“When you speak to a police officer and you refer to them as du”
The development of intercultural and pragmatic competence in Australian foreign language students on short-term study abroad in Germany

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ABSTRACT

Study abroad (SA) is often viewed as the ideal context for the acquisition of language and cultural skills which are difficult to foster in the language classroom. Even at the short-term level, SA enjoys a great deal of institutional and governmental support in Australia. Yet in spite of the rhetoric and support surrounding SA, there is a paucity of research examining learning outcomes for Australian students who spend part of their degree abroad. The majority of students studying abroad now do so for 8 weeks or less and their experiences have seldom been examined in empirical research. Drawing on a language socialisation framework, this study seeks to fill this gap by utilising a mixed-methods approach to explore the development of pragmatic and intercultural competence in a group of Australian university students who participated in a 6-week intensive language and culture program in Germany. In addition, it provides an in-depth analysis of the influence of initial L2 proficiency level on these developing competencies.

The data for this study included pre- and post-exchange language awareness interviews, role plays, photo elicitation projects, social media data, participant observation notes and semi-structured interviews. 28 students, with mixed levels of L2 proficiency from absolute beginner to advanced, participated in all phases of data collection. Language awareness interviews and role plays administered before and after the exchange sought to assess students’ awareness and use of various pragmatic features. Intercultural competence was explored using two different methods: 12 participants used a Facebook group designed to facilitate reflection on intercultural differences; the majority of the remaining participants (N=13) submitted photo elicitation projects, again focussing on reflection on intercultural differences. These data were supplemented by rich qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and participant observation notes, intended to provide detailed information to build four case studies of participants’ pragmatic and intercultural learning.

The results demonstrate that the short-term program aided the development of participants’ pragmatic and intercultural competence. Participants improved their awareness and use of German pragmatic practices, in particular address forms. In many cases their development was mediated by explicit socialisation from native speakers, which served to alert students to the social consequences of their language choices. The culturally specific direct communication style and inclination to critique of German native speakers serves as an advantage for students of German who spend time immersed in the L2-land. The
intercultural data revealed that the program encouraged the development of attitudes, knowledge and skills required for intercultural competence. Participants acquired curiosity about cultural issues and became more skilled at analysing these differences. The deciding factor for the way these students dealt with cultural differences was their preparation for intercultural learning: those who received instruction before the exchange were better able to discern cultural differences and reflect on them at a deeper level. Analysis of the case studies confirmed the large amount of individual variation between participants and revealed that those who had no prior knowledge of German were less able to take advantage of opportunities for informal practice in the L2 outside the classroom setting. Their lack of understanding of German cultural practices also hampered their ability to discuss and learn from the cultural differences they perceived in Germany. Methodologically, photo elicitation emerged as an appropriate technique both for assessing intercultural competence and for encouraging intercultural learning for SA participants. Facebook, however, did not appear to encourage higher levels of discussion or reflection on cultural issues, potentially because participants were unused to engaging with Facebook for formal learning.

Overall, this study suggests that short-term SA is indeed valuable for the development of pragmatic and intercultural competence and as such should continue to enjoy support from government, the higher education sector and language educators. However, students must be supported on their journey to understand and reflect on intercultural differences. Sojourners require the provision of a framework for reflection before their departure as well as guidance whilst abroad, especially in the context of short-term programs.
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<tr>
<td>BTLH</td>
<td>Bringing the Learning Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCT</td>
<td>Discourse completion task</td>
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<td>Developmental Model of Intercultural Competence</td>
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<td>Intercultural Development Inventory</td>
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<td>IEREST</td>
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<td>LAI</td>
<td>Language Awareness Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second/Foreign Language</td>
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<td>L2-land</td>
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Study abroad occupies an important place in the language learning careers of many university students. In part, the reason for study abroad’s significance rests in its uniqueness as a context for language learning. Students gain access to informal interactions with local speakers of the L2, and are often socialised into socially and culturally acceptable ways of speaking and doing in a way that is rarely possible in the language classroom (Kinginger, 2008; Shively, 2011). Additionally, students may also interact with culturally different others, and develop an ability to effectively communicate in such situations (Jackson, 2008). A large body of existing research has confirmed the significance of study abroad for language (e.g. Freed, 1995c; Kinginger, 2008) and intercultural learning (e.g. Jackson, 2005; 2009; Covert, 2014).

Like their US and European counterparts, Australian university students have embraced study abroad as an important milestone, especially for language learners. There is, however, a lack of corresponding research investigating the learning experiences of these students. Students are studying abroad in greater numbers and for increasingly shorter periods of time (Nerlich, 2015) but research continues to focus on semester- and year-long programs (Kinginger, 2009). The research that does exist has perhaps one common finding – that there is a large range of individual differences in the learning outcomes of study abroad students, suggesting future research may benefit from adopting a qualitative approach. This thesis aims to fill this gap by investigating the qualitative development of pragmatic and intercultural competence in a group of students who spent 6 weeks participating in a language program in Germany. A second focus point of the thesis is the influence of initial proficiency on the development of these competencies.

This introductory chapter provides further contextual information about study abroad, in particular the situation in Australia, before expanding on the gaps in existing research outlined above. The aims and research questions of the project are introduced, before the theoretical framework and research design are outlined. The chapter concludes with a summary of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Context information

For many students, study abroad represents one of the most meaningful and fruitful experiences in a university degree. This was certainly true for the first time I spent in
Germany many years ago as an undergraduate. One of the benefits was being alerted to the fact that there was a whole world of language outside the textbooks my learning had been confined to until that point. Before I arrived in Germany, the explanation that my textbooks had given for the often ambiguous and sometimes anxiety-inducing system for choosing whether to call someone du (you, informal) or Sie (you, formal) seemed completely satisfactory to me. There was, as I was soon to discover, a lot more to it.

I was participating in a 6-week exchange program in Stuttgart – the same program (albeit a different student cohort) scrutinised in this study. On one of my weekends off, I visited my friend Corinna, at the time in her late twenties, in Bavaria who introduced me to her friend, also in her late twenties, with whom we were to spend the day skiing. I didn’t know at the time that young Germans tend to address each other with du, especially in informal situations (Clyne, Norrby & Warren, 2009). According to one of the native-speaker informants in this study, it is “einfach komisch jemand vom gleichen Alter zu siezen und ähm das, ich weiß nicht, sowas macht man eigentlich nicht, dann bist du der Freak!” [just strange to say Sie to someone of the same age and um, I don’t know, you just don’t do something like that, otherwise you’re a freak!]

Eager to practice my German, as Corinna’s friend started to speak to me in English, I said to her, “Sie können Deutsch sprechen” [you (formal) can speak German], she responded with laughter and said to Corinna “die hat mich gesiezt!” [she called me Sie! (you. formal)], to which Corinna replied “oh du alte Kuh!” [oh you (inf.) old cow!]. Mortified, I went home and attempted to read up on the ‘rules’ for choosing when to use du and Sie and was somewhat dumbfounded to find that there were none – none that applied in all situations at least. At last, I found something that said that it is a little unusual to use Sie with someone who is close to your age, especially in an informal situation like the one described above. I credit that experience with my continuing fascination with the parts of language that most strongly reflect the cultural dispositions of those who speak it.

My own experiences, as well as countless anecdotes from students, language teachers and study abroad program coordinators, confirm the academic and personal significance often assigned to the experience (Forsey, Broomhall & Davis, 2012; Jackson, 2008; Kinginger, 2008). Study abroad (henceforth SA), “a temporary sojourn of pre-defined duration, undertaken for educational purposes (Kinginger, 2009, p.11), enjoys increasing popularity in the Australian context (Dall’Alba & Sidhu, 2013; Olsen, 2008; 2013). Mechanisms for support exist at both the institutional and government level, with many
universities making SA an institutional priority (Green & Mertova, 2013; Olsen, 2008). SA occupies an especially important place for language learners. Given the fact that Australian learners are geographically isolated from the foreign language (L2) they are learning, SA represents an important opportunity for students to experience the L2 in real life: in situations where the way they use language has real consequences, unlike in the classroom.

Research into SA tends to confirm the widespread belief that it is beneficial for language learning, particularly for oral skills (e.g. Brecht, Davidson & Ginsberg, 1993; Freed, 1995c; Segalowitz et al., 2004). This has been shown to be especially true for skills that are difficult to foster in the classroom, such as pragmatic competence (Barron, 2003; 2006; Hassall, 2013; Kinginger, 2008) and intercultural competence (Beaven, 2015; Engle & Engle, 2004; Jackson, 2009; 2011). Progress in the development of these skills cannot easily be taught at home and this has been described as the “raison d’être” of SA (Coleman, 2015, p. 35).

Here pragmatic competence is understood as 1) knowledge of linguistic forms and their functional meanings; 2) sociocultural knowledge and 3) the ability to use these knowledge bases to create a common act in interaction (Taguchi, 2016, p. 3). Intercultural competence refers to “effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations” (Deardorff, 2011, p.66). During SA, students are often socialised into acquiring new and appropriate linguistic and intercultural behaviour. Often for the first time, students are exposed to the fact that choosing an inappropriate form might offend someone or even make communication difficult (Belz & Kinginger, 2003). Likewise, they may realise that relying on their own cultural frames may not work when interpreting German modes of communication – generally a realisation that few students come to within the confines of the language classroom.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Most research on SA focuses on US, European or Japanese learners participating in semester- or year-long programs (Kinginger, 2009). However, these programs are not necessarily the default mode of participation in international study: in the 2014/2015 academic year only 34.3% of US students who studied abroad did so for a semester or longer (Institute of International Education, 2016). Various factors are pushing students in the direction of short-term SA, including smaller financial costs, limited flexibility within degree programs to take electives and financial and personal responsibilities at home (Ecke,
The situation in Australia is possibly more pronounced given the often long geographical distances and associated financial costs of sending Australians overseas. In 2012 66% of Australian students who studied abroad did so for 8 weeks or less (Nerlich, 2015). As most of research on SA concerns students participating in semester or year-long programs, researchers and policymakers alike have been drawn to examine the value of short-term SA for language and intercultural learning (Hassall, 2013; Penington & Wildermuth, 2005).

The lack of research concerning Australian SA students is of concern given several key differences between Australian and US or European students. Australia has been described as a multicultural society with a monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2005; Martin, 2005). This is reflected in the preferences of Australian university students for studying abroad in English-speaking countries. In 2011, 47% of students participating in overseas study did so in the UK, US or Canada (Daly, 2007). In contrast to both European and US higher education, foreign language learning at university in Australia is unique in that most students begin their study of the L2 in their first year at university as ab initio learners (Nettelbeck et al., 2007). There are several reasons behind this, the first being that foreign languages are seldom offered continuously from primary through to high school, meaning that it is the exception rather than the rule for a student to take the same language throughout their schooling (Martin, 2005). Secondly, when the requirement to study a foreign language for admission into university was removed, the number of students taking languages at secondary level fell dramatically (Jansen & Schmidt, 2011).

Australian students have also been shown to lack intercultural competence (henceforth IC), despite the fact that it is often listed by universities as a key graduate attribute (Diaz, 2011). The lack of language and intercultural skills in Australian students, combined with the paucity of studies focusing on these students makes this area worthy of study. In a review of research on language learning in SA contexts, Kinginger (2009) criticises the dominance of research on US, European and Japanese students, and calls for research with new combinations of receiving and sending countries, such as Australia or Germany. Even when we consider research where German is the L2, scholarship is sparse when compared to L2 French or Spanish (Ecke, 2014).

Perhaps the only finding common across all SA studies is the extensive amount of individual variation between students (Coleman & Kinginger, 2013; Kinginger, 2009). Large-scale quantitative studies of the development of language skills often fail to explain these
individual differences (Kinginger, 2008). Researchers are gradually coming to realise the difficulty in capturing changes in students within the complex SA context, and research is beginning to adopt emic perspectives which focus on the “whole person” (Coleman & Kinginger, 2013). However, while micro-level studies focusing on individual participants have enabled many fascinating insights into how students experience SA, many neglect to link these findings with learning outcomes or indeed fail to discuss whether learning has taken place (Kinginger, 2008). There is a growing need for studies which consider both learning outcomes and the individual experiences of the students.

1.3 Aims of the project

Given the gaps in the literature outlined above, the aim of this project was to explore changes in the pragmatic and intercultural competence in a group of 28 Australian students as a result of short-term SA. My study was guided by two research questions.

1. How does short-term SA affect the pragmatic and intercultural competence development of Australian learners of German?
2. What role does initial L2 proficiency play in the developmental trajectories of these students?

These questions were explored with a mixed-method, largely qualitative approach, which is outlined in the sections below.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The idea that learners are socialised into appropriate ways of communicating and using language is central to this thesis. Language socialisation (LS) theory takes the view that all language learning is socially mediated, rather than something that occurs individually in the mind of the learner (Duff, 2007; Lafford, 2007). The theory also emphasises the link between language and culture, and is as such especially appropriate for examining pragmatic competence, given the place pragmatics occupies between the two (Kasper, 2001).

Novices (both children and language learners) gain communicative competence within a new speech community in a process that is mediated by language (Duff, 2007). Due to the existing cultural codes and ideas that L2 learners bring when they attempt to enter the L2 community, LS in a second language is accepted to be more complicated than L1
socialisation. Both the learner and the L2 community can choose to embrace or reject the socialisation process (Watson-Gegeo, 2004). During SA, students have the opportunity to participate in authentic, everyday social interactions where members of the local speech community may also explicitly socialise them into more culturally acceptable modes of speaking. This opportunity for authentic interaction sets SA apart from traditional classroom language learning and this is why language socialisation is a useful framework for the interpretation of language learning during SA (Shively, 2011; Wang, 2010). Working with LS theory raises the question of the role of explicit and implicit socialisation processes in participants’ pragmatic development, and this is explored further in the thesis.

Equally important and related to LS theory is the idea that language and culture are inseparable, resulting in the concept of ‘languaculture’ (Agar, 1994). The term reinforces the connectedness of language and culture, perhaps best viewed through the lens of ‘rich points’ (Agar, 1994). ‘Rich points’ are instances of language that expose differences between two interlocuters’ languacultures. The German system of address is an ideal example of a rich point. Although linguistic choices must be made when choosing to address someone with du or Sie, the choice represents complex cultural scripts - which are difficult for native speakers and learners alike to navigate (Agar, 1994; Clyne et al., 2009). Rich points can function as excellent opportunities for learning about language, culture and the appropriate way to communicate in intercultural situations. This “appropriate communication in intercultural situations” forms the backbone of IC. According to Deardorff’s process model of IC (Deardorff, 2006a; 2011), this competence functions according to an individual’s attitudes (e.g. curiosity and respect), knowledge (e.g. sociolinguistic knowledge) and skills (e.g. interpreting and relating). Deardorff’s model underpins the conceptualisation of IC in this study and was influential to the analysis of much of the data.

1.5 Qualitative research design

Given quantitative research has often fallen short of adequate explanations for individual differences in SA (cf. Kinginger, 2008; 2009), the majority of the data collected for this study was qualitative in nature. This is important in the context of examining pragmatic competence. Research has shown that it is difficult to discern why learners choose to perform in certain ways – whether it is a matter of their linguistic incompetence or lack of awareness that a certain form may be inappropriate, or whether they deliberately chose a formula in order to express a certain aspect of their identity (Henery, 2015; Kinginger,
Therefore, my study explores participants’ metapragmatic awareness, the “knowledge of the social meaning of variable second language forms and awareness of the ways in which these forms mark different aspects of social contexts” (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004, p. 20), as well as a quantitative appraisal of participants’ pragmatic performance in role plays, in order to gain an idea of how participants used address forms. An additional focus point in the analysis of the pragmatic language data in this study was the socialisation processes experienced by participants as they attempted to navigate everyday situations in the L2. For many students, SA represents the first opportunity to participate in authentic everyday activities in the L2. Given the uniqueness of this context, it emerges as an ideal setting in which to observe language socialisation processes at work (Hassall, 2013; Shively, 2008; 2011).

I adopted qualitative methods of data collection to explore the development of IC in my participants for several reasons. Intercultural scholars are sceptical about the use of quantitative pre- and post-tests to measure IC, particularly as the sole measure (Deardorff, 2006a). 95% of the intercultural scholars who participated in Deardorff’s study (2006a) agreed that a mix of methods was the most appropriate way to assess IC. Secondly, previous research into the development of IC during short-term SA programs has yielded very different results depending on the method used to assess IC. Quantitative scales do not appear able to discern small changes that have occurred to students’ IC over a shorter time frame (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004).

Like other qualitative and mixed-method SA research, my study therefore attempts to “escape the narrow confines of cognitive second language acquisition” and views its research participants as more than language learners – “as rounded people with complex and fluid identities and relationships which frame the way they live the SA experience” (Coleman & Kinginger, 2013, p. 29).

1.6 Outline of thesis

My thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 reviews research on the current situation of SA in the broader context of internationalisation of the Australian higher education system. In this chapter I also discuss relevant theories of language learning and critically examine research related to language learning abroad. Throughout the chapter I compare this research to larger trends within the second language acquisition (SLA) literature. I discuss two models of IC which are important to the understanding of IC as it
relates to this study, as well as presenting research which sought to assess IC during SA. Chapter 3 presents the methods used to answer the research questions that informed this study. The setting in which the research is undertaken and the participants who took part are described, followed by a discussion of the different methods used to collect data and the various ways the data was analysed. Chapters 4-6 present the results and also discuss some of the implications of these findings. In Chapter 4 I analyse the results relating to participants’ pragmatic competence. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the intercultural data collected for this project, and concludes with a discussion of the group’s IC according to Deardorff’s process model (2006a). Four case studies are presented in Chapter 6. These case studies serve to illustrate, in detail, trends in the language and intercultural data found in the group as a whole, especially the influence of each participant’s level of proficiency in German. Lastly, Chapter 7 consists of a discussion of the main findings that emerged from this study, how they build on previous research findings and especially what these findings mean for the planning, design and day-to-day running of short-term exchange programs in the Australian context. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study as well as suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research around SA began in earnest in the early 1990s. It is by nature inter-disciplinary, but given that much of the research focusing on language learning during SA relates to language acquisition, SA research has tended to follow broader trends in second language acquisition research (Kinginger, 2009). In broad terms, this meant a shift from quantitative measurement of the outcomes of SA, to qualitative investigations which focus on the processes involved with learning abroad and an increasing emphasis on the role played by context and other social factors.

This chapter reviews the scholarly literature relevant to this thesis in three sections. In the first section, I explore research which examines language learning in the SA context. This necessitates an introduction to the theory of language learning which underlies this thesis, language socialisation, and why the theory is especially appropriate for research focusing on pragmatics in the SA context. Developments in SA literature from large-scale quantitative studies to detailed qualitative case studies is summarised before a more detailed account of research about pragmatic competence and SA is presented. Included here is a section on research that investigates the influence of initial proficiency level on language learning during SA, in line with the second research question. A focus of section 2.1 is on the reasons why SA is thought to be a fertile ground for pragmatic development.

The second section of the chapter reviews research related to the development of IC during SA. A definition of IC is given and the two models which influenced the way IC is conceptualised in this study are summarised. Empirical research which examines IC using a range of methods is introduced and critiqued. In the third and final section, I investigate the current state of SA in the Australian context, in order to contextualise my study within trends in higher education in Australia. The reasons why further research is especially warranted in the Australian context are explored. The chapter concludes with a summary of the state of SA research and a critique of the areas where scholarly research is lacking, in order to justify the research questions of the current study.

2.1 Language learning during study abroad

The most common claim from language teachers and SA program coordinators surrounding SA is that students return home fluent in the target language with improved intercultural
skills (e.g. Clyne & Rizvi, 1998; Coleman, 1998; Goldoni, 2013; Jackson, 2015; Kinginger, 2008). For many foreign language educators, a sojourn abroad is viewed as the ‘reward’ for years spent learning the grammar in the classroom, where students will finally be exposed to unlimited natural input and as a result will improve their language skills with minimum effort (Kinginger, 2008). This section explores a theoretical framework which is ideally suited to investigate this claim, before reviewing the empirical research examining language learning abroad.

2.1.1 Theoretical framework: Language Socialisation

In the SLA literature, acquisition of the L2 has typically been conceptualised as “an individual cognitive process taking place in the mind of the learner” (Lafford, 2007, p. 1). In the cognitive SLA camp, the L2 learner receives ‘input’ from the native speaker and this influences L2 development (Kinginger & Belz, 2005). Although this has long been the predominant view within SLA, since the late 1990s researchers have called for a renewed emphasis on the social and contextual aspects of language learning (e.g. Firth & Wagner, 1997). This resulted in much interest in socially oriented research using a framework of one of several theories, which emphasise culture and society (Lafford, 2007). One such theory which focuses on the close link between learning language and learning culture is Language Socialisation (LS). Given the place pragmatics occupies between language and culture, this framework is especially appropriate for describing the pragmatic development of language learners (Kasper, 2001). Other researchers have also argued for the adoption of LS in SA research, as SA students join new communities while they are abroad, and LS seems an appropriate framework for investigating how they are socialised into these communities.

LS favours an approach which incorporates cultural and social phenomena and conceives of language learning as a social process that recognises the multiple identities by which a learner defines him or herself (Lafford, 2007). Duff (2007) describes LS as follows:

‘Language socialisation’ refers to the process by which novices or newcomers in a community or culture gain communicative competence, membership, and legitimacy in the group. It is a process that is mediated by language and whose goal is the mastery of linguistic conventions, pragmatics, the adoption of appropriate identities, stances (e.g., epistemic or empathetic) or ideologies, and other behaviours associated with the target group and its normative practices. (p. 310)

Early LS research focused on the socialisation processes surrounding young children being socialised into communicative and discursive practices of their L1 speech community by experts (most often their caregivers) (e.g. Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Most of this
socialisation of young children was seen to happen implicitly, for example as children observe adult behaviour at mealtimes (Ochs, 1986a; Ochs, 1986b; Schieffelin, 1986). By participating in everyday events, learners become aware of how language forms are used in particular contexts to create meaning, express cultural values and to index social roles, relationships and identity (Shively, 2011). Novices may also be explicitly socialised into language practices of the speech community, as experts tell children specifically what to say in certain situations.

More recently, researchers have begun to investigate these socialisation processes in second language learners. Second language socialisation retains many of the principles and objectives of first language socialisation but with the added complication that L2 learners bring their own set of linguistic, discursive and cultural traditions from their L1 community (Duff, 2007; Wang, 2010). While there is seldom any resistance to socialisation in the L1, there may be obstacles to the socialisation of novices in the L2 on the part of the learners themselves or the L2 community (Wang, 2010). For instance, learners may attempt to draw on L1 norms for behaviour in certain situations (Shively, 2011) or they may have no pre-existing cultural schema to draw on. The latter is the case for English L1 speakers acquiring appropriate patterns of address in an L2 with multiple pronouns for second person address (Barron, 2006; Hassall, 2013; Kinginger, 2008). Alternatively, learners may be reluctant to adopt L2 community norms when they feel they clash with pre-existing L1 norms (Duff, 2007; DuFon, 1999; Hassall, 2013; Siegal, 1994).

In the SA context, learners may be either welcomed or rejected by their hosts: the degree to which learners are granted access to the new discourse community varies greatly (Hassall, 2014; Kinginger, 2008). Capacities or skills in the L2 community are strengthened through active participation in different roles, whether as a peripheral or full participant (Lave & Wenger, 1991). SA appears at least on the surface to be an ideal context for language socialisation. Students become part of a range of ‘communities of practice’ - in the language classroom, with their host families, on public transport and in shops. Whether they are brought into or excluded from these communities by locals plays a role in determining their language socialisation (Watson-Gegeo, 2004, p. 341).

When considering the socialisation of L2 learners, it is crucial to reflect on the contribution made by both explicit and implicit socialisation. In L1 socialisation, Ochs (1990) has argued that “the greatest part of sociocultural information is keyed implicitly” (p. 291). For L2 learners, implicit socialisation occurs through repeated participation in everyday
events, where learners observe and interact with more expert members of the community. For instance, students may observe how customers address each other in service situations and, on the basis of these observations, choose to adapt their own address practices (Shively, 2011). Students learn to associate particular ways of speaking with specific activities, which is then reinforced through repeated exposure to cultural definitions of events.

On the other hand, explicit socialisation into the norms of the speech community occurs when an expert community member tells a novice or learner how and when to speak in certain situations. For instance, rather than simply observing address pronoun practices in service situations, a learner may receive advice from host family members on the appropriate way to address people in such a situation. However, a common finding in SA research is that while host community members are willing to provide corrective feedback on grammar and pronunciation, they tend not to give feedback on pragmatic issues (Barron, 2003; DuFon, 1999; Hassall, 2013; Shively, 2011). This lack of feedback may lead students to believe their language use is appropriate when it is not (DuFon, 1999; Hassall, 2013). For example, a group of Irish English L1 learners studying in Germany were found to continue to re-offer their hosts coffee, even though this type of re-offering is not appropriate in the German context (Barron, 2003). The learners maintained the belief that this kind of re-offering was related to being a nice person and decided not to adapt their behaviour to local norms in spite of implicit indications (such as an irritated response) that their hosts found their behaviour inappropriate. Researchers have argued that locals are reluctant to provide this type of feedback due to concerns about face (DuFon, 1999; Shively, 2011).

Although these processes of implicit and explicit socialisation may position children or novices primarily as the recipients of linguistic and cultural knowledge, language socialisation recognises learners as active agents in the process of their own learning (Duff, 2007; DuFon, 2006; Shively, 2011). Learners may socialise experts into understanding their own needs. This is seen to occur, for example, with children socialising their caregivers into the role of parent (Ochs, 1986a) or with learners of Indonesian indicating to their hosts that they do not share the same liking of very spicy foods (DuFon, 2006).

Given that SA represents, for some students, their first opportunity to learn the L2 in a second language immersion environment, rather than a foreign language environment, this change in context holds important consequences for the way in which language is learnt
(Shively, 2008). Students participating in SA (ideally) have access to repeated participation in everyday activities. Their interaction with locals may lead to explicit socialisation of language practices as well. Due to the opportunities for informal interaction in the L2, SA emerges as an ideal context for the exploration of language socialisation. In a review of research on language learning and SA (SA), Wang (2010) convincingly argues for the adoption of a second language socialisation approach in such research:

It is generally believed that SA provides learners with rich opportunities of language input and interactions. As language socialization has to do with new members gaining communicative competence in the new context, the context of SA, in which a student joins new language communities, makes an ideal setting for the study of SLS. [...] Inconsistent results are found in SA studies on linguistic gains for many reasons. [...] Whether SA can make a difference has to do with an infinite number of variables including the type and the quality of interactions the learners have with others and with the SA environment. [...] That is why the often contradictory results of research on SA gains are best interpreted and understood in the framework of SLS (Wang, 2010, p. 57).

Language socialisation emerges as an appropriate framework for this study due to the focus on the influence of context and the opportunity to explore reasons why learners may adapt to or resist L2 norms.

2.1.2 A history of language learning in a study abroad context

Despite the existence of SA programs as far back as the 1950s or 60s, it was only in the early 1990s that scholars began to tackle the subject of language acquisition and SA specifically with any seriousness (Brecht et al., 1993; Freed, 1995b). The first large-scale study to focus specifically on SA examined American students studying in Russia and found that those widely held assumptions were indeed valid – generally only students who went abroad were able to reach advanced levels of speaking proficiency (Brecht et al., 1993).

The relationship between SA and fluency in the L2 has long been touted as one of the major advantages of the SA context. Freed (1995c) compared Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) results from American SA (N=15) and at-home students (N=15) in order to investigate the so-called SA advantage. The OPI samples were rated by a group of French native speakers for fluency. Freed found that only when the students who had the lowest initial proficiency were compared was there a significant difference between the ratings of the two groups. The SA students were found to speak more and faster, and their speech also contained fewer clusters of dysfluency (i.e. unfilled pauses or repairs) than the at-home students (Freed, 1995c, p. 129). Her results appear to confirm that the speech of SA
students is perceived as more fluent, however they also suggested issues in the ability of the OPI to discern changes to language ability at the advanced end of the scale.

In 1996, Coleman carried out the largest scale investigation of European language learners to date: the European Language Proficiency Survey. The survey was cross-sectional, meaning that students were only tested once, but the large sample size (N= 18,825) provides a representational snapshot of the proficiency levels of the students (Coleman, 1996). Using the C-test (a global measure of language skills that does not differentiate between sub-skills), Coleman found that scores were significantly higher for the year after students studied abroad. Although Coleman’s study focused only on one narrow measure of language skills, the robustness of his findings provided compelling evidence (at that time in Europe largely unattested) for the influence of the year abroad, at least in the European context.

While these studies provide promising evidence for the impact of SA on language gain, further studies focusing on specific language skills gave mixed results. In spite of the grand claims of the benefits of SA for students’ language skills, the SA context appears to have no benefit over the at-home classroom in terms of grammatical control (Regan, 1995; Segalowitz et al., 2004) or pronunciation (Díaz-Campos, 2004; Mora, 2008; Segalowitz et al., 2004). Investigations of writing skills yielded mixed results in two studies (Pérez-Vidal & Juan-Garau, 2009; Sasaki, 2007) and no improvement in another two studies (Freed, So, & Lazar, 2003; Llanes, 2010). Areas in which SA does appear beneficial when compared to the at-home context include oral proficiency (e.g. Segalowitz et al., 2004; Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009), oral fluency (Freed et al., 2003; Lara, Mora, & Pérez-Vidal, 2015; Segalowitz et al., 2004), vocabulary development (Llanes, 2010; Pizziconi, 2013), narrative skills (Collentine, 2004) and listening skills (Cubillos, Chieffo, & Fan, 2008).

Qualitative study abroad research
A frequent finding of the SA literature is that some students benefit greatly from the sojourn, while others experience no gain or even regression in language skills (e.g. Kinginger, 2008; Rees & Klapper, 2007). This finding has led several applied linguistics researchers to adopt qualitative research techniques in order to investigate the underlying cause of these individual differences and to determine whether they could be explained through other factors of the SA experience or the individual’s background. This section summarises findings from qualitative research undertaken in this area.
The following two qualitative studies illustrate the trend in SA research to bring the individual back into the spotlight using small samples. Rather than focusing on the outcomes of SA, Wilkinson (1998) sought to investigate the immersion context of studying abroad, especially the role of the host family in language development. She compared two students who, on the surface, shared relatively similar backgrounds. Both students had studied French at high school and university level and had travelled extensively overseas; however, they responded to the immersion environment in vastly different ways. One became a legitimate member of her host family, participating in family activities and actively engaging in the L2. The other student’s host mother was rarely home, meaning the two had little contact, which led to the student spending more time with American peers and feeling excluded from French society. The former was so enthused by the experience with her host family that she quickly applied to spend a longer period in France, while the latter expressed disappointment with the limited gains to her French language ability. The experiences of these two students highlight the importance of the host family in language socialisation.

Kinginger’s 2008 study incorporated quantitative data from language proficiency testing and a language awareness interview examining pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge of French, with detailed qualitative data from interviews and student journals in order to further explain individual differences amongst students. While the group progressed as a whole on the Test de Français International (a standardised test of reading and listening comprehension), Kinginger used case studies to show that students improved at different rates and in different areas depending on their personal histories, approaches to language learning and networks in the local community. One of her case studies exemplifies this phenomenon. Bill made large gains on the Test de Français International as a result of his persistence in forging friendships with locals. Students who were more proficient in French than Bill on their arrival did not necessarily make equal gains. Although the combination of quantitative data combined with case studies provides a powerful picture of these individuals’ SA experience, much of the quantitative data was collected without an expert-speaker baseline. This should be called into question, particularly when examining the results of the language awareness interview, where it is necessary to have a corpus of data from native or expert speakers with which to compare the results of the learners. Kinginger’s research shows the importance of considering the social environment our research subjects find themselves in, and illustrate the interplay between social interaction and language learning. Given large individual differences between and within groups of students at
different proficiency levels, several researchers have grappled with the question of when the optimum time to study abroad is. The following section summarises research which takes this question as a focus.

2.1.3 SA and initial proficiency level

Early research regarding the ideal L2 proficiency level for SA suggested that it is the lower-level students who profit the most from time spent abroad (Freed, 1995c; Milton & Meara, 1995). However, researchers also acknowledged that ceiling effects in the instruments used to measure language proficiency (in particular the OPI) could mask any improvements made by higher level students (e.g. Brecht et al., 1993). A more recent study which examined vocabulary development in British learners of L2 Japanese echoed these results, with students who had only completed two years of university-level language study making higher gains than those who had completed three before the year abroad (Pizziconi, 2013).

DeKeyser (2010) argues convincingly that students require a baseline level of proceduralised knowledge in order to benefit from the multiple opportunities for practice afforded by the SA context. His participants, a group of elementary and intermediate US learners of Spanish, were initially highly motivated to practice speaking Spanish throughout their 6 week stay in Argentina. However, they quickly became demoralised and unmotivated and eventually avoided using Spanish unless absolutely necessary. The author argued that this was a result of their poor grammar knowledge, which had not been adequately proceduralised during college language classes. DeKeyser concluded that sojourners require adequate preparation (in terms of both grammar instruction and practice of this instruction in class) if they are to benefit adequately from opportunities for informal interaction abroad:

On the one hand, however, there are the well-known claims along the lines of ‘I learnt more in a month abroad than in a year in the classroom’. On the other hand, however, as students have not had a chance to proceduralise the basic grammar, let alone to develop the most minimal discourse skills in the classroom, they very much feel the need for classroom(-like) instruction, which leads them to treat native speakers like teachers […] and to focus their attention during their stay overseas on the discrete items of grammar and vocabulary that can equally well be learned at home, while being unable to acquire the idioms, discourse skills, and elements of strategic competence that study abroad is ideally suited for (DeKeyser, 2007, p. 214).

Other researchers have sought to determine whether this extends to students going abroad with no pre-existing knowledge of the L2. Some studies focus on high school students, often those participating in a full-year exchange. The gains made by these students
are in some cases impressive and suggest that SA can benefit even absolute beginner students (e.g. Spenader, 2008). However, there are several key differences between the experiences of high school age students and university students. For example, high school students are almost always placed with a host family, where they are often welcomed as temporary members of the family. University students, by contrast, are perceived as legal adults who may choose their own goals and activities (Coleman & Kinginger, 2013; Kinginger, Wu, Lee & Tan, 2016). High school exchange students often attend local high schools in classes with local students and are purposefully placed in schools or towns with no other exchange students, resulting in an immersion experience significantly more ‘immersive’ than that of university students (Lovitt, 2013; Spenader, 2011).

Studies focusing on university level students with no language skills are considerably fewer; in fact to my knowledge only one study has examined language learning in a SA context with complete beginners (Huebner, 1995). Huebner found that participants in a 9-week intensive language program in Japan progressed further on the OPI than their counterparts completing the same course (taught with the same textbook and course materials) on their home campus in the USA. Given the low sample size, Huebner cautioned against drawing broad generalisation from the study but concluded that “overseas study may be more appropriate and beneficial than previously stated, and may even be appropriate at the beginning levels of foreign language study” (Huebner, 1995, p. 191). When considering the conclusions Huebner draws from his study, it is important to note that his participants were chosen on the basis of several factors, including their plans to continue studying Japanese after the intensive course ended as well as a desire to learn Japanese beyond fulfilling degree or course requirements. Their impressive gains may have been mediated by other factors not present in many SA participants.

2.1.4 Pragmatic competence and study abroad

Following a long and rich research tradition on pragmatic competence outside of the SA context, applied linguists have in recent years begun focusing on SA as a context in which it may develop. Teachers and researchers alike agree on the difficulty of teaching students pragmatic competence in the classroom (Belz & Kinginger, 2003). Given the availability of opportunities for informal language learning in SA, it emerges as an ideal context in which to develop such skills, which are essential for culturally appropriate communication in the L2 (Barron, 2003; Liddicoat, 1997). Before reviewing research on pragmatic competence and SA, a definition is outlined.
**A definition of pragmatic competence**

Broadly defined, pragmatics has been described as “the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others” (Crystal, 1997, p. 120). This broad definition is useful for research into L2 pragmatics as it allows any examples of language use, learning and development to be investigated from the perspective of pragmatics (Van Compernolle, 2014). According to Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983), pragmatics can be further divided into pragmalinguistics, or knowledge of different language forms, and sociopragmatics, or an understanding of which linguistic forms may or may not be appropriate in a given context. Both pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics mediate social action (Van Compernolle, 2014).

A definition of pragmatic competence, then, should incorporate both of these components. In the literature, characterisations of pragmatic competence have evolved to reflect a changing focus from the individual’s performance in speech acts to a more interactional and intercultural understanding of this competence (Taguchi, 2017). While there are many existing definitions, this thesis takes Taguchi’s recent definition as the basis for examining participants’ pragmatic competence:

1) knowledge of linguistic forms and their functional meanings; 2) sociocultural knowledge and 3) the ability to use these knowledge bases to create a common act in interaction (Taguchi, 2016, p. 3).

This definition works well for the present study as it takes into account both pragmalinguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge, as well as the ability to use this knowledge to communicate. If we take the example of address term competence for the participants in this study, pragmatic competence in this sense would refer to, for example, knowledge of the verb forms accompanying *du* and *Sie* (pragmalinguistic knowledge), an understanding that university students tend to use *du* with each other (sociopragmatic knowledge), and the ability to carry out a conversation with an L2 community member using an appropriate address term consistently (ability to use knowledge bases to communicate). This definition underlies the analysis of pragmatic competence in this study.

**Empirical research**

Most research into the acquisition of pragmatic competence in the SA context has examined the performance of varying speech acts in different languages. Marriott (1995) investigated the acquisition of politeness patterns in a group (N=8) of Australian learners of Japanese over the course of a year-long stay in Japan. Although the students arrived with low proficiency in Japanese, all students were able to produce formulaic politeness expressions
and make requests, but struggled to choose an appropriate honorific style when speaking to someone of a higher status. Marriott debates whether previous Japanese language instruction has a positive or negative effect on the acquisition of these skills, but maintains that no conclusions could be drawn from the small sample size.

Shively (2011) investigated the development of pragmatic competence in a group of US students (N=7) studying abroad in Spain, by examining their use of requests in service situations. She found that her participants initially used several request types that were considered inappropriate in Peninsular Spanish, but over the course of the semester students observed Spaniards’ requesting behaviour and adapted their own language use to be more appropriate. Her participants were implicitly socialised into more appropriate requesting behaviour, illustrating the potential for SA to provide opportunities for repeated participation in everyday events.

In contrast to most research examining pragmatic performance, Henery (2014; 2015) investigated the impact of expert-mediation on the development of awareness of French pragmatic practices in a group of American students studying abroad in France. One group of students was introduced to concept-based pragmatics instruction and received expert-mediation in the form of journal discussions, where they met with the researcher to discuss their observations about French pragmatic practices. The second group also completed a journal but did not meet with the researcher to discuss their observations. The author found that while both groups developed awareness of pragmatic practices (most commonly address terms or the use of colloquial language, cf. Kinginger, 2008), only the first group included the scientific concepts they were introduced to by the expert mediator. The use of these concepts led to more sophisticated explanations of the French language practices they observed. Henery’s results suggest that while SA is a context which allows for the development of pragmatic competence, students could potentially further benefit from support in this area.

An area of pragmatics which has received much attention from researchers is the acquisition of address forms. Students are often first taught that using address forms is a straightforward process which simply involves rules, and are as a result unaware of the social weight an inappropriate choice of address form can carry (Belz & Kinginger, 2003). Studying abroad gives students an opportunity to observe how native and expert speakers of the target language use address forms in daily life. It may also allow them to appreciate for the first time the social message their choice of address form conveys about themselves.
and the impact their linguistic choices may have on their interlocutor. Given the importance of address term competence in German to the research questions of this study, the following section serves to summarise developments in historical address pronoun usage in German to the present day, the current situation in Germany, and recent empirical research on the topic with particular regard to studies focusing on the SA context.

2.1.5 Address pronouns in German

The way speakers address one another in any language carries much information and is crucial in defining social relationships. Although the German address form system is largely binary, with an informal T-form (du) and a formal V-form (Sie), many factors make the application of this system significantly more complicated (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Clyne et al., 2009; Kretzenbacher et al., 2006). Despite the simple, dichotomous treatment the subject is often given in language textbooks and grammar books (e.g. Di Donato & Clyde, 2016; Stief & Stang, 2002), it has been argued that the German address system is both binary (with two options for second person pronominal address, informal du and formal Sie) and scalar, due to the many linguistic and non-linguistic devices that serve as an intermediate position beyond this binary system (Hickey, 2003, p. 401). For example, in addition to address pronouns, there are varying modes of nominal address which fall along scales of ‘T-types’ and ‘V-types’ (further discussion of these modes of address lie beyond the scope of this thesis, see for example Kretzenbacher, 2011, 2012.). Table 4.1 shows an overview of second person singular and plural pronouns, inflected for case (the genitive case is not included here as these forms are rarely used: Barron, 2006, p. 61).

Table 4.1 Second person singular and plural pronouns

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<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
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<td>Singular</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
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<td>Informal</td>
<td>du</td>
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The choice of address pronoun also affects the verb form; for example the sentence ‘You learn quickly’ can be rendered in two ways, with two different verb forms: du lernst schnell/ Sie lernen schnell. The use of possessive determiners is also affected by address pronoun choice; this is illustrated in Table 4.2. The informal 2nd person pronoun is less intimate in the plural (ihr) than in the singular (du) (Barron, 2006; Clyne et al., 2009). Consequently, one may use ihr to address a group of people consisting of one or more...
members with whom the speaker is on *du* terms with even if one is on *Sie* terms with some of the members.

**Table 4.2** Second person possessive determiners

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<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
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<td>Informal</td>
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<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
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<tr>
<td>dein(e)</td>
<td>deine</td>
<td>deinem/deiner</td>
<td>deiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ihr(e)</td>
<td>ihre</td>
<td>ihrem/ihrem</td>
<td>ihren</td>
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Generally, the ‘polite/distant’ *Sie* (V-form) is employed where speakers use a title and surname to refer to each other, while the ‘intimate/simple *du* (T-form) is employed where speakers are on first name terms (Barron, 2006). Until the late 1960s or early 1970s patterns of pronoun selection in Germany followed these general principles:

1. *Sie* as the default, unmarked term of address (i.e. in a first encounter with an adult)
2. Members of the family are addressed with *du*
3. Children under the age of 15 are addressed with *du*
4. Young children call everyone *du*
5. *du* is used in prayer
6. As a sign of friendship, speakers may make a verbal agreement to use *du*. This was often ritualised with a drink (*Brüderschaft trinken*). Once this decision has been made it is not reversible, except in the case of a permanent termination of a relationship (Kretzenbacher, 1991).
7. Older people might asymmetrically address younger people, the older speaker using *du* and the younger *Sie* (Clyne et al. 2009, p. 6)

Following the student movement in the late 1960s a more progressive system of address pronoun usage has developed, but exists in competition with the traditional system, depending on the roles of the speaker (Barron, 2006; Besch, 1998; Clyne, 1995; Clyne et al., 2009). As a result of the student movement and changes to the way staff and students addressed each other, the use of the T-form expanded into situations and relationships where previously *Sie* would have been chosen. Speakers began to use *du* as the default term of address to signify group membership and solidarity, for example amongst university students (and more junior staff), but also in sports teams, unions and other groups. On the other hand, *Sie* became the marked form of address which indicated exclusion, distance and non-membership, especially within the university setting (Bayer, 1979; Besch, 1998; Clyne et al., 2009). Researchers named this system of rules for address pronoun selection A² and the
system described above A¹ (Delisle, 1986). There has been a relaxation in the tendency to use *du* in such situations, in some part due to the fact that young people resented the imposition of a pseudo-egalitarian mutual T by their professors (Amendt, 1995).

These conditions have created the current situation where native German speakers are often uncertain which principles their interlocutor is basing their choice of address on: the traditional system of *du* for intimacy and *Sie* to show respect, or *du* for solidarity and *Sie* to mark distance (Kretzenbacher et al., 2006). More recent research suggests that there are situations in which *du* is the default address pronoun, for example with family members, and other contexts where *Sie* is undoubtedly the default. However, in between there is a large ‘grey area’ where either *du* or *Sie* may be the appropriate pronoun (Clyne, Kretzenbacher, Norrby & Schüpbach, 2006; Clyne et al., 2009; Kretzenbacher et al., 2006). In such situations, native speakers rely on several factors to arrive at a decision.

Age remains a crucial factor in determining address pronoun use. Speakers are more likely to address someone younger than themselves with *du*, especially if they are young (Besch, 1998; Clyne et al., 2009). Status also plays a role, with speakers less likely to be on *du* terms with superiors in the workplace than with colleagues. A ‘gemeinsame Lebenswelt’ (Kallmeyer, 2003, as cited in Clyne et al., 2009), or perceived common experiences and affinities also encourages the use of *du*, due to a perception of decreased social distance. For example, similar political attitudes, playing on a sports team or even being on holiday may produce enough commonalities to dispense with normal address rules (Clyne et al. 2009, p. 70). This extends to personal appearance, with one native speaker claiming ‘*Einen Punker in meinem Alter würde ich nicht Siezen, einen Banker schon*’ [I wouldn’t address a punk my age as *Sie*, but I would a banker] (Clyne et al., 2009, p. 72). The basis on which a speaker makes his or her choice also varies from person to person: some claim to be ‘*du Typen*’ [the type to use *du*] while others tend to prefer *Sie* (Clyne et al., 2009).

In addition to the complex situational and personal factors which influence a choice of address pronoun, there are important regional and national variations in addressing practices in German (Kretzenbacher, 2011; Norrby & Kretzenbacher, 2014; Schüpbach, 2014). Differences exist at the national level, ie. Between Austria, Switzerland and Germany, and at the regional level, for example between the former East and West Germany. While there is no difference in clear T/V situations (such as how to address a family member or schoolteacher), there is variation in the domain of T and V. Notably, in one study, Austrian respondents were more likely to be on ‘*du*’ terms with their superiors in the workplace.
The same tendency is reported in the Swiss workplace, where Schüpbach notes that the transition to du does not hold the same weight as in Germany (Schüpbach, 2014, p. 67). Studies have also recorded a stronger tendency towards Sie in the former GDR, which one author attributes to the disappearance of the “public du of comradeship in the communist system” (Kretzenbacher, 2011, p. 76). Anecdotal evidence suggests that similar variation occurs between north- and south-Germany (Kretzenbacher, 2011; Norrby & Kretzenbacher, 2014). Given the complexity for native speakers, it is no small wonder that L2 learners of German find it a difficult aspect of the language to master. Using address forms appropriately requires both a command of the morphological forms (i.e. the pronouns themselves, possessive determiners and their inflectional forms) as well as an awareness of the meaning of their use in different social contexts (Barron, 2006; Belz & Kinginger, 2003). In German, mastery of the linguistic forms surrounding address term use is already more complex than in languages such as Swedish, where a choice of address term does not influence the verb form (Clyne et al., 2009). Arguably harder to acquire is an understanding that an inappropriate choice of address form can lead to ‘confusion, misunderstanding or irritation’ and the ability to avoid such inappropriate choices (Belz & Kinginger, 2003, p. 598). Researchers have argued that it is unrealistic for learners to acquire the whole system, if usage is restricted to the classroom, in part because language use does not hold the same consequences as it does in the real world (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Delisle, 1986; Kinginger, 2008).

2.1.6 L2 learners’ acquisition of address terms

Research suggests that learners struggle to use address forms appropriately without some form of intervention – whether that be participation in a telecollaborative exchange with age peers (Belz & Kinginger, 2003) or a period spent in the L2-land (Hassall, 2013; Kinginger, 2008). In formal instruction, textbooks and metapragmatic information given by teachers tends to over-emphasise the use of Sie to ‘be on the safe side’ (Belz & Kinginger, 2003). The textbook used by participants from UWA (N=13) gives the following advice on using address forms:

German speakers address one another as Sie or du. The formal Sie (you) is used with strangers and even co-workers and other acquaintances. Family members and friends address one another with du (you), as do children and, generally, students. Close personal friends address one another with du and first names. Most adults address one another as Herr or Frau and use Sie, although some might use first names with Sie. Children and students address adults who are not family or friends with Sie. (Di Donato & Clyde, 2016, p. 3).
This excerpt does not make any reference to the use of *du* to express solidarity, nor does it mention that young children address everyone with *du*. In a follow-up exercise students are presented with pairs of interlocuters and asked which form of address they would use (*du* or *Sie*). Although the book gives *du* as the correct answer for a pair of students, it also suggests using *Sie* with any adult you do not know.

This textbook, along with many other beginners’ German textbooks, tends to emphasise the A¹ system, leaving students unsure about using the T-form with their age peers outside of a university context. In Belz & Kinginger’s (2003) investigation of telecollaborative exchange, American students gradually increased their use of *du* only after receiving repeated explicit correction from their German email partners. The authors concluded that classroom instruction is inadequate for students to be able to acquire a command of the nuanced use of address forms and recommended that students be exposed to a wider range of discourse options through telecollaboration, or by spending time in the L2-land.

Belz & Kinginger (2003, p. 594) propose four prerequisites for the acquisition of address-form competence:

1) Exposure to a variety of L2 discourse options
2) The chance to have authentic conversations where there is potential for the speaker to lose face (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
3) Opportunities for noticing pragmatic features, for instance observing German university students addressing each other with *du* on campus
4) Opportunities for peer-assisted learning

Belz and Kinginger (Belz & Kinginger, 2002; 2003; Kinginger & Belz, 2005) have argued that acquiring address-form competence is a process of socialisation as well as acquisition. On this note, and according to their proposed prerequisites, SA appears (at least on the surface) to be an ideal environment for acquiring address-form competence.

For example, in the study described in section 2.1.2, Kinginger (2008) used role plays and a series of tasks designed to probe awareness of the French address form system, in order to examine meta-pragmatic awareness and use of address forms in 23 American learners of French over the course of a semester. Although students still made inappropriate choices and often mixed different address forms within the same utterance, their usage did move closer towards L2 community norms, particularly with regard to using
the informal form with peers. In this example, Bill was asked how he would address a student sitting next to him in the university cafeteria:

1) Bill: When in doubt use vous (Bill, pre-test)

2) Bill: Tu, tu, tu (emphatically)

Interviewer: Why?

Bill: My age (Bill, post-test) (Kinginger, 2008, p. 41)

Bill’s responses illustrate a growing awareness of the conventions surrounding address term use with age peers. The students’ post-test responses often drew on real-life behaviour they had observed and they were able to use these observations to better articulate why they would use a particular form.

Barron (2006) obtained similar results in her study of 33 Irish learners of German over the course of a year. In a discourse completion task (DCT), her participants were able to use address forms more appropriately; however, they continued to mix forms within the same sentence. DCTs have been criticised for various reasons, including the fact that “the consequences of an inappropriate choice of address form are […] not as serious as in real-life communication” (Barron, 2006, p. 71). In addition, DCTs have been shown to elicit less natural features of speech than other data collection methods such as role plays or natural observation (e.g. Turnbull, 2001; Yuan, 2001). Other researchers have argued that address forms are double indexicals that reference both the social context and a speaker’s identity (Kinginger, 2008, p. 31). When using DCTs it is difficult to discern whether a learner has made an inappropriate choice because of their lack of knowledge about the suitability of a certain form in differing contexts, or whether they purposely chose an address form to express a part of their identity (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004).

The difficulty in understanding the reasoning behind a choice of address term influenced Hassall’s 2013 investigation of pragmatic development during short-term SA. Hassall (2013) looked at the acquisition of address forms in 14 Australian learners of Indonesian who participated in an 8-week program in Java. Using a range of data collection techniques including written pre- and post-tests, regular interviews and a diary-keeping exercise to examine students' familiarity with address terms, Hassall found that participants rapidly acquired knowledge of various address terms in the vocative ‘calling’ slot. Their progress was, however, more limited for address terms in the pronoun slot. The author explained that the learners’ more limited progress in this domain was related to the fact that some of the pronouns studied are used very differently in the L2 compared to English.
For instance, the pronoun *mas* (‘older brother’) is used in a much wider variety of settings than the approximate English equivalent ‘bro’. This was further compounded by the fact that address terms are not always symmetrical in Indonesian and locals seemed reluctant to correct learners on inappropriate address term usage. Although Hassall’s study provides results indicating that even a short period abroad can benefit students’ language acquisition, there was a large amount of individual variation between students. Like many SA researchers, Hassall was puzzled by the large amount of variation in the results of his participants and was prompted to carry out further qualitative research on the issue.

Hassall (2014) built case studies of two Australian learners of Indonesian who made strikingly different gains in the study described above. Ross, a learner with previous experience of language learning in informal contexts, acquired several Indonesian address terms which were at the time new to him, and was able to use them with ease. Amy, by contrast, continued to use *Anda* in almost all contexts in spite of the fact that this term is appropriate only in a very narrow range of situations. She revealed feeling ‘ripped off’ and ostracised by locals, leading to a rejection of local L2 norms. The author emphasises the importance of considering the big picture in order to understand differences in the outcomes of SA students.

The ability to understand local norms and adjust one’s language use to include more appropriate forms is an important component of IC (IC). Alongside language competence, IC is viewed as one of the twin goals of SA. The link between competence in a foreign language and IC is complex and there is little agreement on how to incorporate foreign language competence into models of IC (McConachy & Liddicoat, 2016). Given the debate in recent years on how to incorporate culture into the L2 classroom this is unsurprising (Diaz, 2011). In the Australian context, the teaching of foreign language and its culture were kept separate and students often had to wait until they reached more advanced levels of language proficiency before they were able to enrol in courses with cultural content (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997). With increasing acceptance that culture underlies every aspect of communication, IC has emerged as a new goal for foreign language teaching and the two are now closely intertwined (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat, 1997). SA research has acknowledged this and many studies focus instead on the development of IC rather than language skills. The two areas of research have generally developed separately, which informed the decision to present them separately in this chapter. The next section gives a definition of IC and explores two models which attempt to explain IC. Then,
empirical research that focuses on the development of IC during SA is summarised, with a particular focus on studies focusing on pedagogical intervention to improve intercultural learning during short-term SA.

2.2 Intercultural competence and study abroad

Researchers and international education administrators alike agree on the importance of working with a definition and framework of IC before beginning to assess it (Deardorff, 2006a). Deardorff maintains that “too often, this term [intercultural competence] is used (as are other similar terms) without a concrete definition, especially one that is grounded in the literature” (Deardorff, 2011, p. 66). Given the wide range of definitions and models that exist in the literature, and the need to provide a definition and framework of IC, in this section I summarise the definition and models that were influential to the conceptualisation and analysis of IC in this study.

2.2.1 A definition of intercultural competence

The ability to interact with members of other cultures is seen as a key graduate attribute for many universities (Dall'Alba & Sidhu, 2013; Daly, 2007). ‘Intercultural competence’ appears on many university marketing profiles. Despite the emphasis on these skills, many universities have, at least until recently, made little effort to show how and where students gain the skills, let alone made any attempt to assess them in students (Deardorff, 2006a; Engle, 2013). SA has been proposed by universities as one means to provide students with an environment in which they can improve their intercultural skills. At some universities, responsibility for showing evidence of such gains has fallen on international administrators, or individual professors who organise programs within their school or department (Deardorff, 2006a). Recent efforts by various researchers have seen a renewed interest in defining IC and providing universities and program administrators with a range of means to assess the IC of their students. SA is often promoted as a means to achieving IC; before discussing the assessment of these skills, however, we must reach a consensus on what IC actually entails.

There is little agreement on a definition of (and even name for) IC among scholars and relevant institutions (Deardorff, 2006b). IC appears in various publications as multicultural competence, cross-cultural competence, global competence, intercultural literacy, intercultural sensitivity and intercultural effectiveness among others (Deardorff, 2006a). It is widely accepted, however, that IC refers to “effective and appropriate behaviour
and communication in intercultural situations, based on the individual’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2004, p. 184; emphasis added). For the purpose of this study I will use the term Intercultural Competence and rely on the broad definition of IC proposed by Deardorff.

2.2.2 Theoretical framework: Models of Intercultural Competence

In the IC literature, more than 20 models of IC have been identified (Spitzberg & Chagnon, 2009). Of these models, two emerge as relevant to this study. Deardorff’s ‘Process Model of Intercultural Competence’ is a causal path model which describes how the various components of IC interact to form the end product of ‘effective communication in intercultural situations’ (Deardorff, 2004, p. 171). Given Deardorff’s model was built by building consensus from leading experts in the higher education context, the model is both well-verified and appropriate for the context of the current study. Like language acquisition, the development of IC must be viewed as a long-term process, where the individual progresses through various stages leading to competence. One model which focuses on the temporal aspect of IC is Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1986). Bennett’s model also provides an important distinction between ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism which is lacking in Deardorff’s model. These two models inform the concept of IC as it relates to this study.

Process model

In 2004, Deardorff responded to a proliferation of models of IC development (e.g. Bennett, 1993; Byram, 1997; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Gudykunst, 1994) by using the Delphi technique (a method of achieving consensus, usually amongst a group of experts) to develop a model of IC. The model is built on the components of IC that exhibited the highest level of agreement between the intercultural scholars who participated. In this model, the internal and external components of IC interact to produce competence (Deardorff, 2006a). Figure 2.1 illustrates the various components and describes the elements needed for an individual to communicate with competence.

In this model, attitudes form the building block of a speaker’s ability to communicate effectively. These attitudes include respect or value for other cultures; openness or the withholding of judgement; and curiosity and discovery (which includes the ability to tolerate ambiguity). In addition to these attitudes, an individual’s knowledge and skills combine to produce the internal outcome: an informed frame of reference shift. According to
Deardorff, the knowledge required to develop IC includes cultural self-awareness (or an awareness of the influence of one’s own cultural frames); deep cultural knowledge, in the

![Diagram of Intercultural Competence]

Figure 2.1 Process Model of Intercultural Competence. Source: Deardorff, 2004

Notes:
- Begin with attitudes; move from individual level (attitudes) to interaction level (outcomes)
- Degree of intercultural competence depends on acquired degree of attitudes, knowledge/comprehension, and skills

German context this could include, for example, an understanding of the impact the events of recent history have had on the German psyche; and lastly sociolinguistic awareness.

Sociolinguistic awareness in this sense refers to the knowledge that certain forms of language will be appropriate in some situations but not in others. Skills essential for IC include the ability to listen, observe and evaluate as well as to analyse, interpret and relate (e.g. to one’s home culture). When the internal outcome (an informed frame of reference
shift) is achieved, the learner is able to view other cultures from a relative position and not place their own culture in a position of superiority. While this shift is of course desirable, it may be bypassed and the subject can progress directly to the external outcome of effective and appropriate communication in an intercultural situation. As seen in figure 2.1, once this outcome is reached, the process may begin again as new experiences are incorporated and improve the attitude, knowledge and skills base of the learner.

**The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**

Bennett developed the DMIS after years of involvement in intercultural training in both higher education and industry. Unlike many other models of IC, the DMIS focuses on the temporal aspect and emphasises the idea that the development of IC is continuous. Intercultural sensitivity, or the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences, is associated with the ability to exercise IC (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003, p. 422). The model describes six orientations towards intercultural differences (see figure 2.2). According to Bennett, students move through these six stages, changing from an ethnocentric viewpoint, where one’s own culture is viewed as superior to all others, towards an ethnorelative viewpoint where all cultures are perceived as equally valuable (Bennett, 1986).

![Stage Diagram](image)

*Figure 2.2 Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. Source: Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003*

The learner begins in the denial stage, where they deny the existence of cultural difference. In the defence stage, learners adopt a defensive, ethnocentric position towards difference while the home culture occupies a central, intrinsically superior position. In this stage, learners may also display what Bennett has termed reversal – where they reject the home culture in favour of the host culture. Although it is no longer the home culture in the superior position, students still favour one culture over another and maintain a polarising us vs. them mindset (Bennett, 2012). Bennett notes that one does not necessarily move through the stages chronologically, nor does one ‘complete’ a stage (Bennett, 2012). For instance, a student who displays ethnorelative tendencies when speaking about culture may still exhibit aspects of reversal (which is the alternative reaction to defence). In the last
ethnocentric phase, minimisation, the student tries to minimise differences that exist by instead emphasising the commonalities between cultures.

Moving to the acceptance stage represents a shift from an ethnocentric to ethnorelative appraisal of cultural difference. Differences are both recognised and respected, but not evaluated at this stage. Behavioural and communication style differences are generally acknowledged before the acceptance of more underlying cultural differences occurs. Upon reaching the adaptation stage, the intercultural speaker can now temporarily alter his or her behaviour and thinking to interact with a culturally different other. This temporary alteration forms the heart of intercultural communication (Bennett, 1993). In the final stage, integration, speakers can apply the principle of ethnorelativism to their own identity. Cultural differences are perceived as processes rather than ‘things’ and speakers are able to adapt to them. Speakers in this stage exhibit the ability to ‘contextually analyse’ phenomena relative to their cultural context.

The most important concept emerging from this model which holds relevance for this study is the fact that the development of IC is temporal and can shift backwards and forwards over time. I kept this in mind when comparing my participants’ responses before and after the exchange. Additionally, the distinction between ethnorelative and ethnocentric does not seem to emerge in other models of IC, yet it represents an important point of analysis when assessing IC.

2.2.3 Empirical research

Although an improvement in IC has been considered an assumed benefit of going on exchange, recent studies have attempted to empirically measure the development of intercultural skills of their students after sojourning overseas. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been used to measure intercultural development and foreign language proficiency throughout SA, with varying results (Coleman, 1998). Institutions and researchers report using techniques ranging from interviews, classroom observation and student diaries to commercial instruments and custom self-report instruments amongst others (Deardorff, 2006a). 95% of a group of intercultural experts surveyed in 2006 recommended that a mix of methods be used, in order to provide a full picture of a students’ IC (Deardorff, 2006a).

The most widely utilised quantitative scale to measure intercultural competency is the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, et al., 2003). The IDI is based on Bennett’s DMIS. The 50-item questionnaire probes students’ cross-cultural goals, critical
intercultural incidents and challenges, as well as the ways they face cultural differences. The IDI has been employed in numerous other studies to measure intercultural development, and the instrument tends to record an increase in intercultural development as a result of SA (e.g. Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Engle & Engle, 2004; Pedersen, 2010; Vande Berg et al., 2009; Watson, Siska, & Wolfel, 2013). Using the IDI as a means to test intercultural development has several advantages: it is reliable, is grounded in intercultural theory, and it is well-reputed among leaders in the field (Engle & Engle, 2004; Hammer et al., 2003). The instrument is, however, privately owned and tightly controlled, and is costly to administer (Stemler, Imada, & Sorkin, 2014; Vanderheijden, 2011). Subsequent reviews of the instrument have led to inconsistent results when tested for construct validity (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Two studies found problems in establishing a six-factor fit for the scale, instead finding that a 5- or 7-factor model fit best (Greenholtz, 2005; Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova & DeJaeghere, 2003).

Using the IDI, The Georgetown Consortium study examined the IC of approximately 1300 US college students participating in SA programs (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Vande Berg and colleagues found that studying abroad improves IC, especially if students participate in a program that includes successful intervention strategies. Over the course of two decades, Engle & Engle (2004) studied the progress of many different cohorts of American students who participated in the same program in France. Although these students achieved relatively high scores on their entry to the SA program, the researchers found that they achieved an average of 33% of their achievable progress over the course of a semester. This program differs from traditional SA programs in that it offers a wide range of intercultural intervention strategies, including mentoring and experiential learning initiatives (cultural excursions), in order to facilitate intercultural learning (Engle & Engle, 2004).

The idea that intervention or guided intercultural learning provides more benefits to students is also supported by Pedersen's (2010) investigation of Americans who studied in the UK. Using the IDI, the study examined the IC of 3 groups of students: one group that remained on campus in the US and two groups sojourning in the UK. The second UK group also participated in a psychology of group dynamics course. The course focused on intercultural effectiveness and group diversity training, and included material on cultural immersion, guided reflection and intercultural coaching. Only the third group showed gains on the IDI post-exchange. The results of these studies suggest that for students to enjoy the maximum intercultural benefit of studying abroad, program directors need to intervene in
the intercultural learning of their students. Further studies measuring IC using the IDI have shown positive to mixed results, depending on the length of the sojourn (Anderson et al., 2006) or the specific program characteristics (Watson et al., 2013).

In the only existing study to investigate the IC of a population of Australian SA students, Daly (2007) measured the IC of Australian and NZ exchange students (N= 71). The majority of these students (71%) studied abroad in English-speaking countries. Using the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, Daly measured the IC of her participants before and after exchange. It was found that exchange made no significant difference to the students’ post-exchange scores. This lack of effect could be explained in part by the choice of instrument used to measure IC. The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire was first developed as a tool to determine the suitability of employees for selection as expatriates and as such is not appropriate for research with exchange students, given the different aims and experiences of these two groups (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Many students in the study also described a lack of pre-departure preparation on behalf of their respective programs as well as the home university.

While many of the studies described above involved students who were participating in semester exchanges, the growing popularity of short-term programs has led researchers to question whether students become sufficiently immersed for a change to their IC to occur. Where quantitative measures have been used, the picture is still unclear. In a study comparing the effects of a semester-long program with a 7-week program, Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004) examined the IC of her participants using the IDI, individual interviews and reflective journals. She found that less than a third of the participants on the 7-week program progressed to the next stage of the DMIS compared to two-thirds of the semester program students. However, the qualitative data revealed a change in the way students from both groups approached cultural difference.

Qualitative methods such as those used by Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004) produce data that is rich and personal, and when combined with quantitative data can provide a powerful account of students’ intercultural learning (Deardorff, 2006a). Research which is limited to quantitative assessment “largely ignores the social, political and historical contexts of the learning situation” (Jackson, 2008, p. 4), as well as a number of factors related to program design. In the same Delphi-Study described in section 2.2.2 (Deardorff, 2006a), scholars favoured the use of a range of measures (both quantitative and qualitative) to measure IC. Well-endorsed methods included interviews and case studies (90% agreement),
student diaries, self-report methods and observation (85% agreement) (Deardorff, 2006b). Scholars were particularly sceptical of pre-/post-testing, especially as the sole method to assess IC.

**Qualitative investigations**

A growing body of research uses semi-structured or unstructured interviews to collect data to examine the development of IC while on exchange (e.g. Covert, 2014; Forsey et al. 2012; Goldoni, 2013; Murphy-Lejeune, 2003). Courses which teach students ethnographic research techniques have also been employed to encourage intercultural learning. In this case the research projects students produce as part of their coursework can serve as a means of assessing their IC (Jackson, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2008, 2011). Alongside interviews, journal entries or blogs are often used to closely examine the experiences and intercultural development of SA students (Covert, 2014; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Gothard, Downey & Gray, 2012; Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). More recently, Web 2.0 technology is emerging as an avenue to simultaneously foster and assess IC (Aydin, 2012; Mills, 2011).

Over the course of ten years, Jackson (2005, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2015) explored the development of Hong Kong students’ IC and cultural identities after their participation in a 5-week program in the UK. Her students were all advanced language learners who were majoring in English. Unlike many other SA participants, Jackson’s students took part in extensive preparation and programs of pedagogical support before, during and after their sojourn (discussed further in the next section). Using both the IDI (Jackson, 2009) and case studies of participants’ ethnographic research projects, diaries and interviews (Jackson, 2005; 2008; 2009), Jackson found that some of her participants made striking progress towards an intercultural mindset and developed multicultural identities. However, she noted strong individual differences between her participants, despite the fact that they all completed the same extensive preparatory coursework and had access to the same levels of support in the UK (Jackson, 2008). Jackson argues that the use of qualitative techniques “can make an important contribution to our understanding of the impact of stays abroad” (Jackson, 2008, p. 4).

Murphy-Lejeune (2003) investigated adaptation (an important facet of intercultural competence at higher levels, cf. Bennett, 2009) in a group of European students participating in various year abroad mobility schemes. She interviewed her participants at three points – before, during and after their sojourns. Although the group of participants under study were far from homogenous, and in fact were participating in three different mobility schemes -
each with different aims, she identified common elements which allowed some students to adapt to their new environment more effectively. Murphy-Lejeune coined the term ‘mobility capital’ what sets mobile students apart from their non-mobile counterparts. According to Murphy-Lejeune, this capital comprises four sub-components: previous experiences with other cultures (including foreign language proficiency); personality features; previous international travel; and the first adaptation to a foreign culture. Although it may not be explicitly named as such, students in much SA research exhibit facets of this mobility capital.

In the US context, Elola and Oskoz (2008) sought to improve the learning of their students who had spent time in an immersion environment and those whose learning was limited to the classroom by way of a blogging project. The authors had observed discrepancies between the IC of these two groups of students. Students on semester-long exchange in Spain formed partnerships with those remaining at home and completed a number of blogging exercises together. The researchers found that both groups benefitted from the experience – the at-home students learnt from the SA students’ real-life stories from their experiences in Spain, while the SA students were able to reflect more deeply on their experiences by serving as cultural informants to their peers in the US.

The significance of reflection is also evident in Covert’s (2014) study of seven American students spending a semester abroad in Chile. Using reflective journals, photo elicitation and interviews, Covert’s research emphasises some of the preconditions necessary for intercultural learning to occur on exchange. The students in her study all employed various strategies to enhance their intercultural learning, including avoiding speaking English and spending much time with fellow Americans, thinking about cultural differences and then discussing them with Chileans as well as adopting Chilean norms in the university setting. The effectiveness of these strategies is evident in the students’ photo narratives, where students described various cultural differences they were able to come to terms with and describe in relative terms most of the time. Covert’s results emphasise the nature of developing IC as a process and also the importance of personal agency to the development of IC. Her participants were able to engage in this process, once they had accumulated the knowledge and skills required to communicate in intercultural situations over the course of their stay in Chile.
Following claims that short-term programs are not of adequate length to achieve the level of immersion required for IC to develop as described above in Covert’s study, Penington & Wildermuth (2005) aimed to investigate the development of IC of students who participated in a three-week study tour. The authors noted that the reduced gate-keeping in short-term programs results in the inclusion of participants whose main goals revolve around socialising rather than learning. The two programs in the study involved a series of preparatory seminars at the home university, which focussed on the cultural and historical background of many of the sites the students were to visit. This preparation was key for participants, who described the learning material they had covered in the classroom at home ‘coming alive’ when they experienced it in the host culture and reported they felt a growth in intercultural knowledge. Students also described being spurred on by both locals and other students to participate in intercultural situations where they may have previously been reluctant to do so. Penington and Widlermuth’s research shows the benefits experiential learning can have for intercultural outcomes.

In another study focusing on the development of intercultural knowledge on a short-term program, Czerwionka and colleagues found that their participants’ intercultural knowledge grew over the course of six weeks, especially in the areas of ‘Big C’ culture (history, art, etc.), values and politics (Czerwionka, Artamonova & Barbosa, 2015). Increased knowledge improves students’ ability to communicate effectively as it allows them to anticipate topics of conversation and their interlocutors’ responses, as well as their ability to participate in such conversations. Although students’ knowledge of Spanish values and the Spanish political system improved, their knowledge growth about social groups and cultural adaptation was limited. The authors recommended that students be taught about cultural adaptation and sociocultural difference, as well as being provided with opportunities for reflection prior to the sojourn.

In one of the few Australian studies examining student learning abroad, the authors noted the difficulties involved in guiding students to reflect on their experiences. Forsey and colleagues (2012) interviewed a group of Australian students at their home university who had recently returned from exchange in order to see what they had learnt as a result of studying abroad. Although students spoke extremely positively of their experiences and provided statements about how much they had learnt, when asked more specifically what this was, students struggled to provide meaningful answers. They spoke instead about differences in the weather, the cost of transport and student social life. The authors
maintain that the deeper things students learn abroad are somewhat intangible, making it
difficult for the students to clearly express what they had learnt, and suggest that students
be provided with structured opportunities to reflect on their experiences in order to gain
intercultural skills (Forsey et al., 2012, p. 146).

2.2.4 Intervening in student learning abroad

On the basis of findings that educators need to intervene in student learning to optimise the
benefits of an international sojourn, a growing body of research examines various
pedagogies to improve learning outcomes for students studying abroad. As discussed above,
Jackson has implemented various pedagogical activities for her students of English as part of
their participation in short-term SA programs (Jackson, 2005; 2006; 2008; 2009; 2011;
2015). Jackson’s courses for SA students are informed by her research and vice-versa.
Initially, her research centred on the Special English Stream for high-achieving English majors
in Hong Kong. Her students completed a 14-week course on ethnographic research
methods before their departure on a 5-week sojourn to the UK. As part of a course for
credit at the home university, participants completed a small-scale ethnographic research
project on site in the UK. Jackson found that participants honed their skills of observation –
of the host culture as well as the home culture – and most were able to develop an
understanding of other worldviews (Jackson, 2005; 2006).

More recently she has introduced a course for returned Hong Kong exchange
students as well as international exchange students currently studying at the university
(Jackson, 2013; 2015). The course focuses on reflective writing and group discussion of
intercultural issues. Although Jackson found limited movement along the IDI for the group
as a whole (Jackson, 2015), the development of some individual students’ IDI results was in
some cases impressive (Jackson, 2013). Her research addresses a need to better support
students on their re-entry to the university as well as before and during the sojourn.

In the European context, students have typically been granted a high level of
autonomy when participating in ERASMUS exchange programs, especially compared to the
sheltered, faculty-led programs on offer in the US (Coleman, 1998). Students are expected
to enrol directly at the local university, attend classes for local students and live in local
student housing. Intercultural learning abroad has until recently been given little attention in
the European SA literature. The IEREST (Intercultural Educational Resources for Erasmus
Students and their Teachers) project sought to improve intercultural learning outcomes for
ERASMUS students with various pre-departure materials (Beaven, 2015). The IEREST
pedagogy is underpinned by Kolb’s (1984) learning cycle of experiential learning, analysis and critical reflection.

In a study evaluating the effectiveness of one IEREST pre-departure learning activity, Holmes and colleagues found that students acquired the language necessary to discuss the concepts of stereotyping, othering and essentialism, in spite of limited pre-existing knowledge about these ideas (Holmes, Bavieri & Ganassin, 2015). The participants, a group of Italian university students, who were to depart for exchange the following semester, learnt about these concepts before applying them by interviewing exchange students at their university. The students were initially sceptical of the importance of critical reflection and preferred instead to seek practical information to help prepare them for exchange, for instance by asking their interview partners questions about their own experiences in Italy. The authors suggest first satisfying students’ need for practical information before introducing material intended to guide students towards critical reflection (Holmes et al., 2015; p. 27).

In the Australian context too, some students have expressed scepticism towards the need for support in preparing for exchange (Gothard et al., 2012). As part of the Bringing the Learning Home (BTLH) project aimed at improving learning outcomes on student exchange, Gothard and colleagues investigated the use of blogs to encourage critical reflection for Australian students on exchange. Their participants were also introduced to Kolb’s learning cycle (1984) in pre-departure workshops before their departure. In spite of their initial reluctance to engage with the material, many students signed up for and used the blog while abroad. Although many of the blog posts displayed ample evidence of intercultural learning, the authors noted the difficulty of getting students to interact (i.e. to comment on other students’ blogs) in an online space (Downey & Gray, 2012). The authors suggest that participation in pre-departure activities be made a requirement, given the lack of a culture in the Australian tertiary education sector celebrating SA as a learning activity (Gothard et al., 2012, p. 39).

At my own university, ongoing efforts to improve the teaching practices around SA have also included the use of blogs (Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). After being introduced to some of the concepts required for critical reflection in the SA context (e.g. stereotyping, essentialism and ethnocentrism) students participating in a 6-week exchange program were required to make weekly blog posts and leave three comments on other students’ blogs per week. Although students engaged with intercultural material in their
posts, examples of deeper reflection were lacking in the data. For example, one student made a post about the perception of Germans as “rude and abrupt” and attributed this to the fact that the German language sounds “harsh”. The student did not pause to consider whether the common perception of the language as harsh in the English-speaking world was in fact “culturally and historically determined” (Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016, pp. 111-112). Despite the fact that commenting on others’ posts was made compulsory, few students engaged with the blogs of other students. In light of evidence of deeper learning via prompting in individual interviews, the authors concluded that some aspect of face-to-face discussion of intercultural issues is crucial in encouraging reflection on SA.

A common finding among these studies is the importance of an expert facilitator to the ensure students reach higher levels of reflection (Jackson, 2005; 2008; 2017; Gothard et al., 2012; Holmes et al., 2015; Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). In each study, prompting from facilitators in workshops, online spaces such as blogs and interviews have helped students to reflect further on why intercultural differences exist. Given differing conditions surrounding SA programs and the amount of time and financial assistance program coordinators have, new and innovative ways to support student learning must be found.

The literature on IC and SA suggests that the development of IC cannot be taken as a given: students need help to make sense of their experiences and to develop intercultural skills. This is especially important for shorter programs where students have less time to become immersed in the host culture and to learn from their intercultural experiences (Jackson, 2005; 2008; Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). What is clear is that IC is a central goal for universities, employers and graduates, and efforts must be made both to effectively measure student outcomes in this area of learning, but also to determine how to best support students in their endeavours to become interculturally competent.

2.3 Internationalisation of the Australian higher education system

The previous sections of this chapter have attempted to show the current state of the literature related to language learning (and especially pragmatics) and the development of IC during SA. This section summarises internationalisation efforts at Australian universities, and the demographics of the student body who participate in SA, in order to show where research is currently lacking and to contextualise my study in the larger body of Australian research.
Without exception, based on mission and vision statements as well as strategies, all Australian universities are currently committed to the internationalisation of higher education in Australia (Arkoudis, Baik, Marginson & Cassidy, 2012; Crichton & Scarino, 2007; Daly & Barker, 2010). The push to internationalise comes amidst broad claims that global citizenship, or an increased awareness of and respect for others, is now a key part of a university education (Bosanquet, 2010; Forsey et al., 2012). This might be seen as a reaction to criticism that Australian students have been shown to lack knowledge of foreign languages (Diaz, 2011), IC and global knowledge (Fitzgerald, 1997, as cited in Daly & Barker, 2005), all of which poses a challenge to the development of globally competent graduates (Volet, 2004).

Traditionally, many Australian universities’ internationalisation efforts have focused on attracting full-fee paying international students to their campuses. Initially, select international students were offered either fully or partly subsidised places as part of aid/humanitarian agreements between Asian neighbours (Rizvi, 2011). In the 1980s the focus became more financial. Between 1996 and 2006 the number of international students in Australia rose by 371% (Jansen & Schmidt, 2011). As a result, much of the research about the internationalisation of higher education in Australia has focused on these full-fee paying students: their social and academic adaptation to Australian higher education (Neri & Ville, 2008); their employment opportunities after graduation (Hawthorne, 2010); and the impact of these students on the international flavour of university campuses (Volet & Ang, 1998), amongst other questions.

More recently efforts have come to focus on increasing numbers of Australian students who earn part of their degrees overseas (Clyne & Rizvi, 1998). Historically, overseas study had been reserved for students who chose to undertake postgraduate study at prestigious overseas universities (Daly & Barker, 2005). Undergraduate mobility was slow to start in Australia but now enjoys governmental and institutional support on similar levels to Europe and the US (Clyne & Rizvi, 1998; Dall’Alba & Sidhu, 2013). Successive Australian governments have supported outbound mobility under the guise of various programs including University Mobility in Asia and Pacific (UMAP) and also via the introduction of the Overseas Higher Education Loan Program (OS-HELP), which provides access to low-interest loans for those undertaking overseas study. Echoing the sentiments of the Asian Century White Paper, the New Colombo Plan was launched in 2013. In the 2017 round, the program provided mobility grants for 7441 students to live, study or work in the Indo-
Pacific region (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017). Many universities offer similar financial incentives, by providing at least some support for most students that go abroad (Dall'Alba & Sidhu, 2013).

In spite of these measures being put in place to aid students to study overseas, many students are not taking up the offer of SA as readily as university or government bodies might have hoped. With most universities setting targets of 20% participation or higher, in 2012 only 13% of Australian students completing their undergraduate degree had an international study experience in their bachelor degree (Dall'Alba & Sidhu, 2013; Olsen, 2013). According to a typography of types of international experiences published in 2015, there are, in the main, six types of experiences: semester or year-long exchanges, other semester or year programs, short-term programs (including study tours and language programs lasting less than a semester), placements or practical training, research and other (Strategy Policy and Research in Education, 2015). The majority of SA students participated either in a short-term program (66%) or in a semester or year-long formal exchange program (Nerlich, 2015). Exchange programs are formal agreements between receiving and sending universities, in which equal numbers of students participate in the programs at each university. Figure 2.3 illustrates trends of increasing numbers of student participants as well as the growing proportion of students participating in short-term programs as opposed to longer SA options.
In 2013, approximately 74% of students going abroad were undergraduates, generally in their 2nd or 3rd year of study (Nerlich, 2016). Of these students, approximately 34% went to Europe, 35% to Asia and 22% to the Americas. Asia tends to dominate the short-term exchange population, whereas the USA and Europe prove more popular with semester or year-long exchanges. Australian students' preference for study in English-speaking countries reflects their monolingualism: in 2011 47% of students studying overseas did so in English-speaking countries (Strategy Policy and Research in Education, 2015).

Traditionally, the population of students taking a foreign language at university was much less diverse (e.g. Clyne & Rizvi, 1998). The majority had studied the language at school, were enrolled in an Arts major, and took the language at university with the goal of studying the literature and culture of that language at a high level (Nettelbeck et al., 2007). The current situation in language departments could not be more different. Students studying languages at university today come from all faculties and all year levels. The majority of these students begin the language at university with no prior language skills: as complete beginners (Caruso & Brown, 2014; Ludewig, Baumgartner, & Ludewig-Rohwer, 2015). The dominance of beginners’ level language students can be traced back to decisions made in the 1970s to remove the foreign language requirement for university entrance (Martín, 2005). As a result, the number of students taking languages at the secondary level decreased. By 2007, only 13% of students beginning a language at university had taken it all the way through high school (Nettelbeck et al., 2007).

It is unlikely that students coming to university with no language skills could hope to attain advanced language skills to the level required to study the literature and history of
that language over the course of a three-year major (if the student takes the language as a major at all). Language departments often turn to in-country programs in the hope of increasing their students' proficiency level as well as to provide their students with opportunities for informal interaction in the L2. In order to participate in a full semester-long exchange to a country where the native language is not English, students at most universities must prove that they are sufficiently proficient in the target language. Many universities have developed short-term in-country language programs so that even students who start at the beginners' level have the opportunity to study overseas in the target language.

Almost unanimous support for SA along with the growing popularity of short-term programs has left some practitioners sceptical about the benefits of studying abroad (e.g. Freinberg, 2002). Despite the fact that SA receives widespread support throughout the higher education sector, Australian universities have traditionally relied only on numbers of participating students as a measure of success for their programs, rather than attempting to define and measure outcomes associated with these programs (Deardorff, 2006a; Engle & Engle, 2003; Forsey et al., 2012; Pedersen, 2010).

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced relevant theories of language learning as they relate to this study, as well as provided a definition of pragmatic competence. I also reviewed two common claims surrounding SA: that students acquire both language and intercultural skills as a result of ‘being there’. Although research suggests that SA is indeed beneficial for speaking skills as well as providing an advantage for the development of pragmatic competence (at least in comparison to the at-home classroom), in all studies there is much individual variation. Researchers have sought to further explain these differences using a variety of qualitative techniques. Lastly, I reviewed models of IC as well as some of the methods commonly used to assess IC. The common thread throughout this body of research is that students do not necessarily gain IC as a result of studying abroad: educators must intervene in order to aid and advance student learning.

The chapter also outlined the current state of internationalisation in the context of Australian higher education. The general climate of financial and rhetorical support for SA in Australia has in most cases not resulted in a critical investigation of the possible benefits associated with participation in SA programs. The reader will notice another common
theme throughout the empirical research presented in this chapter: that the majority of studies are of North American, European or Japanese origin (Kinginger, 2009). In a review of research regarding language learning and SA, Kinginger calls for an expansion of “the scope of scholarly inquiry to include diverse combinations of sending and receiving countries” (Kinginger, 2009, p. 217). There are many academic and industrial links between Australian and Germany. For a long time, Germany was the second most commonly learnt language after French (Ellis, Gogolin & Clyne, 2010). Today it is still the fifth most popular language for Australian school children, and in the tertiary environment large numbers of students learn German at beginner’s level and important research collaborations exist between academic staff and postgraduate students (Ellis et al., 2010; Nettelbeck et al., 2007). Given these significant ties, a study focusing on exchange between Australia and Germany is appropriate.

In spite of the large body of research on SA, there is a paucity of research examining both the outcomes of SA and the student experience in the Australian context. Moreover, few studies have used qualitative research methods to clarify why some students succeed where others do not. Previous research has examined both short- and long-term programs in high school and university populations, with the majority of studies focusing on semester- or year-long exchanges. Given the increasing popularity of short-term exchange in Australia due to lower financial costs, fewer linguistic prerequisites, and increasingly structured university study programs, an investigation of the outcomes and experiences of students participating in these programs is timely. The significance of the lack of research in this area becomes apparent when one considers the current climate in Australian higher education and the strong priority placed on internationalisation as a key goal for Australian universities. It is especially pressing given that Australian language learners are among the most isolated. SA has been suggested as one possible method for overcoming a lack of authentic practice through communication with L2 community members. It is crucial to investigate the current state of short-term SA in Australia to determine whether it is providing the intercultural and L2 immersion experience desired by students, their language educators, and the international offices in their universities.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I outline the methodology I have chosen to investigate the development of intercultural and pragmatic competence during short-term SA. I present the research questions which guided the study and a discussion of the benefits of and potential ethical problems posed by qualitative research. Next, I describe the research sites and my research participants. Finally, I describe the data collection process: the various methods I used for collecting data, the timeline of data collection and the methods by which I analysed my data. This chapter serves to justify the way in which the study was carried out in order to answer my research questions.

3.1 Research questions

The purpose of my study was to explore changes to pragmatic competence and intercultural competence as a result of short-term SA. My study was guided by two research questions:

1. How does short-term SA affect the pragmatic and intercultural competence development of Australian learners of German?
2. What role does initial L2 proficiency play in the developmental trajectories of these students?

The following sections serve to illustrate how I answered these two questions.

3.2 A qualitative approach

My study employed a qualitatively driven research design with a small quantitative component. According to Morse & Niehaus (2009), using a mixed-method design “makes the study more comprehensive or complete than if a single method [is] used” (p 9.). Given the research findings reviewed in Chapter 2 and the ambiguities which arise when purely quantitative measures of IC and pragmatic competence are used, a primarily qualitative approach emerged as the most appropriate to answer my research questions.

3.2.1 Rationale

Given the common finding in SA research of strong individual differences (cf. Kinginger, 2009), a qualitative approach is fitting for the investigation of some of the variables surrounding SA (e.g. length of stay, L2 proficiency of learners, learners’ local social networks
These variables may all impact on a student's sojourn in various ways (Deardorff, 2011; Jackson 2008; Kinginger, 2008). A similar attitude has recently emerged within SLA research. SLA scholars have made the following criticism of their discipline's traditional research base:

It views communication as a process of information transfer from one individual’s head to another’s. It prioritises etic (analyst-relevant) concerns and categories over emic (participant-relevant) ones. At best it marginalises, and at worse ignores, the social and contextual dimensions of language. (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 288).

Ten years after Firth and Wagner’s call for a broadening of the base of SLA research, scholars have criticised the chasm between “macrolevel quantitative analyses of the acquisition of linguistic elements” and the “microlevel qualitative approach” (Lafford, 2007, p. 749). Kinginger states that although a focus on emic perspectives of SA may result in findings about the varieties of interactive use during SA, this type of research often neglects to explain how this interaction results in learning (2009, p. 216). Her study represents a growing area within SA research that attempts to bridge this gap between large scale quantitative analyses which ignore many aspects of the SA context, and micro level qualitative studies which do not attempt to link their findings to learning outcomes (Kinginger, 2008). Like other qualitative research on SA, the current study attempts to “escape the narrow confines of cognitive SLA and see its subjects not just as language learners, but as rounded people with complex and fluid identities and relationships which frame the way they live the SA experience.” (Coleman & Kinginger, 2013, p. 29).

A similar pattern of research focusing on quantification of outcomes followed by qualitative analyses of the process of the development of IC has occurred in the IC literature. In the Delphi study described in 2.4.2, a group of intercultural scholars found a mix of methods to be superior to any single method of assessment of IC (Deardoff, 2006a). Scales developed to measure IC often fail to reveal changes in the skills of students, especially when testing is carried out over a shorter time frame (e.g. Anderson et al. 2006; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). Similarly, investigating only quantitative language progress ignores many other factors involved. Due to individual differences between students any changes may become masked by variability between students (Jackson, 2008; Kinginger, 2008).

In order to overcome this shortcoming, the current study adopts a chiefly qualitative approach, combining a qualitative investigation of students' language skills (both general oral proficiency and meta-pragmatic awareness) and developing IC with a quantitative assessment
of participants’ pragmatic competence. Pragmatics researchers have also called for further mixed methods research and emphasise the importance of using a mix of methods to explore language development, given that this development is inseparable from context:

A mixed-methods approach can shed light on the complexity and dynamicity of pragmatic development in which multiple factors – learners’ subjectivity, stance, affect, resources, and interaction in the target language – are interconnected and jointly influence the evolving pathways towards increased pragmatic competence (Taguchi, 2017, p. 160)

The qualitative nature of the current study’s research design makes case studies especially appropriate for illustrating some of the changes that occurred to individual students in more detail. Case studies also provide an opportunity to investigate the influence of students’ prior study of the language (or lack thereof) in order to tackle the question of when the optimum time in a students’ language learning career to benefit from the opportunities for informal interaction afforded by SA is.

3.2.2 Ethical concerns in qualitative research

A mainstay of qualitative research is the use of interviews and participant observation (Agar, 1996). These two data collection techniques were also employed in the current study. While participant observation may allow the researcher close access to participants and their worlds, it also brings concerns regarding the level of the researcher’s participation and any influence this may have on the social setting (Hatch, 2002). Participation in the setting under study may range from “complete observer” to “complete participant”, and observers should “think carefully about their level of involvement in the settings they study” (Hatch, 2002, p. 73). My involvement in the daily lives of my participants in Stuttgart as an embedded researcher could be described as moderate – I accompanied students during class and on official program excursions, but I spent little time with participants outside of the official program setting.

3.2.3 Researcher subjectivity statement

My interest in language and intercultural learning on SA stems from my own experiences as an exchange student. Like the majority of my participants, I am an Australian who speaks English as a native language. Prior to beginning university I had very little exposure to language learning. My first experience learning a language in the country where it is spoken came in the form of the Stuttgart exchange program. Like the participants in the current study, I spent 6 weeks living with a host family in Stuttgart. Buoyed by the experience, I
wasted little time in applying to spend a year in the student town of Tübingen. While on that second exchange, I was struck by how profoundly some people seemed to be affected by their exchange and overseas study experience – some became able to communicate comfortably in a second language, fell in love with someone from another culture or learnt to operate in a completely different business context, while others were seen less and less frequently around town, spending most of their time holed up in student dorms using Skype and Facebook in English. I had a strong feeling that it was during my second semester abroad that my understanding of German language and culture was really cemented. I had a close group of friends, both locals and other exchange students, a part-time job where I learnt the seemingly endless phrases locals used to order a beer, housemates who taught me about the joys of a Putzplan [cleaning schedule in a share-house] and classes where I could both understand the lecturers’ academic German and enjoy the content as well. This led me to the question of whether a shorter program could deliver similar benefits.

Throughout my project I have attempted to remain conscious of my status as a former SA student and the positive connotations SA holds for me. I critically reflected on many of my own biases during the data collection and analysis process, and recorded my thoughts in a research journal. Acknowledging my own personal connection to the research topic allowed me to examine the role my own opinions and experiences played in the research process.

3.3 Setting

In this section I describe the settings in which I collected data. I also present information about my participants: how they were recruited, their demographic information and the types of data I collected from each group. I collected data both at my university, the University of Western Australia, (UWA) in Perth and at the site of the SA program in Stuttgart. Stuttgart is the largest city in the state of Baden-Württemberg and has a population of approximately 600,000. The city is home to the University of Stuttgart, a public university which enrolls approximately 25,000 students. The university is part of the TU9, a group of nine of the most prestigious universities focusing on technology and engineering in Germany.

3.3.1 The Stuttgart program

The Winter University Program combines 90 hours of intensive language instruction with 30 hours of an elective taught in English (e.g. art history, contemporary German society) over
the course of six weeks. The University of Stuttgart’s website describes it as “an excellent opportunity for students who have had little or no exposure to German to experience a total immersion in the German language and culture right in the heart of Europe.” (‘Module 1/ Winter University’, 2016). At UWA, the program is explicitly marketed to students of German as a way to improve their language skills and to delve further into the culture. UWA participants also receive fairly extensive preparation for the exchange in the form of a series of online modules and pre-departure/re-entry workshops (described in further detail in chapter 5). In contrast, students from other Australian universities who also participated in the study received little information about the program.

Applications to the program are limited to students whose universities have a formal exchange agreement with the University of Stuttgart. As a result, and because of the timing of the winter university in the academic calendar year, the majority of students who attend the program are from Australia and the USA. Like other more sheltered SA programs, especially short-term programs (where students are not enrolled in classes with local students), classes take place in a building separate to the main university campus and are instructed by local staff from the university. This had important consequences for the amount of incidental and purposeful contact this encouraged with local university students.

When students arrive in Stuttgart, they take a computerised placement test which allocates them to a class corresponding to their level of German. The test is heavily grammar-focused, with sections in which students must answer a certain number of questions correctly before they can proceed to the next section. Students are then placed into language classes on the basis of these results, as well as an informal assessment of their oral skills by their teacher. As part of the program, students can elect to participate in a range of weekend excursions organised and subsidised by the university. Generally, students can choose either to be placed with a host family or to stay in student housing on campus. In 2016, due to the immigration situation in Germany, students were not given the option to stay in dormitories as these were being used to house refugees.

3.3.2 Sampling and recruitment

My study employed convenience sampling to select participants. Given I had reasonably easy access to participants in the Stuttgart program, this method of sampling emerged as the most appropriate for the study. I chose to focus on the experiences of students participating in the Stuttgart program for several reasons. Firstly, short-term programs have become increasingly popular within the last decade and more research is warranted to examine the
benefits of participating in such programs. Secondly, the Stuttgart program places language learning at the forefront. Lastly, students participating in the program have very different backgrounds, ranging from no experience learning German at all, to ten years of experience learning the language combined with multiple trips to an L2-land. Research has shown that these factors exert a strong influence on students’ experience abroad, especially proficiency level (DeKeyser, 2007; 2010; Murphy-Lejeune, 2003). The broad range of students who participated in this study reflect wider trends in the demographics of SA participants and foreign language learners in Australia (Nettelbeck et al., 2007; Olsen, 2013).

Once I had received approval from the ethics board at UWA I was able to begin recruiting UWA students for the pilot study. I approached these students first in the pre-departure meeting where I distributed information sheets regarding the study. Then I sent emails inviting students to participate in interviews. Finally, I approached several students in class and after lectures. I was ultimately able to recruit 10 participants from UWA for the pilot study in 2015. A summary of the students recruited for different parts of this study is shown in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of study</th>
<th>Pilot study (UWA)</th>
<th>Main study (UWA)</th>
<th>Main study (recruited via email)</th>
<th>Main study (recruited in Stuttgart)</th>
<th>Main study total</th>
<th>Native speakers (exchange students at UWA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students recruited</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30 (28 participated in all phases of data collection)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the main study, students from UWA received information about the study via email and in the pre-departure workshop which I coordinated. 13 of 20 students participating in the 2016 program volunteered to participate. These students were interviewed at the home campus before departing for the exchange. When approaching students from other universities, I first made contact with the exchange coordinators, several of whom allowed me access to their students. I contacted these students via email to inform them about the study and invited them to participate. I recruited 5 participants in this way and their first interviews were completed via Skype. Lastly, I made a short presentation about my project at the welcome information session in Stuttgart in front of all program participants. A further 10 participants volunteered to participate; their initial
interviews were completed face-to-face in the first week of the program in Stuttgart. In total, 30 students were recruited to participate in the study, of whom 28 participated in all phases of data collection. In addition, I recruited 12 native speakers of German, all of whom were participating in exchange programs or SA at UWA in Perth and were recruited via email. Their involvement in the project is described in section 3.4.1.

### 3.3.3 Pilot study

In the early phase of the project I carried out a pilot study with students from UWA in order to test different methods of data collection that would produce data examining language and intercultural learning abroad (see Appendix 3.1. for further detail on the pilot study). This decision was informed by results from previous research suggesting participants lack the language and framework to talk reflectively about their experiences (Forsey et al., 2012). I recruited participants for the pilot study from a larger group of participants who participated in the Stuttgart exchange in 2015. Of 17 students, 10 volunteered to participate. Six of these students had completed two units of German at UWA, three had completed an additional two intermediate units and the remaining participant had completed courses at the B1/B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The 10 participants were interviewed individually on their return from Stuttgart. In these interviews, I focused on their day-to-day life in Stuttgart, their experience in host families, language classes and social networks. I also asked questions aimed to elicit narratives of situations they associated with intercultural difficulties or successes (see Appendix 3.2 for the interview guide). The interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes per student and resulted in a total of 3 hours and 26 minutes of audio recordings.

While analysing the interview data, I looked for rich points (Agar, 1994) or opportunities for learning at the nexus of language use and culture. Although instances of rich points did emerge from the data, the students performed poorly at identifying them themselves. The interviews alone did not provide sufficient data to analyse students’ IC, although students did spend a significant amount of time reflecting on cultural differences between Australia and Germany. One participant’s story (which is quoted in the title of this thesis) about his difficulty in choosing an appropriate address term to use when talking to a police officer also informed the decision to focus on pragmatic competence. These findings significantly influenced the interview guide for the main study and also the decision to include other forms of data collection related to IC.
The following section outlines the participants and methods of data collection which were eventually used in the main phase of data collection. At the conclusion of this section, I present an outline of the whole study, including all participants and phases of data collection.

### 3.4 Main study: participants and data collection

In this section I outline the participants who took part in the study; methods used to collect data; the testing phases in the study; and the methods of data analysis. Table 3.2 gives an overview of the different data collected for each group of participants. The participants and individual data collection instruments are described in more detail below.

**Table 3.2 Summary of participants and data collected**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pilot study students (N= 10)</th>
<th>Native speakers (N=14)</th>
<th>UWA students (N= 13)</th>
<th>Other post-beginners (N= 5)</th>
<th>Beginners (N=10)</th>
<th>Staff (N=2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language awareness interview</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role plays</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo elicitation project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Facebook group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.4.1 Participants

A total of 28 participants took part in the main study; see Table 3.3 for their demographic details. The majority of participants were aged 18-25, with a mean age of 22.04 years. There were 8 male participants and 20 female participants. Most students (N= 21) had not formally studied German before starting university, and 10 participants described themselves as absolute beginners upon their arrival in Stuttgart (although two of these participants were placed in higher classes after completing the placement test). 26 participants described their native language as English, with one Hindi speaker and one Mandarin speaker (both were

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1 All names have been replaced with pseudonyms
enrolled in Australia as international students). As seen in the table, participants varied widely in their proficiency in the L2, from complete beginners, through to Tracy, who spoke some German at home and was described as a C1 speaker by her teacher in Stuttgart². Participants also varied widely in the courses they were enrolled in at their home universities. 26 students were completing undergraduate level study, with two Masters level students. Seven students were completing a major in German with an additional three students completing a Diploma of Modern Languages in order to complete a major in German alongside their main program of study.

Table 3.3 Demographics of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>German prior to university (years)</th>
<th>German at university (semesters)</th>
<th>Placement level in Stuttgart²</th>
<th>Elective in Stuttgart²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colin (M)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>German/Law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.2</td>
<td>German Film &amp; Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenni (F)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Marketing/German</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.1</td>
<td>German Film &amp; Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell (M)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Law/political science/international relations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.2</td>
<td>Cross-cultural communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharn (F)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Psychology/German (Diploma in Modern Languages)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.1</td>
<td>Art History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie (F)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Linguistics/German</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A2.1</td>
<td>Art History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy (F)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Politics/Italian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.2</td>
<td>Art History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate (F)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Economics/German</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.2</td>
<td>Contemporary Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elise (F)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A2.1</td>
<td>German Film &amp; Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalie (F)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Chemical Engineering (Masters)/German (Diploma of Modern Languages)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>B1/B2</td>
<td>20th century Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maddy (F)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Human Resource/Population health/German (Diploma modern languages)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A2.1</td>
<td>20th century Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy (F)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>English/German</td>
<td>Political Science/International relations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B1/B2 (C1)</td>
<td>20th century Architecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² C1 refers to the fifth level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, A= basic user, B= independent language user, C= proficient user
See https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/self-assessment-grid for further descriptions of what students can do at each level of the CEFR
Native-speaker participants

In addition, I also recruited 12 native speakers of German, in order to build a corpus of native-speaker material for comparison with the Australian participants’ responses (this comparison is discussed further in Chapter 4). See Table 3.4 for their demographic information. The mean age of these students was slightly older than the Australian participants (mean = 24.5 years). Two native speaker participants were studying Master’s level courses with the remainder completing bachelor degrees.

Table 3.4 Profile of native speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
<th>Languages Spoken</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jakob (M)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>German, English</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabel (F)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>German, English, Swedish, French</td>
<td>International Journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esma (F)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>German/Turkish</td>
<td>German, Turkish, English</td>
<td>Law and Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Students completed a computerised language test (which focused largely on grammar) on their first day of classes in Stuttgart.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>German, French, English</td>
<td>Integrated natural resource management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katharina</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>German, English, French, Dutch</td>
<td>Master of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>German, English, French</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>German, English, French, Swedish</td>
<td>Teaching (Secondary) English and History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>German, English, Spanish, French</td>
<td>Master of International Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>German, English, Chinese, French</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>German, English</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jana</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>German, English</td>
<td>Marine Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>German, English</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff member participants**

I also interviewed two members of staff from the program in Stuttgart. The first was the exchange coordinator from the University of Stuttgart, who was responsible for admissions, placing students into the correct level language class, and the day to day running of the exchange program. Barbara (pseudonym) had been exchange coordinator for the previous five years and had contact with all participants and teachers throughout the exchange program. This interview took place in the last week of the program and lasted approximately 20 minutes. The interview focused on her experience of running the SA program as well as her perceptions of changes that occurred to students during the program.

I also interviewed Vanessa (pseudonym) who taught the intercultural communications course. Five main study participants took part in Vanessa’s course, which focused on comparing cultures and communication styles. Vanessa often utilised role plays, critical incidents and simulations as assessment mechanisms in the course. Her interview took place in the last week of the program in German and lasted approximately 15 minutes. The interview focused on her perceptions of students’ IC, what role the course played in any changes in the students, as well as the methods she used for assessing IC in the course.

The reason for including staff interviews was twofold. Firstly, researchers have noted that viewpoints aside from student participants are lacking in SA research (Kinginger, 2009). Secondly, comments from the staff interviews served to supplement comments from the students and provided an important point of triangulation from my own field notes.

**3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews**

Students in the main study were interviewed at two points during the research project. The interviews were semi-structured and as such followed an interview script; however, to
maintain the flow of the interview, participants were not necessarily asked the questions in order. There was room for participants to speak at length about topics they perceived to be important. See Appendix 3.3 for interview schedules. Interviews were recorded using a digital mp3 recorder, transcribed using f4transkript transcription program and coded with the help of software program N-Vivo 11. I chose to use interviews for several reasons.

Firstly, I wanted to gain an idea about my participants’ language learning and travel histories before their departure to Stuttgart. Secondly, their return interviews were used to follow up on any questions I had recorded in field notes or other data sources. Finally, I hoped interviews would be less intrusive and time-consuming for the students. Other data collection methods, such as reflective journals or collecting naturally occurring language data, represent a much greater burden on students’ limited time.

In the pre-departure interviews I asked participants about their language learning histories, previous travel and their expectations for the exchange and they also completed the Language Awareness interview and role plays if they had previously studied German. These interviews lasted approximately 10-15 minutes for beginning students and 30-40 minutes for post-beginners, resulting in 11 hours and 13 minutes of audio recordings. Prior to the program, I hoped to gain an understanding of each student’s background, their previous international experience, their initial stance towards cultural differences and their proficiency in German.

In the end-of-experience interviews topics ranged from daily life in Stuttgart, the experience of living with a host family to students’ social circles. All participants completed the Language Awareness Interview. We also discussed their intercultural data. These interviews lasted approximately 40-60 minutes, resulting in 20 hours and 8 minutes of audio recordings. Questions were designed to elicit narratives about the SA experience and were thus open-ended in nature. The second interviews were structured in a way to enable comparisons with participants’ first interviews. This meant I often quoted their responses from pre-departure interviews and asked whether they still agreed with their previous statements.

3.4.3 The Language Awareness Interview

The Language Awareness Interview (LAI) was based on the interview used by Kinginger (2008). Kinginger developed the interview according to the principles of the sociolinguistic interview (Labov, 1981) and in response to the lack of a suitable instrument to measure metapragmatic awareness in foreign language learners. While Kinginger investigated
awareness of French variants, I adapted the instrument for the German language. Anything that made reference to France was replaced. For example, *tu* and *vous* were replaced with *du* and *Sie*, the names of French cities and institutions were replaced with German ones.

The LAI in this study consisted of three sections. Each section examined a different aspect of participants’ metapragmatic knowledge of German. Section one investigated participants’ knowledge and use of colloquial words and phrases. In the second section, every participant’s knowledge of leave-taking phrases was examined. The third and final section focused on knowledge of address forms in German.

In section one, participants were given a list of 20 words or expressions in German and asked to indicate whether they recognised the word, could explain what it means and would use it personally. I aimed to include words and phrases that university students are likely to come across in day-to-day life. To choose the list of words I first contacted friends who had previously studied in Germany to ask for suggestions. Then I circulated the list amongst staff and postgraduates in my department to ask for further feedback. This resulted in a list of 24 words, presented in section 4.5. Previous research has shown that L2 learners are often reluctant to use language that they perceive to be ‘too informal’ for learners to use (Dewaele & Regan, 2001). However, spending time in the L2-land also increased the frequency of colloquial language in Dewaele & Regan’s (2001) data corpus of L2 learners of French before and after an exchange in France. This section aimed to see if a short-term stay in the L2-land would increase participants’ familiarity with and willingness to use colloquial German.

The second section focused on leave-taking formulas. Participants read through a list of situations which illustrated various hierarchical, situational and age-related factors and were asked to choose appropriate leave-taking formulas from a list of ten possible choices (see section 4.4 for lists of formulas and situations). They were then told to choose as many formulas as would be appropriate in the given situation. This section was designed to determine whether exposure to different leave-taking formulas would result in increased knowledge about their formality and the appropriateness of use in different situations. Learners may not yet be familiar with many formulas and often possess limited communicative repertoires with regard to greetings and leave-taking (Hassall, 2006; Kinginger, 2008). For example, learners may be unaware that it is inappropriate to use *auf Wiedersehen* [goodbye] with a person one already uses the informal *du* with, but that in
Germany at least³, tschüss [bye] can be used both with people that one uses du [inf. you] and those where Sie [for. you] is required (Hickey, 2003). In the third and final section of the LAI, participants read through various situations and were asked to decide if they would address their fictional interlocutors with du or Sie. Each situation conveyed a different level of formality and familiarity between characters. Some situations were deliberately ambiguous in order to elicit extensive narratives about the participants' current awareness of the German address form system (see section 4.4 for a list of situations). Despite being binary, the German address form system is inherently ambiguous and is a source of potential embarrassment and conflict even for native speakers (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Kretzenbacher, Clyne & Schüpbach, 2006). The pragmatic force of inappropriate address form use is often not appreciated by learners who may be unaware of the social message that is delivered when choosing address forms. This complexity makes address form competence an especially difficult part of foreign language learning to acquire in the classroom: one that requires intervention (such as time in the L2-land) in order for it to develop (Belz & Kinginger, 2003).

The rationale for assessing participants' knowledge of linguistic variance rather than pragmatic performance alone rests on the fact that researchers “have no way of knowing whether inappropriate utterances are a result of a lack of competence or a personal choice” (Henery, 2014, p. 4). Sociolinguistic variants are double indexicals, referencing both the social context of the situations in which the variant is used, as well as the speaker’s identity (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Kinginger, 2008). Kinginger suggests that “in order to understand what learners know about these forms, we have to ask them” (Kinginger, 2008, p. 31). Together, the three sections of the LAI provide a comprehensive picture of participants’ developing knowledge of different forms of German.

3.4.4 Role plays

Whilst the LAI adequately measures participants’ awareness of different forms of German, I also wanted to see whether the exchange program would induce a change in the way participants used address forms. According to the definition of pragmatic competence introduced in section 1.1, in addition to sociocultural knowledge of linguistic forms (as assessed by the LAI), students must also be able to use this knowledge to create a common

³ While it is common to combine Sie and tschüss in Germany, in Austria this would be considered rude (Kretzenbacher, 2011, p. 80). Additionally, Hallo is much more frequently combined with Sie in Germany compared to Austria. Given participants took part in a SA program in Germany, these regional specificities were not considered when analysing their responses to this part of the LAI.
act in interaction (Taguchi, 2016). Although the use of naturally occurring data would seem ideal for this purpose there were several reasons I chose to use role plays to investigate participants’ use of address terms instead. The participants in this study were involved with the research over several months and were required to submit data in various forms. Given there was no reimbursement for their participation I aimed to keep the time and effort required on behalf of participants in each part of the data collection to a minimum. One of the major problems in qualitative research, especially research which requires multiple instances of data collection over a period of time, is the potential for participants to drop out of the study. Role plays represent a significantly smaller burden on participants’ time and effort than for example recording authentic conversations or keeping a journal. In addition, the large number of participants would have resulted in a very large corpus of naturally occurring data. Using role plays allows for comparisons of interactional data while controlling for various sociolinguistic variables (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007). This is ideal when considering participants’ understanding and use of address terms in varying situations. Although DCT’s are commonly used in pragmatics research, as discussed on p. 23 there are several limitations associated with using them that would make DCT’s an inappropriate choice of method for the current study. The role plays used in this study are modified versions of those used by Kinginger (2008) which are loosely based on situations from the OPI. Each role play involves a speech act: either a request or an invitation. The role-play situations were also marked as either informal or formal according to the status of the role-play characters as well as the context the situation took place in. For each speech act and level of formality there was a shorter, slightly more simple version and a longer, more complex version. I chose either the long or short version for each participant based on their language learning backgrounds. Participants completed the same role plays before and after their stay in Germany. Of the Australian participants, only Tracy completed the longer versions of the role plays. See section 4.2 for the role-play situations.

Two limitations are associated with using role plays to collect data on L2 performance. Firstly, it has been argued elsewhere that role plays place unnecessary strain on learners’ processing capacity as they are required to maintain a character and display sensitivity as well as speaking spontaneously in the L2 (Kasper, 2001, p. 513). Role plays can be difficult even for very advanced or native speakers. The native speakers in this study confirmed this, with several participants commenting that they found it difficult to decide what to say and to maintain a ‘character’ throughout the role play. The influence of a
students’ proficiency in the L2 is also noticeable in the difference between performances in the pre- and post-interviews. Secondly, participants may perceive that there is a risk of losing face and as such may try to save face throughout the ‘performance’ by code-switching (Kasper, 2001; Kinginger, 2008). Nevertheless, although some participants displayed difficulties in completing the role-play tasks, the informal nature of the interviews served to relax participants and I was able to gather data about most of the participants’ actual use of address forms.

3.4.5 Intercultural data: Photo elicitation project and reflective Facebook group

In order to assess qualitative changes to students’ IC, I employed two methods for collecting data about how students experienced cultural differences. Students from UWA were invited to use a Facebook group which had been set up to allow them to post comments and photos about cultural differences they noticed in Germany. The concept was introduced in a 1-hour workshop prior to their departure where students were also introduced to the idea of reflective learning and intercultural sensitivity. The workshop was supplemented by a series of online modules that covered the practical aspects of exchange such as purchasing travel insurance, as well as culture shock, the DMIS and reflective learning. As the workshop took place face-to-face on campus and learning management system access was required, participants from other universities were not able to participate in the Facebook group. Instead, these students completed a photo elicitation project where they were asked to take a series of photos focusing on cultural differences between Germany and Australia and to submit a selection of these photos and some details about the photos at the end of the exchange. I discussed their photos with the students in the post-exchange interview. Both of these methods elicited visual data as well as interview data. They are each discussed more fully and compared in Chapter 5.

3.4.6 Participant observation

Participant observation is a technique which is widely used in all types of qualitative research and “emphasises close, intimate, and active involvement” with research participants (Yin, 2001, p. 122). It is called participant observation because the researcher generally acts as a participant, to a greater or lesser degree, in the settings they are studying (Hatch, 2002). The purpose of such a method of data collection is to understand the culture, setting or social phenomenon under study from the point of view of the participants (Hatch, 2002, p.
There are several advantages of participant observation, the most important being that it gives the researcher access to the participants and their behaviour in a way that is not possible in interviews. For example, participants may discuss sensitive information that they would not otherwise mention in an interview, or the researcher may be privy to ideas participants take for granted and that would not surface with other methods of data collection (Agar, 1996; Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2010). In this section I outline the extent of my involvement with my participants as a participant observer in Stuttgart, and the implications this holds for the study.

As an embedded researcher, I travelled with the students to Stuttgart and attended their meetings, classes and excursions. My official involvement in the exchange was limited to my role as the facilitator of the pre-departure and re-entry workshops. Although my age, race and socioeconomic background was similar to many of the students, I had also taught a small number of the participants at UWA. This, in combination with my status as a competent speaker of German, limited my ability to act as a full participant – an exchange student learning German (Hatch, 2002). I therefore occupied a middle ground between teacher and student while in class with students. I often assisted teachers with preparing material for class (e.g. by making copies of class material) but I also often participated in group work if, for example, there was an odd number of students in class. This middle ground encouraged my participants to position me as an ‘in-between’ – between native-speaker teacher and student. While participants often asked me for advice about language and other classroom-related matters in the role of teacher, they also asked me for advice about living in Germany as an outsider. For example, I was often asked how to initiate conversations in the host family, or how to get to know local age peers.

This level of involvement had several benefits for this study, while simultaneously prompting me to ask questions of my research. Firstly, I was able to establish a good relationship with each participant, with the result that only two of 30 participants dropped out of the study. I was also able to see their language use in and out of the classroom, observe their interactions with each other and their teachers, and gain an idea of the material covered by each teacher. This was especially beneficial for the address-form data, as I was able to observe how they addressed and were addressed by their teacher, each other and myself. I took notes on my observations, mostly while in class, but also on excursions and after events such as the welcome meeting. Whilst the lack of naturally occurring conversational data could be considered a limitation of this study, my
observations in Stuttgart allowed me to provide additional detail about the ‘daily lives’ of my participants as they occurred.

My relatively close involvement with my participants also raises certain questions about the research and the influence my presence may have had on participants’ behaviour or their answers in interviews. I have attempted to mitigate the effects of such close involvement by carefully documenting the research process in a research journal, and subsequently in an N-Vivo database. In addition, the different data sources described in this chapter provide triangulation of my own thoughts and ideas as recorded in field notes. Given that I made a presentation about my research at the welcome meeting, all program participants were aware that I was present as a researcher rather than a student, even if they did not know the exact focus of my study.

In accordance with much of the literature about conducting qualitative research (Agar, 1996; Gobo, 2011; Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2010), I believe participant observation posed more potential benefits than drawbacks. The resulting data provided important insights into the participants’ experiences in Stuttgart and were especially useful when building the case studies presented in Chapter 6.

3.4.7 Building case studies

Case studies are one of the most common types of research design and analysis used within applied linguistics, and indeed SA research (Duff, 2008, 2014; Jackson, 2005; Kinginger, 2008). According to Duff (2008), definitions of case studies tend to incorporate the following characteristics:

- A focus on the “bounded” singular nature of the case
- An emphasis of the importance of context to the analysis of the case
- The presence of multiple sources of information, as well as perspectives on observations
- In-depth analysis of data sources (Duff, 2008, p. 21)

A mainstay of qualitative research, case studies have been central to the development of theory and description of many aspects of language teaching and learning (Duff, 2004, 2008). The research design of the current study aligns well with the nature of case study research. When building the case studies presented in chapter 6, I drew on case study research within SA such as Jackson’s (2005, 2008, 2013) case studies of intercultural learnin; Kinginger’s (2008) case studies of language learning in France, and Hassall’s (2014) two case studies of pragmatic learning during short-term study abroad. Many of the issues and themes that
emerged during these studies are also pertinent to the case studies presented in this thesis. However, there were also themes which emerged organically during data analysis of the larger body of qualitative data of the study. One criticism of case study research is a lack of engagement with theory (Duff, 2008, p. 102). In accordance with the theoretical framework of the larger study, language socialisation remained a point of focus during the analysis of the case study data. I expand on the process I followed when building each case study, and how I chose the focal participants further in section 3.4.8 Testing phases

Table 3.5 provides a summary of the data collection timeline. Each phase of data collected is further explained in the next sections.

Pre-exchange

Once participants had been recruited, I contacted them to arrange their first interview. I met with students from UWA on campus, whereas those I recruited via email were interviewed by Skype. We talked about their language learning histories, their expectations for Stuttgart and their ideas about German culture. They also completed the LAI and the role plays if they had previously studied German. Students at UWA attended the pre-exchange workshop and were briefed about the Facebook group and its purpose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2 Summary of data collection timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot study Feb/March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language awareness interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo elicitation project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Facebook group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Stuttgart

On arrival in Stuttgart, I attended the welcome meeting for the students on the university campus and was invited to give a short presentation about my project. The students who were recruited after the meeting were interviewed in the first few days of the exchange. Those students completing the photo elicitation project also received further information and instructions. Students from UWA received prompts and advice about how to use the Facebook group. Several students (N=6) elected to submit their photos and have their final interview prior to returning to Australia as their returns were delayed by further travel – these interviews took place in the final two days of the exchange.

Post-exchange

Following the exchange, students at UWA attended the post-exchange workshop, where we discussed their experiences on exchange and their posts to the Facebook group. Their final interviews took place on campus where I also discussed the Facebook group with them one-on-one. The remaining students who were not interviewed in Stuttgart were interviewed via Skype, where we also discussed their photo elicitation project.

3.5 Data analysis

In this section I outline the methods by which I analysed my data.

3.5.1 Qualitative data

The qualitative data in this study (interview transcripts, field notes, Facebook posts and photos from the photo elicitation project) were first entered into a single database in NVivo. There I created a case file for each participant with all pieces of data related to the participant in a single place, including their demographic details. From there I read and re-read my data corpus several times. After these initial readings, I began the process of content analysis in order to distil the large dataset into manageable chunks and themes (Grbich, 2013). In this initial round of coding, codes emerged inductively from patterns in the data. This allowed me to look more closely at data related to individual themes within the larger data corpus. From these initial codes, I worked with different themes according to relevant theories. For example, data relating to address form choice was coded again according to principles of LS, paying particular attention to instances where participants spoke about receiving explicit correction of their language choices or being socialised into
language use. Data relating to intercultural learning (Facebook and photo elicitation data as well as related discussions in the interviews) was deductively coded according to the attitudes, knowledge and skills described in Deardorff’s model. In each chapter I describe the relevant coding processes in more detail.

3.5.2 Quantitative data

Quantitative data from the role plays and LAI were analysed using the Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Paired sample t-tests were used to analyse differences in means in pre- and post- interviews for post-beginner participants’ performance in the first section of the LAI (colloquial words and phrases). I kept a copy of each participant’s role play and LAI data in both Microsoft Excel and SPSS throughout the data analysis phase.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the methodology chosen for this study. The benefits and questions surrounding qualitative research were summarised. I described the way participants were recruited and the different phases of the study, including the different methods of data collection. Finally, I discussed the analysis carried out on both qualitative and quantitative data. The methods chosen aimed to present a full picture of my participant’s experiences as well as depicting changes in their intercultural and language learning that occurred as a result of the exchange. The following chapter presents the results of the LAI and role plays and shows the linguistic impact of the exchange on my participants.
CHAPTER 4: CHARTING PRAGMATIC AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the role plays and LAI. In the next section I introduce the role-play data with both an analysis of students’ actual use of address forms throughout the role plays, as well as an examination of their general performance. In section 4.3 I present the findings from the du/Sie situations in the LAI. These situations probed students’ awareness of address term usage and complement the findings from the role plays. Then I review the students’ choice of leave-taking formulas in part 2 of the LAI. Finally, I analyse their ability to define and use colloquial German words and phrases. Throughout the chapter I compare the students’ results to my native-speaker participants (N= 12) and make reference to other data from the interviews and my field notes where appropriate. The native speakers’ responses formed an approximate guide for judging the appropriateness of the learners’ responses. They were deemed a suitable comparison group, given they were similar in age and background to the Australian students.

As seen in many of the results in this chapter, the tasks were too difficult for those students who began their German language study in Stuttgart. For this reason, I have presented the beginners’ and post-beginners’ data separately. I refer to students who had learnt German prior to Stuttgart as ‘post-beginner learners’ (N=18) and those who had not as ‘beginner learners’ (N= 10) throughout the rest of the chapter. As post-beginner learners completed the LAI twice, responses from their pre-departure interviews are labelled ‘T1’ and responses from the return interviews ‘T2’. Two students (Liam and Jack) had said they were complete beginners during the recruitment stage of the study. Therefore, they did not complete the LAI and are included with the beginner learners here. Both Jack and Liam had learnt some German at school prior to coming to Stuttgart, but the time that had elapsed between their secondary study and the SA program meant that their knowledge of German was, for the most part, no longer current.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the overall effect of the SA program on the students’ pragmatic competence in German - in particular the impact of the various processes of language socialisation that impacted on participants’ language development - and a brief discussion of the impact of students’ prior study of German on the development of their pragmatic competence.
4.2 Role-play data

All students (N=28) reported that they noticed a difference in their German skills following the six weeks. Most commonly students reported an improvement in their general speaking ability, their range of vocabularies and their confidence and willingness to speak in the L2: this is clearly reflected in their general performance in the role plays. Participating in the interviews appeared to serve as a diagnostic tool for the students, with several students commenting that they noticed a difference between their first and second interview. Students also found completing the LAI made them more aware of variation in language and of the existence of multiple ways of expressing a similar word or idea. They generally found both the role plays and LAI challenging, particularly in the first interview. Their low knowledge of differing sociolinguistic variants and their realms of usage reflect the classroom focus of most participants’ German study prior to the exchange. The role plays were included in this study in order to examine participants’ use of address terms as well as to provide a general measure of their speaking ability. As mentioned in section 3.4.4, role plays are taxing on L2 speakers, as they are required to create an ongoing context. This places additional demands on learners’ processing ability to the detriment of their discourse ability (Kasper, 2001, p. 513). The participants initially found the role plays very difficult as seen in the example given below. Practice in the L2 and an increased familiarity with the tasks was evident in their performance in the post-exchange interviews. However, for the students who began their German study in Stuttgart, the tasks proved very difficult, with three participants unable to complete the tasks at all. See Table 4.3 for the role-play situations.

There are several factors in each of the situations which would indicate to students what the appropriate pronoun would be, for example the age of the interlocutors, the relative formality of the situation and the closeness of the two speakers. For instance, in the short informal invitation situation where students are required to invite a friend to lunch, learners could infer that the friend will be an age peer. The situation also states that the interlocutors have “spent quite a bit of time together”, suggesting further familiarity. That the situation focuses on arranging an informal lunch would suggest that there would be too much intimacy involved for Sie to be appropriate here. In the short, formal invitation where learners invite a professor to dinner after the welcome meeting, the interlocutor’s status as professor indicates the formality required. Although participants were not told if a situation
was deemed to be formal or informal, there was little of the ambiguity present in some of the *du/Sie* situations discussed in section 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Role-play situations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech act: Invitation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal invitation</td>
<td><strong>Short:</strong> Call a friend you’ve known for about a month and invite him/her to lunch. You both have spent quite a bit of time together since meeting a month ago, so you know what type of food he/she likes to eat. You suggest a time and a place to eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Long:</strong> After about a week in Germany, you call a German friend you’ve known since you were young. This friend is 20 years old. Invite him/her to a party at your place on Saturday evening. You tell him/her who will be there, and you ask him/her to bring a couple of his/her friends and something to eat or drink. Your friend needs directions to your house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal invitation</td>
<td><strong>Short:</strong> You are at a welcome dinner with some of your new friends in Germany. It’s being held somewhere in Stuttgart you have been a few times. At the party you happen to see a professor from the German department at your university who you’ve seen before but have never spoken to. Strike up a conversation with him/her. Then ask him/her if he/she would like to join you for dinner after the party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Long:</strong> You met an interesting woman at a cocktail party. She is from Berlin and has been working as an interpreter since she finished her studies 20 years ago. Because this is the kind of work you would like to do once you graduate, at her invitation you call her a few days after the party, you re-introduce yourself to her and you remind her where you first met. You invite her to join you for dinner at your favourite restaurant. You both arrange a date and time, and you tell her where the restaurant is located.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speech act: Requests

| Informal request | **Short:** You’re having a bad day. You need to see your new German boyfriend/girlfriend as soon as possible. Call him/her at home and ask him/her... |
if s/he can see you for coffee within the hour.

Long: You need a particular cook book for a project in your language class. You have a friend, who is also friends with your host sister. You’ve met her on several different occasions and she’s told you about this cookbook before. Call her and ask to borrow the book. Tell her how long you will need to borrow the book and arrange a time and a day to pick it up from her.

Short: You’re going on a trip to Berlin with two other friends. When you call the hostel, you are surprised to hear the voice of a very elderly woman. You think you have the wrong number. When you ask if this is the Meininger Hostel, she says that it is, and she adds that she has owned the hostel for 50 years. You decide that you and your friends must stay there, because she sounds so colourful and interesting. First though, you ask her for the lowest-priced triple room. Ask what amenities the room has and what the price is.

Long: You are at the train station, intending to travel from Stuttgart to Amsterdam via Brussels. You finally reach the counter, after spending about 30 minutes in line, and you buy a two-way ticket from Stuttgart to Amsterdam. You tell the cashier that you need a second-class seat in a non-smoking train car. Ask the cashier at what time you arrive in Brussels and find out the time of your connection to Amsterdam. Then ask the cashier if the train to Brussels is on time and find out from which platform you are leaving.

4.2.1 General performance

Below I present Lisa’s role play from her first interview. Her performance is fairly typical for post-beginner learners (participants who had begun their study of German prior to arriving in Stuttgart). Lisa had studied German for 4 semesters in Australia and had never visited Germany before, so her conversational practice had thus far been limited to the L2 classroom. Like many other students, Lisa was uncomfortable speaking German even in the informal interview situation. See Appendix 4.1 for transcription conventions.

1. I: Cool ok, and the very last thing, we’ll do a couple of little role plays, auf Deutsch

2. L: Oh no!

3. I: Also, das erste

   Ok, the first one

4. L: Oh god, ok

5. I: If you have any questions…

6. L: I'm like, just to like lunch, is that Mittagsessen, oh god, ok hold up I just need to think for a second how I'm gonna do this… Italian food, Italien, is that still like It- (laughs), I'm trying to think of like a certain type of food that's easy, umm, alright, I'm just gonna wing it, I've got this
7. I: Sehr gut, ok give me a ring when you're ready
   Very good, ok give me a ring when you're ready

8. L: Ring-ring-ring (laughs)

9. I: Hallo!
   Hello!

10. L: Hi, Rosie, wie geht's?
    Hi, Rosie, how's it going?

11. I: Ja mir geht's gut, und dir?
    Yeah I'm good, and you (T-form)?

12. L: Ja sehr gut danke uhh willst du mit mir morgen uhh (.) aus essen gehen?
    Yes really good thanks, uhhh do you (T-form) want to go out to eat with me tomorrow?

13. I: Ja, ja ok, wann?
    Yes, yes ok, when?

14. L: Uh, am Mittag?
    Uh at midday?

15. I: Ja ok, um zwölf Uhr oder?
    Yeah ok, at 12 o'clock right?

16. L: Uhh, uhh liebst du (3.8) is it die Kaf-, das, der Cafe, die Cafe?
    Uhh, uhh do you (T-form) love- is it the caf-, the, the Cafe, the Cafe?

17. I: Kaffee?
    Coffee?

18. L: Ja
    Yes

19. I: Ja trinke ich sehr gern
    Yes I like to drink it a lot

20. L: Ja uhhh ich weiß eine kleine Restaurant, wait yeah uhm, willst du mit mir gehen?
    Yes umm I know a small restaurant, wait yeah um, do you (T-form) want to go with me?
Yes, what's it called?

La Cuisine (laughs)

Ok very good, yes

Is that running or walking?

It depends

Oh

Um doesn’t matter, uh yes we can walk there together, um maybe we could meet at the train station and then walk there together?

Yes very good

Ok cool, ok then I’ll see you tomorrow

Lisa’s performance in her role play exemplifies many patterns seen in other students’ role plays. She is able to complete the task quite successfully, but she clarifies the meaning of words in English twice at turns 16 and 24 and uses self-talk in English at turn 20. Bolded items represent unusual or inappropriate vocabulary choices. Like many of the other participants, she consistently and appropriately employs du throughout the role play. By the end of her six weeks in Stuttgart Lisa had found a supportive environment for practising speaking informally in German – with her elderly host parents who spoke no English. She also attributes some of her improvement to the three hours of language immersion every day in classes in Stuttgart. Yet in her second, post-Stuttgart interview, below, she initially appears reluctant to do the role plays again:

Ok role plays!

Oh no!
3. I: You wanted an option to practice your German so

4. L: It’s probably just as bad as my first role play yeah, umm ok, how does this language go again (laughs), ok…
   ring ring! (laughs)

5. I: Hallo!

6. L: Hallo, wie geht’s?
   Hello, how’s it going?

7. I: Na mir geht’s gut und dir?
   Yeah I’m good and you (T-form)?

8. L: Ja sehr gut danke ähm hast du was Zeit morgen?
   Very well thanks, um do you (T-form) have some time tomorrow?

9. I: Ja ich hab’ Zeit
   Yeah I have some time

10. L: Ja? Willst du mit mir ein bisschen essen ähm, willst du mit mir morgen für ein bisschen (laughs) umm oh god umm (2.9) ahh (1.9) ähm ich habe ein neue Restaurant gefunden
   Yes? Do you (T-form) want to go and eat something with me um, do you (T-form) want to go tomorrow for a bit of umm oh god umm, ahhh erm I’ve found a new restaurant

11. I: Ohh sehr schön
   Ohh very nice

12. L: Ja es heisst ähm Kuchen und Kaffee (laughs)
   Yes it’s called um Cake and Coffee

13. I: Lecker, klingt lecker
   Yum, sounds yum

14. L: Willst du mit mir morgen gehen?
   Do you (T-form) want to go with me tomorrow?

15. I: Ja klar, um wie viel Uhr?
   Yeah sure, what time?

16. L: Uhm um zwölf Uhr?
   Uh um at 12 o’clock?
17. I: Ja
18. L: Mittag?
   Noon?
19. I: Ja das passt
   Yes that works
20. L: Ja
21. I: Treffen wir uns dort oder? am Bahnhof oder wie?
   Are we going to meet there? Or at the train station or something?
22. L: Ähm ja am Bahnhof bei der Informationszentrum
   Um yeah at the train station at the information centre
23. I: Ok super
24. L: Kann das?
   Can that?
25. I: Ja
26. L: Ja, ähm (.) willst du jemand mitnehmen oder?
   Yes um do you (T-form) want to take someone with you or?
27. I: Nee ich glaube nicht wir können einfach zu zweit oder?
   No I think we can just go the two of us?
28. L: Ja, ist gut ja ich habe nur zwei ah Stunden dafür, geht das?
   Yes that’s good, I only have two hours, is that ok?
29. I: Ja das passt, also ich hab auch nicht so viel Zeit
   Yes that works, I don’t have that much time either
30. L: Ok gut ja, ich muss arbeiten
   Ok good yes, I have to work
31. I: Oh schade, aber klingt schön
   Oh that’s a shame, but it sounds nice
32. L: Ja bis morgen
   Yes see you tomorrow
33.  I: Bis morgen, tschüss!
   See you tomorrow, bye!

34.  L: Tschüss! (laughs)
   Bye!

Here, Lisa is able to speak at length, uses more appropriate vocabulary and also spontaneously brings in extra information to the role play at turns 26, 28 and 30. Her performance shows the impact of her stay in Stuttgart and the extended use of German throughout these 6 weeks. By contrast, the beginning students found the role plays very difficult. In total, 7 of 10 beginner learners were able to complete the role plays. The three remaining students either declined to complete the role play or could not complete more than one or two turns of speech before deciding the task was too difficult. Below I present Lara’s role play from the post-Stuttgart interview. Her performance is typical of those beginner learners who were able to complete the role-play tasks.

1.  I: Hallo!

2.  L: Hallo! Um (2.1) uh ich habe schlecht Tag uhm
   Hello! Um I have a bad day um

3.  I: Oh nein!
   Oh no!

4.  L: Um (1.5) können (2.1) nein, let me look for a second um uh wir können (2.6) für Kaffee treffen?
   Um can, no let me look for a second, um we can meet for coffee?

5.  I: Ja! Ja gern, wann?
   Yes! Yes I’d love to, when?

6.  L: Umm (3.2) uhh in ein Stunden?
   Umm uhh in an hours?

7.  I: In einer Stunde?
   In an hour?

8.  L: Eine Stunde ja
   An hour yes

9.  I: Ok ähm an der Uni oder?
Ok um at uni or?

10. L: Ja an der Uni

Yes at uni

11. I: Ok cool um, so in einer Stunde an der Uni?

Ok cool, so in an hour at uni?

12. L: Ja, cool tschüss!

Yes cool, bye!

13. I: Ok bis dann, ciao!

Ok I'll see you then, bye!

When compared with Lisa’s role play, Lara is less able to speak at length and brings in no additional information to the role play. She completes the task in 13 turns compared to Lisa’s 34 turns. She makes more grammatical errors in a shorter number of turns, but she is able to choose vocabulary appropriately. Additionally, Lara avoids using address terms completely. It is difficult to discern whether this was a purposeful decision given the short length of the role play. Like Lisa, Lara found a supportive environment in which she could practice her German. She lived with a young family where she often played with the children to practice what she had learnt during the language classes.

Despite the beginner learners’ difficulty with the role plays, that they were able to complete simple speech acts at all provides evidence for improvement over the course of 6 weeks. Belinda, evaluates her own progress on exchange:

What I found I got out of it is by the end of the trip um I was able to converse in […] a chocolate shop completely in German with the lady so that was really cool

(Belinda, Beginner learner, T2)

While the beginners struggled with the role-play tasks (and the rest of the LAI), the progress of those who applied themselves during the language course in Stuttgart was commendable.

4.2.2 Address term use in the role plays

The L2 learners’ and native speakers’ use of address forms in role plays are shown in Table 4.4. In contrast to other studies investigating learners’ use of address forms (e.g. Barron, 2006; Kinginger, 2008), the data in this study displays considerably fewer examples of switching between the two forms and overall a high level of convergence between learner data in the post-interview and native-speaker data, to a somewhat lesser extent for beginner
learners. This may be partly explained by the order of the tasks in the interviews: participants completed the address form awareness section of the LAI directly before completing the role plays. As such, their awareness of address forms may have been raised. Participants completed the role plays last as I assumed they would be nervous about speaking in German, and wanted to maintain a relaxed atmosphere for the majority of the interviews to allow them to speak at ease. This ordering and its potential influence on participants' use of address forms in the role plays is a shortcoming of this study. All participants also spent some time thinking about their responses after reading through the role-play scenarios. During this time, participants may have given thought not only to vocabulary and sentence structure, but also to choosing the correct form of address.

Table 4.4 % of participants using du or Sie in role plays in the pre- (T1) and post-interviews (T2) for post-beginner learners, beginner learners in the post-test (Beg.) and native speakers (NS) (all responses are in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS T1 T2 Beg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie</td>
<td>- 5.8% -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du</td>
<td>100% 82.3% 94.4% 57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>- - 5.5% 14.3% 33.3% 17.6% 16.6% 28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switching</td>
<td>- 11.7% - 28.6% -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another feature of the data in this study is the avoidance of address terms by both native speakers and learners in the formal role plays. Although avoidance of address pronouns is difficult in German due to the verb morphology (cf. Kretzenbacher, 2010), as seen in the example below, it does occur in situations perceived by the speaker as especially ambiguous. Both formal request role plays were service situations, and some participants spoke in the 3rd person to enquire about goods and services.

**N:** Oh wunderbar! umm undd uh wie viel kostet eine dritte Zimmer?

Oh wonderful! Ummm andd uh how much does a third room cost?

**I:** Ein Dreibettzimmer? Das kostet 50 Euro

A triple room? That costs 50 Euro

**N:** Oh ok und mit Frühstück?

Oh ok and with breakfast?

**I:** Ja das Frühstück kommt dazu und

Yes, breakfast comes with it
N: Und ein Bad?
And a bathroom?

I: Ja es gibt ein Badezimmer im Zimmer
Yes there is a bathroom in the room (Natalie, Post-beginner learner, T2)

The fact that native speakers also avoided using address terms in 28.5% of formal role plays suggests that this is appropriate behaviour rather than a deviation from L2 norms. The limited switching that occurred in the role play data, particularly in the formal role plays, does not appear to be related to difficulties with choosing correct address forms but rather an inability to consistently use address forms throughout the role play. In the following excerpt, Kate (Post-beginner learner, T2) attempts to invite a member of teaching staff from her home university to dinner following an information session at the university in Stuttgart:

1. K: Ok umm oh Professor Schultz guten Abend
Ok um, oh Professor Schultz, good evening

2. I: Guten Abend
Good evening

3. K: Umm (.) wie geht es Ihnen?
Umm how are you (V-form)?

4. I: Mir geht es gut und Ihnen?
I'm well and you (V-form)?

5. K: Ja auch gut (1.6) uhhm was: haben Sie heute Nachmittag gemacht? Nach dem Kurs?
Yes also good, umm what did you (V-form) do this afternoon? After the course?

6. I: Oh ich bin nach Hause gegangen, ich habe so ein Buch gelesen und dann einen Kuchen gebacken
Oh I went home, I read a book for a while and then I baked a cake

7. K: Oh sehr nett, uh was für ein Kuchen hast du gebackt?
Oh very nice, uh what kind of cake did you (T-form) bake?

8. I: Das war ein Apfelkuchen
It was an apple cake
9. K: Ah super
   Oh super

10. I: Der war lecker
   It was yum

11. K: Und hast du noch schon Hunger? Oh haben Sie noch schon Hunger?
   And are you (T-form) hungry again already? Oh are you (V-form) hungry again already

12. I: Ja ich habe schon wieder Hunger, ich habe fast immer Hunger eigentlich also
   Yes I’m hungry again, I’m pretty much always hungry

13. K: Ah perfekt, um möchten Sie gern uhm (2.2) uhm nein um: (6.7) ich habe gedacht, dass um: ich nach uhm der Party uhm (2.7) in (2.6) einer mm chinesische Restaurant- chinesisches Restaurant gegangen möchtest mm nein um möchten Sie gern mitkommen?
   Oh perfect, would you (V-form) like to um, um no, I thought that um, I after um the party um would go to a chinese- a chinese restaurant mmm no, um would you (V-form) like to come?

14. I: Ja klar, ich esse sehr gern chinesisch
   Yes of course, I like Chinese

15. K: Oh perfekt um (2.4) uh wir könnten uns uhm (2.0) in eine halbe Stunde mmm treffen?
   Oh perfect um, uh we could meet um in half an hour?

16. I: Ja einfach also bei der Tür oder so und dann können wir zusammen laufen und?
   Yes just by the door or something and then we can walk together and?

17. K: Ja
   Yes

18. I: Ja super, klingt gut. Ok bis gleich!
   Ok great, sounds good. See you soon!

19. K: Mm bis gleich [laughter]
   See you soon!

In total, Kate employs five singular V forms and two singular T forms. In one of these instances, in turn 11, she corrects herself immediately. In turn 13, Kate begins to use the informal verb form, before correcting herself and using the formal form. She also chooses to
address the speaker with the ‘Professor’ title and a relatively formal greeting, ‘guten Abend’ [good evening], indicating that she is aware of the formality required in the situation. Another participant who code switches at T2 does so only once in opening the role play, when she asks the fictional professor ‘wie geht’s?’ [how’s it going?]. It is likely students both heard and used this informal phrase often. Their fellow students and host families would likely use the informal rather than the formal ‘wie geht es Ihnen?’ [how are you (V-form)]. The switching illustrated by these participants reflects the difficulty they had with the role-play tasks in general rather than difficulty choosing the correct address term for a particular situation.

In general, participants were able to consistently choose appropriate address pronouns and displayed limited switching in the role plays compared to previous research. Beginner students displayed understandably less proficiency when choosing address pronouns. Several of the findings in this section may be explained by the difficulty participants had with the role play tasks, and also the ordering of tasks within the LAI.

4.3 Language Awareness Interview: Awareness of address forms

In this section I present findings from the address form situations of the LAI (part 3). The situations are presented in Table 4.5, below. Participants read through these situations and were then asked whether they would address the characters with du or Sie and to explain their choice.

Table 4.5 du/Sie choice situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation 1</th>
<th>You are eating lunch in the university cafeteria when one of your classmates sits down across the table from you and greets you. The classmate is about your age but you are not yet personally acquainted with them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situations 2 and 3</td>
<td>You are being interviewed for a part-time job babysitting for a 6-year-old boy. When you meet the boy’s mother, do you call her ‘du’ or ‘Sie’? (2) When you meet him for the first time do you call the boy ‘du’ or ‘Sie’? (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situations 4 and 5</td>
<td>You have been frequenting the same bakery for several weeks and the lady at the counter now recognises you and often exchanges pleasantries with you when you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
visit the bakery. She is about 50 years old and has a daughter who sometimes works at the bakery after school. Do you call the older woman du or Sie? (4) Do you call the younger woman du or Sie? (5)

| Situation 6 | You are walking down the street when you run into someone you met at a party last week. |

Each situation exhibited different parameters which have been shown in the literature to exert an influence on the choice of address form, for example age, familiarity and setting (cf. section 2.1.5 and Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Clyne, Kretzenbacher, Norrby, & Warren, 2004; Clyne et al., 2009; Kretzenbacher, 2011). Some situations were relatively clear cut du or Sie situations, while others were deliberately ambiguous ‘grey areas’ (cf. Clyne et al., 2009).

Situation 1 involved an age peer in a university setting, a situation where the default choice is du because of the shared experience of being a student, even when the interlocutors are not yet acquainted. Research indicates that many language learners are not yet familiar with this usage (Kinginger & Belz, 2005). In situations 2 and 3, students were placed in an interview for a babysitting job with an older adult and a child, in order to see if students would select the appropriate du for addressing a child and Sie to show appropriate respect to the mother, who is an unknown stranger, in a formal situation. Situations 4 and 5 involved a service encounter with an older woman and an age peer. Situation 5 in particular was designed to be ambiguous and prompt justification and reflection on the choice of address form. Despite the fact that the interaction took place in a service context, the age of the woman could in certain cases prompt a younger person to use du, for example if additional interaction outside of a service situation had taken place, or if the nature of the business was casual and catered more to a younger crowd. Situation 6 again called for knowledge of the use of du between age peers in informal situations, such as at a party. In addition to these data, participants and I also discussed address terms at other points in the semi-structured interviews and face to face in Stuttgart (which were then recorded in field notes). These data created a picture of students’ awareness of the German second person system of address.

Overall, post-beginner learners showed an increase in their awareness of how and why German address forms are used. The native speakers show a high level of agreement in all situations aside from the most ambiguous one (Situation 5). Those who expressed uncertainty at how to address the mother in situation 2 referred to the principle of
reciprocity, noting that if she were to use *du*, they would accommodate her choice and also use *du*. Those that chose *Sie* or were unsure in Situation 6 said that they would prefer to use *Sie* if the party in question was work-related, but would in all other cases use *du*. The variation in their responses confirms the difficulty other researchers have found native speakers have in defining explicit rules for address term usage (e.g. Clyne et al., 2009; Kretzenbacher et al., 2006).

The post-beginner learners have more convergence in their responses on the post-test – especially for the situations involving age peers (Situations 1 & 6). The beginner learners show a less developed awareness of address forms. As seen in Table 4.6, post-beginner learners displayed mostly accurate knowledge regarding how to address an unknown stranger in a formal situation (Situation 2) and how to address children (Situation 3) prior to their sojourn, whereas the beginners were slightly less sure of the rules regarding children and address form after the exchange than post beginners. Their responses are analysed more fully in the sections below.

**Table 4.6** Choices for Situation 2 and 3 of the LAI in the pre- (T1) and post-interviews (T2) for post-beginner learners, beginner learners in the post-test (Beg.) and native speakers (NS) (all responses are in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Babysitting mother (S2)</th>
<th>Babysitting child (S3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NS</strong></td>
<td><strong>T1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>unsure</em></td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.3.1 Address Forms and Age Peers**

Group 1 in particular show a moderate shift towards an L2-like understanding of the factors guiding the use of the *du* form with age peers as illustrated in Table 4.7. The native speakers (N=14) unanimously chose to address the student in Situation 1 with *du*.

**Table 4.7** Choices for Situation 1 and 6 of the LAI in the pre- (T1) and post-interviews (T2) for post-beginner learners, beginner learners in the post-test (Beg.) and native speakers (NS) (all responses are in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classmate (S1)</th>
<th>Party peer (S6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NS</strong></td>
<td><strong>T1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>unsure</em></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This response from one of the native-speaker participants illustrates how strongly they felt about the need to use *du* in such a situation:
ich würde auf jeden Fall du sagen, weil also es ist einfach komisch jemand vom gleichen Alter zu siezen und ähm das, ich weiß nicht, sowas macht man eigentlich nicht, dann bist du der Freak! [I would absolutely say du, because it’s just strange to say Sie to someone of the same age and um, I don’t know, you just don’t do something like that, otherwise you’re a freak!].

Although some post-beginner learners displayed a good understanding of the use of du to show solidarity in group membership prior to their stay in Germany, in the pre-test 55.6% (N=10) of learners opted to address the fellow classmate with non-L2-like Sie, although their status as students would call for the use of du. The influence of classroom training in Australia was evident in the students’ responses, where students cited using Sie as a safer option:

I always […] err on the side of Sie, but if they’re your age and your classmate, they’re probably not going to be offended if you use du […] but when you’ve never learnt German and you learn at home […] use Sie until someone specifically tells you to use du unless it’s a kid (Amelia, post-beginner learner, T1)

See Table 4.8 for a summary of factors involved in choices in all situations. In the post-test 33.3% (N=6) of post-beginner learners and 50% (N=5) of beginner learners chose Sie. Two students who had chosen du in the pre-test chose Sie in the post-test cited an incident in German class where a teacher informed the students that after turning 16 years of age Germans expect to be addressed with Sie:

If you’re not acquainted with somebody and they’re over the age of 16, then you should be using Sie with them,[…] Frank ((German teacher)) was actually telling us […] when he turned 17, no 16, he used to get offended when people would use du with him (Nicole, Post-beginner learner, T2)

This information was apparently interpreted by the students to mean everyone over the age of 16, even in cases where the A² system would obviously be in play. Of those students who changed from Sie at T1 to du at T2 (N=5), two students cited instances where they were specifically told by native speakers to use du with age peers:

C: […] younger people seem to care a little bit less about the formal-informal thing, […] even the people- like we talked to a lawyer in the café and he was like, no du is fine
I: yeah did you ask him?

C: yeah we were just talking to him, like we were being formal and he said ‘oh no don’t worry about that’ (Colin, Post- beginner learner, T2)

The other three post-beginner learners cited now feeling more comfortable using du with fellow students.
Situation 6 asked students to consider which address form they would choose if they encountered someone they had met at a party on the street. Post-beginner learners again showed some development, with 66.7% choosing _du_ at T1 and 88.9% at T2. 70% of beginner learners chose to address the age peer with _du_. The familiarity of the interlocutor and informality of the party situation made participants feel more comfortable choosing _du_. Overall, results from Situations 1 and 6 indicate that participants displayed a greater understanding of the use of _du_ in situations with age peers, and for several participants this was due to explicit socialisation from native speakers.

### 4.3.2 Address forms and service situations

As shown in Table 4.9, post-beginner learners also showed some development towards L2 norms for situations 4 and 5 which involved a middle-aged woman and an age peer in a service situation. The native speakers unanimously agreed on the use of _Sie_ with the older woman, citing the fact that she works on the other side of the counter. In the pre-interview, 55.6% of post-beginner learners chose to appropriately address the older woman as _Sie_; by the post-test this rose to 83.3%. 70% of beginner learners chose to address the older woman with _Sie_ and cited age and the service situation as the main reasons for their choice.

**Table 4.8** Factors used in making their choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group 1: T1 (N=18)</th>
<th>Group 1: T2 (N=18)</th>
<th>Beginners (N=10)</th>
<th>Native speakers (N=12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of interlocutors</td>
<td>72% (13)</td>
<td>94% (17)</td>
<td>70% (7)</td>
<td>100% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on experience in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuttgart</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44% (8)</td>
<td>30% (3)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends on personality</td>
<td>5.5% (1)</td>
<td>5.5% (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends on region (eg.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>du</em> used more in</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin than Stuttgart)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em> for fellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classmates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.3% (6)</td>
<td>40% (4)</td>
<td>75% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em> for personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships</td>
<td>11.1% (2)</td>
<td>11.1% (2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em> is used for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kids</td>
<td>5.5% (1)</td>
<td>27.7% (5)</td>
<td>50% (5)</td>
<td>83.3% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em> for younger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.6% (3)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Du</em> for things in</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10% (1)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-beginner learners largely based their choice of Sie at T1 on the woman’s age; by T2, seven learners had expanded this explanation by emphasising the setting of the situation and its professional nature. As seen in Table 4.8, only 38.9% of post-beginner learners explained their choice on the basis of the ‘work/service setting’ at T1, whereas by T2 this had risen to 94.4%. For example, at T1 Russell opted to use *du* saying “we have the basis for […] a friendly relationship, so I think it would progress to *du*”. By T2 he had sought advice from his host mother about which term to choose in service situations and stated that she had told him “it’s professional life, you would always use *Sie*”. He added that a teacher had also informed him that the older person will make the switch to *du* first, something that many students were apparently unaware of before receiving advice from teachers and host families.

With the younger interlocutor, post-beginner learners appear to have chosen *du* more readily than the native speakers at both T1 and T2. Participants frequently cited the younger woman’s age as a factor in their choice, despite the fact that in service situations *Sie* is more readily used irrespective of the server’s age (although this varies from region to region with one native speaker claiming she would use *du* in Berlin and *Sie* in southern Germany).
Table 4.9 Choices for Situation 4 and 5 of the LAI in the pre- (T1) and post-interviews (T2) for post beginner learners, beginner learners in the post-test (Beg.) and native speakers (NS) (all responses are in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bakery mother (S4)</th>
<th>Bakery daughter (S5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>T1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This situation was also perceived as especially ambiguous by native speakers with one participant claiming ‘Ist schwierig zu sagen, es kommt total auf die Situation und auf die Leute an.’ [It’s hard to say, it completely depends on the situation and on the people] (Isabel, Interview). Sharn’s comment from T2 expresses a similar sentiment and illustrates her growing understanding of the fact that different people have different personal preferences regarding address terms and that this would influence her choice of address term in such a situation:

She might, I don’t know some people might be offended with you being formal with them, which just makes things really complicated because some people are offended if you’re not formal and then some people are offended if you’re formal. It’s like when I was growing up, because my parents are kind of old-fashioned sometimes, and they were like, you have to call every one of your friends’ parents Mr and Mrs blah blah, so I always did and then some people’s parents would be like stop it! [laughs] […] I dunno I guess it depends on the woman yeah… (Sharn, post-beginner learner, T2)

In general, students showed a slight movement towards more appropriate pronoun choice in the service situations. Again, this could, in some cases, be attributed to explicit socialisation by native speakers.

4.3.3 Beginner learners and addressing children

Beginner learners tended to, understandably, have a less sophisticated approach to describing their knowledge of address forms than post-beginner learners. These students discussed address forms less frequently in their classrooms and tended to focus more on grammar and vocabulary. None of these students approached me for advice on choosing address forms, unlike several post-beginner participants. However, there is still evidence that they benefitted from being in-country while starting to learn German. Although three beginner learners still chose to address the young boy in Situation 3 with Sie (‘I want to make a good impression’, Emily), two students recounted situations in which they were explicitly socialised into how to address children:
1) **Lara:** … I learnt that if you ask a child in a formal question, they won’t answer and will run away

**I:** really?

**Lara:** many times, because we would learn the formal in class so when, you know you’re put on the spot you just say what comes out first and I would say it in formal and they would be like ‘heeeheehee’ and run away ((laughs)), and someone was like, you have to say *du*, like oh, so the boy I would say *du* (Lara, beginner learner, T2)

2) **Linda:** and the boy *du*

**I:** yup, why’s that?

**Linda:** because the first time I uh met my host family’s grandchildren, I asked, because I thought it’s the first time and I use *Sie* and they say it should be *du* (Linda, beginner learner, T2)

Linda and Lara both chose to use *du* due to real-life experience. This supports the idea that even complete beginners can be socialised into making pragmatically appropriate linguistic choices.

### 4.4 Language Awareness Interview: Leave-taking

While explicit socialisation of address term practices was a common theme in participants’ narratives, they did not receive the same level of feedback on the other linguistic features under study. This section explores findings related to the second part of the LAI, which focused on leave-taking terms. In this section of the LAI, participants were asked to select all of the leave-taking formulas from Table 4.10 that they would use in each situation given in Table 4.11. Like the address term section of the LAI, these situations illustrated various hierarchical, situational and age-related factors. This section was designed to investigate whether exposure to different leave-taking formulas would result in increased knowledge about their formality and the appropriateness of use in different situations. Learners may not yet be familiar with many formulas and often possess limited communicative repertoires with regard to greetings and leave-taking (Kinginger, 2008).

#### Table 4.10 Leave-taking formulas and their approximate translations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formula</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mach’s gut! – all the best! (usually used with T-form)</td>
<td>(literally) all the best (used with T-form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis spater! – see you later!</td>
<td>(implies the speakers will see each other again the same day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis bald – bye for now, see you soon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auf Wiedersehen! – goodbye! (lit. until we see each other again; used with V-form)</td>
<td>(literally) until we see each other again (used with V-form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tschüss – bye!</td>
<td>(literally) goodbye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciao – Ciao!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viel Spaß noch! – enjoy, have fun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Previous studies have shown that leave-taking is often more complex and harder to master than many learners anticipate (Hassall, 2006). For example, learners may be unaware that it is inappropriate to use *auf Wiedersehen* with a person one already uses the informal *du* with, but that *tschüss* can be used both with people with whom one uses *du* and those where *Sie* is required (Hickey, 2003). However, previous research has indicated that even a short period in an L2 setting can improve a learner’s pragmatic competence (Hassall, 2006; Lafford, 1995).

Each formula displays a different level of implied familiarity or informality and each situation has a differing level of formality. For each situation, there are multiple options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.11 Situations for leave-taking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Diner to companions after being called away urgently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Boss saying good-bye to employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ending a message on a close friend’s answering machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Job applicant at the end of an interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Old lady taking leave of teatime hosts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. One colleague to another on the way out to lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shopkeeper to a departing customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Teenager to friends exiting a bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Host mother to exchange student about to retire for the evening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To a certain degree the use of some of these leave-taking formulas is a matter of personal choice, which was confirmed by the large variation in chosen formulas by the native speakers in this study.

Participants showed some change in their choice of leave-taking formulas by the end of their stay in Stuttgart, but there were still some inappropriate choices. Table 4.12 shows a summary of these choices. Students became more aware of how frequently different leave-taking formulas occur and who is more likely to use them. Beginner learners had not encountered several of the formulas in the course of their stay (e.g. *wir sehen uns*, *mach’s gut*). Both groups of learners were able to select leave-taking forms for the situations involving shopkeepers (Situation 7) and a host mother (Situation 9) as these are two situations they became very familiar with by the end of their stay. Like the address form data discussed in section 4.3, the leave-taking data contained multiple instances where the participants drew on real-life knowledge from Stuttgart and advice given to them by native
speakers. Their familiarity with the situations and leave-taking formulas is discussed further in the sections below.

4.4.1 Leave-taking situations

Post-beginner learners were generally more confident in their choices across all nine situations in the post-exchange interviews, however, this was more pronounced for situations which they commonly encountered during their time in Stuttgart. In the pre-interviews, 77.8% of post-beginner learners chose to say auf Wiedersehen to the shopkeeper, whereas this fell to 27.8% by the post-interviews. Students cited the fact that they rarely heard Germans using auf Wiedersehen at all in Stuttgart:

I dunno I didn’t really hear auf Wiedersehen used at all whilst I was here, like I would say that because it sounds a little more formal but I didn’t actually hear it being used (Lara, T2)

28.6% of students mentioned that they frequently heard shopkeepers saying tschüss, ciao or schönen Tag noch which is likely why these terms were more commonly chosen in the post-interviews. Sharn observed that schönen Tag noch was a phrase most commonly used in shops. Participants spent a lot of time at the shops and in bakeries while in Stuttgart, and their experiences appear to have increased their confidence in choosing appropriate leave-taking formulas in such situations. This was equally true of Situation 9, where the student is asked to take leave of a host mother to go to bed.

Post-beginner learners unanimously chose gute Nacht in both the pre- and post-interviews; they backed up their choice in the second interview by drawing on their experiences staying with a host family. 21.4% of all participants specifically brought up their experiences with their host parents, with several mentioning that they often heard schlaf gut (sleep well), which was not on the list of leave-taking formulas, as they said good night to their host families.

4.4.2 Leave-taking formulas

The main area of growth with regard to students’ knowledge and use of leave-taking terms was the participants’ familiarity with how often certain leave-taking formulas were used. Post-beginner and beginner learners alike noticed that auf Wiedersehen was not as commonly used as their formal instruction implied, whereas ciao was a more important formula amongst young people than many students had realised:
I found that everyone, everyone in Germany between the age of like 30 and 20 always said ciao, and I thought that was very interesting (Eric, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Post-beginner participants also became more familiar with two expressions some participants were reluctant to use in the pre-interviews – mach’s gut and wir sehen uns. Many beginner learners were still unfamiliar with approximately half of the leave-taking formulas including wir sehen uns, schönen Tag noch, mach’s gut and viel Spaß noch, and instead opted for formulas which were taught early in the language classes in Stuttgart such as auf Wiedersehen, tschüss, ciao, bis bald and bis später. It appears that many participants were unaware that bis später (see you later) implies that you will see the person again in the same day, meaning that some participants chose this formula in situations where it was unlikely they would see the person again (Situations 8 & 9). Likewise, some participants did not know that viel Spaß noch would only be used in the middle of a continuing activity and would therefore not be appropriate to take leave in a shop for example.

Overall, participants made some progress in choosing leave-taking formulas of appropriate formality in several different situations. Their knowledge appears to have been influenced both by their host families, to which they referred several times in the course of this part of the LAI (N=9), and by listening to Germans taking leave of each other in public (N=13). Like the data presented in 4.4, these findings suggest that even a short stay in the L2 land can encourage pragmatic development.
Table 4.12 Leave-taking Choices in the pre- (T1) and post-interviews (T2) for post-beginner learners, for beginning students (Beg.) in the post-test, and for native speakers (NS) (all responses are in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dinner (Situation 1)</th>
<th>Boss (Situation 2)</th>
<th>Answer Machine (Situation 3)</th>
<th>Job Interview (Situation 4)</th>
<th>Old lady (Situation 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Beg.</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mach’s gut</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis später</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis bald</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auf Wiedersehen</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tschüss</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciao</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viel Spaß noch</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gute Nacht</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wir sehen uns</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schönen Tag (noch)</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lunch (Situation 6)</th>
<th>Shopkeeper (Situation 7)</th>
<th>Teenager (Situation 8)</th>
<th>Host Mum (Situation 9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Beg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mach’s gut</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis später</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bis bald</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auf Wiedersehen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tschüss</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciao</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viel Spaß noch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gute Nacht</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wir sehen uns</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schönen Tag (noch)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lunch (Situation 6) | Shopkeeper (Situation 7) | Teenager (Situation 8) | Host Mum (Situation 9) |
4.5 Language Awareness Interview: Colloquial words and phrases

In this section of the LAI participants were given a list of 20 words or expressions in German and were asked to discuss whether they recognised the word, could explain what it means, would they use it personally and could describe the context or situations in which it would be used. The list of words is presented in Table 4.13. This section was included as research has indicated that L2 learners are hesitant to use colloquial language in the L2 (Dewaele & Regan, 2001). The opportunity to engage in informal conversation in the L2 is possible during SA in a way that is difficult to replicate in the language classroom at home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.13 Part 1 of the LAI: Colloquial words/phrases and approximate translations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>der Besserwisser – n. know-it-all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Abi – n. abbreviation for ‘Abitur’ (German high school diploma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Glotze – n. TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Schatz – n. nickname for romantic partners (eg darling) ALSO treasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Kumpel – n. mate, buddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Klamotten – n. Clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Bude – n. place, apartment, pad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Schickimicki – n. fancy, trendy or snobby, used to describe a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Kohle – n. money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Dingsda – n. thingy, whatchamacallit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Tamtam – n. fuss, to-do, kerfuffle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Krimskrams – n. knick-knacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geil – adj. awesome, sick, cool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleite – adj. broke (ie. to have no money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kiffen – v. to smoke marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vorglühen – v. pre-drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pech (haben) – v. to have bad luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blau sein – v. to be drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was laberst du? – ‘what are you on about?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was geht ab? – ‘what’s going on?'; ‘what’s the deal?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ich hab’ es satt – ‘I’ve had it'; ‘I’m sick of it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halt die Klappe! – ‘Shut up!'; ‘Put a sock in it!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nach Geld stinken – lit. ‘to stink of money', to describe someone with a lot of money who openly shows it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darf ich kurz mal durch? – ‘Could I squeeze through here!’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I included the section in order to see whether participants became more familiar with and more willing to use such colloquial lexis.

Participants had generally come across very few of these words and phrases before the exchange, and several mentioned that a desire to become more familiar with everyday language was one of the reasons they had chosen to go on exchange. Post-beginner participants could translate an average of 3.9 words in the pre-exchange interview and an
average of 5.6 words in the post-exchange interview. Although any improvement was modest, it was significant ($t (16)= 4.78, p<.001$). Except for those who had learnt some German at high school years previously (false beginners, $N=2$), beginner learners were unable to translate any of the words and phrases (mean= 0.7).

On completing the LAI for the second time in the post-interviews, several post-beginner learners ($N=8$) lamented that they had not come across any of the words or improved since their first interview. Some participants believed this to be the result of the company they kept whilst in Stuttgart:

1) No I think it would’ve been the exact same ones, I can’t see anything I’ve picked up while I was away, again I was thinking about it […] because I did think about that before we came here, again like my (host) parents were old (Eric, Post-beginner learner, T2)

2) […] I didn’t come across any of it, I don’t remember the whole list but I don’t think I learnt any of these words (laughs) or yeah, this is what happens when you hang out with teachers and Australians and 50-something year olds (Amelia, Post-beginner learner, T2)

However, on further reflection participants did recall several instances where they had learnt a new colloquialism from a teacher or host family member or overheard young people using a word from the list ($N= 11$). In some of these instances, the context in which these words or phrases would be used was also made clear:

N: […] uh yes ((laughs)) um uh *vorglühen* [pre-drink] my host mum was really proud about telling me this one, um because uh I was going out one night and I was having a beer with my dinner before I went out and she was just like oh you’re having *vorglühen*, you’re drinking before you go out, I’m like oh that’s cute umm and like the literal translation’s like before glow like yeah (Nicole, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Despite participants’ limited progress in translating the colloquial words, these examples illustrate the process by which students were socialised into learning both the meaning of these words and the appropriate context in which to use them. Participants also gained a clearer picture of whether they would personally use these words. Previous research has indicated that learners are hesitant to use colloquial language (Dewaele & Regan, 2001). This was confirmed by some of the participants’ comments (e.g. "I’d feel a bit nervous to be that kind of informal!", Elise, Post-beginner learner, T2) as well as the number of words/phrases post-beginner participants believed they would use themselves (pre-exchange mean= 3; post-exchange mean= 3.94), which was generally lower than the number of words they were able to translate. However, a single sample t-test revealed a significant difference ($t (15)= 6.47, p < .001$) between the number of words used in the pre- and post-interviews for post-beginner learners. As beginner learners were unfamiliar with any of the
words they agreed that they would also not use them, the mean for the number of words they believed they would use in the post-exchange interview was 0.2.

Some students admitted that the reason they did not feel comfortable using some words or phrases was that they had not heard their host families use them:

I: [...] anyway Abi, would you say it in German as opposed to Abitur?

R: um I've, personally no, because I've never heard anyone say it, like when my host family were talking about Abitur they'd just say Abitur, Abitur, never anything other than that

I: do you think it's maybe more informal than Abitur?

R: mmm yeah, maybe um... like students coming out from the Abitur would be like "oh wie wa- wie war das Abi", or something like that but I would prob- personally wouldn't use it (Russell, Post-beginner learner, T2)

As students themselves realised, their circles of native speakers were rather small, which meant they were likely not exposed to the full range of variation in informal German. In spite of this limited exposure, participants were able to pick up some informal vocabulary from their host families and teachers - for example Nicole learning the word vorglühen [pre-drink] from her host mother. The results from this section of the LAI again point to the ways in which participants were socialised into language for everyday use. Given the instances of socialisation mentioned by students pertaining to all three sections of the LAI, in the next section I summarise the processes of socialisation that participants were exposed to.

4.6 Explicit and implicit socialisation of language use

Several of the interview excerpts in this chapter illustrate both explicit and implicit processes of socialisation at work. In contrast to previous research looking at pragmatic development in a SA context (e.g. Hassall, 2013; Shively, 2011), thematic analysis of LAI data, interview transcripts and field notes revealed a significant number of instances where learners were given feedback. This was particularly apparent in the data that related to address term practices. This section examines instances of implicit and explicit socialisation in the students’ narratives to determine the influence of these processes on students’ understanding and awareness of the German second-person system of address, colloquial language and leave-taking terms.
4.6.1 Implicit socialisation

As explored in Chapter 2, implicit socialisation into appropriate language use occurs when novices repeatedly participate in everyday situations where they have the opportunity to interact with and observe expert members of the community (Shively, 2011). The L2-mediated situations that participants in this study most commonly took part in included service situations, language classes and meals with the host family (see Table 4.14 for a summary). It is unsurprising that the majority of their comments on language use focused on L2 speakers’ behaviour in these situations. The following excerpt illustrates how students were implicitly socialised into appropriate address term use in service situations:

Tracy: I've generally been thinking about that about how [...] in bars when people were ordering drinks, they would say du

I: yeah

Tracy: like to the service people, and they would say du back and yet they hadn't met each other before and that was like, and I was always saying Sie because, it's, in my head [...] if you're not in the same position of the other person [...] and it's like a professional situation that they're in and you're in like a casual situation… (Tracy, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Tracy is a heritage language learner who sometimes speaks German at home with her mother and with her family in Germany. Her surprise that service members in bars addressed customers with du is likely related to the fact that the last time she visited Germany she was 15 and was visiting family. She was not of legal age to visit the kind of drinking establishments frequented by young people who are more likely to use du. Tracy’s repeated participation in drinking at ‘younger’ bars in Stuttgart enabled her to observe the address term practices in use in these types of locations, and adjust her own understanding of address term use accordingly.

These comments frequently surfaced while participants were completing the LAI as they reflected on their choices in the six situations discussed in section 4.3; they illustrate the influence of their observations of language choices while participating in everyday activities in Stuttgart. For example, students reported that host family members would address students with du, as would other students in the Mensa [German university cafeteria], whereas the students would likely be addressed with Sie in service situations and by their teachers (the researcher’s own experience accompanying students in classrooms and to cafes confirmed this). Address form use in Germany is almost always reciprocal (except for very particular circumstances, cf. section 2.1.5 and Clyne et al., 2009, p. 84).
Table 4.14 Implicit socialisation processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location/activity</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Number of coding references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the language classroom</td>
<td>“wir siezen um das zu üben” [we use Sie in order to practice (both forms)] (Helga [German teacher])</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations with host family (e.g. dinner table, family gatherings)</td>
<td>“my host family would always use Sie like for people that weren’t close friends or relatives” (Kate)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service situations</td>
<td>“schönen Tag noch [have a nice day] maybe, I feel like I've only heard people at cash registers say that” (Sharn)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General conversations with L2 experts</td>
<td>“everyone my age pretty much called me du on first meeting me” (Amelia)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This would have likely encouraged students to imitate their interlocutor’s use of address forms. Russell’s comment about students’ behaviour in the Mensa illustrates this:

It’s just the logical thing because that’s how um all the German students in the Mensa talked to each other and that’s how we talked to them so, it just seems logical to do that. (Russell, Post-beginner learner, T2)

4.6.2 Explicit socialisation

In spite of several instances where students mentioned observing locals’ practices regarding leave-taking terms and colloquial language, the majority of the instances of explicit socialisation focused on address term use. In contrast to prior research on pragmatic development in the SA context, participants in this study received direct feedback on their at times inappropriate language use. Table 4.15 presents a summary of the groups of L2 community members who most frequently critiqued participants’ language use.

Participants reported engaging in often lengthy discussions with host community members about the intricacies of the German address term system. At times participants sought advice from L2 speakers, most often their host families, language teachers and the researcher. However, there were also instances where members of the public offered unsolicited advice on inappropriate language use.

Table 4.15 Explicit socialisation processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L2 community member</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Number of coding references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language teacher</td>
<td>“Frank [German teacher] says”</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
it's like a taboo thing like if [...] someone's older than you, you have to wait for them to say, to ask or anything um [on asking whether to say du]” (Nicole)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host family</th>
<th>“yeah um, mind you our host family from like the first day she said call her du” (Eric)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>“my German friend said if there's a ten-year age gap [...] normally you just use du” (Lisa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>“one of the guys I was with kept referring to him as Sie and he kept giving him a lecture on when you're drinking beer together and having a good time, call me du” (Maddy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A notable example which was discussed amongst the entire program cohort was reported by a student not participating in this study who tried to start a conversation with an elderly woman at a train station by saying ‘wie geht es dir?’ [how are you (informal.)?] The woman began to lecture the student about how it is inappropriate to address strangers (and in particular older strangers) with du. Several students enjoyed striking up informal conversations with older people they met on the street and all of these students made note of Pete’s (pseudonym) story. Colin discussed a conversation in which a young lawyer he met in a café asked him to use du and described how younger people tend to prefer this. Maddy mentioned sitting in a beer hall in Munich and being told by a young man at her table to use du when you are sharing a table and drinking beer. These conversations appeared to be very effective at alerting students to issues of identity and face that are brought about by unusual or inappropriate address term practices and, for some, made them aware of address practices with which they had previously been unfamiliar:

**Lisa:** My German friend said if there's a ten-year age gap [...] normally you just use du, but it's hard because in the younger generations [...] if they look your age, you just say du, but the older generations are still like if they're 18 you must firstly address them as Sie, so it's kind of like how you interpret it, but I'd rather her advice because [...] she's German herself

**I:** and is she your age as well?
Lisa: yeah, yeah she's a couple of years older but she's still like, just *du*, [...] the younger generation kind of expect it, [...] they know you're foreign because you're using *Sie*... (Lisa, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Lisa chose to address all of her fictional interlocutors (except for the young boy in Situation 3) with *Sie* prior to the exchange and also laughed off the fact that her mother often teases her about using the formal pronoun too widely in Dutch (she speaks Dutch with her family in the Netherlands). Her conversations with local friends and her host mother appear to have dramatically influenced both her understanding of local norms regarding address pronoun use and the potential for embarrassment due to inappropriate address pronoun use. Lisa’s story in her return interview illustrates the influence of explicit socialisation on her awareness of the German second person system of address.

4.7 Discussion

Although the excerpts in this chapter present some evidence that participants’ understanding of the German address system changed as a result of their stay in Stuttgart, this was not the case for all students. In many cases, implicit and explicit socialisation into appropriate address term use by locals mediated students’ awareness of practices surrounding address pronouns. This section explores how access to certain everyday activities and L2 speakers influenced participants’ pragmatic development as well as potential reasons for the higher level of explicit socialisation in this study compared to previous research.

4.7.1 Access to opportunities for socialisation

Several participants in the current study spent noticeably less time in the company of local L2 speakers than others, which therefore lessened opportunities for L2-mediated language socialisation to occur. For instance, one participant’s host family told her early in her stay that they wanted to host an English-speaking student in order for their children to have additional English conversation practice at home. Another student was ill for two of the six weeks of the program and was also placed in a German family who hosted two other students from the program and another three boarders, resulting in an arrangement that felt more ‘like a B&B than a host family’. This particular student showed no change between his pre- and post-LAI and also maintained the practice of addressing his teacher with *du* (although she had informed the class on several occasions that she would prefer to be addressed with *Sie*). The experiences of these two students lie in stark contrast to Russell,
who showed a greater willingness to communicate in the L2 and often spoke about the advice he had obtained from host family members and other L2 speakers about how to appropriately use *du* and *Sie*. The strong individual differences amongst students in this study confirms findings by other researchers about the variability and often random nature of the SA experience (Hassall, 2013; Kinginger, 2008; Klapper & Rees, 2012).

### 4.7.2 Explicit socialisation in the German speaking context

In contrast to previous research with other L2s, a striking feature of the data in this study was the comparatively high amount of explicit feedback students received on their language choices. The researcher’s own experience as a SA student in Germany corroborates this experience. There are two possible explanations for this finding. The first rests in differences in German versus English speakers’ preferences in communication style. According to research in intercultural communication, there are five dimensions on which German and British English speakers differ (Hall, 1983; House, 1996; 2006; Hofstede, 1984; Thomas, 2003). Germans tend to prefer 1) directness over indirectness; 2) orientation towards the self over orientation towards the other; 3) orientation towards content over orientation towards addressee(s); 4) explicitness over implicitness; and 5) ad-hoc formulation over verbal routines. The preference for directness and explicitness amongst German L1 speakers appears to have influenced their willingness to give learners feedback on what the L1 Australian English speakers may have considered face-threatening topics (Grieve, 2010).

As discussed in the previous section, explicit socialisation by locals appears to have played a major role in facilitating participants’ understanding of the German address system. According to Belz & Kinginger (2003) such opportunities for realising the potential loss of face are essential for address form competence to develop. The German partners in Belz & Kinginger’s (2003) study gave similar explicit advice (‘*Sie* makes me feel old’) to their American partners. Such advice raised the American students’ awareness of the appropriateness of using *du* to address fellow students, also over a short period of 8 weeks. The willingness of Germans (compared to, for example the Indonesian host families in Hassall’s study) to explicitly socialise these students into appropriate address form usage is likely to be in some part culturally specific, given the lack of feedback from locals from other cultures in similar research (DuFon, 1999; Hassall, 2013; Iino, 1996; Siegal, 1994; Shively, 2011). Whilst Barron (2006) did look at the development of address term competence in L2 German, she did so using DCT’s. There was no narrative or naturally occurring data to
further explain the reasons behind her participants’ choices (cf. Henery, 2014; Kinginger, 2008; Shively, 2011).

A second potential explanation for locals’ willingness to give feedback on address term practices lies in the fact that address terms are often explicitly negotiated amongst German speakers in conversation anyway (cf. Besch, 1998; Clyne et al., 2009; Kretzenbacher et al., 2006). The somewhat old-fashioned notion of Brüderschaft trinken, where speakers share a drink to cement the change in their relationship from Sie to du represents one such instance where address terms are explicitly negotiated. German speakers also talk about offering the du to someone (jemanden das du anbieten), something which the German native speakers in this study also frequently mentioned in their LAI responses. If the negotiation of address term use is so explicit, this potentially encourages explicit discussion of address term use in other domains.

4.8 Conclusion

Although students’ progress in the 6 weeks could be described as modest, they developed in areas in which progress is hard to foster in the language classroom in Australia. In general, before the exchange, beginner learners had a low awareness of variation in German – that different words could be used to express a similar meaning but that only some are appropriate in certain situations, that some leave-taking formulas may be more suitable than others, and that peoples’ attitudes towards the address form system may vary.

As described in section 2.1.5, the address form system in German is complex and full of potential embarrassment, even for expert speakers. The students in this study gained an increased awareness of the use of du and Sie in different situations, particularly those involving age-peers and service staff. Even beginner students gained important information about the correct way to address children during their stay. Post-beginner learners were also able to use address forms more consistently in the role plays in their post-interviews. Much of their progress in this domain is explained by the ample feedback they received from German native speakers on their address form usage. The German propensity for honesty and correctness was for these students, a major factor in the development of address term competence.

Students also gained some familiarity with leave-taking formulas and their usage in different situations. Beginner learners’ progress in this domain was more limited, with these students displaying a strong preference for commonly used leave-taking formulas which are
taught in the first few days of classes. However, they too benefitted to a degree from the implicit socialisation of their language practices as seen in their comments about taking leave from their host families in the evening. Feedback from native speakers about leave-taking practices was less common, perhaps due to the fact that inappropriate address term usage carries more pragmatic force than an inappropriate or unusual leave-taking formula. Another explanation is that many (but not all) of the leave-taking formulas are appropriate for use in both informal and formal situations and it is sometimes a matter of personal choice or regional preference which determines which leave-taking formula is chosen.

Findings related to students’ understanding and use of colloquial German lexis stood somewhat in contrast to the results for leave-taking and address term data. Students themselves perceived their progress in this area to be minimal and hypothesised that this was because the majority of their native-speaker contacts were over the age of 50. This phenomenon may also have been the result of host families attempting to provide a good pedagogical model for their students (c.f. Wilkinson, 2002). They may have been concerned that students would be unfamiliar with colloquial variants and therefore tried to avoid using them in their own speech. The words and phrases in this study were chosen in part because of their likeliness to occur in university age students’ day-to-day life. However, as the students noticed, few of them spent time in the company of local students their own age. Although students cherished the relationships they formed with their host families and teachers, lack of contact with local age peers was perceived to be a major shortcoming of the program. In spite of this, several examples of students reporting learning new colloquial expressions from teachers and host families occurred in the data.

In this chapter I have focused on the pragmatic development of my participants. After completing the LAI for the first time before the exchange many post-beginner participants lamented their limited knowledge of informal and every day German and stated that a desire to further this knowledge was a major motivation to go on exchange:

Yeah I think that's a lot of the things I'm looking forward to learning more of the- actually things you would say (Maddy, Post-beginner learner, T1)

19 of 28 participants echoed Maddy’s sentiments when asked what they hoped to gain from the exchange. For many participants, however, learning German was not the sole reason they chose to go on exchange. Over a third of participants explicitly mentioned some kind of cultural learning or an understanding of German culture as equally important in guiding their decision to go to Germany. These students spoke about gaining ‘a great understanding
of how Europe works’ (Lara, Beginner learner, T1); ‘being more culturally aware’ (Russell, Post-beginner learner, T1); and achieving ‘a better understanding of German culture’ (Jenni, Post-beginner learner, T1). In the next chapter I explore whether participants achieved their goal of cultural learning: whether there was a change in the way they perceived and conceptualised cultural differences after the exchange.
CHAPTER 5: INTERCULTURAL LEARNING DURING SHORT-TERM STUDY ABROAD

Increased IC is often promoted as one of the major benefits of participating in SA programs (Daly, 2007; Engle & Engle, 2004; Forsey et al., 2012). Research such as the Georgetown Consortium study (Vande Berg et al., 2009) discussed in Chapter 2 has shown that this can no longer be assumed to be a given and that students need support to best make sense of their intercultural experiences (Forsey et al., 2012). This is especially true for short-term programs where students have limited time available to process their experiences (Jackson, 2006a; Tonkin & Bourgalt du Coudray, 2016). In this study, I used two methods to examine the development of IC in my participants: a reflective Facebook group for participants from UWA and a photo elicitation project for those from other universities. With each of these methods I firstly aimed to support the students in their understanding of the cultural experiences they encountered whilst in Stuttgart and secondly to chart the way in which their IC developed. The use of two methods also allowed me to draw conclusions about which method proved more effective; either for supporting the development of IC or allowing assessment of IC.

In this chapter I present the two methods in detail and describe the coding system I used for the data collected with each method. Then I give a summary of the data and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of using each method, before I discuss my findings with reference to each component of Deardorff’s process model of IC. I conclude the chapter with a summary of changes to the group’s IC.

5.1 Reflective Facebook group

95% of Australians have a Facebook profile and 75% of those between the ages of 18 and 29 access social media at least once a day (Sensis, 2016). Despite the popularity of social media platforms among university students, these platforms have not been widely used in education (Lomicka & Lord, 2016). Students use social media for a variety of reasons: to connect with family and friends, to promote themselves to others or to keep tabs on others (Hetz, Dawson & Cullen, 2015). While Facebook has been harnessed for language learning both overseas and at home with varying degrees of success (see Blattner & Lomicka, 2012 for a review), there are very few studies which have utilised it to encourage reflective practice and the development of IC in SA students.
As part of a support package offered to students participating in the Stuttgart exchange at UWA, students were introduced to the idea of a reflective Facebook group in their pre-departure workshop. Facebook was chosen as the mode for sharing reflective activity in part because it is already used by the majority of university students (Mills, 2011; Sensis, 2016). University students are familiar with the format of Facebook and are generally aware of how to utilise the main features, including creating posts, uploading photos and commenting on others’ posts. Previous research has shown that using blogs or other web 2.0 technology that students are unfamiliar with represents an extra hurdle in encouraging students to engage with and use the technology (Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). In a survey examining the effectiveness of the modules and workshop (see Appendix 5.1), 100% of survey participants (N=19, of which 13 participated in this study) confirmed their familiarity with Facebook and agreed that they intended to use the Facebook group while in Stuttgart.

Before attending the workshop, students worked through a series of online modules presented through the university’s learning management system (LMS); these modules covered practical information about the exchange, Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle, stereotypes and Bennett’s (1986) DMIS. Some of the material in these modules and the workshop were taken from resources made available from the ‘Bringing the Learning Home’ project (Gothard et al., 2012, also available at http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/project/btlh/Resources.html). See Appendix 5.2 for a summary of material presented in the modules and workshop. In the workshop, participants worked together to analyse some of these blog posts from the 2012 exchange group. These blog posts were generated as part of research which responded to findings that students need support in order to best reflect on their exchange experiences. The students participating in the 2012 Stuttgart exchange participated in a ‘photoblogging’ exercise designed to encourage reflection and foster IC (for further detail see Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). Students submitted one blog post per week on a series of given topics (e.g. rethinking a cultural stereotype). Several of the findings from Tonkin and Bourgault du Coudray’s study informed the design of the pre-departure material used in the current study.

Following a discussion of the blog posts, I introduced students to the Facebook group as an exercise in ‘photoblogging’. Figure 5.1 shows the bannerhead and layout of the Facebook group. Students were instructed to focus on aspects of German society and culture that made them curious, especially where these contrasted with their home culture.
I also told the students that they were able to use the group for information sharing or organising social events, an offer which many gladly took up. Several students expressed enthusiasm for the idea of having a place to see what others were noticing and learning and to ‘discuss what everyone sees and thinks’ (Pre-departure workshop survey comment).

![Figure 5.1 Bannerhead of Facebook group](image)

During the exchange, however, participants did not take up the offer of the Facebook group with the enthusiasm they demonstrated before their departure. In Stuttgart, I requested students make posts via the Facebook group on two occasions and prompted students individually in five comments. Additionally, I would also discuss the Facebook group with students on an ad-hoc basis when I saw them around the language school. In spite of this prompting, there were a total of 29 posts and 64 comments to the group. Of these, 8 posts and 22 comments focused on reflecting on cultural differences. The majority of other posts were social - for example organising to meet up, or information sharing where students asked others if they could access their student email or how to transfer the money for the program. See Table 5.1 for a summary of posts to the Facebook group.

Table 5.1 Summary of types of posts to Facebook group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted by researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information seeking/sharing</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of reflective posts and comments focused on objective cultural differences (72.41%) as opposed to subjective (8.6%) or blended (18.96%) issues. Objective culture refers to the objects and artefacts of a culture, such as clothing, music, history and
customs, whereas subjective culture refers to the psychological aspects of a culture, including beliefs, values and attitudes (Stewart & Bennett, 2011). Objective culture is more tangible than subjective culture and is thus easier to observe. However, an understanding of subjective culture is thought to be more important to the development of IC (Covert, 2011; Stewart & Bennett, 1991). When I began coding I found that many of the students’ posts did not easily fit into the subjective or objective categories. I therefore adopted a third ‘blended’ culture category for content which pertained to both subjective and objective culture (Covert, 2011). In these posts, students often took an aspect of objective culture and were able to relate this to other more subjective cultural issues, thus transforming an objective issue into a blended one.

![Figure 5.2 Example of post to Facebook group](image)

I carried out thematic analysis (Grbich, 2013) of all reflective comments and posts, with each post being sorted into inductively developed groups and themes.

Figure 5.2 is an example of a post which was coded as addressing both objective and subjective culture. In her post, Jenni talks about the attitude towards people learning foreign languages in Germany. I coded the phrase ‘They seem to really respect people who are trying to speak German and it’s awesome’ as ‘attitudes towards languages’ in the ‘values’ group and as subjective culture: Jenni is referring to the value placed on foreign languages as
well as positive attitudes towards those learning them. The second section of Jenni’s post where she refers to Germany as ‘carb central’ was coded as ‘food’ in the ‘city life’ section and as ‘objective culture’ as she is emphasising objects (‘bread, cheese, potato, bread’) rather than ideas. The last section of her post, which serves to inform her fellow exchange students about a shop selling vocabulary notebooks, was coded as ‘information sharing’ as it does not refer to a cultural difference. Jenni raises an interesting point about attitudes towards foreign language learners which unfortunately did not result in discussion with other participants even after my prompt:

    I agree! The German students yesterday were so supportive of everyone having a go at German. Was meint ihr? [what do you all think?], is this different to how people treat foreigners trying to learn English in Perth? (Facebook comment)

That Jenni does not question why Germans have a positive attitude towards those learning languages (as compared, for example, to Australia where language learning is often perceived as unimportant or irrelevant) is typical of the majority of posts and comments in the group.

Students offered explanations or evidence of further reflection on the differences they observed in only 6.6% of reflective posts or comments. For example, Russell reflected on behaviour he had encountered in the street and concluded that Germans want young, intelligent people to visit Germany and learn the language:

    People are quite friendly when they see that you actually try and speak German. [...] Maddy and I were sitting in the food court in Königsbau with Sally and Connor [pseudonyms] and we were practising our German. The German guy next to us turns and says (in English), that it’s great that we’re trying to speak German, our German is pretty good, and that he’s glad so many smart young people are coming to his country and learning the language and about the culture. This may be one of the reasons why they’re quite friendly - they actually want people to come to Germany and think well of them but I don’t know. (Russell, Post-beginner learner, Facebook post)

Most of the time participants were unable to take the next step and reflect on reasons for difference. Table 5.2 gives a summary of the topics of reflective posts and comments. The vast majority of posts and comments focused on differences in city life between Australia and Germany. The students spent a great deal of time walking around the city exploring, so it is unsurprising that they chose to focus on aspects of city life in these posts. Many posts represented scenes that students saw on a daily basis on their commute to the university building.

    In contrast to this lack of deep reflection in the Facebook posts, in the one-on-one context of the return interviews, students often expanded on their posts with further
Several students (N= 5) explained that they did not feel comfortable posting their personal thoughts in a public forum:

(1) yeah and I guess a lot of people are kind of like ghost followers like they just look at things, they don't really react because they're not comfortable um putting themselves out there when they don't really know people I guess (Sharn, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Table 5.2 Summary of inductively developed themes in reflective posts and comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number of coding references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Life</td>
<td>Kilometres vs miles</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indoor carwash</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vending machines</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public transport</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dogs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homeless people</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sauna</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Police presence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kehrwoche*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communal living</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic rules</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Smoking culture</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication style</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Attitude towards languages</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A system where each house/apartment in the street takes their turn at shovelling snow off the sidewalk and generally maintaining the appearance of the street

(2) I think sometimes you're also a little bit self-conscious about stuff like that, […] I dunno they don't want other people to think they're a bit weird, or […] they're not quite sure what you want, they want to find something like super unusual or like super deep (Amy, Post-beginner learner, T2)
This finding is of importance for instructors and SA professionals planning support mechanisms for other groups of students going abroad. Previous research has shown that students use Facebook in different ways (Hollenbaugh & Ferris, 2014). Some students are more likely to disclose personal information (as opposed to just following what others are doing), and this has been shown by Hollenbaugh and Ferris to be linked to personality factors. Catering for different personalities and learning styles is crucial when designing activities aimed at fostering reflective learning.

The reflective posts presented in Table 5.2 were made by a small group of students. Many students only posted once or twice, and only five students commented or posted more than five times. Students who admitted they were not avid social media users posted to the group noticeably less frequently than students such as Russell or Julie who confessed to using Facebook a great deal. This supports claims made in previous research that students are unlikely to avidly use forums that are not familiar to them (Tonkin & Borgault du Coudray, 2016). Although the Facebook group provided limited data and did not appear to encourage the deeper reflection that was the focus of the students’ pre-departure workshop, the material posted by the students was more useful in return interviews and as discussion material in a re-entry workshop held three weeks after the students returned to Perth. The importance of face-to-face discussion also emerged in Tonkin and Bourgault’s study (2016), and suggests that in-person discussion of students’ observations should be a key aspect of future pedagogical interventions into student learning abroad.

5.2 Photo elicitation

Participation in the Facebook group required access to the LMS at UWA as well as participation in the face-to-face pre-departure workshop. I sought to provide the non-UWA participants with a similar opportunity to both support the development of IC and elicit data that was visual and interview-based. Photo elicitation is a qualitative data collection method which has its roots in sociology and anthropology (Harper, 2002). Participants collect their own photos on an allocated topic and bring them to an interview where the photos are then discussed with the researcher. Like the Facebook group, this method allows for collection of both visual and narrative data.

In this study, I asked participants to take a series of photos of things they found curious about German culture. I then asked them to select 4-6 of these photos and provide some details about the subject of the photos and why they had chosen them (see Appendix
of the instruction sheet given to participants). Of the 15 students not from UWA, 12 participants in this study completed the photo elicitation exercise. These students submitted a total of 57 photos. Of these, 52 photos depicted a cultural difference. The remaining five photos were excluded from further analysis.

In the analysis I treated the photo, the text from the photo elicitation sheet and the interview data related to the photo as one unit. This decision stemmed from the fact that it was often very difficult to discern the subject of the photos without access to the information sheet and interview data. This was especially true when the subject of the photo related to a subjective difference. Covert (2011) has argued that subjective culture is less tangible than objective cultural differences, and as such subjective culture is more difficult to concretely capture in a photograph. In the photo narratives which referred to subjective culture, the students’ comments in the photo sheets and interviews were crucial to understanding the subject of the photo itself.

Some topics from the Facebook group participants were recurring themes in the photo elicitation narratives. However, subjective culture and blended culture themes were more common for this group. Given the difficulty of capturing subjective cultural differences and the advantage an understanding of such differences holds for IC, this higher proportion of subjective themes in the photo narratives suggests that this method may be more effective than the Facebook group at encouraging reflection on cultural difference (Stewart & Bennett, 2011). 15.7% of photos focused on subjective culture, 49% on objective culture and 35.3% were a blend. Following a similar method to that used for coding the Facebook data, below I give an example of photos coded as subjective, objective or blended culture, as well as a description of how I coded each photo narrative.

Figure 5.3 shows a photo of an English language billboard taken by Liam and is an example of a photo coded as subjective culture. Liam was struck by how important and well-respected foreign languages appear to be in Germany (c.f. Ellis et al., 2010). He had noticed the importance Chinese people place on learning English on a trip to China and was surprised to find this to be the case in Germany as well. He pondered whether having poorer English skills would make people “less employable or less […] professional” and concluded that “it just doesn’t happen for us because we’re from Australia, we speak English and we don’t need to learn another language” (Liam, Beginner learner, T2). This was a topic that emerged in both of Liam’s interviews and that he had spent some time thinking about. He had considered the reason for this difference (globalisation and historical forces) and he
also mentioned discussing these differences with his host mother. Liam showed a lot of respect for the value Germans place on learning languages; however, he did not understand the value of speaking a foreign language for English speakers. His comments reflect a common mindset amongst monolingual Australians (Ellis et al., 2010).

Figure 5.3 ‘Billboard advertising English language courses’, photo courtesy of Liam (beginner learner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Where was the photo taken?</th>
<th>Nordbahnhof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. What is the object of the photo?</td>
<td>A billboard advertising English language courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Why did the object of the photo make you curious or draw your attention?</td>
<td>I always find it curious that other countries consistently advertise for their citizens to speak English. It makes sense, as English is the most common global language, however advertisements for Australians to attend speaking schools simply aren’t as common.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. What were your emotions or thoughts when you took the photo?</td>
<td>This reminds me of a similar billboard I saw in China, which simply read: &quot;better English means better life&quot;. I wonder whether Germans agree with that? Either way, English appears important to them to some measure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.4 shows a typical German ‘Vesper’ dinner (usually consists of bread, cold meats and cheeses) and was coded as objective culture. Kath was struck by the eating habits of her host family compared to her own family’s eating schedule in Australia. She initially thought the practice was confined to her host family, but after discussing with other students she found it was common in Germany. Although Kath did compare practices in
Australia and Germany, and evaluated German eating habits with an accepting, neutral tone, she did not consider the reasons behind this difference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Where was the photo taken?</th>
<th>Host family home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. What is the object of the photo?</td>
<td>Dinner one night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Why did the object of the photo make you curious or draw your attention?</td>
<td>My host family doesn’t cook in the evenings and prefers to have a lighter dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. What were your emotions or thoughts when you took the photo?</td>
<td>I found this very interesting as it is quite different to the way most people have dinner in Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.4 'Dinner one night', photo courtesy of Kath (beginner learner)*

Figure 5.5 presents an image of a train departure billboard. At first glance, this photo narrative appeared to be limited to differences in the public transport system and geographical distances between cities and towns. It thus initially appeared to refer to objective culture. However, the discussion that ensued in Rachel’s interview revealed that she had transformed an objective issue into a blended one:

**R:** yeah so it was like to that level, you can actually like be able to see a whole continent and like also communicate within a whole continent, it’s so easy

**I:** do you think that has an effect on people and their culture and things like that, you know the fact that everything’s so close?

**R:** yeah, you get a lot of like cuisines from different places, I guess we get a lot from like Asian cuisines and stuff like that but you um, but with the language because in
order to be able to like, to work together, each country has to learn each other’s language

I: yep

R: so that sort of knowledge, and like knowing about the countries, about the people and stuff, you’ve just got more knowledge about the world I think. […] Because you have to constantly like interact with each other and stuff, and Australia’s got that because we have people from other countries but we’re a bit like grounded still in like I dunno like the British sort of idea of I don’t know, how we’re supposed to live, respective from culture, yeah, they’re a bit more like developed in that way because they’ve had to be (Rachel, Beginner learner, T2)

Rachel commented that being so close to people from other cultures necessitated an ability to communicate with foreigners and more ‘knowledge about the world’ in comparison to Australia. She had personally experienced this, travelling via the TGV (fast train) from Stuttgart to Paris, as she was able to observe the ease with which Europeans moved between countries, cultures and languages.

---
a. Where was the photo taken?
Photo 3 was taken at Hauptbahnhof International Station

b. What is the object of the photo?
This photo focuses on the easily accessible transport I have here in Germany to travel to other countries within as little time of three hours.

c. Why did the object of the photo make you curious or draw your attention?
I found it really exciting and fascinating that I was going to be traveling to Paris and in less than a few hours I would be in a completely different country. The concept is strange and doesn’t hit me until I am coming back to Germany that I have actually crossed borders and been to another culture.

d. What were your emotions or thoughts when you took the photo?
I feel I have grown a little more in my confidence and wider knowledge. Now that I have travelled on my own to another country twice within less than two months I am extremely eager to seek out more adventures and places to go.

Figure 5.5 ‘Hauptbahnhof International Station’, photo courtesy of Rachel (Beginner learner)
In a similar fashion to the students discussing their Facebook data in the privacy of their interviews, Rachel’s interview provided her with a space to take the next step and think about the reasons behind such differences and the consequences they may hold for people from that culture.

In comparison to the Facebook data, students’ photo narratives were more likely to consider reasons behind the difference, reflect on subjective or blended issues, compare Germany to Australia and have personally experienced or discussed the issue with someone else. See Table 5.3 for a summary of the photos collected and their respective coding. Instances of transformation of objective cultural issues into blended or subjective ones were also noticeably lacking in the Facebook data. This tendency for the photo elicitation data to reveal instances of deeper reflection lies in stark contrast to the dominance of shallow, limited reflection on objective cultural issues prevalent in the Facebook data (notably the numerous posts about vending machines). This suggests that photo elicitation is the more effective of the two methods both for encouraging and assessing the IC of SA students.

There was an observable relationship between the amount of preparation or support students received and the depth of reflection in their photo narratives or Facebook posts. It seems that the combination of Facebook with the pre-departure preparation was less effective at encouraging reflection for UWA students. The following two students’ photo narratives illustrate this trend between preparation and the ability to reflect. One participant, who took the cross-cultural communications course in Stuttgart, attended preparatory workshops at her home university and wrote a reflective essay about her time in Stuttgart, submitted five photo narratives, all of which depicted a cultural difference. In three of the photo narratives, Emily successfully transformed objective issues, such as the importance of extra-curricular activities, into the subjective issue of the ways Germans separate work and social life and try to make new friends outside of work. She also attempted to explain the cultural differences she observed in three of five cases.

By contrast, Sean received no preparation or instruction about intercultural learning before the exchange, nor did he take the cross-cultural communication course. His photo project consisted of three photo narratives, one of which discussed differing architectural styles between Australia and Germany while the other two did not refer to cultural differences. While there were also instances in the data where students with little preparation exhibited deeper reflection in their interviews, photo narrative or Facebook
posts, prior instruction did assist students in knowing what to look for when examining cultural differences.

### Table 5.3 Summary of inductively developed categories and number of coding references

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number of coding references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buildings</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less space</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public transport</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dogs in public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor markets</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community groups</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smoking culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recycling/being eco-friendly</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional pride</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning foreign languages</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing opinions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal expression</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being hardworking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thriftiness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religious tolerance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-nazism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protest culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional politics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural symbols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical symbols</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fasching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dirndl/traditional dress</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the photo narratives there are some clear examples of students showing the attitudes, skills and knowledge required to competently communicate across cultures – for example Rachel’s ability to relate differences in public transport and geographical distance to
the need to cooperate and learn foreign languages in Europe because of geographical closeness. However, there are also instances which suggest that some students have not acquired the skills needed to communicate competently across cultures. In the next section of this chapter, I give examples of students’ IC (or lack thereof) according to the attitudes, skills and knowledge outlined in Deardorff’s model.

5.3 Development of intercultural competence according to the Process Model

In the process model of IC developed by Deardorff, attitudes form the starting point of IC. Attitudes combine with knowledge and skills to create the conditions needed for an informed frame of reference shift, which is considered the desired internal outcome. The desired external outcome – ‘effective and appropriate behaviour in intercultural situations’ - may eventuate with or without an internal frame of reference shift. All parts of the model - attitudes, knowledge and skills - interact to produce the external outcome.

5.3.1 Attitudes

The attitudes required to behave in an interculturally competent manner include respect for other cultures, openness or withholding judgement of other cultures, and curiosity and discovery, including tolerance of ambiguity (Deardorff, 2006a).

Respect

Students were able to demonstrate respect for German culture in many instances. This was especially apparent when students discussed history, the German propensity for recycling and the value of openly voicing opinions and discussing without taboos. Before their arrival in Stuttgart, several students maintained the belief that Germans did not like to discuss the past and in particular the war. For several students, this belief was swayed in their first days in Stuttgart after discussions with their host family:

[…] in the first week or something, my host family were just, they were talking about Hitler and they were talking about the war and they were talking about politics and all of this stuff […] and I don’t remember if I told you the story or if it had happened when we did our first interview, but my host brother, he was sitting with Olivia and I in the kitchen and my host brother comes in and he sits down and he’s chatting to us and he like grabs the dog and puts it on his lap and is just like petting the dog and holding its paws and stuff and then turns to us and says, do you know Hitler […] so he squeezes the dog’s wrist right so that it’s arm extends, so it’s doing this (Kim mimes a Nazi salute) [laughter] so here am I with Olivia looking at each other being like, did that just happen, yes that just happened, how do we react to something like that happening [laughter] so yeah (Kath, Beginner learner, T2)
As the students learnt more about Germany’s past over the course of their stay, many expressed a newfound respect for the way Germans they had met did not shy away from discussing the past and the way they had come to terms with it. Among the older students on the exchange, Belinda expressed a great interest in German history in her first interview and explained that she was studying to become a history teacher. Her interests led her to have many discussions with locals about the past, take a class covering contemporary German issues and visit many significant cultural sites around Germany. She summed up her feelings in her second interview:

[…] I guess I didn’t really know too much about their modern- um the modern side of it so since the war and all the things that have happened, so um what they’ve done is really to me, is really um astounding, especially with paying off all their war debts and also the amount of money they’ve still got like they’re still one of the richest countries in Europe, considering what they’ve had to do, so their innovation and all their technology and all the things that they’ve done I just feel like the German people are really um I dunno they’re- they’re incredible to me (Belinda, Beginner learner, T2)

For these students, learning about post-World War II German history (something that is not often covered in Australian high school history syllabi) and engaging in conversations with locals about something unfamiliar engendered feelings of respect for the German culture and a better understanding of how to approach the topic with Germans they meet in an appropriate manner.

**Openness**

Students were often able to show openness and tolerate a certain amount of ambiguity with cultural differences even if they did not completely understand them. Many students were baffled by the ‘Pfand’ system in Germany, where a deposit is paid on aluminium cans, glass bottles and plastic bottles which is refunded upon return. Throughout their weeks in Stuttgart they discussed differences between Australian and German practices of recycling and came to discover some of the underlying reasons behind these differences. For instance, several students mentioned the fact that the leading political party in the Stuttgart region is the Greens. Environmentalism is arguably a stronger, more important movement in Germany than it is in Australia (Nees, 2011) and as such the students were unused to the presence of environmental initiatives such as the Pfand system in common places such as supermarkets. Although the Pfand system had in reality been in place longer than the Greens, students displayed motivation to fully understand the practice and some of the
reasons behind it. Despite not fully understanding the system, students showed an interest in and openness towards German recycling practices:

**A:** [...] so that was the first time I used one of those bottle recycling machines like, I think at that point I hadn't even realised entirely the Pfand system because that was before I like, there was one time I bought a 29c beer that had a 25c Pfand

**I:** and you're like why is it 50c?

**A:** I thought it was so cheap and then I was going through the register I was like wow that's a big percentage, but um yeah we just saw it in the supermarket and I had a bottle in my bag from like something I bought at lunch or whatever and I thought it was really cool, like I know South Australia has a bottle refund thing but I don't know if it's fully used, [...] it's just cool that it's so convenient like I know Germany's known for recycling but you literally see people with [...] their bags full of all their bottles recycling them [...] it's really cool, [...] it seems to be really well utilised and it's very convenient (Amelia, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Students did not seem frustrated or upset that they did not fully understand the system but were able to withhold any negative judgement until they understood the difference more fully. On the other hand, some participants displayed ethnocentric superiority and were quick to judge another aspect of German culture that many participants perceived to be especially jarring to those from an Australian background:

[...] well we were on a mission for [our teacher] for our cross-cultural communication class [...] and we had to go out and find photos or find things to match a list we were given and [...] I'd seen stacks and stacks of these cigarette vending machines around the place [...]. It's just- it's appalling really, like just everywhere you go, they're almost as frequent as bakeries and that's just not good. [...] Yeah and as an asthmatic who doesn't like smokers- doesn't like smoking it just- I just find it yeah disgusting to be honest so, yeah frustrating and disappointing, it's probably the only thing, or one of the very few things I found disappointing about being in Europe, was the amount of smoking, yeah (Nicole, Post-beginner learner, T2)

The smoking culture in Germany (and Europe in general) was identified as a significant cultural difference by eight participants (28.5%). In addition to Nicole, three other students evaluated differences in smoking culture in a similarly ethnocentric manner – i.e. they reacted defensively to the difference and favoured the 'Australian way' of doing things. While several participants attempted to identify reasons behind these differences (for example, “It's probably so ingrained in people here that they just don't think about the consequences”, Russell, Facebook comment), only one participant considered other historical or cultural reasons for the difference. Sean was able to relate the fact that German society in general places more personal responsibility on the individual - something which other participants picked up on in regard to bicycle helmet laws and alcohol licensing laws – to the more relaxed laws and regulations around smoking:
I think it’s just people are a bit more, less conservative in Germany, sort of a bit more, do what you want you know, and there’s not any of these stupid rules with the smoking, the drinking […] and like wearing a helmet when you go bike riding, […] I think it’s just ridiculous, I think while- while smoking’s bad, I don’t think there should be restrictions like as much- like I think it should be, you know accepted that smoking’s bad but I think stuff’s too much controlled in Australia, like you can’t do particular things because […] the government has so many rules and regulations, whilst I feel in Germany there’s much less of that rules and regulations, you’re more free to do what you want, and you also see that, like people protest more as well…

(Sean, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Here Sean is able to relate a small component of culture – that surrounding smoking – to greater values of personal responsibility and ideas about what constitutes an acceptable level of interference from the government. In this instance, the other students were unable to move past their initial judgment of German smoking habits to think about the issue from an ethnorelative viewpoint. Their negative attitudes blocked any movement towards an internal frame of reference shift and IC for this particular issue.

Curiosity and discovery

Many participants displayed great curiosity about various aspects of German culture, a fascination which began before their departure on exchange. In both the workshops and their pre-departure interviews, students asked questions about German culture, language, and the realities of living overseas as well as showing excitement for learning more when they arrived in Stuttgart. In a post to the Facebook group prior to the exchange, Russell shows curiosity about how the German address system works:

I was just wondering, when replying to an email sent by your host family, if they have referred to you as ’du’ and have used only their first names to introduce themselves, is it fine to use the informal personal pronouns? (Russell, Post-beginner learner, Facebook group post)

The comments that followed his post showed that several other students were also curious about this phenomenon that initially seems so foreign to native English-speakers. Students seemed willing to tolerate the ambiguity surrounding the address system until they had gathered enough information from native and expert speakers. Throughout the exchange students repeatedly asked me for advice on how to address people. Their discovery of the address system continued after the exchange with Russell emailing me to ask how he should address a middle-aged woman who was enrolled in his German course at UWA.

There is a recurring theme of curiosity throughout the Facebook group, photo narratives and interviews. Whether this curiosity was prompted by their participation in my
research project is difficult to say: research participants who volunteer their time tend to be more motivated and committed than the average language student (Martin & Jansen, 2012; Schmidt, 2014). Thanks to their curiosity about and interest in learning about cultural differences, students were able to become expert ‘noticers’ of cultural difference. However, sometimes their attitudes or knowledge caused them to draw incorrect conclusions or not evaluate these differences at all.

5.3.2 Knowledge

Whereas attitudes are the starting point for the process of attaining IC, knowledge of the influence of one’s own cultural background, of their host culture and awareness of sociolinguistic variation in the target language ensure that learners do not draw erroneous conclusions about behaviour in other cultures.

Cultural self-awareness

The level of cultural self-awareness displayed by the students was mixed. For students who were already operating in a foreign culture before the exchange (for example Raj and Linda, who were both international students in Australia), some knowledge of their own cultural predispositions was more apparent than for students for whom the Stuttgart exchange represented their first significant journey outside Australia. Raj and Linda were consistently able to compare practices between Australia, Germany and their home cultures (India and China respectively). For example, Linda was surprised when she saw a car covered in stickers from different places. She explained that you would never see personal expression like this in China, but that this was something Germany and Australia had in common. As a result of her experiences in Australia, she was able to interpret the expression of personal interests from an ethnorelative perspective. Raj and Linda’s previous experience dealing with cultural difference in Australia encouraged them to think more carefully about their reactions to cultural difference and whether these responses were a product of their own cultures.

Students often compared behaviour in Germany to their own understanding of what is acceptable in Australia. At times students were able to view German behaviour from an ethnorelative perspective and showed an understanding of the influence of their own culture on their reactions, but at others they struggled to shift from viewing cultural difference from an Australian perspective. Several students (N=8) noticed the German propensity for heated discussions about topics that for Australians would be considered taboo or difficult.
to discuss, for example politics or immigration. While this can often be confronting for Australians who are more likely to view a difference in opinion as a personal attack (cf. Grieve, 2010), students were able to see the behaviour from another viewpoint and learnt to adapt:

They’re [the German teachers] just kind of more upfront I guess and don’t really hold back with their opinions which is kind of, it’s kind of refreshing, but you do have to get used to it when you do come from that [Australian] culture, it’s kind of like oh not everyone steps around you carefully [both laugh], you just get to the point (Elise, Post-beginner learner, T2)

The knowledge of her own predispositions as an Australian allowed Elise to appropriately deal with intercultural situations involving people voicing their opinions strongly. However, as evidenced in the above example about students’ reaction to differences in smoking culture, students were not always able to move past a viewpoint in which the Australian way is viewed as superior, in spite of their awareness of differences between Germany and Australia.

**Deep cultural knowledge**

Given that some participants had been studying the German culture and language for much longer than others, the level of variation in cultural knowledge is unsurprising. For several of the absolute beginners, their engagement with Germany began as they landed in Stuttgart. They admitted in their first interviews that their knowledge of Germany was extremely limited and gave more shallow answers when asked what they think of when they think of Germany:

1. **Lara:** beer [laughs] uh beer, bread um Lederhosen, Oktoberfest [laughs] yeah um that’s probably about it (Lara, Beginner learner, T1)

2. **Jane:** uh well I spose I could be stereotypical and say like you know they eat a lot of meat [laughs] and they’re very punctual, which I’m not, which I’m kind of a little bit like, oh I hope I don’t step on any toes over there yeah um:: other stereotypes, oh I dunno, my general opinion on it, I don’t really have one to be honest (Jane, Beginner learner, T1)

On the other hand, for students who had previously studied German or had contact with Germany, the impact of previous travel to Germany or contact with native speaker family or friends was evident. For example, Elise, who had studied German for four semesters prior to the exchange, discussed changes to her ideas about Germany:

E: um, well:: I mean I’ve never been to Europe, anywhere in Europe so it’s kind of, I don’t really know, […] kind of you know all the stereotypical things just because I,
for me I've always looked at pictures and I love the snow, so for me I just think of cold Europe, like [laughs] that's all I think about but I know there's more to it um and the food, I love the idea of you know schnitzel and bratwurst […] and beer

I: yep

E: but uh, yeah I dunno I've got a family friend that I've only met a few years ago who's German and um I kind of interviewed her for the German article

I: oh the Uber ((German-language magazine produced by students at UWA))

E: yeah and I dunno she kind of enlightened me a little bit um which I found really interesting just kind of talking about kind of social differences in Australia versus German, Germany and I found that really quite intriguing, the whole um way she just said that I mean very generalised we're quite censored in a way here or in the way we don't wanna, you know avoid confrontation and she found it quite difficult when she first came here kind of interacting with people and really putting her argument forward [and people]

I: [like not getting into arguments] with people

E: yeah! And she was like well I thought that was a healthy thing just discussing, it doesn't mean we have a personal difference it just means that we're talking about things, and then here it's like everyone takes everything really personally (Elise, Post-beginner learner, T1)

Elise's initial response was very shallow and revealed little other than simple objective differences in food preferences and cultural icons. However, when she talked about her contact with a native-speaker friend, the impact of her discussion with this woman on her understanding of German communication preferences is evident. This theme recurred in the interview data when participants referred to discussions they had had with native speakers prior to the exchange and the impact of these conversations on their ideas and understanding of German culture (N=9).

In the pre-departure interview, I asked each participant about their images of and ideas about Germany. On their return from Stuttgart, I repeated their statements in the re-entry interviews in order to gauge whether their ideas had changed. Their answers revealed that for some students, especially those who had previously had little contact with native speakers, the exchange had enabled them to confirm ideas they had previously only speculated about. For example, Raj had learnt some German in his home country of India from non-native teachers but had had little contact with native speakers. His ideas about Germany prior to the exchange were derived from popular culture and the media:

I think [Germans are] really efficient, because they have one of the lowest working hours in Europe but they still manage to produce more so, and I saw a BBC documentary when an English person goes to live in Germany it's called how to live
like a German and over there he advised to work in the factory but he ends up in the middle of work checking his mobile phone and someone reprimands him saying, you can't check your mobile phone you just have to work continuously for 8 hours… (Raj, Post-beginner learner, T1)

During the exchange, Raj was the sole guest in the home of a single German man. They shared many common interests and spent a lot of time discussing cultural differences, leading Raj to expand his understanding of the divide between work and private life:

I think the one about efficiency, that's definitely standing true, at least to the German man ((host father)) that I was living with so, he used to go to work at 9 and he never even used to take a break for lunch so he never used to have lunch, uh and he used to just work from 9 to 6 I think, and then after 6 it's over, there's no connection with work then and then he used to just come up, start cooking, have uh resting conversations with me but not about work, then he was just finished with work so I think they know how to keep their home life and personal life separate […] yeah have like finite hours so they are just gonna work for those hours and then after that not at all and when they are working then they are just inaccessible, can't really contact them and they are really busy in their work, so I think they're efficient because of that reason, they're disciplined to work.

His deep understanding of the work/private life divide could help Raj, for example, to interpret the limited opening hours of some services in Germany from the perspective of efficiency and keeping work and private life separate rather than being frustrated by more limited opening hours. All students talked about instances where their understanding of an aspect of German culture had been improved after a discussion with a local. This deepened cultural knowledge could help students to interpret differences between Germany and Australia in a more ethnorelative manner. Previous research has suggested that cultural knowledge enables learners to anticipate topics of conversation, perspectives and behaviours, thus facilitating effective and appropriate communication in intercultural situations (Czerwionka et al., 2015).

Sociolinguistic awareness
As discussed in Chapter 4, students also displayed mixed levels of sociolinguistic awareness. The importance of accurate sociopragmatic knowledge in facilitating effective and appropriate intercultural communication is clearly seen in the case of address form competence. Given the amount of social information conveyed by a choice of address pronoun, it can be considered a crucial aspect of communication in German. Participants were able to appropriately choose and use address forms only some of the time. For those students who began their study of German in Stuttgart this was particularly apparent. However, many participants did come to terms with the pragmatic force associated with
address form choice and were more concerned about choosing appropriately than they had been before the exchange.

The driving force of this change often came about through intercultural interactions in which participants offended locals with their choice of address form and were reproached for doing so. For example, a student described striking up a conversation with an elderly woman on the street and asking, *wie geht es dir?* [how are you (inf.)?]. The woman reprimanded him for being too informal. Several days after the incident, the majority of students had heard the story and modified their behaviour accordingly. Once students had been alerted to the fact that their behaviour was inappropriate they made the necessary changes required to effectively communicate.

Although students displayed limited knowledge of the colloquial words and phrases analysed in Chapter 4, they did show awareness that some words or phrases are only appropriate for use in certain situations. For example, during the exchange, participants acquired more accurate knowledge about the limited sphere in which use of formal leave-taking formula *auf Wiedersehen* would be appropriate. In spite of their lack of familiarity with colloquial vocabulary and some of the leave-taking formulas, participants displayed enthusiasm for learning these words and their usage. This attitude towards choosing language appropriately in order to avoid offence aids students in intercultural situations.

### 5.3.3 Skills

Listening, observing, evaluating, analysing, interpreting and relating are the key skills needed for effective intercultural communication according to Deardorff’s model. They are also crucial skills for an exchange student who must navigate a new environment and make sense of differences to home. When combined with the requisite attitudes and knowledge, these skills may allow students to achieve the internal outcome of an informed frame of reference shift and eventually the desired external outcome of effective and appropriate communication in an intercultural situation.

**To listen, observe and evaluate**

Most students in this study became experts at listening to and observing cultural difference in Stuttgart. They were often, but not always, able to take the next step and begin to evaluate these differences and the reasons behind them. An instance where students listened, observed, and then modified their behaviour as a result again relates to address form usage. Prior to the exchange, many students displayed a preference for *Sie* as a ‘safe
option’ or to show politeness. After hearing other young people address them with *du*,
some students opted to do the same:

> Everyone my age pretty much called me *du* on first meeting me so I’d say that’s the
done thing, and like really different contexts like some of them were friends of
friends, some of them just strangers so yeah. (Amelia, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Participants listened to native-speaker behaviour, evaluated it as the ‘done thing’ and chose
to change their own behaviour in order to communicate more appropriately.

The evaluation of difference was more evident in the photo narrative data than the
Facebook group: students considered a reason for the cultural difference portrayed in the
pictures in 41.2% of narratives. There were, however, many instances in the Facebook,
photo narrative and interview data where students did not offer an evaluation of the cultural
difference under discussion. Some students also struggled to listen to and observe
classroom practices in order to appropriately adhere to them. For example, although Tom’s
teacher explained to him multiple times that students used informal *du* with each other, but
he should use formal *Sie* with her as his teacher, Tom continued to address her with the
informal *du*.

It was also outlined to participants explicitly and early on in the program what the
expectations around their classes were: namely, that punctuality was crucial given the short
time frame of the program and that students were required to take all aspects of
assessment and the course seriously. However, on more than one occasion when I was
present, students continued to arrive late, would disappear to the bathroom in the middle
of a lesson, complain about the German-only immersion policy and show insufficient respect
for their teachers by speaking when they were speaking or interrupting (Field notes, 3/2/16).
This behaviour, although only on the part of three participants, displays a disrespect for
German classroom norms and a lack of consideration and empathy as well as a diminished
ability to learn from listening and observing. This example shows one instance where
participants were not able to show the necessary skills (to observe and relate) as set out in
Deardorff’s model.

**To analyse, interpret, relate**

Students’ skills of analysing, interpreting and relating were most evident in instances where
they compared German and Australian practices. However, students also became skilled at
observing scenes around the city, analysing them and relating these observations to more
significant aspects of German culture. For example, Rachel became intrigued by a building
site where the shell of the building was being kept intact (Rachel, Interview 2). She interpreted the scene as an example of how Germans value the practices of re-using and not letting things go to waste. She analysed a simple image of a building site in terms of the values of recycling and re-using. By relating scenes of city life to more complex, subjective aspects of culture, students are able to move beyond simple observation to a deeper understanding of cultural patterns.

5.3.4 Internal outcome: informed frame of reference shift

With the requisite set of attitudes, knowledge and skills students may be able to shift their frame of reference from a more ethnocentric Australian position to that of an ‘intercultural speaker’ (Byram, 1997). According to the Process Model, this includes showing adaptability, flexibility, an ethnorelative view and empathy. These are characteristics that participants in my study displayed only some of the time. For the most part, students were able to adapt and come to terms with routines and behaviours in their host families, in the language classroom and with other locals they met over the course of their six weeks in Stuttgart. Eric’s response to his teacher discussing his performance on the placement test in class is a good example of adaptable, flexible and empathetic behaviour:

[…], she said oh Eric your speaking German’s quite good but your, you tested very, very poorly, you were really, really bad […] in front of the whole class, and I’m not paraphrasing it, I’m saying it word for word, she was like in fact you were really, really bad you know you were like um A1 level […] and so the first day I was like oh I really don’t like this teacher and then I kind of got to realise that she was just- […] again in Australia you would never have a teacher um read out what you got […] or their comment on the grade, like pass judgement on it, um so I think that was like a stereotype which is very, very, and it probably ties into, not the humour but in the same kind of way, like same blunt […], just saying it how it is, which I think is interesting and it took a little bit of time to get used to […] at first it can be a bit like upsetting and then when you realise um what their intentions are then you realise it’s not um yeah (Eric, Post-beginner learner, T2)

His initial response was defensive and he compared his teacher’s behaviour to classroom etiquette in Australia, where teachers are not allowed to disclose marks or discuss a student’s performance in front of others. Over the course of several weeks he came to realise that she had not meant it in a negative or hurtful way and adjusted his initial judgement. In his second interview, Eric described feeling initially shocked by his host mother abruptly telling him not to wear his shoes upstairs. Again, after speaking to her about it he came to realise the way she said it was not meant as a personal attack. Eric was able to adjust his expectations of how people communicate or behave in the classroom and view the behaviour of his hosts away from an Australian perspective. For Eric, the key to
An instance where several participants did not display the ability to shift their frame of reference while others did was at a football match attended by a group of students. Several students were perplexed by some of the differences in attending a football game in Germany compared to Australia. Local fans became irritated at the students for taking photos of the game, security at the gate asked them to remove scarves which were the colours of the opposing team and the female students were repeatedly shepherded around because they were standing in the male queue to enter the stadium. All in all, several students admitted to feeling out of place and somewhat unwelcome at the game (Field notes, 3/2/16). These students did not pause to consider why these security mechanisms were in place or why the fans took the game so seriously – they retained an Australian view of how one should behave at a sporting event. On the other hand, Raj engaged in conversation with a local fan to attempt to understand why many German football fans are so passionate:

So it was like they were there partly for the game but I think they have this - I talked to a German fan and he told me about his idea about football is that for 90 minutes they just want to forget about their lives and uh just enjoy while they're there, of course they want to see their club win, but it's also very important for them to enjoy the game - so sing, chant, bounce around, have some beer, it's as much important as the club winning for them, that's why I think they enjoy the game more than the other people, the atmosphere is so good in the stadiums (Raj, Post-beginner learner, T2)

As a result of their discussion, Raj walked away from the game with a better understanding of German football culture and how sport functions as escapism for some fans. He shows both flexibility in his behaviour and empathy for other fans, in contrast with the other students attending who became frustrated with practices which seemed foreign and restrictive when compared to football games in Australia. Again, discussing these differences with locals seems to be important for students to be able to move past their initial judgements from an Australian perspective.

5.3.5 Desired external outcome: effective and appropriate communication and behaviour

The final part of the process model consists of the desired external outcome in intercultural communication: that is, effective and appropriate communication or behaviour. In many
examples described in this chapter, students were able to communicate and behave appropriately as a result of their acquired attitudes, skills and knowledge. As a whole, this group of students were curious and motivated to learn about culture and concerned with communicating with their hosts in a way that did not cause offence, and this showed in their interviews, photo narratives and Facebook group comments. Table 5.4 gives an example for each aspect of Deardorff’s model where participants illustrated competence or not. Additionally, I would like to compare two participants’ behaviour related to address terms, in order to illustrate how attitudes, knowledge and skills work together to produce effective and appropriate communication in intercultural situations.

Table 5.4 Examples of competence/lack of competence according to Process model

<table>
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<th>Aspect of model</th>
<th>Competence demonstrated</th>
<th>Competence not demonstrated</th>
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<tr>
<td>Respect (valuing other cultures)</td>
<td>Belinda’s respect for post WWII Germany history</td>
<td>Beginners’ lack of respect for different teaching styles and ways of giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness (withholding judgement)</td>
<td>Eric understanding his teacher’s criticism</td>
<td>Eric reacting defensively to his teacher talking about his grades</td>
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<td>Curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity)</td>
<td>Russell’s curiosity about address term practices</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural self-awareness</td>
<td>Linda’s understanding of Chinese preferences vs. Australian</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ella’s understanding of propensity for heated discussions among Germans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic awareness</td>
<td>Lisa’s awareness of young peoples’ preference for du</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>To listen, observe and evaluate</td>
<td>The majority of participants’ ability to observe and adhere to classroom etiquette</td>
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<tr>
<td>To analyse, interpret and relate</td>
<td>Sean’s ability to relate German smoking practices to values of personal freedom</td>
<td>Nicole’s inability to further analyse and relate smoking practices to other aspects of German culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal outcome (adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative view,)</td>
<td>Raj’s ability to adopt an ethnorelative view of a German soccer match</td>
<td>The other students’ inability to be flexible in their understanding of what</td>
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</table>
Lisa, who had studied German for four semesters before Stuttgart, demonstrated a competent approach to understanding L2-like ways of using address terms. Prior to the exchange, Lisa emphasised the need to use Sie to be polite, and tended to overgeneralise her use of the formal pronoun across a wide range of situations. Throughout the exchange, she showed openness to acquiring new norms of language use. She listens to and observes her host mother’s use of address terms, and also demonstrates the attitude of curiosity and discovery when she asks her German friend about how she chooses whether to use du or Sie. Lisa analyses her friend’s comments and relates them to the idea that using du with age peers is appropriate. The outcome of her curiosity and ability to analyse is her appropriate choice of address terms in her post-exchange interview. By contrast, Max, remained stuck on the idea that Sie simply expresses politeness, without considering what this usage said about himself or the effect it had on his interlocutors. Max retained the belief that German students would prefer to be addressed with Sie by other students. His lack of curiosity and discovery, combined with a lack of deep cultural knowledge about the social meaning of address terms contributed to his inability to appropriately address his age peers.

Often students were able to take the next step in thinking about why differences between cultures exist. This was frequently made possible after discussions with cultural informants: their host families, teachers and other local friends. There were, however, many instances where students could not move past their initial judgements about local practices and values. In the case of the Facebook group, the cultural differences students chose to discuss were often so shallow and unrelated to deeper cultural values, beliefs and norms (for example the multiple posts about different vending machines seen around Stuttgart) that they were unlikely to contribute any real change to participants’ IC.

5.4 Conclusion

Although the Facebook group did not facilitate the extensive and deep discussion envisaged by both the students and myself before the exchange, students’ posts served as an interesting starting point for discussions in person upon their return from Stuttgart. The fact that the facilitator played a small role in prompting discussion may help to explain this. During interviews and the re-entry unit, students were asked many questions which may
have helped to propel them to higher levels of reflection (cf. Jackson, 2013; Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). By contrast, the photo elicitation project stimulated the participating students’ interest in noticing and interpreting cultural differences. Future research should focus on incorporating positive aspects from both methods – the personal private collection of photo elicitation, with the group discussion facilitated by comments made on social media. That some students were able to engage with these tasks and reflect more effectively than others illustrates the difficulty in fostering reflection on intercultural dialogue in a group as diverse as this one.

The wide range of reactions to and understandings of German culture reinforces a central tenet of Deardorff’s model: that attaining IC is an ongoing, lifelong process. Even if students have near-perfect sociolinguistic awareness or a superior ability to empathise and shift perspectives, other aspects of their skill sets could perhaps benefit from further development or interaction with other attitudes, knowledge and skills. This is evident where participants exhibited thoughtful, reflective and ethnorelative behaviour in one instance, yet reverted to judgemental, negative and ethnocentric responses in others. What also becomes apparent when examining students’ photo narratives, Facebook posts and interviews is how varied students’ experiences in Stuttgart were. These experiences interacted with the vastly different skills and attitudes students brought to Stuttgart – the experience of learning many languages and extensive travel for some, compared with someone who had not left Australia previously and had not learnt a language since primary school. Given the amount of variation between students, the impact on each student’s intercultural trajectory is hard to determine in the context of a group of 28 individuals.

The importance of discussing cultural issues with locals emerged as a significant influence in many participants’ interview data. Given that several participants lived with host families who spoke limited English, the question of proficiency in the L2 seems crucial. If students cannot hold a conversation with their hosts, meaningful discussion of cultural difference becomes impossible. Language proficiency aside, contact with people from other cultures and the presence of parents with international backgrounds or a love of foreign languages also greatly influence an individual’s disposition towards cultural difference (Murphy-Lejeune, 2003). In the next chapter, I explore the influence of these factors on the development of IC as well as performance in the LAI by examining four case studies. By looking at the backgrounds of these four students – how and why they came to study German in Stuttgart, their goals for the exchange and the future, their language learning
histories – and how these factors impacted their time in Stuttgart, we can better understand what is involved in language and intercultural learning during SA.
CHAPTER 6: CASE STUDIES OF DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Given that many students are only able to study abroad once during their university studies, it is important to determine when it is most beneficial for this exchange to take place in order to improve language and intercultural skills. The limited research addressing the timing of SA has shown mixed results, with some studies suggesting SA is more beneficial for lower level language learners (Freed, 1995c; Huebner, 1995; Pizziconi, 2013; Spenader, 2011) and others suggesting students can only truly benefit with a certain level of pre-existing language ability (DeKeyser, 2007; 2010). DeKeyser has argued that ‘the role of initial proficiency […] is even more ambiguous than the role of SA in itself’ (DeKeyser, 2014, p. 316). Chapters 4 and 5 explored the influence of short-term SA on the group of participants as a whole. This chapter examines the experience and learning outcomes of four individuals and focuses especially on the influence of prior L2 proficiency.

Before I present the cases I summarise the method by which I chose the case studies. For each case study, I introduce the student and their history of learning German (and other languages if applicable), their travel experiences and any international contacts (i.e. friends and family) they may have had before the exchange. I also discuss their motivation for learning German and their aims for the exchange. I then dissect their experience in Stuttgart – their relationship with the host family, friendship groups, how they coped in language classes and any travel they undertook on the weekend. For each student, I draw on all material in their respective case file in N-Vivo, including interviews, field notes, email communication, Facebook data and photo elicitation project data. Following this reconstruction of their experience in Stuttgart, I present a profile of their language achievements, as well as any data related to intercultural learning. These results are then interpreted in light of participants’ narratives and experiences in order to better understand their LAI and intercultural data. Following the analysis of the case studies is a synthesis of the findings presented in this chapter.

6.1 Choosing the case studies

Choosing cases to discuss in this chapter was difficult given that each participant’s story was unique and offered different insights to the SA experience. In spite of this uniqueness, common themes emerged in many participants’ interviews – the benefits of staying with the
host family, the positive influence of their German teachers only speaking German and increased confidence speaking German. However, each participant’s background influenced their stay in Stuttgart in different ways. I therefore aimed to achieve a balance between representing the group’s experiences as a whole, and showing the uniqueness of each case. I would like to also emphasise that the cases described here are only “typical” for this specific group; to attempt to offer a representation of the “typical SA experience” would be unachievable given the varying conditions surrounding exchange.

As one of the aims of my study was to see what influence students’ initial proficiency levels would have on their experiences and development, I chose cases of students of differing proficiency levels. Aside from Huebner’s (1995) mainly quantitative appraisal of language gains and the studies involving high school-aged students described in section 2.1.3, there has to date been no research examining how complete beginner students fare on exchange. I have chosen one student from each level of classes in Stuttgart, from Kath who started her study of German in Stuttgart, to Sean who was placed in the highest level (B1/B2) class in Stuttgart. The case studies selected show examples of students who made considerable progress linguistically and in terms of their IC as well as students who did not.

6.2 Kath

Kath is a 22-year-old business student from Sydney who participated in the exchange in return for credit towards her degree. Although Kath began studying German in earnest in Stuttgart, she described many previous varied experiences of learning foreign languages:

K: yeah um so I grew up learning- […] I grew up learning Korean um because my mother is Korean and my Grandparents are Korean and they only speak to me in Korean

I: really?

K: yeah so like my Grandma […] knows a lot of English that she can communicate with me um and so I grew up learning Korean, but then I started learning French in high school, oh Chinese in high school- so Mandarin in high school and French, but not much [of] either because it was high school and […] now at [home university] I'm doing Japanese. (Kath, T1)

Kath also mentioned teaching herself some German in high school as well as taking beginners German at another university for four weeks before dropping out. She described her experiences of learning languages as positive, but lamented the difficulty of learning a new language as an adult and claimed that she can’t ‘properly speak’ any of the languages she
has learnt. Her decision to study in Stuttgart was based on her perception of German as an important business language and a desire for personal development:

[... ] one of the main reasons I decided on Germany was because I’m doing a business degree um, [...] if you know a language or more than one language in business, so many doors are just thrown open for you, because if you can trans- well if you can be multilingual and work for a company they’ll send you places which is great! And also there’s just so much more opportunity that way um so I think that’s going to affect it a great deal, also it’s 6 weeks of me being in another country by myself, practically independent, except for like living with a host family but having to get to and from, in a new cold, cold city [...] but yeah, so that’s gonna change me, it’s also just going to be a whole lot of like personal development, self-reflective stuff (T1)

Kath’s hopes for the exchange echo the familiar narrative of the transformative power of travel (O’Reilly, 2006). In spite of Kath’s varied experiences learning languages and contact with other cultures through her family, she had travelled very little prior to the exchange. Aside from a two-week guided tour through Japan with her boyfriend and the week she spent in London before her arrival in Stuttgart, Kath had not travelled internationally and thus possessed a relatively low level of mobility capital compared to many other participants.

Kath did not mention any German contacts in her first interview, meaning that her perceptions of Germans were likely to be limited to stereotypes commonly presented in popular media. Some of these pre-conceptions were, however, challenged on the first day of her exchange:

[... ] I mean there’s always the stereotypes of sort of Germans but one of the, because you know everyone tells you, don’t talk about the war um but I was literally here the first day, [...] my host mother was about to take her dogs for a walk and I was like oh I’ll come with you [...] um so we were walking them along and we go round this field and she was telling me how the dogs [...] sometimes they like other dogs sometimes they don’t, and she was like they like border collies [...] and she’s like I think it’s because they’re English dogs and they still think it’s the Second World War and like they don’t like German dogs, they hate German Shepherds, I was like ‘oh!’, um yes, oh yeah... and then we were saying, I was just in, I mean you were in the class before and he [teacher] was just casually talking about Hitler and all and I was like this is very different to what I expected because everyone tells you, don’t talk about the war um, so very different, but I sort of, I dunno I kind of thought of Germany as quite similar to us in some ways and quite different in others you know… (T1)

Like many other participants, she mentioned the perception of German as a harsh language as well as the German sense of humour (cf. Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016). She was, however, already able to acknowledge that these cultural differences vary “from person to person” (T1).
6.2.1 Experience in Stuttgart

In Stuttgart Kath did not complete the placement test but instead began lessons at the A1.1 level upon her arrival. Like many of the other absolute beginners, she was shocked that the teacher spoke only in German and criticised the fact that the teachers were unable to explain more difficult concepts to the class in English. This remained an important topic of complaint for the majority of the beginners throughout the program. Kath retained her consumerist mindset towards many aspects of the exchange program, including her host family:

They didn't really tell us anything, they said, you know how they're meant to provide us with breakfast and stuff, one morning[…] we were like oh, um so what do we do for breakfast, and then the host mother said what do you want for breakfast, there's toast and there's muesli and um just sort of pointed at these things […] I mean they could've explained things a lot better and been like this is what you do to wash your clothes but we weren't allowed to use the washing machine, so we had to leave our clothes for the host mother to wash, and I was like that's difficult um so I didn't have any access to that, could use the kitchen but it was a bit awkward and because oh yeah, so I mean could've been a better experience, they were a good host family though overall, they didn't cause me any trouble or any issues but you know could've- could've made things easier I guess (T2)

In her second interview, Kath complained about the location of the German classes (separate from the main campus), having to share a bathroom with another student, the organisation of the excursions as well as the German-only policy in the classroom. However, her negative response to these aspects of the program did not cause her to ‘recoil into national superiority’ (Kinginger, 2008, p. 96) like some of the American participants in Kinginger’s study (2008). Kath chose to spend the exchange in the company of her classmates: travelling around German cities, drinking in bars and speaking English. Kath was away from Stuttgart each weekend on excursions or independent travel and claimed to spend less than an hour with her host family each day. She also expressed disappointment that she did not get to know any other Germans her own age during the exchange.

However, it seems even the little time she did spend with her hosts was beneficial to her understanding of cultural difference. Expanding on ideas set out in her first interview, Kath spoke again about perceptions of common stereotypes about Germans and how her ideas had changed as a result of her hosts' behaviour:

My host family, as strange as they were, were hilarious, um they had a very dry sense of humour, […] I mean I always maintain that humour doesn't really translate unless you know the language, or you know the culture, because like Japanese humour doesn't translate, nor does Korean humour, it doesn't come across, unless
you’re part of the culture or you understand the culture um and with German, like well at least in my host family, […] they were just very flat and very dry in their humour um, like when I was leaving and I took a photo […] with my host family and I said, “oh I’m gonna put that on Facebook” and she was like “oh did you get permission from us to put it on Facebook?”, [laughter] and I was like well it’s too late now isn’t it um and we all had a good laugh, so it’s, most people […] wouldn’t understand it was [a joke] but I dunno if it was from living with them for that long or from understanding that that’s the kind of humour that, I don’t wanna blanket everyone but Germans have… (T2)

For Kath, exposure to her hosts stimulated reflection on the accuracy and universality of these common stereotypes about Germans.

6.2.2 Intercultural data

As Kath was not attending UWA she completed the photo elicitation project. Of the four photos she submitted, three depict cultural differences (see Table 6.1 for a summary). Kath’s appraisal of the cultural differences in her photos remained fairly shallow, although she displayed a propensity to discuss issues with her classmates. For example, she was surprised by her host family’s practice of eating a light, cold meal for dinner but after discussion with other students found this to be common:

Kath: […] I thought it was very interesting because our host family had said at some point that they don’t cook in the evenings, yeah which um from what I found out later was fairly common, that […] they just don’t cook in the evenings and they have like a light meal and like a big lunch and then a light meal and I was like oh that’s very interesting, it’s very different to what we do here […] so that was interesting, […] it was a nice idea because it means you don’t have to cook in the evenings, you just have a spread of meat and cheese and you barely have to clean up so that’s nice, um yeah it’s just sort of a uh different approach to things, cultural difference I guess

However, her reflection on the issue remained shallow (“that’s very interesting”) and she was not able to take the next step and question why this might be the case. Overall, Kath’s engagement with the photo elicitation project and cultural differences in general was limited. Any real change to her perceptions about Germans could be attributed to spending time with her host family.

Table 6.1 Summary of Kath’s photo elicitation project photos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of picture</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Subjective/objective culture</th>
<th>Observe/personally experience/experience and discuss</th>
<th>Acceptance of cultural difference?</th>
<th>Compare to own culture?</th>
<th>Reason given for difference?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fasching costume masks</td>
<td>Regional history Cultural artefacts</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Observe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.3 LAI data

The fact that learning German was not her main reason for going on exchange is reflected in Kath’s LAI results shown in Table 6.2 below. Like many of the other absolute beginners, Kath found her immersive language classes very tiring and described feeling “done with German” following the exchange. She did not mention any specific areas where she felt her classes had really made a difference to her ability in German. Kath noted that the little that she had learned was quickly being forgotten as her Japanese classes started again at home. This may have contributed to her performance in the LAI, where like two of the other absolute beginners, she was unable to complete the role-play tasks:

K: [...] ok so ahhh I think the problem is that I just didn’t learn that much German, um ohhh, uh, no look oh man, all of its gone, I know the sentences like oh not really, actually I don’t know any of them, like at all

I: Hallo?

K: Hallo, um ohhh (5.0) I just, I don’t remember how to ask like (2.6) is can you come meet me would be like (1.7) it's just the structure that's throwing me, kannst du (3.0) Kaffee trinken? That’s can you drink coffee?

I: yeah but I would understand that

K: yeah you would get it but it wouldn’t be, like kannst du Kaffee trinken [can you drink coffee?] (2.6) uh (5.5) nup, dreißig Minuten?

I: ja, dreißig Minuten ja [yes, thirty minutes yes]

K: or, um, yeah that’s about as good as I got [laughs], kannst du [can you] nup, if I were at a higher-level German, I probably could remember all of this

Kath and several other absolute beginner students noted that their coursework was very grammar-focused with little time for conversational skills. As noted by DeKeyser (2007; 2010) grammar and vocabulary can be equally as well learnt in an at-home context.
That these beginner students require grammar instruction lessens time available for oral practice and acquiring the discourse skills necessary to engage in conversations in settings outside the classroom.

In the LAI Kath showed an ability to draw on her knowledge about using address terms in other languages and demonstrated a reasonably sophisticated understanding of the boundaries of informal/formal relationships (see Table 6.2 for a summary). Although she chose Sie to address the student in Situation 1, she showed a more measured response when considering how to address the service staff in Situations 4 & 5:

K: oh ok well I mean I'd still, because you’re not friends with them I’d still say Sie, yeah for both of them because it's not a personal, I mean it's a personal exchange but it's not, I dunno it's not really a personal exchange, it's just being nice to someone so, you’re still polite and formal in those situations so Sie for both (T2)

Unlike several other participants, she acknowledged that these situations are not “a personal exchange”, potentially drawing on information she had acquired about the boundaries of informal address term usage in other languages she has learnt such as Japanese. However, Kath made no mention of any real-life situations in Stuttgart having altered her understanding of the address pronouns. Her results are unsurprising given the limited engagement she had with German outside the language classroom. Aside from attempting to order in a restaurant in German, there are very few instances in her interview where she mentioned speaking German outside the classroom. Her own appraisal of SA as an absolute beginner summarises her experience well:

I don’t think that it wasn’t helpful, the level of German that I had but I also think I couldn’t have used it to [...] talk to anyone, it's just the things that we learnt- I mean we did learn like you know, how to ask where people are from, how old they are and how tall they are uh so, so that kind of thing because the basic level German stuff isn’t very conversational, more vocab and um grammar, structure and stuff but you don’t actually learn how to hold a conversation, so I don’t think- at least for all the beginners it was probably way too hard to, and also way too daunting to wanna go out and try and talk to people. (T2)

Table 6.2 Summary of Kath’s LAI results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of turns and use of address forms in role plays</th>
<th>Turns</th>
<th>du</th>
<th>Sie</th>
<th>avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-informal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-formal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of errors in role plays</th>
<th>Grammatical</th>
<th>Short pause</th>
<th>Long pause</th>
<th>Code-switching</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Her thoughts echo those of other beginners and lower level students: that their language skills impeded their ability to engage in informal conversation outside the classroom. Kath’s limited international experience and low L2 proficiency did hamper her capacity to take advantage of opportunities for language and cultural learning during her time in Stuttgart. Following the exchange, Kath had successfully applied for a semester exchange program to the UK and did not mention any future study of German. That becoming proficient in German was unimportant to Kath’s future plans may have played a role in her developmental trajectory. Language motivation research describes the importance of the ‘Ideal L2-self’, where if the learner has a vision of themselves in the future that includes proficiency in an L2, this is a powerful motivator for learning (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 98). Given Kath’s plans and visions for the future excluded German, it is likely this lessened her resolve to make the most of opportunities for language learning throughout the exchange. Although Kath considered the exchange a success in personal terms and was pleased to have made new (Australian) friends, the exchange does not appear to have benefitted her in any significant way linguistically or culturally.

6.3 Sharn

Sharn is a 23-year-old student majoring in Psychology, who completed the exchange in return for credit towards her degree. Before participating in the Stuttgart program, Sharn had studied German for two semesters at university. In order to continue studying German throughout her degree, Sharn was also enrolled in a Diploma of Modern Languages, an
accreditation available at UWA to allow students from other fields to study a language major alongside their main area of study. Sharn’s motivation for learning German was threefold:

Sharn: um it’s kind of stupid, because, well obviously because I’m doing psych, I’ve want- I’ve always wanted to learn another language like since I was little but um I have quite a few German friends and, I found out that it’s really good to learn a language before you’re in your 30’s because it does all these amazing things for your brain, like [...] it's really like a good [...] protective factor against Alzheimer’s and stuff and yeah I was actually dating a German guy and I was like 'I'm gonna learn German!' [...] And I have heaps of German friends and some who'll come visit me in Stuttgart which is really cool. (T1)

She stated that she had enjoyed the experience of learning German at university, more so than her experience of learning Italian in primary and high school, where she felt that they did not teach students to “actually speak it” but instead spent a lot of time rote-learning phrases.

Sharn recalled having contact with people from other countries from a young age. Her best friend has German/Dutch parents and she met many international travellers who worked on their asparagus farm throughout her school years. Since finishing school, Sharn had met many other travellers through working in the hospitality industry. Her international travel was limited to two extended independent trips to Europe (four and seven weeks in length) as well as a family holiday to Indonesia, and a volunteering trip to East Timor that was organised by her parents in order for her to “try and get into med school” when she was 17.

Sharn’s aims for the exchange included improving her German and gaining “worldliness”. She also emphasised that she was concerned “about being rude by accident, like accidentally overstepping a cultural boundary and being really embarrassed” (T1). Sharn expressed excitement about opportunities for informal language learning on exchange and related several incidents throughout her interviews (and in general conversation) where she felt more comfortable using German in very informal contexts, generally with friends in bars and nightclubs.

Given Sharn’s extensive exposure to German culture through her friends she had already established several ideas about Germany which largely revolved around Diskussionsbereitschaft [readiness to have discussions] and progressive political ideologies:

S: Uh like... I guess positive ones would be like I just, I appreciate the value they put on education and rationalism, like that sounds weird but you can have really interesting discussions and people will like, if you bring forward like a logical point they’ll actually like be like oh I didn’t necessarily agree but when you put it like that.
I: yeah

S: I dunno coz I'm really into medicine and pharmacology and stuff and like it's just good to be able to talk to things, with people who like actually like analyse it properly, I don't know [...] and people who understand real research, I found most Germans do I don't know why. (T1)

Her comments revealed a strong affinity for aspects of German culture that aligned with her own interests (e.g. research, the environment and liberal politics). Unlike many of her peers, Sharn’s response made no reference to stereotypes of bluntness, efficiency or Lederhosen. Just as Elise’s experience of interviewing a German woman for a student magazine altered her perspective about Germany (discussed in section 5.3.2), Sharn’s German friends had no doubt significantly influenced her ideas about Germany. Sharn’s international contacts throughout Europe, independent travel in the region, sensitivity about offending others and preference for using language in informal settings made her well-prepared to make the most of opportunities for informal language learning in Stuttgart.

6.3.1 Experience in Stuttgart

For her classes, Sharn was placed in the A2.1 class along with several of her fellow classmates from Perth. She praised the immersion aspect of her classes and attributed some of the improvement in her listening ability to the way her teachers talked. Sharn was slightly disappointed that her teachers did not encourage them to speak more and was envious of other students’ reports that they spent more time speaking in a higher-level class.

Sharn was placed with a middle-aged German couple who welcomed her into their home and social lives. Living with this couple appeared to reaffirm her ideas about middle-aged Germans as “really easy to talk to and get along with and they don't condescend at all” (Interview 2). Her host mother was close friends with the woman living in the apartment downstairs. This woman hosted Jane, another student from the exchange who was a complete beginner. The two families often shared meals and other social activities. Sharn initially expressed concern at having another student downstairs in case they didn’t get along, but the two quickly became friends and spent much of their time together. Although Sharn viewed their friendship as a positive outcome of the exchange, it also had the unintended downside of English being their language of communication:

Sharn: yeah but it turned out to be, yeah just someone kind of similar to me so it was like really easy to get along, but um she didn't speak any German so a lot of the conversations, like her and I just spoke English all the time, and then like when we had dinner all together, often they'd like, I'd be listening [to them speaking in German] but then to speak to us they'd speak in English [...] and that's when they
actually do speak a bit slower, but like yeah so [...] but- I mean it was really cool to be friends with Jane [...] The other two students Sharn befriended were also absolute beginners so their evenings were spent speaking English together. Sharn’s participation in L2-mediated communication was limited because of her friends’ more limited L2 ability (cf. Churchill, 2003; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002; Shively, 2009).

Sharn spent a significant amount of time away from Stuttgart on excursions and visiting various friends in Berlin and Austria, and her boyfriend in Amsterdam. These weekends away were, however, an opportunity for Sharn to practice speaking German with close friends. A recurring theme for Sharn was the effect consuming alcohol had on her willingness to speak German:

[...] every time I drink just like two or three beers I would just start speaking German and it flowed so much better um yeah and people would be like ‘wow’ which kind of [...] encourages you to do it more um yeah even when I was in Austria actually, because my friends who were working in Austria, they were the ones with German parents so they can speak German, so I'd like say random German words and be like does that mean that, and they'd be like yes [laughs] (T2)

Aside from international contacts she had already made prior to the exchange and her host family, Sharn did not meet any other locals during her time in Stuttgart.

6.3.2 Intercultural data

Although Sharn discussed cultural differences in her interviews and in informal conversations with me in Stuttgart, her contributions to the reflective Facebook group were limited to questions about administrative aspects of the exchange and sharing articles or memes. A summary of her comments and posts is found in Table 6.3.

In her interview, she revealed that she regretted not using the Facebook group more given that Facebook is “so prevalent” for students already. Sharn’s familiarity with German culture may have meant that she felt there was little more for her to comment on, a sentiment echoed by two other participants who had already spent time in Germany. Comments from her interview suggest that the exchange had not so much changed her ideas and approach to Germany and Germans but expanded and confirmed them:

<p>| Table 6.3 Summary of Sharn’s posts to Facebook group |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment/post/photo</th>
<th>Text from post</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>‘learning a second language like’ (meme)</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>‘most Germans don’t buy their homes’ (link to)</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sharn: [...] it broadened my way of thinking about German culture, although a lot of the opinions I already had, [...] like especially about [...] middle-aged German people, like how cool they are [laughter] um because a few of my friends growing up had German parents

I: yeah I think I remember you talking in your first interview

Sharn: yeah which is like [...] randomly surrounded by Germans and then every time I’ve worked in hospitality I’ve always met loads of Germans but like I’ve always thought like middle-aged German people are really easy to talk to and get along with and they don’t condescend at all and it’s just really interesting to see their perspective of life um like generational difference, um and also just like experiencing so many new things with a bunch of people you don’t know is really cool (T2)

6.3.3 LAI data

Sharn’s results in the LAI show a similar tendency for her previous views to be confirmed or expanded rather than altered as a result of her experiences in Stuttgart. Table 6.4 summarises Sharn’s performance in the LAI.

In her first interview, Sharn became very nervous when I explained the role-play tasks and complained that “it’s all disappeared from my brain since the exam” (T1). She was unable to complete the tasks and was very uncomfortable in spite of the relaxed manner in which we had conducted the interview prior to these tasks. By the time of her second interview there was a marked difference. Again, she explained that she didn’t like the tasks as they weren’t in a “normal environment”. However, she was able to successfully complete both tasks with far less recourse to English. In addition, she consistently used appropriate address forms in both the informal and formal role plays.

Table 6.4 Summary of Sharn’s LAI results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of turns and use of address pronouns in role plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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There were still many long pauses in her role plays, some of which are attributable to nerves and a dislike of artificial scenarios. Her improved ability to complete the role plays is likely related to extended opportunities for oral practice in class, as well as the time she spent with native speakers on weekends.

Prior to the exchange Sharn showed an incomplete understanding of German address pronouns and expressed uncertainty about several of her beliefs about address terms, which at that stage were based on conjecture:

I would probably say *du* with the classmate even though we’re not acquainted, because it would feel weird to say it to someone who’s like, to be formal to someone who’s the same age as you […] I think it would depend on which friend I’m talking to but like, obviously, like my closest German friends would say *du* to like most people I feel, but I think it, might depend on between people and areas. I would probably say, I would feel weird to say something formal (T1)
She correctly assumed her friends (young, liberal travellers) are more likely to use *du*. Sharn herself showed a strong preference for *du* in both pre- and post-interviews and relied on her “own cultural background” to make her choices prior to the exchange. In spite of her many German contacts, Sharn did not mention asking them for advice about language before the exchange.

By the time of her second interview she had revised her choice about how she would address a fellow student and made a non-L2-like choice of *Sie*. She explained that “[*Sie*] just seems like the safer option, if you don’t know someone’s personality” (T2). Sharn realised that just as she may prefer to use *du* because of her own cultural preferences and personality, others may prefer *Sie*. However, she still overgeneralised the use of *du* in situations 4 and 5 and did not seem to recognise the importance of context: an event taking place in a work environment would generally suggest the use of mutual *Sie*.

Like many other participants who began their study of German the year prior to the exchange, Sharn was familiar with several of the words and phrases from part 1 of the LAI. Her improvement following the exchange was also modest, which is harder to explain given the time she spent with age-peer Germans on the weekends. Unlike many other participants, Sharn made no mention of any explicit correction or discussion about address terms.

Ultimately, Sharn gained a newfound confidence in her ability to communicate in German and an appreciation of the benefits of living somewhere overseas as opposed to travelling. Although her reflections on culture appear to have changed little between the two interviews, the exchange further deepened Sharn’s interest in other cultures and her desire to live overseas. In spite of her higher level of mobility capital and otherwise excellent preparation for the SA program, Sharn’s choice of friends limited any further improvement to her language ability that may have taken place had she spent more time speaking German out of class.

Sharn’s experiences in Stuttgart are to a certain extent the result of the “hand she was dealt” (Klapper & Rees, 2012). Her placement with an absolute beginner student (and her choice of friends) severely limited her opportunity for practice outside the classroom. A similar situation was observed with an American student in Kinginger’s (2008) study, where the lingua franca within the host family changed from L2 French to L1 English upon the arrival of another lower-proficiency student. Klapper & Rees discuss several instances of British students who had recently returned from a year abroad in Germany, where
individual circumstances (for example accommodation or the quality of staff in language courses) played a large role in determining future behaviour during the year abroad (Klapper & Rees, 2012, pp. 344 – 346).

The exchange allowed Sharn to realise a passion for languages and further her interest in the area: in Stuttgart she wrote to me for advice concerning future study in Germany and at the conclusion of this study she had applied for and was about to embark on a semester exchange program in Freiburg, two hours southwest of Stuttgart. For Sharn, participating in the program cemented her intention to realise an ‘ideal L2 self’ and become proficient in German.

6.4 Russell

Russell is an 18-year-old student majoring in Political Science, International Relations and German. Like Sharn, he began his study of German a year prior to his sojourn in Stuttgart and was completing the exchange for credit towards his degree. Having encountered Russell in language classes at UWA (as an observer rather than as his teacher) I found him to be a confident, opinionated and intellectually curious young man with a keen interest in politics and international issues. Russell was heavily involved in student politics at his home campus. In his first interview, he described an ambitious goal he had set for himself upon beginning university study:

Um well it's always been something, I've always wanted to do um and I love languages, I- it's my goal to be trilingual by the time I finish uni. I wanted to mainly do French and German, but I chose German first because I'm a science major and German is a very important language in science (T1)

That being fluent in another language, primarily German, was important to his future plans was a strong motivator for Russell in Stuttgart.

With an Italian family background, Russell had also briefly studied Italian in primary school and claimed that he could understand his Italian grandmother when she spoke Italian to him although he could only answer in English. Russell’s only international experience prior to the exchange was a school trip to Malaysia where he was disappointed by his and his classmates’ attitude to speaking the local language:

And, we, everyone spoke English, which I, I dunno I found it kind of rude that we didn't even try to learn their language, but we just expected them to speak English. It didn't sit well with me (T1)

It may have been as a result of this trip that Russell began to doubt representations of other cultures presented in the media, describing it as “a real eye-opener for stereotypes” (T1).
Particularly in Western Australia, Australian tourists have a notoriously bad reputation for their behaviour on the Indonesian island of Bali which is often spruiked in popular media (e.g. Dennis, 2014). Russell was surprised when local Malaysians showed a keen interest in talking to and getting to know the Australian tourists. His experiences clashed with his understanding that people in Asia “hate Westerners” because of the bad behaviour of so many tourists.

Russell’s other link to Germany came in the form of German-speaking friends who live in Perth. He was able to utilise his friends as cultural and linguistic guides, drawing on their advice when he completed the LAI. In terms of what he hoped to gain from the exchange, Russell spoke about improved speaking proficiency and a better understanding of culture, including being more culturally aware “of just how different European and German, particularly German culture is from Australian culture” (T1). Narratives of personal development (e.g. maturity, independence, becoming more outgoing) were absent from Russell’s pre-departure interview, unlike the interviews of many other participants. Instead, Russell’s goals related more to becoming a “global citizen”: foreign language proficiency, cultural and global awareness.

6.4.1 Experience in Stuttgart

In Stuttgart Russell’s efforts in the classroom were commendable. Russell was placed in the A2.2 level class alongside several students who had been learning German for several years longer than himself. He appeared to enjoy the challenge and was a lively, actively engaged class member on the days I observed his class. Russell praised his teacher’s teaching style and attributed much of his progress in both speaking and listening to the fact that the first hour of their lessons each day was dedicated to speaking practice. His participation in “Cross Cultural Communications” appears to have furthered his interest in cultural issues and fostered his growing ability to make sense of cultural differences.

Russell lived with a large family with three adult children as well as three other boarders who were unrelated to the Winter University program. Russell claimed to get along very well with his family and enjoyed trying to “Denglish” (slang for a mix of German and English) his way through complicated discussions with his host mother. Despite their good relationship, Russell spent the majority of his time with his classmates, something he came to regret by the end of the exchange. Like Sharn’s friends from the Stuttgart program, several of his friends had only begun their study of German in Stuttgart, meaning that the majority of their conversations took place in English or “Denglish”. When asked how he
spent his time in Stuttgart, he described various outings around the city with his exchange friends. Other contacts Russell made throughout the exchange were limited to people he met on one-off occasions: in nightclubs or while travelling as well as friends of his host family on the rare Sundays he spent at home. Mostly, Russell’s weekends were spent in the company of classmates and speaking English: he participated in all of the excursions offered as part of the program and also spent a long weekend in Berlin with fellow students. Russell did, however, make a conscious effort to speak German in public – both with friends when Germans happened to be walking by and in shops and restaurants.

6.4.2 Intercultural data

Russell was one of the main contributors to the Facebook group; in fact he was the only participant who made more posts and comments than I. Table 6.5 shows a summary of his reflective comments and posts (Russell also made a significant number of social and information sharing posts to the group). His interest in observing and discussing cultural differences began before the exchange as he asked questions of his fellow students (e.g. he posed the question of how to address host family members to the Facebook group), native-speaker friends, teachers and others. He was often able to use his friends’ and teachers’ comments to make sense of differences he encountered. Although Russell was adept at asking questions and observing differences, many of his observations remained at a shallow level. As seen in the table, he rarely compared differences to his home culture or offered a reason for the cultural difference he observed. In many instances, he was very accepting of cultural differences and showed a genuine interest in how things are different; however, in other instances he was unable to shed the Australian viewpoint and view them through an ethnorelative lens:

Not seeing plain packaging for cigarettes is very different (although the advertisements do say that it can kill you). Positive cigarette advertising, however, is completely alien to me - In Australia you would never see ads that actually promote cigarettes. I think this might have to do with the smoking culture in Germany. Here, so many people smoke and they smoke everywhere. Whether it be while walking, at the train station, outside shopping centres, even in bars and clubs. It's probably so ingrained in people here that they just don't think about the consequences. (Facebook comment)

Russell displayed many of the attitudes required for appropriate intercultural communication (e.g. curiosity and discovery), but in some instances he was unable to back them up with the deep cultural knowledge required to make sense of cultural issues. For example, his shocked response to the smoking culture in Germany may have been more neutral or accepting with a better understanding of modern German history and the
influence this history has had on the value of personal responsibility prevalent in many aspects of German society (Nees, 2011). However, his inability to pause, step back and consider reasons for this difference between Australia and Germany blocked any further reflection from taking place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.5 Summary of Russell’s reflective posts to Facebook group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of contribution</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
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<td>Comment</td>
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<td>Post</td>
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<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Russell's curiosity about culture extended to an interest in different varieties of language, which became apparent both times he completed the LAI. A summary of his LAI results is presented in Table 6.6 below. What becomes obvious when examining Russell's role plays is his pre-occupation with formulating things exactly, leading to several very long pauses over the course of the two role plays prior to the exchange. By the time of his second interview he had relaxed considerably, something which I could already observe when we were sat together on a train during the last week of the exchange. We spoke with his friend Amelia almost solely in German for approximately half an hour. Although both Russell and Amelia often needed to clarify words or phrases, we were able to continue the conversation in German over a period which I am doubtful would have been possible at the beginning of the exchange (Field notes, 16/2/16). The benefits of informal conversations with his host mother and teacher became apparent. In addition, he was able to employ address forms consistently and accurately, whereas in the first role plays he exclusively used du in the formal role play and Sie in the informal role play.

Russell’s awareness of the address form system appears to have been relatively well-developed prior to the exchange (aside from an overgeneralisation of the use of du to extend to work situations), perhaps as a result of frequent questioning of his native-speaker friends. In questioning his friends and adopting their recommendations, Russell displays personal agency, as he intentionally chooses to alter his patterns of communication (Covert, 2014). Covert (2011, 2014) argues that exercising personal agency is crucial to the development of IC. Here, and in several other narratives from participants, agency appears to be important to language learning.

Throughout the exchange, he benefited from observing Germans using and advising him about address forms. Russell mentioned several occasions in his second interview where he was socialised into more appropriate language use, for example observing
students using *du* with each other in the *Mensa*, his host mother advising him that *Sie* is more appropriate for anything work-related, as well as several instances where his teacher asked the class to address her with *Sie* and each other with *du*. His concern for choosing the correct address form persisted after the exchange when he emailed me to ask for advice on how to address a mature-aged student (a woman in her 40s). The exchange appears to have solidified Russell’s understanding around some of the complexities of the address system, as well as confirmed the importance of making pragmatically appropriate choices regarding address forms.

Russell also acquired some knowledge about some of the colloquial words used in this study, even if the gains were somewhat modest. For example, in discussing *das Abi*, which he was able to correctly translate in the post-interview, he noted that he had only heard his host family using *Abitur* and exercised his right to choose certain variations of language over another:

**Table 6.6 Summary of Russell’s LAI results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of turns and use of address pronouns in role plays</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td>avoidance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-informal</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-informal</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-formal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-formal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of errors in role plays</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Grammaratical</em></td>
<td><em>Short</em></td>
<td><em>Long</em></td>
<td><em>Code-switching</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-informal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-informal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-formal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-formal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice of address pronouns in part 3 of LAI</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation 1: student peer</td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 2: babysitting mother</td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 3: babysitting child</td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 4: older woman bakery</td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 5: younger woman bakery</td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 6: party peer</td>
<td><em>Du</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>Sie</em></td>
<td><em>du</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I: anyway Abi, would you say it in German as opposed to Abitur?

Russell: um I've, personally no, because I've never heard anyone say it, like when my host family were talking about Abitur they'd just say Abitur, Abitur, never anything other than that (T2)

He also expanded his understanding of the one word he was familiar with prior to the exchange – Klamotten - and added that he understood that it was more commonly used in southern Germany than northern Germany. Unlike some of the other participants in the study who had less of a capacity to carry a conversation in German, Russell's pragmatic competence appears to have benefitted from his growing ability both to understand conversations happening around him, and a willingness to discuss these terms with his host family and others.

Russell had limited previous travel experience and had only studied German for one year prior to the program - his exchange may be considered very successful. After the Stuttgart program, Russell changed from a Science degree to an Arts degree in order to be able to pursue his international interests more fully. Again exercising agency (cf. Covert, 2014), he tried to find opportunities to speak German in Perth, by seeking out German exchange students and attending a language exchange meeting I had arranged for returned Australian exchange students. Russell mentioned that he intends to move to Germany once he has completed his studies and remains highly motivated to continue his German studies in Perth.

For Russell, the ability to consistently understand what was being said around him (compared, for example, to the other case studies presented thus far in this chapter) had a positive effect on his understanding of language as well as his own ability to express himself. It may have also encouraged him to pursue discussions about culture in the target language where weaker students may have been too unsure to do so. It fostered a better understanding with his host family (as shown by the “six-hour conversation” he had with his
host brother the night before he left Stuttgart) and a deeper engagement with his language classes. However, his case does illustrate that higher language proficiency and even the right attitudes of curiosity and openness do not necessarily confer IC in relation to issues such as smoking that are especially grating to one’s own cultural predispositions.

6.5 Sean

Sean is a 20-year-old student from Adelaide majoring in civil and structural engineering and completed the exchange for credit towards his degree. He struck me as an outgoing, friendly, if somewhat vague and disorganised young man. Compared to many of the other participants, Sean had a much longer history of engagement with German. He had begun learning German in year 8 at high school, initially because he was required to take a language. In the last two years of high school he described “knuckling down” and starting to take things a little more seriously as a result of a 6-week high-school exchange to Germany. He referred to this exchange as his main motivation for continuing to learn the language. At university, Sean had only taken one semester of German and he was concerned that his German would be “pretty rusty” for the exchange. Aside from learning German, Sean also learnt Japanese at primary school but “didn’t pick anything up”.

Sean had travelled with his family on several holidays to Europe and the US, where they visited various family friends. His exposure to international friends throughout his childhood appears to have influenced Sean’s interest in global affairs as well as his international group of friends in Adelaide. The Stuttgart exchange, however, represented Sean’s first independent international travel experience. His aims for the exchange mostly revolved around language, especially speaking proficiency:

Umm better language skills, like being able to speak to people better umm probably trying to make some connections over there as well, so I’ll find out more about like how hard it is working in Germany (T1)

Instead of being placed with a host family, Sean stayed with the elderly parents of his family friends who did not speak any English. He was concerned about being able to understand them but viewed their lack of English skills as a potential benefit for his own language development. Sean was very confident in his ability to cope with the exchange given that he had visited the area previously and had reasonably well-developed language skills. He expected the exchange to cement his hopes of finding a job in Germany after completing his degree. For someone with a long history of engagement with the German language and culture, Sean’s images of Germany as reported in the first interview were
surprisingly limited to “rainy and some snow”, and he described the German people as “very serious” but also “pretty much the same as Australian people”. It is likely that his friendships with people from different countries influenced his outlook that those from other cultures are similar.

6.5.1 Experience in Stuttgart

In Stuttgart Sean was placed in the highest level German class (B1/B2). This class was extremely mixed both in terms of the proficiency level of the students as well as the manner in which they had studied German previously. Some students had learnt German exclusively in a formal classroom setting, whereas others had only learnt by living in Germany or speaking it at home with family. On the days I observed his class, Sean appeared to find the material very challenging. Although he had few problems understanding his teacher, he did seem to struggle with some of the grammar-related material. Several of the more capable students often worked with Sean to help him. He seemed to take his language classes very seriously – I saw him on several occasions working on grammar exercises rather than listening to the teacher in his afternoon German literature class (Field notes, 1/2/16). Sean took to the challenges of semi-independent travel well and quickly befriended a group of students (mostly from the lower level classes) with whom he spent much of his time in the evenings and on weekends.

Although his hosts lived a fair distance from the centre of Stuttgart, Sean described the experience of staying with them as “worthwhile” and “very German”. He only spoke German with them and described their relationship as one of the main factors in the improvements to his speaking ability. However, as they lived quite far from the centre of Stuttgart, Sean often remained in Stuttgart with classmates in the evenings and on weekends. Like many of the other participants, Sean was content with his relationship with his host parents, but disappointed that he did not meet any other younger Germans. Sean felt that there were two reasons for this, the first being “surrounded by Aussies” and having an established friendship group. Secondly, he blamed his speaking ability:

**Sean:** yup, and I still think I need, I still think I mean I could yeah make German friends but I think my language skills need to be a bit better before it can be a fluent conversation, because it's a bit more stop-start sort of you know, it's not exactly fluent it's just sort of quite basic, basic questions, basic answers, nothing really complex […] so I think it needs to be a bit better before I can actually integrate
Curiously, few other students viewed their own language abilities as the reason for their lack of friendships with locals, which may have been related to the fact that Sean had higher expectations of his own language ability than other participants.

Sean was also one of the only participants who deeply engaged with the idea of integration into German society, with many other participants noting that they did not feel integrated into Stuttgart as a whole but rather into the 'host family community' or 'exchange community'. It appears that Sean’s plans to migrate to Germany after his degree influenced his reflection on the idea of integration. He brought up several instances when he was unquestioningly accepted, for example in shops or asking other tourists to take his picture, where his Australian friends (one of whom had a Pakistani background, the other Chinese) would be treated with suspicion:

[…] I know some of the um, some of the Chinese girls and the um one of my mates from Pakistan, they didn’t feel particularly […] accepted into the German sort of, like culture because like obviously in Germany 90% of the population’s white and then maybe 2%’s Asian and 1% Arab so, they felt that they got like a lot of stigma and so they felt that Sydney was more […] multicultural um they felt more [in] place in Sydney than they did in sort of the German environment. Which, it sort of proved it, I was with my Pakistani mate and he would go up to the- he was automatically assumed to be a […] refugee, so he would come up to some people, so like every time I went up to someone and asked them to, like take a photo, like it wasn’t a problem […], I didn’t have any trouble but when he tried to do it, they would like- I would say the majority of people would just continue walking and ignore him… (T2)

Although several other students participating in the program could be described as culturally and linguistically diverse, no other students commented on this phenomenon, whether as part of the research project or in general. Sean’s musings on the topic were likely related to his plans to move to Germany permanently, and the potential consequences of situations such as the one described in the previous excerpt.

6.5.2 Intercultural data

Although the photos Sean supplied for the photo elicitation project did not go deeper than an appreciation of different architectural styles and differences in the weather (see Table 6.7), several of his narratives in the interview revealed a deeper appreciation of cultural differences, apparently prompted by his reflection on the decision of whether to stay in Europe after the completion of a semester exchange in Prague which began directly after the Stuttgart program.

His musings paint a different picture to his first interview during which Sean claimed that Germans are “pretty much the same as Australians” (T1). Sean reflected on several
aspects of German society which he finds preferable to Australia (e.g. an interest in global affairs, excellent education system, value of personal responsibility) as well as those he finds less desirable (e.g. the treatment of his culturally and linguistically diverse friends). As described in section 5.3.1, like several of his peers, Sean also commented on smoking practices in Germany. Unlike some of the other students, however, he was able to relate this behaviour to the broader value of personal responsibility in an ethnorelative manner. His ability to relate smaller behavioural patterns such as smoking to broader values, as well as the deep cultural knowledge Sean displays point towards a higher level of IC according to Deardorff’s model.

Table 6.7 Summary of Sean’s photo project photos

| Subject of picture          | Codes               | Subjective/objective culture | Observe/perso
|                           |                      | nally experience/exp  |
|                           |                      | perience and discuss          | Acceptance of cultural differenc |
|                           |                      |                              | Comp are to own culture ? |
|                           |                      |                              | Reason given for differen |
| Host family’s house       | Architectural style | Objective                     | Observe | Yes | Yes | No |
| Weather                   | Differenc            | Objective                     | Observe | Yes | No | No |
| Stadtsbibliothek (Stuttgart city library) | Architectural style | Objective                     | Observe | Yes | No | No |

Sean’s interview data revealed what his photo elicitation project failed to: evidence of higher level reflection and engagement with cultural differences. This provides support for the use of different methods of data collection such as photo elicitation in combination with individual interviews, particularly when related to the sensitive subject matter of IC.

6.5.3 LAI data

Sean’s efforts in his language class and sustained engagement with his German-speaking hosts resulted in visible improvements to his speaking ability by the time of his second interview (see Table 6.8 for a summary of his results). In his first interview Sean already displayed an understanding of language as a way of communicating rather than just a subject to be studied thanks to his experiences in Germany in high school. He described several instances where he used German outside of a classroom context, for example in a German deli in his home city. However, like many other participants he appeared frustrated by his limited knowledge
of colloquial language, and his role plays were punctuated by long pauses where he searched for words and code-switched to English.

By the time of his second interview, Sean was obviously more comfortable speaking in German and was able to speak at greater length in both of his role plays. Although the number of grammatical errors in his second role play was actually higher, this is likely because of the increased number of turns as well as the speed at which the conversation was conducted. There were far fewer pauses, less recourse to English and a more appropriate use of vocabulary. Sean was also able to use address forms appropriately and consistently, whereas he used du in his formal role play in the first interview. There were also several changes to Sean’s choice of address forms in part 3 of the LAI. By the time of his second interview he chose du in Situation 1, citing the fact that they are a “classmate”; however, he also changed his choice and inappropriately addressed the young boy in situation 3 with Sie, stating that it is “work-related”. This judgement did not carry over to his appraisal of Situations 4 and 5, where he chose du in both pre- and post-interviews. Unlike many other participants, Sean did not seem to appreciate the social message that can be conveyed with an appropriate or inappropriate choice of address form. He also did not mention any instance where he discussed address forms with others, likely because he did not realise the seriousness of his choice. His general preference for du (“it’s a bit weird to call someone Sie”, T2) may relate to his identity as a progressive, anti-establishment student; however, it is difficult to be conclusive given the limited space he gave this part of the LAI in each of his interviews.

Table 6.8 Summary of Sean’s LAI results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of turns and use of address pronouns in role plays</th>
<th>Turns</th>
<th>du</th>
<th>Sie</th>
<th>avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-informal</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-formal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-formal</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of errors in role plays</th>
<th>Grammatical</th>
<th>Short pause</th>
<th>Long pause</th>
<th>Code-switching</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-informal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-informal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sean’s appraisal of his own German skills summarises the changes he experienced well:

[...] I think that's pretty crazy though to notice the difference, like, maybe not the first [part of the LAI], I still had no idea what those words are but the difference between when I first did it and [...] I seriously struggled [...] with saying anything at all, and then [...] I actually managed to have like reasonably, not fluent but like a free-flowing conversation, without having to stop and think about it, it was just a bit more, that's pretty crazy to think that difference happened in 6 weeks (T2)

In general, the exchange appears to have had a profound impact on Sean, in terms of his appraisal of other cultures, his ability to hold a conversation in German and his ideas about his own future. Throughout his second interview he expressed an interest in moving to Germany to complete his studies there. The exchange was able to convey to Sean the importance of foreign language competence for communication and global cooperation, as well as the benefits it may hold for his career:

I just feel like it's a more interesting place to be than Australia, because Australia’s so- it’s so like conservative [...] and also for your career as well, I think doing this in the early stages of my life, [...] I think it will pay off, because I mean how many people do it, and also [...] if you become fluent in German, then [...] it opens up two worlds basically, one in Europe and one in Australia, [...] especially for engineering, there's so many German companies operating in Australia, so it like opens up a whole set of career opportunities within both Australia and Germany.
and like, like that makes you so much more employable rather than just [having] an engineering degree will make you employable but I think add a language to it, this is definitely what I’ve found out in Germany, uh having a language will make you even more employable because there’s a lot of companies that operate between the two and obviously if you can speak German, like it’s a benefit (T2)

In terms of his mobility capital, Sean was better equipped than many of the other participants to make the most of his exchange. His German was significantly more advanced, meaning that, like Russell, he could communicate with his host parents exclusively in German. It also allowed him to participate in many discussions on diverse topics in his language class, some of which did focus on intercultural differences rather than grammar, as was often the case in the lower level classes (Field notes, 3/2/16). His class spoke about issues such as differences in the importance of education between Australia and Germany and the way Germans and Australians approach friendship. Such topics often resulted in heated discussion which was not possible in classes below the A2.2 level.

Having been to Germany before, Sean was also prepared in that he had already needed to adapt to a host family on his previous exchange and had likely acquired some of the deeper cultural knowledge necessary for effective intercultural communication. This was evident in his response to the smoking culture in Germany: he was able to relate this to broader values of personal responsibility where other students were not. Sean’s inability to acknowledge the importance of considering address pronouns is, however, one aspect of his IC that requires development. His language and travel experience combined with his interest in global issues and multicultural friendship group in Adelaide made him well-placed to benefit greatly from the exchange, which shows in both his LAI results as well as his qualitative data.

6.6 Conclusion

Upon reviewing the four cases presented in this chapter, it becomes apparent how different factors influence the learning trajectory of each individual student. The differing motivations and goals, varying levels of language proficiency and international experience students bring with them on exchange can have a profound effect on their time overseas. The exchange coordinator summed up her impressions of how the students changed over the course of the program:

I: Do you tend to notice a change in the students after 6 weeks, whether that be a personal thing, with their German, with how they get along with other cultures?
B: yeah they open up, at the beginning quite a few of them, they've never been outside Australia, talking about the Australians only and um, yeah they really open up to other cultures [...] and um most of them want to come back, and as Germany was their first station here in Europe they often want to come back for SA for a whole semester, if they do it, I dunno but quite a few tell me [...] sometimes I get emails and then most families tell me that um their guest from two years ago, they were back in Germany, they visited them and so on [...] so it definitely makes a change (Barbara, Interview)

As examples from many of the participants in this study have shown, SA can alert students to the real-life applications of a second language and the benefits of being able to function in that language, as well as providing many students with a much-needed boost to their confidence in using the L2. Many of the participants in this study (for example Russell and Sean) came to realise that they were able to use German not just as language students, but as peripheral participants in Stuttgart – as indicated by some participants' realisation of the strong social message conveyed by a choice of address form. The impact of language socialisation by their teachers, host families, friends and strangers is seen in many of the students' interview transcripts. For language students in Australia, such socialisation is hard to come by, where correction in the language classroom is often viewed as a matter of little consequence, simply as something one should improve in order to attain better marks.

The need to communicate in the L2 also alerted some participants to the importance of language proficiency for intercultural communication. For the more proficient students in this study like Russell, the ability to converse in German with host parents and teachers enabled many interesting discussions that likely altered the attitudes, knowledge and skills of these students and improved their ability to reflect on and deal with cultural differences, and consequently their ability to effectively communicate in intercultural situations.

The use of different data collection methods in this study was crucial in revealing that not all students react in the same way to the same intervention, and that one method may reveal changes for one student but not for another. Without access to Sean’s interview transcript it would have been easy to conclude that he did not experience any progress in his IC. The cross-cultural communications teacher Vanessa discussed different assessment methods she had used in her course over the years and confirmed the importance of providing students with different personality types varying opportunities for assessment:

Einmal habe ich einen Text gegeben zum Lesen und einmal sollten [die Studierenden] einfach ein Foto machen von was, oder jetzt diese Photopräsentation, also es ist auch für die Menschen, die kreativ sind, die können irgendwie was Kreatives machen, die, die das nicht so mögen, können lieber schreiben, also das hat mir ganz gut gefallen, weil beim Präsentieren prüft man eben auch nur ein... eine Art also äh, oder ein bestimmter Persönlichkeitstyp schneidet besser ab
Once I’ve given a text to read and another time I asked the students to take a photo, or now this photo presentation – this is for the people who are creative, who can do something creative, those that don’t like that kind of thing can instead write something, and I liked that because with the presentations you’re really only assessing… one type or a certain type of personality performs better (Vanessa, Interview)

Using multiple methods of data collection related to the students’ IC has revealed changes that have occurred in students with different preferences.

Several trends emerge from the four case studies in terms of factors that can hinder learning on exchange and factors that can facilitate it. The ability to participate in conversations in the L2 outside the classroom constitutes a major advantage. If students are limited to using the L2 in the classroom, this severely restricts any advantage the SA context may offer students for their language development (cf. DeKeyser, 2007; 2010). Additionally, if students first need to learn grammar, there is both less opportunity for speaking practice and it is less likely that discussions on complex, intercultural themes will be able to take place in the classroom. My own observations, coupled with narratives from student interviews and comments from the exchange coordinator suggest that students at A2.2 level and above are best placed to profit from a short-term program, such as the Stuttgart program. Students at this level were able to participate in informal conversations (for example the conversation between Russell and his friend Amelia, also at the A2.2 level) and converse with their host families in German. For students below this level, the default language remained English:

1) Right yeah and even you know, the A, A1.2 or A2.1 even those they prefer if you speak English (Barbara, Exchange Coordinator)

2) Because I was a beginner I didn’t know like much at all um and so I did like, ok sit together and it would just go over my head and then they’d end up just speaking English to me (Jane, Beginner learner, T2)

3) My host mother spoke fluent English, she tried to speak German a couple of times but she spoke quite quickly and I just never really picked up on it so we couldn’t really have a meaningful conversation, so she sort of remained [in] English for the most part of the trip um and you know […] after class all I did was speak English so um my German hasn't got as good as I thought it would (Liam, Beginner learner, T2)

L2 proficiency level also played a role in determining how motivated students were to succeed. There was a marked difference between how prepared students came to class, how attentive they were to the teacher and generally how much interest they showed in language classes as well as opportunities for informal language learning outside the classroom. This became most apparent in the absolute beginner classes, where students
would regularly speak amongst themselves while the teacher was talking, disappear to the bathroom during lessons and come late to class (Field notes, 12/2). On the other hand, students who had already invested time in learning the language were more determined to succeed, resulting in a very different atmosphere in the higher-level classes:

_Yep_ that’s a big difference, because the beginners, they, they don’t put as much effort in to the class I would say, whereas when they’re advanced, they really wanna get to the next level […] look at the beginners classes, I mean you sat in all classes, you can tell the difference better than I but I talk to the teachers and the, the ones in the advanced classes are a lot happier with their students (Barbara, exchange coordinator, Interview)

The amount of effort students put into their classes and finding opportunities to use the L2 outside the classroom was also linked to their plans for learning German in the future. Unsurprisingly, students who had no intention of continuing their study of the language after the exchange were less motivated than those who hoped to return to Germany or complete a major in German. This echoes the case study of Deirdre (Kinginger, 2008) who had decided to abandon her study of French after her semester abroad and thus withdrew from any opportunity to use the language while in France.

For the students in this study, previous knowledge of German also aided their ability to make sense of cultural differences. Given many language courses now include outcomes related to culture and society, students have the opportunity to gain cultural knowledge before they go abroad. For instance, at UWA this is explicitly stated as an outcome in all beginner and intermediate language units (UWA, 2016). In a second-year unit for example, students are required to interview a native speaker of German about cultural differences, while other units focus on film as a vehicle for learning about German culture and society. Exposure to alternative discourse about Germany provides students with other viewpoints to stereotypes commonly presented in mainstream media about Germany (Ludewig et al., 2015). This involvement with cultural knowledge puts students at an advantage when trying to make sense of cultural issues. For beginners, the situation could be rectified by making texts or other resources pertaining to German culture and society available to students before the sojourn, or pairing students with buddies who have spent longer learning German.

Several factors were seen to hamper opportunities for language and intercultural learning throughout the exchange. Firstly, the presence of co-nationals with limited language skills curtailed opportunities for students to use the L2 outside the classroom, as was the case for Sharn in her host family. This is difficult to avoid in a program which caters to
students “with little or no exposure to German” as well as those who have already reached higher levels of proficiency (‘Module 1/ Winter University’, 2016). However, with careful planning the impact could belessened. For instance, placing students in host families with students who are at a similar level could help to shift the default language within the host family to the L2. In the Stuttgart program it was not possible to house students separately, in light of this restriction placing students at a similar level would be most likely to encourage students to persevere in speaking the L2. Making students aware of the fact that it is very easy to spend a lot of time speaking English by sharing stories from past participants may also increase students’ resolve not to make the same mistakes.

Secondly, as noted in several of the case studies in this chapter, many students tend to spend most (if not every) weekend travelling away from Stuttgart:

I: yeah, and I’ve noticed a lot of students will spend every weekend travelling anyway and then hardly any time with the host family

Barbara: yup, I’d say that’s 50% at least, mmm yeah (laughs), which is a pity, but that’s how it is

This significantly reduces opportunities for socialising with host families and getting to know the city and its inhabitants. Many students related memorable instances when they had decided not to attend an excursion or go away for the weekend and instead spent time with their host families:

Then there was some I think uh the [host father’s] mother, he suggested us going to a Besenwirtschaft [specific to southern Germany; a tavern selling homegrown wine] so over there we were going to a Besenwirtschaft […] which was really packed with people because it was a Friday evening and then we had to sit on a table with 10 other people so it was only obvious that we had to start talking and then I talked lots with them, there was um mostly old people over there and that spent their weekends and they’re just drinking wine and having some local food. (Raj, Post-beginner learner, T2)

Several students expressed regret at not spending more time with their host families, often realising in the last few days of the program how much they could have benefitted from more time with their hosts. Again, students could be made aware of this by having previous participants attend pre-departure workshops to talk about their experiences staying with a host family. For many of the factors which can hinder language and intercultural learning, much could be remedied by alerting students to these factors and setting goals relating to language use or spending time with hosts.

In this chapter I explored the experiences of four individuals to determine the impact of factors such as proficiency level and international experience on the learning
trajectory of students. Considering all the data from the beginner learners who participated in this study leads one to the conclusion that short-term language programs are less suitable for these students unless they possess certain pre-requisites, such as an intention to continue language study at the end of the program (Huebner, 1995). Given the often random conditions surrounding SA, students would in all cases benefit from more extensive preparation about the realities of exchange and help setting realistic goals for the program.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

My study responded to the need for further research on short-term SA programs in the Australian context. In particular, I aimed to explore the development of intercultural and pragmatic competence, two skills which have proven difficult to acquire in the traditional classroom setting. Additionally, given the extensive financial costs and geographical distances covered by Australian students when they SA, I sought to explore when (i.e. at what stage in their language studies) a student is best placed to participate in SA. To this end my research questions were:

1. How does short-term SA affect the pragmatic and intercultural competence development of Australian learners of German?
2. What role does initial L2 proficiency play in the developmental trajectories of these students?

In this final chapter, I summarise the findings presented in Chapters 4-6 and discuss the significance of these results in the context of existing empirical research and theory. In addition, the limitations of this study are discussed along with potential avenues for future research.

7.1 Summary of findings

Using a mixed-methods, predominantly qualitative approach, this study examined the development of intercultural and pragmatic competence in a group of 28 Australian university students. These students, all studying at different universities in Australia and with differing initial levels of L2 proficiency, participated in a 6-week exchange program in Stuttgart. Students stayed with host families and the program maintained a strong focus on language and culture. Given SA represents, for many students, the first opportunity to participate in everyday activities with expert L2 speakers and the associated opportunities for explicit and implicit socialisation to occur, the study engaged a language socialisation framework. In contrast to cognitive based theories of second-language acquisition, language socialisation views language acquisition as a socially mediated process, rather than something that occurs in the individual mind of the learner (Duff, 2007, Wang, 2010). The explicit and implicit socialisation practices observed in the narratives of the students suggests that the
study of pragmatic competence, comprised of knowledge of linguistic forms as well as the ability to use these forms in an appropriate manner in different sociocultural situations, lends itself well to a language socialisation approach.

I qualitatively examined the development of metapragmatic awareness of three different language features: address terms, leave-taking phrases and colloquial words/phrases. The decision to study awareness was borne of findings from previous research suggesting that it is impossible to tell if a student's use of a particular linguistic feature was due to a lack of pragmatic competence or if the usage was by choice, in order to express an aspect of the speaker's identity (Henery, 2015; Kinginger, 2008; Kinginger & Blattner, 2008). In order to explore the relationship between participants' metapragmatic knowledge and use of address terms, I also examined participants' use of German address terms in role plays with a quantitative approach.

To examine the second part of my first research question, I used two techniques to explore and support the development of IC in my participants. The first was a Facebook group designed to promote group discussion of cultural differences experienced by participants whilst in Stuttgart, and the second was a photo elicitation exercise where participants explored cultural differences first alone by collecting photos and then in interviews where they discussed their photo projects with the researcher. To answer my second research question, I examined in detail the data for four case studies of the intercultural and language learning of four participants, taking their prior international experience and L2 proficiency as additional reference points.

Many of the participants in this study showed a clear development of metapragmatic awareness from before to after the exchange. In particular, students displayed a greater level of convergence in both their choices and explanations of the German address term system, as well as more control over this knowledge as exhibited by their ability to use these forms appropriately and consistently in their role plays. Students also showed a growing ability to relate their beliefs about the address term system to real-life situations they had observed in Stuttgart, or to explicit feedback given to them by members of the L2 community. Thus, the Stuttgart program significantly influenced the development of pragmatic competence in these participants.

Much of the students’ development in this area was related to the explicit correction they received from L2 speakers, as well as being implicitly socialised into more appropriate usage by observing how others around them addressed each other. Students also gained a
greater understanding of some of the leave-taking terms discussed in this study. In addition, they developed awareness of the situations in which it would be appropriate to use some of these terms. Areas of the most striking progress correlated directly to settings which they had ample opportunity to observe whilst in Stuttgart, again highlighting the importance of socialisation processes to their development in this area. The third linguistic feature examined in this study, colloquial words and phrases, was the area in which participants showed the least progress. In their interviews, several students theorised that this was most likely due to their lack of German-speaking age-peer contacts in Stuttgart, given that it is younger people with whom the use of the colloquial words and phrases in this study is most commonly associated.

With regard to the development of IC, the majority of participants showed clear instances where they were able to exhibit ‘effective and appropriate behaviour in intercultural situations’, but also many where they did not (Deardorff, 2006a). In the photo elicitation data especially, students showed the ability to transform objective cultural issues, such as differences in public transport systems, into the subjective issue of the need for people to be able to communicate across geographical borders. Although students were more likely to be accepting than not of cultural differences, there were some issues which they responded to with an ethnocentric stance, for example the prevalence of smoking in Germany. This variation in responses to different cultural issues reinforces the central idea of Deardorff’s model – that acquiring IC is a constant process.

This study suggests that Facebook, in the format utilised here, is not particularly useful for encouraging the development of IC during SA. The majority of participants were reluctant to use this format to express their thoughts in part because of the semi-public nature of the forum. In contrast, the photo elicitation narratives provided more instances of reflection on subjective culture as well as more extensive reflection on the reasons for cultural differences. When given the opportunity to discuss their photos in interviews, students were often able to reach a deeper level of reflection. This was also the case for students discussing Facebook posts in the re-entry workshop and in interviews. The ability to reflect on cultural issues alone, followed by some kind of discussion, whether in interviews or workshops, emerged as the most effective way of encouraging students to engage with intercultural material. It must also be noted here, that participants who used the Facebook group received limited instruction from an expert facilitator while they were abroad (cf. Jackson, 2005, 2008, 2013). Whether further instruction, guidance and
prompting from an intercultural expert could deepen the level of reflection brought about by Facebook group discussion could be explored in future research.

In both the language and intercultural data there was a large amount of individual variation, which appears to have been mediated by several factors, the most prominent being students’ prior engagement with the German language. Previous study of German had two major implications for students participating in this program. First, if students did not have the language skills to participate in informal conversation in the L2 outside the language classroom, they missed out on important opportunities for practice offered by the SA context (cf. DeKeyser, 2007; 2010). This also meant that their language classes focused more on teaching students the basic concepts of grammar, unlike students in the higher-level classes, who often had the opportunity to discuss cultural issues as well. Secondly, beginner students often lacked cultural knowledge about Germany which enabled participation in discussions of cultural issues (Czerwionka et al., 2015). Students who had studied German prior to the exchange were often exposed to more cultural content through their language courses, which gave them more resources to engage in reflection on cultural issues.

These findings reinforce the conclusions of other studies claiming the value of short-term SA, especially for the development of skills that are difficult to foster in the language classroom (Czerwionka et al., 2015; Hassall, 2013; Jackson, 2009; Penington & Wildermuth, 2009). The majority of participants came to realise the importance of their language choices in a way that is seldom achieved through classroom instruction. Their real-life experiences in Stuttgart – being criticised for inappropriately using Sie, experiencing the enthusiasm towards environmentalism through rubbish separation and the Pfand system – led to the beginning of a fascination with German and German culture, which motivated some students to continue to integrate German studies into their university degrees, for instance by taking on a German major, or participating in longer exchanges. To my knowledge at least four participants have returned to German-speaking countries for semester-long exchange programs since their participation in the Stuttgart program.

7.2 Significance

Like other studies investigating the development of oral proficiency during short-term SA, this study suggests that changes to participants’ oral skills occurred as a result of participating in the program (Martinsen, 2008). This counters claims that short-term SA is
insufficient for changes to students’ language skills to occur (Brecht et al., 1993; Dwyer, 2004; Penington & Wildermuth, 2009). This study also contributes to literature on the development of pragmatic competence in the SA context. In particular, it confirms and extends the results of prior studies that examine the development of pragmatic competence in short-term SA (Barron, 2006; Hassall, 2006; 2013; Kinginger, 2008), by showing that students can indeed acquire metapragmatic knowledge about address forms and leave-taking terms even in the short-term context, as well as improved control over their ability to use address terms to create a communicative act. Unlike the students in studies conducted by Kinginger (2008) and Dewaele & Regan (2001), participants in this study did not develop increased awareness of or more frequent use of colloquial language, the principle reason being that the students in this program had less access to age-peer locals than participants in the previous studies.

The importance of explicit correction of language use to my participants’ development of pragmatic competence contrasts strongly with the lack of correction received by Hassall’s (2013) Australian participants studying in Indonesia. His participants were rarely corrected for using inappropriate terms of address, which likely hindered their appreciation for the significance of choosing appropriate address terms. The strong inclination to critique and correct appears to be culture-specific: the participants in Belz & Kinginger’s study (2003), for example, received strong advice on using address terms from their German email partners. Instances of correction are scant in the data in the French context presented by Kinginger (2008). This conveys a definite advantage for language students spending time abroad in countries where direct and frank criticism and feedback is the norm even among strangers. Seeing the way locals reacted to their language use was crucial to students’ realisation that pragmatic errors are serious. Schauer (2006) investigated this perception of pragmatic errors with two groups of German students, one studying English in Germany, the other in the UK. Like my participants, those in the SA context perceived pragmatic errors as more serious, while those who remained in Germany felt grammatical errors were more important. Apparently, the change from a foreign language to a second language context has important implications for students’ understanding of language and the impact it has on others (Shively, 2008).

When comparing these findings with the studies of pragmatic development through telecollaborative tandem discussed on p. 22 (Belz & Kinginger, 2002; Kinginger & Belz, 2005), it appears SA produces a similar effect in that the frequency with which participants
addressed other German students (whether fictitious as in the LAI and role plays of this study, or real, with German native speaker email partners in Belz & Kinginger, 2002) with inappropriate Sie reduced over the period the research was carried out. In both instances, explicit correction from native speakers appears key in alerting learners to the potential consequences associated with using an inappropriate address pronoun. Findings to arise from this study confirm Belz & Kinginger’s (2003) four pre-requisites for the acquisition of address term competence, especially with regard to the fourth prerequisite of ‘opportunities for peer-assisted learning’ (p. 594).

The findings of this study also contribute to the growing literature on the importance of intervening in intercultural learning on SA. Facebook has not been widely used as a method of support for improving intercultural learning during SA. According to the results presented here, it is not particularly suitable for this purpose, as students are unfamiliar with harnessing the platform’s possibilities for deeper meaning-making purposes (cf. Blattner & Lomicka, 2012; Lomicka & Lord, 2016). My study does suggest, however, that photo elicitation could be a useful avenue for both assessing and encouraging student intercultural learning on exchange, confirming a suggestion made by Covert (2011). Comments made by the participants in this study demonstrate the importance of providing students with a framework with which they can begin to reflect on cultural differences (Beaven, 2015; Gothard et al., 2012; Tonkin & Bourgault du Coudray, 2016; Vande Berg et al., 2009). According to the results of this study as well as the body of research surrounding intervention in student learning on SA, the provision of support strategies to students should be seen as a key component of any SA program. Additionally, SA practitioners should aim to provide pedagogies which cater for the different learning styles of students.

To my knowledge, prior to this study, no studies have used the process model of IC as a framework for analysing qualitative data related to the development of IC. My study builds on findings in the area of assessing intercultural development during short-term SA programs using qualitative techniques (Blood & Ludewig, 2016; Covert, 2014; Jackson, 2005, 2008, 2011; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). In contrast to these studies, I used the Process model rather than the DMIS as the departure point for my analysis of the intercultural data. This analysis resulted in many instances where effective and appropriate behaviour in intercultural contexts was recognised, as well as instances where the behaviour was determined to be not effective or appropriate. The model served as a suitable framework for analysing the qualitative data from interviews, photo elicitation projects and field notes.
and could be utilised by similar studies which seek to assess the development of IC during SA. Further suggestions regarding the use of the Process model in this context are made in Section 7.5.

My work both confirms and contradicts findings related to the timing of SA. Participants in this study experienced a meaningful change to their language skills at all levels except the most basic (<A2.1). Like DeKeyser (2007, 2010), I found that students below a level A2.1 proficiency were less able to benefit from the opportunities for informal interaction in the L2 afforded by SA. These students spent less time using the L2 outside of the classroom, and took their language classes less seriously than their more proficient counterparts. Participants with more experience of learning German had also been exposed to German culture through the language curriculum at their home universities, which left them better placed to communicate with locals (Czerwionka et al., 2015). This corresponds to assertions from leading interculturalists that foreign language skills are necessary for intercultural communication, even if language competence does not necessarily equal IC (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2016). These findings must, however, be considered within the complex context of SA, and there are naturally many other factors which play a role in determining language and intercultural success or failure.

In contrast to early findings that ‘upper-level’ students appeared to experience smaller gains in their language skills (e.g. Brecht et al., 1993, Freed, 1995b, Huebner, 1995; Pizziconi, 2013), some of the more proficient participants in this study showed the largest gains (for example, Sean). However, even the more advanced participants in this study were at the B1/B2 level, which according to the explanation of the European Reference Framework equates more to an intermediate level. The loose terms ‘more advanced’ or ‘advanced language student’ may hold different meanings in the Australian compared to US or European context, and this holds important implications regarding suggestions for the ‘ideal’ time for a student to participate in SA.

### 7.3 Practical and theoretical implications

Several practical and theoretical implications arose from this study. Firstly, this study confirms the appropriateness of a language socialisation framework for assessing language development (in particular pragmatic competence) in the SA context (Wang, 2010). Socialisation, both explicit and implicit, had significance for my participants’ language development and helped to explain gains they made in this area. Culturally specific
differences, such as the preference of German speakers for explicit correction and direct communication, influence how language socialisation is carried out. For the students in this study, explicit correction made the importance of choosing an appropriate address form, for example, extremely clear. As explained above, this has important implications for students of German.

In practical terms, several suggestions for practice emerge from the results of this study. Firstly, the findings confirm the importance of supporting students throughout the SA experience through guidance on language and cultural issues. The material covered in the pre-departure workshop for students at UWA helped most students understand the level of reflection that is required to engage in intercultural learning. Several students commented that framing the exchange in such a way encouraged them to think more about intercultural differences and how these influence communication. The inclusion of such material should be considered a highly desirable addition to SA programming. Photo elicitation emerged as a useful avenue for both assessing and encouraging intercultural learning. SA program leaders should consider incorporating photo elicitation exercises into existing support programs (i.e. with workshops). The exercise as it was used in this study could be easily adapted as a learning tool, with more specific instructions about the types of photos students should submit and the provision of an exemplar. Given the dominance of photo narratives focusing on objective culture, students could be guided to focus more on subjective or blended cultural issues, as these are more important to the development of IC (Stewart & Bennett, 1991).

Although the findings of this study centre on one program in one year, they do suggest that short-term programs such as the one outlined in this study are more beneficial for students who have had some experience with the language. Unless beginners are required to show that they have the necessary motivation, for example the intention to continue study of the language at the conclusion of the program (like the participants in Huebner’s 1995 study), I would hesitate to recommend language exchanges for complete beginners. Given the paucity of research on SA participants with no language skills, further studies are required in this area. This is perhaps most important in the Australian context, where students are considerably more likely to begin their study of foreign languages at university (Nettelbeck et al., 2007).
7.4 Limitations

As with any empirical study, it is important to review any shortcomings of the methods and frameworks used. The major limitation of my project is its scale. My study focused on one specific exchange program in one year. Any generalisations made on the basis of the findings presented here should be made with caution. In particular, further research is required with students who participated in SA programs with no prior language skills. My finding that absolute beginner students make less use of opportunities for informal interaction in the L2 might not be replicated with a different sample of students with a stronger interest in the L2 and culture. Many of the beginners in this study were nearing the end of their university studies and mentioned they were unlikely to have the time or opportunity to continue their study of German. For students who may be embarking on a longer program of SA learning, such as the participants in Huebner’s (1995) study, the result may be quite different. Additionally, the scale of the project did not allow me to recruit native-speaker participants from the Stuttgart region where participants were learning German. This would have been preferable given variation in the use of address pronouns in different regions of Germany (cf. Kretzenbacher, 2011). Future research could seek to address this by recruiting a more homogenous pool of native speakers for comparison.

Another feature of this study that was both an advantage and a disadvantage was my close involvement with participants. While I was able to build a strong rapport with each student, resulting in a retention rate of 93%, I knew my participants as both their teacher, their workshop facilitator and a near-peer participant observer in Stuttgart. This had conscious and implicit implications for my interpretations of their narratives in the coding process as well as for the way students formulated their answers in interviews, photo projects and Facebook posts. Given our informal and frequent interaction, students may have been prompted to give answers which they felt would fulfil the expectations of their teacher. As I did not have the funding to employ a research assistant to help with the coding of interviews and perform inter-rater reliability checks, my own analysis of participants’ narratives may have been influenced by my external information and additional knowledge I had of the students. This was minimised as much as possible by keeping a detailed record of my coding processes in N-Vivo as well as triangulation of participants’ statements with different data sources (interviews, field notes, Facebook/photo elicitation data).

Lastly, as discussed on pp. 80-81, the order of the tasks in the LAI may have had some effect on the findings presented in section 4.2.2. I had chosen to ask students to
complete the role plays last in order to minimise their nerves for the remainder of the interview and allow them to speak honestly and freely. This may, however, have caused participants’ awareness of address pronouns to be raised. Ideally participants should complete role plays and the LAI in separate interviews, for the current study this was not logistically feasible. Future research should investigate SA participants’ use of address pronouns in role plays prior to or on a separate occasion to determine whether this affected the results.

7.5 Suggestions for future research

Several avenues for further research emerged from the findings of this study. Given the benefits many participants took from their instruction about reflecting on cultural differences, providing support related to learning pragmatics may also assist students’ development in this area. Henery (2014) implemented a concept-based framework of pragmatics for her participants throughout their SA semester in France. Many of the concepts introduced in her framework could be applied in the short-term context. If the material was first presented to students prior to their departure (whether in a workshop or online), they would be able to engage with the material and use it to guide their interpretation of pragmatics throughout their stay abroad. Participants’ interpretations of language use in real-life situations in Stuttgart was sometimes inaccurate (for example Jenni’s generalisation of her teacher’s story that he liked to be addressed with Sie after he turned 16). Such inaccurate interpretations could be reduced if students were introduced to pragmatics before their departure, especially considering the tight time-frame in which many short-term programs take place. Similarly, given the difficulty participants had in acquiring colloquial language and the disappointment several students expressed at not having learnt it, further research could also be undertaken to determine how informal/everyday language could be better integrated into preparation for SA programs.

Secondly, the positive outcomes associated with using photo elicitation as a method for both assessing and encouraging reflection on intercultural differences suggest that this is an area worthy of future research. If students were provided with more detailed guidelines on what kinds of photos to take, including an emphasis on subjective cultural differences over objective ones, they might be able to better engage in reflection using photos. Researchers should focus on the incorporation of this method into existing support mechanisms such as workshops. The technique may also be of use to researchers wanting
to assess the IC of students. It may be possible, for example, to assess IC using the process model in a more systematic way than how it was operationalised in this study. The Association of American Colleges and Universities have developed a rubric using the process model (Bennett, et al., 2009). This rubric could be used to examine, for example, photo elicitation project data and how it shows the development of IC.

The findings and implications discussed in this chapter suggest that short-term SA is worthy of both institutional support and further research. Given the trends observed in the population of Australian students who study abroad, it is likely short-term programs will remain popular. This study has shown that participation in short-term SA can influence students' understanding of language as a medium for communication and has implications for their pragmatic and intercultural competencies. Participants in this study also significantly benefitted from pedagogical intervention strategies: future research is needed to determine how we can continue to best support students during their often short sojourns abroad.
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Interkulturelles Lernen während eines kurzzeitigen, studienbegleitenden Fremdsprachenprogramms. Erfahrungen australischer Studierender in Deutschland

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Mobilitätskapitals (Murphy-Lejeune 2003) könnten helfen, die Studierenden vor, während und nach dem Studienaufenthalt besser zu unterstützen.

The support of ‘study abroad’ programs is part of an increasing effort made by Australian universities to internationalize the student experience. This study analyses student perceptions of colloquial language, manners and customs in the host country during a short-term study abroad program. The aim of the study is to identify the factors that influence intercultural learning and thus should be taken into account in order for administrators and instructors to best support students taking part in such short-term exchanges. Bennett’s model of the development of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett 1986) formed the basis for a qualitative content analysis of data obtained from semi-structured interviews with ten of the participants. The results of our study point to the students’ inadequacy when it comes to reflecting on intercultural situations. Analysis indicates that both the students’ proficiency in the target language (L2) and previous international travel influence their ability to reflect on their overseas experiences. Examining the influence of a student’s ‘mobility capital’ (Murphy-Lejeune 2003) on the exchange experience could shed light on how best to support students so that they can make the most of their stay.

Schlagwörter: australische Studierende, interkulturelle Kompetenz, qualitative Inhaltsanalyse, Austauschstudium; Australian students, intercultural competence, qualitative content analysis, student exchange.

1. Einleitung


Vor diesem Hintergrund ist es das Ziel dieses Beitrags, die Wahrnehmungen der Studierenden bezüglich ihres sprachlichen und kulturellen Lernens in einem Rahmenkonzept von interkultureller Kompetenz zu analysieren, wobei der Fokus auf den Zusammenhängen zwischen den Sprachkenntnissen und den bisherigen Auslandserfahrungen sowie deren Einfluss auf den Studienaufenthalt im Ausland liegt. Unsere Forschungsfragen lauteten:

1) In welchen Phasen der Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität befanden sich die Studierenden nach dem Austausch?

2) Wie wirken sich die persönlichen Faktoren der Studierenden und die Programmfaktoren (Länge, Unterbringung, Unterrichtseinheiten etc.) auf die Entwicklung von interkultureller Sensibilität der Austauschstudierenden aus?

Um diese Fragen beantworten zu können, wurde eine Pilotstudie durchgeführt, die Teil eines größeren Projektes ist, das das interkulturelle Lernen und die soziolinguistische Kompetenz australischer Studierender untersucht, die an einem Austauschprogramm in Stuttgart teilnehmen (s. Kap. 2). In der vorliegenden explorativen Studie wurden zehn Studierende zu ihren interkulturellen und fremdsprachlichen Lernerfahrungen nach dem Austausch in Deutschland interviewt. Die Interviewdaten wurden transkribiert und die Stellen, an denen häufig Kommunikationsprobleme auftraten (sogenannte rich points, vgl. Agar 1994) identifiziert. Diese rich points wurden nach dem Modell der Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, DMIS) von Bennett (1986) kodiert (s. Kap. 3). Die Analyse deckte auf, dass sich das Niveau der interkulturellen Sensibilität unter den Studierenden stark unterschied (s. Kap. 5.1). Dieser Befund ließ sich auf den individuellen Hintergrund der Studierenden zurückführen, insbesondere auf bisherige Kontakte mit anderen Sprachen und Kulturen (s. Kap. 5.2). Die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Studie sollen Anregungen für ein Programm bieten, das die Studierenden rund um den Austausch vorbereitet und betreut, um sowohl interkulturelles als auch fremdsprachliches Lernen zu optimieren.

Im Folgenden wird zuerst das Stuttgart-Austauschprogramm der Universität Westaustraliens vorgestellt (Kap. 2). Anschließend wird der Hintergrund zum interkulturellen und fremdsprachlichen Lernen während kurzzeitiger Auslandsaufenthalte unter Berücksichtigung der Fragestellung der hier vorliegenden Studie erläutert (Kap. 3). Im Anschluss an die Beschreibung der Materialien und Methoden (Kap. 4) wird eine Analyse der Datensätze (Kap. 5) vorgestellt, gefolgt von einer Diskussion der Ergebnisse (Kap. 6).
2. Das Stuttgart-Austauschprogramm der University of Western Australia


3. Interkulturelles und fremdsprachliches Lernen im Ausland


Einheimischen suchten, konnten trotz anfänglich besserer Fremdsprachenkenntnisse keine ähnlichen Fortschritte verzeichnen.


In der ersten Phase, d.h. auf der Leugnungsstufe (Denial), leugnet man, dass es überhaupt Unterschiede zwischen Kulturen gibt. Auf der Ablehnungsstufe (Defence) wertet man andere Kulturen ab, häufig mit negativen Stereotypen einer Gruppe (vgl. Bennett 1986: 183). In dieser Phase ist auch eine Umkehrung (Reversal) der eigenen Einstellung möglich, in der man die Gastkultur höher als die eigene Kultur schätzt. Vor dem Übergang in die ethnorelativen Phasen versucht man interkulturelle Unterschiede zu minimieren (Minimisation). Individuen, die die Akzeptanzstufe (Acceptance) erreicht haben, akzeptieren, dass es Unterschiede gibt und sehen alle Kulturen als gleichwertig an. In der Anpassungsphase (Adaptation) kann man Verhalten und Perspektiven des Anderen übernehmen. In der letzten Phase (Integrationsstufe) kann man zwischen den Kulturen flexibel und kompetent wechseln (Integration). Laut Bennett müssen die Stufen nicht vollständig abgeschlossen sein, bevor man die nächste Stufe erreicht. Beispielsweise könnten Studierende ethnorelativen Tendenzen und gleichzeitig eine Umkehrung zeigen, was normalerweise auf der Ablehnungsstufe auftritt.

Beispiel gezeigt, dass sich die Studierenden in Gruppe II (die 16 Wochen im Gastland verbrachte) nach dem Aufenthalt bewusst waren, dass die Kultur einen Einfluss auf alle Aspekte des Lebens haben kann. Die Wege, auf denen die Studierenden in Gruppe I die fremde Kultur konzeptualisiert hatten, blieben dagegen auch nach sieben Wochen relativ unverändert.


Eine Studie, die an der University of Western Australia (UWA) durchgeführt wurde und sich auf Studierende unterschiedlichster Fachrichtungen konzentrierte, befasste sich mit folgender Frage: Lernen Studierende tatsächlich etwas, während sie im Ausland sind, oder glauben sie das lediglich (vgl. Forsey et al. 2012)? Studierende, die gerade vom Austausch zurückgekehrt waren, wurden interviewt und danach gefragt, was sie während ihres Austausches gelernt hatten. Sie fanden es schwierig, tiefgründige Antworten zu geben und sprachen stattdessen über das Essen, das Wetter und Unterschiede in der Umgangssprache. Die AutorInnen schlussfolgerten daraus, dass Studierende Hilfe bräuchten, um über ihre Erfahrungen reflektieren zu können. Zum Beispiel sollten sie durch Workshops vor der Abreise besser vorbereitet werden. Da die meisten TeilnehmerInnen dieser Studie allerdings in englischsprachige Länder reisten, wo es in der Regel keine Sprachprobleme gibt,
unterscheiden sich sowohl die Erfahrungen dieser Studierenden als auch ihre Motive ins Ausland zu gehen von denjenigen typischer L2-Lernender (vgl. Pedersen 2010).

Im Folgenden werden Material und Methode der vorliegenden Studie zu der Auffassung australischer Austauschstudierender in Deutschland (Stuttgart) über ihr interkultureelles und fremdsprachliches Lernen im Austauschkontext vorgestellt.

4. Material und Methode vorliegender Studie


4.1. TeilnehmerInnen

Tab. 1: Demografie der TeilnehmerInnen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Deutschkenntnisse vor dem Programm</th>
<th>Einstufung in Stuttgart *</th>
<th>Deutsch als Hauptfach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ben</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sean</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Erica</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Sally</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Tom</td>
<td>Englisch/Kantonesisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>B2/C1**</td>
<td>Nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Ashley</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Anfänger</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Ross</td>
<td>Italienisch</td>
<td>Mittelstufe</td>
<td>B1/B2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Max</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Mittelstufe</td>
<td>B1/B2</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Yvette</td>
<td>Hochchinesisch</td>
<td>Mittelstufe</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Jacob</td>
<td>Englisch</td>
<td>Fortgeschritten</td>
<td>B2/C1</td>
<td>Ja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Bezieht sich auf den Gemeinsamen Europäischen Referenzrahmen, A= Elementare Sprachverwendung, B= Selbstständige Sprachverwendung, C= Komponente Sprachverwendung


Diese Studie wurde vom UWA Human Ethics Board genehmigt. Die TeilnehmerInnen bleiben anonym, da Pseudonyme verwendet werden.

4.2. Datensammlung


4.3. Datenanalyse


Diese rich points und andere Erzählungen (narratives), die Rückschlüsse auf den Stand der Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität zuließen, dienten als Ausgangspunkt für die deduktive Kodierung. In Tab. 2 werden Kodierungsbeispiele für rich points und die Stufen des DMIS gezeigt, die in unseren Daten auftraten.

Tab. 2: Kodierungsbeispiele DMIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Beispiel</th>
<th>Anzahl der Kodierungsreferenzen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ablehnung</td>
<td>&quot;some German people are quite abrupt, you know […] they’ll say Entschuldigung and then just launch into the question.&quot; (Sally)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobilitätskapital</th>
<th>Kodierungsbeispiel</th>
<th>Anzahl Kodierungsreferenzen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Persönliche Faktoren</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Erfahrungen mit anderen Kulturen</td>
<td>&quot;I grew up in Italy, and I went through the Italian education system til I was 15&quot; (Ross)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Sprachkompetenz</td>
<td>&quot;I mean I was only in A2 and I was fine with</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 3: Kodierungsbeispiele für persönliche und Programmfaktoren
### 1.3 Persönlichkeit

| 1.3.1 Extravertiertheit vs. Introvertiertheit | "I was going out partying and drinking as much as I could and meeting new people" (Ben)
"And then literally most afternoons I just went home and […] cooked dinner and then just like read buzzfeed and then went to bed." (Sean) |
| 1.3.2 Toleranz von Ambiguität | "But yeah so I just kept asking questions and trying to gauge the kind of character they are […]. Culturally asking how someone is and getting a one word response is very funny." (Max) |
| 1.3.3 Bereitschaft Fehler zu machen | "[…] knowing that like if I use a word, generally […] it’s gonna be understood" (Sean) |

### 1.4 Bisherige Reisen

| 1.4 Bisherige Reisen | "I’ve been to Europe many times anyway" (Sally) |

### 2. Programmfaktoren

| 2.1 Gastfamilie | "Yeah so that my advice would be if you wanna do more German […] then you’d better stay with a family." (Jacob) |
| 2.2 Länge des strukturierten Austausches | "[…] an 8 week course, it would’ve been that much better to just cement those…" (Sally) |
| 2.3 Nationalität und Mutter-sprache der anderen ProgrammteilnehmerInnen | "[…] it was difficult to practice German when you’re with a bunch of Australian people" (Max) |

Die verwendeten Kategorien, wie z.B. Persönlichkeitseigenschaften sind selbstverständlich sehr komplex und enthalten viele Aspekte, die man nicht so eindeutig aus diesen Interviewstellen herauslesen kann. Hier wurde demnach nur eine annähernde Zuordnung vorgenommen, im Rahmen weiterführender Studien könnte aber überprüft werden, ob diese Persönlichkeitsfaktoren tatsächlich eine signifikante Rolle spielen.

### 5. Ergebnisse

#### 5.1. Stand der Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität während des Austauschstudiums

Im folgenden Kapitel werden die Ergebnisse der deduktiven Inhaltsanalyse nach dem Modell zur Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität (DMIS) vorgestellt. Die Analyse deckte auf, dass die TeilnehmerInnen an dieser Studie sich im Grad ihrer interkulturellen Sensibilität unterschieden. In unserem Korpus waren Aussagen vertreten, die den Stufen der Ablehnung, Minimierung und Akzeptanz zugeordnet werden konnten (s. Abb. 2). Die reichliche Hälfte der Kodierungsreferenzen fiel in die Ablehnungsphase (defence), in der sich zwei gegensätzliche Tendenzen beobachten lassen: Studierende beurteilen hier entweder die fremde oder die eigene Kultur als minderwertig (vgl. Kap. 2). Obwohl beide dieser
Reaktionen als Ausdruck einer ethnozentrischen Haltung gelten, erscheint uns diese Unterscheidung wichtig, weshalb sie in Abb. 2 auch verdeutlicht wurde.

![Kodierungsreferenzen zu den DMIS Stufen](image)

Abb. 2: Kodierungsreferenzen zu den Phasen des Modells zur Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität (DMIS)

Die wenigsten Aussagen der Studierenden (10%) fielen in die Phase der Minimierung, in der Unterschiede zwischen den Kulturen eher trivialisiert wurden, anstatt eine der Kulturen höher zu bewerten. Diese Phase ist im Modell zur Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität das letzte ethnozentrische Stadium, bevor Studierende die Akzeptanzphase erreichen, während derer zwar Unterschiede wahrgenommen aber nicht mehr negativ beurteilt werden. In die Phase der Akzeptanz fiel mehr als ein Drittel aller Aussagen der Studierenden.

Wie in Kap. 3 erwähnt zeigten einige TeilnehmerInnen Aspekte von zwei (oder mehreren) Phasen. Aus diesem Grund wurden in den folgenden Unterkapiteln für jede Phase zwei Studierende ausgewählt, an deren Beispielen die Tendenzen einer Phase verdeutlicht werden sollen.

**5.1.1. Ablehnung**

guess the Germans are quite literal people". Es war ihm zudem im Umgang mit nicht-deutschstämmigen BürgerInnen aufgefallen, dass selbst nach Jahren in Deutschland viele TürkInnen mangelnde Deutschkenntnisse hatten. Die Situation des Multikulturalismus in Australien wurde von ihm deshalb viel positiver bewertet, und nach seiner Rückkehr meinte er: „I […] am more appreciative of Australia’s […] cultural integration“.

Sowohl Sally als auch Sean beklagten administrative und organisatorische Aspekte des Austausches:

- they are very like, this is how it is, this is what you’ve gotta do and were very abrupt about it and were quite rude about it […]. And then they got angry when […] we didn’t have the money on us and we all had to go and get it. You know, they ran over time and Germans can’t run over time. So that was a little bit frustrating, you know, but that’s not our fault that we weren’t told about it. (Sally)

Sallys Reaktion deutet auf Unterschiede in den Bildungssystemen der Länder hin. In Australien zahlen Studierende vergleichsweise hohe Studiengebühren. Dies bedeutet, dass Studierende sich als zahlende Kunden mit einem Anspruch auf Dienstleistung sehen. In Deutschland werden die Kosten vom Staat getragen, und die Studierenden übernehmen zudem persönliche Verantwortung für ihr Studium. Wenn etwas mit dem Verwaltungspersonal nicht klappt, war dies ein Problem, das von einigen TeilnehmerInnen extrem negativ beurteilt wurde. In ähnlicher Weise hatte auch Sean Probleme mit einigen Aspekten des Programms:

W: I’m […] a mature aged student and I felt the course was quite catered […] towards […] younger students which was a bit disappointing.

I: In what way?

W: […] there were quite a lot of like rigidly organised excursions and activities which I felt were catered definitely towards like 18 and 19 year olds […]. And the staff at the university were definitely more used to dealing with […] younger people […], like there were several occasions where I felt they were a bit disrespectful […] you know where they […] kind of spoke to you like you were a child.

Negative Aussagen, wie die obenstehende, sind ein Indiz für die Ablehnungsphase bei diesem Studierenden.

Wie in Kap. 3 erwähnt, können Individuen in der Ablehnungsphase eine widersprüchliche Haltung einnehmen, wobei Aspekte einer anderen Kultur positiver als die
der Heimatkultur bewerten werden. Dies tauchte mehrmals in unserem Material auf. Die organisatorische Effizienz der öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel in Stuttgart wurde dabei besonders positiv wahrgenommen:

… sometimes I sit there and think, why don’t they do that in Australia? … in Stuttgart on the U-Bahn and the S-Bahn there’s just a little picture and it shows you where on the platform the train stops… just so you know where to stand. And when I got off here at the Esplanade [in Perth], the train stopped right at the other end, and we had people running from this end to catch the train… It’s just those little things that Australia should adopt. (Sally)

Obwohl diese Empfehlung zur Nachahmung eine Wahrnehmung der Unterschiede (Akzeptanz) und eine positive Beurteilung eines Aspektes der fremden Kultur (Umkehrung) liefert, weist die insgesamt negative Beurteilung des Programms sowohl von Sean als auch von Sally auf deren ethnozentrische Standpunkte hin.

5.1.2. Minimierung

In dieser Phase tendierten die Studierenden zu sehr positiven Bewertungen von Deutschland und der deutschen Kultur auf Kosten der Unterschiede zu ihrer Heimatkultur. Der hohe Bildungsstandard in Deutschland in Bezug auf Fremdsprachen und Allgemeinwissen sowie die Bereitschaft zur Diskussion selbst schwieriger und bisweilen in anderen Kulturen tabuisierter Themen wurden mit Bewunderung wahrgenommen. Dies führte jedoch gleichzeitig dazu, dass viele Gespräche lieber auf Englisch statt in der L2 geführt wurden, insbesondere im Umgang mit Gleichaltrigen aus dem Kurs und im deutschen Alltag. Die Benutzung ihrer eigenen Muttersprache minimierte kulturelle Unterschiede.

italienischer und deutscher Kultur und fand, dass die stärkeren Unterschiede eher zwischen europäischer und australischer Kultur liegen.

There [are] some things that I don’t understand about German culture, but I found myself struggling more with Australian culture than anything else. Because Europe, Europeans are quite, […] in terms of manners or mannerisms, we’re quite similar compared to Australia. I mean […] I wouldn’t go out to a restaurant and eat and then […] heavily criticise what I just ate, or, that’s something that I found people in Australia do a lot… (Ross)

Es waren nur Studierende mit internationalen Familienhintergründen, die solche Unterschiede minimierten. Ross und Yvette fanden es bis dato schwierig, sich der australischen Gesellschaft anzupassen, was vielleicht zu ihrer Minimierung der Unterschiede zwischen Deutschland und ihrer jeweiligen Heimatkultur beitrug.

5.1.3. Akzeptanz

Die Studierenden, die Akzeptanz zeigten, lieferten tiefere und sehr neutrale Beurteilungen, sowohl von der australischen als auch der deutschen Kultur. Es wurde häufig akzeptiert, dass Dinge in anderen Ländern anders gemacht werden. Ben meinte beispielsweise: „you just have to get used to it“. Die Studierenden in dieser Phase hatten häufig entweder deutsche Kontakte oder vergleichsweise mehr Zeit in Deutschland verbracht.

Ben lernte die deutsche Sprache zum Beispiel erst seit einem Jahr, er hatte deutsche Freunde, bei denen er einen weiteren Monat verbrachte. Er zeigte eine Tendenz, Risiken in der Fremdsprache einzugehen, als er mit einem Polizisten sprach:

You know you’re not able to communicate, […] like when you speak to a police officer and you refer to them as ‘du’ because everyone’s your mate in Australia, but there it’s gotta be professionalism […] so you get a few looks [in Germany], but you know, it’s a mistake, you’re a foreigner!

Obwohl er angab, einige Fehler (sowohl kulturelle als auch sprachliche) gemacht zu haben, reflektierte Ben über viele subjektive Unterschiede zwischen deutscher und australischer Kultur, so z.B. über Direktheit, Unterschiede in den Anredeformen und wie lange es dauert, in Deutschland eine Freundschaft zu schließen. Sein Rat für zukünftige Austauschstudierende war folgender:
The best thing I did was go there with no pre-conceived ideas and I'd recommend that to everyone, not to go there and be like, 'no that's not how we do it', because that's how they do it and you've just gotta get used to it!

Während Ben in kurzer Zeit ein Maximum an Erfahrungen mit der deutschen Sprache, Deutschland und den Deutschen machte, war Jacobs Weg etwas länger. Er hatte bereits seit einigen Jahren Deutsch gelernt, und der Austausch war sein dritter Deutschlandbesuch. Es fielen ihm bei jedem weiteren Besuch in Europa andere Dinge auf, und seine Wahrnehmung wurde immer differenzierter. Jacob fand, dass seine Auffassung mit jedem Besuch immer noch vielseitiger wurde. Bei seinem ersten Besuch beurteilte er die Deutschen als „super friendly and polite… and quiet“. In Stuttgart, während seines dritten Besuchs, war er von der schonungslosen Offenheit und Ehrlichkeit seiner Gastfamilie überrascht. Er beschrieb eine Diskussion über Politik mit seinem Gastvater, wo er über dessen Reaktion schockiert war, als sie nicht einer Meinung waren:

If you said something, he didn’t like, he would just be like, no that’s wrong. And sometimes, […] it shocks you so much, but what he said, is right, pretty much. If you are wrong in that situation, it’s good just to be told.

Jacob konnte keine bestimmte Antwort geben, als er nach Beispielen für Situationen gefragt wurde, in denen Kommunikation durch interkulturelle Unterschiede erschwert wurde. Er hat aber weitgehend über Unterschiede in Bezug auf Ehrlichkeit und Offenheit seitens der Deutschen reflektiert. So beschrieb er z.B. das erste Abendessen mit seiner Gastfamilie wie folgt:

We were eating dinner on the first night and so you were meant to make a good impression […] and be really polite […]. And one of the American guys was […] really struggling to get the food down and […] obviously found it pretty gross and the mother kept asking […], do you like it and do you want something else, and he’s like no […], it’s really good and eventually he’s just like ok, I don’t like it, (because) it was so obvious. And then she was just […] fine. And it wasn’t […] a big deal or anything.

Jacobs Erfahrungen mit der deutschen Sprache und Kultur ermöglichten tiefe Reaktionen über die Unterschiede zwischen den Kulturen.

Obwohl Studierende insgesamt Mühe hatten, konkrete Beispiele von interkulturellen Begegnungen zu nennen, konnten sie Aspekte der australischen und deutschen Kultur wortgewandt und reflektiert besprechen. Die Teilnehmenden tendierten zur Relativierung

5.2. Einfluss von persönlichen und Programmfaktoren auf die Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität und Implikationen für deren Berücksichtigung in der Vorbereitung auf ein Auslandsstudium

Eine Analyse der Interviewdaten zeigte, dass ein Zusammenhang zwischen dem jeweiligen L2-Sprachniveau der TeilnehmerInnen am Anfang des Programms und ihrer Bereitschaft, im Ausland mit anderen auf Deutsch zu interagieren, bestand. Der Fremdsprachengebrauch spielt selbstredend eine wichtige Rolle für die Entwicklung von interkultureller Sensibilität, aber auch andere Faktoren sind hier von Bedeutung. Im Folgenden sollen die persönlichen und programmspezifischen Faktoren unter diesem Gesichtspunkt der Entwicklung interkultureller Sensibilität analysiert werden.

5.2.1. Mobilitätskapital: Persönliche Faktoren

Das Mobilitätskapital (vgl. Kap. 3.4.3) der Studierenden, das L2-Kompetenz, Erfahrung mit anderen Kulturen, bisherige Reisen sowie Persönlichkeitsaspekte umfasst, hatte offensichtlich einen entscheidenden Einfluss auf die Erfahrungen der TeilnehmerInnen. Studierende mit Auslandserfahrungen hatten Vorteile gegenüber denjenigen, die weniger Kontakt mit anderen Kulturen und Sprachen gehabt hatten. Die Fähigkeit, sich mit der Gastfamilie oder mit Gleichaltrigen auf Deutsch zu unterhalten, wurde von dem Niveau in der L2 beeinflusst, was mit den Studierenden in Zukunft bereits vor der Abreise diskutiert werden sollte. In unserer Studie hatten die fortgeschrittenen Studierenden (wie Jacob, Max und Ross) einen Vorteil, da sie schon bedeutsamere Konversationen mit ihren Gastfamilien und anderen Deutschen führen konnten. Max beschrieb ein Abendessen mit seiner Gastmutter, bei dem sie stundenlang auf Deutsch sprachen:

I got along with the mum really well, […] we spoke for like four hours sometimes, […] you eat dinner and everyone sits at the dinner table and then we have a discussion, the kids might go off and do homework but then I would stay back with the host mum and we would talk for a long time just about anything really.

In solchen Gesprächen erhielten die Studierenden Hilfe und Erklärungen über Unterschiede zwischen Australien und Deutschland. Bei diesem spezifischen Programm
muss jedoch bedacht werden, dass fast alle Programmteilnehmenden in Stuttgart aus Australien oder aus den USA kamen, d.h., dass sie mehrheitlich englische MuttersprachlerInnen waren, und insofern viele Konversationen selbst innerhalb der Gastfamilien auf Englisch geführt wurden, was den zeitlichen Umfang für deutsche Sprachübungen einschränkte. Es wäre für zukünftige Teilnehmende vorteilhaft, wenn verschiedene Aktivitäten außerhalb des Klassenverbandes, wie z.B. Beteiligung an sportlichen Aktivitäten mit Deutschen, Teil des Programmes würden.

Teilnehmende Studierende verwiesen in den Interviews immer wieder auf ihre bisherigen Auslandserfahrungen, egal ob sich dies auf ihre eigenen Erfahrungen als AusländerIn in Australien (Ross, Yvette) oder als TouristIn oder StudentIn (Sally, Ben) im Ausland bezog. Studierende, die vor dem Austausch Kontakte in Deutschland hatten, zeigten eine eher ethnorelativen Haltung zur deutschen Kultur. So hatte z.B. Ben vor dem Austauschprogramm einen Monat bei deutschen Freunden der Familie verbracht, was einen großen Einfluss auf seine Sprachfähigkeiten und sein Verständnis von der deutschen Kultur gehabt hatte. Yvette und Sally besuchten ebenfalls andere deutsche Freunde während des Austauschs (Yvette einen Studienfreund und Sally Freunde der Familie) und profitierten von dieser Erfahrung. Die Mehrheit der Austauschstudierenden hatte jedoch vor ihrer Ankunft in Stuttgart keine Kontakte zu deutschen MuttersprachlerInnen gehabt und tat sich auch während ihres Aufenthalts schwer damit. Da zu erwarten ist, dass dies auch unter den Teilnehmern an zukünftigen Programmen der Fall sein wird, wäre es hilfreich, Studierende schon vor dem Austausch und auch währenddessen mit gleichaltrigen Deutschen in Verbindung zu bringen.

Der Faktor „Persönlichkeit“ gehörte anfänglich nicht zu unseren Forschungsschwerpunkten, ergab sich aber während der Analyse der Interviews als wichtige Kategorie, besonders in Bezug auf die Introvertiertheit und Extrovertiertheit der Studierenden, ihre Toleranz bezüglich Ambiguitäten und ihre Risikobereitschaft, die deutlich zu Tage traten und einen Zusammenhang zur Entwicklung ihrer interkulturellen Sensibilität aufwiesen. Studierende, die bereit waren, Risiken einzugehen (z.B. Ben, Max, Ross) zeigten eine größere Bereitschaft, kulturelle Unterschiede ethnorelativ zu interpretieren. Eher Extrovertierte hatten mehr Kontakte geknüpft und verfügten über eine größere Bandbreite an Bekanntschaften, die ihnen mehr Einsichten in die Kultur des Gastlandes erlaubten. Dies zeigte sich auch in Bezug auf ihre Bereitschaft, Deutsch zu sprechen, Fehler zu machen und Risiken einzugehen. Eine positive Einstellung zum Lernen sowie individuelle Strategien zur

5.2.2. Programm faktoren


Die Spezifik des Austauschprogrammes, d.h. seine Kürze und die homogene Zusammensetzung der Kursteilnehmer-Innen (zumeist englische MuttersprachlerInnen aus den USA und Australien), reduzierte die Möglichkeit, Kontakte mit Einheimischen zu knüpfen. Dies wurde von einigen KursteilnehmerInnen negativ bewertet. Sean beschwerte sich z.B. darüber, dass er kaum Gelegenheit hatte: “[to] speak […] conversational German with […] other […] younger Germans coz they were also quite keen to practice their English”. Für diejenigen, die keine bisherigen Kontakte in Deutschland hatten, bedeutete das, dass sie die meiste Zeit mit anderen Austauschstudierenden verbrachten, was ihre Fähigkeit, kulturelle Unterschiede wahrzunehmen und zu reflektieren, limitierte. Auch empfanden einige TeilnehmerInnen es als Nachteil, dass sie selten gezwungen waren, ihre L2 anzuwenden. Auch hier könnte eine vorbereitende Vermittlung von Strategien der Kontaktaufnahme und von Kommunikationsbausteinen zur Vertiefung von flüchtigen Begegnungen, z.B. in Bus und Bahn helfen.

Die in dieser Studie gewonnenen Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Studierende von einer Beratung vor dem Austausch und währenddessen profitieren könnten. Studierenden wie Jacob, der schon viel gereist ist, fiel der Reflexionsprozess etwas leichter als Studierenden, die weniger Auslandserfahrung hatten. Wenn diese unerfahrenen Studierenden passende Unterstützung erhielten, könnten sie zu einem höheren Niveau der Reflexion hingeführt
werden. Idealerweise sollten Studierende vor, während und nach ihrem Austausch eine tiefgehende Beratung erhalten, so dass sie mit Hilfe von Reflexionen vor, während und nach dem Austausch den besten Nutzen aus demselben ziehen können.

6. Fazit


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## Appendix 3.2. Pilot Interview Schedule

### Introduction
In German class/lecture I said I was interested in hearing about your experiences on exchange, especially your language learning experiences and experiences with different cultures. I’m interested in your positive stories as well as any mishaps! Please feel free to speak freely, only I will hear or see your responses after we leave the room and you’ll remain anonymous in any publications that result from this research.

Is there a pseudonym you’d like me to use in any of my writing? Otherwise I can pick one for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Probe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>2. Tell me a bit about who you <strong>socialised</strong> with in Stuttgart? Who did you spend the majority of your time with? What language did you speak with them, did this change at all?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/housing</td>
<td>3. Were you in a <strong>dorm</strong> or with a <strong>host family</strong>? Tell me a little bit about your housing situation Describe the family for me Describe the living situation – own bathroom/kitchen, do your own laundry? Family buy you food/do you cook? How/where did you eat breakfast? What do you like most and least about the host family setup?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formals classes</td>
<td>4. How did you find the <strong>language classes</strong> at the University of Stuttgart? <strong>Which</strong> class?</td>
<td>Learn anything? German improved? How different to UWA? Difficulties/successes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language skills/use</td>
<td>5. Tell me about your <strong>German</strong>, when do you speak it, <strong>with whom, how often</strong> what sorts of things do</td>
<td>Specific difficulties/language skills?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Were there any situations where you felt confused or uncomfortable as a result of being a non-native speaker?

7. Any situations that made you speak less or more German as a result?

8. Do you feel like you learnt or spoke more German than you would at home? How do you feel about your German skills after Stuttgart?

9. How have they changed? Where do you notice the difference? What did you find most difficult about communicating in German?

10. Did you use any strategies to cope with language learning in Stuttgart?

Cultural experiences

11. How would you describe culture?

12. Do you like Germany? How would you describe Germany and Germans to someone who knows nothing about it?
Let’s talk a little about intercultural interactions. By this I mean a situation where you interacted with someone from Germany (or another culture)

13. Did you experience any interactions where you thought you communicated effectively and appropriately?

13a. How do you know the interaction was successful?
13b. How did you feel afterwards?

14. Did you experience any interactions where you thought you didn’t communicate effectively and appropriately?

How do you know the interaction was unsuccessful?
How did you feel afterwards?

15. Did you have any ‘aha’ moments when dealing with German culture?

16. Do you feel more aware of other cultures after Stuttgart?
How does this make you feel about your own culture?

17. Do you have any strategies that you used for culture learning?

18. How do you feel about the program on the
19. Did it meet your expectations? Why/why not?

20. What advice would you give to future SA students? Looking back on the exchange is there anything you would have done differently? Anything you think differently about?

Expectations about the types of cultural or linguistic experiences you thought you would have?

Final question: Is there anything else you want to say on the topic, that I haven’t asked you? Anything you want to ask me?
Appendix 3.3 Pre-departure interview guide

Question guidelines
1. Why did you decide to learn German? Can you describe your experience of learning German to date?
2. Were there any special moments that you associate with learning German?
3. How would you characterize your language learning experiences in the past? Were they mostly positive? Negative? Can you give examples?
4. Did anyone in your life encourage you to excel in your studies? To learn other languages?
5. What kinds of experiences do you think will help you learn German?
6. What are your images of Germany and what do you think it will be like when you get there (what are your impressions of Germany so far)?
7. When you think of Germany what do you think of?
8. Is there anything about living in Germany that worries you or that you feel apprehensive about?
9. How do you think this experience will change you/ your life/ your career path?
10. What do you expect to gain by going on exchange?
11. In what ways do you think you will be different when you come back?
12. Please describe your travel experiences in general and in countries where other languages are used.

Return Interview

Question Guidelines
How was the experience overall? Can you describe it in a word?

How will you remember this experience? How will you describe it to people?

In the first interview you said…. (you hoped to… thought you would change in this way…) Did the experience fit these expectations? If so, how? If not, how did it not? (you, life, career path)

How did you spend your spare time? With whom? (Did you guys speak in German?)
What was a typical weekday for you?
What did you do on the weekends?

Were you involved in any activities outside the winter uni (eg sport, church, music, language exchange)? Did you meet anyone through these activities?

Have you met anyone German from outside the winter uni program? How?
If not, why do you think this is?
Did you end up making German friends?
--If so, how did you go about doing this?
--If you did not, why do you think you were unable to do so?

Did you ever try to ‘pass yourself off as ‘German’’ (i.e., try to blend in)? Did it work? How do you know? How did you go about this ‘blending in’? Why did you ‘want’ to blend in?

Do you feel as though you integrated into a community in Stuttgart?
--If yes, why? What did you do to integrate?
    --If not, why not? What could you have done differently, do you think, to integrate more?

Has your German level/ability helped or hindered the ways in which you find German people with whom to converse? Why is this?

What do you think it means to ‘be German’? Or what does it mean to ‘be Australian/Chinese/Indian’? International s’s – has this changed how you think about culture?

**In your first interview you said Germans/Germany made you think of…. Has this changed?**

Do you sense that your German has improved over the course of the program (beginners? How can you tell?- do you feel like you’ve learnt some amount of German after the program?)
In what areas has your German improved, or not?
Are you motivated to keep learning German? Has your experience in Stuttgart encouraged you to keep learning? Or has it discouraged you? Why?
Has your desire to learn (more) German since being in Stuttgart increased or decreased? Why do you think that is?

Are you excited/looking forward to going home/excited to be home? Why or why not?
Do you think you’ll ever come back to Germany? Why or why not?
How do you think it will be to be back in Australia/how is it being home? Do you think you’ll have trouble/are you having trouble adjusting to being back? Why or why not

What recommendations would you give to future SA students?/ If you could re-do anything, what would you redo?

LAI

1) Tell me the story of each photo. What does each say about the aspects of German culture that interest you or stimulate your curiosity?

2) What are the connections or relationships among the photos? Feel free to arrange or move the photos around.

3) Tell me about your process of planning and taking the photos.
4) Are there certain photos that are missing or that you did not take? If so, which?

5) Did you take more photos than those you submitted? If so, why/how did you choose these particular photos from your larger group?

6) What do you think about using photos to represent your cultural interests or curiosities?
Appendix 4.1. Transcription conventions

(0.2) elapsed time in tenths of seconds

(.) short pause

? raised intonation

. falling intonation

, continuing intonation

::: prolongation of immediately prior sound

at all emphasis in original

(() transcribers comments

[ ] overlapping speech

- abrupt cut-off

[...] speech omitted by researcher
Appendix 5.1 Pre-departure and re-entry workshop surveys

Pre-departure Workshop Survey

Please take a few minutes to answer the following survey on your experience of the pre-departure workshop. Your feedback is anonymous. Thank you!

Using a scale of 1-5 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree), please respond to the following statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 - strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 - disagree</th>
<th>3 - neutral</th>
<th>4 - agree</th>
<th>5 - strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I found the pre-departure material (online modules and workshop) useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the pre-departure material (online modules and workshop) enjoyable</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I found the online modules useful</td>
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<tr>
<td>I found the online modules enjoyable</td>
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<tr>
<td>I found the workshop useful</td>
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<tr>
<td>I found the workshop enjoyable</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I think the online modules and workshop work well together</td>
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1. Which parts of the workshop were the best?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________

2. Which parts of the online modules were the best?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
3. Do you have any suggestion/s for change?

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

4. Do you intend to collect photos in Stuttgart to discuss with the group in the re-entry workshop? Yes □ No □

   Why/why not?

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
Re-entry Workshop Survey

*Please take a few minutes to answer the following survey on your experience of the re-entry workshop. Your feedback is anonymous. Thank you!*

Using a scale of 1-5 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree), please respond to the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 – strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 – disagree</th>
<th>3 – neutral</th>
<th>4 – agree</th>
<th>5 – strongly agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I found the re-entry material (online modules and workshop) useful</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think the online modules and workshop work well together</td>
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1. Which parts of the workshop were the best?

____________________________________________________________________
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2. Which parts of the online modules were the best?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
[232]
3. Do you have any suggestion/s for change?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

4. Did you use the UWA Facebook group in Stuttgart? Yes □ No □

Why/why not?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What kind of format would you prefer for encouraging reflection (eg meeting face-to-face in Stuttgart, a blog, a more structured Facebook groups with a required number of posts)

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Appendix 5.2 Summary of material in pre-departure/re-entry workshops and modules

Pre-departure

Online modules:

- Module 1: Introduction/Practical Information
- Module 2: Reflecting on culture
- Module 3: Kolb’s experiential learning cycle
- Module 4: Stereotypes
- Module 5: Culture shock

Pre-departure workshop (60-minute duration)

- Hopes and fears for the exchange
- Self-reflection before you go
- Facebook and photoblogging
- Discussion of previous students’ blog posts
- Current stereotypes about Germany (and challenging them)

Re-entry

Online modules:

- Module 1: Professional benefits – soft skills
- Module 2: Developing career stories
- Module 3: Portfolio building

Re-entry workshop (60-minute duration)

- Discussing prior hopes and fears
- Discussing individual posts to Facebook group
- Discussing photos that symbolise transformation
- Career stories and writing an elevator speech
Appendix 5.3. Photo project guidelines

**Photo project guidelines**

While in Stuttgart, you'll encounter opportunities to get to know German culture on a daily basis. You may find that some of your intercultural interactions stimulate your curiosity or give you pause for thought. Such interactions could occur in any number of places, such as on the bus, in your host family, at the shops, walking on a street, in a classroom, or when talking with German friends or teachers.

Over the next 6 weeks, take a series of photos (as few or as many as you like) to document or capture those situations, experiences, or interactions with German culture that stimulate your curiosity. Think about those aspects of the culture that have caught your attention or about which you have questions, experiences that have caused you to reflect, or characteristics of German culture you want to learn more about. Don’t worry about what might be considered an acceptably curious situation or experience – take photos that are of interest to you.

The only limitation on your photo taking is that you should not take photos of individual people. Your photos should be of public scenes or public behaviour. Also, make sure you ask permission to take photos of official places (a museum or government building, for example). If you are not granted permission, do not take the photo.

Select between 4-6 of your photos that best represent your interests or curiosity about German culture. Then, answer the following questions about each photo:

a. Where was the photo taken?

b. What is the object of the photo?

c. Why did the object of the photo make you curious or draw your attention?

d. What were your emotions or thoughts when you took the photo?

You may use the table on the reverse to record your answers. Submit your photos and notes by Friday, February 12th to Rosie Blood either via e-mail or in person. The week after you submit everything, we'll discuss your photos as part of the final interview. The interviews will take place at the language school (or somewhere nearby that is more convenient for you)

If you have any questions about this activity, contact Rosie:

Email - rosalind.blood@research.uwa.edu.au

Facebook – Rosie Stuttgart
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where was the photo taken?</th>
<th>What is the object of the photo?</th>
<th>Why did the object of the photo make you curious or draw your attention?</th>
<th>What were your emotions or thoughts when you took the photo?</th>
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