

Chapter 6

Analysis and Discussion



Abstract This chapter will give an analysis and discussion of the findings in relation to the various research questions outlined in the preceding section. From Sect. 6.1 through Sect. 6.4, the overall analysis may be broken into three sub-sections: (1) the general trend of each routine task modality, (2) the impacts of proficiency and study-abroad experience on distinct components of routine competence, alongside underlying explanations, and (3) specific individual pragmatic performances with extensive discussion. Sect. 6.5 will depict the learners' cognitive processes as they complete the whole routine tasks. The details can be seen as follows.

Keywords General trend · Proficiency · Study-abroad experience · Routine competence · Cognitive processes

6.1 Production Competence of Routines

One of the goals of this study was to look into the effects of English proficiency and study-abroad experience on learners' competence of initiating and responding to utterances at the same time, as both these elements combined to form productive pragmatic competence of routines. In the current study, the constituting mechanisms of each productive segment is primarily reflected as the mappings of the actual situational context (ASC, implying sociopragmatic contexts or functions) onto prior context (PC, denoting pragmalinguistic forms), validating the importance of both context knowledge for productive pragmatic competence of routines. In accordance with Sect. 5.1, the three subsections that follow will show the underlying analysis and discussion.

6.1.1 *The General Trend of Routine Production*

This study first looked at the impact of English proficiency and study-abroad experience on contextualized productive pragmatic (initiating and responding) competence

of routines (ProPCR) among Chinese learners of English using a computer-animated production task. The operationalization was further computed by adding the scores from the ASC and PC sections. The descriptive result given in the previous section was then turned into the corresponding Fig. 6.1. So that the overall dynamic trend between two variables and ProPCR could be seen much more clearly. Each level shows a moderate increase from G1 to G2 (the full lines are in bold), indicating that proficiency has a very little influence in routine production. In marked contradiction, a considerable rising trend (dotted lines in bold) exists from G2 to G3, indicating that study-abroad experience has a greater influence on routine output.

From an overall trend standpoint, Fig. 6.1 demonstrates that the overall ProPCR of all-level participants involved is comparatively at a satisfactory level (outnumbering 70% or so on the total), as shown in the advanced formation of ASC-PC knowledge mappings. Furthermore, mastery of ASC knowledge significantly outnumbered that of PC knowledge counterparts both in the initiating and responding sections, resulting in slightly easier access to actual situational information and contextual reminders but more limited retrieval of PC knowledge for native-like output of linguistic strings that correspond to the ASC. In terms of the criteria used to measure ASC mastery, all three groups of learners were needed to first analyze the key sociopragmatic information encoded in the computer-animated scenarios, followed by perception of the target speech act suitable technique (if necessary). Following that, participants' PC knowledge took effect, mapping the preferred pragmalinguistic ways of saying things onto the proper sociopragmatic context, culminating in the attainment of productive routine competence.

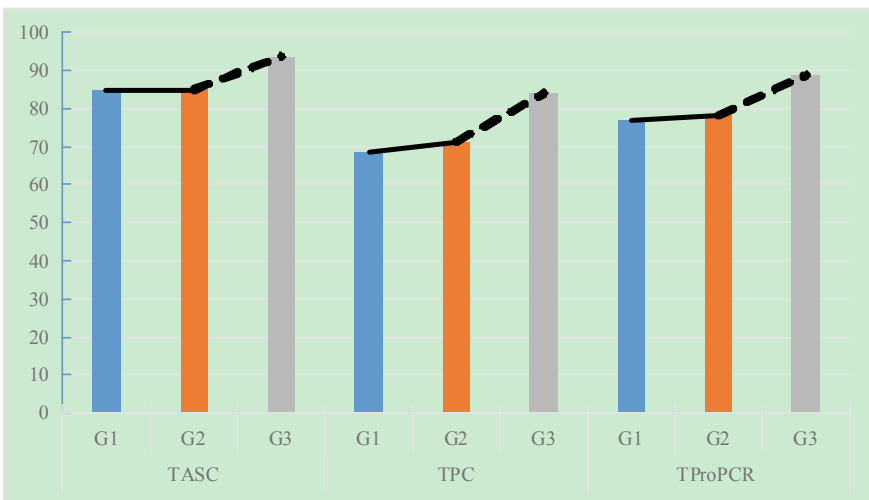


Fig. 6.1 The general trend of routine production. *Note* TASC, total mastery degree of actual situational context; TPC, total mastery degree of prior context knowledge; ProPCR, productive pragmatic competence of routines

It is obvious that ASC will act as a critical precondition for ProPCR, with any divergence resulting in the failure of their mappings. Consider the example scenario “refusal to provide additional food”. The core of refusal speech act (*No thanks*), accompanied by the strategy being full or staffed (*I’m full/staffed*) as an excuse, was mistaken for gratitude speech act (*Thank you*), implying the illocutionary force of acceptance rather than rejection, and therefore directly leading the deviated retrieval of PC knowledge to inappropriate target expressions.

However, simply interpreting the ASC information did not guarantee success in the PC sections. For example, the “late for appointment” (#R7) highlighted the target routine *I’m sorry. {I’m late.}*, the apologetic speech act, and the accompanying pragmatic strategy indicate two distinct levels of ASC knowledge that are universally understood. These are most frequently and successfully produced with the target apology utterance of all three groups, though participants do not always have complete command of appropriate pragmalinguistic forms based on their PC knowledge: (*I’m Sorry for (my) late, I’m sorry for lating (5 min), and I won’t late again*). It might also explain the ease with which all participants comprehended the contextual reminders when compared to situationally appropriate selection and use of routine expressions.

6.1.2 Impacts of Proficiency and Study-Abroad Experience on Routine Production

As shown in Fig. 6.1, it revealed somewhat similar patterns in the ASC, PC, and ProPCR sections, namely, little observable change (see flat lines in bold from G1 to G2) is evident between the two non-sojourn groups, whereas marked rising tendency (steep dotted lines from G2 to G3) is clearly observed between high-level groups with and without study-abroad experience. This confirms that all components of ProPCR were insignificantly changed by proficiency alone but profoundly influenced by study-abroad experience, and the combination of both variables primarily resulted in no dramatic pragmatic advances.

For one thing, the minimal role of proficiency highlighted here implicitly mirrors prior literature’s differing perspectives on the link between L2 proficiency and pragmatic competency of routines. As previously stated, several research has demonstrated that students’ L2 proficiency is a major positive predictor of their pragmatic competence of routines, implying that students’ pragmatic competence of routines rises proportionally to their growing L2 proficiency (i.e., Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011). On the other hand, high proficiency does not always result in native-like routine production, which is less essential than exposure, namely, higher-proficiency learners unnecessarily outperform lower-level peers on competent routine production (e.g., Taguchi, 2013). Taken together, the latter findings are more consistent with the existing study, indicating a certain but comparatively weaker impact of proficiency

on routine production, which is most likely due to the nature of routines: situational-bound, constitutive shortness, and linguistic simplicity. This may account for the ease with which even low-proficiency participants may generate them as a prefabricated chunk with no need for sophisticated semantic and syntactic parsing. However, this is not to argue that routines of all sorts do not benefit from L2 proficiency, particularly when producing semi-fixed expressions with specific slots for further completion.

For another, the research findings lend further support to the study-abroad context's superiority over the at-home context in learning or producing routine expressions as self-contained pragmatic units through extended residence in the host-country environment, which has already been confirmed by the majority of relevant studies mentioned in the section of literature review. The positive effect of studying abroad over the at-home learning context for L2 routine production makes intuitive sense when two fundamental strands of factors are considered: the promoting aspects of the abroad setting itself and the ubiquitous nature of routines. In such an atmosphere, high-quality opportunities to engage in social practices, L2-driven norms, and precise awareness might potentially be established and attained, which are uncommon in an at-home instructional situation. These pragmatic practices, reinforced by native speakers' authentic and unscripted utterances via everyday interaction, can further lead to conceptual socialization (such as linguistic choices regulated by specific contexts or interpersonal connections) into automatized pragmatic behaviors. Routines, on the other hand, are frequently used across the community and are tied to daily speech occurrences, with the characteristics of permeating daily communication and facilitating social involvement. The superiority of the study-abroad context is largely due to the abundance of opportunities to observe local community members' preferred ways of saying or selecting linguistic forms, as well as to frequently practice those target-like patterns through daily engagement in social events or activities.

Furthermore, comparable to the effect of L2 proficiency, a study-abroad investigation gave slightly divergent findings (no significant or even negative influence) depending on the relationship between study-abroad settings and L2 production of routines reviewed (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011; Kecskes, 2000). In other words, students who study overseas do not always surpass their peers who just have an at-home academic background. According to the takeaway from conflicting findings, studying abroad "is not a uniform construct" (Taguchi, 2018: 129; Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 221). Specifically, the study-abroad experience can generate varying impacts across various pragmatic targets (situational vs. function routines or fixed vs. semi-fixed routines) as well as distinct task modalities (comprehension vs. production).

The study-abroad environment, in particular, "does not account for target-like production of routines" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 224). Elucidating the issue of language socialization, however, "just physical presence in the target language environment is no guarantee for actual engagement" (Roever et al., 2014: 379), and the individual difference factors such as motivation or willingness (Kecskes, 2015),

learner agency or subjectivity, other decisive factors, such as intensity of interaction (Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011), or another variable initial-level formulaic competence (Taguchi et al., 2013) can vary widely and take significant effect.

Simultaneously, in contrast to these clear-cut findings, there is another line of evidence in the present study showing the interplay of proficiency and study-abroad experience has a significant impact on the production of routines. To put it another way, proficiency and overseas studying experience both influence learners' capacity to perform L2 pragmatic functions of routines. A complex association was also discovered between study-abroad experience and the structure of pragmatic targets, with L2 proficiency serving as a mediator (Roever, 2005). Indeed, study-abroad experience, even when at play, has not always been shown to offer a distinctive contribution to routine output, which may also be vulnerable to proficiency levels (Taguchi, 2013). In terms of routine production, adequate exposure to target language surroundings can result in L2-dominated patterns and sociopragmatic norms, and high-level L2 proficiency is inevitably helpful to the precise management of target-like linguistic forms.

6.1.3 Learners' Specific Performances in Routine Production

This section now moves on to a more extensive examination and discussion of the impact of proficiency and study abroad on the distinct features of productive pragmatic competence of the routines under investigation in this study.

6.1.3.1 Competence of Initiating Utterances

From a holistic standpoint, the competence of initiating utterances (CIU) was found to be adequate in comparison to a comparatively lower level reported in Wang's (2020) study, as the entire score rate exceeded 70%. In accordance with the overall productive trend, learners surpassed their PC counterparts in terms of ASC knowledge mastery. The results from the present study's Chinese EFL participants revealed a variety of nuanced roles of proficiency.

As shown in Fig. 6.2, proficiency alone demonstrated a gently declining trend (see ASC from G1 to G2) in learners' mastery of ASC knowledge, a slightly ascending impact (see G1 to G2 in PC section) on their mastery of PC knowledge, and an almost parallel trend (see CIU section from G1 to G2) for the overall CIU. In comparison, the impact of the study-abroad context alone on all dimensions of CIU was rather consistently upward (from G2 to G3 across each level). It is also apparent that both overseas-sojourn students outperformed their non-residence counterparts significantly, indicating the superiority of studying abroad over studying at home. The following analysis is depicted below.

Proficiency and CIU The area-line constitutional diagram was produced based on the data calculated and displayed in Fig. 6.3 to observe the influence of proficiency

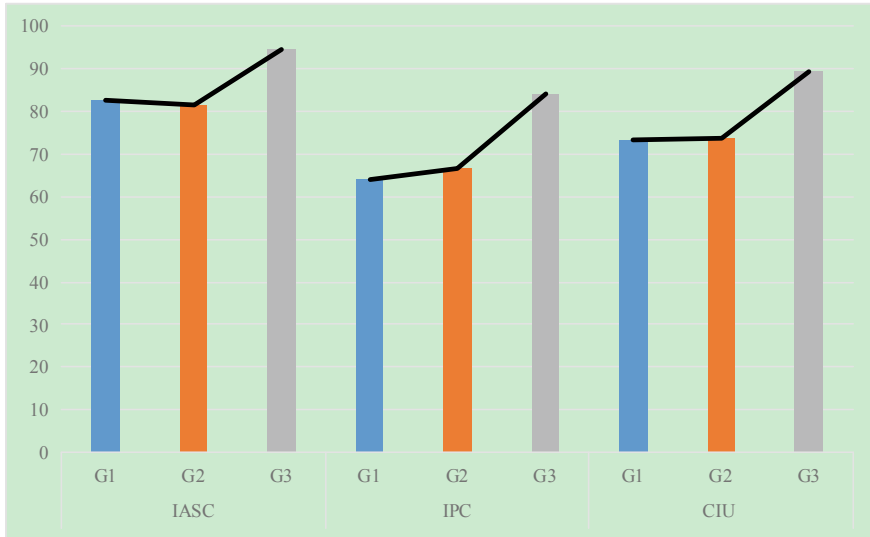


Fig. 6.2 The general trend of CIU. *Note* IASC, mastery degree of actual situational context in initiating competence; IPC, total mastery degree of prior context knowledge in initiating competence; CIU, competence of initiating utterances

alone (by subtracting numbers in G1 from those in G2) on the CIU section. The areas above the x-axis represent the positive effect of proficiency, while the areas below the x-axis represent its negative influence (applying to other area graphs below). The polarized trend was committed to demonstrating that proficiency was significantly salient to both groups of learners when commencing target routines such as *Be careful* (#1), *Come to my place* (#2), *I'm sorry I'm late, I gotta go*, *Watch out*, and *Can I you leave/take a message*.

What's more, two negligible positive correlations lie in PC knowledge of *Nice to see you* and ASC knowledge of *Excuse the mess*. By comparison, counter-evidence from the figure below manifested a negative-correlated pattern that lower-level learners demonstrated superior initiating performance to higher-level peers, such as *Watch out*, *Can I get a ride*, *Can/Would you (mind) pass(ing) me a glass*, *No problem*, and *Do you have a minute*. The rest partially-negative roles of proficiency were mainly reflected as ASC knowledge of *Nice to see you* and PC knowledge of *Excuse the mess*.

Concerning the ASC portion, a notable pattern is that the proficiency level appears to have resulted in a mixed contradictory effect of ASC knowledge. To begin, Table 6.1 depicts the particular performance of the ASC knowledge section between two non-residence groups with varying degrees of proficiency. The situations are sorted and ranked from the top down in the leftmost column by the favorably influencing degree of proficiency.

However, as shown in Table 6.2, high-level proficiency may not ensure the complete accuracy of ASC information. G2 learners' inaccuracies in the ASC portion

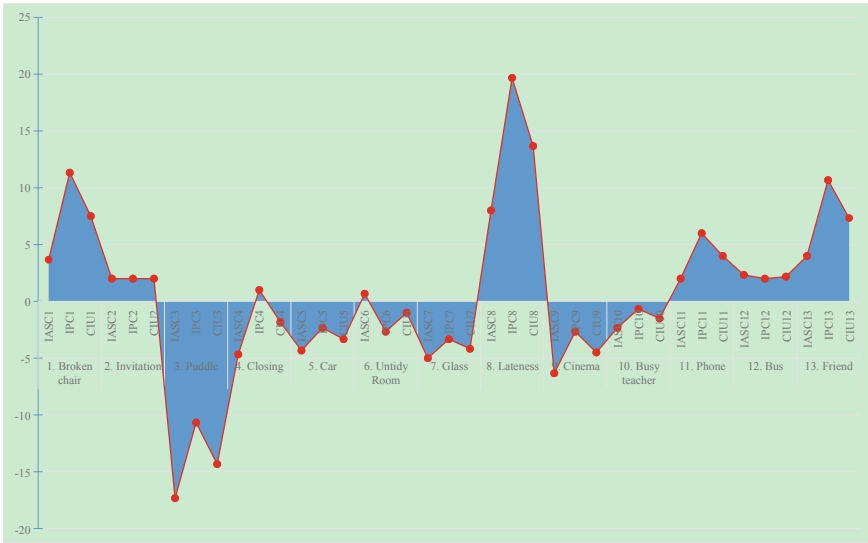


Fig. 6.3 Effects of proficiency on ASC, PC, and CIU

are also evident in the erroneous comprehension of essential contextual information puddle as heavy rain, resulting in a large variation in the target speech act with its pragmatic strategies, such as *not forgetting the umbrella*, or *come with me*, and so on. Similarly, learners with excellent linguistic competence occasionally misinterpreted being quiet for talking loudly (i.e., *Could you speak aloud?*), or asking for a cup as though they wanted coffee (e.g., *A cup of coffee?*). In reality, such fixed routines or semi-fixed expressions with fixed lexical cores may not need significant language parsing, relying instead on recurrent practice based on a thorough knowledge of ASC requirements.

In Table 6.3, the precision of pragmalinguistic selections, such as syntax and lexical core, must be strongly demanded to ensure the meanings contained in the response can be sufficiently and mutually understood. To be more explicit, improper linguistic representation can directly lead to deviations from native-speaker norms, such as erroneous word order or word choice.

For example, the inaccurate routine *sorry for my lating* uttered by lower-proficiency students who have not studied abroad might result in an immediate PC level of Level 4, deviating from the target linguistic form due to interlanguage grammatical mistakes. Similarly, problematic utterances by G1 participants included adding a redundant object following the fixed goal expression *watch out* and employing an incorrect preposition related to *be careful*, as well as incorrect phrasal verb collocation *go up to take*. On the other, high-level proficiency can undoubtedly help in this respect. Learners may get greater control of pragmatic processes, as shown by their capacity to prevent negative L1 transfer, manage acceptable degrees of directness in speech acts, and more accurate interpretation of indirect meaning as

Table 6.1 Positive effects of proficiency on ASC knowledge in CIU¹

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Lateness” (#I8)	“I’m sorry I’m late”			
G1 (6)	Goodness. What a terrible day	✗	✗	✗
G1 (11)	What a pity!	✗	✗	✗
G1 (30)	Oh my god	✗	✗	✗
G1 (1)	I’m so sorry. But there’s no teacher, why I’m supposed to talk?	✓	✓	✗
G2 (75)	Oh, I’m so sorry that I’m late. There is something emergent that need I to handle. Do you have other time that I can make an appointment?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (85)	I’m so sorry I’m late today. Can we meet next time?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (101)	I’m sorry for late. We can make an appointment next time	✓	✓	✓
“Friend” (#I13)	Can I/you leave/take a message?	✗	✗	✗
G1 (43)	Would you please tell something about him?	✗	✗	✗
G1 (28)	Could you pass me the message to him?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (56)	Do you know where is he? Can you tell me? Thank you	✗	✗	✗

(continued)

¹ G1 (6) means the response was given by the G1 student that is labeled as No. 6. The same goes for the following tables in this chapter.

Table 6.1 (continued)

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
G2 (78)	If my friend come back, give me a message	✗	✗	✗
G2 (101)	Can you take the message to him?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (110)	I'll leave me a message to my friend. Thank you	✓	✓	✓
"Broken chair" (#11)	Be careful!			
G1 (1)	Wait a minute. The chair is broken	✓	✗	✓
G1 (2)	Oh. It's dangerous. Let me help you	✓	✗	✓
G2 (74)	Oh, don't do this. Be careful. Let me help you	✓	✓	✓
G2 (63)	Take care yourself	✓	✓	✓
G2 (108)	Be careful. The leg has broken	✓	✓	✓

their proficiency levels increase (Taguchi, 2011a). As a result, although still evident, the high-level group's interlanguage grammatical faults may be efficiently regulated and decreased. When completing this slot-and-frame pattern, G2 learners outperformed their lower counterparts in terms of the specific component of *leave/take a message*. Lower-proficiency peers cannot typically determine that the logical subject of *leave* should be *I*, but the logical subject of *take* is *you*, whose mixed collocation would immediately lead to the deviating target forms.

In contrast, a significant number of researchers, like Ortactepe (2012), discovered that in the case of developed language learners, the use of routines rests not on proficiency but on acceptability, preference, and willingness to use. In reality, even if learners are proficient in their L2 language abilities, their connection with local community members might be severely hampered by the restrictions placed by cultural elements (Kecskes, 2015). Consider the theater scenario as an example. As illustrated in Table 6.4, even when disturbed, Chinese students are more likely to follow the traditional Chinese cultural norm of politeness.

As a result, a wide range of euphemistic semi-fixed formulaic structures with attenuated properties was abundantly used, such as *Could/Can/Would you + lexical core lower your voice?* Because the learners insist on expressing themselves through social beliefs and personal values, their pragmalinguistic options will not accept the target-like norm (fixed functional routine *Be quiet/Shut up*). This guarantees that the imperative ordering tone is imposed at a low level in order to retain personal agency and L1-driven social norms, resulting in divergence from native-speaker norms.

Table 6.2 Negative effects of proficiency on ASC knowledge in CIU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Puddle” (#13)	“Watch out.”			
G1 (14)	Oh be careful. There is a big puddle	✓	✓	✓
G1 (37)	Stop right there	✓	✓	✓
G1 (7)	Oh, watch out your shoes. Be careful	✓	✓	✓
G1 (26)	Please use my umbrella and we can go to the library together	✗	✗	✗
G2 (67)	Come with me	✗	✗	✗
G2 (85)	It’s going to raining. Don’t forget your umbrella	✗	✗	✗
G2 (102)	Are you OK?	✗	✗	✗
“Cinema” (#19)	“Shut up/Be quiet/Keep it down.”			
G1 (3)	Hey guys. Please stop talking so loud. I couldn’t hear what the movie says	✓	✓	✓
G1 (8)	Could you please lower down your voice? I cannot hear a word	✓	✓	✓
G1 (30)	I’m sorry, but would you mind talking in a lower voice?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (82)	Would you mind louding your voice?	✗	✗	✗
G2 (91)	Could you speak aloud?	✗	✗	✗
G2 (64)	hey, hey, hey...	✓	✗	✓
“Glass” (#17)	“Can/Could/Would you mind pass (ing) me a glass?”			

(continued)

This is not to say that EFL learners do not know or understand these commonly used target-like forms, but they have subjectively managed to resist the target norms, or at least experienced inner struggles between seemingly contradictory pragmatic norms (Taguchi & Roever, 2017; cf. Kim, 2014), due to discomfort with the way of saying things triggered by the disagreement with their L1 cultural norms. In summary,

Table 6.2 (continued)

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
G1 (4)	Could you please to give me a glass?	✓	✓	✓
G1 (33)	Could you help me a cup of glass?	✓	✓	✓
G1 (22)	Can you give me a bottle of water?	✓	✓	✗
G2 (82)	A cup of coffee?	✗	✗	✗
G2 (104)	Do you want to a cup of glass?	✗	✗	✗

research has shown that learners' application of pragmatic knowledge may be limited by how they establish themselves as L2 (non-native) speakers and what identities they wish to present (Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

Study-abroad experience and CIU Study-abroad experience in the present study profoundly influence all aspects of CIU with a relatively consistent pattern, exclusive of the puddle scenario alone. It is effortless to understand the beneficial role of the study-abroad context in routine learning is mainly manifested as the characteristic that learners can obtain "abundant opportunities to observe linguistic patterns preferred by native speakers and to practice those patterns through daily participation in social events" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 223). Based on the data shown in Fig. 6.4, the study-abroad context's advantageous position can be detected with great ease, for most of the parts in the area line chart are above the x axis.

In the present study, study-abroad experiences substantially impact all components of CIU in a rather cohesive manner, excluding the puddle scenario alone. It is simple to see how the beneficial role of the study-abroad context in routine learning is primarily embodied by the fact that learners have numerous chances to observe and practice linguistic patterns favored by native speakers through continuous involvement in social activities (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Based on the data in Fig. 6.4, the favorable position of the study-abroad environment can be easily identified, since most of the portions in the area line chart are above the x axis.

However, the degree of facilitation by studying abroad differs from scenario to scenario. This might be due to the fact that the specific application circumstances of these routines may be firmly established at varying stages during abroad residence, and non-native speakers "do not passively 'pick up' and internalize L2 pragmatic norms through exposure" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 205). In the case of infrequently used routines such as *Excuse the mess* (#6), *Can I get a ride?* (#5), and *Thanks for your time* (#10), the salience of such prefabricated linguistic forms in the local community environment will become quite noticeable to EFL speakers. Although at play, the degree of familiarity previously stored in the at-home environment, such as *Shut up* (#9), *I'm sorry to be late* (#8), and so on, reduces the reinforcement generated by the abroad context. The target routine *Be careful* embodied the solely

Table 6.3 Positive effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in CIU

Situation	Expressions (Band)
“Lateness” (#18)	“I’m sorry. {I’m late.}”
G1 (11)	What a pity. (Band 7)
G1 (30)	Oh my god. (Band 7)
G1 (35)	I’m so sorry for my lating. (Band 4)
G1 (45)	I’m sorry for my late. (Band 4)
G2 (75)	Oh, I’m so sorry that I’m late. There is something emergent that need I to handle. Do you have other time that I can make an appointment? (Band 2)
G2 (100)	I’m very sorry I’m late. Can we make next time? (Band 2)
“Broken chair” (#11)	Be careful!
G1 (33)	Let me help you. (Band 7)
G1 (7)	Please be careful to your leg. Or my heart will broke. (Band 4)
G1 (51)	Watch out your foot. (Band 4)
G1 (20)	Oh, attention please. (Band 3)
G2 (63)	Take care yourself. (Band 4)
G2 (101)	You should change another chair. (Band 3)
G2 (100)	I’m very sorry I’m late. Can we make next time? (Band 2)
“Friend” (#113)	Can I/you leave/take a message?
G1 (48)	Could you tell me more details for my friend? (Band 7)
G1 (8)	OK, could you please tell her that I want to made her at 18 I’m and school campus? (Band 7)
G1 (38)	Can I leave a... (Band 5)
G1 (12)	May I leave a message to my friend? (Band 3)
G1 (29)	Would you like to pass some message for me? (Band 3)
G2 (63)	Take care yourself. (Band 4)
G2 (107)	Can you help me a favor? I have something to tell him. Could you help me? (Band 3)
G2 (100)	Could you help me to tell him something? (Band 3)
G2 (85)	Can you help me to pass the message to him? There is something really important that I want him to know. (Band 2)
“Phone” (#111)	I gotta go
G1 (21)	It’s time to get off. Stop focus on your phone. (Band 7)
G1 (44)	I’m sorry. Here comes a bus. I need to hang. (Band 5)
G1 (26)	Now I should go up to take the bus. Wait for a minute. (Band 4)
G1 (29)	The bus is coming. But I have to hanging up. (Band 4)
G2 (63)	I’ll take to you later. (Band 3)
G2 (100)	I’m sorry I have to go. (Band 2)

Table 6.4 Negative effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in CIU

Situation	Expressions (Band)
“Puddle” (#I3)	“Watch out!”
G1 (22)	Watch out. Be careful. (Band 2)
G1 (35)	Stop right there. (Band 3)
G2 (81)	Please watch out your feet. (Band 4)
G2 (90)	It’s going to raining. Don’t forget your umbrella. (Band 7)
“Glass” (#I7)	“Can/Could/Would you mind pass (ing) me a glass?”
G1 (7)	Can you do me a favor and give me a glass? (Band 2)
G2 (35)	Could you help to take the glass for me? (Band 4)
G2 (87)	Can you come here and have glass? (Band 5)
G2 (104)	Do you want to a cup of glass? (Band 7)
“Cinema” (#I9)	Shut up
G1 (8)	Could you please lower down your voice? I cannot hear a word. (Band 2)
G2 (98)	Hey, hey, hey. (Band 3)
G2 (105)	Please low your voice. (Band 4)
G2 (91)	Could you speak aloud? (Band 7)

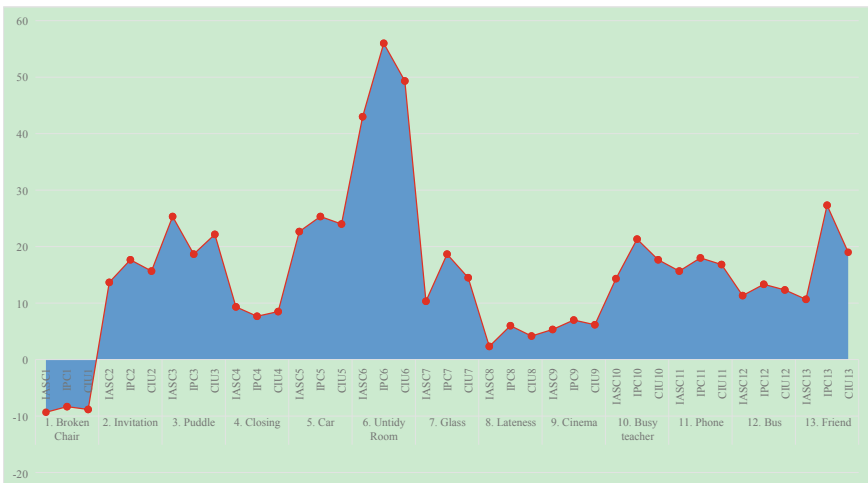


Fig. 6.4 Effects of study-abroad experience on CIU

negative correlation, since the usage conditions are significantly more accessible to G2 students in the at-home learning environment.

According to the data set, non-native speakers can benefit from the study-abroad context “in developing an understanding of strategies involved in communicative acts through their daily participation in the acts” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 229).

For example, in the situation of an untidy room, learners who did not live abroad typically finished the initiating utterance with the target apologetic speech act, either disregarding (*Sorry*) or misusing the pragmatic strategy (*I'll clean it up*). Similarly, the underuse of pragmatic strategy (*Can I go with you?*) by speakers with limited abroad experience may result in confusing output, because we as listeners have no concept of *how* you will *come with me*. In other words, because of the overgeneralization of pragmatic strategy, the main essence of the request speech act cannot be fully conveyed. The same was true for only adopting the target expression *Thank you* with neglecting the necessary strategy *the time your teacher spent on you* encoded in the ASC. Table 6.5 summarizes the particular performances in the ASC section.

The length of abroad experience, like proficiency, may not ensure the absolute comprehension of ASC information. As indicated in Table 6.6, despite the fact that *Be careful* may be the most frequent routine expression to learners both at home and

Table 6.5 Positive effects of study-abroad experience on ASC knowledge in CIU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Untidy room” (#16)	“Excuse the mess.”			
G2 (108)	Help me. I need your help	✗	✗	✗
G2 (100)	Come in. Don't worry about the mess. I'll clean up	✓	✗	✓
G3 (126)	Sorry	✓	✓	✗
G3 (75)	Sorry. It is messy but I will clean it up immediately	✓	✓	✓
“Car” (#15)	“Can I get a ride/lift?”			
G2 (67)	Thanks for take	✗	✗	✗
G2 (95)	Can I go with you?	✓	✓	✗
G3 (126)	Can you please pick me up?	✓	✓	✓
G3 (131)	Can you take me a ride?	✓	✓	✓
“Busy teacher” (#110)	“Thanks for your time”			
G2 (102)	That's alright	✗	✗	✗
G2 (87)	Thank you so much	✓	✓	✗
G3 (115)	Thank you for teaching me	✓	✓	✗
G3 (133)	Thanks for your time and answering my questions	✓	✓	✓

Table 6.6 Negative effects of study-abroad experience on ASC knowledge in CIU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Broken chair” (#I1)	“Be careful.”			
G2 (63)	Take care yourself	✓	✓	✓
G2 (74)	Be careful. Watch out	✓	✓	✓
G3 (130)	Do you need help?	✓	✗	✗
G3 (135)	That chair’s leg is broken	✓	✗	✓

abroad, G3 learners with a specific length of abroad residence may still struggle to understand the ASC information accurately. They also frequently ignored the target warning speech act, instead seeing it as an offer of assistance *Do you need help?* or just presenting a pragmatic strategy *That chair’s leg is broken*.

In terms of the specific influence of study abroad on PC knowledge, non-native learners may “develop an understanding of pragmalinguistic forms and their indexical meanings through routine interactions with expert members of the community” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 87). In particular, the three norms of native-like speakers shown in Table 6.7 pertain to semi-fixed routines that were considerably more commonly used in the local community. The study-abroad experience contributed to their dominant linguistic form, which is not otherwise available in the at-home situation. At-home learners with higher proficiency, for example, were significantly hampered in retrieving PC knowledge due to less contact with their use conditions, since their pragmalinguistic selection was confined to *little dirty* rather than the lexical core *the mess*. Likewise, the deviating terms *help me get to...* and *go with you* replaced the native-speaker lexical core *get a ride/lift*, albeit the former can still reflect the illocutionary forces of the request speech act.

Furthermore, because pragmatics learning is assumed to be “embedded in cultural practices in situ in a community of users of the language” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 87), continuous interaction with the target form in the host context promotes the internalization of routine acquisition. Furthermore, active participation in the target language community aids in the differentiation of the similarly-paired lexical core. Even with stronger proficiency, learners without abroad experience failed to distinguish between *leave and take a message*. The particular performance of G2 and G3 learners is detailed in Table 6.7.

As previously stated, not all routines receive equal promotion in the study-abroad environment, particularly for certain conventional expressions often employed at home. There is evidence that learners without abroad experience outperform learners with abroad experience in the broken chair scenario. This might also explain the comprehensive command of PC knowledge gathered previously by at-home learners. Due to extensive exposure to the use condition, at-home students have

Table 6.7 Positive effects of study-abroad experience on PC knowledge in CIU

Situation	Expressions (Band)
“Untidy room” (#I6)	“Excuse/Sorry for the mess.”
G2 (81)	Sure, can you come my home to help clean my home? (Band 7)
G2 (57)	Just forget it. It’s a little dirty. (Band 4)
G3 (133)	It is a messy place. So sorry. (Band 2)
G3 (129)	Sorry. It is messy but I will clean it up immediately. (Band 2)
“Friend” (#I3)	“Can I/you leave/take a message?”
G2 (78)	If my friend come back, give me a message. (Band 7)
G2 (79)	Can you tell... (Band 6)
G2 (91)	Can I give a conversation with my friend? (Band 5)
G2 (89)	Do you like to take a message for me for my roommates? (Band 4)
G2 (81)	Could you do me a favor? And I want to say something to my roommate. (Band 3)
G3 (143)	Can you pass a message to him? (Band 2)
“Car” (#I5)	“Can I get a ride/lift?”
G2 (67)	Thanks for take. (Band 7)
G2 (63)	Can you help me to get to...? (Band 6)
G2 (77)	Can I go together with me? (Band 5)
G2 (70)	Could you please take me a ride? (Band 4)
G2 (95)	Can I go with you? (Band 3)
G3 (119)	Would you mind driving me there? (Band 2)

been completely familiar with the target selection of *Be careful*, enabling the study-abroad experience to lose its constructive value, even with a tendency toward negative association.

However, it is worth noting that G2 learners’ responses contained a wide range of interlanguage grammatical errors. One of the most common faults is verbosity, in which learners with no abroad experience tended to offer more statements (i.e., the simultaneous occurrence of *Be careful. Watch out.* in one response) in order to compensate for non-native speaker norms. Meanwhile, collocation mistakes were placed high up on the list. As seen in the example, the preposition *of* that should have been followed by *take care* has been completely deleted, resulting in a considerable variety of intended responses owing to inadequate PC knowledge. Table 6.8 has further information.

Both factors’ interaction and CIU There is no dispute that proficient learners with abroad experience outperformed their less-proficient counterparts without abroad experience in all facets of routine initiating competence. In effect, the interplay between proficiency and study-abroad experience influences routine productivity in general. Due to the significant reliance on grammar for the realization of semi-fixed

Table 6.8 Negative effects of study-abroad experience on PC knowledge in CIU

Situation	Expressions (Band)
“Broken chair” (#11)	“Be careful.”
G2 (63)	Take care yourself. (Band 4)
G2 (74)	Oh, don’t do this. Be careful. Let me help you. (Band 2)
G3 (130)	Do you need help? (Band 7)
G3 (132)	The chair is not stable. It has a broken leg. (Band 3)

routines or exact management of pragmalinguistic forms, a greater degree of proficiency is necessitated. On the other hand, more exposure to the target language community might lead to the formation of target-like norms, because these forms are easily available in such a context as long as EFL speakers actively engage in such social activities.

Similarly, this does not imply that the combined factors may produce dramatic pragmatic advantages in all routine expressions. As shown in Fig. 6.5, its favorably impacting degree varied from routine to routine, and even the ASC component of Scenarios 1 and 9 showed varying degrees of negative correlation. Similarly, the study-abroad context has differential supporting effects on learners’ usage of low-frequency routines in the at-home environment. For example, the positive and constructive degree of their combination in *Excuse the mess* was the highest, while that in *Come to my place* was substantially lower. Acquiring exact “pragmalinguistics for encoding illocutionary intentions” is a long process, even in the target language environment (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 229), despite the presence of relatively quick advancement of knowledge relevant to a solitary pragmatic event. To that aim, a sophisticated understanding of linguistic systems along with target language abilities to activate the information in actual engagement is essential for successful pragmatic production (Taguchi, 2011a).

This part primarily focused on routine demonstrating the influence of two primary factors, proficiency and study-abroad experience, on the two categories of contextual knowledge necessitated for initiating competence of routines. The following part will illustrate the relevant analysis and discussion on the competence of responding to utterances.

6.1.3.2 Competence of Responding to Utterances

In terms of competence in responding to utterances (CRU), the points by G3 in each item were clearly placed in the topmost portion of the chart, followed by G2 and G1, which were positioned at the bottom with an essentially uniform changing pattern, as illustrated in Fig. 6.6. This general trend ($G3 > G2 > G1$) confirmed the finding that proficiency was not the sole crucial component (Kecskes, 2013); rather, study-abroad experience and both factors’ interaction had a significant influence on CRU. This is

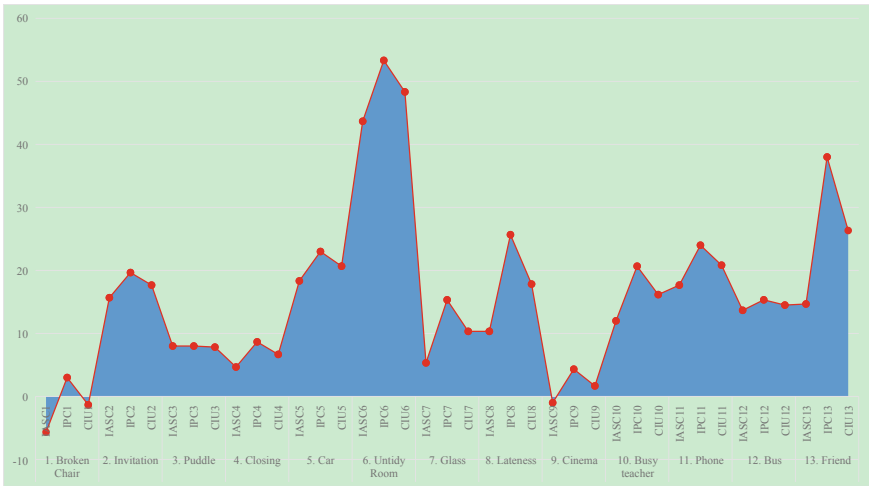


Fig. 6.5 Effects of both factors' interaction on each scenario in CIU

consistent with previous research findings on proficiency versus routine production (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009) and the interplay of proficiency and study-abroad experience (Taguchi, 2013), but differs slightly from those on study-abroad experience versus routine production (Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011).

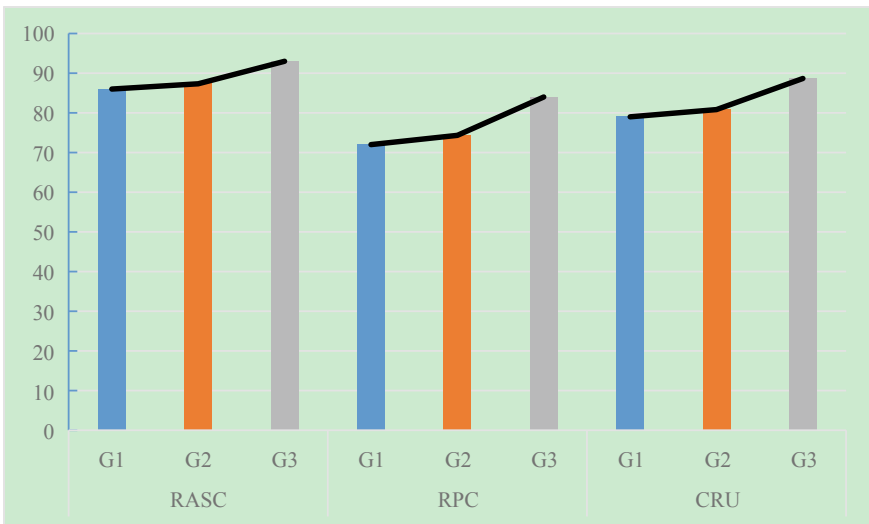


Fig. 6.6 The general trend of CRU

Furthermore, it is necessary to emphasize that the integrated variable was more relevant in CRU than proficiency alone. Indeed, learners with study-abroad experience gain extensive exposure to target-like socio-culturally bound practices, which is “the prime feature of the study-abroad context” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 220), resulting in more socialization of PCs in appropriate linguistic practices because they are shaped and guided by native speakers. Meanwhile, repeated interactions with multiple ASCs should be widely obtainable in the target-language context, enhancing learners’ pragmatic awareness. Furthermore, members of the local speech community can generate preferred methods of linguistic selection, native-like patterns of interaction, and explicit feedback on pragmatic practices.

The usage of routines often reflects preferred ways of saying things (cf. Kecskes, 2007; Pawley & Syder, 1983), which are closely related to pragmatic competence (Kecskes, 2013). Aside from the advantage of study-abroad experience, the combination of two variables might offer an exceptional contribution to routine output, as a vital function of high levels of proficiency has been discovered in the productive control and proper processing of linguistic expressions. Even learners with high levels of pragmatic ability (from studying abroad) cannot fully attain the target-like degree, which is contrary to Taguchi’s (2013) findings.

This phenomenon might be accounted by non-native speakers’ lack of readiness to rely on prefabricated routines and properly comprehend the socio-cultural burdens they face, as well as their proclivity to turn to literal production rather than figurative output in intercultural communication. In conclusion, learners were able to identify the same essential components of ASCs as native speakers, covering a speech act of specific illocutionary force. However, due to their limited prior knowledge and infrequent interactions with ASCs, they were unable to select the most relevant linguistic strings to elaborate on that force. Furthermore, while all test takers excelled at producing *No problem* for Item 3, the riding scenario, they were unable to provide *Do you have a minute?* in the office context. The following paragraphs will feature detailed analysis.

Proficiency and CRU The area-line constitutional diagram was drawn based on the data calculated and shown in Fig. 6.7 to examine the unique influence of proficiency (by subtracting values in G1 from those in G2) on CRU. According to this diagram, the area above the x-axis denotes positive impacts of proficiency and vice versa. The polarized trend was committed to demonstrating that proficiency was significantly salient to both groups of learners when responding to target routines such as *I have other plans* (#10), *I’m just browsing* (#12), *Do you have a minute?* (#13), *I’m sorry to hear that* (#1 and 16), *I’m looking for...* (#4), and *Thank you* (#18). In comparison, the data below revealed a negative-correlated pattern in which lower-level learners outscored higher-level peers in 7 scenarios, including *Thank you* (#2), *No problem* (#5), *You too* (#6), *I’m sorry* (#7 and 8), *Thank you* (#17), and *No thanks* (#19). Mixed connections were also observed among the remaining routines, such as *No problem* (#9), *That works for me* (#8), *Nice to meet you* (#15), and so on, which primarily represented a favorable influence on ASC knowledge but a negative impact on PC counterpart.

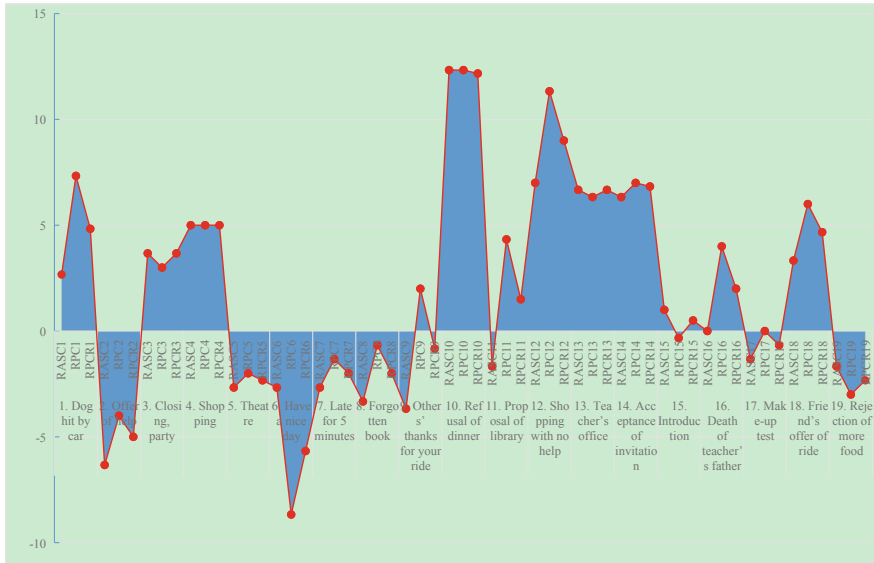


Fig. 6.7 Effects of proficiency on each routine scenario in CRU

After contrasting the positive and negative effects of proficiency, Table 6.9 shows that the most frequently used, situation-bound expressions with slot completion are more likely to be susceptible to proficiency. Such routines are not fully and exclusively formulaic in essence but frequently consist of some slots-and-frame patterns whose completion benefits greatly from a high level of precise linguistic parsing. In terms of ASC in CRU, proficiency was not a significant factor in the ASC of most items, but it did impact perception of the refusal speech act in response to the salesclerk's offer of assistance, *Can I help you?* in Item 12.

To some extent, proficient learners (G2) were considerably more likely than lower proficiency counterparts (G1) to identify the refusal speech act embedded in the shopping (refusal) context and employ the pragmatic strategy of presenting a justification for not purchasing, as shown below. Low proficiency individuals failed to formulate a pragmatic strategy or distorted the target refusal speech act far more frequently than high proficiency participants. It can also be demonstrated that high proficiency, albeit insignificantly, can help participants retrieve accurate ASC information when confronted with such scenarios up to a point. Concurrently, no significant association occurred between influencing factors and other features not mentioned in this section, implying that even the combination of proficiency and study-abroad experience had no marked effect on ASC.

In contrast, high levels of proficiency are not always a guarantee of successful routine output. In fact, the formation of fixed and functional routines is within the ability of lower-level at-home learners, and even lower-level participants outperformed their higher-level counterparts in terms of responding performance. Although G2 learners have a better command of linguistic abilities, complete comprehension

Table 6.9 Positive effect of proficiency on ASC knowledge in CRU section

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Dinner” (#R10)	“I have other plans.”			
G1 (23)	Yes, I’m sure. I would love to	✗	✗	✗
G1 (35)	I’m so sorry I cannot go there	✓	✓	✗
G2 (105)	I really want to go but I have something to do on that night	✓	✓	✓
G2 (59)	I’d like to but I have an appointment with others	✓	✓	✓
“Shopping with no help” (#R12)	“I’m just browsing/looking around.”			
G1 (11)	Yes. Thank you	✗	✗	✗
G1 (30)	No, thanks	✓	✓	✗
G2 (107)	Thank you but I just want to look around. maybe I’ll call you later	✓	✓	✓
G2 (93)	Thank you, but I just go around by myself	✓	✓	✓
“Teacher’s office” (#R12)	“Do you have a minute?”			
G1 (48)	Thank you	✓	✗	✗
G1 (35)	Can we have a talk?	✓	✗	✓
G2 (101)	Hello, can I ask you some questions? Are you available?	✓	✓	✓
G2 (72)	Do you have time?	✓	✓	✓

of ASC information may still occur, as one respondent may use *My pleasure* (a routine used to respond to others’ gratitude) to replace *Thank you*, corroborating s/he completely misjudged the contextual information embedded in this situation. This also occurred frequently in the following situations *Of course, I can bring the book* (denoting one’s abilities) in place of *I’m sorry* simply because your forgetfulness (#8), and the refusal *Sorry, I don’t want to*. taking the target’s place by *responding to others’ reasonable requests* (#5) Another instance of ignorance about the target speech act may be identified among upper at-home learners. As a reaction to others’ *Have a nice day*, the only use of a supplemental strategy *Thank you* appears insufficient to reply to the speaker’s utterances. The same might be argued about using *Oh my god. I left the book at home* to do the apologetic speech act in Scenario 8.

These observations might also demonstrate that improved management of linguistic resources does not have a direct relationship with comprehension of ASC information. Table 6.10 contains information on the performance of two-group at-home learners.

Appropriate routine output does necessitate some grammatical analysis. Proficiency, as reflected by an excellent command of previously acquired linguistic abilities, is more conducive to production in the CRU part because “producing language requires greater effort, active access to grammar and vocabulary knowledge, and fast output” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 215). In fact, proficiency was a significant factor only in the shopping (refusal) and dinner (refusal) settings due to a significant increase of approximately 11.10–12.23% in the accuracy ratings of PC knowledge between G1 and G2. However, study-abroad experience had no impact on these two items in which the target expressions required a specific number of syntactic analyses, particularly accurate mastery of the lexical core. For example, the target expression *I have other plans* (Band 1) required learners to extract the core vocabulary *other plans* through their PC knowledge in accordance with the information provided by the ASC. This cannot be substituted, ignored, or attached to additional components, otherwise resulting in alternative routines that were slightly nonnative-like with verbosity (Band 2) or expressions without mentioning core content (Band 3).

This interpretation also applies to the expression *{I'm} Just browsing/looking (around)*, which has a functional meaning that is generally stable or invariant and is tightly linked to a certain ASC. This type of routine, which is often handled as a fixed group rather than a solitary string of words, can be retrieved and pronounced quickly as long as it meets the requirements of ASC. The lexical core *browsing* or *looking around* most likely reflected the nature of ASC, that *I had no intention of purchasing anything here*. As a result, when *browse* or *look around* were replaced by *see* or *for*, the learners' PC knowledge dropped immediately to Band 4, nonnative-like, due to minor lexical errors.

Also, the illocutionary force of the refusal speech act may even be changed directly into its antithesis, acceptance, bringing about strange wording because of substantial grammatical errors (Band 5). As a result, greater proficiency appeared to be favorable, as it reduced the risk of syntactic incorrectness, particularly when learners manipulated accurate prior knowledge for routines. However, it did not apply to the majority of the other routine items not stated in this section, where no significant differences between G1 and G2 learners were found, because proficiency alone does not account for target-like production (Taguchi, 2013). Due to the partial conceptual socialization process, errors in routine production can sometimes be triggered by pragmatic rather than structural problems, as L2 learners must identify issues with culture-specific communicative functions, routine-specific pragmatic features, and differences in communication patterns (Kecskes, 2013).

In conclusion, as stated by Taguchi and Roever (2017: 312), “the meanings of speech forms are diverse and ambiguous, reflecting one's language ideology and contextual contingencies”, which was intertwined with the unfamiliar degree of certain speech act, such as the refusal speech act shown in the table below. More

Table 6.10 Negative effects of proficiency on ASC knowledge in CRU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Offer of help” (#R2)	“Thank you.”			
G1 (5)	Thank you, it’s very kind of you	✓	✓	✓
G1 (35)	Oh, very appreciate. Thank you very much	✓	✓	✓
G2 (68)	My pleasure	✗	✗	✗
G2 (70)	That would be very nice of you	✓	✗	✓
“Forgotten book” (#R8)	“I’m sorry.”			
G1 (9)	Oh, I’m sorry I forgot. I am going right to my home and pick it for you	✓	✓	✓
G1 (38)	I’m sorry. I forget it at home. I will give you the book this afternoon	✓	✓	✓
G2 (87)	Of course I can bring the book	✗	✗	✗
G2 (99)	Oh my god. I left the book at home	✓	✗	✓
“Theatre” (#R5)	“No problem.”			
G1 (5)	OK, of course	✓	✓	✓
G1 (38)	Of course yes. I can do that for you	✓	✓	✓
G2 (76)	Sorry, I don’t want to	✗	✗	✗
G2 (83)	sorry, I don’t have time	✗	✗	✗
“Have a nice day.” (#R6)	“You, too!”			
G1 (1)	Thank you. You too	✓	✓	✓
G1 (15)	Thank you. Have a nice day too	✓	✓	✓
G2 (101)	Thank you	✓	✗	✓
G2 (108)	Thank you very much. It’s a nice day	✓	✗	✓

Table 6.11 Positive effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in CRU

Situation	Target expressions (Band)
“Dinner” (#R10)	“I have other plans.”
G1 (23)	Yes, I’m sure. I would love to. (Band 7)
G1 (46)	I’m sorry but I have to... (Band 6)
G1 (19)	I’m so sorry. I’m busy for something else and I... (Band 4)
G2 (64)	I’m sorry. The time is not available at that time. (Band 3)
G2 (91)	Sorry, I have an appointment on Friday. (Band 2)
“Shopping with no help” (#R12)	“I’m just browsing/looking around.”
G1 (11)	Yes, thank you. (Band 7)
G1 (30)	No, thanks. (Band 5)
G1 (26)	I just looking for some clothes. I don’t need help. Thank you. (Band 4)
G2 (97)	Thank you, but I want to choose by myself. (Band 3)
G2 (107)	Thank you but I just want to look around. Maybe I’ll call you later. (Band 2)

crucially, lower proficiency learners usually produce less native-like responses than their higher proficiency peers simply because they lack the linguistic resources required to convert complicated L1 pragmatic conventions into L2 output (Taguchi, 2011a: 907). Table 6.11 has listed the defective responding utterances that support the aforementioned elaborations.

Higher-level control of pragmalinguistic resources by PC knowledge, on the other hand, does not always result in the successful output of routines. As shown in Table 6.12, even high-level EFL speakers were unable to completely eliminate L1-driven negative transfer due to the frequent occurrence of interlanguage grammatical errors, such as ignorance of the indefinite article *an* in *You’re angle* as a thanking response to others’ offer of assistance. At the same time, even if the linguistic form of the target speech act is correct, certain errors in the supplemental pragmatic strategies may occur, such as the incorrect adverb collocation in *I’m already eating enough*.

In reality, when learners do not have access to practice opportunities, their L2 growth and final attainment are always constrained (Duff, 2012). G2 learners without abroad experience must have understood the target pragmalinguistic form of *You too*, but they may still fail to activate PC knowledge when confronted with such a circumstance with limited use of *Thank you* as an alternative linguistic string. This might also be attributed to a lack of practice and exposure to the use condition of such fixed functional routines.

Study-abroad experience and CRU The results of this study revealed that the study-abroad environment has a positive effect in CRU, as shown in Fig. 6.8, because relatively few areas are adversely below the x-axis (i.e., #8 the forgotten book). Exposure to diverse communicative situations could be abundantly realized in the study-abroad context (in comparison to at-home academic background) to make non-native

Table 6.12 Negative effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in CRU

Situation	Target expressions (Band)
“Have a nice day.” (#R6)	“You, too!”
G1 (12)	Have a nice day, too. (Band 2)
G1 (46)	It’s same to you. (Band 2)
G2 (101)	Thank you. (Band 3)
G2 (83)	Thanks, I will. (Band 3)
“Offer of help” (#R2)	“Thank you.”
G1 (13)	Thank you. It’s very kind of you. (Band 2)
G1 (46)	That’s wonderful. (Band 3)
G1 (29)	Thank you with your nice. (Band 4)
G2 (76)	You’re angle (Band 4)
G2 (68)	My pleasure. (Band 7)
“Rejecting more food” (#R19)	“No, thanks. {I’m full/stuffed.}”
G1 (37)	I would like to but I’m really stuffed. So delicious, thank you. (Band 2)
G1 (29)	The food is delicious but I’m already full. (Band 3)
G2 (110)	No, thanks. I’m already eating enough (Band 4)
G2 (107)	Thank you but... (Band 6)
G2 (105)	Thank you. (Band 7)

speakers participate in L2-dominated social patterns and linguistic practices. This further contributed more to L2 conceptual socialization into target-like pragmatic norms subconsciously, especially after prompt feedback and guidance from native speakers.

More crucially, non-native learners were able to identify certain characteristics of interactional contexts for which matching linguistic choices were really suitable, suggesting that their comprehension of appropriate pragmatic acts may be gradually established. Similarly, the promoted degree of abroad residence differed from scenario to scenario. In other words, the study-abroad experience may encourage infrequently utilized, saliently established routines with a certain degree of unfamiliarity, such as *Thanks for having me* (#3) and *Do you have a minute?* (#13). The thorough analysis will be elaborated on in the following sections.

Again, proficiency had essentially little impact on ASC mastery between G2 and G3, but study-abroad experience showed the exact opposite effect; consequently, our attention is undeniably on the latter. First, G3 participants with abroad experience were found to comprehend ASC considerably better than G2 counterparts without abroad experience in Item 3, closing party, Item 11, library proposal, and Item 13, teacher’s office situations. This implies that study-abroad experience appeared to have the most impact on comprehending ASC of these items. As for the performance when producing *Do you have a minute?* as the target response on *hearing*

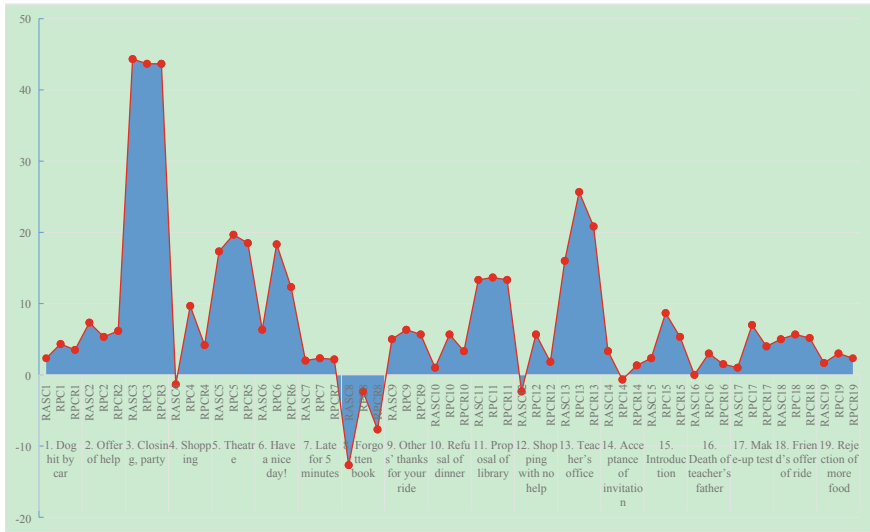


Fig. 6.8 Effects of study-abroad experience on each routine scenario in CRU

the teacher's allowing you to enter the office (#13), learners with abroad experience significantly outperformed the two non-residence counterparts both in the comprehension of ASC information and the target-like production of linguistic forms. Because of these frequently encountered situations in learners' daily communication abroad, they gain a better understanding of ASC than those who have no abroad experience.

On hearing *Thanks for coming* in the reception scenario, for example, the learners were required to accomplish the thanking speech act with the pragmatic strategy containing *the host's invitation*. Similarly, the ASC of the library scenario could include the assenting speech act and the pragmatic strategy regarding the intrinsic suitability of the proposal *Is the library okay for everyone* for yourself, whereas the office setting required test takers to use the request speech act, which included inquiring about the teacher's availability (*time*).

The peers without abroad experience frequently misinterpreted the situational context as a general greeting occasion, ending with *Hi, morning, Hello, professor*, or even *I'm sorry to interrupt you* and *Thank you*. Sufficient exposure to these frequently encountered situations overseas can aid in the formation of ASC knowledge experiences in which the target speech actions and pragmatic strategies are effortlessly mastered. The counterparts without abroad experience, for example, may only output the target speech act of *Thank you* without the suitable strategy *for having/inviting me*, and vice versa (using an appropriate strategy *for your invitation* with an irrelevant speech act *I'm quite pleased...*).

This might be attributed to a decrease in utilization or a lack of involvement in productive classroom training or practice, which “fails to consider the importance of a pragmatic focus for improving communicative competence” (Halenko, 2018: 156).

The lack of any element in each item may cause the entire ASC knowledge to be judged defectively. The participants' inadequate responses related to ASC in these items, as listed below, may validate the aforementioned explanations. We focused primarily on whether the participants grasped the core information provided by the short video, as well as if the target speech act was consistent with the required pragmatic strategy. Table 6.13 has further details.

In contrast, as shown in Table 6.14, the study-abroad context had no discernible effect on the perception of ASC information with regard to the apology speech act of *I'm sorry*. As previously stated, learners with or without study-abroad experience always follow this fixed routine. Furthermore, "genuine opportunities for language practice of speech acts such as apologies may be few and far between in study abroad

Table 6.13 Positive effects of study-abroad experience on ASC knowledge in CRU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
"Closing party" (#R3)	"Thanks for having me."			
G2 (52)	That's okay. I'm coming anyway	✗	✗	✗
G2 (66)	My pleasure	✓	✗	✗
G3 (126)	I have fun. Thank you	✓	✓	✗
G3 (137)	I had a wonderful night. Thanks so much for your invitation	✓	✓	✓
"Library" (#R11)	"That works for me."			
G2 (56)	Yes	✓	✓	✗
G2 (98)	That would be fine	✓	✓	✗
G3 (123)	Perfect for me	✓	✓	✓
G3 (121)	I am OK with that	✓	✓	✓
"Teacher's office" (#R13)	"Do you have a minute?"			
G2 (93)	Hello, teacher. I forget the time to meet you now	✗	✗	✗
G2 (78)	Good morning, teacher	✓	✗	✗
G2 (100)	Hello, teacher. May I talk to you please?	✓	✗	✓
G3 (129)	Hi professor. I just stop by to see if you are available	✓	✓	✓

Table 6.14 Negative effects of study-abroad experience on ASC knowledge in CRU

Situation/Group	Expressions	Core information	Speech act	Pragmatic strategy
“Forgotten book” (#R8)	“I’m sorry.”			
G2 (53)	I’m so sorry. I’ll give it tonight	✓	✓	✓
G2 (99)	Oh my god. I left the book at home	✓	✓	✗
G3 (112)	Of course	✗	✗	✗
G3 (125)	I forget to bring it here for you	✓	✗	✓

experiences” (Halenko, 2018: 156). As a result, it appeared conceivable for learners, even those with abroad experience, to avoid the target speech act of apologizing by simply offering an excuse, such as *I forget to bring it here for you*.

According to Taguchi and Roever (2017: 229), the promotion of the salience regarding “target form-function mappings” by direct attention to forms may hasten the rate of pragmalinguistic development. In terms of PC knowledge, both G2 and G3 subjects were 12–47% more likely to produce native-like routines than G1 students, implying that study-abroad experience and both factors’ combination, rather than proficiency alone, appeared to play a dominant role in most reception, riding, studying, and office situations. Approximately 65.9–82.9% of native speakers can produce a single ruling routine, such as *Thanks for having me* in the reception setting, *No problem* in the riding item, *That works for me* in the studying scenario, and *Do you have a minute?* in the office context.

The shared distinguishing features of these expressions are comparatively fixed in syntactic structures and functional meanings across similar situations; thus, a “lesser degree of creative construction (is) required in their processing, understanding, and production” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 176), and such expressions can be immediately retrievable. Even higher proficiency will have no effect on native-likeness, but learners’ sociopragmatic knowledge from their PC might be the crucial determinant in choosing the appropriate routines, highlighting the significant impact of study-abroad experience in these scenarios. Continuous exposure to the use of routines in a dense target-language environment would undoubtedly aid in the formation of solid ASC-PC mappings, resulting in target-like production of linguistic units. As a result, the participants’ erroneous expressions centered mostly on Bands 5 and 6, that is, non-native selection of dominant expressions or divergence from normative patterns. Table 6.15 provides the specifications.

On the contrary, not all learners benefited equally from their overseas study experience. In reality, “the precise elements-amount and nature of social contact, types of language practice, and individual learner characteristics-that determine learning outcomes” (Taguchi, 2018: 129), rather than just sheer time of staying abroad. Even with the experiences of abroad residence, it is not guaranteed that they have complete access to it due to personal or environmental factors (Kecskes, 2015). The above

Table 6.15 Positive effects of study-abroad experience on PC knowledge in CRU

Situation	Target expressions (Band)
“Closing party” (#R3)	“Thanks for having me.”
G2 (52)	That’s okay. I’m coming anyway. (Band 7)
G2 (91)	Glad to invite this activity. (Band 4)
G3 (126)	I have fun. Thank you. (Band 3)
G3 (128)	Thanks for your reception. (Band 2)
“Teacher’s office” (#R13)	“Do you have a minute?”
G2 (94)	Thank you. (Band 7)
G2 (64)	I want to ask you if you have time to give my... (Band 6)
G2 (74)	Oh, my dear teacher. I have something to talk with you. Do you free now? (Band 4)
G3 (120)	Hello. Do you have time to talk to me? (Band 2)
G3 (129)	Hi professor, I just stop by to see if you are available. (Band 2)
“Theatre” (#R5)	“No problem.”
G2 (23)	Sorry, I don’t want to. (Band 7)
G2 (96)	I’m so sorry. I couldn’t. (Band 7)
G3 (125)	Sure. (Band 2)
G3 (117)	Of course. (Band 2)

findings clearly demonstrate the vital need of considering learners’ subjectivity and agency, particularly when evaluating speech act data (Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

Concerning the verbose responses in routine production, non-native EFL speakers persisted in using verbosity to approximate the target-like responses they evaluated, such as *I am very sorry that I forgot it, but I will retain it to you tonight at your house*. On the other hand, this type of abroad setting failed to advance the “learning of the exact syntax and lexis involved in the acts” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 229). In the case of acceptance of invitation, learners with study-abroad experience may still exhibit insufficient responses due to a lack of interactions with direct input driven by inadequate exposure or low interaction in the target environment (Halenko, 2018). This resulted in unsuccessful conceptual socialization into native-speaker norms, because linguistic and social development are not always intertwined, and non-native EFL learners do not always have easy access to L2-dominated sociocultural contexts. Table 6.16 illustrates their responses.

Both factors’ interaction and CRU In addition to study-abroad experience, as shown in Fig. 6.9, the interplay of both variables had an influence only on routine production. Aside from the advantages of studying abroad, higher-level proficiency may contribute significantly to far more precise retrieval of syntax and lexical core in routine output, resulting in the meaning encoded in the expression being correctly interpreted (Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

For example, the target phrasal verbs, such as, *I’m looking for...*, *I have other plans*, and *I’m just browsing/looking around*, pertained primarily to semi-fixed

Table 6.16 Negative effects of study-abroad experience on PC knowledge in CRU

Situation	Target expressions (Band)
“Forgotten book” (#R8)	“I’m sorry.”
G2 (58)	Sorry. I will give it to you tomorrow. (Band 2)
G2 (99)	Oh my god. I left the book at home. (Band 3)
G2 (67)	Sorry I forgot your book at home and I will check it to you. (Band 4)
G3 (112)	Of course. (Band 7)
G3 (124)	I forgot taking it here and give it to you. (Band 4)
“Acceptance of invitation” (#R14)	“Yes, I’d love to.”
G2 (55)	Sure, I’m very happy you can invite me. (Band 3)
G2 (65)	Yeah, sure. I’m so glad to attend the party. (Band 2)
G3 (127)	Of course. (Band 3)
G3 (118)	Of course. I am so happy to join you. (Band 2)

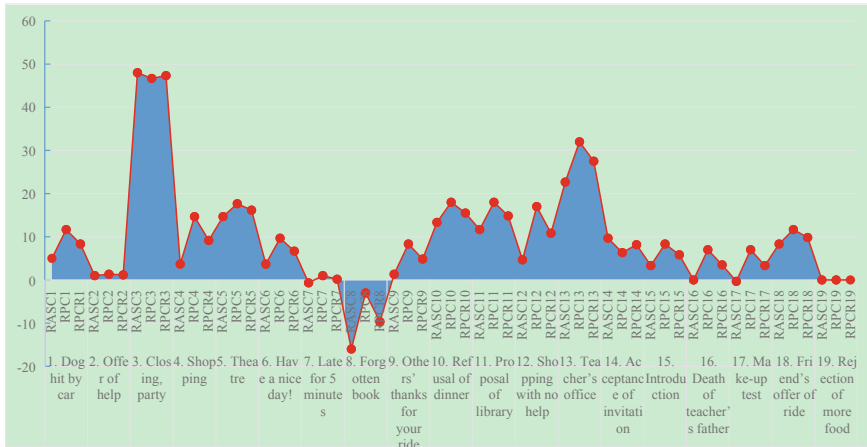


Fig. 6.9 Effects of both factors' interaction on each scenario in CRU

routines, which were closely tied to various actual situations, resulting in greater susceptibility to the combination of proficiency and study-abroad experience. These situational routines aren't entirely formulaic, but they do typically incorporate slot-and-frame patterns (i.e., *I'm looking for...*). As a result, completion of the slots component benefits from a decent level of proficiency. Furthermore, the routine itself may have some flexibility (i.e., *{I'm} Just browsing/looking around*), where both significant exposure to the target-language environment and high-level language proficiency did affect native-like production. In conclusion, some less adept learners with no abroad experience may not respond to the animation scenario owing to a lack

of ASC knowledge and PC knowledge, including sociopragmatic comprehension and pragmalinguistic rehearsal.

This part focused mostly on the competence of routine output, including both initiating and responding to utterances. The section that follows will go through the precise performances of contextualized routine recognition in detail.

6.2 Recognition Competence of Routines

Production and recognition are distinct modalities, with the modality interacting with diverse factors to varying degrees of effect. As indicated in the literature review section, the study-abroad experience was found to have a significant impact on routine production, with the added impact of proficiency in precise language parsing. However, routine recognition was shown to be less impacted by proficiency, instead relying on contextual cues or reminders as the inference foundation. Even when using the identical routine expression, Bardovi-Harlig (2009) discovered that learners performed far worse in routine production than on routine recognition. In order to answer the research question of the present study, to what degree do proficiency, study-abroad experience, and the combination of both factors affect routine recognition, the analysis of PC knowledge required and comprehension of contextual reminders contained in the ASC were used as evidence.

6.2.1 *The General Trend of Routine Recognition*

The interaction between ASC reminders (shown in the animation movie) and learners' mastery level of PC knowledge is characterized as routine recognition (the main focus of examination). Because L2 speakers' pragmatic options reflect their understanding of the individual, others, and circumstances at the time of interaction (Taguchi & Roever, 2017), this task modality required all three-group learners to choose an exclusive item that can be most appropriately matched with the scenario. As seen in Fig. 6.10, all learners had a reasonably superior recognition performance.

Above all, an ASC prompt is required for effective routine recognition. For instance, in Item 6, all groups, including the low-level learners without abroad experience, were familiar with the literal meanings of the four alternatives offered in the animation task. If the contextual reminder *the phone rings*, suggesting that the scene where the conversation takes place is about a phone conversation, was not well received by learners, the greeting expression *Hello*, typically used on the phone, could not be accurately identified by non-native speakers. Furthermore, pragmatic recognition and production are task modalities that demand learners to use different context knowledge and pragmatic capabilities. As a result, once learners' PC knowledge is focused on the lexical core *No, thanks*, alternative accompanying pragmatic

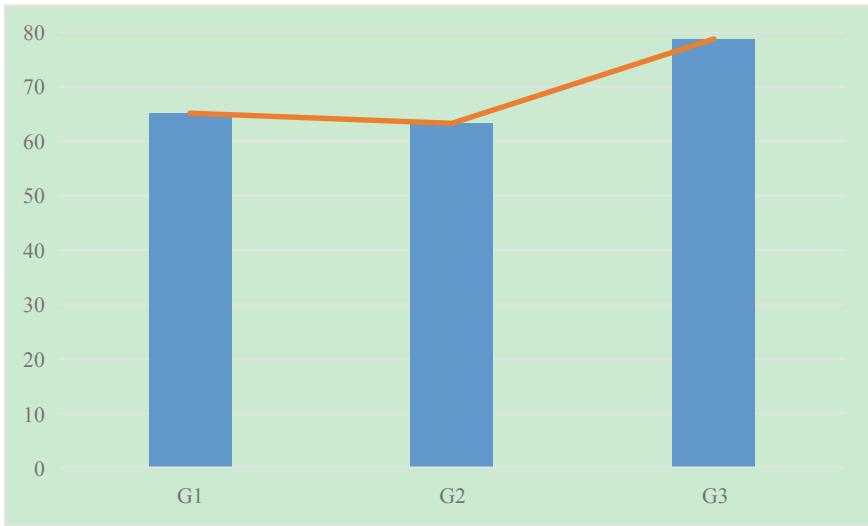


Fig. 6.10 The general trend of routine recognition

strategies (*I'm full* or *It's enough*) will not cause significant variance in the selection of target speech acts.

On the other hand, it is well recognized that PC knowledge is necessary for the effective recognition of routines. Failure to retrieve and extract PC knowledge will result in erroneous recognition, even though the actual contextual information was simply received and completely understood. For example, all participants might easily learn from contextual signals of Item 9 that replies to an apology were necessary. Despite the contextual reminders, the two at-home groups still found the intricacies of the target selection alternatives of *That's alright* (a reply to apologies; *I'm good enough to take care of myself* or *I don't need it*) to be bewildering, and other perplexing options such as *No bother* (no problem at all, especially implying it is not serious), *It's nothing* (not worth mentioning, a response to thanks), and *Don't mention it* (akin to *You're welcome*, a response to thanks) a tough routine to differentiate.

In terms of overall performance across three groups (see Fig. 6.10), learners with abroad experience outnumbered the other two at-home groups (see a steep upward trend from G2 to G3), with little significant difference (a downtrend from G1 to G2) between the former two under at-home institutional learning context. This corresponds to Bardovi-Harlig and Bastos' (2011) conclusion that there was no significant effect of proficiency on routine recognition, as well as Roever's (2012) generalization that routines are normally easier to acquire in the target language environment, but routine knowledge was almost independent of L2 proficiency.

The following part will provide a full linguistic analysis and explanation of the influence of these two distinct factors on routine recognition.

6.2.2 Impacts of Proficiency and Study-Abroad Experience on Routine Recognition

Proficiency and Routine Recognition To examine the influence of different degrees of proficiency, the sample was originally divided and primarily focused on two at-home groups with lower and higher levels of proficiency, respectively. As shown in Fig. 6.11, portions above the x-axis are positive, and vice versa. The same is true for the remaining figures in Sect. 6.2. The current study demonstrated a weaker effect of proficiency on routine recognition, which was most likely owing to routines being brief and featuring less linguistic complexity. Furthermore, because participants are just required to identify and select a prefabricated routine “without necessarily having to parse it semantically and grammatically” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 176), this crucial feature makes recognition or routines accessible to even low-proficiency participants.

For example, in Item 6, recognition of the target greeting expression *Hello* from possible distraction options, such as *Hi*, is achievable without exact language parsing by relying on the contextual on the phone rather than the face-to-face meeting. Certainly. This is not to suggest that proficiency levels have no effect on routines. In contrast, a substantial negative impact was found in Item 3, indicating that lower-level learners are better at detecting and selecting the target routine, *Can I get you anything else?* although their more proficient counterparts were far more likely to choose *Would you like anything else?* as the native-like alternative. This can, to some extent, support the notion that it is the frequent engagement, although in a purely at-home situation, rather than a strong command of linguistic skills, that allows the internalization of PC knowledge into contextualized routine recognition.

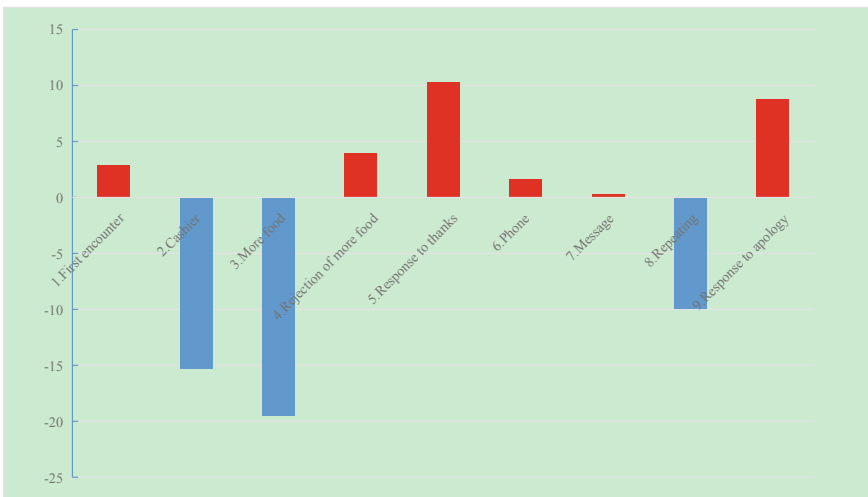


Fig. 6.11 Effects of proficiency on recognition competence

Furthermore, whereas proficiency had little effect on routine recognition in general, its specific positive and negative role differed from scenario to scenario. The negative effect of proficiency is reflected by Items 3, 2, and 8, as seen in Fig. 6.11, whereas the others are all positive. The positive relationship may be explained by two underlying factors: higher-proficiency learners' stronger command of refined linguistic knowledge and a certain extent of flexibility the routine itself may feature. Based on a thorough understanding of the contextual cues, the interpretation of the differences in answers to an apology, such as *That's okay*, *No worry*, *It's nothing*, and *Don't mention it*, necessitates exact linguistic differentiation via adequate PC knowledge.

Furthermore, when one part of the target routine, *No thanks*, is consistent across the overall options in Item 4, the distinction of deviated pragmatic strategies (i.e., *I've finished it*, *I've eaten*, and *I've done it*) and their completion require a relatively higher level of proficiency. In comparison to general proficiency, frequent use or encounter with the situational routine, *Here you go* in Item 2, will enhance the occurrence of preferable and native-like selections at home or abroad.

Study-abroad experience and Routine Recognition A closer look at how study-abroad experience affects routine recognition in Fig. 6.12 demonstrates that the findings comply with those from most previous recognition research (e.g., Roever, 2012; Roever et al., 2014) that routines are generally easier to acquire in the host community, as the majority of the blue bars are clearly distributed above the horizontal axis, with the exception of two red exceptions below the x-axis. This supports the relevance of study-abroad experience in facilitating the recognition of routines. At least in this study, exposure to the target norms is inevitably influential in the spontaneous accumulation of the sociopragmatic properties included in the ASC and pragmalinguistic forms based on their PC knowledge, which is required to recognize preferred routines.

To be more explicit, because routines are seen as prominent linguistic forms in the host environment, sufficient exposure and engagement in the study-abroad context, "characterized by features such as length of residence in formula-use situations, are likely to enhance knowledge of routine" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 224). Furthermore, routines reveal higher links with colloquial communication occurrences. Learners in the local setting have indeed been exposed to situations featuring such prefabricated expressions. As a result, learners can progressively understand "the function of highly context-dependent, culture-specific routines" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 225). The target selection of *Here you go* (Item 2) falls under the category of situational routines, with the essence that one linguistic form has the authority to carry a wider range of functional meanings. It is closely related to a few circumstances, the compositional meanings of which are completely distinct from their practical implications (i.e., *Here you are*, *Well done*, and so on). As a result, this can account for the ease with which routines, in particular, can be most efficiently learned and restored as updated PC knowledge by recurring quality interaction with communicative activities while overseas.

Furthermore, the target language community is "certainly not the only place where routine formulae can be learnt" (Roever, 2012: 16). Some routine knowledge can be

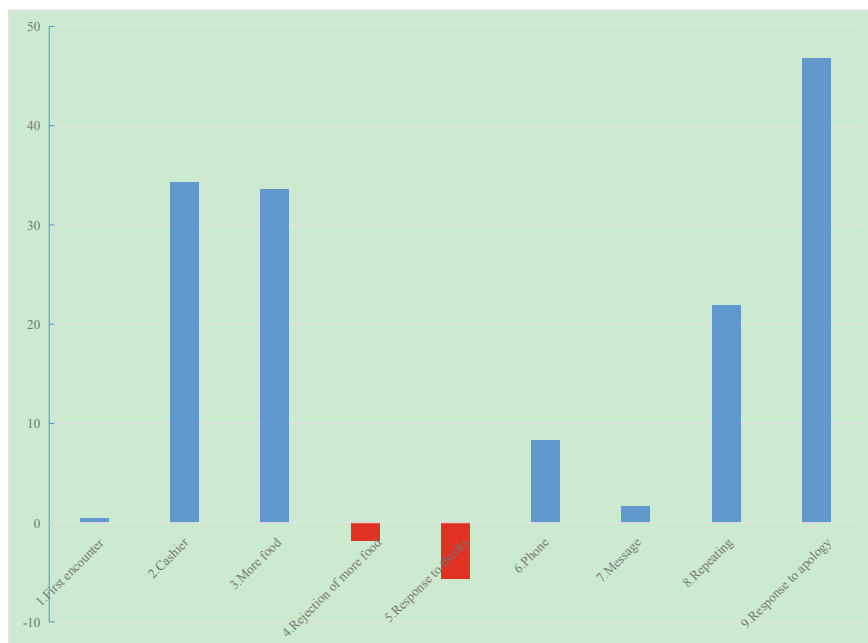


Fig. 6.12 Effect of study-abroad experience on routine recognition

gained at home, leading to reduced gaps between G2 and G3 (see the first and seventh blue bars). In comparison to other deviant expressions, the frequently used greeting routine *Nice to meet you* during the first encounter and the suggestive impact of *Can I leave a message?* appear to be generally learnable by at-home learners outside the target language context.

Although learning routines are highly susceptible to the study-abroad experience, this is not to say that high proficiency learners without abroad experience are invariably inferior to their peers with abroad residence in routine recognition or would not benefit from at-home instruction or experience—quite the contrary (e.g., see Item 4 and 5). Because these expressions are learnable in the at-home institutional context, at-home learners with high proficiency are already familiar with them. For example, at-home students are already accustomed to the refusal routine *No thanks, I'm full* and the reply to others' thanking *You're welcome*. Such routines will be modified more frequently at home than in local communities, resulting in even more evident negative growth.

Both factors' interaction and Routine Recognition In compared to the basic effect of study abroad experience, a significant difference was observed that there was no negative part in this section at all, as all blue bars are clearly above the x-axis as shown in Fig. 6.13. However, these elements appear to have differing effects on various types of routines. Some expressions are more likely to be selected as a result of sufficient encounters with target-like patterns in the social environment, but

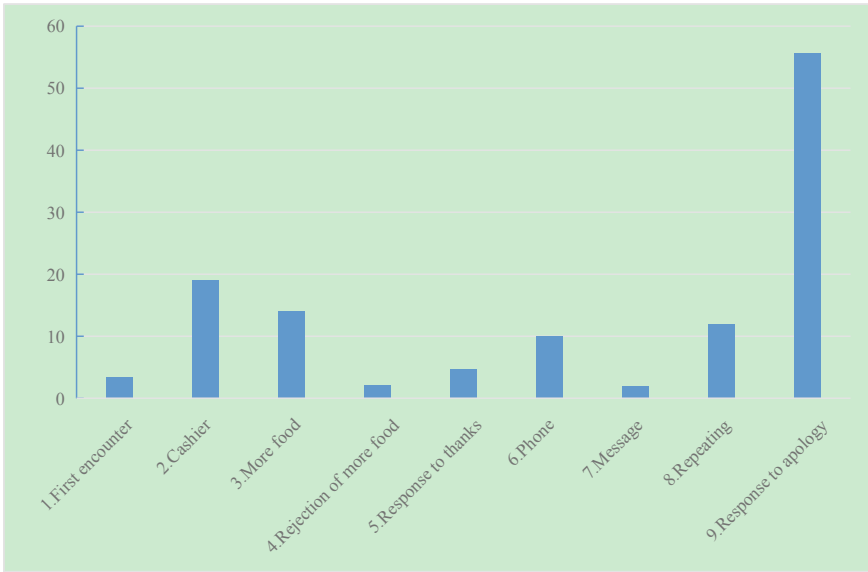


Fig. 6.13 Effects of both factors' interaction on routine recognition

others do not necessarily require a long duration of residence to become internalized. Overall, the significant pragmatic improvements were divided into two categories: larger gaps are represented by *That's okay*, *Here you go*, and *Can I get you anything else*, while smaller gaps are characterized by *No thanks*, *I'm full*, *Can I leave a message*, and *Nice to meet you*. These discrepancies in growth have been attributed to a number of factors including levels of contact, a recall of pertinent deviating possibilities, and the degree of familiarity with target routine expressions.

The next section will go into further insight into the specific performances within different grouping variables.

6.2.3 Learners' Specific Performance in Routine Recognition

As shown in Fig. 6.14, recognition of routines across three groups of unequal size is almost unaffected by proficiency and significantly susceptible to study-abroad experience, with rather similar changing patterns across all scenarios: flat (green/black dotted line), slightly steep (green/black lines) rising, and sharp down-trend (green/black lines in bold). More specifically, a negligibly slow broken-line increasing trend was discovered among the semi-fixed routine *Can I leave a message?* (best recognized), the fixed routine *Nice to meet you* (#1) when first met, and the phone greeting routine *Hello* (#6). In addition, a severe V (downtrend + uptrend)

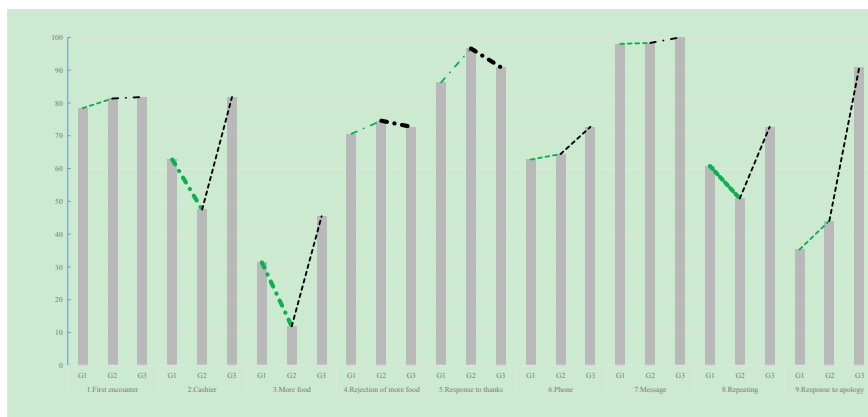


Fig. 6.14 Learners' specific performances in each scenario of routine recognition

pattern was also identified among the situational routine *Here you go* (#2), the semi-fixed routine *Can I get you anything else* (#3, the most unrecognizable), and the fixed routine *Say that again, please*. There was also an inverted V-pattern in *No thanks, I'm full* (#4) and *You're welcome* (#5). In the end, a continuous sharp ascending trend falls on the functional routine *That's okay* (#9).

In light of the trends discussed above, it is also possible to conclude that while English proficiency was identified as an effective indicator for only certain routines, it had almost no overall positive and constructive impact in this study, whereas study-abroad experience had the opposite effect, statistically influencing routine recognition.

It is undeniable that study-abroad experience, defined as the time of residence in the host community, may lessen routine unfamiliarity through frequent interaction while abroad. Furthermore, prompt activation of the specified alternatives can boost routine recognition accuracy. According to the degree of recognition, *Can I leave a message* was the most prominent among almost all of the respondents (except 2 learners). In contrast to other deviating constituents, such as *take a note* or *write something*, the lexical core *leave a message* can be directly picked by even low-level peers. In comparison, the target expression *Can I get you anything else* seems to be a little more difficult to choose generally, since it is readily mistaken with the most disruptive alternative *Would you like anything extra* (A total of 82 participants' selections). Over time (more than two years), the precise use conditions of this routine may become firmly defined (Roever, 2012). This might also explain the low recognition among overseas students in the present study. This category of unfamiliarity or low frequency of use also resulted in lower recognition of *Say that again, please* generally used on the phone and *Here you go* with a couple of functional meanings designated for various contextual situations, which were respectively interfered by *Repeat yourself, please* (chosen by 39 learners) and *There they are* (selected by 30 people).

Even in this scenario-based recognition task modality, failure in recognition was attributed to a lack of exact PC knowledge concerning ASCs' functional properties. In this regard, high-level, abroad-experienced learners may occasionally confuse the functional usages of *Nice to meet you* and *Nice to see you*, demonstrating that simply being exposed to the target language environment (language socialization) does not guarantee learners' heightened pragmatic awareness of routine recognition. Rather, the intensity of interaction (quality engagement) or the degree of individual attention will increase the management of conceptual socialization and routine recognition.

For example, L1-driven negative transfer will enable 31 learners to choose *It's me* as their favored manner of answering phone calls. At the same time, it becomes more understandable that both at-home groups showed no significant recognition performance due to a lack of daily interaction or extensive use. Because there is little room for higher-level linguistic processing through proficiency, syntactic succinctness has also led to language level losing its major function. Indeed, it is not to suggest that pragmatic recognition of routines will not benefit from the at-home environment, because these participants can be shown to have learned and become familiar with expressions, such as *Nice to meet you*, *Hi*, and *You're welcome*.

To summarize, the prompt role of other deviating possibilities and degree of familiarity will make the target option much more apparent without much more precise linguistic parsing by proficiency, resulting in improved routine identification across all participants. When high-level at-home learners are also aware of specific functional meanings, the study-abroad experience might lose its positive and constructive function. While similarly acquainted, successful routine recognition requires knowledge of the various distinctions between target and interference choices. In contrast, insufficient PC knowledge owing to rare interaction or employment in at-home settings would result in lower routine recognition under comprehensible ASC signals, which is also unknown to at-home learners.

6.3 Comprehension Competence of Routines

Routine comprehension can be further coded and characterized as four levels: No PC & ASC (no comprehension), Plausible PC (offering precise definitions alone), Plausible ASC (merely providing appropriate examples), alongside their plausible integration, which mainly required learners to figure out the definition and use condition of a specific routine under no contextual cues as inference basis. As noted above, advantages of studying abroad, however, do not hold the same across different task modalities (comprehension vs. production). As opposed to the comprehension of routines, the linguistic demands posed by the production highlight proficiency as an additional influence on routine competence. Therefore, further analysis and discussion with respect to the correlation between both factors and decontextualized comprehension of routines will be discussed in detail.

6.3.1 The General Trend of Routine Comprehension

As shown in Fig. 6.15, more than 20% of the no PC or ASC responses given by learners with studying abroad indicated no recognition of these routines, and even though nearly 40% with high proficiency but no abroad experience knew the meaning, this was a lower rate than that observed for their low-proficiency counterparts. The data considered here confirmed that all learners had low pragmatic gains in decontextualized routine recognition. Proficiency had almost no effect on routine recognition, with small discrepancies existing between these two groups, while the effect of study-abroad experience was indeed remarkable, as revealed by the large gaps between G3 and the other no-abroad-experience two groups.

In addition, there is a uniform downtrend in all the groups as a whole: there is a peak at plausible PC and a nadir at the plausible interplay PC and ASC, with plausible ASC being located in the middle. A steeper decline (see the bold lines in Fig. 6.15) is evident between plausible PC and plausible ASC. Learners predominantly manifested high confidence in providing plausible definitions based on their PC knowledge. The functional meanings of some routines (i.e., *All yours*) are close to their literal meanings, making inference easy even without the help of actual situational context. For certain short and simple constituents, linguistic parsing or frequent exposure abroad is not necessary for recognition. By contrast, participants showed less confidence in making up a plausible example in a concrete context, not to mention plausible definition-example mappings, demonstrating that learners

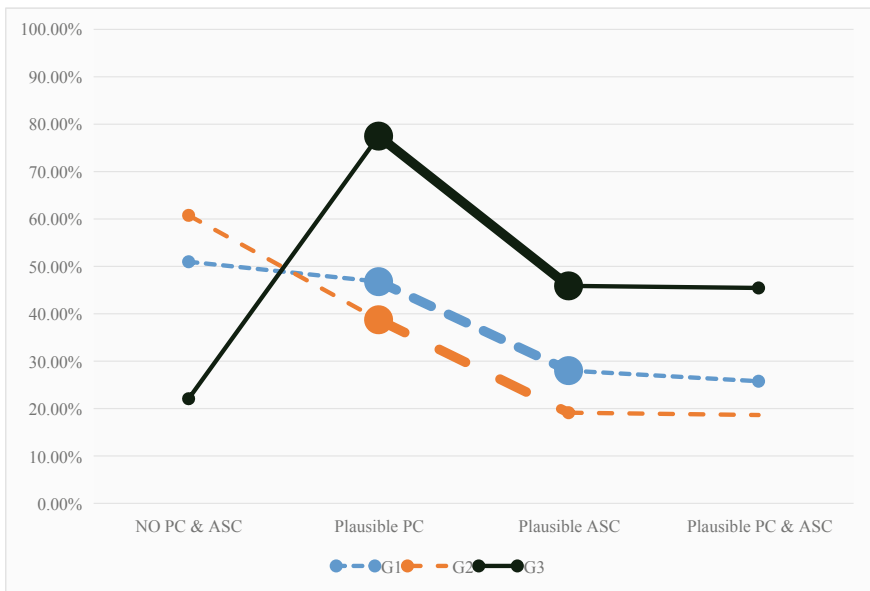


Fig. 6.15 The general trend of learners' PC and ASC knowledge distribution

still did not know how to map their PC knowledge onto a specific actual situational context.

Furthermore, the overall trend among the groups revealed a consistent mode ($G3 > G1 > G2$), suggesting that the three levels mentioned above were highly susceptible to study-abroad experience but negligibly influenced by proficiency. For instance, the functional meaning of *For here or to go?* failed to be inferred directly from learners' PC knowledge unless they knew its concrete usage in advance. Hence, the study-abroad context can be intuitively advantageous in enhancing the cumulative PC knowledge in learners' conceptual base, given that routines are used community-wide and bound to specific speech events. On the other hand, study-abroad experience is beneficial for increasing actual experience of given speech situations, since learners in the target language environment are often located in diverse social situations where routines are frequently used. In fact, non-native learners, whether they knew it or not beforehand, constantly heard *Here you go* by local community members while abroad—in situations such as when the supermarket cashier hands you your purchase or when your team wins. In this regard, participants with study-abroad experience are likely to have acquired such salient linguistic strings through recurrent socialization and to better understand their functions, which are socio-culturally bound to certain situations. The two-variable combination profoundly affected the influence of PC alone, considering G1 subjects' relatively limited social participation and relatively low proficiency.

6.3.2 *Impacts of Proficiency and Study-Abroad Experience on Routine Comprehension*

The sharp “V” pattern of the total results in Fig. 6.16 once more substantiated that the holistic comprehension of routines was almost unaffected by proficiency but significantly correlated with study-abroad experience, corresponding to the previous findings that a significant study abroad effect was found on the comprehension of routines (i.e., Roever, 2005; Taguchi, 2011a), whilst proficiency, on the other hand, had no significant effect (e.g., Roever, 2005). As the proficiency of at-home learners increased, their PC knowledge showed a marked downward trend. Namely, high proficiency was not necessarily influential in learners' routine comprehension (Roever, 2005) in the absence of actual situational context as an inference basis, largely due to routines' syntactic simplicity, fixedness in terms of construction and intrinsically situation-bound features. Specifically, the constituents of *Here you go* and *All yours* are relatively invariant and cannot be substituted by other words, leading to the non-transparency of their functional meanings. Moreover, situation-bound routines are commonly exploited in colloquial language use for their lexical succinctness, making acquisition “through (social) participation in recurrent communicative events while abroad” more effective (Taguchi & Roever, 2017: 224). Briefly,

it was not proficiency but rather daily use or exposure that mattered for situation-bound routine comprehension, especially in the absence of contextual reminders. However, this was not at all true for *That works for me* and *Thanks for having me*, given the escalating trend (see red lines in bold), indicating that proficiency still played a strong and decisive role in both no-abroad-experience groups. That is, proficiency can still make striking contributions to decontextualized comprehension to some extent, since a certain amount of linguistic parsing is indispensable to non-native learners.

On the other hand, study-abroad experience interacted with proficiency, as indicated in Fig. 6.16, appeared pivotal to learners' PC knowledge without ASC to provide an inference basis, as the highest value for each item except Item 5 was obtained by G3. In fact, this task provided abundant evidence of the facilitating role of study-abroad experience in learners' comprehension of routines. Furthermore, most items were situation-bound utterances and functional speech formulas, the majority of which had strong associations with specific actual situational contexts. Learners in the study-abroad environment would have many opportunities to encounter such situations in which routines might occur. Since routines permeate daily communication and reinforce effective socialization, it can be far easier for learners to interpret the function of these culturally context-dependent expressions while abroad. In this regard, there is no need to conduct precise parsing of *For here or to go?* and *Here you go* due to their clear compositional meanings and the particularly strong correlation between their functional meanings and actual situational contexts. The former is often asked by waiters in fast food restaurants, and the latter has several functional meanings, such as *Well done!* and *Here you are*, that are determined situationally in

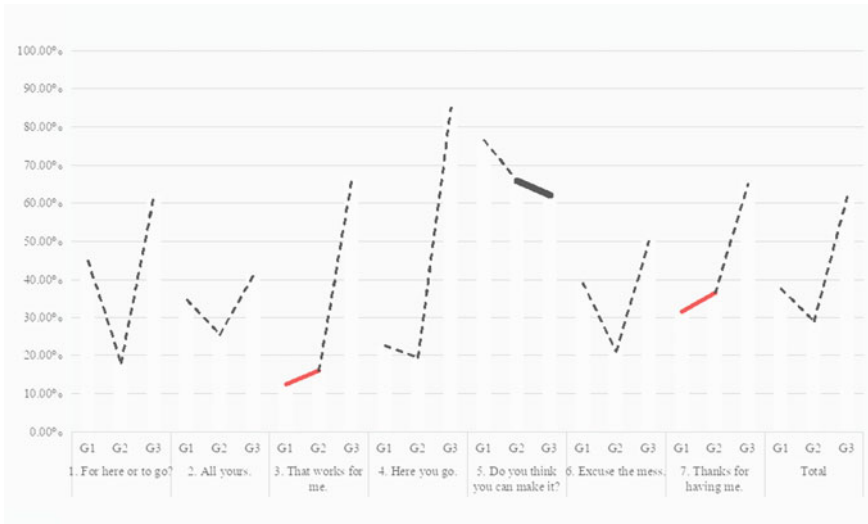


Fig. 6.16 The overall frequency of routine comprehension for each routine item

daily colloquial use. While the meaning values of routines are the result of the socio-cultural interplay of prior and actual situational experience (context), the proportion of their contribution to meaning comprehension is continuously changing. PC knowledge, therefore, has a dominant role in routine comprehension, particularly in the absence of contextual information that can be used as an inference basis. By this token, it seemed difficult for non-native learners who had never studied abroad to comprehend the functional meanings of such routines. Instead, as the black, bold line in Fig. 6.16 indicates, learners' comprehension of *Do you think you can make it?* actually decreased from G2 to G3. This expression has a more complex syntactic structure and is basically utilized by the speaker to determine whether the hearer can accept an invitation to attend an event later or whether s/he can accomplish something difficult successfully. Study-abroad experience alone does not exert a comprehensive influence on all aspects of routine comprehension, and it had a negligible impact with respect to this routine expression. For non-native learners, continuous exposure to these routinized expressions may be insufficient to establish "psychological saliency" (Kecskes, 2013: 119). It is not certain that they can fully exploit individual or external cues except in the host environment. As a matter of fact, "language learners may have direct access to the L2 linguistic materials they need but not always to the socio-cultural background knowledge that gives sense to particular linguistic expressions in the L2" (Kecskes, 2015: 428). In summary, learners tended to understand situation-bound routines readily and unproblematically under exposure in the host environment, but specific routines might require extensive use or may be difficult to acquire even in the target environment "when learners' L1 and L2 cultures do not operate under the same values and norms or when learners do not agree with L2 norms and the linguistic forms that encode target norms are not easily acquired" (Taguchi, 2011b: 303). Some participants may even be fully aware of preferred linguistic selections but are reluctant to adopt them because they are not consistent with their L1-dominated conceptual system. Exposure (individual-social interplay) is one factor, but the individual preference and willingness that motivate acquisition in the study-abroad environment also play a pivotal role. In fact, "exposure, quality, and quantity of input can be effective only as much as the individual learner allows them to be" (Kecskes, 2015: 428; cf. Kecskes, 2013).

More importantly, it can be ascertained that the integration of the two factors produced a striking pragmatic advantage (except for Item 5) in routine comprehension, for G3 obtained the highest values for each item. The combination of high proficiency and study-abroad experience is beneficial because these non-native learners with higher proficiency in linguistic retrieval and parsing have abundant opportunities to observe the linguistic strings preferred by local community members. G3 students can also practice these expressions more through daily participation in social events. In practice, participants generally "have higher pragmalinguistic skills than sociopragmatic skills, especially if they have acquired the target language in the classroom" (Kecskes, 2013: 64), as G1 and 2 learners did.

6.3.3 Learners' Specific Performance in Routine Comprehension

Regarding the participants' specific performance, several key trends can be observed. As shown in Fig. 6.17, a similar change pattern ($G3 > G1 > G2$) was also detected across several expressions. It appeared for all four responses for *Here you go*, *All yours*, and *For here or to go*; the no PC or ASC and plausible PC responses for *Excuse the mess*; and the plausible ASC responses for *That works for me*. However, diverse modes appeared for the other routine expressions, i.e., $G3 > G2 > G1$ for all the responses of *Thanks for having me* and $G1 > G2 > G3$ for *Do you think you can make it*; $G3 > G2 > G1$ for the main responses (except the plausible ASC) of *That works for me*; and $G1 > G3 > G2$ for the PC & ASC and plausible ASC responses of *Excuse the mess*.

A markedly similar trend ($G3 > G1 > G2$) emerged across all the responses for *For here or to go?* and *Here you go*. These two expressions pertain to the category of situational routines, whose functional meaning is completely different from their compositional meaning, and will be considered as examples for the purposes of this discussion. On the one hand, literal inference predominated in non-native speakers without study-abroad experience, and they were likely to assume that *for here* meant *stay/live here* or even *stop here* and to erroneously interpret *to go* as *go to another place* or *continue*. The decontextualized comprehension of such situational routines depends on high-quality input/exposure when studying abroad or frequent use in daily

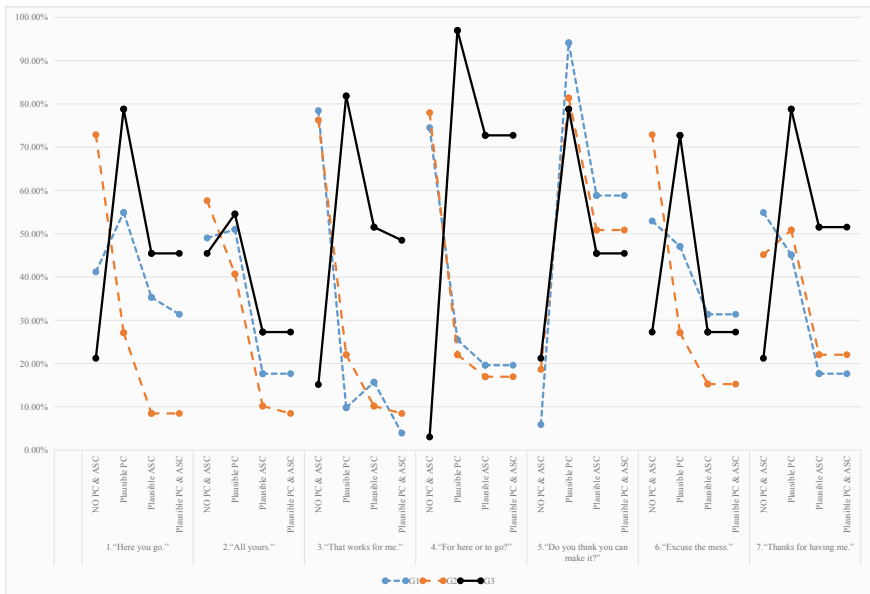


Fig. 6.17 Learners' specific trends of learners' PC and ASC knowledge distribution

communication rather than high proficiency in linguistic parsing or syntactic analysis. Hence, high-proficiency learners with study-abroad experience tend to outperform their no-abroad-experience counterparts. On the other hand, there are several functional meanings of *Here you go*, such as, *Well done*, *Here you are*, and *That's it*, and so on, which cannot be directly inferred from the literal meaning at all. Exposure, as a distinguishing feature of study-abroad experience, appears to be salient to the interpretation of situational-bound routines and their specific usage in the actual situational context across all stages.

For example, participants who have encountered such expressions are able to both define them and propose an example in a situational context. The no-abroad-experience participants can provide an example but may not know the accurate definition, i.e., they may misinterpret *Here you go* as *let's get it started*, *getting permission to leave*, or *you can deal with something* because of “insufficient exposure through productive and receptive classroom practice which fails to consider the importance of a pragmatic focus for improving communicative competence” (Halenko, 2018:156). In contrast, routine comprehension does not seem to develop hand in hand with higher proficiency (Roever, 2005) due to a certain degree of language attrition. Furthermore, formulaicity is always considered one of the main indexes of pragmatic competence. G2 postgraduate students seemed to focus more on the cultivation of academic ability and paid less attention to routine use, leading to a certain degree of attrition both in pragmatic awareness and competence of routines. For example, certain participants even believed that *here* meant going *in this direction*, a complete deviation from the original meaning. By comparison, G1 participants reported that they had frequent exposure to such expressions both in and out of class, although they had lower proficiency. They likely at least knew some of the basic functional meanings, such as *It's your turn*.

Though most of the aforementioned data indicate that routine comprehension bears no relation to proficiency but is highly susceptible to study-abroad experience and the combination of high proficiency and study-abroad experience, some exceptions are noteworthy. Proficiency was significantly associated with comprehension of *Thanks for having me* and *That works for me*. The lexical core of *having* refers here to *inviting* and not to the literal meaning *possessing*, and the latter is more strongly bound to the actual situational context (extending gratitude for others' invitation). Similarly, for the phrasal verb *works for*, the functional meaning, *the suitability to you of some suggestion, proposal, or idea*, makes more sense than the literal meaning, *doing a job for an employer*. In other words, higher proficiency is indeed conducive to inferring an obscure definition from a specific example in a situational context. In reality, “the higher the learner's fluency in the L2, the less the learner has to rely on L1 word association because the growth of L2 proficiency brings about changes in the conceptual system, which starts to accommodate socio-cultural knowledge and concepts gained through L2 use and experience” (Kecskes, 2013: 140). For example, students tended to believe the functional meaning of *having* was *choosing and letting you be a member or accompanying you when you have difficulties*. Likewise, some students could provide only partial appropriate responses, that is, an implausible definition (*It's very good and all right*) with a plausible example (*How about the*

movie?; *That works for me*) or vice versa (a plausible definition, *something is suitable for me* with an implausible example, *The clothing is beautiful. That works for me*). Sometimes, both of the parts provided were problematic (an implausible definition, *Something has an effect on me* with an inappropriate example, *The medicine works for me*). As a matter of fact, most G1 students knew the distinction between the functional and compositional meanings of *works for* but erroneously interpreted it as *effective, helpful, functional or solvable* nonetheless. The same was true for their interplay in *Do you think you can make it*. Participants in the high-proficiency group outperformed their low-proficiency counterparts because *make it* here also did not denote its literal meaning and embodied two functional meanings, as mentioned above. Both no-abroad-experience groups were aware of the former meaning, but the latter was less known to some extent.

High proficiency combined with study-abroad experience had a decisive and considerable impact overall, but there still existed some discrepancies in the effect of the integrated factor on routine comprehension. This combined factor loses its efficacy when students have frequent exposure to prefabricated expressions at home or there is a close approximation between their literal and functional meanings. G1 students retrospectively mentioned that they grasp the usage of *Do you think you can make it*, particularly because it has appeared so many times on oral English tests. However, certain learners may misinterpret it as *whether someone has confidence in doing something* (i.e., *Are you confident?*). The illocutionary force of *invitation* was rarely assimilated by subjects with no study-abroad experience because they were incapable of acquiring their socio-cultural connotations in the classroom. Their study-abroad counterparts had a better knowledge of the meaning (i.e., *Can you come to someplace on time?*) because of their authentic engagement with local community members. However, even subjects with low proficiency could infer the use of *Excuse the mess* in a specific context based on its transparent compositional meaning. Both G1 and G3 participants could guess the exact definition *sorry for the untidiness of my place* based on their PC knowledge; however, their low-proficiency counterparts often failed to come up with an example simultaneously and might sometimes misinterpret its definition, such as *forgive my mistakes/the matter* or *somebody makes someplace dirty*. Likewise, high-proficiency learners with study-abroad experience could also experience a complete inability to infer meanings and formulate examples at the same time. Study-abroad experience sometimes failed to be beneficial due to insufficient exposure to authentic input (poor engagement) in the host environment or learners' L1 socio-cultural mindset and "L2 norms and patterns need conscious acts by the language learner to accept and/or acquire them" (Kecskes, 2015: 421–422). Hence, it is not only authentic language socialization that matters but also conceptual socialization, which can fully restructure learners' L1 conceptual system to adapt to a new language that encodes specific socio-cultural loads. Moreover, even if an individual with a certain amount of study-abroad experience has good English proficiency and excellent interaction abilities on par with those of native speakers, they also tend to be strongly hindered by the constraints imposed by L1 cultural norms. L1 and L2 cultures are sometimes mutually contradictory, and prefabricated strings that encode pragmatic norms and conventions are not easily acquired even

during a study-abroad program. non-native speakers may be fully aware of them but tend to ignore them or be unwilling to perform accordingly, underscoring the crucial and powerful role of individual motivation and willingness in the modification of L1-based pragmatic conventionality.

Regarding the significant difference in plausible definitions and examples within each group, the students' performance followed the pattern of G2, mainly embodied in the consistency of *All yours*, *Do you think you can make it* and *Thanks for having me*. Moreover, G2 students gave far more plausible definitions of *Here you go* than plausible examples. This pattern applied equally to G3 participants with regard to *Excuse the mess*. Beyond these expressions, all learners tended to give definitions based on their PC knowledge but uniformly failed to specify its actual usage in a situational context. Some test-takers indicated that much more time was spent inferring definitions than inventing examples due to the order in which they answered the questions and the approach they used to do so. Most used a literal translation method to infer the meanings of routines they were totally ignorant of or not familiar with. For instance, the functional meaning of *All yours* is relatively easy to determine from compositional constituents; however, it is difficult to formulate a specific example. Hence, there was not enough time to provide its definition, let alone give examples. Based on their performance and the calculation above, it is clear that PC knowledge is not only significantly higher than ASC knowledge but also determines it to a large extent. More importantly, for situational routines, the two types of knowledge are closely related to each other. As long as the meaning can be accurately inferred, corresponding examples can be generated. By contrast, it is difficult to form PC-ASC mappings for functional routines.

6.4 Perception of Routines

The decontextualized pragmatic perception of routines was intended to investigate learners' pragmatic awareness of two distinct routines, after which all participants were required to elaborate their specific ASC functional utilization apiece using their accumulated PC knowledge (form-context-function mappings). On the one hand, pragmatic awareness is defined as a "conscious, reflective, and explicit knowledge about pragmatics" (Kecskes, 2015: 425). Pragmatic differentiated awareness is required for later effective perception. The mapping of pragmalinguistic forms of routines to sociopragmatic usage conditions, on the other hand, has not always been linear and unambiguous (Bardovi-Harlig, 2014). Indeed, the ultimate challenge for non-native learners, in particular, is to master new form-function relationships corresponding to the L2, necessitating the acquisition of new pragmalinguistic forms as well as the social settings wherein they occur (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). The thorough analysis and debate will be presented in the subsections that follow.

6.4.1 The General Trend of Routine Perception

The combination of pragmatic awareness and the correct identification of ASC traits of two associated routines by the mastery of PC knowledge constituted routine perception in the present study. Across all routine tasks, the learners performed the worst in routine perception, as evidenced by the difficulties of formation into the PC-ASC mappings. In other words, learners' PC knowledge does not develop concurrently with their acquisition of ASC properties; there is no direct mapping between pragmalinguistic forms and their sociopragmatic use conditions. Figure 6.18 showed a steady "V" pattern across all categories, indicating that proficiency plays a less role while study-abroad experience has a larger influence.

In reality, the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competencies do not develop concurrently (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). The reason for this is that routines typically convey functional meanings that differ from their compositional equivalents, leading to confusion or misinterpretation. Non-native speakers, in particular, were far more likely to rely on compositional meaning (semantic analyzability) than functional meaning (Kecskes et al., 2018), resulting in inferential failure of ASC characteristics, particularly under decontextualized conditions. When comparing *Do you have the time* versus *Do you have a minute*, it was mistakenly assumed that *have the time* literally means *have the time to do something*, and that the distinction between *the time* and *a minute* was primarily reflected in the length of time (*the time* referring to

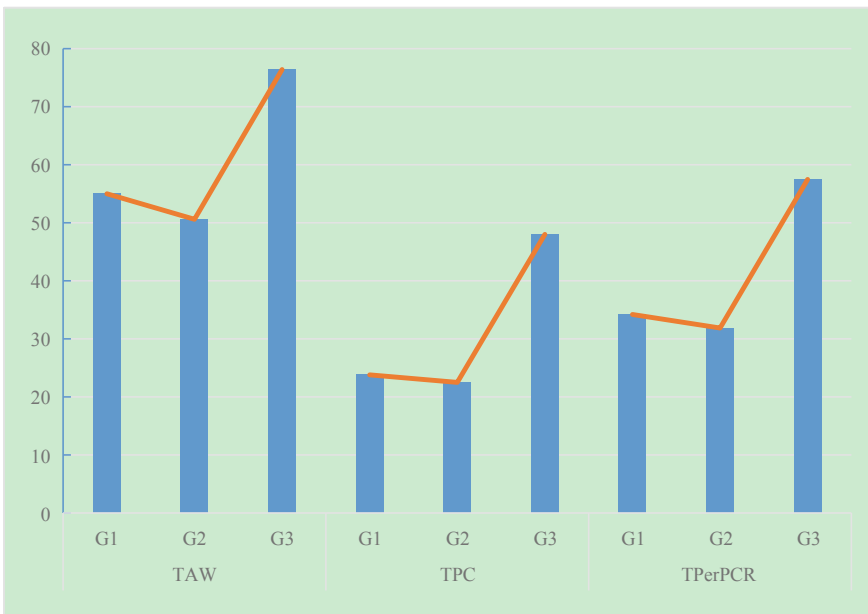


Fig. 6.18 The general trend of routine perception. *Note* AW, awareness; PC, prior context; PerPCR, perceptive pragmatic competence of routines

a long time and *a minute* emphasizing *a short time*). They have no awareness that the former was used to inquire *what time it is right now* and the latter to determine whether *the other person involved is accessible*. In practice, all learners who could employ warning speech acts, *Be careful* and *Watch out*, but they could not always gauge the extent of their illocutionary forces.

Furthermore, some students believed that *No problem* simply means being capable of or promising to do something, but much less is known about other functional meanings, such as a response to thanking, the trivial matter (a piece of cake) of responding to a request, and the consolation implying it is not a problem. Although pragmatic awareness was occasionally directly helpful in PC-ASC mappings for routine perception, learners' PC knowledge was nevertheless important in overall perceptive competence. Even though the learners intended so, inadequacy of PC knowledge resulted in failure of perceiving paired routines. For example, all participants (50%) were pragmatically aware of the distinction between the greeting expressions *Hello* (on the phone) and *Hi* (face to face). They were virtually unaware of the various characteristics of use in the actual situational context (18.5%) and considered them as interchangeable alternatives. The fact that traditional classroom instruction at home has overwhelmingly concentrated on pragmalinguistic changes and features of the target language, whereas the sociopragmatic facets (e.g., rich opportunities for meaning-making in pragmatics) has been neglected, can account for more dispreferred responses frequently produced by at-home students in particular.

6.4.2 *Impacts of Proficiency and Study-Abroad Experience on Routine Perception*

Proficiency and Routine Perception In contrast to Bardovi-Harlig's (2010) optimistic conclusion on the beneficial contribution of L2 proficiency, our results show that proficiency is only marginally important in routine perception, but study-abroad experience, together with both variables' integration, has a rather substantial influence. Above all, proficiency helps but does not always necessitate L2 pragmatics, because this sensitive task modality prioritizes learners' sociopragmatic awareness of cultural norms and standards rather than more precise parsing. In the case of two groups of at-home learners who have had no direct exposure to target instructional strategies, frequent use and regular interaction nonetheless play an important role in routine perception.

As a result, it is not surprising that lower-proficiency learners outperformed higher-proficiency counterparts across most levels, because the former group has far more opportunities (more communication with native foreign teachers, see Sect. 6.5) to use these types of routine expressions precisely. Meanwhile, higher counterparts, although having great command of linguistic skills, are postgraduate learners who have admitted experiencing less opportunity to practice these routinized phrases than lower students did both within and outside of the formal classroom, resulting

in certain language attrition. The area-line charts were also used to demonstrate the positive (areas above the x-axis) and negative (areas below the x-axis) impact of various variables on routine perception.

As shown in Fig. 6.19, the beneficial contribution generated by proficiency was found in an exclusive pair, *No problem* versus *You're welcome*, with the pragmatic awareness section of *Hello* versus *Hi*. G2 students may know more functional interpretations of the situational routine *No problem* than G1 peers since they are more adept in linguistic capabilities. As an example, consider the PC portion of Pair 4. Few at-home students can learn the entire set of functional utilization of *No problem*, only attaining one interpretation at most. High-proficiency peers, on the other hand, can explicate more acceptable usages than lower peers. This might be justified by G2 learners' superior command of linguistic resources.

Nonetheless, almost no learners (including those with study-abroad residency) failed to differentiate the essential nuances of *No problem* versus *You're welcome* in relation to the *deflection and reception of gratitude* indicated above in Sect. 6.1. In reality, not all study-abroad students benefit relatively well throughout their studying overseas, leading to the generalization that individual characteristics and their interplay with context influence pragmatic progress. (cf. Taguchi & Roever, 2017). The particular variables that do have a significant impact on routines are "amount and nature of social contact, types of language practice, and individual learner characteristics" (Taguchi, 2018: 129). Table 6.17 vividly displays the information.

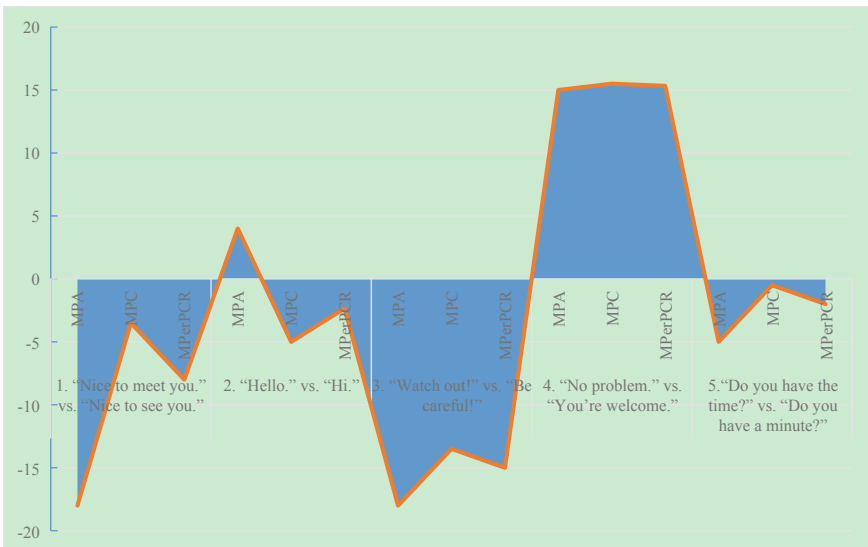


Fig. 6.19 Effects of proficiency on routine perception. *Note* AW, awareness; PC, prior context; PerPCR, perceptive pragmatic competence of routines

Table 6.17 Positive effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in routine perception

Group	ASC functional features (Score)
G1	No problem is less formal than You're welcome (0')
G1	No problem: more casual and used between friends or family (0'); You're welcome: more formal, say to a person who you respected (0')
G1	No problem: you don't want anymore (0'); You're welcome: you can do this again (0')
G1	No problem: the things is already been done (0'); You're welcome: the things not been done (0')
G1	No problem: no explain (0'); You're welcome: reply to thank you (1')
G2	No problem: when you speak to others for help and you says it's easy (0.5'); You're welcome: a response to others' thanks (1')
G2	You're welcome: response to thank you (1'); No problem: response to someone's help (0.5')

As demonstrated in Table 6.18, while G2 participants have a numerical advantage in identifying two types of greeting routines, proficient levels do not always ensure the complete interpretation of sociopragmatic characteristics in a given ASC. The majority of G2 students believe there is no difference between *Watch out* versus *Be careful* and *Nice to meet you* versus *Nice to see you*. They just believed that *Watch out* is more direct in spoken language, but *Be careful* is a more formal and written word. Similarly, G2 may consider *Hello* as a formal expression or simply treat it as a commonly-used pattern for greeting on the phone, but G1 peers are also reported to be aware that *Hi* might primarily be used for face-to-face engagement.

Study-abroad experience and Routine Perception In contrast to proficiency, studying abroad has resulted in a variety of social experiences contributing to the formation of unique form-function linkages (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). The favorable trajectory brought about by study abroad experience was usually retained in all facets of routine perception, with the exception of a modest drop in the awareness portion of Pair 2, as shown in Fig. 6.19. In reality, adequate functional language use rests on conventions, norms, attitudes, expectations, and knowledge concerning preferred ways of saying things and structuring thoughts (Kecskes, 2007). This corroborates the

Table 6.18 Negative effects of proficiency on PC knowledge in routine perception

Group	ASC functional features (Score)
G1	Hello: when we phone others (1'); Hi: meet some guys in the daily life (1')
G1	Hello: making phones (1') Hi: people meet (1')
G2	Hello can be used in when we are calling in the telephone but Hi not (1')
G2	Hello is more official (0'); Hi is for friends, family, meeting persons (1')

requirement and promoting role of abroad residency for successful routine perception and demonstrates that prolonged exposure to native patterns is up to a point necessarily influential in form (PC)-function (ASC) mappings.

Take Pair 5 as an example. Even with higher proficiency, at-home learners resorted to literal inference, viewing the distinction between *a minute* and *the time* as the difference in length of time or degree of formality, rather than a request for asking the current time (*the time*) and making a request whether they have time to talk (*a minute*). Similarly, the majority of at-home learners also see no differences between the conventional and alternatively utilized expressions *Nice to meet/see you* in daily communication, whereas study-abroad peers grasped at least a portion of the functional meanings or both.

Non-native speakers are motivated to engage in the ASC on a frequent and quality level, where routines are constantly present, in order to better grasp the function of inherently context-dependent, culture-specific routines in particular. In comparison to the study-abroad experience or duration of studying abroad, frequent and effective interaction with the use features of routines' ASC will undoubtedly increase the establishment of learners' pragmatic awareness, acquisition, storage, and extraction of contextual knowledge. This might support the function of length of residence while overseas in decontextualized routine perception. Table 6.19 contains more information.

Table 6.19 Positive effects of study-abroad experience on PC knowledge in routine perception

Situation/Group	ASC functional features (Score)
#5	
G2 (64)	Have the time: when you want to have a long talk to others Have a minute: only spend a little time (0')
G2 (66)	Have the time: ask for future (0') Have a minute: ask for now (0')
G2 (76)	Have a minute: short time; more casual (0') Have the time: long time; officially and formal (0')
G3 (112)	Have the time: ask the exact time (1') Have a minute: ask someone whether have time to talk (1')
G3 (133)	Have the time: ask time (1') Have a minute: make a request (1')
#1	
G2 (60)	Meet: when two persons meet at the first time (0')
G3 (123)	Meet: the first time to see someone (1') See: no response (0')
G3 (129)	Meet: the first time to greet (1') See: you are mutually friends (1')

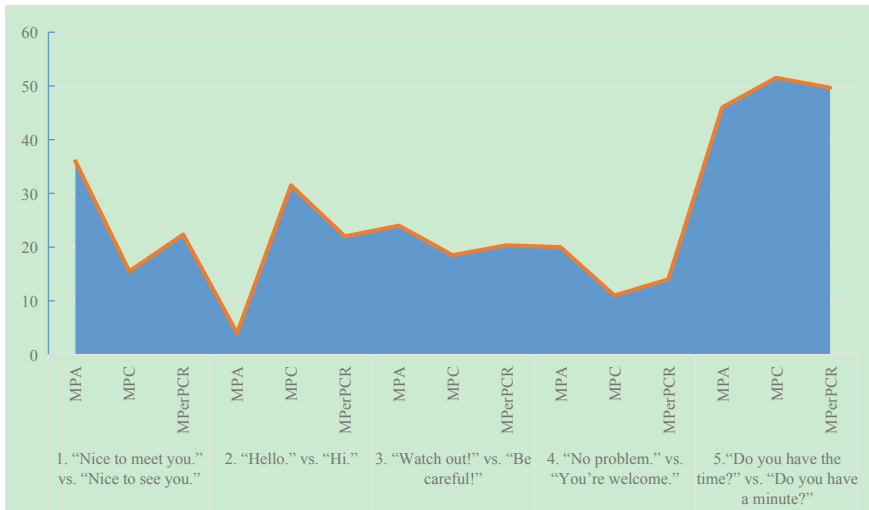


Fig. 6.20 Effect of study-abroad experience on routine perception

All of the regions in Fig. 6.20 are above the x-axis, indicating that the study-abroad experience had a significant influence on routine perception. However, it is also seen in Fig. 6.20 that even those who studied abroad did not achieve the desired level of routine perception because “form-function-context mappings are not internalized in a linear, fast-paced manner even when living in the target language community” (Taguchi, 2011a: 914). In actuality, frequent interactions with these expressions for non-native speakers are beneficial but insufficient to establish “psychological saliency” (Kecskes, 2013: 109). This might further support the notion that learners’ individual willingness or motivation, as well as quality participation in social events, matter significantly more to decontextualized routine perception than pure interaction with the target language community.

Both factors’ interaction and Routine Perception When comparing G1 and G3, all areas in the area graph (Fig. 6.21) are above the x-axis, indicating that both factors combined made more striking pragmatic gains in situational routines (e.g., *No problem* and *Do you have the time?*) than in functional routines (e.g., *Watch out* and *Nice to meet you*). Situational routines, which are generally related to one or a few situations, appeared to be more prominent in the target language community, resulting in simpler acquisition and subsequent internalization. Aside from that, awareness of such situational routines needs some linguistic parsing. Due to the essence of one (linguistic form)-to-many (functional meanings) would undoubtedly promote routine perception, and great mastery of linguistic abilities and knowledge will undoubtedly promote routine perception. For example, the definite article *the* in *have the time* cannot be substituted with the indefinite article *a* without generating a meaning shift. Similarly, the perception of various functional meanings of *No problem* benefits



Fig. 6.21 Effects of both factors' interaction on routine perception

from acquired PC knowledge, or it results in perceived incompleteness, such as just pointing out replies to thanking or requesting separately.

6.4.3 Learners' Specific Performances in Routine Perception

When comparing differentiated awareness and required PC knowledge, as shown in Fig. 6.22, the former outnumbered the latter to a greater extent. As previously stated, the formation into PC-ASC mappings is the most important question of routine perceptive pragmatic competence. In other words, even if they have distinctive awareness, their PC knowledge cannot accomplish effective or thorough routine perception, especially if contextual reminders are not used as the inferential foundation.

To be more specific, as illustrated in Fig. 6.22, the pragmatic awareness across three groups in *Hello* versus *Hi* and *Watch out* versus *Be careful* revealed a somewhat parallel tendency. Both of these paired expressions were located at an unsatisfactorily lower level, because learners at home or abroad are constantly manipulating these routinized expressions interchangeably, resulting in their weaker distinctive awareness and routine perception. The distinctive awareness will emerge perpendicularly for situational routines (i.e., Pair 4 and 5) with a reduced frequency of usage, notably in at-home contexts. Furthermore, continuous exposure to the host community benefits their specialized functional utilization. This type of unfamiliarity or infrequency may further elucidate and lead to the lowest performance of PC knowledge and routine perception across two non-residence groups in Pair 5, with essentially no

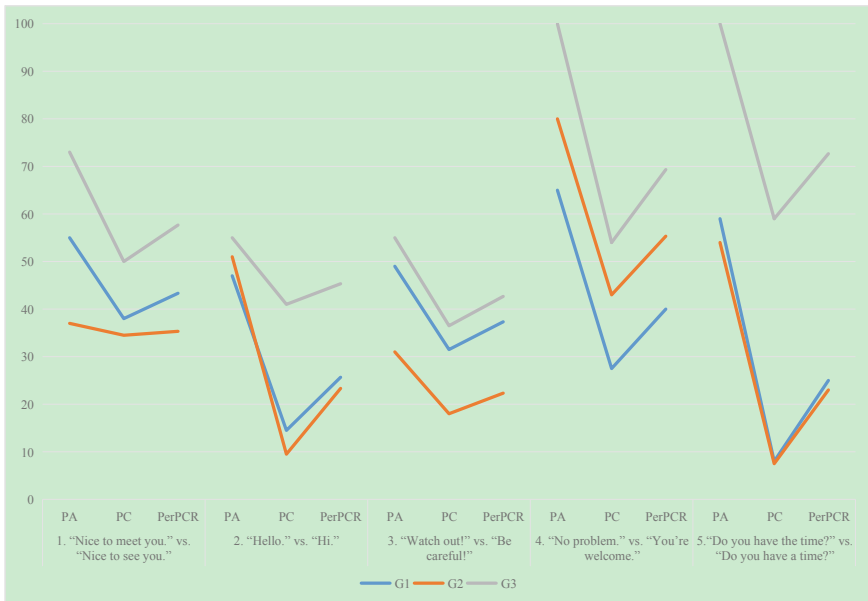


Fig. 6.22 Learners’ specific performance of each pair in routine perception

differences between the two non-residence groups but the largest gaps between G2 and G3. The performance of three groups in Pair 4 shared a similar evolving pattern with those in Pair 5 but clearly differentiates in two non-residence groups, since expressions in Pair 4 appear more acquainted to all participants than those in Pair 5, owing to extensive usage and interaction level. The perception level in Pair 1, by contrast, was squarely in the middle. Because the paired expressions, comparable to *Hello* versus *Hi*, were also employed interchangeably, up to two-thirds of non-residence higher learners were unable to distinguish between *Nice to meet you* as a routine for first meetings and *Nice to see you* as a routine for subsequent encounters.

To recapitulate, for unexpected or infrequent expressions (Pair 5), differentiated awareness may appear to be significantly higher in the at-home context, and the constructive impact of study-abroad experience, rather than proficiency, may appear to be more important in routine perception. In contrast to the rather frequently-used routines (such as Pair 2 and 3), interchangeable employment in the at-home setting leads to L1-driven negative transfer, which further minimizes their distinguishing awareness and decontextualized perception. When handled alternatively, the clearly differentiating functional usage (Pair 1 and 4) in the abroad setting might at least raise learners’ pragmatic awareness.

6.5 Retrospective Review for Cognitive Process

Sections 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 investigated the influence of proficiency and study-abroad experience on four modalities in pragmatic competence of routines (production, recognition, comprehension, and perception), with the required ASC and PC knowledge involved. This section primarily examines and discusses the findings of the investigation into 110 non-abroad-experience Chinese EFL learners' cognitive processes involved in completing their routine items in order to ascertain the explanations of deficient pragmatic competence. When the four tasks listed above were completed, the Computer Animated Retrospective Protocols were implemented and data were collected cross-sectionally.

The retrospective review used for this study served three functions, as described by Ren (2015): (1) to investigate learners' cognitive processes at each phase of task modalities, (2) to justify the results and conclusions drawn from the entire task, and (3) to offer viable approaches to developing pragmatic abilities. The first level concentrated on four dimensions: (1) learners' attention when responding to each item; (2) task complexity; (3) source of context knowledge; and (4) preference for L1 or L2 when responding to each scenario. The second level included two aspects: (1) whether they had been exposed to such expressions or not; and (2) whether their pragmatic competence was higher when compared to lower grade learners, as evidenced by data on difficulty of each task. The last level focused on self-reported ways of developing pragmatic competence of routines. Here are the interview questions.

1. What is your primary emphasis during the task completion process?
2. When comparing the four tasks as a whole, which part do you believe is the most difficult to complete?
3. What prompted you to accomplish all of the routine tasks in this manner?
4. Do you prefer to use or think in Chinese or English when trying to respond to each item?
5. Is there adequate exposure to or contact with such routines within or outside the English classroom?
6. As an English-majored postgraduate student, do you believe your pragmatic competence of routines is stronger than that of your less-proficient peers? (Only for G2 students)
7. What tactics or approaches do you think will help you considerably increase your pragmatic competence of routines?

As previously stated, during the data collection phase, each learner in both non-residence groups was asked six questions in total, with an additional question specifically designed for G2 students. As a result, if learners had faithfully followed the directions to respond to each question, there would have been 719 responses (110 learners * 6 questions + 59 G2 learners * 1 question). However, students did not always cooperate, resulting in fewer responses (575 total in reality) that may be obtained. The parts that follow will exemplify each of the objectives in succession.

6.5.1 Learners' Cognitive Processes

As shown in Table 6.20, the data in the table just verify that contextual information plays a critical part in the production modality, with the appropriateness level receiving the greatest attention. Meanwhile, the attention of question in each item and the intricacies of routines continue to influence participants' responses to some extent.

Concerning the difficulty ratings of each task modality, all participants were asked to identify which task they are relatively adept at and which is the least acceptable for them. We added up the relevant frequency of each task based on the answers (some learners raised two tasks at the same time) and summarized the results in Table 6.21. We may further rank the degree of difficulty across all tasks by removing the first two frequencies (easiest through hardest). In accordance with the previous findings, the ratings range from the easiest recognition to the most difficult perception.

In Table 6.22, 94 responses out of 110 learners were successfully gathered for the level of L1 or L2 preference. Only around 14% of learners favor L2 (here is the target language, English), while almost half of the students were still influenced by L1 negative transfer, with 38.30% of students affected by both languages at the same time. This could add to the evidence that all at-home peers have more deviated

Table 6.20 Descriptive statistics of learners' cognitive processes

Item	Selective coding	Reference point	Examples
	Context	28	Contexts
	Question	11	Questions
	Differences of routines	8	What does routines mean and what is the difference between their similarities
Answer	Self	10	The first thing that comes out of the mouth
	Collocability	3	The use of individual words; different words have different effects
	Value	1	Whether it's valuable or not
	Succinctness	1	I focus more on being concise
	Appropriateness	17	I am much closer to native-like norms
	Politeness	1	What would be a more polite and appropriate response
	interchangeability	1	Whether the expression can be replaced, and whether the answer can be changed according to the close relationship with the other person

Table 6.21 Descriptive statistics of task difficulty ratings

Task modality	Easiest	Hardest	Difference value (E-H)	Rating
Production	35	25	10	2
Recognition	35	4	31	1
Comprehension	7	10	-3	3
Perception	8	26	-18	4

Table 6.22 Descriptive statistics of self-reported L1 or L2 preference

Item	Language preference	Reference point	%	Examples
1	English	13	13.83	It tends to be in English because it is different from the literal translation into Chinese
2	Chinese	45	47.87	Maybe more Chinese
3	Both	36	38.30	Fifty-fifty

routine performances than their study-abroad counterparts, owing to L1-dominated norms and practices.

92 replies were provided throughout the data collection phase about the source of context knowledge. Similarly, 5 prospective themes were then constructed (see Table 6.23). The input source of target routines for non-native learners in the at-home setting was highly dependent on watching American dramas rather than the infrequency of classroom education and regular practice, which resulted in less guidance correcting, and instant feedback by professional teachers. When taking foreign teachers' lessons, G1 students have more opportunities to communicate with native speakers. However, this was not the case for G2 learners, since English masters at Chinese universities were expected to gain more training in academic ability with little linguistic ability and much less pragmatic instruction. This might demonstrate once again that at-home learners receive less exposure to native-like norms favored by local community members. Furthermore, the basic encounter with routines in specific segments of American TV shows appeared to be inadequate to promote the ASC-PC mappings, although being available to some amount.

6.5.2 Self-reported Factors Affecting Learners' Routine Performance

From a personal perspective, 90 replies representing the impact of proficiency and 103 equivalents reflecting the impact of study-abroad experience were gathered. Only over 20% of the learners indicated that proficiency would have had a significant impact on routine competence, validating the negligibly beneficial function of proficiency discovered in this study. Meanwhile, the majority of participants who hold

Table 6.23 Descriptive statistics of source of context knowledge

Item	Selective coding	Reference point	%	Examples
1	Original American dramas, and so on	52	56.52	Watch American TV series, watch foreign TV, life sitcom
2	At-home instructional classroom	11	11.96	There are no other ways. It's all in class, you know
3	Textbooks	18	19.57	Through these years of English learning, the knowledge on the textbook
4	Communication with NSs	24	26.09	Communicate with foreigners, practice oral English
5	Daily personal practice	10	10.87	More listening to the radio, retelling some of the contents of their speech, listening and reading

unfavorable beliefs believe that exposure to the target language or frequent encounters with local community members will result in native-like target production rather than superior command of linguistic knowledge. Indeed, the frequent ratings of study-abroad experience by non-residence learners may corroborate the above-mentioned assumption. Approximately 90% of the learners had very few strong associations with such commonly used routines in their daily lives, resulting in a lesser establishment of psychological saliency and internationalization of PC and ASC knowledge. Table 6.24 contains more details.

6.5.3 Self-reported Methods for Improving Learners' Routine Performance

Diverse approaches (92 out of 110) have been proposed and collected for the strategies that learners deemed to be effective in formulaic promotion. Following the primary coding, 5 prospective themes were established. As shown in Table 6.25, the answers offered by learners subjectively might be classified into five groups, numbered from highest to lowest: (1) excellent interactions with local community members (foreign language instructor); (2) frequent exposure to American dramas or original novels; (3) more oral practice in daily life; (4) more travel or going overseas if feasible; and (5) more possibilities for classroom instruction. Practice approaches are not restricted to the method outlined here. However, as a reference point, these approaches might give insight into future English teaching and learning routines in the at-home context.

Table 6.24 Self-reported effect of proficiency and study-abroad experience

Item	Variable		Reference point	%	Examples
1	Proficiency	Positive	15	16.67	Learners with high proficiency will have high pragmatic ability, because they will have deeper understanding than those with low proficiency and will be exposed to expressions in different situations
		Negative	75	83.33	Not necessarily, English level is reflected in vocabulary, grammar knowledge, academic level is relatively high, but will not be as good as the low English level of NS has a lot of contact with native-like norms
2	Study-abroad experience	None	72	69.90	No. Because I seldom know foreigners
		Little	23	22.33	There are fewer opportunities to use English in real life and in class, and procedural discourse is generally produced in everyday conversation. The language in class is not quite the same as that in real life
		Frequent	8	7.77	Yes, there will be more chances to meet foreign guests or translate for them

6.5.4 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted many aspects of the mechanism behind learners, including individual cognitive processes of production, recognition, comprehension, and perception of routines via the instant retrospective report. Furthermore, at the end of the interview, the retrospective review allowed learners to subjectively explain their source of context knowledge and suggest several realistic strategies to further develop Chinese EFL learners' pragmatic competence of routines. As a moderate factor, proficiency had no effect on overall routine competence, while exposure to target norms both at home and abroad has had the opposite

Table 6.25 Self-reported feasible methods for routine development

Item	Methods	Reference point	%	Examples
1	American dramas/books, and so on	34	36.96	Watch more original movies and American TV series; Simulate the environment and the conversation
2	Communication with NSs	55	59.78	Communicate with NS more, get more opportunities to express yourself, pay attention to these aspects consciously
3	Studying abroad	15	16.30	More contact with native speakers, more overseas exchanges, communication with foreigners; out of the textbook, close to the authentic communication
4	Classroom training	4	4.35	Given the use of these routines in class, they learned less by themselves and had less understanding of native-speaker thinking patterns and cultural conventions
5	Daily practice	21	22.83	Increase the chances of practice. There are many such scenes in life, and it is not effective to simply encounter a specific scene

effect. During routine task completion, learners' attention was primarily focused on contextual information and reminders, as well as the propriety of their responses in particular. Even for high-level at-home students with excellent command of language resources, L1-driven negative transfer remained dominant in routine competence. In terms of task modalities, the pragmatic perception test was deemed the most difficult to complete, whereas recognition was considered the easiest according to all participants. The overwhelming source of the target norms' exposure, especially for at-home learners, was grounded throughout American dramas, books, and other types of original electronic resources; however, at-home learners were extremely lacking in daily practice inside or outside the classroom, leading to strong expectation of consistency with the native-like norms through guidance and correction by both native speakers or their teachers in the classroom. These discoveries have the potential to create a robust basis.

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