



The pragmatics of thanking reflected in the textbooks for teaching Spanish as a foreign language

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 11 May 2010

Received in revised form 25 February 2011

Accepted 28 February 2011

Available online 11 April 2011

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to present a classification for the speech act of thanking as reflected in the textbooks for teaching and learning Spanish as a foreign language and to ascertain the formulaic sequences used when expressing gratitude (i.e. from a pragmalinguistic viewpoint) in the Spanish language. For the purpose of this investigation, a corpus of 64 coursebooks, which included 250 situations representing the speech act of thanking, was used. Situations were analysed in order to design the classification of gratitude which took into consideration the relationship between interlocutors, and the object and/or the action for which this speech act was performed. The use of thanking sequences was explored by means of a questionnaire administered to 100 Spanish native speakers. The questionnaire results were then contrasted with the thanking formulae found in the coursebooks. The outcome of the investigation provided a classification of thanking which consisted of four main categories, subsequently divided into twelve subcategories. The results also revealed the sociopragmatic representation of thanking in the coursebooks for teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language and the most frequent specific thanking formulae used by native speakers. We expect that the classification will serve as a basis for future investigations in which this specific speech act is explored from a pragmatic standpoint.

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1. Introduction

Thanking is a speech act, henceforth SA, which Searle includes in the group of illocutionary acts (1969:67). This author explains that the propositional content of this SA is a “past act A (act) done by H (hearer)”, and includes three rules related to thanking: i) the “preparatory rule: A benefits S (speaker) and S believes A benefits S”; ii) the “sincerity rule: S feels grateful for or appreciative of A” and iii) the “essential rule: counts as an expression of gratitude or appreciation”. Searle remarks on the fact that the sincerity and essential rules overlap. He also includes thanking within the group of expressive speech acts, as it displays the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards a proposition or a statement.

This SA has been classified as an aspect of polite language (Watts, 2003; Eelen, 2001; Leech, 1983), as *social norms* (Escandell, 1996), as a conversational routine or discourse expression and as an institutional expression (Aijmer, 1996; Watts, 2003). Following Brown and Levinson's politeness model ([1978] 1987), thanking is face-damaging to the self as it involves acknowledging one's state of indebtedness to the other. Thanking can be divided into a double parameter by taking Escandell's dimension of politeness (1996:136–138): thanking as a *social norm* or as a conversational strategy. Politeness as a

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social norm refers to the group of rules, established by each society, that regulate the appropriate behaviour of its members, prohibiting some behavioural norms and favouring others: what adjusts to the behavioural norms is polite and what does not adjust to them is impolite. Politeness as a conversational strategy is related to the use of the strategies of a language in order to maintain the congenial relationship between the interlocutors, and therefore, avoids or mitigates possible conflicts between them.

When performing the act of thanking, the receiver's face (in Goffman's terms, 1972:5) is benefited from the sender's behaviour (i.e. the actual thanking). However, this is reciprocal as the sender's face is also benefited when he/she actually performs the SA of thanking. The event that motivates thanking is supposed to be the past action performed by the receiver for his/her own benefit.¹ The sender feels grateful for a past event or, at least, he/she acts as if he/she feels thankful.

To date, research studies on thanking have focussed on its realization from a linguistic point of view, including both its pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic dimensions. This SA has been analysed taking into consideration the way in which it is performed and according to its relationship with other speech acts within the same language (Coulmas, 1981; Kumatoridani, 1999; Aijmer, 1996). In other investigations, the realization of thanking has been explored when performed by native and non-native speakers of a language (Eisenstein and Bodman, 1986; Dumitrescu, 2005; Hickey, 2005; Wong, 2010). Other researchers have studied the differences in thanking formulae between English and other languages: English-Italian (Aston, 1995), English-Japanese (Ferrara, 1994) and English-Spanish (Díaz, 2003). Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) investigated the production of various forms of gratitude expressions by native and non-native speakers of American English while Hinkel (1994), using the same type of informants, analysed how appropriate certain thanking expressions were in specific contexts. Okamoto and Robinson (1997) studied determinants of gratitude expressions in British speakers, and Giannoni (1998, 2002) and Hyland (2003, 2004) investigated acknowledgement texts in research articles and in graduate dissertations respectively. The investigation of Schauer and Adolphs (2005) explores the similarities and differences of gratitude expressions used in a discourse completion task and, in a five-million-word corpus of spoken English examines the advantages and disadvantages of both data sets with regard to the language-teaching context. But no research has yet been devoted to the analysis of this speech act by comparing coursebook data with elicited data with a view to exploring when and in which specific communicative situations it is used.

The main aim of the present study is to explore and analyse the SA of thanking as it is presented in the coursebooks for the teaching and learning of Spanish as a foreign language. Firstly, the SA of thanking is classified by analysing the specific characteristics of the object of thanking and the action for which this SA is performed (see section 2.1). Secondly this SA is studied by taking into consideration the type of formulae employed in the thanking situations found in the coursebooks. These are then contrasted with the data from native Spanish speakers, obtained by means of a questionnaire.

In the following sections I first present some background information on the components that intervene in the development of the SA of thanking and the proposal for its classification found in present day research. I then introduce the methodology of the study: corpus of data – which served as a basis for the classification of acts of thanking – and a questionnaire – for identifying the thanking sequences. Finally, results are provided with regard to the type of thanking situations found in coursebooks following the proposed classification, along with the data supplied by the responses of Spanish native speakers to the questionnaire.

2. Background to the research

In this section I introduce, on the one hand, the components of the SA of thanking and the variables taken into account for its analysis, and on the other, the parameters used for classifying acts of thanking which serve as a platform for the proposed taxonomy of thanking (see section 3).

2.1. Components of the speech act of thanking

Four main elements take part in the realization of thanking, which are exemplified in the following dialogue:

- (1) *En unos grandes almacenes.*² [At a large department store]

Cliente: Quería cambiar esta chaqueta. Me está grande y no me gusta cómo me queda. [Customer: I wanted to change this jacket. It is too big and I don't like the way it looks/and it doesn't suit me]

Dependiente: ¿Quiere cambiarla por otra de su talla? [Shop assistant: Would you like to change it for another one in your size?]

Cl.: No, prefiero que me devuelva el dinero. [No, I'd rather have the money back]

D.: ¿Cómo lo pagó, en efectivo o con tarjeta? [How did you pay for it? Cash or card?]

Cl.: Con tarjeta. Aquí tiene el ticket de compra. [Card. Here is the receipt.]

D.: Gracias. Espere un momento. [Thank you. Wait a moment.]

¹ However, it is also possible for some actions to be acknowledged with a gratitude expression before they are actually performed (i.e. thanking someone for an invitation before it has taken place).

Table 1

Dimensions of the speech act of thanking (Coulmas, 1981:74).

1a. thanks ex ante (for a promise, offer, invitation)
1b. thanks ex post (for a favor, invitation (afterwards))
2a. thanks for material goods (gifts, services)
2b. thanks for immaterial goods (wishes, compliments, congratulations, information)
3a. thanks for some action initiated by the benefactor
3b. thanks for some action resulting from a request/wish/order by the beneficiary
4a. thanks that imply indebtedness
4b. thanks that do not imply indebtedness

The shop assistant, who is the interlocutor that performs the SA of thanking, is the sender; the customer, the interlocutor that receives the benefit of this SA, is the receiver; the beneficial action that triggers the performance of the SA is the handover of the receipt; and the concrete object that is exchanged in the thanking action is the actual receipt.³

When analysing speech acts, the following independent variables need to be taken into consideration:

1. the personal and individual characteristics of the sender and the receiver: gender and age, which are independent contextual relationships,
2. the relationship between the sender and the receiver: social distance (the degree of familiarity) and social power (the degree of social (im)balance: hierarchy or equal status),
3. the specific characteristics of the object (in this case associated with the SA of thanking) whether the benefit associated with the SA is tangible or verbal,
4. the specific type of action linked to the performance of a speech act (e.g. provision of help, goods, etc.),
5. the context in which the SA takes place (public places – shops, banks, hotel, etc. or private contexts – someone's house).

For the purpose of the classification of the thanking situations from the coursebooks, I took into consideration two of the above independent variables: the specific characteristics of the object of thanking and the action for which this SA is performed (as illustrated in example 1). On the other hand, for the analysis of the thanking sequences obtained by means of the questionnaire, I considered the relationship between the sender and the receiver: distance and social power, the characteristics of the object of thanking, the types of actions and the context in which the SA takes place.

2.2. Classification parameters

In the field of pragmatics research, the classification model of the SA of thanking designed by Coulmas (1981) takes into account the object for which this SA is performed and presents four different categories (see Table 1). The first one is associated with the performance of this SA before or after the use of a specific action (1a and 1b); thanking for material or non-material goods (2a and 2b); thanking for actions initiated by the benefactor or for some action resulting from a request/wish/order by the beneficiary (3a and 3b); and thanking that either implies indebtedness or not (4a and 4b). Coulmas's model has been used by other researchers such as Hinkel (1992a, 1992b), Aijmer (1996) and Kumatoridani (1999).⁴

To date, Coulmas is the only researcher who has attempted to establish a taxonomy for the SA of thanking. In this study, I propose a classification of thanking based on the realization of this SA as portrayed in the pedagogical materials for teaching and learning Spanish as a foreign language.

3. Methodology

Sixty-four coursebooks for the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (published in Spain between 1985 and 2006) were used as data sources for the identification of thanking situations (see Appendix C). This brings some limitations to the

² From *Nuevo Ven 2* (2003:203).

³ This last component may not appear in the performance of the SA of thanking in other cases as, for example, when giving directions on how to get to a specific place.

⁴ Eisenstein and Bodman (1986:80) suggest classifying thanking by taking into consideration its use. In example 2, the thanking expression has been employed ironically expressing annoyance. Conversely, in example 3, the same gratitude expression has a literal meaning, thanking for the offered invitation.

(2)

A: *No digas ninguna tontería en la entrevista.* [Don't say any ridiculous things in your interview].

B: *Gracias. Me alegra saber que confías en mí.* [Thanks. It's good to hear that you trust me.]

(3)

A: *¿Te gustaría cenar con nosotros?* [Would you like to join us for dinner?]

B: *Sí. Gracias.* [Yes. Thanks.]

Table 2

Classification of coursebooks according to the language levels of the European Framework for Foreign Languages.

	A1–A2	B1–B2	C1–C2
Number of coursebooks	25	20	19
Thanking situations	159	58	32

Table 3

Classification of the speech act of thanking from a pragmatic dimension.

1. Thanking for offers or invitations.
1.1. Acceptance or rejection of offers/of an offer.
1.2. Invitation (ex-post or ex-ante)
2. Thanking for receiving goods.
2.1. Non-material goods.
2.1.1. Receiving information previously requested.
2.1.2. Receiving good wishes and congratulations.
2.1.3. Receiving a compliment.
2.1.4. Receiving help and receiving permission.
2.2. Material goods.
2.2.1. Receiving objects and presents.
2.2.2. When borrowing objects.
3. Thanking for services rendered and performance of actions.
3.1. Reaction or answer to a service rendered.
3.2. Reaction or answer to the performance of an action.
4. Thanking in greeting rituals.

investigation of this specific speech act as this corpus restricts the analysis of thanking situations to those only found in the coursebooks. Two criteria were used for identifying thanking situations: (1) the occurrence of thanking formulae – four being specified in the corpus: *gracias* [thank you, thanks], *muchas gracias*, *muchísimas gracias* [thank you very much] and *(lo) agradezco* [I appreciate it] – (2) thanking included in the scripts of conversational exchanges (i.e. thanking formulae found in written discourse as, for example, in a letter, were not taken into account). Generally speaking, these types of situations were found in the dialogues of the coursebooks which are used as introductory elements and usually employed to present grammatical or lexical components. Thanking formulae were located at the end of these interactions, sometimes used as conversational closing signals. Consequently, a total of 248 situations were collected, which Table 2 shows distributed across the language levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for the Study of Foreign Languages. Of the 64 coursebooks, 38 were published before the creation of the CEFR document, and consequently had not been labelled according to its level. Therefore, these coursebooks were assigned to the CEFR levels on the basis of their stated target levels: those aimed at beginners and lower intermediate levels were included in A1–A2 level, intermediate level coursebooks in B1–B2 levels, and upper-intermediate and advanced in C1–C2.

The highest number of thanking situations found in the coursebooks corresponds to A1–A2 levels, followed by B1–B2 and C1–C2. This is probably due to the fact that these coursebooks contain a higher number of dialogic scripts which are often used in the situational-based approach characteristic of the early stages of foreign languages. Conversely, the higher the level of the coursebooks, the less frequent the number of dialogues and consequently, thanking formulae.

3.1. Classification of thanking from a pragmatic dimension

This classification outlined in Table 3 comprises four categories of thanking situations which were identified in the textbooks: the first three relate to the actions performed and the objects exchanged that motivate the manifestation of gratitude. The fourth refers to thanking that takes place as part of greeting rituals.

3.1.1. Thanking for offers or invitations

In these situations, the interlocutor thanks as a consequence of a previous non-solicited action performed by the other interlocutor. Two subcategories are included within this criterion: offers (rejected and accepted) and invitations.

3.1.2. Rejection of an offer

Thanking may take place when the sender rejects an offer, previously made by the receiver (example 4). Most of these situations found in the coursebooks happen in various shops, pubs, restaurants, in people's homes and during telephone conversations, when offers are made. Offers may be related to, for example, the purchase of a product in a shop, or the invitation to have another drink or more food in a pub.

(4) *En el bar El Bocata.*⁵ [At the bar *El Bocata*]

- a. *Hola ¿qué desea?* [Hello, what would you like?]
- b. *Un bocadillo de bacon, por favor.* [A bacon sandwich please]
- a. *¿Alguna salsa?* [Any sauce?]
- b. *No, gracias.* [No, thank you]

3.1.3. *Acceptance of an offer*

As opposed to the previous criterion, thanks may also be given by the sender who accepts an offer (example 5). Once again, these offers refer to the purchase of an object in a shop or an invitation to have another drink or more food in a pub.

(5) *En una tienda de ropa.*⁶ [At a clothes shop]

- a. *¿Quiere probárselo? (refiriéndose a un vestido)* [Would you like to try it on? (referring to the dress)]
- b. *Sí, gracias.* [Yes, thank you]

3.1.4. *Thanking for an invitation (ex-post or ex-ante)*

The sender may express gratitude after, or in some cases before, an invitation. Three out of the four thanking situations found in the coursebooks refer to celebrations, where invitations are made (Examples 6 and 7).

(6) *Invitation (ex-post)*

*Unos invitados a los anfitriones.*⁷ [Guests to the hosts]

- a. *Lo sentimos pero nos tenemos que ir.* [We are sorry but we have to leave.]
- b. *¿Tan pronto?* [So soon?]
- a. *Ha estado todo muy bien. Gracias por la invitación. Bueno, enhorabuena y que seáis muy felices.* [Everything has been very good. Thanks for the invitation. Well, congratulations and we hope you are very happy]

(7) *Invitation (ex-ante)*

*Una conversación telefónica.*⁸ [A telephone conversation]

Alumna: Muy bien. Entonces ¿a qué hora podría recibirme? [Student: Very well. Then what time could you receive me?]

Profesora: Vamos a ver... ¿Le viene bien a las seis? [Teacher: Let's see... Does six o'clock suit you?]

A.: Perfectamente. En su despacho ¿verdad? [Perfect. In your office, then?]

P.: Eso es. Está en la planta quinta, departamento de Literatura Española. Otra cosa, mañana hay Bernarda Alba, de García Lorca y, si lo desea, puede asistir. [That's correct. It's on the fifth floor, department of Spanish Literature. Another thing, *Bernarda Alba* is on tomorrow, by *García Lorca* and, if you wish, you can attend]

A.: Muchas gracias. [Many thanks]

P.: ¡Hasta luego, señorita White! [See you later, Ms. White!]

3.2. *Thanking for receiving goods*

Here the sender who acts as the beneficiary may thank after receiving goods. These can be material goods, which refer to a present, a drink, etc., or non material goods, which denote non-physical objects such as information, directions, help, etc.

3.2.1. *Non-material goods*

3.2.1.1. *Receiving information previously requested.* In the coursebooks, conversations in which the information is exchanged are shown to occur in public places or during telephone conversations. Most information requested refers to directions or locations of specific places (example 8).

⁵ *Así me gusta 1* (2003:59).

⁶ *Español 1* (2001:66).

⁷ *Esto funciona A* (1985:81).

⁸ *Primer Plano 3* (2002:122).

(8) *En el metro*⁹: [In the underground]

Sergio: Perdona, ¿puede decirme cómo se va a Plaza de España? [Sergio: Excuse me, can you tell me how to get to Plaza de España?]

Taquillero: Pues desde aquí es fácil, coja usted la línea 8 hasta Nuevos Ministerios y cambie a la línea 10 en dirección Puerta del Sur. La sexta estación es Plaza de España. [Ticket assistant/seller: Well, from here it's easy, take line 8 to Nuevos Ministerios and change to line 10 in the direction of Puerta del Sur. The sixth station is Plaza de España.]

Sergio: Muchas gracias. ¿Tiene un plano del metro? [Sergio: Many thanks. Do you have an underground map?]

Taquillero: Sí, claro, tome. [Ticket assistant/seller: Yes, of course, here it is]

3.2.1.2. *Receiving good wishes and congratulations.* In the coursebooks, good wishes are usually connected to one's state of health and, in some other cases, to wishing good luck before taking an exam or before attending a job interview (examples 9 and 10). The contexts for these situations are, for example, birthday parties or wedding celebrations.

(9) Good wishes¹⁰

Julián: ¿Qué te pasa? [What's the matter?]

Begoña: Me duele un poco la cabeza. [I've got a slight headache]

Julián: Bueno, seguro que no es nada. [Well, I am sure it's nothing]

Begoña: Sí, ahora me tomo una aspirina. [Yes, I am going to take an aspirin]

Julián: Bueno, pues yo me voy. Hasta luego... y que te mejores. [Well, I am leaving. See you later... and I hope you get better]

Begoña: Gracias. Hasta luego. [Thanks. See you later]

(10) Congratulations¹¹

En el cumpleaños de Lola. Lola está sentada en un sillón leyendo. Por detrás de ella se acercan Mónica y Raúl. Entre los dos llevan un gran regalo, se acercan muy silenciosamente a Lola y, cuando están a su lado, le dicen los dos a la vez: [At Lola's birthday. Lola is sitting in an armchair reading. Mónica and Raúl get closer to her from behind. They are carrying a big present between them, they get closer to Lola quietly and, when they are next to her, they say at the same time]

Mónica y Raúl: ¡Felicidades! [Congratulations!]

Lola pone cara de susto y después sonrío. [Lola has first a frightened face and then she smiles]

Lola: Gracias. [Thank you]

3.2.1.3. *Receiving a compliment.* Expressions of thanks may occur in the coursebooks as the sender's polite reaction to a compliment made by the receiver. They are usually linked to physical appearance, clothing or, in some cases, culinary abilities (example 11).

(11) - *Estás muy guapa con el pelo corto.*¹² [You are very pretty with your hair short]

- *Gracias, Manuel.* [Thanks, Manuel]

3.2.1.4. *Receiving help and receiving permission.* The coursebook examples show that the sender may also thank someone after receiving help (on a plane, example 12) or permission to act (on a train, example 13).

(12) Receiving help

*En el avión. Colocando el equipaje de mano*¹³: [On a plane. Putting away the hand luggage]

- *¿Me permite que le ayude?* [May I help you?]

- *Gracias.* [Thanks]

(13) Granting permission

*En el tren*¹⁴ [On the train]

a. *Disculpe ¿puedo abrir un poco la ventanilla?* [Excuse me, can I open the window a little?]

⁹ *Español en marcha 1* (2004:52).

¹⁰ *Español Nivel intermedio* (2001:99).

¹¹ *Redes Nivel 2* (2003:133).

¹² *Avance (Nivel elemental)* (2002:104).

¹³ *Español sin fronteras 2* (2002:75).

¹⁴ *Español sin fronteras 1* (1997:132).

- b. Claro. Ábrala, ábrala. [Of course. Open it, open it.]
 a. Gracias, es que la calefacción está muy fuerte. [Thank you, the heating is too high.]

3.2.2. Receiving material goods

3.2.2.1. *Receiving objects and presents.* Most of the dialogues found in the coursebooks about the exchange of objects or presents happen in public places (shops, pubs and hotels). In quite a few cases, the object received is linked to a performed transaction and the SA of thanking usually takes place when receiving the money or the card used for the payment (example 14) and when receiving birthday presents (example 15).

(14) Receiving an object

*En la tienda de ropa*¹⁵. [At a clothes shops]

Dependiente: ¿Cómo le quedan (los pantalones)? [How do the trousers look?]

Diego: Me quedan bien. Me los llevo. ¿Qué precio tienen? [They fit well. I'll take them. How much are they?]

Dependiente: Estos están rebajados. Sólo cuestan 58 euros. ¿Cómo va a pagar, en efectivo o con tarjeta de crédito? [These are on sale. They only cost 58 euros. How are you going to pay, in cash or with a credit card?]

Diego: Con tarjeta. Aquí tiene. [With a card. Here you are]

Dependiente: Gracias. [Thank you]

(15) Receiving a present

*En la fiesta de cumpleaños de Teresa*¹⁶ [At Teresa's birthday party]

Alfonso: ¡Felicidades, Teresa! ¡Cuántas flores! Las tarjetas de felicitación son muy bonitas. Aquí tienes tu regalo. Te gustará. Pero no lo abrirás ahora. Es una sorpresa. ¡Deberás controlar tu curiosidad! [Congratulations, Teresa! What a lot of flowers! The birthday cards are very pretty. Here is your present. You'll like it. But don't open it now. It's a surprise. You should control your curiosity!]

Marisol: El nuestro también llegará un poco tarde. Lo traerá Inés. [Ours will also arrive a little late. Inés will bring it]

Teresa: ¡Qué nerviosa estoy! [I am so excited!]

(Suena el timbre) [The doorbell rings]

Será Inés... [It will be Inés...]

Inés: ¡Bueno, al fin llegué! ¡Felicidades Teresa! [Well, I'm finally here! Happy birthday Teresa!]

Teresa: ¡Vaya paquete! [What a parcel!]

Inés: Es mi regalo y el de Marisol. Puedes abrirlo. ¿Te gusta? [It's mine and Marisol's. You can open it. Do you like it?]

Teresa: Es un vestido precioso. Gracias a todos. Estoy muy contenta y feliz. [It's a beautiful dress. Thanks everybody. I am very content and happy.]

3.2.2.2. *Borrowing objects or money.* Of the 248 thanking situations extracted from the coursebooks, only two examples representing the borrowing of objects or money were found. In one, a son asks his father if he can borrow his car (example 16) and a work colleague borrows some money from another colleague.

(16) En casa (padre e hijo)¹⁷: [At home (father and son)]

a.. ¡Oye! Estoy pensando en ir de excursión con Pilar ¿me dejas el coche? [Listen! I am thinking about going on an trip with Pilar, can you lend me the car?]

b. Bueno, pero lo necesito el domingo por la tarde. [O.K, but I need it on Sunday afternoon]

a. De acuerdo, gracias. [O.K., thank you]

3.2.3. Rendering services and performance of actions

Actions and services belong to two different types: i) actions and services that are part of the interlocutor's job or obligation. These take place in shops, other public places (greengrocer's, tobacconist's, railway stations, etc.), and at the doctor's surgery (example 17) and; ii) actions and services that are not necessarily part of the interlocutor's job or obligation. These actions occur during telephone conversations in which one of the interlocutors passes the call to the other (example 18) or explains that the person to whom he/she wants to talk is not available at that moment.

¹⁵ Nuevo Ven 1 (2003:80).

¹⁶ Cumbre (1995:159).

¹⁷ Español sin fronteras 1 (1997:131).

Table 4

Relationship between interlocutors and object of thanks (material and non-material).

	Scenarios					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Interlocutor 1	Passer-by	Family member	Waiter	Doctor	Waiter	Shop assistant
Interlocutor 2	Passer-by	Friend	Client	Patient	Client	Client
Social distance	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Social power	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Object for thanking	Non material	Non material	Material	Non material	Material	Material

	Scenarios					
	7	8	9	10	11	12
Interlocutor 1	Classmate	Friend	Friend	Friend	Student	Classmate
Interlocutor 2	Classmate	Friend	Friend	Friend	Student	Classmate
Social distance	No	No	No	No	No	No
Social power	No	No	No	No	No	No
Object for thanking	Non material	Non material	Material	Material	Non material	Material

(17) Service rendered at the doctor's.

*En el médico*¹⁸. [At the doctor's]

Médico: Sí, no tome grasa ni comidas fuertes. Le voy a recetar unas pastillas para hacer bien la digestión. Venga por aquí la semana próxima. [Doctor: Yes, do not eat any animal fat nor heavy meals. I am going to prescribe some tablets to help with your digestion. Come back next week]

Carlos: Muchas gracias por todo. Hasta la semana que viene. [Carlos: Many thanks for everything. Until next week]

(18) Performance of an action

Al teléfono.¹⁹ [On the phone]A. *¿Dígame?* [Hello?]B. *¡Hola! ¿Está Trond?* [Hi! Is Trond in please?]A. *Sí, ahora se pone. ¿De parte de quién?* [Yes, he is. Who's calling?]B. *De Juan.* [This is Juan]A. *Espera un momento, por favor.* [Hold on a moment, please]B. *Gracias.* [Thanks]A. *¡Trond... al teléfono! Es para ti.* [Trond... telephone! For you]

3.2.4. Thanking as a greeting ritual

This category refers to the answers given to questions related to health or the state of things. The interlocutor responds by thanking to a ritual question used as a greeting (example 20). In some cases, the health questions refer to the interlocutor's relatives or friends.

(19)

a. *¿Eres Pedro?*²⁰ [Are you Pedro?]b. *Sí, soy Pedro.* [Yes, I am Pedro]a. *Yo me llamo José. ¿Cómo estás?* [My name is José. How are you?]b. *¡Hola, José! Estoy muy bien, gracias.* [Hello, José! I am very well, thank you]

3.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was originally created for the investigation of English native speakers' linguistic attitudes towards thanking in Spanish (de Pablos-Ortega, 2010). It was designed by taking into consideration the most frequent thanking situations found in the coursebooks and it was used to elicit polite formulae from Spanish native speakers in thanking situations. The questionnaire was administered to one hundred Spanish native speakers who were university students at

¹⁸ *Español 2000 Nivel Elemental* (1981:117).¹⁹ *Español sin fronteras 1* (1997:86).²⁰ *Cumbre* (1995:12).

Table 5

Thanking formulae taxonomy for the gratitude expressions found in the coursebooks.

Thanking formulae	Use
<i>Gracias</i> [thanks/thank you], <i>agradezco</i> [I appreciate it]	Expressing gratitude
<i>Muchas gracias/muchísimas gracias</i> [thank you very much]	Expressing intensifying gratitude
<i>(Muchas) gracias por</i> [thank you (very much) for]	Expressing gratitude and stating the reason

Universidad de Alcalá (Madrid). They were between 18 and 35 years old and were studying Spanish and/or English as university degree programmes.

The questionnaire (Appendices A and B) comprises 12 different scenarios, adapted from the coursebooks, which are designed by taking into account the components that intervene in the realization of the SA of thanking (relationship, social distance and power between interlocutors and type of object, as shown in Table 4).

Each scenario (Example 3) includes a short explanation, stating the context in which the verbal exchange is going to take place. This is followed by a dialogue, as it was found in the coursebooks, except for the omission of the thanking formula in the last intervention of one of the interlocutors. At the end of each scenario, two questions related to the performance of the interlocutor in the last intervention are included. These refer to whether the final intervention of the speaker is appropriate or not and where participants consider that the reply is not appropriate, they are asked to provide an alternative answer.

(20)

Scenario 5 of the questionnaire

In a bar:

a. Hola ¿qué desea? [Hi! What would you like?]

b. Un bocadillo de jamón. [A ham sandwich]

a. ¿Con queso? [With cheese?]

b. No. [No]

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada? [Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?]

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? [If not, what do you think s/he should have said?] _____

The answers given by the Spanish native speakers to the open question of the questionnaire provided some information on the specific polite formulae which might be used in each of the 12 scenarios. The type of thanking formulae and sequences found in the coursebooks were contrasted with the data collected. Most polite formulae included by the participants were connected to thanking or, on occasion, to apologizing. All answers were then classified according to a thanking sequence taxonomy (Table 5) which is organized by taking into account the use of the actual formulae.

4. Results and discussion

In this section results are presented by looking at the distribution of the total number of thanking situations according to the proposed classification and also by taking into account the language level of the coursebooks. Secondly, thanking sequences are identified and quantified following the taxonomy for thanking and their distribution in the coursebooks by language level. Thirdly, the correlation between three independent variables (social distance, social power and type of thanking object) and the thanking situations in the coursebooks is presented. The second part of the results is devoted to the classification of answers provided by native speakers in accordance with the thanking sequences. The dialogues found in the coursebooks were classified into the proposed thanking criteria and, as a result, I ascertained, firstly, how thanking is represented from a pragmatic point of view and, secondly, which thanking formulae were used in these situations (i.e. pragmalinguistic viewpoint).

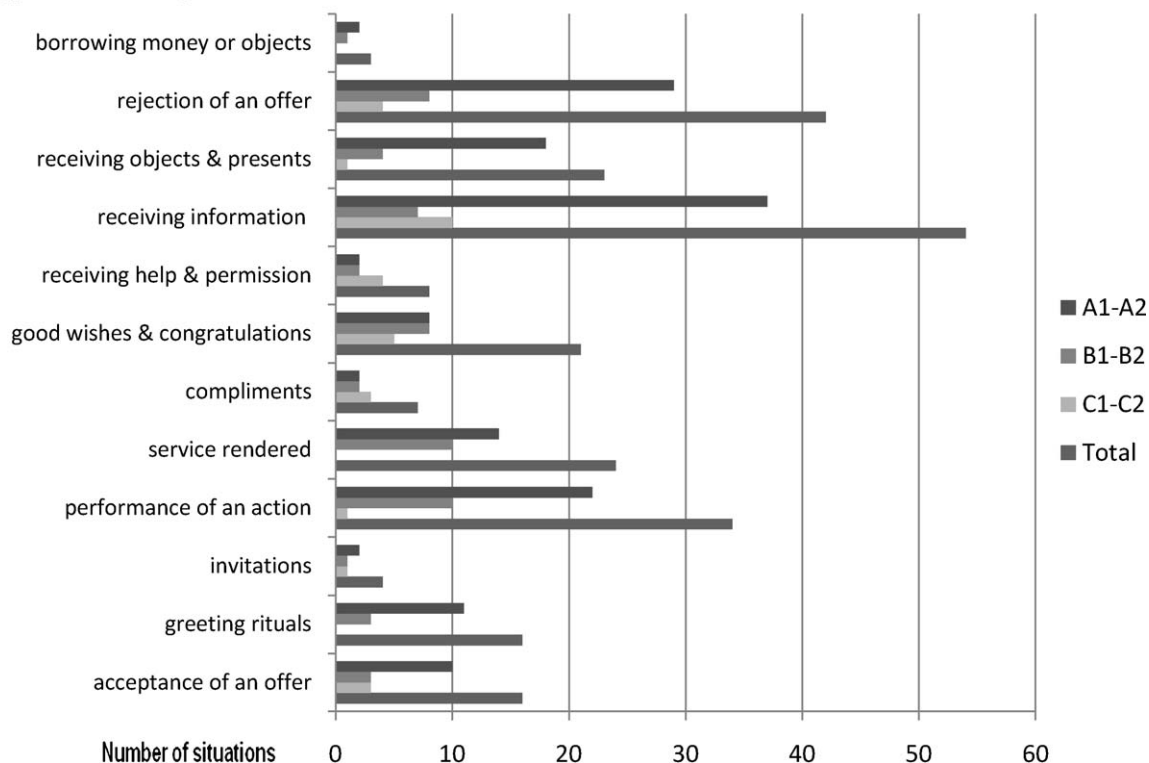
4.1. The pragmatic dimension of thanking in the coursebooks

Unlike other languages, English for example, the explicit thanking formulae expressions in Spanish are limited to the word *gracias* ('thank you', in English) and other sequences including intensifying forms of the same expression *muchas gracias* or *muchísimas gracias* (thank you very much, in English). In Spanish, other informal expressions to acknowledge gratitude comparable to *cheers* or *ta*, which are commonly used in British English, do not exist.

Graph 1 shows the total number of thanking situations according to the pragmatic classification of gratitude presented in the previous section. The levels of the coursebooks have been taken into account for this distribution.

As shown by Graph 1, the results seem to indicate that most situations in which gratitude is expressed are connected to the receipt of non-material goods, in particular, receiving information provided after a previous request (54 situations).

Type of thanking situation



Graph 1. Number of situations found in the coursebooks by language level.

This criterion is followed by situations in which offers are rejected (42). Conversely, the least frequent situations found in the coursebooks refer to expressing gratitude after an invitation (4) and thanking when borrowing objects or money (3). In this last case the less frequent use of gratitude expressions is due to the fact there was a small social distance between the interlocutor as opposed to other situations in which the social distance was larger (for example when asking for information in public places). When receiving good wishes and congratulations (21), when receiving objects and presents (23) and when reacting or answering to a service rendered (23) or to the performance of an action (28) are the categories positioned in the middle of the classification.

The distribution of thanking situations with regards to the language level of the coursebooks (Table 2) shows that the lower the level, the more frequent the number of thanking situations for each particular component of the classification.

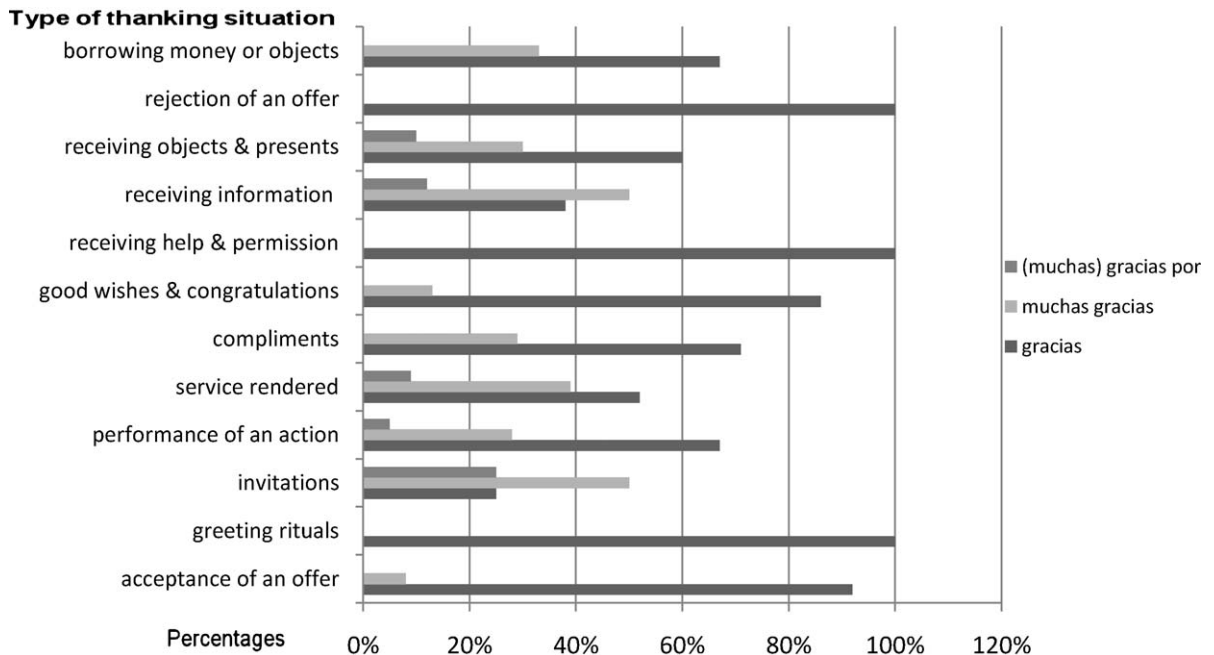
4.2. Thanking sequences in the coursebooks

From a pragmalinguistic point of view and considering the thanking situations as a whole (Graph 2), gratitude expressions are represented 171 times (in the total of 248 dialogues analysed) with the formula *thanks/thank you* (in Spanish *gracias*). On 62 occasions *thank you* is preceded by the intensifying adverbial form (i.e. *muchas* [very much/a lot]). Finally, 12 situations include an expression of gratitude and the reason for it (i.e. (*muchas*) *gracias por* [thank you very much for]).

Results related to thanking formulae employed in the different categories of the classification (Graph 2) reveal some interesting information with regard to four of the categories of the classification. When thanking after receiving information previously requested, 50% of the thanking sequences belong to the type (*muchas*) *gracias* [thank you very much] while only 38% of them were just a simple thanking formula (*gracias* [thank you]). A significant proportion of *thank you* + intensifier expressions was found in the case of thanking after reacting or answering to a service rendered (39%), thanking after the performance of an action (28%) and thanking after receiving objects and presents (30%). However, in the rest of the thanking situations, the thanking sequence used was *gracias* [thank you].

The analysis of thanking sequences in relation to the language level of the coursebooks (Graph 3) showed some interesting findings. The proportion of *thank you* + intensifier expressions is higher in C1–C2 level books (38%) than in B1–B2 level books (26%) and even more so than in A1–A2 level coursebooks (22%).

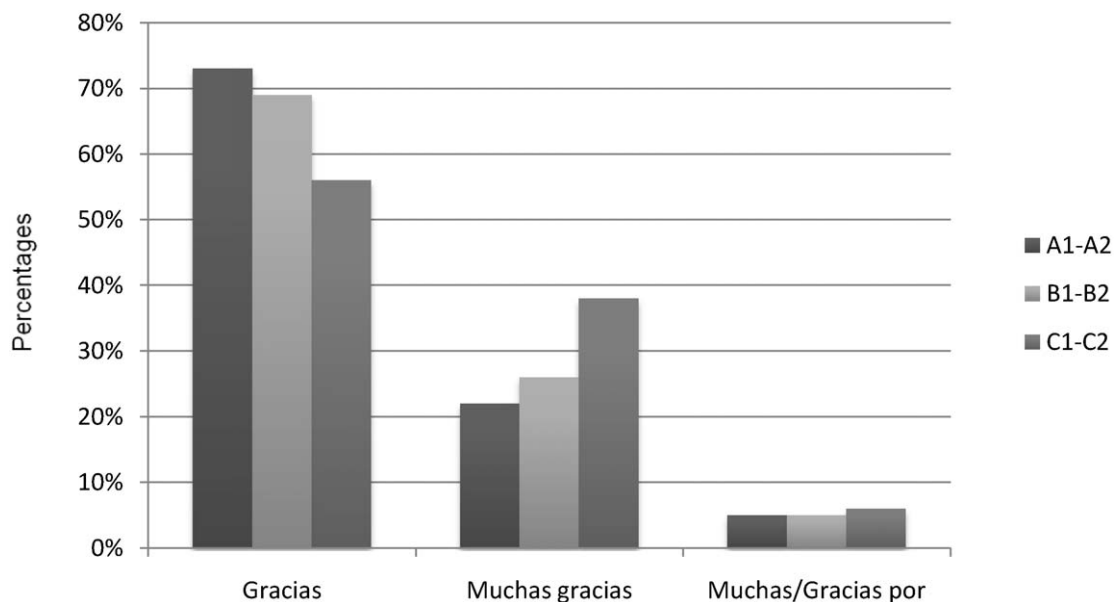
Graph 4 illustrates the results when contrasting the thanking situations from the classification with three independent variables (social power, social distance and type of thanking object). Of the 248 situations, only 3 present social imbalance between the interlocutors (i.e. social power). These situations belong to the categories of thanking when rejecting an offer, thanking after receiving objects and presents and thanking when reacting or answering to the performance of an action.



Graph 2. Thanking formulae in the coursebooks of Spanish as a Foreign Language.

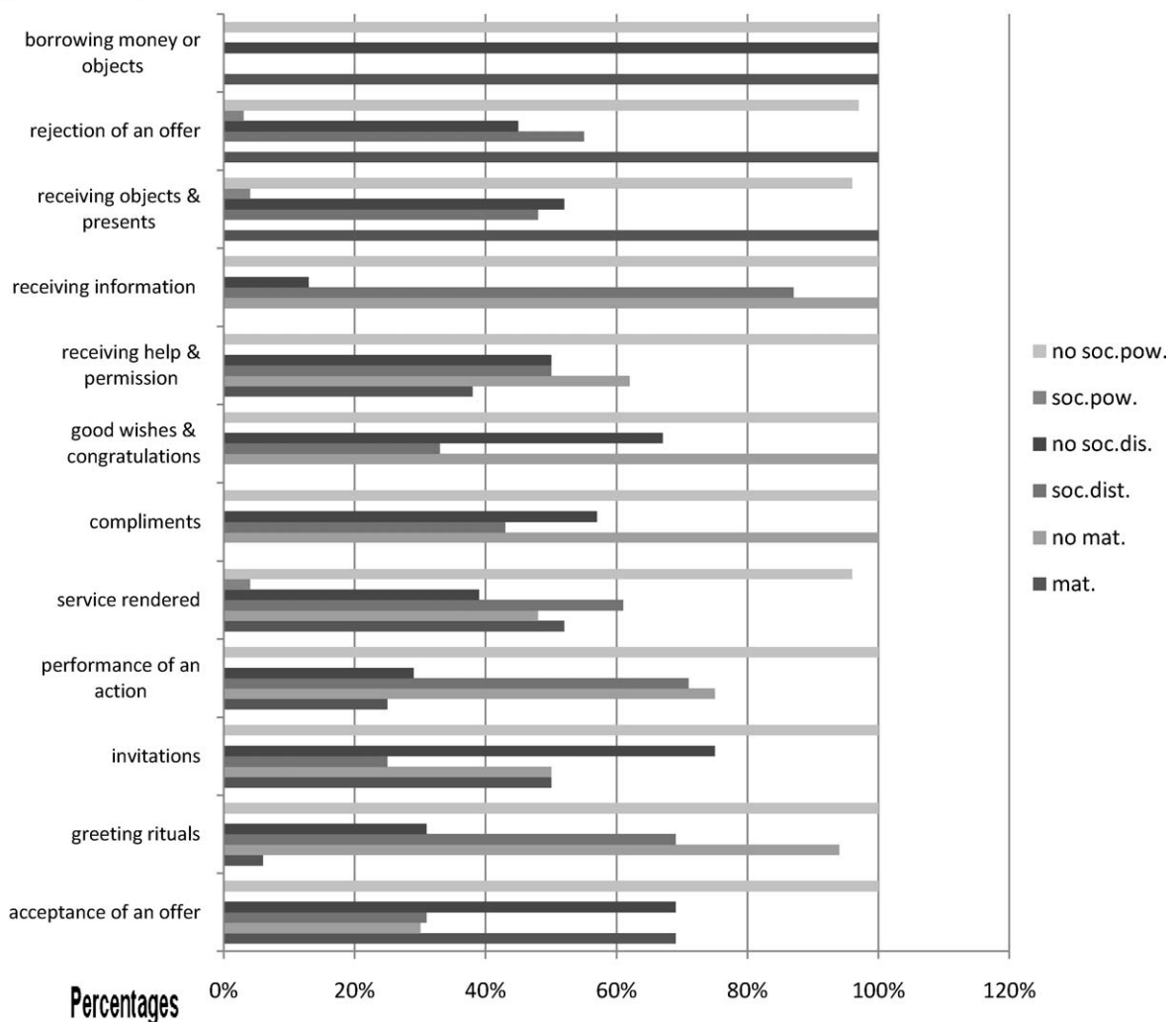
The data regarding the social distance between the interlocutors shows quite an even balance among the categories of the classification. The social distance between the interlocutors is shown in four categories within the classification: thanking when accepting an offer (social distance 31%, no social distance 69%), thanking after an invitation (social distance 25%, no social distance 75%), thanking after receiving good wishes and congratulations (social distance 33%, no social distance 67%) and thanking when borrowing money or objects (social distance 0%, no social distance 100%). Conversely, in four categories the absence of social distance is more noticeable: thanking after greeting rituals (social distance 69%, no social distance 31%), thanking after reacting or answering to a service rendered (social distance 61%, no social distance 39%), reaction of answer to the performance of an action (social distance 71%, no social distance 29%) and thanking after receiving information previously requested (social distance 87%, no social distance 13%).

In four categories it seems that there is an equal balance between the presence and absence of social distance. These are: thanking after receiving a compliment (social distance 43%, no social distance 57%), thanking after receiving help and



Graph 3. Thanking situations in relation with the language levels of coursebooks.

Type of thanking situation



Graph 4. Thanking situations in relation to independent variables (social power, social distance and type of thanking object)

receiving permission (social distance and no social distance, 50% each), thanking after receiving objects and presents (social distance 48%, no social distance 52%) and thanking after rejecting an offer (social distance 55%, no social distance 45%).

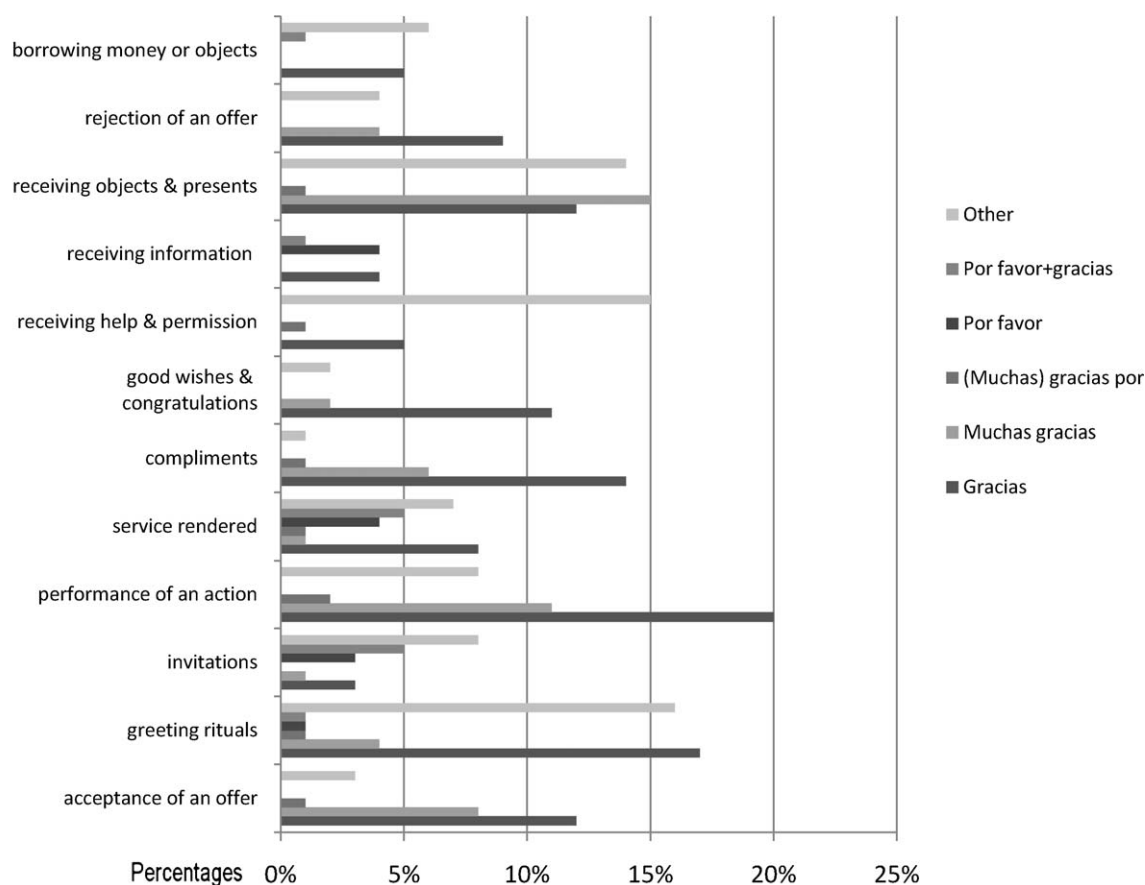
As a contrast, four categories present a higher number of situations where the object is material (thanking after accepting an offer, 69%; thanking after receiving objects and presents, 100%; thanking after rejecting an offer, 100% and thanking when borrowing money or objects, 100%). There's almost an equal distribution of thanking situations when thanking after an invitation (material and non-material 50%) or after reacting or answering to a service rendered (material 52%, and non-material 48%). There are six categories of the classification in which there is a higher percentage of thanking for non-material objects: thanking after asking for health or the state of things (94%), thanking after reacting or answering to a performed action (75%), thanking after receiving a compliment (100%), thanking after receiving good wishes and congratulations (100%) thanking after receiving help and permission (62%) and thanking after receiving information previously requested (100%).

4.3. Type of thanking sequences in situations

The number of gratitude sequences included by the Spanish native speakers in the questionnaire (Graph 5) show similar results as the gratitude expressions found in the coursebooks. The sequence *gracias* [thank you] is again the most commonly used, followed by *muchas gracias* [thank you very much]. Apologizing formulae and, at other times, apologizing and thanking formulae together were used by participants in two scenarios of the questionnaire. These refer to thanking after a service rendered, and thanking when rejecting and accepting offers.

From a linguistic point of view, thanking responses given by the native speakers in the questionnaire were similar both in form and number to those found in the corpus (87%). Unsurprisingly, on a high number of occasions (77%), participants

Situations in the questionnaire



Graph 5. Gratitude expressions used by native Spanish speakers in the thanking situations of the questionnaire.

included a wider variety of responses, more elaborate than those found in the coursebooks. In some cases (25%), other types of SA, such as apologising were used instead.

The design of the data collection questionnaire was based on the dialogues found in the coursebooks. Thus, this significant number of alternative responses provided by Spanish participants suggests the fact that certain thanking formulas, included in these coursebooks, do not reflect accurately the Spanish socio-cultural reality. For example, when rejecting an offer it seems that other polite formulae, different from thanking, (i.e. *por favor* – “please” in Spanish) were used instead by the Spanish participants (example 22). This leads us to consider the need for further research on speech acts and their connection to specific polite formulae.

(21)

- a. *En un restaurante de comida rápida* [In a fast-food restaurant]
 b. *¿Quiere queso en la hamburguesa?* [Would you like cheese with your burger?]
 a. *No, por favor.* [No, please]

The SA of thanking is also incorporated in the document which outlines the language level content for the learning of Spanish as a foreign language: *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (PCIC) (Instituto Cervantes, 2006). This is an important reference point used as a descriptor for the study of Spanish as a foreign language. The content of this document is divided into three volumes and is divided in accordance with the levels of the *European Framework of Reference for the Study of Foreign Languages*: A1–A2, B1–B2 and C1–C2. It includes the description and analysis of the linguistic components for the learning of Spanish and presents thanking from both a pragmalinguistic and a sociopragmatic perspective.

The contents relevant to the first level, (A1–A2) include five categories: grammatical, pragmatic-discursive, notional, cultural and language learning. The cultural component, entitled *Saberes y comportamientos socioculturales* (socio-cultural knowledge and behaviour) includes three sections (under the subheading of interpersonal relationships): personal/public,

professional and educational. Thanking formulae (the expression *Gracias*) is classified under personal/public and is represented simply by the thanking formula *Gracias* (Thank you) when giving and accepting presents.

The second and third volumes of PCIC for B1 and B2 and C1 and C2 levels present several ways of expressing gratitude from a pragmalinguistic point of view (Table 2).

In level B1, gratitude expressions are limited to the simple formulaic sequence, *Gracias* (Thank you) and *Gracias por + noun* (Thank you + noun), while in level B2 there is one sequence which includes an intensifying adverbial form, *Muchas gracias* (Thank you very much), and other gratitude expressions in a verbal sequence, *Te lo agradezco* (I appreciate it) and other linguistic structures which imply gratitude, such as, *muy amable* (very kind).

More elaborate thanking sequences are presented in levels C1 and C2, such as *No tenías que haberlo hecho* (You shouldn't have) or *Te debo una* (I owe you one). These expressions entail a deeper pragmatic understanding and knowledge of the language which, as a consequence, learners of Spanish might feel less confident to use appropriately. Some of these sequences, like *Te estaré eternamente agradecido* (I'll be eternally thankful) or *No sé cómo pagártelo* (I don't know how to repay you) carry slight nuances that, in Thomas's terms (1983), might result in sociopragmatic failure if they were not used in the appropriate context or situation.

The PCIC (Instituto Cervantes, 2006) is a normative document which does not clearly state the criterion for the presence of particular thanking formulae or sequences in each given level. There is also no mention of the source from where these thanking formulae and sequences have been extracted. It becomes apparent that the criterion used to allocate more complex thanking sequences from a pragmalinguistic point of view is connected with lexical reasons. The more elaborate thanking sequences in terms of lexical complexity, the more frequent their appearance in higher language levels.

It is also important to highlight that the thanking formulae and sequences included in the PCIC (2006) do not fully correspond to those found in the coursebooks, except for lower levels. This reference document for the study of Spanish as a Foreign language presents different linguistic structures which imply gratitude, such as *Que Dios te lo pague* (May God help you) or *¿Qué haría yo sin ti?* (What would I do without you?) in levels C1 and C2. These expressions do not contain specific thanking formulae as such, and therefore, require that the learners should demonstrate a high level of pragmatic competence in order to fully understand their nuances.

5. Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to analyse how the SA of thanking is performed in coursebooks for the teaching and learning of Spanish as a foreign language in order to contribute to filling the gap in existing research on the SA of thanking.

Once the thanking situations were classified according to the categorization of thanking (de Pablos-Ortega, 2010), I proceeded to ascertain the correlation between these situations with the classification of thanking and with the language levels of these pedagogical materials. According to the proposed taxonomy, the most frequent thanking situations from the coursebooks are: thanking when receiving information previously requested, thanking after rejecting an offer and thanking after reacting or answering to the performance of an action. The contrastive analysis between the number of thanking situations and the language levels of the coursebooks show that higher level books present a smaller number of thanking situations than lower level ones. This is probably due to the fact that coursebooks aimed at higher levels tend to include fewer dialogical texts, which are most likely to contain thanking formulae. These coursebooks do not generally present explicit pragmalinguistic information on speech acts, such as thanking for example.

Results related to thanking sequences show that in only one category of the classification (thanking after receiving information previously requested), the thanking + intensifier formula (*muchas gracias* [thank you very much]) is more frequently used than simply the thanking formula (*gracias* [thank you]). This is probably due to the fact that 87% of these situations involve two unknown interlocutors (i.e. absence of familiarity and, as a consequence, higher social distance between them).

Generally speaking, the findings from these analyses revealed some implications connected to the Spanish didactic materials. These do not widely, or accurately, reflect the socio cultural reality of the Spanish language and its culture with regards to the SA of thanking, as shown in the responses of the questionnaire provided by Spanish native speakers.

The findings suggest that a more uniformed and varied representation of thanking situations (according to the proposed classification) might be included in didactic materials used for teaching and learning Spanish as a foreign language. However, I am aware of the constraints and difficulties that coursebook authors are faced with when designing these didactic materials and the amount of variables which need to be considered in order to produce coherent and well-structured products from a methodological point of view. The proposed taxonomy for the classification of gratitude should also be contrasted with naturally occurring data and, if necessary, should be expanded to other communicative situations accordingly. Here it is vital to bear in mind the variables which may affect the performance of the SA of thanking (i.e. relationship, distance, social power between interlocutors and object of gratitude).

From a pragmalinguistic perspective, the data provided by Spanish native speakers suggest that thanking sequences used in Spanish tend to include a simple *thanks/thank you* formula and, less frequently, more elaborate sequences, such as *thank you + intensifier form* and *thank you for + stating the reason for gratitude*. The reason for this might be that some of the transactions included in the coursebooks probably require less elaborate types of thanking expressions/formulae/sequences.

Table 6

Gratitude expressions according to *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (Instituto Cervantes, 2006:243, 258–259).

B1	B2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gracias por todo [Thank you for everything] • Gracias por + SN [Thank you for + Noun] <i>Gracias por tu visita.</i> [Thank you for your visit] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muchas gracias, de verdad. [Thank you very much, really] • Gracias por... [Thank you for...] <i>Muchísimas gracias por haber venido tan rápido.</i> [Thank you very much for having come so quickly] • Te lo agradezco sinceramente/muchísimo. [I thank you most sincerely] • No sé como agradeceréte/darte las gracias. [I don't know how to thank you enough] • Muy amable. [Very kind]
C1	C2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gracias de antemano. [Thank you in advance] • Muy amable de/por tu parte. [Very kind on your part] <i>Muy amable de su parte el haberme traído hasta aquí.</i> [Very kind on your part for having invited me] • No sé como pagártelo. [I don't know how to repay you] • Te estoy muy/francamente agradecido. [I am frankly very thankful] • No tenías que haberte molestado/que haberlo hecho. [You shouldn't have bothered] • Mil/Un millón de gracias. [A thousand/A Million thanks] • ¿Qué haría yo sin ti? [What would I do without you?] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te estaré eternamente agradecido. [I will be eternally grateful] • Quiero/Quisiera expresarle mi más sincero agradecimiento/profunda gratitud (por todo lo que ha hecho por mí). [I want/would like to express my most sincere thanks/my deepest gratitude (for all you've done for me)] • Aprecio (en) mucho... [I appreciate it a lot] <i>Aprecio en mucho lo que has hecho por mí...</i> [I appreciate a lot what you have done for me] • Te debo una. [I owe you one] • (Que) Dios te lo pague. [May God help you]

As seen in Table 6, some thanking formulae and sequences which are part of the PCIC do not explicitly include the word *gracias* (thank you) to acknowledge/express thanks. As a consequence, teaching materials should probably include these types of expressions and learners of Spanish should be made aware of them as ways of thanking. Thus, possible intercultural misunderstandings would be avoided and non native speakers of Spanish would improve their interactional skills and enhance their intercultural competence. All this leads us to consider, once again, the accuracy of describing and using thanking expressions in these teaching materials.

Further contrastive research, analyzing the thanking formulae in materials for the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, would be an important contribution to the investigation of the speech acts in connection with the didactics of foreign language teaching. Other studies could focus on the exploration of thanking (both in verbal and non-verbal forms) as a natural occurrence or on the examination of thanking formulae from a longitudinal perspective. The latter could be carried out by looking into the differences of thanking in coursebooks published in the 1980s in contrast to those published in 1990s or in the years 2000.

All this needs to be taken into account when designing didactic materials and presenting both pragmatolinguistic and sociopragmatic information to learners of Spanish as a foreign language. The main product of this investigation, the classification of thanking, may be used as a reference point for future research on thanking from a pragmatic perspective or as a platform in order to widen and enhance the taxonomy.

Appendix A. Questionnaire in Spanish

Nombre:

Por favor conteste las siguientes preguntas:

1. Fecha de nacimiento: _____
2. Nacionalidad: _____
3. ¿Ha estudiado lenguas extranjeras? ☐ Sí ☐ No
4. Si ha marcado SI, indique cuál/es:
☐ inglés ☐ francés ☐ alemán ☐ italiano ☐ otra: _____
 ¿Durante cuánto tiempo aproximadamente ha estudiado las lenguas extranjeras?
 (Indique años y meses aproximadamente)
 Lengua: _____ años _____ meses
 Lengua: _____ años _____ meses

POR FAVOR LEA LAS SIGUIENTES SITUACIONES **CON ATENCIÓN** Y COMPLETE LAS PREGUNTAS PARA CADA UNA DE ELLAS. **SEA POR FAVOR LO MÁS SINCERO POSIBLE:**

Situación 1

En la estación de metro:

- a. Por favor, ¿para ir a Metropolitano?
- b. Sí, tienes que coger la línea 4, en dirección a Parque de Santa María, hasta Avenida de América. Allí cambias a la línea 6, la Circular, y creo que hay cuatro o cinco estaciones hasta Metropolitano.
- a. Vale.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 2

Una conversación telefónica:

- a. ¿Está Mariana?
- b. No, en este momento no está
- a. ¿Sabe a qué hora volverá?
- b. Pues, la verdad, no lo sé. No me lo ha dicho.
- a. Bueno. Soy Santi. Volveré a llamar antes de las nueve.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 3

En un restaurante:

- Camarera: ¿Y de beber?
- a.: Pues nos va a traer un tinto de reserva.
- Camarera: ¿De la casa?
- a.: Sí.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 4

En la consulta del médico:

- a. Primero voy a tomarle la tensión, y voy a recetarle una pomada para la espalda y unas pastillas. De todas formas, no debe preocuparse.
- b. ¿Nos vemos, entonces, la semana que viene?
- a. Sí, cuando estén listos los resultados de las pruebas. Yo le avisaré.
- b. ¡Hasta luego doctor!

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 5*En un bar:*

- a. Hola ¿qué desea?
- b. Un bocadillo de jamón.
- a. ¿Con queso?
- b. No.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 6*En una tienda de ropa:*

Dependiente: Buenos días, ¿puedo ayudarle en algo?

a: Sí. Quería unos pantalones.

Dependiente: ¿de qué talla?

a: Pues, no sé...la 44 ó 46, creo.

Dependiente: de esas tallas los tenemos grises, azules y negros. ¿Cuáles te gustan?

a: Estos azules están bien. ¿me los puedo probar?

Dependiente: Sí, claro. Allí está el probador.

(Después de probarse los pantalones)

Dependiente: ¿Cómo le quedan?

a: Me quedan bien. Me los llevo. ¿Qué precio tienen?

Dependiente: Estos están rebajados. Sólo cuestan 58 euros. ¿Cómo va a pagar, en efectivo o con tarjeta de crédito?

a: Con tarjeta.

Dependiente: Aquí tiene.

a.: Adiós.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 7*A la salida de clase de la universidad:*

- a. ¿Vienes a tomar algo?
- b. No, no puedo. Tengo una entrevista para un trabajo.
- a. Pues que tengas suerte.
- b. Y vosotros, que lo paséis bien.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 8*En la calle:*

- a. Hombre, Manuel, ¡cuánto tiempo sin verte! ¿Cómo va todo?
- b. Bien, bien, no me puedo quejar ¿Y tú cómo estás?
- a. Pues hombre, tirando...
- b. ¿Y la familia?
- a. Bien.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 9

En el salón de casa:

- a. Perdona. ¿Te importaría acercarme esa revista?
- b. Sí, sí, toma. ¿Quieres que encienda la luz?
- a. Sí.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 10

En una fiesta de cumpleaños:

- a. ¡Muchas felicidades! ¡Cuántas flores! Las tarjetas de felicitación son muy bonitas. Aquí tienes tu regalo.
- b. (Mientras abre el regalo) ¡Vaya paquete más grande! (Lo abre y es un jersey) Es muy bonito, me gusta mucho.
- a. Esperamos que te valga.
- b. Estoy muy contento y feliz.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 11

Una conversación con un estudiante extranjero:

- a. ¿De verdad? Pues hablas español muy bien.
- b. Empecé a estudiar español hace dos años, en mi país.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje B es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Situación 12

En un aula de la universidad:

- a. Disculpa ¿puedo abrir un poco la ventana?
- b. Claro. Ábrela, ábrela.
- a. Es que la calefacción está muy fuerte.

¿Cree que la respuesta final del personaje A es apropiada?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ SÍ

Si piensa que no, ¿qué cree que debería haber dicho? _____

Appendix B.**Translation of the questionnaire into English**

Name: _____

Please answer the following questions before you take part in the study.

1. Date of birth: _____
2. Nationality: _____
3. Have you studied any foreign languages? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. If YES, please indicate:

☐ English ☐ French ☐ German ☐ Italian ☐ other: _____

How long have you studied the foreign languages?

(In years and months, please)

Language: _____ years _____ months

Language: _____ years _____ months

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS CAREFULLY AND COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE BELOW. BE AS SINCERE AS POSSIBLE:

Scenario 1

At a metro station:

- a. Excuse me, how do I get to Metropolitano?
- b. Well, you have to take line 4 towards Parque de Santa María until Avenida de América. There you need to change to line 6, the Circular one, and I think there are four or five stations to Metropolitano.
- a. O.K.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 2

A telephone conversation:

- a. Is Maria in?
- b. No, she is not at the moment
- a. Do you know what time she'll be back?
- b. Well, I don't really know. She didn't tell me.
- a. Well. This is Sam. I'll call her back before nine.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 3

In a restaurant:

Bartender: And what would you like to drink?

a.: Bring us a red wine. A "reserve".

Bartender: A house wine?

a.: Yes.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 4

At a doctor's office:

- a. First I am going to take your blood pressure and I am going to prescribe you some cream for your back and some tablets. Anyway, you shouldn't worry.
- b. Shall I come back again next week?
- a. Yes. Once the test results are ready, I'll call/inform you.
- b. See you, doctor!

Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 5*In a bar:*

- c. Hi! What would you like?
- d. A ham sandwich, please.
- c. With cheese?
- d. No.

Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 6*At a clothes store:*

Store assistant: Good morning. Can I help you?

a: Yes. I would like some pants.

Store assistant: Which size?

a: Well, I don't know... 13 or 14, I think.

Store assistant: In those sizes we have them in grey, blue and black. Which ones would you like?

a: These blue are fine. Can I try them on?

Store assistant: Yes, of course. The changing room is over there.

(After trying them on)

Store assistant: How do they look?

a: They fit me well. I will take them. How much are they?

Store assistant: They are reduced. They only cost 58 €. How would you like to pay? Cash or credit card?

a: By card.

Store assistant: Here you are.

a.: Bye.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 7*After class at the University:*

- a. Are you coming for a drink?
- b. No, I can't. I've got a job interview.
- a. Good luck!
- b. Enjoy your drink!

Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 8*In the street:*

- a. Manuel! How long has it been? How is everything going?
- b. Fine, fine, I can't complain. And how are you?
- a. Well, not too bad...
- b. And your family?
- a. Fine.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 9

In the lounge in your house:

- a. Excuse me. Would you mind passing me that magazine?
- b. Yes, here you are. Do you want me to put the light on?
- a. Yes.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 10

At a birthday party:

- a. Happy birthday! What a lot of flowers! The birthday cards are very nice. Here is your present.
- b. *(While opening the present)* It's a very big packet! *(He/she opens it and it's a sweater)* It's very nice. I like it very much.
- a. We hope it fits you.
- b. Yes, It will. I am very happy.

Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 11

A conversation with a foreign student:

- a. How long have you been in Spain?
- b. Six months
- a. Really? You speak Spanish very well!
- b. I started learning Spanish two years ago, in my country.

Do you think that person B's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Scenario 12

In a classroom at the University:

- a. Excuse me. Can I open the window?
- b. Of course. Open it, open it.
- a. The heating is too high.
- b. No, go ahead. It's no problem.
- a. O.K.

Do you think that person A's final reply is appropriate?

NO ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ YES

If not, what do you think s/he should have said? _____

Appendix C**1. Levels A1 and A2.**

2. *Así me gusta 1*, Publisher Cambridge University Press.
3. *Aula 1*, Publisher Difusión.
4. *Aula 2*, Publisher Difusión.
5. *Avance* (nivel elemental), Publisher S.G.E.L.
6. *Cumbre* (nivel elemental), Publisher S.G.E.L.
7. *Eco A1 + A2*, Publisher Edelsa.
8. *En acción 1*, Publisher EnCLAVE ELE.
9. *Español 1*, (libro del alumno y libro de ejercicios) Publisher Espasa Calpe

10. *Español (2000)*: (nivel elemental), Publisher S.G.E.L.
11. *Español en marcha 1*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
12. *Español más claro*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
13. *Español sin fronteras 1*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
14. *Esto funciona A*, Publisher Edelsa.
15. *Gente 1*, Publisher Difusión.
16. *Intercambio 1*, Publisher Difusión.
17. *Nuevo ELE inicial 1*, Publisher S.M.
18. *Nuevo ELE inicial 2*, Publisher S.M.
19. *Nuevo Ven 1*, Publisher Edelsa.
20. *Planeta 1*, Publisher Edelsa.
21. *Primer plano 1*, Publisher Edelsa (Grupo Didascalía)
22. *PRISMA: comienza nivel A1*, Publisher Edinumen.
23. *PRISMA: continúa nivel A2*, Publisher Edinumen.
24. *Rápido, Rápido*, Publisher Difusión.
25. *Redes Nivel 1*, Publisher S.M.
26. *Sueña 1*, Publisher Anaya

2. Levels B1 y B2.

2. *Así me gusta 2*, Publisher Cambridge University Press.
3. *Aula 3*, Publisher Difusión.
4. *Avance*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
5. *Cumbre* (nivel medio), Publisher S.G.E.L.
6. *Eco B1 + B2*, Publisher Edelsa.
7. *En acción 2*, Publisher EnCLAVE ELE.
8. *Español 2*, Publisher Espasa Calpe.
9. *Español (2000)*: (nivel medio), Madrid: S.G.E.L.
10. *Español en marcha 2*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
11. *Español sin fronteras 2*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
12. *Gente 2*, Publisher Difusión.
13. *Marca Registrada*, Publisher Santillana.
14. *Nuevo Ele Intermedio*, Publisher S.M.
15. *Nuevo Ven 2*, Publisher Edelsa.
16. *Planeta 2*, Publisher Edelsa.
17. *Primer plano 2*, Publisher Edelsa (Grupo Didascalía)
18. *PRISMA: avanza nivel B2*, Publisher Edinumen.
19. *PRISMA: progresa nivel B1*, Publisher Edinumen.
20. *Redes Nivel 2*, Publisher S.M.
21. *Sueña 2*, Publisher Anaya.

3. Levels C1 y C2.

1. *A fondo*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
2. *Abanico*, Publisher Difusión.
3. *Así me gusta 3*, Publisher Cambridge University Press.
4. *Aula 4*, Publisher Difusión.
5. *Cumbre* (nivel superior), Publisher S.G.E.L.
6. *Español 3*, Publisher Espasa Calpe.
7. *Español 2000* (nivel superior), Publisher S.G.E.L.
8. *Español en marcha 3*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
9. *Español sin fronteras 3*, Publisher S.G.E.L.
10. *Gente 3*, Publisher Difusión.

11. *Nuevo Ele Avanzado*, Publisher S.M.
12. *Nuevo Ven 3*, Publisher Edelsa.
13. *Planeta 3*, Publisher Edelsa.
14. *Primer plano 3*, Publisher Edelsa (Grupo Didascalía).
15. *Primer plano 4*, Publisher Edelsa (Grupo Didascalía).
16. *PRISMA: consolida C1*, Publisher Edinumen.
17. *Redes Nivel 3*, Publisher S.M.
18. *Sueña 3*, Publisher Anaya.
19. *Sueña 4*, Publisher Anaya.

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