both Spanish and English have been conducted using a variety of elicitation methods, including role-play (Félix-Brasdefer, 2005), naturally occurring speech (Placencia, 1995), and discourse completion tests (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989). Previous studies have found that variation is present in the level of directness of requests between dialects of Spanish (Placencia, 1998, 2005; Delgado, 1994; Márquez Reiter, 2002; Puga Larrín, 1997). Peninsular Spanish speakers tend to produce more direct requests (Placencia, 1994), while varieties, such as Ecuadorian Spanish (Placencia, 1996), produce more indirect requests. In an analysis of Costa Rican Spanish, Félix-Brasdefer (2009) found that Costa Rican speakers produced heavily mitigated and indirect requests. Similarly, Fitch (1994) found that American English speakers produced more mitigated requests with a higher rate of internal modification.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

3.1.1 Discourse Completion Test

This study utilizes a discourse completion test (DCT) to elicit requests from participants based on a series of hypothetical situations. For each scenario, the participant must provide the response that he or she would give in the given context. Discourse completion tests have been used extensively in pragmatic research on speech acts. DCTs first came into vogue through their use in Blum-Kulka's (1982) work on the cross-cultural analysis of speech act realization (Franch and Lorenzo-Dus, 2008). Since that time, DCTs have been applied to a range of languages including Spanish (Mir, 1993; Pinto, 2002), German (Baron, 2003), French (Cohen and Shively, 2007) and English (Code and Anderson, 2001) in both native and non-native contexts (Le Pair, 1996, Ballesteros Martín, 2001).

DCTs offer the advantage that the context of data collection can be controlled and standardized across the range of participants; however, some disadvantages exist in the use of a discourse completion test for data collection. DCTs elicit what would normally be spoken utterances through a written method. Since in many cases individuals do not write as they would speak, even when instructed to do so, the data produced by a DCT may deviate from actual spoken production. This can be seen in the Beebe and Cummings (1996) study analyzing differences that exist between data collected using a DCT and data collected through recordings of natural speech. The authors reported that DCTs "bias the response toward less negotiation, less hedging, less repetition, less

elaboration, less variety and ultimately less talk” than data collected through natural conversation (Beebe & Cummings 1996, p.71). This would indicate that given the same context, DCTs would produce less mitigated requests than those produced through a role play or natural speech. However, in Franch and Lorenzo-Dus (2008), refusals collected through the use of a DCT were similar in the frequency of type of refusal used, although they were far less elaborate than those produced through natural speech. This indicates that though the overall structure may be less elaborate, DCTs do offer a valid representation of naturally occurring speech.

The discourse completion test used in this study was comprised of two sections. The first section requested basic demographic information from the participants. This information included the age, place of birth, place of residence, and information on the reading habits of the individual; however, the name of the individual and other identifiable information was not requested. The second section was comprised of seven hypothetical situations with distinct contexts and relationships between the speaker and the recipient of the request. These relationships include family members, friends, neighbors, acquaintances and strangers. In this section, the participants were asked to respond to the scenarios with what he or she would say in the given context. A variety of relationships and environments were used in an attempt at eliciting both situational and interpersonal variation of request forms.

The demographic information requested from each participant is important in identifying possible external or cultural elements that may impact the responses given by the participants. Many of the Spanish-speaking participants are from the community of San Luis, Costa Rica. This is a small community that has been somewhat isolated until

fairly recently. Participants of the study from this community are related whether biologically or through marriage to many other members of the community. The close relations between the participants and the other community members are an essential factor in determining the selection of the request variety and the type of mitigation used in an utterance. However, there are also individuals that are not originally from the community, but that live and work in the area. The level of belonging, the level of acceptance that the speaker feels in the community, and the role that the speaker plays in the community may also have an impact in the responses given in the DCT.

In the demographic questionnaire, information on the reading habits of the participant was also requested. Education is extremely important in the San Luis community. While public education through high school is free, there are costs such as uniforms, books, and transportation that families must pay in order for their children to attend school beyond the 6th grade. Because of these costs, many of the older individuals in the community do not have an education past the primary level. This is something that the elders of the community are not proud of, and efforts are being made to further the education of their children and grandchildren. A lack of education, that is pervasive throughout older members of the community, causes many community members to feel self-conscious about their own level of schooling. To avoid any negative feelings toward the DCT, educational achievement and literacy are addressed indirectly through the questions regarding reading habits. While this does not directly elicit participants' education level, it does show the amount of contact they have had with written Spanish and writing conventions. Contact with standardized syntactic forms and spelling conventions could impact requests produced by the participants in these areas.

3.1.2 DCT Scenarios

The discourse completion test in this study utilized seven scenarios that ranged both in physical context and relational distance between interlocutors. Scenarios that would be easily recognizable for both Costa Rican and American participants were chosen for inclusion in the DCT. Scenarios that took place in the home with family members and interactions with non-family members outside of the home were utilized in an attempt to elicit a range of social interactions. Below are listed the prompts for each scenario as well as a justification for the inclusion of each scenario in the DCT.

Scenario 1: Bus Line Bathroom (stranger) [+distance]

S1US - “You are in a bus station waiting for the 9:00 a.m. bus, but it is running 20 minutes behind. Beside you is a person that you do not know that has also been waiting a long time. Because you have been waiting for a long time, you have to use the restroom. You ask the other person to save your spot in line.”

S2CR - “Está usted en la estación de buses esperando el bus de las 9:00 de la mañana, que lleva un retraso de 20 minutos. A su lado hay una persona desconocida que también ha estado esperando un largo tiempo. Dado la espera, usted necesita ir al servicio sanitario. Entonces usted pide a la otra persona guardar su lugar en la fila. Como le pediría este favor a esta persona.”

While bus lines are decidedly more common in the Costa Rican community than in the American communities, the scenario of asking for someone to hold a place in line is recognizable across cultural contexts. This scenario takes place in a public place and the interaction is with a complete stranger. While this scenario has low levels of imposition since the hearer was already waiting in line, the [+distance] attribute of this scenario was expected to prompt more mitigation from the speakers of both English and Spanish.

Scenario 2: Sick Store (family member) [-distance]

S2US - “Today is Saturday and you have the flu. Because it is Saturday the farmers market is open in town, and you need some things from the market. Some members of your family are going to go to the market, so you ask them to buy the things you need.”

S2CR - “Hoy usted amaneció con gripe, pero ocupa ir al mercado para comprar unas cosas. A causa de la gripe, usted no puede ir, pero sabe que algunos miembros de su familia van. Como les pediría a ellos que le haga el favor de comprar las cosas que necesita.”

Item two involves a request from a family member. This scenario is both in the home and has low social distance between the speakers. This item was included in an attempt to elicit more direct requests from the speakers.

Scenario 3: Crowded Restaurant (acquaintance) [+distance]

S3US - “You go to a restaurant with a group of friends. The restaurant is very busy and there are no free tables for you to sit down. You see an acquaintance with a table and enough seats for you and your friends. You ask to join him.”

S3CR - “Usted va a un restaurante con un grupo de amigos. El restaurante está muy ocupado y no hay una mesa disponible para sentarse. Usted ve a un conocido sentado en una mesa con sillas suficientes para usted y sus amigos. ¿Cómo le pediría compartir la mesa con él?”

Scenario 3 has both a higher level of imposition and a higher level of social distance between the speaker and the hearer. It was expected that this scenario would elicit a higher percentage of indirect requests than items in which there was [-distance] and low imposition.

Scenario 4: Work Meeting Transportation (brother) [-distance]

S4US - “You have a work meeting at 1:00 in the afternoon, but you don’t have any transportation to get you there. Your brother has a car. How would you ask for transportation to the work meeting?”

S4CR - “Usted tiene una reunión para su trabajo a la una de la tarde, pero no tiene transporte para ir. Su hermano tiene un carro. ¿Cómo pediría transportación a la reunión?”

This scenario has a low level of social distance since the request is being made to a family member; however, there is a high level of imposition. This is also an easily recognizable context for both speaker groups.

Scenario 5: Garden (neighbor) [+/-distance]

S5US - “You have a new piece of land with a lot of grass and trees on it. You want to plant a vegetable garden, but you need help preparing the area for the garden. You ask your neighbors for help.”

S5CR - “Usted tiene una nueva parcela de tierra con mucho pasto y árboles. Quiere plantar hortalizas, pero usted necesita ayuda para preparar el terreno. ¿Cómo les pediría a sus vecinos que le ayuden?”

Both the Costa Rican and American communities are rural with a background in agriculture. Gardens in both communities are common. However, relationships between neighbors vary considerably between individuals in these communities. This scenario could have more or less social distance between the interlocutors depending on the relationship between the speaker and the neighbor.

Scenario 6: Community Party Cook (community member) [-distance]

S6US - You are in charge of organizing a party for the community, and you have to have some people to cook food for the party. How would you ask for this help?

S6CR - Usted está encargado de organizar una fiesta para la comunidad y tiene que tener algunas personas para cocinar comida para la fiesta. ¿Cómo solicitaría esta ayuda?

This scenario is based on a community party. Community parties that benefit certain groups are common, especially in the Costa Rican community. Requests to help cook for these events is also a common aspect of the planning of this type of community activity. As the members of the American speaker group are all members of the same

church where “pot luck” dinners (meals where different individuals bring different items that are then shared with others at the gathering) are common, this request is also recognizable. This scenario is marked with negative social distance as the speaker is unlikely to ask an acquaintance or stranger to cook for one of these activities. However, there is a high level of imposition since the hearer must perform some kind of labor in cooking for a gathering of people.

Scenario 7: School Fund Raiser Game Prizes (community member) [-distance]

S7US - “Every year, the elementary school has a party to raise funds for the school. There are events like bingo and others that need prizes for the winners. You are in charge of asking members of the community to donate prizes. You ask...”

S7CR - “Cada año, la escuela primaria tiene una fiesta para recaudar fondos. Hay eventos como bingo y otros que otorgan premios a los ganadores. Usted está encargado de solicitar a los miembros de la comunidad cosas que pueden servir como premios. ¿Cómo le pediría a la gente colaborar?”

This scenario is similar in many ways to scenario 6. Like scenario 6, there is a request that is based on the planning for a community activity. One difference that exists between these two scenarios is that the activity benefits the elementary school in the community. It is common and in many ways an expectation for community members to assist in the planning and support of activities such as dances and fundraisers for the community school in both locations. This is more common for the Costa Rican group, but as both communities are small, many individuals have connections to the schools in some way. This encourages collaboration and support of these types of activities in both communities. This context was chosen for its salience in both communities. Additionally, this scenario is highly imposing, but the speaker is not the beneficiary of the action. The

beneficiary of this request is ultimately the children of the school. This could help to encourage the hearer to comply with the request.

3.1.3 Instructions for Participants

Participants were instructed to respond to the contexts provided in the DCT as they would in natural speech in order to elicit a more natural response. No time limit was placed on the participants for the completion of the task, but participants were asked not to consult with other speakers about their responses while completing the DCT.

Additionally, to provide the opportunity for everyone to participate, participants were given the option to record their answers aloud instead of responding in written form. All recordings were transcribed and deleted after transcription. Data was collected from individuals in and around the San Luis de Monteverde, Costa Rica region. The English data was collected from the communities surrounding Chattanooga, Tennessee.

3.1.4 Participants

The participants were native speakers of Spanish from Costa Rica and native speakers of English from the United States older than 18 years of age. The two groups were comprised of 30 (22 females and 8 males) speakers in the American speaker group and 15 (7 females and 8 males) speakers in the Costa Rican speaker group. The chart below shows the breakdown in age of the participants from each group.

Table (4) Age Range of Participants

Age Range	US	CR	Total
25-younger	2	6	8
26-35	1	4	5
36-45	3	3	6
46-55	3	2	5
56-65	11	0	11
66-older	10	0	10
Total	30	15	45

Spanish-speaking participants were drawn from the community of San Luis de Monteverde. This community is in the Tilarán Mountain Range that runs the Pacific side of Costa Rica. As the University of Georgia has a campus in the community, many of the participants have large amounts of contact with speakers of English from the United States. Additionally, a large number of these individuals work for the university in jobs such as housekeeping, maintenance, and administration of the UGA Costa Rica facilities. It is also important to note that the San Luis community is very heavily involved in agriculture. As such, many of the participants work for and with each other in activities that involve farming. Familial relationships and employment, among other factors, could be expected to impact the amount of mitigation present in the responses of these individuals.

Speakers surveyed in the United States are all native speakers of English that live in the communities surrounding Chattanooga, Tennessee. The speakers from the Chattanooga area have a variety of professions, but all of the English-speaking participants attend the same church and participate in the church choir. Though the participants live in the metropolitan area surrounding Chattanooga, all of the English

speaking participants are deeply embedded in their communities, and many have familial ties in their communities that are similar to those of the Spanish speakers. All of the participants are monolingual English speakers except for one speaker of French. However, the speaker of French has low speaking proficiency, and therefore should not have much, if any, French language transfer that would impact the responses in the discourse completion test.

The two groups in this study were chosen based on the contexts in which they live and work. In spite of the fairly close proximity to the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee in the case of the American group, both communities are decidedly rural. All participants in the study were both born and raised in the communities from which the data was collected or they have spent many years living and working in these communities. Because the speakers that form the two groups interact regularly with one another within their respective communities, they can be expected to share the same dialectal features. This is especially important in the case of the American speakers as the dialectal markers between the southern United States and other areas of the country vary considerably. The similarities between the contexts of the Costa Rican and Southern American speaker groups makes these groups ideal for comparison.

3.2 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed through two lenses. First, the requests were coded using the taxonomy of request varieties proposed by Bataller (2010). Additionally, mitigators were classified into the classes of lexical or syntactic mitigators. The coded data were then used as the basis for qualitative and quantitative analysis. The English and Spanish data are analyzed separately in sections 4.1 and 4.2 respectively. In section 4.3,

the two data sets are compared. Secondly, the Lakoff's (1977) Maxims of Politeness are utilized as the basis for qualitative analysis of the data in section 4.4.

Lakoff's (1977, p. 89-90) maxims of politeness. Lakoff's maxims are composed of two maxims:

1. be clear
2. be polite.

The maxim of politeness is further divided into three sub-maxims:

1. do not impose or avoid imposition
2. offer options
3. encourage feelings of camaraderie.

Based on the data analysis of both the Costa Rican and American data, a ranking of importance of the maxims of politeness will be proposed. This ranking seeks to represent the importance and level to which a maxim is maintained or violated in the requests elicited through the DCT.

3.3 Method for Coding of the Analyzed Data

The coding of the data is based on the taxonomy of request varieties taken from Bataller (2010). This taxonomy is divided into direct and indirect request strategies. Indirect strategies are subdivided into conventionally indirect and unconventionally indirect strategies. The examples of each variety provided below come from the data under analysis unless otherwise specified.

3.3.1 Direct Strategies

1. Mood Derivable: “Mood derivable strategies are those where the grammatical mood of the locution determines its illocutionary force as a request” (Bataller 2010, p.166).

Commands are the most prevalent of the mood derivable strategies.

(1) *Mae, lléveme. ¿No ve que el carro se me jodió?*

(2) *Save my place.*

2. Elliptical Phrase: Elliptical phrase strategies only mention the object or action that is desired by the speaker.

(3) *Un café con leche.*

(4) *A coffee with milk. (Bataller, 2010)*

3. Explicit/Hedge Performative: Explicit and Hedged Performatives state the speaker’s intent in in the request.

(5) *Here I am asking for help, but you have always been so faithful to donate.*

(6) *Miembros de la comunidad quisiera solicitar su colaboración con algún premio para la fiesta para recordar fondos para la escuela primaria.*

4. Obligation Statement: In cases of obligation statement requests “the illocutionary point is directly obtained from the semantic meaning of the locution” (Bataller, 2010, p.166).

(7) *Tengo que cambiarlos por un tamaño más grande (Bataller, 2010).*

5. Want Statement/Need Statement: In this request variety, the speaker expresses his or her desire or the necessity that the recipient perform the task at hand.

(8) *I need your car this afternoon, please.*

(9) *Necesito que me traigan un kilo de chayotes.*

6. Simple Interrogative: The speaker takes on the position of indirect object in the construction with the main verb conjugated for the recipient of the request (Carduner, 1998). This construction does not exist in English, but it corresponds closely to “will you...” construction in English (Bataller, 2010).

(10) *¿Me guarda el campo porfa? Ya vuelvo.*

(11) *Por favor, ¿Me cuidaría mi campo para ir al baño?*

3.3.2 Conventionally Indirect Strategies

7. Query Ability: In this request variety, the speaker questions the ability of the recipient to perform the action while inferring that if the recipient has the ability to perform the action then he or she should do so (Owen, 2001).

(12) Could y'all buy me some corn and okra? Thanks.

(13) *¿Señor, usted podría cuidarme mi campo en la fila? Tengo que ir al baño.*

8. Query Willingness: Query willingness strategies question the willingness of the recipient of the request while inferring that the recipient should perform the action because he or she is willing (Owen, 2001).

(14) *¿Usted quisiera sembrar algunos árboles en mi parcela? Es un bien para los dos. Compartimos las cosechas.*

(15) Will you donate an item to help raise funds for the school?

9. Query Permission: In this request variety, the speaker asks for permission to perform the action desired by the speaker.

(16) May we join you?

(17) *¿Podemos sentarnos con usted por favor?*

10. Query Possibility: “This makes reference to the possibility of carrying out a request, e.g.,: *es posible?* [is it possible. . .?], *sería posible . . .?* [would it be possible?]”

(Bataller, 2010, p.166).

(18) *¿Sería posible que compartamos la mesa?*

3.3.3 Unconventionally Indirect Strategies

11. Hint: Hints act as an unconventionally indirect strategy because they do not explicitly state the desired action being requested. This lack of clarity is intentional in hints (Trosborg, 1995). It is left to the recipient of the request to infer the speaker’s intended meaning.

(19) Do you have a tiller? (Request for assistance planting a garden)

Example (19) acts as a hint because it does not address the speaker’s desire that the hearer participate in the planting of a garden. The hearer must infer that the speaker desires assistance in planting a garden through the question posed regarding the tiller.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study for the Costa Rican and American participants are described and compared to each other. I will begin by describing the findings of requests in Spanish (4.2) and English (4.3) independently, and then compare the two groups to each other (4.3). I will conclude by presenting the proposed rankings of the maxims of politeness for both the Costa Rican and American requests (4.4). The findings of the first three sections serve as support for the proposed constraint rankings.

The analysis of request structures for each section was based upon the taxonomy of requests utilized by Bataller (2010). Request responses were coded using this taxonomy which allows for a view of the type of strategy and level of directness utilized by the participant. In addition, an analysis of external and internal modification of the request head through syntactic (internal) and lexical (external) mitigation was conducted.

4.2 Spanish Data Analysis

The table below describes the Costa Rican participants' responses to each of the seven items of the DCT using the coding system described in section 3.3. Items that received no response are coded in black.

Table (5) - Request type by Spanish-speaking participant

Speaker	S1 Type	S2 Type	S3 Type	S4 Type	S5 Type	S6 Type	S7 Type
CR1	SI	HP	QPoss	NS	QA	HP	OS
CR2	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA
CR3	SI	QW	HP	SI	SI	SI	QW
CR4	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA
CR5	QA	NS	QP	QA	QA	QA	QA
CR6	QW	QW	QP	QA		QW	
CR7	QW	SI	QP	MD	QA	SI	SI
CR8	QA	QA	QP	QA	QA		
CR9	QA	QA	QP	QA	QA	SI	QA
CR10	QW	QA	QW	SI	QW	QW	QW
CR11	QA	QA	QPoss		QA		HP
CR12	QW	QA	QP	QA	QW	QW	QA
CR13	QA	QW	QPoss	SI	QPoss		HP
CR14	QA	QA	QP	QA	QA	QW	QA
CR15	QA	NS	QW	MD	SI	QA	QW
Response total	15	15	15	14	14	12	13

Key	Mood Derivable (MD)	Elliptical Phrase (EllP)	Performatives (ExP/HP)	Obligation Statement (OS)	Want/Need Statement (WS/NS)
Simple Interrogative (SI)	Query Ability (QA)	Query Willingness (QW)	Query Permission (QP)	Query Possibility (QPoss)	Hints (H)

Overwhelmingly, the Costa Rican Spanish speakers preferred indirect requests, which comprised a total of 77% of the responses elicited through the DCT. Of these responses, the preferred request structure for the Costa Rican speakers of Spanish was query ability, which occurred in 47% of the total responses. This variety was by far the most common with the next most common variety being query willingness, which accounted for 18% of the responses given.

Query strategies (query ability, query willingness, query possibility, and query permission) were the most request strategy utilized in each scenario. Scenario three elicited the only occurrences of query permission. This undoubtedly is an effect of the instrument. Because scenario three involves a request to join an acquaintance at his or her table in a crowded restaurant, the context itself requires asking permission of the hearer. It is not surprising that seven of the fifteen (47%) responses in this scenario were query permission forms.

In addition to the indirect request forms used by the Costa Rican speakers, there were a number of direct requests used. One of the most common forms was the simple interrogative structure. This is a structure that only exists in Spanish. The lack of a modal in this request form results in a more direct request with less optionality for the hearer. The simple interrogative structure is exemplified in the example below. The speaker and recipient of the request is represented through the indirect object pronoun, while the hearer assumes the role of the subject or agent of the action.

(20) CR1 – ¿Me guarda el campo porfa? Ya vuelvo.

Many of the query varieties utilized the Spanish conditional form. Chodorowska-Pilch (2004) in her analysis of the conditional mood in Spanish found that the conditional functioned as a means to realize the Lakoffian maxims of ‘don’t impose’ and ‘give options’ in requests. Below are two examples of the conditional with the verb *poder* in query structured requests.

(21) ¿Me podría hacer el favor de guardarme el campo, porfis?

(22) ¿Me podría comprar unas cosas que necesito del super? Es que estoy enferma y no quiero salir. Gracias.

The use of the conditional in these requests offers the option of saying no to the request, whereas in requests such as commands or simple interrogative requests, that option is not given. The level of indirectness given by this form of request provides a higher level of conventional politeness than more direct forms, following Leech's (1983) assertion that a higher degree of indirectness by the speaker translates to a higher degree of perceived politeness of the part of the recipient. This use of the conditional to express optionality seems to be the preferred manner of request for the Costa Rican speakers. This supports Félix-Brasdefer's (2009) finding that Costa Rican speakers of Spanish use a higher degree of deferential strategies.

Hwang (1990) differentiates between politeness and deference stating that while politeness "raises the hearer," the speaker through deference "humbles and abases himself" (p. 42). The frequency of indirect forms used, especially query ability requests, and the use of the conditional to provide the recipient of the request with a higher degree of optionality illustrates the Costa Rican speakers' tendency to downplay the imposition of the request on the recipient. The speaker employs politeness and deference together to humble him or herself and to raise the hearer's power to choose. This deference to the hearer is illustrated in the chart below, which shows the number of responses by request type for the Spanish speakers. Deference to the hearer is consistent across DCT items with a higher number of direct forms only arising in items two and four. Both items two and four involve requests to family members. Additionally, in both items, the beneficiary of the action is the speaker, and a restriction is placed on the speaker that prevents him or her from completing the action. In item two this restriction is an illness, and in item four the restriction is a lack of transportation.

Table (6) - Request type by Spanish DCT item

Type	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	Total
Modal Directive				14.4% (2)				2.0% (2)
Elliptical Phrase								
Explicit/Hedged Performative		6.7% (1)	6.7% (1)			8.4% (1)	15.4% (2)	5.1% (5)
Obligation Statement				7.1% (1)			7.7% (1)	2.0% (2)
Want/Need Statement		13.3% (2)						2.0% (2)
Simple Interrogative	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)		21.4% (3)	14.3% (2)	25.0% (3)	7.7% (1)	12.3% (12)
Query Ability	60.0% (9)	53.3% (8)	13.3% (2)	57.1% (8)	64.3% (9)	33.3% (4)	46.1% (6)	46.9% (46)
Query Willingness	26.7% (4)	20.0% (3)	13.3% (2)		14.3% (2)	33.3% (4)	23.1% (3)	18.4% (18)
Query Permission			46.7% (7)					7.2% (7)
Query Possibility			20.0% (3)		7.1% (1)			4.1% (4)
Hint								
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (14)	100% (14)	100% (12)	100% (13)	100% (98)

As illustrated in the table, the speakers used lexical mitigators at a higher rate than syntactic mitigators in the data set. Interestingly, mitigation tended to occur following the request head. Costa Rican speakers tended to adhere to the request structure outlined in figure (3). Optional elements are represented using parenthesis, while required elements are represented using brackets.

(vocative) [(poder) (conditional) request] (mitigator 1) (mitigator 2)

Figure (3) - Costa Rican Native Spanish speakers Request Structure

Generally, a vocative addressed to the speaker preceded the request. Vocatives fall into two categories: (1) calls or summonses; and, (2) addresses (Levinson, 1983). As Levinson (1983) states, “summonses are naturally utterance initial, indeed conversation-initial, and can be thought of as independent speech acts” (p. 71). Summonses act as a way to gain the attention of the hearer. Examples from the Spanish data set include

disculpe, hola, buenas, and *con permiso*. The second class of vocatives, addresses, name the recipient of the utterance. Addresses may assume the position of a summons; however, unlike summonses, addresses are not required to be utterance initial (Levinson 1983). The Costa Rican speakers used 13 distinct addresses including: *amigo, caballero, vecino, Doña María*, and *mae*. *Mae* is a very colloquial word that exists only in the context of Costa Rican Spanish and translates to something similar to the slang word ‘dude’ in American English. In total, the Spanish speakers used 19 distinct vocatives in their DCT responses. Following the initial vocative, the speakers would then make the request of the hearer, usually utilizing the verb *poder* in the conditional mood. One to two mitigators followed the request head.

The table below represents the number of lexical and syntactic mitigators used in each DCT item for each speaker and an average of lexical and syntactic mitigators. In items six and seven in the DCT, the average number of internal and external mitigators was lower than in the other DCT items. Items six and seven involved the planning and implementation of a community event that was for the benefit of the local school. In the community in which the DCTs were completed, community events that act as fundraisers are common. All members of the community are expected to participate in some way. This context could explain why the number of mitigators used by the speakers was lower than in the other scenarios. It is not as necessary to be indirect when the expectation of participation already exists. While the level of clarity of the requests is higher because of a lack of mitigating devices, a certain level of deference is still represented through the type of request used in these items. As can be seen in Table (6) above, the query strategies were still the most commonly used strategies. By using an indirect strategy

with lower levels of mitigation, the speaker maintains the desired level of politeness while still expressing clearly the desire for the hearer to participate.

Table (7) below shows the number of lexical and syntactic mitigators by speaker and DCT item. In the first four items, there was a higher incidence of lexical mitigation than in items 5, 6, and 7. In items 5 through 7, there was the possibility for payment for services rendered. In the first four contexts, there was no possibility of reciprocity of services. This could be motivation for a lower number of lexical mitigators present in the final three scenarios.

Table (7) - Lexical and Syntactic Mitigation by Speaker

	S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7	
Speaker	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM
CR1	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
CR2	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
CR3	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
CR4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
CR5	2	0	2	0	3	0	4	0	2	0	1	1	3	1
CR6	3	0	2	1	5	1	0	1			2	0		
CR7	2	1	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
CR8	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1				
CR9	3	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	0
CR10	2	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1
CR11	1	1	1	0	1	0			1	0			1	0
CR12	3	1	3	0	3	0	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
CR13	1	1	2	1	3	0	1	1	2	0			1	1
CR14	2	1	2	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
CR15	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Average	2	1	2	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	0

4.3 English Data Analysis

The table below represents the type of requests used by the English-speaking participants for each scenario of the DCT. Items where no response was given are coded in black. Like the Spanish speakers' responses, indirect request strategies were by far the most commonly used. Native English speakers consistently used the query willingness strategy for the majority of requests in the study. Query willingness was chosen by 60% of the respondents in the first three scenarios, 34% in scenario 4, 50% in scenario 5, 50% in scenario 6, and, 63% in scenario 7.

Table (8) Request Type by Speaker and DCT Item

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Speaker	Type	Type	Type	Type	Type	Type	Type
US1	QW	QW	QP	QP	QW	QW	QW
US2	MD	QW	QP	QW	QW	QW	QW
US3	QW	QW	QP	QP	NS	QA	QW
US4	MD	QW	QW	QP	QW	QA	QW
US5	QW	QW	QP	QW	QW	QA	QA
US6	QA	QA	QW	QW	QW	QW	QW
US7	QW	QW	QP	QW	QA	QW	QW
US8	MD	MD	QW	QP	QW	QW	QW
US9	QW	MD	QP	QP	HP	QW	NS
US10	QW	MD	QW	QW	QW	QA	QA
US11	MD	MD	QW	NS	MD	NS	QA
US12	QW	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QW
US13	MD	NS	QW	QW	H	MD	HP
US14	QP	QW	QW	QP	QW	NS	QW
US15	QW	QA	QW	QP	QW	QW	QA
US16	QW	MD	QA	QW	QA	QW	QW
US17	QW	QW	QP	QP	QW	NS	QW
US18	MD	MD	QW	QP	NS	NS	ExP
US19	MD	QW	QW	QP	QW	QW	QA
US20	QW	QW	QW	QP	QW	QW	QW
US21	QW	QW	QW	QP	QW	QA	QW
US22	QW	QW	QP		QW	QW	QW
US23	QW	QW	QW	QW	QW	QW	QW
US24	MD	QW	QP	QW	QPoss	QW	QW
US25	QW	QW	QW	QP	QW	QW	QW
US26	QW	QW	QW	QP	QA	QA	QW
US27	QW	QA	QW	QW	QW	NS	NS
US28	QW	QW	QW	QA	QA	QA	QA
US29	QA	QA	QW	QA	NS	QW	QW
US30	QA	QW	HP	QP	QP	QW	HP
Response Total	30	30	30	29	30	30	30

Key	Mood Derivable (MD)	Elliptical Phrase (EllP)	Performatives (ExP/HP)	Obligation Statement (OS)	Want/Need Statement (WS/NS)
Simple Interrogative (SI)	Query Ability (QA)	Query Willingness (QW)	Query Permission (QP)	Query Possibility (QPoss)	Hints (H)

The English speakers used more direct requests than was initially expected based on previous studies. In scenarios one and two, there were 8 and 7 direct requests respectively. This grouping of direct requests is interesting, because it only occurs on DCT items one and two. The common trait between these two items that the other items lack is a certain amount of physical discomfort on the part of the speaker. In scenario one, the speaker has to use the restroom, and in scenario two the speaker is physically ill. Because of this physical element, the participants use more direct request forms than in other DCT items. The desire for the discomfort to end, whether through using the restroom or the items brought back from the market, is realized through a more direct form. There is a connection between the directness of the utterance and the belief that the physical discomfort will be relieved should the hearer comply with the request. It is also important to note that only one participant produced one bare mood derivable (MD) form (command). All other requests were mitigated whether through a syntactic or lexical mitigator. *Please* was a common lexical mitigator found in the direct commands in items one and two.

Blum-Kulka (1990), in an analysis of Israeli parental speech, found that there were two modes of politeness represented in interactions between parents and their children. The first is conventional politeness. This category is characterized by the use of indirect forms in order to downplay the imposition placed on the hearer (Mir, 1993). The second, solidarity politeness, is characterized by the use of mitigated direct requests. Solidarity politeness stresses involvement from the participant and creates a bond or ‘solidarity’ between the speaker and the hearer (Mir, 1993). It appears that the English

speakers in scenarios one and two utilized solidarity politeness to create solidarity between themselves and the hearer based around the physical discomfort felt by the speaker. In other scenarios, the speakers used more conventionally polite strategies which can be seen in the large number of conventionally indirect requests across DCT items.

The table below, shows the number of syntactic and lexical mitigators by DCT item and participant. The number of mitigators can also help to explain the level of directness that is found in items one and two.

Table (9) - Number of Lexical and Syntactic Mitigators by DCT Scenario

Speaker	S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7	
	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM	LM	SM
US1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
US2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
US3	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
US4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1
US5	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	1
US6	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	1
US7	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
US8	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
US9	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
US10	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	0
US11	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
US12	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	1
US13	2	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
US14	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
US15	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
US16	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
US17	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
US18	2	0	3	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
US19	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	0	1
US20	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	1
US21	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
US22	1	1	1	1	0	0			2	1	1	1	1	1
US23	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
US24	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
US25	2	1	2	0	3	1	3	2	3	1	2	0	2	0
US26	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	1
US27	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
US28	3	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	3	1
US29	2	1	2	0	3	1	2	1	2	0	2	1	3	0
US30	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	0	2	0
Average	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1

Fifteen speakers used direct requests across DCT items one and two. Of those speakers, 11 used one or more lexical mitigators in conjunction with the direct request. Of those, four used two or more lexical mitigators. As Mir (1993) asserts, solidarity politeness, realized through the use of a direct requests mitigated by a lexical mitigator, can be perceived as a polite request.

The table below shows the number of requests by request strategy. Strategies coded as direct requests are green while indirect requests are blue. Across scenarios, query willingness strategies were the preferred response type, except in scenario four which involved a request for transportation to a work meeting.

Table (10) Number of English Requests by Request Strategy

Type	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	Total
Modal Directive	26.7% (8)	20.0% (6)				3.3% (1)		7.2% (15)
Elliptical Phrase								
Explicit/Hedged Performative			3.3% (1)		3.5% (1)		10.0% (3)	2.4% (5)
Obligation Statement								
Want/Need Statement		3.3% (1)		3.5% (1)	10.3% (3)	16.7% (5)	6.7% (2)	5.8% (12)
Simple Interrogative								
Query Ability	10.0% (3)	16.7% (5)	6.7% (2)	10.3% (3)	16.7% (5)	26.7% (8)	20.0% (6)	15.3% (32)
Query Willingness	60.0% (18)	60.0% (18)	60.0% (18)	34.5% (10)	58.6% (17)	53.3% (16)	63.3% (19)	55.8% (116)
Query Permission	3.3% (1)		30.0% (9)	51.7% (15)	3.5% (1)			12.5% (26)
Query Possibility					3.5% (1)			0.5% (1)
Hint					3.5% (1)			0.5% (1)
Total	100% (30)	100% (30)	100% (30)	100% (29)	100% (29)	100% (30)	100% (30)	100% (208)

The table illustrates an overall pattern of a preference for query willingness strategies with the notable exception of item four where 15 of the responses used the query permission strategy.

Item number five, which involved a request for help to clear land for a garden, has the widest range of request strategies of any DCT item. While query willingness remains

the most frequent strategy used, every other indirect strategy is also represented in the data. This scenario was the only scenario to use query possibility and hint strategies. This request is one of the most imposing requests on the DCT, as it requests the hearer to perform physical labor. Additionally, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer is that of neighbors not family the need for mitigation is more substantial. If the request were made to a family member, the speaker could utilize more direct request strategies because the closeness of the relationship and the expected reciprocity of the labor involved would decrease the necessity for conventionally polite strategies. While close relationships between neighbors is traditionally more common in rural settings, the level of closeness between neighbors can vary substantially. Relational variation between neighbors coupled with low obligation on the part of the neighbor to assist in the planting of the garden could help to account for the large range of indirect and direct strategies in item five.

It is important to note that there were no direct commands used in this item. Only two types of direct strategies are represented: performatives and need statements. Need statements can transfer a certain level of perceived power to the hearer. The hearer has the capacity to fill the speaker's need if he or she decides to do so. This is a contrast to the mood derivable strategy in which the power is held by the speaker. Though need statements are more direct than query strategies, their presence can be explained because they transfer of power to the hearer. The example below is a good example of a shift in power based on the use of a need statement.

(23) US18 – I know you are very busy, but I need your help desperately.
(Scenario 5 – garden)

In the example, the speaker uses a need statement to defer the power to the hearer in order to downplay the imposition placed on the hearer. By giving the hearer power while still remaining direct about the purpose of the request, the speaker mitigates the request while still accomplishing the ultimate goal of getting what he or she wants.

4.4 English and Spanish Data Comparison

In this section the data from each speaker group are compared for each of the seven DCT scenarios. These data are analyzed qualitatively to determine the pragmatic motivations for the selection of request variety and mitigators. This section seeks to answer Research Question 1: How do the requests of speakers of Spanish from Costa Rica differ from English speakers from the southern United States?

Representative examples were systematically chosen for each language and scenario by first tallying the number of lexical and syntactic mitigators per item and averaging them. Then utilizing that average as the standard, the examples were selected from the responses which represented the most commonly occurring request variety (in the case of English speakers this was the query willingness variety). Additional examples that highlight certain trends for the Costa Rican and American groups are also be presented.

4.4.1 Scenario 1

In scenario 1, the speaker asks a complete stranger to hold his or her place in line at the bus station so that the speaker may go to the restroom. In this scenario, the two speaker groups differed substantially in the way that they realized this request. The

following examples represent the average responses for item 1 in terms of request strategy, lexical and syntactic mitigation.

(24) CR14 - *Señor/a, ¿usted podría cuidarme mi campo en la fila? Tengo que ir al baño gracias.*

(25) US3 - Would you please save my place?

The Costa Rican example begins with a vocative address that functions as a call in this environment. This acts to create a connection with the hearer and to gain the individual's attention. The address introduces the request. The speaker in this example then uses the *usted* form of address, which is the common form of address in Costa Rican Spanish. The use of the verb *poder* in the conditional is both a marker of optionality and the query ability request strategy. The request is followed by an explanatory phrase that provides a reason why the request is being made, in this case *Tengo que ir al baño* ('I have to go to the bathroom').

English request US3 contrasts the Spanish request CR14 by using the query willingness strategy. The speaker uses a similar technique to the Costa Rican speaker in that the conditional form is used to provide optionality. Imbedded into the request is the politeness marker *please*. There is no explanation given for why the request is being asked in the American exemplar.

The requests made by both groups had a range of levels of directness and methods of mitigation that deviated from the exemplar. In the example below, the English speaker provides a reason for the request similar to the Spanish exemplar. Deviations can also be seen in the following Spanish example.

(26) US12 - Would you mind saving my spot? I need to go to the bathroom.

(27) CR3 - *Por favor ¿me cuidaría mi campo para ir al baño?*

Like the English exemplar, the Spanish-speaker used the politeness marker *por favor*. However, there is a difference in the usage of please/*por favor* between the two speakers. The Spanish-speaker used this term as a call, whereas the English speaker used *please* to convey politeness. This example also uses the simple interrogative strategy. The SI strategy is more direct, but, in this example, is mitigated by the use of the conditional. Additionally, there is an explanatory phrase attached to the request.

4.4.2 Scenario 2

In this scenario, the English speakers used a number of direct strategies with lexical mitigators attached to the request. However, the preferred strategy remained query willingness, while query ability was the preferred strategy for the Spanish speakers for this DCT item. Below are two responses that are exemplars in both the type and number of mitigators used, but also in the strategy used.

(28) US7 – Will y'all get me some things that I need, please?

(29) CR14 – *¿Me podría comparar unas cosas que necesito del súper? Es que estoy enferma y no quiero salir. Gracias.*

Speaker 7 from the American group used a lightly mitigated request. No syntactic mitigators were used, and the only lexical mitigator was the politeness marker *please* at the end of the phrase. While the speaker uses an indirect strategy, the pattern for more direct requests present in items one and two is still followed. The speaker uses fewer mitigators, but the request is tagged at the end with a lexical mitigator that works to soften the request.

Speaker 14 from the Costa Rican group uses much more mitigation in the request than the American speaker. CR14 begins with the head act of the request. The head act, or the element of the request that contains the speaker's desired action from the hearer, is mitigated by the use of the conditional. This provides more optionality to the hearer. The speaker then follows the request with an explanatory phrase and, like the American speaker, the politeness marker *gracias*.

Although the two speakers used politeness strategies through the use of *please* and *gracias*, a difference exists between the two individuals in their usage of these strategies. In the use of *please* the speaker defers the option to choose to the hearer whether or not he or she will comply with the request. By using *gracias*, the Costa Rican speaker does not defer the option to the hearer. Instead, the speaker expects that the hearer will agree to comply with the request. In this environment, *gracias* acts as a command, and has a stronger illocutionary force than does *please*.

An interesting difference in interpretation of the scenario was also present for this DCT item. This difference was primed by the prompt for scenario 2 through the use of the word *market/mercado*. The Spanish speakers consistently interpreted the use of *mercado* to mean 'grocery store'. The English speakers interpreted the use of *market* to mean a farmer's market. This interpretational distinction led to references to vegetables in many of the requests by the American speakers. Explicit references to a supermarket were made by the Spanish speakers. Regional differences in dialect could lead to other interpretations for American or Costa Rican speakers in different parts of their respective countries. The distinction noted above can be seen clearly in the examples below.

(30) CR9 – *¿Ustedes me pueden comprar lo que tengo anotado en esta lista si van al súper? Gracias.*

(31) CR14 – *¿Me podría comparar unas cosas que necesito del súper? Es que estoy enferma y no quiero salir. Gracias.*

(32) US9 – Please bring me x, y, and z from the farmers market.

(33) US30 – If you happen to see any fresh squash or okra, would you pick me up some?

In the examples from CR9 and CR14, there is explicit reference to the supermarket. None of the English responses made reference to the supermarket; however, there were explicit references to the farmers market, as in the example from US9. Additionally, common items that would be found at a farmers market, such as squash and okra, were referenced by the American speakers.

4.4.3 Scenario 3

In scenario 3, the speakers must ask an acquaintance to join him or her at a table in a crowded restaurant. In both groups, a high number of query permission strategies were noted. Query permission was the preferred strategy used by the Spanish speakers, but query willingness remained the preferred strategy for the English speaker.

(34) CR14 – *¿Podemos sentarnos con usted? Es que ya no hay más mesas disponibles. ¿Está bien? Si no, no hay problema!!*

(35) US25 – Hello! Would you mind if we join you? There doesn't seem to be any empty tables.

Similarly to the query ability strategies, query permission strategies use the verb *poder* in Spanish. The difference between the two categories is in the focus of the verb. There is a shift from “can you” (query ability) to “can I” (query permission). We see this in the example from CR14 where the Costa Rican speaker uses the first person plural to ask to

sit with the hearer. This request does not use any syntactic mitigation; however, there are two phrasal groupings that act as lexical mitigators. The first mitigator grouping is an explanatory phrase that is common throughout the Costa Rican responses. The second phrasal grouping is formed by two phrases that act as a unit expressing optionality for the hearer. This acts as a manner in which to decrease the amount of imposition on the hearer.

This scenario was especially rich in the number of vocatives used. Five different vocative calls were used by the Costa Rican speakers as introductions to the request. Below are two interesting examples that show vocatives and their use as a manner in which to create feeling of camaraderie between the speaker and the hearer.

(36) CR6 – Hola. ¿Cómo está (marked out estás)? ¿Cómo va todo? Le (Te) presento a mis amigos x, y, z. ¿Qué está (estás) haciendo? ¿Está (estás) esperando a alguien? Si dice que sí, entonces me despido y me voy a otro lugar. Si dice que no, entonces le pregunto si podríamos sentarnos con él/ella.

(37) CR15 – Mae, ¿le molestaría si nos sentamos con usted? (Y si dice que sí) ¡Pura Vida Mae!

In example (36), the speaker begins the request with the call *hola*. This acts as a way to gain the attention of the hearer and to create a link between the two individuals. Unlike in many of the responses, the speaker does not initially ask to join the table with the hearer. Instead, the speaker begins a conversation which builds rapport between the individuals. This is also done through the speaker introducing his or her companions. The speaker then asks if there will be anyone else joining the hearer. Only then does the speaker ask the hearer to join the table.

Example (37) is similar to example (36) in that there is an attempt to create camaraderie between the speaker and the hearer. The speaker begins the request with the vocative *mae*. This is an address that is acting as a call in this environment. The same term is used at the end of the request as an address. *Mae* is a Costa Rican term that would be translated to something similar to ‘dude’ in English. The speaker then makes a request using a query willingness strategy that focuses on the level of imposition that is being placed on the hearer. This is paired with the use of the conditional that acts as a syntactic mitigator on the request. The speaker then follows the request with ¡*Pura Vida Mae!* *Pura Vida* is another common Costa Rican saying that has a variety of translations based on context. In this case it is a positive response similar to ‘great!’ or ‘thanks!’ directed at the hearer for allowing the speaker to join the table. The use of distinctly Costa Rican lexical items in the request is a way to solidify feelings of camaraderie between the speaker and the hearer.

4.4.4 Scenario 4

In scenario 4, participants are asked to make a request for transportation to a work meeting. The realization of this request was drastically different for the English speakers and the Spanish speakers. The English speakers did not ask for the hearer to take the speaker to the work meeting in many cases. Instead, the speaker asked to use the hearer’s car. As can be seen in table (5), the Spanish speakers did not use query permission in any of the elicited responses. In every instance for the Costa Ricans, the request centered on the speaker’s desire for the hearer to drive the speaker to the work function.

There are a number of possible explanations for this trend and deviation between the responses from the two groups of speakers. Cars for many individuals in Costa Rica

are items that are both extremely expensive and used primarily for activities relating to work. This is especially true in the region included in this study where many vehicles are used for farming and other work related tasks. Unlike the Costa Rican participants, the American participants asked for use of the car. This could be tied to the desire for control by the American speakers. With the use of the car, the Americans can come and go from their work meeting without the constraints of having someone else drive to and from the meeting.

The examples below highlight the difference in the way in which the speakers from each group realized the request for transportation.

(38) CR14 – *¿Me podría llevar a la oficina antes de la 1 pm? Es que tengo una reunión y no tengo en que ir. Por favor.*

(39) US3 – Can I please borrow your car?

In example (38), the speaker asks his or her brother for transportation to the meeting. The conditional is used in conjunction with a query ability strategy. Additionally, there are two lexical mitigators realized through an explanatory phrase and a politeness marker. This is very different from example (39) in which the English speaker uses a query permission strategy to gain access to the car. The only mitigation on the phrase is the use of the politeness marker please. Differences in the accessibility of the speakers to cars causes a difference in the realization of the requests.

As many families have multiple cars, borrowing a car is not as big of an inconvenience to the hearer as it would be for the hearer to drive the speaker to the meeting. This is very different from the Costa Rican context. There are no car

manufacturing plants in Costa Rica, so all vehicles in the country must be imported. All car imports face a hefty import tax of 52.29% for cars between 1 and 3 years old, 63.91% for cars between 4 and 5 years old, and 89.03% for cars older than 5 years in order to be released from customs as of 2012 (Lopez, 2012). The heavy import taxes leave cars too expensive for many Costa Rican families to afford. This lowers the accessibility that many Costa Ricans have to a vehicle, and makes it highly unlikely that a family or individual would have more than one vehicle. The contextual factors heavily impact the structures used in this DCT item.

4.4.5 Scenario 5

Scenario 5 involves a request for assistance from a neighbor in clearing ground for a garden. Although the speakers from the different groups used different request strategies to realize this request, their responses are similar. Examples (40) and (41) below highlight similarities in the realization of this request.

(40) CR1 - *¿Me podría ayudar con la hortaliza y cuando produzca lo repartimos?*

(41) US22 - Would you mind helping me get my land ready for a garden? You can plant some vegetables if you like.

In example (40), the speaker promises to share the crop from the garden in return for assistance in preparing the land. Although there is not a promise of a shared crop with the hearer in example (41), there is offered the opportunity to plant additional vegetables in the garden. In both speaker groups, sharing in the produce from the garden was a common theme.

Mutual benefit from the garden was expressed in other ways for the Costa Rican speakers. Many of the Costa Rican participants, if not all, have neighbors that are farmers. Since time working on someone else's land is time that an individual cannot work his or her own land, there was a theme of compensation in some way for the hearer of the request. In some responses, the produce from the garden was shared. In other examples, there was an offer to pay the hearer for his or her work in the garden. The examples below show two such requests.

(42) CR14 – ¿Me podrían ayudar a limpiar mi parcela? Yo les pagaría por hora.
😊

(43) CR15 – ¿Cuánto me cobra cuate por ayudarme para sembrar?

Example (42) explicitly states the intention on the part of the speaker to pay the hearer for his or her work in the garden. Additionally, the participant used a smiley emoticon when filling out this response. Given that the DCT is a written realization of a spoken interaction, we can draw the conclusion that the smile would translate into the interaction as a way in which to mitigate the request. Example (43) uses an inquiry into the amount that the neighbor would charge to assist in the garden as a way in which to ask for assistance. The speaker mitigates the request by using the address *cuate* which would translate to 'buddy'. The use of an address to create camaraderie between the speaker and hearer as well as the desire to pay the hearer mitigates this request.

4.4.6 Scenarios 6 and 7

In the two scenarios both languages were similar in the way in which they were mitigated and the context of the requests. Both are requests for assistance in different elements of a community party. Across the two scenarios, both languages used the same

average number of lexical mitigators within each language; however, there was a lower average number of syntactic mitigators for the Costa Rican speaker group. The lack of the conditional as a syntactic mitigator for scenarios 6 and 7 for the Spanish speakers results in less optionality present in the request. This results in a more direct request than the requests of the American speakers. A decrease in optionality is shown in the following examples.

(44) CR1 – *Usted que cocina tan rico, ¿por qué no me ayuda a preparar la comida?* (Assistance cooking)

(45) CR14 – *¿Me puede colaborar con un premio para las actividades de la fiesta? Cualquier cosa está bien. Necesitamos ayuda con donaciones.* (Bingo prizes)

(46) US8 – Would you please help me cook something for the party?
(Assistance cooking)

(47) US26 – We are trying to raise funds for our school. Would you be willing to help provide prizes for the events? (Bingo prizes)

In examples (44) and (45) there is a lack of the conditional. This lack of optionality can be explained through an elaboration given by one of the Costa Rican participants. He explained, “Si es parte de algún comité, es obligación para con la comunidad ayudar, de lo contrario la mejor es pagar por el servicio.” Since the context of the DCT scenario was a fundraiser for the school, it would be an obligatory for the community members to assist in whatever ways they can. Since it is an obligation, the level of directness does not have to be mitigated in the same way as scenarios in which there is no obligation to comply. However, examples (44) and (45) are mitigated using lexical mitigators. Speaker 1 in example (44) uses a compliment, and speaker 14 in example (45) gives the option for the hearer to choose the prize to be donated.

Examples (46) and (47) from the English-speaking participants used more syntactic mitigation in their responses. In many communities in the United States, participation in the planning and implementation of a fundraiser is only the responsibility of those directly involved with the school or organization. In other words, there is less sense of obligation to participate. Along with syntactic mitigation, the English speakers also utilized a politeness marker and an explanatory phrase to mitigate the request.

4.5 Maxims of Politeness and Requests

This section will present a proposed ranking of Lakoff's (1977) maxims of politeness that can be used to analyze the pragmatic motivation for the selection of certain request varieties and mitigation strategies. The rankings presented below correspond to the Costa Rican dialect of Spanish and the Southern American dialect of English. Given the dialectal variation in request structures represented in previous studies, such as Placencia's (1998, 2005) analysis of Peninsular and Ecuadorian Spanish, modifications to the present rankings would need to be made to represent the tendencies of other varieties of Spanish and English.

Figures (4) and (5) below show the proposed rankings for Costa Rican Spanish and Southern American English. The constraints are ranked with highest ranking maxims on the left. Lakoff's (1977) maxim "be polite" for both the Costa Rican speakers and the American speakers was higher ranking than the maxim "be clear". Evidence for this ranking can be clearly seen in the preference for conventionally indirect strategies as well as the use of lexical and syntactic mitigators. Dialects of Spanish, such as Peninsular

Spanish, would have a change in the rankings to represent the preference for direct forms found in previous studies.

Be Polite			Be Clear
Do not Impose	Offer Options	Encourage Feelings of Camaraderie	

Figure (4) – Southern American English Constraint Ranking

Be Polite			Be Clear
Offer Options	Encourage Feelings of Camaraderie	Do not Impose	

Figure (5) – Costa Rican Spanish Constraint Ranking

Differences between Southern American English and Costa Rican Spanish can be seen when the “be polite” maxim is expanded into Lakoff’s (1977) sub-maxims of politeness. The proposed ranking for Southern English places “do not impose” as the highest ranking of the sub-maxims. It is followed by “offer options” and “encourage feelings of camaraderie.”

This ranking is supported by the preference for query willingness strategies. Through questioning the willingness of the hearer to perform the desired task instead of questioning the ability of the individual, the speaker is judging the amount of imposition that the task places on the hearer. This is the opposite of what is seen in the Costa Rican data. Instead, optionality and camaraderie are the two most important sub-maxims

followed by do not impose. In contrast, Costa Rican speakers question the speaker's ability to perform the task.

Since Costa Rica is much more of a collectivist society in which family and community play a substantial role, it is expected that if someone has the ability to help then they will. The United States is much more individualistic. This leads to the questioning of willingness to help. While the ability to help may exist, the willingness to help may not.

Optionality is very important for both groups, but it is the highest ranking sub-maxim for the Costa Rican speakers. The conditional to express optionality is used extensively throughout the Costa Rican data in conjunction with the verb *poder*. These elements provide the hearer with a high degree of optionality in choosing whether or not to comply with the request. Camaraderie is also very important for the Costa Rican speakers. Extensive usage of vocatives and mitigators that attempt to highlight relational bonds are common in the responses from Costa Rican Spanish. The examples below highlight attempts by the Costa Rican speakers to create bonds of camaraderie

(48) CR10 – *Tengo una reunión, ¿Me iría a dejar en una carrera? Ahí lo invito a tomar café!!! (Scenario 4 – Work transportation)*

(49) CR9 – *Mi hermanillo, me podría hacer un raí (ride) a una reunión que tengo a la 1 p.m. (Scenario 4 – Work transportation)*

In example (48), the speaker asks the hearer to take him or her to a work meeting. As a mitigator, the speakers invites the hearer to come and have coffee. This is an attempt at focusing on the relationship between the two individuals. Example (49) uses a vocative that is modified by the diminutive morpheme in Spanish '-illo'. In both examples, the relationship between the individuals is focused upon, not the request itself.

The request structures used for Costa Rican Spanish and American English represent the pragmatic hierarchy of requests in each language. Speakers mentally filter potential requests through the pragmatic filter of the constraint hierarchy. Deviations from this ordering become marked in the dialect.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

5.1 Summary of Study Conclusions

The current study was designed to compare requests of Costa Rican Spanish speakers to requests of Southern American English speakers. Data was collected through the use of a discourse completion test comprised of seven hypothetical scenarios. Certain tendencies were noted across the DCT items in both the types of request and the types of mitigation selected.

Both speaker groups preferred conventionally indirect strategies across DCT items. This supports the findings of Félix-Brasdefer (2009) in his analysis of Costa Rican requests that Costa Rican speakers preferred conventionally indirect and more deferential requests. While both groups preferred conventionally indirect requests, they differed on the type of indirect request favored. Costa Rican speakers preferred the query ability strategy, while the American speakers preferred the query willingness strategy.

Variation was noted on certain DCT items. American speakers utilized more direct requests than were initially anticipated in items one and two of the DCT. The physical discomfort for the speaker associated with these items could explain the higher number of direct request that appear in this item. Also, items five through seven for the Costa Rican speakers had a lower average number of lexical and syntactic mitigators than the averages for the first four DCT items. These items have the potential for the hearer to receive some benefit for completing the task. This could account for the lower number of mitigators used in these items.

Pragmatic differences were also noted between the two speaker groups. Costa Rican speakers used vocatives throughout the data as a means in which to encourage camaraderie between the speaker and the hearer. American speakers used lower numbers of vocatives indicating less desire to foster camaraderie through request structures. Contextual differences between the two groups seemed to have an effect on the way that requests were realized. This was especially true for scenario 4 in which the English-speaking group requested the use of the car where the Spanish-speaking group requested to be dropped off at the work meeting.

Conventional politeness and optionality through the use of the conditional and query strategies were the preferred manner of request for both speaker groups. The American group also utilized solidarity politeness to include the hearer as a part of the interaction. This was realized by more direct requests and the use of lexical mitigators. Costa Rican speakers used a higher average number of lexical mitigators than did the American speakers. These findings show a preference for deferential politeness strategies amongst the Costa Rican speakers. The American speakers also showed considerable deference through their use of the query willingness strategy.

Finally, the current study provided a proposed ranking of maxims that can be used as a basis for future studies on requests. Both Costa Rican Spanish and Southern American English patterned similarly in the rankings with politeness outranking clarity. Differences arose in the sub-maxim rankings. English speakers ranked the avoidance of imposition than did the Spanish speakers. The Costa Rican group valued optionality and the nurturing of camaraderie between speaker and hearer higher than did the English speakers for those two sub-maxims.

5.2 Limitations

Requests elicited through discourse completion tests have been extensively studied. DCTs offer many benefits in studying requests such as controlled and standardized interactional contexts from which to draw conclusions; however, the use of DCTs also has certain innate limitations. DCTs use a written format that is designed to elicit what would normally be spoken data. As is noted in the findings of Beebe and Cummings (1996), because of their written nature, DCTs result in overall less negotiation, less talk, and less elaboration between the speaker and the hearer. As a result, the number of mitigators used in the responses to the DCT items is less than in naturally occurring speech. The use of oral recorded data as the basis for analysis of Costa Rican and Southern American requests would help to expand this research and serve as a check for the conclusions of this study. Additionally, while the speakers in this study are representative of the speech communities from which they come, it is possible that other trends may be found in a larger speaker sample.

This study only includes individuals from areas that are decidedly more rural. The Costa Rican speakers in this study represent speakers that are very much not the standard speakers of Costa Rican Spanish. The overwhelming majority of Costa Ricans live and work in the Central Valley that is occupied by the city of San José. Speakers from San José and other urban areas may vary in the level of directness and the amount of mitigation used. An analysis of data elicited from urban and rural speakers would greatly contribute to more global conclusions about both Costa Rican Spanish and Southern American English.

Additionally, while the Costa Rican speaker group is almost perfectly divided in terms of number of participants based on gender, the American speaker group is heavily weighted towards female participants. Continued development of this data set in both the number of participants of each sex as well as age group would help to develop the findings present in this study.

5.3 Future Research and Applications

These data can serve as a starting point for studies that can expand the understanding of the formation of requests across the Spanish language. Multiple branches of research are possible from these findings. The first is more global in its focus. Through extensive data collection from a variety of sources, we can analyze common tendencies that are shown of Spanish as a whole. Secondly, more research must be conducted on specific dialects of Spanish and English as well as different cultures in these language groups to determine the trends that exist in these communities and to examine the differences that exist between these locations and cultures.

As has been shown by this study and others (Delgado, 1994; Félix-Brasdefer, 2005, 2008, 2009; García, 1989, 1993; Márquez Reiter, 2000, 2002; etc.) much variation exists between dialects of languages. More exploration into the tendencies that arise between dialects and inter-dialectally is needed. This also includes research into the Spanish-speaking population of the United States. Language contact in the United States, as well as locations like Peru with the contact of Spanish and Quechua, has a dramatic impact on the request varieties and mitigation represented in these populations.

Additionally, the field of translation and translation studies can benefit extensively from the findings of this and other studies. As can be seen in this study,

equivalency of form does not always equal an equivalency of illocutionary force or perceived politeness by the recipient of the request. Since variation exists between dialects and language as to what is perceived as acceptable in a given context, it is important for translators to focus not only on maintaining the desired content of the utterance but also a maintenance of the illocutionary force of the utterance.

Lastly is the implications for the field of second language acquisition. Second language learners typically do not understand the pragmatics behind the formation of structures like requests. The culture from which the language learners come impacts the way in which they frame the world. This in turn impacts the way in which they write, speak, and understand the second language. As such, it is necessary to explicitly teach the pragmatics of requests in a framework that students can understand and apply. By formalizing certain structures into formulas based on actual native speaker production that can be taught in the L2 classroom, students can use native like structures in an attempt at approximating closer to actual native production.

As was noted in figure (3) in section 4.2, certain tendencies for the formation of requests in the Costa Rican dialect of Spanish were noted. The figure below represents a proposed formula for the teaching of requests using the Costa Rican dialect. This formula would provide students with a structural framework from which to build in order to be perceived as polite within the Costa Rican dialect.

(vocative) [(poder) (conditional) request] (mitigator 1) (mitigator 2)
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Figure (6): SLA Costa Rican Proposed Request Formula

The formula above uses parenthesis to represent optional elements, while brackets represent required elements in the request. In this structure, vocatives such as a person's name or *hola* can be used to gain the attention of the hearer. The request then follows using the query ability request variety through the use of *poder*. To increase mitigation and give more optionality, the conditional form may be used. Following the request a two mitigators may be used. The first, based on the data, is an explanatory phrase. This phrase explains the reason why the request is being made or provides an excuse why the desired action is needed. Following the explanatory phrase is a politeness marker such as *por favor* or *gracias*. Other formulaic frames may be developed to represent other dialects of Spanish that can be taught in second language classrooms to assist students in producing more native like structures.

The proposed rankings could easily be used as a basis for a more theoretical model of requests, such as Optimality Theory (OT). The OT framework is based upon a series of violable universal constraints. These constraints, called the CON, represent universal tendencies across languages. The constraints represented in the CON are given a ranking that varies based on the language. The CON and the rule ranking are housed in an evaluative function, EVAL. Linguistic candidates are generated in the GEN function and then pass through the filters (constraint rankings) in EVAL. The most optimal candidate, the candidate that has the least objectionable constraint violations, is selected as the output (Archangeli, 1997). The rankings provided in this study could be transitioned into the role of universal constraints that would then be ranked according to importance within each language, dialect, and culture. These threads of research together could lead to major findings and developments in Spanish linguistics and education.

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Appendices

A.

Cuestionario 1

Estamos estudiando el uso del español por nativo hablantes del español en distintos contextos y situaciones. Queremos saber cómo responden los nativo hablantes en las siguientes situaciones. Después de leer cada situación, escriba en el espacio en blanco lo que tú dirías. Muchas gracias por su cooperación.

Ficha de información personal

Lugar de origen (ciudad, país) _____

Lugar de residencia si es diferente al de origen

Seleccione su rango de edad:

- a. 25 o menos b. 26-35 c. 36-45 d. 46-55 e. 56-65
f. 66 o más

Sexo: Masculino Femenino

¿Cuántas horas por semana lee usted?

- a. 0-1 b. 1-2 c. 2-3 d. 3-4 e. 4 o más

¿Qué clase de lectura lee usted?

- a. novelas b. periódicos c. artículos del internet d. revistas e. U otra

¿Habla usted un segundo idioma? _____ ¿Cuáles?

Situación 1:

Está usted en la estación de buses esperando el bus de las 9:00 de la mañana, que lleva un retraso de 20 minutos. A su lado hay una persona desconocida que también ha estado esperado un largo tiempo. Dado la espera, usted necesita ir al servicio sanitario. Entonces usted pide a la otra persona guardar su lugar en la fila. Como le pediría este favor a esta persona.

Situación 2:

Hoy usted amaneció con gripe, pero ocupa ir al mercado para comprar unas cosas. A causa de la gripe, usted no puede ir, pero sabe que algunos miembros de su familia van. Como les pediría a ellos que le haga el favor de comprar las cosas que necesita.

Situación 3:

Usted va a un restaurante con un grupo de amigos. El restaurante está muy ocupado y no hay una mesa disponible para sentarse. Usted ve a un conocido sentado en una mesa con sillas suficientes para usted y sus amigos. Como le pediría compartir la mesa con él.

Situación 4:

Usted tiene una reunión para su trabajo a la una de la tarde, pero no tiene transporte para ir. Su hermano tiene un carro.

Situación 5:

Usted tiene una nueva parcela de tierra con mucho pasto y árboles. Quiere plantar hortalizas, pero usted necesita ayuda para preparar el terreno. Como le pediría a sus vecinos que le ayuden.

Situación 6:

Usted está encargado de organizar una fiesta para la comunidad y tiene que tener algunas personas para cocinar comida para la fiesta. Como solicitaría esta ayuda.

Situación 7:

Cada año, la escuela primaria tiene una fiesta para recaudar fondos. Hay eventos como bingo y otros que otorgan premios a los ganadores. Usted está encargado de solicitar a los miembros de la comunidad cosas que pueden servir como premios. Como le pediría a la gente colaborar.

B.

Survey 1

We are studying the use of English by native speakers of English in distinct contexts and situations. We want to know how native speakers respond in the following situations. After reading each situation, write en the white space what you would say. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Personal Information Card

Place of origin (city, country) _____

Place of residence if different from place of origin

Choose your age range:

a. 25 or younger b. 26-35 c. 36-45 d. 46-55 e. 56-65 f.

66 or older

Sex: Male Female

How many hours a week do you read?

a. 0-1 b. 1-2 c. 2-3 d. 3-4 e. 4 or more

What types of literature do you read?

a. novels b. newspapers c. internet articles d. magazines e. others

Do you speak a second language? _____ What

language? _____

Situation 1:

You are in a bus station waiting for the 9:00 a.m. bus, but it is running 20 minutes behind. Beside you is a person that you do not know that has also been waiting a long time. Because you have been waiting for a long time, you have to use the restroom. You ask the other person to save your spot in line.

Situation 2:

Today is Saturday and you have the flu. Because it is Saturday the farmers market is open in town, and you need some things from the market. Some members of your family are going to go to the market, so you ask them to buy the things you need.

Situation 3:

You go to a restaurant with a group of friends. The restaurant is very busy and there are no free tables for you to sit down. You see an acquaintance with a table and enough seats for you and your friends. You ask to join him.

Situation 4:

You have a work meeting at 1:00 in the afternoon, but you don't have any transportation to get you there. Your brother has a car.

Situation 5:

You have a new piece of land with a lot of grass and trees on it. You want to plant a vegetable garden, but you need help preparing the area for the garden. You ask your neighbors for help.

Situation 6:

You are in charge of organizing a party for the community, and you have to have some people to cook food for the party. You ask...

Sitation 7:

Every year, the elementary school has a party to raise funds for the school. There are events like bingo and others that need prizes for the winners. You are in charge of asking members of the community to donate prizes. You ask...

C.

English DCT Responses

Scenario 1

US1 – Would you save my place?

US2 – Save my place.

US3 – Would you please save my place?

US4 – Save my place please.

US5 – Would you mind holding my place in line? I must use the restroom.

US6 – Could you please hold my spot? I will be right back.

US7 – Would you mind saving my spot while I run to the bathroom real quick?

US8 – Please save my place while I go to the potty.

US9 – Would you please save my place in line while I go to the restroom?

US10 – Would you mind saving my spot?

US11 – Save me a place in line please.

US12 – Would you mind saving my spot? I need to go to the bathroom.

US13 – Please save me a place for a few minutes.

US14 – I have to go to the bathroom. Can I get back in line beside you?

US15 – Would you please save my spot?

US16 – Would you save my place?

US17 – Will you please save my space in line? Thank you.

US18 – Please hold my place. I have to use the restroom.

US19 – Hold my place.

US20 – I really need to use the restroom. Would you mind holding my spot in line?

US21 – Would you please keep my spot in line?

US22 – Would you hold my spot for me in line please?

US23 – Will you please save my place in line?

US24 – Please save my place.

US25 – Would you please save my place in line? I have to go to the restroom.

US26 – Would you please hold my place in line? I'll be right back. Thanks.

US27 – Do you mind saving my spot so I can go to the bathroom?

US28 – This bus is late. I am never going to make it. Would you please hold my place while I go to the bathroom?

US29 – If you are going to be here, could you save my place while I go to the bathroom?

US30 – Can you hold my spot? I will be right back.

Scenario 2

US1 – Will you pick up a few things for me?

US2 – I need some vegetables. Will you pick them up for me?

US3 – Would you get me some vegetables?

US4 – Will you pick me up some things at the market?

US5 – I'm really sick. Would you mind picking up some tomatoes for me at the market?

US6 – Could you pick up something for me?

US7 – Will y'all get me some things that I need, please?

US8 – Please pick up a few things for me.

US9 – Please bring me x, y, and z from the farmers market.

US10 – Pick up some corn and peas while you're out.

US11 – Pick me up a please.

US12 – Could y'all buy me some corn and okra? Thanks.

US13 – I need you to do a favor for me. Please buy some fruit and vegetables for me.

US14 – Will you get me a few items?

US15 – Could you pick up a few things while you'r[e] out?

US16 – Please get me some cereal.

US17 – Will you get these items from the market when you go to the market? Thanks.

US18 – I'm sick and contagious. Since you're going to the market, please bring me some corn and tomatoes.

US19 – Will you pick up some items for me? If you don't mind?

US20 – If I make you a list, would you mind picking up some things for me? I can either send money with you or pay you back when you return.

US21 – Would you please pick up a few things?

US22 – Would you mind bringing me milk and bread from the market?

US23 – If I give you some money, will you please pick up a few things for me?

US24 – Would you get me some eggs?

US25 – Will you please pick up a few items for me when you go to the market today? I am sick and cannot go.

US26 – We need something from the market. Would you please go for me?

US27 – Could you pick up a few things for me at the market when you go?

US28 – Would you pick up a couple of things for me?

US29 – I'm sick with the flu, but I would like you to pick up some things for me when you go to the market. Can I give you a list and me pay you when you get back?

US30 – If you happen to see any fresh squash or okra, would you pick me up some?

Scenario 3

US1 – May we join you?

US2 – May I sit with you?

US3 – Can we please join you?

US4 – Would you mind us joining you for dinner?

US5 – May we join you?

US6 – Do you mind if we join you?

US7 – Can we just sit with you guys?

US8 – Do you mind if we join you?

US9 – May we join you for dinner?

US10 – Mind if I join you?

US11 – Do you mind me joining you?

US12 – Hey! Can we come sit with you?

US13 – Do you mind if we join you? We'll pick up your tab.

US14 – Do you mind if we sit with you since there is [are] no tables?

US15 – Would you mind if we join you?

US16 – Could my friends and I share your table?

US17 – May we sit at your table since there are no available tables? Thank you.

US18 – Boy, this place is busy. Do you mind if we join you?

US19 – Do you mind if we join you?

US20 – This place is packed! Would you care if we sat with you?

US21 – Would you mind if we join you?

US22 – May we join you?

US23 – Do you mind if we join you?

US24 – May we join you?

US25 – Hello! Would you mind if we join you? There doesn't seem to be any empty tables.

US26 – Would you mind if we joined you?

US27 – Do you care if we join you?

US28 – This place is crazy! Would you mind if our group joins you?

US29 – Hello. Are you expecting anyone else to join you? If not, would you mind if my friends and I sit with you?

US30 – Would you think I was crazy if my friends and I asked to join you? We could be here all night waiting on a table.

Scenario 4

US1 – Can I borrow your car?

US2 – Will you drop me by the office?

US3 – Can I please borrow your car?

US4 – Can I borrow your car for tomorrow?

US5 – Would you mind dropping [me] off at my meeting?

US6 – Hey do you mind taking me for a meeting at 1:00?

US7 – Would you possibly mind giving me a ride to my meeting?

US8 – May I borrow your car?

US9 – May I borrow your car to go to my 1 o'clock meeting?

US10 – How about dropping me off for my appointment?

US11 – I need your car this afternoon, please.

US12 – Hey can I borrow your car? I have a meeting to go to

US13 – Will you take me to my meeting? I'll buy you lunch.

US14 – Can I borrow your car for a meeting at 1:00?

US15 – Could I borrow your car this afternoon?

US16 – Would you take me to my work meeting?

US17 – May I borrow your car at 1 today to go to a meeting? Thanks.

US18 – Buddy, I'm in a "jam". Works calls. No car. May I borrow yours?

US19 – If you aren't using your car, may I?

US20 – Hey, I've got an important meeting at work at 1:00. Can I borrow your car?

US21- Can I borrow your car?

US22 – I would call my brother and ask for a ride or ask to borrow his car.

US23 – Do you mind taking me to work?

US24 – Would you please take me to my meeting?

US25 – Could I please borrow your car? I have a meeting at work and don't have a way to get there. Or, could you please take me?

US26 – I need to ask a favor. Can I please borrow your car to go to my work meeting?

US27 – If you are free at 1:00 today, could you take me to an appointment?

US28 – Could you carry me to...where I have to make a 1:00?

US29 – Hello. I'm having trouble with my car, and I've got to get to a meeting today at 1:00. Could you take me for the meeting or let me borrow your car?

US30 – Are you going into town? Could I catch a ride or could I borrow your car for a couple of hours? I'll fill the tank with gas.

Scenario 5

US1 – Would you help me?

US2 – Will you help clear this field?

US3 – I need you to help plan my garden.

US4 – Would you help me plant a vegetable garden?

US5 – I need some help preparing my garden. Would you like to help and we'll share the veggies?

US6 – I was wondering if you would mind helping me

US7 – I was wondering if you could give me some tips for starting my garden?

US8 – Would you mind helping me clear my land?

US9 – I'm excited about my new garden and would love your help and advice.

US10 – Would you mind helping me clean off my lot? I'll share my crop with you when it comes in!

US11 – Let's go plow this garden.

US12 – Hey! I'm planning to plant a garden and need some help clearing this mess.
Could you help me?

US13 – Do you have a tiller?

US14 – Do you mind helping me clear my land for a garden?

US15 – Want to help plant some vegetables?

US16 – Could you please help me plow my garden?

US17 – Would you be so kind as to help me with my garden?

US18 – I know you are very busy, but I need your help desperately.

US19 – If you'll help me with my garden, I'll share the vegetables.

US20 – If you'll help me get everything ready, I'll share some vegetables with you when they come in.

US21 – Would you mind plowing my garden?

US22 – Would you mind helping me get my land ready for a garden? You can plant some vegetables if you like.

US23 – Do you mind helping me clean the land?

US24 – Could we get you to help us get this ground ready to plant a garden?

US25 – Would you please help me clear my land? I need to plant a garden. I will share my crop with you.

US26 – I am planting a garden. Do you have the time to help me prepare the lot?

US27 – Do you mind helping me get a garden ready?

US28 – Could I borrow your tiller?

US29 – I would like to plant a garden, but I need help. If you can help me I will let you share everything.

US30 – We are needing some expertise [expert] help with our garden. Could I impose on you to help me? I'll cook you a nice steak dinner.

Scenario 6

US1 - Would you help cook?

US2 – Will you help prepare food for a party?

US3 – Can you help with food for a party?

US4 – Hey could you bring your grill and help us cook for the party?

US5 – Who can help cook for the party?

US6 – Would you mind bringing some food for our party?

US7 – Would you like to make some quesadillas for our party for the community?

US8 – Would you please help me cook something for the party?

US9 – Would you be willing to make ‘x’ for the party?

US10 – I need some help preparing food for our party. Are you available and would you mind helping?

US11 – I need you to fix....

US12 – Can y’all help me cook some food for the party?

US13 – I need some wonderful cooks to help me out for this party. Can you help?

US14 – I need help preparing food for the party.

US15 – You’re the best cook in the neighborhood. Would you please help out?

US16 – Who would be willing to help with the cooking?

US17 – I need a few people to help me cook for the party. Any volunteers?

US18 – I need volunteers to cook!

US19 - We’re having a community party. Will you please cook your favorite dish?

US20 – I need some help preparing food for the party. Would you fix a dish?

US21 – Could you guys volunteer your time to help?

US22 – Would you mind to bring so and so for the party?

US23 – Will you help me cook for the party?

US24 – Would you all mind bringing a dish for the party?

US25 – Will you please help cook for the party? We need food for several people.

US26 – Can I count on you to help bring some food for our community party?

US27 – I need people to volunteer for cooking.

US28 – Could you possibly help us out and help prepare some food for our function?

US29 – I am in charge of the community party, but I can't cook. Would you like to help in order that we can meet people in the community?

US30 – I'm sending out a signup list for theparty. If you want to join in, sign your name by the dish you want to cook.

Scenario 7

US1 – Would you be willing to help?

US2 – Will you donate an item to help raise money for the school?

US3 – Our school is having a fundraiser. We wonder if you will help us with game prizes.

US4 – Would you like to donate an item for the school fundraiser?

US5 – Could you donate a prize to help the elementary school kids?

US6 – Would you mind sending some prizes to help out with the school party?

US7 – Do you think you'd want to donate some prizes for games like bingo for the fundraiser?

US8 – Would you be willing to donate some prizes for a bingo game at our school?

US9 – We need prizes for the winners and would appreciate everyone donating one item.

US10 – Our school is having a fund raiser for our elementary students. Do you have an item you would be willing to donate?

US11 – Can you please donate...

US12 – We are having a party to raise funds for the school. Would you mind donating prizes to help? Thank you.

US13 – You are always so generous and I know you will want to help us with our school party to raise funds.

US14 – Prizes are needed for the school fundraiser. Will you donate?

US15 – Could you please help with the education of our kids?

US16 – Who all will donate prizes for the school party?

US17 – Would you help with prizes for the fund raiser at school?

US18 – Here I am asking for help, but you have always been so faithful to donate.

US19 – Do you have any items you can donate that we could use for prizes at the party?

US20 – We are having a fundraising event at school and need prizes. Would you be willing to donate an item?

US21 – Would you be willing to make a donation?

US22 – Would you mind donating prizes for our school's fundraiser?

US23 – Will you please donate items for the elementary school party?

US24 – Would you please bring 1 item per person that can be given as prizes for the winners?

US25 – Will you please donate a prize for our school to help raise funds?

US26 – We are trying to raise funds for our school. Would you be willing to help provide prizes for the events?

US27 – I need help with organizing prizes.

US28 – Remember the annual party to raise funds for the school? Could you possibly help us by donating some prizes? Doesn't have to be big – anything will help.

US29 – I need some help to raise funds for the school. I do not have children in the school, but I will buy the prizes if you will come help with the games.

US30 – We are asking you to join in our fundraiser for our school. Any donations you make are tax deductible. Thank you Thank you

D.

Spanish DCT Responses

Situación 1

CR1 – ¿Me guarda el campo porfa? Ya vuelvo.

CR2 – Amigo, ¿me puede podría guardar el campo mientras voy al baño?

CR3 – Por favor ¿me cuidaría mi campo para ir al baño?

CR4 – ¿Me puede usted por favor cuidar mi lugar?

CR5 – Usted me puede hacer el favor de aportarme un campo pues necesito ir al servicio sanitario

CR6 – Hola. Disculpe. ¿Usted sería tan amable de cuidarme este lugar en la fila?

CR7 – Disculpe ¿usted sería tan amable de cuidarme el campo?

CR8 – Con permiso ¿usted cree que pueda guardarme el espacio?

CR9 – Disculpe, ¿me podría guardar el campo? Necesito ir al baño. Gracias

CR10 – ¿Sería mucho molestia si le pido que me cuide mi espacio? En un minuto vuelvo.

CR11 – Disculpe, ¿usted podría cuidarme el campo en la fila?

CR12 – Hola. ¿Usted me haría el favor de guardar el espacio para ir al baño un momento?

CR13 – Disculpe, ¿podrías cuidar mi espacio un momento?

CR14 – Señor/a, ¿usted podría cuidarme mi campo en la fila? Tengo que ir al baño gracias.

CR15 – ¿Me podría hacer el favor de guardarme el campo porfis?

Situación 2

CR1 – Ya que ustedes van al súper ¿por qué no me traen estas cosas?

CR2 – ¿Me puede hacer un favor? ¿Me puede ir a comprarme estas medicinas en la clínica? Porque en este momento tengo que ir al mercado.

CR3 – ¿Usted me haría el favor de traerme las compras mías ya que estoy con gripe?

CR4 - ¿Podría usted ayudarme con las compras?

CR5 – Necesito que usted me haga el favor de traerme unas cosas que ocupo, pues tengo gripe y no me siento bien de salud.

CR6 – Le digo a mi esposa: Karen, ¿usted me haría el gran favor de traerme x, y, x de la feria?

CR7 – Lo llamó por teléfono, le digo que haga las compras y le doy el dinero “¿me compra unas cositas?”

CR8 - ¿Usted podrá hacerme el favor de cómprame etc.

CR9 – ¿Ustedes me pueden comprar lo que tengo anotado en esta lista si van al súper?

Gracias.

CR10 - ¿Podría pasar por mi casa para lleve plata y me compre unas cositas que necesito?

CR11 – Yo también necesito algunas cosas. ¿Me las puede traer?

CR12 - ¿Usted me puede traer unas cosas? es que estoy con gripe y le agradezco. Me siento muy mal.

CR13 – Por favor, ¿me harían el favor de comprar unas cosas que necesito?

CR14 – ¿Me podría comprar usas cosas que necesito del súper? Es que estoy enferma y no quiero salir. Gracias.

CR15 – Necesito que me traigan un kilo de chayotes. ¿Podrían traérmelos, si me hace el favor?

Situación 3

CR1 – ¿Sería posible que compartamos la mesa?

CR2 – ¿Nos podríamos sentarnos aquí con usted amigo? porque el restaurante está lleno/
¿Está ocupado el espacio?

CR3 – Por favor ¿puede bajar de la mesa? Mis amigos y yo necesitamos el espacio.

CR4 – ¿Nos puede dar un espacio en su mesa?

CR5 – Hola, ¿cómo está? ¿Podemos compartir con usted en su mesa? Pues no tenemos espacios para sentarnos.

CR6 – Hola. ¿Cómo está (marked out estás)? ¿Cómo va todo? Le (Te) presento a mis amigos x, y, z. ¿Qué está (estás) haciendo? ¿Está (estás) esperando a alguien? Si dice que sí, entonces me despido y me voy a otro lugar. Si dice que no, entonces le pregunto si podríamos sentarnos con él/ella.

CR7 - ¿Podemos sentarnos con usted por favor?

CR8 - ¿Podemos acompañarlos mis amigos y yo?

CR9 – Amigo, ¿podríamos sentarnos con ustedes?

CR10 - ¿Le sería incomodo si le hacemos compañía? Es que no tenemos espacio.

CR11 – ¿Es posible que yo y mis amigos podamos compartir la mesa con usted?

CR12 – Hola. ¿Me puedo llevar las sillas para mi y mis amigos? Gracias. Es que no hay suficientes.

CR13 – Buenas caballero, disculpa la molestia. ¿Usted cree posible compartir la mesa con mis amigos y yo?

CR14 – ¿Podemos sentarnos con usted? Es que ya no hay más mesas disponibles. ¿Está bien? Si no, no hay problema!!

CR15 – Mae, ¿le molestaría si nos sentamos con usted? (Y si dice que sí) ¡Pura Vida Mae!

Situación 4

CR1 – Mae, ocupo que me lleve al trabajo. Tengo una reunión.

CR2 – (llamo por teléfono) Hermano, me podría llevar a la uno en punto a San Luis a la reunión? Es que no tengo transporte en que ir.

CR3 – Por favor ¿cuánto me cobra y me lleva al sitio de reunión?

CR4 - ¿Usted podría llevarme a la reunión?

CR5 – Hermanito, usted me puede hacer el favor de llevarme a mi trabajo es que tengo una reunión y debo asistir.

CR6 – Alex (Alex is the taxi driver), ¿Usted podría llevarme al trabajo?

CR7 – Hermano, ¿me va a dejar en la reunión por favor?

CR8 - ¿Usted va a ir a la reunión? ¿Usted cree que me pueda llevar?

CR9 – Mi hermanillo, me podría hacer un raí (ride) a una reunión que tengo a la 1 p.m.

CR10 – Tengo una reunión, ¿Me iría a dejar en una carrera? Ahí lo invito a tomar café!!!

CR11 – “No tengo hermanos.”

CR12 – Hermano, ¿usted podría llevarme un momento al trabajo a una reunión? Es que se me hace tarde.

CR13 – Hermano, ¿tú me llevarías en tu carro a una reunión de trabajo?

CR14 – ¿Me podría llevar a la oficina antes de la 1 pm? Es que tengo una reunión y no tengo en que ir. Por favor.

CR15 – Mae, llévame – ¿no ve que el carro se me jodió?

Situación 5

CR1 - Me podría ayudar con la hortaliza y cuando produzca lo repartimos.

CR2 – Amigo, ¿me podría ayudar mañana para arreglar un terreno? ¿Podría usted ayudarme?

CR3 – Por favor ¿ustedes me ayudarían a preparar el terreno para la hortaliza?

CR4 - ¿Podrían ustedes ayudarme por favor?

CR5 – Vecina, ¿usted me puede ayudar a limpiar el terreno para sembrar hortaliza? y luego las compartimos.

CR6 – Opción 1: Los contraria con un pago por horas. Opción 2: Hago/organizo una fiesta de agricultura

CR7 – Mira, ¿me podrías echar una manilla en la finca?

CR8 - Me gustaría sembrar unas hortalizas. ¿Me podría ayudar?

CR9 – Amigos, ¿ustedes podrían ayudarme a preparar un terreno para una hortaliza?

CR10 – Le gustaría ayudarme con un terreno para sembrar y le comparto una parte de la cosecha.

CR11 – ¿Usted puede ayudarme a preparar la tierra para cultivar?, así usted tendrá parte de la cosecha.

CR12 – ¿Usted quisiera sembrar algunos árboles en mi parcela? Es un bien para los dos. Compartimos las cosechas.

CR13 – Buenas vecino. Necesito ayuda para preparar terreno. ¿Sería posible que ustedes me ayuden?

CR14 – ¿Me podrían ayudar a limpiar mi parcela? Yo les pagaría por hora. □

CR15 – ¿Cuánto me cobra cuate por ayudarme para sembrar?

Situación 6

CR1 – Usted que cocina tan rico, ¿por qué no me ayuda a preparar la comida?

CR2 – Amigos, ¿ustedes podrían cocinar para la fiesta mañana a la comunidad?

CR3 – Por favor, ¿usted me ayudaría a cocinar para la fiesta?

CR4 – Doña María, ¿usted me podría hacer el favor de ayudarme en la cocina?

CR5 - ¿Usted nos podría ayudar a cocinar para la fiesta comunal? y le agradecemos mucho.

CR6 – Opción 1: Por contratación Opción 2: Si es una causa benéfica, le explicaría la situación y pediría que si por favor serían tan amables de donar x, y, z, su tiempo, y conocimiento para la causa.

CR7 - ¿Quién se apunta para la cocinada?

CR8 – No response

CR9 – Queridos vecinos, necesito algunas personas que me ayuden en la cocina para la fiesta comunal. ¿Quién se apunta?

CR10 - ¿Quiere ayudarme a cocinar para una actividad? y yo le pago las horas trabajadas.

CR11 – “Es parte de algún comité es obligación para con la comunidad ayudar, de lo contrario la mejor es pagar por el servicio.”

CR12 – Hola ¿le gustaría cocinar y colaborar en la fiesta para la comunidad? Y se le pagará por su trabajo.

CR13 – “Programamos [programamos] un reunión para solicitar ayuda.”

CR14 – ¿No quieren ayudarme en la cocina para la actividad? Necesitamos voluntarios, es para una contribución.

CR15 – (le preguntaría a los amigos/conocidos): Mae, ¿usted sabe quién podría cocinarme para la fiesta?

Situación 7

CR1 – Por favor, ocupo su colaboración con premios para los Bingos.

CR2 – ¿Podrían ustedes colaborar mañana en el bingo llevando un premio? – cualquier cosa que usted vea que sea un premio. (Es importante decir “es que” con una explicación)

CR3 - ¿Usted no haría el favor de regálanos premios para la actividad?

CR4 - ¿Usted me podría regalar un premio para la actividad?

CR5 – Estoy pidiendo premios para la escuela y si usted tiene gusto de ayudarme le agradecemos mucho.

CR6 – No response

CR7 – Tenemos un bingo un día de estos, ¿Con qué nos va a ayudar para premio?

CR8- No response

CR9 - ¿Usted me puede ayudar con un premio para el bingo? Es para ayudar a la escuela. Gracias.

CR10 – Estamos organizando una actividad para recordar fondos. ¿Les gustaría colaborar con algo? Cualquier cosa es bien recibida.

CR11 – Le solicitamos su ayuda para colaborar con la comunidad en pro de la causa “x”, con lo que usted desee colaborar.

CR12 – ¿Usted podría donar un regalo para el bingo? Por favor. Es a beneficio de los niños.

CR13 – Miembros de la comunidad, quisiera solicitar su colaboración con algún premio para la fiesta ara recordar fondos para la escuela primaria.

CR14 – ¿Me puede colaborar con un premio para las actividades de la fiesta? Cualquier cosa está bien. Necesitamos ayuda con donaciones.

CR15 – Vamos a hacer una fiesta y necesitamos premios. ¿Quiénes se apuntan?