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POLITENESS IN AMERICAN ENGLISH, SPANISH AND JAPANESE: THE CASE OF (DIS)AGREEMENTS IN CONVERSATION

PhD Dissertation

NOBUO IGNACIO LÓPEZ SAKO

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POLITENESS IN AMERICAN ENGLISH, SPANISH AND JAPANESE: THE CASE OF (DIS)AGREEMENTS IN CONVERSATION

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EL DOCTORANDO

Fdo.: Nobuo Ignacio López Sako
Licenciado en Filología Inglesa y Diplomado en Estudios Avanzados

EL DIRECTOR DE LA TESIS

Fdo.: Prof. Dr. D. Miguel Ángel Martínez-Cabeza Lombardo
Profesor Titular de Universidad en Filología Inglesa
de la Universidad de Granada

A Ena, María Inés y Cristina

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GLOSSARY OF TRANSCRIPT SYMBOLS (Adapted from Du Bois *et al.* 1992 and Jefferson 2004).

//   *Double obliques* indicate the point where current speaker has been interrupted by next speaker, in which case they should be located at the end of current's speaker's turn and also at the beginning of next speaker's turn:

[A *left square bracket* indicates the point of the overlap (or simultaneous talk) onset.

]   A *right square bracket* indicates the point where the overlap or simultaneous talk ends:

[[ ]] *Double square bracket* are used when a sequence of overlap talk is found and it is necessary to identify which overlaps with which. They are also used to indicate an overlap within another one that started earlier. If more than two overlapping sequences are found, even a *triple square bracket* can be used.

=   *Equal* symbol has two functions. If may indicate latching between two speakers, or it can indicate that current speaker continues his/her talk in the following line when this has been broken up for transcript convenience.

(.)   A *dot in parenthesis* or *round brackets* indicates a brief interval of no talk of less than two tenths of a second (roughly). It can be located (a) within a turn or (b) between turns.

(0.0) *Numbers in parentheses* indicate the time of 'no talk' elapsed in tenths of seconds (roughly):

_____   *underlining* or *underscoring* indicates an emphatic stress. It may come under a syllable or a whole word depending on the stressed item:

::   *Colons* (two or more) indicate elongation of the prior sound, normally a vowel. The longer the row of colons, the longer the elongation:

↑↓   *Arrows* indicate shifts to higher or lower pitch. If used alone, ↑ indicates a rising intonation contour, but not implying an inquiry. ↓ indicates a falling intonation contour, especially when not expected, as in the middle of a turn. When used together in a single word, they mean emphatic change in pitch from a quick rise to a quick fall.

?   A *question mark* indicates a rising intonation that can be interpreted as an inquiry

WORD   Letters in *Upper case* indicate loud voice relative to the general level of talk.

°word°   *Degree signs* at the beginning and end of an expression (word, phrase, clause) indicate low voice or whisper.

word   *Superscripts* indicate expressions uttered in an extremely high pitch relative to the surrounding talk.

XXX   *Upper case X letters* indicate unintelligible talk or a piece of talk that the transcriber was not able to capture.

(word)   *Words and expressions between parentheses* indicate that the transcriber is unsure of the exact transcription.

(( ))   *Double parentheses* contain descriptions and comments made by the transcriber/analyst, which are written in italics.

–   A *dash* indicates a cut-off, normally following false starts.

@ An *'at' mark* indicates laughter or laughing quality in the voice.

T000 The letter *T* followed by a number indicates the turn number in the conversation analyzed.

PREFACE

I remember someone once told me that after more than thirty years of marriage she had realized that one source of misunderstanding between her and her husband had been what I would call the "level of explicitness" of what they wanted to express. While she had expected him to capture her discontent or disagreement by attending at her non-fully compliant answers, he had consistently failed to notice her reluctance. He used to ask himself *'¿para qué tenemos la boca?'* (*'what are mouths for?'*), implicating that she should have been clear in stating her complaints or disagreements. Now, what was going on? Besides the difference in gender, there was one additional factor that complicated things: she was Japanese and he was Spanish.

I myself had the experience of attending some conferences, speeches, and lectures in Japan several years ago. I was surprised at the seemingly lack of commitment of the speakers with their arguments. The speakers invariably concluded their assertions with qualifications like *to omou no de gozaimasu* (*'the fact is that (I) humbly believe that…'*)*, to omowaremasu* (*'it is believed that…'*)*, dewa nai deshoo ka* (*'wouldn't it be the case that…?'*)*, kamoshiremasen* (lit. *'it is not possible to know even whether…',* but normally translated as *'perhaps'*), thus constantly hedging their opinions, proposals, and assessments. In contrast to this, Japanese frequently showed surprise and commented upon the way Spanish people often engage in what they (the Japanese) believed to be heated arguments and confrontations. Their normal comments were that they seemed to be always quarrelling and arguing. Some years later, I had the possibility of contrasting the above experiences and impressions with the American conversational behavior.

From this background experience and the observation that people in these three cultures seemed to follow different interactional conventions in conversation, the idea emerged of carrying out a research project that would compare their linguistic and discursive patterns. My general impression was that in some cultures (particularly Spanish) interactants had a more direct and assertive way of saying things, while in others the opposite seemed to be the norm. So, from a cross-cultural perspective, what

might be considered perfectly normal for one cultural group could be sanctioned as impolite by members of another cultural group. This consideration led me to approach discursive phenomena from the perspective of (im)politeness.

From the wide range of possible linguistic and discursive features that could have been selected as object of study, I chose to focus on disagreements. There were two motivations for this decision: the first motivation was experiential and the second one was scholarly. The starting point was a lively conversation among four Spanish acquaintances, including myself, in which I observed that my interlocutors did not have any problem in bluntly saying *'no'* to what prior speaker(s) had said. Due to my half-Spanish background, I did not sanction such a reaction, but I found it difficult to adopt this interactional style because of my half-Japanese background and my twelve-year residence in Japan. The scholarly motivation will be fully discussed in Chapter 3. Suffice it to say here that previous research in politeness had been focused on speech acts such as requests, offers, invitations, apologies, thanking, compliments, and criticism, while (dis)agreements had received relatively little attention.

Conversational data were collected to carry out the task of comparing the performance of disagreements in the three languages introduced above and the ways in which their realization was related to (im)politeness. Such research aim is spelled out in two main research questions regarding (a) the kind of 1st order preference (a conversation analytic notion described and commented upon in Chapter 3) speakers of American English, Peninsular Spanish and Japanese would show when performing disagreement in a conversation framed as "friendly", and (b) the implications of findings related to point (a) for the relationship between 1st order preference structure and politeness.

The first task for the above endeavor is to establish an adequate theoretical and methodological framework. In order to achieve this goal, the main theoretical proposals in the field of linguistic politeness are reviewed in chapter 1, where it is concluded that the widely used (and widely criticized) face-saving theory of politeness proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987 [1978]) is not an adequate model. The search for a better account leads to the comparison of two main alternative proposals: Watts' (1989, 1992, 2003) Relational Work (RW) and Terkourafi's (2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d) Frame-Based Approach (FBA). Their view of politeness as a norm (in the sense of 'normal behavior'), their reliance on notions such as *'habitus'*, 'frame' and 'face', and their bottom-up approach to the analysis of data are seen as common features in both

models. However, it is found that they differ in two important aspects, both of them related to the notion of politeness: a) while in RW, *politeness* as commonly understood in everyday language (i.e., the 'folk' notion of politeness) is adopted, *politeness* in FBA is a theoretical concept especially defined for research purposes; b) as a result of this conceptualization of the notion of politeness in FBA, *politeness* is defined in this model as a perlocutionary effect that is achieved automatically "by virtue of presumptive inferences arising given a minimal context" (Terkourafi 2001: 2), which accounts for the fact that politeness often passes unnoticed and it is not necessarily related to indirect speech but depends on the kind of relationship established between the linguistic expression and context. It is concluded that the latter definition is better for the present study, since the understanding of what *politeness* is does not change across cultures.

The appropriateness of FBA for the analysis of (dis)agreements is considered in Chapter 2. It is argued that FBA has some shortcomings regarding the contextual configuration of frames, especially with respect to the micro-contextual and discursive elements. In order to bridge this gap, two discourse analytic models are reviewed: Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis as proposed by the Birmingham School. Conversation Analysis is viewed as the better option to account for the organizational features of discourse, but complemented with the analytical apparatus provided within the Speech Act Research paradigm (e.g., Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989) for a more fine-grained analysis at the turn-constructional level of analysis.

In Chapter 3, (dis)agreement is described from a semantic and turn-organizational perspective. (Dis)agreement is locally defined as a responding move to a prior assessment, opinion or proposal, and it is clearly distinguished from related terms such as confrontation, conflict, and the like, which refer to the general frame of interactions. The relationship between (dis)agreement and the conversation analytic notion of *preference organization* is discussed and revised. The revision is two fold: On one hand, following Bousfield (2007), a distinction is made between 1st order preference as a structural property of sequences and 2nd order preference as a social-psychological notion that can be related to *politeness*. On the other hand, a one-to-one relationship between 1st order preference (linguistic realization) and 2nd order preference (politeness) is rejected, and the mediation of context is called for. Once this is made clear, the research questions are formulated.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the presentation of the research design. While acknowledging that authentic data recorded in natural settings should be the best

material for analysis, it is argued that it has more disadvantages than assets in a cross-cultural study. On the other hand, traditional research designs for the elicitation of speech acts such as written questionnaires and discourse completion tests are considered inadequate due to their format and excessive control. It is claimed that the method called 'elicited conversations' (Kasper 2000) is the best choice for eliciting (dis)agreements, since it allows for the control of certain contextual factors in the setting which make the cross-cultural comparison the data possible. The data collected with this method consists in friendly conversations among young university students who are asked to talk about certain topics such as a trip plan or their likes and dislikes. The setting is initially controlled so as to guarantee that conversations are framed as friendly (i.e., 'polite') situations.

Having completed the theoretical and methodological considerations, a quantitative analysis is carried out in Chapter 5. In the first part of this chapter, a Coding System for the quantitative analysis of (dis)agreement is proposed in which turn-organizational features and turn-constructional features (Kasper 2004, 2006) are integrated in one single analytic tool. Using this coding scheme, a comprehensive analysis of (dis)agreement moves is conducted attending at the following linguistic and discursive features: (a) level of illocutionary directness; (b) type and frequency of use of mitigating/downgrading devices; (c) type and frequency of use of aggravating/upgrading devices, including the sequential features of the conversation such as turn-external delays, gaps, overlaps, and simultaneous talk. The interpretation of the findings allows for a preliminary comparison and classification of English, Spanish and Japanese regarding the realization patterns of disagreements by young acquaintances in a 'polite' context. These findings, however, are revised in Chapter 6, where a qualitative analysis is conducted to provide a more fine-grained picture of the similarities and differences among the three languages investigated, and the relationship between conversational style and politeness is established. Finally, the overall findings are summarized and conclusions offered in Chapter 7.

Before proceeding to Chapter 1, however, some caveats are in place. Firstly, although I have purported this study to be a comparison between North American, Peninsular Spanish, and Japanese cultures, some qualifications should be made. Almost all the American participants in this research came from the Central Region, the Spanish participants came from Andalusia, and the Japanese were mainly from two areas: the Tokyo metropolitan area and Shizuoka prefecture, both located in central Japan.

Secondly, this study is limited to university students and casual conversations, and therefore any extrapolation should be handled with caution. Thirdly, individual differences should not be underestimated. However, these differences should be accounted for by the interactants. That is, differences should be tolerated and accepted by members of a community within certain and well-known limits, otherwise divergent behavior would be sanctioned as strange and weird because unexpected. Finally, the use of the term (dis)agreement with the prefix *'dis'* in parenthesis in the title and in some parts of the present thesis needs to be justified. Although this research work is mainly focused on the realization of disagreements, these communicative acts should be understood as one part of a pair in which agreement is the other part. That is, disagreement is only one of two possible reactions to an assessment, opinion or proposal. Consequently, agreement will often be mentioned throughout the whole thesis as a backdrop against which disagreement should be analyzed and understood.

PART I

THEORY

CHAPTER 1

A MODEL OF (IM)POLITENESS

1.1. Introduction

(Im)politeness has been the object of scholarly interest in the field of pragmatics roughly for the last thirty five years. Since then, a vast amount of research work has been published. As far back as 1994, DuFon *et al.* published a bibliographical list covering more than fifty pages. However, as Fraser observed, "[w]hile the existence of [im]politeness or the lack thereof is not in question, a common understanding of the concept and how to account for it is certainly problematic" (Fraser 1990: 219). The lack of consensus over how to understand and define this notion has permeated (im)politeness research to date. The discussion over how to conceive politeness (and later on, also impoliteness) has not only been permanent, but the points of controversy have also been wide ranged. One object of dispute consists in whether (im)politeness should be studied as a lay or 'folk' notion – called 1st order (im)politeness or (im)politeness$_1$ (Eelen 2001, Watts 2003, Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005) – or as a theoretical construct specifically devised for sociolinguistic/pragmatic investigation – called 2nd order (im)politeness or (im)politeness$_2$ (Watts 2003). Furthermore, among those who construe (im)politeness as a theoretical concept there is no agreement about how it should be defined. Politeness – i.e., the positive side of the construct – has been explained in terms of a set of rules or maxims, face-work, appropriate behavior, observance of social norms, while impoliteness – i.e., the negative side –, as a breach of those rules, a threat to face, inappropriate behavior, or going against normative behavior. At a more fine-grained level of discussion, researchers working within the (im)politeness$_2$ paradigm have often argued about whether instances of deviations from direct speech should be viewed as an intentional and strategic way to convey politeness (also termed particularized implicature, inferred politeness or

communicated politeness) or just as the normal way people talk and therefore expected and unnoticed (also referred to as generalized conversational implicature, anticipated politeness, or unmarked politeness) (Escandell-Vidal 1996, 1998; Jary 1998; Terkourafi 2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c; Usami 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006; Haugh 2003). Also controversial is the place impoliteness should occupy in the study of (im)politeness (Culpeper 1996; Culpeper *et al.* 2003).

Fraser (1990) identified four views of politeness: the social-norm view, the conversational-maxim view, the face-saving view, and the conversational-contract view, and other proposals have been made since then such as the view of politeness as Relational Work (Watts 1989, 1992, 2003; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005), and Terkourafi's Frame-Based Approach (2001, 2003, 2005c, 2005d). The social-norm view can be dubbed as the 'traditional' way of understanding politeness consisting in a set of social norms that prescribe how people should behave in certain contexts and it is generally associated with 'good manners' and 'etiquette'. In fact, these are some of the definitions for the word 'polite' given by the OED, together with 'cultivated', 'refined', or 'elegant'. Thus, if the behavior observed is congruent with the norms, it is positively evaluated as polite, and if those norms are not followed, negative evaluations arise (impoliteness, rudeness). This traditional view of politeness is also closely related to 'formal' speech style, and this is how people normally understand the concept.

However, this way of understanding politeness is faced with several problems as an object of study in general, especially if the purpose is to carry out a cross-cultural comparison. Besides the fact that an equivalent term might not be found in every language (Nyowe 1992: 315) or that there might not be exactly semantic correspondence between similar terms across cultures (Hill *et al.* 1986), or even that the understanding of what is to be considered polite might change over time (Locher 2004: 72), the strict relationship between politeness and formality precludes the possibility of explaining why even in some informal contexts people use different strategies to convey the same propositional message. So, for example, a wife can request her husband to pick up the phone as follows (among many other possibilities):

(1) *Pick up the phone*
(2) *Can you pick up the phone, please?*
(3) *The phone is ringing*

While (1) is a straight request, most people would agree that (in the appropriate context) (2) would be considered more polite than (1) although not necessarily more 'formal'. Furthermore, how should we account for (3)? Is it more formal? Is it a more 'refined' or 'elegant' way of requesting? While it could be argued that (3) is merely a highly indirect way of asking to pick up the phone and that politeness is irrelevant, there must be some motivation for using (and most frequently is) (3) instead of (1), and it could be argued that one such motivation is politeness. Even more problematic is the fact that studies conducted by Garfinkel (1972, *cit.* in Terkourafi 2001: 4; see also Fraser 1990: 321) revealed that polite behavior was seen as arrogant or even impolite if used among family members. Therefore, I agree with Terkourafi (2001) that "the everyday notion of politeness turns out to be ambiguous and imprecise, and cannot serve as the basis for a theoretical definition with reference to which politeness phenomena may be identified and described" (Terkourafi 2001: 5). That is, (im)politeness should have a clear technical definition in order to be manageable for research (but cf. Eelen 2001; Watts 2003 for a different view).

This is in fact the move made by most approaches to (im)politeness nowadays, although with some relevant exceptions (Watts 2003; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005). In what follows, the other three views of politeness as classified by Fraser (1990) will be reviewed together with the two more recent approaches: the so-called "post-modern" view of politeness as instantiated in Watts' Relational Work (Watts 1989, 1992, 2003; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005) and the most recent Frame-Based Approach proposed by Terkourafi (2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c).

One feature shared by the three "modern" (as opposed to "traditional") views listed above is that they were conceived as proposals to explain apparent deviations from rational efficiency in communication as argued by the philosopher of language Paul H. Grice (1975 [1967], 1978 [1969], 1981 [1970]). Grice captured this primary interest in being informatively efficient in a general Cooperative Principle (CP), formulated as follows:

> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice 1975: 45)

This principle was further spelled out in the form of specific maxims and sub-maxims:

1. The maxim of Quantity
    a. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
    b. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
2. The maxim of Quality
    a. Do not say what you believe is false.
    b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
3. The maxim of Relation
    a. Be relevant.
4. The maxim of Manner
    a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
    b. Avoid ambiguity.
    c. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
    d. Be orderly.

The main tenet is that the CP is always observed even if some of the maxims (or sub-maxims) are flouted, violated, or in conflict among each other, and that these violations motivate what Grice calls *conversational implicatures*, defined as messages intended by the speaker which are not explicitly stated, or at least not in a direct and straightforward manner (i.e., not abiding by the maxims), such as example (3) above in which the sub-maxim of Quantity (1a) would be violated if intended as a request, which is possible in many contexts. Although not developed in his proposal, Grice (1975) himself suggested that politeness could be behind such violations:

> There are, of course, all sorts of other maxims (aesthetic, social, or moral in character) such as *'Be polite'* that are also normally observed by participants in talk exchanges, and these may also generate nonconventional (i.e., conversational) implicatures. (Grice 1975: 47, emphasis added)

Theories of politeness that were specifically proposed as possible explanations for these deviations from rational efficiency were Lakoff's (1973, 1974) Politeness Rules and Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, and to a lesser extent Brown & Levinson's (1978, 1987) Face-Saving view and Fraser's (1990) Conversational-Contract approach (*Vid.* also Fraser & Nolen 1981).

1.2. Politeness as a set of rules

In an attempt to elaborate Grice's CP so as to account for politeness, Robin T. Lakoff (1973, 1974) proposed a set of pragmatic rules that were said to be most often in competition with (or subsumed) Grice's maxim of clarity. She first made the distinction between clarity (i.e., in accordance with the Gricean conversational principles) and politeness by formulating the following Rules of Pragmatic Competence:

1. Be clear.
2. Be polite. (Lakoff 1973: 296)

According to Lakoff (1973: 305), these pragmatic rules should be part of our linguistic rules, just as syntactic or semantic rules are. In her model, politeness is conceived as avoidance of offense, which should most often supersede clarity "since in most informal conversations, actual communication of important ideas is secondary to merely reaffirming and strengthening relationships" (Lakoff 1973: 298). Nevertheless, clarity and politeness are considered to be weighted differently in different conversational settings. For example, clarity is more expected in business meetings or in academic lectures.

As Grice divided the CP into a set of conversational maxims, Lakoff further formulated three rules of politeness as follows (adapted):

1. Don't impose
2. Give options
3. Make (the addressee) feel good – be friendly. (Lakoff 1973: 298)

These rules are said to be in effect together or separately, and in the latter case one would normally supersede the other(s) depending on the context, especially between options 1 and 3, which seem to be applicable in different situational settings. Thus, Rule 1 would apply in formal and impersonal settings, Rule 2 in informal situations, and Rule 3 in more intimate relationships. Clarity depends on whether Rule 1 is applied or not, and therefore politeness subsumes clarity, and not the other way around (Lakoff 1973: 303, 305). According to Lakoff (*ibid.*: 304), although the rules are universal, there might be cross-cultural variation in how the above three rules are ordered, which in turn

determine the way politeness is viewed across cultures. One problem with Lakoff's proposal is that there is no apparatus that allows for an explanation of how interactants (and also the analyst) assess the level of politeness required in each context. Even more problematic is her view of pragmatic rules as linguistic rules that should be followed as we do with syntactic or semantic rules.

1.3. Politeness as a set of maxims

A similar proposal that has Grice's conversational maxims as the starting point is Leech's (1983) notion of politeness as a conversational principle that parallels Grice's Cooperative Principle of maximum efficiency in conversation. Adopting the view that the level of politeness will depend on the speaker's illocutionary and social goals, Leech proposes a set of maxims situated within the domain of Interpersonal Rhetoric, which include those related with Grice's CP, as well those under a Politeness Principle (PP) and those associated with an Irony Principle (IP). Thus, while Lakoff regarded politeness as superseding clarity, Leech considers that the PP interacts with the CP at the same level, with the latter used to explain illocutionary indirectness and the former to explain why this is so.

In a classification that parallels the set of maxims of information efficiency proposed by Grice, Leech's Politeness Principle subsumes six interpersonal maxims (Leech 1983: 119ff): Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy, which modulate the otherwise direct and maximally informative utterances. These maxims would be variably gauged and applied in different contexts and cultures, and possible clashes among them would be resolved depending on the relative weight assigned to some maxim depending on the situation. Leech adds one more maxim called Phatic, which accounts for utterances which role is not to inform, but to establish or maintain relationships among participants.

Furthermore, Leech also establishes a series of scales such as cost-benefit, optionality, indirectness, authority and social distance, on which the observation of the above maxims would depend. So, for example, the Tact Maxim is said to be at work at a lower or higher level depending on the costs for the addressee, his/her authority relative to the speaker, and the social distance, which in turn would determine the degree to

which the speaker would give options to the addressee and the indirectness of the utterance used to convey the intended message.

In a vein similar to Lakoff's (1973) distinction between imposition avoidance and friendliness, Leech distinguishes two types of politeness: Negative Politeness, which consists in minimizing impoliteness in impolite utterances, and its mirror-image Positive Politeness, consisting in maximizing politeness in polite utterances.[1]

Leech's proposal carries the problem that it is difficult to put into practice. As Fraser (1990) argues, "there is no way of knowing which maxims are to be applied, what scales are available, how they are to be formulated, what their dimensions are, when and to what degree they are relevant, and so forth" (Fraser 1990: 227). Additionally, although the scale of maxim observance is very neat, recent studies have shown that it cannot be applied in all contexts and in all cultures (*vid.* Blum-Kulka 1987, 1990, 1997; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002; Sifianou 1992; Terkourafi 2001; Wierzbicka 1985). Furthermore, the direct relationship established between illocutionary acts and (im)politeness has been criticized. As Holmes (1995) puts it:

> Not only is there an infinite variety of ways of expressing linguistic politeness, it is also the case that the same linguistic devices can express different meanings in different contexts. There is nothing intrinsically polite about any linguistic form. (Holmes 1995: 10).

Additionally, there seems to be no limitation as to the number and type of maxims that could be formulated. Nothing would prevent us from making additional proposals. Finally, it also lacks parsimony, with its vast number of maxims, sub-maxims, functions and scales, which makes it less attractive than Brown & Levinson's (1987 [1978]) face-saving model.

1.4. The face-saving model

Brown and Levinson's (1987 [1978]) face-saving theory of politeness has been – and probably still is – by far the most influential model to date. As the previous two approaches, it assumes that Grice's CP is basically a correct account of what goes on in

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[1] These labels are also used by Brown & Levinson (1987), but with a different meaning.

conversation, but they do not attempt at extending its theory the way Lakoff and Leech did, but use it merely as a starting point for their theory, which aims at finding social-psychological motivations for the deviations from rational and efficient communication normally found in language use. Instead of proposing additional principles or rules of conversation, they put the notion of 'face' at the core of their theory. One major tenet in Brown & Levinson's theory is that while CP is viewed as 'unmarked' behavior, linguistic politeness needs to be communicated:

> The CP defines an 'unmarked' or socially neutral (indeed asocial) presumptive framework of communication [...]. Politeness has to be communicated, and the absence of communicated politeness may, *ceteris paribus*, be taken as absence of the polite attitude. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 5).

So, it should be assumed that there is "no deviation from rational efficiency without a reason" (*ibid.*) and that politeness can be such reason. In other words, no deviation = no politeness.

Brown & Levinson propose the construction of a Model Person, symbolizing every "competent adult [member] of a society" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 61), endowed with rationality and face (Brown & Levinson 1987: 58, 61). Rationality is defined in very concrete terms as "a precisely definable mode of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends" (*ibid.*) which in a way resembles the goal-orientation proposed by Leech (1983). But crucially, it differs in that those ends are, not only communicative, but also face-oriented (Brown & Levinson 1987: 58). Thus, the need to "save face" is behind all polite behavior, either verbal or non-verbal. They define face as "the public self-image that every [adult] member [of society] wants to claim for himself [sic]" (*ibid.*: 61). Their notion of face is partly taken from Goffman (1967) and partly from the English folk term, as used in expressions such as "losing face", related to the feelings of embarrassment and humiliation.

In addition to this general definition, Brown & Levinson propose that the claimed public self-image has two aspects: "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom of imposition" (*ibid.*), labelled 'negative face', and "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (*ibid.*), called 'positive face'. These two aspects

being vulnerable in interaction, people try to cooperate in maintaining each other's face by letting the other participants know that one is taking face concerns into consideration (*ibid.*), and although they allow for certain variation among cultures regarding the exact limits of both negative and positive face, they assume that the mutual knowledge of and concern for face are universal. (*ibid.*: 62).

According to their model, there are certain (speech) acts that intrinsically threaten the face wants of either the speaker or (more importantly) the addressee. These are called Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs). FTAs, which may be targeted at either positive or negative face wants, will tend to be avoided or at least minimized and appropriate strategies used. According to Brown & Levinson (1987: 68), these strategies will vary depending on the relative weightings (Wx) of three wants: the communication of the content of the FTAx, efficiency/urgency, and face-maintenance. FTAx is calculated by the use of the formula Wx = D (S,H) + P (H,S) + Rx. D (S,H) refers to the social distance between the speaker and the hearer, P (H,S) represents the relative power of the hearer over the speaker, and Rx is the ranking of the imposition of the FTAx, which might vary across cultures. Unless the need for efficiency outweighs the other two factors, the speaker will try to minimize the threat of his/her FTAx.

Depending on the value of the above weightings, the speaker may choose from two different sets of strategies: on record and off record (see Fig. 1). On record strategies are those in which the addressee can attribute a rather clear communicative intention to the utterance produced by the speaker, while off record acts are all kinds of 'hints' where no clear and unique intention can be assigned and "the meaning is to some degree negotiable" (*ibid.*: 69). On record acts can be done with or without redress, the former being typically those performed "in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible" (*ibid.*), and used only when threat to the addressee's face is considered not to damage the speaker's own face, when the threat to the addressee's face is very small and/or when urgency outweighs any face considerations. Otherwise, on record FTAs will be performed with redressive action, i.e., using linguistic devices that lessen face-threat. These devices will vary depending on the type of face toward which the strategy is oriented: positive politeness strategies will include those approach-based devices conveying solidarity, belonging, similar wants, and so on, whereas negative politeness strategies are those aimed at showing respect for the addressee's want for freedom of action.

Fig. 1: Strategies for doing FTAs (Brown & Levinson 1987: 60)

Circumstances determining
choice of strategy:

Lesser

1. without redressive action, baldly

on record

2. positive politeness

Do the FTA   with redressive action

Estimation of risk of face loss

4. off record

3. negative politeness

5. Don't do the FTA

Greater
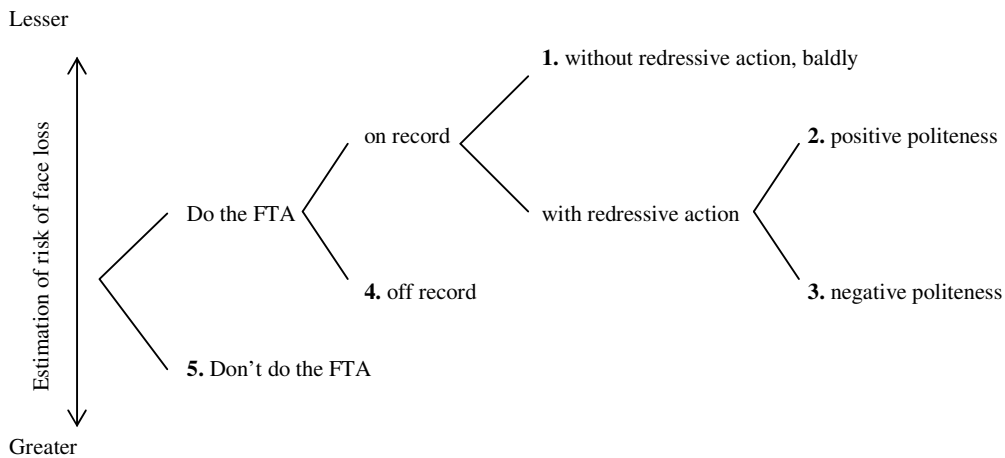
Brown & Levinson (1987) go on to show and discuss the possible ways in which these macro- or super-strategies can be linguistically realized. So, for example, for positive politeness they list 15 possible micro- or sub-strategies (*ibid.*: 103-129) and for negative politeness, they give ten (*ibid.*: 129-211), providing examples from three languages (Tzetal, Tamil and English) for each one of them. These examples are mainly single sentence-long utterances without either co-text or context (e.g., *(on saying goodbye) This was a lovely party* (*ibid.*: 121), *Could you jump over that five-foot fence?* (*ibid.*: 173), and the like), pairing direct speech acts with baldly on record strategies, and indirect speech acts with both redressive on record and off record strategies.

Brown & Levinson's classification of strategies is based on the speech-act-theoretical model of communication (SAT). SAT was a formalization made by John R. Searle (1965) drawing from initial ground-breaking insights on the performative (as opposed to representative) nature of utterances put forward by the philosopher of language John L. Austin (1976 [1962]), who first drew attention to the fact that some utterances cannot be considered statements describing something but actions performed through language. Examples of this kind of utterances are the naming of ships or the proclamation of husband and wife by a priest in a wedding ceremony. Austin calls utterances of this kind 'explicit performatives', as opposed to 'implicit performatives', in which the performative verbs are not said (e.g., *go* which may have the same function as *I order you to go*, where the explicit performative verb is *order*). He further

formulates the distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts performed when something is said, and the notion of illocutionary force as the intended meaning of an utterance. A locutionary act is what is said, the act of saying; an illocutionary act is what is meant by what is said, or the act performed in saying something, and the perlocutionary act is the ultimate goal pursued (or the effect desired) by what is said. For Austin, the locutionary and the illocutionary acts are performed simultaneously: "To perform a locutionary act is in general, we may say, also and *eo ipso* to perform an illocutionary act, as I propose to call it" (Austin 1976 [1962]: 99). The logical separation between "the act *of* saying something" and the act performed "*in* saying something" (Austin 1976: 100) is of central importance because it relates "what is said" to the person who said it, i.e., the speaker. Austin finally stated that certain contextual requirements should be met for the successful performance of speech acts, and called them *felicity conditions.*

Based on Austin's initial notions, Searle (1965) gave a more systematic account of speech as action. He made a classification of speech acts into five major types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations. He further specified the types of conditions necessary for the felicitous fulfilment of an act: (1) the *propositional content condition,* (2) *preparatory conditions,* (3) the *sincerity condition* and (4) the *essential condition,* thus systematizing Austin's initial insight. So, for example, for the act of *promising* to be felicitous when a speaker S utters a sentence T in the presence of a hearer H, T will count as a promise if (1) the propositional content is a future act A of S; (2a) H would prefer S's doing A to his/her not doing A, and S believes H would prefer his/her doing A to his/her not doing A, and (2b) it is not obvious to both S and H that S will do A in the normal course of events (*preparatory conditions*); (3) S intends to do A (*sincerity condition*), and (4) S intends that the utterance of T will place him/her under an obligation to do A (*essential condition*). Now, these felicity conditions were stated having direct speech acts in mind, that is, utterances interpreted as having their paradigmatic meaning or illocutionary force, recognized by the hearer "in virtue of the hearer's knowledge of the rules that govern the utterance of the sentence" (Searle 1975: 59). Thus, the paradigmatic function of interrogative sentences is making questions, while imperative sentences are used for commands and declarative sentences for statements of fact. However, it was immediately noted that more often than not these sentence types were used with other intended meanings, as for example, a declarative sentence with the force of a request

(e.g., *'I need a cigarette'* with the force of 'give me a cigarette') or an interrogative sentence with the force of an offer (e.g., *Do you want some more cake?* with the force of 'have some more cake').

SAT and Brown & Levinson's Politeness Theory met at this point, since politeness had been given as one of the main motivations for these *indirect* uses of utterances (Searle 1975, Brown & Levinson 1987 [1978], but *cf.* Blum-Kulka 1987, Sifianou 1993, Holmes 1995, Terkourafi 2001). In fact, Brown & Levinson's whole argument for the classification of politeness strategies into bald on record, on record with redressive action and off record is built upon the distinction made in SAT between direct and indirect speech acts together with Gordon & Lakoff's (1971) suggestion that by stating or questioning a felicity condition politeness is systematically achieved (Brown & Levinson 1987: 132; *vid.* also Searle 1975). Thus, an utterance like *Do you want me to go now?* would count, in the appropriate context, as a polite offer by virtue of inquiring whether the preparatory condition of H (the hearer) wanting S (the speaker) to perform the act of going is obtained. Furthermore, many of these indirect forms are so conventionalized that they are the *primary* or default interpretation (Searle 1975: 62) and in most cases there is no doubt about the intended meaning (Brown & Levinson 1987: 133). Due to this double nature —being indirect but conventionally so (and hence most often unambiguous)— these speech acts are classified by Brown & Levinson as on record politeness strategies (negative politeness strategy, to be more precise[2]) because this way "the speaker's want to communicate his [sic] desire to be indirect [is conveyed] even though in fact the utterance goes on record" (*ibid.*: 133) in virtue of the fact that, by questioning or asserting doubt about a precondition, S indicates that she does not take for granted that the precondition is met and/or allows H to deny that the precondition is met, thus providing H a way out (*ibid.*: 134).

As opposed to on record negative politeness strategies, off record strategies are described as speech acts whose possible interpretations are much more open-ended and presented as mere hints, thus depending on a full-blown reasoning process taking into account nonce contextual factors to reach the conversational implicatures intended by the speaker (*ibid.*: 213; Blum-Kulka 1997: 46). For example, *'What a boring movie!'* can be an off record suggestion to, say, change the TV channel, turn off the DVD

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[2] The first negative politeness micro strategy is *Be conventionally indirect*. One of the problems with Brown & Levinson's model refers to the relationship between the macro-strategies and their realizations (see Section 1.5).

player, or leave the movie theater, or just an assessment about the movie in question. It all depends on the context in which it is uttered; no default, *a priori* meaning (conventionalized) can be assigned.

1.5. Critiques to the face-saving model

Among the three so-called "modern" (Werkhofer 1992) approaches to the study of linguistic politeness (Lakoff 1973; Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), Brown & Levinson's has been the most influential, especially because they articulated their theory in such a way – and provided specific tools – to make it possible to carry out empirical research to test their hypotheses. Another major advantage, especially with respect to Leech's proposal, was its parsimony. But, arguably, its major contribution has been the inclusion of both psychological and social aspects to their theory. Thus, whereas Lakoff's and Leech's approaches can be labelled as rule/principle/maxim based (in the sense of principles governing language use), Brown & Levinson introduced the notions of face and rationality (psychological-cognitive factors) as well as social parameters (power and distance) in their paradigm, thus bringing together the external and internal motivations for politeness.

However, as influential as it has been, Brown & Levinson's model has also been the target of much criticism. Fraser (2005 [1999]) mentions eight points in their theory that are, at least, controversial: (1) their view of politeness as deviation from rational efficiency; (2) the place of politeness in Grice's Cooperative Principle; (3) the conflation of deference and politeness by including the former as a politeness strategy; (4) the exclusion of rudeness and impoliteness; (5) the one-to-one correlation between politeness strategies and face-threat mitigation; (6) their ethnocentric notion of face; (7) their Wx formula, including problems of definitions of P and D (Spencer-Oatey 1996), the assignment of comparable values to P, the independence of the variables from each other (Watts *et al.*, 1992), and the additive nature of the formula (Holtgraves & Yang, 1992), and finally (8) the hierarchical nature of politeness strategies and the exact place of these in such hierarchy. Some of these points are commented below.

As Fraser (2005) points out, Brown & Levinson's (1987) assumption that politeness represents a deviation from Grice's CP (point (1)) has been widely criticized as counterintuitive because politeness is rather the norm and often passes unnoticed,

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while it is rather the breach of such norm that becomes salient in interaction (Escandell-Vidal 1996, 1998; Fraser 1990; Jary 1998; Kasper 1990; Meier 1995, Terkourafi 2001, 2005d; Usami 2002). As Kasper (1990) noted, people normally "comment on absence of politeness where it is expected, and its presence where it is not expected", which means that "politeness is more often anticipated than communicated" (Jary 1998: 1; *vid.* also Fraser 1990: 234).

Another problem consists in the exclusion of impoliteness and rudeness from the paradigm (point (4)). An initial attempt to characterize rudeness was made by Kasper (1990), who separated motivated from un-motivated rudeness, and motivated rudeness was further divided into three different types: Lack of control on affect, strategic rudeness and ironic rudeness (Kasper 1990: 208-211). More recently, Culpeper (1996) proposed as theory of impoliteness that would mirror a theory of politeness, and nowadays, almost all accounts of (im)politeness include the negative side of the equation. The question remains whether Brown & Levinson's Wx formula could be extended to account for impolite acts, although it seems quite difficult. As it stands, Brown & Levinson's model accounts for either efficient communication or a deviation from it in polite terms.

The status of politeness strategies is another major stumbling block (point (5)). It is not clear that there is a one-to-one correlation between politeness strategies and face-threat mitigation, as Meier (1995: 385) has shown: an apology could be a request for exoneration and therefore a threat to H's face. Furthermore, a request could be not only an FTA, but also a sign of solidarity. Turner (1996, *cit.* in Fraser 2005) shows that many strategies may address more than one face. For example, the request *'Could you look after the baby for half an hour?'* could be a threat to H's negative face (imposition) as well as to H's positive face (if interpreted as a real question), but it could also be an anointment of H's positive face, if it is interpreted as a token of confidence and trust, making the addressee feel accepted as a responsible person. Thus, off-record strategies such as *'You're good with children'* could have multiple interpretations depending on the setting. Another problematic point is the relationship between on-record redressive acts (i.e., positive and negative politeness) and off-record politeness. Blum-Kulka (1987) found a problem with the status of both on-record strategies with respect to off-record ones. Conventionalized utterances were perceived as more polite and, therefore, a distinction between conventional and non-conventional indirection should be established. Intercultural variation poses a further problem: Clancy (1986: 221, *cit.* in

Fraser 2005) suggests that indirect forms in the US mitigates negative face, but shows empathy in Japan, while Placencia (1996: 28) questions the one-to-one correspondence between strategy type and its value, in view of the results obtained in her analysis of Ecuadorian Spanish. Therefore, Kasper (1990) suggests that "strategies and means of politeness enactment are not endowed with absolute politeness values; rather their politeness potential appears to be 'over-determined' by the contextual constraints operating in different discourse types and speech events" (Kasper 1990: 200-1; see also Holmes 1995, Watts 2003, Locher 2004, Spencer-Oatey 2005).

Their notion of face as applicable to all cultures has also been widely criticized (point (6)). Problems have been found in Brown & Levinson's definition of face in terms of individual psychological wants. For Matsumoto (1988: 404), it is too focused on individual rights. For the Japanese, "[l]oss of face is associated with the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group" (Matsumoto 1988: 405), and suggests redefining face as a "socially given self-image" more in line with Goffman's (1967) view. Ide (1989: 241) goes even further and claims that face is irrelevant in Japan and that the motivating force for being polite is discernment. Nwoye (1992) proposes adding the notion of "group face", defined as the individual's desire to behave in conformity with culturally expected norms of behavior, based on his observation of the Igbo society. Gu (1990) concludes that Brown & Levinson's notion of negative face cannot be applied to Chinese, while López Sako (2008) suggests that positive face is equally individualistic and egocentric in its definition.

The correctness of Wx formula has been questioned (point (7)). According to Brown & Levinson, Wx is equal to the sum of D + P + Rx, which are culturally and contextually variable and determine the perceived weight of an FTAx (by the speaker). Fraser (2005) argues that the notion of "inherent risk" has never been properly operationalized, Wx has no predictive ability and the universal classes of strategic use are not regular classes. Another problem is how to define P and D (Spencer-Oatey, 1996: 5). For example, D could be dubbed as frequency of contact, length of acquaintance, amount of self-disclosure, and amount and type of affect. On the other hand, how to assign a number to P (degree of P)? Fraser states that P and D are constantly renegotiated and, also, have different loadings in different languages, which would result in different strategies for the same Rx. Other problems and suggestions have been made. Watts *et al.* (1992) question that the variables should be regarded as

independent of each other; Holtgraves & Yang (1992) cast doubt on their additive nature and argue that when any of the three variables is extremely high the speaker will be polite no matter how small the other values are. In addition to the difficulty in determining the value of Wx, "it is unclear how it should be applied to the hierarchy of politeness strategies and what the relationship of the main class of strategies is to each other" (Fraser 2005: 79).

Finally, it has been argued that there is a design flaw in the hierarchy of the macro-strategies. There might be circumstances in which, for example, silence can be more impolite than an off-record utterance. For example, studies in Conversation Analysis have found that questions and answers form adjacency pairs and that the former creates an expectancy of an answer. Therefore, if an answer is expected, there is a possibility (context allowing) that not providing an answer be seen as impolite. Blum-Kulka (1987), as observed earlier, found that indirectness should be separated into conventional and non-conventional indirectness, on the basis that only conventional indirectness is almost always associated with politeness.

To the above list one final problem could be mentioned in relation again to the notion of face: Brown & Levinson's view of face as exclusively oriented toward "threat avoidance", which has been considered an over-pessimistic view of communication. As Terkourafi (2001) suggests, "face may not only be threatened but it may also be maintained by not creating any imbalance" (Terkourafi 2001: 11). That is, "[c]onversants can and do attend to their own and other's face even when redressing a threat is not an issue" (Arundale 1999: 145). Following this assumption, Arundale (1999) proposed an alternative "face-constituting" view that is closer Goffman's sense sense of the notion of face maintenance as "a condition of interaction, not its objective" (Goffman 1967: 12; *vid.* also Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2005). This move from face as threat-avoidance to face as intrinsic to communication and as a pre-requisite is important for a theory of politeness as anticipated rather than communicated, since it is not linked to specific face-threatening acts, but it is present in every interaction as far as it is not rude or impolite.

In sum, although Brown & Levinson's theory of politeness has allowed for politeness to stand on its own as an important field of research, it seems that the time has arrived to abandon the idea of its being the 'canonical' approach. As far back as 1990, Kasper had already suggested this:

[I]n the light of current evidence, it has also become clear that the early models, while impressive in their parsimony and elegance, are over-simplistic. Their lasting achievement is to have provided excellent heuristics to investigate a highly complex object of inquiry. As theories with claims of universality, they need elaboration and revision. (Kasper 1990: 194).

Terkourafi (2001) puts it this way:

The point […] is to emphasise the commonsensical bias of approaches which seek politeness in deviations from the CP (R. Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987) in a move consonant with the intuition "no deviation from rational efficiency, no politeness" which implicitly guides traditional accounts. While this intuition may have been useful at an initial stage to draw attention to the phenomena of linguistic politeness, it nonetheless has the effect of confining politeness to instances of deviation from the CP, when, on closer investigation, such deviations only achieve politeness in association with the context of utterance. Reference to the context of utterance is therefore unavoidable. At the same time, once a theory incorporates such a reference, it must account for attested instances of achieving politeness without deviating from the CP (Arundale & Ashton 1992). Appealing to the above intuition, then, proves inadequate to account for the full range of politeness-in-context. (Terkourafi 2001: 6).

In what follows, models of politeness that attempt to account for "politeness-in-context" are reviewed. I will start with Fraser's (1990; Fraser & Nolen 1981) Conversational-Contract view of politeness, and then I will follow with Watts' (1989, 1992, 2003) Relational Work, which has recently been more developed than Fraser's proposal and has been used in empirical studies (Locher 2004).

1.6. The Conversational-Contract view

The Conversational-Contract (CC) view (Fraser 1990, 1999; Fraser & Nolen 1981) is based on the assumption that:

upon entering into a given conversation, each party brings an understanding of some initial set of rights and obligations that will determine, at least for the preliminary stages, what the participants can expect form the other(s). During the course of time, or because of a change in the context, there is always the possibility for a renegotiation of the conversational

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contract, the two parties may readjust just what rights and what obligations they hold towards each other. (Fraser 1990: 232).

According to this approach, there are some aspects of conversation that are non-negotiable such as turn-taking, the use of intelligible language, and speaking loudly enough and seriously. Also non-negotiable are requirements imposed by social institutions, such as a church service or in court. Other terms (of the conversational contract) can be determined by previous encounters or by the context at hand, and can be subject to renegotiation as the conversation unfolds.

The CC view accounts for the often observed fact that speakers initiate an interaction with certain expectations determined by his/her relative status, power and role with respect to others, as well as by the nature of the interaction. Thus, "[b]eing polite does not involve making the hearer 'feel good', à la Lakoff or Leech, nor with making the hearer not 'feel bad', à la B[rown] & L[evinson]. It simply involves getting on with the task at hand in light of the terms and conditions of the CC" (Fraser 1990: 233).

Another important difference between CC and the previous models consists in integrating polite behavior within the Cooperative Principle, since being cooperative involves "abiding by the CC" (Fraser 1990: 233). Thus, the view of politeness as a deviation from "the most 'efficient' bald-on-record way of using language" (*ibid.*) is discarded, since polite intentions are taken for granted and expected to be present in every conversation. Thus, using a relevance theoretical expression, they need not be made ostensive.

One important contribution of this approach to politeness theorizing consists in the definite departure from the view of politeness as something consciously calculated and communicated, and wholly dependent on the speaker's choice. As Fraser & Nolen (1981) point out, at the end of the day, politeness is "totally in the hands (or ears) of the hearer" (1981: 96), and therefore the possible perlocutionary effect (borrowing Austin's terminology) that an utterance may produce is not under the speaker's control although s/he can anticipate it. Fraser (1999) puts it this way: "[the] Speaker selects the form of the utterance to meet [the] rights and obligations [constituting the CC] and in terms of: the Nature of the message (content and force) [and the] Anticipated perlocutionary effect" (Fraser 1999: 15). I agree with Terkourafi that the importance of Fraser's proposal consists in having brought "into prominence the notion of participants'

expectations in conversation" which "emanate to a large extent forom participants' knowledge of conversational conventions, and of constraints imposed by social institutions, participant roles, and the nature of the circumstances, all of which rely heavily (if implicitly) on convention" (Terkourafi 2001: 14), something that was already pointed out by Blum-Kulka (1987).

1.7. Relational Work

A radical departure from previous approaches is found in what Terkourafi (2005) calls "post-modern" views of politeness, among which probably Watt's (1989, 1992, 2003) Relational Work (RW) is the most representative. This view, however, is shared by Eelen (2001), who set out a strong critique against the most influential theories of politeness. He rejects their theoretical standpoint (politeness$_2$ over politeness$_1$, speaker-oriented, politeness as action) and the tools and notions used therein (recourse to culture, norms, shared knowledge, pragmatic competence as explanatory factors). Relying heavily on Bourdieu's theory of practice and his notion of *habitus*, Eelen argues for a bottom-up research method, without making any predictions of what constitutes polite behavior. Thus, his proposal includes using first order politeness as object of analysis rather that second order politeness, focusing the analysis on the hearer's reactions and opinions, and avoiding *a priori* definitions of culture or norms. Eelen's critique is very persuasive but it is not suitable for a linguistic approach to politeness because his main concern is the investigation of politeness from a sociological point of view (rather than linguistic), and he provides no tools to probe into the linguistic aspects of politeness. Nevertheless, Eelen's views have been incorporated by Watts (1989, 1992, 2003) and colleagues (Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005) in their theory of RW.

RW shares with Eelen's (2001) approach the fact that it represents a substantial shift in politeness theorizing. They have two premises in common: 1) they define (im)politeness in lay/folk terms, i.e., as (im)politeness$_1$, and 2) they draw insights from Bourdieu's (1990) sociology of language, with the notion of *habitus* at the core of their proposals. Thus, they are strongly based on social theory, rejecting the Gricean framework with its emphasizes on efficient communication rather than rapport and its

focus on speaker's intentions rather than addressee's inference, and placing rapport management at the heart of politeness practices.

Locher & Watts (2005) define relational work as "the 'work' individuals invest in negotiating relationships with others" (2005: 10). Individuals need to "negotiate" with others because they are "social beings" who need to rely on others to achieve their goals and aspirations in life. This "negotiation" becomes a recurrent social practice.

In order to systematically explain how and when people interact with each other, two concepts are invoked: the notion of *frame* (Goffman 1974, 1981; Tannen 1993a; Escandell-Vidal 1996; Schank and Abelson, 1977), and the concept of *habitus*, taken from Bourdieu's (1990) Theory of Practice. Frame can be seen as "structures of expectation based on past experience" (Tannen, 1993a: 53), or "an organized set of specific knowledge" (Escandell-Vidal 1996: 629). *Habitus* is explained as "the set of predispositions to act in certain ways, which generates cognitive and bodily practices in the individual" (Watts 2003: 149). These two concepts account for "structuring, emergence, and continued existence of social norms which guide both verbal and non-verbal instances of relational work" (Locher & Watts 2005: 11).This by no means implies that individuals always follow a set of norms. On the contrary, having *frame* and *habitus* as a backdrop, people engage in the exploitation of those norms, thus including aggressive and conflictive behavior. So, RW is dynamic in the sense presented by Fraser (1990) and it can be seen as a more elaborated form of the same approach. People start an interpersonal exchange with a set of ideas (based on past experience and, therefore, predispositions) about how the interaction will be. But then the terms may change in the course of the interaction. Thus, "relational work comprises the entire continuum of verbal behavior from direct, impolite, rude or aggressive interaction through to polite interaction, encompassing both appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behavior" (*ibid.*). This continuum is represented as in Fig. 2 below:

Fig. 2. Relational work and its polite version (third column). (Adapted from Locher & Watts 2005: 12).

RELATIONAL WORK			
negatively marked	unmarked	positively marked	negatively marked
impolite	non-polite	polite	over-polite
non-politic / inappropriate	politic / appropriate	politic / appropriate	non-politic / inappropriate
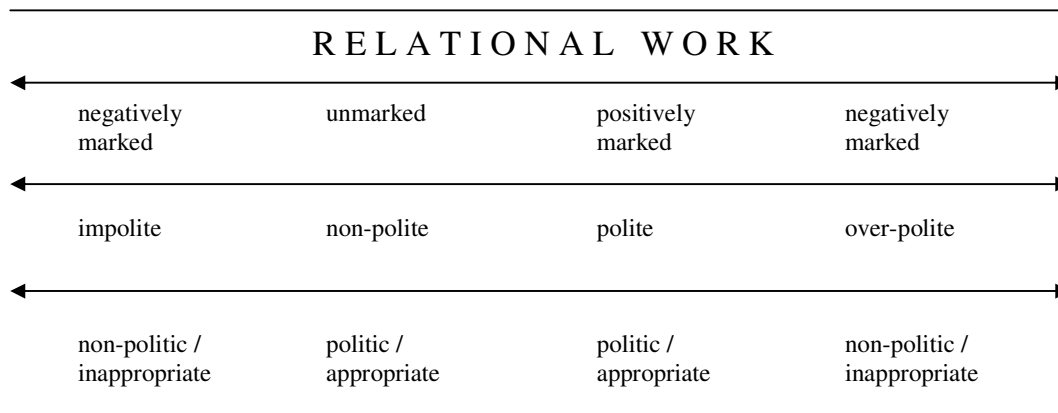
In this scheme, RW is said to be carried out mainly as unmarked behavior (politic/appropriate), and therefore it goes unnoticed. This happens when participants' perceptions of verbal interactions are "oriented to the norms established in previous interactions" (*ibid.*: 11). If not, marked behavior is observed in three possible ways: two of them are negatively marked (either impolite/non-politic/inappropriate or over-polite /non-politic/inappropriate) and one is positively marked (non-polite / politic). In spite of this neat classification, Locher & Watts (2005) warn that "there can be no objectively definable boundaries between these categories if […] politeness and related categories are discursively negotiated" (*ibid.*: 12).

The notion of face is also incorporated into their framework. But instead of following Brown & Levinson's dichotomy, they return to Goffman's notion defined as an image "pieced together from the expressive implication of the full flow of events in an undertaking" (Goffman 1967 [1955]: 31) and as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for (her/himself) by the line others assume (s/he) has taken during a particular contact" (*ibid.*: 5).

One major advantage of this framework over the previous ones is that it accounts for two phenomena that were outside their scope: impoliteness and the possibility that direct utterances be interpreted as appropriate, and not necessarily impolite, in a given context. So, a highly direct request such as *'Oi! Pen!'* can be seen as appropriate in a given context "if the relationship between speaker and addressee is such that this form of behavior is interpretable as good-humor banter" (*ibid.*: 15). And conversely, an utterance such as *'I wonder whether you would be so very kind as to lend me your pen?'* could be over-polite/inappropriate when proffered in the wrong context. As Watts (2003) would put it:

> A failure to abide by members' expectations of what constitutes politic behaviour frequently leads to the attribution of impoliteness. Behaviour in excess of expected politic behaviour is open to interpretation as polite, which may then result in positive or negative evaluations by other participants in the interaction. Conceptualisations of politeness in the literature as ways to achieve comity, mutual concern for others, concern to uphold individuals' face needs, etc. are directed fundamentally to relational work and as such are aspects of politic behaviour. (Watts 2003: 201-2).

Thus, since no one-to-one relationship can be established between linguistic expression and politeness, they "consider it important to take native speaker assessments of politeness seriously and to make them the basis of a discursive, data-driven, bottom-up approach to politeness" (*ibid.*: 16). Their model is thus process-oriented and emphasizes the dynamic realization of politeness, which is a direct consequence of considering (im)politeness$_1$, and not (im)politeness$_2$, the object of study. However, as Terkourafi (2005) points out, their emphasis on politeness as "a matter of situated evaluation" leads them to conceptualize politeness as particularized implicatures, for "evaluations of politeness presuppose specific addressees in specific encounters, hence no prediction is (or can be) made about the impact of linguistic expressions until one knows the specific context in which they were used" (Terkourafi 2005: 241). This leads to two paradoxical conclusions. On one hand, it would mean going back to Brown & Levinson's view that politeness is communicated rather than anticipated, because the speaker's intentions would be calculated anew each time. The other consequence is that, if the analyst cannot make predictions, lay people would not either, and then the notion of "expectation" would be pointless.

Moreover, the conflation of two terms (politic and polite) within the same framework leads to confusion and reduces its parsimony. To begin with, it seems that both folk and technical meanings are simultaneously used. While the folk notion is found in the terms 'polite', 'impolite', 'non-polite' and 'over-polite', I consider the that the terms 'politic' and 'non-politic' to be theoretical constructs broadly equated with appropriateness and inappropriateness, which is similar to some views of (im)politeness$_2$, such as Fraser's CC and Terkourafi's Frame-Based Approach (see next Section). Additionally, the terms 'polite', 'impolite', and so on are equivocal, since in their theory they seem to refer to linguistic expressions rather than behavior. So, when describing a certain utterance, should one say that it is an utterance that would normally

be, for example, 'over-polite' but 'impolite' in the context at hand? Or just 'over-polite' but inappropriate? But then, what does 'over-polite' refer to? In fact, there seems to be a residue of equation between linguistic expressions and "normal" metapragmatic evaluations of those expressions.

It is my view that Terkourafi's Frame-Based Approach is more parsimonious than RW, since one single term captures all the (im)polite phenomena. The term 'politeness' is seen again as a pragmatic theoretical construct, but shying away from Brown & Levinson's biased view of polite behavior as deviation from efficient communication.

1.8. The Frame-Based Approach

A very persuasive and (in my view) well articulated model has been proposed by Marina Terkourafi (2001, 2003, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d) called the Frame-Based Approach (FBA). Her starting point is Brown and Levinson's theory, but she extensively elaborates and improves their model. Thus, she shares with them the notions of face and rationality, although somewhat differently defined. She rejects their Wx formula, and argues for a closer relationship between utterance type and context by appealing to the notions of *frame* and *habitus*, as done within RW. Besides these notions, FBA shares with RW the bottom-up (data driven) approach, and the focus on the hearer rather than the speaker. However, it does not share with some key aspects: Terkourafi argues for an etic definition of politeness (politeness$_2$); she remains faithful to the Gricean paradigm and tries to improve it, thus approaching politeness from a linguistic point of view. All three of them are, in my opinion, important moves to bring the study of politeness back to the pragmatic domain.

1.8.1. Outline of the model

Instead of providing a set of social and interactional variables *à la* Brown and Levinson to calculate the level (and type) of politeness conveyed by an utterance, Terkourafi proposes to analyze linguistic expressions in relation to the immediate context at hand. This is achieved by using two notions: *habitus* and *frames*. The first

notion (also used in RW and Eelen (2001), most prominently by the latter whose critique of politeness theories is almost a direct application of Bourdieuian theory to the field of politeness) is taken from Pierre Bourdieu (1990), who rejects both *objectivist* (forces that are external to the individual and compel him/her to act in a certain way, i.e., mechanical determinism) and *subjectivist* (internal forces that arise from free will in the form of motivation, i.e., pure creativity and freedom) approaches to the study of human (social) behavior, and proposes a synthesis of both, subsumed in the notion of *habitus*.

Habitus is the internalization of the external through recurrent exposure to the same or similar situations. It refers to the system of internal dispositions that enables, and at the same time regulates and limits, the individual's thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions. As Bourdieu explains: "[T]he *habitus* is an infinite capacity for generating products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions, and actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production" (Bourdieu 1990: 55). Thus, this notion captures both the human capacity for invention and creation, as well as the fact that this does not happen "out of the blue", but is limited and conditioned by the individual "history" or past experience. This past experience is actively present in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, that "tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms" (*ibid.*: 54).

The notion of 'scheme' above roughly corresponds to the notion of 'frame' used by Terkourafi, who regards it "as psychologically real implementations of the *habitus*" (Terkourafi 2005b: 253). But, at the same time, it is a tool to describe the regularities found in the data. It sets the parameters to analyze both the linguistic and extra-linguistic components and the relationship between them in an interaction in search of regularities of co-occurrence between the former (linguistic elements) and the latter (context of use). This move is justified by the fact that the analyst looks for the regularities from an emic stance, thus putting him/herself at the same level as the participants in the interaction, who (as the analyst) should be able to detect those regularities.

Having established these two notions as key elements in the FBA, Terkourafi relates them to polite behavior by incorporating two premises, *face-constituting* (i.e., face as always present in interaction and assumed to be maintained whenever possible) and *rationality* (societal rationality, because face-constituting "orientates participants to

maintain social equilibrium" and, therefore, face-constituting may become an end in itself (Terkourafi 2005c: 240)). Rationality is said to be "responsible for gearing behaviour toward the generation and re-enactment of norms (or […] habits) of polite behaviour" (Terkourafi 2005b: 250). So, polite behavior is a habit, which is implemented in a variety of contexts identified via frames. This way, Terkourafi shies away from the view of politeness as "rational calculation", or in other words, of means to obtain a goal (Leech 1983), of social factors to assess the Wx of an act, on which the Brown & Levinson's framework is based.

This move (i.e., regarding politeness as a habit) also implies taking up Kasper's (1990) view that, more often than not, politeness passes unnoticed, that is, politeness is *unmarked* behavior. This leads Terkourafi, again, to reconsider the status of politeness in the Gricean paradigm. She agrees with Arundale (1999) that in Brown & Levinson's account politeness is achieved via particularized conversational implicatures (Terkourafi 2001: 10), that is, politeness has to be communicated, by implicating that the threat to addressee's face is being taken into account and redressed. However, Terkourafi's model differs from this view in two ways: firstly, face is seen as something co-constituted by the interactants (*vid.* also Arundale 1999), and it can be threatened as well as maintained or enhanced (*vid.* also Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2005; and Hernández-Flores 2004a, 2004b). Thus, face concerns are (or are supposed to be) always present in interaction, even if there is no threat involved. In this case, then, there is no need to redress a threat, but just maintain each other's face by not creating imbalance. If this is assumed, the concern for face should be incorporated in the Gricean CP as the main reason for (and sometimes aim of) co-operative behavior, as Terkourafi makes clear (2005c). Secondly, politeness is seen a normally achieved via a generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and only sometimes via a particularized conversational implicature (PCI) as for example when an expression manifestly indicates the polite intention of the speaker. Consistent with the bottom-up (data-driven) approach, those polite GCIs and PCIs are searched in the data. This is possible by seeing politeness as a regularly observed perlocutionary effect of either lack of negative reaction or positive reaction to an utterance. If the act performed is regularly received with (i.e., produces the perlocutionary effect of) indifference, then it is unmarked, and hence polite. From this perspective, politeness$_2$ can be regarded as equivalent to politic behavior in RW, but crucially including polite behavior too, although in this case

conveyed via PCIs. The key elements in the FBA model of politeness are outlined below.

1.8.2. Summary of the key features in the Frame-Based Approach

1. **(Im)politeness$_2$:** It is theoretically defined, without relying on emic interpretations of the concept, but crucially observing people's reactions to it in interaction (see point 2). The positive side of it (i.e., politeness) is defined as face-constituting linguistic behavior at all times. Thus, if face-constituting does not achieve, there is no politeness.

2. **Face**: Politeness is perceived as unmarked behavior because it is assumed that, in principle, all acts are face-supporting or face-constituting, and therefore face is "there" by default. This means that "face-threat redress" does not need to be normally communicated via a particularized conversational implicature (PCI) (*contra* Brown & Levinson's view), but is often conveyed via a generalized conversational implicature (GCI). The word "normally" is key here, because GCI occurs ONLY when an utterance matches the context in which it is regularly used according to the interactants' expectations. This view is supported by Escandell-Vidal (1995, 1996, 1998). This proposal borrows from Brown and Levinson the notions of rationality and face. But rationality is constrained by "*societal* rationality" (Mey 1993: 263) into the realm of interaction: people will normally choose the least costly mode of communication and interaction, which excludes hostility and distrust unless evidence is provided on the contrary. That is, "interlocutors will not attribute a face-threatening intention to each other a priori", (Terkourafi 2005c: 248) thus adopting the opposite view to that of Brown & Levinson. The consequences of societal rationality are twofold: It is on the basis of societal rationality that speakers' communicative intentions and addressees' recognition of those intentions are bridged. This ability to recognize does not apply only to intentions, but also "to ways of threatening/enhancing face, which are also socially constituted" (*ibid.*: 249)

3. **Polite = politic:** No distinction is made between "politic" and "polite" behavior because the way it is done in RW. "Since politeness always arises out of face-

concerns […] both politic and polite behaviour achieve face-constituting" (Terkourafi 2005b)**.**

4. **Perlocutionary effect**: Politeness is identified via the perlocutionary effect produced by an utterance. If no special (negative) reaction is (regularly) observed, then an expression is *unmarked*, and hence polite. Therefore, politeness is quantitatively defined as the statistical frequency of linguistic expressions that are perceived as unmarked in a given context of use.

5. **Frame**: The contexts of use form frames of interaction, and as such it is a descriptive concept. But it is also an analytical tool for describing the observed regularities of co-occurrence of linguistic expressions and contexts of use. Terkourafi includes the following components in a frame: linguistic expressions on the one hand, and on the other, sex, age, social class of the participants, relationships between them, setting of exchange and whether a certain act occurred for the first time or it was repeated. A fundamental assumption of the frame-based view is that the social categories are fixed early on in an exchange based on participants' expectations and in situ evaluations of the context of interaction, thus providing the initial frame of interaction, which nevertheless can be renegotiated throughout the exchange. The claim is made that social categories are no static, but people make initial default assumptions before or as soon as interaction is started. Linguistic expressions are classified into different act types depending on the addressee's uptake.[3]

6. **Bottom-up approach.** That is, it is data driven. It focuses on hearer's uptake and the quantitative analysis of the data. Norms are neither rejected nor assumed, but are seen as the result of empirically observed regularities of co-occurrence between linguistic expressions and context of use in the data. These regularities constitute frames.

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[3] The question of the applicability of such frame to the present study will be taken up in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the use of the face-constituting approach to the study of polite uses of language (Arundale 1999; Terkourafi 2001) has been argued for. Additionally, following Terkourafi (2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d), the Neo-Gricean model of communication has been assumed as part of the theoretical framework with the addition of social-psychological concerns (i.e., face) as a determining factor in the assumption of cooperation in communicative actions, understanding that polite behavior is intended and interpreted as cooperative communicative behavior, i.e., as an integral element in the CP, rather than a deviation from it. Also following Terkourafi (2001, 2005c), politeness was quantitatively defined as the statistical frequency of linguistic expressions that are perceived as (i.e., produce the perlocutionary effect of) unmarked behavior in a given context of use.

The approach adopted requires then to make a close inspection of real discourse in order to obtain empirical evidence of recurrent patterns between those linguistic expressions and politeness in concrete contexts of interaction. The question now is raised as to how to analyze those data. It is no longer feasible to rely on Speech Act Theory, as it was not devised as a tool for empirical research.[4] On the other hand, Terkourafi limits herself to the extraction of relevant request realizations from her empirically obtained corpus and the assignment of possible interpretational frames for the relative frequency of those patterns as polite ways to make requests. So, for example, she observed that the majority of requests performed at home or at informal

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[4] However, some labels and categories used in speech act research (as opposed to speech act theory) can still be used in the analysis of turn-constructional units (*vid*. Kasper 2004, 2006). This point is discussed in Chapter 5.

social gatherings in her Cypriot Greek data were realized either by an action verb in imperative second-person singular form or via an action verb in subjunctive second-person singular form. She further noticed that while the first option was by far the most frequent in general, this order was reversed when the request was performed for the first time at home or at informal social gatherings by a middle-class female speaker to another middle-class female speaker of the same age who was her friend (Terkourafi 2001: 188). This recurrent relationship between utterance type and setting allowed the researcher to propose that the contextual frame in which action verbs in subjunctive second-person singular form are the preferred way to realize a polite request should have the following configuration (see Table 1):

Table 1. Proposed frame for AV-subjunctive-2sg. as the preferred formula for performing requests. (Terkourafi 2001: 190)

Sex of speaker: *female*	Sex of addressee: *female*
Relative age of speaker and addressee: *same*	
Social class of speaker: *(middle)*	Social class of addressee: *(middle)*
Relationship: *friends*	Speech act: *request*
Setting: *at home/informal social gatherings*	Occurs for the: *1st time*
AV-subjunctive-2sg.[5]	

In a similar vein, Terkourafi proposes frame configurations for other four most frequent request realizations. Terkourafi (2001) argues that

> the extra-linguistic features which jointly constitute such frames are limited in number, and specific in kind: they pertain to immediately perceivable information about a situation, and include a reference to the identities of the speaker and addressee (which may be broken down to information about their respective ages, sexes, and social classes), and the place and the time of utterance (i.e., the setting in which a speech act was realised, and its order of occurrence in the flow of discourse). (Terkourafi 2001: 178-9)

Thus, it seems that the contextual features outlined above by Terkourafi includes both macro-contextual (identity information of speaker and addressee) and micro-contextual (the place and the time of utterance) factors that should provide the participants in interaction (and also the researcher) enough elements to reach an accurate interpretation of the acts performed.

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[5] AV-subjunctive-2sg.: 'Action verb in subjunctive second person singular form'.

Now, a question is raised whether this contextual configuration is enough to account for other communicative acts such as (dis)agreements. It is my impression that although an attempt is made to account for the dynamic unfolding of conversation by including "the place and the time of utterance", this micro-contextual and procedural side of the model is not sufficiently spelled-out. The only distinction made in terms of time and place in framing an utterance type is whether they occur for the first time only or for the first time and also afterwards, without being specific about when and where in the conversational sequence this 'afterwards' is located. Her analysis of the five request forms does not shed more light on this, since all of them occurred for the first time except one, which happened for the first time and subsequently.

However, one main feature that distinguishes (dis)agreements from requests is its status as a responding act rather than as an act that initiates an interaction. This would mean that the realization of (dis)agreement would always depend on how the prior utterance has been produced. In other words, while requests can be considered independent from discursive conditions at least at the beginning of an interaction (as the ones analyzed by Terkourafi)[6], (dis)agreements are inevitably preceded by some kind of statement whose realization should in part determine (in combination with the other contextual factors) how and when to utter the response (if uttered at all). Thus, discursive features should always be taken into account when framing (dis)agreement acts, and not just extra-discursive factors. Therefore, it is my argument that more discursive approaches to the data are needed in order to fully account for the crucial role played by context in the nonce interpretations made by participants in face-to-face interactions which are consistent with a Frame-Based Approach (FBA) to the study of politeness.

Following suit, two main approaches to the analysis of discourse will be reviewed that might provide the necessary apparatus to carry out a fine-grained analysis of what is going on in conversation: the linguistically-oriented Discourse Analysis (DA) (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975; Labov & Fanshel 1977; Longacre (1976), Coulthard and Brazil 1979) and the sociologically-oriented Conversation Analysis (CA) (Levinson, 1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1992; Mori, 1999; Pomerantz 1984a; Sacks *et al*., 1974; Schegloff, 1988, 2000; Schegloff *et al.*, 1977; among others). On the whole, it is suggested that the

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[6] Actually, Terkourafi (2001) does not specify what exactly is meant by '1st time'. It seems, however, that it does not refer to an act that initiates an interaction (i.e., initial position in absolute terms), but rather as the first occurrence of that act no matter where it is located in an interactional sequence.

methodological approach used in CA can be more useful than DA for the study of (im)polite communicative acts in context [7] although shying away from some methodological assumptions (see, for example, Turnbull 2007). Of special interest for the present study are central findings in CA such as the systematicity of turn-taking at talk and the notions of adjacency pair and preference organization, which might have a bearing on the analysis of communicative acts as polite or impolite.

Nevertheless, CA's absolute lack of concern for the cognitive and social-psychological aspects of talk-in-interaction, as well as its explicit rejection of contextual factors to explain what goes on in conversation, are seen as two elements that reduce its explanatory power in relation to facework and politeness. Thus, for example, it is argued that the notion of *conditional relevance* cannot be properly explained without recourse to cognitive factors, while the notion of *preference organization* would have more explanatory power if social-psychological factors were taken into account (Bousfield 2007).[8] But precisely the notion of frame and the Levinsonian heuristic model of communication as further elaborated by Terkourafi (2001, 2003, 2004, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d) in the Frame-Based Approach to politeness provide the necessary rational-cognitive support to CA findings, thus coming full circle and integrating Terkourafi's theoretical proposal with a sound analytical instrument. Moreover, CA's approach to discourse is in line with FBA's 'bottom-up' approach to the data.

Finally, as CA is mainly interested in the organizational aspects of conversation, it does not provide a tool to carry out a fine-grained analysis of the concrete turn-internal linguistic realizations, nor does FBA as outlined by Terkourafi (2001, 2005), which focuses on grammatical patterns only. However, I consider that the analysis of turn-organizational features and the levels of conventionality and (in)directness should be completed with a comparison of downgrading and upgrading devices used in the realization of (dis)agreements as (im)polite, since they have the role of mitigating or aggravating the illocutionary force of the utterance (Holmes 1984). Hence, following Kasper (2004, 2006), a combination of CA's analytical instruments for turn-organizational aspects and the analytical apparatus offered by speech act cross-cultural research (as opposed to speech act theory) for turn-constructional units is proposed.

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[7] Several studies have already been conducted using this methodology. See for example Bousfield (2007), Kasper (2004, 2006), and Muntigl & Turnbull (1998).

[8] Only the cognitive aspects will be discussed in this chapter. The notion of 'preference' is dealt with in Chapter 3.

2.2. Two different approaches to discourse: DA vs. CA

Two highly articulated and widely used approaches to discourse are the linguistics-based Discourse Analysis (DA) and the sociology (ethnomethodology)-based Conversation Analysis (CA), which are quite different regarding their theoretical and methodological standpoints. According to Levinson (1983), although DA and CA share the fact that "[b]oth approaches are centrally concerned with giving an account of how coherence and sequential organization in discourse is produced and understood" (Levinson 1983: 286), they differ in almost everything else. On the one hand, DA has inherited its theoretical concepts and methodological principles from traditional descriptive linguistics in their attempt to state rules and formulas for discursive patterns. It has a deductive analytical method and relies heavily on intuition. It is seen as an attempt to extend sentence level analysis to the realm of discourse. CA, on the other hand, is basically inductive in its approach and intuition is strictly avoided.

A neat classification of features that characterize both paradigms is provided by Martínez-Cabeza (2002: 206) (see Table 2):

Table 2. Summary of features of DA and CA (in Martínez-Cabeza 2002: 206).

FEATURES	DISCOURSE ANALYSIS	CONVERSATION ANALYSIS
Descriptive approach	Linguistic	Sociological
Theoretical ontology	Rules	Choice
Theoretical status	Explicit theory	Inexplicit theory
Method of analysis	Deductive	Inductive
Descriptive procedure	Categorization	Identification of patterns
Analytical guideline	Intuition	Discovery procedures

Although both DA and CA represent structural models of conversation, the former is satisfied with a mere description of the function of utterances depending on their location in the exchange sequence, while the latter goes beyond that and tries to see the social organization that lies behind behavioral patterns found in spoken interaction. One major consequence of this difference in interests is that DA is quick in establishing rules of discourse the way it is done in grammar, whereas CA ― and this is crucial for our purposes ― places "emphasis on the interactional and inferential consequences of the choice between alternative utterances" (Levinson 1983: 287). DA, having inherited the methods used in descriptive linguistics (especially from systemic-functional approaches), is theoretically explicit and methodologically deductive, and hence units for analysis are identified, isolated and classified into *categories* depending on the

functions realized in the specific *slot* occupied in discourse, and then contrasted with real data and used as criteria to distinguish *coherent* from *incoherent* discourse sequences. CA, on the other hand, is rooted in sociology, ethnomethodology and anthropology, and therefore has adopted an inductive method in search of recurring *patterns* in the data, avoiding premature assumptions and categorizations.

In what follows, a brief description of both models is provided before proceeding with a critique and assessment of the best approach to discourse in general and for our purposes in particular.

2.3. Discourse Analysis

Although Levinson (1983) includes in the discourse-analytical paradigm the approaches used by Labov & Fanshel (1977), Longacre (1976), Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), and Coulthard & Brazil (1979), we will concentrate here on the model proposed by Sinclair & Coulthard and its latest version presented by Tsui (1994), with only occasional references to other authors like Labov & Fanshel (1977) and Burton (1980). This is justified by the fact that it has been the most widely developed model within DA and has undergone further developments and improvements in recent years as demonstrated by the amount of related publications.[9]

The theory of DA was developed by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) as a model to analyze patterns of linguistic interaction, but specifically applied to the classroom setting. Borrowing Halliday's concept of a Rank Scale of descriptive units, they proposed five units of analysis to account for the organization of discourse, with each smaller unit embedded in larger ones the way systemic-functional grammar does in the analysis of sentences. These units were called *act*, *move*, *exchange*, *transaction* and *lesson*. As the label of *lesson* is clearly inadequate for other conversational exchanges outside the classroom, Burton (1980) uses the term *interaction* for that category instead. Tsui (1994), on the other hand, deals only with the systematization of *moves* and *acts* within an *exchange*, disregarding larger units of analysis (i.e., *transaction* and *interaction*). The rationale behind this categorization of units is made explicit in the

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[9] Pérez de Ayala (2003) suggests some major works introducing modifications and improvements: Burton (1980), Coulthard & Brazil (1981), Berry (1981), Stubbs (1981), and Tsui (1994). Martínez-Cabeza (2002) mentions Burton (1980).

formulation of four criteria that should be followed when describing discourse organization (Sinclair *et al.* 1972, *cit.* in Coulthard 1985: 10-1):

1. The descriptive apparatus should be finite.
2. It has to be a comprehensive system so that the whole of the data can be described.
3. There must be at least one impossible combination of symbols, in order to make falsifiable statements.
4. Symbols used in the descriptive apparatus must be explicitly and precisely relatable to their exponents in the data. That is, it must be established what elements exactly constitute on class with a certain label.

This way, DA aims at providing an apparatus to describe as accurately and comprehensively as possible the discourse phenomena as a whole, starting from delimiting the scope of a discourse unit (i.e., *interaction*) and ending at the smallest elements in that unit (i.e., *act*), thus establishing a hierarchy of analytical levels the way it is commonly done in descriptive grammar. Transactions are made up of exchanges. Each exchange has a boundary identified by means of *falling intonation* and moves like *framing* (e.g., *Well, OK, Now*) and *focusing* (*e.g., today we are going to talk about…*). At the level of moves or minimal discourse interaction units (similar to the notion of *turn* in CA) there are three different types: *opening, answering and follow-up*, whereas Burton (1980) provides a classification into five types: *opening*, *supporting*, *challenging*, *bound-opening*, and *re-opening*. The three-type model is the one adopted by Tsui (1994) but with slightly different labels: *initiating, responding,* and *follow-up*.

As I see it, the difference between both proposals is not just quantitative, but also qualitative. While in Sinclair & Coulthard's and Tsui's versions the labels only make reference to structural and sequential aspects of discourse, Burton's model allows for a classification of moves taking into account their content (topic management, meaning clarification, speech act negotiation). In quantitative terms, Burton's model could be reduced to Tsui's three if supporting and challenging moves merged into Tsui's *responding* category but with different polarity (actually what Tsui does in her sub-classification of responding acts) and the *bound-opening* and *re-opening* moves were grouped under *follow-up.* Even so, several mismatches would remain, as for example the fact that Tsui argues for a three-part exchange with clearly different functions realized by each one of them, while Burton's model seems to be a two-part

model with an extension, with the categories *bound-opening* and *re-opening* having an ambiguous status.

Finally, at the level of acts there is no consensus. Sinclair *et al.* (1972, *cit.* in Tsui 1994) give a list of 22 acts, while Burton (1980) reduces their number to nineteen types. Coulthard (1985) reduces the list even more to 17. One common feature in these classifications is that their lists of acts include those used for the organization of discourse as well as those more closely related with speech acts, i.e., the actions performed by the utterances. Thus, for example, Coulthard (1985) divides the 17 acts in three different groups: three meta-interactive — marker (framing function), meta-statement (focusing function), loop (return to previous move) —, ten interactive — starter, informative, directive, elicitation (initiation acts); acknowledge, react, reply (response acts), accept, evaluate, comment (follow-up acts) —, three for those related with turn-taking — nomination, bid, and cue —, plus one called *aside* produced outside the main interaction. One problem with this classification is that the turn-taking acts are specific for the classroom context and hardly applicable to natural conversation.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and best organized taxonomy of acts is provided by Tsui (1994). She identifies moves with primary acts corresponding to the head acts in every move: *initiating*, *responding*, and *follow-up acts*. These head acts are further classified into four initiating acts (*elicitation, requestive, directive, and informative*), three responding acts (*positive, negative* and *temporization*) and four follow-up acts (*endorsement, concession, acknowledgement* and *turn-passing*)[10]. This is not the end of the story, as each one of these acts has several realizations depending on the specific function they perform. Fig. 3 shows the complete list of possible realizations of initiating acts.

The nature of responding acts are determined by the corresponding initiating act. So, for an initiating act of the type *elicit:inform*, the possible responding acts will be: *positive responding act* and *negative responding act* (or *challenge*)[11], the latter being of two different types: either an expression of inability or a blatant refusal to provide the information, the amount of threat to face being lower in the former than in the latter. In the case of responses to requestives, she also includes the possibility of responding by

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[10] Actually, Tsui distinguishes two different types of follow-up acts, the first type comprising endorsement, concession and acknowledgement, and the second one, turn-passing (*vid*. Tsui 1994: 59-61)
[11] Tsui first uses the term *negative responding act* but she later adopts Burton's term *challenge*.

temporizations, i.e., avoiding a straight positive or negative answer, as when someone answers *I don't know* to a request.

Fig. 3. Taxonomy of choices at the head of initiating move. (Tsui 1994: 220).

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head of          ┌─ elicitation →   ┌─ elicit:inform
initiating move →│                  ├─ elicit:confirm
                 │                  ├─ elicit:agree
                 │                  ├─ elicit:commit
                 │                  ├─ elicit:repeat
                 │                  └─ elicit:clarity
                 │
                 ├─ requestive →    ┌─ request for action
                 │                  ├─ request for permission
                 │                  ├─ offer
                 │                  ├─ invitation
                 │                  └─ proposal
                 │
                 ├─ directive →     ┌─ mandative →   ┌─ instruction
                 │                  │                └─ threat
                 │                  │
                 │                  └─ advisive  →   ┌─ warning
                 │                                   └─ advice
                 │
                 └─ informative →   ┌─ assessment →  ┌─ assessing
                                    │                ├─ compliment
                                    │                ├─ criticism
                                    │                ├─ self-denigration
                                    │                └─ self-commendation
                                    ├─ report
                                    └─ expressive
```

The function of every utterance is determined by their position in the structure of the discourse in which they occur (something of central relevance for CA, too). So a simple utterance like *It's almost five* would be interpreted differently depending on its place. If we compare the following examples,

(4)   A: What time is it?
        B: It's almost five.

(5)   A: It's almost five
        B: OK, let's go.

it is evident that, besides the fact that in (4) *It's almost five* occurs in responding move and in (5) it occurs in an initiating move, it is one linguistic form performing quite

different acts, which for the moment, and following Tsui, might be labelled *reply* and *informative* respectively.

However, one problem that arises concerns how to assign the correct function to utterances that occur in the same structural location. That is, how to decide that an utterance like *It's almost five* occurring in an initiating move is an *informative*, and not a *threat*, for example. DA researchers solve this problem by recurring to the concept of *continuous classification*, by virtue of which "the meaning of an utterance is its predictive assessment of what follows" (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975: 12, *cit.* in Tsui 1994: 17), i.e. the function of utterances are *prospectively* assigned according to the kind of response they expect. So, according to Tsui, the prospective function of *It's almost five* would be informative.

An attempt to systematize this function assignment, or mapping, is made by Labov & Fanshel (1977), who state the following set of rules for directives or requests for action (in Couthard 1985: 28-9):

> If A addresses to B an imperative specifying an action X at a time T1 and B believes that A believes that
>
> 1.   a) X should be done for a purpose Y (*need for the action*)
>   b) B would not do X in the absence of the request (*need for the request*)
> 2.   B has the *ability* to do X
> 3.   B has the *obligation* to do X or is *willing* to do it.
> 4.   A has the *right* to tell B to do X,
>
> then A is heard as making a valid request for action. (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 78)

For the interpretation of indirect requests for action, they state the following rule:

> If A makes to B a *request for information* or an *assertion* about
>
> a)   the existential status of an action X to be performed by B
> b)   the consequences of performing an action X
> c)   the time T1 that an action X might be performede by B
> d)   any of the pre-conditions for a valid request for X as given in the Rule for Requests
>
> and all other pre-conditions are in effect, then A is heard as making a valid request of B for the action X. (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 82).

This way, a request can be realized by either questioning or asserting the following pre-conditions:

1. *existential status* (Have you dusted yet? / You don't seem to have dusted this room yet)
2. *consequences* (How would it look if you were to dust this room? / This room would look a lot better if you dusted it)
3. *time referents* (When do you plan to dust? / I imagine you will be dusting this evening)
4. *pre-conditions*
    1.a   *need for the action* (Don't you think the dust is pretty thick?/This place really is dusty)
    1.b.   *need for the request* (Are you planning to dust this room? / I don't have to remind you to dust this room)
    2.   *ability* (Can you grab a dust rag and just dust around? / You have time enough to dust before you go)
    3.a.   *willingness* (Would you mind…? / I'm sure you wouldn't mind…)
    3.b.   *obligation* (Isn't it your turn to dust? / You ought to do your part in keeping this place clean)
    4.   *rights* (Didn't you ask me to remind you to dust this place? / I'm supposed to look after this place, but not do all the work.)   (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 83)

Now, as conversation is a joint venture including at least two participants, it is possible that the function (or illocutionary force in SAT terms) intended by the speaker is not recognized by the interlocutor or taken with a different discourse value, in which case it is said that the initiating utterance is *retrospectively* reclassified. This is what happens in the following example:

(6) *M has a bad old and H could not recognize her voice*

H: You sound terrible, you sound like a man.
M: Thank you.   (Tsui 1994: 18)

Here, according to Tsui (1994: 18), an assessment is reclassified as a compliment by the second speaker, hence producing a sarcastic effect.

2.4. Shortcomings of the DA approach to discourse

As can be seen, the DA approach represents a neat formalization of discourse structure having into account the hearer's uptake. However, there are several reasons for questioning the appropriateness of this model in accounting for both the structure of conversation and utterance meaning.

Mountford (1975, *cit.* in Coulthard 1985: 142) immediately noticed that DA represents a descriptive apparatus that is applied to the data *est post facto*, and it deals with discourse as a product, not as a process, thus having nothing to say about participants' understanding of discourse as a communicative activity. Willis (1983, *cit.*

in Coulthard 1985: 142) warns about the inadequacy of a model that aims at making a linguistic description while also trying to handle speaker's intentions. However, the most comprehensive and powerful critique against DA approaches to discourse has been made by Levinson (1981a, 1981b, 1983). His criticisms revolve around four assumptions, of which something has already being said regarding points 1, 2 and 3:

1. There are unit acts, *speech acts or moves*, that are performed in speaking, which belong to a specifiable, delimited set.
2. Utterances are segmentable into unit parts – *utterance units* – each of which corresponds to (at least) one unit act.
3. There is a *specifiable function,* and hopefully a *procedure*, that will map utterance units into speech acts and vice versa.
4. Conversational sequences are primarily regulated by a set of *sequencing* rules stated over speech act (or move) types. (Levinson 1983: 289 original emphasis; see also Levinson 1981a: 473-4).

As we have seen in Section 2.3., sequential constraints are established in DA at the level of underlying acts performed by overt utterance units to account for regularities found in conversation of the sort of questions-answers, greetings-greetings, apologies and acceptance/rejection of apologies, and so on. This model further assumes that there is a one-to-one assignment of acts to utterance units, establishing additional rules to distinguish direct/literal speech acts from indirect ones. However, Levinson convincingly demonstrates that unit acts do not necessarily have a single, one-to-one correspondence with utterance units. Utterance units can perform more than one act at a time, as the response *Yes, thank you* to the offer/question *Would you like another drink?* seems to demonstrate. In this case, *yes* addresses the literal meaning of what is said (leaving aside at this stage what we mean by literal), while *thank you* implies an acceptance to the offer. This is what Schiffrin (1994: 85ff) calls a "one form for many functions" relationship, which is a problem both for SAT and, especially, for DA.

Tsui (1994: 44ff) points out, however, that Levinson's criticism is based on his failure to distinguish illocutionary act from perlocutionary effect, as well as the lack of a well defined definition of the labels 'question' and 'offer'. Regarding the first point, Tsui explains that when a speaker produces an utterance like *Would you like another drink?*, he/she realizes the illocutionary act of offering having at the same the intention of producing some perlocutionary effect, which could be, for example, to embarrass the guest or to get him/her to leave because he/she has finished several bottles and is completely drunk. However, this doesn't mean that two illocutionary acts (offering and

asking to leave) has been produced, but rather one illocutionary act of offering and one successful perlocutionary effect if the guest finally decides to leave. With respect to the second point, Tsui argues that there is no reason to regard *Yes, I would* as just an answer to a question and not to an offer, "as there is no necessary relation between grammatical form and communicative function" (Tsui 1994: 46). The problem should be solved by characterizing a question as a discourse act which prospects *only* a verbal response, and an offer as an act which prospects a non-verbal action if responded to positively. Hence, for Tsui it would be pointless to say that a discourse act like the one above prospects a verbal response and *only* a verbal response, while *simultaneously* prospecting a non-verbal action.

There are, in my view, several problems in Tsui's argument which shows the deficiencies in the DA approach to discourse. To begin with, although it is true that there is no one-to-one relationship between grammatical form and communicative function, this does not mean that there is no motivated relationship between them. That is, a speaker does not choose utterances at random when performing an act, but chooses those that will allow the addressee to have access to the speaker's intentions taking into account all the contextual factors, including the situation, shared knowledge, history of the relationship and of the interaction, and so on, as cognitive models of communication such as Relevance Theory have demonstrated.

Furthermore, I see another problem in her definition of an offer as an act that prospects a non-verbal action, if responded to positively. Does this mean that it does not count as an offer if responded to negatively? Furthermore, Tsui's account would have nothing to say about the difference between the following two sequences:

(7)   A: Do you want some more?
        B: Yes, thank you.

(8)   A: Come on, have some more.
        B: OK, thanks.

In both examples, the token of appreciation allow the interpretation of A's utterances as offers. However, while in (7) B starts her turn with *Yes* which is typically a response to a yes/no question, B in (8) produces a token of agreement or compliance. This difference supports Levinson's suggestion that speakers seem to address both the literal and the intended meaning of the utterance *at the same time*.

The strict reliance of DA in predetermined structural frameworks does not allow the possibility to explore and spell out the process by which an utterance that potentially has the function of a question and of an offer be interpreted as either one or the other by the hearer in a given context. While SAT (and Gricean Pragmatics) argue for a cognitive account to explain the phenomenon and CA gives a structural explanation in terms of a four turn sequence in an abbreviated format, DA has nothing to say about it and limits itself to describe the obvious. Any competent speaker of English would see (and this is why almost always communication proceeds smoothly) that *Would you like another drink?* counts as an offer if uttered in the appropriate context. The question a pragmaticist needs to answer is why and how speakers have come to understand a grammatical structure typically used for eliciting verbal responses as realizing another different interactional function.

One further problem in DA's account has to do with point 2 above. Levinson (1981a, 1981b, 1983) casts doubts on the existence and identifiability of utterance units corresponding to unit acts and the fact that the former are equated to sentences, as utterances could perform more than one act at a time and acts could be performed by sentence parts or even by silence: "[T]he relevant utterance units that can function as conversational contributions can be just about anything, including nothing" (Levinson 1981a: 479). Therefore, utterance units must be functionally defined, rather than formally (i.e., sentence). Put in other words, the classification and organization of conversation should be act-based, rather than utterance-based (1981b: 102). Conversely, there are utterance units which do not count as turns, much less as act-units, namely the back-channel cues (Levinson 1981b: 102). This problem is acknowledged by Coulthard (1985). The important conclusion here is that it is not possible to determine in advance "[w]hich unit is the relevant unit for speech act assignment" (Levinson 1981b: 103)

The third problem has to do with the mapping of speech acts onto utterance units. We have already seen Labov & Fanshel's (1977) attempt to state rules for the performance of directives. Their account is based on the assumption that there are certain conversion rules known as "conversational postulates" (Gordon & Lakoff 1971) that license the use of utterances with an indirect interpretation. However, as Levinson (1981a) argues, the "postulates" or rules account for the problem only partially. For example, general rules like "saying that you can eat the whole of X counts as a compliment on X" (e.g., *I could eat the whole of that cake*) is not always applicable. It can be, *but need not be*, a compliment, and therefore cannot be stated as a rule.

According to Levinson, the construction and interpretation of indirect speech acts depend on "some small but powerful set of general principles of inference to interlocutors' communicative intentions in specific contexts" (Levinson 1981a: 482; 1981b: 106). Labov & Fanshel (1977) themselves recognize that it is not an easy task to formulate a reliable set of discourse rules to account for all possible utterance types that might be used to produce a certain act, because there may be an "unlimited number of ways in which we can refer to the pre-conditions [of an act]" (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 84, *cit.* in Coulthard 1985: 30).

This observation could be complemented with the fact that the multiplicity of realizations also affects interpretation, as there is also an unlimited number of pre-conditions (forces) that could be assigned to utterances produced. For example, the utterance *This place really is dusty* given by Labov & Fanshel as an example of a possible indirect request asserting the pre-condition 'need for the action' of 'dusting', could have (context allowing) many other forces (functions, uses). That is, there is no guarantee that once the utterance is produced, it will be interpreted – via the application of the conversational postulates – the way the speaker wanted it to be interpreted. Therefore, both speech act theorists and discourse analysts that rely on this model cannot account for the fact that illocutionary force and what is said are "rather [linked by] *a powerful set of little-understood inference principles that take many aspects of context into account*" (1981a: 482, my emphasis. See also Levinson 1981b: 106).

Finally, there are also problems with representing sequencing rules in conversation as dependent upon the type of initiating act realized. Levinson downplays the importance of adjacency pair organization — or for the matter, exchange format —, as initiating acts can be followed by many different types of responding acts and the set of relevant responses can be determined depending on the "particular language game (social activity) it is embedded within" (Levinson 1981a: 483). To this point I would add the inadequacy of postulating a rigid sequence rule such as the one formulated by Tsui (1994: 25ff), for whom "a three-part exchange is the basic unit of organization in conversation" (Tsui 1994: 34). She supports this view relying on Goffman's (1967, 1981) suggestion that 'ritual interchanges' are typically formed by chains of three-turns, and even if the third move (follow-up move) does not actually occur, it is expected and therefore it is seen as being absent.

This argument, however, is not quite convincing and counter-examples can easily be found. Compare, for example, the following interactional sequences in Spanish:

(9)　　*(A and B are close friends)*
　　　　A: ¿Qué hora es?
　　　　B: Las ocho.

(10)　　*(A asks someone in the street)*
　　　　A: ¿Me puede decir la hora por favor?
　　　　B: Las ocho.
　　　　A: Gracias.

If a strict rule were to be applied the way Tsui suggests — although in Tsui's account the word *rule* here does not seem to be understood in the grammatical sense, but rather as a *principle* —, we should analyze (9) as a three-part exchange with the third move missing and *expected.* However, this analysis seems to be counter-intuitive. It is possible to imagine many situations in which a follow-up move is not *expected* at all. Even the example in (10) is not as strong evidence as it may appear. The above interaction in (10) could have perfectly ended with a word by B accepting the thanking act (e.g., *De nada*), in which case we would have either two two-part exchanges or one four-part exchange.

It should also be noted that Goffman (1981) qualified the three-part interchange as being occasional, never the norm, as the following quote demonstrates:

> A response will *on occasion* leave matters in a ritually unsatisfactory state, and a turn by the initial speaker will be required, encouraged, or at least allowed, resulting in a three-part interchange; or chains of adjacency pairs will occur (albeit typically with one, two, or three such couplets), the chain itself having a unitary, bounded character. (Goffman 1981: 23, emphasis added)

This quote not only supports the view that three-part interchanges should not be formulated as a rule, but it also is in line with the above analysis of (10) as, using CA terminology, a four-turn sequence. Furthermore, both my analysis and Goffman's notion of 'ritual interchanges' seem to support Levinson's view that the 'language game' in which the interaction occurs plays a relevant part in the way we perceive such interaction.

One further problem with DA's sequencing rules concerns the notion of coherence, as it is defined in structural terms. For DA researchers, a sequence is coherent if an eliciting first move is followed by either a response, another question (what CA analysts would call other-initiated repair) or even a comment, but not by an acknowledgement like *Oh, I see* (Tsui 1994: 20). So, as discourse act sequencing rules are applied over functions independent of propositional contents, DA has nothing to say about topic coherence.

Martínez-Cabeza (2002) sees serious objections in the strict reliance of DA on speech act types, as this "inevitably leads to certain arbitrariness in the mapping of strings of conversation onto sequences of acts" (Martínez-Cabeza 2002: 213-4), and concludes that the need for independent tests to decide which conversational sequences are acceptable and which are not renders the approach less attractive. An illustration of this 'arbitrariness' is provided in example (11) below given by Tsui (1994):

> (11) [BCET:A:10]
>   B: Did you have a good time in Soho?
>   C: It was alright, you know, bit of rip-off place. We found – we walked – ((laughs)) we were trying to pluck up courage to go in a strip club, right, because I hadn't been to a strip club before, Mike hadn't either and we thought…
>
> (Tsui 1994: 68)

For Tsui, B's yes-no question is tantamount to inquiring 'What did you do in Soho? and it would be odd to answer either 'Yes' or 'no'. However, while it is possible that B's utterance had been interpreted as a WH-question in this case, as evidenced by C's response, it is too presumptuous to say that a 'yes' or 'no' answer would be odd. I do not see any reason at all for not producing a reply like *Oh, yeah, it was wonderful!*

Furthermore, as Levinson (1981a: 484) says, "[t]here are exchanges in dialogue where responses are aimed not at what has been said, but at the broader motive, or higher level goal, that is seen to lie behind what has been said", as can be seen in the following example:

> (12)   A: What's the metric torque wrench nipple extractor look like?
>   B: It's on the bench in front of you.   (Levinson 1981a: 484)

Here, B identifies (or at least makes such inference taking into account contextual factors at hand) that A has some needs or wants not explicitly stated by his/her utterance. First of all, it would be bizarre to classify the initiating move as a request,

either prospectively or retrospectively. Secondly, it would also be counter-intuitive to say that B is a response to an *elicit:inform* act. This problem is acknowledged by Coulthard (1985), who concedes that a purely linguistic account of discourse is not enough because discourse is built at least by two participants in collaboration and many decisions about the correct interpretation of utterances require metalinguistic knowledge.

Goffman (1976) regards examples like the above as cases of conversational ellipsis. However, we cannot regard them as ellipsis in the grammatical or textual sense, as the exact form cannot be recovered. They are cases of ellipsis in the sense that interactants have jumped over some elements in recurrent and conventionalized scripts or schemata of interaction. If this is not the case, as Levinson (1981a) suggests, additional "deletion" rules should be stated.

Finally, the existence of embedded structures (what in CA is known as *insertion sequences* or *side sequences*) is also problematic. For many discourse analysts, once a new exchange has begun, even if it is incomplete, it is impossible to return and complete it. According to this view, the next example would be incoherent, which clearly is not:

> (13) A: Can I have a bottle of wine?
>   B: How old are you?
>   A: Seventeen sir
>   A: I'm sorry

This shortcoming has been solved in part by Coulthard (1985), Stubbs (1983) and Tsui (1994), but not quite convincingly. Coulthard proposes to regard the exchange system as a kind of template "which makes predictions about what a speaker will do next *provided he [sic] chooses to stay within the same exchange*" (Coulthard 1985: 145, original emphasis). But then the problem would be on how to recognize when one is staying within the exchange and when is not, as well as when it is a three-part exchange and when it is a two-part, or a four-part.

Stubbs (1983, *cit.* in Tsui 1994) and Tsui (1994) suggest utterances like *How old are you?* in the exchange above would represent the initiation of a new system of choices licensed by a supporting move, represented in Fig. 4:

Fig. 4*:* Systems following an initiating utterance (Stubbs 1983, *cit.* in Tsui 1994: 20).

```
                                    ┌─ canonical
                   ┌─ support  →    │
     →       ┌─                     └─ query
             │
             └─ reject
```
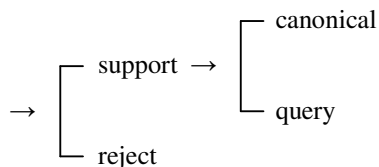
According to them, an initiating act could be followed either by a supporting or a rejecting move. If the former is selected, an additional system is activated in which the preceding utterance can be either responded (*canonical*) or its presuppositions questioned (*query*), which is the case in Example (13). However, as I see it, this poses another question of how to come back to the initial exchange sequence. That is, how to account for the fact that the final move (i.e., *I'm sorry*) represents an answer to A's request, rather than a mere follow-up move of the exchange initiated by the query. This is not accounted for in Stubbs' (1983) model.

From the above discussion it seems clear that a model based on purely linguistic grounds the way DA does leaves too many questions unanswered. A reliable model of language in interaction should account for such communicative aspects as the multiplicity of perlocutionary intents, the indefinite nature of utterance units, the context-sensitivity of act or goal assignment, the strategy-based rather than rule-based nature of sequencing constraints, and the nature of topic coherence, something that DA fails to do. Furthermore, DA's high level of formalization of sequential features seems to be too rigid a way to approach conversational interaction.

One possible and promising candidate is Conversation Analysis (CA). For one thing, many of the improvements introduced into DA by Tsui (1994) are based on insights provided by CA, like for example the turn-taking system (Tsui 1994: 42) or preference organization (Tsui 1994: 54). For another, some CA findings have already proved useful for pragmatics research, as demonstrated by the works done by Kasper (2004, 2006) or Bousfield (2007).

2.5. Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) was introduced in the 1970s as a specific approach to sociology by some scholars — known as ethnomethodologists — who were not satisfied with the quantitative and objectivist methods used in social studies at that time. Among the most prominent representatives of this model are Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff, Gail Jefferson, John Heritage, Charles Goodwin, Paul Drew and Anita Pomerantz. Their focus on the organization of conversation as a social phenomenon was inspired by the work of previous sociologists and psychologists, who suggested the relationship between social and conversational organization. Goffman (1964), for example, stated that

> [t]alk is socially organized, not merely in terms of who speaks to whom in what language, but as a little system of mutually ratified and ritually governed face-to-face action, a social encounter". (Goffman 1964: 136, *cit.* in Sacks *et al.* 1974: 697, fn. 1).

Due to their position against premature theorizing and the formulation of *ad hoc* analytical categories, their model is based on little or no theoretical framework and high dependence on the data and the patterns discovered in them. Furthermore, as their aim is to find out how conversation is structured and organized *in general*, little attention is paid to the specific nature of the contexts in which they occur. The assumption is that in order to see regularities, they should be pan-contextual.

Their methodology consists in modelling the actual procedures and expectations employed by speakers and hearers in a conversation and to discover what functions are performed by the conversational devices used. Levinson summarizes the methodology as follows:

> a) We should attempt to locate some particular conversational organization, and isolate its systematic features, by demonstrating participants' orientation to it.
> b) We should ask, (i) what problems does this organization solve, and (ii) what problems does this organization raise – and therefore what implications does it have for the existence of further solutions to further problems? (Levinson 1983: 319)

This way, the research looks for behavioral patterns and states hypotheses of possible conversational rules based on those patterns; when counter-examples are

found, participants' behavior is observed again and additional patterns are sought, to modify the original hypotheses or establish new ones, so on and so forth. Using this method, CA has made some ground-breaking findings, including *turn-taking rules, adjacency pairs, preference organization* and *pre-sequences*, which we proceed to present in a summarized fashion.

2.5.1. Turn taking

The most basic, and apparently obvious, discovery is that conversation is organized in turns, that is, the fact that one speaker talks after another in a sequential order. Upon close inspections and analyses of this system, many not so evident features of this organization have been discovered as, for example, the fact that there are very few cases of overlap and/or gaps between turns, or that the number of participants can vary within and across situations. Also, the size of the turns does not seem to be pre-established and the management of turn allocation seems to be the same for face-to-face interaction and those without visual contact.

A turn is seen in *economic* terms as a scarce resource that needs to be shared. Each one of these shares is called a *floor*. The turns are made up of units — called *turn-constructional units* (TCU) and normally formed by grammatical units — identified by prosodic or intonation cues. Each speaker is assigned one of these TCUs, at the end of which there is a *transition-relevant place* (TRP) where turn-change may occur. These TRPs can be predicted by the shape of the turn, which *projects* the location of a TRP.

Now, Sacks *et al.* (1974) formulated a series of techniques by which turns are allocated. These were classified into two main types: those in which the next turn is assigned by the current speaker, and those cases in which the next turn is self-selected. Taking into account this distinction, Sacks et al. (1974) formulated the following rules:

(1) For any turn, at the initial transition-relevance place of an initial turn-constructional unit:

    a. If the turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then the party so selected has the right and is obliged to take next turn to speak; no others have such rights or obligations, and transfer occurs at that place.

b. If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then self-selection for next speakership may, but need not, be instituted; first starter acquires rights to a turn, and transfer occurs at that place.

c. If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then current speaker may, but need not continue, unless another self-selects.

(2) If, at the initial TRP of an initial TCU, neither 1a nor 1b has operated, and, following the provision of 1c, current speaker has continued, then the rule-set a-c re-applies at the next TRP, and recursively at each next TRP, until transfer is effected. (Sacks *et al.* 1974: 704)

This system is capable of accounting, among other things, for the fact that overlaps are scarce, and if they occur they are brief; it also discriminates overlaps produced inadvertently from those interruptions that go against the turn-taking rules, it further allows for a classification of different kinds of silence or pauses. Thus, a distinction is made between *gaps*, which are those pauses produced before a subsequent application of rules 1b or 1c, *lapses* that occur on the application of rules 1a, 1b or 1c, and *significant* or *attributable silence* produced when a selected next speaker does not pick up the floor. All the above variations together with others discovered in the distribution of turns, the number of participants, the production of interruptions and discontinuous talk, or the existence of repair mechanisms, are possible because the rules operate on a turn-by-turn basis, that is, they are locally managed.

2.5.2. Adjacency pair

Another obvious feature in conversations is that they seem to be organized in pairs of the type *question-answer, offer-acceptance, greeting-greeting,* and so on. According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973: 295-6), these are sequences of two utterances that are (i) adjacent, (ii) produced by different speakers, (iii) ordered as a first part and a second part, and (iv) together form a *type*, a first part requiring a particular second (or range of second parts) — e.g., offer- acceptance/refusal. Adjacency pairs operation is governed by the following rule:

> [G]iven the recognizable production of a first pair part, on its first possible completion tis speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type of which the first is recognizably a member. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973: 296)

One problem with this rule is that it was stated having closing sequences in mind (e.g. *bye –bye*) and therefore does not characterize all kinds of sequences, that is, not always does an answer immediately follow a question, for example. This is what happens in the example below, in which one question-answer pair is embedded in another,

```
(14) A: May I have a bottle of Mich?        ((Q1))
     B: Are you twenty one?                 ((Q2))
     A: No                                  ((A2))
     A: No                                  ((A1))   (Merritt 1976: 333)
```

In fact, Schegloff (1972) himself had already brought our attention to the existence of *insertion sequences* like the above, while Jefferson (1972) noticed that there were cases in which the embedded sub-sequences were what she called *side sequences*:

```
(15) A: If Percy goes with – Nixon I'd sure like that           ((Statement))
     B: Who?                                                    ((misapprehension))
     A: Percy, that young fella that uh – his daughter was murdered  ((clarification))
     A: Oh yea:h. Yeah                                          ((terminator))
                              (Jefferson 1972: 318, cit. in Tsui 1994: 8)
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Furthermore, these embedded sequences may have several layers so that the answer to an initial question may be many turns away. What is of crucial importance here is that the whole time the answer is being expected and is kept on hold and that the embedded sequences are restricted to those that are relevant for the final second pair part. Thus, according to Levinson (1983), this may produce a large sequence of seconds that can be expected within an overarching adjacency pair, hypothetically creating the following structure: (Q1(Q2(Q3(Q4-A4)A3)A2)A1), and "failure to resolve an insertion sequence regularly aborts the entire *umbrella* sequence too" (Levinson 1983: 306). For this reason, he suggests that the adjacency pair rule should be better considered as a first approximation, rather than a strict rule similar to those seen in DA, and suggests replacing it by the notion of *conditional relevance*, according to which, "given a first part of a pair, a second part is immediately relevant and expectable" (*ibid.:* 306). This notion would account for the occurrence of the expected second pair part later on in the

sequence. This is an interesting move, although a risky one, because it implies a departure from two basic CA assumptions: a) that turns are locally managed and that the organization of conversation should be explained in structural terms. Another problem inherent in the notion of adjacency pair consists in the *a priori* unlimited number of potential second parts that may be realized with respect to a given first part, as there is not way to delimit the kinds of seconds that are allowed. Unfortunately, this seems to be the case, as questions might be followed by protestation of ignorance, re-routes, refusals to provide an answer, and challenges to the presuppositions or sincerity of the question (Levinson 1983: 307). However, this apparent problem is solved by the notion preference organization, which we review in the next section.

2.5.3. Preference organization

As we have seen, the notion of preference may account for the existence of a wide variety of second parts within adjacency pairs, some of them being preferred to others. The notion of preference as used here does not have anything to do with the psychological state of the speakers but is a structural notion which is similar to the concept of markedness used in linguistics (Levinson 1983)[12]. Thus, preferred seconds are unmarked and dispreferred ones are marked. Unmarked seconds are typically simpler than marked ones, which are normally characterized by delayed production, markers of dispreferred status and accounts of why the dispreferred second is produced, and in general are more complex than preferred seconds. In addition to these structural features, a rule for speech production is stated: "Try to avoid the dispreferred action – the action that generally occurs in dispreferred or marked format" (Levinson 1983: 333), thus accounting for markedness and avoidance of these actions.

From a structural viewpoint, dispreferred seconds exhibit the following features (Pomerantz 1984, Sacks 1987 [1973]): a) *delays* in the form of pauses before their production, prefacing and displacement over a number of turns via repair initiators (what Jefferson calls *side sequences*) and/or insertion sequences; b) *prefaces* by means of markers of dispreferred acts (*Uh, well*), token agreements before disagreements, appreciations (if relevant), apologies (if relevant), qualifiers or hedges (*I don't know,*

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[12] See Boyle (2000) for a critique of this view.

but…), and various forms of hesitation devices, including self-editing; c) *accounts* (i.e., explanations for why the dispreferred act is performed, and d) a *declination component*, "a form suited to the nature of the first part of the pair, but characteristically indirect or mitigated" (Levinson 1983: 334-5).

It seems evident that preference organization is a strong and robust notion that not only applies to adjacency pairs but also to what Pomerantz (1978, *cit.* in Levinson 1983: 337) calls *action-chains* in which first parts do not seem to *require* second parts, although some sort of response is expected anyway. Such is the case of assessments, which often call for a second assessment in preferred format, which can be an agreement or a disagreement depending on the nature of the first act in the *action-chain*. So, for instance, after self-denigrations disagreements are preferred, while after compliments equilibrium between agreement and avoidance of self-praise call for compromise solutions, including down-graded agreements, transfer of praise to third parties and plain disagreements (Pomerantz 1984).[13]

Preference organization is also related to the way repair work is carried out and how identification procedures are followed in telephone conversations. Evidence shows that both self-initiation of repair and self-repair is preferred over other-initiation and other-repair. Furthermore, the notion of preference stretches out to account for the general reluctance to produce overt self-identifications on the phone, as well as the abundance of so-called *pre-sequences*.

2.5.4. Pre-sequence

Pre-sequence is another important pattern in CA. It refers both to a certain type of sequence and the turns within such sequence that serve to introduce other sequences: after a summons normally a reason for the summons is expected and, therefore, the summons prefigures what comes next. Similarly, this pre-figuring function is found in many other types of sequences. Levinson (1983: 346ff) mentions: pre-closings, pre-invitations, pre-requests, pre-arrangements, and pre-announcements. One important point to bear in mind is that a pre-sequence should not be construed as a turn that merely comes *before* some other turn, but as "a turn that occupies a specific slot in a

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[13] This point will be further developed in Chapter 3.

specific kind of sequence with distinctive properties" (Levinson 1983: 346), characterized in the following rule:

a) T1 (Position 1): a question checking whether some precondition obtains for the action to be performed in T3.
    T2 (Position 2): an answer indicating that the precondition obtains, often with a question or request to proceed to T3.
    T3 (Position 3): the prefigured action, conditional on the 'go ahead' in T2.
    T4 (Position 4): response to the action in T3.
b) *distribution rule:* one party, A, addresses T1 and T3 to another party, B, and B addresses T2 and T4 to A. (Levinson 1983: 346-7)

However, things are not so simple. A problem with this characterization arises when we try to account for insertion sequences. One such case is illustrated in the following example:

(16) T1   C: … Do you have in stock please any L.T. one eight eight? ((POST 1))
      T2   R: One eight eight ((HEARING CHECK))
      T3   C: Yeah = ((CHECK OKAYED))
      T4   R: = Can you hold on please ((HOLD))
      T5   C: Thank you ((ACCEPT))
            (1.5)
      T6   R: Yes I have got the one ((POSITION 2))
      T7   C: Yes. Could I- you hold that for H.H.Q.G. please ((POSITION 3)).
                                                          (Levinson 1983: 348)

Here we see that the actual response to T1 (i.e., Position 2) does not occur until T6, while the follow-up request act (Position 3) comes immediately afterwards (T7). In between there are two insertion sequences, one to check what has been said in the previous turn, and the other to put a hold on the sequence in order to verify the stock. How to account for the lack of correlation between turns and positions? This problem is solved, however, by distinguishing the sheer location of a turn from position. The former refers to the strict order of production of turns, while the latter refers to the turn that is expected as a follow-up of the main topic initiated by the utterance occupying Position 1 by virtue of the conditional relevance principle.

The notion of pre-sequence is highly relevant in many respects, because it helps explain in a neat way many features in conversation that have been widely debated. One major contribution has to do with the problem of how the force of indirect speech acts are calculated by the speaker and inferred by the hearer. As discussed above, this was highly problematic for both SAT and DA. Hence, this and other advantages offered by CA are discussed in the next section.

2.6. Advantages of CA over DA

There seem to be many reasons to prefer CA over DA as an analytical tool. For one thing, the explanatory power of CA over DA is obvious. As opposed to what Martínez-Cabeza (2002) labels 'coarse-grained' and, in many instances, counter-intuitive analyses offered by the DA model, CA has proved a reliable and highly accurate method of analysis. For example, CA provides a convincing explanation of how some seemingly incoherent sequences are in fact coherent by combining the notions of pre-sequence and preference organization, like this sequence on the phone:

(17)   A: Is John there?
         B: You can reach him at extension thirty four sixty two.

                                                    (Levinson 1981a: 484)

In this example, it can neither be said that A performed a request nor that B responded to a question and hence it is problematic from a DA perspective. In fact, this is possible thanks to a whole reanalysis of indirect speech acts by a combination of the notions of pre-sequence and preference organization (Levinson 1983: 356ff).

As we saw in the rules for pre-sequences, the function of Position 1 turns is to check whether pre-conditions for the successful performance of Position 3 obtain.[14] In the case of request sequences, the use of pre-requests has to do with the preference ranking of responses to requests: a refusal to a request is dispreferred and therefore should be avoided. By issuing a pre-request, it is possible to verify in advance whether the request will succeed, and if not to avoid a rejection by not producing the request act. In such circumstances, pre-requests are preferred to requests. One evidence for this is that "[w]hat is checked in the pre-request is what is most likely to be the grounds for refusal" (Levinson 1983: 358), for example the ability to comply in conversation, or the availability of goods in stores. One further motivation for the use of pre-requests is to avoid a request sequence allowing for the possibility that the interlocutor pre-empts the request by producing an offer in Position 2, which is preferred to requests, as in the example below:

(18)   *(A and B share a flat and they usually go to the same grocery)*
         T1 (Position 1)   A: Are you going to the store this afternoon?
         T2 (Position 2)   B: Yeah. Do you want me get something for you?

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[14] The subsequent presentation is based on Levinson (1983: 357-364).

But it is possible to go one step further, and suggest that the most preferred sequence is that in which a request is totally avoided. This is possible if the receiver of the potential request sees that a request is forthcoming and hence decides to go directly to Position 4 (either compliance or refusal of the possible request), in which case the following ranking of preference could be in operation in the case that the preconditions are met:

1.   most preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                       Position 4: (response to non-overt request)

2.   next preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                       Position 2: (offer)
                                       Position 3: (acceptance of offer)

3.   least preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                       Position 2: (go ahead)
                                       Position 3: (request)
                                       Position 4: (compliance)   (Levinson 1983: 361)

This ranking would perfectly account for the coherence and also for the appropriateness of the sequence in (18) above in certain circumstances, and would also eliminate the problem of accounting for the difference between direct and indirect acts.

An additional advantage of CA over DA is the way discourse is viewed within each framework. While the latter provides a static view, CA accounts for the dynamic and ever changing nature of conversation (e.g., local management system and turn-taking rules) trying to capture all the patterns therein by the minute observation of how participants show an orientation towards those patterns or how topic coherence is maintained over a sequence despite the insertion of other sequences in between such as repair-work or checking understanding problems, hardly manageable from a DA perspective. This is a relevant feature that accounts for how discourse is framed at a specific moment in conversation since it would, for example, explain the role of delays of responses over a series of turns with respect to a certain initiating turn.

Besides the general benefits of relying on CA as an analytical tool for the study of politeness, two aspects are of special relevance for the research that concerns us here: the turn-taking system and the notion of preference organization. CA researchers have demonstrated that there are mechanisms (or rules) that determine how and when turns are transferred and allocated, and how sequences are expected to be constructed. They have also been able to explain the fact that overlaps and gaps are not frequent, and how

silence becomes meaningful depending on the place they occur in a sequence (recall the distinctions between gaps, lapses and attributable silence).

The relevance of the above findings for this study cannot be underestimated, as they allow for the investigation of how turn-organizational patterns are used in the production of (dis)agreements. For one thing, they are typically second acts, similar to compliment responses, refusals and/or acceptance of offers and invitations, rebuttals to criticisms, and the like, and the specific form the (dis)agreement action will adopt will depend not only on the discourse-external fixed variables of power, distance and degree of imposition *a la* Brown & Levinson, but also on the way the previous assessment or assertion has been made.

The above account would be incomplete without one notion that underlies all structural patterns: preference organization, which allows for the classification of turns and sequences in terms of preferred and dispreferred. Thus, if applied to the turn-taking system, the general lack of overlaps and gaps is regarded as preferred, and noticeable (attributable) silence as dispreferred. This finding is of crucial importance, as it provides additional evidence for the realization of face-saving, face-respecting or face-enhancing strategies, and concretely in the issuance of (dis)agreements. For, example, Pomerantz (1984) has demonstrated that when disagreements are construed as dispreferred, they show certain turn-organizational (e.g., lapses, attributable silence) and turn-constructional features (e.g., token agreements, hedges and mitigation) that do not appear when they are framed as preferred (see also Kasper 2006).

These patterns clearly help in the identification of face-saving and non-face saving strategies, allowing for a re-definition of preference in terms of politeness[15]. In fact, the relationship between the concept of politeness and preference organization has been stressed by some scholars, including Kasper (2004, 2006), Lerner (1996), Heritage (1984), Bousfield (2007), among others. Kasper (2006), for example, argues that they both explain how participants in conversation show respect for relational concerns, and Heritage (1984) associates preference organization with *face* and social solidarity[16], and claims that

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[15] For a discussion on how 'preference' can be related to 'politeness' see Chapter 3.
[16] But this view has been criticized (*vid.* Czyzewski 1989 and Cameron 1990, *cit.* in Boyle 2000, and Boyle (2000) himself).

[…] preferred format actions are normally affiliative in character while dispreferred format actions are disaffiliative. Similarly, while preferred format actions are generally supportive of social solidarity, dispreferred format actions are destructive of it". (Heritage 1984: 369, *cit.* in Boyle 2000: 588)

In line with this view, Muntigl & Turnbull (1998) have described disagreements as "inherently face-threatening because they express disapproval of another person" (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998: 242) while combining "elements from conversation analysis, research on face and empirical psychology" (*ibid.*: 226) in their analysis, and Bousfield (2007), has tried to show "how exploitation and manipulation of the conversational structure […] can create, or contribute to, the production of impoliteness work […]" (Bousfield 2007: 2) by combining politeness theory and the notion of preference organization.

The above discussion supports the usefulness and applicability of the instruments and constructs offered by CA for the analysis of face-work. However, one major shortcoming can be mentioned: its strict reliance on the organizational aspects of talk-in-interaction. This emphasis on the structured nature of conversation has two derivative consequences: on one hand, the lack of a well-defined and articulated cognitive support to account for the motivation (participants' inclination) of many of the rules and organizational patterns described, and on the other, the little attention given to the structure and internal elements of turn-constructional units (although there are some notable exceptions: Pomerantz (1984), Mori (1999), Tanaka (1996)). These problems will be reviewed next in search of possible solutions and/or improvements.

2.7. Shortcomings of the CA approach

As observed so far, CA is mainly concerned with the accurate description, representation and explanation of the organizational features of conversation, as made evident by the titles of the subsections above: *turn-taking*, *adjacency pair*, *preference organization,* and *pre-sequence*. All these labels refer to the sequencing patterns of turns, for the description of which CA has proved its usefulness. CA has also been forced to resort to the cognitive aspects of behavior to be able to explain a lot of conversational phenomena. This is evidenced by such concepts as *conditional*

relevance, the verification of *pre-conditions* as the *motivation* for the use of *pre-sequences,* and *preference organization*. However, the above claims need to be supported by some cognitive theory that provides a systematic explanation of the mental processes involved, that is, of why and how those processes take place.

In addition to this, although detailed analyses of (dis)agreements have been carried out within CA in terms of preference organization (Pomerantz 1984; Mori 1999; Bilmes 1988; Kotthoff 1993; Myers 1998; Graham 2007, among others), no attempt has been made to provide a systematic and well-delimited categorization and classification of strategies people use when they perform them. I consider this an important element for a fine-grained and accurate cross-cultural contrastive analysis. In order to carry out a comparative study which includes quantitative and qualitative analyses, it is essential that sequence-organizational and turn-constructional features be appropriately codified in a systematic form, the way is done within the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989; Kasper & Blum-Kulka 1993). This does not mean, however, that Speech Act Theory will be adopted, but only that an attempt will be made to present the abovementioned features exhaustively analyzed within CA in a neat and orderly manner to be manageable for quantitative analyses[17].

A word is due here regarding this last point. CA researchers normally do not endorse quantitative methods of analysis (Psathas 1995; Schegloff 1993, *cit.* in Turnbull 2007), as it is not a cognitive model. Rather, as Turnbull (2007) says, "it focuses on the observable details of talk/discourse by which and in which participants co-construct social interaction". However, there are several arguments which support the use of quantification in our study. First of all, the fact that CA does not allow a quantitative approach resides in its theoretical stance that avoids premature formalization, and looks for patterns in the data and from the data, rather than imposing built-up categories onto the data. As Schegloff (1993) points out, there is the risk to regard conceptual phenomena (i.e., deductively built categories) as if they were empirical. Hence, to fully account for what is going on "our there", a qualitative method consisting in attentive and detailed observation of empirical facts is needed, without any assumptions or categories given *a priori*. This limitation, however, is not strictly applicable in our case. This is because we are going to base our study on previous qualitative studies that have

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[17] See relevant discussion and a detailed description of categories and codification in Chapter 5.

already spelled out the sequential and turn-internal features that we need for the categorization (see Sacks 1987 [1973], Pomerantz 1984, Mori 1999, Kotthoff 1993, Kakava 2002, among others) of those patterns. In this sense, we may say that the analytical categories are not given *a priori*, but are well-founded in previous empirical work.

Furthermore, the purpose of this study is to use the above categories as a dependent variable as a function of (im)politeness in (dis)agreements. That is, the purpose of this study is to find out how and in what degree the three cultures are similar or different in the realization of those communicative acts and their relationship with (im)politeness. As discussed in Chapter 4, a suitable data collection method has been adopted in order to guarantee the comparability of the data. My aim is not to discover what categories and patterns are involved in the kind of interaction we are interested in, but rather to find variations *within* those categories whose empirical basis is well attested, and CA has provided the tool to investigate how and to what degree there might be similarities and differences across cultures at the turn-organizational level of conversation. Finally, the existence of previous qualitative studies allows for the adoption of a deductive approach and the formulation of informed research questions.

The second problematic aspect, that is, the little importance given to cognitive factors, is illustrated in Levinson's (1983, Ch. 6) re-analysis of indirect speech acts. Although his classification of most-preferred, next-preferred and least-preferred structures is very persuasive and seem to account for some seemingly incoherent sequences, his explanation about how to regard and where to locate conventionalized indirect requests of the type *could you?/can you?*, in which the object of the request is stated, is less convincing. Although literally it is a question checking whether the *ability* pre-condition is verified or not, and therefore a candidate for Position 1, it does not licence an offer in Position 2:

(19)   T1 (Position 1): A: Can you buy me some apples when you go to the store?
       T2 (Position 2): *B: Do you want me to get something/some apples for you?

So, it seems to be better positioned in 3, as a request proper. Against this interpretation Levinson (1983) argues that it is rather a pre-request built specifically to invite a Position 4 response by virtue of specifying the object of the request. This way, he goes on, it can be concluded that

so-called indirect speech acts are position 1 turns — pre-requests — formulated so as to expect position 4 responses in second turn. Questions about whether they have 'literal' or 'indirect' (or both) forces or meanings simply do not, on this view, arise. Such position 1 turns mean whatever they mean; that they can be formulated so as to project certain conversational trajectories is something properly explored in the sequential analysis of successive turns. (Levinson 1983: 363).

Levinson seems to suggest here that a structure including a question about a pre-condition and the object of the request should still be located in position 1. However, this explanation is clearly insufficient. What position is occupied by *can you bring me some apples?* in the following sequence? Are there two pre-requests or a pre-request in T1 and a request in T3?

> (20)   T1 (Position 1): A: Are you going to the store this afternoon?
>   T2 (Position 2): B: Yeah.
> →   T3 (*Position ?*): A: Can you bring me some apples?
>   T4 (*Position ?*): B: Sure.

There is no straight answer to the above question. While there seems to be no doubt about utterance in turn 1 occupying Position 1, the utterance in T3 has an ambiguous status which, I believe, cannot be explained in purely structural terms: should we say that both T1 and T3 utterances occupy Position 1? Also, CA cannot account for the difference between the example above and the next one:

> (21)   T1:   A: Are you going to the store this afternoon?
>   T2:   B: Yeah.
>   T3:   A: Bring me some apples, then.
>   T4:   B: OK.

Of course, following Levinson's argument again, it could be said that while T3 in example (20) is a pre-request, T3 in (21) is a request proper, but it is not possible to reach that conclusion on purely structural grounds, because, as argued above, it is not so clear that the modal interrogative is in Position 1. Rather, the outstanding similarity between both sequences seems to call for an explanation in psychological and cognitive terms.

This conflation of structural and psychological factors seems to be supported by Kasper's (2006) finding that preliminary moves (pre-sequences) perform a dual role: that of "action or reference preparation" and "affiliative work", which indicates "these

interactional functions may not be clearly separable but rather seem reflexively related and mutually constitutive" (Kasper 2006: 345).

The cognitive basis is evident in Levinson's own words when he proposes the notion of conditional relevance to explain the fact the pair parts need not be adjacent:

> What the notion of conditional relevance makes clear is that what binds the parts of adjacency pairs together is not a formation rule of the sort that would specify that a question must receive an answer if it is to count as a well-formed discourse, but the setting-up of specific *expectations* which have to be attended to. (Levinson 1983: 306).

As I see it, the term *expectations* does not refer here to merely structural expectations, but cognitive ones, as only that way an appropriate second part can be searched in subsequent turns. That is, the structural criterion is not enough for the participants in a conversation to decide which turn in a sequence represents a relevant second part of a pair because, as we have seen, it could occur anywhere. Only the development of the sequence together with the content of the utterance will provide enough clues.

Finally, Levinson (1983) himself acknowledges that CA alone would prove to be inadequate for modelling human competence and suggests that "CA analyses may perhaps be found deficient as rather simple reconstructions of the no doubt immensely complicated cognitive processes involved in conducting conversations" (*Ibid.*: 367)

2.7.1. Cognitive support: Back to SAT

Due to the above reasons, together with the *ad hoc* nature of CA's explanations, some proposals have been made to provide the necessary cognitive background, as for example Van Rees (1992). This scholar explains that, after all, SAT is able to account for the coherence of seemingly incoherent sequences like (17) above, which we reproduce here as (22),

> (22)   A: Is John there?
>   B: You can reach him at extension thirty four sixty two.
>
> (Levinson 1981a: 484)

by making a distinction between *communicative* and *interactional* acts. Van Rees equates the former with illocutionary act and the latter with perlocutionary act. This way

illocutionary acts produce communicative *effects* and perlocutionary acts produce interactional *effects*. She explains the difference between the two acts as follows:

> Illocutionary acts involve the attainment of a *communicative* effect by producing verbal utterances with the intention of getting a listener to recognize, by recognizing that one has that intention, what particular attitude (belief, want, intention, affect) with respect to a particular state of affairs one is trying to express. Perlocutionary acts involve the attainment of an interactional effect by trying to bring about further effects on the cognitive, affective, or conative state of the listener by way of a communicative act. (Van Rees, 1992: 40).

These two different acts are said to be performed by the same utterance simultaneously (thus, shying away from DA), the communicative act being the conventional means for achieving the interactional act. Van Rees tries to demonstrate this point by arguing that the example *Are you doing anything?* — given by Schegloff (1988: 58) as a typical case of pre-invitation rather than a simple request for information — is in fact performing both acts at the same time, that is, communicatively as a request for information and, interactionally, as a way to look for possible objections to subsequent speech acts (as, for example, an invitation). Thus, recognizing the communicative force of an utterance is essential for capturing the interactional goal of the speaker. So, for Van Rees, Schegloff's analysis as a pre-invitation is un-problematic, but his account focuses on the interactional level only, completely disregarding the communicative level.

Van Rees' analysis seems to provide a cognitive support for CA findings, at least regarding pre-sequences. As Van Rees (1992), says

> [T]here is a functional relation between the speech act and the further purposes which it is aimed at attaining. This functional relation can help explain *how a listener can understand what interactional purposes speaker's utterance is aimed at attaining.*
> Moreover, if these purposes are connected with further or projected speech acts that a speaker might be wanting to perform […], a factor in *understanding these further purposes consists in participants' knowledge about the fulfilment of the felicity condition* of these further or projected speech acts. (Van Rees 1992: 42, emphasis added)

Notice Van Rees' emphasis on the *understanding* of the interactional purposes of the speech acts. Van Rees' argument is supported by the fact that Levinson's own

formulation of pre-request rules there is a cognitive stratum. Recall that Position 1 was filled by expressions that checked a *precondition* for the performance of a subsequence action:

a) T1 (Position 1): a question *checking whether some precondition obtains* for the action to be performed in T3.
   T2 (Position 2): an answer indicating that the precondition obtains, often with a question or request to proceed to T3.
   T3 (Position 3): the prefigured action, conditional on the 'go ahead' in T2.
   T4 (Position 4): response to the action in T3.

b) *distribution rule:* one party, A, addresses T1 and T3 to another party, B, and B addresses T2 and T4 to A. (Levinson 1983: 346-7)

Hence, as Van Rees points out, it seems that "the notion of speech act can certainly be of use" (Van Rees 1992: 41) to explain what is going on in the minds of the participants in a conversation, specifically how the speaker can produce interactional effects on the hearer and the latter in turn reach the interactional intentions of the former. Furthermore, thus conceived, SAT might be essential for explaining the differences between different forms for achieving the interactional goals. For instance, it would explain the difference between *Can you bring me some apples?* in example (20) and *Bring me some apples, then* in example (21).

This adaptation of SAT to the dynamics of discourse seems persuasive indeed. However, in my view, it still has one major problem: its form-to-function orientation, and the dependence to the former by the latter. In characterizing the precise relationship between speech acts and interactional goals, Van Rees argues that the latter are reached *"by way of"* (*ibid.*: 41, original emphasis) the performance of a speech act, "a minimal interactional act of trying to gain acceptance of the communicative force and propositional content of the utterance being conventionally associated with every speech act, and all other interactional effects being dependent on the realization of this minimal interactional effect" (*ibid.*: 41-2). This poses the problem of how to account for silence, that is, the non production of speech acts, which certainly has a function in conversation despite the lack of (speech-act-theoretical) form. This problem can be extended to other interactional features not manageable in speech-act theoretical terms, such as discourse markers, back-channelling cues, and the like.

Summarizing, although the above revision of CA has revealed that it needs to be complemented by some model that provides the necessary cognitive support for CA findings, I expect to have shown that the attempts to go back to SAT are not fully

successful[18]. Two additional models will be revised in the following section: Relevance Theory and the Neo-Gricean Theory of implicatures.

2.7.2. Relevance Theory and the Neo-Gricean theory of implicatures

On close inspection of many of the organizational rules reviewed so far, it seems possible to reanalyze them in cognitive terms. Thus, we can see a rational and cognitive counterpart for the notion of people's 'orientation', 'expectation', 'preferred' and 'dispreferred' turns[19], 'most-next-least preferred sequences', and 'checking of pre-conditions', as well as the concept of 'conditional relevance'. The question is why it is the case that all the above features hold and are socially observed? What do those expectations, orientations, and the like consist of? Two main cognitive models attempt to provide an answer to these questions: Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson 1995 [1986]) and the Neo-Gricean Theory of Implicatures (Levinson 2000; Terkourafi 2001, 2003, 2005c, 2005d). They both stem from the seminal framework devised in theoretical pragmatics by Paul H. Grice (1975 [1967], 1978 [1967], 1981 [1979]) but have adopted different approaches: while the former reduces Grice's Maxims to one single super-maxim of Relevance, the latter elaborates and further refines Grice's original proposal. I do not intend to make a full-fledged description of each approach here. I will limit myself to make a brief introduction to both views before supporting the Neo-Gricean model as better suited for accounting for the notion of politeness as defined in FBA.

The starting point of Relevance Theory is the observation that human cognition is geared toward the maximum (or optimal) level of relevance. This is achieved when two opposing factors are perfectly balanced: positive cognitive effects and processing efforts. The former are defined as effects which may make people strengthen, revise or abandon previous assumptions and trigger other related conclusions. It is purported that the higher the effects the greater the relevance. Processing efforts are in inverse

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[18] The inadequacies of SAT as a cognitive tool to supplement CA deficiencies does not necessarily mean that the empirical model of speech acts used in the CCSARP project to codify utterances should be discarded as a research tool. In fact, in Chapter 5 I will argue that the guidelines offer within this research tradition can be useful to organize and classify the turn-constructional features of the realization of turns in conversation, an aspect which is not very well developed and systematized within CA.

[19] The notion of *preference organization* as defined in CA will be discussed in length in Chapter 3. Here, the Levinsonian sense of the term is used for the sake of the argument.

correlation with cognitive effects, since relevance is reduced the more effort is invested in processing some input.

Now, Sperber & Wilson (1995 [1986]) argued that this cognitive principle of relevance is exploited in communication. It is assumed that in any communicative event, the speaker has the intention to inform about something and the intention to let the addressee know that intention. The former is called *informative intention*, and the later *communicative intention.* In order to make the addressee aware of both intentions, a speaker needs to produce a stimulus to prompt the hearer's retrieval of contextual implications that allow him/her to eventually reach a new conclusion. However, this stimulus needs to be clear and explicit enough for the addressee to be able to recognize both informative and communicative intentions. This modelling of the communication process is called *ostensive-inferential communication* (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 63), defined as follows:

> The communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions I. (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 63).

Based on the assumption that everybody shares the knowledge of what is considered optimally relevant, Sperber and Wilson propose the *communicative principle of relevance* (1995: 50ff, 261), by which "every ostensive stimulus conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance" (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 266-7), a presumption that is spelled out (in the 1995 modified version) as follows:

(a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.
(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences. (*ibid.*)

Sperber & Wilson claim that this set of principles account for a wide range of communicative phenomena, including metaphor, irony, or the correct interpretation of intended meaning of a communicate acting the appropriate context.

This model seems to provide a sound cognitive support for the structural patterns found within CA. Recall, for example, the classification of pre-requests made by Levinson (1983), which I reproduce below:

1.   most preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                        Position 4: (response to non-overt request)

2.   next preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                          Position 2: (offer)
                                          Position 3: (acceptance of offer)

3.   least preferred: Position 1: (pre-request)
                                          Position 2: (go ahead)
                                        Position 3: (request)
                                        Position 4: (compliance)   (Levinson 1983: 361)

Here, Levinson argued that option 1 derived from option 3. The problem consisted in where in the sequence to position indirect requests (or pre-requests for Levinson) of the form *can you/could you*, which are conventionalized for requests in most contexts. Levinson (1983) argued that most pre-requests were constructed so as to trigger position 4 responses, but this was unconvincing.

It seems more plausible to account for the above distinction between most-next-least preferred on the one hand, and the difference between ambivalent (*Bring me some apples*) and conventionally indirect (*can you/could you bring me some apples?*), on the other, separately. Rather than strictly relying on sequential/positional accounts, I believe it is better to resort to the notion of *expectation* (Escandell-Vidal 1996, 1998, Terkourafi 2001), which results from the combination of general knowledge about the world and society and specific knowledge acquired in virtue of the frequent experience of events. These expectations have a role in the type of implicatures raised and in the inferencing process. Let us compare the following examples under this light:

(23)   A: Is John there?
          B: You can reach him at extension thirty four sixty two.

                                              (Levinson 1981a: 484)

is said to be more preferred than

(24)   A: Is John there?
          B: I think so. Do you want his extension number?
          A: Yes, please.

and even more so than

(25)   A: Is John there?
          B: I think so.
          A: Can you give me his extension number, please?
          B: Sure, it's thirty four sixty two.

How is it possible that B in (23) can infer that A by way of saying *Is John there?* has implicated that (i) A wants to talk to him on the phone? To reach this conclusion she needs to draw from the general knowledge or schema that one possible reason for someone asking over the phone where someone is or whether that person is at the place to where the phone call is made is that he/she wants to talk to him/her, especially if the call is made to an office or a company. However, by no means is this the only possible reason: (ii) John could be the son of the caller and that the latter is looking for the former and just wants to know where he is, or (iii) the caller is a friend and wants just to make sure that John is there to come and see him, and so on. In fact, in example (25), the status of *Is John there?* is uncertain and B needs more clues (data) to venture a guess. Hence, in order for B to give prominence to interpretation (i) and pre-emptively produce the Position 4 utterance above in the second turn without going through the whole confirmation process, she needs to draw from the specific knowledge acquired through her own experience in her own specific context: she probably is a receptionist; probably B knows who the caller is and also knows that the caller knows John, and this is not the first time the caller has tried to get through to John. We could then hypothesize, drawing from the above expectations, that B has framed the utterance *Is John there?* as a pre-sequence before requesting to be put through to John. This way, we have an account of why (23) can be produced without being incoherent. But, what is the rationale behind these different cognitive processes outlined above? Why should speaker B in (23) go through the extra effort of processing A's *Is John there?* as implicating *Put me through to John*? According to Relevance Theory, this is because both speakers share enough contextual information for B to infer from A's utterance that A wants to talk to John and therefore considers A's linguistic stimulus is ostensive enough as to reach the conclusion. Sperber & Wilson (1995) put it this way:

> [I]f it is mutually manifest to communicator and audience that an assumption contextually implied by an utterance increases its overall relevance, then it is (in general) mutually manifest that the communicator intended this implication to be manifest. In other words, this implication is communicated (as an implicature). (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 275).

So, what speaker B does in (23) is to increase the "overall relevance" of her contribution in the above specific context by jumping over the obvious, which in this

case would be A's intention to talk to John. What example (23) through (25) show is not a preferred sequence in structural terms, but rather the different assumptions made by speaker B which allows her to respond as in (23) or as in (25).

Relevance Theory, then, seems to provide the cognitive support I was looking for. In fact, it has been adopted by other scholars working on politeness and relational work (e.g., Watts 2003; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts, 2005) as a cognitive supplement for the interpretation of (im)polite behavior (Watts 2003: 203). However, while it seems a good candidate as a complement for CA, several shortcomings have been mentioned with respect to the analysis of politeness phenomena. Watts himself acknowledges that "[o]ne major problem with R[elevance] T[heory] is that it rarely, if ever, concerns itself with stretches of natural verbal interaction" (Watts 2003: 212), and although an attempt is made to apply this theory to the study of politeness (*vid.* Watts 2003: Chapter 8), he limits himself to the analysis of the role played by the apology *I'm sorry* before a claim of lack of knowledge (*'I don't know'*) as a response to the inquiry *'Where's Margaret this evening?'* in several hypothetical contexts.

The usefulness of the communicative principle of relevance as a way to explain politeness phenomena has been questioned by Haugh (2003: 404-7). Although relevance theorists were among those who first brought attention to the difference between politeness that is anticipated because it conforms to social and cultural norms (Escandell-Vidal 1996b, 1998; Jary 1998) and politeness that is inferred in nonce context because it occurs when and/or in a way that it is not expected, Haugh criticizes that their notion of *cognitive effects* does not characterize politeness with sufficient detail. Haugh (2003) puts it this way:

> The problem facing the relevance theoretic account of the distinction between anticipated and inferred politeness is that neither cognitive effects nor processing effort […] have been sufficiently characterised in relation to politeness. In particular, there is no distinction made between cognitive effect with have 'positive affect' (such as feelings of approval or warmth and so on), and those which negative affect (such as an antagonism or alienation and son on). For example, there is no distinction made between showing that one thinks well of others (which can give rise to politeness, and showing that one thinks badly of others (which can give rise to impoliteness). (Haugh 2003: 406).

Thus, although Relevance Theory accounts for the problematic conversation analytic features revised and provides the basis for a definite departure from Brown &

Levinson's view of politeness as always communicated instead of being anticipated (because expected), it seems that it does not spell out with enough detail what exactly goes on in the interpretation of (im)politeness.

One step further toward this detailed characterization of politeness is found in Terkourafi's (2001, 2003, 2005c, 2005d) Neo-Gricean approach to the study of implicatures, and in her distinction between particularized conversational implicatures (PCIs), generalized conversational implicatures in relation to some minimal-context (*GCIs), and generalized conversational implicatures that are presumed in all contexts, other things being equal (GCIs) (Terkourafi 2001: Chapter 5, and particularly pp. 134-154; 2003: 212). PCIs correspond to Brown and Levinson's view of politeness as always communicated, whereas *GCIs and GCIs are inferred, and spell out what relevance theorists identified as anticipated. The only difference between the latter two resides in their partial or total independence from context for a default interpretation of an utterance as polite, which in turn would trigger different inferential paths. These two cases correspond to anticipated politeness, and therefore pass unnoticed (Kasper 1990: 193; Terkourafi 2005c: 250) and are seen as 'unmarked' behavior. So, Terkourafi's enhanced version of Levinsonian heuristics (2000) seems to provide a more defined cognitive apparatus to explain the different ways in which (im)politeness can be interpreted.

Now, from the above discussion it is deduced that context plays a crucial role in how (im)politeness is interpreted. For the speakers (and for the analyst) to make correct assumptions and inferences, a precise analysis of the relationship between utterances (or, for the matter, the lack of them) and the context in which they occur (or do not occur where expected) is needed. But how is this done in practice? What is meant by context in the first place? This questions can be answered by including the notion of frame (Goffman 1986 [1974]; Escandell-Vidal 1996, 1998; Terkourafi 2001, 2005c) into the framework in order to relate findings not only to conversational organization, but also to the extra-linguistic situation (activity, event) in which they occur.

2.7.3. Framing context

It is certainly true that the interpretations we make about the world depend on the type of activity we are engaged in and the way we frame that activity. Different

activities activate different inference processes. People will behave differently depending on whether they know each other or not; the particular encounter they are in is formal or informal, it is realized for the first time or not, it has a ludic purpose or is related to more serious matters; it is mainly transactional (e.g., buying an airplane ticket) or mainly interactional (e.g., greetings, chatting at the university canteen), so on and so forth. When people start a conversation, they are not a blank slate but bring to it a set of background assumptions and a series of expectations which they will use to frame in their behavior as appropriately as possible to the context at hand.

So, if someone shouts *Hey, Ignacio!* in the street, I will probably turn around and see who it is. I would activate the 'calling' frame appropriate to that situation, including factors like 'the caller knows me', 'the caller has recognized me', 'the caller wants me to pay attention to him/her (for whatever reason that I may or may not know depending on the situation)'. If the same utterance is produced in a soccer game, I would activate a different frame and my inferential process would be something like 'someone has called me', 'the caller is one of my team mates', 'I currently have the ball', 'the caller wants to bring my attention to the fact that he is in good position to receive the ball', and so on, thus reaching the conclusion that the caller wants me to pass the ball to him.

Terkourafi (2001) defines frames as "structuring [...] prototypical information about a situation and the appropriate use of language therein" based on "beliefs [that] are both 'stored' in memory and brought to bear on [such] situation" (Terkourafi 2001: 161-2). A frame is the result of answering the question: "What is going on here?" (Goffman 1986 [1974]: 25). For the correct interpretation of verbal communication, frames are triggered by the use of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors and once activated they pre-select some structured set of assumptions from which the relevant and applicable context can be chosen (Escandell-Vidal 1996: 641, Terkourafi 2001: 163), that is, the situation *type* the current event seems to fit in, thus creating a set of expectations[20]. The event, or *eventuality*, should not be understood only as something static, as a frozen picture of a situation, but also as the dynamic unfolding of such event (Terkourafi 2001: 163, fn. 3), and hence what we could call new micro-frames are activated online (e.g., an event can be initially framed as a friendly chat in a terrace but then some inappropriate or rude comment can trigger the activation of a 'hostility' frame and end up being a battle).

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[20] Terkourafi's (2001) notion of politeness as the relation of fit between these expectations and the real unfolding of events has been discussed in Chapter 1.

One important corollary of the notion of frame is that it provides a principled cognitive account of why situations can be classified as 'unmarked' and 'marked', and consequently, as 'preferred' and 'dispreferred', respectively, and hence why one heuristic process is chosen over the others in a given context. From this view, events (including, conversational events) will be seen as 'unmarked' and 'preferred' if expectations —including the belief that normally people are cooperative, and hence polite— are met and, as a result, things will proceed smoothly. On the other hand, 'marked' events are 'dispreferred' because they go against expectations, and this should be noticed in people's behavior.[21]

This being the case, Terkourafi (2001) argues for the notion of frame as the perfect complement for Levinson's heuristics (Neo-Gricean pragmatics). The proposed heuristics establishes "the relationship between stereotypical linguistic descriptions and the real-world situations they describe" (*ibid.*: 166) but it does not tell which real-world situation is the one that fits best the "stereotypical linguistic description". This is done by correctly *framing* the event through the *combination* of information drawn from linguistic descriptions and real-world situations (*ibid.*). Thus, we may conclude with Terkourafi that "the reconciliation of a frame-based account of understanding with the Levinsonian heuristics […] appears not only feasible, but also theoretically desirable" (*ibid.: 166*).[22]

At this point, I have come full-circle from my initial proposal to supplement the deficiency found in Terkourafi's approach to the data with a discourse-analytic tool back to her model again in order to resort to two key concepts in her account: the Neo-Gricean theory of implicatures (Levinson 2000, Terkourafi 2001, 2003, 2005c, 2005d) and, again, to the notion of frame. My suggestion is to bring together Terkourafi's instruments that give a plausible account of the rational-cognitive aspects of (polite) communication and the tools provided by Conversation Analysis and speech act research for a fine-grained analysis of disagreement acts in interaction.

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[21] See relevant discussion, again, in Chapter 1.
[22] The notion of frame is operationalized for our research purposes in Chapter 4.

2.8. Summary

In this chapter, I have argued that Brown and Levinson's approach to the analysis of politeness based on the classification of speech acts is hardly feasible and that the analysis should be conducted in the context of real interaction. Two main discourse analytic models have been reviewed as possible candidates to provide the necessary apparatus to conduct such task: Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis. Relevant discussion of both models has revealed the inadequacy of the former and the higher descriptive power of the latter. However, a question was raised about its explanatory power, due to its over reliance on the structural properties of conversation. Attention was brought to the fact that many terms and rules belied this assumption (e.g., 'motivation', 'expectation', 'preference') and betrayed the need to resort to some cognitive account. Hence, several proposals were reviewed, such as the improved version of speech act theory (Van Rees 1992), Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson 1995) and Terkourafi's (2001, 2003, 2005c, 2005d) improved version of Levinsonian heuristics (Levinson 2000). I finally opted for Terkourafi's proposal as the best complement for CA as an analytic framework since it spells out how politeness could be either anticipated or inferred in nonce-context, and also because it integrates the notion of frame, which allows for empirical application of the above heuristics. This choice is base on the assumption that our perception of the linguistic and extra-linguistic situation and the expectations raised therein depends on how we frame a certain activity (Levinson 1992 [1978]), both a *priori* and in the dynamic unfolding of events, in accordance with our general knowledge of the world and the specific knowledge of context acquired through experience that are relevant for such situation. We have also argued for the combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses (Turnbull 2007), based on the assumption that it is possible to categorize and operationalize independent and dependent variables drawing from current findings about how (dis)agreements are produced and interpreted in talk-in-interaction.

This approach is in many respects similar to that adopted in Usami's (2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2002, 2006) discourse approach to politeness in several respects. Usami's model also relies on conversation analysis as an analytic tool and the linguistic data are quantitatively analyzed in order to find out what is considered as "default" interpretation of politeness in context, since politeness is also understood as primarily 'unmarked behavior' (Usami 2001b: 12). The approach adopted here, however, differs from

Usami's in two ways: on one hand, while Usami's approaches gives a descriptive account of what can be considered 'unmarked', no explanation is given about why this is so. By following Terkourafi's cognitive approach to politeness based on Levinsonian heuristics and the notion of frame, an explanation is provided to the difference between anticipated and inferred politeness. The present approach is also different in that it combines conversation analytic tools and findings with notions and categorizations realized within cross-cultural pragmatics research at the turn-constructional level of analysis, which allows for a more fine-grained comparison at different levels of (dis)agreement realization.

PART II

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

CHAPTER 3

(DIS)AGREEMENTS: A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON FROM A POLITENESS PERSPECTIVE

3.1. Introduction: Why (dis)agreements?

In the thirty years elapsed since politeness and facework became objects of study, a vast amount of research has been carried out in the field from both theoretical and empirical perspectives as evidenced by the over-fifty-page long bibliography offered by DuFon *et al.* as far back as 1994, and later works published in collections of essays (e.g., Bravo & Briz 2004; Gass & Neu 1996; Lakoff & Ide 2005; Márquez-Reiter & Placencia 2004; Spencer-Oatey 2000), books (e.g. Eelen 2001; Fukushima 2000; Holmes 1995; Locher 2004, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Watts 2003), and international journals (Cordella *et al.* 1995; Félix-Brasdefer 2003; Fukushima 2004; García 2004; Hinkel 1997; Holtgraves 1997, 2005; Kasper 2004, 2006; Locher 2006; Locher & Watts 2005; Lorenzo-Dus 2001; Márquez-Reiter 1997; Meier 1995, 1996; Muntigl & Turnbull 1998; O'Driscoll 1996; Pizziconi 2003; Spencer-Oatey 2005, 2007; Terkourafi 2002, 2004, 2005c; Watts 2005, to mention just a few).

Most of the empirical studies carried out so far have focused on initiating communicative acts [23] such as *orders/commands* (Blum-Kulka 1990), *complaints* (Murphy & Neu 1996), *compliments* (Cordella *et al.* 1995; Díaz Pérez 2001; Holmes 1988, Lorenzo-Dus 2001; Manes & Wolfson 1981), *reprimands* (García 2004), *suggestions* (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford 1990), *invitations* (García 2005; Wolfson 1981; Mao 1994), *advice* (Hinkel 1997), *offers* (Koutlaki 2002), and above all, *requests*

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[23] The preference for "communicative act" instead of "speech act" is explained in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, the term "speech act" will be mentioned again in the Analytical Section (Chapter 5), where the difference between the theoretical notion of speech act and the way it is understood within the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP) is discussed (see also Kasper 2004, 2006).

(Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka & House 1989; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984; Clark & Schunk 1980; Cohen 1996; Díaz Pérez 2001; Faerch & Kasper 1989, Fraser & Nolen 1981, García 1989b, 1993; Geis 1995; Geis & Harlow 1996; Hill *et al.* 1986; Holtgraves & Yang 1990, 1992; House & Kasper 1989; Ide *et al.* 1992; Kasper 2006; Márquez-Reiter 1997; Rintell & Mitchell 1989; Terkourafi 2001, 2004; Walters 1979).

Responding acts or *reactives* (Coulmas 1981: 71) have received less attention. Some exceptions are the study of *apologies* (Bergman & Kasper 1993; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984; Cohen & Olshtain 1981, 1993; Coulmas 1981; Díaz Pérez 2001; García 1989a; Holmes 1990; Lakoff 2001; Meier 1996; Rintell & Mitchell 1989), *refusals* to various initiating acts (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford 1991; Beebe & Cummings 1996; Félix-Brasdefer 2003; Houck & Gass 1996, Kwon 2004; Turnbull 2001; Turnbull & Saxton 1997), *expressions of gratitude* (Coulmas 1981; Díaz Pérez 2001; Eisenstein & Bodman 1993; Koutlaki 2002), and *responses* to various initiating acts, such as *reprimands* (García 2004), *requests* (Clark & Schunk 1980, García 1993), *compliments* (Chen 1993; Golato 2003; Holmes 1988; Lorenzo-Dus 2001; Spencer-Oatey, Ng & Dong 2000; Yu 2003) and *unfounded accusations* (Tanaka, Spencer-Oatey & Cray 2000).

Among these latter acts, i.e. *reactives*, are agreements and disagreements (Sornig 1977, Rees-Miller 2000), as they are produced as reactions to some opinion, evaluation, or attitudinal stance proffered by a co-conversant in a prior turn of speech or piece of writing. These reactives have been studied within various frameworks, such as speech act theory (Sornig 1977, Rees-Miller 2000), interactional sociolinguistics (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002; Kakavá 2002; Honda 2002; Lee & Peck 1995; Schiffrin 1984; Tannen 2002), and above all conversation analysis and ethnomethodology (Bilmes 1988; Emmertsen 2007; Goodwin 1983; Goodwin & Goodwin 1987, 1992; Greatbatch 1992; Gruber 1998; Hutchby 1992; Kotthoff 1993; Mori 1999; Mulkay 1985; Myers 1998; Ogden 2006; Pomerantz 1984; Sacks 1987; Saft 2004; Williams 2005, among others), and have provided a considerable amount of insight on the structural and sequential properties of the production of (dis)agreement in various contexts and cultures[24].

However, very few studies of this conversational phenomenon have been undertaken from a politeness and facework perspective. Some few exceptions are Edstrom (2004), García (1989b), Georgakopoulou (2001), Graham (2007), Hayashi

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[24] See Section 3.2.2. for a full review.

(1996), Holtgraves (1997), Locher (2004), Muntigl & Turnbull (1998), and Rees-Miller (2000). Although they all investigate the relationship between (dis)agreement and politeness — or the lack of that relationship (*vid.* Georgakopoulou 2001) —, the data are approached from diverse theoretical and analytical perspectives, as well as in different contexts and cultures. García (1989b), for example, adopts Lakoff's (1973) framework of politeness rules, whereas Edstrom (2004), Holtgraves (1997), Hayashi (1996), Muntigl & Turnbull (1998), and Rees-Miller (2000) prefer Brown & Levinson's (1987) face-saving model, and Graham (2007) and Locher (2004) choose the notion of relational work proposed by Watts (1989, 1992, 2003).

On the analytical plane, many models have been adopted too. While Rees-Miller (2000) stays within the speech-act theoretical tradition, García (1989b), Locher (2004), and Graham (2007) prefer an ethnographic approach to discourse, although the first two also rely on the notion of 'frame'. This notion is also used by Hayashi (1996), but in combination with the Discourse Analysis of the so-called Birmingham School; Muntigl & Turnbull (1998) put together conversation analysis and empirical psychology, and Holtgraves (1997) relies on quantitative methods of data collection and analysis commonly used in social-psychology. Finally, some others do not specify their approach, like Edstrom (2004) and Georgakopoulou (2001).

The cultural and contextual milieu is diverse as well. At the cultural level, the majority of studies have been conducted on the English language spoken in various countries[25]: Canadian English (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998), American English (García 1989b; Hayashi 1996; Holtgraves 1997; Locher 2004; Rees-Miller 2000), and British English (Graham 2007). Other languages have received little attention: Georgakopoulou (2001) investigates Greek, while Edstrom (2004) works on Venezuelan Spanish. On the plane of context, most studies focus on casual conversations among acquaintances, friends or close friends, with the only exceptions of Hayashi (1996), who sets the investigation in the interaction between a supervisor and a teacher-to-be; Graham (1997), who concentrates on computer-mediated communication, and Rees-Miller (2000), whose study is located in an academic setting. Incidentally, Graham's research is the only one that deals with written communication[26], and García's (1989b), the only

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[25] At the risk of over-simplification, 'culture' is equated here with the combination 'nation-language'.

[26] Of course, the review so far deals only with those studies conducted within the framework of politeness and facework. Outside this paradigm, a large amount of research has been carried out in different areas, such as the comparison between oral and written forms of disagreeing (*vid.* Bayrn 1996, Mulkay 1985, Lewis 2005), disagreements in institutional settings (Emmertsen 2007, Greatbatch 1992, Gruber 1998,

contrastive work. A summary of the different approaches and methods to the study of disagreement is offered in Table 3:

Table 3: *Previous research on disagreements from a politeness/facework perspective.*

Authors	Model of politeness	Analytical approach	Language	Context	Contrastive approach?
García (1989b)	R. Lakoff	Interactional Sociolinguistics + Frame Analysis	American English spoken by Venezuelans	Response to complaint by apartment superintendent	YES
Hayashi (1996)	Brown & Levinson	Discourse Analysis + Frame Analysis	American English	Supervisor-trainee advice session	NO
Holtgraves (1997)	Brown & Levinson	SAT + empirical psychology	American English	Casual conversations	NO
Muntigl & Turnbull (1998)	Brown & Levinson	Conversation Analysis + empirical psychology	Canadian English	Casual conversations	NO
Rees-Miller (2000)	Brown & Levinson	Speech Act Research	American English	Academic discussions	NO
Georgakopoulou (2001)	Contra Brown & Levinson	?	Greek	Casual conversations	NO
Locher (2004)	Watts	Interactional Sociolinguitics + Frame Analysis	American English	?	NO
Edstrom (2004)	Brown & Levinson	?	Venezuelan Spanish	Casual conversations	NO
Graham (2007)	Watts	Interactional Sociolinguistics	British English	Computer-mediated communication	NO

As can be seen, scarcity and lack of uniformity characterize the study of (dis)agreements within the politeness/facework paradigm. Hence, this work aims to address the above limitations and contribute to its study in several ways. First of all, by choosing (dis)agreement, an attempt is made to extend the study of politeness phenomena outside the beaten path of prototypical FTAs such as requests, apologies, complaints and refusals. Secondly, it attempts to be innovative in its approach and design by including three highly divergent cultural areas —North-American, Mediterranean and Asian— and languages —American English, Peninsular Spanish and Japanese—, thus adopting a contrastive, cross-cultural method. This design should allow a close inspection of conversational output and strategies in similar settings —including topic, number of participants and the relationship between them, their age and gender— thus guaranteeing the comparability of the data. Finally, the inclusion of Peninsular Spanish is justified by the paucity of studies on (dis)agreements in this language, and adds up to previous research on other Mediterranean languages,

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Hutchby 1992, Honda 2002, Myers 1998, Saft 2004, Tannen 2002), and in different cultures (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002, Kakavá 2002, Kotthoff 1993, Honda 2002, Mori 1999, Saft 2002, Tannen and Kakavá 1992, among others). See below for a more comprehensive review.

especially Greek (Georgakopoulou 2001, Kakavá 2002, Tannen 2002) and Hebrew (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002). On the other hand, disagreement and the management of conflicts in Japanese have been previously studied from a CA perspective (Jones 1990, Mori 1999, Honda 2002, Saft 2002), but are still very few, and none of them has been conducted from a politeness approach. In this chapter, a critical review of the literature is done in order to arrive at an informed definition of what should be understood by (dis)agreement and in what ways this phenomenon is related to politeness and facework. The methodological aspects are tackled in the next chapter.

3.2. Agreement, disagreement, preference organization and politeness

To *agree* is, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English (ODE) (2003), to "have the same opinion about something; concur" with someone else, and *agreement* is achieved when there is "harmony or accordance in opinion and feeling". The Collins Universal Dictionary (CUD) (2005) translates this last term as *acuerdo* to Spanish, as used in the expression *estar de acuerdo*, while *to agree* is rendered as *estar conforme, coincidir*. In Japanese, this verb is equivalent to *iken ga itchi suru* (意見が一致する lit. 'coincide/share an opinion') and *sansei no i o arawasu* (賛成の意を表す lit. 'show approval'), while the noun is translated as *itchi*（一致 'coincidence'）, *choowa*（調和 'harmony'）, *dooi*（同意 'same opinion', 'approval'）, or *gooi*（合意 'convergence', 'consensus'）(Unabridged Genius English-Japanese Dictionary (UGEJD), 2001).

Disagreement, on the other hand, is defined by the ODE as follows: "Lack of consensus or approval". It is translated into Japanese as *fu-itchi* (不一致 'lack of coincidence') or *sooi* (相違 'discrepancy', 'disagreement') (UGEJD 2001), and into Spanish as *desacuerdo, discrepancia, disconformidad* (CUD (2005), Oxford Spanish Dictionary (2003). When people *disagree*, they "have or express a different opinion" (ODE) with respect to some previous statement, assessment, or opinion. Hence, a disagreement is produced as a reaction to some previous turn and therefore is a responding act, not an initiating act. It is, in Coulmas' (1981) terminology, a *reactive*.

Sacks (1987 [1973]) regarded agreement and disagreement as the second pair part in an adjacency pair.[27]

Disagreement is in some ways similar to related notions like confrontation (Hutchby 1992), opposition (Kakavá 2002), conflict (Honda 2002), dispute and argument (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998), but should be distinguished from them in several ways. Firstly, disagreement will be understood here in a narrow sense as a local phenomenon in the conversation analytic sense. That is, it will refer to the orientation a second and/or subsequent turn(s) show(s) with respect to an initiating turn (Bilmes 1988; Kotthoff 1993; Pomerantz 1984; Sacks 1987), as opposed to the other terms like dispute, argument or confrontation which will be used to refer to the broad orientation of the activity once a shift has been produced from a consensual to a confrontational orientation (Gruber 1998; Kakavá 2002; Kotthoff 1993; Schiffrin 1984, 1990), the onset of which is generally acknowledged to be established once an exchange of at least two disagreeing turns has taken place (Gruber 1998, Muntigl & Turnbull 1998), that is, what Gruber (1998: 476) calls the "conflict nucleus". Thus, one single disagreeing act does not constitute an argument (dispute, confrontation), nor does it imply a conflictive situation. Only when that disagreement is met with a counter-disagreement in the following turn could be said that a shift of frame from cooperative to conflictive orientation has potentially been activated. Still, this does not necessarily mean that a full-blown conflictive episode ensues. Conversationalists may either orient to that frame by holding onto their differing/opposing views and enter a second phase of opposition in order to proceed to the finding of a solution (Gruber 1998: 477), or they may avoid the conflict and return to a consensual interaction (*Ibid.*)[28].

Another caveat is related to the type of unit agreement/disagreement should be related with. For Rees-Miller (2000), disagreement is linked to a specific utterance type, as made clear in the following definition:

> A Speaker S disagrees when s/he considers untrue some Proposition *P* uttered or presumed to be espoused by an Addressee A and reacts with an utterance the propositional content or implicature of which is *Not P*. (Rees-Miller 2000: 1088, original emphasis)

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[27] See previous chapter for a description of the notion of adjacency pair and further elaboration in Section 3.2.1.

[28] As we will see, this change of interactional frame is highly important to determine the relationship between conversational features ―sequence-organizational and turn-constructional patterns (Kasper 2006)― and preference organization (Kotthoff 1993, Gruber 1998), and between these two and politeness.

By defining disagreement as a "react[ion] with an utterance", Rees-Miller links disagreements to propositions contained or implicatures drawn from specific speech productions, thus precluding the possibility of incorporating the absence of speech as an object of analysis. In my approach, however, disagreement is not necessarily defined as an active oppositional stance expressed through speech, but also includes marked absence of agreement (or disagreement) when agreement (or disagreement) is expected. This expectation is due to the basic organization of turns into adjacency pair types (Sacks 1987[1973]; Sacks *et al.* 1974; Schegloff & Sacks 1973), in which one 'first pair part' calls for a 'second pair part' that fits the type. Sacks (1987 [1973]) puts it this way:

> if a party does, for example, a first pair part of some type, such as greeting, question, offer, request, compliment, complaint, things like that, then the party who is going to do a second pair part to that first pair part picks it from the sort of alternatives that fit the type. (Sacks 1987: 55-6).

Hence, greetings fit after greetings, answers after questions, acceptances or rejections after offers, and so on. This is why silence is marked after questions, greetings, offers, invitations, and so forth, simply because some kind of reaction or response is expected. Anybody would feel at least awkward or even annoyed if a *Hi, how are you doing!?* were met by silence, or no response were received to, say, an invitation to go to the cinema. Both the greeting and the invitation sequences are felt to be incomplete if no answer is received. Similarly, some kind of reactive token is expected after statements, assessments, opinions or even 'conducive' questions (Bousfield 2007, Quirk *et al.* 1985)[29]. In these cases, silence is not the expected second pair part and therefore it is a marked option (Levinson 1983: 307). The precise relationship between silence and its interpretation as agreement or disagreement will be fully explored in subsequent sections. For the moment, suffice it to say that in typically friendly conversations, in which agreement is expected, an *attributable silence* (Levinson 1983: 299) will be interpreted as a possible disagreement (Pomerantz 1984, Sacks 1987).

The object of the present work is, therefore, to probe into the production of agreements and disagreements locally understood as turns in talk-in-interaction that

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[29] Conducive questions indicate "[…] that the speaker is predisposed to the kind of answer he [sic] has wanted or expected" (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 83), such as negative questions with asserted terms (e.g. *Don't you think this is stupid?*) or tag questions (e.g. *You did it, didn't you*) (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 808-810; Bousfield 2007: 16ff), to which an affirmative answer is expected.

have a convergent or divergent position/orientation with respect to some prior turn to which they are sequentially related. These (dis)agreements are not formally defined as propositions produced in response to other propositions, but as turns that are expected in some kind of turn sequence in virtue of which certain inferences are made depending on whether those expectations are met or not.

Now, I have already advocated a politeness approach to the study of agreement and disagreement. This move needs to be qualified, justified and elaborated. In the previous chapter, I hinted that there was a close relationship between the CA notion of preference organization and facework. In what follows, a review is made of previous studies on (dis)agreements that inform about the notion of preference, its role in the production and interpretation of (dis)agreements, and the sense in which it is related to facework and politeness.

3.2.1. Agreement preferred; disagreement dispreferred

It was Sacks (1987 [1973]) who first suggested that agreement in conversation was a preferred action and, conversely, disagreement was dispreferred in adjacency pair sequences. This preference orientation, Sacks claimed, is not a question of individual psychological preferences, but rather an apparatus that operates at the level of the structural organization of talk (Sacks 1987: 65) as something socially imposed, that is, that people might not like to disagree "because they are supposed to not like to disagree; they are supposed to try to agree perhaps" (Sacks 1987: 69, fn.7). In other words, it is structurally defined.[30]

As shown in the previous section, following the adjacency pair principle, an initiating turn creates the expectation of a specific set of relevant second pair parts. Sacks (1987) provides the example of a yes-no question, which creates the expectation of an answer that represents either a *'yes'* or a *'no'*[31]. A priori, a *'yes'* or a *'no'* are equally possible to occur. However, Sacks (1987: 57) noticed that *'yes'* answers are by far more frequent than *'no'* answers. This pattern led Sacks to state the following rule of preference:

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[30] This point is discussed in Sub-section 3.2.2. and Section 3.3.
[31] The picture is oversimplified for the sake of the argument. Of course, the answer could be almost anything including compromise or lack of commitment (e.g. *Well, yes and no*, or *It depends*).

[I]f a question is built in such a way as to exhibit a preference as between 'yes' or 'no', or 'yes-' or 'no-' like responses, then the answerers will tend to pick that choice, or a choice of that sort will be preferred by answerers, or should be preferred by answerers". (*ibid*.: 57)

The preference rule predicts that if a first turn is positively oriented, the answer will tend to agree with that orientation, and if the first turn is negatively oriented, then again the answer will be to 'agree' with that. Thus, there seems to be some kind of principle, which Sacks suggests to call "preference for agreement".

Another conversational feature that Sacks noticed is related to the sequential properties of agreements and disagreements. In preferred question sequences, when a question turn is embedded in a turn and surrounded by other elements, the question normally goes at the end of the turn, while in response turns, the answer normally comes at the beginning of the turn. That is, they are normally juxtaposed or 'contiguous', which is also a collaborative task, as are agreements with previous turns. Thus, there seems to be a correlation between agreement and contiguity: when an agreement occurs, it usually happens contiguously, whereas if a disagreement is proffered, it will be placed rather deep in the turn (*Ibid*.: 58). This 'delay' is illustrated in the example below, where the negative answer is displaced to the end of the turn (in bold face):

(26) *(5esp/T52M42)*
    T245' B: =lo reservarmos pro::nto (1.2) n::: tú qué has dicho? cincuenta
              e::uros↑ para Sevi-? o sea:::-
    T246 A: yo:::↑ bueno mis padres buscaron en:::- en febrero↑ (.) no en marzo↑ a
              primeros de marzo↑ y les costó:::: (.) lo reservaron en no<u>viem</u>bre o en
              octub- e::::n di<u>ciem</u>bre (.) y les costó:::: creo que **ochenta euros** ir y
              venir

This way, preferred answers are characterized by 'contiguity' and lack of delay, whereas dispreferred answers show the opposite features. But this is not the only feature that informs about (dis)preference. Sacks (1987: 63-6) mentions some additional patterns of dispreferred seconds like avoiding saying *'no'* overtly, using 'fake' agreements before modifying them (e.g., *A: do you have a favorite? B:* <u>*Yeah I have-*</u> *uh I can't say I have one favorite I have a couple (.) I like Velazquez (.) El Greco Goya (.) Dali (.) Gaudi … it's hard to pick one though* (7eng/85-6M61)), starting the turn with a pause or a token agreement (e.g. *'yes, but…'*), or delaying the disagreement through a number of turns in which a negotiation takes place and both interactants reach a

compromise to understand each other by activating the "misunderstanding machinery" (*ibid.*: 66).

Building on Sacks' notion of contiguity as a feature of preference, Pomerantz (1984) provided a more systematic account of the "turn-shapes" displayed by both preferred and dispreferred actions, with special attention to second assessments. Pomerantz (1984: 61) argues that, as with question-answer pairs, first and second assessments are coordinated in such a way that initial assessments anticipate the next assessment, which in turn is oriented to the first. These second assessments will be shaped as preferred or dispreferred depending on their orientation toward the initial assessment. Initial assessments may be so structured as to invite agreement or disagreement from its interlocutor. If a next action is oriented to as invited, it is a *preferred next action*, if not, it is a *dispreferred next action* (*ibid.*: 63). According to Pomerantz, the status of second assessments (and other communicative actions) bears on the way they are performed. One type of performing the action is by *maximizing* its occurrence by means of gap minimization and explicit components that state the action being performed (*preferred-action turn shape*). The second type of action performance is by *minimizing* its occurrence by means of delays and non-explicitly stated action components (*dispreferred-action turn shape*). This way, there is a correlation between the preference status of an action and the shape or format adopted by the turn in which the action occurs (*ibid.*: 64).

Drawing from Sacks (1987) and from her own observation of data, Pomerantz suggests that in general agreements are preferred over disagreements, with some few exceptions such as self-deprecations, which do not invite agreements because they would be interpreted as implicit criticism (*ibid.*: 78). In circumstances in which agreements are 'invited', however, the following features are identified:

a) agreements have agreement components occupying the entire agreement turns, while disagreements are often prefaced;

b) agreements are accomplished with stated agreement components, whereas disagreements may be accomplished with a variety of forms, ranging from unstated to stated disagreements; when stated, disagreements are frequently formed as partial agreements/partial disagreements, constituting weak forms of disagreement;

c) in general, agreements are performed with a minimization of gap between the prior turn's completion and the agreement turn's initiation; disagreement

components, on the other hand, are frequently delayed within a turn or over a series of turns; finally,

d) absences of forthcoming agreements or disagreements by recipients by means of gaps, requests for clarification, and the like are interpretable as instances of unstated, or as-yet-unstated, disagreements (*ibid.*: 65).

When agreements are invited, these show the following features: they are upgraded agreements having the same referent, and the gap with respect to prior turn is minimized. The upgrade is performed via the use of evaluative terms that are stronger that the previous descriptor, normally adjectives, adverbs and the like (e.g., *beautiful* → *gorgeous; good* → *lovely; cute* → *adorable*), and/or intensifiers that modify a prior evaluative descriptor (e.g., *it was fun* → *it was great fun; a nice little lady* → *awfully nice…; good buy* → *really good buy*). The minimization of the gap or slight overlap is realized in virtue of the anticipation of the possible Turn Completion Point (TCP) (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974).

According to Pomerantz (1984), if agreements in "agreement preferred" sequences are not upgraded or are downgraded, they usually announce forthcoming disagreements. Pomerantz classifies them as *same evaluation* agreements, performed via repetition (echoing) of the prior evaluative term with the addition of *too* (e.g., *I like it* → *I like it too* (agree); *I like it* → *I like it too but...* (disagree)), or using a pro-form for the prior term or structure (e.g., *She's so beautiful!* → *She is* (agree); *I wish you were gunnuh sta:y* → *I do too. But I think…* (disagree)). Downgraded agreements, on the other hand, are scaled-down or weakened evaluations of the same referent as in the prior assessment (e.g., *beautiful* → *pretty; fantastic* → *good; lovely* → *pretty much like himself*).

In this kind of "agreement preferred" sequences, disagreements, if uttered at all, are characterized by a delay in the production of the disagreement component, which can be positioned later in the relevant turn or even withheld in initial turn(s) and not produced until later in a sequence. Additionally, the disagreement will typically have a weak form. The strategies used to delay the production of disagreements are long gaps or "no immediately forthcoming talk" (Pomerantz 1984: 70) ―what Levinson (1983: 299) calls *attributable silence*― and *repair initiators* such as requests for clarification (e.g. *what? Hm?*) and (partial) *question repeats or pro-terms* (e.g., *A: You sound very far away. B: I do?*) if the purpose is to postpone the second pair part for several turns or

avoid the dispreferred assessment altogether. I suggest calling these strategies *Turn External features.*

If the delaying and downgrading devices are located within the same turn in which the dispreferred action is performed, they will typically come before the action in question in the form of *turn prefaces* and will show the following features: they will be preceded by long gaps, hesitation markers such as *uh*, *well* and so on which display reluctance or discomfort, and agreements with a prior's position by means of a) agreement tokens followed by contrastive conjuncts/conjunction (*but, however, except*) (e.g., *Yes but…; Yeah, but…; I know, except…; essentially but*), b) asserted or claimed agreements (e.g., *I think it's funny, yeah → but*), and c) weakened and/or qualified agreement assertions (e.g., <u>*As I remember, yes*</u>; <u>*I don't know, maybe she would → but*</u>). I suggest calling these prefaces *Head Act external features*[32].

Finally, the disagreements that follow the initial agreements are typically weak in form. While strong disagreements are characterized by what Pomerantz (*ibid.*: 74) calls "referent-contrastive evaluation construction", which consists in an evaluation in direct contrast with the prior evaluation and are not hedged but contain disagreement components alone (e.g., *R: … well never mind. It's not important. D: Well,* <u>*it is important*</u>. (*ibid.*: 74); *A: nos vamos en coche … B:* <u>*no eso no*</u> (8esp/T28M25); *A: …murippoi. B:* <u>*iya dekiru zettai dekiru*</u> (*'A: it seems it's impossible (to do). B: no it's possible definitely it is possible'* (11jpn/T79M62)), weak disagreements normally show an *agreement-plus-disagreement* format and does not adopt the *same referent-contrastive evaluation* construction, but are constructed as partial agreements-partial disagreements with the inclusion of qualification, exceptions, additions, conditions, and the like. In the following example, A's disagreement (in bold face) is presented as a condition to be fulfilled in order carry out C's proposal:

(27) *(4eng/T15M6)*
    T072' C: and then either go from Bilbao to Madrid or go from Bilbao try to go- maybe to Galicia but I was thinking like (0.6) you know with the travel times and like (.) be enough (.) just to go to Barcelona for a few days and then like Bilbao (.) and then to like (.) oh ^{well} ºwe could have time for something elseº but (.) I don't know ºlike how- hereº I don't know <u>I would like</u> to see Galicia but (.) I don't know
    T073 A: yeah **I wouldn't mind going to Galicia too if it's like (.) feasible (0.4) going that way**

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[32] See Sub-section 5.3.2.2. in Chapter 5 for a categorization of realizations and act types.

Here, there is an agreement token (*'yeah'*) followed by weak agreement (*'I wouldn't mind going…'* + same referent) that hides the disagreeing element (*'if it's like feasible going that way'*), suggesting that it is *not* feasible to do that. Rather than producing a straight and explicit disagreement, A chooses not to "fully agree" in order to weakly implicate her disagreement. I suggest calling these features that are internal to the main disagreeing act *Head Act internal features*.

The above turn-external, turn-internal/act-external, and turn-internal/act-internal features are associated with dispreferred actions and "constitute part of the apparatus for accomplishing disagreements *as* dispreferred" (*Ibid*. 75-6, original emphasis). One piece of evidence for people's orientation to agreement and the avoidance of disagreement is provided by the interpretation of silence as possible disagreements in those contexts. When an initiating speaker who uttered an assessment is met by silence, s/he will usually resume talk with reversals of and/or backdowns from prior assessments, as illustrated by the following examples in which C's comment in both excerpts does not receive any supporting response and triggers C's backdown in (28) and a qualification of the initial opinion in (29) (in bold face):

> (28) *(2eng/T40-1M32)*
>   T377 B: so you wanna go to like El Prado::   [Reina] Sofía::=
>   T378 A: [yeah]
>   T377'B: =[Gug]genhe::im   [things like that @@@]
>   T379 A: [yeah]   [so if we can like (.)   ] do::: (.) the coo::::l-
>   T380 C: wait I thought that Reina Sofía painting↑ was <u>in</u> El Prado (.) no?
> ⟶   (0.5)
>   T380'C: **[(name of) a museum?]** ((*shaking head sideways*))
>
> (29) *(8esp/T140M125)*
>   T555 C: diez euros al día↑ para comer
> ⟶   (5.2) ((*A y B piensan*))
>   T555'C: **o más**

These general features and the orientation to agreement as preferred and disagreement as dispreferred seem to hold across different situations and cultures. Cross-cultural evidence of the prevalence of this orientation is provided by Mori (1999). In her study, she found that when Japanese disagree, they regularly delay and mitigate this act, and give accounts for their disagreement or non-compliance. Furthermore, disagreements are often "less than fully agreeing" responses, and recipients only suggest partial disagreement instead of explicitly claiming their opposition (Mori 1999: 79-80). The disagreeing turns showed the following characteristics: a) agreement accompanying

a display of reluctance including formulaic expressions (e.g., *soo da ne* 'that's right'), lack of intensification or elaboration, and low amplitude; b) no talk (Levinson's *attributable silence*), and c) next turn repair initiators (NTRIs), such as partial repeat of prior talk with a rising intonation, or other requests for clarification (e.g., *e?* 'what?' 'mhm?' or *doo iu imi?* 'What do (you) mean?'). Furthermore, when speakers perceive that next speaker displays some kind of hesitancy or difficulty in responding to an opinion or assessment, "they are likely to consider potential sources of the problem in their earlier utterance and remedy it in the following talk" (Mori 1999: 137) to pre-empt possible disagreement.

Pomerantz (1984), on the other hand, argues that this preference structure is pan-situational. As she puts it:

> *[A]cross different situations*, conversants orient to agreeing with one another as comfortable, supportive, reinforcing, perhaps as being sociable and as showing that the are like-minded. *This phenomenon seems to hold whether persons are talking about the weather, a neighborhood dog, or a film that they just saw*. Likewise, *across a variety of situations* conversants orient to their disagreeing with one another as uncomfortable, unpleasant, difficult, risking threat, insult, or offense. (Pomerantz 1984: 77, emphasis added)

So, it seems that the default form of communication in talk-in-interaction displays a preference for agreement format across different situations and activities. Pomerantz gives a reason for this: agreeing is comfortable and supportive; disagreeing is uncomfortable and unpleasant[33]. Although not overtly stated in the above quotation, there seems to be a relation between the preference for agreement and politeness. Orientation to agreement as showing like-mindedness and sociability, and the avoidance of disagreement for "risking threat, insult, or offense" are reminiscent of the notion of positive politeness in Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, which is a strategic way to redress threat to the interlocutor's wish to be accepted and approved of by others. In fact, several scholars have explicitly emphasized this relationship (Brown & Levinson 1987: 38, 103ff; Hayashi 1996; Bousfield 2007; Rees-Miller 2000), while others have linked "the preferred format responses to requests, offers, invitations, and assessments" (Heritage 1984: 269) with social solidarity (Heritage 1984: 268-9, Taylor and Cameron

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[33] Although this claim is not discussed here, this study aims at investigating whether disagreeing is really "uncomfortable and unpleasant" in all cultures and contexts.

1987). This move, however, is tantamount to defining preference not merely as a structural phenomenon, but as a social-psychological concept as well, thus coming back to the issue raised in Chapter 2.

3.2.2. Preference and politeness: same or different?

As mentioned above, conversation analysts (Bilmes 1988; Boyle 2000; Pomerantz 1984; Sacks 1987) consider preference organization as a structural phenomenon and exclude any social-psychological basis for the notion of "preference" (*vid.* also Levinson 1983: 307-8; 332-3). This is, however, a controversial issue since there is no unanimous view on how to account for that "structure". Levinson (1983: 333), for example, argues that it is very close to the concept of 'markedness' used in Morphology, in virtue of which when two members of a type are in opposition, one of them is felt to be more usual and frequent and seen as more 'normal' and 'less specific', that is, it is deemed to be *unmarked*. According to Comrie (1976, *cit.* in Levinson 1983: 333), "unmarked categories tend to have less morphological material than marked categories". When applying this notion to preference, Levinson sees preferred actions as *unmarked,* and dispreferred actions as *marked.*

Pomerantz (1984) suggests that second assessments are preferred if they are *invited* by the first assessment and the dispreferred status of second assessments is identified via "dispreference markers" (*vid.* also Bilmes 1988: 173), which is an elaboration of Sacks' (1987) "preference for agreement and contiguity" rule based on the observation that affirmative responses to questions occurred more frequently than negative ones.

Bilmes (1988), on the other hand, disregards the "markedness", "frequency" and "preference marker" definitions of structural preference. According to this scholar, preference should be understood in terms of *relevant absence* and *accountability* which states that 'you should do *X* unless you have reason not to' in the appropriate situation, and allows for conversationalists to reach two types of inferences: what Bilmes calls *Type U* inferences, derived from the expectation that unusual, unexpected information should be given (*accountability*); and *Type R* inferences drawn when relevant absence is noticed (*relevant absence*). The latter notion is similar to Schegloff's (1968, *vid.* also Levinson 1983: 306) *conditional relevance* in that a second pair part is expected after a

first pair part is produced, and if it does not occur, there is an expectation that it will in future turns.

Type U and Type R preferences are complementary: the former states that if something unexpected is considered relevant to mention, it should be mentioned, while the latter refers to the perception that certain contexts make relevant some preferred action and if that preferred action is not performed, it is seen as *relevantly absent*, that is the fact that it is not mentioned is relevant, and therefore noticeable. To better capture this distinction between preferences, Bilmes gives the following example: Mr. X invites Mr. Y at 7:00 pm. Given the time, Mr. Y expects that Mr. X will provide dinner (American culture), as the normal time for dinner is 6:00 pm, but nothing is said about it. When Mr. Y arrives, Mr. X has already finished dinner. What has happened here? Mr. Y expected dinner because nothing was said on the contrary, whereas Mr. X expected Mr. Y not to expect dinner because of the same reason. Where does the misunderstanding lie? Mr. X applied the Type R principle (if it is not mentioned, it is relevant), whereas Mr. Y applied the Type U principle (if it is not mentioned, there isn't anything unexpected, the expected thing being 'having dinner' together). This difference becomes gradually less significant as the invitation time advances (9:00 pm, 10:00 pm), because dinner at that time is unexpected and therefore it should be mentioned. So the difference between Type U and Type R depends on what is relevant, or rather, what is assumed to hold in a given situation. In the case of U, mentioning that something will not occur is expected because its occurrence is *assumed* given the context, while in the case of R, mentioning something will not occur is unexpected because its occurrence is *not assumed* given the context. So it is a "context-assumption" relationship. In fact, this version of "preference" is purported to be Sacks' original proposal in his lectures (Sacks 1992).

Bilmes' (1988) view is adopted and further developed by Boyle (2000), who also accounts for the concept of preference in terms of *noticeable absence* and *accountability*. He contends that preferred actions are those that are normal, ordinary, or seen but unnoticed, whereas a dispreferred action is a "noticeably absent [action], and […] therefore has to be accounted for" (Boyle 2000: 589). He further claims that this dispreferred action can be of two types: on one hand, it can be noticeable and accountable, but not sanctionable because no negative inferences are drawn, and on the other, it can be noticeable, accountable and sanctionable as the actor is held responsible

for the unexpected behavior. One example of this latter type of behavior is given by Garfinkel (1967: 44), reproduced by Boyle (2000: 596):

    (30) *The victim waved his hand cheerfully*

        (S)   How are you?
        (E)   How am I in regard to what? My health, my finances, my school work, my peace of mind, my …?
        (S)   (Red in the face and suddenly out of control) Look! I was just trying to be polite. Frankly, I don't give a damn how you are.

                                      (Garfinkel 1967: 44)

Here, the expected answer to S's *How are you?* would have been a similar kind of greeting. This seems to be the orientation showed by S, who is enraged by E's unexpected behavior. Furthermore, E's noticed-and-accounted behavior is sanctioned by S as we can gather from her loss of control and rude reaction. As Boyle puts its, "the expected, 'seen but unnoticed' response to [S's] question is noticeably absent, accountable and sanctionable" (Boyle 2000: 596).

      The distinction between sanctionable and not-sanctionable behavior is locally determined by interactants and is displayed in nonce interactions. As a case of noticeably absent, accountable but not sanctionable behavior, Boyle provides the example of a conversation that was being tape-recorded but nothing had been said about it by the researcher, who was present in the session. The evidence that this lack of information was not sanctioned by the conversationalists is given by their laughter. That is, all participants mentioned the fact that everything had been recorded (noticed and accounted) but only laughed and made jokes about it (not sanctioned).

      The above accounts are aimed at providing a structural, even normative, definition of "preference organization". People orient to preference because they are expected to do so, and this expectation is created because it is the 'normal' thing to do. Jayyusi (1991) explains it as follows:

> What does it mean to say that a greeting is expected in return [for a greeting]? – it means that there is a *normative orientation* to the propriety of a return greeting, in order to accomplish an encounter as *routine, 'normal', 'ordinary', 'as usual', 'unproblematic',* etc." (Jayyusi 1991: 242, *cit.* in Boyle 2000: 589, emphasis added).

Thus, what is seen but unnoticed —because it abides by the norm— is the preferred behavior. What runs contrary to expectation is dispreferred, and it is noticed due to the absence of expected behavior (*vid.* also ten Have 1999: 41, *cit.* in Boyle 2000: 601).

Oddly enough, Bilmes' (1988) and Boyle's (2000) attempts at providing an orthodox conversation analytic view seem to bring us back to the initial point. As I see it, the notion of "seen but unnoticed" put forward by these authors is not so different from the concept of "unmarkedness" after all. Recent literature on linguistic politeness uses this notion with a similar meaning (Kasper 1990: 193; Jary 1998: 1-2; Escandell-Vidal 1998: 46; Terkourafi 2001: 22). Terkourafi, for example, points out that "speaking politely [is] the *unmarked* way of speaking within a community" and that "politeness most often *passes unnoticed*, while what is commented on is impoliteness" (Terkourafi 2001: 22, emphasis added), while Fraser (1990: 233) observes that politeness is *expected*. Finally, in her discussion about relational work, Locher (2006: 255) highlights the *unmarked* nature of appropriate or 'politic' behavior, as opposed to positive politeness, over politeness and impoliteness, which are *marked*.

It seems, therefore, that we have come full circle, since the notion of markedness can be, and in fact is, related to the notions used by Sacks (1987, 1992), and later argued for by Bilmes (1988) and Boyle (2000), as 'expectation' and 'relevant absence'. But the implications of Boyle's move do not end there. Although conversation analysts' claims over preference do not go beyond a normative view of behavior, it is legitimate to ask *why* people show orientation to normal behavior. It would be redundant and trivial to say "because it is the norm". In fact, there are many instances in which the norm is breached, as Jayyusi clearly states:

> If we look at the pair greeting/greeting, for instance, we can see that *it is not the case* that a greeting will in actuality *always* elicit a greeting. The formulation here is not one of empirical regularity. *Rather, it is that a greeting is expected in return*, as a matter of routine practico-moral order. (Jayyusi 1991: 242, *cit.* in Boyle 2000:589, emphasis added).

If people have the 'freedom' to go against the established norms, the norms cannot explain their behavior. The norms are the backdrop against which behavior is interpreted as 'expected' or 'unexpected', but does not provide the answer to the reasons

people have for 'normally' behaving as expected. It seems legitimate to look for an additional motivation elsewhere.

It has been suggested that preference can also be understood from a social-psychological perspective. This view is argued for by Bousfield (2007), who points out that, "[i]f we are to consider 'expectations' to answers [in the context of question-answer sequences], then, clearly, we are looking at the psychological and the social considerations – the psycho/social *expectations* – of the participants within the discoursal context in which the question is asked" (Bousfield 2007: 10), and proposes a two-level approach to the concept: a 1st order or *structural* preference and a 2nd order or *psycho-social* preference, "which indicates a broadly *pragmatic* understanding of the phenomenon in that it embraces the non-CA-specialist usage of preference" (Bousfield 2007: 9).

Bousfield is not alone in this view. As we have observed in the previous section, this 2nd order notion of preference has been explained in terms of face concerns (Brown & Levinson 1987; Lee & Peck 1995) and social solidarity (Heritage 1984). Brown and Levinson (1987), for example, stated that "[i]f one asks what determines which kinds of response are preferred vs. dispreferred, in [the] structural sense corresponding to unmarked vs. marked in form respectively, a large part of the answer must lie in *face considerations*" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 38, emphasis added). More concretely, the type of face that is at stake here is positive face, i.e. the interactants' wish to belong, to fit in, to be appreciated and approved of by relevant others (Brown & Levinson 1987: 61-2). Heritage (1984) puts this in similar terms. He argues that responding acts like acceptance and agreement "are uniformly affiliative actions which are supportive of *social solidarity*" and therefore preferred, while refusals and disagreements "are largely destructive of *social solidarity*" (Heritage 1984: 269, emphasis added), and are produced in a dispreferred format.

Sensitivity for face is suggested by Lee & Peck (1995) as the reason behind cooperative behavior, which leads interactants to proffer disagreements in a dispreferred format, including interrogative structure, downtoning (e.g., *a little bit, just, all I'm saying*), modalization (e.g., *don't you think it's a little bit dramatic…*), endearment (e.g., *sweetheart, mum*), impersonalization (e.g., *someone*), hedges (e.g., *I think*), the function of which is to "preserv[e] relationships against the obvious threat posed by the interaction" (Lee & Peck 1995: 40).

Although not explicitly aligning with the face/solidarity view of preference, Pomerantz (1984) herself points to that direction when she suggests that "conversants orient to agreeing with one another as comfortable, *supportive*, reinforcing, perhaps as *being sociable* and as showing that are *like-minded* […] [and to] disagreeing with one another as uncomfortable, unpleasant, difficult, *risking threat*, *insult*, or *offense*" (Pomerantz 1984: 77). According to this view, agreement enhances or supports sociability and anoints the interlocutor's positive face by showing "like-mindedness". Disagreement, on the other hand, can be seen as a possible "threat" or "offense" (to the speaker's positive face).

Following this line of reasoning, then, is it possible to claim that seeking agreement and avoiding disagreement are politeness strategies to reduce conflict or enhance the sense of belonging and solidarity, i.e., to convey "like-mindedness" and avoid "offense"?. In fact, several researchers have explored this relationship. Leech (1983: 132), for instance, includes a Maxim of Agreement in his Politeness Principles, which states that disagreement should be minimized and agreement maximized. Within the facework tradition, Brown & Levinson (1987) propose Seek Agreement and Avoid Disagreement among positive politeness strategies to "claim common ground" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 103ff; 112-117).

Some scholars have looked for empirical evidence for this claim (Hayashi 1996, Holtgraves 1997; Lee & Peck 1995; Muntigl & Turnbull 1998, Rees-Miller 2000). Holtgraves (1997), for example, finds similarity between the positive politeness strategies outlined by Brown & Levinson (1987) and certain phenomena uncovered by CA in relation to preference structure. Consistent with Brown & Levinson's (1987) views, Holtgraves (1997: 225) argues that if someone disagrees with his/her interlocutor, s/he threatens this person's positive face, and consequently people will try to disagree in a polite way when rapport and harmony are searched. This author found that interactants showed a preference for agreement by asserting common ground, pursuing safe topics, offering token agreements before proffering a disagreement or showing attentiveness by partially repeating the prior speaker's turn. Among the devices to show disagreement avoidance, Holtgraves found token agreements, hedged opinions, personalization of opinions, expressing distaste with one's opinion, displacing disagreement and deprecating oneself.

Hayashi (1996) also reports that people try to show consideration for positive face by minimizing the effects of disagreeing turns. In his analysis of polite

disagreements (or refusals, as Hayashi calls them) at the local level (i.e. at the level of linguistic realization in actual discourse), he found that they where often prefaced by disclaimers (*I understand what you are saying; I'm not saying it isn't; and you're apparently telling me that's what's happened today*), repetitions (*A: Confusion. B: Confusion. What else?*), and what he calls formulations (*So you're telling me that…; So you feel that…*). Repetitions, according to Hayashi, "can convey positive politeness more strongly that short back-channels of the continuer type as 'mm hum', or 'yeah'" (Schegloff 1982, *cit.* in Hayashi 1996: 250), because they implicate "emotional agreement with the [prior] utterance" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 113).

Muntigl & Turnbull (1998) investigate the patterns and orientation displayed by disagreeing second and third turns in an arguing exchange to see how face concerns influence the realization of arguing. They classified disagreement strategies into five types based on their content: *irrelevancy claims* (IR), *challenges* (CH), *contradictions* (CT), *contradictions + counterclaims* (CT+CC), and *counterclaims* (CC). They found that IRs, CHs, CTs, and CT+CCs were aggravated (overlap, no prefacing), whereas CCs showed mitigation (delays, prefaces, mitigating devices). They also discovered that when disagreements were performed as dispreferred, that is, showing respect for the interlocutor's face, both speakers would show this orientation as "an effective strategy for strengthening group bonds" (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998: 250). They explain the difference between IRs, CHs, CTs, and CT+CCs on one hand and CCs on the other in that the former are straight challenges and therefore are used in conflictive situations. That is, they are in themselves direct attacks to the interlocutor's face and it would be awkward to mitigate them. CCs, on the other hand, are indirect in nature because they show opposition by presenting counter evidence, rather than by directly disqualifying the interlocutor's arguments.

For Rees-Miller (2000: 1089), disagreement is a face-threatening act because it jeopardizes the solidarity between interlocutors. In order to test Brown & Levinson's theory, she carried out a study of the way disagreement was produced among students and scholars in academic settings. Although the results were not wholly consistent with Brown & Levinson's predictions, she found that disagreements were more frequently softened (62% of the cases) than strengthened (8%), while 30% were neither strengthened nor softened. These results seemingly support the "disagreement dispreferred" hypothesis on a frequency basis (62% to 38%).

From all the previous review, then, polite behavior seems to be tantamount to preferred, as agreements show features of preferred actions (no delays or gaps, unprefaced realizations, no hedges or mitigating devices, strong forms of agreement) while disagreements display the dispreferred format: delays, attributable silence (gaps), prefaced by weak agreements, disagreements are mitigated by means of hedges, downtoners, hesitations, repetitions, claims of common ground, and so forth. An analysis of example (31) will illustrate this:

(31) A: Yuh comin down early?
      B: Well, I got a lot of things to do before getting cleared up tomorrow.
             I don't know. <u>I w- probably won't be too early</u>.

<div align="right">(Sacks 1987: 58)</div>

The above answer by B, starts with a discourse marker typically used to preface dispreferred turns (*well*), a grounder (*I got a lot of things to do before getting cleared up tomorrow*), a lack of knowledge claim (*I don't know*), a false start (*w-*), a hedge (*probably*), and a downgrader of the negation (*too*), all of which signal the dispreferred status of the negative answer to the question.

All these devices are used to show concern for positive face or solidarity. In sum, borrowing Kakavá's (2002: 1540) words, "these […] studies argue that disagreement is a disaffiliative action that threatens solidarity and therefore it displays a dispreferred turn format", consistent with the predictions made within Brown & Levinson's politeness theory (Holtgraves 1997).

Other studies have shown, however, that disagreement may display the opposite format ― i.e. "disagreement preferred"― in some cultures and contexts. This seems to undermine the neat equation politeness = preference presented so far. The next two sections will focus on this issue.

3.2.2.1. Cultural variation

Several studies have shown that solidarity is not necessarily linked to a "disagreement dispreferred" orientation (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002; Edstrom 2004; García 1989b; Gruber 1998; Kakavá 2002; Schiffrin 1984; Jones 1990). It is reported that in the Indonesian island of Roti, people show a positive attitude towards arguing, albeit

with some constraints on who has the right to speak (Fox 1974, reported in Kakavá 2002: 1541). "Mediterranean" cultures are also known for their orientation to confrontational styles and direct disagreement. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (2002), for example, in comparing two discursive genres —the *xavruta*, or paired-study debates in Talmudic academies, and a political TV talk show called *Popolitica*— in Israel, show that culture has influence on "the degree to which disagreements are conversationally favored and displayed blatantly" (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002: 1574), as the overall confrontational framing of TV political talk shows such as *Popolitica* are reminiscent of disputes over Talmudic texts (*ibid.*: 1587).

A similar "preference for disagreement" and a clear predisposition "towards the open expression of opposition" (Kakavá 2002: 1564) seems to the norm in Greece. Kakavá (2002) analyzed the production of disagreement among Greeks in three different settings —after-dinner family conversations, talk among friends, and classroom interaction in an American University— and discovered that disagreements were proffered with all the "preferred" features: unprefaced, latched with the previous turn, accelerated tempo, high pitch, contrastive stress, initial disagreement followed by accounts (as opposed to initial agreement), and personal analogies (Kakavá 2002: 1552-57). Some others were found only in conversations among friends and family members, such as partial or total repetitions marked by negative affect and aggravated questions with or without endearment terms (*Ibid.* 1548-52). Crucially, despite the above features, the interpersonal relationship between Greek interactants was not jeopardized, thus indicating that disagreement does not threaten solidarity among conversants, but is rather expected and allowed among Greeks (Kakavá 2002: 1562), that is, disagreement is "seen but unnoticed".

Schiffrin (1984) observes that disagreement can also be a form of sociability among American Jews. She found that, although interactants constantly showed opposition toward their interlocutors by means of sustained disagreement, the intimate relationship among participants was not threatened, because they were framed as "sociable argument", defined as a "speech activity in which a polarizing form has a ratificatory meaning" (Schiffrin 1984: 331).

In a comparative study between female Venezuelan non-native speakers of English and American English native speakers, García (1989b) found that the former used a confrontational and personal style of disagreement in the context of response to a complaint expressed by an apartment superintendent, as opposed to the native

Americans, who preferred a non-confrontational, impersonal style. While Edstrom (2004) warns against premature categorizations in terms of culture, she found that there were more cases of direct, unmitigated disagreements (e.g., *olvídate*; *no, no, no*; *no, pero…* among others) than indirect ones (e.g., *pero…*; *sí, no, pero...*; *claro, pero…*; and so on) in casual conversations among Venezuelans.

Finally, although Japanese is usually given as a prototypical case of an "agreement preferred" culture in which consensus is highly valued and disagreement is discouraged (Mori 1999), some studies have shown that this is not necessarily the case in all circumstances. Jones (1990), Honda (2002), and Saft (2004) report cases of direct confrontation. Jones (1990), for example, analyzed conversations in three different situations ―television debate shows, casual conversations at home, and teachers discussing job issues― and found that despite the many instances of direct confrontation and lack of compromise, no signs were seen of anger, but rather the activity was reframed as play or a new topic was introduced when the discussion became overheated (Jones 1990, reported in Kakavá 2002: 1541). Honda's (2002) study of three Japanese public affairs talk shows partly confirmed Jones's findings. In one program, Honda found instances of direct negation, rudeness, direct accusations and threats, as the following example illustrates: *Ya Kenpoo mamoranakucha, anta Kenpoo wa Kenpoo o mamoritaku nakattara Nihon kokuseki nukete dokka ikkya: i:n da yo* ('well, we have to abide by the Constitution, if you, if you don't want to follow the Constitution, you should renounce your Japanese nationality and go somewhere else') (Honda 2002: 591-2). However, "the confrontation is not accompanied by any conspicuous ill will, such as unhappy or angry feelings, which would presumably appear in their facial expressions" (*ibid.*: 592). On the contrary, participants in the row are smiling. Thus, the above attack is reframed as something funny and the conflict is kept playful. Saft (2004) also report that in so-called classroom meetings (*kyooshitsu kaigi*) in Japanese universities oppositional exchanges are common and that they are characterized by frequent interruptions that were unsanctioned and included many oppositional tokens like *iya* (*'no'*).

In sum, it seems too presumptuous to generalize that "agreement preferred/disagreement dispreferred" is the default format in all cultures. Of course, it is open to question whether all the differences found should be interpreted at the cultural level, or rather at the contextual-situational level. In fact, many of the results reported so far are highly restricted across situations. Kakavá (2002) found some differences

between informal conversations and the classroom setting. Honda's (2002) and Saft's (2004) work on Japanese focus on two specific genres: TV talk shows and faculty meetings, and different strategies were found depending on the program type, on one hand, and the meeting type, on the other. Therefore, a closer inspection of contextual variables is called for.

3.2.2.2. Contextual variation

Since Sacks (1987 [1973]) first claimed that people in conversation normally showed orientation to "preference for agreement", and Pomerantz (1984) argued that dispreferred actions showed certain features that betrayed their "dispreferred" status, several studies have examined whether this generalization is applicable to all context types. These studies that probe into the nature of preferred vs. dispreferred turn formats have been conducted both at the macro-contextual level and at the micro-contextual level. Macro-contextual factors that influence the way talk-in-interaction is framed include the type of activity in which people are engaged, as well as relevant ethnographic variables such as age, gender and social role, while micro-contextual factors include the type of relationship between interactants, the number of participants, and the dynamic changes of alignment in the unfolding of events.

3.2.2.2.1. Macro-contextual elements

One major source of variation is introduced by the type of activity people are engaged in. The need to take into account this kind of contextual variation has been stressed by several scholars (Bilmes 1988: 169, 175; Edstrom 2004: 1514; Georgakopoulou 2001: 1883; Lee & Peck 1995: 47; Rees-Miller 2000: 1107; Saft 2004: 552, 579). Bilmes (1988) reminds us that "[w]hat we need to bear in mind […] is that the preference for agreement or disagreement is not determined solely by the types of speech acts involved. The situational context is a possible determinant of preference". (Bilmes 1988: 175). In an argument, for example, disagreement adopts a "preferred" format. Georgakopoulou (2001), on the other hand, contends that disagreement as dispreferred and the notions of solidarity and politeness should be carefully analyzed

taking into account the interrelations between local interactional goals, functions, and the specific context in which they take place.

Many studies have examined the influence of macro-contextual, activity-specific factors in the realization of disagreements. Atkinson & Drew (1979, *cit.* in Kotthoff 1993: 195) found that in judicial discourse, more often than not disagreements were unmitigated after accusations, and concluded that denials are seen as preferred in this institutional setting. This is because accusations are inferred to be true if not denied. Bilmes (1988) argues that this preference organization can be extended to responses to attributions in general, and states the following conversational principle: "When someone makes an attribution about you, contradict, unless you want others to understand that you accept the truth of the attribution" (Bilmes 1988: 187).

Another setting in which disagreement as "preferred" has been reported is TV news interviews (Greatbatch 1992; Emmertsen 2007; Hutchby 1992). According to Greatbatch (1992), disagreements in British TV news interviews are unmitigated because interviewees never address each other directly, but indirectly through the moderator. Emmertsen (2007), however, makes a distinction between news interviews and debate interviews. The latter, Emmertsen reports, are "characterized by the occurrence of unsanctioned sequences of aggravated and unmitigated confrontation [between interviewees]" (Emmertsen 2007: 570), thus being openly confrontational. Confrontation between interviewees is achieved by the interviewer, who challenges the positions of the interviewees to polarize positions. The fact that this confrontational style is "preferred" is demonstrated by the fact that the interviewees' counter turns are located "interjacently during co-[interviewee]'s turns while the turns are addressed directly to the co-[interviewee] instead of to the interviewer" (Emmertsen 2007: 589).

Other studies have investigated television debate shows with more than two participants, in which the control of the moderator is weaker. Gruber (1998) suggests that talk shows of this kind are more similar to spontaneous arguments because of the high frequency of "nested conflicts" which remain unresolved and participants shift to safer topics in search of agreement. Honda (2002) reported that in Japanese public affairs talk shows the preference format "varied greatly from heavily mitigated to quite straightforward [opposition]" (Honda 2002: 575) across programs depending on the number of participants and the TV channel. While in one program, disagreement was highly mitigated, the other two were characterized by direct confrontation and almost no mitigation. However, when this happened, conflict was often prevented via intervention

by a third party or by the moderator. In one program, confrontation was buffered by the simultaneous intervention of other participants in the talk show which made the argument inaudible and therefore aborted. Honda concludes that there are two opposing forces in action: 'face-work' and 'conflict' as a result of the interaction between the interpersonal orientation of the participants and the institutional traits of TV talk shows. Oppositional stances, then, are adopted with the audience in mind, and the use of jokes and mediating acts are used to reduce the seriousness of the confrontation or to stop it altogether.

Other studies have tested whether the features found in relaxed everyday conversations can be applied to group discussions like focus groups (Myers 1998) and psychotherapy groups (Krainer 1988, reported in Kakavá 2002: 1542). In the case of the former, disagreements were unprefaced when directed to the moderator but not so when addressing other participants, a pattern that is in direct contrast with Emmertsen's study of debate interviews. In psychotherapy groups, on the other hand, challenges were found to be both strong and mitigated, thus showing great variation. One relevant feature in these sessions is that disagreement is expected and unsanctioned, precisely because open discussion is part of the treatment.

Further variation in interaction and disagreement has been reported in the academic setting (Kakavá 2002; Saft 2004; Tannen 2002). Tannen (2002) argues that academic discourse is framed as a metaphorical battle or ritualized adversativeness, which Tannen calls "agonism" (Tannen 2002: 1652), while Kakavá (2002) reports some differences between friendly conversations and classroom discussion among Greek speakers. The latter are characterized by long monologic arguments, justifications after disagreements and lack of endearment terms and sarcasm. Saft (2004) compared two types of academic meetings in Japanese universities, the *kyooshitsu kaigi* or 'classroom meeting' and the *kyoojukai* or 'professorial meeting'. He found that while the former was designed so as to facilitate oppositional exchanges, the latter discouraged them. Arguments were possible in the former case because participants constructed their turns so that the issued reported could be discussed and even argued about. This was not so in professorial meetings, because it was aimed at quickly admitting matters that were essential for the smooth administration of the university. Saft acknowledges that additional information that is "external" and "beyond" the interaction itself is needed to have a full understanding of the differences between *kyoojukai* and *kyooshitsu kaigi* as evidenced by the need to refer to a generalized practice in Japanese institutions known

as *nemawashi,* in virtue of which important decisions are taken before official meetings, these being only a formality in the administrative process (Saft 2004: 579). Saft suggests that there is "a close connection between the organization of talk in the meetings and the institutional structure of the university itself" (Saft 2004: 550) which enables or constrains the possibility of confrontation.

Another type of contextual variation is produced by the medium of communication. Bayrn (1996, reported in Kakavá 2002), Graham (2007), and Lewis (2005) have investigated disagreements in computer-mediated communication, while Mulkay (1985) has focus on letter writing. In addition, other studies have reported different attitudes toward disagreement depending on age (Goodwin 1983), education and personality (Edstrom 2004), social role and power (Hayashi 1995, Kakavá 2002, Tannen 2002).

3.2.2.2.2. Micro-contextual elements

One final factor that determines the preference format on talk-in-interaction is not established by macro-contextual factors given a priori, that determine the initial framing of the interaction, but rather by the dynamic unfolding of events. In the previous section we have seen how the setting could influence people's orientation toward conversation as agreement preferred or disagreement preferred. This orientation, however, is not necessarily static and unchangeable, but is in constant change depending on how every participant contributes to the conversation. Every contribution can potentially reframe the ongoing conversation from cooperative to confrontational and vice versa.

Kotthoff (1993) convincingly shows how preference formats are not fixed but are locally managed in every turn. She begins her argument by casting doubt on the one-to-one association between "an action's preference status and the turn shape in which it is produced" (Kotthoff 1993: 195), and argues that "normal consensus expectations"[34] are suspended once arguments are set up:

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[34] Of course, we are referring here to cultures and situations where agreement is the preferred format. It has already been discussed how in certain cultures and settings, disagreements might be preferred without being conflictive.

> As soon as arguments begin, the context specifications change. This is shown by a change in turn formats. Disagreement becomes more and more explicit. The participants then do not orient each other to the expectation of agreement any longer. (*ibid.:* 195).

That is, the interaction is reframed as a confrontation. This change "is reflected and confirmed by [the participants'] expressing dissent in an unmodulated or nearly unmodulated way" (*ibid.*: 199). The change in frame is signaled by a reduction of dispreference markers. Furthermore, the argument may escalate into "aggravated dissent" and adopt clear opposition formats, characterized by even less modulating devices and no cooperative negotiation of topics. At this stage, participants attempt to control the development of topics "by downgrading the topical relevance of the interlocutor's subject" (*ibid.*: 201). Disagreements in opposition formats show the following features (*Ibid.*: 202-3): a) both speakers orient to a quick counterattack; b) disagreements are formatted in such a way that one speaker's contribution is turned into its most contrary meaning; c) repetition is used to sharpen dissent because the previous point is picked up to invalidate its validity or to re-evaluate perspectives, and d) downgraders are reduced to a minimum.

Contrariwise, agreements in disputes show the following features (*ibid.*: 203-5): a) upgraded agreements are interpreted as pre-sequences to dissent, and the more upgraded they are, the stronger the interpretation; b) normally people agree on a minor point to preface disagreement on the main point, and c) hesitations and reluctance markers are avoided because they can be interpreted as a concession.

Concession acts serve to reframe the whole conversation again, which may begin by accepting minor topical points (partial agreements). However, it is very unlikely that opponents will concede immediately once disagreement has adopted an aggravated format because "when an argumentative episode is established, speakers are expected to defend their positions. Concessions may imply that they are not really able to do that" (*ibid.*: 209). In other words, concessions threaten self-face and this is the reason why they are done reluctantly and with a lot of hesitation markers.

This micro-contextual factor, together with all the above counter-evidence at the macro-contextual level support the view that disagreement is not always mitigated, hedged, and indirect, as Sacks (1987) and Pomerantz (1984) had suggested, but they are so only in certain contexts. Disagreements are produced and interpreted in different

ways depending on how they are *framed* in terms of culture, activity type and the dynamic unfolding of events, and affect the sequence-organizational and turn-constructional patterns in conversations. This high variation leads to a reconsideration of the relationship between the concepts of preference and politeness, which I proceed to do in the next section.

3.3. Re-assessment of the politeness-preference relationship

At this point it is obvious that preference as a structural feature cannot be related to politeness in a straightforward way. It had been suggested that conversationalists oriented to disagreements as dispreferred due to face considerations and solidarity, but counter-evidence for this claim was provided both at the cultural and contextual level. Especially problematic are those cases in which disagreement does not represent a risk to other people's face, as for example, in denials to accusations in judicial settings (Atkinson & Drew 1979), disagreements with attributions in general (Bilmes 1988), open disagreements in debate interviews (Greatbatch 1992, Emmertsen 2007, Honda 2002) and oppositional patterns of interaction to show solidarity (Kakavá 2002). There are instances in which disagreements are oriented to as "structurally" preferred without necessarily representing a threat to face. This is not the case with arguments and conflictive situations in which the interlocutor's attack and discredit each other, as in Kotthoff's (1993) example, because these are instances of impoliteness and consistent with politeness predictions.

The separation of the concept of preference from face considerations and solidarity is suggested by Bilmes (1988), for whom Pomerantz's (1984) *dispreference* markers should be restated as *reluctance* markers (Bilmes 1988: 173). For Bilmes, preference is a "structural" notion that has nothing to do with "format", arguing that even if certain response is preferred it may show signs of dispreference. He says, for example, that although contradictions to attributions are preferred because their absence would be relevant and a cause of inference, they may very well be prefaced by reluctance markers. He puts it this way:

> […] there are situations where one might feel awkward about producing […] a
> contradiction and might preface it with reluctance markers: "Well, uh, actually, that

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wasn't what I said." This is not any less a sincere contradiction, at least in a nonadversarial situation, than "That wasn't what I said," but it is perhaps more polite. (Bilmes 1988: 173).

That is, in this case, disagreement is preferred but the format shows "dispreferred" features in Pomerantz's terms. Bilmes move is to separate the notion of preference from that of politeness. It should be noted, however, that it is precisely because of face and politeness that the dispreferred format is adopted in a *nonadversarial situation*, even if it is legitimate to produce a contradiction. Clearly, in Bilmes' example there are two opposing forces in action: on one hand, in many nonadversarial situations, contradicting other people's statements and opinions go against face considerations; on the other hand, not contradicting an attribution, especially if they are negative ones, would be interpreted as admitting such attribution, thus running against one's positive face wants. People in these circumstances need to reach a compromise and try to restore self-face while strategically avoiding damage to alter-face. In fact, Pomerantz (1984: 78ff) herself mentioned an exception to the agreement preferred orientation in the case of self-deprecations, where agreement is dispreferred because it would count as criticism.

More problematic are those cases in which, contra Pomerantz's (1984) predictions, disagreements have a preferred format without going against sociability, support, and solidarity. According to the literature reviewed so far, disagreement may adopt a "preferred format" under three circumstances:

a) When preserving self-face is more important than paying respects to alter's face or there is a wish to attack and threat alter's face. This is the case of arguments, discussions and similar conflictive situations.

b) When the activity type determines participants' orientation, as for example, in judicial discourse, TV debates, psychological groups, etc.

c) When it is culturally accepted as a conversational style (Greece, Venezuelan Spanish, Hebrew).

Among these, (b) and (c) are instances of 'seen and unnoticed' behavior in Boyle's terms, and should be considered as "normal" patterns of action that do not threaten other people's face. They are "polite" in Terkourafi's (2001, 2005) sense, "politic" (Locher 2004, 2006; Watts 2003), "appropriate" (Kasper 1990, Meier 1995), or "normal" (Fraser 1990). As only when behavior is seen as sanctionable we can say that it is impolite, it is

clear that that we cannot establish a direct relationship between preference and politeness via "preference format". Rather, this relationship should be established via context. Hence, in order to determine whether certain behavior is "polite", "appropriate" or not, we should establish a three-part relationship between agreement/disagreement – context – and format, where context at the cultural, situational, interpersonal and interactional levels determine how the interaction is to be framed (See Fig. 5 below):

Fig. 5. Preference organization, context and politeness

Preference organization

agreement preferred
context
(culture, activity type, face concerns)

disagreement preferred
context
(culture, activity type, face concerns)

agreement   disagreement   agreement   disagreement

Prefer. format *Disprefer. format* *Prefer. format* *Disprefer. format* *Prefer. format* *Disprefer format* *Prefer. format* *Disprefer. format*

unnoticed (**polite**) facework

noticed (**polite**) facework

noticed/sanctioned (**rude**) conflict

unnoticed (**polite**) facework

noticed (reframing?) (*Kotthoff 1993*)

unnoticed (reluctance?) (*Bilmes 1988*)

noticed (reframing?) (*Kotthoff 1993*)

unnoticed (**polite**) solidarity, camaraderie

noticed/sanctioned (**rude**) conflict

This Figure, being a static representation, does not capture the dynamic changes produced within and across interactions, but represents an attempt to illustrate how context can be constantly reframed from agreement preferred to disagreement preferred and vice versa. "Preference format", as can be seen, does not necessarily bear on politeness. It all depends on how the event is framed at the cultural, situational, interpersonal, and interactional levels, which together frame an activity as one in which face should be preserved, respected and/or anointed. In cultures where disagreement is a preferred way of friendly interaction, it will adopt a "preferred format" in a "disagreement preferred" context, thus being perfectly normal and polite (e.g. among Greeks and Hebrews). When self-face is at risk, however, it is given precedence over alter-face, and questions of politeness and facework become irrelevant. This may happen both when a consensual activity is reframed –or "rekeyed" in Goffman's (1974:

40ff) terms– as a conflictive interaction, as Kotthoff (1993) showed, and when a friendly conversation with an oppositional format in cultures and/or settings where this is allowed is reframed as hostile confrontation.

Activity type may also determine the preference orientation, as Bilmes' (1988) suggested. Despite the fact that contradictions to attributions are regarded by Bilmes as preferred at the structural level, there are *situations* (i.e., certain contexts) in which straight disagreement is not desirable and therefore the contradiction is *framed* as dispreferred. Although after accusations or attributions in general disagreements are called for, they will be framed as dispreferred in certain contexts.

Now, the question we should ask ourselves is whether it is still possible to relate the notion of preference with politeness. In order to answer this question, Bousfield's (2007: 9) distinction between 1^{st} order and 2^{nd} order preference might be useful here. The former refers to the structural properties, and the latter to social-psychological aspects. The first is related to the format, while the second refers to how the activity is framed. Thus, a preferred organization at the structural level (1^{st} order) may or may not be preferred at the social-psychological level (2^{nd} order). For example, in some cultures disagreement would be framed as "dispreferred" at the 2^{nd} order level (impolite), in which case it would be structurally formatted as "dispreferred" (1^{st} order dispreference). In some other cultures disagreement would be framed as "preferred" at the 2^{nd} order level (polite) and be reflected as such at the 1^{st} order level (structure). That is, disagreement may be preferred both at the 1^{st} order and 2^{nd} order levels (Bousfield 2007: 9) in a given culture/activity. However, it may escalate and become dispreferred at the 2^{nd} order level (impolite, rude, self-face maintenance), marking the beginning of a conflict. In this sense, we could say that disagreement in a conflict adopts a preferred format at the 1^{st} order preference level (structure), but is not preferred at the 2^{nd} order level (impoliteness). This conclusion is reached via framing rather than conversational format. Impoliteness or conflict arises when there is no correlation between framing (2^{nd} order preference) and structure (1^{st} order preference).

In Fig. 5 above, there are many slots that are labelled with a question mark. These are areas on which some evidence has been provided (Bilmes 1988, Kotthoff 1993) but await further research. In the present study, I will focus on a cross-cultural comparison of the realization of disagreements in an "agreement preferred" context at the 2^{nd} order level, that is, in a situation in which face considerations are relevant. The purpose is to see whether interactants in this kind of amiable, friendly situation frame

the interaction as "agreement preferred" or "disagreement preferred" at the 1st order or structural level, and probe into the similarities and differences in the realization patterns. Some contextual variables (activity type and interactants' ethnographic features and relationships) have been held constant in order to uncover cross-cultural variation at two levels: the development of events at the dynamic micro-contextual level and its relationship with culture. The research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What kind of 1st order preference do speakers of American English, Peninsular Spanish and Japanese show when they perform (dis)agreements in a conversation framed as "friendly"?

This general research question is spelled out in the following sub-questions:

1.a. What is the relative frequency of disagreement in this context?

1.b. What are the similarities and differences in the strategies used to produce disagreements?

The answers to these questions have the following corollary:

2. What are the implications of the evidence found in the data for the relationship between 1st order preference structure and politeness?

In order to find answers to the above questions, the analyses have focused on three interactional and pragmatic aspects following Kasper (2006)[35]:

1. the sequence-organizational patterns (Kasper 2006: 331), which I have labeled *turn-external features*.
2. the turn-constructional patterns (Kasper 2006: 331), divided into two parts:
   a. *Head Act-external features*
   b. *Head Act-internal features.*

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[35] These analytical aspects are discussed in full in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. Introduction: Contrastive approach and data collection

We have already argued for conversation analysis as an analytical tool, supplemented with the notion of "frame" to account for the differences found in conversational patterns depending on the type of activity participants are engaged in and the dynamic changes introduced in people's orientation toward the activity as the conversation unfolds. This being the case, the natural corollary to this approach would be to collect and use real data obtained in natural settings as material for analysis, as purported by conversation analysts. Manes & Wolfson (1981, *cit.* in Beebe & Cummings 1996: 65) indicate that the best data would be those collected from spontaneous speech events in real contexts of use without the speakers knowing that their performance is being observed and/or recorded. This is especially so when the purpose is to find a relationship between language and behavior. As the present study also aims at characterizing people's behavior as faithfully as possible, how representative the data is of authentic discourse should be a major concern. In fact, some scholars (Manes & Wolfson 1981; Wolfson 1981; Davis & Henze 1998) have argued for the use of ethnographic approaches in cross-cultural pragmatics, such as participant and non-participant observation and interviews, because, as Yuan (2001: 259) puts it, "[n]atural speech, if recorded properly, can provide the most accurate picture of everyday conversations".

There are, however, several drawbacks in this approach for our purposes. The data obtained should not only be "representative" of real discourse but also amenable for research. Turnbull (2001) suggests four criteria a good pragmatic data collection method should meet:

1. It must generate data that are *representative* of structures of natural talk, whatever the fíneness in level of analysis;

2. it should allow *researcher control* and the possibility of manipulating variables of theoretical interest;

3. it should be *efficient* in that many instances of the phenomena at issue can be generated easily; and

4. it must be *ethical*.   (Turnbull 2001: 33, original emphasis).

All these points are relevant for the present study. Firstly, it has already been argued that the aim of the present work is to elucidate similarities and differences between North Americans, Peninsular Spanish and Japanese regarding their production of agreements and disagreements in terms of their relative frequency and type of strategies used. That is, the study has a cross-cultural, comparative design, which calls for the control of certain aspects of the communicative setting in order to assure comparability. Some researchers (Beebe & Cummings 1996; Rintell & Mitchell 1989; Yuan 2001) have pointed out that in comparative studies valid and reliable parameters of comparison should be established in order to guarantee the equivalence of the data obtained. This is hardly achievable without certain control over people and situations to prevent extraneous effects on the outcome of the study.

Secondly, as naturally occurring talk is highly unpredictable and uncontrollable, there is no guarantee that the selected contextualized events will take place at all. If this is a problem for one language, the situation is aggravated when three languages are investigated. The amount of time and effort needed for the collection of data would be overwhelming. Additionally, as collecting data from a large variety of situations and contexts proves an impossible task, selecting the relevant situations and deciding whether they are cross-culturally equivalent or not may pose an additional inconvenience. In sum, if gathering relevant data for one single language/culture with an ethnographic method can be highly time-consuming[36], doing the same for three languages seems to be impracticable for one researcher with limited time and funds.

Finally, the question remains whether it is ethical to record data without the permission or even the awareness of the people being recorded. Should the researcher ask for approval to record and use the data? If so, when? If permission is requested in

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[36] *Vid.,* for example, Wolfson (1989: 227), who reported that she spent two years in gathering her observational data.

advance, it ceases to be a mere observation of events, as participants get to know that they are going to be observed as part of a research. In this case, we would have what Cohen (1996) calls Real Play, in which participants agree to continue their normal everyday activities but knowing that they are being observed and/or recorded[37].

The cross-cultural approach adopted here, then, seems to call for a data collection method that fulfils two seemingly incompatible requirements. On one hand, certain aspects of the conversational setting should be controlled in order to guarantee equivalence on how interactants "frame" the activity. This control should allow for the comparability of the data obtained. On the other hand, little or no influence should be exerted on the linguistic and interactional output of the conversationalists to prevent the introduction of bias into the data as much as possible. That is to say, the selected method should combine the advantages of direct observations of natural discourse and the control over certain situational variables to establish the parameters of the comparison. This view is shared by Turnbull (2001: 36-7), for whom the ideal method should combine (a) a *high* researcher control over the situation ― without the speakers being aware of that ― and (b) *no* control over speakers' utterances, i.e., a combination of the best from the ethnographic and experimental approaches (see Table 4).

Table 4. Comparison of Pragmatic Elicitation Techniques as a Function of the Researcher's Degree of Control over the Eliciting Situation and Degree of Control over the Elicited Response (Turnbull 2001: 37)

Degree to which Elicited Response Controlled	Degree to which Eliciting Situation Controlled	
	High	Low
High	Discourse Completion	?
Low	Ideal Method	Natural in-situ

The ideal case of total control over situation and no intervention in the response elicited is seldom achieved. One rare exception is provided by Turnbull (2001: 38ff), who designed an experiment using telephone conversations, in which one of the interlocutors was the researcher or a research assistant and the other interlocutors were the subjects being studied (see also Beebe & Cummings 1996: 68ff for a similar design). As Turnbull (2001: 38-9) suggests, this allows for the manipulation of certain variables such as biographical variations, topic and setting, while exerting little or no

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[37] See Sub-section 4.2.3. for further discussion.

control over the elicited response[38]. However, leaving aside the question whether telephone conversations really represent, and are equivalent to, face-to-face conversations, or rather have their own conventions, rules and pragma-linguistic features[39], it is very hard to elaborate experiments in which situational variables are highly controlled while participants are completely unaware of the fact that they are the targets of an investigation. In most cases, a compromise is reached in one or other direction, i.e. either authenticity is somehow sacrificed in order to enhance the control over the data, or vice versa.

There is a wide variety of methods to collect socio-linguistic data that try to bridge, more or less successfully, the two opposing needs mentioned above. Kasper (2000: 316) provides a whole array of possible methods of data collection, and classifies them according to the type of data the researcher is after ―interaction, comprehension, production, and/or metapragmatic― and the procedure followed to gather the data ―as actually produced by informants online) vs. as imagined, recorded, and/or written by participants offline, while including or excluding the researcher as a participant in the research― (see Table 5). In the list, we can find from purely observational methods (e.g., 'natural discourse' in Kasper's table), such as the ones used in CA, to highly experimental ones (e.g., 'production questionnaires', 'multiple choice', and 'scales' in the Table).

Table 5. Types of data collection methods as a function of focus and procedure (Kasper 2000: 316)

	Focus				Procedure	
	Interaction	comprehension	production	metapragmatic	online/ offline	interaction with researcher
Authentic discourse	+	+	+	−	on	+ / −
Elicited conversation	+	+	+	−	on	+ / −
Role-play	+	+	+	−	on	−
Production questionnaire	−	−	+	−	off	−
Multiple choice	−	+	+	+	off/on	−
Scales	−	−	−	+	off	−
Interview	−	−	−	+	off	+
Diary	−	−	−	+	off	−
Think-aloud Protocols	−	+	+	+	on	−

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[38] See, however, Beebe and Cummings' (1996: 79) report of some methodological problems in relation to this approach. One shortcoming is the possible bias introduced by the fact that one of the interactants in both Beebe & Cummings' (1996) and Turnbull's (2001) designs is a research assistant who is acquainted with the research objectives and is performing a role.

[39] Consider, for example, typical initiations and closings in telephone conversations (Levinson 1983: 309ff)

Of special interest for our purposes here are those methods that share some properties with authentic discourse while at the same time aim at controlling certain contextual aspects in order to make the data more amenable for research. Hence, in what follows a review is carried out of the above methods excluding those that deal with metapragmatic knowledge only (i.e. scales, interviews and diaries), as my objective is to assess the degree of authenticity and comparability of the actual linguistic data produced, rather than the subjective opinions and impressions people might have about their performance.

4.2. Production-data collection methods: a review

Echoing Kasper & Dahl (1991: 216), "[t]he methods of data collection employed in […] pragmatics can be characterized in terms of the constraints they impose on the data". That is, depending on the type of technique and/or instrument used, the researcher will be in a position to exert more or less control over the speakers' linguistic output. In Fig. 6 below, the methods on the right hand side are those in which control over participants and other variables are kept to the minimum (e.g., Elicited Conversations and Real Plays) or do not exist at all (e.g., observation), while those on the far left allow for high control[40].

Fig. 6. Classification of production data collection methods in relation to their degree of control over data.

Written DCT	Closed Role Plays	Open Role Plays	Elicited Conversations	Real Plays	observation of authentic discourse

elicited   *observational*

+ control   *- control*
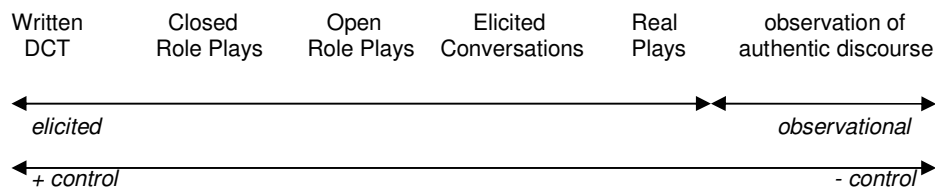
Written DCTs (Discourse Completion Tests) are equivalent to Kasper's (2000) 'production questionnaires' given above. They are production questionnaires in written format which consists in a situational description (context) followed by a brief dialogue in which at least one turn is left blank, so that the respondent may write down his or her response. In order to investigate the effect of situational and interpersonal variables on

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[40] *Vid.* Kasper & Dahl (1991: 217) for a similar representation.

speech act performance, the situational descriptions are manipulated, thus creating several items with similar characteristics. A Closed Role Play (CRP) is an oral version of the DCT, and therefore it is sometimes called Oral DCT. Here, the experimenter reads the introduction describing the hypothetical situation and reads the turn or turns that should prompt the expected next turn by the respondent. Normally, no more than two or three turns are realized. This last limitation is overcome in Open Role Plays (ORPs), as in this design participants are free to exchange several turns and even negotiate the final outcome of the interaction. The difference between ORPs and Elicited Conversations (ECs) lies in the roles played by interactants. In the former, participants are asked to represent several hypothetical roles in diverse contextual settings, whereas in the latter informants interact as themselves. In this sense, there is one more step toward authenticity, as people do not need to imagine roles.

To the above classification, Cohen's (1996: 24) Real Plays should be added between ECs and observational methods. According to this scholar, Real Plays are almost observational in nature, as they are recorded in real settings with people performing their real-life roles, but participants are aware that the whole event is a performance although they may not know the precise purpose of it. Cohen gives the example of the owner of a store who attends to a complaint about merchandise from a costumer in his/her own shop.

The problems posed by observational methods have already been discussed. In what follows, the other data collection techniques are reviewed before selecting the most appropriate one for our present purposes.

4.2.1. Written DCTs: a 'classic' in pragmatics research

As several scholars have pointed out (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 80; Houck & Gass 1996: 46, Turnbull 2001: 35), the possibility of manipulating and controlling variables is one of most important advantages of the Written DCT, as it allows for hypotheses testing. This method is also efficient, as a large amount of data can be gathered in short time. In addition to that, written questionnaires can be filled out without much effort, and hence not being so imposing on the respondent, which may result in a better attitude toward the experiment.

The above assets notwithstanding, research on DCTs have found some important shortcomings. Rintell & Mitchell (1989: 269) discovered that responses in Written DCTs were more direct than in the oral version (Oral DCT or CRPs), and suggested that it could be due to the absence of face-to-face interaction in the former. Other limitations of this method have been described, such as the lack of negotiation because the number of turns is pre-established, which makes respondents feel obliged to say in one single turn what might have been said across several turns in real-life situations (Beebe & Cummings 1996); the difference between conventions of written language (planning, reformulations, and so on), and the features of oral production, including online processing, repetitions, self-repair, and so forth, and the limited range of semantic formulas have also been mentioned (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 70-2; Houck & Gass 1996: 57ff). Additional drawbacks regarding the instrument itself have been outlined. These include the fact that roles are imagined, making it difficult to establish the authenticity of the data, and the fact that questionnaires are like tests and may introduce a bias into the respondents' attitude. Finally, the problem whether a rejoinder should be included or not remains open (*vid.* Johnston, Kasper & Ross 1998; Rose 1992), as they provide information about the other's response *before* the actual speech act is uttered.

Some consequences of the above have been mentioned: less negotiation, hedging, repetition, elaboration, variety and amount of talk has been reported as being produced in Written DCTs as compared to natural data (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 70-2). Furthermore, in some cases, it has been shown that in natural settings conversations may evolve in unpredictable ways. In one case described by Beebe & Cummings (1996: 78-9), for instance, the elaboration of the response developed from just providing an excuse for not accepting a request to finally criticizing the requester. It seems, therefore, that a Written DCT has too many limitations and is "at best a projective measure of speaking" (Cohen 1996: 33).

4.2.2. Solution to some limitations of Written DCTs: CRPs

Several studies have been conducted to find out whether the oral version of the DCT (i.e., CRP), represents an improvement over the written one (Eisenstein & Bodman 1993; Rintell & Mitchell 1989; Yuan 2001). Rintell & Mitchell (1989) report that some advantages over the written version include the obvious fact that it is in the

speaking mode, thus processing being online, and interactions are face to face, which may indicate that language produced that way could be "a good indication of [the] 'natural' way of speaking" (Rintell & Mitchell 1989: 251). Yuan (2001: 279) found that data gathered via Oral DCTs showed higher values than Written DCTs in response length and the number of exclamation particles, repetitions, inversions, and omissions, features that were closer to the observational data.

However, CRPs still share the major disadvantages of DCTs. For one thing, they are designed to elicit the desired speech act alone, with no regard for possible preceding and following turns (broader co-text) that may influence the type and interpretation of the speech act in question. And, again, negotiation is not allowed (Yuan 2001: 284). This lack of negotiation may have psychological consequences as well. In their study of expressions of gratitude, Eisenstein & Bodman (1993: 70) conducted *post-hoc* interviews which revealed that respondents in CRPs found the process awkward and had ambivalent feelings about the naturalness of their responses, as when callers have to leave messages to telephone answering machines. In sum, the differences with respect to the written format are very few. In fact, Rintell & Mitchell (1989: 265) reported that these were limited to a larger amount of talk and repetitions in the case of oral responses produced by non-native speakers, while comparisons among native respondents showed no significant differences.

4.2.3. ORPs, ECs, and Real Plays

ORPs, ECs and Real Pays represent further steps in the collection of data, and in that order, toward authentic speech. The difference between ORPs and ECs is limited to the roles participants should play. Whereas in the former, respondents play roles other than their own, in ECs the interactants keep their real identities. Real Plays, on the other hand, are a special case of RPs in which both roles and situations are real, as explained above.

The main advantage of these methods over previous ones consists in their little control over the elicited data while still allowing for the manipulation of other variables such as the age, sex, social status and level of education of the participants, as well as the contents of the interaction. The difference between them consists in the degree of control over those variables and, in inverse proportion, the level of authenticity of

linguistic output. That is, the less control over situation the closer the data to real-life discourse. ORPs, being similar to drama plays in which roles and settings are fictitious, allow for more control over situational (e.g. hypothetical activity type, place and time of interaction), interactional (e.g., relationship between participants, topic limitation and control) and social variables (e.g., sex, age, social status). As ORPs, an EC data collection design may allow for the control over the above variables, and manipulate some of them, as for example, situational factors. It is not possible, however, to manipulate the social and some interactional factors, as the sample population need to behave as themselves. Finally, Real Plays represent one further step toward authenticity, as even situations are real. As no manipulation of the above factors is performed, it is the elicitation technique most closely resembles the ethnographic observation of naturally occurring discourse. The only difference consists in participants' awareness. While in the case of the former informants know that they are part of an investigation, and hence the data is somehow elicited, in the latter people are unaware of the fact that they are being observed.

These three techniques further share the advantage that they elicit a type of data that highly resemble natural talk-in-interaction because they include features that are present in face-to-face real-time interaction, such as the online processing of linguistic output and input, the possibility of negotiation along multiple turns of talk, the role of non-verbal cues in communication, and other features of natural conversation. Houck & Gass (1996: 52) reported that in their experiment, "speakers [who participated in ORPs] hemmed and hawed, cut each other off, requested clarification, self corrected, modified and elaborated their positions, and generally became involved in negotiating semantic, pragmatic and social meaning", more or less as they would in natural circumstances.

Some drawbacks have also been mentioned, though. For one thing, they are difficult to administer and are time consuming. This is because they require the recording to be carried out in small groups, and participants must perform in front of a video- or audio-recording device. This is not very welcome by many people, who are more prone to cooperate in surveys involving written questionnaires, as they are quick and anonymous. Secondly, the presence of a recording instrument may introduce a bias on the data. Finally, in the case of ORPs, roles and situations are still fictitious, and therefore it is hard to say how this might affect language production. This shortcoming is not shared by Real Plays and ECs, as participants enact their real roles, but the negative side of this is the impossibility of manipulating personal and interpersonal

variables using the same participants. The above outline of the strengths and weaknesses of data gathering techniques are summarized in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6 shows the degree to which the data collection method used allows for the elicitation and gathering of natural data. Clearly, direct participant observation of events is the best option here. The quality and level of authenticity of the data obtained with this method, however, highly depend on the data-gathering tool utilized, and hence the question-mark in the table. It has been reported, for example, that note-taking is accurate at the content level, but does not reproduce exact performance (Yuan 2001: 289). So, this kind of data should be supplemented with video and/or audio recordings.[41]

Table 6. Features of real-life conversation that can be elicited depending on the data collection method used.

Data / Method	Authentic	Spoken	Face to face	Naturalness	Negotiation Multiple turns	Online	Nonverbal cues
Observation	++/?	+	+	++	+	+	+
ECs and real plays	++/-	+	+	++/-	+	+	+
Open RP	+/-	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
Closed RP	+/--	+	+	+/--	-	+/-	+
Written DCT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 7. Comparison of data collection methods as a function of degree of control over situation, degree of control over response, administration and ease of data processing.

METHOD	Situation control		Response control	Administration Amount of data/time	Ease of processing
	Personal	Contextual			
Observation	-	-	-	-	-
Real plays	-	+/-	-	-	-
ECs	+/-	+	+/--	+/-	+/-
Open RP	+	+	+/--	+/-	+/-
Closed RP	+	+	+	+	++/-
Written DCT	+	+	+	++	+

At the other end of the continuum are Written DCTs, which do not allow for the observation of many features that are inherent in talk-in-interaction, such as face-to-face

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[41] This point has been confirmed in my research. When transcribing the data, I normally recorded the correct content but frequently failed to use the accurate wording in my first try. I had to rely on second, third or even more hearings to capture the exact terms and expressions used.

natural oral production, online processing and negotiation along a series of turns, as well as the role of non-verbal cues. The table further shows how ECs and Real Plays are as close to ethnographic methods as can be. These techniques have the advantage of eliciting most of the features present in natural discourse while controlling over some elements and features of the setting to allow comparability of the data, especially so in the case of ECs.

The level of control exerted over the data is shown in Table 7. The pattern observed is direct contrast to that seen in Table 6. While Written DCTs allow for the control of many factors in order to isolate the variable(s) under investigation, observational methods discard any form of interference in the events observed. This approach has a bearing on the time and effort spent in the gathering and processing of data, thus reducing efficiency. Furthermore, Written DCTs are less time-consuming, as they are easier to administer and no transcription of spoken data is needed. This, indeed, is an advantage. In between are, again, ORPs, ECs, and Real Plays.

Clearly, no method is free of problems. The closer the data to natural language the less control over situations and speakers can be enforced, and vice versa. Additionally, time and effort are also relevant. Therefore, a compromise is needed at some point. It is my position that both observation and Written DCTs, which are placed at the ends of the authenticity-control continuum, are not good candidates for a study like the present one. On the one hand, the comparison of three languages using ethnographic methods of data collection would render the task impossible to carry out in the period of time allocated for a PhD thesis. As Wolfson (1981) has reported, a serious ethnographic work would require one or two years of observation in each language-culture. This would mean that a minimum of three years would be needed just to collect the data, which is unfeasible both financially and temporally. Moreover, there is no guarantee that comparable data can be obtained, as no control can be exerted over extraneous elements.

Regarding Written DCTs, although it has been shown that they could be useful to find out what semantic formulas are frequently used or expected in the performance of speech acts (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 80), there are many features especially related to the nature and structure of conversations that make them the least suitable for eliciting data representing not only the broad semantic contents of utterances, but also the amount, place, and concrete form of each linguistic element in the sequence of a conversational event. There are many sequence-organizational (e.g., attributable silence,

token agreements, hesitation markers, laughter, among others) and turn-constructional (e.g., long lapses, repetitions, hesitation markers, next turn repair initiators, intonation patterns, and so on) patterns that are relevant to establish the preferred or dispreferred status of turns at talk which Written DCTs are unable to elicit. Furthermore, they do not permit interaction, thus precluding the possibility of investigating many dynamic elements that are inherent in conversation, such as negotiation and the unpredictable evolution of events, which can vary from highly consensual conversation to an extremely confrontational one depending on context and participants' orientation, as shown by Kotthoff (1993). Finally, Turnbull (2001: 46) has reported that RPs, telephone scripts and spontaneous speech are more similar among each other and differ from DCTs, and Tannen (1982: 9, *cit.* in Beebe & Cummings 1996: 75) found that in spoken conversations the speaker's attitude was in many cases conveyed by means of paralinguistic cues and repetitions, which cannot be found in the written versions.

Recent developments in socio-pragmatics research seem to support the use of data collection methods that allow for the analysis and interpretation of speech act data in the broader context of full discourse, such as ORPs, ECs, Real Plays and observation, at the expense of Written DCTs and CRPs, which focus on isolated question-answer, request-acceptance/refusal, compliment-compliment responses, offence-apologies pairs. While researchers in the speech act realization framework have been interested in "the conventions of means and form by which the focal speech act is implemented" (Kasper 2004: 125) by isolating the speech act(s) in question, in many cases it is impossible to maintain this approach. Kasper (2004) herself presents a case in point and shows how the repetition of questions and requests may function as "question substitutes" which are impossible to elicit by means of Written DCTs:

> (32) I: Mm… **Can you tell me** about –what – you did over the Golden Week?
> *[Conventionally indirect]*
> C: Pardon?
> I: **Tell me** what you did over the Golden Week.
> *[Locution derivable/direct]*   (Adapted from Kasper 2004: 126)

In this example, the request for information is performed via a conventionally indirect form in the first case, whereas the repetition of the request is realized by means of a locution derivable, direct speech act. It would be impossible to capture this difference in pragmatic force if a Written DCT were used to elicit language production.

Similarly, Houck & Gass (1996) report that ORPs revealed features in the production of refusals that did not appear in CRPs:

> The use of open role plays has […] shown that the performance of acts such as refusals involves the use of resources not required or even appropriate in noninteractional role play. (Houck & Gass 1996: 57).

The conclusion seems to be that Written DCTs and CRPs fulfil two of Turnbull's (2001) conditions, namely variable control and efficiency, but lack to ability to capture many features of talk-in-interaction present in natural conversations, thus not quite fulfilling the "representativeness" condition. Considering the unfeasibility of fully ethnographic methods for our purposes, three possible approaches remain: ORPs, ECs and Real Plays. In the following section, the appropriateness of these methods for eliciting (dis)agreement tokens is discussed. It is argued that ECs are, in our case, a good choice if the object of study and the research design are considered.

4.3. A method for eliciting (dis)agreements: ECs

As the review of previous studies on (dis)agreements have shown[42], these are often negotiated in a series of turns and include the production of many discourse features (repetition, reluctance markers, hedges, downtoning), non-linguistic cues (hesitation, high-low pitch, speech volume, et cetera) and nonverbal devices (gestures, body position and orientation, facial expressions, and so on), that inform about the nature (preference organization and politeness/facework) of the interaction. Consequently, the elicitation technique chosen should be one that captured all these communicative aspects in the production of (dis)agreements for them to be representative, while guaranteeing cross-cultural comparability of the data on one hand and relative ease of administration on the other. Additionally, it needs to be ethical and prevent the violation of individual rights to privacy. The purpose of this section is to discuss which of the three quasi-observational/quasi-experimental approaches reviewed above that are closest to authentic discourse is the best choice for the present study.

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[42] See Chapter 3 for a full review.

ORPs, ECs, and Real Plays are quasi-experimental designs (Porte 2002) in that some variables can be controlled, and at the same time they are what I would call 'quasi-observational', or 'semi-ethnographic' in Cohen's (1996: 24) terminology, in that the behavior and language used within the setting is very close to those occurring in unplanned, natural circumstances.

Although they all share these characteristics, they differ in the degree of control, and presumably, in "representativeness" of natural language. In general, the major advantage of ORPs over ECs and Real Plays consists in the possibility of manipulating both personal and contextual variables in order to elicit a larger variety of responses and settings. So, for example, personal variables (sex, age, social status, jobs, and so forth) can be tested and manipulated by asking participants to perform the same activity with different roles each time; contextual variables can be manipulated by selecting, for example, various activity types or imaginary location/situational contexts. Also, certain control can be exerted on response by limiting the type of topics to be discussed or the type of act to be performed (e.g., the realization of apologies vs. congratulations). However, it has the disadvantage that roles are fictitious, which might infringe on spontaneity and naturalness.

ECs and Real Plays, on the other hand, retain the naturalness of authentic discourse, as participants keep their identities, and interactions are spontaneous and unstructured, and as Edstrom (2004: 1503) observes, data obtained with these techniques are "more natural than data collected through role plays". What is gained in "representativeness" is lost in variable control, as individual and interpersonal variables cannot be manipulated in a within-subject design as can be done in ORPs. This precludes the possibility of carrying out a random sampling of the population. This is not to say, however, that no control is feasible, but is limited to a between-subject/between-situations design by means of a preliminary selection of relevant informants. Edstrom (2004: 1503), for example, attempted the control of the variables of native language and gender by determining in advance who was to be invited to the conversational gatherings.

Real Plays and ECs also differ from each other. While the former is bound to real settings (e.g., shopkeepers and customers in a store, teachers and pupils in class), the latter is more context-free in that it focuses only on the naturalness of conversations. The former is almost observational in that no manipulation is carried out on informant selection and response. In ECs, on the other hand, certain control can be exerted at both

situational and topic levels, by selecting the participants in the research in terms of age, sex, social status, relationship, and so on, and the type of topics to be discussed.

In sum, although all three methods combine aspects of experimental and observational approaches, ORPs can be labelled as closer to experimental than observational design, while Real Plays are more observational than experimental, with ECs somewhere in between. None of them elicit wholly natural data, as certain biases may be introduced by the fact that participants are asked to gather or perform for research purposes, even if they do not know the purpose of the study. None of them are wholly experimental either because extraneous factors are not completely controlled. Therefore, the choice of one method over the others will depend on the concrete needs and aims of each research project.

In the case of eliciting (dis)agreements, I have deemed the EC approach more appropriate than the ORP or Real Play methods. On one hand, as the natural locus of (dis)agreeing is in conversation, rather than other human interactions, I believe ECs to be more efficient and less time consuming than Real Plays. Although both approaches barely impinge upon the naturalness of the interaction, ECs are more conversational-*interaction* oriented and only require people to get together to talk, whereas Real Plays are more *transaction*-oriented and require real contexts of interaction. Thus, finding participants with similar characteristics, in similar contexts and in three different countries, who would be willing to participate in an investigation would be difficult and highly time consuming[43]. On the other hand, I regard ECs more appropriate than ORPs for this study because presumably there are many sequence-organizational and turn-constructional patterns in the production of (dis)agreements that might not be produced when people engage in fictitious roles. In this sense, I share Edstrom's view that, although ECs are "not completely natural, their 'less-elicited' nature enables them to provide a distinct perspective from data collected through role plays, discourse completion tasks, etc." (Edstrom 2004: 1504).

4.4. Research design

As the purpose of this research project was to elicit agreements and disagreements in conversations that could be cross-culturally compared, the EC

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[43] Of course, ECs focusing on informal group chats can be regarded a type of Real Play, in which case we could say that their boundaries are fuzzy.

approach was adopted including some elements of control in the design. The idea was to get participants to engage in lively conversations over certain topics that were as natural and authentic as possible while controlling some elements of the interaction. In order to achieve the former, interactants were informed that they could carry on the conversation as they wished. No imposition on order of speaking or limitations of turn allocations were imposed. Conversationalists were asked to behave as naturally as possible, exactly as they would in normal everyday chats. The only restriction was a topic agenda they had to follow loosely, although they were not obliged to talk about all of them or strictly follow their order of appearance.

Data equivalence was sought by controlling some features of the participants, the initial activity frame, and the setting. The variables of age and level of education were controlled by limiting the study to undergraduate university students whose ages ranged between 18 and 25. Only one participant among the Spanish participants exceeded this age, but still was an undergraduate university student and did not exceed the 30 years of age. In order to guarantee equivalence in "framing" the activity, some major topics of discussion were proposed, such as planning a trip around Spain/Japan or stating their preferences over certain people and objects. The settings were also controlled by limiting the number of interlocutors to a maximum of three and by carrying out the sessions in a classroom or lecturer's office. All sessions used for analysis comprised three speakers. A pilot test was carried out using four speakers and it was concluded that it wasn't operative because in many occasions there were two parallel conversations going on at the same time, which made both dialogs really hard to follow and transcribe.

All conversations were video recorded. This video was supplemented by an audio recording using a digital audio recorder in order to ensure a better sound quality and keep back-up data. The Spanish recordings were carried out from February 26, 2007 to April 18, 2007. The English conversations started on March 26, 2007 and finished on April 17, 2007. The Japanese sessions were undertaken between May 29, 2007 and June 15, 2007.

4.4.1. Participants

A total of 101 participants agreed to cooperate in the research project, of which 22 were Americans, 30 Peninsular Spanish, and 49 Japanese. Although they were all

admitted for the audio and video recordings, only four groups per language were selected for transcription and analysis, and therefore the final number of participants was reduced to 36. This decision was made in order to guarantee the comparability of the data. In all three cultural groups, female participants outnumbered male volunteers. Of the 22 Americans, 18 were female and only four were male; in the Peninsular Spanish group, 19 were female and 11 were male, while 22 women and 14 men comprised the Japanese group. The original idea was to make a 3x2 design (three cultures, two genders) but the low number of male participants, especially in the case of Americans, would have precluded the possibility of reaching strong conclusions as to male-female differences. Thus, any conclusions regarding differences and similarities in their behavior in terms of gender will be only tentative. Taking this limitation into account, I decided to select two female groups and two mixed groups (one with one male and two females, and one with two males and one female). No male-only groups could be formed for English, and therefore they were discarded from this study[44].

While Spanish and Japanese volunteers were recruited in their own countries, the American participants were gathered among exchange students of Spanish language and culture in Granada, Spain, which is one reason why it was difficult to find as many volunteers as in the other two cultures. It could be argued that this difference in location might introduce a bias into the study. However, in order to minimize the influence of another culture in their behavior, only those who had been in Spain for less than six months were selected. Additionally, special care was taken to include only native speakers of each language. Consequently, those who were multilingual or had a high level of proficiency in a second language were not admitted.

The American participants were all university students enrolled in courses of Spanish language, culture and history at a language center in Granada that cooperates with some American universities. Most of volunteers selected for the study were living and studying in the state of Illinois, except for three of them, who came from Florida, North Carolina, and New Mexico. Therefore, they mainly represent the central and eastern parts of the United States. The selected Spanish participants were all students at the University of Granada. The vast majority were from Granada (9), two of them came from other Andalusian provinces (Cádiz, Jaén), and one came from Murcia. Thus, they were all representatives of the southern part of Spain. The Japanese recordings were

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[44] See the Section 5.4.2. for a justification of the group selection.

conducted at two universities in neighboring prefectures: the University of Kanagawa in Kanagawa prefecture, and Tokoha Gakuen University in Shizuoka prefecture. Four participants came from Shizuoka prefecture, while six of them were from the Tokyo Metropolitan Area (three from Kanagawa, two from Tokyo, and one from Chiba). Finally, one volunteer came from Tokushima and another one from Nagasaki, although both of them were studying in Shizuoka (see Table 8 for group configurations):

Table 8. Group configurations.

Americans			
Groups	**Number of participants**	**Gender**	**Origin**
Group # 1	3	All female	Illinois; Illinois; Florida
Group # 2	3	All female	Illinois; Illinois; New York
Group # 3	3	Female x 2 Male x 1	All from Illinois
Group # 4	3	Female x 1 Male x 2	Michigan; Michigan; New Mexico
Spanish			
Group # 1	3	All female	Granada; Cádiz; Murcia
Group # 2	3	Female x 2 Male x 1	All from Granada
Group # 3	3	All female	All from Granada
Group # 4	3	Female x 1 Male x 2	Granada; Jaén; Madrid
Japanese			
Group # 1	3	All female	Shizuoka; Shizuoka; Tokushima
Group # 2	3	Female x 1 Male x 2	Nagasaki; Shizuoka; Shizuoka
Group # 3	3	Female x 2 Male x 1	Chiba; Kanagawa; Tokyo
Group # 4	3	All female	Tokio; Kanagawa; Kanagawa

4.4.2. Procedure

Participants were approached via their teachers and lecturers in their respective institutions. They were asked to volunteer for the study in exchange for some compensation. In the case of the American participants, they were offered the possibility to participate in Spanish-English language exchanges with students from the University of Granada. The Spanish students were offered extra credits for their English language courses, while the Japanese were paid for their cooperation. All of them were informed

that their participation was needed for a research project in the field of linguistics regarding conversational strategies. No additional information was provided.

When all the volunteers had signed in, they were individually contacted either personally or by telephone to agree on a date and time of the meeting, as well as for group assignment. This process was carried out by the researcher in the case of the American and Spanish participants, and by collaborating scholars in their respective home institutions in Japan. Group assignment was not randomly conducted, but was determined by the participants' availability and preference, due to their class and work schedules. As explained above, an effort was made to get three group configurations: female only, male only and mixed. This was possible in all cases except among the American groups, due to the low participation of males. Therefore, I decided not to include "male-only" groups in the design.

Once a group was gathered, they were told that their cooperation was needed for a maximum of one hour of their time. They were asked to sit in a semicircle in order to be able to record their behavior with a video camera. Figs. 7 through 10 represent how participants were positioned with respect to each other and the video camera:

Fig. 7. Sitting arrangement for the conversations: A version.
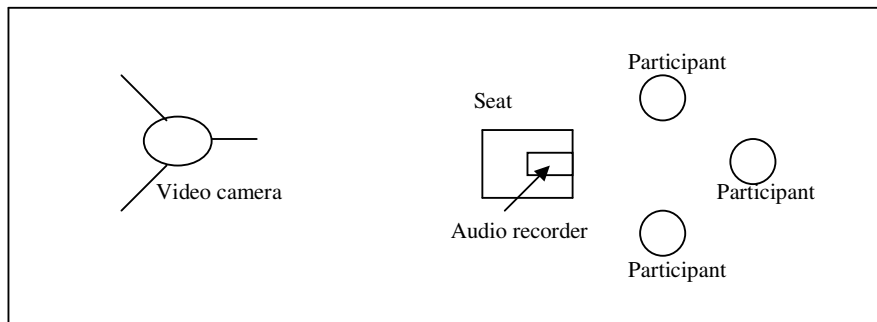
Fig. 8. Sitting arrangement for the conversations: B version.
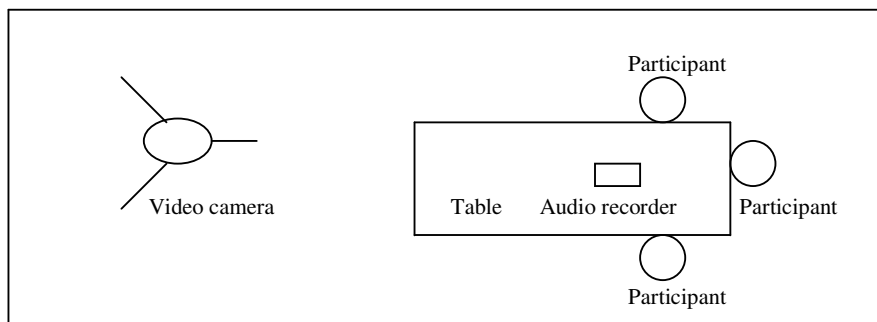
Fig. 9. Sitting arrangement for the conversations: A version, viewed from the video camera.

Fig. 10. Sitting arrangement for the conversations: B version, viewed from the video camera

The use of a video camera and an audio recorder might represent an intrusion and a threat to the authenticity of the interaction. Indeed, it has been reported that people show concern and somehow stilted behavior when they are aware that they are being recorded. However, there are several reasons for having chosen these data collection devices. For one thing, Scarcella (1979) argues that these effects are prominent only for a short while at the beginning, but gradually disappear as the conversation unfolds. One piece of evidence that supports the argument that participants get involved in their conversations and tend to forget the presence of a recording device this is provided by a case in which one of the participants in the present study criticized a teacher she has at university and used an expletive to refer to that person. It was only *after* she had uttered the improper word that she remembered she was being recorded, and felt a little embarrassed. In this sense, I agree with Locher (2004: 110) that this kind of behavior "confirms the assumption that the material occurring before was indeed spoken without the participants' awareness that they were being recorded".

Of course, a little voice recorder is much less intrusive than a video camera. Locher (2004) and Edstrom (2004), for example, use only tape-recorders in their studies. The use of the video camera is justified by the fact that it is often very difficult to identify who is speaking when no visual clue is provided. Furthermore, there are many physical features such as gestures, body position and orientation, head movements, and the like that are of much help to correctly interpret participants' behavior. For example, in the data analyzed there were many cases in which the hearers kept nodding at what one speaker was saying, thus accepting and approving his/her statements. When this is the case, a gap or silence at turn completion might not be interpreted as a strategy of disagreement as dispreferred, but maybe only as a symptom that there is nothing else to add or say because this was accomplished with a nodding.

Alternatively, the use of a camera could have been avoided by the researcher being present in the conversations either as one more participant, as Locher (2004) does in her study, or as a mere observer in order to keep track of who speaks when. This procedure, however, has more inconveniences than advantages. For one thing, I could not participate in the conversations, as my ethnographic profile does not match the requirements established for the present research. Moreover, I observed that participants were hesitant to begin their talk in my presence, even though I encouraged them to start once I had switched the camera on. My participation, then, seemed to be more intrusive than the use of a video camera.

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Once participants were seated, they were asked to fill out a brief ethnographic questionnaire in which questions regarding their age, sex, origin, education, language proficiency, and experience living abroad had to be answered in order to ensure that the sample population was homogeneous enough (See Appendix 1 for a sample of the questionnaire in the three languages under investigation). Then, they were told that they would have a conversation on several topics proposed by the researcher that would be video and audio recorded. They were also informed that, at the end of the session, they would be asked to sign a written authorization to use the data collected for research purposes. At this point, they were given a set of instructions on how to proceed in the conversations (see Appendix 2). All groups were asked to make a travel plan for the summer and to try to reach an agreement on certain aspects of the trip such as the amount of money they were ready to spend, the places they would like to visit, the kind of accommodation they would choose and the means of transportation they would use. In order to get additional data about the production of agreements and disagreements, they were also asked to talk about their preferences on certain matters such as their favorite towns, museums, monuments, and opinions regarding actors/actresses, artists, singers. In the Japanese case, some others topics included some social issues such as marriage among homosexuals or male-female equal rights. These two sections were labelled Part One and Part Two of the conversation (see Appendix 3). However, not all groups did Part Two, as Fig. 11 shows:

Fig. 11. Distribution of topics by group and time spent in each part

Part One only:	Americans:	2	(Groups 1 & 3)
	Spanish:	0	
	Japanese:	0	
Parts One & Two:	Americans:	2	(Groups 2 & 4)
	Spanish:	all	
	Japanese:	all	

The rationale for selecting these two types of conversational topics is that in the case of the travel plan there is a need to reach a consensus and interactants should orient toward achieving a final agreement on how to carry out a plan. The second part, on the other hand, deals with personal likes and dislikes, opinions and beliefs, on which people do not have to converge and therefore do not need to reach a compromise or accommodate to the opinion of others. In sum, in the first case the task is oriented

toward agreement, whereas in the second case it is not necessarily so and depends completely on personal choice.

Interactants were asked to act as naturally as possible, as if they were gathered at someone's room or apartment. For Part One, they were asked to plan the trip as if they were really going to carry out the project. A list of items to be discussed was provided beforehand for them to think about their preferences and desires in terms of places to visit, budget, lodging, et cetera. For Part Two, participants were told that the topics were a kind of general guideline to be followed loosely and that they were free to digress and discuss other topics if they wished. They were informed that they were not required to cover all the topics either, and that no restriction was imposed for their timely conclusion. They were also asked to forget about the time allocated for the conversation. All these measures were adopted to prevent possible biases on the data due to time limitations and topic control. While being aware that this is not completely achieved —some participants checked their watches after a while to see the time remaining—, these instructions are considered to reduce extraneous effects on "naturalness". Finally, upon completion of the task, all participants signed the authorization to use the data for academic purposes and were thanked and dismissed. All participants agreed to grant permission.

4.4.3. The data

The length of the conversations varied from as little as 11 minutes in one American conversation (Group # 1) to over 45 minutes in one Spanish (Group # 4) and one Japanese (Group # 1) group. American English conversations amounted to 99 minutes, Spanish to 141 minutes, and Japanese to 150 minutes, totalling 390 minutes of talk, that is six hours and thirty minutes. Table 9 provides detailed information on the duration of each conversation and the time spent on Part One and Part Two.

There is no unitary criterion for establishing the appropriate amount of data to be gathered. Locher (2004), for example, works on three types of data —a friendly conversation over dinner, scientific meetings in a nuclear physics laboratory, and a radio interview program— which lasted 175 minutes (ibid.: 106), 90 minutes (*Ibid*.: 233), and 30 minutes (*Ibid*.: 290), respectively, which amount to 295 minutes. Edstrom (2004), in her study of Venezuelan conversational behavior, recorded 574 minutes of talk, out of

which 183 corresponded to the conversation of two control groups (Edstrom 2004: 1503). Kakavá (2002: 1545-6) used a total of 205 minutes of spoken data to compare the production of disagreements among family members, friends and university students and lecturers. As we can see, there is considerable variation in the amount of data gathered in these studies, from as little as 205 minutes to almost six hundred. In this picture, I consider 390 minutes of talk to be enough data to reach conclusions regarding frequency and variety of language output.

Table 9. Total conversation time per group, divided into Part One and Part Two.

English				Spanish				Japanese			
Group	Duration (min.)			Group	Duration (min.)			Group	Duration (min.)		
	P. 1	P. 2	Total		P. 1	P. 2	Total		P. 1	P. 2	Total
1	11	--	11	1	11	20	31	1	21	24	45
2	20	22	42	2	8	17	25	2	16	27	43
3	18	--	18	3	17	23	40	3	13	16	28
4	13	15	28	4	38	7	45	4	24	9	33
Total	62	37	**99**	Total	74	67	**141**	Total	74	76	**150**
OVERALL TOTAL											**390**

I am conscious, however, that the data gathered using the method adopted here is not one hundred percent natural, as some features are reminiscent of role plays. So, for example, in the travel planning part, participants need to imagine that they are going to take a trip together and therefore their commitment might not be the same as in real life. Their relationship in this part is also fictitious, as they are asked to behave as if they were friends who get together to organize the journey. These two shortcomings disappear in Part Two, where participants are asked to proffer their true likes and opinions. In sum, the conversation in Part Two should be regarded as more "authentic" than that in Part One.

One additional caveat regards the degree of generalization of findings. This study focuses on a particular population group and a particular conversational setting. That is, even though participants are asked to play roles, these are limited to imagining a hypothetical setting. The other factors of the interaction are not manipulated, and therefore the extrapolation of findings to the population in general will be done with caution.

4.4.4. Transcription method

In an attempt to capture all the features of spoken discourse, a combination of Du Bois et al.'s (1992) and Jefferson's (2004) transcription conventions have been used, supplied with some additional elements to represent some characteristics in speech that are exclusive of one language, as for example the extremely high pitch quality of some Japanese utterances. An attempt was made to balance an accurate rendering of the interactions and legibility in order not to overwhelm the reader[45].

Dialectal variations in pronunciation were not captured unless they were seen as relevant for the meaning and intention of the speakers. Thus, all the transcriptions follow the standard graphological conventions of each language. In the case of Japanese, the Hepburn *romaji* system (Roman letter system) has been used to facilitate its reading by non-Japanese speakers.

5.5. Data analysis

In order to establish the relative proportion of agreeing vs. disagreeing turns produced in each language and whether these adopt a preferred or dispreferred structure, I have followed Pomerantz's (1984) and Kasper's (2006) suggestion to focus on sequence-organizational and turn-constructional patterns as units of analysis. To achieve this goal, the initial "frame" was controlled as an amiable gathering, thus excluding a confrontational orientation at the outset. That is, the conversations were to be viewed as friendly, not conflictive or controversial. This decision was taken in order to find what the conversational styles and preferences are in each culture in close encounters where the aim was not to blatantly attack each other's face. In this kind of setting, the production of agreements and/or disagreements as preferred or dispreferred structures at 1st order level should also inform about their preference at the 2nd order level[46]. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility of "rekeying" (Goffman 1974) the event as confrontational as the conversation unfolds. This change in the interactional frame, however, should be intrinsic to the conversation, and therefore relevant for participants'

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[45] A Glossary of transcript symbols is provided on pages xiii-xv.
[46] See Chapter 3 for their definition.

conversational styles and orientations. All these elements are tackled and discussed in the analytical section of the present thesis.

Analysis of data has been conducted at two levels. Firstly, a quantitative analysis was carried out in order to determine the relative frequency of disagreements and their realization in terms of 1[st] order preference. The adoption of this type of analysis is motivated by the definition of the result of statistical frequency of linguistic expressions that produce unmarked perlocutionary effects in a given context, where *unmarked* is defined as either unnoticed or noticed and unsanctioned.

For the quantitative analysis to be manageable, a coding system was devised taking into account both sequence-organizational and turn-constructional features, thus combining elements from Conversation Analysis and Empirical Pragmatics (Kasper 2004, 2006). The analysis included an initial classification of disagreement moves into pragmatically direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect attending to the type of Head Act used to disagree. The strategies employed in each category were also computed and compared within and across cultures. This was done in order to establish the level of "preference" at the illocutionary or pragmatic level, an aspect that has been neglected within Conversation Analysis.

The next step was to analyze disagreements in terms of their degree of modification, again integrating both sequence-organizational and turn-constructional elements. As suggested in Chapter 4, these were first classified into turn-external and turn-internal. A further distinction was made between Head-Act external and Head-Act internal modifications, following the CCSARP conventions. Head-Act external modifications include features found within Conversation Analysis such as gaps and prefaces to the Head Act such as weak agreements and hesitation markers, and also accounts and other discursive elements that either precede or follow the main act. Head-Act internal modifications include syntactic, lexical, supra-segmental and sequential features that either upgrade or downgrade the force of the disagreement, which should inform about the 1[st] order preference status of the disagreement.

In Chapter 6, an in-depth qualitative analysis is undertaken on some aspects that are not manageable in mere quantitative terms. Here, I delved into such aspects as the distinction between mitigated and highly mitigated disagreements, the realization of sustained disagreement sequences, or the degree of respect shown for the turn-taking rules.

In Chapter 5, a fine-grained coding scheme is proposed for the quantitative analysis. Therefore, only a brief outline of which conversational realizations are to be considered as structurally preferred and which as structurally dispreferred is given in the following section.

4.5.1. Elements of analysis

Pomerantz (1984: 65) identified four major characteristics that distinguished agreements from disagreements in a 1st order "agreement preferred" context:

1. Agreements have agreement components occupying the entire agreement turns; disagreements are often prefaced.

2. Agreements are accomplished with stated agreement components; disagreements may be accomplished with a variety of forms, ranging from unstated to stated disagreements. Frequently disagreements, when stated, are formed as partial agreements/partial disagreements; they are weak forms of disagreement.

3. In general, agreements are performed with a minimization of gap between the prior turn's completion and the agreement turn's initiation; disagreement components are frequently delayed within a turn or over a series of turns.

4. Absences of forthcoming agreements or disagreements by recipients with gaps, requests for clarification, and the like are interpretable as instances of unstated, or as-yet-unstated, disagreements.

As noted above, these features are to be applied to agreements and disagreements only in "agreement preferred" contexts. It can be said, however, that these are patterns that establish an opposition between the "preferred" and "dispreferred" status of utterances in general at the 1st order level, abstracting away from the agreement-disagreement distinction. Following the literature reviewed so far, the following features have been identified.

4.5.1.1. Features of 1st order preference

A) Sequence-organizational features:

1. **No time lapse** between prior and next turn, with frequent latching and even overlapping between turns (Kakavá 2002: 1556-7; Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984: 66).

2. **Response produced in next turn** (Sacks' (1987 [1973]) Rule of Contiguity). That is, the response to prior turn is not postponed or pushed down in the sequence (Pomerantz 1984: 66).

B) Turn-constructional features:

3. **Absence or minimization of hedges, downgraders, and mitigating devices** (Kakavá 2002: 1557; Kotthoff 1993: 202; Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984: 65-69).

4. **Un-prefaced agreements or disagreements** (Kakavá 2002: 1555; Pomerantz 1984: 65), occupy the entire turn (Pomerantz 1984: 65).

5. **Agreements or disagreements explicitly stated**. If agreement is intended as preferred, agreement is accomplished with stated agreement components. If disagreement is intended as preferred, then disagreement components are explicitly and straightforwardly stated (Pomerantz 1984: 65).

6. **Supra-segmental features** such as high pitch and accelerated tempo (Kakavá 2002: 1557) are used. In the case of agreements, these show enthusiasm, compliance, camaraderie, shared knowledge, and involvement. The correlation between upgrading and high pitch is reported by Ogden (2006: 1762, 1772), as well as other upgrading features such as expanded pitch span, more dynamic pitch contours, slower tempo in the case of agreements, and closer, tenser articulations (*Ibid.*: 1762).

7. **Upgrading prior statements** in the case of agreements, which can be evaluative terms that are stronger than the prior descriptor (e.g. *beautiful → gorgeous / bien → genial) / ii ne* ('isn't it good') *→ subarashii yo* ('it's wonderful'), intensifiers (e.g. *it was fun → it was great fun / estuvo bien → estuvo realmente bien / omoshirokatta* ('it was fun') *→ hontoo ni omoshirokatta* ('it was really fun')) (Pomerantz 1984: 65-6), and reduplications (e.g. *aa kirei da ne* ('isn't it pretty') *→ kirei, kirei* ('pretty, pretty') / *es precioso, ¿verdad? → precioso, precioso*) (Brown & Levinson 1987: 113), which are normally stated in a higher pitch.

8. **Repetitions** of prior statements (Brown & Levinson 1987; Goodwin 1983; Hayashi 1996; Holtgraves 1997; Kotthoff 1993; Locher 2004; Mori 1999;

Pomerantz 1984) which are necessarily partial in the case of disagreements in order to incorporate an opposing element (Goodwin 1983: 670; Kotthoff 1993: 202), and partial or total in the case of agreements (Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984: 66), echoing prior statements or assessments.

4.5.1.2. Features of 1st order dispreference

One main difference between preferred and dispreferred utterances is that the latter might be produced in the next turn, over a series of turns or not produced at all ―which could finely correspond to Brown & Levinson's (1987: 60) strategy of not performing an FTA―, while the former will tend to follow Sacks' (1987 [1973]) Rule of Contiguity. As we will see, one of the main features that characterize the dispreferred status of utterances is tokens of reluctance that appear both at the sequence-organizational and turn-constructional levels. This is because sometimes these devices are strategically used to push the dispreferred utterance down several turns and/or preface a dispreferred utterance in the same turn. So, for example, token agreements can also be produced alone in one turn (Holtgraves 1997: 230) or prefacing a disagreement in the same turn (e.g., *yes, but …*).

A) Sequence-organizational features:
1. **Long gaps** (Mori 1999: 85, Pomerantz 1984: 70-1), defined as relevant absence of talk in which next-turn speaker(s) either decline(s) to hold the floor ―what Levinson (1983: 299) calls "attributable silence"―, or delays in its initiation, which is interpreted by first speaker as a signal of non-compliance and disagreement ― Levinson's (1983: 299) gaps proper.
2. **Token agreements** (e.g., *yeah, right, okay / sí, vale, de acuerdo / soo, un, ee, soo da ne, soo desu ne*) in order to postpone disagreement until later in a sequence (Brown & Levinson 1987: 113; Holtgraves 1997: 231).
3. **Repetitions** of prior utterance. We have already seen that repetitions can signal the preferred status of the utterance. However, they can be ambivalent when these repetitions are not very enthusiastic. Pomerantz (1984: 67) suggests that they can occur as part of disagreement sequences: "Same evaluations […] occur in agreement turns and agreement sequences. But they

also, importantly, occur as components within disagreement turns and sequences".

4. **NTRIs** (Next Turn Repair Initiators), which consist in requests for clarification —e.g., *what? / ¿qué? ¿cómo? / e? doo iu imi?* (*'what do you mean?'*)— (Honda 2002; Mori 1999: 85, Pomerantz 1984: 71) and/or confirmation —e.g., *really? / ¿sí? ¿de verdad? / honto?* (*'trully?'*)— (Pomerantz 1984: 71).

B) Head-Act external turn-constructional features

5. Prefacing elements

   a. **Hesitation markers**, such as *uhm, mhm, well / eh, bueno, esto verás / ee, eeto ne, ano ne* (Brown & Levinson 1987; Holtgraves 1997; Honda 2002; Locher 2004; Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984).

   b. **Weak agreements** (Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984: 66-7), which may adopt the form of a repetition or a proform as well as a downgraded evaluation of same referent (Pomerantz 1984: 68).

   c. **Token agreements**. These are often followed by contrastive conjuncts or conjuctions (*but, however, except*).

   d. **Qualified agreements**, in which agreements are downgraded by means of hedges, understaters, donwtoners and other attenuating devices —e.g., *I don't know, maybe she would but …* —(Pomerantz 1984: 71)

   e. **Pseudo agreement** (Brown & Levinson 1987). Use of *then* in final position and *so* as if there had been consensus over some point previous to the utterance in question (e.g., *I'll meet you in front of the theatre just before 8.0, <u>then</u>*; *<u>So</u> when are you coming to see us?* These *then* and *so* can be fake if no prior agreement has taken place, in which case they put some more pressure on the addressee (e.g., *so…, then… / jaa…/ entonces …*).

   f. **Conditional agreement** (Holtgraves 1997). Similar to qualified agreement but in the conditional form (e.g., *I would agree except that...*)

   g. **Disclaimers,** which according to Hayashi (1996: 249) are "speech actions to prevent the interlocutor from arriving at an interpretation of the message which is unfavourable or face-threatening", such as showing understading (e.g., *I understand what you're saying, but…/ no digo que no, pero…/ iitai koto ga wakarimasu ga… ('I know what you want to say but…')*).

6. Either before or after the dispreferred act

    a. **Accounts or grounders**, in virtue of which speakers give reasons, normally personal and subjective, for disagreeing (Locher 2004: 126-7). In the case of Japanese, Mori (1999) reports that they are usually introduced by the connector *datte* (rougly 'because').

    b. **Expressing distaste with one's position** (Holtgraves 1997: 233), which lessens the force of the disagreement because the speakers point at negative aspects of their own opinions.

    c. **Denial of disagreement or of one's own remark** at some point of the argument (Honda 2002: 580-1), as for example *soo taishite ninshiki wa chigai ga nai n desu keredomo* ('there's not much difference in understanding. However…'). That is, a weak form of agreement by negating disagreement.

    d. **Self-deprecation** (Holtgraves 1997: 233-4) in which speaker disqualifies his/her own assertions (e.g. *It's a dumb idea but…*)

All these strategies signal a more dispreferred status of the turn if they precede the dispreferred act, and less so if they go after, as Kakavá (2002) suggests when she shows surprise in finding accounts after disagreements: "What is notable about this strategy is the choice the speaker makes to frame the upcoming talk as disagreement and then proceed with accounts and other mitigating strategies rather than the reverse" (ibid.: 1552).

C) Head Act-internal turn constructional features:

7. **Storytelling** as a strategy to avoid direct confrontation in which the opposing view is presented via a third party's experience (Georgakopoulou 2001: 1888-1893). These are also called **personal analogies** by Kakavá (2002: 1554) and represent deictic shifts or changes in the participation framework of talk (Goffman 1981, change of footing) in which interlocutors modify their alignment either with their talk or with their discussants. This way a direct criticism or confrontation is avoided.

8. **Downgraders.** They serve to mitigate or attenuate the force of an utterance. This can be achieved via personalization of opinion (subjectivizers) ─e.g., *I think, in my opinion / to omou kedo* ('although I think…') / *yo creo, pienso, en mi opinión*─ (Holtgraves 1997: 232), claiming lack of knowledge (CLK)

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―e.g., *I don't know / no sé, yo qué sé /, wakaranai* (*'I don't know'*), *doo daroo* (*'how would it be?'*)― (*Ibid.*) or other words and expressions in the dispreferred act that downgrade the impact of the utterance such as *just, only, perhaps, maybe, sort of, kind of, like, in a way…/ como, más o menos, a lo mejor, solo, quizás, probablemente… / chotto* (*'a bit'*)*, no yoo na* (*'like'*)*, to iu kanji* (*'feels like'*)*, mitai na* (*'like'*)*, to iu ka* (roughly *'would I say'* when used to hedge one's own statement)… / (Brown & Levinson 1987; Holtgraves 1997; Honda 2002; Locher 2004; Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984).

9. **Modal auxiliary verbs** (Locher 2004: 129-130) such as *may, might, would, should* or *could* in English might soften the face-threatening force of a disagreement. This is expressed in Spanish with the conditional form of the main verbs (e.g., *podría, sería*) (Chodorowska 2004), and the hypothetical expression verb + *kamoshirenai* ('probably') and expressions indicating speaker's conjectures such as *daroo, rashii, mitai* (Makino & Tsutsui 2001: 100-2; 173-5).

10. **Hesitation markers, fillers and false starts** (Brown & Levinson 1987; Holtgraves 1997; Honda 2002; Locher 2004; Mori 1999; Pomerantz 1984) such as noticeable gaps and expression similar to those in (5a) above.

11. **Objections in the form of a question** (Locher 2004: 113, 133-135). According to Locher (2004: 133), they can be used for face considerations as disagreement is only implied instead of directly stated: "Such questions might still ask for a referential clarification, but nevertheless contain disagreement" (*Ibid.* 133). They normally adopt a negative orientation which occupy initial position in English and Spanish (e.g., *isn't it, can't it be, don't you think…/ no será que, no crees que*), and final position in Japanese (e.g., *to omowanai* ('don't you think?')), due to its strict verb-final word order.

12. **Assertions of common ground** (Brown & Levinson 1987; Holtgraves 1997: 234). The dispreferred statement can be interspersed with expressions like *you know* or *right?* in English, similar expressions in Spanish such as *¿sabes?, ¿verdad?*, and the involvement marker *'ne'* in Japanese.

13. **Laughter** (Mori 1999). Sometimes some assessment, opinion, suggestion or the like might be interspersed with laughter or they might be produced with a laughing quality in order to frame the utterance as non-serious.

14. **Suprasegmental resources** such as low pitch, decreased loudness, faster tempo in the case of disagreements and articulations with more open stricture (Ogden 2001: 1769). These features are also applicable to weak agreements that preface disagreements (*Ibid*.).

Most of the above features, randomly listed here, have been codified in terms of illocutionary directness and strategies that either mitigate or aggravate the force of the disagreement before carrying out the quantitative analysis, which I proceed to do in the following chapter.

PART III

ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 5

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

In the descriptive section, I formulated the research question in the following terms:

What kind of 1^{st} order preference do speakers of American English, Peninsular Spanish and Japanese show when they perform (dis)agreements in a conversation framed as "friendly" (i.e., polite)?

In other words, the purpose of this study is to find out in what ways people from these three cultures realize potentially disruptive communicative acts such as disagreements in a context where interactants try to maintain a good relationship with each other.

As reviewed in previous sections, communicative acts can be framed as "preferred" or "dispreferred" at the 1^{st} order level depending on the degree of directness showed. Hence, the more to the point, direct, explicit, without unnecessary delays, hesitations, hedges and other distancing and mitigating devices, the more "preferred" is said to be (Pomerantz 1984; Mori 1999). In this sense, an enthusiastic and straightforward agreement act in an "agreement preferred" context will most probably be produced without delay, even overlapping with the prior turn, and with explicit markers of agreement. In fact, this was the general pattern found in my data (see examples 33, 34, and 35):

(33) *(1eng/002)*
    T002 C: oh I was thinking kind of at the beginning of the summer::↑=
→T003 B: =me too=

(34) *(1esp/T004)*
    T004 C: [yo había] pensado por el norte más bien=
→ T005 A: =<u>yo</u> también

(35) *(11jpn/T004)*
    T004 A: minami no hoo ni ikitai
→ T005 C: onajiku
          A: *(I) wanna go to the south*
          C: *(I want the) same*

In the three examples above, agreements are framed as "preferred" at the 1[st] order both at the turn-organizational and turn-constructional (Kasper 2004, 2006) levels. Sequentially speaking, they strictly follow the adjacency pair principle by occupying the second position in the sequence, representing a relevant response to a prior statement. Furthermore, they are produced without delay, sometimes even latched onto the prior turn as we can see in the English and Spanish data. At the turn-constructional level, the agreement is explicit, direct and without any mitigating devices that either push the agreeing Head Act further down into the turn (via, for example, Distractors, Alerters or Supportive Moves prefacing it)[47], or downgrade its illocutionary force by using syntactic or lexical mitigating devices.

        Conversely, it has been reported (Kotthoff 1993: 202-3) that the same markers might be reproduced when producing a disagreeing response in heated disputes, which can be regarded as 1[st] order "disagreement preferred" contexts. An example is given in the following sequence, where the response to B by N shows features that are similar to the above:

(36)
    B: That is really VERY cheap, for a [sandwich]
    N: [that is   ] cheap for a restaurant. With a
        waitress. Okay? With with well with service, that you pay for. But that is not
        cheap for a self-service restaurant, and most of all not for one that actually is
        sponsored by the student center, and should be sponsored…
                                      (Adapted from Kotthoff 1993: 203)

As in example (33), N's answer is characterized by its directness, explicitness and lack of delay. In fact, her turn even overlaps with the prior turn.

        However, the above two "preferred" contexts differ in terms of 2[nd] order preference (Bousfield 2007). While in the case of the former, mutual face enhancement

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[47] See Section 5.3.2. below for a definition of each term.

and politeness can be claimed as underlying motivations for that preference orientation (Brown & Levinson 1987: 38; Heritage 1984: 268), very different reasons move interactants to frame disputes as "preferred", one of them being probably the preservation of own-face (Locher 2004: 146), but sometimes even other-face threat as well.

The aim of the present study is to find cross-cultural similarities and differences in how people produce disagreements in a context in which agreement is framed as "preferred" at the 2nd order –i.e., as a non-disruptive, amiable situation–, informed by the cross-cultural variation found in previous studies in the production of disagreement in 1st order "agreement preferred" contexts. To achieve this goal, the first step has been to guarantee that the initial interaction was framed as 2nd order "agreement preferred", so that we could interpret the communicative acts therein as produced in a face respecting, saving or enhancing environment. Of course, this initial control of the situation does not guarantee that the interaction will continue in amiable terms all along. Conversations are dynamic and they can develop into a dispute or an argument. Therefore, all the conversational sessions have been monitored to check for possible changes in frame from friendly to hostile and vice-versa.

Results show that all twelve sessions went off without significant changes, as demonstrated by the interactants' interpersonal and discursive behavior. At the interpersonal level, I did not perceive that any of the participants felt offended by their interlocutor(s). At the discursive level, no blatant defamatory remarks were made. Sporadically, there were some disapproving comments in a bantering tone (e.g., *some taste you have* (7eng/T110-1M80) */ huy qué floja eres ('pff how lazy you are')* (3esp/T132M117) */ amai na ('don't be so naïve, you're too optimistic')* (13jpn/T85M67) which were tokens of solidarity rather than signs of real hostility. The fact that they were not real cases of offence is demonstrated by their perlocutionary effects: the addressees did not show any signs of being offended. On some occasions, the above expressions were explicitly framed as banter by laughing after the statements were uttered, and this frame was acknowledged by co-participants by sharing in the laugh. This is, for example, the case of *some taste you have* above, which I contextualize below:

(37) *(7eng/T110-1M80)*
    T708' B: or Debra Messing?
           (2.2)
    T709   A: ºI don't knowº @@@
          B: @@@
    T710   C: ºI don't knowº
    T711   A: **some taste you have↓ B** @@@@
          B: @@@@

Both A and B explicitly frame the interaction as non-serious by laughing, which means that the potentially offensive utterance due to its negative connotations has been unsanctioned (albeit not unnoticed, as the laughter demonstrates). In other cases, no importance was given to the remarks, as the addressee continued her participation with the same enthusiasm, as in the following Japanese case:

(38) *(13jpn/T85M67)*
    T0719 B: baito shite   [ganbaroo] yo
    T0720 A: **[amai na]**
    T0721 C: amai ne
            (0.9)
    T0722 B: natsu yasumi=
    T0723 A: =datte sore demo omiyage mo kau no yo zettai
    T0724 C: a [soo da yoo] omiyage kau yo
    T0725 B: [kau:::::::::]
          B: *let's try [doing some   ] job*
          A: *[**don't be so naïve**]*
          C: *that's naive (yeah)*
            (0.9)
          B: *(during) the summer vacation=*
          A: *=because look we definitely have to buy souvenirs too*
          C: *oh [that's right] we (should) buy souvenirs*
          B: *[yeah::::::::::]*

After both A and C make the comment that B's proposal is too optimistic and that things are not as easy as she thinks, B strongly agrees with A's opinion that they will probably spend even more money on souvenirs, thus showing that A's and C's previous remarks have been unsanctioned by B. They have certainly been taken up as disagreeing moves, as in T0722 B tries to justify her proposal by suggesting that they could work during the summer, but they haven't produced the perlocutionary effect of impoliteness.

      One additional evidence for considering that all interactions were framed as "friendly" is that there was alternation of agreements and disagreements in 1[st] order preferred format. Kotthoff (1993) argues that once "the context-sensitive preference structure of disagreement is established, it takes some accountable effort for both participants to change it again, and thereby to constitute another communicative

context" (Kotthoff 1993: 213). In my data, however, interactants agree and disagree interchangeably and do not show evidence of reluctance in returning to a 1[st] order preference for agreement even if prior disagreements had adopted a "preferred" format. The following example illustrates this point:

(39) *(8jpn/T0950)*
```
T0950  A:  monogatari ga aru no↓ sakana ni mo  [XXXXXX]
T0951  C:                                      [@ na::::i n] da @@@
T0952  A:  aru
T0953  B:  aru yo
T0954  A:  aru
T0955  B:  su:::::::ge chitchai sakana toka ga hisshi ni ikitetari suru no o  [ore-    ]
       C:                                                                     [@@@   ]
T0956  A:                                                    [naka yo]ku
           issho ni oyoidetari ne↑ (.) zutto ne↑ koo hanarechattari ne↑
       C:  ((aizuchi))
T0957  A:  [asondetari suru no]
T0958  B:  [yoku- (.)     yoku] kuwarenee na toka tte [omottari suru n da yo]
       C:                                             [@@@@@@@@@@ ]
T0959  A:  [da yo ne::: tashika ni    ]
T0960  C:  [A::: SORE WA DEMO] OMOU NE
T0961  A:  issho no suisoo de sa:: okkii no ga chitchai XXXX
T0962  B:  [nanka:::-]
T0963  C:  [sore wa  ] tashika ni omou yo
```
A: fish also have their story [XXXXXXXXXXX]
C: [@ (they) don::::'t]@@@
A: (they) do
B: (they) do ((+ 'yo' assertive marker))
A: (they) do
B: like rea:::lly small fish trying to survive in earnest are [for me-   ]
C: [@@@   ]
A: [(they) swim]
happily together ((+ 'ne' involvement marker)) ↑ (.) all the time ((+ 'ne' involvement marker)) ↑ or drift away from each other ((+ 'ne' involvement marker))↑
C: ((acknowledging back-channel))
A: [or play together ((+ 'no' assertive marker))]
B: [how- (.) how come] they are not eaten up that's [what I think sometimes]
C: [@@@@@@@@@]
A: [that's right definitely]
C: [OH::: BUT I (ALSO)] THINK SO ((+ 'ne' involvement marker))
A: together in the same water tank the big ones XXXX the small ones
B: [like:::-]
C: [(I) definitely] think so ((+ 'yo' assertive marker))

In this sequence, speaker C strongly disagrees with both A and B in T0951 adopting a preferred format (overlap, emphatic stress, vowel elongation). Nevertheless, he is ready to agree with the same format a few turns later. In T0960, C realizes the agreement in a loud voice and without hesitation. In T0963, he even uses an assertive marker *'yo'*,

which upgrades the force of the utterance, thus indicating that it is not a reluctant concession, but rather a genuine agreement. In addition to all these features, we should also take into account the role of laughter again, which seems to frame the whole sequence as non-serious and confirms the general impression that the "friendly" frame has never been abandoned.

Something similar happens in the following American English excerpt. After several turns in which participants A and B hotly disagree with C on which actors and actresses are good (1st order preference), A also agrees with C with enthusiasm:

(40) *(7eng/T769)*
    T769 C: oh what's the- pirate Jack Sparrow? uh:::m
    T770 A: ((*breathes in in excitement*)) JOHNNY DE::PP
    T771 C: yeah Johnny Depp
    T772 A: Johnny Depp's pretty good
    T773 C: he's good↑ I like him in (.) Pirates↑

Speaker A frames her agreement in T770, and later on in T772, as preferred. So does speaker C in turns T771 and T773. There is no sign of reluctance in the speakers' utterance or anything indicating that a threat to face has been produced in previous turns.

The agreements and disagreements in the Spanish data proceeded in a similar vein, as the following example shows:

(41) *(2esp/T143)*
    T143' B: =yo quiero hotel [[[@@@]]]
    T144 A: [[[yo tam]]]bién yo tam[bién]
    T145 C: [hot<u>e</u>l?]
    T146 B: [hotel hotel]
    T147 A: [hotel hotel] (.) hombre un hotel   [que no sea de cuatro] es<u>tre</u>llas↑ pero:::=
    T146' B: [tú no quieres hotel?]
    T148 C: =[hombre]
    T149 B: =[NO NO] NO SÍ @ tres es<u>tre</u>llas↑ por lo- yo no quiero un hotel malo @@
    T150 C: no::: yo quiero↑- vamos a ver yo::- como no est- no estamos muy bien
             económicamente yo había pensado en un hostal <u>que no</u>↑ pues en un hotel de
             una estrella no nos podemo::::::s-
    T151 A: [@ no nos podemos permitir un hotel de (tres o cuatro)] es<u>tre</u>llas=
    T152 B: [pero ya (un hotel de tres estrellas) no es <u>ca::</u>ro por fa<u>vor</u>]
    T153 C: =[un hotel]
    T154 B: =[uno de] tres estrellas no pero   [hombre]
    T155 C: [un hotel] de tres es<u>tre:::</u>llas:: que no es
             <u>ca</u>ro::?
    T156 B: que <u>fuer</u>te [que es caro?]
    T155' C: [dos se<u>ma::</u>nas] te puede salir:: [vamos]
    T157 A: [te pue]de salir por un ojo de la
             <u>ca</u>ra=

```
        T158  C:   =ya ve::::s=
        T159  B:   =pero un hostal tampoco tía no sé [un hostal- ]
        T160  C:                                     [hombre no] un hostal tampoco pero en un
                   hotel de una estrella o dos↑-
        T161  A:   =no sé=
        T160' C:   =ni- no ni dos  [es que-]
        T162  B:                   [bueno ] eso sería ver el precio luego también
   ──▶ T163  A:   eso tenemos que ver las tarifas ºy todo esoº (0.5) de cada hotel=
        T164  C:   =[mira yo había pensado un hostal↑ pues anda]
   ──▶ T163' A:   =[yo tengo una guía:: una guía de hoteles de   ] España→ (.) me la traigo y
                   la miramos
```

In this excerpt, there is a strong disagreement sequence between the three participants. It begins with B showing preference for a hotel over a hostal (T143'), which is immediately endorsed by A (T144). Speaker C, on the other hand, does not agree with them (T145). In this context, A shows an attempt to align with C by adding that they would choose a cheap hotel, staying away from four-star hotels (T147). This time, it is B who disagrees with A by saying that she does not want a *'bad'* hotel (T149). This move is realized in a "preferred" format (latching, loud voice, reiteration). From this moment, a heated debate ensues on whether three-star hotels are expensive or not, with A and C aligning together on one side and B disagreeing with them. After a brief concessive sequence between T159 and T161, B suggests that they should check hotel prices, with which A fully agrees and even offers to bring a guidebook. And again, the agreement here is straightforward and explicit, bringing the agreement marker *'eso'* to the initial position.

Summing up, after closely monitoring all the conversations, it was concluded that the harmonious relationships among the participants were not disrupted at any moment, and that no utterance therein was interpreted as impolite, no matter how direct the disagreements might have been. This can be explained in terms of social distance. As Locher (2004: 143) points out, unmitigated disagreements may occur "in contexts where the relationship of the interactants minimizes the potential risk of damage to the social equilibrium". The participants in the conversations were all university students of same or similar age who shared classes and had been acquainted at least for several months. Although this design was adopted to ensure comparability between language groups, the findings from my data should be limited to this social stratum and the type of interaction investigated. Therefore, any generalization will be made with caution, awaiting further evidence from similar studies including participants from other social groups and other interactional contexts.

After making sure that disagreements produced were not sanctioned as impolite, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were carried out in search of cross-cultural similarities and differences as regards their frequency and level of explicitness (directness) and/or mitigation. At the quantitative level, the frequency of production of disagreements and the level of directness of the illocutionary force have been measured, comparing the preference showed in each culture. The strategies used in each category of the directness scale have also been investigated in terms of type and relative frequency. Finally, the level of mitigation and aggravation of the disagreement acts, as well as the distribution of devices used, have been analyzed.

A separate section is devoted to the qualitative analysis, in which the results obtained in the quantitative section are discussed in depth. Additionally, some features that could not be explained with sheer numbers are also tackled, such as the degree of respect for the turn-taking system, the role of the Initiating turn in how the Responding turn is framed, the different levels of mitigation/aggravation, the presence/absence of sustained disagreement sequences and their frequency, and the level of semantic (rather than structural) cooperation in the turn-taking and adjacency pair systems.

5.2. Turn allocation

To carry out a detailed and exhaustive quantitative analysis of disagreements in my data, several steps were followed. First of all, the number of turns in each data set was established. This was done by following the conventions used within the Conversation Analytic framework. A turn was counted as such whenever a speaker made an attempt to hold the floor, either selected by current speaker or otherwise:

> (42) *(1eng/T001)*
>   T001 A: okay, guys, when do you wanna go on vacation?
>   T002 C: oh I was thinking kind of at the beginning of the summer::↑=
>   T003 B: =me too=

In this example, speaker A selects next speaker by proffering a question, although in this case she does not specify whether B or C should be the first to respond. It is C who self-selects first, while B waits to a TRP in C's turn to produce her own answer to A.

Not all examples were as simple and straightforward as the above, and several decisions had to be made in the following terms:

1) When two participants talked at the same time (*simultaneous talk*), each contribution counted as a separate turn:

   (43) *(1eng/T260)*
     T260 A: =yeah   [it's probably a suitcase]
     T261 B: [one (to travel along↑)   ] (.) cause I don't [wanna have (.)]=

2) When one speaker self-selected as next speaker one or more times while current speaker continued talking without relinquishing his/her turn, two possibilities were considered:

   a. When next-speaker's contributions were mere back-channels, they were not regarded as turns. In the following example, B's contributions are mere acknowledgment tokens that encourage speaker C to continue, rather than real answers to C, as at the point of their production C has not really produced a complete proposition. This is finally stated at the end of the long turn (*'I could sa::y like fifteen hundred (.) two thousand dollars'*):

      (44) *(1eng/T109)*
      T109 C: u:::hm (0.6) the budget? <u>I</u> don't really know   [if-   ] I mean (.) it's hard to say=
             B: [right]
      T109' C: =there's just- you know we can <u>spe::nd</u> in that [[like]](.) a <u>who</u>le semester [there]=
             B: [[right]]   [yeah]
      T109' C: =I could sa::y like fifteen hundred (.) two [thousand dollars↑]

   b. When next-speaker's contributions were full responses to current speaker, every contribution counted as a turn. In the following example, C self-selects twice while B continues talking. C's first contribution *'yeah'* is a response to a turn prior to B's contribution, while *'u::::::hm (.) I said Barcelona'* is a response to B's inquiry. In this case, therefore, three separate turns are identified.

      (45) (1eng/T026)
      T026   B: ALRIGHT @@@@ where [else] are you thinking [cause that's (to be) uh]
      T027/8 C: [yeah]   [u::::::hm (.) I said   ]
                     Barcelona (.)

3) When current speaker reached a turn completion point (TCP) but was met by silence, the gap generated was reanalyzed as a pause, and the speaker's two contributions were regarded as one single turn. This decision is supported by the

fact that according to Sacks *et al.* (1974: 714-5) a potential gap (silence *between* turns) can be reframed as pause (silence *within* a turn) if current speaker retains the floor:

(46) *(7esp/T555)*
```
    T555  C:   diez euros al día↑ para comer
                (5.2)
    T555' C:   o más
```

4) When current speaker made a false start or produced incomplete utterances that were followed up afterwards, they were computed as one single turn, irrespective of what other interlocutors said.

(47) *(1eng/T285)*
```
    T285  B:                                        [beach] yeah (.)=
                =isn't there a famous church  [[that (.) wasn't (.)]] ever really done?
    T286  C:                              [[Sagrada Familia ]]
    T287  C:   it's still [being built]                           ((nodding))
    T288  A:           [yeah it's  ] still being [built    ]
    T289  B:                                [is that↑-]
                (.)
    T290  C:   it's really  [cool]=
    T289' B:             [Gu- ]=
    T291  A:   =awesome=
    T289' B:   =Gui-=
    T292  A:   =Gaudí
```

In this example, B tries to pronounce Gaudí's name without success. These attempts are interspersed with other turns by C (*'it's really cool'*) and A (*'awesome'*), but they do not represent next turn allocations for B, who ignores these contributions. In fact, there are two parallel sequences here. In sequence #1 B is trying to correctly pronounce Gaudí's name and finally receives A's help. In sequence #2, C assesses Gaudí's Sagrada Familia (*'it's really cool'*), to which A responds with a strong agreement (*'awesome'*).

5) Finally, when a current speaker had been interrupted and continued afterwards, two possibilities were contemplated:

   a. If the "interruptee" continued at the point were his/her turn was left before being interrupted, and no evidence was found in his/her turn that attention had been paid to the interrupter's turn, the contributions before and after the interruption were considered as one single turn.

b. If, on the other hand, the "interruptee" did not follow the original line of reasoning but answered to the interrupter's turn, the contributions before and after the interruption counted as two separate turns.

5.3. A coding system for the analysis of disagreements

Pomerantz's work on agreements and disagreements revealed certain recurrent patterns in their production depending on whether they were framed as preferred or dispreferred second turns. It is comprehensive in the sense that it attends to both turn-constructional and turn-organizational patterns [48]. For example, at the turn-organizational level, she mentions that disagreements in agreement preferred contexts are often delayed both within a turn and over a series of turns (*turn-external delay*), and that sometimes considerable gaps (absence of talk) are produced between turns. At the turn-constructional level, she shows how disagreements in agreement preferred contexts are often prefaced (Pomerantz 1984: 65) and that they range from unstated to stated disagreements. She also shows how disagreements are often framed as partial agreement/partial disagreement, and provides some examples to illustrate this point.

However, Pomerantz's (1984) description is somehow unsystematic from a linguistic point of view and hardly manageable to establish a hierarchy of (in)directness of different utterance types in order to investigate cross-cultural similarities and differences with respect to politeness and face. That is, in order to establish what level of (in)directness is considered polite in the production of disagreements in friendly conversations (Research Question # 2), a categorization of acts and turns from most direct to most indirect is needed. In this regard, it is especially limited in terms of the characterization and categorization of the kind of internal modification a turn may undergo when a dispreferred format is adopted. In other words, the conversation analytic framework does not provide the tools to discern between what constitutes a conventionally indirect disagreement, a non-conventionally indirect disagreement or just a hint. From my point of view, however, this type of categorization is crucial to elucidate the level and type of directness/indirectness is considered tolerable and non-face threatening in the production of disagreement in a friendly conversation among

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[48] See the summary of characteristics in Chapter 3 and in Pomerantz (1984: 65).

acquaintances. As mentioned above, my aim is not limited to finding cross-cultural similarities and/or differences in the production of disagreements, but also in what ways the strategies used are related to politeness and face. For example, my data reveals that Spanish participants showed a higher preference for the format "*pero* + disagreeing statement" over the form "*sí* + *pero* + disagreeing statement", while the American English speakers had the opposite tendency, i.e. "*yes* + *but* + disagreeing statement" over "*but* + disagreeing statement". From a conversation analytic view, they are two different ways of disagreeing in both languages, with the only difference that the *'yes but'* version represents a prototypical case of *agreement token-plus-disagreement* turn shape that frames the turn as dispreferred. CA alone, however, does not provide a fine-grained tool to establish their different status in relation to politeness and face-work. Pomerantz (1984) herself acknowledges that "[a]n apparent puzzle regarding the agreement-plus-disagreement turn shape is *why* recipients agree with assessments when they will shortly disagree with them" (*ibid.:* 72, original emphasis).

The limitations of CA are even more evident at the turn-constructional level. For example, it does not provide the tools to make a distinction between a "*yes* + *but* + disagreeing statement*" (e.g., *yes but that's in Madrid*) and a "*yes* + *but* + disagreeing conducive question" (e.g., *yes but isn't that in Madrid?*), in which the latter is more indirect than the former from a pragmatic point of view. In fact, this is a general difference found in my data between Japanese on one hand and the "Western" languages on the other: as we will see, Japanese speakers showed a high preference for the conducive question format, while Americans and Spanish speakers used the statement format more frequently. Of course, CA is not to be blamed for these limitations, as it aims at finding organizational patterns in conversation. However, this is not enough for our purposes, as the propositional content of utterances is also a key element for the study of politeness.

At this level of analysis, a well-attested analytical tool is given within the framework of *speech act research* Kasper (2004: 125), which provides a highly systematic and comprehensive coding methodology at the turn-constructional level, including a distinction between Head Acts, Supportive Moves and Alerters, and a ranking of acts depending on their degree of directness as a function of their illocutionary transparency and the presence/absence of aggravating/mitigating devices. Now, it might be argued that this move is a step back to *speech act theory*, something that I already discarded as a discourse analytic tool. However, this is not necessarily so.

Kasper (2004) makes a clear distinction between an empirical and a theoretical approach to the study of speech acts:

> Speech act theory has its intellectual home in ordinary language philosophy and is thoroughly *nonempirical*. It is concerned with the *conceptual* analysis of speech acts, such as their definition, composition, conditions for production and recognition, classification, and conventional linguistic implementation. Speech act research, by contrast, is an *empirical* undertaking that focuses on the *realization* of speech acts in social contexts (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper 1989). (Kasper 2004: 131, fn., original emphasis in the words *'conceptual'* and *'realization'*. Emphasis added in the case of *'nonempirical'* and *'empirical'*)

Kasper is referring here to the research project initiated in the 1980's to make cross-cultural comparisons in the production of speech acts and their relation to politeness, which was called Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP). Highly interesting for this study is Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper's (1989) speech-act coding manual, in which a hierarchical classification of acts – albeit limited to requests and apologies – is established in terms of their illocutionary directness, and a detailed explanation is provided on how to proceed in the coding process.

Nevertheless, the CCSARP concentrated only on turn-constructional features, that is, on how communicative acts are built, but had nothing to say about turn-organizational features (Kasper 2004: 125), including moves performed across several turns or the non-production of a response at TCP, which have proved highly relevant in the production of disagreements. Consider, for example, the case of direct oppositions with straight *'no'*. In my data of friendly conversations, aside from the fact that Spanish speakers show a high preference for direct *'no'* oppositions, they are frequently produced overlapping with the prior turn, and sometimes even in long simultaneous and parallel talk, while in the case of the American speakers, the negative tokens never overlapped with prior statements, and sometimes were preceded by long gaps and produced only after a change of frame in the prior speaker. The following examples illustrate both Spanish and English cases:

(48) *(3esp/T55M48)*
    T240 A: [pero hay] que- hay que reservar una cantidad de dinero
                para venir::::: para acá↑ vayamos [a que-]
    T241 B: [eso es] lo que te digo=
    T242 A: =me tenga que quedar [yo allí↑]

→ T243 B: [**no no**   ] los billetes ya hay que com<u>pra::r</u>los↓ sabes lo
                  que te digo? [para] que nos salgan más baratos a<u>ho::</u>ra (.) porque si no↑=
T244 C: [claro]
T243' B: =como nos esperemos↑ a agosto↑ ya ves tú↓ eso ya está todo reservado

(49) *(2eng/T49M37)*
     T548' C: =but (.) o::kay A:::lhambra (.) I- I always thought it <u>was</u> one of the seven
              wonders
→   **(0.5)**
     T548' C: no?
→ T550 A: **no::** it's not although what I- I'm-

In the Spanish example, the negative token produced by B overlaps with the ending part of A's utterance. In the English data, on the other hand, the same token produced by A is preceded by a 0.5 second gap and a negative token with rising intonation produced by C, which downgrades the level of assertiveness of the prior utterance, and therefore the contrastive force of A's *no* is not as strong.

It seems, then, that choosing one single approach for the analysis of disagreements falls short of providing a full account of the phenomenon. Kasper (2004) has pointed out that

> for some pragmatic objects, drawing on both approaches in an integrated fashion may have analytical benefits that are not available through either speech act research or conversation analysis when deployed independently. (Kasper 2004: 126).

I believe that the realization of (dis)agreements is a case in point, as the examples above show, for which reason I propose to integrate turn-organizational and turn-constructional features in one single coding scheme to provide a fuller account of how disagreements are framed.

The coding scheme used in the description of disagreements at the turn-constructional level will broadly follow the model presented by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper's (1989: 273-289) for requests in terms of the directness scale and the method used for segmenting the disagreement moves. Those labels that proved to be useful for the analysis of disagreement were retained (e.g., Alerter, Locution derivable, Explicit Performative, Grounder, Hedge), but some major changes have been introduced both in the specific categories and strategies used in order to fit the type of communicative act investigated. Thus, some labels used by Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) that are specific to requests, such as *Attention getters* (*hello, hey*) or *Getting a precommitment* (*could you do me a favor?*), have been discarded, while new categories and strategies specific to

disagreements have been added, such as the category of *Distractor* that includes all the turn-initial token agreements that camouflage a possible upcoming disagreement by framing the turn as an agreement, or the strategies *Next-turn repair initiator (NTRI)* and *Attributable silence* –both notions used in Conversation Analysis– added in the category of *Alerter*.

Finally, to the above turn-constructional patterns, two turn-organizational features have been added for analysis:

(1) gaps vs. overlaps and latching as signals of preferred or dispreferred turn format, and

(2) respect for the turn-taking system (one-at-a-time) vs. disregard for the turn-taking system (competitive simultaneous talk, overlaps in wrong places).

Point (1) should inform about the level of immediacy or hesitation in producing a disagreement. As Pomerantz (1984: 65) points out, acts framed as dispreferred frequently show many signs of hesitancy and vacillation, as well as delays in the production of the dispreferred Head Act. Contrariwise, when acts are viewed as preferred, they tend to be produced right away and in a straightforward manner, even anticipating the Transition Relevant Place (TRP) in the prior turn, which results in overlaps and latching.

Point (2) is related to point (1) but focuses on the respect interactants show for each other's turn allocation. According to Sacks *et al.*'s (1974: 704) turn-taking rules, people normally do not self-select as next speaker in a conversation unless there is evidence that current speaker has not selected one. Furthermore, there are TRPs in every turn that people recognize as possible points for changing floors. Whether these principles of turn-taking are respected or not, i.e., whether speakers interrupt each other, overlap outside TRPs or talk at the same time, should also be relevant to see how aggressive (in the sense of assertive and forceful rather than hostile) or respectful interlocutors are. When the turn-taking rules were violated, they were regarded as aggravating devices.

As gaps between turns are signs of hesitancy, they have been included as mitigating devices[49]. Latching and overlap have been regarded as devices that signal the turn as preferred. In the case of overlaps, however, special care has been taken to recognize whether they have been produced right after a TRP or not in order to decide

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[49] A more precise and elaborated description is provided in Sub-section 5.3.2.1.2. below.

whether they respected the turn-taking system or not. When they happened right after a TRP, as for example after a brief pause or a turn-constructional unit (TCU) was perceived to have been completed, they were not regarded as aggravating devices (see example 50):

(50) *(7eng/T14M12)*
    T132 C: mayb- probably like twenty euro a night (.) [average]
    T133 A: [rea::lly↓?]

In this case, A's utterance overlaps with C's final comment *'average'*. However, it does not represent a disruption of the turn-taking system as A perceives that C has reached a TCP after the word *'night'*. The brief pause that follows reinforces this interpretation. The word *'average'* in this case is an afterthought that is not expected by speaker A. In purely conversation analytic terms, this is a case in which "[the] projected self-liquidating feature obviates the need for special practices for managing the overlap" Schegloff (2000: 5) and it is un-problematic in terms of the management of the turn-taking system. So, in cases like the above, the response is analyzed as "preferred" because there is no delay, but not aggravated.

However, there are cases in which the turn-taking system is blatantly violated, and should be seen as an invasion of the prior turn:

(51) *(2esp/T35M31)*
    T152 B: [pero ya (un hotel de tres estrellas) no es <u>ca::</u>ro por fa<u>vor</u>]
    T153 C: =[un hotel]
    T154 B: =[uno de] tres estrellas no pero [hombre]
    T155 C: [un hotel] de tres es<u>tre:::</u>llas:: que no es <u>ca</u>ro::?

In this excerpt, speaker C initiates her turn right alter speaker B has uttered the adversative conjunction *'pero'* (*'but'*), which indicates that the TCU is still incomplete and there is no sign that a TRP is approaching.

Having clarified all the above aspects, this section will proceed as follows: firstly, Blum-Kulka *et al.*'s (1989) scheme will be briefly reviewed and an adapted version for analyzing disagreements at the turn-constructional level introduced and described. Then, the proposed coding scheme will be integrated in a comprehensive analytical model including turn-organizational considerations.

5.3.1. The CCSARP coding scheme

In their coding scheme, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) propose a segmentation of request acts into three categories: Head Act, Supportive Moves and Alerters. The Head Act is defined as the core of the request or "the minimal unit which can realize a request" (*ibid.*: 275) as for example (*Carry this bag for me*). Supportive Moves are those units that are external to the request Head Act and "[modify] its impact by either aggravating or mitigating its force" (*ibid.*: 276). They may precede (e.g., <u>*This bag is really heavy*</u>, *carry it for me*) or follow (e.g., *Carry this bag for me*<u>, *it's really heavy*</u>) the Head Act. Finally, Alerters are elements such as terms of address (e.g., *Sir*) or attention getters (e.g., *Hey*) that normally occupy the initial position in the act (e.g., <u>*Hey*</u>, *carry this bag for me, it's really heavy*). When the Head Act is not direct, the most explicit realization counts as such (e.g., <u>*The kitchen is a terrible mess*</u>. *I can hardly see the sink*). Conversely, it is also possible to find more than one Head Act at the same time (e.g., *Clean up the kitchen. Get rid of this mess*). [50]

Head Act strategies are classified from most direct to most indirect into *Mood derivable, Explicit performative, Hedged performative, Locution derivable, Want statement, Suggestory formula, Preparatory, Strong hint* and *Mild hint*[51]. As Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) suggest, these different levels of directness are determined by "the degree to which the speaker's illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution" (*ibid.*: 278), and although they can be related to politeness, there is no one-to-one correspondence between them in terms of more direct = least polite and least direct = more polite. The nature of the relationship should be determined upon close inspection of speakers and hearers' behavior taking into account cultural, contextual and co-textual factors.

The above different levels of indirectness can vary depending on the kind and amount of syntactic, phrasal and lexical *downgraders* –devices that mitigate the impact of the communicative act– and *upgraders* –devices that enhance the impact. The relevance of Blum-Kulka *et al.*'s (1989) coding system resides not so much in each and every category and strategy, which are necessarily specific to each communicative act,

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[50] I do not offer here a definition and example for each and every category and strategy. A full explanation and exemplification are provided in their adaptation and application to the analysis of disagreements. See Section 5.3.2. in this chapter. For examples of all the strategies in requests, see Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper (1989: 277-289).

[51] See previous footnote.

but rather in the rationale behind the classification from most direct to most indirect, and the major super-categories ranging from direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect, following the Gricean pragmatic model of linguistic communication.

Obviously, the categorization of disagreement moves will necessarily be different in some respects from that of requests. For one thing, the prototypical grammatical mood used for disagreements is the declarative form, contrasting with the imperative mood for requests. Secondly, while requests are related to a future action to be performed by the addressee, disagreements are related to the truth value of a past statement uttered by the addressee. Thirdly, requests are Initiating turns whereas disagreements are Responding turns, which means that they are more contextualized, thus affecting on utterance interpretation. Finally, I have already mentioned that, since they are Responding turns, turn-organizational features of conversation such as overlaps and delays also become relevant.

5.3.2. A coding system for disagreements

When adapting the CCSARP scheme, the following differences between disagreements and requests were taken into account:

1) The prototypical disagreement Act adopts a Declarative Mood, as opposed to requests, for which the Imperative is used as the most direct form.

2) Disagreements address the truth value of prior statements, while requests are related to future action.

3) Disagreements are Responding rather than Initiating Acts. This means that, following the turn-taking system and the adjacency pair principle, first statements/assessments (Initiating Acts) create an expectation of a reaction/response (Responding Acts) that make any utterance produced in that sequential slot communicatively relevant (in Relevance Theoretic terms). This has two consequences:

   a. The expectation of an answer constitutes a contextual enrichment. Thus, the range of possible interpretations of utterances –or the lack of utterances– decrease.

b. *When* (and not only *how*) a communicative act is produced is also relevant, as studies in Conversation Analysis have demonstrated.

Points (1), (2), and (3a) have a bearing on the coding system at the turn-constructional level, and inform about the way in which the CCSARP coding system will fit for the analysis of disagreements. Points (3a) and (3b) refer to the turn-organizational features found for disagreement within the CA framework, such as the different interpretation that might be assigned to gaps and overlaps and the delay in the production of the Head Act inside (Turn Internal Delay) or outside the relevant turn (Turn External Delay).

5.3.2.1. Turn-organizational classification

I begin with the turn-organizational features as they will also be relevant for the categorization of turn-constructional strategies. In this section, the following features will be discussed as turn-organizational elements of analysis: (1) a first distinction will be made between Turn Internal and Turn External Delays in the production of disagreements, and (2) the importance of the difference between overlaps between turns and gaps.

5.3.2.1.1. Turn-Internal vs. Turn-External Delays in the production of disagreements

One feature that characterizes dispreferred acts is the tendency to delay their production. The delay sometimes occurs within the turn in which it should occur following the adjacency pair rule, as in Example (52):

(52) *(2ng/T8M4)*
    T043 A: well↑ (0.7) I::: really wanna go:: (.) I did a sort of ma:p going aro::und (.) and I
            thou::ght (.) a cool group would be like Granada:: Cordoba:: Sevilla:: (.) up to
            Madri:d (.) San Sebastian which is like this [small] [coastal   ] town=
    T044 C: [mhm]
    T045 B: [and   ] [then Bilbao]
    T046 A: =yeah and Bilba::o a::nd Barcelona °and then (.) back around°
→ T047 C: okay I definitely have Madrid and Barcelona on there (.) and again I wasn't sure
            if we- (.) were studying abroad the whole time↑ (.) so I figured we would already
            be in Andalusia for quite a while↑ so **I kind of picked northern Spain**↑ but I'm
            open (.) [so-]

The main disagreement act (Head Act) uttered by C in T047, *'I kind of picked northern Spain'*, is pushed down inside the turn. The turn starts up with an agreement token (*'okay'*), followed by an explicit partial agreement (*'I definitely have Madrid and Barcelona on there'*), and a statement of uncertainty to justify the choice (*'I wasn't sure if we- (.) were studying abroad the whole time↑ (.) so I figured we would already be in Andalusia for quite a while↑'*), before finally arriving at the Head Act.

Sometimes, the delay might be even longer and last over a number of turns before an explicit disagreement is produced. When this happens, normally the Head Act is preceded by a series of Distractors or Alerters, which hide the speaker's real intentions[52]. In fact, the example above is a case in point. Notice that C produces an agreement token (*'mhm'*) in T044, but it is not until T047 that she states her true opinion. Here is another example, in which the agreement is even more explicit for two turns, until the disagreement is proffered in the third turn:

> (53) *(2eng/T18M13)*
> T175' B: [could be less in Italy] we spent <u>le::ss</u> than that a night↑=
> T176 C: [[**okay**   ]]
> T175' B: =[[and they]] had linens towels and everything↑ (.) and breakfast↑ so I mean you can find cheap ones
> T177 C: **that's true in Italy I only did spend around like eight**
> T178 B: yeah
> T179 A: [I could-   ]
> → T180 C: [**for a week] but then this is <u>two</u> weeks**

The arrow marks the turn in which the disagreement is put forward. Before that, C agrees with B with an agreement token (*'okay'*) and even explicitly acknowledges the truth of B's statement in T177 (*'that's true'*).

When the Responding Act is framed as preferred, however, no signs of delay can be appreciated. The following example serves as illustration:

> (54) *(7eng/T88M63)*
> T652 A: Oprah? @@@ [<u>not</u> really] [Hollywood↑ but XXXXXX (.) I know but-]
> → T653 B: [she is not] [she isn't- she's not an actress↑ (.) don't lie](.) not=
> → T654 C: [<u>she</u>'s not an actress↑ @@@@@@@@@]
> T653' B: =principally

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[52] See Sub-section 5.3.2.2.1. below for a full description of form and function of Distractors.

In this case, both speakers B and C frame their turns as preferred, as there is no delay. Moreover, there is a considerable overlap and simultaneous talk, which indicate that there is no hesitation and doubt, but rather involvement and intensive participation.

5.3.2.1.2. Overlaps vs. gaps

Closely related with the notion of delay are gaps produced between turns in dispreferred sequences. When disagreements are framed as dispreferred, there is a tendency to show hesitation by remaining silent for a short while, as the following example shows:

```
(55) (7eng/T110-111M80)
     T708' B:  or Debra Messing?
  →         (2.2)
     T709 A:  ºI don't knowº @@@
          B:  @@@
     T710 C:  ºI don't knowº
     T711 A:  some taste you have↓ B @@@@
```

In this example, A waits 2.2 seconds before claiming lack of knowledge (CLK), a kind of Alerter, which prefaces the comment *some taste you have*, an ironic understatement implicating that she does not really like Debra Messing. This is in clear contrast with Example (54) above, in which interlocutors do not respect each other's turns. Not all cases are like (55). It is also common to see slight overlaps between turns in disagreement sequences when these are framed as preferred[53]:

```
(56) (7eng/T33M24)
     T184 B:  beaches for like (.) two::::: da:::y:::s↑ (.) three  [days?]
  → T185 A:                                               [we'll ] just be on the beach
              for the rest of it
```

The above two features, delays and gaps, have been demonstrated to be highly relevant for determining the preference status of turns, for which reason I have decided to include them in my analysis.

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[53] As commented earlier, this is not a case of aggravation, as the onset of A's turn is located right after a TRP.

5.3.2.2. Turn-constructional classification

Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) proposed a threefold segmentation of categories for requests: Alerter, Supportive Move and Head Act. Although they were retained in my coding system, it was soon obvious that they were not enough for disagreements, as none of them seemed to fit what Pomerantz (1984) called token agreements and weak agreements, which in agreement-preferred contexts often preface disagreement. These moves cannot be said to be Alerters, as they do not call the addressee's attention upon the nature of the forthcoming disagreement, but rather function as a device to camouflage the dispreferred act. They are not Supportive Moves either, or at least not in the sense predicated by Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) as "a unit […] which *modifies* […] [the] impact [of the Head Act] by either aggravating or mitigating its *force*" (*ibid.*: 276). Token and weak agreements do not *modify* the force of the Head Act, but rather have their own illocutionary force that is different from –and often in blatant opposition to– the upcoming disagreement act. Consider the word *'claro'* in the following sequence:

```
(57) (3esp/A1)
    T113  C:                                    [pue::s] yo había pensado que media semana
            en  cada sitio (.) sería::: (.)  [como son cuatro sitios↑]
  →T114  B:                                    [claro ((asiente))          ]
    T115  A:                                    [como depende de los    ] sitios↑
  →T116  C:  claro
```

Here, the word *'claro'* indicates that speaker B in T114 fully agrees with C, who in turn agrees with A in T116. As we can see, *'claro'* in Spanish is a word conventionally used to agree meaning *'it's clear and evident'* and it is precisely with this meaning that is used here by B and C. Now, consider the following example:

```
(58) (2esp/T41M37)
    T189  B:  [tía come::r   ] [cena::r y a lo mejor::- ]
  →T190  A:                  [claro pero ts- tú sabes] lo que yo había pensa::do? (.)
            hacer pensión completa (.) en el hotel
```

This time, *'claro'* is followed by an adversative conjunction *'pero'* that marks the initiation of a disagreeing turn. Moreover, a close inspection of the ensuing utterance reveals that A's proposal completely excludes the problematic factors mentioned by B before, thus invalidating the initial agreement.

The adjective *'claro'* does not modify the force of the disagreeing Head Act, nor does it "alert" the addressee to the fact that the disagreement is forthcoming. It is rather a disguise that conceals the real intentions. Therefore, I propose to add a new category that I will label *Distractor*, as the terms and expressions of this kind disguise a dispreferred act as preferred. This category should consist of strategies that allow the speaker to withhold his/her true intentions and frame the turn as preferred, thus delaying the production of a dispreferred act. The strategies should include agreeing words and expressions in "agreement preferred" contexts such as friendly conversations.[54] It is in this kind of turns that words like *'claro'* should be codified as *Distractors*, as their agreement is only symbolic and do not represent a real agreement.

With the inclusion of this category, then, disagreement moves can be segmented into four categories: *Head Acts, Supportive Moves, Alerters*, and *Distractors*. The Head Act is the minimal act that can perform the disagreement and carries the main force of the turn, which may range from direct + aggravated to non-conventionally indirect + mitigated. When a disagreement is produced in a non-conventionally indirect manner, we are never sure whether a disagreement has really taken place or not (see Example 59), and evidence for it needs to be searched either in other contextual factors such as tone and volume of voice, body gesture or subsequent turns in the conversation (see Example 60):

(59) *(4eng/T6-8M2) C is explaining A where some Spanish cities are located*
    T061 C: Valencia Salamanca
    T062 A: sal- o:::h **Salamanca is way up there?**
    T063 C: yeah [like   ] Madrid (.) °it's° here

Actually, in the above example, C interprets A's statement with rising intonation as a mere request for confirmation/clarification, as T063 shows. It is only several turns later that we discover that in fact A had a different opinion but had not wanted (or dared) to say so directly. It is only after interlocutor B challenges C's assumption that A expresses her mind more clearly:

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[54] The fact that they are *agreeing* words does not mean that they necessarily positive/affirmative. It all depends on the orientation of the Initiating turn. If this has a negative orientation (e.g., *You're not coming / tú no vienes*), a Responding turn with the same polarity (i.e., negative) would be an agreement in English and Spanish (e.g., *no, I´m not / no, yo no*). Japanese is somehow different in this respect, as agreeing responses to statements and questions with negative orientations are also made with affirmative interjections (e.g. *A: ikanai no? B: un ('A: aren't (you) going? B: lit. 'yes')*. Only in the case of echo agreements to prior turns is the "same polarity" maintained (e.g. *A: ikanai no? B: ikanai ('A: aren't (you) going? B: (I'm) not going')*.

(60) *(4eng/T6-8M2)*
    T061 C: Valencia Salamanca
    T062 A: sal- o:::h Salamanca is way up there?
    T063 C: yeah [like   ] Madrid (.) °it's° here
    T064 A: [°okay°]
          (1.1)
    T065 B: is it that close?
          (1.0)
    T066 C: well=
→ T067 A: **=I thought Salamanca was like (.) down there**

Following Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989), I will consider as Head Act the most explicit and/or unit in the turn or across turns that expresses the disagreement, which may or may not be accompanied by other elements like Distractors, Alerters and/or Supportive Moves. Furthermore, these other categories can assume the role of main disagreeing act if they are the most explicit and/or direct form found.

5.3.2.2.1. Distractors

Under this category I include all kinds of patterns that try to conceal one way or other the forthcoming disagreement, not only what Pomerantz (1984) calls same evaluation (*ibid.*: 67) and downgraded (*ibid.*: 68) agreements, but also positive assessments and several devices that frame the turn as agreement, such as the use of the additive conjunction *'and'*. Under this label the following strategies are included:

1. *Upgraded agreements:* They are words and statements that are framed as strong agreements with prior turn(s). These cases are not contemplated by Pomerantz (1984) but some examples have been found in my data. Typical patterns are agreement interjections with upgraded repetitions (e.g., *'me gusta muchísimo'*), upgraded interjections (e.g., *'yeah totally'*), repeated agreement words and interjections (e.g., *'yeah yeah yeah'* / *'sí sí sí'*, *'claro claro'* / *'soo soo soo soo'* (*'right, right, right, right'*), *'kakaru kakaru'* (lit. *'it costs it costs'*) [55], or a combination of the above (e.g., *'yes sure'* / *'sí claro'* / *'un kakaru kakaru'* (*'yeah it costs it costs'*)).

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[55] Unless specifically stated otherwise, all the examples will be presented in the following order: English / Spanish / Japanese.

(61) *(2eng/T21M16)*
    T187 C: <u>I</u> would just <u>sa::</u>y to- to <u>plan</u> on being safe and not sorry↑ (0.5) a grand
    T188 B: yeah (.) [okay that would be-] [it'd] be like seven fifty a grand
→T189 A: **[yeah <u>to::</u>tally** (.)   ] [but-]

(62) *(8esp/T80-3M69)*
    T317 C: y:::: no sé (.) luego Port Aventura lo que tú has dicho↑
→T318 B: **sí sí** (2.2) **sí ya** que bajamos para abajo↑- espérate (.) pero (.) Port Aventura
               está? (.) en Tarragona (.) ºcreoº (1.7) Tarra- que Tarragona está (.) por
               debajo (.) no? o no? es que no:::.- es que en geografía yo estoy pegado

(63) *(3jpn/T36M23)*
    T0601 B: ((*kuchi o akete*)) ºna no ni [kyuuhyakuenº]
    T0602 C: [XXXXXXXX] @@
→T0603 A: **ºsoo soo soo sooº (.) kyuuhyakuen** demo ryoo wa ookatta
          B: *((opening her mouth)) ºand even then it was [nine hundredº]*
          C: [XXXXXXX   ] @@
          A: ***ºyeah yeah yeah yeahº (.) nine hundred** but it was a large serving*

(64) *(3jpn/T45M27)*
    T0732 B: ºoofuku juuman gurai kakaru [ne↑º]
→T0733 A: **[kaka]ru kakaru**
    T0734 C: ºtabenakyaº
    T0735 B: ne::↑
    T0736 A: ºkawaisooº
               (1.1)
    T0737 B: ºtooi ne::↑º
               (0.4)
    T0738 A: **demo** ne nijuu- juu<u>goman</u> areba zenzen yoyuu da yo
          B: *ºround trip is about a hundred thousand [isn't itº   ]*
→   A: ***[it definitely] is***
          C: *ºbut we need to eatº*
          B: *you're right*
          A: *ºpoor guyº*
               (1.1)
          B: *ºit's so farº*
               (0.4)
          A: ***but** if we take two hundred- one hundred and fifty thousand is more than*
               enough

In the case of Spanish, it also adopts a special *yes-no-yes* pattern:

(65) *(8esp/T125M110)*
    T453 A: º(irnos para Málaga::)º
→T454 B: **sí no sí tío** si nos sobra un día podemos hacer @ por Málaga [@@] no es que- =

2. *Token agreements words*: they are single affirmative or negative interjections and
    adverbs which indicate that the speaker fully agrees with the prior utterance. Some
    prototypical examples are *'yes', 'yeah', 'mhm' / 'sí', 'je', 'ya' / 'soo', 'un', 'ee',*

'ne' (or *'no'*, *'nhnh'* / *'no'* / negative echo in Japanese [56] when prior turn is negatively oriented).

(66)*(1eng/T18M13)*
    T082 B: or we can get like a really cheap airline↑
→T083 C: **yeah** or there's a high speed train↑ (.) that's like takes two hours and it's like
              sixty euro↑

(67) *(2esp/T27M24)*
    T121 A: puf::::: @ antes ((*palmadita a B*)) ya no nos acos<u>ta</u>mos directamente @=
→T122 B: =**ya** pero a qué hora llegaríamos?

(68) *(3jpn/T27M18)*
    T0435 B: futsuu ni @ tabereru kedo ne↑ @
→T0436 A: º**ne**↑º demo tabenaide kudasai ne:: to iwareta mon
          B: @ *although you can eat it. No problem right?* @
          A: **right** *but we were told not to eat it*

(69) *(3jpn/T38M25)*
    T0650 B: [ne↑] [akashi] ippai nanka samayotte soo
    T0651 C: [e::::?]
→T0652 A: **un demo** ikitai
          B: *[right][akashi] there's sure to be lots of "akashi" lurking around*
          C: *[what ?]*
          A: **yeah** *but I wanna go*

In all these examples, the agreement words and expressions preface the production of some kind of disagreement, either partial or complete. In (66), for example, *'yeah'* is immediately followed by a disjunctive conjunction *'or'* introducing an alternative proposal to that made by an interlocutor in the previous turn. In (67), speaker B initially accepts A's negative comments before raising a problematic issue. Finally, in (68) A seems to support B's opinion but provides a counter evidence in an attempt to support her own view that the thing they are talking about (in this case, a wrapping paper) should not be eaten.

3. *Token agreement statements*: They are basically the same as token agreements but performed with a full statement, although the verb might be elliptical. Typical examples of this type are *'I agree', '(that's) right', '(that's) alright', '(that's) okay', 'I know'* / *'(estoy) de acuerdo', '(está) claro', 'vale', 'tienes razón', 'es verdad'* / *'soo (da) ne'* (*'that's right'*), *'(sore wa) aru (ne)'* (lit. *'there is/are', 'that happens'*).

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[56] See footnote 54.

(Partial) repetition or echoes of prior utterances are also included in this category (see examples (71) and (74)), as the full statement is given in the Initiating turn.

(70) *(4eng/T6-8M2)*
    T063 C: yeah [like   ] Madrid (.) °it's° here
→T064 A: **[°okay°]**
               (1.1)
    T065 B: is it that close?
               (1.0)
    T066 C: well=
    T067 A: **=I thought Salamanca was like (.) down there**

(71) *(2eng/T34-5M27)*
    T334 C: [al]right flight to Valencia↑
               and <u>bus</u> it the rest of the time↑
→T335 A: **bus it the rest**
               […] ((*side sequence*))
    T340 A: **a::nd if** we're still on <u>tha::</u>t and we have a thousand bucks (.) euros we cou:::ld-
               from Bilbao to Madrid <u>tha</u>t's kind of far↑ (.) we could fly there→

(72) *(2esp/41M37)*
    T189 B: [tía come::r   ] [cena::r y a lo mejor::-]
→T190 A: [**claro** pero ts- tú sabes] lo que yo había pen<u>sa::</u>do? (.) hacer
               pensión completa (.) en el hotel

(73) *(8esp/T159M144)*
    T668 B: =sí **es verdad** (.) baja::r a Aranjuez (0.9) Aranjuez nos sale más lejos
               que Burgos pero bueno

(74) *(3esp/T39M34)*
    T167 A: =y ya otras veces si hace más calor pues un hotel pero me gustab- que yo veía
               más divertido la tienda de campaña vamos
    T168 C: [claro]
→T169 B: [**más] divertido** pero (.) yo qué sé↑ yo he puesto un ho<u>tel</u>↑ porque:::- porque es
               mucho más- mucho más-   [no tienes que hacer la] comida XXX tu
               habitación↑=

(75) *(8jpn/T35-6M29)*
    T0233 B: Karuizawa::- hi<u>sho</u>chi tte ieba ore Karuizawa na n da
    T0234 C: a::: ma <u>soo</u> [da ne]
→T0235 A: [**soo da] ne::**
    T0236 B: un
    T0237 A: demo nishuukan (.) nani shiyoo ka tte iwareru to komannai?
          B: *Karuizawa::- if we say cool place I choose Karuizawa*
          C: *oh well <u>you're</u> [right]*
          A: **[*that's*] *right***
          B: *mhm*
          A: *but if we consider what to do there for two weeks, that's a problem isn't it?*

4. *Positive assessments of prior turn*: They are positive evaluations of what has been stated in the prior turn. Some characteristic examples are *'that's cool', 'nice' /*

'(está) bien', 'guay' / 'ii (desu) ne' ('(that's) good' + involvement marker*)* (no examples were found in the Japanese data).

(76) *(1eng/T3M3)*
    T017 B: I thought Madrid for sure cause it's the capital you know (.) so Madrid
               and then (.) u<u>h</u>m (.) Ga<u>li</u>cia […]
               (1.2)
→T018 A: **that's cool** (.) my places are WA::Y out of Spain @@@@@ (.) uh:: I
               like (0.5) mm (0.6) London Manchester→

(77) *(8esp/T156M141)*
    T641 B: **está bien** (.) hombre (.) ts- es ca<u>ri::</u>llo pero
               es- [es aceptable (.) para lo que vamos a estar↑]

5. *Downgraded/mitigated agreements*: Pomerantz defined downgraded agreements as scaled-down or weakened evaluations of the same referent as in the prior turn (Pomerantz 1984: 68)[57]. However, this definition is limited to agreements with assessments. I extend this category to include reluctant agreements with other kinds of prior statements such as factual opinions or proposals, and range from weak agreement statements (e.g., *'I guess'* instead of *'I agree'*) to hedged agreements (e.g., *'yeah maybe'*). Furthermore, these mitigated agreements can be very simple or highly complex:

Simple downgraded agreements include: *'I guess', 'yeah maybe', 'you might be right', 'it might be'* / *'puede (ser)', 'quizás (sí)', 'a lo mejor (sí)'* / *'soo kamo'* (*'maybe it is so'*), *'maa ne'* (*'well yeah'*), *'maa sore wa aru ne'* (*'oh well that's right'*), *'maa tashika ni'* (*'well certainly'*).

(78) *(4eng/T27M17)*
    T188 B: [but is Salamanca a day trip?] I thought it was farther I think-
→T189 C: **maybe (.) it might be** (.) I don't think you can go there directly fro:m- (.) I don't
               know if you can get there- (.) you might have to go to like Madrid before you
               can- (.) <u>no</u> <u>the</u>re's probably [a bus so::-]

(79) *(11jpn/T34-5M30)*
→T0108 A: **un maa ne**
   T0109 C: densha tsukatte mo shooganai mon ne
   T0110 A: **e?** kore de mata sugu- Hokkaido to Okinawa dake de ii no? nanka sa::
                Nagasaki:: toka Kagoshima:: toka Fukuoka:: toka iranai? (.) Oosaka Kyooto
         A: *yeah well ((+ involvement marker))*
         C: *we don't solve the problem by taking the train ((+ involvement marker))*
         A: *huh? We go straight- are you alright with just Hokkaidoo and Okinawa?*
            Don't you need like Nagasaki or Kagoshima or Fukuoka? (.) Oosaka Kyooto

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[57] See also Chapter 3 in the present work.

COMPLEX weak agreements are more elaborated statements, like *'I'm not talking about them being cra::ck heads but-'* (2eng/T75-8M59); *'I wouldn't mind going to Galicia too'* (4eng/T15M6)

(80) *(4eng/T15M6)*
    T072' C: and then either go from Bilbao to Madrid or go from Bilbao try to go- maybe
               to Galicia but I was thinking like (0.6) you know with the travel times and
               like (.) be enough (.) just to go to Barcelona for a few days and then like
               Bilbao (.) and then to like (.) oh ᵂᵉˡˡ ºwe could have time for something elseº
               but (.) I don't know ºlike how- hereº I don't know <u>I would like</u> to see Galicia
               but (.) I don't know
  →T073 A: yeah **I wouldn't mind going to Galicia too** if it's like (.) feasible (0.4)
               going that way

(81) *(5esp/T49M39)*
    T222 B: hombre **yo por mí me iría a Escocia una mijilla más para arriba** pero::: (.) no sé

6. *Other agreement markers*: There are some expressions that have an additive meaning (e.g. in English, the conjunction *'and'*, the conjunct *'so'*, the adverbial expressions *'also', 'besides'*) that function as Distractors when preface disagreements, as they frame the upcoming utterance as an agreement, or rather as a follow-up without challenging what has been said before. Here is an example of the additive conjunction *'and'* acting as a Distractor:

(82) *(7eng/T57-8M45)*
    T501 A: Isabel Católica was fourteen ninety two:: (.) Patio de lo- de los Leones was
               in [fourteen fifty] four
    T502 B: [ºfourteen fiftyº]   ((*scrunching up his face, accepting reluctantly*))
               (0.8)
    T501' A: so::
  →T503 C: **and** it was built in stages (.) [so   ]
    T504 B: [ºyeahº]
    T505 A: yeah (.) there was like-//
    T506 C: //started-

Here, A and B are arguing about the exact date in which the Alhambra was built. B believes that it was around the twelve hundreds, whereas A argues that it was in the mid fourteen hundreds. After A clarifies that Patio de los Leones was finished in 1454, C adds that *'it was built in stages'* prefaced by the addition conjunction *'and'*. The antecedent of the neutral personal pronoun *it* is ambiguous between the Alhambra and the Patio de los Leones. Both A and B interpret C's turn in T503 as supporting their respective positions. The confusion is generated because, on one hand, it is framed as an agreement right after A's turn, and on the other, the semantic content of the utterance seems to support B's view. Only T506 clarifies that C is in fact supporting B by suggesting that *'it'* started being built before 1454.

5.3.2.2.2. Alerters

They are words, expressions and reactive tokens that serve as *hints* about the possibility that the utterer disagrees or does not fully agree with prior speaker's opinion, proposal or assessment. Three types can be distinguished: (1) Type A: reactive tokens and attributable silence, (2) Type B: NTRIs (Pomerantz 1984: 71; Mori 1999: 92), i.e. request for clarification, and (3) Type C: lack of knowledge claims (CLKs) prefacing the Head Act.

Type A Alerters

Type A Alerters merely hint some kind of reaction –including a gap between the Initiating Act and the Responding Act– that might signal a problem in the fluent conversational flow (one possible reason being disagreement). So, for example, if a speaker B reacts with the interjection *'oh'* (Type A) to an assessment produced by a prior speaker A, this speaker might infer that one possible reason for B showing that kind of reaction is that s/he does not agree with his/her assessment. The problem is that speaker A needs more clues to reach the conclusion that it is in fact a disagreement, as according to Heritage (2002: 204ff), *'oh'* may preface both agreements and disagreements. In the first case, it may index either "independent access" to some referent or epistemic authority, or both; in the latter case, it is part of an "agree + disagree" response (*ibid.*: 210).

Some possible realizations of this type of Alerter are *'well', 'oh', 'oh?', 'uh:::', 'uhm', 'mm' / 'bueno', 'hombre', 'pues', 'eh', 'ah', 'n:::', 'puf' / 'a', 'a::::', 'e::::', 'he:::::', 'e?', 'aa soo ka', 'maa (ne)', 'uso'*), as well as significant gaps between turns. Here are a few examples:

(83)*(2eng/T32M25)*
    T313 C: and that's- what?- like six hours maybe↑ at the most?
→T314 A: **well** he::re to Gr- here to Madri::d is like-

(84) *(2eng/T29M22)*
    T243 C: [that's why] I'm not bringing my digital
            camera or anything [there] [I'll bring- I'm bringing (.)   ]=
    T244 A: [o:::h]
→T245 B: **[o:::h]** [I- no- it's not a big- that big of a deal]

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(85) *(8esp/T46-7M39)*
    T202 A: yo creo que para el Camino de Santiago no va a haber tiempo eh↑
→T203 C: **n:::::** @ así así @
    T204 A: no
    T205 C: dos semanas dan para mucho

(86) *(8esp/T151M136)*
    T618 A: **bueno** pero si quieres ir a Port Aventura↑- no queríamos ir?

(87) *(3jpn/T53-4M30)*
    T0773 B: Hokkaidoo toka?
             (0.7)
→T0774 A: **a:::::[:::::::::]**
    T0775 B: [samui] ka na?
    T0776 A: demo ne:: yukikaki taihen da yo
          B: *like Hokkaidoo?*
             (0.7)
          A: **oh::::::[:::::::::]**
          B: *[will it] be cold?* ((in self-question format))
          A: *but* ((+ involvement marker)) *it's hard to shovel the snow* ((+assertive marker))

(88) *(11jpn/T129-130M100)*
→T0661 B: [**e?** ja::]
    T0662 A: [dooshi]tara ii ka wakaranai mon
    T0663 B: ja kaiketsu (.) shinakute ii tte iu koto?
          B: *[**huh?** then::]*
          A: *[(I don't know] what should be done*
          B: *then (do you) mean (.) it should not be solved?*

Type B Alerters

Types B Alerters are not as vague as Type A. From a pragmatics perspective, Type B Alerters are communicative acts that Terkourafi (2001: 129) labels as *ambivalent*, and are characterized by what Blum-Kulka (1989: 43) calls *pragmatic duality*. That is, they have two possible illocutionary forces: one concomitant with the propositional content of the utterance (i.e., direct) and another one that is inferred (i.e., indirect) and that constitutes the source for a potential disagreement. In NTRIs (e.g., *'what?' / '¿cómo?' / 'e?'*) the propositional meaning of the utterance is that of requesting the previous speaker to either repeat or elaborate – partially or in full – on what s/he has said due to lack of understanding or perception. They are what Pomerantz (1984: 71) calls clarification requests. However, they have an indirect illocutionary force of casting doubt on the relevance or appropriateness of the prior turn, thus hinting disagreement. From the point of view of the Gricean maxims of cooperation, they

inquire about the Maxim of Manner (*Be perspicuous*) (Grice 1978: 46), and indirectly implicate that "things are not so clear". This same feature is shared by Responding Acts that request for confirmation or clarification, as when someone answers *'really?'* to a prior statement, before producing a more explicit disagreement afterwards[58].

Some common expressions of this type include *'what?', 'what's that?', 'what do you mean?', 'really?', 'sure?', 'is it?'* / *'¿qué?', '¿cómo?', '¿qué dices?', '¿sí?' '¿seguro?'* / *'e?'* (*'huh?'*), *'e doo iu imi?'* (*'oh what do you mean?'*) (Mori 1999)*, 'honto ni?'* (*'really?'*)*,* and partial repetition of prior statement with rising intonation, as in the following examples:

    (89) *(4eng/T51M37)*
        T347 B: I mean when we were in Italy for one week we probably spent <u>ha::lf</u> of that↑
                   (.) maybe↑ (.) more?
→ T348 A: **in Italy?** I would've spent about that

    (90) *(2esp/T29M26)*
        T143' B: =yo quiero hotel [[[@@@]]]
        T144 A: [[[yo tam]]]bién yo tam[bién   ]
→ T145 C: **[hot<u>e</u>l?]**

     In this case, C makes an explicit disagreement later on: "no yo quiero…"

    (91) *(11jpn/T13M12)*
        T0056 B: sanjuuichi- sanjuuichi ya- toka de ii ja nai?
→ T0057 C: **sanjuuichi?**
                B: *Thirty first- don't you think the Thirty first is okay?*
                C: ***Thirty first?***
     Here, C repeats the question afterwards not as an NTRI but questioning the fact that there actually are thirty one days in the month.

Type C Alerters

Type C Alerters hint a disagreement because they are a way of opting out by claiming lack of knowledge or enough information on the topic. As Type B Alerters, they also have an *ambivalent* illocutionary force when they occur before a more explicit disagreement act, as it is only there that a doubt is generated between a sincere claim and a concealed disagreement. Prototypical examples are *'I don't know'* / *'no sé', 'yo qué sé'* / *'wakannai'* (*'(I) don't know'*). Consider the following examples:

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[58] This kind of realizations is fully explained in the section on conventionally indirect Head Acts of disagreement in Sub-section 5.3.2.2.3.

(92) *(2eng/T12M8)*
    T135 A: and we could do while we're in Madrid- could do like- (.) probably we'll be
                there for like three days↑ (.) we could do a day trip to Toledo↑
    T136 C: [o::h yeah (.) very true]
  ➤T137 B: [**I don't know** I don't] wanna stay there [too]

(92) *(8esp/T115M101)*
    T428 B: °(**no sé** creo que Lugo también tiene playa)°

(93) *(8jpn/T28M23)*
    T0151 B: nanaman gurai?
               (1.3)
  ➤T0152 A: (°**wakannai**°) (1.0) kekkoo suru n da ra:: nishuukan toka itte
          B: *around seventy thousand?*
               (1.3)
          A: *(°**I don't know**°) (1.0) it's gonna be pretty expensive don't you think? It's*
               two weeks

In these three examples, at the moment the lack-of-knowledge claim is produced we are not sure whether the speaker really means what s/he says or not. The uncertainty is resolved as the turn unfolds, and we clearly see that it was just an Alerter with a mitigating function.

These expressions, however, are regarded as Supportive Moves when they are interspersed inside the main act or produced afterwards as an afterthought. They are not Alerters anymore, as there is no doubt about their status as mitigating devices:

(94) *(2eng/T42-45M33)*
    T388 B: that painting might be <u>in</u> El Prado but those are two separate (.) art museums
    T389 C: oh cause I know I've seen that painting→
    T390 A: yeah
  ➤T391 C: and I think I- I don't think I went to tha- I might have <u>went</u> to it **I don't know**

(95) *(2esp/72M65)*
    T509 A: tiene que ser chulísimo
  ➤T510 C: está chulo (.) está muy chulo (0.6) pero que eso no::: **yo qué sé**↓ vale
               que:: tiene una forma muy::::- (.) muy extraña pero:::-

(96) *(13jpn/T27-8M18)*
    T0098 B: a:: demo natsu dakara ue no hoo ga ii ka na::
    T0099 C: °soo da yo ne:: soo kamo shirenai° demo sa (1.0) asoberu no tte shita ne
               Oosaka toka Kyooto toka ikitaku nai?
    T0100 A: ikitai
    T0101 B: [nnnn]
    T0102 C: [ikitai] yo ne
    T0103 B: kankoo tsuaa desu ne
  ➤T0104 C: ne o- ue no hoo tta tte **atashi wakannai n da kedo**
          B: *oh:: but it's in the summer maybe it's better to go to the north*
          C: *°you're right you may be right° but (1.0) if we wanna play around we have*
              to go south don't you wanna go to Oosaka or Kyooto or places like that?
          A: *I do*

> B: [nnnn   ]
> C: [we wanna] go don't we
> B: oh like a sightseeing tour
> C: right- because [you] say north but **I don't know anything** about that

They may also function as act internal mitigating devices of the Head-Act. This is so in moves where they come right after an adversative conjunction (e.g., *'but' / 'pero' / 'demo'*) that frames the turn as disagreement[59], as the following example illustrates:

(97) *(3esp/T9-10M7)*
    T038 C: [a] Ma<u>dri::</u>d en verano (.) con el ca<u>lor</u> que hace ((*con todo grave, de*
             desacuerdo))
→ T039 B: ya:: pero **no sé** [@@@]

Here, *no sé* is the only utterance produced after the adversative conjunction and should be considered a Head-Act internal mitigating device.

When Alerters are used on their own, i.e., without a more explicit or elaborated disagreement act, they are analyzed as Head Acts and represent a kind of *hint* or Non-Conventionally Indirect Acts (NCIAs). The hint might be either weak (gap, *'oh', 'n:::' / 'eh:::', 'puf' / 'e::::', 'a::::'*) or mild (*'how is that?', 'what do you mean?', 'in Madrid?', 'I don't know' / '¿cómo?', '¿qué quieres decir?', 'no sé' / 'e?', 'doo iu imi?', 'Okinawa?', 'wakannai'*):

 (98) *(1eng/T13-4M10)*
    T064 C: =so we could go to San Sebastian↑ (.) but- okay so if we do Granada to
             Sevi::lle (.) to Madri::d (.) to Barcelona to Valencia:::
→   **(0.7)**
→ T065 B: **[oh]**

(99) *(3esp/T44M37)* **long gap**
    T181 B: la Mezquita no está ahí? la Mez<u>qui::</u>ta
       A: ((**abre la boca, asombrada y mira fijamente a B**))
→   **(1.5)**
    T181' B: Córdoba [@@@@@@@]

(100) *(13jpn/T76M60)*
    T0593 A: [sudoma]ri dekiru
→   **(0.3)**
→ T0594 B: º**e:::?**º
       A: *[we can] just stay without meals*
             (0.3)
       B: º**what?**º

5.3.2.2.3. Head Acts

They represent the core of the turn, where the central message or illocutionary intention is supposed to be encapsulated. As mentioned above, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) classified request strategies into nine categories, from most direct to most indirect, taking into account their syntactic structure and lexical items used: *Mood derivable, Explicit performative, Hedged performative, Locution derivable, Want statement, Suggestory formula, Preparatory, Strong hint,* and *Mild hint.* Among these, *Want statement* (e.g., *'I'd like to borrow your notes'*) and *Suggestory formula* (e.g., *'How about cleaning up the kitchen?'*) refer specifically to requests and should be discarded. An additional problem is posed by the first category (*Mood derivable*) as declaratives are not used exclusively for disagreements (e.g., *'I disgree'*), but also for agreements (e.g., *'I agree'*) and many other communicative acts. In this case, therefore, mood does not seem to guarantee the directness of the act but rather the degree of semantic contrast and opposition between the disagreeing act and the prior utterance. Therefore, it seems appropriate to converge this category with *Locution derivable*, defined by Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) as a strategy in which "the illocutionary intent is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution", which in the case of disagreements should be an explicit marker of disagreement such as antonymy, contrastive polarity, contrastive preference (e.g., comparatives *'I like Y better than X'*), different item in a series (color, number, dates, etcetera), and the like.

Another problem was found in the *Preparatory* strategy. This strategy, described as utterances that "[contain] reference to a preparatory condition for the feasibility of the Request, typically one of ability, willingness, or possibility, as conventionalized in the given language" (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989: 280), does not seem to fit for disagreements either, as disagreements are not acts that ask for the addressee's future action. Rather, disagreements deal with statements and assertions, and hence, with truth values and conditions. This means that indirect responding acts can be addressed to the sincerity condition of the communicative act – e.g., the speaker casts doubt on prior speaker's belief on what s/he has said (*'do you think so?'*)–, implicating that the Maxim of Quality has been violated, or the propositional content condition – e.g., the speaker questions the truth value or the accuracy of the information given by prior speaker (*'really?', 'are you sure?'*).

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Therefore, from Blum-Kulka *et al.*'s classification, the categories of *Locution derivable, Explicit performative, Strong hint* and *Mild hint* have been retained, and some new ones have been incorporated for a fine-grained analysis of disagreements, which I proceed to present and describe.

A. Direct Acts

Direct acts are those communicative acts in which there is a perfect match between the propositional content and the illocutionary force of the act. In the case of disagreements, they can be explicit tokens of opposition by means of a contrastive polarity marker (*'no'* against positively oriented prior turns, and *'yes'* against negatively oriented prior turns) [60]; by marking the Responding Act with some kind of disagreement marker (adversative conjunction *'but'*, disjunctive conjunction *'or'*, concessive conjunction *'although'*); by including some item in the disagreement that explicitly contrasts or differs from that in the prior turn (antonymy, different items from a class or series), or by means of an explicit performative (*'I disagree')*.

A.1. Contrastive polarity marker[61]

It seems obvious that the most direct form of disagreeing Head Act is to utter a straight contrastive polarity interjection *'no'* (or *'yes'* for a negatively polarized prior turn). Not only it is the most direct form of disagreement, but also the most aggressive,

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[60] Their equivalent items in Japanese (*'iie', 'iya' ('no') / 'ee', 'hai', 'un' ('yes')*) are used somewhat differently. There is some controversy over the exact nature and their exact analogy with their English counterparts. One evident difference is their lack of symmetry. While in both English and Spanish it is possible to contradict a prior negatively oriented statement with a positive polarity marker *'yes'* (e.g., *'A: No, it isn't; B: Yes, it is.'; ' A: No cada uno que controle lo suyo. B: Sí yo te controlo un poquillo'*), this is not the case in Japanese (e.g., *'A: doo na no kashira? Nanka soreppoi kanji de yatta hoo ga ii ka na? murippoi- B: iya dekiru zettai dekiru' – 'A: how would it be? Better do it like that maybe? Or looks like it's impossible- B: Yeah it's possible definitely it's possible'*). In the English version, the negative word *'impossible'* triggers an affirmative answer *'yeah'*. In Japanese, however, *'iya'* is used, which suggests that it is a contradiction marker rather than a negative polarity item equivalent to the English/Spanish *'no'*. What is relevant for our study of disagreement, however, is its interpretation as contradiction when used as a response to prior opinions and assessments, which allows us to include it in the same discursive category as its English and Spanish counterparts. For more on the initial *'iya'* in Japanese, see Saft (1998). For the functions of *'ee'* and *'hai',* see McGloin (1998).

[61] I use the term *marker* because there is no agreement on how to label this across languages: in English they are called *interjections*, in Spanish *adverbios*, and in Japanese *disagreement tokens*.

as it conveys an oppositional stance with respect to the prior utterance, as symbolized in Fig. 12:

Fig. 12. *Symbolic representation of contrastive* 'no-yes'
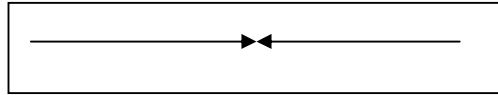
This kind of responding turns can be simple, with bare *'no – yes' / 'no – sí' / 'iie, iya'*[62] utterances:

    (101) *(2eng/T51M39)*
        T560 B: [it's the leaning] tower
→   T561 A: **the- no**

    (102) *(3esp/T95-6M85)*
        T437 C: el tío del espejo es él
                (0.5)
        T438 B: [sí]
        T439 A: [es] el pintor
→   T440 B: **no** [sí]

or complex, when followed by a supporting statement:

    (103) *(2eng/T50M38)*
        T556' B: =[°wonders of the °world?° wasn't like- it's (.) Eiffel Tower isn't it?]
→   T557 A: [that's what I:: was gonna say I wonder- I only know like three-] **no it's not that**

    (104) *(3esp/T121M107)*
        T615 B: [**no** cada uno que controle lo] suyo [déjalo] ((*negando con el brazo*))
→   T616 A: [**sí** yo te] veo a ti muy:::: suelta↑ yo
                te controlo un poquillo↑ @@@

    (105) *(11jpn/T83M65)*
        T0356 B: [zutto sa::] onaji hoteru ni tomattetara yasui no ka na?
                (1.5)
→   T0357 C: **iya (.) sonna koto wa↑ nai**
            B: *[do you] think it will be cheaper if we stayed in the same hotel*
            the whole time?
            (1.5)
            C: **no (.) it's not cheaper**

In either case, the direct illocutionary force is expressed by the contrastive polarity token[63].

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[62] Both *'iie'* and *'iya'* are contradiction items. They differ only in register, the former being more formal than the latter. As for the reason for not including the positive item (*'ee', 'un', 'aa'*) see Footnote 8.
[63] See Footnote 54.

A.2. Explicit performative

Also direct and transparent in their illocutionary force are Explicit performatives (EP) (e.g., *'I disagree' / 'estoy en desacuerdo', 'opino lo contrario' / 'watashi wa hantai da' (*lit. *'I am the opposite')*), in which the perlocutionary verb or expression explicitly states the speaker's illocutionary intention (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989: 279). In theory, these expressions are possible and that is why I include this strategy in my coding system. However, no items were found in my data.

A.3. Locution derivable

Finally, disagreements will have a direct illocutionary force when the disagreeing utterance has a declarative mood and contains the same referent as the Initiating turn plus an explicit disagreeing/contrastive item. These are labelled *Locution derivable* (LD) disagreeing head acts. These negative items can be antonyms (e.g., *'good' – 'bad'*), different items from a series (e.g., *'three' vs. 'four'; 'black' vs. 'white'; 'Monday' vs. 'Tuesday',* different degrees of preference (e.g., *'better than'*), and even the negation of same referent with the adverb *'not'*. The difference between initial position *'no'* and clause internal *'no'/'not'* is that the former negates the truth value of the Initiating move whereas the latter negates the truth value of the clause in which it occurs. Consider the following example:

(106) A: Antonio Banderas is a good actor.
  B1: No (he is not).
  B2: He's not a good actor.
  B3: He's a bad actor.

While B1 represents a straight opposition to A's assessment, B2's negative adverb only disagrees with A indirectly, via the negation of the same assessment, and is closer to B3. Also compare the following two examples:
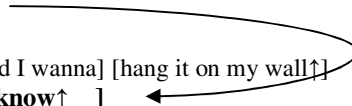
(107) A: I love Antonio Banderas.
  B1: I don't like him.
  B2: I hate him.

Neither B1 nor B2 negate the truth value of A's statement but represent disagreements by making a contrastive assessment. The negative adverb + positive assessment verb (*'don't like'*) in B1 is semantically equivalent to the negative assessment verb in B2 (*'hate'*), although *'hate'* might be an upgraded version.

Some examples of *Locution derivable* disagreements are:

(108) *(2eng/T65-6M53)*
    T724' B: [so like] the history of it↑ **I don't wanna know**
    T725 C: oh really?=
    T726 B: =I just don't care I only wanna see it↑ [I like it↑ and I wanna] [hang it on my wall↑]
⟶T727 C: **[I:: like to know↑   ]**

(109) *(5esp/T10M8)*
    T043 C: oh:::::: bueno pues a partir del **siete** de julio
⟶T044 A: **el quin[ce]**

(110) *(11jpn/T147M111)*
    T0749 A: a::: ato wa are ja nai? ano::: hefe- hefe- ue↑ @ supeingo tsukatta atashi
               @@@ **osa ni narenai↓** ue no hito ni katenai
    T0750 B: @@@@@@ so:::nna @
⟶T0751 C: **osa ni natte n jan °ippai°**
        A: *oh:: and also, uh::: jefe- jefe- a higher @ I've used Spanish @@@*
            ***[women] can't become bosses** [we] can't beat people in a higher position*
        B: *@@@@@@ wha::::t? @*
        C: **there are plenty of [women] bosses aren't there**

Those Head Acts introduced by the contrastive polarity interjections *'no'* – *'yes'* and the conjunctions *'but'* or *'or'* are excluded from this category even if the following utterance adopt a Locution derivable format. In these cases, the utterances following the interjections and/or conjunctions will be regarded as Supportive Moves that can elaborate on the disagreement either by aggravating, mitigating or just giving an account for the disagreement:

(111) *(2eng/T29M22)*
    T243 C: [that's why] I'm not bringing my digital
             camera or anything   [there]   [I'll bring- I'm bringing (.)   ]=
    T244 A: [o:::h]
⟶T245 B: [o:::h]   [I- **no it's not a big- that big of a deal]**

(112) *(2esp/T25M22)*
    T117' A: [y el] cinco por la mañana a las <u>ocho</u> tendríamos
             que estar sa<u>lie</u>ndo=
    T119 C: =jm=
⟶T120 B: **=o antes también**

(113) *(11jpn/T148M112)*
    T0751 C: osa ni natte n jan ºippaiº
⟶ T0752 A: **demo sukunai jan kitto**
            C: *there are plenty of [female] bosses aren't there*
            A: ***but there are only a few aren't there, maybe***

In these examples, the disagreement is marked by the initial tokens *'no'*, *'o'* and *'demo'*. In the case of (111), the utterance that follows mitigates the force of *'no'* by qualifying what is exactly meant by the negative interjection. In (112), although the semantic content of *'antes'* represents a disagreement with respect to *'ocho'*, it is reframed as an addition (*'también'*) rather than as an alternative, thus mitigating the force of the initial *o*. Finally, in (113), the force of the adversative conjunction *'demo'* together with the contrastive statement *'sukunai'* (*'few'*) are downgraded by the question tag with falling intonation *'jan'* (*'aren't there'*) and the downtoner *'kitto'* (*'probably'*). In all these cases, the illocutionary force of the disagreement is already established by the initial word, while the utterances that follow specify the contents of the disagreement and mitigate their force.

A.4. Adversative marker 'but'

Equally direct and explicit are those Head Acts introduced by the adversative marker *'but'* / *'pero'* / *'demo'* and similar conjuncts and conjunctions (*'although'*, *'however'*, *'except'* … / *'es que'*, *'lo que pasa es que'*, *'excepto'*, *'sin embargo'* … / *'dakedo'*, *'shikashi'*, *'tada'* …, as they mark the utterance as disagreement. According to Schiffrin (1987) *'but'* "has a pragmatic effect which depends on [its] contrastive meaning" (1987: 189). For Locher (2004), *'but'* is a discourse marker that "indicates opposition, [and] can be face-threatening to the extent that it ciriticizes the previous speaker's contribution and person" (2004: 136). It is, however, milder than the contrastive polarity item in the way the disagreement is framed with respect to the Initiating move, as there is an implicit initial acceptance of the prior statement albeit not fully. The adversative conjunction introduces some problematic aspect of the prior opinion/proposal/assessment rather than a full negation. Fig. 13 shows how *'but'* frames the turn:

Fig. 13. *Symbolic representation of adversative conjunct/conjunction*
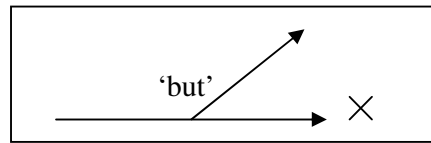
A question might be raised as to the appropriateness of regarding a conjunction as the Head. There is one strong reason for this classification: The adversative conjunction *'but'* explicitly specifies the kind of disagreement current speaker has adopted with respect to the prior turn. Consider the following example. If B responds *'**but** it's cool'* to A's warning *'it's dangerous'*, the conjunction *'but'* informs about the position of the statement *'it's cool'* with respect to the prior assessment *'it's dangerous'*. In Gricean Pragmatics terms, it generates a conventional implicature (Grice 1978: 44-5). This way, the speaker explicitly marks *'it's cool'* as a disagreement. The fact that the conjunction *'but'* is the word that creates the expectation of disagreement is demonstrated by the following example. Consider this hypothetical case:

(114) *A: it's dangerous*
      B: cool

Although there is some kind of semantic opposition between the terms *'dangerous'* and *'cool'*, it cannot be concluded that B is disagreeing with A. In fact, one possible interpretation is that, for B, it is precisely the dangerous nature of whatever they are talking about that makes it *'cool'*. That is, it can be a positive assessment of the fact that the referent is dangerous. Furthermore, the following solution is also possible,

(115) *A: it's dangerous*
      B: and cool

where B explicitly frames *'cool'* as an additional feature of *'it'*, whatever that might be, rather than a matter of dispute. Hence, the mere production of *'cool'* does not guarantee that it will be interpreted as disagreeing with *'dangerous'*. It is the conjunction *'but'* that explicitly frames *'it's cool'* as a disagreement. Here are some examples from my data:

(116) *(2eng/T55M43)*
    T615 A: a roof pro[bably?]
——▶T616 C: [yeah   ] kind of like it's- (.) **but** I don't think it was really like the
          roof of it↓

(117) *(2esp/T3M2)*
    T036 A: un mes necesitamos
⟶T037 C: **pero** tiene que ser dos semanas

(118) *(8jpn/T35-6M29)*
    T0233 B: Karuizawa::- hi<u>sho</u>chi tte ieba ore Karuizawa na n da
    T0234 C: a::: ma <u>soo</u>   [da ne]
    T0235 A: [soo da] ne::
    T0236 B: un
⟶ T0237 A: **demo** nishuukan (.) nani shiyoo ka tte iwareru to komannai?
           B: *Karuizawa::- if we say a cool place, I choose Karuizawa*
           C: *oh::: well you're   [right   ]*
           A: *[you're] right*
           B: *mhm*
           A: ***but** don't you think it's a problem if we have to consider what to do for two weeks?*

Although not relevant as an argument for regarding *'but'* as head of the Head Act, it is interesting to note that an analogy can be established between my proposal and the status of the preposition in a Prepositional Phrase. In some descriptive grammars, the preposition is analyzed as the head of the prepositional phrase, as the following branching analysis shows:

Fig. 14.   *in the classroom*

Head   Complement

Prep.   NP

in   *the classroom*
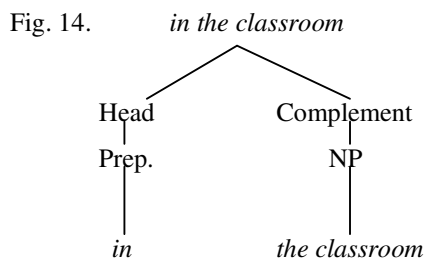
In a PP, the preposition is the head and the NP is a complement, which means that it cannot be omitted without falling into ungrammaticality. In similar terms, the conjunction *'but'* could be the head of the disagreement initiated by such conjunction and the utterance that follows a complement that completes the meaning of the act. The conjunction *'but'* is the head because it makes the speaker's position or attitude explicit with respect to the prior turn, and it implicates disagreement even if the utterance is truncated right after its production, as illustrated in the following examples::

(119) *(7eng/T51M40)*
    T491 A: and the Alhambra is (.) from the fourteen hundreds?
    T492 C: yeah
    T493 A: [so]
⟶T492' C: [it's] old **but-**

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(120) *(2esp/T59-61M55)*
    T404 A: [a mí no] me hace ni::::-
                mira que es bonita eh? [por]que:: Sevilla es preciosa tía (.) las cosas=
    T405 C: [jm]
    T404' A: =como son
→ T406 C: **pero:::**
    T407 A: pero:::: juh ((*haciendo una mueca*))

(121) *(13jpn/T103M83)*
    T0876 C: soko made benri ja nakute mo yokunai? (.) [chott- (.) chotto] fuben na hoo ga sa
→ T0877 A: [e::? **demo ºdemoº**]
          C: *don't you think it doesn't need to be so convenient?(.) [better a bit- (.)] a bit*
             inconvenient
→   A: [oh? **but ºbutº**]

However, as the utterance that normally follows the conjunction is also obligatory, it is expected, and therefore its absence can be seen as reluctance to be more explicit about the exact nature of the disagreement. Thus, in the above examples there is no doubt about the degree of disagreement, but there is uncertainty on what exactly it is that the speaker is disagreeing on.

A.5. Disjunctive marker 'or'

The disjunctive marker *'or'* / *'o'* / *'ka'*, *'aruiwa'* also indicates disagreement, although it seems less face-threatening than either a straight *'no'* or a *'but'*-introduced disagreement, as it leaves several options open, and does not directly problematize or negate the illocutionary act of the Initiating move (see Fig. 15):

Fig. 15. *Symbolic representation of disjunctive conjunction* or
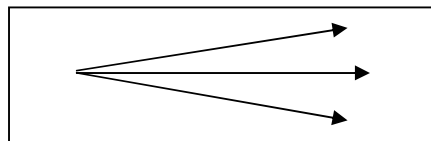
According to Schiffrin (1987: 177), *'or'* has the interactional effect of giving alternative options for the addressee to decide whether to choose only one element of the disjunction or both (see also Locher 2004: 135). As in the case of *'but'*, I consider *'or'* as the key element in a disagreement. Its force can be either enhanced or downgraded

depeneding on the type of locution which may follow. Here are some examples from my data:

    (122) *(2eng/T11M7)*
        T114' B: [then Madri::d] and then Madrid to Sevilla
        T118 C: yeah
        T114' B: [and then-]
  →T119 A: **[or** to   ] Cadiz and then Sevilla [back to Granada]

    (123) *(3esp/T33M28)*
        T153 B: sí @@@ y por allí para movernos por allí::↑ en metro o algo de eso no?
        T154 C: claro
  →T155 A: **o** andandillo

In (122), the statement following *'or'* is a plain LD disagreement. In (123), on the other hand, the disagreement is mitigated by the diminutive form of the gerund *'andando'*.

Summing up, direct disagreement acts will be classified into the following five major strategies.

        1. Contrastive Polarity Marker *'no/yes'*

        2. Explicit performative (EP)

        3. Locution derivable (LD)

        4. Adversative Conjunction *'but'*

        5. Disjunctive conjunction *'or'*

One final question remains as to the relative degree of directness of the five strategies. Clearly, the contrastive polarity marker should rank first, while *'or'* seems to be the least aggressive, as several options are left open for the addressee to choose on. However, EP, LD and *'but'* are hard to classify. From a pragmatic perspective all of them are direct. From a turn-organizational perspective, *'but'* introduced turns bring the disagreement closer to the TRP, and hence it could be seen as more aggressive. Further research is needed to see how people rank these strategies, and therefore no assumption will be made as to their relative position in the list.

B. Conventionally Indirect Acts

Under the category of Conventionally Indirect Acts (CIA) I include those utterances that address the propositional content of the initiating act either by

questioning its truth value or its supporting conditions (reasons, purpose, feasibility, procedure, and so on). As already mentioned in the section on Alerters, their indirectness consists in the fact that they have what Blum-Kulka (1989: 43) calls *pragmatic duality*, i.e., two possible interpretations: one literal one of sincere request for information/confirmation/clarification/elaboration, and the other one of potential disagreement. Their conventionality resides in the fact that they are common ways to express disagreement indirectly, without explicitly doing so. From a Gricean Pragmatics viewpoint, the propositional content[64] of the utterance puts into question the truth value or certainty of the proposition, i.e., a possible violation of the Maxim of Quality (Grice 1978: 46). Consider the following example:

(124) *(3esp/T112M98)*
     T538 A: y yo- yo considero a Antonio Banderas↑ como el guapo del cine pero no le
                veo yo ninguna (0.7) cualidad así [que resalte]
     T539 B: [yo tampoco] (.) yo tam[poco]
→ T540 C: [**no:::?**]=

The negative adverb with rising intonation *'no:::?'* should be interpreted as an elliptical output of the negatively oriented interrogative structure *'¿No le ves ninguna cualidad a Antonio Banderas?'*. The antecedents of the elliptical items are recoverable from the co-text as they are explicitly mentioned by speaker A in T538. At the propositional level, C's utterance is a repetition of A's statement with rising intonation representing a request for confirmation of C's uptake of the statement, meaning something like *'Do you really mean what I've heard?'*. At the illocutionary level, however, it can be interpreted as a token of disagreement, as Same referent + same polarity + rising intonation/interrogative structures are commonly used for that purpose.

      The fact that CIAs do not always carry the disagreement implicature (and hence its indirect nature) is demonstrated in the following example, where the utterance *'really?'* only shows that the speaker did not have the information given by her interlocutors, and expresses a bit of surprise:

(125) *(2eng)*
     T286 C: =what did we do in Italy::? how many citi-? but we saw like <u>fi::</u>ve cities too
     T287 B: yeah and [it was five in a week]
     T286' C: [and that was <u>plenty</u>→]
     T288 A: yeah=

---

[64] Although the examples are not propositions *per se*, the interrogative utterances refer back to a proposition made in the previous turn. Therefore, the propositional content is equivalent to the previous whole utterance.

```
        T289  C:  =for a wee::k=
        T290  B:  =yeah=
        T291  C:  =it was plenty=
     → T292  A:  =really?=
        T293  B:  =°mhm°=
        T294  C:  =yeah
```

The interaction prior to this sequence showed that participants B and C had gone to Italy together, while A had not. This is key to interpret A's *'really?'* as a genuine request for confirmation, rather than a CIA. Furthermore, the subsequent interaction shows no evidence that *'really?'* in T292 should be regarded as an Alerter or a disagreement itself. This same expression, however, may preface a more explicit disagreement acting as Head Act, in which case they would be analyzed as Alerters. The following examples show this kind of sequence:

```
   (126) (2eng/T65-6M53)
         T724' B:  [so like] the history of it↑ I don't wanna know
      → T725  C:  oh really?=
         T726  B:  =I just don't care I only wanna see it↑ [I like it↑ and I wanna] [hang it on my wall↑]
      → T727  C:                                          [I:: like to know↑      ]


   (127) (5esp/T66-7M55)
         T390  B:  según los sitios que ve↑a::mos↓ (.) […] y luego si vas al día siguiente no
                   pasa ↑na::da↓
         T391  A:  jm jm
      → T392  C:  sí?
         T393  B:  jm jm
      → T394  C:  pero no es bueno sabe::r fechas?
```

Finally, when more explicit forms of disagreement did not follow these expressions, they were analyzed as CIA Head Acts. I have divided CIAs into three types: A, B and C. Types A and B, in turn, have been subdivided into sub-strategies.

B.1. Type A

Type A CIAs are those moves that question or challenge the truth value/condition of the prior utterance. They may adopt a strong (Type A1) or weak (Type A2) format.

Type A1: This type of CIAs are those which clearly cast doubt over the truth value of the prior utterance with strong inference of disbelief and disagreement by indirectly challenging prior speaker's opinion/proposal/assessment. They adopt

different conventional forms depending on the language. In English, they are typically "same referent" repetitions in declarative mood with rising intonation (e.g., *'it is X'* – *'it is?'*, *'it isn't X'* – *'it's not?'*, *'sure?'*, *'I am X'* – *'you are?'*) or expressions related to the truth-value or epistemic certainty of prior utterance (e.g., *'really?'*; *'sure?'*), in Spanish questions about epistemic certainty can be used (e.g., *'es X'* – *'¿seguro?' '¿tú crees?'*; *'no es X'* – *'¿seguro que no?'*), as well as emphatic same-polarity adverbs with rising intonation (e.g., *'¿sí:::::?'*; *'¿no::::?'*); in Japanese they may have the self-addressed question format (e.g., *'X desu'* (*'it is X'*) – *'soo kana'* (it expresses doubt and disbelief, roughly meaning *'I wonder if that's true'*), *'X ja nai'* (*'it's not X'*) – *'soo ja nai kana'* (*'I wonder if it is not'*)[65], among other forms including *'X desu'* – *'soo na no?'* (emphatic *'is that right?'*), and "repetition + assertive marker *'no'* with rising intonation (e.g., *'aru yo'* – *'aru no?'* (*'there is'* – *'there is?'*). Some examples from my data set are given below:

> (128) *(2eng/T42-45M33)*
>   T386 B: [XXXXXXXXX] of the Reina Sofía↑- Reina Sofía is a
>   separate- it's a separate museum
> ──▶T387 C: **it is?**
>
> (129) *(3esp/T112M98)*
>   T538 A: y yo- yo considero a Antonio Banderas↑ como el guapo del cine pero no le
>   veo yo ninguna (0.7) cualidad así [que resalte]
>   T539 B: [yo tampoco] (.) yo tam[poco]
> ──▶T540 C: [**no:::?**]=
>
> (130) *(11jpn/T89-90M71)*
>   T0406 C: [ano pakku] de renta kaa tsuaa mitai no aru wa
> ──▶T0407 A: **aru no?**
>   C: *[uhm there's] like a package including car rentals*
>   A: ***there is?***
>
> (131) *(11jpn/T139-141M105)*
>   T0675 A: soo soo soo dakara kyooiku (.) mondai ni suru↓ niito wa↓
> ──▶T0676 C: **soo kana**
>   A: *yeah yeah yeah so it should be considered an educational issue I*
>   *mean the NEET problem*
>   C: ***I wonder if that's so***

---

[65] According to Makino & Tsutsui's (1995) Dictionary of Intermediate Japanese Grammar, *'kana'* is "a sentence-final particle that indicates a self-addressed question or a question addressed to an in-group member" (*ibid.*: 90) often used as a monologue question (*ibid.*: 91) which need not be answered (*ibid.*: 92). From discourse and pragmatic perspectives, I claim a same referent (either by repetition of the predicator or by means of affirmative response token *'soo'* (*'yes'*, or better *'that way'*) + *'kana'* is a conventionally indirect way to disagree.

Type A2: They question the truth-value of the Initiating Act, and the disagreement interpretation is weaker. That is, there is weak inference of disagreement, and the disagreement interpretation is more context (and co-text) dependent than Type A1. The conventional means to perform this indirect act in English is a repetition (or a proform) of the prior opinion/proposal/assessment + same polarity in the interrogative mood (e.g., *'is it?'*, *'do you?'*) or a negative interjection (*'no?'*), while in Spanish they would be an unmarked same-polarity adverb with rising intonation , and in Japanese the expression *'soo'* (*'yes'*) with rising intonation and other forms. Here are some examples: *'it is X' – **'is it?'**; 'it isn't X' – **'no?'** / 'es X' – '**¿sí?'**, 'no es X' – '**¿no?'** / 'X desu' – **'soo?'** ('it is X' – 'yes?'); 'X ja nai' – **'X ja nai?'** ('it isn't X' – 'not X?')*, and partial repetition of prior statement with rising intonation. Some examples from my data set are:

> (132) *(4eng/T48M35)*
>   T331 B: =not really
> —►T332 C: **no?**

> (133) *(3esp/T97M86)*
>   T439 A: [es] el pintor
>   T440 B: no [sí]
> —►T441 A: **[no] es el pintor?**

> (134) *(13jpn/T63-4M49)*
>   T0419 C: a Kinkakuji [ikitai] n da kedo=
>   T0420 A: [E:: ?]
> —►T0421 A: **=Kinkakuji iku?**
>   C: *I wanna [go to] Kinkakuji=*
>   A: *[OH::?]*
>   A: **=[are we] go[ing] to Kinkakuji?**

Sometimes, these indirect disagreements are made more direct when an explicit disagreement item is included, as illustrated in the following example:

> (135) *(4eng/T9-10M3)*
>   T063 C: yeah [like   ] Madrid (.) °it's° here
>   T064 A: [°okay°]
>   (1.1)
> —►T065 B: **is it that close?**

Expressions like *'really?'* / *'de verdad?'* / *'honto ni?'* (*'trully?'*) and partial or total repetitions of the Initiating act with rising intonation – e.g., *'A: kuso atsui no. B: kuso atsui no?'* (*'A:the really hot one. B: the really hot one?'*) can also be included

under Type A category although it is hard to say whether they belong to subtype 1 or 2. I will include them however in the A2 category, and only upgraded to the A1 level when they are aggravated via emphatic stress and/or loud voice, which are often indicators of clear opposition.

Finally, NTRIs are also included in this group, as they also share the pragmatic duality nature. However, NTRIs differ from requests for confirmation in that they only request repair on some aspect of the prior turn, while the latter questions the truth value of the whole proposition. Compare:

(136) *(1eng/T20M15)*
    T131 C: and the::n <u>Sevi:::</u>lle to::::: Ma<u>drid</u> (.) I'd say like (1.0) two days two nights
                probably?
  →T132 B: **in Madrid?**
    T132 C: more- maybe we cou- should do like three days three [night-] three days two
                nights=

(137) *(7eng/T65-6M48)*
    T531 C: [[I didn't like   ]] that
    T532 B: REALLY?
    T533 C: mhm
    T534 B: o:::h
  →T535 A: **ºyou didn't like it?º**

They are similar in that they both involve repetition of the prior turn. However, whereas in (136) the truth value of the predicator is not put into question, it certainly is in (137). The former is an NTRI acting in this case as a Head Act and interpreted by B as a Type A2 CIA, as demonstrated by C's repair work in the subsequent turn. The latter, on the other hand, represents a request for confirmation of the truth value of C's statement in T531 and a Type A1 CIA.

B.2. Type B

Type B CIAs are those disagreement responding acts framed as questions to the truth value of the disagreeing statements. They are indirect because they can be either sincere requests to confirm that the propositional content of the responding act is false (literal meaning) or an indirect form of disagreement. They may adopt the form of a statement with a question tag (Type B1), or negatively oriented interrogative mood utterances (Type B2). These two types of utterances are labelled Conducive Questions

(CQs) by Quirk *et al.* (1985: 809-810) as they indicate that "the speaker is predisposed to the kind of answer he [sic] has wanted or expected" (see also Bousfield 2007: 16). Type B1 CQs express "maximum conduciveness" (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 810; Bousfield 2007: 17). Although these definitions are given for English, similar patterns were found in Spanish and Japanese.

Type B1: They question the truth value of own assessment/opinion/proposal. Format: Same referent + different/contrastive assessment/opinion/proposal with question tag. E.g., *'it is X' – 'it is Y isn't it?' / 'es X' – 'es Y ¿no?' / 'X desu' – 'Y desho. Chigau?'* (*'it should be Y. [Am I] wrong?'*).

Examples from my data set:

(138) *(2eng/T39M31)*
    T377 B: so you wanna go to like El Prado:: [Reina] Sofía::=
    T378 A: [yeah]
    T377' B: =[Gug]genhe::im [things like that @@@]
    T379 A: [yeah]   [so if we can like (.)   ] do::: (.) the coo::::l-
   → T380 C: wait **I thought that Reina Sofía painting**↑ **was <u>in</u> El Prado (.) no?**

(139) *(2esp/T1-2M1)*
    T010 B: (pues) a mí me gustaría hacer el Camino de Santiago @@=
                    […]
 → T018 C: [pero **un recorrido <u>co::r</u>to no que sea::[::: (.) toda España no?(.)]** sino::-

No Japanese example was found.

Type B2: They question the negation of own assessment/opinion/proposal. Format: Same referent + different/contrastive assessment/opinion/proposal with rising intonation (Conducive). E.g., *it is X – **isn't it Y?** / es X - **¿no es Y?** / X desu – **Y ja nai?*** (*'isn't it Y?'*).

Examples from my data set:

(140) *(1eng/T11M8)*
    T057 A: is it in Gali[cia?]
 → T058 B: **[isn't] it** like (.) the <u>capital</u> of Galicia?

(141) *(5esp/T66-7M55)*
    T390 B: según los sitios que <u>ve</u>↑<u>a::</u>mos↓ (.) pero más o meno::s dos o tres
                días por cada sitio↓ si hay un sitio que nos gusta más↑- (.) como:::
                los albergues se pueden ir reservando sobre la marcha↑ que les dices
                mira:: estos tres días (.) y luego si vas al día siguiente no pasa
                ↑<u>na::</u>da↓
    T391 A: jm jm
    T392 C: sí?
    T393 B: jm jm
 → T394 C: pero **no es bueno sabe::r fechas?**

(142) *(13jpn/T49M38)*

    T0317 A: ichinchi goto ni yado kawatteku tte kekkoo **tsukarenai?**
             A: ***isn't it quite tiring*** *to keep changing places every day?*

B.3. Type C

Type C CIAs are those indirect disagreements that are framed as requests for grounders/arguments (reason, purpose, procedure, feasibility, and the like) supporting the proposal, assessment or opinion proffered in the Initiating turn. Again, they can be sincere requests or concealed disagreements. Here I describe five sub-types, but I do not pretend the list to be comprehensive:

    i.   Reason/cause: (*'it is X'* – ***'why?'*** */ 'es X' –* ***'¿por qué?'*** */ 'X desu' –* ***'naze?'*** ***'dooshite?' 'nande?'***).

    ii. Purpose/goal: (*'do X' –* ***'for what?' 'what for?'*** */ 'hacer X' –* ***'¿para qué?'*** */ 'X o suru' –* ***'nan no tame ni?'***).

    iii. Mode/procedure: (*'do X' –* ***'how?'*** */ 'hacer X' –* ***'¿cómo?'*** */ 'X o suru' –* ***'doo yatte?'***).

    iv. Possibility/feasibility: (*'do X' –* ***'can + pronoun?'*** */ 'hacer X' –* ***'¿se puede?'*** */ 'X o suru' –* ***'dekiru?'*** (*'do X* ***– [is it] possible?'***).

    v.   Others…

Summarizing, the following strategies will be included in the CIA category:

1. TYPE A1: Challenge truth value/condition (strong implicature).
2. TYPE A2: Question truth value/condition (weak implicature).
3. TYPE B1: Question truth value of own assessment/opinion/proposal via question tag.
4. TYPE B2: Question the negation of own assessment/opinion/proposal.
5. TYPE C: Query about supporting arguments/evidence/purpose/...

C. Non-Conventionally Indirect Acts

Non-Conventionally Indirect Acts (NCIAs) are those disagreement responding acts which do not make explicit reference to the disagreeing item and are not conventionalized as a disagreement. That is, their illocutionary force is not transparent

and therefore requires more inferential effort than conventionally indirect acts. They have what Blum-Kulka (1989: 43) calls *pragmatic vagueness*. Following Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 18; 280) I will adopt the distinction between Strong hints and Mild hints, but I will also add an additional category: Weak hints, to account for Alerters that act as Head Acts, which (obviously) are not contemplated in Blum-Kulka *et al.*'s classification.

These scholars define a Strong hint in requests as

> the locution [which] refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary and/or propositional act. Such elements often relate to preconditions for the feasibility of the Request. Unlike the preparatory strategy, hints are not conventionalized and thus require more inferencing activity on the part of the hearer. (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989: 280).

Mild hints, on the other hand, are locutions containing "no elements which are of immediate relevance to the intended illocution or proposition, thus putting increased demand for context analysis and knowledge activation on the interlocutor" (Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 280). For the former case, they give examples like *'Will you be going home now?'* (when the speaker intends to get a lift home), and for the latter *'You've been busy here, haven't you?'* (when the speaker wants the addressee to clean the kitchen). So, the common criterion for regarding an utterance as a hint is the lack of a clear relationship between the locution and the speaker's intention via propositional content (*vid.* Weizman 1989: 80-2).

Now, one major difference between requests and disagreements is that the latter occupy second position turns, which means that, following the adjacency pair and conditional relevance principles, there is already a co-textual expectation, and not merely a situational (contextual) one. Furthermore, what is proffered (or not) in the second turn slot is expected to be semantically or pragmatically related to the prior turn. In the case of statements of opinions/proposals/assessments as Initiating Moves, there is an expectation for either an agreement or disagreement to be produced as a Responding Move. In this situation, next speaker (the profferer of the Responding Move) may have three possible choices: (1) to produce an agreement, (2) to produce a disagreement, or (3) to opt out by changing topic, declining to respond, or otherwise. However, due to the expectation created by the Initiating Act, option (3) can also be interpreted as a hint for disagreement. For this reason, we need to consider the possibility for not only the types

of hints reviewed above for requests, but also other types of hints that are interpretable as such due to turn-organizational rather than turn-constructional reasons. Hence, in the case of disagreements, a simple reactive token such as *'oh',* a hesitation maker *'uhm'*, or even no-talk can represent hints of disagreement, as they often mark the turn as dispreferred (Pomerantz 1984). This is precisely what happens in the following examples in which the profferer of the Initiating Move changes the force of his/her statement after waiting for a response for a short while:

> (143) *(2eng/T40-1M32)*
> T377 B: so you wanna go to like El Prado:: [Reina] Sofía::=
> T378 A: [yeah]
> T377' B: =[Gug]genhe::im [things like that @@@]
> T379 A: [yeah]   [so if we can like (.)   ] do::: (.) the coo::::l-
> T380 C: wait I thought that Reina Sofía painting↑ was <u>in</u> El Prado (.) no?
> ⟶   **(0.5)**
> T380' C: [(name of) a museum?] ((*shaking head sideways*))

> (144) *(8esp/T140M125)*
> T555 C: diez euros al día↑ para comer
> ⟶   **(5.2)** ((*A y B piensan*))
> T555' C: o más

In example (143), C in T380 expresses her belief, via a conducive question, that *'Reina Sofía'* is the name of a painting and that it is exhibited in El Prado museum. Her turn is complete and has reached a TCP, where some interlocutor is expected to pick up the floor to either agree or disagree with C's assumption. The lack of an immediate response allows C to infer that her assumption is deemed incorrect by her interlocutors, as demonstrated by her move toward her interlocutors' position in T380'. Something similar happens in the Spanish example. After waiting for more than five seconds, speaker C slightly changes his opinion via a self-correction introduced by *'or'*.

Therefore, I propose to incorporate the category of Weak hints to account for all these cases, which in fact are the Type A Alerters described above, but this time acting as Head Acts. Here are some more illustrating examples:

> (145) *(2eng/T5-7M3)*
> T020 A: [cost or what?] well June- it's actually really hot (.) also
>   [right? it's <u>gross</u>]ly hot
> T021 B: [yeah (probably)]
> ⟶ T022 C: **oh::::**

> (146) *(8esp/D1)*
> T493 A: pues el seis podemos ir a Cantabria↑ (.) y::::-

```
         T494  C:  no sé a XXXXXXX o algo de eso
    ➤ T495  B:  ºn:::::º ((como dudando))
```

(147) *(11jpn/T183-4M143)*
```
         T0942  B:  demo @ futsuu ni- @ datte  issee kekkon suru deshoo ne (0.7)   [izure ]
    ➤ T0943  C:                                                          [n:::? ]
               B:  but @ normally- @ homosexual weddings will take place (0.7)[eventually]
               C:                                                      [huh::?    ]
```

Turning now to Strong and Mild hints, they will be analyzed as such if they fulfil the following conditions:

a) there is no explicit disagreeing element

b) they have some propositional content (thus excluding Alerters) that might allow the addressee to make some kind of connection with the prior statement, albeit not in a clear and straightforward manner.

The connection mentioned in (b) can be more or less clear. Sometimes the relationship between the disagreement move and the prior utterance might be highly obvious, as in example (148):

(148) *(8jpn/T55-6M44)*
```
         T0410  B:  Okinawa:: ishuu ryokoo  [ma:: Na- Naha tsuita]ra koo:::: itte=
    ➤ T0411  A:                         [@ atsui ze zettai @]
               B:  a trip around Okinawa [uhm as- as soon as ] we arrive in Naha we go- =
               A:                         [@ it's gonna be hot for sure @]
```

In this example, B suggests going around Okinawa visiting some islands. In a previous turn, he had proposed to do that by bicycle. A seems to complain that it is going to be too hot for that. There is no direct opposition here but a mere comment –albeit upgraded– on the climatic conditions of Okinawa, letting the addressee establish first that heat is negative in this case, and then that this negative quality advises not to ride on bicycle. Something similar happens in the following Spanish example, in this case aggravated syntactically with an exclamative format (*'con el calor que hace'*):

(149) *(3esp/T9-10M7)*
```
         T035  B:  =ir a Madrid ((moviendo la cabeza hacia los lados))
         T036  A:  a Madrid?
         T037  B:  [sí]
    ➤ T038  C:  [a ] Madri::d en verano (.) con el calor que hace
```

Or in this one in English, in which it is claimed that one factor was not included in the budget, thus implicating that the amount proposed is not enough:

(150) *(7eng/T46M35)*
    T328 A: so it's about six hundred euro our whole time in Europe?
    T329 C: °yeah°
               (0.8)
→T330 B: **buses↑ did we count [that?]**

These indirect disagreements are non-conventional. That is, there is no "standard" grammatical structure that is conventionally used in this sub-category. Their common feature is that they address some problematic factor in the initiating communicative act. They give arguments/accounts that are inferred as disagreement, without explicitly disagreeing. Now compare the three examples above with the following one:

(151) *(8esp/T155M140)*
    T628 C: [[venga eso es- exactamente]] pon ciento cincuenta para las en<u>tra::</u>das↑ y
                para ver todas las fiestas (.) que **hacemos botellón en el coche↑ y ya está:::**

C begins the turn by explicitly agreeing with prior speaker about the amount of money they should take with them to allow for going to concerts, events and festivals (*'venga eso es- exactamente pon ciento cincuenta para las en<u>tra::</u>das↑ y para ver todas las fiestas'*). He then hints a disagreement by saying that they can have a *'botellón'* party in the car. The inference here is that the proposed amount is not enough, but there is no direct reference to that in the statement and the addresses' background knowledge or schemata about the *'botellón'* is called for.

Example (151) is similar to examples (148, 149, and 150) in many respects, but there is one major difference. While the utterances in (148, 149, and 150) explicitly address some problematic factor in the previous turn, in (151) there are additional layers of indirectness: *'botellón'* – student drinking parties celebrated in the streets because they do not want to spend much money in bars and pubs – if a *'botellón in the car'* is claimed as a possible solution in this context it should be because of its relation with *students without money*, thus implicating that the proposed budget is insufficient for a comfortable trip.

Example (152) below is similar, but this time a logical conclusion is claimed. Speaker C has suggested going both to Galicia and Valencia, to which A sees one problem:

(152) *(1eng/T5-8M5)*
→T040 A: **where's Galicia? Galicia is [on the other side?]**
  T041 B: [it's on the other   ] side=
  T042 C: =it's u:::::::h   [west?]
  T043 B: [west] yeah [that's where it is]
  T044 C: [(northwest)   ] just [the west]ernmost[part]
  T045 A: [**yeah**   ]   [**and**]▲
→   **(0.5) and (.) u::h (.) Valencia's on the right**
          (0.8)
  T046 B: yeah they're complete oppo[sites]

Here, Speaker A is trying to lead her interlocutors to the logical conclusion that going both to Galicia and Valencia is unfeasible *because* they are complete opposites. That is, she is trying to hint that it is not a good idea without saying so.

In conclusion, following the above discussion, I suggest classifying the former as Strong hints as their relationship with the propositional content of the prior utterance is more direct, and the latter as Mild hints. In these two categories I do not intend to make an exhaustive list of possible realizations, as that would be a paramount task, there should be as many strategies as possible inferential links and logical connections between the propositional content of the disagreement and the statement they disagree with. Furthermore, one major feature of hints is its heterogeneity (Weizman 1989: 82).

In sum, NCIAs have been classified in three different levels of indirectness, from less to more opaque in their illocutionary force:

1. Strong Hints
2. Mild Hints
3. Weak Hints.

D. The problem of identifying hints as disagreement

One problem that arises with hints is their identification as disagreements, precisely because of their ambiguous or vague nature. One is never sure whether a disagreement has been really produced unless confirmed by contextual and co-textual factors. In this respect, I have followed three criteria to recognize a hint as a disagreement token: (1) the initial speaker's (the producer of the initial statement) uptake of the hint as a disagreement as evidenced by either a downgrade in the force of the original statement or self-repair (see Example 153), (2) the speaker's follow-up in

subsequent turns, in which the disagreement is made more explicit (see Example 154), and (3) the speaker's gesture (see Example 155):

> (153) *(4eng/T22M12)*
>   T160 A: and then you'd have a full day there (.) and then you'd go to Bilbao for the day (.) and then you'd get- come back to San Sebastian if you needed to (.) [depen]ding
>   T161 B: [mhm]
> → **(1.0)**
> → T162 C: so:::: **uh:::-**
> → T163 A: or just go straight from Bilbao to:: (.) the Madrid area↑
>   (1.3)
>   T164 B: °mhm°= ((*nodding slightly*))
> → T165 C: =I think that might be::::: (.) [yeah]

> (154) *(13jpn/T92-4M74)*
>   T0806' C: kore de sugoseru ka ne? ni<u>shuu</u>kan sugosu n dattara sa yohodo (.) keikakuteki ni ikanai to sa (0.7)   [jikan] moteamashichaisoo da ne
> → T0807 A: [**nn?**]
>   T0808 A: u:::n
>   (.)
>   T0809 B: e? demo kekkoo yukkuri (.) kankoo dekiru to omou↓ (.) kon dake areba
> → T0810 A: **datte uchira tochikan nai mon ne**
>   C: *are we gonna be okay with this? we need to plan the trip carefully (.) if we're [gonna travel] for two weeks (0.7) [I feel] like we're gonna waste our time don't you think so?*
>   A: *[huh?]*
>   A: *mhm*
>   *(.)*
>   B: *huh? but I think we can relax (.) and see around the sights leisurely (.) if we have that much time*
>   A: ***and in fact we don't have a sense of direction***

> (155) *(7eng/T107M77)*
>   T696 A: mhm o::::r Jennifer Connelly↑ (.) [also] for Requiem↑ (.) for a Dream↑
> → T697 B: [**n::::**]   ((*scrunches up his face*))

Example (153) is a typical case in which Weak hints perform the disagreeing act. In this case, there are more than one hint and several clues that allow their interpretation as disagreements. The Weak hints, in bold face, are a long gap (one second) and the hesitation marker *'uh::::'*. The first evidence for interpreting them as disagreeing Head Acts is A's reaction in T163, who suggests an alternative route to the one proposed in T160. The second evidence is found in T165, in which C agrees with the alternative proposal rather than the first one. In example (154), it is the speaker's follow-up that confirms the disagreement. In T0807, A produces a reactive token followed by an agreement token in T0808. It is not until T0810 and after B has already disagreed that A is more explicit in her disagreement, although still non-conventionally indirect. Finally,

in Example (155), the disagreement interpretation is reached via the speaker's facial expression, which clearly shows disgust.

Criterion (2), however, poses one further analytical problem: if a more explicit form of disagreement is searched in subsequent turns, then that turn could count as the Turn Externally Delayed Head Act[66], and the hint would be just an Alerter (Weak Hint) or a Supportive Move (Mild and Strong Hints). This point is not relevant from a qualitative point of view, as the Hint may locally count as a Head Act at the turn level for the participants (or at least the speaker). The problem is posed only for the analyst. However, it is more problematic for a quantitative analysis. Should they be regarded as one disagreement move with an Alerter + Head Act format? Or rather two disagreement moves? In order to solve this problem, I have followed what I will call the *Relevant Initiating Turn Criterion*: as disagreements occupy the second pair part in an adjacency pair, no matter how far apart the first and second pair might be, the Turn-Externally Delayed disagreement should count as one single move whenever the delayed Head Act constitutes a response to that initial act, i.e. if there is no other Initiating turns between the Alerter and the (potential) Head Act. So, in fact the Weak Hint in Example (154) has been analyzed as an Alerter acting as a *pre-exchange* (Weizman 1989: 75) for the Head Act performed in T0810, as they both address the statement made by C in T0806'. Thus, they both constitute one single disagreement move. On the other hand, in example (153) the Weak Hint has been analyzed as a Head Act because the utterance produced in T165 (besides being framed as an agreement) addresses the repaired statement in T163, which in this case constitutes a new Initiating turn.

5.3.2.2.4. *Head-Act internal modifiers*

When the Head Act is not realized by a Weak Hint, i.e., when the disagreement is not performed by attributable silence (which cannot be mitigated or aggravated), a reactive token, and the like, the speaker can modify the force of a Head Act either by attenuating or enhancing the impact of the disagreement on the addressee. The former will be categorized as Mitigators, and the latter, as Aggravators.

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[66] See Sub-section 5.3.2.1.1. for a description and classification of turn-organizational features.

A. Mitigators

Mitigation can be realized at the syntactic, phrasal, lexical, and suprasegmental levels. As Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 281) point out, syntactic Mitigators are those syntactic modifications that downgrade the force of the utterance and are optional in the context in which it is used. So, in the following examples the NTRIs (Ex. 156) and requests for clarification/confirmation (Ex. 157) will not be regarded as syntactically mitigated, as the interrogative mood is the conventional structure used in those cases[67]:

(156) *(2esp/T29M26)*
    T143' B: =yo quiero hotel [[[@@@]]]
    T144 A: [[[yo tam]]]bién yo tam[bién   ]
→T145 C: **[hot<u>e</u>l?]**

(157) *(1eng/T11M8)*
    T057 A: is it in Gali[cia?]
→T058 B: **[isn't] it** like (.) the <u>ca</u>pital of Galicia?

Rather, syntactic Mitigators are normally applicable to LD disagreements, *'no', 'but',* and *'or'* strategies when not followed by CIAs, or either strong or mild NCIA disagreements. The following examples are cases of the latter:

(158) *(7eng/T46M35)*
    T328 A: so it's about six hundred euro our whole time in Europe?
    T329 C: ºyeahº
             (0.8)
→T330 B: buses↑ **did we count [that?]**

(159) *(7eng/T41M31)*
    T260 A: the <u>Dali</u> apartments↑
             (0.8)
→T261 C: ye- (.) oh **were- were those built by Gaudi?**

B's and C's utterance respectively are non-conventionally indirect disagreements mitigated by the interrogative mood. In (158) the immediate implicature is *'we did not count buses'*, which in turn implicates that six hundred euros is not enough. In what follows, a list of syntactic, phrasal, lexical, supra-segmental and sequential mitigators is given.

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[67] See Sub-section 5.3.2.2.2.

<u>Other syntactic downgraders</u>

1. **Past tense:** e.g., *'I thought it was'* (4eng) / *'creía que…', 'no era…?'* / *'… to omotte ita'*.

2. **Conditional (modal in English, and conditional verb form in Spanish):** *'would'* (4eng) / *'sería, me gustaría'* / no exact equivalent in Japanese.

3. **'if' subordinate clause:** *'if'* (4eng) / *'si'* / *'(moshi)…dattara', '…nara', '*verb+*eba'*.

4. **Possibility:** English modals *'can', 'could', 'may', 'might'* / *'puede', 'podría'* / *'kamo(shirenai)'*.

5. **Ellipsis:** they are inconclusive statements in which typically the explicit disagreeing item is missing): *'sí pero en los demás sitios…'* (3esp/T36M31)

6. **Post-position of adversative marker:** Instead of the adversative conjunctions *'but'* / *'pero'* / *'demo'*, the explicit disagreement marker is delayed to the final position in the clause *'though'* / *'sin embargo'* (although not found in my Spanish data since it is highly formal) / *'kedo'*.

7. **Interrogative mood:** The speaker utters a Locution Derivable disagreement with an interrogative structure. As opposed to Type A CIAs, they should include a different referent: *'A: I wanna go to Madrid. B: Shall we go to Toledo?'* / *'A: quiero ir a Madrid. B: Vamos a Toledo?'* / *'A: Dizunii e ikitai. B: Shii e ikoo ka'. ('A: I wanna go to Disneyland. B: Shall we go to Sea (Paradise)?')*.

<u>Phrasal and lexical downgraders</u>

1. **Claim lack of knowledge (CLK)[68]:** CLKs are analyzed as Head-Act internal downgraders of the illocutionary force of the disagreement when produced as part of the Head-Act, and not before or after it. When produced before the Head-Act, they are regarded as Alerters. When produced afterwards, they are supportive moves indicating some kind of concession, in which Tsui (1991: 607) defines either as an avoidance of commitment or a minimization of impolite beliefs. In any event, as Locher (2004: 125) argues, they have a mitigating effect.

2. **Cajoler:** Blue-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 284) define cajolers as "conventionalized speech items whose semantic content is of little transparent relevance to their

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[68] See Sub-section 5.3.2.2.2 for further details.

discourse meaning […] [that] increase, establish, or restore harmony between the interlocutors […]". E.g., *'you know' / '¿sabes?' '¿sabes lo que te digo?' /* involvement marker *'ne'*.

3. **Subjectivizer:** The speaker presents the statement as a personal opinion rather than as a general truth and it is equivalent to what Holtgraves (1997) calls "Personalize opinion". Although Holmes (1995: 92-3) warns against an over-generalization of its mitigating function due to its primary role as an expression of insecurity about the truth value of the utterance, I agree with Locher (2004: 123) that there is always a face-saving function, either for the addresser or for the addressee. Some realizations of this strategy are *'I think', 'I feel' / 'yo creo' / 'to omou'* (Holtgraves' (1997) Personalize opinion).

4. **Impersonalization:** the speaker avoids personal responsibility for the propositional content of the utterance by presenting it as a general perception without committing him/herself to its truth value. Some examples of this type are *'it seems'* (4eng) */ 'parece', 'supuestamente' / 'mitai', 'rashii', 'soo da'*, as well as references to a third party to whom the responsibility is shifted.

5. **Understater:** they are adverbial expressions used to under-represent the state of affairs. When the statement is presented in positive terms they may adopt the following forms: *'a bit', 'a little', 'a few', 'only', 'just', 'about' / 'un poco', 'algo', 'algunos', 'cierto', 'solo' / 'chotto', 'jakkan', 'tada', 'karuku', 'dochira ka to'*. When the utterance is negatively oriented, some other expressions are used, like *'too' (*as in *'it's not too fast'*), *'so', 'as' / 'tan', 'tanto', 'demasiado', 'muy', 'tampoco'* (like in *'tampoco está mal'*) */ 'sonna ni', 'soo demo (nai)', 'dake', 'ammari', 'amma'*.

6. **Downtoner:** they are words and expressions that downgrade the accuracy and level of precision of the statement. E.g., *'probably', 'maybe', 'really'* (in negatively oriented utterances) */ 'a lo mejor', 'quizás', 'posiblemente', 'igual' / 'tabun', 'kitto',* the ending particle *'–soo'* after verbs, as in *'arisoo'* (*'there probably is'*).

7. **Hedge:** these are expressions used to disclaim precision and certainty in order not to sound too assertive. E.g., *'kind of', 'like' / 'como', 'más o menos' / 'daitai', 'gurai', 'toka', 'mitai na', 'nanka', '-ppoi'* (like in *'ikinikuppoi' ('kind of hard to go')*).

8. **Relativizer:** They downgrade the force of the disagreement by suggesting some condition or conditions for the relevance of the statement. E.g., *'(it) depends' / 'depende', 'según', 'ya veremos' / '… ni yoru'*.

9. **Reformulation marker:** they are expressions that indicate that the speaker is trying to reformulate what has been said, thus implicating some kind of modification in the illocutionary force. E.g., *'I mean' / 'quiero decir', 'es decir', 'o sea' / 'tte iu ka', 'tsumari'*.

10. **In-group solidarity marker:** Expressions that help enhance camaraderie and bonding among the in-group members. They are relevant in in-group situations. E.g., *'bro', 'man' / 'tío' / 'anta', 'omae'*. In Japanese, the final particle *'ne'* is commonly used to fulfil this function. It is a marker of involvement which suggests that all participants share the same knowledge.

Suprasegmental and sequential

1. **Final rising intonation:** They refer to either full propositions in declarative mood or verbless utterances ending with a rising intonation. They should be distinguished from utterances in interrogative mood.

2. **Low voice/whisper.** The speaker makes an almost inaudible contribution.

3. **Laughter/laughing quality.** The speaker either produces his/her utterance interspersed with laughter, or laughs openly before and/or after his/her contribution.

4. **Hesitation markers/fillers.** According to Locher (2004: 120), hesitation markers can "protect either the speaker's or the addressee's face" (see also Brown and Levinson 1987: 172) when they perform as mitigators, and they display reluctancy or discomfort, as Pomerantz (1984: 72) pointed out. E.g., *'uh', 'uhm', 'erm' / 'eh:::', 'n::::' / 'n::::', 'eto::::', 'e::::'*.

5. **Pauses:** Pauses are defined by Sacks *et al.* (1974: 715, fn.) as "intra-turn silence" which do not occur at TRPs, and frame the turn as dispreferred at 1st order.

6. **False starts:** They refer to un-finished utterances followed by reformulations or repetitions.

All the above devices (syntactic, phrasal, lexical, supra-segmental and sequential) are not mutually exclusive but may co-occur forming multiple combinations.

B. Aggravators

They have the opposite effect of that of Mitigators. They are used to enhance and upgrade the impact of the propositional content of the utterance. The following aggravators have been considered:

Lexical and phrasal

1. **Intensifiers:** They are adverbial expressions or morphemes that upgrade the force of specific elements of the proposition of the utterance. Some examples are *'super', 'very', 'pretty', 'really', 'much', 'way (up)', 'that', 'so' / 'muy', 'super', '-ísimo' / 'totemo', 'kanari', 'kekkoo', 'zuibun', 'dai (kirai)', 'choo (omoshiroi)', 'sugoku', 'daibu'.*

2. **Superlatives:** They are comparisons that bring the contrast to its maximum degree, thus enhancing the oppositional effect. E.g., *'worst (+ ever)' / 'el (la) peor' / 'saitei', 'saikoo', 'mottomo'.*

3. **Reiteration:** They are repetitions of own words or statements. E.g., *'no no no', 'I like…, I like…', 'really really' / 'no no no', 'sí sí sí', 'buenísimo buenísimo' / 'chigau chigau'.*

4. **Explicit perspective-contrast marker:** *'not **me**' / '**a mí** no', '**yo** no' / '**ore** wa chigau' (roughly 'I'm different' or '(that's) not my case')*

5. **Attention getters:** They are expressions, most frequently in imperative form, which coerce the freedom of action of the addressee by bringing his/her attention to what the speaker is going to say or requesting a halt in the conversation. E.g., *'look', 'wait' / 'espera', 'mira', 'piensa', 'vamos a ver' / 'matte' ('wait'), 'hora' ('look').*

6. **Lexical uptoner:** A marked lexical choice that upgrades the disagreement, normally emphasizing its oppositional meaning. E.g., *'can't stand', 'hate', 'love' / 'odio', 'detesto', 'me encanta' / 'tamannai' ('(I) can't bear (it)'), 'yabai' ('terrible'*, also used with positive meaning*).*

6. **Taboo uptoners:** They are expletives and words that are normally considered improper in certain contexts, especially in formal settings. E.g., *'(like) shit' / 'como el culo', 'hasta los huevos' / 'kuso (atsui)' ('hot like shit').*

7. **Modifying uptoners:** they are disjuncts and/or subjuncts that emphasize the certainty of the proposition. E.g., *'definitely', 'totally', 'surely', 'really' /*

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'seguro', 'sin duda' / 'tashika ni' ('surely'), 'zettai' ('definitely'), 'kanarazu' ('without fail'), 'zenzen' ('definitely (not)'). When the utterance has a negative orientation, alternative forms may be used, such as *only*

8. **Assertive markers in Japanese:** In Japanese, the final particles '*mon', 'yo'* give a more aggressive tone to the utterance, which can be mitigated if not used or completed with the involvement marker '*ne'*. This form assumes that the addressee does not share the information hold by the speaker, which can represent a threat to the addressee's face. A similar effect is achieved in Spanish with the interjection '*eh'* with rising intonation.

9. **Assertive grounders:** They precede the utterance that supports some previously stated disagreement, or directly contradicts the interlocutor. Some examples are *'the fact is' / 'es que', 'lo que pasa (es) que' / 'datte'*. They are similar to *'but'* and *'or'* in that they make the nature of the unfolding utterance explicit.

10. **Challeging emphatic expressions:** They are formulaic expressions that upgrade the disagreement in several ways, normally by means rhetorical questions that have the force of a challenge. E.g., *'so what' / 'tú dime a mí'* (3esp/T79M70), *'cómo no…?'* (3esp/T99-100M88), *'a dónde voy yo…?'* (3esp/T131M116).

11. **Criticisms and accusations:** They are expressions that do not aim at presenting a counter-argument to the previous turn, but rather target the person with the purpose of damaging his/her self-esteem.

<u>Suprasegmental and sequential</u>
1. **Loud Voice,** relative to the general voice level of the conversation.
2. **Elongation.** It refers to acoustic extensions of some syllables which have the effect of upgrading the effect of the disagreement, and they normally go together with emphatic stress. For example, the CIA *'really?'* is more clearly interpreted as a disagreement when the vowels are sustained (e.g., *'rea:::::lly::::?'*).
3. **Emphatic stress.** A word or certain parts of a word may be prosodically stressed in order to underscore its oppositional value (e.g., *'are you <u>sure?'</u>*). They normally have this function when used in words that directly contrast with prior statement.
4. **Overlap and simultaneous talk.** They are included as Head Act internal devices because they do not precede the main act, but are rather concomitant with its production. Aggravating overlaps have been distinguished from non-

aggravating overlaps, which happen when a TCP or a TRP has been reached by prior speaker, in which case their occurrence can be said to be accidental (see Schegloff 2000).

As in the case of Mitigators, these strategies may co-occur and adopt different combinations.

5.3.2.2.5. Supportive Moves

Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 287) defined Supportive Moves as moves that are external to the Head Act and either mitigate or aggravate the force of the Head Act. Some of them may precede the Head Act (e.g., Preparators) while others usually come afterwards (e.g., negations of or disagreements with own statements, grounders introduced by *'because' / 'porque', 'es que' / 'datte', 'dakara'*). They may be Turn-Internal or Turn-External. When they follow the Head Act and are Turn External, they occupy the 3rd position slot in a sequence, which normally mark the initiation of a sustained disagreement sequence.

There is one qualitative difference between those produced before the Head Act and those that come afterwards. As Sacks (1987 [1973]) pointed out, preferred turns seem to follow a Principle of Contiguity in virtue of which turns that are framed as preferred immediately follow the preceding turn without gaps or hesitations. Conversely, those turns that are framed as dispreferred tend to be delayed. This way, if a disagreement is framed as preferred, it should be produced explicitly, without mitigation and with no delay. Conversely, if a disagreement Head Act is framed as extremely dispreferred it would be as indirect as possible, highly mitigated and pushed down into the turn or over several turns. Compare the following examples:

(160) *(3esp/T106-7M94)*
    T516 A: [PERO QUÉ LE PASA? QUÉ PASA? QUE] XXXXXXX
                PENÉLOPE CRUZ (.) Y:: ANTONIO BANDERAS↑ SON LOS GUAPOS
                DEL CINE↑ (.) PERO (.) CUA- ASÍ [CALIDAD DE ACTOR↑   ]
——▶T517 C: [**NO NO** MIRA PENÉLOPE]
                CRU::Z↑ (.) en la- cuando habla en ing- o sea cuando actúa en inglés↑ (.)
                está como el culo
    T518 B: yo es que no la he visto
——▶T519 C: pero cuando actúa en español↑ por lo menos hay ahí unas películas que:: yo
                qué sé [su papel lo hace bien]

(161) *(3esp/T57M50)*

→ T270 A: yo he puesto Córdoba↑ porque mi madre es de Córdoba y le tengo
→   mucho cariño a Córdoba
   T271 B: yo es que nunca he estado (.) por eso no sé qué decirte (.) a mí::- yo he- yo
            he estado en Madrid **a mí me [encanta Madrid]**

Both (160) and (161) have been extracted from the same conversation. Notice the difference in strategy. In Example (160), C frames his disagreement as preferred, as the disagreement is direct (*'NO NO'*), it follows the Principle of Contiguity (in fact, there is an overlap), and the Supportive Moves come afterwards (among other features). In Example (161), on the other hand, B frames her disagreement as dispreferred: although the Head Act is explicit (*Madrid* vs. *Córdoba*), direct (Locution derivable) and aggravated (contrastive personal pronoun *'a mí'*, lexical uptoner *'me encanta'*), it is pushed down into the turn and preceded by two Supportive Moves: (1) A CLK prefaced by a grounder that serves as justification (*Yo es que nunca he estado (.) por eso no sé qué decirte*), and (2) a Preparator to contextualize the Head Act (*yo he estado en Madrid*). The Supportive Moves here have a mitigating effect from both turn-constructional (CLK) and turn-organizational (delay) perspectives.

Finally, when these elements do not precede or follow a main disagreement act but stand on their own, they become the Head Act. Consider the above example again. Speaker B could have been much less explicit than in the data (*a mí me encanta Madrid*), and have produced a milder disagreement by uttering only the first part: *'Yo es que nunca he estado (.) por eso no sé qué decirte (.) a mí::- yo he- yo he estado en Madrid',* in which case the Preparator *'yo he estado en Madrid'* would have become the Head Act.

Supportive Moves (SM) have been classified as follows:

Mitigating

1. **Preparator:** this SM prepares the ground for the realization of the disagreeing Head Act by situating or contextualizing it: *'yo he estado en... y...'* (3esp/T57M50)

2. **Prefacing grounder:** the speaker gives reasons, explanations, or justifications for disagreeing *before* the disagreement, a position in which the addressee is still unaware of the nature of the utterance. A grounder in this position also has the effect of delaying the production of the Head Act.

2. **Negation of own statement:** After having disagreed, the speaker negates his/her own statement, thus functioning as a concession. E.g., *'I think Madrid is six hours (.) **no'.***

3. **Expressing distaste with one's position**. (Holtgraves 1997).

4. **Denial of one's own remark.** (Holtgraves 1997).

5. **Self-deprecation.** (Holtgraves 1997).

6. **Disagreement followed by adversative marker, with or without an explicit agreement move:** Its function is similar to that of negating own statement in that it signals a change in footing toward agreement. Here is an example that illustrates the point:

(162) *(3esp/T30M25)*
    T103 B: unos mil- unos mil quinientos vale? [y] si nos sobra pues nos lo traemos=
    T104 C: [sí]
    T103' B: =[o lo que sea vamos para   ] traer re<u>ga::</u>los:: y todo el rollo para la gente↑
    T105 C: [venga (.) (podrían ser mil-)]
→T106 C: **no hace falta quinientos para el viaje pero** yo creo que los podemos echar

7. **Story-telling:** The speaker tells his/her experience or somebody else's to justify the disagreement.

8. **Gradual agreement-disagreement move:** the speaker starts by agreeing with prior statement, but gradually changes to disagreement.

9. **Re-frame as agreement:** They are lexical items added at the end of the Head-Act which attempt to downgrade the force of the disagreement by finally agreeing with prior speaker, even if the propositional content of the utterance indicates the opposite. The normally adopt the affirmative agreement token *'yes', 'yeah' / 'sí' / 'un'*.

10. **The same suprasegmental features as in the Head Acts.**

<u>Aggravating</u>

1. **Command:** the speaker uses an imperative form to stop the conversation and bring the interlocutors attention: *'wait' / 'espera' / 'matte'*.

2. **Postponed grounder:** The speaker gives arguments for disagreeing *after* the Head Act (either inside or outside the turn), which are either marked by conjuncts/conjunctions (*'because' / 'es que', 'lo que pasa (es) que' / 'datte'*) or produced directly *'we just watched a video'* (7eng/T43-4M33).

2. **Reformulation/reiteration:** The speaker either restates the same message and illocutionary force of the Head Act with different wording or repeats the whole Act with an upgrading effect. As opposed to false starts, these reformulations come after full disagreements and the effect is to aggravate the force of the prior utterance.

3. **Irony:** the speaker makes some ironic comment supporting the disagreement: *'some taste you have'* (7eng/110M80).

4. **Criticism/accusation/contemptuous remark:** Although this device was already mentioned as an internal aggravator, they can also be Supportive Moves if they are produced as a separate clause upgrading the force of the disagreement expressed in the Head Act. Some examples are: *'You fail'* (7eng/T84M60), *'don't lie'* (7eng/T88M63) / *'qué floja eres'* (3esp) / *'hayai' ('too fast')* (8jpn).

5. **Upgrading assessment/opinion:** The speaker upgrades the disagreement by making evaluations or proffering opinions that enhance the opposing effect of the disagreement. Example (upgrading assessments/opinions in bold):

(163) *(7eng/T121M87)*
    T731 B: [ºbut he's kind] of awkwardº
                       (1.3)
    T732 A: I think that's what I like about him that he is kind of awkward like in Love
                   Actually::↑ (.) how **he's <u>so::</u> awkward** about (.) having a crush↑[**that's]
                   ad<u>o</u>rable**

5.4. Results of the quantitative analysis

The first step towards the quantitative analysis of disagreements was to establish the number of turns produced in each language group. Americans produced 2,488 turns, Spanish participants completed 3,319, and Japanese speakers uttered 5,057 turns. The resulting data object of analysis comprised 10,864 turns overall (see Table 10 for their distribution among the groups that participated in this study).

Table 10. Distribution of turns per groups and language.

	Group # 1	Group # 2	Group # 3	Group # 4	TOTAL
English	288	982	416	802	2,488
Spanish	827	721	886	885	3,319
Japanese	1,528	1,292	1,044	1,193	5,057
TOTAL					**10,864**

The difference in the number of turns produced between languages is partly explained by the fact that the Japanese speakers simply talked more minutes than their Spanish and American counterparts[69]. There is, however, one additional motivation. The Japanese speakers showed a tendency to make their contributions very short and constantly looked for their interlocutors' reactions and comments, as the following excerpt illustrates:

(164) *(8jpn)*
      T135 B: ja:: (.) niman gurai da to [yosoo shite]
      T136 C: [niman gurai]
      T137 A: ºunº
                (1.5)
      T138 B: juuniman juusanman
                (1.7)
      T139 C: ºjuusanmanº
      T140 B: juuyonman juu (.) ni kara juuyon
      T141 A: ºunº
      T142 B: de:: (.) omiyage?
                (0.9)
      T143 C: rejaa dai de?
      T144 B: rejaa dai ga-//
      T145 A: //sono ta [moromoro]
      T146 C: [rejaa- rejaa] dai ippai hoshii ne
            A: [@@@]
      T147 B: [rejaa dai] ga::-
      T148 C: @ rejaa dai ippai hoshii [@@@ ni]shuukan da ze::
      T149 B: [rejaa dai↑-]
      T150 A: soo da yo ne::
      T151 B: nanaman gurai?
                (1.3)
      T152 A: (ºwakannaiº) (1.0) kekkoo suru n da ra:: nishuukan toka itte
                (1.1)
      T153 C: ºrejaa dai-º
            B: *okay (.) let's say around [twenty thousand]*
            C: *[around twenty]*
            A: *ºyeahº*
                (1.5)
            B: *one hundred and twenty thirty*
                (1.7)
            C: *ºone hundred and thirtyº*
            B: *one hundred and forty twenty (.) to forty*
            A: *ºyeahº*
            B: *a::nd (.) for souvenirs?*
                (0.9)
            C: *for leisure expenses?*
            B: *for leisure-//*
            A: *//for all   [sorts of things]*
            C: *[for leisure- we] want a lot for leisure don't we*
            A: *[@@@   ]*
            B: *[for leisure expenses-]*

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[69] See Chapter 4 for relevant discussion.

> C: @ we want a lot for leisure [@ @ @ it's] gonna be two weeks (remember)
> B: [for leisure↑-]
> A: that's right
> B: about seventy thousand?
>   (1.3)
> A: (ºI dunnoº) (1.0) in two weeks you spend a lot don't you
>   (1.1)
> C: ºfor leisure expenses-º

As observed above, contributions are pretty short and highly repetitive, as if speakers were thinking aloud. The resulting ratio of turns per minute of talk was around 33 turns/minute average for the Japanese participants, while both Spanish and American speakers only produced around 25 turns.

5.4.1. The computation of disagreements

Once the total number of turns was established, I proceeded to the computation of the disagreeing turns. The following criteria were taken into account:

1. It had to be a responding turn to a prior proposal, opinion, or assessment, thus discarding answers to questions, requests, apologies, and other Initiating Moves.

2. Either the semantic content of the turn or the reaction of the other participants to that turn indicated that it was interpreted as disagreement.

3. One disagreement act could in turn be the Initiating Move against which further disagreeing turns could be produced, thus representing the beginning of a disagreement sequence.

4. When two people disagreed with one Initiating Move, two possibilities were considered: (a) if they both addressed the Initiating Move separately and framed their turns as disagreement, they were regarded as such; however, (b) if one of them framed their contribution as an agreement with a previously produced disagreeing turn, it was computed as agreement, and not as disagreement.

5. No distinction was made between disagreement turns occupying second and subsequent positions in a disagreement sequence.

As soon as I started counting, I stumbled with one difficulty: the number of turns did not always correlate with the disagreement acts. That is, sometimes one disagreement act could be delayed for several turns until it was finally produced, while the preceding

turns were used as Alerters or Supportive Moves that prepared the path for the disagreement. The following example shows this point:

(165) *(1eng/T5-8M5)*
    T040 A: **where's Galicia? Galicia is [on the other side?]**
    T041 B: [it's on the other   ] side=
    T042 C: =it's u:::::::h   [west?]
    T043 B: [west] yeah [that's where it is]
    T044 C: [(northwest)   ] just [the west]ernmost [part]
    T045 A: **[yeah   ]   [and]**
             (0.5) and (.) u::h (.) Valencia's on the right
             (0.8)
    T046 B: yeah they're complete oppo[sites]
    T047 A: **[yes]**
    T048 C: Valencia is kind of near Bar[[celona]]
    T049 A: **[[so we go]] like this**↑ [@@]

Speaker A prepares the ground in turns T040, T045 & T047 for producing a disagreement in T049, where she brings her interlocutors' attention to the fact that going both to Galicia and Valencia could be quite complicated considering that they are *'complete opposites'* on the map, as B acknowledges in T046. As we can see, A has used four turns here for one single disagreement.

In order to solve this problem, I decided to use the term *move* for the disagreement *per se*. Move was chosen to refer to the whole disagreeing sequence (in the above example, covering turns T040, T045, T047, and T049) with respect to one Initiating Move. The word *act* was reserved for the term Head Act, as used for the identification of the nuclear part of the move, in which the main force of the disagreement is located[70]. As a result of this decision, turns and moves were computed separately, and different results obtained[71].

5.4.2. Results #1: Distribution of disagreement moves

The first research sub-question posed in the Descriptive Section was the relative frequency of disagreements in an "agreement preferred" context such as the one investigated here. The purpose at this stage is to see whether consistent similarities or

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[70] See the section on the Coding System in Section 5.3.
[71] No instance of the opposite nature was found, i.e., cases in which one single turn included more than one disagreement move. An example of this type could be when someone answers to two different questions in one single turn (see Pérez de Ayala 2003: 81ff, for this type of cases).

differences can be found in the sheer number of them. It can be argued that disagreements might or might not occur just because people do or do not have anything to disagree with, thus making the comparison a trivial one. Nevertheless, I believe that if recurrent patterns can be found (e.g., that more disagreeing moves are consistently produced in one language), then results can be meaningful.

At this first level of analysis, one major distinction emerged. While American English speakers and Japanese speakers both showed a similar production level of disagreements (9.65% and 8.58% of moves, totalling 240 and 434 cases, respectively), the Spanish participants showed much less reluctance, as their production comprised as much as 14.07% of the overall turns (467 cases).

A close group-by-group inspection revealed that the Japanese speakers were the ones who showed the highest degree of variation, from as little as 3.40% of cases in Group # 1 to as high as 14.37% in the case of Group # 3, the latter being more than four times higher than the former. The Spanish speakers presented least inter-group variation, as the results ranged from 9.67% minimum to 18.42% maximum, which falls short of doubling the first figure. In this case, the English data showed a similar pattern to that found in the Spanish data, exceeding them just slightly (6.42% vs. 13.84%) (see Table 12 below).

Table 11. Number of turns comprising disagreement and their proportion with respect to turns per group and language.

	TURNS									
	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
English	24	8.33	80	8.17	57	13.70	151	18.83	312	12.54
Spanish	90	10.88	140	19.42	121	13.66	181	20.45	532	**16.03**
Japanese	149	9.75	150	11.61	192	18.39	133	11.15	624	12.34
TOTAL									**1,468**	13.51

Table 12. Number of disagreement moves and their proportion with respect to turns per group and language.

	MOVES									
	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
English	19	6.60	63	6.42	42	10.10	111	13.84	240	9.65
Spanish	80	9.67	125	17.34	99	11.17	163	18.42	467	**14.07**
Japanese	52	3.40	125	9.67	150	14.37	107	8.97	434	8.58
TOTAL									**1,141**	10.50

One may ask the reason for such variation. On one hand, the language internal variation in general can be explained if we attend to the type of participants in each group. Recall that groups where distributed as follows:

- English: Group # 1: all female; Group # 2: all female; Group # 3; mixed; Group # 4: mixed.

- Spanish: Group # 1: all female; Group # 2: mixed; Group # 3; all female; Group # 4: mixed.
- Japanese: Group # 1: all female; Group # 2: mixed; Group # 3; mixed; Group # 4: all female.

If we match the data in Table 12 with the group configurations, we find that the highest scores correspond to the mixed groups, whereas the lowest scores were obtained in the "all female" groups. Clearly, there seems to be a correlation between gender and the production of disagreements, at least in close friendly encounters as the ones analyzed here, where there are higher levels of in-group solidarity. These conclusions are, however, tentative since this variable was not initially considered for analysis in the present work. Furthermore, no "all male" groups participated in this study, and therefore, we do not know whether the effect on disagreement production was a matter of gender differences or rather a question of inter vs. intra-gender interactions.

In other respects, all the groups show a similar behavior, with the only exception of the "all female" Japanese Group # 1, where the production of disagreement is much lower than the other "all female" groups (Group # 4). There is not one single and clear explanation for this variation. One possible reason might be some internal hierarchy among the participants in Group # 1 that escaped my control. The hierarchical nature of Japanese society is well known, and although every effort was exerted to guarantee that all participants were acquainted and belonged to the same college year, the possibility of having some special relationship among them, such as being members of the same university club, might have influenced their behavior.

Another possible source for the variation can be the participants' geographical origin. In the case of Group # 1, one of them came from a not-very-developed provincial town in Tokushima prefecture (central Honshu Island), and the other two lived in small towns in Shizuoka prefecture which are not very well communicated, as the participants themselves say in their conversations. The rest of the participants, on the other hand, come from more developed urban areas such as Shizuoka city, Nagasaki, Yokohama or Tokyo. One possible explanation, then, could be that people from more rural regions are more traditional than those living in big cities, and show less preference for disagreements in "agreement preferred" contexts. This, of course, is speculative at this stage and further studies controlling this variable are needed to reach a conclusion.

One major conclusion that can definitely be drawn at this level of analysis is that Spanish speaking young people show less reluctance to express disagreement than American and Japanese speakers. If the three cultures are compared keeping the group configurations constant, we find that the Spanish speakers consistently produce more disagreement moves than their counterparts: Spanish "all female" groups disagree more than the other "all female" groups, and Spanish "mixed" groups show the same pattern. The Spanish female groups produced 9.67% and 11.17% (*Mean:* 10.42%) of disagreements, way above the 6.60% and 6.42 (*Mean:* 6.51%) and 3.40% and 8.97% (*Mean:* 6.15%) produced by Americans and Japanese respectively. Similar results are found in the mixed groups, where the Spanish 17.34% and 18.42% (*Mean:* 17.88%) stand in high contrast with the American 10.10% and 13.84% (*Mean:* 11.97%) and Japanese 9.67% and 14.37% (*Mean:* 12.02%).

Finally, the American vs. Japanese comparison is inconclusive, due to the high variation in the Japanese data. We could venture, however, that their behavior is quantitatively similar. American female participants only scored 6.42% and 6.60% (*Mean:* 6.51%), while one of the Japanese female groups disagreed 8.97% of the turns, but fell as low as 3.40% in the other (*Mean:* 6.15%). The mixed groups in both languages behaved similarly, with 10.10% and 13.84% (*Mean:* 11.97%) of the turns by the Americans, and 9.67% and 14.37% (*Mean:* 12.02%) in the case of the Japanese.

Summing up, Spanish speakers showed less reticence to disagreeing than Americans and Japanese. This distinction seemed to hold both in all-female and mixed interactions, although they were consistently higher in the case of the latter. The all-female versus mixed distinction also holds among Americans and Japanese, but their scores were lower throughout. Americans and Japanese, on the other hand, had a similar behavior in terms of frequency of production of disagreement moves in friendly conversations.

5.4.3. Results # 2: Distribution of disagreements by categories of directness

Once the total number of disagreements was computed, they were classified by their level of directness following the coding scheme outlined in Chapter 4. In order to establish whether disagreeing moves were direct, conventionally indirect (CIA), or non-conventionally indirect (NCIA) regarding their illocutionary force, the Head Acts in

each move were isolated. At this point, directness should be understood in its pragmatic sense of degree of correspondence between the propositional content (or explicature in Relevance-Theoretic terms) and the implicature of the utterances, rather than the level of mitigation or the delays in their production, which will be the focus of analysis in subsequent sections.

As already explained in the section on the Coding System, the force of the disagreement should be straighter and also (potentially) more damaging to the face of the interlocutor the more explicit and direct it is. This is not to say, however, that direct disagreement moves should be labelled as impolite. On the contrary, as I argued in the theoretical part of this thesis, the (im)politeness of each utterance should be decided via the perlocutionary effect produced in the addressee(s). What cannot be denied, however, is the level of explicitness (i.e., directness in the pragmatic sense), and hence aggressiveness, depending on the pragmatic strategy used. It is counter-intuitive to say that uttering a bare and straight *'no'* is less risky than being conventionally indirect (e.g., *'really?'*), other things being equal. The aim of this analysis, then, is to find out the degree of cross-cultural variation in the relative directness of Head Acts in disagreeing moves, which should inform about the level of tolerance to direct/aggressive disagreeing moves without falling into impoliteness.

A first look at the results shows that strategies categorized as *Direct* were preferred over CIA and NCIA strategies in all languages. This holds true not only across languages but also across groups within each language (see Tables 13, 14, and 15, and Graphs 1, 2, and 3 below). Overall, in the three languages the average direct disagreement moves constituted more than half of the data.

Table 13. Distribution of disagreements in English as a function of directness of Head Acts

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Direct	12	63.16	46	73.01	19	45.24	79	71.82	156	**66.67**
CIA	4	21.05	12	19.05	6	14.29	16	14.54	38	16.24
NCIA	1	5.26	4	6.35	14	33.33	12	10.91	31	13.25
Others[72]	2	10.53	1	1.59	3	7.14	3	2.73	9	3.84
TOTAL	**19**	100.00	**63**	100.00	**42**	100.00	**110**	100.00	**234**	**100.00**

Table 14. Distribution of disagreements in Spanish as a function of directness of Head Acts

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Direct	74	92.50	104	83.20	83	83.84	126	77.30	387	**82.87**
CIA	4	2.50	5	4.00	5	5.05	13	7.98	27	5.78
NCIA	1	3.75	11	8.80	10	10.10	21	12.88	43	9.21
Others	1	1.25	5	4.00	1	1.01	3	1.84	10	2.14
TOTAL	**80**	100.00	**125**	100.00	**99**	100.00	**163**	100.00	**467**	**100.00**

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[72] In the category of "Others", I have included those moves that were difficult to categorize due to their semantic and/or structural complexity. As they represent very few cases, I believe they do no invalidate the results obtained.

Table 15. Distribution of disagreements in Japanese as a function of directness of Head Acts

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Direct	30	57.69	58	46.40	79	52.67	61	57.01	228	**52.43**
CIA	8	15.38	30	24.00	47	31.33	27	25.23	112	25.81
NCIA	12	23.08	34	27.20	15	10.00	15	14.02	76	17.51
Others	2	3.85	3	2.40	9	6.00	4	3.74	18	4.15
TOTAL	**52**	100.00	**125**	100.00	**150**	100.00	**107**	100.00	**434**	**100.00**

Graph 1. Distribution of categories in English
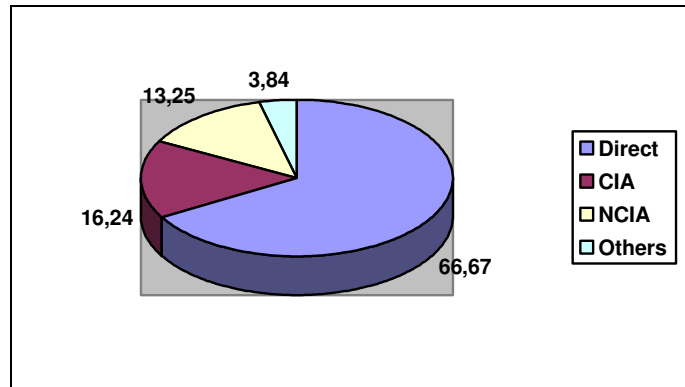
Graph 2. Distribution of categories in Spanish
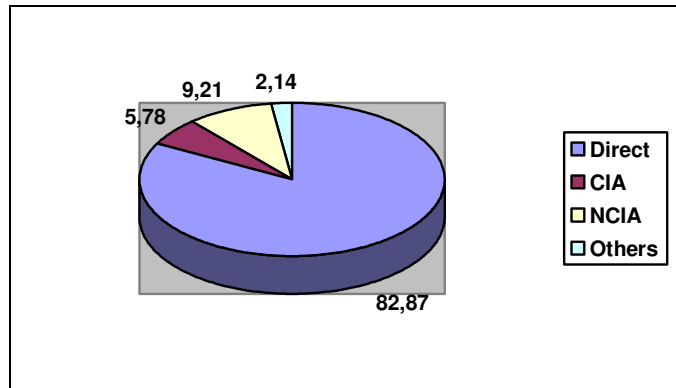
Graph 3. Distribution of categories in Japanese
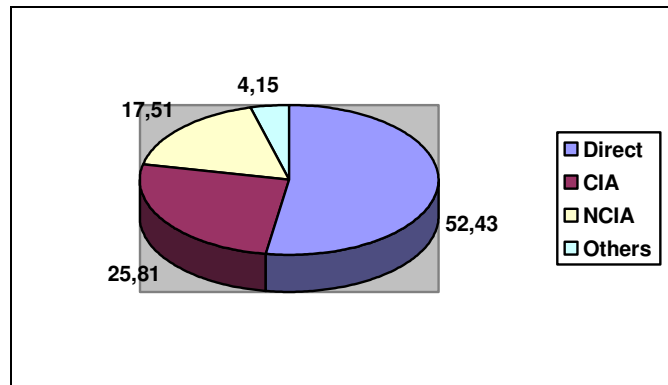
They differ, however, in their relative frequency. Again, the Spanish speakers not only seem to disagree more than the other two groups, but they also do so in a direct fashion more frequently than the rest. While the preference for directness is only moderately high in the case of the Japanese, who used strategies under this category a little over half of the time (*Mean*: 52.43% of the cases) (see Table 15 and Graph 3), the Spanish speakers stand at the opposite end, as they show an extremely high preference for directness (*Mean*: 82.87% of the cases) (see Table 14 and Graph 2). The American English speakers stand somewhere in between, showing a relatively high preference but somewhat closer to the Japanese (*Mean*: 66.67% of the cases) (see Table 13 and Graph 1).

Graph 4. Relative frequency of each category in American English, Spanish and Japanese
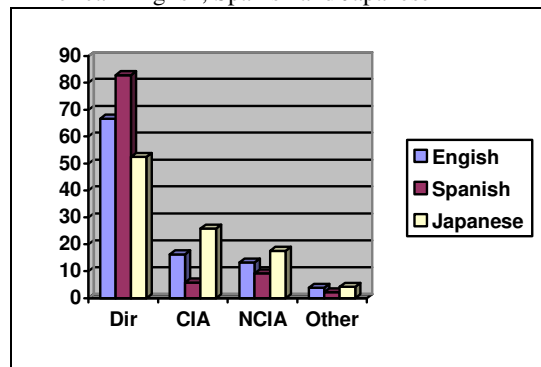
A group-by-group analysis reveals that this time it was the Japanese speakers who showed least inter-group variation, direct moves ranging from 46.20% to 57.69% (a bit over 11 point difference), while the American English speakers were the most unstable, with a difference of almost 28 points between the lowest and the highest scores (from 45.25% to 73.01%).

In terms of internal consistency, the Spanish speakers seem to be more constant, as the distribution of direct, CIA and NCIA moves follow the same pattern in all groups (see Graph 6). The Japanese, on the other hand, show ambivalence, with two groups opting for more CIAs than NCIAs, and the other two for the opposite tendency (see Graph 7), while the American English data reveal a similar pattern.

Graph 5. Level of Directness in American English
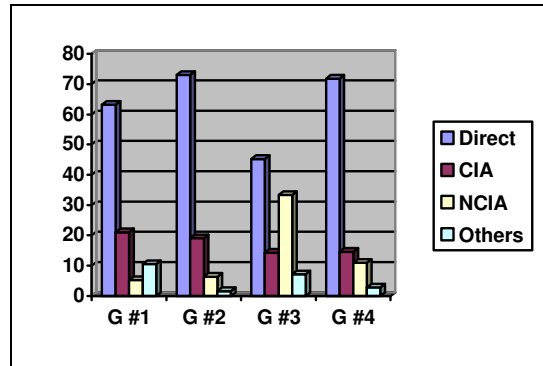
Graph 6. Level of Directness in Spanish
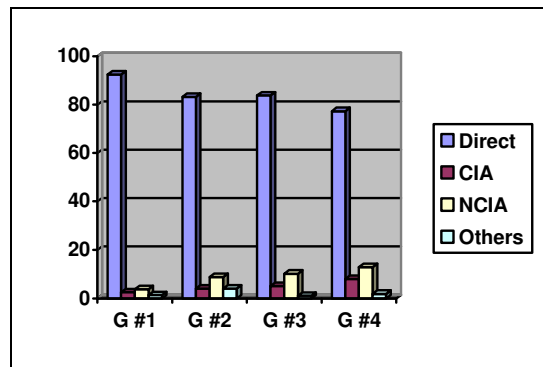
Graph 7. Level of Directness in Japanese
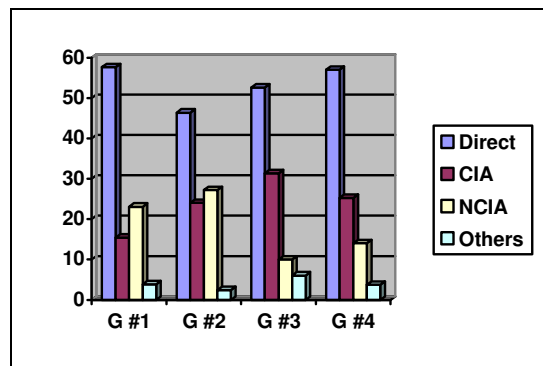
These results show that the Spanish interactants have a clear and defined pattern of behavior that hardly changes, no matter who they are with, as long as the distance of the relationship is kept constant. On the other hand, Americans and Japanese, by showing more variation in their behavior, seem to be more sensitive to the kind of interlocutors they have. That is, one possible explanation for the difference between the Spanish speakers on one hand, and Americans and Japanese on the other, is how much

"themselves" they are in front of others. As scholars working on Spanish point out (Bravo 1999: 168-9; Hernández Flores 2003b: 122; Briz 2004: 82), self-affirmation and *confianza* (mutual trust and openness) are two features of the Spanish character. The former is shown in behaving as "themselves" irrespective of who they are with; the latter is manifested in a tendency to strengthen inner bonds and show closeness in their relationships. These two features are translated in interaction into strength of character and involvement.

5.4.4. Results # 3: Distribution of direct strategy types

The previous two analyses have shown that Spanish speakers differ from American English and Japanese speakers both in frequency of disagreement and frequency of direct disagreement moves. In this section, I present the results of the relative frequency of each strategy used within the category of Direct, which were labelled as (1) *'no'* (labelled as "no"), (2) Explicit Performative (EP), (3) Locution Derivable (LD), (4) *'but'* introduced disagreement ("but"), and (5) *'or'* introduced disagreement ("or"). It was found, however, that no EPs were produced in the three languages, and therefore this strategy has not been included in the final results.

Disagreements initiatied by the conjunction *'or'* were also relative low in frequency. Out of 156 Direct moves uttered in English, only nine belonged to this strategy type, representing just 5.77% of the data. Even lower figures obtained in Spanish with merely ten tokens of 387, which is 2.58% of all Direct moves. An extreme case was found in Japanese, where no instances of this strategy were found. This is explained by the fact that they usually refer to alternative paths of action, and therefore they are normally used when some future plan is discussed. Thus, in my data, their appearance is limited to the summer trip planning part of the conversation, and it is absent in the rest of the topics.

As for the other strategies, American English and Japanese speakers showed once again a similar pattern of behavior, contrasting with Spanish participants (see Tables 16, 17, and 18, and Graph 8). While the most preferred strategy for both Americans and Japanese was the Locution Derivable strategy –Americans: 67.95% (*mean*), Japanese: 62.28% (*mean*) of the cases–, it was only second in preference for Spanish speakers (34.63%), being outnumbered by the *'but'*-initiated strategy (41.60%).

Graph 8 clearly shows how Americans and Japanese follow a similar distribution pattern while Spanish speakers behave in a different way.

Table 16. Distribution of direct disagreement strategies in English.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
"no"	-	-	7	15.22	1	5.26	8	10.13	16	10.26
LD	9	75.00	28	60.87	15	78.95	54	68.35	106	**67.95**
"but"	-	-	10	21.74	1	5.26	14	17.72	25	16.03
"or"	3	25.00	1	2.17	2	10.53	3	3.80	9	5.77
TOTAL	**12**	100.00	**46**	100.00	**19**	100.00	**79**	100.00	**156**	**100.00**

Table 17. Distribution of direct disagreement strategies in Spanish.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
"no"	18	24.33	23	22.12	7	8.43	34	26.98	82	**21.19**
LD	15	20.27	37	35.58	34	40.97	48	38.10	134	34.63
"but"	38	51.35	42	40.38	42	50.60	39	30.95	161	**41.60**
"or"	3	4.05	2	1.92	0	0.00	5	3.97	10	2.58
TOTAL	**74**	100.00	**104**	100.00	**83**	100.00	**126**	100.00	**387**	**100.00**

Table 18. Distribution of direct disagreement strategies in Japanese.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
"no"	-	-	4	6.90	18	22.78	2	3.28	24	10.53
LD	13	43.33	43	74.14	41	51.90	45	73.77	142	**62.28**
"but"	17	56.67	11	18.96	20	25.32	14	22.95	62	27.19
"or"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	**30**	100.00	**58**	100.00	**79**	100.00	**61**	100.00	**228**	**100.00**

Graph 8. Distribution of direct disagreement strategies in Spanish, English and Japanese
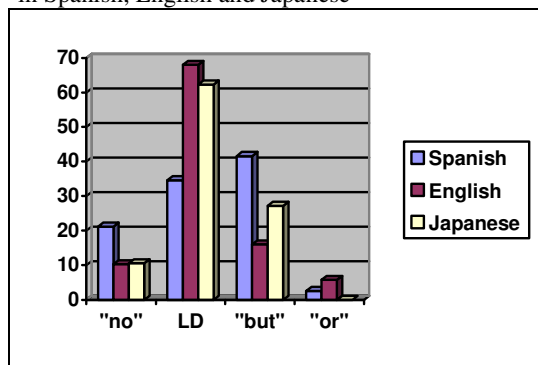
Although in the three languages the most direct *'no'* strategy ranks third, the proportion of cases among Spaniards (21.19%) doubled that obtained among Americans (10.26%) and Japanese (10.53%), thus showing a more direct style, in vein with the pattern observed so far. It should be noted that there were some English and Japanese groups that even refrained from producing *'no'* utterances, as Tables 16 and 18 show.

The distribution pattern found for English is consistently observed in all groups, with LD always ranking first, followed by *'but'* and *'no'* closing the list in all cases. The overall rank order found in Spanish and Japanese is also confirmed in three out of

the four groups in each language, with the only exception of G #4 in the former and G #1 in the latter. In Spanish G #4, LD comes before 'but', thus adopting the rank order found in English. However, this possible similarity is disconfirmed if the 'no' strategy is observed, which obtained the highest score among all groups (26.98%). In Japanese G #1, the rank order was the one found in Spanish, but this time the 'no' strategy was not used at all.

To sum up, two main features emerged in the realization of Direct disagreement moves. On one hand, Spanish differed from English and Japanese in the order of preference of strategies. While *'but'*-introduced disagreements ranked first in the former, LD moves were the most used in the other two languages. On the other hand, although *'no'* responses ranked third in the three language groups, Spanish doubled the score obtained in English and Japanese, which again showed a similar behavior.

5.4.5. Results # 4: Distribution of CIA strategies

In the section on coding, conventionally indirect acts (CIAs) were classified into five groups: TYPE A1: Challenge truth value/condition (strong implicature); TYPE A2: Question truth value/condition (weak implicature); TYPE B1: Question truth value of own assessment, opinion or proposal via question tag; TYPE B2: Question the negation of own assessment, opinion or proposal, and TYPE C: Query about supporting arguments/evidence/purpose. If we attend to their syntactic structures and/or lexical items used, it could be argued that Type A1 is more direct than Type A2, and Type B1 more direct that Type B2.

As shown in Tables 13 through 15 above, the production rate of CIAs differed across the three languages. Whereas they were the least preferred strategies for the Spanish speakers, they ranked second among Americans and Japanese. The score was especially high in Japanese, as one every four disagreement moves (25.81%) were of this type, totally 112 tokens. This stands in high contrast with the average rate of 1/20 obtained in Spanish (5.78%) with only 27 tokens found.

The analysis of strategy preference also revealed high inter-language variation (see Tables 19, 20, and 21, and Graph 9). While Type A1 strategy seemed to be preferred in American English (55.26%), followed by Type A2 strategy (39.48%), Spanish speakers preferred the latter (40.74%) much better than former (18.52%).

Furthermore, Type A2 was outranked by Type B1 in this language since this strategy was used 29.63% of the time. In this case, Japanese was more similar to Spanish than to English, since Type A2 also ranked first (33.04%) and Type A1 occupied the third position (16.07%). However, the weaker versions of each type seemed to be the first options in the Asian language, since Type B2 –less direct than Type B1– was the second in preference (27.68%).

Particularly notorious was the cross-cultural contrast in the occurrence of the B2 CIA strategy, which was never used by the Spanish speakers and only once (2.63%) by the American English speakers. On the other hand, the comparison of the production of the B1 strategy is also revealing, as the Spanish speakers chose this type more often than the A1 strategy while it was the least preferred by the Japanese (9.82%) and the Americans did not use it at all. Finally, although Type C occupies the fourth position in the three languages, the different production rate should be highlighted. While similar scores obtained in Spanish and Japanese with 11.11% and 13.39%, respectively, English differed considerably, with just 2.63% of CIA disagreements being of this type.

Table 19. Distribution of CIA strategies in English.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
A1	-	-	10	83.34	2	33.33	9	56.25	21	**55.26**
A2	3	75.00	1	8.33	4	66.67	7	43.75	15	39.48
B1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B2	1	25.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2.63
C	-	-	1	8.33	-	-	-	-	1	2.63
TOTAL	4	100.00	12	100.00	6	100.00	16	100.00	38	100.00

Table 20. Distribution of CIA strategies in Spanish.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
A1	2	50.00	2	40.00	1	20.00	-	-	5	18.52
A2	2	50.00	2	40.00	2	40.00	5	38.46	11	**40.74**
B1	-	-	-	-	1	20.00	7	53.85	8	**29.63**
B2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C	-	-	1	20.00	1	20.00	1	7.69	3	11.11
TOTAL	4	100.00	5	100.00	5	100.00	13	100.00	27	100.00

Table 21. Distribution of CIA strategies in Japanese.

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
A1	-	-	3	10.00	9	19.15	6	22.22	18	16.07
A2	6	75.00	11	36.66	13	27.66	7	25.93	37	**33.04**
B1	1	12.50	-	-	9	19.15	1	3.70	11	9.82
B2	1	12.50	8	26.67	10	21.28	12	44.45	31	**27.68**
C	-	-	8	26.67	6	12.76	1	3.70	15	13.39
TOTAL	8	100.00	30	100.00	47	100.00	27	100.00	112	100.00

Graph 9. Distribution of CIA strategies in English, Spanish and Japanese.
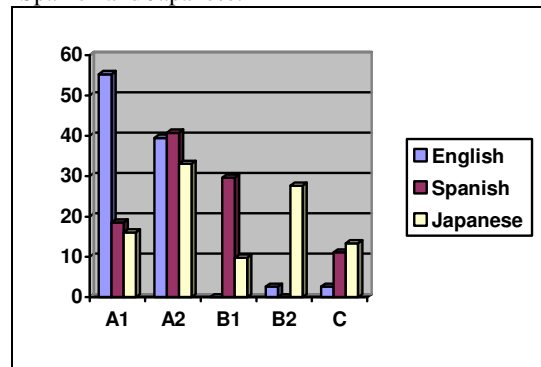
The individual comparison of CIA strategies conducted above revealed that in terms of rank order, English stood in opposition to Spanish and Japanese, while these two languages were more similar. This distribution was also confirmed when the relative frequency of Type C CIAs were compared. In other respects, however, Spanish aligned with English, as for example in the production rate of Type B2 strategy, stood alone in their high preference for Type B1 strategy. However, in terms of the overall realization pattern of CIA disagreements, Japanese seemed to be more prolific and had a wider production range. For one thing, they were the only ones who used all strategy types. For another, irrespective of the rank occupied by every strategy, they all obtained a relatively high score, the difference between the lowest and the highest being of roughly 24 points, as opposed to the more than 40 points in Spanish and over 55 points in English. In this sense, then, Spanish and English seem to be more similar between each other and different from Japanese not only in the relative low frequency of CIA moves with respect to Direct moves, but also in the range of CIAs used.

5.4.6. Results # 5: Distribution of NCIA strategies

Non-Conventionally Indirect Acts (NCIAs) were classified into tree groups: Strong, Mild and Weak. While the last denomination was reserved for Alerters (gaps, hesitation markers, and lack of knowledge claims (CLKs)), the Strong and Mild NCIAs refer to those moves that hint disagreement by either making reference to some reason or presupposition that should be taken into account, often allowing the addressee to reach the implicature of disagreement via logical deduction (Strong NCIA), or just

hinting at some remote connection between what has been said and the intended disagreement whose links are less obvious (Mild NCIA).

Results showed a similar distribution for the three languages in this category. The Strong and Weak NCIA strategies were by far more used than the Mild NCIAs in all cases, with the Strong NCIAs ranking first. These were produced 17 times in English (54.84%), 32 in Spanish (74.42%) and 37 in Japanese (48.68%), which indicates that this strategy was most favored in Spanish, followed by English and Japanese, in that order. English and Japanese showed a similar behavior again in the production rate of Weak NCIAs, but this time in a reversed order: more Weak hints were found in the latter with 26 tokens comprising 34.21% of all NCIAs, compared to the nine computed in English, which represents 29.03% of the data on NCIA disagreements. This time, Spanish obtained the lowest score, with only eight tokens out of 43 (18.60%) that comprise this category. Finally, as mentioned above, Mild hints ranked last in all languages, although with different realization rates. Again, English and Japanese showed a similar distributional pattern, as this strategy corresponded to 16.13% of the total NCIAs in English, and to 17.11% in Japanese. Spanish, on the other hand, obtained a much lower score, since the three cases found represented only 6.78% of the data in this section.

Table 22. Distribution of NCIA disagreement strategies in English

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Strong	1	100.00	1	25.00	7	50.00	8	66.67	17	54.84
Mild	-	-	2	50.00	2	14.29	1	8.33	5	16.13
Weak	-	-	1	25.00	5	35.71	3	25.00	9	29.03
TOTAL	1	100.00	4	100.00	14	100.00	12	100.00	31	100.00

Table 23. Distribution of NCIA disagreement strategies in Spanish

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Strong	-	-	10	90.91	7	70.00	15	71.44	32	74.42
Mild	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	14.28	3	6.98
Weak	1	100.00	1	9.09	3	30.00	3	14.28	8	18.60
TOTAL	1	100.00	11	100.00	10	100.00	21	100.00	43	100.00

Table 24. Distribution of NCIA disagreement strategies in Japanese

	G # 1	%	G # 2	%	G # 3	%	G # 4	%	TOTAL	Mean
Strong	7	58.33	16	47.06	10	66.67	4	26.67	37	48.68
Mild	2	16.67	4	11.76	4	26.67	3	20.00	13	17.11
Weak	3	25.00	14	41.18	1	6.66	8	53.33	26	34.21
TOTAL	12	100.00	34	100.00	15	100.00	15	100.00	76	100.00

Graph 10. Distribution of NCIA strategies in
English, Spanish and Japanese
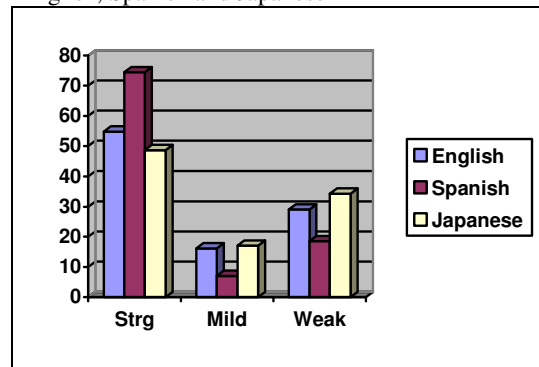
In terms of the production rate of each strategy within this category inside every language, the pattern observed in the CIA category was partly reproduced here. Both English and Spanish showed a higher degree of variation than Japanese between the most and the least preferred strategies. Spanish revealed the highest level of variation, with a difference of 67.44 points. They were followed by English, where 38.71 points separated both ends. Finally, Japanese showed the lowest variation, with only 31.51 points. However, this times English seems to align with Japanese, as their scores are more similar. These results seem to reinforce the impression that Spanish speakers always show a higher preference for more direct forms in each category.

5.4.7. *Overall distribution of Head Acts*

Up to this point, the analysis of Head Act has been carried out category by category, and the frequency level and rank order of each strategy were weigh up inside each category group. In this sub-section, an overall comparison of Head Act is conducted in order to see the order of preference in a broader context.

A first look at the data confirmed some of the results observed in the analyses by categories. The most frequently used strategy in English and Japanese was Locution Derivable disagreement, representing 45.30% and 32.72% of the data, respectively. On the other hand, *'but'*-introduced Direct moves where the most preferred in Spanish, comprising 34.48% (see Tables 25 and 26). However, while in Spanish the second- and third-ranked strategies remained the same as in results obtained in the local analysis of Direct moves, with LD ranking second and 'no' ranking third, English and Japanese underwent some changes. Although the second position was kept by *'but'*-introduced

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utterances in both languages, no equivalence was found for the third strategy. In English, A1 ranked as the third most frequent, while in Japanese this slot was occupied by two strategies: CIA A2 and Strong NCIA (see Table 25 for the full list).

Table 25. Rank order of all Head Act strategies in English, Spanish and Japanese.

English	Spanish	Japanese
1. Locution Derivable	1. 'but'	1. Locution Derivable
2. 'but'	2. Locution Derivable	2. 'but'
3. CIA A1	3. 'no'	3. CIA A2 / Strong NCIA
4. Strong NCIA	4. Strong NCIA	5. CIA B2
5. 'no'	5. CIA A2	6. Weak NCIA
6. CIA A2	6. 'or'	7. 'no'
7. 'or' / Weak NCIA	7. CIA B2 / Weak NCIA	8. CIA A1
9. Mild NCIA	9. CIA A1	9. CIA C
10. CIA B2 / CIA C	10. CIA C / Mild NCIA	10. Mild NCIA
12. CIA B1 (not produced)	12. CIA B2 (not produced)	11. CIA B1
		12. 'or' (not produced)

Furthermore, the realization of the *'no'* strategy dropped as low as the fifth position in English and the seventh position in Japanese, which shows not only its dispreferred status with respect to LD and *'but'* strategies, but also the preference in these languages for more indirect forms. In English, Type A1 conventionally indirect disagreements and Strong hints were more used, while in Japanese as many as four different types of conventional and non-conventional indirect realizations outranked the *'no'* strategy: namely CIA A2, Strong NCIA, CIA B2, and Weak NCIA.

With these results, the following picture emerged. On one hand, Spanish was the only language which kept all Direct moves at the top of the ranking, with the only exception of the *'or'*-introduced strategy, whose low production has already been explained. In the other two languages, the distribution suffered considerable changes, albeit in different degrees. Japanese seems to stand opposite to Spanish, since after LD and *'but'*, a whole range of indirect forms came together before the highly straight *'no'* realization of disagreement. English stands rather closer to Japanese, but relying less in indirect forms. The rank order of the first two strategies remains the same in both languages, and the straight opposition device is relegated to a lower position, albeit not so low in the case of American English. Furthermore, the more aggressive Type A1 conventionally indirect move ranked third in this language, whereas a softer A2 was preferred by Japanese.

Table 26. Relative frequency of Direct, CIA and NCIA Head Acts in English, Spanish and Japanese.

Disagreement Head Acts		English		Spanish		Japanese	
		N	% (N 234)	N	% (N 467)	N	% (N 434)
Direct	'no'	16	6.84	82	17.56	24	5.54
	LD	106	45.30	134	28.69	142	32.72
	'but'	25	10.68	161	34.48	62	14.29
	'or'	9	3.85	10	2.14	-	-
	Sub-Total	156	66.67	387	82.87	228	52.43
CIA	A1	21	8.97	5	1.07	18	4.15
	A2	15	6.41	11	2.36	37	8.53
	B1	-	-	8	1.71	11	2.53
	B2	1	0.43	-	-	31	7.14
	C	1	0.43	3	0.64	15	3.46
	Sut-Total	38	16.24	27	5.78	112	25.81
NCIA	Strong	17	7.26	32	6.86	37	8.53
	Mild	5	2.14	3	0.64	13	2.99
	Weak	9	3.85	8	1.71	26	5.99
	Sut-Total	31	13.25	43	9.21	76	17.51
Others		9	3.84	10	2.14	18	4.15
TOTAL		234	100.00	467	100.00	434	100.00

In terms of the production rate of each strategy in terms of relative number of tokens, two different patterns seemed to emerge. On one hand, English and Japanese concentrated a high proportion of moves in the LD category, while Spanish distributed the rather distributed the disagreements among the top three. On the other hand, while there was a big difference between the LD and the rest of strategies in English and between the top three strategies and the other devices in Spanish, they were more evenly distributed in Japanese. Thus, the realization rate of LDs was extremely high in English (45.30%), followed by a group of five strategies which obtained similar scores between each other but far below LD: 'but' (10.68%), CIA A1 (8.97%), Strong NCIA (7.26%), 'no' (6.84%) and CIA A2 (6.41%). The rest of scores were kept below four points. In Spanish, LD, 'but', and 'no' obtained together extremely high scores, comprising 80.73% of the data, only followed far behind by Strong NCIAs with only 6.86% of the data, while the remaining strategies scored less than 3%. Lastly, in Japanese, all strategies were more or less evenly distributed (see Table 26 above), with the only exception of LDs, which comprised almost one third of the data (32.72%).

5.4.8. Results # 6: Mitigating and aggravating devices

In order to either attenuate or enhance the impact of a disagreement move, speakers can use mitigating or aggravating devices. Mitigating devices have the role of

delaying, hiding or downgrading the explicitness of the disagreement produced in the Head Act. Aggravating devices, on the other hand, enhance the force of the disagreement by emphasizing and intensifying the oppositional intention of the speaker. In this section, a quantitative analysis of their distribution is carried out in search for cross-cultural similarities and differences. I start with an overall analysis of the frequency of mitigating and aggravating strategies used, followed by a distributional analysis by categories. At a second stage, the distribution of Head-Act external and Head-Act internal mitigating strategies is investigated. Finally, a comparison of the major devices (syntactic, phrasal and lexical features, supra-segmental features, and sequential features) is conducted.

5.4.8.1. Overall mitigation vs. aggravation

A first comparison shows that disagreements were more often mitigated than aggravated in all cultural groups. This feature was particularly prominent among the American English speakers, who mitigated their disagreements 55.11% of cases, while Spanish and Japanese participants did so a little less than half of the time (44.86% and 43.99%, respectively) (see Table 27 and Graph 11). However, if an analysis is realized in terms of preference, a different picture emerges. Recall that plain and upgraded utterances (such as strong disagreements) are 1st order preferred forms, while mitigation frames disagreements as dispreferred. From this perspective, then, plain and aggravated moves could be grouped together at one end, while mitigated moves would stand alone at the opposite end. The result is that while Americans were the only ones who framed disagreements as dispreferred more often than preferred overall (55.11% vs. 36.89%), Spanish and Japanese scored higher for disagreements as preferred (46.39% and 51.20% for preferred forms, respectively).

Table 27. Overall distribution of Aggravated, Plain and Mitigated moves

	English		Spanish		Japanese	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aggravated	24	10.67	96	**21.01**	62	14.90
Plain	59	26.22	116	25.38	151	**36.30**
Mitigated/Aggravated [73]	18	8.00	40	8.75	20	4.81
Mitigated	124	**55.11**	205	44.86	183	43.99
TOTAL [74]	**225**	100.00	**457**	100.00	**416**	100.00

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[73] These refer to moves in which both mitigating and aggravating devices had been found, normally combining act-external mitigating/aggravating devices with act-internal devices of the opposite nature.

Graph 11. Overall distribution of Aggravated, Plain, Mitigated/
Aggravated and Mitigated moves in English, Spanish and Japanese
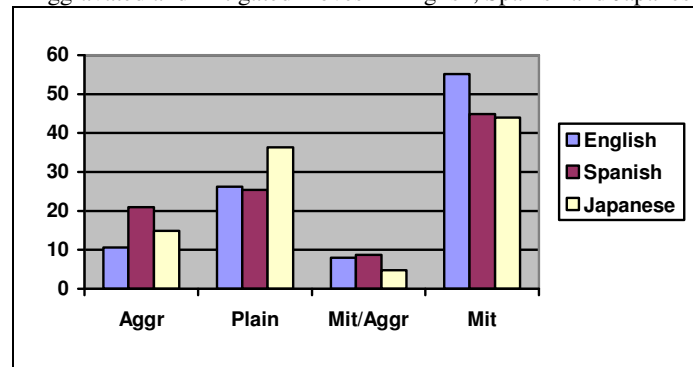
This picture is, however, incomplete. The analysis of the distribution of utterance modification by categories confirmed that the Japanese preference for directness was only apparent (see Table 28). When Aggravated forms were compared across categories, Spanish speakers not only ranked first in aggravation but also concentrated more than 91.67% of the Aggravated moves in the Direct category, while the Japanese aggravated their direct utterances only 56.45% of the time[75]. An analysis of the distribution of Mitigated, Aggravated, Plain and combined Mit-Aggr moves by category revealed that Spanish participants aggravated their utterances more often, comprising 22.74% of cases in the Direct category, while Americans did so only in 12.82% of cases. The Japanese stood in between with 15.35%. The opposite tendency was observed again in mitigation, where English ranked first with 62.18% of cases and Spanish were third with 48.58%, whereas Japanese ranked second once more (58.33%). Spanish and Japanese obtained almost the same score in the relative frequency of plain disagreements, with Japanese just a little higher than Spanish (19.74% vs. 19.12%), while English scored five points less (14.74%).

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[74] The total figures do not coincide with the total disagreement tokens because those under the category of "other", which comprised 2,14% of cases in Spanish, 3,84% in English, and 4,15% in Japanese, have not been included in this analysis. Nevertheless, this means that more than 95% of cases have been computed.
[75] Spanish speakers produced 88 Aggravated Direct moves out of 96, while the Japanese uttered 35 out of 62.

Table 28. Distribution of Plain, Mitigated and Aggravated moves by category.

		English			Spanish			Japanese		
		N	%	% (N225)	N	%	% (N457)	N	%	% (N416)
Direct	**Aggravated**	20	12.82	8.89	88	**22.74**	**19.25**	35	15.35	8.41
	Plain	23	14.74	10.22	74	19.12	16.19	45	19.74	10.82
	Mit - Aggr	16	10.26	7.11	37	9.56	8.10	15	6.58	3.61
	Mitigated	97	**62.18**	43.11	188	48.58	41.13	133	58.33	31.97
	Sub-Total	**156**	100.00		**387**	100.00		**228**	100.00	
CIA	**Aggravated**	4	10.53	1.78	4	14.81	0.88	21	**18.75**	**5.05**
	Plain	25	65.79	11.11	18	66.67	3.94	57	50.89	**13.70**
	Mit - Aggr	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3.57	0.96
	Mitigated	9	23.68	4.00	5	18.52	1.09	30	26.79	7.21
	Sub-Total	**38**	100.00		**27**	100.00		**112**	100.00	
NCIA	**Aggravated**	-	-	-	4	9.30	0.88	6	**7.89**	**1.44**
	Plain	11	35.48	4.89	24	55.81	5.25	49	**64.47**	**11.78**
	Mit - Aggr	2	6.45	0.89	3	6.98	0.66	1	1.32	0.24
	Mitigated	18	58.06	8.00	12	27.91	2.63	20	26.32	4.81
	Sub-Total	**31**	100.00		**43**	100.00		**76**	100.00	
TOTAL		**225**		100.00	**457**		100.00	**416**		100.00

If the combined (Mit-Aggr) form is considered for both the mitigated and aggravated moves, Spanish would rank first again in the 'Aggravated' section with 32.30% (Aggravated + Mit-Aggr) followed by English (23.08%) and Japanese (21.93%), in this order. Spanish interactants would also tend to produce less mitigated direct disagreements than the other two languages, as can be gathered from the relatively low score obtained in the combination of Mitigated and Mit-Aggr forms (58.14%), as compared with Japanese (64.91%) and especially with English (72.44%).

When a cross-category analysis was carried out, some patterns were confirmed while others suffered some modifications. The comparison of Aggravated Direct moves across categories partially confirmed the above results, with Spanish ranking first again. In fact, the gap between Spanish on one hand and the other two languages on the other was widened, as these move types comprised 19.25% of the Spanish data, while English and Japanese scores fell down to 8.89% and 8.41%, respectively. These results also show that although disagreements were more often aggravated in Japanese than in English overall, they were not so in Direct moves, where English scored slightly higher.

In Plain Direct disagreements, the same tendency was observed as to the Spanish higher tolerance for non-mitigated forms. Spanish stood out with 16.19% of overall disagreements, widely exceeding the 10.22% realized in English and the 10.82% performed in Japanese. This time, Japanese scored higher than English, which seems to compensate the results obtained in the Aggravated moves. The former, however, produced less Mitigated Direct disagreements (31.97%) than either Spanish (41.13%) or

English (43.11%). The possible reasons for these results will be explained in the Discussion section.

Graph 12. Overall distribution of Aggravated, Plain, Mitigated and Combined (Mit-Aggr) disagreement moves in English, Spanish and Japanese.
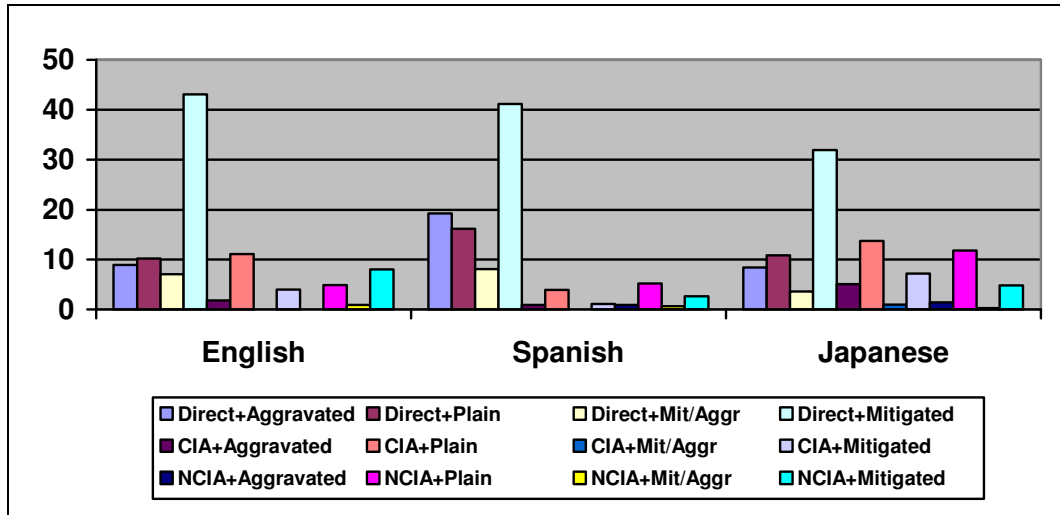
In the CIA and NCIA categories, mixed results were obtained. In the CIA section, while Japanese ranked highest in the production of Aggravated moves (18.75%), followed by Spanish (14.81%) and English (10.53%), more Plain CIA disagreements were produced in Spanish (66.67%), in this case closely followed by English (65.79%). This time, only half of CIA moves were Plain in Japanese (50.89%). This is in symmetrical distribution with Mitigated CIAs, which were produced only 18.52% of cases in Spanish, 23.68% in English, and 26.79% in Japanese, with the Asian language ranking first, English standing in the middle, and Spanish closing the list. If these strategies were divided into preferred and dispreferred forms, Spanish would top the list with 81.48% of moves framed as preferred, English would come next with 76.32%, and Japanese would come last with just 69.64%.

In the NCIA category, Spanish and Japanese competed again for their primacy in the realization of disagreements in the preferred form. Here, utterances were more frequently upgraded in Spanish (9.30%, versus 7.89% in Japanese), while a higher number of Plain forms were found in Japanese (64.47% vs. 55.81%). English, on the other hand, not only obtained the lowest score for preferred realizations (none for Aggravated and 35.48% for Plain), but it was also the only language where NCIAs were

mitigated more often than the other strategies in the category (58.06% vs. 27.91% for Spanish and 26.32% for Japanese).

An overall comparison of Mitigated and Aggravated moves in the three cultures showed that Spanish concentrated most Aggravated and Plain disagreements in the Direct category, comprising more than one third of all moves (19.25 + 16.19 = 35.35%), whereas Japanese distributed these forms amongst the three categories of directness (19.23% of Aggravated + Plain Direct moves, 18.75% of Aggravated + Plain CIA moves, and 13.22% of Aggravated + Plain NCIA moves). Moreover, out of these figures Aggravated forms comprised only 5.05% of CIAs and 1.44% of NCIAs, which means than Plain realizations predominated. Graph 12 shows the different patterns observed in the three languages. English stands out in the Mitigated Direct moves, closely followed by Spanish, while Japanese stands a little behind. These lower scores are compensated differently in these two languages. Whereas in Spanish Aggravated and Plain Direct forms scored higher, indirect strategies in general were more frequent in Japanese. These results will be interpreted in Section 5.5.

5.4.8.2. The realization of mitigation

In this section, the realization patterns of mitigating devices are investigated. In Chapter 3 and in the coding system introduced above, a distinction was made between Head Act external and Head Act internal mitigating devices. Head Act external mitigation can be realized in several ways, including the use of prefacing elements such as Distractors (*'yeah', 'uhm'*), Alerters (*'I don't know', 'huh?', 'oh'*), and Supportive Moves such as Preparators (*'I went to Madrid and it was wonderful'*). Supportive Moves can also follow the main act, as in the case of a Concession (*'it's not the same but yeah'*). All these devices may co-occur in one single move, either in one turn or over several turns[76]. Head Act internal mitigating devices, on the other hand, are those used inside the main act. They can be syntactic, lexical/phrasal, supra-segmental and sequential realized, individually or in combination, as the following example shows:

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[76] At this point, no distinction will be made between turn external and turn internal realizations of external mitigation for computing their frequency of occurrence. The results of the analysis of the realization of turn external delays are presented in Sub-section 5.4.9.

(166) *(7eng/T13M11)*
    T130 A: you think?
                (2.6)
    T131 B: ºI thinkº
                (0.5)
→ T132 C: mayb- probably like twenty euro a night (.) [average]

Several turns prior to this sequence, speaker C (and B) had expressed their disagreement with A's idea about the amount of money they would spend on accommodation saying that it was no enough. Speaker A had replied with a request for confirmation of the disagreement followed by a question regarding hostel rates (*'it's no::t? (.) how much- a hostel is what?'*). C's utterance in T132 represents a delayed realization of the second pair part of the adjacency pair initiated by A, with several side sequences in between. In C's move there are both lexical and sequential mitigating features. The inconclusive *'maybe'* rephrased as *'probably'* is a downtoner (lexical) and *'like'* in this case can also be interpreted as a hedge (lexical). The false start in *'mayb-'* and the little pause before the word *'average'* are sequential signals of dispreference.

Head Act external and Head Act internal devices have been analyzed separately in order to make the data more manageable. First of all, moves were divided into three groups separating those that had both external and internal mitigation from the ones that were mitigated only externally or internally. The former are identified with the label of 'Combined'. The distribution of each of these major strategies in the three languages is shown in Table 29.

Table 29. Distribution of act-external, act-internal, and combined mitigation in Mitigated moves.

MITIGATION TYPE		English		Spanish		Japanese	
		N	% (N124)	N	% (N205)	N	% (N183)
External	Direct	36	29.03	48	23.41	23	12.57
	CIA	9	7.26	1	0.49	23	12.57
	NCIA	8	6.45	7	3.41	8	4.37
	TOTAL	53	42.74	56	27.32	54	29.51
Internal	Direct	21	16.94	53	25.85	43	23.50
	CIA	0	0.00	3	1.46	4	2.19
	NCIA	2	1.61	1	0.49	5	2.73
	TOTAL	23	18.55	57	27.80	52	28.42
Combined	Direct	40	32.26	87	42.44	67	36.61
	CIA	0	0.00	1	0.49	3	1.64
	NCIA	8	6.45	4	1.95	7	3.82
	TOTAL	48	38.71	92	44.88	77	42.07
TOTAL		124	100.00	205	100.00	183	100.00

As the combined form includes both external and internal devices, they have been computed in both analyses. Yhe resulting number of token moves was the sum of

external + combined moves for the analysis of external devices, and internal + combined moves for internal devices. Additionally, the moves that combined mitigation and aggravation were also included. Table 30 shows the number of moves that were added from Mitigated/Aggravated moves:

Table 30. Number of tokens from Mitigated/Aggravated moves used for the analysis of Mitigating devices.

		English	Spanish	Japanese
Direct	**Internal**	7	17	4
	External	11	24	12
CIA	**Internal**	-	-	-
	External	-	-	4
NCIA	**Internal**	1	-	-
	External	2	3	1

After this addition, the total number of moves analyzed for Head Act external and Head Act internal mitigation was the following:

1. English
    a. Head Act external mitigation: 114 moves.
    b. Head Act internal mitigation: 59 moves.

2. Spanish
    a. Head Act external mitigation: 175 moves.
    b. Head Act internal mitigation: 166 moves.

3. Japanese
    a. Head Act external mitigation: 148 moves.
    b. Head Act internal mitigation: 133 moves.

5.4.8.2.1. Head Act external mitigation

The possible combinations of external mitigation were classified into four major types: (1) Head Act (H) prefaced by one single type of mitigator: Distractor (D+H), Alerter (A+H) or Supportive Move (S+H); (2) Head Act preceded by more than one type of pre-head: DA+H, DS+H, AS+H, DAS+H; (3) Head Act followed by one or more mitigating Supportive Moves without a prefaced attenuator: H + S, and (4) prefaces and follow-ups combined (D+A+S)+H+S.

Some points need to be clarified in the above classification. 'One type' of mitigator does not necessarily translate into 'one token'. Instances of one single token

of the same type of mitigator – say, a Distractor –, and those with more than one were grouped under the same class. For example, the following two sequences were included in the D+H group (the Distractors are in bold face):

> (167) *(7eng/T6M5)*
> T106 B: Cordoba (.) like (.) a da::y↑ maybe two::↑
> T107 A: **yeah** but you can see a::ll the yacimientos <u>a::</u>nd the Mezquita in one da::y↑

> (168) *(2eng/T18M13)*
> T175' B: [could be less in Italy] we spent <u>le::ss</u> than that a night↑=
> T176 C: [[**okay**   ]]
> T175' B: =[[and they]] had linens towels and everything↑ (.) and breakfast↑ so I mean
> 　　　　　you can find cheap ones
> T177 C: **that's true in Italy I only did spend around like eight**
> T178 B: yeah
> T179 A: [I could-   ]
> T180 C: [for a week] but then this is <u>two</u> weeks

In (167), only one Distractor (*'yeah'*) is uttered before the head disagreement act (*'but you can see…'*). In (168), on the other hand, the preface is more elaborated. In T176, the acknowledgment token *'okay'* is produced (Distractor 1). In T177, a stronger agreement is produced via a positive statement and a personal account initially supporting B's opinion (Distractor 2).

In type (2) groups, sometimes the order of occurrence of the prefacing device in DA+H forms was reversed. That is, instances of Alerters preceding Distractors (AD) were also included in this category. Two examples are provided to illustrate this point (prefaces in bold face):

> (169) *(5esp/T31-2M26)*
> T166 A: [de Sevilla↑] nos vamos a Irlanda↓ no?
> T167 C: [[sí (.) de Sevilla   ]]
> T168 B: [[**sí (.) bueno** pode]]mos coger↑ n:::: por los aero- vuelos que salen más
> 　　　　　baratos↑ [ir a Londres↑]

> (170) *(8esp/T127M112)*
> T460 C: pero eso da igual en verdad
> T461 B: **puf (0.5)** ^{**bue:no**}↓ °sí° (.) pero es que si es un fin de semana↑ (.)
> 　　　　　°también (.) podemos ir° (1.4) sabes lo que te digo?

Example (169) shows a DA+H pattern, i.e., a Distractor *'sí'* (*'yes'*) followed by two Alerters: a pause and the reactive token *'bueno'* (*'well'*). In (170), the picture is a bit more complex. There are three Alerters (*'puf'* + pause + reactive token) before the

Distractor is produced. Furthermore, another pause follows the agreement token, which means that there are four Alerters in total, which means that the exact pattern would be A+A+A+D+A+H. However, since multiple tokens of the same type are grouped together, the combination here would be Alerter + Distractor.

Finally, in the DAS+H+S type, all the possible realizations of pre-head mitigation are included, from one single item (e.g., D+H+S, A+H+S, and so on) to multiple items (DAS+H+S). Actually, no case was found in which all the elements co-occurred. An example of a A+H+S realization is given below (in bold face):

(171) *(13jpn/T22M13)*
    T0083 A: juuyokka? (0.5) ºkugatsu juuyokkaº
    T0084 C: **juu- yokka? juugo? juu[yon]**
           A: *the fourteenth? (0.5) ºSeptember the fourteenthº*
           C: *four- fourteenth? fifteenth? four[teen]*

Here, A suggests coming back from vacation on September 14th. C starts her turn with an Alerter in the form of a NTRI. She then suggests an alternative date using a rising intonation as mitigator (Head Act). Finally, she (formally) accepts the original proposal by repeating the number *'fourteen'* once more (Supportive Move).

Having clarified the above aspects, I proceed now to the presentation of results (see Table 31). The first point I want to make is that in terms of external mitigation my data seem to support Pomerantz's (1984) claim that in friendly conversations disagreements are most often prefaced with elements that delay their realization. In the three languages investigated, pre-head mitigation occurred far more frequently than post-head attenuation. The highest difference was found in Japanese, where this latter option was used only 4.05% of cases. However, Spanish and English showed a similar behavior, since this strategy was chosen 16 times every one hundred (16.00%) in Spanish and seventeen and a half (17.54%) in English. These scores are four times higher than those obtained in Japanese, although they are still low figures if they are compared with pre-head mitigation.

Table 31. Distribution of Act-External mitigation by categories in English, Spanish and Japanese.

		Direct		CIA		NCIA		TOTAL	
		N	% (N114)	N	% (N114)	N	% (N114)	N	% (N114)
English	D+H	21	18.42	2	1.75	7	6.14	**30**	26.32
	A+H	21	18.42	4	3.51	5	4.39	**30**	26.32
	S+H	3	2.63	-	-	2	1.75	**5**	4.38
	DA+H	5	4.39	-	-	3	2.63	**8**	7.02
	DS+H	1	0.88	-	-	-	-	**1**	0.88
	AS+H	3	2.63	-	-	-	-	**3**	2.63
	DAS+H	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
	H+S	18	15.79	2	1.75	-	-	**20**	17.54
	(DAS)+H+S	15	13.16	1	0.88	1	0.88	**17**	14.91
	TOTAL	**87**	76.32	**9**	7.89	**18**	15.79	**114**	100.00
		N	% (N175)	N	% (N175)	N	% (N175)	N	% (N175)
Spanish	D+H	68	38.86	-	-	5	2.85	**73**	41.71
	A+H	28	16.00	2	1.14	2	1.14	**32**	18.29
	S+H	6	3.43	-	-	1	0.57	**7**	4.00
	DA+H	16	9.14	-	-	-	-	**16**	9.14
	DS+H	1	0.57	-	-	-	-	**1**	0.57
	AS+H	5	2.85	-	-	2	1.14	**7**	4.00
	DAS+H	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
	H+S	26	14.86	-	**-**	2	1.14	**28**	16.00
	(DAS)+H+S	9	5.14	-	-	2	1.14	**11**	6.29
	TOTAL	**159**	90.86	**2**	1.14	**14**	8.00	**175**	100.00
		N	% (N148)	N	% (N148)	N	% (N148)	N	% (N148)
Japanese	D+H	24	16.22	2	1.35	1	0.68	**27**	18.25
	A+H	44	29.73	24	16.22	6	4.05	**74**	50.00
	S+H	4	2.70	4	2.70	-	-	**8**	5.41
	DA+H	16	10.81	-	-	7	4.73	**23**	15.54
	DS+H	2	1.35	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**2**	1.35
	AS+H	4	2.70	-	-	2	1.35	**6**	4.05
	DAS+H	**-**	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
	H+S	6	4.05	**-**	-	**-**	-	**6**	4.05
	(DAS)+H+S	2	1.35	**-**	-	**-**	-	**2**	1.35
	TOTAL	**102**	68.92	**30**	20.27	**16**	10.81	**148**	100.00

On the other hand, the simultaneous use of too many different types of pre-head mitigation also seems to be avoided. In my data, no single instance was found of the three pre-head types (DAS+H) functioning together. This is not to say, however, that there is no complexity before the Head Act. The following example illustrates that this not necessarily the case. Speaker C has drawn a map of Spain and explains where each city is located, but speaker A does not seem to agree with him (the whole disagreement move in bold face):

(172) *(4eng/T6-8M2)*
    T061 C: Valencia Salamanca
    T062 A: **Sal- oh::: Salamanca is way up there?**
    T063 C: yeah [like   ] Madrid (.) °it's° here
    T064 A: **[°okay°]**
              (1.1)
    T065 B: is it that close?
              (1.0)
    T066 C: well=
    T067 A: **=I thought Salamanca was like (.) down there**

Speaker A's disagreement is explicitly stated (albeit internally downgraded) in T067. However, it is initiated in T062 with a false start (*'Sal-'*) and an Alerter (*'oh:::'*) and a statement with rising intonation that would have served as the head disagreement act had speaker C not made it more directly in T067. Before doing so, she even accepts C's position by saying *'okay'* in T064, which would have reframed the utterance in T062 simply as a request for confirmation, thus cancelling the disagreement interpretation.

It also emerged that in the three languages there was a high preference for the use of Distractors or Alerters or the combination of both. These devices, either alone or combined, were used in English 68 times (59.66%), 121 times in Spanish (69.14%), and 124 in Japanese (83.79%). Apparently, there is a big difference between the Japanese on one hand and especially American English on the other. However, if the (DAS)+H+S type is added, the difference is reduced considerably (74.57% in English and 75.43% in Spanish). This conflation is justified by the fact that in the Spanish and the English data, only one case of S+H+S pattern was found, and none in Japanese, the rest being either the D+H+S or A+H+S type.

Nevertheless, when it comes to choosing Distractors or Alerters, the picture is quite different. Spanish participants showed a preference for Distractors over Alerters (41.71% vs. 18.29%), in clear contrast with the Japanese interactants, who used Alerters half of the time (50.00%) and Distractors barely twice every ten disagreement moves (18.25%). Americans did not align with any of them, as they obtained exactly the same score in both strategies (26.32% each). The explanation and implications of these results will be tackled in Section 5.5.

Finally, English and Spanish align together in the classification of Head Act external mitigation by categories. These two languages used this device more often in Direct moves (76.32% and 90.86%, respectively), followed by NCIAs (15.79% and 8.00%) and CIAs (7.89% and 1.14%), in that order. In Japanese, however, although Direct moves were also more frequent (68.69%), more external mitigation was found in CIAs (22.27%) than in NCIAs (10.81%).

5.4.8.2.2. Head Act internal mitigation

The Head Act internal mitigation patterns have been analyzed following the coding system proposed earlier in this chapter. Strategies have been classified into three

broad areas: syntactic, phrasal/lexical, and supra-segmental/sequential. Syntactic mitigation refers to any kind of modification in the syntactic structure of the Head Act that might downgrade the force of the disagreement. Besides the well-attested grammatical forms of attenuation such as the Past tense (e.g., *'A: it's X. B: oh I* *thought* *it was Y.'*), the Conditional (e.g., *'A: vamos a X. B: preferiría ir a Y.'* (see Chodorowska 2004)), the (modal) verbs or particles of Possibility (e.g., *'A: we should do X. B: or we* *could do Y.'*), or the Interrogative mood (e.g., *'A: Dizunii Rando wa doo?. B: Shii e ikoo* *ka' ('A: How about (going to) Disneyland?. B: Shall we go to Sea (Paradise)?'*), some others have been have been added from my data, such as Ellipsis (e.g., *'I know but…'*), post-position of the Adversative marker (e.g., *'A: I prefer the plane. B: it's expensive* *though.'*), and the 'If' clause (e.g., *'A: it's a good action-packed movie. B: I guess (.) if* *that's what you're looking for.'*).

Among the lexical and phrasal downgraders the following devices have been analyzed: Lack of knowledge claims interspersed in the Head Act, Cajolers, Subjectivizers, Impersonalization markers, Understaters, Downtoners, Hedges, Reformulation markers, Solidarity/involvement markers, and Relativizers. Finally, supra-segmental and sequential features include Final rising intonation, Low voice/whisper, Laughter, Hesitation markers/fillers, Pauses, and False starts.

As observed above, there are many possible realizations of internal mitigation. Moreover, the probability of co-occurrence is high. Making a classification of all possible combinations the way it was done with external devices would have been a paramount task and hardly manageable. Therefore, the analysis consisted here in the computation of all the different types of mitigation found in every disagreement move. However, repeated instances of the same device within on single move were computed as one realization. Consider the following example for an illustration of all these points (internal mitigators in bold face):

> (173) *(2eng/T34-5M27)*
> T334 C: [al]right flight to Valencia↑
>   and <u>bus</u> it the rest of the time↑
> T335 A: bus it the rest
>   […] ((*side sequence*))
> T340 A: a::nd if we're still on <u>tha::</u>t and we have a thousand bucks (.) euros we
>   **cou:::ld**- from Bilbao to Madrid <u>that</u>'s **kind of** far↑ **(.)** we **could** fly there→

In this excerpt, syntactic, lexical/phrasal and supra-segmental/sequential features co-occur. Additionally, there is one word that is used twice (*'could'*). Syntactically, two

devices are used: the modal verb of possibility (*'can', 'could'*), and the past tense (*'could'*), which adds one more layer of mitigation, due to its distancing effect if used with present time reference (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989: 283). From a lexical/phrasal point of view, there is a hedge (*'kind of'*). Finally, the vowel elongation in *'cou:::ld'* represents an example of supra-segmental mitigation, whereas the false start (*cou:::ld-*) and the pause after *'far'* are sequential mitigators. Overall, five different types of internal mitigation were computed in this disagreement move, since the repetition of *'could'* was not taken into account. This co-occurrence of devices within the same move explains why the total number of devices computed does not match the number of moves given above.

In total, Americans produced 188 internal mitigating devices in 59 moves that included Head Act internal mitigation. Spanish participants used 285 in 166 moves, and the Japanese 346 in 133 moves. If these results are translated into the level of density of internal mitigation per move, the average rate is 3.19 times per move in the English data, 1.72 times in Spanish, and 2.60 in Japanese, which means that a considerably higher number of internal mitigators were used in English, while Spanish showed the opposite tendency.

Results at a coarse-grained analytical level of distribution of syntactic, lexical/phrasal and supra-segmental/sequential devices show that the three groups are heterogeneous regarding internal mitigation (see Table 32). To start with, although English and Spanish obtained similar scores in the lexical/phrasal section (40.96% vs. 40.70% of the total samples found), they showed opposing tendencies both in syntactic and supra-segmental mitigation: whereas a higher reliance on syntactic devices was seen in Spanish than in Enlgish (27.72% vs. 21.81%), more supra-segmental/sequential markers were used by the latter (37.17% vs. 26.32% in Spanish). Secondly, in this section Japanese was similar to English (35.84% of instances), but their similarities ended there. Japanese scored higher than both English and Spanish in lexical/phrasal mitigation (45.95%), but obtained the lowest overall figures in the syntactic section (13.29%). However, this low score in the last section can be explained if the overall rate of CIAs is considered, as these are syntactically modified forms of disagreement, albeit conventionalized.

Table 32. Distribution of Head Act-internal mitigation devices in Mitigated moves in English, Spanish and Japanese.

		English			Spanish			Japanese		
		N	%	% (N188)	N	%	% (N285)	N	%	% (N346)
Syntactic mitigation	Past	14	**34.14**	7.45	7	8.86	2.46	4	8.70	1.16
	Conditional	9	21.95	4.79	8	10.13	2.81	-	-	-
	'if' clause	1	2.44	0.53	5	6.33	1.75	-	-	-
	Possibility	9	21.95	4.79	6	7.59	2.11	2	4.35	0.58
	Ellipsis	4	9.76	2.13	38	**48.10**	**13.33**	10	21.73	2.89
	Postpone adver.	4	9.76	2.13	-	-	-	15	**32.61**	4.36
	Interrogative	-	-	-	15	18.99	5.26	15	**32.61**	4.36
	Sub-Total	41	100.00	**21.81**	79	100.00	27.72	46	100.00	13.29
Lexical and phrasal mitigation	CLK	3	3.90	1.60	22	18.97	7.72	6	3.77	1.73
	Cajoler	-		-	6	5.17	2.11	1	0.63	0.29
	Subjectivizer	22	28.57	**11.70**	39	**33.62**	**13.68**	6	3.77	1.73
	Impersonalization	4	5.19	2.13	3	2.59	1.02	8	5.03	2.31
	Understater	5	6.49	2.66	11	9.49	3.86	19	11.95	5.49
	Downtoner	9	11.69	4.79	8	6.90	2.81	11	6.92	3.18
	Hedge	32	**41.56**	**17.02**	1	0.86	0.35	67	**42.14**	**19.36**
	Reform. marker	2	2.60	1.06	5	4.31	1.75	2	1.26	0.58
	Solidarity marker	-		-	13	11.21	4.56	38	23.90	**10.98**
	Relativizer	-		-	8	6.90	2.81	1	0.63	0.29
	Sub-Total	77	100.00	**40.96**	116	100.00	40.70	159	100.00	**45.95**
Supra-Segmental and sequential mitigation	Final rising tone	8	11.76	4.26	2	2.67	0.70	5	4.03	1.45
	Low voice/whisp	2	2.94	1.06	-	-		7	5.65	2.02
	Laughter	13	19.12	6.91	9	12.00	3.16	27	21.77	7.80
	Hesitation marker	12	17.65	6.38	10	13.33	3.51	11	8.87	3.18
	Pause	23	**33.82**	**12.23**	20	26.67	7.02	54	**43.55**	**15.61**
	False Start	10	14.71	5.32	34	**45.33**	**11.93**	20	16.13	5.78
	Sub-Total	68	100.00	**37.17**	75	100.00	26.32	124	100.00	35.84
Others		**2**		1.06	8		2.81	17		4.91
TOTAL		188		100.00	285		100.00	346		100.00

If the overall ratio of every strategy across categories is considered, the three languages seem to coincide only partially. This time, English and Japanese were more similar in the lexical/phrasal section, in which Hedges were the most frequently used internal mitigators with 17.02% and 19.36% of cases respectively. In fact, this strategy was used in both languages more often than any other device. And again, English and Japanese shared Pause as the second most frequent mitigating feature, with 12.23% and 15.61% each.

However, no more similarities were found: Subjectizers were the third most preferred in English (11.70%), while Solidarity Markers were used more often in Japanese (10.98%), especially by means of the Involvement marker *'ne'*. Precisely, Subjectivizers were the preferred form of modulation in Spanish (13.68%), closely followed by Ellipsis (13.33%) and False starts (11.93%). CLKs were also relatively frequent (7.72%), especially if compared with the results obtained in English (1.60%) and Japanese (1.73%). At the other end of the continuum, Hedges obtained one of the lowest scores in Spanish (0.35%), in clear contrast with English and Japanese, where the highest preference for this device was observed, as described above.

Japanese aligned with Spanish in the use of the Interrogative mood (4.26% and 5.26%, respectively), while English speakers refrained from using this device. In the strategy of Postponement of adversative marker, it was Spanish which did not score, but it was the most preferred syntactic downgrader in Japanese, scoring the highest mark within the syntactic category together with the Interrogative mood (32.61% each). This device was also used in English, although not as frequently as in its Asian counterpart (9.76% of all syntactic strategies). The fact that the Postponement of adversative marker device were not found in Spanish should be explained. While in English there are specific grammatical items that go naturally in final position (e.g., *'though'* in English and *'kedo'* in Japanese), there is no equivalent word or expression in Spanish that can occupy that position. The conjunct *'sin embargo'* could perform that role, as it can move rather freely in the clause, but it is seldom used in informal conversation.

As observed above, the picture seems rather complex and chaotic. Nevertheless, some clear patterns can be found. A comparison between categories showed that lexical/phrasal mitigation was preferred over syntactic mitigation in Japanese, while supra-segmental/sequential mitigation was also highly used. A similar tendency was perceived in English, although the differences between categories were not as marked as in the Japanese case. Finally, Spanish speakers did not rely on supra-segmental/sequential attenuation as much as the other two languages, but were more prone to use syntactic strategies. They shared, however, the same preference for lexical/phrasal mitigation.

At the within-category level of analysis, there was no coincidence in the syntactic group. In English, the use of the Past tense was preferred, while Ellipsis was chosen most often in Spanish, and Japanese opted for Interrogative mood and Postponement of adversative marker. In the lexical/phrasal category, there was a convergence between English and Japanese in the high use of Hedges over the rest of devices, whereas Subjectivizers were the most frequent in Spanish. Finally, a similar picture emerged in the supra-segmental/sequential section, where English and Japanese showed a similar behavior. Pauses ranked first in both languages, whereas in Spanish more False starts were realized.

In sum, both quantitative and qualitative differences emerged in the realization of Head Act internal mitigation. In quantitative terms, more mitigators were used in English than in the other two languages, with Japanese ranking second and Spanish, third. In terms of the realization strategies, some similarities were especially found

between English and Japanese at the Lexical/phrasal and Supra-segmental/sequential levels, with Hedges and Pauses obtaining the highest scores in both languages. A different behavior was observed in Spanish, where Subjectivizers and False starts were more frequent. No coincidence was detected at the Syntactic level except for the relatively high scores obtained in Spanish and Japanese in the Interrogative mood strategy.

5.4.8.3. The realization of aggravation

In the analysis of the realization and distribution of aggravating devices, the procedure followed was similar to the analysis of mitigation. First of all, aggravated moves were classified into Head Act external, Head Act internal, and combined aggravation. However, some changes were introduced due to the special features seen in this type of moves. One major difference between mitigated and aggravated moves is their lack of symmetry in the realization of Head Act external modification. Aggravated realizations of disagreements share with plain moves the fact that they are framed as preferred at 1st order level, which means that their production is not delayed or hidden, and the disagreement elements are explicitly and clearly stated. The consequence is that aggravating devices seldom preface the Head Act. This turn-organizational feature has been reflected in the classification of Head Act external devices, which included only Supportive Moves as aggravators because Distractors and Alerters are devices that frame moves as dispreferred and have a mitigating function. On the other hand, violations of the turn-taking system in the form of sustained simultaneous talk and overlaps have been analyzed as Head Act internal features, as they are simultaneous to the act. Table 33 shows the distribution of aggravators in Aggravated moves.

All language groups showed a similar behavior in the way they upgraded Direct moves, choosing Head Act internal aggravation far more often than either external or combined realizations. Thus, this strategy comprised 62.50% of cases in English, 60.42% in Spanish, and 45.16% in Japanese. This sensible difference between English and Spanish on one hand and Japanese on the other is due to the high production of Aggravated CIAs by the latter group, as Graph 13 shows where the pattern found for Direct moves was reproduced, with internally aggravated CIAs comprising 27.42% of all cases. When Direct and CIA moves were added up, it emerged that the Japanese

obtained a higher overall score for Head Act Internal aggravation with 72.58% of all moves, slightly more than the 70.83% obtained by Americans and way above the Spanish 61.46%. This pattern was repeated when Direct, CIA and NCIA moves were computed together, also including the combined forms. Thus, Japanese showed a stronger tendency to realize the aggravation internally (88.71%) English (83.33%) or Spanish (76.03%).

Table 33. Distribution of Head-Act external, internal and combined aggravation in Aggravated moves.

		English		Spanish		Japanese	
		N	% (N 24)	N	% (N 96)	N	% (N 62)
Direct	**External**	2	8.33	21	21.87	4	6.45
	Internal	15	62.50	58	60.42	28	45.16
	Combined	3	12.50	9	9.37	3	4.84
	Sub-Total	**20**	83.33	**88**	91.66	**35**	56.45
CIA	**External**	2	8.33	1	1.04	2	3.23
	Internal	2	8.33	1	1.04	18	27.42
	Combined	-	-	2	2.08	1	1.61
	Sub-Total	**4**	16.67	**4**	4.17	**21**	33.87
NCIA	**External**	-	-	1	1.04	-	-
	Internal	-	-	2	2.08	6	9.68
	Combined	-	-	1	1.04	-	-
	Sub-Total	**-**	-	**4**	4.17	**6**	9.68
TOTAL		**24**	100.00	**96**	100.00	**62**	100.00

Graph 13. Distribution of Head-Act external, internal, and combined aggravation in Aggravated moves.
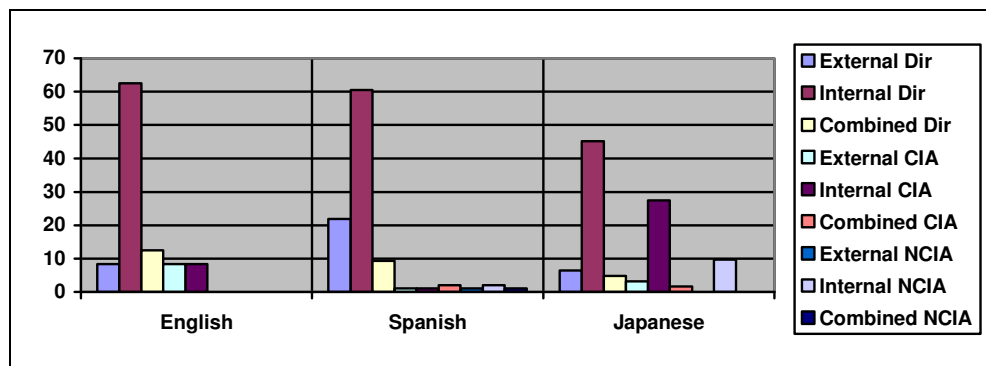
Conversely, Head Act external aggravation in Direct moves was much more used in Spanish (21.87%) than in English (8.33%) or especially Japanese (6.45%). Even when the combined moves were added, the former scored higher (31.24%) than the other two groups (20.83% and 11.29%, respectively). When all Direct, CIA and NCIA moves were computed, this distribution was confirmed, with Spanish speakers using the strategy in 36.44% of moves, followed by English (29.16%) and Japanese (16.13%).

The above notwithstanding, the picture is not complete unless the moves that combined mitigation and aggravation are also included in the analysis. Table 34 shows the number of moves that have been added from Mitigated/Aggravated moves:

Table 34. Number of tokens from Mitigated/Aggravated moves
used for the analysis of Aggravating devices.

		English	Spanish	Japanese
Direct	**Internal**	12	30	13
	External	6	6	1
CIA	**Internal**	-	-	3
	External	-	-	1
NCIA	**Internal**	1	3	1
	External	1	1	-

After this addition, the total number of moves analyzed for Head Act external and Head Act internal aggravation was the following:

4. English

    a. Head Act external aggravation: 14 moves.

    b. Head Act internal aggravation: 33 moves.

5. Spanish

    a. Head Act external aggravation: 43 moves.

    b. Head Act internal aggravation: 106 moves.

6. Japanese

    a. Head Act external aggravation: 12 moves.

    b. Head Act internal aggravation: 73 moves.

If external and internal aggravation are compared, they show the following rate of production: internal aggravation was used 2.35 times more than external aggravation in English, 2.5 times more in Spanish and as high 5.61 times in Japanese, which reveals that in this case English and Spanish were more similar.

5.4.8.3.1. Head Act external aggravation

As mentioned above, Head Act External aggravation was limited to Supportive Moves that enhanced the oppositional effect of the disagreement. Six strategies were identified and considered for quantitative analysis: Grounders, Commands, Reformulations/Reiterations, Criticism/Accusations/Contemptuous remarks, Irony, and

Upgrading Assessments/Opinions. In the case of Commands, which refer to expressions that claim a halt in the conversation (*'wait' / 'espera' / 'matte'*), they should precede the Head Act, as the intention is to stop and reconsider what the prior speaker has said. If they come after own disagreement, they have a concessive role, as the reconsideration is made of what one has just said. Reformulations/Reiterations and Upgrading assessments/opinions, by their own definitions should come after the Head Act. Similarly, Grounders are analyzed as aggravators if they follow the main act because they would have a delaying effect if produced before.

Results reveal that slightly more strategies were produced than moves in the three languages, which means that more than one strategy was simultaneously used in some move. However, this only happened once in English (15 strategies in 14 moves), and only twice in Spanish (45 strategies in 43 moves) and Japanese (14 strategies in 12 moves) (see Table 35 below). In terms of the distribution of strategies, English and Spanish showed a higher diversification than Japanese. English speakers used all strategies, while Spanish speakers employed one less, as they excluded Irony. Japanese were more limited in their selection by using only three out of six: Commands, Grounders and Reformulations/Reiterations.

Table 35. Distribution of Head-Act external aggravating devices in English, Spanish and Japanese.

		English		Spanish		Japanese	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Direct	Grounder	2	13.33	19	**42.23**	4	28.57
	Command	2	13.33	3	6.67	2	14.29
	Reformulation / Reiteration	3	20.00	7	15.56	4	28.57
	Criticism / accusation / contempt	1	6.67	2	4.44	-	-
	Irony	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Upgrading assessment / opinion	2	13.33	9	20	-	-
	TOTAL	10	66.67	40	88.89	10	71.43
CIA	Grounder	-	-	1	2.22	2	14.29
	Command	1	6.67	-	-	1	7.14
	Reformulation / Reiteration	2	13.33	1	2.22	1	7.14
	Criticism / accusation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irony	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Upgrading assessment / opinion	-	-	1	2.22	-	-
	TOTAL	3	20.00	3	6.67	4	28.57
NCIA	Grounder	1	6.67	1	2.22	-	-
	Command	-	-	1	2.22	-	-
	Reformulation / Reiteration	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Criticism / accusation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irony	1	6.67	-	-	-	-
	Upgrading assessment / opinion	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	2	13.33	2	4.44	-	-
Total tokens		15	100.00	45	100.00	14	100.00
Total of externally aggravated moves		14		43		12	

An initial comparison between Direct, CIA and NCIA categories showed that Spanish concentrated many more Head Act external aggravators in Direct moves than English or Japanese. While as many as 40 out 45 corresponded to externally Aggravated Direct moves in Spanish (88.89%), ten tokens were found both in English and Japanese, which represented 66.67% and 71.43% of the data respectively. On the other hand, although Spanish and English showed similar raw figures in the CIA and NCIA categories (three instances in CIA and two in NCIA), their overall rate differ considerably, since they represented 20.00% and 13.33% in English and only 6.67% and 4.44% in Spanish. Japanese, on the other, although different in raw numbers (four tokens in CIA and none in NCIA), obtained a production rate similar to English in the CIA category, as the four tokens represented 28.57% of the whole data.

When a comparison was carried out between strategies, more differences than similarities emerged. For one thing, many more Grounders were used in Spanish than in English or Japanese. The recurrence to this device in Direct moves was as high as 19 times out of 45 tokens (42.23%) in the case of the former, while two token were found in English (13.33%) and four in Japanese (28.57%). In addition to this, disparate behavior was also found with respect to Upgrading Assessments/Opinions, being used nine times in Spanish (20.00%), only twice in English (13.33%) and not produce at all in Japanese. Finally, Irony only occurred in English, albeit jusy once.

Contrariwise, among the similarities, Reformulation/Reiteration and Commands can be mentioned. In the case of Reformulation/Reiteration, it was the favorite strategy in both English and Japanese, obtaining similar scores, while it also ranked rather high in Spanish. In English, this strategy was used three times in Direct moves (20.00%) and twice in CIAs (13.33%), together comprising 33.33% of all external aggravators. Similarly, Japanese also used this strategy on five occasions (35.71%), although differently distributed: four of them were in Direct moves (28.57%) and one in CIA moves (7.14%). It was also produced once in CIAs (2.22%) in Spanish, and as many as seven times in Direct moves (15.56%), but the overall production rate was sensibly lower (17.78%) than the other languages.

Lastly, the three languages were even in the production of Commands (three times each). As less tokens of external aggravation were produced in Japanese overall, Commands comprised 21.43% of all strategies, which is slightly more than the 20.00% of the English data, and considerably higher than the Spanish rate (6.67%).

Summarizing, in terms of the distribution of Head Act external aggravation, Spanish stands alone by accumulating a higher proportion of this type of device in Direct moves than English or Japanese. These two languages also produced more externally aggravated moves in the Direct category than in CIAs or NCIAs, but in a lower degree. In this respect, they showed a similar behavior between them. At the level of strategy realization, except for the higher preference observed in Spanish for Upgrading Assessments/Opinions with respect to English and Japanese, they all seem to share a predilection for Commands, Grounders and Reformulations/Reiterations, although in different degrees. While Grounders are the first option in Spanish, Reformulations/Reiterations and Commands are preferred in English and Japanese.

5.4.8.3.2. Head Act internal aggravation

Aggravators inside the Head Act, as listed in the Coding System above, show a higher level of variation than external realizations. The following strategies were included for analysis: Intensifier, Superlative, Reiteration, Contrastive marker, Attention getter, Lexical uptoner, Taboo words and expressions, Modifying uptoners, Assertive markers, Assertive grounders, Challenging expressions, Criticism/Accusation, Loud voice, Elongation, Emphatic stress, Overlaps and Simultaneous talk. Of this long list, the last five belong to the Supra-Segmental/Sequential category. Although Reiteration and Criticism/Accusation have the same labels as their Head Act external counterparts, they refer to act-internal realizations. Head Act internal Reiteration occurs at word or phrase level, rather than as a separate clause, when words are clustered together creating a pattering effect (e.g., *'no no no no' / 'claro claro' / 'chigau chigau' ('wrong wrong')*. The mere co-occurrence of two words of the same class in one single Head Act does not necessarily imply aggravation. Criticism/Accusation, on the other hand, refers to cases in which the Head Act itself represents the criticism and carries the main force of the disagreement. Having clarified these details, I proceed now to the presentation of results (see Table 36 for the distribution of all strategies).

A preliminary analysis of the realization of Head Act Internal aggravation revealed that 37 upgrading devices were produced in 33 moves in English, as often as 167 times in 106 moves in Spanish, and 90 in 73 disagreements in Japanese. The lowest density of upgraders was found in English, followed by Japanese and Spanish. The

production density in English was of 1.12 per move, 1.23 in Japanese, and 1.58 in Spanish. These figures represent the opposite tendency to that found for mitigators, where the highest density was found in English, and the lowest in Spanish. Not only do speakers of Spanish upgrade their disagreements more often, but they use a higher number of devices whenever they do so.

Table 36. Distribution of Head-Act internal aggravating devices in English, Spanish and Japanese.

		English		Spanish		Japanese	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Direct	**Intensifier**	3	8.11	7	4.19	2	2.22
	Superlative	2	5.41	3	1.80	-	-
	Reiteration	1	2.70	17	**10.20**	5	5.56
	Contrastive marker	-	-	11	6.59	-	-
	Attention getter	-	-	8	4.79	-	-
	Lexical uptoner	4	**10.81**	4	2.40	1	1.11
	Taboo	-	-	5	2.99	1	1.11
	Modifying uptoner	3	8.11	1	0.60	5	5.56
	Assertive marker	-	-	-	-	12	**13.33**
	Assertive grounder	-	-	7	4.19	2	2.22
	Challenge	-	-	3	1.80	1	1.11
	Criticism / accusation	1	2.70	1	0.60	-	-
	Loud voice	2	5.41	13	7.78	6	6.67
	Elongation	1	2.70	14	8.38	6	6.67
	Emphatic stress	8	**21.62**	20	**11.97**	9	**10.00**
	Overlap	2	5.41	16	9.58	2	2.22
	Simultaneous talk	7	**18.91**	23	**13.77**	2	2.22
CIA	**Intensifier**	-	-	-	-	1	1.11
	Superlative	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Reiteration	-	-	-	-	1	1.11
	Contrastive marker	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Attention getter	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Lexical uptoner	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Taboo	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Modifying uptoner	-	-	-	-	2	2.22
	Assertive marker	-	-	-	-	1	1.11
	Assertive grounder	-	-	-	-	1	1.11
	Challenge	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Criticism / accusation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Loud voice	-	-	-	-	8	8.89
	Elongation	2	5.41	2	1.20	7	7.78
	Emphatic stress	1	2.70	2	1.20	5	5.56
	Overlap	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Simultaneous talk	-	-	1	0.60	1	1.11
NCIA	**Intensifier**	-	-	1	0.60	1	1.11
	Superlative	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Reiteration	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Contrastive marker	-	-	-	-	2	2.22
	Attention getter	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Lexical uptoner	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Taboo	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Modifying uptoner	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Assertive marker	-	-	-	-	4	4.44
	Assertive grounder	-	-	1	0.60	1	1.11
	Challenge	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Criticism / accusation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Loud voice	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Elongation	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Emphatic stress	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Overlap	-	-	1	0.60	-	-
	Simultaneous talk	-	-	1	0.60	1	1.11
Total of tokens / Density		37	1.12	167	1.58	90	1.23
Total internally aggravated moves		33	-	106	-	73	-

A cross-category analysis showed that most of the aggravating strategies were used in Direct moves, especially in English and Spanish. The English case is the most radical, as aggravation in CIAs was limited to one or two instances of supra-segmental/sequential features and none in NCIAs. Spanish showed a similar pattern, but some tokens were found both in CIAs and NCIAs. In the latter category Intensifier, Superlative and Assertive grounder were used once, together with some supra-segmental/sequential features (see Table 36 above). Japanese also showed a tendency to gather a higher number of devices in Direct moves, but not as radically as the other two languages. In fact, 36 out of the 90 tokens (40%) were produced either in CIA or NCIA moves, in sharp contrast with the 14 out of 167 in Spanish (8.38%), and especially the three out of 37 in English (8.10%).

Turning now to the distribution of strategies, Spanish showed a wider selection of devices, as all were used except one. The only exception was Assertive marker (e.g., *'eh?'* in Spanish or the final particles *'mon'* or *'yo'* in Japanese). In fact, this was the most preferred device in this language, comprising 13.33% of all cases and in clear opposition to Spanish and English. This language was the one that revealed less variation with only eleven out of seventeen strategies used, followed by Japanese with fourteen.

In terms of language internal frequency, a high degree of variation was found across the three languages. While in English, Emphatic stress ranked first in the production rate with eight instances out of 38 (24.32%), Simultaneous talk was more frequently used in Spanish with 25 tokens (14.97%) distributed along the three types of moves, while Assertive marker represented the first option in Japanese, with 16 tokens (17.77%). Simultaneous talk was the second most used device in English (18.91%), followed by Lexical uptoner (10.81%). In Spanish, Emphatic Stress with 23 instances (13.77%) and Overlap with 18 tokens (10.78%) were second and third respectively, while Loud voice and Emphatic stress completed the top three in Japanese with 14 tokens each (15.56%). These results reveal that putting emphasis on a relevant word or on the stressed syllable of that word as a means to upgrade the disagreement is shared in the three languages.

Focusing only on lexical/phrasal devices, English revealed the following order of frequency: Lexical uptoner came first, followed by Intensifier and Modifying uptoner with the same score (three times each). Superlative with two instances and Reiteration with one completed the list. Reiteration was precisely the most frequent lexical/phrasal

strategy in Spanish, while Contrastive marker and Attention getter were runner-up and third respectively. Intensifier and Assertive grounder shared the fourth position, and were followed by Taboo, Lexical uptoner and Superlative, in that order. Challenge, Modifying uptoner and Criticism/Accusation occupied the last positions. In Japanese, Assertive marker, Modifying uptoner and Reiteration top the list, with Assertive grounder, Intensifier and Contrastive marker occupying the fourth, fifth and sixth positions respectively. With only one token each, Reiteration, Lexical uptoner, Challenge and Taboo rank last. This rank order is shown in Table 37 below:

Table 37. Rank order of Head Act internal aggravating strategies in English, Spanish and Japanese**.**

ENGLISH	SPANISH	JAPANESE
1. Lexical uptoner	1. Reiteration	1. Assertive marker
2. Intensifier / Modifying uptoner	2. Contrastive marker	2. Modifying uptoner
4. Superlative	3. Attention getter	3. Reiteration
5. Reiteration / Criticism	4. Intensifier	4. Assertive grounder
	5. Assertive grounder	5. Intensifier
	6. Taboo	6. Contrastive marker
	7. Lexical uptoner / Superlative	7. Lexical uptoner / Challenge / Taboo
	9. Challenge	
	10. Modifying uptoner / Criticism	

In terms of order of preference, only two perfect correlations were found. One of them was the high preference in English and Japanese for Modifying uptoners, which occupied the second position in both languages. The other correlation corresponded to Lexical uptoner between Spanish and Japanese, which ranked seventh in both cases. A close correlation, albeit not perfect, was found again between these two languages in the production rate of Intensifier and Assertive grounder, which occupied the fifth and sixth positions in Spanish, and the reverse order in Japanese, but nevertheless showing a similar level of preference. If the three languages are compared, the only partial correlation that seems to hold is the dispreference shown for Challenge and Criticism, which either occupy the last position or are not produced at all.

Particularly remarkable is the contrast between Spanish on one side and English and Japanese on the other in ranked preference of Modifying uptoner, which was used only once in Spanish and ranked last in the list, while it was the second most frequent lexical/phrasal aggravator in English and Japanese. Another striking difference is the role played by Lexical uptoner in the three languages, since it occupied the first position in English, and the seventh position in Spanish and Japanese, which corresponded to the last position in the case of the latter.

Turning now to the sequential features – i.e., Overlap and Simultaneous talk –, the relatively high frequency found in English (5.81% and 18.91%, respectively) and Spanish (10.78% and 14.97%, respectively) contrasts with their low rates in Japanese (2.22% and 4.44%, respectively). Notice that English and Spanish show a symmetrical distribution here, with Simultaneous talk outranking Overlap in English and the reverse order in Spanish. The explanations and implications of these results will be discussed in the Discussion section.

Summing up, results have shown that Spanish stands out in terms of the frequency rate of Aggravating devices, with over one and half strategies per move. Conversely, English ranked last. In terms of strategy selection, no clear pattern of correlation was found, although there were some common features between English and Japanese, especially in the high preference for Modifying uptoner as an upgrading device. Also, Spanish and Japanese showed certain similarities, as in the use of Intensifiers and Assertive grounders. In sequential terms, both English and Spanish obtained a relatively high score and the same distribution, which was not the case in Japanese. At the supra-segmental level, they all showed a similar high preference for emphatic stress, although English and Japanese obtained the highest scores. Elongation and Loud voice were by far more frequent in Japanese than in English, with Spanish showing a middle preference.

5.4.9. Turn external delays

A separate section is devoted to the turn-externally delayed production of disagreement Head Acts, as I consider that they need special attention for the cross-cultural comparison of English, Spanish and Japanese. This attention should focus on three aspects of their realization: (1) their relative frequency in each language, (2) their length in terms of the number of turns over which the Head Act is delayed, and (3) the type of linguistic elements that are used to postpone the explicit disagreeing act. The results obtained for points (1) and (2) above will be described in this section, while point (3) will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Before starting with the presentation of results, one word needs to be said on the counting method used. Reference will be made in this section to the number of turns delayed. The figures shown will refer to the production rate of own turns, i.e., to the

number of turns needed by the speaker to produce the disagreement without considering the other-participants' turns. Only one exception is contemplated: when next speaker (the disagreement producer) refrains from talking in the relevant turn, then the turns are computed by counting the turns used by his/her interlocutors. In my data, this happened twice, once in the English data and once in the Spanish data.

First of all, in terms of the relative frequency of turn external delays, Japanese interactants showed a higher tendency to refrain from producing an explicit disagreement in the expected second-pair-part position than American and Spanish participants. Japanese speakers used this strategy on 38 occasions, representing 8.76% of all disagreement moves, while Americans did so in twelve disagreeing moves (5.00%), and Spaniards only eight, which corresponded to just 1.71% of the whole data (see Table 38). This means that Japanese used this device 75% more often than Americans and over five times more than Spanish speakers (see Graph 14 for a clear picture of the differences).

Table 38. Frequency of turn external delays of disagreements per group.

	TURN EXTERNAL DELAYS					
	G # 1	G # 2	G # 3	G # 4	TOTAL	% (N total moves)
English	2	4	4	2	12	5.00
Spanish	3	1	2	2	8	1.71
Japanese	16	11	6	5	38	8.76

Graph 14. Frequency of turn external delays per language.
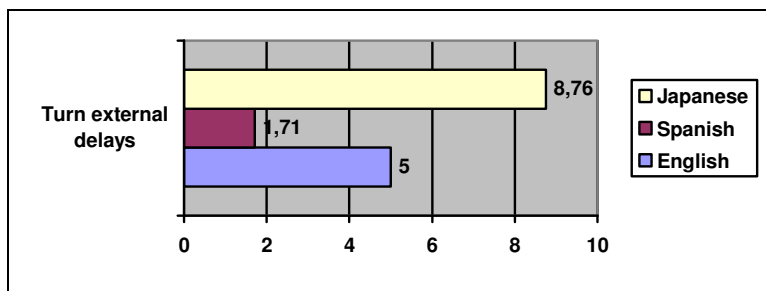
Regarding the number of turns used to produce the delayed disagreements, the following pattern emerged (see Table 39 and Graph 15). While the number of delayed turns ranged from two to four in English, mainly two-turn and three-turn delays were found in Spanish, with the exception of one case in which a speaker waited more than five turns (namely 14) to produce her disagreement. Leaving aside this exception, which will be discussed later on, English and Spanish had a similar behavior, showing a high preference for two-turn and three-turn delays (91.67% and 77.50%, respectively).

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Table 39. Distribution of turn-external delays as a function by number of turns delayed.

Number of turns delayed	English		Spanish		Japanese	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2 turns	5	41.67	5	62.50	13	34.21
3 turns	6	50.00	2	25.00	10	26.32
4 turns	1	8.33	-	-	5	13.16
5 turns	-	-	-	-	2	5.26
More than 5 turns	-	-	1	12.50	8	21.05
TOTAL	12	100.00	8	100.00	38	100.00

However, the distribution of delays in Japanese showed a different pattern. Even though two-turn and three-turn delays were still more frequent than the rest of realizations (60.53%), more-than-three turn delays were also highly produced, together comprising almost two fifths of the data (39.47%). Hence, Japanese not only delayed their disagreements more frequently but also showed a higher degree of hesitancy. This interpretation was reinforced by the results of the item analysis, which revealed that more-than-five-turn delays comprised 21.05% of the data. In other words, one out of every five turn-external delays was extremely delayed. Furthermore, although not shown in Table 39, the number of turns in this item was far from being homogeneous. From the eight instances identified, only two of them occupied six turns. The other six were distributed as follows: two delays were realized in seven turns, two more were delayed over ten turns, one occupied eleven turns, and finally one speaker waited as many as 19 own-turns to make her disagreement explicit.

Graph 15. Distribution of turn-external delays as a function of number of turns delayed.
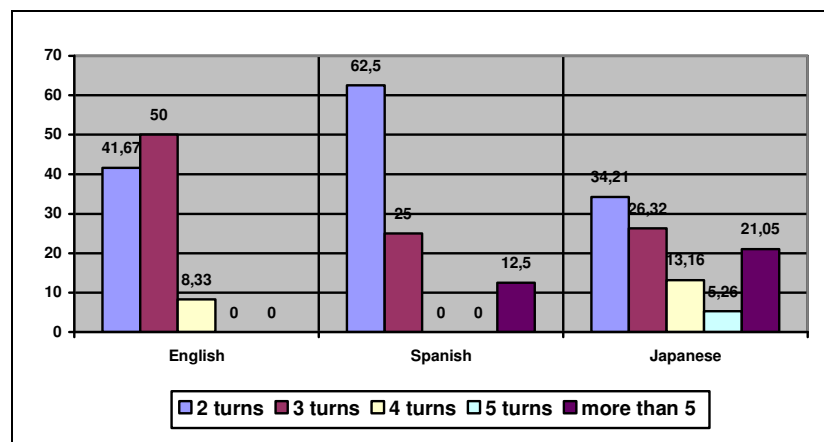
Summing up, in terms of relative frequency of turn-external delays, Japanese used this strategy more often than Americans and Spaniards. The latter were the ones

who relied less on this strategy, while the former were less reluctant. In this sense, Japanese and Americans should be grouped together, since the difference between them was not as high as the one between them on one hand and Spanish on the other. Americans turn-externally delayed their disagreements nearly three times more often than Spanish speakers. This difference grew up to over five times when the latter was compared with Japanese. As regards the length of the delay, however, Spanish and English were more similar between each other, showing preference for brief delays of two or three turns. In this case, disagreements in Japanese showed a high level of variation, ranging from two to as many as 19 turns. These results show that Japanese speakers delayed their disagreements more and longer, while Spanish speakers showed the opposite tendency. Once again, Americans seem to be somewhere in between.

5.5. Discussion of the results of the quantitative analysis

In this section, an interpretation of the above findings will be carried out and their implications discussed. As purported at the beginning of this chapter, the aim of these quantitative analyses was to discover the relative frequency of production of disagreements in English, Spanish and Japanese, as well as their similarities and differences in their realizations. These similarities and differences will be interpreted in terms of the degree of directness or indirectness of the disagreements produced at two levels of production:

  a) Transparency of illocutionary force, and
  b) Mitigation/Aggravation of illocutionary act by means of
      a. turn-constructional devices
      b. turn-organizational devices

The first analysis consisted in the computation of the relative frequency of disagreement moves in the context of a friendly conversation between young acquaintances established as the initial frame of the interactions. As claimed at the beginning of this chapter, this "friendly" frame was seen to be maintained throughout the conversations, and therefore they could be regarded as "preferred" at the 2nd order of preference (Bousfield 2007), i.e., polite. This is the backdrop against which disagreement acts are going to be interpreted in the following discussion.

The frequency analysis was justified in the literature review conducted in Chapter 3 about the status of disagreement with respect to preference organization and politeness, where it was suggested that there was no one-to-one relationship between the latter and the format adopted by the former at the 1st order of preference (Bousfield 2007). Seminal theoretical works on politeness such as Leech (1983) and Brown & Levinson (1987) had claimed that agreement was at the core of the notion of politeness. Leech (1983: 132), for example, proposed an Agreement Maxim in virtue of which agreement should be maximized between self and other and disagreement should be minimized. Brown & Levinson (1987) suggested 'seek agreement' and 'avoid disagreement' as strategies of positive politeness that could be used to save the interlocutor's positive face. In these two frameworks, agreement was presented by default as "preferred" at the 2nd order of preference, thus establishing a direct relationship between 1st order and 2nd order preference. However, several studies had recently shown that there was cross-cultural variation regarding the degree of acceptability of disagreements in conversation (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 2002, Edstrom 2004, García 1989b, Gruber 1998, Kakava 2002, Schiffrin 1994). It was argued, for example, that disagreement was often framed as "preferred" in some languages such as Hebrew, Greek or Venezuelan Spanish. Kakava (2002) suggested that in intimate contexts, Greeks are cooperative and supportive by "agreeing to disagree" (2002: 1564), in clear opposition to, for example, Canadian conversants, who seem to "agree no to argue" (*ibid.*).

Based on this evidence, it seemed relevant and justified to take up a cross-cultural comparison not only of the preference structure of disagreeing utterances, but also of the relative frequency of their production in order to gauge the degree to which the 'seek agreement' and 'avoid disagreement' conversational principles (or strategies) where followed in quantitative terms.

The second step was to see how disagreements were framed in the context of friendly conversations in the three cultures. In order to do this at the quantitative level, the data were codified in terms of illocutionary directness of the disagreement move, and the level and type of modification of the Head Act attending to both turn-constructional and turn-organizational features. The different degrees of illocutionary directness were established following the canonical classification used in cross-cultural speech act research, based on the pragmatic notions of conventional and non-conventional implicatures. The codification of Head Act modification included both

speech act and conversation analytic features, including the notion of "delay" in the turn-taking system.

Finally, the findings at the quantitative level of analysis will be related to the notion of politeness. The discussion will follow the order of presentation used in the Results section, with a brief summary preceding every comment.

5.5.1. Disagreement production rate

The analysis of the frequency of disagreements showed that the production rate varied among the three languages. In English, 240 disagreeing moves were produced in 2,488 turns, which represented 9.65% of the total number of turns. In Japanese, the production rate was lower, since only 434 disagreements occurred in 5,057 turns (8.58%). Spanish, on the other hand, was more prolific in disagreement moves with 467 moves in 3,319 turns, which is 14.07% of the data.

As already pointed out in the Results section, these rates suggest that Spanish young people are more prone to disagree in close encounters than either Americans or Japanese. Although to my knowledge, no studies exist including a quantitative comparison of the production rate of disagreements including Spanish, these results seem to support previous observations made about the high tolerance for disagreement found in this language. For example, Hernández Flores (2004b) argued that disagreement expressed through emphatic intonation was "neither polite nor impolite since expressing disagreement is socially accepted in Spanish conversation" (2004b: 276). In a brief excerpt from a conversation among family and friends at a barbecue party (Hernández Flores 2004b: 272-4), I counted five disagreements in eighteen turns, almost all of them highly direct (straight *'no'* or Locution Derivable) and aggravated (emphatic stress, reiteration and loud voice), which represents 27.77% of turns. In spite of this, Hernández Flores comments that "the interaction occurs in a friendly atmosphere where the participants behave as is expected of them [...] and *faces* are positively emphasised" (*ibid.:* 275), which means that disagreements are completely normal not only for the interactants but also for the researcher.

English and Japanese, on the other hand, showed a similar rate of disagreement production between each other, albeit English obtained a slightly higher score. Although at this stage of the discussion it is too early to make a strong claim, this might suggest

that English and Japanese are closer to each other in showing a lower degree of tolerance toward disagreement. Again, previous studies have not focused on this issue in purely quantitative terms, but many similarities in the strategies used have been mentioned. Mori (1999), for example, reported that "agreement and disagreement [in Japanese] demonstrate systematic differences in terms of the timing of uptake and the structure of turns, as has been discussed in English […]" (Mori 1999: 191), thus suggesting a similarity between the two languages. Nevertheless, these initial impressions need to be confirmed by the rest of the results.

5.5.2. Directness

At the level of directness, the distribution of Direct, Conventionally Indirect (CIA) and Non-Conventionally Indirect (CIA) disagreeing moves were quantitatively analyzed in order to establish their order of preference in each language. Here, results also revealed a high level of variation among the three languages. Spanish was found at one end, with more than eight disagreements proffered in a direct manner every ten moves (82.87%), only 5.78% in a conventionally indirect way, and 9.21% via NCIAs. Once more, Japanese stood at the opposite end, with direct disagreement comprising only half of the total number of disagreements (52.43%), while the amount of CIAs and NCIAs increased considerably to reach 25.81% and 17.51%, respectively. Finally, English seemed to align with Japanese again, but this time obtaining higher scores for directness. In terms of the relative frequency of Direct moves, English was equidistant from Spanish and Japanese with 66.67% of disagreements, but showed the same distribution as the latter in CIAs and NCIAs with 16.24% and 13.25%, respectively.

These results not only confirm the pattern observed in the previous section, in which English and Japanese showed less tolerance for disagreement in merely quantitative terms, but also shows that disagreements are more frequently framed as dispreferred at the 1st order of preference in English, and especially in Japanese, than in Spanish. Although this interpretation should await confirmation until put together with the different levels of mitigation and aggravation, a pattern seems to have emerged.

5.5.2.1. The distribution of Direct strategies

The similarities between American English and Japanese on one hand, and the difference between these two and Spanish on the other, seem to be supported by the distribution pattern of Direct strategies as well. The rank order of the four Direct moves analyzed (*'no'*, Locution Derivable (LD), *'but'* and *'or'*) showed the same pattern in English and Japanese, where the following order emerged: LD – *'but'* – *'no'* – *'or'*. Moreover, the scores obtained in both cases were also similar in most of the strategies: English scores were 67.95% (LD), 16.03% (*'but'*), 10.26% (*'no'*), and 5.77% (*'or'*), while in Japanese they were 62.28% (LD), 27.19% (*'but'*), 10.53% (*'no'*), and 0.00% (*'or'*). As can be observed, there is a striking coincidence especially in the production rate of straight *'no'* oppositions, as well as in LDs, although in a lower degree.

Spanish, however, showed a different organization. In this case, it was *'but'* which ranked first (41.60%), followed by LD (34.63%), *'no'* (21.19%) and *'or'* (2.58%). Some clear patterns can be observed here. First of all, the rank order of *'but'* disagreements and LD is reversed. Secondly, although *'no'* ranks third as in English and Japanese, it was used far more frequently than in these languages. Thirdly, the rates are more evenly distributed among the main three strategies. Now, is it possible to interpret these results in terms of preference? I argue that it is possible on two grounds. One of them seems fairly straightforward: far more *'no'* utterances were produced in Spanish than in the other two languages. The other feature might be more controversial: I argue that *'but'* disagreements are more direct and explicit than LDs. I will take each argument at a time first, and then I will bring them together in a more general discussion.

Several scholars have already argued that direct opposition via a contrastive polarity marker *'no'* (or *'yes'* if the prior statement had been framed as a negative proposition) maximizes the explicitness and directness of the disagreement. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (2002) cite a blunt *'no'* as "the most blatant, on the record, mode of disagreement possible" (2002: 1577), while Gruber (1998: 488) argues that it is a "disagreement pragmatic marker" that can be used as an aggravating device. Sacks (1987 [1973]: 63) puts it in opposite terms: the effect of disagreements can be minimized by not saying *'no'* explicitly. Pomerantz (1984: 84-6) also mentions *'no'* as a preferred disagreement strategy although nothing is said about being more or less direct.

No doubt, a *'no'* as a response to a prior positive assessment/opinion or a *'yes'* to a negatively oriented prior statement can be considered most highly oppositional.

Turning now to *'but'* disagreements, the question arises as to whether it is more or less direct than either *'no'* or LDs. I suggest that *'but'* disagreements, when used without a prefacing token agreement, are more direct and explicit than LDs. My argument is that *'but'* shares with *'no'* the fact that the explicit disagreeing element is brought to the front of the Head Act, while in LD utterances this is not necessarily the case. Gruber (1998: 488) includes this adversative conjunction among the Austrian German words that are used as aggravating devices when combined with overt disagreements, with the capacity of turning any utterance into a disagreeing move. So, even though from a logical point of view, the word *'but'* might introduce a partial disagreement rather than a complete opposition, it is nevertheless an explicit marker of disagreement, while in the case of LD, the disagreeing item needs to be searched inside the proposition, which might be hidden and delayed among mitigating devices. In fact, my English data show that out of the 106 LD disagreeing moves found, 61 were mitigated in some way, which represent 57.55% of the cases. In the Japanese case, 68 out of 142 LD moves were mitigated (47.89%). So, if we attend to the attenuating effect produced by the delay of the explicit disagreement component (Pomerantz 1984: 70ff) as well as the mitigating devices that downgrade the effect of the oppositional utterance, the LD strategy could be less face-threatening than a more explicit adversative marker *'but'*. Furthermore, when *'but'* is mentioned as an attenuated disagreement, it is always presented in *'yes but'* or similar formats, rather than un-prefaced. Muntigl & Turnbull (1998: 232) mention some realizations including *'but'* mitigated disagreements, but the examples are invariably preceded by some downgrading device such as token agreements or weak agreements. Similarly, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (2002: 1578), include *'but'* as a downgraded form, but again prefaced by a token agreement. In my data, however, many *'but'*-initiated utterances in Spanish were produced without a mitigating device prefacing the main act. That is, they were not preceded by a Distractor (token agreement markers –*'yes'*–, weak agreements, and so on). Out of 161 cases, 91 were un-prefaced by a Distractor, which represent 56.52%. These figures stand in sharp contrast with English, where only eight out of 25 cases were straight (32.00%), and also with Japanese, in which 30 out of 62 were not preceded by a Distractor (48.39%). Although the figures in Japanese are closer to the Spanish ones, *'but'* disagreements in the former

were frequently prefaced by Alerters (13 cases out of the 30 above) which also had a delaying and/or mitigating effect, as the following example shows:

(174) *(11jpn/T139-141M105)*

T0669   A: [are ni shiyo] are (.) kazoku::↑ ai o fukameru toka
→   **(1.1)**
T0670   B: un
→T0671 C: [**a::?**   ]
T0672   B: [@ nani] ga? [@@@@@ ii ka soo ka]
T0673   A: [soshitara sa:: are jan↑   ] nanka chanto shita kyooiku o
             ukete::↑ a:: hatarakanakucha ikenai n da to iu XXXXXX no toki kara chanto
             rikai suru (no ga aru) jan oya ga soo iu fuu ni sodatereba
T0674   B: oya no mondai?
T0675   A: soo soo soo dakara kyooiku (.) mondai ni suru↓ niito wa↓
→T0676 C: **soo ka na?**
             (1.2)
T0677   B: doo na n daroo ne? (1.6) wakannee
T0678   A: ºwakannai ne demoº
→   **(1.3)**
→T0679 C: º**demo XXXXXX muri da yo**º
        A: *[let's say that] that (.) to deepen like family::↑ love*
             (1.1)
        B: *yeah*
        C: [**huh::?**   ]
        B: *[@ what?] [@@@@@ oh well that might be okay   ]*
        A: *[in that case you see↑ like they are properly] educated::↑ uh:::*
             if parents bring up their children like that so that they understand from
             XXXX that they must work
        B: *(is it) a parent problem?*
        A: *yeah yeah yeah so make it (.) an educational problem↓ this NEET thing↓*
        C: *it is?*
             (1.2)
        B: *how might that be? (1.6) I dunno*
        A: *ºwe don't know though don't weº*
             (1.3)
        C: *ºbut XXXXXX is impossible (I tell you)º*

In this example, no Distractor prefaces the *'but'* disagreement move. However, the explicit disagreement is pushed down several turns and is preceded by a number of weak hints in T0671 and T0676 as well as long gaps of more than one second. Clearly, these are highly mitigated cases, even if they are not introduced by token or weak agreements. So, if we take this kind of pre-Head Act sequences into account, the total un-prefaced *'but'* disagreements should be finally reduced to 17 (27.42% of all *'but'* utterances). This way, if the bare *'but'* cases were added to the straight *'no'* cases, they would comprise 44.70% of the Direct strategies in Spanish, and only 15.38% and 17.98% in English and Japanese, respectively.

If Direct moves are classified as argued above, Spanish speakers seem to contrast clearly with American and Japanese speakers. The analysis of the distribution

of Direct strategies suggests that Spanish speakers are more prone to produce straight and explicit markers of disagreement than their American and Asian counterparts. It can be argued that rather than the level of directness of the illocutionary force of the utterances, it is the explicitness and timing of the disagreement marker that aggravates the disagreement. Consider the following example in which *'pero' ('but')* introduces a strong disagreement marked by aggravating devices such as explicit negation (*'no es caro'*), emphatic stress, vowel elongation, simultaneous talk, and a special use of *por favor* (*'please'*) indicating indignation, roughly equivalent here to the English *'get out of here'*:

> (175) *(2esp/T33M29)*
>   T150 C: no::: yo quiero↑- vamos a ver yo::- como no est- no estamos muy bien
>   económicamente yo había pensado en un hostal <u>que no</u>↑ pues en un
>   hotel de una estrella no nos podemo::::::s-
>   T151 A: [@ no nos podemos permitir un hotel de (tres o cuatro)   ] es<u>tre</u>llas=
> ⟶T152 B: [**pero ya (un hotel de tres estrellas) no es <u>ca::</u>ro por fa<u>vor</u>**]

Clearly, the adversative conjunction *'pero'* seems to reinforce the aggressive quality of the utterance, which would lose part of its strength if only an LD disagreement had been produced because the disagreement would not have been made clear until *'no es caro'*, which occurs by the end of the turn. In addition to that, the utterance that follows *'pero'* is not an exception or qualification to prior utterance the way Pomerantz (1984: 74) said most disagreements in "agreement preferred" contexts were, but rather a blatant opposition that directly contradicts prior speaker's statement including the explicit opposition marker *'no'*.

This example and the quantitative results shown above do not support Muntigl & Turnbull's (1998) claim that what they call *counterclaims*, normally introduced by the adversative conjunction *'but'* and defined as "alternative claim[s] that [do] not directly contradict nor challenge other's claim" (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998: 231), are less face-threatening and usually mitigated. These authors argue that counterclaims mitigate the threat by not directly attacking the other's position of "central aspects of the other's self-image and, in addition, they invite further cooperative discussion" (*ibid.:* 246). Furthermore, the mitigating effect is frequently enhanced by means of delays, prefaces and Head Act internal mitigating devices. However, I expect to have shown that although this seems to be the case in English and Japanese (attending to the distribution of mitigated and un-mitigated *'but'* utterances), it is not fully supported by the Spanish

data. For one thing, more non-delayed and un-prefaced *'but'* disagreements were produced than delayed and prefaced ones. For another, the internal realization of utterances initiated by *'but'* showed a high range of variability, straight opposition being one possible realization, as shown in example 175 above.

Returning now to the main argument line, it was observed that Americans and Japanese showed a similar pattern in the production of *'no'* answers. The Japanese results might be a bit surprising, as one might have expected even less cases of explicit *'no'* strategies due to the widespread perception that the use of this word (or its equivalent: *'iya', 'chigau'*) is almost taboo in many Asian countries (Escandell-Vidal 1995: 82), including Japan, or to the often-mentioned Japanese preference for harmonious relationships in which confronting differences is a serious blunder (Maynard 1997: 126). Two factors help understand why they scored so high in this case. On one hand, the above restrictions are relaxed in close in-group (*uchi*) situations, where the public face is not at risk and a relationship based on *amae* (*'indulgence'* and *'mutual dependence'*) is established. Jones (1992, *cit.* in Maynard 1997: 157) points out that even conflictive situations are tolerated in intimate realtionships. The other factor that explains the high score obtained is that in the case of Japanese Group # 3, 14 out of the 18 cases were produced by the same male speaker, and three out of the four cases in Group # 2 were also uttered by a male participant. This amounts to 70.83% of cases. These results seem to suggest a gender difference in communicative style among Japanese, with the male speakers being more assertive and confrontational than their female counterparts.

Summing up, I have suggested that within Direct moves, *'no'* would be the most aggressive form of disagreement, followed by straight *'but'* and LD. According to this classification, Spanish would rank as the most direct language, since it scored higher in both *'no'* and un-prefaced *'but'* disagreements. English and Japanese, on the other hand, showed a similar pattern once more, although the former obtained slightly higher scores for LD and Japanese showed the reverse pattern in *'but'* and *'no'* strategies. These results, however, are still partial and provisional, and they should be contrasted with the rest of strategies, including their level of mitigation and aggravation. As observed in the Results section, some major changes were found when their frequency was calculated together with CIAs and NCIAs. Before doing that, these two indirect strategies are discussed.

5.5.2.2. The distribution of CIAs and NCIAs

In clear opposition to the realization pattern of Direct moves, CIAs amd NCIAs were highly favored in Japanese and relatively so in English, while they were used very little in Spanish. If the production rates of CIAs and NCIAs shown at the beginning of this section were put together, they would represent 43.32% of all disagreement moves in Japanese, 39.49% in English, and only 14.99% in Spanish, which again shows that the former two languages are closer to each other. And again, as already mentioned above, Spanish also differs from the rest in terms of the order of preference of these two categories of realization. While NCIAs are preferred over CIAs in this language, the opposite tendency was observed in both English and Japanese.

Let me turn now to the analysis by categories. Regarding the realization patterns within the CIA category, it was Japanese that showed a wider distribution than English or Spanish by scoring in all strategy types. In English, no token was found of Type B1 disagreements, whereas Type B2 was not used in Spanish. As to the rank order of each strategy, English showed a higher preference for Type A1 (55.26% of CIAs) and Type A2 (39.48%), while the rest where seldom used or not used at all (only one token was found for Type B2 and Type C CIAs). On the other hand, the distribution pattern in Spanish was as follows: A2 (40.74%) – B1 (29.63%) – A1 (18.52%) – C (11.11%). Finally, A2 (33.04%) was the first option in Japanese, followed by B2 (27.68%), A1 (16.07%), C (13.39%) and B1 (9.82%).

The pattern found in terms of the internal distribution of CIAs seems to be slightly different from the Spanish vs. English-Japanese contrast. For one thing, while English showed preference for A1 CIAs, Spanish and Japanese produced more A2 CIAs. For another, the moves were more equally distributed among strategy types in these two languages than in English. However, two factors need to be taken into account in the interpretation of these results: (1) the relationship between Type 1 and Type 2 in each strategy type, and (2) the overall production rate of CIAs. Regarding point (1), I argue that version 1 of each CIA type is more direct and/or aggressive than version 2. For example, while Type B1 has one layer of indirectness because statements are first uttered in a direct format (i.e., declarative statement) followed by some kind of syntactic mitigation – typically a question tag in English, a contrastive polarity item in Spanish, and a negation marker or the copulative verb *'desu'* in what Bloch (1946, *cit.* in Shibatani 1990: 227) calls 'non-past presumptive form' in Japanese –, Type B2 is

characterized by its double layer of indirectness, which consists in questioning the negation of one's own statement. The first layer is represented by the negation of the disagreement, and the second layer by the interrogative form (or rising intonation in Spanish and Japanese, as no grammatical feature indicates the difference between one mood and the other in these two languages). It could be argued that this form in Japanese is similar to B1 in Spanish and English due to the different word order. However, there is one major difference. In B1 utterances, there is an initial affirmative assertion that contradicts the prior statement or makes a divergent claim (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998). In B2 utterances, on the other hand, this is not the case. In Japanese, the verb form and the ending particles preclude the possibility of a positive interpretation (e.g., *'yokunai' ('not good'), '…ja nai' ('… is not')*). This is especially so in the case of *'ja'* (an abbreviated form of *'de wa'*), a particle that introduces a negative form (except in some highly conventionalized expressions such as *sore jaa ('then…', 'so')*)[77]. Furthermore, Makino & Tsutsui (1995) argue that this is one common strategy used by Japanese speakers "to make their statements less forceful and more humble" in order to "avoid straightforward expressions" (1995: 52-3), and include them among the strategies to avoid what they call "Decisive expressions".

Taking into account these different layers of indirectness, and considering that the main act is realized by a contrastive polarity utterance in Declarative mood (i.e., direct), the results above seem to confirm the general preference for directness observed in Spanish, since it obtained the highest mark in B1 CIAs. On the other hand, the production pattern of B2 and B1 strategies in Japanese would also be consistent with the overall pattern, as B2 ranked first and B1 ranked last. This means that Japanese shows a higher tendency to be more indirect than Spanish speakers within the CIA category as well.

Finally, the high preference showed for the A1 type CIAs in English should also be highlighted. In fact, not only do they rank first in this category, but they are also the third most frequent strategy overall (21 cases), only preceded by the direct LD and *'but'* strategies (106 and 25 cases, respectively). It should be noted that in spite of being an indirect strategy, A1 CIAs are conventionally understood as tokens of disbelief and incredulity because in English they are constructed in Declarative mood with rising intonation rather than in Interrogative mood (*'it is?', 'you do?'*) or else they consist of

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[77] But still these expressions have a different intonation contour.

lexical items with rising intonation which are stressed and elongated to make the contrast of opinion clear (*'rea::::lly?'*). So, although they are clearly understood as disagreements (rather than requests for clarification), they also show the speaker's intention of avoiding direct confrontation. The A2 strategy, on the other hand, is a bit less aggressive than A1 CIA, as already shown in Sub-section 5.3.2.2. above. In the A2 strategy, the illocutionary force is somehow less clear than in the A1 version: expressions like *honto ni? soo?* (*'really? is that true?'*) can be taken as genuine requests for clarification or confirmation, or even as markers which indicate that the prior utterance represented new information received with some surprise. If this difference is considered, the English preference of Type A1 over Type A2 on one hand, and the Japanese higher score for Type A2 would confirm the pattern observed so far in virtue of which disagreements in English are produced slightly more directly than in Japanese. In fact, following the above line of reasoning, the Japanese results in this category are consistent with the previous findings above, since version 2 of each strategy type was preferred over version 1. And again, the last position occupied by B1 would also fit in this pattern because it is the only CIA strategy that includes an initial Direct form.

The problem, however, is how to explain the distribution found in Spanish. On one hand, the fact that no B2 CIAs were produced is consistent with previous findings, as it can be considered the most indirect form. However, A2 obtained a higher score than A1. One possible explanation might be found in the relationship between Direct and CIA moves. It can be hypothesized that when a strong disagreement is aimed, Spanish speakers tend to use direct forms, whereas English and Japanese speakers tend to prefer strong CIA forms. This way, the low score obtained by English and Japanese in both *'no'* and *'but'* strategies, and in Direct forms in general, could be compensated by a higher frequency of strong CIA forms. If this is taken into account, English would rank second again, as more aggressive forms within the CIA category are used in this language than in Japanese.

A similar 'direct vs. conventionally indirect' distinction could be formulated in relation to the Japanese relative higher preference for Type C strategy, which consisted in requesting support for the opinion, assessment or proposal made by the prior speaker. Although expressions like *'why?'* or *'how?'* are described by Muntigl & Turnbull (1998: 229) as challenging expressions, they still constitute indirect ways to disagree. Muntigl & Turnbull's (1998) own definition of Challenging (CH) is an indication of the *pragmatic duality* of these interrogative forms: "CH is defined more narrowly as the

specific type of disagreement by which a speaker *questions* an addressee's prior claim and demands that addressee provide evidence for his/her claim, while *suggesting* that the addressee cannot do so" (Muntigl & Turnbull 1998: 230, emphasis added). So, from a pragmatic point of view, these expressions are conventionally indirect, and leave the possibility of a non-challenging interpretation. This point will be taken up again when discussing Aggravated moves, as my data revealed a relatively high rate of Aggravated CIAs in Japanese, including Type C disagreements.

Turning now the NCIAs, the same distribution of strategies was observed in the three languages, where Strong hints ranked first, followed by Weak hints and finally Mild hints. Moreover, the Strong and Weak NCIA strategies were far more used than the Mild NCIAs. This might be explained by the fact that Mild NCIAs are highly equivocal and require a lot of processing effort, thus being uneconomical for both the addresser and the addressee. In Relevance Theoretic terms, it is very hard to calculate the optimal relevance. It is uneconomical for the addresser because she needs ingenuity and wit to build an utterance that is as complex as a more direct disagreement but needs to avoid a clear relationship with the disagreeing intention. For the addressee, a high inferential process is required and even then the possibility of reaching the implicature of disagreement is low. For this reason, in a context framed as a friendly chat in which the risk for face is relatively low, the high processing effort required may not be rewarded in terms of face anointment or redress.

In terms of the relative frequency of occurrence of each NCIA strategy, the differences found in prior sections are repeated: Spanish obtained the highest score in Strong hints (74.42%), followed by English (54.84%) and Japanese (48.68%). The opposite order was observed for Weak hints, with Japanese producing more than the rest (34.21%), and Spanish less (18.60%), while English came in between again (29.03%). And once more, English seemed to stand closer to Japanese than to Spanish in the distribution pattern by obtaining scores for each strategy that were more similar to the former than to the latter.

5.5.2.3. Comparison of directness across categories

Up to this point, all results showed the same pattern: Spanish stood out as more assertive and direct in the production of disagreements than both English and Japanese.

Among the latter, Japanese showed a higher preference for indirect forms than English although the realization patterns remained more similar between them than between English and Spanish. The aim of this sub-section is to discuss these findings in the overall context, by comparing all strategies across categories.

As already mentioned in the Results section, the distribution of strategies in terms of rank order suffered certain variation in the three languages, although it was wider in some languages than in others. While the first two positions remained unchanged with respect to the results obtained in the Direct category, probably the biggest difference was found in Japanese, were two CIA strategies (A2 and B2) and two NCIA strategies (Strong and Weak hints) occupied the third through sixth positions, relegating the *'no'* strategy to the seventh (the table of the overall rank order of strategies is reproduced here as Table 40. In the case of English, only Type A1 CIA and Strong NCIA overcame *'no'* in the ranking, while it remained the same in Spanish. This means that the preference for the three Direct strategies found in Spanish at the local level is confirmed at the general level too. Leaving aside the position of *'or'* (whose low frequency has been discussed above), the only major change in this language might be the fourth position of Strong NCIAs. However, this is explained by the extremely low production of CIAs in Spanish, as observed above.

Table 40. Rank order of all Head Act strategies in English, Spanish and Japanese.

English	Spanish	Japanese
1. Locution Derivable	1. 'but'	1. Locution Derivable
2. 'but'	2. Locution Derivable	2. 'but'
3. CIA A1	3. 'no'	3. CIA A2 / Strong NCIA
4. Strong NCIA	4. Strong NCIA	5. CIA B2
5. 'no'	5. CIA A2	6. Weak NCIA
6. CIA A2	6. 'or'	7. 'no'
7. 'or' / Weak NCIA	7. CIA B1 / Weak NCIA	8. CIA A1
9. Mild NCIA	9. CIA A1	9. CIA C
10. CIA B2 / CIA C	10. CIA C / Mild NCIA	10. Mild NCIA
12. CIA B1 (not produced)	12. CIA B2 (not produced)	11. CIA B1
		12. 'or' (not produced)

With this picture, we are now in a position to confirm the tendencies observed so far. First of all, the rank order reveals a preference for directness over indirectness in Spanish: the most direct forms occupy the first three positions in the ranking –maybe with the only exception of Strong NCIAs–, while the most indirect ones occupy the last two (Mild NCIA and CIA B2). I interpret the low position occupied by A1 as a confirmation of the preference for Direct forms: that is, Spanish speakers prefer to use a

straight oppositional utterance rather than a strong version of an indirect form, such as the A1 strategy. This same interpretation applies for English, but reversing the terms. CIA A1 ranks so high in this language because conventionally indirect forms are frequently used in order no to be so assertive. This should also explain why the *'no'* strategy ranks lower and the rest of the CIA strategies are at the bottom of the list. This higher preference for indirectness applies only in relation to Spanish, because Japanese has shown the highest scores in this category. Table 40 above shows that in this language the weak forms of CIA are more frequent than both the Direct *'no'* and the strong forms of conventionally indirect disagreements, which occupy the seventh, eighth, and eleventh positions. So we may say that those strategies of high risk (A1, B1) or high processing effort (Mild hints) are avoided. The general tendency seems to be that, although both English and Japanese show a higher preference for indirect forms than Spanish, slightly more assertive and explicit forms are used in English and in the Asian language.

Summing up, as regards the level of directness of disagreement utterances at the illocutionary level in the context of friendly conversations among young acquaintances, the following characterization seems to hold: Direct forms prevail over indirect forms in the three languages, although at different degrees. While Spanish shows a high preference in terms of frequency of production and rank order of strategies, English and Japanese show mixed patterns. Although directness still prevails in terms of overall frequency, the rank order of strategies shows that only the less aggressive forms are highly used, while the blatantly oppositional *'no'* tends to be avoided. English and Japanese are also similar in combining direct and indirect forms more frequently than Spanish, but their behaviors diverge at this point. While English seems to stand closer to Direct forms by the use of more aggressive types of conventionally indirect strategies, Japanese reveals a higher degree of indirectness using a wider range of CIA and NCIA moves. This is also supported by the position occupied by the *'no'* strategy in each language: fifth in English and seventh in Japanese.

Now, the confirmation of these findings will depend on the behavior shown in the use of mitigating and aggravating devices, which I discuss in the following section.

5.5.3. Mitigation and aggravation

A first overall analysis of the relative frequency of Mitigated, Plain, Aggravated and Combined forms showed mixed results. While the general tendency was confirmed in some respects, there was also some apparent counter-evidence. The high rate of Aggravated moves in Spanish seemed to confirm this language as the most direct. However, there were several features that did not. For instance, Japanese showed a higher rate of Plain forms than English and Spanish, and a lower overall rate of Mitigated forms, with Spanish ranking second. Furthermore, more Aggravated disagreements were produced in Japanese than in English, which seems to go against the classification made of the three languages so far. Attending to these results alone, it would seem that while Spanish and English still keep their relative positions, Japanese does not.

However, this apparent counter-evidence needs to be qualified. For one thing, as mentioned above, Spanish speakers beat both Japanese and American speakers in the number of Aggravated turns. Results show that the former aggravated their responses more than one fifth of cases (21.01%), whereas the Japanese did so in only 14.90% of utterances, and the Americans 10.67%. For another, if the figures in the Mitigated-Aggravated section were taken into account (both as preferred and dispreferred), then the difference between the Spanish and the Japanese scores would be reduced to less than one point (55.14% and 56.01%, respectively). These results do not reverse the situation, as the Japanese are still positioned in the first place, but recall that Japanese interactants produced significantly [78] more CIAs and NCIAs than their Spanish counterparts (23.04% and 20.28% versus 4.71% and 10.28%, respectively). And since CIAs and NCIAs have an indirect illocutionary force, they may need less mitigation than direct moves, which might explain the relatively low frequency of mitigation in Japanese.

This claim seemed to be confirmed when a comparison was conducted across categories. Results showed that Spanish concentrated most Aggravated and Plain disagreements in the Direct category, comprising more than one third of all moves (19.25 + 16.19 = 35.34%), whereas Japanese distributed these forms amongst the three categories of directness (19.23% of Aggravated + Plain Direct moves, 18.75% of

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[78] The word 'significant' is used here in its general meaning of 'considerable', 'important', and no statistical claim is made.

Aggravated + Plain CIA moves, and 13.22% of Aggravated + Plain NCIA moves). Moreover, out of these figures, Aggravated forms comprised only 5.05% of CIAs and 1.44% of NCIAs in Japanese, which means than Plain realizations predominated in this language.

The overall characterization of Spanish as direct, and English and Japanese as indirect (in the contextual configuration studied) seemed to be confirmed as well when the relative frequency of direct and unmitigated forms were compared with indirect forms in general, including CIA (both mitigated and aggravated), NCIA (both mitigated and aggravated), and mitigated direct forms. As mentioned above, English and Japanese obtained almost identical scores for direct-and-unmitigated disagreements, with 19.11% and 19.23%, respectively, which means that 80.89% and 80.88% of moves respectively were mitigated in some way. Spanish, on the other hand, differed considerably, scoring 35.34% in direct-and-unmitigated forms and 64.66% in the rest.

If we attend to the rank order in absolute terms, i.e., integrating the three different categories of directness at the illocutionary level and the four possible realizations of strategies depending on the presence or absence of upgrading and/or downgrading modulation, the findings are confirmed again (see Table 41). Focusing only on the top five realizations, Spanish concentrates all the Direct forms at the top followed by Plain realizations of non-conventionally indirect disagreements, whereas only three are found in English and Japanese. Moreover, only one Direct form is found among the top three in Japanese, while there are two in English. In fact, the only feature shared by the three languages is the first position occupied by Direct/Mitigated moves, since Direct/Aggravated moves rank second in Spanish, fourth in English and only fifth in Japanese, while the second position is occupied by CIA/Plain moves in the latter two languages. Direct/Plain moves rank third in Spanish and English, and NCIA/Plain disagreements in Japanese. This means that there are two unmitigated forms among the top three in Spanish, one in English and none in Japanese.

Table 41. Rank order of possible realizations of disagreements combining illocutionary directness of the Head Act and the presence or absence of modulation.

English	Spanish	Japanese
1. Direct/Mitigated	1. Direct/Mitigated	1. Direct/Mitigated
2. CIA/Plain	2. Direct/Aggravated	2. CIA/Plain
3. Direct/Plain	3. Direct/Plain	3. NCIA/Plain
4. Direct/Aggravated	4. Direct/Mit-Aggr	4. Direct/Plain
5. NCIA/Mitigated	5. NCIA/Plain	5. Direct/Aggravated

In sum, results at the overall level of comparison of mitigation and aggravation seem to confirm that Spanish speakers tend to be more explicit, assertive, and direct than speakers from the other two cultures since they use more Plain and Aggravated moves in Direct disagreements. English and Japanese, on the other hand, showed a higher level of mitigation in Direct moves, with the former scoring higher than the latter. This difference is compensated in the CIA category since Japanese revealed a higher rate of Mitigated strategies here. Plain and Aggravated forms were also more frequent but this might be explained by the fact that CIAs are already indirect. Thus, it can be said that English and Japanese show a similar concern for avoiding straight disagreement, although in slightly different ways.

5.5.3.1. Mitigation

In terms of the realization pattern of mitigation in the three languages, it was found that Head Act external mitigation was more frequent than Head Act internal mitigation overall. However, this difference was more marked in English than in the other two languages, which showed a similar distribution. Hence, after including Mitigated+Aggravated moves in the calculation, 114 moves were externally mitigated in English, while only 59 were internally mitigated (80.28% vs. 41.55% of 142 moves)[79]. In Spanish, 175 corresponded to external mitigation and 166 to internal mitigation (71.43% vs. 67.76% of 245 moves). In Japanese, 148 were external and 133 were internal (72.91% vs. 65.52% of 203 moves). This means that there was 1.93 times more external mitigation than internal mitigation in English, while the rate was of just 1.05 in Spanish and 1.11 in Japanese, which shows the relatively high reliance on external mitigation in English.

At the level of Head Act external mitigation, all languages showed the same preference for the DA+H realization, i.e., prefacing the Head Act with some kind of Distractor (token agreements, weak agreements, positive assessments, partial repetitions) and Alerter (reactive tokens, hesitation markers, gaps and/or pauses, NTRIs, CLKs), which confirms the general findings described by scholars in Conversation

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[79] The sum of both rates do not total 100% because Mit-Aggr moves may include both forms combined in several ways (e.g., internal mitigation + external aggravation; external mitigation + internal aggravation; internal mitigation + internal aggravation, and so on).

Analysis as typical ways of framing a turn as dispreferred (Sacks 1987 [1973]; Pomerantz 1984; Gruber 1998; Mori 1999; *vid.* also Brown & Levinson 1987).

However, as we saw in the Results section, the frequency rate of Distractors and Alerters varied greatly. While Distractors were preferred over Alerters in Spanish, the reverse was true in Japanese, with English obtaining the same score for both. These diverse results might be explained if we have a closer look at the disagreement realization patterns. In the Spanish case, the most common realization of the D+H pattern was an agreement token (*'sí', 'ya', 'claro'*) followed by the adversative conjunction *'pero'* (*'but'*) (i.e., the oft-mentioned *'yes but'* format), and similar forms including (upgraded) repetition + *'but'*; a positive assessment (*'guay'* (*'cool'*)) + *'but'*, among others. Out of the 68 D+H forms computed, 54 corresponded to this pattern, which represents 79.41% of the data. In addition to this, recall that the *'but'* Direct strategy was the most frequent disagreement format in this language[80]. If these two factors are taken into account, the high frequency of the D+H form might be explained. The point I want to make here is that the preference for one form of prefacing device over the other (or no preference at all, as in English) might be determined by the disagreement type.

Let us consider now the Japanese case. In this language, the high preference for Alerters might be due to the kind of disagreement strategy used. The main kind of Alerters found were attributable silence in the form of noticeable gaps, reactive tokens (*'e?', 'n?', 'a:::::', 'e::::', 'he:::'*), NTRIs (partial repetition with rising intonation), and requests for confirmation (*'honto ni?'* (*'is that true?'*)). Although sometimes Alerters prefaced *'demo'* (*'but'*) utterances, they most frequently preceded some indirect or mitigated form of disagreement, as the following examples illustrate (disagreements in bold face):

(176) *(11jpn/T107-8M87)*
    T0528 A: toshi dakara::: seeri shiri- shitee toshi toka no::↑- Sendai Fukuoka toka::
                     Tookyoo toka [(.)] [Sapporo] toka ja nai no?
    T0529 B: **[a::]**
    T0530 C: [ºa soo kaº]
    T0531 B: **futsuu ni Kanagawa ken ja nai?**
           A: *as it should be a city, doesn't it refer to places like (World) Heritage*
              cities like Sendai Fukuoka Tokyo [(.)] [or Sapporo?]
           B: *[a::]*
           C: *[ºoh rightº]*
           B: ***isn't it just Kanagawa prefecture (kind of thing)?***

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[80] See Sub-section 5.4.4. above.

(177) *(11jpn/T104-5M85)*
   T0523 A: [TOSHI DA YO]
   T0524 C: **@ a so? to- toshi? @@@**
   T0525 B: @ sonna- @
   T0526 C: **toshi tte::- sonna oomaka?**
            A: [IT IS A CITY]
            C: **@ oh yes? ci- city? @@@**
            B: @ *sonna-* @
            C: **city ((quotative, roughly *'you mean'*)) (in) so general (terms)?**

In the case of (176), the Alerter is realized by a reactive token *'a::'* (*'oh'*) followed by CIA disagreement of the B2 type. Additionally, there is a lapse of time between the Alerter and the Head Act determined by the completion of the TCU by prior speaker. In (177), on the other hand, the Head Act is realized by a phrasal structure with rising intonation (*'sonna oomaka?'*) which mitigates the force of the disagreement. This act is prefaced by three Alerters in a row: a reactive token, a request for confirmation and an NTRI. In both examples, the Alerters seem to delay the realization of the Head Act, which in turn is presented in a mitigated form. It might be said that it is a concatenation of ambiguous terms which suggest, but not clearly state, that a possible disagreement is forthcoming.

     The English case is somewhat different. Although Distractors are also used to preface *'but'* disagreements, they are not so closely linked to this construction (only 10 out of 21 tokens adopted this form, which is 47.62% of the D+H data). Their realizations show high variation (D+LD, D+*'or'*, D+hints), as these examples show (the whole disagreement in bold face):

(178) *(7eng/T25M18)*
   T164 B: ºfour- fourthº↓ we're staying in Granada for three::::: days↑ three nights?
   T165 A: **yea::h [and it's (.)] [third- third] day in Madrid↑**

(179) *(1eng/T18M13)*
   T082 B: or we can get like a really cheap airline↑
   T083 C: **yeah or there's a high speed train↑ (.) that's like takes two hours and it's**
               like sixty euro↑

(180) *(4eng/T45M32)*
   T321 B: seven fifty↑ would you say? like to cap it off?
   T322 A: **yeah (1.7) ºI don't-º [ºI don't knowº]**

In (178), Speaker A had previously stated that they should be in Madrid on the third day of the trip, to which B other-repairs saying that it should be on the fourth day because (although not explicitly stated) they were going to stay in Granada until the third day.

A's response has a D+D+H format in which the Head Act is realized by a Locution Derivable disagreement initially framed as an agreement via the token agreement *'yea::h'* and the copulative conjunction *'and'*. In (179), an *'or'* disagreement follows the token agreement, and in (180) the Distractor is followed by two hints: the long pause and the CLK mitigated by low voice and a truncated statement.

On the other hand, Alerters are most often realized by NTRIs, requests for confirmation (*'oh really?'*), and reactive tokens (especially *'oh'* and *'well'*). Particularly, American speakers seemed to rely heavily on requests for confirmation with the adverbial *'really'* with rising intonation, often combined with the reactive token *'oh'* (*'oh really?'*). Here are some illustrating examples (the whole disagreement move in bold face):

(181) *(7eng/T62-4M47)*
    T531 C: [[I didn't like   ]] that
    T532 B: **REALLY?**
    T533 C: mhm
    T534 B: **o:::h**
    T535 A: ºyou didn't like it?º
    T536 C: ºnhnhº ((*scrunching up his face*))
    T537 B: **I like that better than Prado**

(182) *(7eng/T68-70M50)*
    T539 A: [I thought] it was much better than Prado [I was] bored in the Prado but-
    T540 C: [ºo::hº]
    T541 C: **really?**
    T542 B: mhm
    T543 C: **all the Velazquez? Goya? (.) El Greco?**

(183) *(2eng/T65-6M53)*
    T724' B: [so like] the history of it↑ I don't wanna know
    T725 C: **oh really?=**
    T726 B: =I just don't care I only wanna see it↑ [I like it↑ and I wanna][hang it on my wall↑]
    T727 C: [**I:: like to know↑**   ]

In (181), the request for confirmation precedes the reactive token, while the reverse order is observed the (182) and (183). In terms of the realization of the Head Act, (181) and (183) are performed via Locution Derivable disagreement acts, while a Strong hint is used in (182).

In sum, while the Spanish high reliance on the *'yes but'* form seems to determine the high rate of Distractors over the rest of prefacing mitigators, the use of Alerters by

Japanese and Americans suggests a similar disagreement realization pattern, albeit the latter more heavily depending on the 'request for confirmation' form and the former showing preference for NTRIs and reactive tokens. The realizations are not only linked to the type of Head Act, but also to the way these are delayed. So, in the case of Distractors in Spanish, they seem to function merely as anchoring devices to initiate the disagreement. Distractors preceding *'but'* are highly conventionalized and together form a collocation. So, the delaying effect is minimal particularly in the case of the token agreement, especially when produced the way suggested by Kakava (2002: 1560): in one breath, with high pitch and accelerated tempo. In the case of Alerters, on the other hand, while requests for confirmation and NTRIs have more or less the same status (they are both Type A2 CIAs) and both have an ambivalent illocutionary force, this is not the case with reactive tokens, since they lack propositional content and show the hearer's reaction, exactly as gestures might do. As any reaction, they are open to interpretation and a single intention is hard to assign. As Mori (2006: 1201) points out, a reactive token like *he::* in Japanese may have several functions such as "newsmark", "assessment", "continuer", or "repair initiator". Furthermore, reactive tokens are less intrusive than either requests for confirmation or NTRIs, since they do not necessarily imply holding the floor and do not represent an interruption of the current speaker's turn (Clancy *et al.* 1996: 356). The following two excerpts show the ambiguity of reactive tokens. The first example represents a genuine reaction of surprise, whereas the second one prefaces a disagreement (reactive tokens in bold face):

(184) *(3jpn)*
    T0351 A: nanka ne (.) sawattari- nanka sawatte mite mo [ii] yo↑ mitai na [kan]ji de itte↑=
            B: [un]   [un]
    T0351' A: =sawaru to kawasareru toka
    T0352 B: **e:::::: ↑** [@@@]
    T0353 C: [**e:::::::::↑**]
    T0354 A: da mon de kiotsukete::↑ minna nante chuugaku no toki iwareta
            A: *like (.) if you touch- like your're told that [it's] alright to [touch] them=*
            B: *[mhm]*   *[mhm]*
            A: *=and then you have to buy them if you touch them*
            B: **oh:::::: ↑** *[@@@]*
            C: *[***oh::::::: ↑***]*
            A: *so we were all told to be careful when we were in junior high*

(185) *(3jpn/T39-44M26)*
    T0683 A: Washita aru tte [kiita] [dakara   ] Okinawa ga honten nan datte=
            B: **[e:::↑]**
            C: [((*nods*))]

```
T0684   B:   =un un
T0685   C:   o::: o::: ((aizuchi))
T0686   A:   ºsoo soo sooº
T0687   B:   Tokushima ni wa nai yo [@@@@@ Washita nai yo @ are dakedo] un
        A:   I've heard there are Washita [shops] [so   ] it seems that the main shop is in
             Okinawa=
        B:                                [oh::: ↑]
        C:                                         [((nods))]
        B:   =mhm mhm
        C:   oh.::: ((nods))
        A:   ºyeah yeah yeahº
        B:   there are no shops in Tokushima you know [@@@@@@ there are no
             Washita shops @ but that's] yeah
```

In example (184), speaker A tells B and C about an experience she had had in Kyoto. Both B and C show surprise at the story told by A. In (185), on the other hand, the reactive token prefaces a disagreement that is produced in T0687. Although not said in this excerpt, speaker A had previously stated that Washita shops were spread all over Japan, including Okinawa. B presents a counterclaim in T0687 by giving one example of a city where there is no Washita shop. But before doing so, she produces a reactive token and a token agreement.

Finally, with respect to Mitigating Supportive Moves after the Head Act, they seem to be rather productive both in English and Spanish, albeit slightly less in the latter according to my data. Conversely, Japanese does not seem to rely much on this mitigating strategy. The reason might be that while prefacing devices hide and delay the production of the disagreement, thus having the double role of softening and camouflaging, this latter effect is not produced by post-head mitigators and therefore their only role is to downgrade the illocutionary force of the utterance. From this perspective, and considering that so far Japanese seems to be the language where indirectness is most preferred, the low frequency of this strategy seems to be in accordance with this general pattern.

Turning now to the realization of Head Act internally mitigated moves, it was already mentioned that the overall production rate was rather low in English, and moderately high in Japanese and Spanish. However, the proportion of tokens found was much higher in the case of English. As observed in the Results section, as many as 188 instances of internal mitigation devices were computed in English, which means that an average of 3.19 devices were used per move. The production rate was also rather high in Japanese, since 346 tokens were found in the 133 moves analyzed, with a ratio of 2.60 tokens per move. Fewer devices were used in Spanish than in the other two

languages, since only 1.72 were used average (285 tokens in 166 moves). These figures indicate that although internal mitigation in general was not preferred in English, a wide range of devices co-occurred when used, which means a high level of mitigation. In Spanish and Japanese, on the other hand, more internal mitigation was used than in English, but fewer were produced per move. However, this ranking would change if the above figures were considered against the total number of Mitigated moves. In such case, the highest score would be obtained by Japanese, with 1.70 internal mitigators per move, followed by English with 1.32, and finally Spanish again with 1.16. So, in both cases, Spanish ranks lowest in internal mitigation, whereas English and Japanese alternate.

In terms of the rank order of strategies, some overall similarities were found, such as the preference in the three languages for Lexical/phrasal mitigating devices over Syntactic and Supra-segmental/sequential. However, while English and Japanese seemed to prefer Supra-segmental/sequential devices over Syntactic ones, this was not the case in Spanish. This means that English and Japanese show a similar distribution pattern, while Spanish coincides with the rest only partially. In terms of the relative production rates, however, Japanese obtained a very low score in Syntactic devices (13.29%), while the score obtained in English was more similar to that in Spanish.

At the level of strategy comparison, the following rank order emerged (see Table 42):

Table 42. Rank order of Head Act internal mitigating strategies in English, Spanish and Japanese.

English	Spanish	Japanese
1. **Hedge**	1. Subjectivizer	1. **Hedge**
2. **Pause**	2. Ellipsis	2. **Pause**
3. Subjectiver	3. False start	3. Solidarity marker
4. Past	4. CLK	4. **Laughter**
5. **Laughter**	5. Pause	5. **False start**
6. Hesitation	6. Interrogative	6. Understater
7. **False start**	7. Solidarity marker	7. Adversative marker postponement / Interrogative
8. Conditional / Possibility / **Downtoner**	8. Understater	9. **Downtoner** / Hesitation
11. Final rising intonation	9. Hesitation	10. **Ellipsis** / **Impersonalization**
12. Understater	10. Laughter	11. Low voice
13. **Ellipsis** / Adversative marker Postponement / **Impersonalization**	11. Conditional / Downtoner / Relativizer	12.**CLK** / Subjectivizer
16. **CLK**	14. Past tense	14. Final rising intonation
17. Low voice / **Reformulation marker**	15. Possibility / Cajoler	15. Past tense
19. "if" clause	17. "if" clause / Reformulation marker	16. Possibility / **Reformulation marker**
	18. Impersonalization	17. Cajoler / Relativizer
	19. Final rising intonation	
	20. Hedge	

As the table shows, certain correlation can be observed between English and Japanese, since Hedge, Pause, Laughter, False start, Downtoner, Ellipsis, Impersonalization, CLK and Reformulation marker follow the same rank order among them. Especially notorious is the coincidence between Hedge, Pause and Downtoner in their relative positions inside each ranking. Spanish, on the other hand, shows little correlation with the other two languages. Besides the fact that no strategy can be found that occupies the same position as in English or Japanese, very few follow a similar rank order. Only Subjectivizer, Laughter, Understater and *'If'* clause can be mentioned with respect to English, while False start, Interrogative (or Understater), Hesitation, Past tense, and Reformulation marker are ordered in Japanese as in Spanish, although relative positions are quite different in most cases.

Conversely, some striking differences were also found. The clearest divergence was seen in the production rate of Hedges, which ranked first in English and Japanese, while they occupied the 20th position in Spanish. Three other strategies showed a rather sharp contrast, two of them between Spanish and the other two languages, and one which grouped Spanish and Japanese together against English. On one hand, while Ellipsis and CLK were widely used in Spanish as mitigating devices, they obtained rather low scores in English and Japanese. On the other hand, Past tense was the fourth most preferred strategy in English, but only fourteenth in Spanish and fifteenth in Japanese. These results seem to suggest that Spanish not only stands in contrast with English and Japanese in quantitative terms, but also in the type of strategy used, while the latter two languages show a higher level of similarity between them.

5.5.3.2. Aggravation

Results in the realization of Aggravated moves showed the following features: (1) In general, aggravation was mostly found in Direct and CIA moves, but distributed differently: it was highly concentrated in Direct moves in English and Spanish, but not so in Japanese; (2) overall, internal aggravation was more frequent than external aggravation, but the highest difference was found in Japanese, followed by Spanish and English, in that order. Regarding point (1), results showed that 91.66% of Aggravated moves corresponded to Direct disagreements in Spanish. A similar pattern was revealed in English, where 83.33% were Direct and Aggravated. Scores fell down, however, in

Japanese, in which only 56.45% of Aggravated moves were Direct. This is due to the relative high frequency of Aggravated CIAs in this language, which comprised 33.87% of the data. These results suggest that, even when moves are upgraded in their assertiveness, Japanese tend to be less aggressive by relying more on conventionally indirect forms. The following example illustrates this point. Shortly before this sequence, speaker C had commented that he liked watching shows in zoos and aquariums. This comment had come after a series of disagreements on whether they liked aquariums or not. While A and B did, C did not (the whole disagreement in bold face, aggravated Head Act indicated with arrow):

(186) *(8jpn/T124M102)*
  T0910 B: [ore sho- shoo wa-]
  T0911 A: [iya (.) shoo wa-]
  T0910' B: ore shoo tobashitari suru mon
  T0912 A: un shoo wa [betsu ni-]
  T0913 C: [**maji de?**]
  T0912' A: gyaku ni ii
→T0914 C: **NA:::NDE?**
      B: *[shows- shows for me-]*
      A: *[no (.) shows for me-]*
      B: *I usually skip shows* ((assertive marker *'mon'*))
      A: *yeah shows are not [particularly-]*
      C: **[*serious?*]**
      A: *on the contrary, I don't mind (skipping them)*
  →C: ***WHY:::?***

In this excerpt, both A and B express their lack of interest for shows, while C listens to them in incredulity. While it could be argued that in this type of sequence a Spanish interactant would have responded with a contrastive *'pues a mí sí me gustan' ('well I <u>do</u> like them')* or a similar Direct form, speaker C produced here a Type C CIA upgraded with emphatic stress, loud voice and elongation. This kind of realization of aggravated disagreement contrasts highly with the following Spanish example:

(187) *(3esp/T75M66)*
  T347 A: yo he puesto que no
  T348 B: **pues yo pienso que sí porque [es como-]**

In this case, the disagreement is mitigated by a Subjectivizer *'pienso'* (*'I think'*), but the most direct form of disagreement is used with a contrastive polarity marker *'sí'* (*'yes'*) which stands in clear opposition to the previous *'no'*. The result is that, even though the

disagreement is downgraded, the oppositional stance is made pretty clear. In the Japanese case, however, the disagreement is less explicit from the point of view of illocutionary force, and it is made more evident only by means of supra-segmental devices. It is like 'showing' disagreement rather that 'stating' it.

As for English, it seems to be more similar to Spanish in this respect, since Aggravation was concentrated in Direct moves. We need to keep in mind, however, that the overall rate of Aggravated moves was very low. Therefore, it seems that the similarity here lies in style rather than in frequency. That is, while Direct moves are preferred in English as much as in Spanish, and they both concentrate Aggravation in Direct moves, they do so in different degrees. The Japanese case seems to be different: the similarity with English seems to be one of frequency, rather than style. Although they both show a similar level of indirectness and dispreference for aggressive forms, they do so in different ways. Thus, while in English the mitigation of Direct forms is chosen, in Japanese conventionally indirect forms seems to be preferred.

Regarding point (2) above, the opposite tendency to that found in Mitigation was observed in the relative distribution of Head Act external and Head Act internal aggravation. In English, out of 42 moves in which Aggravation was found, 14 were external and 33 internal (33.33% vs. 78.57%); in Spanish, of the 136 Aggravated moves identified, 43 were external, while 106 were internal (31.62% vs. 77.94%). The sharpest contrast was found in Japanese, where only 12 were external, while 73 had some Head Act internal upgrading device (14.63% vs. 89.09% of N=82). One factor for this difference between Mitigation and Aggravation might be in the lack of prefacing devices in the latter, as Pomerantz (1984) and other scholars showed. Additionally, the decision to include Overlaps and Simultaneous talk as internal devices might have also biased the results.

Turning now to the realizations of Head Act external aggravation, in the Results section it was mentioned that they were limited to Supportive Moves, including: Grounders, Commands, Criticism/Accusations/Contemptuous remarks, Irony, Reformulations/Reiterations, and Upgrading Assessments/Opinions. Results revealed that this time English and Spanish were more similar in the range of strategies used, with English using them all and Spanish five of them, contrasting with Japanese, where only three were produced, namely Grounder, Command and Reformulation/Reiteration. English and Spanish were also similar in that some NCIA moves were also aggravated in both languages, while no token was found in Japanese.

In terms of the rank order of each upgrading device, the three languages share the high use of Grounders and Reformulation in Direct moves. English and Spanish also share the high preference for Upgrading assessments and opinions in Direct disagreements, while Direct Commands ranked second in both English and Japanese. There are also differences: while Direct forms of aggravation occupy the top five positions in Spanish, only four do so in English, and one less in Japanese (see Table 43).

In terms of their relative frequency, Spanish concentrated almost all aggravating devices in the Direct category (88.89%), followed by Japanese (71.43%) and English (66.67%), which confirms the Spanish higher tolerance for aggressive forms. As for the other two languages, results are a little puzzling, since Japanese high performance here seems to run counter to the general tendency found so far, in virtue of which English relied on Direct strategies more than Japanese.

Table 43. Rank order of Head Act external aggravating devices in English, Spanish and Japanese.

English	Spanish	Japanese
1. Direct/Reformulation	1. Direct/Grounder	1. Direct/Grounder; Direct/Reformulation
2. Direct/Command; Direct/Grounder; Direct/Assessment; CIA/Reform.	2. Direct/Assessment	3. Direct/Command; CIA/Grounder
6. Direct/Criticism; CIA/Command; NCIA/Grounder; NCIA/Irony	3. Direct/Reformulation	5. CIA/Command; CIA/Reformulation
	4. Direct/Command	
	5. Direct/Criticism	
	6. CIA/Grounder; CIA/Reformulation; CIA/Assessment; NCIA/Grounder; NCIA/Command	

This new counter-evidence seemed to be reinforced when the production rate of Head Act internal upgrading devices was calculated. As already mentioned in the Results section, while Spanish ranked first with a ratio of 1.58 aggravators per move, thus confirming the general tendency, Japanese ranked second with 1.23 per move, while only 1.12 in English. However, this does not constitute counter-evidence, because it has already been suggested that Japanese might concentrate more aggravators in CIA moves than in English due to their difference in style. In fact, this was precisely what emerged when the analysis by categories was realized. Only 60% of Head Act internal aggravators in Japanese were used in Direct moves, a clearly low figure if compared with the 91.89% produced in English and the 91.62% in Spanish. Thus, the pattern observed in Head Act external aggravation is reversed again in Head Act internal

aggravation. Moreover, the difference between English and Japanese is greater in the latter case.

At the strategy level of analysis, high variation was found among the three languages. To begin with, there was no complete correlation between Spanish on one hand and the other two languages on the other regarding the top three Lexical/Phrasal upgraders. While Reiteration, Contrastive marker and Attention getter were most preferred in Spanish, Lexical uptoner, Intensifier and Modifying uptoner were chosen in English, whereas Assertive marker, Modifying uptoner and Reiteration were the most frequent in Japanese. A sharp contrast was found in the production of Lexical uptoner on one hand and Modifying uptoner on the other. In the former case, it ranked very low in Spanish and Japanese, while in English it ranked first. In the latter case, Spanish stood alone against English and Japanese by showing little concern for this strategy. At the Supra-segmental/sequential level, with the only exception of Emphatic stress, which ranked first in English and Japanese, and second in Spanish, there was also variation. Spanish aligned with English in the high production of Simultaneous talk, but produced more aggravating overlaps than English or Japanese, while this language outranked Spanish, and especially English, in Loud voice and Elongation. As argued earlier in this section, these Supra-segmental devices together with Emphatic stress are highly used in Japanese both in direct and indirect moves. In fact, results showed that Loud voice and Elongation were more frequent in CIA moves than in Direct moves. However, Japanese speakers seem to show a high respect for the turn-taking system, since the above Supra-segmental features seldom came together with aggravating Overlap or Simultaneous talk.

Several features of the above findings need some comments. First of all, the high preference observed in English for Lexical uptoners (*'shit'* instead of *'bad'*), Modifying uptoners (*'definitely'*) and Intensifiers (*'really', 'very'*) contrasts highly with Reiteration (*'no no no'*) in Spanish and Assertive marker (*'mon', 'yo'*) in Japanese. On one hand, the English-Spanish distinction can be explained in terms of Head Act type. Recall that English showed a high preference of Locution Derivable disagreement, in which the disagreement was to be found in the semantic meaning of the main disagreement component (e.g., *'A: I wanna go to <u>Madrid</u>. B: I wanna go to <u>Barcelona</u>.'*; *'A: I <u>don't</u> like it. B: I <u>do</u>'*). This type of strategy calls for some kind of upgrader that makes the contrast more explicit or evident (e.g., *'I <u>definitely</u> wanna go to Barcelona.'*). In Spanish, on the other hand, *'no'* disagreements were very frequent. If this type of

strategy is aggravated, it tends to be done via repetition of the contrastive marker (e.g., *'no no no'*).

The Japanese case has different motivations. It is well known that Japanese is rich in sentence final particles with various grammatical and interactional functions (Maynard 1997: 87). Assertive markers like *'yo'* are among the latter. While particles such as *'ne(e)'* and *'na'* which I included in the Coding System as Mitigators, are considered by Takuzo Uyeno (1971, *cit.* in Maynard 1997: 87-90) as particles of rapport, the use of *'yo'* assumes that the addressee does not have the information provided by the utterance. While this might be unproblematic in cultures like Spanish or English, Maynard argues that

> [if] the information exchange does not occur as expected, a variety of emotional reactions can be evoked. *Such reactions include an impression of self-centeredness and a lack of consideration and cooperation.* Instead of achieving emotional resonance, the speaker may encounter a disappointing emotional response. *Ne* is a device that helps avoid or remedy this potential failure in interpersonal emotional involvement. It plays down the information and calls attention instead to interpersonal feelings, in an attempt to assure some level of emotional engagement". (Maynard 1997: 90, emphasis added).

Thus, if the use of *'yo'* might produce in the addressee "an impression of self-centeredness and a lack of consideration and cooperation" in the speaker, it might be considered an aggravating device. The strategy to mitigate this impression is the use of the interactional particle *'ne'* which may either follow *'yo'*, in which case the assertive nature of the utterance is cancelled, or directly without *'yo'*.

Finally, the high frequency of Simultaneous talk in English, surpassing Spanish, should be explained. First of all, although the relative production rate was higher in English than in Spanish (18.91% vs. 14.97%) when calculated with respect to the total number of tokens, this result does not hold if we have the total number of moves as reference. Thus, in English, seven instances of aggravating Simultaneous talk were found in 33 moves, whereas in Spanish they were as high as 25 in 106 moves, which represent 21.21% in English and 23.58% in Spanish. As can be observed, the frequency rate is higher in Spanish in this case. Furthermore, five out of the seven tokens found in English were produced in one single disagreement sequence, as the following excerpt shows (Simultaneous talk indicated with an arrow):

(188) *(7eng)*
```
      T652  A:  Oprah? @@ [not really ] [Hollywood↑ but XXXXXX (.) I know but-]
 →T653  B:              [she is not-] [she isn't- she's not an actress↑ (.) don't lie ] (.) not=
 →T654  C:                        [she's not an actress↑  @@@@@@@@@ ]
      T653' B:  =principally
                (0.7)
      T655  A:  principally?=
      T656  C:  =what?=
      T655' A:  =what kind of words are you gi::ving? @@@
      T657  B:  not↑principally↓ this is like- that's no::t her principal ro::le in society↓
                [(isn't) that of an actress        ]
 →T658  A:  [okay I don't think principally] is a word
                (2.0) ((B turns his face to C, looking for support or his opinion. C silently
                repeats the word "principally"))
      T659  C:  ºI don't think so yeahº=
      T660  A:  =no nh↑nh↓ (.) you fail @ ((to B))
      T661  B:  @ okay @@
      T662  C:  wait   [no  ] I think↑- ((looking upwards, like thinking))
      T663  A:         [yeah]
 →T664  A:  no- she wa- [SHE WAS- SHE WAS TONY- (.)] [she was a::: ] shrink on a TV show
 →T665  C:              [that's a word↑[[that's a word↑   ]]
```

In Spanish, on the other hand, Simultaneous talk was more evenly distributed among the fours conversation groups and throughout the whole conversations. In fact, Overlaps and Simultaneous talk seemed to be pervasive in this language as something non-disruptive. There were many more cases of transgression of the turn-taking system which did not have an aggravating function because they were either produced at a TRP or TCP, or the overlap/simultaneous talk happened between two speakers who were not talking to each other, but were both responding to a third interlocutor, or they were agreeing sequences. Even leaving this last case aside, as many as 133 cases of latching, overlap or simultaneous talk were identified. Since the total disagreement moves were 467, their rate of occurrence would be of 28.48%, i.e., almost one third of the whole data. This seems to suggest another interactional feature in Spanish: the relative high tolerance for the violation of the turn-taking organization in friendly and colloquial conversation among young people. Conversely, the low figures found in Japanese both in Head Act external aggravation and in Overlap/Simultaneous talk seems to be an indication of a high respect for the interactional elements of a conversation. The implications of these findings in relation to preference structure and politeness will be discussed in Chapter 6.

5.5.4. Turn external delays

In this final section, the findings regarding the relative frequency and length of turn external delays will be discussed. In terms of frequency, results showed that turn external delays occurred in Japanese five times more than in Spanish in relation to the total number of disagreements, while it was 75% higher than in English. These results suggest that Japanese frame disagreement as dispreferred at the 1st order of preference by showing more concern than English, and especially more than Spanish, for sequential and interactional features, which seems to support the characterization made in the previous section.

As to the number of turns used to produce the disagreement, the differences were also notorious. While in English and Spanish, all except one involved two or three turns, 39.47% of turn external delays occupied four or more turns in Japanese. Furthermore, more than half of these extended over more than five moves, some of them even more than ten moves (see Section 5.4.8 for a detailed exposition). As far as Japanese is concerned, these results seem to confirm the overall tendency found in the previous sections in virtue of which disagreement was more often framed as dispreferred at the 1st order of preference. On the other hand, although English and Spanish confirmed their difference from Japanese regarding frequency and length of turn external delays, the relationship between the first two is not so clear. Although, English scored higher than Spanish in frequency in accordance with the overall pattern observed so far, they obtained mixed scores in the number of turns delayed. Whereas Spanish seemed to confirm the general pattern by scoring higher in two-turn delays than in English (62.50% vs. 41.67%), there was one disagreement in Spanish where more than five turns were used, as opposed to only four turns employed in one disagreement in English. However, after analyzing the Spanish sequence in detail, the following features emerged: the speaker who produced the delayed disagreement (speaker A) was not taking part in the conversation until late in the discussion, which was led by the other two interlocutors (speakers B and C). That is, the dialog in which this disagreement took place had been conducted by B and C all the time, and only when C introduced a change of 'footing' did A participate in the conversation. The excerpt is offered below (disagreement discussed in bold face at the end of the sequence):

(189) *(8esp/T96M82)*

T351' C: o no sé a mí Cuenca es un sitio también que me gus̲ta↑ (.) por lo de las
casas colgantes y todo eso (.) dicen que es una ciudad muy bonita↑

T352 B: ya:: es que claro (.) depende (.) o sea que habría que elegir↓ si te vas a
Cuenca↑=

T353 C: =o a Almería=

T354 B: =te vas a Cuenca ya es para ir a Jaén↓ (.) si te vas a Almería↑ pues ya
haces así

T355 C: sí

T356 B: o sea::: a mí me da igual
(3.0)

T357 C: [XXXXXX]

T356' B: [hombre si] vamos para Almería↑ podemos pasar por Murcia
(1.5)

T358 C: ((*asiente*)) pero en Murcia qué hay?

T359 B: no lo sé [@@@@@@@@@@@@]

T360 C: [@ murcianas murcianas @@]

T361 B: no sí tío algo habrá tío en Murcia no? (.) algo habrá en Murcia↓ más que
en Jaén↑

T362 C: @@@ no no no sé yo qué decirte @ (.) o a Albace̲::te::↑

T363 B: en Albacete qué hay tío?

T364 C: nada por eso dicen en Albacete caga y vete
A: ((*gesto de reprobación negando con la cabeza*))

T364' C: porque no hay nada:::↑
(1.6)

T364' C: no sé pues ya a votaciones (.) y XXXX ahí que-

T365 B: a mí me da igual (.) lo de- lo de Almería o::::- °o Cuenca↓° es que me::-
es que me da lo mismo la verdad

T366 A: **yo prefiero Almería**

The whole sequence starts with speaker C suggesting that Cuenca was one more town they could visit. When he notices B's reluctance, he suggests Almería in T353. From this point on, B and C continue their discussion including other possibilities such as Murcia and Jaén until C suggests putting it on a vote in T364'. At this point, A is given the option to participate, a chance that she takes up by opting for Almería, thus disagreeing with C's initial proposal.

Although this can be considered a delay, it is qualitatively different from a delay in which the responding part is actively participating in the conversation and is obliged to respond to an initiating turn. In the above sequence, A is not obliged to respond to C's proposal since B has taken up the role of interlocutor, and therefore no expectancy in terms of response type and timing is created. Speaker A is free to just stay there as spectator and just wait for the right moment to enter the conversation. This chance is given in T364' when C frames his turn as an invitation to vote. Therefore, I suggest that this example does not constitute counter-evidence against the general preference for directness observed in Spanish.

Summing up, the results obtained in the analysis of turn external delays offer one more piece of evidence in the classification made so far. While directness and assertiveness seem to be highly valued in Spanish in the performance of disagreement in the context of friendly conversations among young acquaintances, Japanese seems to frame disagreements as dispreferred more often by using more indirect forms, using more mitigation, less aggravation and delaying the disagreeing moves more frequently and over more turns. It also emerged that English is neither as direct as Spanish nor as indirect as Japanese, also confirmed here by delaying disagreeing turns less often than Japanese and over fewer turns.

CHAPTER 6

CONVERSATIONAL STYLE AND (IM)POLITENESS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter will be devoted to the discussion of the relationship between the findings in Chapter 5 regarding the inter-cultural similarities and differences in the realization of disagreements in terms of the 1st order of preference and politeness, in response to the Research Question # 2 formulated in Chapter 3, which I reproduce below:

> What are the implications of the evidence found in the data for the relationship between 1st order preference structure and politeness?

The chapter will be structured as follows. In Section 2, the results obtained in the quantitative analyses will be interpreted in relation to politeness and preference, and the implications for a theory of politeness discussed. In order to provide additional support for my claims, evidence drawn from some qualitative analyses will be provided. In Section 3, the relationship between conversational style and politeness will be dealt with based on the evidence discussed in Section 2. The chapter will end with a brief summary and a conclusion in Section 4.

6.2. Preference and politeness

In Chapter 3, it was argued that the relationship between 1st order and 2nd order preference was not a fixed one, but that it was dependent on contextual and cultural factors. As the aim of this work was to find the degree to which three languages such as

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English, Spanish and Japanese, representing three widely different cultural groups – loosely defined–, the research was designed so as to keep contextual factors as constant as possible by framing the conversations as "friendly" chats among young people with similar educational backgrounds. However, the dynamic aspects of conversations cannot be manipulated. Therefore, the interactions were monitored in order to see whether the initial "friendly" atmosphere was disrupted as the conversations unfolded. Although some instances of changes in footing were identified in them, no evidence was found of aggressive confrontation in which the interlocutors' face was at risk. That is, although different degrees of directness and assertiveness were observed in the performance of disagreement throughout the conversations, none of them were interpreted as offensive. Having verified this, it was possible to assess all the disagreement moves performed as "appropriate" in the context of "friendly" conversation in which they were produced, thus allowing for the interpretation that these acts were polite, defined as "an unmarked way of speaking" in which the perlocutionary effect produced in the addressee is "the belief that the speaker is polite […] to the extent that [politeness] passes unnoticed" (Terkourafi 2001: 210). Politeness was also related to the notion of preference, but refined as 2nd order preference following Bousfield (2007), regarding 1st order preference as a structural notion related to the realization features of turns and utterances. By keeping the variable politeness/2nd order preference constant, it was possible to investigate the cross-cultural variation in the realization of disagreements in terms of 1st order preference in order to find out the degree to which 1st and 2nd order preference matched when potentially face-threatening communicative acts such as disagreements were performed.

6.2.1. 1st order preference in English, Spanish and Japanese

The findings regarding the relative frequency and realization of disagreement are summarized below (see Table 44):

1. Spanish showed a relatively high tendency to frame disagreements as preferred at 1st order of preference, since they ranked first in all categories of analysis except in Mitigation.

2. Not only did Spanish rank first, but also they often obtained relatively high scores in preferred realization formats, including Direct and Aggravated forms, *'no'* and straight *'but'* disagreements, and the high occurrence of Simultaneous talk and Overlaps. Conversely, Spanish obtained low scores in some features that frame disagreements as dispreferred, such as Head Act internal mitigation and turn external delays.

3. Japanese showed the lowest tendency among the three languages to frame disagreements as preferred as 1st order of preference. They ranked last in most of the categories of analysis except in the frequency of preferred formats (direct + un-mitigated moves) and in the production rate of Head Act internal mitigation when calculated among internally mitigated moves, although they ranked last again when calculated among mitigated moves in general.

4. Japanese obtained especially low scores in the rate of Direct moves, the proportion of Direct and Aggravated forms, in Simultaneous talk and Overlaps, which stand in sharp contrast to Spanish. Together with English, it produced a lower percentage of disagreements than Spanish, and it also obtained low scores in the production of preferred formats. Conversely, it obtained particularly high scores in dispreferred realizations of disagreements such as conventionally indirect forms (CIAs) in general, the combinations of Direct+Mitigated, CIA+Plain and NCIA+Plain realization formats, Head Act internal mitigation and turn external delays.

5. English showed a mixed behavior. In terms of ranked order, it was second in both preferred and dispreferred realizations of disagreement most of the time. Some exceptions to this tendency were the frequency rate of Mitigated forms in general and Direct+Mitigated forms, as well as in the average number of mitigators in internally mitigated moves, where it ranked first. On the other hand, it ranked last in preferred realizations of disagreements and in the average number of aggravators per Aggravated move. Attending to these results, English framed disagreements as dispreferred at a higher level than Japanese in some respects.

Table 44. Rank order of English, Spanish, and Japanese in terms of frequency, directness and modulation in the performance of disagreement.

CATEGORIES OF COMPARISON		RANK ORDER		
		First	**Second**	**Third**
Overall frequency of disagreements		Spanish	English	Japanese
Directness	**Frequency of Direct moves**	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Distribution of Direct strategies	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Distribution of CIA strategies	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Frequency of Strong NCIAs	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Overall rank order of strategies	Spanish	English	Japanese
Preference	**Frequency of preferred format**	Spanish	Japanese	English
	Rank order of transparency + modulation	Spanish	English	Japanese
Mitigation	**Rate of internal mitigation per internally mitigated move**	English	Japanese	Spanish
	Rate of internal mitigation per mitigated move	Japanese	English	Spanish
	Rate of Mitigated forms	English	Spanish	Japanese
	Direct + Mitigated forms	English	Spanish	Japanese
	Indirect + Mitigated forms	Japanese	English	Spanish
Aggravation	**Rate of aggravated forms**	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Direct+Aggravated forms	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Indirect+Aggravated forms	Japanese	English	Spanish
	Rate of internal aggravation per aggravated move	Spanish	Japanese	English
	Rate of Simultaneous talk	Spanish	English	Japanese
	Rate of Overlap	Spanish	English	Japanese
Turn external delays		Japanese	English	Spanish

Table 44 shows how Spanish ranked first in all preferred realizations, although not always last in dispreferred ones, as the second position occupied in the percentage of Mitigated forms in general and Direct+Mitigated forms shows. As already discussed in Chapter 5, the low scored obtained in Japanese in the Direct+Mitigated realizations was due to the preference for conventionally indirect forms of disagreement in this language, a shown by the high rate of both Indirect+Mitigated and Indirect+Aggravated forms used.

The above classification of the three languages takes into account only their relative positions regarding the categories of disagreement realizations. However, when scores are compared, the results obtained in English are often closer to Japanese than to Spanish, thus showing a higher preference for dispreferred rather than preferred realizations of disagreement. Only two exceptions were found in the combination of Direct+Aggravated moves and the frequency of turn-external delays, where English was more similar to Spanish in quantitative terms. Overall, the following patterns are observed in terms of similarity or difference among each other (see Table 45 below):

1. English seemed to align with Japanese in the distribution of categories, Direct strategies, CIAs, and Mitigated strategies, as well as in the frequency of Direct + un-mitigated disagreements.

2. However, English was more similar to Spanish in sequential features such as the relative frequency of Overlaps, Simultaneous talk or turn external delays, and the percentage of conventionally indirect strategies.

3. All three languages presented different Lexical/phrasal realizations of Head Act internal aggravation.

Table 45. Similarities and differences among English, Spanish and Japanese in the performance of disagreement.

	SIMILAR	DIFFERENT
Overall frequency	English / Japanese	Spanish
Overall distribution of categories	English / Japanese	Spanish
Distribution of direct strategies	English / Japanese	Spanish
Distribution of conventionally indirect strategies	English / Spanish	Japanese
Overall rank order of strategies	English / Japanese	Spanish
Rate of disagreements in preferred format	English / Japanese	Spanish
Realization of Mitigation: Head Act internal devices	English / Japanese	Spanish
Realization of Aggravation strategies: Lexical level	-	English / Spanish / Japanese
Realization of Aggravation: Simultaneous talk	English / Spanish	Japanese
Realization of Aggravation: Overlap	English / Spanish	Japanese
Frequency of turn external delays	English / Spanish	Japanese

As observed above, English aligned with Japanese in almost all categories of analysis, including the low realization of *'no'* disagreements, but it aligned with Spanish in some turn-organizational features and in the low frequency of conventionally indirect acts. In terms of the relative tolerance for preferred realizations of disagreements at the 1st order preference then, the following hierarchy can be established in the three languages: Spanish: High tolerance; English: Relatively low; Japanese: Low. The relative position of each language in the High/Low tolerance continuum is shown in Fig. 16 below:

Fig. 16. Level of tolerance for preferred realizations of disagreements in the context of friendly conversations among acquaintances.

+ tolerance		**– tolerance**
Spanish	English	Japanese
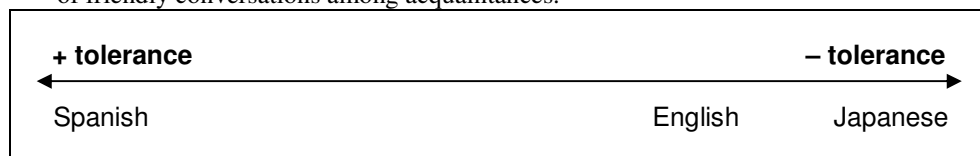
As already suggested in Chapter 5, this preference for directness in informal situations in Spanish has been found in previous studies. In her analysis of conversations among friends and family, Hernández-Flores (2004b) did not perceive any sign of impoliteness in direct and even aggravated disagreement moves. Something similar has been suggested by Briz (2004) with respect to the realization of requests in contexts of low distance among Spanish speakers:

> [U]na petición *directa* (p.ej. con imperativo) es más previsible en un contexto de cercanía social, en la interacción interpersonal, *en un contexto como el español* en que tal acto directivo *no se siente, por lo general, como amenazante …*" (Briz 2004: 73, emphasis added)[81].

This relative preference for directness was empirically demonstrated by Pérez Díaz (2001), who found that "los hablantes de español son […] los que utilizan estrategias más directas […] mientras que los hablantes nativos de inglés son lo que recurren a estrategias más indirectas" (Pérez Díaz 2001: 478)[82], after comparing the realization of several speech acts in British English, Spanish and Spanish non-native speakers of English.

The above classification suggests that Spanish is similar to other languages labelled as "Mediterranean" that have shown a high tolerance for the preferred realization of potentially face-threatening acts. For example, Terkourafi (2001: 210) reported "apparent non-cooperativeness" in Cypriot Greek which in fact was seen as perfectly normal (i.e., unmarked). Blum-Kulka *et al.* (2002: 1579) found that downgraded disagreements were the exception in TV talk shows and the Jewish study of Talmudic texts in Hebrew, and Kakava (2002: 1555-7) found that un-prefaced disagreements and sustained disagreements in Modern Greek were not seen as disruptive in conversations among friends and family, as well as in the classroom context.

On the other hand, the last position occupied by Japanese in almost all rankings also seems to confirm the results obtained in previous studies regarding the high tendency toward non-confrontational communication in this language (Watanabe 1993:

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[81] "A direct request (e.g., in Imperative mood) is more expected in a context of low-distance interpersonal interaction among Spanish speakers, where this type of directive act is not seen as a threat".

[82] "Native speakers of Spanish are the ones who use more direct strategies while native speakers of English are those who resort to more indirect strategies".

180; Maynard 1997: 137). For example, Watanabe (1993: 203-4) showed that while the American interactional style invited confrontation since opposite views and arguments were introduced, Japanese would not be categorical or unequivocal when faced to question of either agreeing or disagreeing with a prior statement, but would give holistic accounts in order to pre-empt the possibility of disagreement. Maynard (1997) even suggested that this tendency to avoid disagreement might affect the Japanese emotionally and psychologically when confronted with the American more direct style:

> The Japanese often remain vulnerable, frustrated, and hurt because their negotiation style does not allow them to express their disagreement, resentment, or anger as explicitly as their American counterparts do. (Maynard 1997: 137).

However, these descriptions of English as being more direct and confrontational does not seem to be supported by the results obtained in my quantitative analyses. As observed above, English showed an ambivalent behavior by sometimes aligning with Japanese and sometimes with Spanish, but with a higher tendency to align with the former than with the latter, which implies that English might not be so confrontational after all. Furthermore, the previous comparison between Spanish and English showed that the latter was more indirect. The consequence of this is that 'direct' and 'confrontational' are labels that should be qualified, since English seems to be just a little more direct and confrontational than Japanese, but much less so than Spanish.

The problem seems to be now where exactly to place English in relation to Spanish and Japanese. According to the relative frequency counts of all the categories and strategies analyzed, it seems to be a culture in which disagreement is more framed as dispreferred than preferred. Nevertheless, these conclusions are based only on the quantitative analysis of categories and strategies as codified in the Coding Scheme proposed for this study. Although it aimed at being as exhaustive as possible, certain conversational features at the turn-constructional and the turn-organizational levels remained outside its scope. Therefore, in order to fill this analytical gap, some qualitative analyses have been conducted with the purpose of finding out whether the results in the quantitative analyses that grouped English together with Japanese were confirmed.

In the process of computing the different realizations of disagreement, the following qualitative differences emerged: (1) the internal realization of *'but'*

disagreements; (2) the degree to which a move could be externally mitigated; (3) the nature and realization of disagreement over a series of turns; (4) the framing function of the initiating turn; (5) the avoidance or not of making explicit proposals, and (6) the presence or not of laughter in Aggravated moves. The following sub-sections will deal with these differences.

6.2.2. 'Yes but'… (in)directly

In the discussion on the results obtained in the quantitative analyses, I made some comments about the differences found in the realization of Direct disagreements introduced by the adversative conjunction *'but'*. It was pointed out that, a major difference between Spanish on one hand and English and Japanese on the other was the high frequency of un-prefaced forms found in Spanish. It was also observed that while English combined two types of prefacing devices such as Distractors and Alerters in the different realizations, Japanese showed a tendency to rely more on Alerters. In the Coding Scheme, prefaces in front of the disagreement Head Act were codified as external mitigating devices that downgraded the force of the disagreeing move by delaying and camouflaging the main act. Here I am going to focus on two additional features in the realization of *'but'* utterances in which certain cross-cultural differences have been appreciated: (a) the internal realization pattern of the proposition following *'but'*, and (2) the turn-organizational features accompanying this type of disagreements.

With respect to the internal realization of *'but'* disagreements it was found that while Spanish and English show a high preference to use Locution Derivable Direct disagreements after the conjunction, the conventionally indirect Type B2 CIA was very frequent in Japanese. The following excerpts show these differences (disagreements in bold face):

> (190) *(7eng/T19-20M15)*
>   T137 A: [it <u>i::s</u> yeah]
>   T137' A: I've seen hostels for like (.) fifteen so↓
>   T138 C: okay
>   T139 A: but okay so:: you think maybe three hundred?
>   T140 B: **but in Madrid it was like twenty one**↑

> (191) *(2esp/T3M2)*

> T036 A: un mes necesitamos
> T037 C: **pero tiene que ser dos semanas**

(192) *(8jpn/T104-6M86)*
>   T0789 B: un (.) ma::: (1.9) yu- yuuguu suru tokoro machigatteru
>   (1.2)
>   T0790 A: ºun:::º=
>   T0791 C: =un
>   T0792 A: **demo nanka sore wa sa::: (.) kanwa sarenasoo ja nai?**
>   *B: yeah (.) well::: (1.9) they're wrong in what they favor (women)*
>   *(1.2)*
>   *A: ºyeah:::º=*
>   *C: =mhm*
>   *A: **but like don't you think it::: (.) doesn't look like it's gonna change?***

As these examples show, English seems to be more similar to Spanish in the way *'but'* disagreements are framed. In both the English and Spanish examples, the main disagreement components that follow *'but'* and *'pero'* are performed by an LD statement in Declarative form (although the Spanish case seems to be more emphatic by the use of the form *'tiene que ser'* *('it has to be')*, which introduces a sense of obligation). In Japanese, on the other hand, the CIA B2 form is used, which requests from the addressee the confirmation for a supposition rather than being an assertion[83]. This realization pattern is highly frequent in Japanese, which seems to support the view that assertive utterances a rather avoided. Moreover, this feature is not only limited to *'but'* disagreements. It is also found in the realization of highly oppositional *'no'* disagreements, as Example (193) illustrates:

(193) *(11jpn/T55M44)*
>   T0253 A: e? d<u>a</u>tte sa:: (.) nanka betsu ni shiranai kedo hikooki dore gurai kakaru
>   no?
>   T0254 B: honto da yo ne
>   T0255 C: **iya kek<u>ko::</u> kakaru n ja nai?**
>   *A: huh? because (.) like well I don't know but how much is it by airplane?*
>   *B: you're right*
>   *C: **no don't you think it will cost a <u>lo::t</u>?***

Although it may sound odd to say *'no'* to a Wh-question, the negation aims at the indirect illocutionary act intended by speaker A. Prior to this sequence, speakers C and B had agreed upon staying at somebody's house in order not to spend too much money. C seems to disagree by asking in T0253 how much is the airplane ticket, hinting

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[83] A more faithful translation would be *'but like ((involvement marker 'sa')) isn't it (the case) that it does not look like it is going to be mitigated?'*

indirectly that they should be rather cheap. Speaker C's *'no'* addresses this indirect allusion to cheap prices. The whole sequence is an illustration of the indirect way the whole issue is discussed. I will come back to this point in my discussion of the role of the Initiating turn in the way discussions are framed.

6.2.3. High vs. low external mitigation and delay

The quantitative analyses revealed that English had the highest frequency of mitigators inside the Head Acts. However, the analysis of external mitigation was designed in a way it did not allow this kind of comparison. That is, the analysis of Head Act external mitigation involved the frequency counts of "types" rather than "tokens". So, for example, cases of one Distractor + Head Act and, say, four Distractors + Head Act were included in the same category of D+H external mitigation. A case-by-case analysis of the actual realizations of prefaced disagreement moves revealed that there were considerably more instances of highly delayed disagreements in Japanese than in the other two languages. As the realization of a long stretch of Distractors and Alerters often involved the delay of the main disagreement component over a series of turns, the issue of turn external delays will be discussed together with the level of mitigation.

I already suggested that most realizations of pre-head mitigation via Distractors in Spanish involved *'but'* disagreement moves, and that they were frequently used in a way that seemed to function as collocations or formulaic expressions (e.g., *'sí pero'* or *'claro pero'* are often quoted together as one set). The quantitative analysis confirmed that this was often the case in Spanish. It was also suggested that Distractors were so closely related to *'but'* disagreements in English, but had wider combinatory possibilities. Finally, the relative high frequency of Alerters in Japanese was also discussed. Now, Japanese also differed from both English and Japanese in that these Distractors and Alerters were quite often used as a delaying device which allowed the speaker to hold the disagreement over a number of turns, as in the following excerpt (the whole disagreement process in bold face):

(194) *(11jpn/T59-63M48)*
  T0273 C: <u>son</u> nara yasui ja nai?
  T0274 A: **e? tsuaa o**-
  T0275 B: tsuaa↓ [(.) tsuaa↑] tsuaa de iku

```
T0276  A:            [a tsuaa de] ((nodding))
T0277  C:  [tsuaa ni shiyo]
T0278  A:  [tsuaa↑ tsuaa ] @@@
T0279  B:  de soo datte jiyuu jikan ga aru n desho? doose
T0280  A:  a:::::
T0281  C:  un ((nodding))
           (0.6)
T0282  C:  e?  [jiyuu jikan tte iu ka-    ]
T0283  A:         [sannin de (.) ikuppoku] nai ne:: soo shitara↓ soo shitara kore
           kangaenakute ii jan
       C:  that way don't you think it would be cheaper?
       A:  huh? a tour-
       B:  tour↓ [(.) tour↑  ]  go on a tour
       A:          [on a tour] ((nodding))
       C:  [let's go on a tour]
       A:  [a tour↑ a tour  ] @@@
       B:  and even then we will have free time won't we? anyway
       A:  ri::::ght
       C:  yeah ((nodding))
           (0.6)
       C:  huh?  [rather than free time-]
       A:          [it doesn't (.) look like] we will be able to go just the three of us
           ((involvemente marker 'ne')) then↓ then don't you think we don't
           need to think of all this
```

This excerpt shows the process followed by speaker A to disagree with C's proposal of going on a tour instead of organizing the trip themselves. The sequence starts at the point were C is justifying his idea by arguing that it would be cheaper since they all thought that the trip was going to be too expensive for their limited budgets. Besides the fact that it takes A five turns to finally bring herself to express her disagreement, she keeps postponing its realization by using some very common strategies in Japanese such as the reactive token *'e?'* (*'huh?'*), which may only mean *'I didn't get it'*, but could also convey surprise or new information depending on the intonation contour; a series of repetitions of the problematic word *'tsuaa'* (*'tour'*) without asserting or negating it; an ambiguous marker *'a:::'* which I have dubbed as *'right'* but which is not as precise as clear as the English word and has the connotations of *'well'*, *'I get it'*, *'is that so?'* and *'oh'* all together, and a final 0.6 second gap. Cases like this where speakers avoid disrupting the flow of the conversation by apparently agreeing with prior statements abound in Japanese. As the results of the quantitative analysis showed, these delays can be extremely long sometimes.

This kind of extreme mitigation by postponing the realization of the disagreement as much as possible was not found either in my English or my Spanish data. Sometimes, disagreement Head Acts could be prefaced by one or two Distractors

in combination with an Alerter, but that would be all in both languages. The following example shows a prototypical case of rather high mitigation in English:

> (195) *(4eng/T33-5M23)*
>   T207 B: [would you like to] put another like
>   Madrid day in? to see Madrid?
>   T208 A: **yeah we could do that (1.1) or we could do uhm (2.2) yeah**

Speaker A initiates her turn as an agreement, but then she downgrades her agreement by using the modal *could* of possibility, which hints a possible disagreement. This is followed by a rather long pause of 1.1 seconds that serves as an Alerter for the more explicit disagreement in the form of an alternative proposal, which finally is not uttered. The turn ends with a concession (*'yeah'*) preceded by a hesitation marker or filler and a long pause.

      Although hypothetically it would be possible to imagine similar disagreement realizations in Spanish, no examples were found in my data. Prefaced disagreement realizations which included more than one Distractor and/or Alerter were mainly token agreement and/or short positive assessments (e.g., *'está bien'* (*'that's good'*)) followed by change of frame tokens such as *'hombre'* or *'bueno'* with some short pauses of less than 0.2 seconds in between. The following example represents a prototypical case:

> (196) *(8esp/T146M131)*
>   T577 A: eso- (.) vamos a hablar de cuánto nos vamos a llevar cada uno no?
>   T578 C: **claro (.) bueno (.) lo podemos saber más o menos**

In the above excerpt, speaker A suggests talking about how much money each one will take with him/her for the trip. Speaker C responds that it can be calculated, imply that it is not necessary for each one to say explicitly how much they would carry. C's move is prefaced by one Distractor (*'claro'* (*'sure'*)) and one Alerter (*'bueno'* (*' well'*)) realized between two short pauses, which represents one typical disagreement configuration in Spanish.

      Leaving differences in the concrete wordings aside for a moment, what English and Spanish have in common is the tendency to produce their disagreements in the position expected for a second part in an adjacency pair, since according to this principle an agreement or disagreement is relevant after an assessment, opinion or proposal. This realization is in sharp contrast with the delay observed in the Japanese

example above. The importance here resides in the fact that these are frequent patterns observed in the three languages, which shows the extent to which explicitness can be avoided in each culture.

This same general tendency to avoid explicit confrontation and contrast of views in Japanese has been noted in other conversational features. Two of them will be presented and discussed here. One major feature seems to be the role assigned to NTRIs in Japanese, not always corresponding to the use made in either English or Spanish. The other feature refers to the production of the first pair-part in an adjacency pair. That is, the way an initial utterance is produced so that it makes an oppositional stance almost impossible, and allows a sort of "conversational dance" in which each participant plays his/her part.

6.2.4. NTRI: checking for everyone's views

As already observed in Chapter 5, the relatively high occurrence of A2 CIAs, Weak hints and these devices in their function as Alerters in Japanese is illustrative of the high sensitivity shown in this language for the slightest tokens of non-conformity which in many cases can be expressed by the mere absence of an explicit agreement marker. Japanese speakers are always on the alert, and any sign of reluctance, doubt, uncertainty and the like is interpreted as potential disagreement. One common strategy used is A2 CIAs in the form of NTRIs, which are highly equivocal in nature, and therefore they do not necessarily implicate disagreement, which is why it can be considered as safe strategy if a commitment with the disagreeing move is to be avoided. The following sequence shows how a NTRI by A is interpreted by B as a disagreement to C's prior utterance, but finally it is found that A did not intend to disagree but rather check everybody's position in order to finally reach consensus:

```
(197) (3jpn)
    T0033  A:  ikura daseru? ((signalling C))
    T0034  C:  n::::::::::: juu:::go gurai?
    T0035  A:  juugo?
    T0036  B:  juuman gurai da to omou @ e atashi rokuman  [toka- toka] mo kangae chatta
           A:                                              [@@@@ ]
           C:                                              [@@@@ ]
    T0037  C:  wakannai da-  [dasete- (.) un ]
    T0038  A:                [DASETE MO] dono  [gurai kana]
```

T0039   B: [dasete iu?] dare demo **juugo** nijuu (.)
        man?
T0040   A: °un° dasete un juugo (.) da ne [dasete juu]go ni
T0041   C: [un un un]
T0042   B: °juugoman°
T0043   A: juugo de wa osaetai ne
T0044   C: un
T0045   B: un
        (1.8)
T0046   A: °juugo da ne::°

A: *how much can (you) spend? ((signalling C))*
C: *uh:::::::::: around one hundred and fifty (thousand)?*
A: ***a hundred and fifty?***
B: *(I) think about one hundred @ uh (I) had even considered [like- like] sixty thousand*
A: *[@ @ @ @]*
C: *[@ @ @ @]*
C: *(I) don't know max-[maximum- (.) mhm]*
A: *[MAXIMUM   how] much [would (that) be?]*
B: *[(should we) say] the maximum?*
     Anyone (would spend) one hundred and fifty? two hundred?
A: *°mhm° yeah one hundred and fifty max (.) isn't it?[one hundred and fifty] maximum*
C: *[yeah yeah yeah   ]*
B: *°one hundred and fifty°*
A: *we want to keep it below one hundred and fifty don't we?*
C: *yeah*
B: *yeah*
     (1.8)
A: *°one hundred and fifty right?°*

In this sequence, A responds to C's proposal with an NTRI (T0035). It is not clear, however, whether A disagrees with C's suggestion or not. It seems that the aim of A is to achieve B's agreement rather than C's repair. Evidence for this interpretation is provided by turns T0036 through T0040. At A's production of NTRI, B suggests an alternative quantity way below the amount proposed by C. This response does not satisfy A's expectations who had previously commented on how expensive travels usually are, and triggers another question by A in T0038 emphasizing how much each interlocutor is able to spend on the trip *maximum*. B finally suggests an amount ranging from C's original proposal to fifty thousand yen more. This response fulfils A's expectations and finally agrees to C's original proposal.

The whole sequence seems to suggest that A's NTRI in T0035 is not a disagreement marker but rather a request for confirmation directed to B to achieve consensus. Nevertheless, the NTRI is so ambiguous that both B and C initially interpret T0035 as a challenging interrogative demonstrated by their responses in T0036 and T0037, respectively. A repair of this misunderstanding is attempted by A in T0038,

where she reveals the intended illocutionary force of T0035. Once agreement is achieved, A closes the sequence by confirming her agreement with C's initial proposal.

The conclusion seems to be that none of the three participants has a clearly defined stance or position with respect to the topic *'budget'*. A believes that holiday trips are expensive but has no idea about how much that would be. Her intention is to reach a consensus on how to translate *'expensive'* into a concrete amount. C's proposal seems about right, but A needs B's support. Clearly, B misfires in her first attempt and is met with A's reflective repetition (*'dono gurai kana' ('how much would that be?'*)) of the initial question *'ikura daseru?'* (*'how much are you able to spend?'*) but emphasizing the fact that she is looking for the maximum affordable amount. This time, B not only responds as expected but also suggests that the stated amount is what *'anyone'* would spend. This answer satisfies A's expectations and wraps up the sequence by confirming her agreement with an involvement marker *'ne'*. Turns T0043 through T0046 represent the prototypical agreement sequence in which all the interlocutors explicitly confirm their consensus and constitute the ending point of the discussion.

The relevant point here is that A checks C's proposal not because she has another opinion (i.e., disagreement), but because she needs everyone's support, and nevertheless her NTRI *is* interpreted by B (and probably also by C) as disagreement. Although this kind of strategy is not absent in Spanish and English, their high frequency in Japanese is indicative of their different conversational style. In my opinion, we cannot interpret A's NTRI as a disagreement token but rather as having an exploratory function that opens up the possibility of other participants to express their opinions before reaching consensus.

This example supports Watanabe's (1993) view that Japanese show a high preference for a holistic perspective "integrating contradictions rather than choosing one point over the other" (Watanabe 1993: 201), and contrasts with the way NTRIs are normally used in English or Spanish, where only two interpretations are possible: NTRIs are either sincere requests for clarification or they are indirect modes of disagreement, as the examples below show (NTRIs in bold face):

(198) *(3esp/T7M5)*
    T028 C: luego seguimos por Valencia↑ (0.8) [Barcelona↑]
    T029 B: **[Vale:::ncia?]** para qué?

(199) *(4eng/T51M37)*
  T347 B: I mean when we were in Italy for one week we probably spent <u>ha::lf</u> of that↑
       (.) maybe↑ (.) more?
  T348 A: **in Italy?** I would've spent about that

As observed above, NTRI in both cases introduce disagreements. In (198), the NTRI is followed by a Type C CIA (*'para qué?' ('what for?')*), whereas in (199), the disagreement is realized with a mitigated LD. These are typical examples in which NTRIs are used to preface a more explicit disagreement act. No cases were found in either English or Spanish in which NTRIs were used to check everyone's views to reach consensus.

6.2.5. Pre-empt disagreement (1): The role of the initiating turn

One additional form to avoid explicit and direct disagreements consists in pre-empting their occurrence by framing the initial turn either as a question or as a request to disconfirm one's negative assumptions about the topic at hand (conducive question). This latter type of utterance format was categorized in the Coding Scheme as a Type B2 conventionally indirect disagreement. The novelty in this case resides in that it is not a disagreement, but rather an initial assessment, opinion or proposal which is expressed indirectly instead of adopting a assertive-declarative form. Here is an example in which both realizations co-occur:

(200) *(8jpn)*
  T0096 A: **ja:: Hokkaidoo ka?**
  T0097 B: Hokkaidoo
  T0098 C: Hokkaidoo ka?
  T0099 A: **Hokkaidoo ja nai?**
  T0100 B: un Hokkaidoo (.) Hokkaidoo de::
      A: *so:: Hokkaido?*
      B: *Hokkaido*
      C: *Hokkaido?*
      A: ***isn't Hokkaido okay?***
      B: *yeah Hokkaido (.) Hokkaido then*

Just before the above sequence, speaker C had commented that he would like to go to a cool place rather than to a warm one. Then, speaker A proposes going to Hokkaido in T0096, but framing the utterance as a question. B seems to agree by repeating the word while C shows uncertainty, reluctance or just uptake (the only thing that the NTRI

shows is that C had not considered that possibility before). Speaker A repeats the proposal, but this time she frames the turn as a 'conducive question' (Quirk *et al.* 1985, Bousfield 2007).

Of the above two strategies, which were pervasive in Japanese, the question format was also rather frequent in my English data. Here's an example of the former:

(201) *(7eng)*
  T033 B: **Barcelona?**
  T034 C: Barcelona I wanna go to Barcelona yeah

No examples were found of either form Spanish. Instead, the statement + question tag form of 'conducive question' was sometimes used:

(202) *(5esp)*
  T055 B: **[salimos el <u>quin</u>]ce↑ (.) por la ma<u>ña::na</u>↑ no?**
  T056 C: y- y- y (.) <u>pron</u>to (.) [y luego vam-   ]
  T057 A: [pero no íbamos] a ver- (.) qué vamos a coger? (.) bueno si
        vamo::s (.) primero:::: [por la costa↑ **vamos en autobús no?**]
  T058 B: [**si vamos por Málaga::: y eso↑ el au**]tobús no?
  T059 C: claro

As already pointed out in previous sections, the statement + question tag format is more direct than the other forms since it is initially uttered in Declarative mood, which implies assertion. These findings suggest that although some kind of mitigating device is used in the three languages to mitigated the force of the initial assessment, opinion, or proposal, more aggressive forms are used in Spanish than in English or Japanese, while these two show a preference for forms that have additional layers of indirectness.

6.2.6. Pre-empt disagreement (2): Show modesty and reluctance

Another more radical way of pre-empting disagreement is to avoid proffering clear assessments, opinions or proposals. My data revealed that Japanese also contrasted highly with Spanish or English here. In Japanese, it was often the case that interactants delayed positioning themselves with respect to some topic or making clear what their feelings, desires or opinions were. I will show this with one extreme case in which one speaker seemed to have a preference for going to Okinawa but did not dare to say so openly for a long time, but kept providing weak hints here and there with the hope that

some of the interlocutors would pick up the hint and express a similar view. These hints, which started in turn T0027 and amounted to thirteen before a proposal was made explicit in turn number T804, were scattered over the conversation. The whole sequence is too long to reproduce in full, since it occupies almost one whole conversation, and therefore I will narrate how it developed and only some specific parts will be shown.

One of the speakers (Speaker C) seemed to prefer Okinawa for the summer vacation, and tried to make this clear to the other interlocutors by mentioning it in passing when the budget was being discussed. This was the first time Okinawa was mentioned:

(203) *(13jpn)*
      T0023 C: konna yosan   [XXXX]
      T0024 A: [basho ni] yoru::::=
      T0025 C: =basho ni yoru yo [ne::]
      T0026 B: [un]
      T0027 C: de **Okinawa** toka dattara hikooki dai takasoo ja °nai° @@@
             C: *a budget like this   [XXXX   ]*
             A: [it depends] on the pla:::ce=
             C: *=it depends on the place [you're right]*
             B: [yeah   ]
             C: *and if it were a place like* **Okinawa** *the airfare would probably be expensive* °wouldn't it° @@@

This is the first time speaker C mentions Okinawa as a possible destination. She does so by strategically putting it as an example, rather than explicitly expressing her desire to go. Her interlocutors, however, do not pick up the implied message and just continues their discussion about the general budget, and C does not insist. It is over sixty turns later that C finds another chance to express her preferences, when the options of going north or south are presented. She immediately chooses going south, which is where Okinawa is located (T0094). Nothing more is said. As the other interactants show their preference for the north of Japan, she makes some comments regarding the option of going to the northernmost island of Hokkaido which suggest her reluctance, such as claiming lack of knowledge (T0104). Then she tries to bring the south option again to the discussion by mentioning Okinawa, Hokkaido, Kyoto, and Osaka as the possible destinations (T0114). At this point, speaker A finally picks up the message and expresses her disagreement with C by stating that it would be too much hassle to go to an island which is so far away (T0119). From this point on, C does not insist and the conversation focuses on what they will do in Kyoto, Osaka and Nara. What is relevant

in this sequence is that speaker C never states her want clearly, but always either as one more option among some others, or mentioning it as an example, or even just hinting toward the place it is located. It is only more than six hundred turns later that she picks up another chance to mention Okinawa again by suggesting that they should go to the beach and enjoy the sea (turns T0751 and T0755). This try is frustrated when speaker A lets her know that she can't swim. Finally, after a long side sequence in which speaker A tells the others how scared she is of deep waters, speaker C uses this as a good reason to go to Okinawa, since its beaches are shallow and very similar to Caribbean waters (T0799). It is when A acknowledges that this is true that C brings herself to make her proposal directly and explicitly, as shown below:

(204) *(13jpn)*
    T0799 C: [a wakaru (.) wakaru] [wakaru wakaru (.) soo nara] sa :: Okinawa no
                    umi tte iu no ga :: saikoo na jooken [[da yo ne   ]]
    T0800 A: [[kowai yo ne]]
    T0801 B: [[saikoo da ne]] are wa::
    T0802 C: [ya::bai yo] ne
    T0803 A: [atchi wa   ] zu::tto asase da mon ne
    T0804 C: **tochuu kara Okinawa ikoo yo** @@@
            C: *[oh I know (.) I know] [I know I know (.) in that case] the Okinawan sea*
                    has the perfect conditions   [[doesn't it   ]]
            A: *[[it's scary   ]] ((referring to a previous turn))*
            B: *[[perfect   ]] it is*
            C: *[it's amazing] isn't it*
            A: *[over there   ] all the beaches are shallow aren't they*
            C: ***let's go to Okinawa for the second half of the trip*** *@@@*

No similar cases were found in the English or Spanish data. In these two languages, everyone's position was made rather clear at the relevant positions in the turn-taking system, and interactants did not have any problem in stating their desires and wishes, although they might differ slightly in how they expressed their opinions in terms of directness, as the extensive quantitative analyses showed. In neither case did any of the participants keep lingering over some idea or opinion for so long without expressing their views or desires explicitly.

6.2.7. The role of laughter in Aggravated disagreement

The qualitative differences analyzed so far suggest that although Japanese and English might show a similar level of concern for the overuse of direct strategies in the

performance of disagreement, they seem to frame this concern in different ways, with English using strategies which are more similar to Spanish than to Japanese. The case of laughter in Aggravated moves, however, seems to be different. That is, while this kind of moves where most often realized without the mediation of laughter in Spanish, in both Japanese and English they needed this mitigating devices in order to send a message of "non-seriousness". Compare the following examples:

(205) *(7eng)*
    T746 C: [Mr. and Mrs. Smith?   ]
          (.)
    T747 B: **[[that was the worst]] movie <u>ever</u>**
    T748 A: **[[that was pretty bad]]**
          (0.8)
    T749 C: no:: it wasn't
         B: [@@@@@@@@@@@@@@]
         C: [@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@]
    T750 A: **[that was a (.) pretty bad movie @@]** in all honesty↑

(206) *(8jpn)*
    T0906 B: [dat- tatoeba (.)] sango ga aru ja nai (.) sango no shita ni iru (.)
            chi<u>tchai</u> sakana ga (.) hisshi ni kuchi pakupaku iinagara (.)
            [kono hen no (.) koke toka o tabetari suru]=
    T0907 A: [@ a::: @@@@@@ ((*nods*)) @@@@@]
    T0906' B: =no o toka (.) [sugee↑ (.)] ha::::: toka itte sa::
    T0908 A: [@ miru @]
    T0909 C: @ **MI<u>NA:::</u>I**↑ @@@ nanka <u>shoo</u> toka nara sa:: kekkoo shikkari (.)
            [miru to wa omou] kedo sa::
    T0910 B: [ore sho- shoo wa-]
    T0911 A: [iya (.) shoo wa-   ]
    T0910' B: ore shoo tobashitari suru mon
    T0912 A: un shoo wa [betsu ni-]
    T0913 C: **[maji de?]**
    T0912' A: gyaku ni ii
    T0914 C: <u>**NA:::NDE?**</u>
    T0915 A: e? sono ookii suisoo toka nanka- suisoo toka nanka (.) minna onaji ugoki
            shinai n da yo zettai
         C: @@@@@
         B: *[becau- for example (.)] there is coral isn't there (.) like I watch in admiration*
            the little fish that are under the coral and earnestly eat the lichen that is
            around there making a "paku paku" noise
         A: *[@ oh::: @@@@@@ ((nods)) @@@@@]*
         B: *=like (.) I keep saying oh::: [wonderful while I watch]*
         A: *[@ (I) watch (them too) @]*
         C: *@ **(I) <u>DO::::N'T</u>**↑ @@@ although like if it is like shows I think I would*
            certainly watch them
         B: *[shows- shows-]*
         A: *[no (.) shows-   ]*
         B: *I usually skip shows*
         A: *yeah shows [are not -]*
         C: *[really ?]*
         A: *on the contrary it's okay if I miss them*

> C: **WHY::::?**
> A: *huh? uh::: like in the big water tanks- water tanks like (.) they all don't*
> *move in the same way I tell you definitely not*
> C: *@@@@@*

(207) *(3esp)*
    T350 A: [yo he estado] en la Estatua de la Libertad↑ (.) y es
                      (.) nada comparada con la Alhambra↓ es que no tiene nada
    T351 C: pero es un símbolo de::- yo que sé
    T352 B: AHÍ ESTAMOS [YO POR ESO PORQUE ES UN SÍM]BOLO DE HIS<u>TO</u>::RIA
    T353 A: **[UN SÍMBOLO↓ PERO DE QUÉ::::?]**
    T354 A: **PERO ES QUE TÚ DIME A MÍ DOS ES<u>TA</u>::TUAS↑ (.) QUE <u>YO</u> NO VEO**
             NADA ORIGI<u>NA::L</u> NI NADA QUE-   [HAY DOS-] HAY UNA EN =
    T355 C: [pero eso-   ]
    T354' A: **=FRANCIA TAMBIÉN↑**

In all excerpts, some features that aggravate the disagreements are observed. In (205), speaker B uses the superlative *'worst'* further enhanced by the adverb *'ever'*, which in turn is emphasized via emphatic stress. Speaker A also aggravates her assessment, albeit moderately, with the intensifier *'pretty'*. In (206), speaker C disagrees twice: the first time he uses an LD Direct disagreement form aggravated via supra-segmental devices such as loud voice, vowel elongation and emphatic stress. The same devices are used in the second disagreement, but this time applied to a Type C CIA. Although the aggravating strategies used in the English and Japanese examples are different, they both share the fact they are framed as non-serious confrontation by laughing during or after the disagreements are proffered. However, this is not the case in the Spanish. In (207), speaker A upgrades the force of her disagreement via partial simultaneous talk, loud voice, emphatic stress in the words *'estatuas'* (*'statues'*) and *'original'* (*'original'*), the assertive marker *'es que'* (*'(the fact) is that'*), the imperative expression *'tú dime a mí'* (*'you tell me'*), and the intensifier *'nada'* (*'at all'*), but these are not downgraded with laughter.

This finding suggests a major qualitative difference between Spanish and the other two languages. On one hand, direct and aggravated forms seem to be allowed and unsanctioned in Spanish as a way to communicate disagreement in friendly conversations, which supports previous characterizations of Spanish as rather direct. On the other hand, English and Japanese need to use a device such as laughter in order to show that the whole sequence is framed as non-serious. This qualitative difference in framing discourse seems to confirm the preference for the indirect realization of disagreements shown by English and Japanese, in contrast to Spanish.

Summing up, the qualitative analysis of the above six conversational features has shown that English and Spanish are more similar between each other than with Japanese in most of them: in how *'but'* disagreements are realized, in the length and nature of Head Act external mitigation, including the delay over several turns, and in the way one's point of view is expressed. Firstly, the internal realization of *'but'* disagreements in English seem to be more similar to that found in Spanish, while it is more indirect in the Japanese case. Secondly, Japanese showed a higher tendency to delay disagreements over a series of turns than English and Spanish, where they were most often produced inside the position expected for a second pair in an adjacency pair. Thirdly, while NTRI Alerters were frequently used both in English and Japanese, their functions seemed to differ. Whereas English shared with Spanish their dual nature in illocutionary force as sincere requests for clarification or indirect disagreements, they seemed to have one additional role in Japanese of checking everybody's opinions and ideas so as to reach a final consensus. Finally, the avoidance of making an explicit proposal or of expressing one's views clearly was a feature found in Japanese that was not shared by English or Spanish.

However, English still seemed to be similar to Japanese in two aspects: there was a higher tendency to realize the Initiating turn with a conventionally indirect form, and aggravated moves needed to be framed as non-serious for them to remain unsanctioned. Regarding the first point, although the three languages showed differences in the realization of the Initiating turn, Spanish was more direct than English or Japanese. Nevertheless, English was not totally similar to Japanese either, since only the strategy of framing an opinion or proposal as a question or with rising intonation was found in the former, whereas this strategy was used together with negative conducive questions in Japanese.

6.3. Conversational style and (im)politeness

The results in the quantitative part of the present study showed that English aligned with Japanese in being rather indirect in the production of disagreements, while Spanish showed a higher preference for directness and assertiveness. The qualitative analyses, on the other hand, have confirmed that Spanish and Japanese stand at opposite ends in a continuum. They suggest, however, that although English aligned with

Japanese in many of the categories analyzed at the quantitative level, there are some important qualitative differences between these two languages.

The problem now emerges as where exactly to locate English between Spanish and Japanese. Previous comparisons of American English and Japanese have emphasized their differences rather than their similarities (e.g., Maynard 1997, Watanabe 1993; but *cf.* Mori 1999), highlighting the Japanese preference for indirection and diffusion (Maynard 1997: 21) or a holistic perspective "integrating contradictions rather than choosing one point over the other" (Watanabe 1993: 201). However, the inclusion of one more language in the comparison has provided a more complex perspective from which to view the relationship between these two languages. As already observed above, American English seems to favor indirect realizations of disagreement rather than direct ones even in friendly conversations among young people, while Spanish speakers show a higher tolerance for preferred formats in this context. It all depends on who is compared with whom. As Wierzbicka (1985: 175) pointed out, Australian English appeared to be highly indirect when compared with Polish, but direct or blunt when compared with some so-called "non-Western" languages. For Geertz (1969, *cit.* in Wierzbicka 1985: 175), for instance, the Javanese culture favored 'indirection' and 'dissimulation' much more than the American culture. Furthermore, Japanese and Javanese have been grouped together as languages that value indirectness (Brown & Levinson 1987).

Taking into account both quantitative and qualitative evidence, English seems to have come closer to Spanish after the qualitative analysis, although not so much as to change the rank order. One strong piece of evidence for this is how aggravated moves are framed in each language. On the other hand, these results together with the difference found between English and Japanese in the quantitative analysis regarding the realization of indirect moves suggest that the difference is not so much of frequency but of style. That is, in the quantitative section it was found that, besides Japanese being slightly more indirect than English in almost all categories and strategies, English highly favored Direct+Mitigated realizations of disagreements, whereas conventionally indirect forms in general were preferred in Japanese. In the qualitative section, further differences in style have been found, but sharing the fact that aggravated moves need to be properly downgraded with laughter in both languages. Since Spanish shared with English almost all these qualitative differences with respect to Japanese, the relationship

between them should have a double layer of comparison: level of tolerance and similarity of style, as represented in Fig. 17:

Fig. 17. Level of tolerance for the preferred realizations of disagreements and level of similarity of style in the context of friendly conversations among acquaintances.

+ tolerance		**– tolerance**
Spanish	English	Japanese
+ similar style		**– similar style**
Spanish English		Japanese
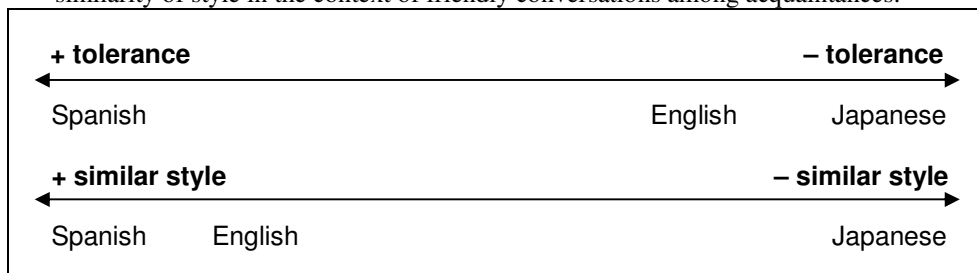
So, if the three languages are contrasted at both levels of comparison, Spanish would have a (+ / –) relationship with respect to English and a (– / –) relationship with respect to Japanese, while English would have a (+ / –) relationship with both Spanish and Japanese, although for different reasons: it would align with the former in style but with the latter in indirectness and mitigation.

These two layers of similarity or difference suggest that traditional labels used to refer to different communicative styles such as confrontation vs. collaboration (Gruber 1998), oppositional vs. consensual, high involvement vs. low involvement (*cit.* in Gruber 1998), or conflictive vs. harmonious, are not accurate representations because although both Spanish and English seem to have a more confrontational style than Japanese, Spanish is more assertive and direct than English. Conversely, English and Japanese have shown similar levels of tolerance for preferred realization patterns of disagreements, but qualitative differences emerged in their realization. It would seem more appropriate to refer to the Spanish conversational style as confrontational + direct, to the English style as confrontational + indirect, and to the Japanese one as harmonious + indirect, which would capture the similarities and differences found in this study. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to establish a clear-cut distinction between where confrontation ends and harmonious interaction starts, or where to draw the line between directness and indirectness. As could be seen in my analysis, directness was not totally absent in English and Japanese, while indirectness was also present in Spanish. Therefore, it seems to me that the similarities and differences are best captured by the representation given in Fig. 17 in which all languages are placed in the same continuum at different categories of comparison.

The question now remains of how to relate the above conversational styles with (im)politeness. According to Culpeper *et al.* (2003), there are two conditions for an utterance to be interpreted as impolite: an *intention* to attack the hearer's face and that the *context* is such as to allow the interpretation of an act as impoliteness. Something similar is pointed out by Briz (2004), for whom

> señalar que la petición directa es descortés o menos cortés que la indirecta significa quedarse en lo codificado […]. La cortesía de la acción, de uno sólo, puede interpretarse como tal en virtud de la inter- y re-acción del otro y por relación al conjunto interaccional. La minimización de la fuerza ilocutiva de los actos de habla y la función social de éstos, es decir, la cortesía en dicha minimización, sólo pueden ser medidas dialógicamente en el contexto conversacional. (Briz 2004: 73).

The crucial points here are the correct interpretation of the speaker's intentions and the lack of one-to-one relationship between linguistic form and (im)politeness. This means that intentions cannot be derived (or inferred) from linguistic form alone but need to be mediated by the concrete contextual and cultural frame in which such linguistic form occurs. In Chapter 3 and in some other parts of this thesis, I have commented that conversations were monitored to check whether any disagreement moves had had a perlocutionary effect of impoliteness, and that this did not occur. In my data, the initial context of interaction was framed as friendly and face-respecting. The ensuing conversation further showed that there was no intention to attack someone else's face even when disagreements were upgraded with the use of a variety of aggravating devices. However, there is one major cross-cultural difference in the realization of this type of communicative acts which shows whether Direct+Aggravated disagreements are really unsanctioned or not, and this is laughter. So, while Direct+Plain realizations did not need to be accompanied by laughter in the three languages, the upgraded ones had to be framed as non-serious or playful acts in English and Japanese by recurrence to laughter, which appears to indicate that it is necessary to explicitly frame these aggravated acts as non-serious in order to avoid impoliteness. In Spanish, on the other hand, disagreement seemed to be more expected and allowed, serving as a ritualized form of opposition the way it is done in Modern Greek (Kakava 2002: 1538), since no mitigating device was used whatsoever.

So, in the context of friendly conversations among young acquaintances, the borderline between (unnoticed or noticed-and-unsanctioned) politeness and

impoliteness in Spanish, English and Japanese seems to be located at different levels of illocutionary directness. This borderline is really high in Spanish, but not so high in English and Japanese. Moreover, it could even be suggested that in Spanish the borderline is hard to draw in purely linguistic-pragmatic terms, since the most direct and explicit forms have been used without falling into impoliteness. Further research is needed to find out what contextual and linguistic factors are involved in the interpretation of disagreements (and communicative acts in general) as impolite, especially in languages like Spanish where the most aggravated forms can be used in certain contexts without been sanctioned.

PART IV

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

1. Summary and conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to investigate the similarities and differences in the realization of (dis)agreements in American English, Peninsular Spanish, and Japanese, as well as their relationship with (im)politeness. The parenthesis around the prefixes *dis-* and *im-* suggest that both ends of the dichotomy have been object of study at the same level. However, the emphasis has been placed on *dis*agreement and politeness, while the correspondent opposites have served as the complementary elements needed to have a full picture of both phenomena because both concepts cannot be properly understood without reference to their antonyms. In the first case, agreement was used to illustrate the difference between preferred and dispreferred responses to prior assessments, opinions and proposals in the theoretical discussion about the relationship between preference organization, politeness and context. It served as a backdrop against which to measure the proper value of the performance of disagreement in the present study, since the co-occurrence of both agreement and disagreement in the same sequence (or one immediately after the other) in preferred format at the 1st order of preference indicated that the conversations were not framed as dispute or conflict, but as friendly conversations. The verification that conversations were thus framed allowed to assume that face was being co-constituted among the participants in the interactions and that the disagreement moves realized therein were unsanctioned irrespective of the form adopted.

Before carrying out the above analysis, a review of the literature was conducted on the notion of politeness and the different theoretical approaches to the study of it. It was immediately noted that there is no consensus about how to construe the notion of *'politeness'*: some scholars advocate that the folk understanding of 'polite' as captured

in dictionaries of English in definitions such as "with good manners", "cultured", "refined", "elegant", is the appropriate way to conceptualize the notion, while other researchers support the idea that lay notions of *politeness* are not manageable for scientific investigation. Several reasons are given for this latter view. For one thing, there is no guarantee that the terms 'polite' and 'politeness' might exist in all cultures. For another, where they do, their conceptualization may vary, as demonstrated by Hill *et al.* (1986). Furthermore, 'politeness' thus understood would limit the research scope to purely formulaic expressions or highly grammaticalized terms and constructions that are seen to represent polite linguistic utterances independent of their context of realization (Terkourafi 2001: 4).

Due to the cross-cultural nature of my thesis, I decided to adopt the latter view that politeness should be technically defined. Most of the theoretical approaches to politeness reviewed subscribed to this view, but their conceptualizations differed (Chapter One). Politeness was construed as a set of conversational rules (Lakoff 1973), as a set of conversational maxims under the umbrella of a Politeness Principle (Leech 1983), as a means to save one's face by not threatening the interlocutor's face (Brown & Levinson 1987), as a kind of invisible conversational contract that is either ratified or renegotiated in context (Fraser 1990; Fraser & Nolen 1981), and as the statistical frequency of linguistic expressions that are perceived as unmarked in a given minimal context of use, such perception being the result of "a perlocutionary effect consisting of the addressee's holding the belief that the speaker is polite is achieved, at least to the extent that [politeness] passes unnoticed" (Terkourafi 2001: 210). In addition to these models that approached politeness from an etic point of view, the importance acquired by Relational Work (Watts 1989, 1992, 2003; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005), which subscribes to an emic approach to politeness, could not be underestimated, and therefore it was included in my review.

A comparison of the above models revealed the inadequacy of the so-called "modern" approaches (Lakoff 1973; Leech 1983; Brown & Levinson 1987). Brown & Levinson's face-saving view was reviewed in some more detail due to the high influence it has had in politeness research in the last thirty years, but it was finally regarded as not suitable anymore. Especially problematic was their equation "no deviation from rational efficiency = no politeness" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 5), which seemed to exclude utterances with direct illocutionary force. The Conversational-Contract view was persuasive, but was not developed enough as a theoretical model.

Finally, I subscribed to Terkourafi's view of politeness considering that her definition would account for the fact that direct and even aggravated forms of disagreement were most often unsanctioned in my Spanish data. The review of Terkourafi's theoretical framework, called the Frame-Based Approach, was completed with the notions of *habitus,* frame, and face as co-constituted in conversation, rather than just saved via the strategic uses of potentially face-threatening utterances *à la* Brown & Levinson (1987). The resort to *habitus*, frame and face together with a bottom-up approach to the empirical data is shared by Watts' Relational Work. However, Relational Work was discarded for two reasons: First of all, it subscribed to the emic view of (im)politeness (1st order (im)politeness or (im)politeness$_1$), which I had previously rejected. Secondly, the incorporation of the notion of 'politic behavior', defined as 'approapriate behavior', to the framework rendered the model less parsimonious than Terkourafi's.

While I found the Frame-Based Approach a sound theoretical model for the study of politeness, some shortcomings were identified as a descriptive apparatus (Chapter Two). Terkourafi's proposal of what should be included as factors in a frame did not seem sufficiently elaborated, at least for the analysis of (dis)agreements. Consequently, it was suggested that her model should be complemented with a discourse analytic tool that might allow for the detailed analysis of (dis)agreement moves in the context of interaction, including their relationship with prior turn(s). For this purpose, two major models were reviewed: Discourse Analysis as proposed by the Birmingham School and Conversation Analysis. It was concluded that Conversation Analysis faired better as an analytic tool. However, two limitations were mentioned: its strict reliance on the structural-sequential nature of conversation in their explanation of conversational phenomena described disregarding cognitive factors completely, and the relatively little attention paid to the internal structure of turn constructional units (TCUs).

The FBA framework provided the solution for the first issue, since it incorporated a strong cognitive element based on Levinson's theory of implicatures (further refined for the study of politeness by Terkourafi 2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d). In order to address the second shortcoming, a Coding System for the analysis of disagreements was proposed following the guidelines provided within the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989) but incorporating turn-organizational features into the framework as suggested by Kasper (2004, 2006). This way, Conversation Analysis,

complemented with a speech-act based coding system and the cognitive apparatus offered by FBA, completed the necessary analytic framework to carry out a fine-grained analysis of disagreement in discourse.

In Chapter Three, the notion of (dis)agreement was described. It was defined as a second part of an adjacency pair that is locally managed and established a clear distinction with other related words such as conflict, opposition, or confrontation. Furthermore, the relationship between (dis)agreement and the conversation analytic notion of *preference organization* was reviewed. It was concluded that the equation agreement = preferred second vs. disagreement = dispreferred second did not hold. Moreover, following Bousfield (2007), the notion of *preference* was divided into 1st order of preference and 2nd order of preference, the first one referring to the structural properties of the realization of (dis)agreements and the second one to the social-psychological view of term. The 2nd order of preference was then related to politeness. Crucially, the relationship between the 1st order and the 2nd order of preference was not established in a straightforward manner. On the contrary, it was claimed that context played a central role in that relationship.

In order to guarantee the comparability of the data obtained, the data collection method of 'elicited conversations' (Kasper 2000) was proposed (Chapter Four). This method allowed for the control of certain macro-contextual factors in the conversational setting such as the age, sex and status of the interactants, as well as the relationship between them. It also allowed for certain control over the topics to be discussed, although this is possible (and desirable) at the initial stage of the sessions only. Another advantage of this method was the possibility to obtain visual data, which was very useful for the correct interpretation of people's reactions and behavior. Some shortcomings were also mentioned. For example, although it was considered that the conversations were authentic because participants did not have to play different social roles, the presence of a video camera might have affected their behavior. Nevertheless, I considered that the pay-offs for a cross-cultural research project justified its use.

In Chapter Five, the quantitative analysis was carried out. The aim of the quantitative analysis was to find out the extent to which disagreements were framed as preferred or dispreferred at the 1st order of preference (i.e., structurally). To reach this goal, disagreement moves were analyzed in terms of illocutionary directness and modulation at the turn-constructional and turn-organizational levels, establishing that the more direct and the less modulated a move, the more preferred at the 1st order

preference would be, and the more indirect and modulated a move the more dispreferred. It was further suggested that the relative frequency of realization of preferred and/or dispreferred moves would also inform about the relative tendency to either tolerate or avoid aggressive forms of disagreement, or in other words, to frame disagreements as preferred or dispreferred at the 1st order of preference in the contextual milieu of my investigation. The relationship between disagreement realization and politeness was not established at this point, but awaited the results of the qualitative analysis realized in the following chapter.

The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that Spanish framed disagreements as preferred at the 1st order of preference much more than either English or Japanese, since it ranked first in all categories of directness and ranked last in all categories of indirectness. It also ranked first in upgrading modulation, and last in downgrading modulation. In more concrete terms, it obtained relatively high scores in preferred realization formats, including Direct and Aggravated forms, *'no'* and straight *'but'* disagreements, and Simultaneous talk and Overlaps. Conversely, low scores were obtained in some features of dispreferred realization, such as Head Act internal mitigation and turn external delays.

Japanese stood at the opposite end of the continuum by showing the lowest tendency among the three languages to frame disagreements as preferred at the 1st order of preference. Not only did it rank last in most of the categories of analysis related to preferred realizations formats, but obtained especially low scores in the rate of Direct moves, the proportion of Direct and Aggravated forms, in Simultaneous talk and Overlaps, which stand in sharp contrast to Spanish. Furthermore, less disagreement moves and fewer disagreements with preferred formats were performed in this language and English than in Spanish. Conversely, it obtained particularly high scores in dispreferred realizations of disagreements.

English aligned with Japanese in most categories of analysis, but almost always at a lower degree. This was reflected in the ranked order, where it was second in both preferred and dispreferred realizations of disagreement. However, it ranked last in preferred realizations of disagreements and in the average number of aggravators per Aggravated move which indicated that in some respects disagreements were framed as more dispreferred in English than in Japanese.

These findings provided the basis for establishing a provisional classification of the three languages with respect to the level of tolerance of preferred realizations of

disagreements at the 1st order of preference in friendly conversations among young acquaintances, which Spanish showing the highest level of tolerance and Japanese, the lowest. English was between the other two languages, but it ended up being rather low in the scale.

Besides this lineal classification, another pattern emerged. It appeared that while Spanish stood alone in the relative frequency of preferred realizations of disagreements and English and Japanese were closer to each other, the realization patterns in English and Spanish seemed to be more similar between each other in some respects, whereas different strategies were used in Japanese. In order to investigate this in more detail, a qualitative analysis was conducted in Chapter Six. It was found that English was more similar to Spanish in the realization of *'but'* disagreements, in the format and extension of both turn-internal and turn-external delays, in the discourse role assigned to NTRIs, and in the way one's views are expressed. Conversely, English and Japanese had similar strategies to frame initiating turns as indirect assessments, opinions and proposals and to frame aggravated moves as non-serious by having recourse to laughter. These two patterns were not found in Spanish.

Having qualified the quantitative results with the findings in the qualitative analyses, the following conclusions were reached:

1. In terms of the level of preference for the realization of disagreements at the 1st order of preference in the context of friendly conversations among young acquaintances, Spanish showed a "high" level of tolerance, while it was "relatively low" in English and "low" in Japanese.

2. In terms of the realization patterns of disagreements, Spanish and Japanese clearly stood at opposite ends, while English seemed to be more similar to Spanish in many respects.

The relationship between the three languages in terms of similarity and difference as a function of level of tolerance and style can be represented as in the following table, in which "+" = similar, and "−" = different:

Table 46. Relationship between English, Spanish and Japanese in terms of level of preference of preferred formats and style.

	Similarity (+) vs. Difference (−)	
	Level of preference	**Style**
Spanish vs. Japanese	−	−
Spanish vs. English	−	+
English vs. Japanese	+	−

The above findings led to three main conclusions:

1. The above two layers of similarity or difference in the relationship between the three languages proved the traditional distinctions between East and West in terms of dichotomies such as confrontation vs. collaboration, oppositional vs. consensual, high involvement vs. low involvement, conflictive vs. harmonious, and the like fall short of providing an accurate picture of the complex ways in which different languages and cultures are inter-related. It seems that a double characterization like the one provided above is more adequate. Thus, Spanish would be characterized by a confrontational + direct conversational style and English would have a confrontational + indirect style. Finally, Japanese could be categorized as harmonious + indirect. This way the double layer of similarity/difference would be captured.

2. This study has demonstrated that Terkourafi's definition of politeness as "a perlocutionary effect consisting of the addressee's holding the belief that the speaker is polite is achieved […] to the extent that it passes unnoticed" (Terkourafi 2001: 210) accounts for the cross-cultural variations in the "polite" performance of disagreements, ranging from highly direct and aggravated to indirect and mitigated forms. The present study has confirmed that in the context of friendly conversations among young acquaintances this whole range of realizations passed unnoticed or were noticed but unsanctioned, and therefore not considered a threat to each other's face. In other words, face was co-constituted by the interactants.

3. Finally, this thesis has shown that the boundary between politeness and impoliteness in friendly conversations among young acquaintances is located at different levels of directness and modulation of the communicative acts performed. In spite of the differences found among the three languages investigated, the borderline seems to be rather high (i.e., high in politeness and low in impoliteness) in this kind of informal settings, where direct forms and even aggravated ones seem to be acceptable ways of proffering disagreements without being sanctioned. Especially in the case of Spanish, the question remains as to what exactly would represent an impolite communicative act, since even the most aggravated forms in terms of illocutionary force were unsanctioned. These findings seem to suggest that

this could be rather determined by supra-segmental features (such as an aggressive tone of voice, shouting), direct attacks to the addressee's face (e.g., insults) or non-linguistic factors (e.g., gesture, face expression, physical intimidation).

7.2. Weaknesses of the present study

In spite of the fact the every effort has been put forward to carry out a rigorous research work, several weaknesses in the present study should be acknowledged. Perhaps the first shortcoming consists in the type of data gathered. In order to make the cross-cultural comparison of disagreement a manageable task, conversations were recorded in a semi-controlled setting by using the 'elicited conversation' method (Kasper 2000). Although I argued that among the non-ethnographic research designs it is the one that most closely resembles real and authentic situations (together with Real Plays) and the flow of the conversations were almost completely natural, the interactional situations were nevertheless fictitious in terms of topic selection and context of interaction. The intrusiveness of the presence of a video camera cannot be completely denied either. Therefore, the results presented here need to be confirmed by a more detailed observation of conversations in real contexts.

The fact that only one kind of interactional context was investigated represents another limitation. It remains to be tested whether the present findings can be extended to other participants and other contexts of interaction as well, including different status, age, relationships, topics, and so on.

Finally, the Coding System proposed for the quantitative analysis of disagreements is most probably incomplete. More qualitative research is needed to include a wider range of strategies.

7.3. Proposals for future research

From the conclusions and the weaknesses of the present study some future venues of research can be suggested. One possible way of expanding our knowledge about the way politeness as unmarked face-constituting behavior is observed can be to

carry out research with a similar design but including different interactants and topics. In this regard, the effect of more controversial topics or status difference could be investigated. So, while the present study kept situational variables constant in order to make cross-cultural comparisons, it would be interesting to compare the realization of (dis)agreements in different situational contexts in one single culture.

Some provisional and partial findings in the present work suggest that there might be considerable cross-cultural and intra-cultural differences between male and female interactants in the way (dis)agreements are performed. It also observed that conversations among same-gender interactants seemed to be different to those carried out in different-gender group configurations. Future empirical studies could be designed so as to allow this kind of cross-gender comparison.

Finally, the fact that almost the whole range of linguistic realizations were used (especially in Spanish) in the performance of disagreements, the question remains as to how impoliteness is realized. The study of impoliteness could be approached from different perspectives. Two of them will be mentioned here. One possible area of future research could be the relationship between (im)politeness and multimodality, since the present findings seemed to suggest that impoliteness could not be determined by the level of directness of utterances. The other area of research is more theoretical in nature and consists in the relationship between impoliteness and implicatures. Since politeness has been defined as most frequently anticipated rather than communicated or inferred, I suggest that the opposite holds for impoliteness. That is, if face-constituting behavior is the norm, then it is the impolite intention that has to be communicated via particularized conversational implicatures. Paradoxically, this would mean that the argument used by Brown & Levinson (1987: 5) to define politeness might be applied to impoliteness instead: "*im*politeness has to be communicated, and the absence of communicated *im*politeness may, *ceteris paribus*, be taken as absence of the *im*polite attitude" (adapted from Brown & Levinson (1987: 5), emphasized prefixes added). What constitutes rudeness in every culture remains to be explored.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Bio-data questionnaire (English version).

Research on English Conversation Strategies

Department of English and German Philology
Faculty of Letters
Granada University

Thank you for cooperating with the present research project. The purpose of this session is to collect linguistic and discursive data in a conversational frame. Briefly, you will be asked to participate in a conversation with other two people. This conversation will be audio and video recorded. The collected material may be used as data for academic purposes only, including research papers and presentations in scientific conferences. For this reason, your authorization will be asked to use the recorded material at the end of the recording.

Before beginning the conversation, please kindly fill in the following information:

1. Age: 18-19 ☐   20-25 ☐   26-35 ☐   36-50 ☐   51-70 ☐

2. Sex: Female ☐   Male ☐

3. Place of birth (city, state):_____

4. Current city/state where you live _____

5. How long have you been living in that place?
   Less than 2 years ☐   3-5 ☐   6-10 ☐   10+ ☐

6. Have you ever lived abroad (outside the US) for more than 6 months?   Yes ☐   No ☐

7. If you answered YES in (6), ¿what country did you live in?, ¿for how long?

     1. Country _____ ☐ 6-12 months   ☐ up to 2 years   ☐ 2-5 years
                               ☐ 6-10 years   ☐ more than 10 years

     2. Country _____ ☐ 6-12 months   ☐ up to 2 years   ☐ 2-5 years
                               ☐ 6-10 years   ☐ more than 10 years

     3. Country _____ ☐ 6-12 months   ☐ up to 2 years   ☐ 2-5 years
                               ☐ 6-10 years   ☐ more than 10 years

8. Level of education: ☐ High School   (currently studying ☐ / graduated ☐)
                                   ☐ College (BA) (currently studying ☐ / graduated ☐)
                                   ☐ MA / PhD   (currently studying ☐ / graduated ☐)

9. Profession/job: _____

10.   Languages   you   speak   well   (advanced/proficiency   level):
_____

Thank you!
Please, turn over.

(Spanish version)

Estudio sobre estrategias de conversación en español

Departamento de Filologías Inglesa y Alemana
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Universidad de Granada

Te agradezco tu participación y ayuda en la realización de esta investigación, cuya finalidad es recoger algunos datos lingüísticos y discursivos relacionados con la conversación en español. En breve, participarás en un diálogo junto a otras dos personas. La conversación será grabada en audio y vídeo. Dicho material podría ser utilizado para fines académicos y científicos, para lo cual se te pedirá una autorización por escrito al término de la sesión.

Antes de comenzar la conversación, por favor, completa los siguientes datos:

1. Edad: 18-19 ☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-70 ☐

2. Sexo: Mujer ☐ Hombre ☐

3. Lugar de nacimiento (provincia, país):_____

4. Lugar de residencia actual _____

5. ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas residiendo en ese lugar?
    Menos de 2 años ☐   3-5 ☐   6-10 ☐   Más de 10 ☐

6. ¿Has residido alguna vez fuera de España más de seis meses?   Sí ☐   No ☐

7. Si has respondido SÍ en el apartado (6), ¿en qué país?, ¿por cuánto tiempo?

    1. País _____ 6-12 meses ☐ hasta 2 años ☐ 2-5 años ☐
                              6-10 años ☐   más de 10 años ☐

    2. País _____ 6-12 meses ☐ hasta 2 años ☐ 2-5 años ☐
                              6-10 años ☐   más de 10 años ☐

    3. País _____ 6-12 meses ☐ hasta 2 años ☐ 2-5 años ☐
                              6-10 años ☐   más de 10 años ☐

8. Nivel de estudios: ☐ Bachillerato (Cursando actualmente ☐ / Graduado ☐)
                      ☐ Universidad (Cursando actualmente ☐ / Graduado ☐)
                      ☐ Doctorado   (Cursando actualmente ☐ / Graduado ☐)

9. Profesión/ocupación: _____

10. Idiomas que dominas muy bien (nivel avanzado o muy avanzado):
_____

Muchas gracias.
Por favor, pasa a la siguiente página.

(Japanese version)

日本語会話研究

グラナダ大学文学部
英・ドイツ語英・ドイツ文学科

　お忙しいところ、日本語会話研究にご協力して頂きまして、まことに有難うございます。今回参加して会話して頂くのはスペイン語・英語・日本語三ヶ国語の比較研究の為、日本語のデータを集めるのが目的です。その会話は録音・録画させて頂きますが、集めたデータは、研究のためにのみ使わせていただきます。どうぞ、よろしくお願いいたします。
　　それでは、会話の本番の前に、次の無記名アンケートにご記入下さい。
　　１．出身地（都道府県のみ）　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　２．現住所（都道府県のみ）　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　３．現住所にどのくらい住んでいますか

　　　　　□ 2 年未満　　　　□ 2-5 年　　　□ 6-10 年　　□ 10 年以上

　　４．年齢　□ 18-19　　　□ 20-25　　　□ 26-35　　□ 36-50　　□ 51-70

　　５．性別　　　　□ 男　　　　□ 女

　　６．職業　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　７．教育レベル：

　　　　a．高校　　　　（卒・在学中）

　　　　b．大学　　　　（卒・在学中）

　　　　c．大学院　　　（卒・在学中）

　　８．海外に六ヶ月以上滞在したことがありますか

　　　　　　　□ はい　　　□ いいえ

　　９．「はい」と答えた場合、その国名と滞在期間は。

　　　　　国名　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　　在住期間 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　　　　国名　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　　在住期間 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　　　　国名　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　　在住期間 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　１０．　　語学力（能力試験一級以上のレベル）

　　　　　　英語　　　　　　　□ はい　　　　　□ いいえ

　　　　　　スペイン語　　　　□ はい　　　　　□ いいえ

　　　　　　その他　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

では、次のページへお進み下さい。

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Appendix 2. Instruction sheet (English version).

CONVERSATION SESSION

Instruction sheet

<u>**Scenario**</u>

The following conversation has two parts.

In part # 1, you are asked to imagine that you and two friends are getting together to organize a trip around Spain next summer. You have already agreed upon two points, namely that the trip will be for two weeks and that the starting and arriving city will be Granada. Each one of you has his or her own preferences and ideas about where to go, how much to spend, and so on. Therefore, you have decided that the first step should be to think about a possible plan individually and then get together to discuss it and try to agree on the final plan.

In part # 2, you will exchange your opinions on certain topics, including cities, museums, monuments and artists.

<u>**Procedure**</u>

Please follow these steps:
   a) Think carefully about the seven items outlined in PART # 1. These are the main points in your travel plan that you will have to discuss.
   b) Mentally, take a decision about your preferences, providing the reasons for your choice.
   c) Be realistic. Try to imagine that the trip will actually take place, thus affecting your budget and personal preferences.
   d) Once you have reached a personal decision regarding PART # 1, read the six questions in PART # 2.
   e) Think about your preferences.

Now, you can get together to draw up the travel plan (PART # 1) and discuss the points mentioned in PART # 2. Do not start PART # 2 until you feel you have reached an agreement on the travel plan.

Please, make the conversation as real as possible, acting as you would in a similar situation. Imagine that the trip will actually take place, and therefore it will affect your personal desires, interests, and money.

(Spanish version)

SESIÓN DE CONVERSACIÓN

INSTRUCCIONES

<u>Situación</u>

La conversación que mantendrás en breves momentos consta de dos partes. En la primera, deberás imaginarte que has quedado con dos amig@s para organizar un viaje por España el próximo verano. Ya os habéis puesto de acuerdo en dos cosas: que será de dos semanas de duración y que el lugar de salida y llegada será Granada. Cada un@ de vosotr@s tendrá sus preferencias e ideas respecto a cuestiones como dónde ir, cuánto dinero gastarse, etc. Por tanto, habéis decidido que sería mejor que cada uno trazara un plan de viaje por separado antes de reuniros para poneros de acuerdo sobre un plan final. En la segunda parte, deberéis opinar sobre algunos temas relacionados con la cultura en general.

<u>Procedimiento</u>

Por favor, sigue esto pasos:
  a) Piensa detenidamente sobre los siete puntos que aparecen en la PRIMERA PARTE, pues serán los aspectos del viaje a tratar.
  b) Decide mentalmente cuáles serían tus preferencias, dando las razones que te han llevado a tomar tus decisiones.
  c) Trata de ser lo más realista posible, teniendo en cuenta lo que realmente estarías dispuest@ a gastar y tus preferencias personales.
  d) Cuando hayas terminado, lee las seis preguntas que se plantean en la SEGUNDA PARTE.
  e) Decide mentalmente cuáles serían tus preferencias.

Una vez terminado este proceso, estaréis list@s para trazar el plan final de viaje (PRIMERA PARTE) y dialogar sobre las seis cuestiones planteadas (SEGUNDA PARTE). Podéis pasar a la SEGUNDA PARTE una vez que hayáis alcanzado un acuerdo sobre el plan de viaje.

Por favor, haz que la conversación sea lo más real posible, actuando como lo harías en una situación similar. Imagina que el viaje se realizará de verdad y que, por tanto, afectará a tu bolsillo, deseos e intereses.

¡Gracias por tu colaboración!

(Japanese version)

日本語会話

　これからしていただく会話は二部に分かれています。第一部では、旅行の計画がテーマです。あるシチュエーションを想像していただいて、その七つの項目について考え、まとめた上で会話をしていただきます。第二部では、様々な話題について話してもらいます。

<u>会話の前にして頂く事</u>

１．まず、第一部では旅行の計画を本当に実現するつもりになってよく考えてください。

２．次に，第一部の夫々の項目に対して自分の希望とその理由をはっきりさせてください。

３．（２）につづいて第二部の項目にも目を通してざっと自分の意見をまとめてください。

４．上記の（１）、（２）、（３）のステップが終わりましたら、研究員に合図をしてください。

<u>会話の進め方</u>

　研究員がスタートの合図をしましたら会話を始めてください。まず、第一部のテーマについて話して頂きます。旅行プランが完全に皆さんで一致しましたら、第二部に移ってください。尚、全部の項目をカバーしなくてもかまいませんので、無理に時間内にすべてを終わらせる必要はありません。

では、次のページの項目に移ってください。

Appendix 3. Topics for the conversation (English version).

Points for discussion

PART ONE

(YOU ARE FREE TO CHANGE THE ORDER)

- Exact dates of departure and arrival

- Places you definitely want to visit

- Budget for the whole trip

- Length of stay in each place

- Means of transport

- Accommodation and length of stay in each one

- Activities (sightseeing, museums, cultural events, leisure time, etc)

PART TWO

Once you have agreed on your trip plan, express your opinion on the following points:

1. Which Spanish city (town, village) do you like best? Which city do you think is the best one to visit? Why?

2. Which Spanish monument do you like best? Why?

3. Do you think the Alhambra should be chosen as one of the seven new wonders of the world? How about the Statue of Liberty? What other monument should definitely be included? Why?

4. Besides El Prado, which museum do you think is the best? Why?

5. Who is, in your opinion, the best Spanish artist? Why?

6. Who is, in your opinion, the best Hollywood actor/actress? Why?

(Spanish version)

PUNTOS A TRATAR

(ERES LIBRE DE CAMBIAR EL ORDEN)

- Fechas exactas de salida y llegada a Granada

- Lugares que quieres visitar e itinerario

- Presupuesto para todo el viaje

- Tiempo de estancia en cada uno de los lugares

- Medios de transporte, especificando el transporte utilizado en cada tramo

- Tipo de alojamiento y tiempo de estancia

- Visitas turísticas, culturales, de ocio, museos

Una vez trazado el plan de viaje, expresad vuestra opinión sobre las siguientes cuestiones:

1. ¿Cuál es para ti la mejor ciudad (pueblo, localidad) de España (excepto la tuya)? ¿Cuál es la más turística? ¿Por qué?

2. ¿Qué monumento español te gusta más? ¿Por qué?

3. Crees que La Alhambra debería ser elegida como una de las nuevas siete maravillas del mundo? ¿Y la Estatua de la Libertad? ¿Qué otro monumento debería ser incluido? ¿Por qué?

4. Aparte de El Prado, ¿qué museo crees que es el mejor o se debería visitar sin falta? ¿Por qué?

5. ¿Quién es, en tu opinión, el mejor pintor español? ¿Por qué?

6. ¿Quién es para ti el/la mejor actor/actriz español/a? ¿Por qué?

(Japanese version)

会話のテーマ

第一部

テーマ： 旅行計画

　今年の夏、私たちは３人で二週間の国内旅行をすることにしました。出発地及び到着地は東京です。旅行プランを作るために、あらかじめ自分の希望を考えてから３人で話し合い、調整することにしました。

<div align="center">項目</div>

1． 予算

2． 出発日と到着日

3． 旅程（行きたい場所とその順番）

4． 交通機関（区間別決めてください）

5． 各場所の滞在期間

6． 宿泊場所（ホテルなど）と宿泊期間

7． 見物・レジャー

第二部

<div align="center">項目</div>

1． 日本で、一番住みやすい都市はどこだと思いますか。 その理由は？

2． ニート（NEET）の問題はどうすれば解決できるでしょうか。

3． 一人の歌手を選ぶとしたら誰を選びますか。 なぜですか。

4． 男女同権がどれくらい進んでいると思いますか。

5． どのテーマパークが最も面白いと思いますか。 どうしてですか。

6． アルバイトが勉強の妨げになると思いますか。

7． あなたにとって一番いい俳優（女優）は誰ですか。 その俳優（女優）のどこがいいですか。

8． 同性結婚が法律的に認められてもいいと思いますか。

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RESUMEN Y CONCLUSIONES

EN ESPAÑOL

RESUMEN Y CONCLUSIONES EN ESPAÑOL DE LA TESIS DOCTORAL: "POLITENESS IN AMERICAN ENGLISH, SPANISH AND JAPANESE: THE CASE OF (DIS)AGREEMENTS IN CONVERSATION"

La presente tesis doctoral tiene como principal objetivo comparar la realización de actos de (des)acuerdo en inglés estadounidense, español peninsular y japonés en conversaciones coloquiales percibidas como cordiales y amistosas por los interlocutores y averiguar la relación que se establece entre dichos actos y la cortesía lingüística.

La cortesía se define como un efecto perlocutivo (Austin 1962) no marcado, o marcado pero no sancionado como descortés por los participantes en un contexto de interacción dado (Terkourafi 2001, 2003, 2005b, 2005c), dándole así al contexto un papel primordial en la interpretación del acto cortés o descortés. De esta manera, la cortesía se considera un constructo teórico universalmente válido, y por tanto aplicable a cualquier cultura o contexto situacional, e implica un alejamiento de los planteamientos denominados "post-modernos" (Terkourafi 2005b), que abogan por una aproximación "émica" a la noción de cortesía, basada en la interpretación popular, no especializada del término (Watts 1989, 1992, 2005; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005).

La noción de cortesía adoptada aquí comparte con el modelo presentado por Brown y Levinson (1987) su base socio-psicológica, representada en el concepto de imagen social (*'face'*). Pero a diferencia de aquéllos, que la definen como algo a proteger ante las amenazas que puede sufrir en la interacción, la imagen social se concibe como algo que es constituido recíprocamente y en cada momento por los hablantes en la interacción misma (Arundale 1999; Terkourafi 2001; 2005c). Lo que se defiende, por tanto, es que la mutua protección de la imagen social se da por defecto, no siendo necesario comunicarla expresamente y sólo en actos específicos de amenaza a la imagen tal y como defienden Brown y Levinson (1987). Desde este punto de vista, la ausencia de dicho respeto mutuo hacia la imagen social (ya sea por el contexto

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situacional o debido a algún acto lingüístico marcado como descortés) representa la excepción más que la regla, y por tanto debe ser comunicada explícitamente.

Tomando como base datos empíricos obtenidos por el método de "conversación provocada" (Kasper 2000), que permite controlar variables situacionales sin apenas comprometer la autenticidad de los datos lingüístico-discursivos, se ha tratado de responder a las siguientes cuestiones, planteadas en el capítulo 3 del presente estudio: a) el tipo de organización de preferencia de primer orden (*'1st order preference organization'*) (Bousfield 2007) utilizado por los hablantes de inglés norteamericano, español peninsular y japonés en conversaciones amistosas y cordiales entre jóvenes, y b) comprobar la relación que se establece en cada una de esas lenguas entre dichas realizaciones y la cortesía tal como se define en el presente trabajo.

Marco teórico

En el capítulo uno se revisan las principales aproximaciones al estudio de la cortesía, desde la denominada "tradicional" por Werkhofer (1992) hasta las llamadas "post-modernas" por Terkourafi (2005c). Tras un somero repaso a los primeros modelos de cortesía comunicativa introducidos por Lakoff (1973) y Leech (1983), se lleva a cabo una extensa revisión crítica de la teoría de Brown y Levinson (1987 [1978]) por ser ésta la más influyente y de mayor arraigo en los estudios de pragmática socio-cultural, y se concluye que es inadecuado por diversos motivos, a pesar de haber servido como modelo para innumerables trabajos empíricos. Fraser (2005) resume en los siguientes términos los puntos problemáticos de la teoría de Brown y Levinson (1987): a) la cortesía entendida como una desviación de la utilización eficiente y racional del lenguaje en la comunicación; b) el lugar que ocupa la cortesía en el Principio de Cooperación de Grice (1975); c) la fusión entre deferencia y cortesía al considerar la primera como una estrategia dentro de la segunda; d) la exclusión de la mala educación y la descortesía de su modelo; e) la relación unívoca entre las estrategias de cortesía y los actos lingüísticos de atenuación de las amenazas a la imagen del/de la interlocutor(a); f) su visión etnocéntrica de la imagen social; g) su fórmula para valorar el nivel de imposición de los actos de amenaza a la imagen, y por último h) la supuesta jerarquía de las estrategias de cortesía de más a menos cortés y el lugar que supuestamente ocupan cada una de ellas en dicha jerarquía.

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Dos modelos se presentan como posibles alternativas a la teoría de Brown y Levinson (1987): el modelo denominado *Relational Work*[84] propuesto por Watts (Watts 1989, 1992, 2005; Locher 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts 2005) y el elaborado por Terkourafi (2001, 2005c), que realiza un acercamiento a la cortesía basado en la identificación y análisis de los marcos de interacción (*Frame-Based Approach*). Ambas teorías comparten algunos elementos constitutivos, tales como el concepto de "norma" entendido como una acumulación de experiencias repetidas y hechas un hábito de conducta (Bourdieu 1990), el mantenimiento y la protección de la imagen social (*'face'*) como motivación para la conducta cortés, una aproximación inductiva de abajo-arriba (*bottom-up approach*) a los datos, y la noción de marco de interacción (*'frame'*) para delimitar el contexto situacional.

Sin embargo, se distinguen entre sí en dos aspectos fundamentales: a) mientras que en la propuesta de Watts se adopta la cortesía tal y como se entiende popularmente, o cortesía de primer orden (Watts 2003), en el modelo de Terkourafi se ofrece una definición técnica de la misma con la pretensión de validez universal; b) basándose en la Teoría de la Relevancia (Sperber y Wilson 1995 [1986]), Watts y sus seguidores consideran que la cortesía debe ser siempre comunicada para crear efectos positivos en el interlocutor, por el contrario Terkourafi, siguiendo los pasos de Levinson (2000) y su teoría de las implicaturas generalizadas, defiende que la cortesía es la norma y en consecuencia casi siempre anticipada por el/la oyente en virtud de las inferencias de éste/a basadas en suposiciones hechas en relación a un contexto mínimo (Terkourafi 2001: 2). En otras palabras, mientras que para los defensores del modelo de Watts la cortesía es siempre un tipo de implicatura conversacional particularizada, para Terkourafi la mayoría de las veces es una implicatura conversacional generalizada debido a la recurrente relación entre la forma lingüística y el contexto situacional. Esto explica el hecho de que con frecuencia la cortesía pase desapercibida (Escandell Vidal 1996, 1998; Jary 1998). En este estudio se adopta el modelo de Tekourafi por entender que ofrece un aparato teórico mejor definido y a la vez más simple que el de Watts, y por ofrecer una definición de la cortesía válida para llevar a cabo una comparación intercultural.

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[84] Resulta difícil hallar una traducción adecuada para esta denominación. Se podrían proponer algunas como "trabajo de mantenimiento de la relaciones" o "negociación de las relaciones", aunque ninguna demasiado convincente.

La utilidad del aparato analítico del modelo basado en marcos de interacción para el estudio de los actos de desacuerdo se pone en duda en el capítulo dos. Se argumenta que los elementos contextuales descritos por Terkourafi como constituyentes de un marco de interacción no son suficientes para el análisis de actos de desacuerdo, pues sólo tiene en cuenta aspectos macro-contextuales estáticos (edad, sexo, estatus) y algunos micro-contextuales (relación entre los hablantes y la situación o actividad en términos muy generales), sin incluir otros elementos micro-contextuales como el tema de conversación o el número de participantes, y el aspecto dinámico de la interacción y del discurso. Este segundo aspecto se considera crucial, pues los actos de desacuerdo son actos de respuesta y ocupan la segunda posición en los pares de adyacencia (*adjacency pair*), lo que significa que el marco dinámico se establecerá localmente en el turno iniciador (*Initiating turn*). Se resalta, por tanto, la necesidad de una aparato analítico que dé cuenta de los detalles y variaciones discursivas y conversacionales, y para ello se revisan dos modelos: el Análisis del Discurso propuesto por la Escuela de Birmingham (Coulthard 1985) y el Análisis de la Conversación (Sacks, Schegloff y Jefferson 1973). Tras una exhaustiva revisión de ambas propuestas, se llega a la conclusión de que el Análisis de la Conversación es más idóneo para la descripción de los rasgos organizativos de la conversación. Se observa, sin embargo, que no está suficientemente desarrollado para llevar a cabo un análisis detallado y una clasificación de la realización interna de los turnos de habla, por lo que se decide recurrir al aparato analítico propuesto en el marco del Proyecto de Investigación Intercultural de los Actos de Habla (*Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP)*) (Blum-Kulka y Olshtain 1984; Blum-Kulka, House y Kasper 1989), tal y como defiende Kasper (2004, 2006). Se concluye el capítulo realizando una defensa de la integración de la noción de marco de interacción y la base racional aportada por Terkourafi en el Análisis de la Conversación y la Investigación de Actos de Habla (*Speech Act Research*).

Marco descriptivo

En el capítulo tres, se describe el acto de (des)acuerdo desde los puntos de vista semántico-pragmático y organizativo. Dicho acto es definido localmente como un turno de respuesta a una opinión, valoración o propuesta realizada en el turno iniciador anterior, y se distingue de términos con un significado similar pero más general como

confrontación, conflicto, etcétera, que se utilizan en este trabajo para referirse al marco de interacción. Se considera que un acto de desacuerdo no implica necesariamente conflicto o confrontación. Se replantea, además, la relación entre el (des)acuerdo y su papel en la organización de la preferencia (*preference organization*) establecido en estudios anteriores según el cual, ante una valoración inicial, una opinión convergente adoptaría un formato "preferido" (*preferred*), mientras que una valoración divergente tendería a realizarse discursivamente de manera "no preferida" (*dispreferred*) (Pomerantz 1984; Mori 1999). Siguiendo a Kotthoff (1993), Kakava (2002) y otros, se argumenta que el formato adoptado puede variar según la cultura y el contexto o tipo de actividad. Asimismo, se pone en duda la definición puramente estructural de la organización de la preferencia y se identifican dos niveles de preferencia: uno secuencial-estructural o preferencia de primer orden, y otro psico-social o preferencia de segundo orden (Bousfield 2007). Posteriormente, esta segunda acepción es relacionada con la noción de cortesía y se niega la relación unívoca entre las preferencias de primer y segundo orden, siendo el contexto el mediador entre el uno y el otro.

El capítulo cuatro está dedicado a la presentación y defensa del diseño de investigación adoptado. Aunque se reconoce la necesidad de que el material lingüístico-discursivo objeto de análisis sea auténtico en todos sus aspectos, se resaltan al mismo tiempo algunos inconvenientes para una aproximación intercultural, como puede ser la comparabilidad de los datos obtenidos o la dificultad que entraña para un solo investigador el llevar a cabo estudios etnográficos en tres países diferentes. Para seleccionar el mejor método de recogida de datos, se realiza una amplia revisión de los diseños tradicionalmente utilizados en pragmática social e intercultural (Kasper y Dahl 1991; Sasaki 1996; Kasper 2000; Turnbull 2001, Yi 2001, entre otros). Se considera que los cuestionarios escritos y los tests para completar el discurso (*Discourse Completion Tests*) no son adecuados para este estudio por su alto nivel de control de variables personales y contextuales, y por la exclusión del aspecto dinámico de la conversación. Se aboga por el método de la "conversación provocada" (Kasper 2000) porque se pueden controlar algunos elementos macro y micro contextuales (sexo, edad, tipo de relación y número de participantes, temas de conversación) mientras se interfiere mínimamente en el desarrollo natural de la conversación, tal y como defiende Turnbull (2001). Los datos obtenidos mediante este sistema consisten en conversaciones cordiales y amistosas entre jóvenes universitarios que se conocen entre sí y que tratan temas como la elaboración de un plan de viaje o sus gustos y preferencias sobre diversas

cuestiones. Se establece un control sobre el marco inicial de interacción para garantizar que las conversaciones sean percibidas como amistosas, es decir, corteses.

Análisis e interpretación de los datos

Tras las consideraciones teórico-metodológicas, se llevan a cabo análisis cuantitativos y cualitativos en los capítulos cinco y seis, que representan el eje central de la tesis. El capítulo cinco es el más extenso al incluir un apartado inicial de codificación de los rasgos constitutivos de los actos de (des)acuerdo, incluyendo tanto los elementos organizativos de la conversación (silencios entre turnos, solapamientos, habla simultánea, secuencia y localización de los actos de habla), como los elementos de construcción de los actos (estructura gramatical de los enunciados, elementos léxicos). Para ello, se realiza una adaptación del modelo de codificación propuesto por Blum-Kulka y Olshtain (1984) y en Blum-Kulka, House y Kasper (1989) para actos de petición de forma que incluyan los dos aspectos mencionados anteriormente.

Mediante el uso de dicho sistema de codificación, se procede a un exhaustivo análisis cuantitativo de los actos de desacuerdo teniendo en cuenta los siguientes parámetros: a) la frecuencia relativa de los actos de desacuerdo en las tres lenguas; b) su fuerza ilocutiva dependiendo de si son actos directos, convencionalmente indirectos o inconvencionalmente indirectos; c) el tipo y la frecuencia de los mecanismos de atenuación de la fuerza ilocutiva, y d) el tipo y frecuencia de los mecanismos de intensificación o aumento de la fuerza ilocutiva, incluyendo en ambos casos las características secuenciales de la conversación.

En la segunda parte del capítulo cinco se presentan los resultados de los análisis cuantitativos, así como la interpretación de los hallazgos, que responden a la primera cuestión planteada como pregunta de trabajo: el tipo de preferencia de primer orden que demuestran los hablantes de inglés estadounidense, español peninsular y japonés en la realización de actos de (des)acuerdo en el contexto de conversaciones cordiales y amistosas entre jóvenes que se conocen.

En general, el español mostró bastante más tolerancia que el inglés y el japonés a la realización de los actos de desacuerdo como preferente, mientras que estas dos últimas mostraron en muchas ocasiones comportamientos similares. Aunque en ninguno de los tres idiomas las formas "preferidas" sobrepasaron en frecuencia a las "no

preferidas", la proporción fue muy equilibrada en el caso del español, con más del 35% de los actos realizados de forma directa y sin ningún tipo de atenuación, mientras que en inglés y en japonés no alcanzaron el 20%.

Más concretamente, el español obtuvo los valores más altos en todas las estrategias de realización directa de los actos de desacuerdo, incluidas las agravadas, mientras que obtuvo la menor puntuación en las formas atenuadas. Asimismo, se produjeron más desacuerdos mediante los indicadores de oposición "no"/"sí" y la conjunción adversativa "pero", así como más habla simultánea y solapamientos. De forma inversa, el español obtuvo la menor puntuación en rasgos que caracterizan los turnos como "no preferidos", como por ejemplo en la atenuación interna del acto central (*Head Act*) o en el aplazamiento de la producción del acto central de desacuerdo hasta un turno posterior (*Turn External Delay*).

El japonés mostró el mayor contraste respecto al español al obtener en general los valores más bajos en las formas de realización "preferida". En esta lengua se observó una mayor reticencia a utilizar formas directas y agravadas, al habla simultánea y a los solapamientos, contrastando claramente con el español. Además, junto con el inglés, se realizaron menos actos de desacuerdo en general así como una menor cantidad de actos construidos como "preferidos" en comparación con el español. Por el contrario, la realización de los actos como "no preferidos" fue particularmente alta en el japonés.

El inglés mostró un comportamiento similar al japonés en la mayoría de las categorías de análisis, aunque casi siempre obteniendo valores ligeramente superiores para las formas "preferidas" y algo inferiores para las "no preferidas". En algunas ocasiones, incluso mostró una mayor tendencia a utilizar formas "no preferidas" que el japonés, como en el caso de la frecuencia general de los actos "preferidos" y el número de agravadores por acto agravado.

Estos resultados permitieron establecer una clasificación provisional de las tres lenguas respecto al nivel de tolerancia hacia la realización de los actos de desacuerdo como "preferidos" en conversaciones entre jóvenes conocidos, con el español mostrando una alta tolerancia, el inglés una tolerancia media-baja y el japonés una tolerancia baja en términos relativos. No obstante, a la hora de realizar los análisis cuantitativos se detectaron algunos rasgos cualitativos que sugerían otro nivel de clasificación: mientras que el español se distinguía del inglés y el japonés en la frecuencia relativa de los actos "preferidos" y éstos últimos obtenían valores similares en casi todos los apartados, el español y el inglés mostraban comportamientos similares

en algunos rasgos comunicativos no incluidos en el análisis cuantitativo. Estos rasgos cualitativos se describen y explican en el capítulo seis.

Los resultados del análisis cualitativo son los siguientes: mientras que el inglés y el español muestran patrones de realización similares en los actos de desacuerdo introducidos por *'pero'*, en la forma y extensión de los aplazamientos en la producción del acto central de desacuerdo tanto dentro del mismo turno como a través de varios turnos, en el roles discursivos asignados a los llamados *iniciadores de enmiendas en el siguiente turno* (*next turn repair initiators*), y en la forma en que se expresan las opiniones y puntos de vista. Por otro lado, el inglés es similar al japonés a la hora de 'enmarcar' (*frame*) las valoraciones, opiniones y propuestas vertidas en los turnos iniciadores como actos indirectos, invitando así a una respuesta también indirecta o atenuada. Otro aspecto común entre el inglés y el japonés es el recurso general a la risa para enmarcar los actos directos y agravados léxica y/o sintácticamente como oposiciones no reales. Estos dos recursos de atenuación fueron muy poco utilizados en español.

Conclusiones

Tras los análisis cuantitativos y cualitativos, se sacaron las siguientes conclusiones:

1. En el contexto de conversaciones coloquiales amistosas y cordiales entre jóvenes conocidos, el español muestra una alta tolerancia a la realización de actos de desacuerdo como "preferidos", mientras que la tolerancia es relativamente baja en el inglés y aún más baja en el japonés.
2. El estilo conversacional del inglés se acerca más al estilo español en muchos aspectos, en contraposición al japonés.

Estas dos conclusiones se resumen en el siguiente cuadro:

Tabla 1. Relación entre el ingles estadounidense, español peninsular y japonés en cuanto al nivel de preferencia por las formas "preferidas" de realización de los desacuerdos y al estilo conversacional.

	Similitud (+) vs. Diferencia (–)	
	Nivel de preferencia	**Estilo**
Español vs. Japonés	–	–
Español vs. Inglés	–	+
Inglés vs. Japonés	+	–

Las conclusiones alcanzadas arriba parecen indicar que las distinciones que tradicionalmente se hacen sobre los estilos comunicativos de Oriente y Occidente en forma de dicotomías tales como de confrontación o de colaboración, de oposición o de consenso, de alta o de baja participación, conflictivo o armonioso, son caracterizaciones demasiado generales e inadecuadas. Más aún, los términos "Oriente" y "Occidente" no se refieren a realidades homogéneas, como demuestra la diferencia entre el inglés y el español en el nivel de tolerancia hacia formas directas de desacuerdo. Parece más adecuado caracterizar el estilo conversacional español como contencioso + directo, el del inglés como contencioso + indirecto, y el del japonés como armonioso + indirecto.

La presente tesis demuestra además que la definición de la cortesía como un efecto perlocutivo no marcado que consiste en la creencia por parte del/de la oyente de que el/la hablante es cortés en tanto que dicha cortesía pasa desapercibida (Terkourafi 2001: 210) da cuenta de las variaciones interculturales en la producción e interpretación de los actos de desacuerdo como corteses, que pueden ser directos e incluso agravados en algunas culturas y contextos, e indirectos y altamente atenuados en otras culturas y contextos. En el presente estudio se ha podido comprobar que, en el contexto de conversaciones coloquiales amistosas y cordiales entre jóvenes que se conocen entre sí, tanto unas como otras realizaciones pasaron desapercibidas o, en todo caso, no sancionadas como transgresiones a la norma, y por tanto no fueron consideradas como amenazas a sus respectivas imágenes sociales. Es decir, la imagen social de los interlocutores era constituida de forma colaborativa por todos y en todo momento.

Finalmente, esta tesis muestra cómo el límite entre lo cortés y lo descortés en conversaciones coloquiales amistosas y cordiales entre jóvenes que se conocen entres sí se halla en diferentes niveles de transparencia de la fuerza ilocutiva (directos, convencionalmente indirectos e inconvencionalmente indirectos) y de modulación (atenuadores y agravadores) de los enunciados en las tres lenguas estudiadas. Aunque en este tipo de contextos informales, la frontera entre los cortés y lo descortés parece encontrarse a un nivel relativamente alto en general en el sentido de que muy pocos actos y estrategias se consideran descorteses, el español fue el más tolerante a las formas directas y agravadas, mientras que el japonés fue el menos tolerante, acompañado de cerca por el inglés. Especialmente en el caso del español, cabe plantearse qué es lo que produce exactamente el efecto descortés en el acto comunicativo, pues incluso las formas más intensificadas y agravadas de desacuerdo fueron realizadas sin ser sancionadas como inadecuadas o descorteses. Los resultados

obtenidos aquí parecen sugerir que los actos descorteses se llevan a cabo en español de forma directa y explícita mediante rasgos supra-segmentales tales como el tono de voz (agresivo), el volumen de voz (gritos), etcétera, y/o mediante ataques directos a la imagen social y a la dignidad de la persona mediante críticas, insultos y descalificaciones, todo ello acompañado quizás de factores no-lingüísticos como gestos, expresiones faciales y intimidaciones físicas. Sin embargo, se necesitan más trabajos empíricos centrados en la descortesía para confirmar estas observaciones.