

Preliminary study for the creation of a test of pragmatics for Chinese students of Spanish as a foreign language

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Abstract

If the studies of pragmatics of the interlanguage are few, there are still fewer that are carried out for the development of the pragmatic competence assessment in foreign/second language through tests that evaluate pragmatics. There is neither a level test to measure the pragmatic understanding of Spanish nor is there a test specific for students who speak Spanish. The objective of this study is to establish the basis on which the foundations of a future pragmatic test for Chinese students who study Spanish as a foreign language will be established. To achieve this purpose, an ethnographic study that starts from the exemplary generation method and serves to detect the degree of difficulty with which the most common situations of a student's university life are perceived has been carried out. Due to this preliminary study, in which the same students and some native experts provide us with this information, we can say that the items created and analysed meet the quality requirement, which means that the bases of the pragmatic test are correctly established. All these specifications indicate that and the final questionnaire can now be developed.

Keywords: pragmatics; second language learning; Spanish as a second language; Chinese language learners; pragmatics assessment.

1. Introduction

The present study is framed in the field of interlanguage pragmatics, that is “the study of nonnative speakers’ use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language (L2)” (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993: 3) and establishes a new theoretical basis in the field of language pragmatics of learners of Spanish as a foreign language (ELE) in a context of linguistic immersion in Spain.

The pragmatic component is part of the communicative competence of a language and its domain makes it possible to use it appropriately in each specific communicative situation (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). A questionnaire to check the level of pragmatic knowledge is an extremely useful tool to improve the teaching of specific target groups and research in the acquisition of Spanish as a foreign language (ELE) or second language (L2).

The objective is to carry out an ethnographic study that starts from the exemplary generation method and serves to detect the degree of difficulty with which the most common situations of a student’s university life are perceived. This study will be the indispensable basis on which the foundations of a future pragmatic test for students who speak Spanish as a foreign language will be established.

2. Theoretical frame

Studies of interlanguage pragmatics are relatively recent and most of them focus on English as a foreign language or second language (Van Dijk, 1977; Canale & Swain, 1980; Corder, 1982; Canale, 1983; Bouton, 1988; Bachman, 1990; Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Rose, 1992; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Cenoz & Valencia, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Bou Franch, 1998; Kasper, 1998; Gutiérrez-Colón, 2003; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Liu, 2002; Witten, 2002; Barron, 2003; Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Schauer, 2009; Taguchi, 2011). To a lesser extent, there are also studies on the pragmatics of interlanguage in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (Hervás, Picó & Villarrubias, 1990; Calvo Pérez, 1994; Matte Bon, 1995; Cenoz & Valencia, 1996; Gelabert, 1996; Lara, 2001; Bravo & Briz Gómez, 2004; Steele, 2006; Gaviño Rodríguez, 2008; Grabowski, 2008; Alvarado Ortega, 2010; Toledo Vega, 2012; Romero Betancourt, 2012; Campillos Llanos, 2013).

If the studies of pragmatics of the interlanguage are few, there are still fewer that are carried out for the development of the pragmatic competence assessment in foreign/second language through tests that evaluate pragmatics. Farhady (1980) carried out a first approach to a pragmatic test with a functional test of English as a foreign language; Hudson, Brown & Detmer devised in 1992 a framework for an intercultural pragmatic test in English that materialized in 1995 in a pragmatic test that has served as the basis for several subsequent tests. Other researchers have developed tests to measure the pragmatics of students of English

as a foreign language or second language, such as, but not limited to, the following ones: Yoshitake (1997) and Tada (2005) developed an interlanguage pragmatic test for Japanese English students; Liu (2004) developed such tests for Chinese students of English; Russell (2005) developed tests for Korean students of English as a foreign language; and Birjandi & Rezaei (2010) developed similar tests for Iranian students. Schauer (2009) studied through a pragmatic test of pragmatic awareness of students and EFL English as a second language acquisition and compared among German students studying English at home and those in study abroad for one year. There are also other studies that have developed pragmatic tests for Japanese (Taguchi, 2005, 2011; Itomitsu, 2009). However, in Spanish there is only one functional test that is a first approximation to the evaluation of the pragmatics of Spanish as a foreign language (Hervás, Picó & Villarrubias, 1990), based on the functional test by Farhady (1980).

There is neither a level test to measure the pragmatic understanding of Spanish nor is there a test specific for students who speak Spanish. The popularity of Spanish among Chinese university students has significantly increased their presence in Spanish universities. ELE professors have detected a lack of materials for this student profile. The creation of materials that specifically address the needs arising from the great cultural and linguistic distance between Chinese and Spanish can be carried out more precisely if it is possible to know the level of pragmatic understanding of the students. Pragmatics is presented as a component to which we must pay special attention. This is due to the approach that receives the teaching of ELE in Chinese universities, which is based on grammar, lexicon and translation, especially from written texts.

Communicative competence initially appeared in the official Spanish curriculum in China with the first curricular designs in the years 1998 and 2003. These programs did not introduce significant novelties with respect to the practice that had been carried out until now. According to Sánchez Griñán, these documents make reference to the communicative meaning of language learning but also take care of the art of communication (Sánchez Griñán, 2008: 96). Nevertheless, these documents do not mention the pragmatic level of the language, the understanding and production, but refer exclusively to the “coding and decoding of the linguistic system [...] obviating the role of pragmatic inferences in the communication process” (Sánchez Griñán, 2008: 96). It is still, then, the teaching of the language from a methodology based on the grammar-translation method and the structuralist approach.

Linguistic immersion in a second language country significantly improves the students' awareness of pragmatic errors (Bouton, 1994; Matsumura, 2003; Hassall, 2006; and Schauer, 2009), but the awareness of pragmatic errors may occur at a different rate from the awareness of grammatical errors. Schauer (2009) demonstrates that German students who are integrated into study abroad programs in the United Kingdom achieve a pragmatic awareness similar to native speakers at the end of their nine months of stay in the country. However, we should ask whether this results would be similar for students with a language and a culture as distant

as China. As we have seen, teaching Spanish in China is essentially lexicon-based with a focus on grammar and reading (Sánchez Griñán, 2008: 94-102). Chinese students are often doomed to pragmatic failure when faced to real situations in Spain or in their relationship with Spaniards (Liang & Han, 2005: 10).

3. Methodology

The optimal way to assess the pragmatic levels of Chinese students is to test the students both at the beginning and completion of an immersion program. The level they reach upon completion of the program would measure their level of pragmatic competence in university contexts (this is, everyday situations that may be part of the lives of students residing in Spain). But this specific test does not exist yet. For this reason, this study establishes the theoretical-practical basis for developing one.

There were several strategies established by Lado (1961: 26) to design a language test. The first proposed strategy is the choice of situations in which the language is produced. Lado states that the number of situations that can be found is infinite and that no speaker is fully competent in all of them. According to Lado, it is not possible to ensure that the language has been evaluated without having validated the situation presented in the test. As a solution to this difficulty, this work takes as starting point an initial sampling of the test from common everyday scenarios in university students, extracted from the inventory of functions of the Cervantes Institute (2007). It is not about language samples, but about real situations, in order to detect which ones students perceive as more or less difficult in their everyday lives.

The objective of the preliminary study is to understand the perception of difficulty Chinese students' face when integrating in foreign daily activities, while enrolled in an immersion program in Spain. To gain this understanding, we have used a questionnaire. This experiment will allow us to measure pragmatics through a representative sample of real situations that differ in levels of difficulty.

Once the data of the entire investigation has been collected and analyzed, the items are re-ordered according to the level of difficulty according to the number of correct answers and errors made by the users. In this way, it will be possible to have a specific pragmatic level of comprehension test for non-proficient ELE students.

The first step required to develop the pragmatic comprehension test is to obtain an understanding of real everyday situations encountered by Spanish university students and to observe the degree of difficulty of these situations, as perceived by the Chinese students while studying at a Spanish university.

Given that functional competence is one of the fundamental competences in pragmatics, the study starts with a pre-selection of the most frequent functions in the daily life of university

students. The functions inventoried in the Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes (PCIC, 2007) are taken as a basis in order to elaborate the situations that will form the items of this preliminary study.

In order to develop a quality test, the characteristics of the test's utility must be defined explicitly and clearly (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). One of these qualities is the authenticity of the items (the future test will conform this characteristic, since the preliminary test is developed precisely for the purpose of getting the maximum authenticity). The authenticity of the items, in this preliminary study, has been found and contrasted through the open questions asked to three representative collectives: (1) Chinese university students who are immersed; (2) experts in ELE teaching to university students (among these students are a large number of Chinese students); and (3) other native and non-native Spanish speaking university students.

This preliminary study is an adaptation of the so-called exemplary generation (Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Rose & Ono, 1995; Ostrom & Gannon, 1996; Groves, 1996; Rose & Ng, 2001; Birjandi & Rezaei, 2010) and consists of an online survey in which participants are asked to assess, according to their own perception, the degree of difficulty involved in certain functions from a context that takes into account pragmatic variables such as imposition, power, or distance. With the open question that is presented at the end of each item, students can comment on the situation or add similar situations in which they have found themselves in Spain. All this information will be used to create the final test.

The preliminary study is carried out through a survey that consists of 240 items, where 176 items are mandatory responses and 55 items are not mandatory responses. The items are distributed as follows:

- 9 introductory questions on personal data of the respondents that provide us with significant independent variables (nationality, age, sex, length of residence in Spain in case of non-Spanish students, residence time in a Spanish-speaking country if applicable, level of Spanish according to the degree obtained, years of learning Spanish in case of not having a diploma and Spanish university in which they study or work);
- 176 questions of mandatory response related to the functions inventoried by the PCIC (Instituto Cervantes, 2007) in scenarios that reproduce everyday situations in which Chinese students can meet during their stay in Spain;
- 55 non-compulsory open-ended question items that can potentially provide scenarios suggested by the students themselves or teachers participating in the survey.

The answers to the 176 questions about situations in the university context are presented in terms of difficulty, on a scale of 1 to 10: 1 being the value that expresses a minimum level of difficulty and 10 expressing a level of maximum difficulty. The participants in the study

are asked to measure each situation depending on the difficulty involved according to their opinion, taking into account not only the linguistic difficulty, but also the pragmatic difficulty.

To avoid confusion when assessing the difficulty of the examples, the survey is presented in bilingual Spanish/Chinese format (the first language of the students) and the participants are allowed to use this same language, if they wish, to answer the open answers.

At the end of each part of the questionnaire, there is an open question asking participants to write examples that they have experienced themselves. It is possible that students perceive the same situation as easier or more difficult, depending on a pragmatic variables such as imposition, power, or distance, and that the scenarios presented in the exemplification of the functions are ambiguous when we speak of degree of difficulty. It is specified that the examples they describe must have been perceived as especially difficult during their stay in Spain. The objective of these open questions is to be able to detect possible situations not suggested in the questionnaire that are relevant for the preparation of the pragmatic test. This open question can be answered in both Chinese and Spanish, at the participant's choice. In total, the questionnaire contains 55 open questions to gather new situations, 5 of which are repeated, as in the closed questions. The survey lasts between 20 and 30 minutes.

Unlike other tests that apply exemplary generation in their research (Birjandi & Rezaei, 2010), the participants are provided with some of the situations already devised and they only have to add those that they consider to be more common or especially difficult. In this case, the pragmatic level of comprehension test does not focus only on a few functions, but aims to measure pragmatic understanding by covering as many functions as possible.

The survey has been passed to native and non-native speaking students and professors who are experts in teaching Spanish as a second language to Chinese students (N = 209). Before administering the final survey, it is piloted among a smaller sample of university students (3 native language subjects, and 3 non-native language subjects) and 3 expert teachers. Subsequently, with the data obtained, we proceed to rectify possible ambiguities and errors that this pilot sample reports.

4. Participants in the study

Of the 158 participants, 19% are male and 81% are female. When categorized by chronological age, 74% are between 22 and 25 years old, 18.5% are between 26 and 29 years old, while only 3.5% are under 22 years old. Regarding the level of Spanish, the largest group (almost 36%) has passed the DELE B2 (official language exams of the Instituto Cervantes), followed by a 20.5% who hold the Diploma Level 4 (EEE-4) Spanish in China. Less representative are the groups that have the DELE B1 (11.5%) and the Level 8 (EEE-8) of Spanish in China (12%). 11% of the respondents claim not to have any ELE diploma.

Another representative variable for the study is the duration the respondents have resided in Spain. In this sense, 47% say they have lived in Spain for less than one year, while 26% have lived in Spain between one and two years and 21.5% between two and three years. Only 5.5% have lived in Spain for more than three years.

The Spanish subjects (13 male and 30 female) who participate in the survey are mostly Spanish as a second language (ELE) professors (67%), which gives them added value as experts in ELE education, especially for their teaching experience with Chinese students at the university. In the sample of native speakers, there is a 33% who are students of the Official Master's degree: Spanish as a foreign language, that is, future ELE professors.

The information provided by the native and the non-native speakers is very useful for the study, since the native speakers identify scenarios that do not appear in the non-native speakers and vice versa.

5. Measurement scale

An ordinal scale was used in this study. These scales mark the level with a number that allows the responses to be ordered one with respect to the others. In this case the informants had to mark the level from 1 to 10 (1 = easier, 10 = more difficult).

6. Problems in the preparation of the preliminary study

The basis of the study is the inventory of functions of the PCIC (Instituto Cervantes, 2007) in its six levels (A1/A2, B1/B2, C1/C2), with which the questionnaire has been written. The inventory presents a total of six general functions that are repeated in each level with 140 microfunctions adapted to the difficulty of each of the levels. These functions are described as: the kind of things that people can do through the use of language: describe, ask, reject, thank, apologize, express feelings, etc. The CEFR (2002: 122) refers to the functions of the language, with the name microfunctions, when developing the functional competence—one of the competencies that constitute pragmatic competencies—. The CEFR defines microfunctions as “categories for the functional use of single (usually short) utterances, usually as turns in an interaction” (CEFR, 2002: 125).

The large number of functions is problematic, because they must be transformed into situations that further must be converted into items that can be evaluated. Answering 176 questions can lead to demotivation and fatigue among the participants and can cause them to either stop answering the questions with the seriousness required or abandon the questionnaire altogether. To overcome this difficulty, the questionnaire was divided into 4 parts (survey1, survey2, survey3, and survey4), which maintained the format of the original questionnaire, but required each respondent to answer only part of it. Each of these divi-

sions of the questionnaire consists of a total of 50 obligatory questions, plus the optional open questions (17 in each questionnaire). The 50 questions in each questionnaire present 42 different situations for each survey and eight that are repeated. These eight repeated items serve as controls and validate the survey, providing the necessary proofs that allow us to use the four surveys as a single survey. Thus, the four samples evaluate the degree of difficulty in the same way.

This has been verified by performing a MANOVA. The 8 items repeated with the degree of difficulty granted by the participants have acted as dependent variables and the four samples as independent variable. The results indicate that there are no significant overall differences between the four samples (Trace of Pillai: 0.138, equivalence $F_{21.456} = 1.045$, $p > 0.4$). This indicates the homogeneity of the four parts of the global survey and that these can be treated as a single survey.

In a first phase, a survey of 150 questions with the corresponding open questions is prepared and divided into 3 parts. The first problem arises with the results that emerge from this first data collection, since the participants do not identify enough situations of the proposals in the survey classified as “very difficult”. The maximum difficulty shown, speaking in terms of arithmetic mean, was of 5.59 on a scale of 10. These results are presented as a problem, since for the final objective of the study—to try to scale the situations according to their degree of difficulty to be able to write a pragmatic comprehension test—situations that are in the very difficult range are also needed.

Starting from the fact that each function consists of different variables—on the one hand, the linguistic variable and, on the other, the pragmatic variables that include aspects such as imposition, power, or distance—it is concluded that one of the reasons for which the participants consider very few of the situations as “very difficult” is that they do not take pragmatic variables into account. That is, participants who in most cases have a level of Spanish above A2, and who value functions with a difficulty of 1 to 5 on a scale of 1 to 10, only take into account purely linguistic variables. On the other hand, it is valued the possibility that students never come to consider the score of 5 to 10 for purely cultural reasons, since that would mean admitting a lack of command of the language that could make them lose face before the teacher.

To solve the problem and in view of the need to identify situations in the very difficult area to graduate in the pragmatic test, a fourth survey is elaborated on, expanding the survey instructions. It is decided to add two paragraphs of instructions: (1) one that serves to make the participants more aware that they have to think from a cultural and pragmatic perspective, and (2) another one in which the use of capital letters is notified to highlight the function that must be evaluated. In the questions, the functions to be evaluated in uppercase are emphasized so that the participants do not confuse the function with the context. In Chinese, there

are no uppercase characters and the limitations of the online program that is used to make the surveys do not allow editing the text (it does not have bold, underlined, color, etc.), so this question is obvious in Chinese. In the Chinese instructions, it is reported that the functions in Spanish are highlighted in capital letters.

Illustration 1 shows the interface of the survey with an example of the instructions.

ILLUSTRATION 1

Instructions in Spanish and Chinese

SITUACIONES EN CONTEXTO UNIVERSITARIO Y SU GRADO DE DIFICULTAD (ENCUESTA 4)

Abandonar-> Continuaré más tarde

3.- INSTRUCCIONES:

A continuación vas a leer una serie de situaciones relacionadas con tu vida en la universidad. Seguro que hay algunas situaciones que te parecen más difíciles de resolver que otras. Tienes que pensar que estás en España y que hablas con españoles. Valora, por favor, del 1 al 10 cada una de estas situaciones, teniendo en cuenta que 1 es lo más fácil y 10 lo más difícil.

Nota: Se trata de ver cómo percibimos la dificultad de cada situación aunque seamos nativos.

接下来你将看到一系列有关学校生活的情景，其中一定有一些让你感到比较难以处理。请设想你在西班牙并同西班牙人交流。下面请按照难易程度用1到10进行评价。（1为最容易，10为最难。）

Además, tienes que pensar si la situación se resuelve de la misma forma según la forma de ser y de pensar china y la forma de ser y de pensar española, es decir, si cuando lo haces en español tienes que cambiar lo que te dice tu cultura china para actuar como dice la cultura española o se hace igual en las dos culturas.

另外，你必须考虑根据中国和西班牙的思考和行为方式，下列情况能否用同一种方式处理。也就是说，当你用西班牙语处理该情况时，是否必须改变你的中国式反应来适应西班牙文化，还是两种文化的处理方式一样。

RECUERDA: Debes evaluar la dificultad de la situación que está escrita en MAYÚSCULA.

注意：你要评价字母大写的情况的难度。

<-Anterior Siguiente->

11%

The situations are based on:

- the functions presented exclusively at the reference level for the Spanish of the PCIC C1-C2;
- the ones presented in the open questions of the survey1, survey2, and survey3;
- the ones presented in personal interviews with Chinese university students;
- those presented in the emails and social networks presented by Chinese students of Spanish who are living in Spain;
- those presented in the emails and social networks presented by Chinese students of Spanish who are living in Spain and studying in Spanish universities;
- those presented in the emails and social networks presented by Chinese ex-students of Spanish who had lived in Spain and studied in Spanish universities.

In this second collection of survey data, the expected results are achieved. The situations obtained are framed within a difficulty that we could call very difficult, with responses of a maximum average of 7.7 on a scale of 10.

We repeat the previously used methodology using eight control questions to measure variables, which are difficult to control (fatigue, tiredness, and even resentment). A similar evaluation of these eight situations in the four surveys means that the subject samples are not biased for this task. For practical purposes, the four surveys are treated as a single sample, which includes all situations, without the inconvenience of answering a too long test. This is known as fractional sampling of situations.

7. Gradation of situations

With all the data of the four surveys of exemplary generation, a statistical analysis was carried out. This makes it possible to order the situations from the easiest to the most difficult, taking into account their average and standard deviation. The average of all the answers to a same item indicates the degree of difficulty compensated for the sample. For example, if an item has an average of 1.47, it means that the majority of the participants has said that it is an easy situation. The standard deviation tells us how the data are distributed with respect to the mean. A very high standard deviation implies that there is little agreement; on the other hand, the low standard deviation implies that the mean will be much more representative.

Considering these data, the items have been grouped into 5 levels: very easy / easy (17 items); easy-medium (15 items); medium (26 items); medium-high / high (23 items), and very high (16 items). These levels are what will help us to write a first provisional test of pragmatic understanding. In order to write the definitive test in the form of interactions, the selected situations, apart from being ordered by the level of perceived difficulty, will also have to be grouped according to what is considered most appropriate for routines, implications or speech acts. Thus, 24 situations are selected to write the routines, 24 to convert them into implicatures, and 24 adapt them to speech acts (specifying which type of speech act is involved).

8. Results

From the information provided by the box diagram, the situations are graduated as presented in table 1 (see the table on the next page).

On one hand, there are the extremes—which are symmetrical—, in which the easiest and most difficult situations are located, and, on the other, the intermediate situations. The values correspond to the degree of average difficulty that the situations presented in the preliminary study have obtained. The choice of items is made between the situations that are within these values following the following criteria:

- Non-repeated averages are selected to maximize the variability of the difficulty scale.

- The values that have the lowest standard deviation are selected as indicators of a greater degree of agreement on the perceived difficulty.
- It is taken into account that the selection of the items is symmetric to improve the statistical properties of the scale.

TABLE 1

Degree of difficulty of the items in the preliminary study

Nº ITEMS	DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY	VALOR
8	0 (not difficult)	1.47 – 1.97
15	1	2.00 – 2.62
13	2	2.65 – 3.37
13	3	3.41 – 4.18
15	5	4.19 – 5.35
8	6 (very difficult)	5.37 – 7.71

9. Validity of the construct

Once the process of drafting and elaborating the questionnaire is finished, it is verified that the questions are not ambiguous, as well as that they contain no errors. For this, it is necessary to validate them. The validation of the construct has been carried out, as recommended by Hudson, Detmer & Brown (1992) and Hudson, Brown & Detmer (1995) from two perspectives: first, from the theoretical perspective (the representativeness of the content of the test, carefully planning according to the theoretical bases, research or practical perspectives) and, second, the perspective of the assessment of the expert (experts trained or in terms of the contents or processes that they want to measure so that they judge to what degree the test (or each item of the test individually) is measuring relevant contents).

The validation from the theoretical perspective has been made from the literature (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Farhady, 1980; Hudson, Detmer & Brown, 1992; Hudson, Brown & Detmer, 1995; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996a, 1996b; Lu, 2008; Jin & Cortazzi, 2011). To validate the items from the perspective of the expert's assessment, we reviewed the survey with four native language experts (native language teachers who are experts in pragmatics who also contrasted the time required to answer the questions).

9.1. Selection of relevant items

The relevant items that will serve to write the questions of the pilot test of the main study have to be chosen. First, we must determine the number of items that the pilot test will have.

As this is a pilot test, the number of items selected must be large enough to eliminate items that present ambiguities or extreme levels of difficulty (either all of them correct, or none correct). To make sure we can replace the questions that do not work, we are going to elaborate a series of clone questions. The clone questions are a random sampling of all the possible situations evaluated, that is, questions that will serve as a spare in case we find some failure in the pilot test to be able to substitute the inadequate question.

Tests that are too long can give skewed results due to fatigue of the participants, therefore it was decided that the final survey should have of 54 items. However, since the initial survey at the end of each function has an open question so that the participants can include the personal situations that they find most difficult to face, it is convenient to elaborate a pilot test that has 72 items. The questions that are ambiguous or that are not useful for a reliable evaluation will be eliminated.

9.2. Validity and reliability

A box diagram is applied to choose these 72 items in a balanced way between percentiles. This diagram allows us to see the minimum and maximum values of degree of difficulty, which is the variable that is needed.

ILLUSTRATION 2

Minimum and maximum values of the degree of difficulty of the preliminary study

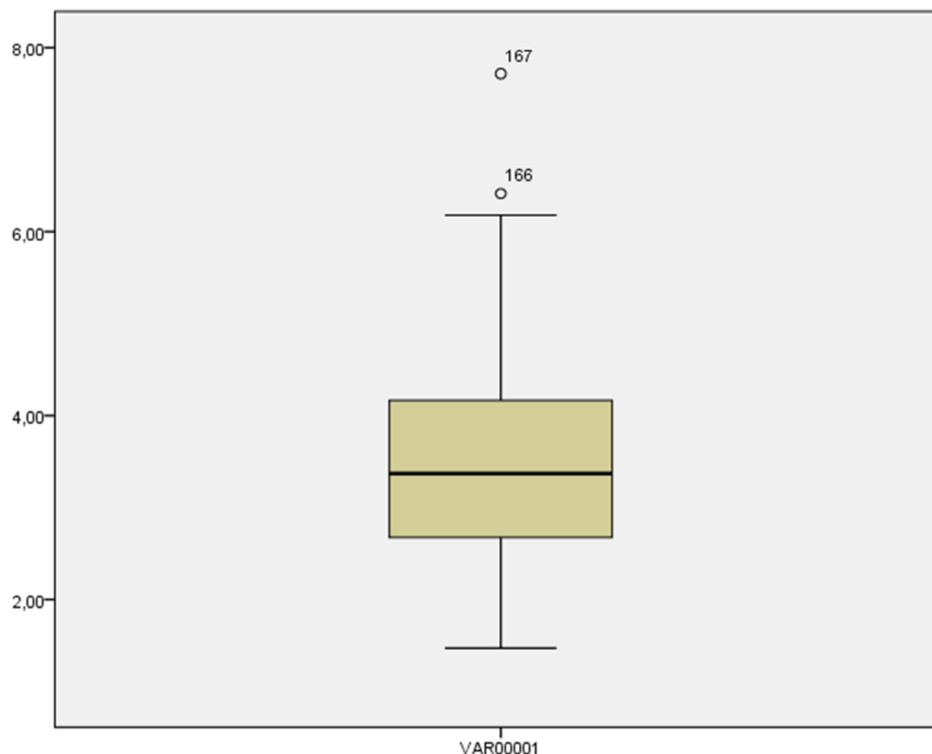


TABLE 2

Descriptive statistics of the difficulty of situations

N	Valid	167
	Not valid	0
MEDIAN		3,3720
MAXIMUM		7,71
MINIMUM		1,47
PERCENTILES	25	2,6500
	50	3,3720
	75	4,1820

The resulting quartiles indicate that the dispersion of data is not large, although there are atypical values that lengthen the lines of the maximum (7.71) and minimum (1.47) values. The median, which divides the quartile box, is substantially displaced towards the bottom (3.37), which means that the items analyzed are mostly concentrated in the easy part of the difficulty scale.

This analysis provides sufficient data to create the final test of pragmatics.

10. Conclusion

In order to check the level of pragmatics Chinese students have at the beginning of an immersion program, as well as to know what level they reach at the end, a pragmatic comprehension test should be used, which allows them to measure their level of pragmatic understanding in their own contexts of university students. However, this specific test is yet to be created.

The objective of this study is to establish the bases for the future creation of this test. Therefore, a survey had been developed with the final objective of knowing the perception of difficulty that Chinese students have in common university-life situation while studying in a context of linguistic immersion in Spain.

Due to this preliminary study, in which the same students and some native experts provide us with this information, we can say that the items created and analysed meet the quality requirement, which means that the bases of the pragmatic test are correctly established. All these specifications indicate that and the final questionnaire can be now developed.

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