PREDICTORS OF INNOVATIVE ESTAR: A SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STUDY

by

BRITTANY BANKSTON

(Under the Direction of Margaret Quesada)

ABSTRACT

The choice between Spanish copulas ser and estar is one that can be potentially difficult for Second Language Learners of Spanish. One structure in particular that often proves to be difficult to master is the copula + adjective construction. It appears to be more difficult because variation between the uses of the two copulas is often permitted. Also, a more recent phenomenon referred to as the extension of estar, makes these distinctions more difficult for learners to acquire. This study examines copula selection among twenty-one second language learners as well as eight native speakers with particular focus on the variables adjective class, animacy of the referent and extremity of the adjective. Computer software was used to record responses and reaction times. Results indicated that the learners did not employ innovative estar as often as the native speakers, yet the general tendencies among copula selection were similar among all groups.

INDEX WORDS: Second Language Acquisition, Spanish, ser, estar, innovative, animacy, extremity, adjective
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by

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The choice between the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* is one that can be potentially difficult for second language (L2) learners of Spanish, especially those whose first language does not contain a contrast in the same way, as is the case with English. In many cases, *ser* and *estar* equate to the English verb ‘to be’. The distinctions and uses of these two copulas must be explained and taught in the second language classroom. However, problems tend to arise regarding certain uses of each copula. More specifically, the copula + adjective construction has sparked much discussion in the field of Spanish Linguistics over the past decade. According to Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes (2008), “approximately eighty percent of all adjectives are grammatical with both *ser* and *estar*” (366). It is precisely this claim that illustrates why the copula + adjective construction is so confusing for L2 learners and why it continues to be discussed.

Additionally, a fairly new phenomenon has been observed not only in bilingual Spanish communities but also in monolingual Spanish speaking communities that can serve to make the Spanish copula + adjective selection more difficult for L2 learners. This phenomenon is often referred to as *the extension of estar* or *innovative estar* and occurs when *estar* appears in contexts where *ser* is normally expected. In other words, the construction *estar* + adjective has begun to infringe upon the semantic territory traditionally reserved for *ser* + adjective. For example, Gutiérrez (2003) cites the following instance:
In this example, the copula *estar* occurs in a context where *ser* is normally expected. This use of *estar* is not traditional in the sense that in general, it has been suggested that *estar* + adjective is used with more temporary qualities or qualities that are not inherent to the subject while *ser* + adjective is used in just the opposite situation. In example (1), one would expect that the quality of being *good* is not a fleeting condition or a temporary state that this movie is passing through. Because it is expected that one would normally describe *good* as an inherent property of the movie, that is, a property not likely to be lost, and therefore use the Spanish copula *ser*, what we see in this case is the extension of *estar* to a domain previously held exclusively by *ser*.

This fairly recent phenomenon can affect Second Language Acquisition (SLA) because the construction *estar* + adjective seems to be acquiring new uses which must be accounted for and explained in the classroom. Because of the possible effect of this phenomenon on SLA the current study will investigate the extension of *estar* among L2 learners as well as native speakers while attempting to identify certain linguistic predictors of this trend. This study focuses on the animacy of the referent and the extremity of the adjective as linguistic factors that may or may not favor the innovative use of *estar*. Previous research has suggested, but not definitively
shown, that these factors may be part of the catalyst fomenting this change (Silva-Corvalán 1986; Gutiérrez 2003; Geeslin & Guijarro-Fuentes 2008; Geeslin 2002). By extremity of the adjective I refer to distinctions such as *grande* ‘big’ vs. *enorme* ‘enormous’ whereby *enorme* would be considered [+ extreme] because it expresses the same concept or idea only to a greater degree. All Spanish adjectives carrying a superlative or a diminutive such as –ísimo or -ito would be considered [+ extreme] for the same reason that *enorme* is assigned the same feature. By identifying the predictors of the extension of *estar*, we can provide a more in-depth explanation and gain a better understanding of Spanish copula selection which in turn can contribute to the field of SLA. I will show in the following sections and chapters why these two linguistic factors were chosen as the focal point of the current investigation.

### 1.2 Justification

Several studies have been carried out in an attempt to describe the grammatical process of the extension of *estar*. Silva-Corvalán (1986) conducted a study of bilingual families in Los Angeles, California in an attempt to study this phenomenon. She found an elevated use of innovative *estar* in this bilingual community and suggests that this is partly due to simplification. In this study, the author identifies two factors that she believes predict the extension of *estar*: class vs. individual frame of reference and susceptibility to change. She mentions that animacy of the subject may be a predictor of innovative *estar* but then rejects that hypothesis when her data show that innovative *estar* occurs frequently with inanimate subjects as well. In her study, adjectives of size, age and physical appearance are identified as the top three adjective classes that favor this phenomenon. She asserts that this is because these adjective classes “may be conceptualized as susceptible to change” (599). Though animacy of the subject is mentioned, it is not tested exclusively. In the same way, she presents examples of innovative *estar* occurring
with adjectives carrying diminutives (está pequeñito) but fails to recognize the possibility that such adjectives may have an effect on copula selection.

Gutiérrez (1992) carried out a similar study in the monolingual community of Morelia, Mexico. The author’s purpose for conducting such a study stemmed from the suggestion in Silva-Corvalán (1986) that the extension of estar is accelerated in situations of language contact. Gutiérrez (1992) argues that an accelerated rate of use in situations of language contact implies a preexisting change in monolingual communities. The results of the study indicated the occurrence of innovative estar only at a slower rate than that found in Silva-Corvalán’s (1986) study. Similarly though, Gutiérrez (1992) found that adjectives of age, size and physical appearance favored innovative estar more so than other classes of adjectives and argues that this is because these adjectives primarily express subjectivity. The author cites examples of the estar + adjective carrying diminutive construction and describes it as [+ subjective] (as opposed to [+ objective]) corresponding to what the current study classifies as [+ extreme]. Although the author mentions this construction briefly, he does not test for it exclusively. The appearance of the construction estar + adjective carrying diminutive (estar pequeñito) in both Gutiérrez’s (1992) and Silva-Corvalán’s (1986) investigations suggests that the extremity of the adjective may in fact play a role in copula + adjective selection. In this study, Gutiérrez (1992) mentions which adjectives occurred with animate subjects but does not test animacy of the subject exclusively. The overall results of the study indicate that there is a change in progress, albeit slow, toward the extension of estar in monolingual communities in certain contexts.

Similarly, Gutiérrez (2003) later examines two Mexican-American communities in Houston and Los Angeles in an attempt to determine the role of English on this phenomenon of estar extension. The author suggests that the reason why adjectives expressing physical
appearance, age and size favor innovative *estar* is because the meaning of such adjectives is related to the opinions of the speaker. For this reason, he asserts that *estar* expresses subjectivity while *ser* expresses objectivity. The results indicate higher frequencies of innovative *estar* in both bilingual communities which suggests that language contact does in fact accelerate the extension of *estar*. Primarily, Gutiérrez (2003) argues that this elevated use is due to simplification and does not mention nor test exclusively in his study the extremity of the adjective or the animacy of the subject.

Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes (2008) also conducted a study to determine the effects of language contact on the extension of *estar*. However, they investigated four bilingual regions in Spain (Catalonia, Galicia, Valencia and Basque Country) to observe any differences that may occur in a language contact situation other than English. It is important to note that all of the languages examined in this study (Galician, Valencian, Catalan and Basque) contain a dual copula system. Data was elicited through a contextualized questionnaire from both monolingual Spanish speakers and bilingual participants (from each region mentioned) and was coded for predicate type (stage-level vs. individual level), frame of reference (individual vs. class), susceptibility to change and animacy. Although the authors state that animacy can be a predictor of innovative *estar*, they go on to say that this variable “does not always yield consistent effects” (370). Such a statement suggests that animacy of the subject as a predictor for the extension of *estar* needs more attention. In general, the speakers in Catalonia and Valencia used innovative *estar* more than the monolingual Spanish speakers, while speakers from Galicia and the Basque region employed innovative *estar* with lower frequencies than the monolinguals. The results also showed that predicate type, adjective class, and copulas allowed were the three linguistic predictors common among all groups. The only groups that appear to be sensitive to animacy
were the monolinguals and the Valencians. The extremity of the adjective is not discussed in this study nor is there any indication that the authors believe it to be relevant to the phenomenon of *estar* extension. Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes (2008) have shown in their investigation that situations of language contact do not always yield consistent effects.

Geeslin (2003) conducted a study within the framework of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The purpose of the study was to determine the different contextual factors that predict copula selection among native speakers and advanced learners and to examine the differences between the two groups. Data was elicited via a contextualized questionnaire and was coded for various linguistic factors such as predicate type, susceptibility to change and frame of reference among others. Animacy was not included as a linguistic predictor in this study, and while adjective class was included, there was no mention of the extremity of the adjectives and no indication that this was believed to be a factor that favors innovative *estar*. The results show that while the advanced learners used the copulas *ser* and *estar* with similar frequencies to those of the native speakers, there was still significant variation of copula choice among the two groups. Also, the only significant predictors of innovative *estar* for both groups were susceptibility to change and adjective class. Adjective class refers to adjectives of age, size, physical appearance, etc. while susceptibility to change refers to the semantic relationship between the referent and the adjective. Geeslin’s (2003) study showed that there are subtle differences in copula selection among native speakers and advanced learners.

Similarly, Geeslin (2002) carried out another study of seventy-seven high school students learning Spanish as a second language. While working within the framework of SLA this study is also sociolinguistic in nature as it deals not only with the extension of *estar* but also the effect that this phenomenon has on language change. One of the goals of Geeslin’s (2002) study is to
determine which linguistic predictors of innovative *estar* are significant at different stages of acquisition. The participants completed a guided interview, a picture-based task and a contextualized questionnaire. The author mentions briefly that animacy is a significant factor at only one level (level 4), but later fails to discuss the role of animacy in her results. She does not mention nor test exclusively the extremity of the adjective in this study. However, the results do confirm the mirror-image hypothesis which states that the linguistic factors acquired in the early stages of acquisition are in fact the same features that are lost by native Spanish speakers in the extension of *estar*. Her results indicated that “the frame of reference constraint that is lost earlier in the process of language change is also acquired later in the process of SLA while, at the same time, the susceptible to change constraint is not only lost late but is acquired early” (442).

The above-mentioned studies serve as the basis for the current investigation. Several of the studies mentioned (Silva-Corvalán 1986, Gutiérrez 1992) presented samples of their data which included examples of *estar* + adjective carrying a diminutive, yet the authors do not clearly discuss the possible effect such adjectives may have on the extension of *estar*. Likewise, no study mentioned has exclusively tested the extremity of the adjective and its potential correlation with the use of innovative *estar*. It is possible that these types of adjectives, those that the current study classifies as [+ extreme], express more subjectivity on the part of the speaker and therefore would trigger the use of innovative *estar* (Gutiérrez 2003). In the same way, some of the above mentioned studies (Silva-Corvalán 1986, Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes 2008, Geeslin 2002) have attempted to test animacy as a predictor of the extension of *estar*, yet the results yielded are difficult to interpret and at times left unaddressed altogether. It is possible that [+ animate] referents would trigger the innovative use of *estar* because these referents are more likely to elicit subjective reactions and may also be perceived as susceptible to change.
Based on the inadequacies mentioned regarding these investigations, the current study seeks to determine with more clarity the role that the extremity of the adjective and the animacy of the subject may play in the extension of *estar.*

### 1.3 Questions to be studied

The purpose of the present investigation is to determine the rate of use of innovative *estar* among second language learners of Spanish and which linguistic factors best predict its appearance. Based upon previous research and the results they produced the research questions that guide the current study are as follows:

1. At what rate are second language learners employing innovative *estar* and how does that rate differ from native speakers?

2. Does animacy of the subject favor the innovative use of *estar*?

3. Does extremity of the adjective favor the innovative use of *estar*?

I hypothesize that the rate of use of innovative *estar* among the second language learners will be lower than the rate employed by the native speakers. The learners in this study are classified as intermediate and because of this it is likely that they still have not mastered the distinctions between the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar.* Also, because most of the input that these learners receive comes from a classroom setting where prescriptive rules are emphasized, it is also likely that the use of innovative *estar* is not salient in the input, therefore decreasing the probability that these learners will employ innovative *estar* as frequently as the native speakers in this study. I also hypothesize that the data collected will support the hypotheses that animacy of the subject and extremity of the adjective favor the extension of *estar* among second language learners as
well as native speakers. Based on the explanation provided by Gutiérrez (2003) that *estar* is used for subjective reactions or opinions, it is assumed that [+ animate] referents are more likely to elicit these types of subjective reactions and therefore will generate more instances of innovative *estar*. Likewise, because [+ extreme] adjectives (*grandísimo*) are usually associated with more subjective reactions or opinions, it is assumed that this variable will also elicit more choices of innovative *estar*.

1.4 Methodology

The participants for this study are made up of second language learners as well as native speakers. The test group consists of twenty-one students enrolled in a 4000 level (fourth year) advanced Spanish grammar class at the University of Georgia. The control group is comprised of eight native Spanish speakers from various countries of origin such as Mexico, Peru, Spain and Puerto Rico. The age of all participants ranges from twenty to thirty-six and the two groups contain both males and females. Members of the test group completed a consent form, a language background questionnaire, a vocabulary-based pre-test to determine their level of Spanish proficiency and a computer-based contextualized questionnaire which contained the linguistic factors tested in the current investigation. The control group completed a consent form, a language background questionnaire and the same computer-based contextualized questionnaire administered to the test group. The data collected was analyzed by applying a logistic regression analysis.

1.5 Structure of the Current Study

This chapter has discussed the problem to be studied as well as provided a brief review of the literature supporting the research questions of the current investigation. Chapter Two will
review the previous literature and studies related to the copula + adjective construction, SLA of
the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* and the extension of *estar*. Chapter three will detail the
methodology of the current study including all data collection and analyses. Chapter Four will
present and discuss the results of the data analysis followed by conclusions in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to reviewing the literature regarding the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar*. Section 2.2 will discuss what traditional grammars have said about the two copulas and section 2.3 will detail the theoretical studies that have been carried out with particular focus on the copula + adjective construction. Finally, section 2.4 will discuss studies of Second Language Acquisition of *ser* and *estar* as well as studies dealing with the extension of the use of *estar*. The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader an overview of the topic of *ser* and *estar* as well as explain and justify the current investigation.

2.2 Traditional Grammar views of *ser* and *estar*

The topic of *ser* and *estar* is one that has been studied for quite some time. Bello (1891) states that there are no other verbs used so frequently while at the same time often misunderstood. He then moves on to briefly discuss the two Spanish copulas with the purpose of abating some of the confusion. Bello (1891) defines a verb as the part of a sentence expressing the movements or action of the subject. However, he goes on to assert that *ser*, because it denotes no movement or action, is not rigorously a verb and therefore refers to it as a copula in other parts of his grammar. He explains that *ser* is used in passive constructions with the past participle and that such a construction focuses on the action that has occurred. For example, he provides the following sentence (315):

```
...
In this example, Bello (1891) explains that the time period of the action is the same as the auxiliary verb. On the contrary, _estar_ can be used with the past participle to emphasize the resulting state of the action that has occurred and the following example is cited (315):

(2) La casa estaba edificada.

_The house was built._

In this example, the author explains that the time period of the action is anterior to the time period of the auxiliary verb. This anteriority illustrates why _estar_ + past participle refers to the resulting state of an action rather than the action itself. The author also indicates that _ser_ signifies absolute existence, providing the example “los pocos sabios que en el mundo han sido” (316). The author allots more attention to the Spanish copula _ser_ and only explains its distinction from _estar_ with regard to their use with past participles.

On the other hand, the Real Academia Española (1962) provides a more detailed account of both Spanish copulas, _ser_ and _estar_. They explain that the passive voice is formed with _ser_ + past participle, however, unlike Bello (1891), there is no mention of the significance or meaning of the opposing construction _estar_ + past participle. They explain that when the predicate is a noun, an infinitive, a demonstrative adjective, a possessive pronoun or a noun followed by the preposition _de, ser_ must be used. Regarding the copula + adjective construction, _ser_ is to be utilized when the quality denoted expresses something permanent to the subject. The following examples are cited (158):
(3) *El hielo es frío*

(4) *La oveja es mansa*

(5) *El hombre es mortal*

In the preceding examples, it is assumed that each adjective denotes a permanent quality of the subject, in other words, a characteristic that would not change. In contrast, *estar* should be used with an adjective when it denotes a temporary or accidental characteristic or quality of the subject. The Real Academia provides the following examples (158):

(6) *El agua está fría*

(7) *El agua está caliente*

(8) *Mi criado está estos días muy obediente*

In these examples, *estar* is being employed because the adjectives are expressing qualities of the subject that could change, for example, the temperature of water or the behavior of a person.

Gili y Gaya (1955) also attempts to give a more in-depth explanation of the different functions of *ser* and *estar*. He explains that these two verbs are called copulas because they serve as a nexus between the subject and the predicate without adding any meaning to the sentence. However, Gili y Gaya (1955) also explains that at times, *ser* and *estar* maintain their primitive meanings of *existir* ‘to exist’ and *presencia* ‘presence’ and cites the following examples (54):

(9) *Tal señora no es en el mundo*

(10) *No está*
He also asserts that, while many grammars have stated that *ser* is used with permanent qualities and *estar* is employed with temporary or accidental qualities, these explanations are not sufficient due to the fact that the limits between permanent and temporary are not clearly perceivable. Instead, he offers an explanation based on perfectivity and imperfectivity but points out that the Spanish copulas are not perfective and imperfective in the same way as other verbs because they do not denote actions, rather, they express qualities of the subject. The author explains that if the designated quality represents the resultant state of a perceived action, one will employ *estar*. For example, in the sentence ‘*este jarro está roto*’, the quality of being broken is the result of a specific perfective action. Meanwhile, if one wishes to attribute a quality without concern for the origin or source of such a quality, *ser* would be utilized. In the sentence ‘*este jarro es blanco*’, *ser* is utilized because there is no focus on how the imperfective state of being white has come into being. Gili y Gaya (1955) also asserts that the use of *estar* depends on immediate experience, so that to say ‘*el niño está alto*’ would mean that the speaker has had immediate and or previous experience with the child and wishes to say that the child is tall with respect to the speaker’s other experiences with the referent. The use of *ser* requires no such experience. The author also proposes a rule for English speakers and says that if the verbs ‘to look’ or ‘to feel’ can be substituted for ‘to be’ then *estar* should be used. Additionally, he states that because *estar* originates from Latin ‘*stare*’ which means ‘to stand’, this copula is used for locations and positions. Finally, Gili y Gaya (1955) lists five adjectives (*bueno, malo, vivo, listo, fresco*) that change meaning depending on which copula is employed. When used with *ser*, they most often refer to a constant characteristic such as being morally good or intelligent. When *estar* is used, however, they tend to convey a more transitory state such as being in good/bad
health or being ready. However, the author does not provide any further explanation as to why such changes in meaning would occur.

In their book about Spanish grammar, Alonso & Ureña (1955) briefly discuss the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar*. In accordance with other authors, they state that the use of *ser* with a past participle signifies the action itself as experienced by the subject while the use of a past participle with *estar* represents a resultant state or consequence of an action. They then move on to discuss the role of the two copulas with adjectives. They assert that *ser* denotes a quality inherent to the subject while *estar* expresses a state that has been reached or a comparison of a quality considered normal to the subject. For example, if one were to say ‘el niño está alto’ this would convey a comparison of what the speaker considers normal in terms of height for a child of that age. Alonso and Ureña (1955) indicate that while some grammars define *ser* and *estar* in terms of permanent and temporary qualities, they do not agree with such explanations because the quality of being *muerto* ‘dead’ is not temporary and yet it is used with *estar*. They also state that the use of *estar* does not allude to the end of a state, rather to the beginning, in other words, to say ‘está gordo’ does not mean that the subject will later lose weight, but that he has become fat, which coincides with Gili y Gaya’s analysis of the use of *estar* with resultant states.

Although the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* have been discussed for many years, most of the explanations that these traditional grammars offer fall somewhat short. Some of the accounts are incomplete, allocating more attention to one copula, therefore only providing a one-sided analysis. Furthermore, all of these analyses are descriptive in nature. They do not study the actual speech and patterns of use of individuals, but rather, rely on invented examples that support their explanations. Finally, while these grammars have provided an adequate base for
the analysis of *ser* and *estar*, they unfortunately do not explain the more contemporary uses of the two copulas.

### 2.3 Recent Analysis on *ser* and *estar*

Because some of the traditional grammars do not provide a complete picture of the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* and the distinctions between their uses, more recent theoretical analyses have been carried out in an attempt to give a more detailed account of the meanings of the two copulas and their distribution and actual use within Spanish grammar. Particular focus has been given to those constructions which permit variation among copula selection. For example, Franco & Steinmetz (1985; 1994) and Franco (1985) have thoroughly investigated the copula + locative construction because of its ability to accept both *ser* and *estar* as grammatical. In general, they have proposed that *ser* be used with the location of an activity or an event and with a place associated with a function, such as the ‘correo’ post office. Conversely, *estar* should be used with physical locations. Additionally, Franco (1984) states that “localización con *ser* indica relaciones semánticas de identidad y miembro de un conjunto. La localización con *estar*...indica que la relación expresada es una relación espacial” (75). Although the copula + locative construction has attracted discussion, this particular structure is not the focus of the current investigation. Nevertheless, another structure that has received even more debate and analysis is the copula + adjective construction which is the focus of the present study.

The copula + adjective construction also allows for variation among copula selection and many investigators admit that the majority of Spanish adjectives can appear with both *ser* and *estar* and still be considered grammatical. Because of these possibilities, many researchers have tried to explain the distinctions in meaning and distribution of the Spanish copulas. Roldán
(1974) complains that one of the biggest problems with explanations of *ser* and *estar* is that they are “full of unexplained exceptions” (69). She points out that another inadequacy is that “the copula is often made responsible for information that actually belongs to other parts of the sentence” such as the adjective or perhaps the referent (74). The author states that in her opinion the Spanish copulas are in fact two variations of the same verb. However, she does not expand on that idea. Instead, Roldán (1974) explains that *ser* means ‘to exist’ and because of that it is used with the identification of the subject with its predicate, statements of identification of the subject, happenings and definitions, description and statements of set membership. On the other hand, she asserts that existence is presupposed by *estar* so that the use of this copula “denotes the presence of the subject in the state or condition denoted by its complement at the time specified by the sentence” (Roldán 1974; 70). The author provides the following examples (71):

(11)    *El acero es duro*

(12)    *El acero está duro*

She explains that in example eleven, the copula *ser* denotes the intrinsic identification of the quality ‘hard’ with the class of those objects named ‘steel’. In contrast, the use of *estar* in example twelve refers to one singular instance of ‘steel’ and that at that specific moment in the sentence, the steel possesses the quality of being ‘hard’. While Roldán (1974) has attempted to explain the distribution of the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* in terms of existence and the presupposition of existence, she still has only provided a descriptive analysis of the copula + adjective construction and lacks real data to support her theory.

Similarly, Luján (1981) also proposes a theoretical analysis of the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* reasoning that traditional explanations in terms of essential and accidental properties
are not sufficient. Therefore, she advocates an explanation based on perfectivity and imperfectivity and begins by stating that “predicates describing perfective states must occur with *estar*; those referring to imperfective states require *ser*” (165). Citing traditional grammarian Gili y Gaya’s (1955) explanation of aspectual markers of the Spanish copulas, Luján explains that his notion of modification (also referred to as resultative state) is not adequate because it is difficult to determine what states or things are the result of modification. She also argues that the notion of change is not completely incompatible with *ser* while *estar* does not always have to be associated with some type of modification. Additionally, the author indicates that the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* are partially synonymous; a factor she claims has not been addressed. In the following examples cited in Luján (1981; 173), this partial synonymy is illustrated:

(13)  

\[ \text{Ser gordo} \rightarrow \text{estar gordo} \]

(14)  

\[ \text{Son firmados} \rightarrow \text{están firmados} \]

(15)  

\[ \text{Estar gordo} \neq \text{ser gordo} \]

The author explains that a predicate with *ser* implies a similar predicate with *estar* as shown in examples thirteen and fourteen; however, the inverse relationship does not hold as exemplified in example fifteen. Using truth value judgments, Luján continues to clarify this argument before discussing her analysis based on perfectivity/imperfectivity. The author claims that while *ser* and *estar* bear the markers [- perfective] and [+ perfective] respectively, adjectives also carry the same markers which signal a certain adjective’s compatibility with one or the other copula; and should an adjective carry the feature [+/- perfective], the reading that such an adjective receives will be determined by which copula is selected. To further clarify the argument that *ser* and *estar* are distributed in terms of perfectivity, a connection is drawn between the Spanish aspects preterit and imperfect in such a way to explain that the preterit, like *estar*, refers to a specific
and/or delimited time frame while the imperfect, like *ser*, takes into consideration the duration or stretch of time; in other words, no particular focus is given to the beginning or end of the state/action. Luján (1981) uses this analysis and applies it to explanations of copula + locative constructions, copula and adverbial combinations and copula + adjectival participles. She explains that adjectival participles “may be modified by adverbs of degree or quantity, which are clearly incompatible with the verbal participle” (196):

(16)   Está muy enojado

(17)   Se ha *muy enojado

The author moves on to distinguish between two classes of adjectival participles: those like *escrito* ‘written’ and those like *enojado* ‘annoyed’. She states that participles like *escrito* ‘written’ cannot be constructed freely with adverbial modifiers while participles like *enojado* ‘annoyed’ or *satisfecho* ‘satisfied’ can be modified by any kind of adverbs. Additionally, Luján (1981) asserts that participles like *enojado* ‘annoyed’ can occur in pre- or post-nominal positions while participles like *escrito* ‘written’ cannot appear in a prenominal position (198):

(18)   La enojada mujer/La mujer enojada

(19)   La carta escrita/*La escrita carta

The author contends that participial adjectives “are related to a class of reflexive inchoative verbs which denotes changes of physical or mental states” and explains that the two classes of past participles can be categorized as accomplishments (*escribir una carta*) and achievements (*enojarse*). Each of these categories denote an activity or process with a terminal phase and “the participles of such verbs may be constructed with the perfective copula *estar*, then, because they describe states whose beginning is defined or must be assumed” (202). Describing the use of the
Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* in this way supports Luján’s (1981) argument for a description based on perfectivity/imperfectivity.

Bookman (1982) offers a similar explanation to that of Luján (1981). She argues that *ser* and *estar* express imperfectivity and perfectivity in the same way as the preterit and imperfect. The author claims that “the same temporal facts about the world as the speaker perceives it will make *ser* + adjective true and verb +-*aba* true. Likewise, for *estar* + adjective and verb +-*ó” (Bookman;1982, 414). The following examples are cited (415):

(20)  *La caja es roja*  (sic)
+ past

(21)  *La caja enrojecía*  (sic)

(22)  *La caja está roja*  (sic)
+ past

(23)  *La caja enrojeció*  (sic)

In examples (20)-(21), the beginning and end are unspecified for both and according to Bookman (1982), the temporal truth conditions for both examples are the same. On the other hand, the time period for examples (22)-(23) is bound. However, this comparison does not suffice to argue for an explanation based on perfectivity. The author explains that cyclic and non-cyclic events have different truth conditions and in order to prove an analysis based on perfectivity, the truth conditions must be examined. The following examples are provided (417):

(24)  *Úrsula envejecía*  (sic)
(25) Úrsula es vieja  (sic)  
+ past  

(26) Úrsula envejeció  (sic)  

(27) Úrsula está vieja  (sic)  
+ past  

Bookman (1982) explains that the truth conditions for (24)-(25) are the same because “if it is true that Ursula was in the process of becoming old at some indeterminate interval, then it is also true that her becoming that way was going on at any subinterval” (417). On the other hand, the truth values for examples (26)-(27) are not the same; however, the author points out that this is not because there are two kinds of perfectivity, rather, two types of events being illustrated: cyclic and non-cyclic, and the author states that there may be no adjectives that represent cyclic events. Consequently, Bookman (1982) concludes, in accordance with Luján, that the Spanish copulas express perfectivity and imperfectivity based on the fact that the “temporal truth conditions for the intervals and subintervals of cyclic and non-cyclic events expressed by the copula and the verbal complements are identical” (419). Although both Luján (1981) and Bookman (1982) propose an explanation of ser and estar based on perfectivity, it could be argued that there is a problem with such an analysis. Both Spanish copulas are considered stative as neither denotes movement or an actual physical action and stative verbs cannot be perfective at the same time. This opposition would be troublesome for estar as both authors claim that it expresses perfectivity.
Franco and Steinmetz (1986) propose a different theoretical analysis not based on perfectivity. They suggest that the distinction between the distribution of *ser* and *estar* is best explained in terms of implied comparison. According to the authors, *ser* expresses an implied comparison of the type X/Y while *estar* represents a comparison of the type X/X. The following examples are provided (377):

(28) *Pedro es rico*

(29) *Pedro está rico*

Using the implied comparison analysis, (22) would mean that Peter (entity X) is wealthier than the average person (entity Y) while (23) states that Peter (entity X) is “rich in the sense that his present wealth is greater than it is known or thought usually to be” (377). In the preceding examples Pedro is first being implicitly compared with other human beings and then implicitly compared with himself. Franco and Steinmetz (1986) explain that the distribution of the copulas *ser* and *estar* is not determined by the semantic content of the adjective. They list the example ‘*listo*’ which would carry a different meaning depending on which copula is used. They state that if the copula chosen depended on the adjective, each adjective would have to contain two lexical entries, one for *ser* and one for *estar*. Instead, they assert that the speaker is able to impose a certain reading according to which copula s/he uses. This type of analysis gives complete semantic control to the two copulas and would contradict the analysis given by Gili y Gaya (1955) stating that the copulas are nothing more than a nexus adding no meaning to the sentence. Therefore, Franco and Steinmetz (1986) propose that the speaker is free to choose either copula based on what type of implied comparison s/he wishes to express. The authors extend the X/X analysis even further with the following example (380):
The authors suppose for this example that “because of its present location in the production line the steel in question should be (relatively) soft” and the speaker finds it to be harder than s/he had anticipated (380). In this case, the comparison X/X represents the actual state and the anticipated state so that this type of comparison may refer to X(now)/X(usual state) or X(reality)/X(anticipated state). According to the authors, this analysis can account for the classic counter examples given against the temporary vs. permanent explanation. To say, ‘Juan está muerto’ would mean that “John is dead in comparison with his usual or anticipated vital signs” (382). Likewise, ‘María es joven’ would mean that Mary is young in comparison with other individuals.

Differently than traditional grammars, these theoretical studies have not just stated rules based on observations about the language and the way the Spanish copulas seem to be distributed. Each researcher attempts to describe and account for the differences in the uses of *ser* and *estar* based on a more in-depth analysis of the nature of the two verbs and the different variables that surround them, such as adjective or referent. These studies offer a deeper analysis of why these copulas may be distributed in the ways in which they are. However, much like the traditional grammars, these studies are descriptive in nature and do not analyze real data or patterns of use. These studies raise the questions: how do second language learners perceive and distinguish these copulas? Do they see a correlation between the preterit and imperfect and *estar* and *ser*? Do they choose a copula based on the adjective present or do they sense that the copulas can implicate different readings and choose them based on the message they want to convey? Although these are not the questions guiding the current study, they have undoubtedly served as origins for other researchers working within the field of Second Language Acquisition.
2.4 Second Language Acquisition and Variation Studies of *ser* and *estar*

Early interest in Spanish copula choice under the framework of Second Language Acquisition focused on the different stages of acquisition that learners pass through while acquiring *ser* and *estar*. The first in-depth study conducted with regard to stages of acquisition was carried out by Van Patten (1987). He examined data elicited from six English-speaking beginning learners of Spanish who were enrolled in a college class. The researcher met with the participants over a nine month period and recorded their conversations. The participants also had to complete a picture description task. The data was coded for accuracy whereby 90% correct usage represented the acquisition of a structure. Van-Patten (1987) found that in general the accurate use of *ser* was usually around 90% while the accurate use of *estar* was at or below 50% during the data collection period. The researcher was able to postulate five distinct stages that second language learners of Spanish pass through while acquiring the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* and are listed below:

(31) Stage I: Omission of copula

(32) Stage II: Selection of *ser* to perform most functions

(33) Stage III: Appearance of *estar* with present progressive

(34) Stage IV: Appearance of *estar* with locatives

(35) Stage V: Appearance of *estar* with adjectives of condition

The stages put forth demonstrate that *estar* is the structure that is mastered later during the process of acquisition indicating that second language learners have difficulties with the use of this copula. Although his data shows that the uses of *estar* are the last to be acquired, Van-Patten (1987) explains that this is not due to classroom teaching approaches as both copulas, as well as
the *estar* + adjective construction, were presented from the beginning of the classroom instruction. Instead, he asserts that the students pass through these stages because of simplification, frequency of input and L1 transfer. It is possible that because native English speaking learners of Spanish do not have a dual copula system, they attempt to simplify the Spanish copula system by either omitting the copula altogether or by overusing one copula (*ser*) more than the other. The overuse of *ser* may also be a result of L1 transfer, as learners try to reduce the model to resemble their native language. Van Patten (1987) also explains that frequency of the input may be an important factor as the use of *ser* appeared to be overwhelmingly more frequent during the instruction of these participants. These three factors may contribute to the later acquisition of the uses of *estar*.

In an attempt to determine whether or not the stages proposed by Van-Patten (1987) could be generalized and also whether or not they applied to different language learning settings, Ryan and Lafford (1992) conducted a similar study within a study abroad context. The participants consisted of 16 beginning-level English speakers learning Spanish who were taking part in a study abroad program in Granada, Spain. They completed an oral interview prior to leaving the United States and then participated in two more interviews during the four and a half month stay abroad. The researchers, in accordance with Van-Patten (1987), used the same coding scheme for data analysis. Ryan and Lafford (1992) found that errors occurring with the locative construction consisted of incorrect use of *ser* while omission was an error associated with adjectives of condition. While the data elicited more or less confirmed the stages established by Van-Patten (1987), the authors noted some differences. The stage of omission was extended because the authors found that the copula was absent in some constructions with adjectives. Also, the learners of this study appeared to pass through Stage IV (locative) before
Stage V (adjectives of condition), thus essentially switching the stages in this study. Nevertheless, the results confirm that the locative and adjective constructions are still the last structures acquired by second language learners.

Similarly to Ryan and Lafford (1992), Guntermann (1992) also conducted an investigation abroad within a non-traditional learning setting as a way to expand understanding of copula acquisition outside of an academic setting. The participants in this study included nine Peace Corps volunteers working in a Spanish speaking country. After a certain number of service hours were completed, they participated in oral interviews and based on those interviews, the researcher classified them into different groups based on their proficiency. Guntermann (1992), much like Ryan and Lafford (1992), found an extended use of omission; however, the absence of a copula with adjectives of condition was not present in the data. The researcher also found that the locative construction was acquired after the adjective construction.

The results of these studies have shown that the stages of acquisition of *ser* and *estar* in academic and non-academic settings are fairly consistent, which suggests that such stages do in fact exist regardless of the learning environment. Nevertheless, these studies are still descriptive in nature. Van-Patten (1987) postulates that transfer from L1 has an effect on the stages of acquisition but fails to articulate what exactly that effect is. Furthermore, these studies do not explain the actual processes that are involved in the acquisition of *ser* and *estar*. Equally important, these studies do not address the possible differences in uses between learners and native speakers.

Although the previously mentioned studies establish stages of acquisition, because they demonstrated some discrepancies among such stages, Briscoe’s (1995) dissertation examines
these divisions in more detail. Seventy-seven English-speaking learners of Spanish participated in this study. They were enrolled in different levels of college classes ranging from first semester to fourth year and some individuals in upper levels had spent significant amounts of time in Spanish-speaking countries. Each participant had to tell a story based on a set of pictures and unlike previous studies, the data was coded for specific functions (14 in all) that each copula is responsible for carrying out and are listed below (45-46):

(36) \((\text{SER/events } [\text{time}])\) to express the time when an event takes place

(37) \((\text{SER/events } [\text{location}])\) to express the location where an event takes place

(38) \((\text{SER/characteristic})\) to express a normative characteristic

(39) \((\text{SER/copula})\) as copula

(40) \((\text{SER/profession etc.})\) to equate a noun with nationality, religious affiliation, profession, etc.

(41) \((\text{SER } + \text{de/origin})\) to express origin, composition or possession

(42) \((\text{SER } + \text{de/composition})\) to express composition

(43) \((\text{SER } + \text{de/possession})\) to express possession

(44) \((\text{SER/telling time})\) to express time

(45) \((\text{SER/ impersonal expressions})\)

(46) \((\text{SER/passive})\)

(47) \((\text{ESTAR/location})\) to state location

(48) \((\text{ESTAR/condition})\) to express a non-normative condition

(49) \((\text{ESTAR/progressive})\) as an auxiliary of the progressive tenses

The stages found in Briscoe’s (1995) study confirm those established by Van-Patten (1987). Moreover, because the author isolated different functions of the Spanish copulas, he was able to
show that because *ser* is responsible for many functions (see examples 36-46) this could explain why it seemed as though this copula was being over-generalized in earlier studies. The only difference in the stages proposed by Briscoe (1995) is that he added an additional stage at the end whereby learners acquire *ser* + events and *ser* used in passive voice.

After having reached a general consensus on the stages of acquisition of *ser* and *estar*, researchers began comparing copula selection among learners with copula selection of native speakers. Geeslin (2003) conducted a study of second language learners of Spanish as well as native speakers to show that copula selection is determined by many contextual features. Her research questions focus on those features that predict *estar* because it has been shown that *ser* is often acquired early and with relative precision. One group of participants consisted of 28 English-speaking learners of Spanish, ten of whom were enrolled in a Master’s program and the rest were obtaining a Ph. D. In this group, all but four participants had been studying Spanish for ten years or more, all were teaching Spanish at the time and had lived in a Spanish-speaking country for at least four months. This group represents advanced learners of Spanish and they were chosen as a part of the research design because it was assumed that these individuals had passed through all of the stages of acquisition and demonstrated control of both copulas *ser* and *estar*. The second group was made up of 25 native speakers from ten different countries of origin that learned how to read and speak Spanish before studying English. All but one individual in this group arrived in the United States after the age of 20. Both groups of participants completed a background questionnaire as well as a contextualized questionnaire which allowed them to select *ser*, *estar* or both and then rate their level of confidence with their choice. Data was coded for predicate type whereby individual-level predicates represent stable and lasting qualities (*inteligente*) while stage-level predicates indicate temporary or transitory
properties (enfermo). Susceptibility to change is a semantic feature and refers to the relationship between the referent and the adjective and was also included in the coding scheme. For example, ‘El niño es pequeño’ is considered [+ susceptible] while ‘El coche es pequeño’ would be considered [- susceptible]. Another factor that was included was frame of reference. A class frame of reference compares the referent to a group of similar objects while an individual frame of reference compares a referent to itself at a specific point in time. For example, ‘El niño está alto’ the boy grew tall, would be considered [+ comparison] because the child is being compared with himself. On the other hand, ‘El niño es listo’ the boy is smart would be considered [- comparison] because the boy is being compared with other boys or human beings. Class-frame is most often associated with ser and individual-frame is normally used with estar. Features of the adjective such as resultant state, adjectives denoting nationality religion, etc. and adjectives denoting mental states was also considered during the coding process. Finally, the results were also coded for copula allowed, in other words, whether or not one or both copulas could be grammatically correct. Frequency data, chi square correlation tests and individual binary forward stepwise regression analyses were carried out on the data in an attempt to determine which factors were significant predictors of estar. At first glance the results seem to indicate that the learners had reached native-like competence as the percentages of use for each copula was very similar to those of the native speakers. However, upon closer examination, differences emerged between the two groups. The only variables that were significant for both groups were susceptibility to change and adjective class while native speakers were also sensitive to predicate type. Also, in those contexts where native speaker selection was unanimous, the advanced learners showed variation therefore demonstrating a lack of accuracy with copula selection where it could be measured. Geeslin’s (2003) study highlights the importance of a multi-feature
analysis of copula choice as many different factors are considered by the speaker when choosing between ser and estar. Additionally, this study demonstrates that there are subtle differences even among advanced learners of Spanish and native speakers when it comes to copula choice. According to Geeslin (2003), this investigation shows that “stages of acquisition are marked by the incorporation of new linguistic details at the levels of syntax, semantics, or pragmatics and a continuous re-ranking of the importance of these features” (750). This study reaches beyond the earlier approaches of analyzing stages of acquisition and moves to understand how second language learners and native speakers differ in copula selection based on specific contextual and linguistic features of the language.

Much like Geeslin (2003), Woolsey (2008) conducted a study with the purpose of determining the role of comparisons within an individual frame of reference and reactions as a result of immediate experience on copula selection among second language learners of Spanish. The author explains that the challenge in describing copula selection is determining speaker intent, especially among learners. The participants in this study included 111 students enrolled in five university Spanish courses at four different levels. They completed a proficiency test and the students were divided into four different levels according to their scores. Participants had to complete a contextualized questionnaire, much like the one administered in Geeslin (2003), as well as a picture description task. The referents chosen in the picture task were well-known celebrities so that the participants were familiar with the subject therefore creating individual frame of reference as well as immediate experience contexts. The data was coded for frame of reference (individual vs. class), immediate experience, animacy and adjective class. Immediate experience refers to whether or not the speaker is familiar with the referent and humans would be classified as animate while objects would be classified as inanimate. A chi square test as well as
a stepwise multiple regression analysis was carried out on each level of participants. In general, the results show a steady decline of the use of *ser* as proficiency increases. Contrary to Woolsey’s (2008) hypothesis, the frequency of *estar* increases in non-comparison contexts. Furthermore, level one participants choose *estar* more frequently in [- immediate] contexts; although the significance changes across levels so that at level four, *estar* is used with [+ immediate] contexts. Thus, individual frame of reference is never a predictor of *estar* in this study while immediate experience becomes increasingly significant as proficiency increases. Unfortunately, this investigation did not include a group of native speaker participants which makes it difficult to compare and contrast copula selection and the factors considered in this study among learners and native speakers. However, this study, much like Geeslin (2003), demonstrates the importance of considering several factors when analyzing and describing copula choice.

Much of the current literature concerning *ser* and *estar* focuses more specifically on a recent phenomenon known as ‘extension of *estar’ or ‘innovative *estar’’. While it is interesting and revealing to compare and contrast general copula selection among learners and native speakers, this phenomenon of innovative *estar* has also attracted the attention of many researchers. Silva-Corvalán (1986) was one of the first to shed light on this development in her study of bilinguals in Los Angeles, California. She looks to examine the extension of *estar* into *ser*’s semantic domain and the effect of language contact on this process. The author studied approximately 40 hours of recordings of 27 Mexican-Americans living in Los Angeles. The participants were divided into three different groups. Group one consisted of individuals born in Mexico who immigrated to the United States after the age of eleven. Group two was made up of speakers who were born in the United States or who immigrated before the age of six and had
obtained all of their schooling in the United States. Additionally, one of their parents must fit the
description of group one. Group three is comprised of speakers born in the United States whose
parents are of Mexican descent and who fit the definition of group two. Dividing the participants
into these three groups facilitates an analysis based on different levels of language contact. In
general, the results indicate that the innovative use of \textit{estar} increases as the level of Spanish
proficiency decreases; in other words, group three demonstrates higher frequencies of innovative
\textit{estar}. Data was coded for innovative or conservative use and a cross tabulation program of
SPSS was used to determine which factors were more or less favorable to the extension of \textit{estar}.
The analyses reveal that the vast majority of the cases of innovative \textit{estar} occur within a class
frame, a context usually reserved for \textit{ser}. The following examples demonstrate the use of
innovative \textit{estar} in class-frame contexts where \textit{ser} is normally expected (593):

(50) \quad \text{Ni está gordo ni está flaco.} \\
\quad \textit{He is neither fat nor skinny.} \\
(51) \quad \text{Pero yo estoy inteligente.} \\
\quad \textit{But I'm intelligent.}

The results also show that adjectives of size (\textit{alto}), physical appearance (\textit{liso}) and age (\textit{joven})
favor this process more so than other adjective classes. Silva-Corvalán (1986) explained which
adjectives occurred with animate and inanimate referents in order to explain that adjectives
occurring with animate referents were more susceptible to change. She posited that animacy
would correlate positively with the extension of \textit{estar} but then found that innovative \textit{estar} was
used with a significant amount of inanimate referents as well and subsequently retracted that
hypothesis. She also suggests that susceptibility to change may be a satisfactory predictor of
\textit{estar} extension. Interestingly, the author cites an example from the sample in which the
participant employs innovative estar with an adjective carrying a diminutive, “…Y el otro está pequeñito” yet she does not discuss the possible significance of this nor does she suggest that this may have an effect on copula choice. Because the results demonstrated an elevated use of innovative estar in those groups experiencing more language contact, Silva-Corvalán (1986) argues that this is due to simplification. She also points out that the situation of extended language contact has accelerated the process of estar extension. Although this study does not necessarily examine second language learners, it still has implications for second language acquisition. If estar is acquiring more uses, those contexts will have to be explained in the second language classroom and learners will have yet another factor to consider when making the distinction/selection between ser and estar.

Following Silva-Corvalán’s (1986) study, Gutiérrez (1992) carried out an investigation in a monolingual community in Morelia, Mexico. He reasons that Silva-Corvalán’s (1986) results showing accelerated uses of innovative estar in situations of language contact imply a change already in progress in monolingual communities. He contacted families and other individuals who had lived in Michoacán since the age of five and conducted two interviews with each participant where he tried to elicit narrations. The participants also completed a fill-in-the-blank questionnaire about ser and estar followed by a subjective evaluation instrument focusing on the use of estar. The data was coded for the following linguistic variables: verb, adjective type and norm (class vs. individual). While the author mentions which adjectives occurred with animate subjects (age, size, physical appearance, moral characteristic and evaluation) animacy of the referent is not tested exclusively. On the whole, the data indicate that there is in fact a change in progress in this monolingual community, only at a slower rate found in the study conducted by Silva-Corvalán (1986). Gutiérrez (1992) also finds that innovative estar occurs when the copula
is extended into the contexts of class frame. The researcher notes that in some of his examples innovative *estar* occurs with an adjective carrying a diminutive such as *pequeño* ‘very small’. He explains this by pointing out that *estar* + adjective carrying diminutive represents the feature [+ subjective]. The appearance of the *estar* + adjective carrying diminutive construction in this and the study conducted by Silva-Corvalán (1986) suggests that the extremity of the adjective may in fact play a role in copula selection. While this author allots some attention to what the current study calls extremity of the adjective, he still does not test for this exclusively.

Confirming the findings of Silva-Corvalán (1986), Gutiérrez (1992) found that adjectives of age, size and physical appearance favor the extension of *estar*. He explains that these classes of adjectives are related to the subjectivity of the speaker and that is why they favor innovative *estar*. His study confirms that the process of *estar* extension is also occurring in monolingual communities and this investigation has also offered an explanation of this phenomenon based on subjectivity. Later, Gutiérrez (2003) conducted a study of bilinguals in Houston and Los Angeles and also found an accelerated use of innovative *estar*. He explains that this is due to simplification as well as subjectivity on the part of the speaker.

Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes (2008) also examine the role of language contact on the extension of *estar*; however, they studied four bilingual regions in Spain (Catalonia, Galicia, Valencia and Basque region). The purpose is to determine the different effects of language contact with languages other than English on the use of the copulas in Spanish. The authors note that all four languages studied, Catalan, Galician, Valencian and Basque, also contain a dual copula system where the construction copula + adjective is allowed. The participants in this study include speakers from Galicia (73), Valencia (66), Catalonia (141), the Basque Country (17) and monolingual Spanish speakers (83). The sample includes both genders and individuals
ranging from 15-79 years of age. Each participant completed a background questionnaire as well as a contextualized questionnaire where they had the option of choosing *ser*, *estar*, or both. The data elicited was coded for individual or stage-level predicate, frame of reference (class vs. individual), susceptibility to change, animacy and adjective class. Although the researchers code for animacy of the referent, they also state that this variable “does not always yield consistent effects” suggesting it should continue to be investigated (370). A chi square test was run on the data to determine the frequency of *estar* selection and then a binary logistic regression analysis was carried out to establish which factors best predict innovative *estar*. In general, the results show that speakers from the Basque region and Galicia employ innovative *estar* more than monolinguals while participants from Catalonia and Valencia utilize it less than the monolinguals. The researchers note that the cases of unanimous selection of *estar* occurred with a stage-level predicate, an individual frame of reference and a referent + adjective relationship that was susceptible to change (*Elena está enferma*). Likewise, those cases where *ser* was chosen unanimously occurred with individual level predicates and class frame of reference. Although there were cases of unanimous responses, variability does exist among the groups and more items on the questionnaire elicited variation than not. The variables, predicate type, adjective class, and copulas allowed, were significant for all groups. Susceptibility to change was significant for the Catalans and Valencians while the Galicians and Catalans were also sensitive to dependence on experience. The variable frame of reference was not significant for any of the groups. This study demonstrates that not all situations of language contact produce consistent effects on the extension of *estar*.

The above-mentioned studies examine the extension of *estar* in both monolingual and bilingual communities illustrating the extent of the use of innovative *estar*, the different factors
that seem to favor this phenomenon, as well as the varying effects of language contact on this process. These investigations shed light on the modern uses of the Spanish copulas with particular focus on *estar*. In contrast to the previous studies, Geeslin (2002) carried out a study of *estar* extension within the framework of second language acquisition. In her study, she also adopts a sociolinguistic approach as she explores this phenomenon and its relation to language change. She argues for a mirror image hypothesis stating that language change moves toward simplification while language acquisition moves away from simplification toward a more native-like grammar. The purpose of her study is to determine which features predict the use of innovative *estar* at different levels of acquisition. She also hopes, through this study, to show the importance of crossing the boundaries between second language acquisition and sociolinguistics as she highlights the fact that these two fields can inform each other. She states that examining the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* under these frameworks can be beneficial because not only are these structures difficult to acquire for learners, but they are also “undergoing a process of language change in monolingual and bilingual populations” (423). The participants are made up of 77 high school students at four different levels of instruction. Each participant completed a background questionnaire, a guided interview, a picture description task and a contextualized questionnaire. The data were coded for frame of reference, susceptibility to change, animacy, dependence on experience and adjective class. Chi square and stepwise regression analyses were carried out on the data. The general results show that *ser* is used much more frequently than *estar* at all levels. Susceptibility to change and frame of reference are the only variables significant at all levels. Although animacy was tested exclusively, this variable is not reported or discussed in the results. Geeslin (2002) finds support for her mirror image hypothesis as “those constraints lost during the process of the extension of *estar* are those acquired during the process
of SLA” (439). Furthermore, this study demonstrates that different factors are significant predictors of innovative *estar* at different levels of acquisition.

All of the studies reviewed in this chapter work together to describe Spanish copula choice. Traditional grammars began by providing descriptive observations about the distribution of *ser* and *estar*. Theoretical studies moved to analyze the distinctions between the copulas in a more detailed and in-depth manner. The first studies within the framework of second language acquisition established stages of acquisition while the research continued toward a comparison of copula selection among learners and native speakers. Finally, the most recent literature has focused more specifically on the phenomenon of *estar* extension. However, as this topic is still being researched, some questions have gone unanswered. Several of the studies mentioned (Silva-Corvalán 1986, Gutiérrez 1992) presented samples of their data which included examples of *estar* + adjective carrying a diminutive. However, the researchers do not clearly discuss the possible effect such adjectives may have on the extension of *estar*. Likewise, no study mentioned has exclusively tested the extremity of the adjective and its potential correlation with the use of innovative *estar*. In the same way, some of the above mentioned studies (Silva-Corvalán 1986, Geeslin and Guijarro-Fuentes 2008, Geeslin 2002) have attempted to test animacy as a predictor of the extension of *estar* yet the results yielded are difficult to interpret and at times left unaddressed altogether. Based on these inadequacies, the current study seeks to determine with more clarity the role that the extremity of the adjective and the animacy of the referent may play in the extension of the use of *estar* in copula + adjective constructions.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction, Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to examine the role that both extremity of the adjective and animacy of the referent play in the innovative use of *estar* in the copula + adjective construction, I have set forth the following research questions and hypotheses:

(1) At what rate are second language learners employing innovative *estar* and how does that rate differ from native speakers?

I hypothesize that second language learners will employ innovative *estar* at a lower rate than the native speakers.

(2) Does animacy of the referent favor the innovative use of *estar*?

I hypothesize that [+ animate] referents (i.e. humans and animals) will favor the extension of *estar*.

(3) Does extremity of the adjective favor the innovative use of *estar*?

I hypothesize that a [+ extreme] adjective (i.e. *pequeño*, *enorme*) will favor the innovative use of *estar*.

The following sections of this chapter discuss the methodology and research design implemented in the current study. Section 3.2 details the procedure including the participants, the instrument and the data collection. Section 3.3 explains the statistical analyses carried out on the data. The methodology adopted in the current study is based on procedures and instruments
administered in previous studies (Geeslin 2002; Gutiérrez 1992) that have examined the extension of estar.

3.2 Participants

The participants in the current study are comprised of twenty-one second language learners of Spanish as well as eight native Spanish speakers. The learners make up the test group while the native speakers constitute the control group. All learners were enrolled in a 4000 level advanced Spanish grammar class at the University of Georgia. The test group was further divided into two groups based on the scores that were attained on a vocabulary and grammar based proficiency exam. The groups are labeled Intermediate High (N=11) and Intermediate Mid (N=10). Although the students are enrolled in an advanced level university course, much of the current literature categorizes advanced learners as graduate students or individuals who have studied Spanish for 10 years or more (Geeslin 2003). In keeping with this trend, the learner groups were therefore classified as intermediate. The age of the participants in the test group ranges from 20 to 23 with only one participant being 32 years old. The test group is made up of twelve females and nine males. All learners reported being English dominant and Spanish is not spoken in the homes of any participant in the test group. It is assumed that the participants in the test group had received previous instruction about the uses and distinctions between ser and estar, however, there was no explicit instruction on the Spanish copulas in the 4651 Advanced Spanish Grammar class in which they were enrolled. Out of the eleven participants in the Intermediate High group, five had traveled to and spent at least two months in a Spanish-speaking country. In this group, seven participants self-reported that they used Spanish either occasionally or frequently outside of the classroom. Out of the ten participants in the Intermediate Mid group, all but one had traveled to and spent at least one month in a Spanish-speaking country.
speaking country. Six of the learners in this group reported that they used Spanish either frequently or occasionally outside the classroom.

The native speaker participants were recruited on the University of Georgia campus through e-mails followed by the friend-of-a-friend method. Half of the participants in the control group are students while the other half have finished their university degrees and are teaching Spanish. The control group is evenly divided among males and females. The native speakers range in age from 20 to 36 years of age and are from varying countries of origin such as Mexico (N=4), Puerto Rico (N=1), Peru (N=1) and Spain (N=2). The participants have been living in the United States for two (N=1), five (N=2), six (N=1), seven (N=2) and twelve (N=2) years.

3.3 Instruments

In this study, all participants in both the test group and the control group completed a consent form, a language background questionnaire and a contextualized questionnaire. Additionally, the test group completed the intermediate DELE vocabulary and grammar exam in order to establish their proficiency level with the Spanish language. As previously mentioned, the test group was subsequently divided into two groups based on their score on the DELE exam. The division was made according to the median score attained by the participants. Those scoring a 38 or higher were assigned to the Intermediate-High group and those scoring less than a 38 were assigned to the Intermediate-Mid group.

The language background questionnaire administered to the test group asked questions regarding their age, sex, dominant language, travel to Spanish speaking countries, language spoken at home and how often they use Spanish outside of the classroom. The language background questionnaire distributed to the control group inquired about country of origin, age,
sex and time spent in the United States. The language background questionnaire was administered on paper.

The contextualized questionnaire was designed to test for different factors that predict or favor the innovative use of estar (see Appendix C for the full questionnaire). The questionnaire was created in the software program E-Prime and was administered via computer. It contained 32 questions and each question was accompanied by a brief context that read like a complete story. The test group received the contexts in English while the control group received them in Spanish. On every question, the participants had the option of choosing three possible answers: ser, estar or both. The questionnaire was designed so that for all questions, the prescriptive choice was ser. Consequently, any selection of estar indicated an innovative use. The following example illustrates one of the contexts present on the contextualized questionnaire (see Appendix C for the full questionnaire):

(4) John and Mary go inside. Mary sees her best girl friend, Jennifer, in the crowd and says to her:

A. ¡Hola chica! ¡Estás bellísima!
B. ¡Hola chica! ¡Eres bellísima!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

The only adjective classes that appeared on the questionnaire were physical appearance and size.

Examples four and five list some of the different adjectives used:

(5) Physical Appearance (PA): guapo, feo, bellísimo

(6) Size (S): grande, chiquito, pequeño
Previous studies have shown that these are the two adjective classes that favor the extension of *estar* more so than others (Silva-Corvalán 1986; Gutiérrez 1992). Also, these types of adjectives can be employed with both animate and inanimate referents. Each question was coded for adjective class, animacy of the referent, extremity of the adjective and also for combinations of animacy and extremity, both of which represent binary values. The questionnaire contained 16 cases of all individual variables and 8 instances of the combinations with animacy and extremity. The combinations were coded as Type 1 [PA, + animate, + extreme], Type 2 [PA, + animate, - extreme], Type 3 [PA, - animate, + extreme], Type 4 [PA, - animate, - extreme], Type 5 [S, + animate, + extreme], Type 6 [S, + animate, - extreme], Type 7 [S, - animate, + extreme] and Type 8 [S, - animate, - extreme]. Table 3.3.1 presents an example of each possible variable combination that appeared on the contextualized questionnaire:

Table 3.3.1 Variable combinations present in questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type 1</th>
<th>Type 2</th>
<th>Type 3</th>
<th>Type 4</th>
<th>Type 5</th>
<th>Type 6</th>
<th>Type 7</th>
<th>Type 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>chica</em></td>
<td><em>nño</em></td>
<td><em>pinturas</em></td>
<td><em>árbol</em></td>
<td><em>serpiente</em></td>
<td><em>perro</em></td>
<td><em>zapatos</em></td>
<td><em>mesa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ bellísima</td>
<td>+ flaco</td>
<td>+ feísimas</td>
<td>+ feo</td>
<td>+ grandísima</td>
<td>+ pequeño</td>
<td>+ chiquitos</td>
<td>+ chica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PA</strong></td>
<td><strong>PA</strong></td>
<td><strong>PA</strong></td>
<td><strong>PA</strong></td>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[+ A]</td>
<td>[+ A]</td>
<td>[- A]</td>
<td>[+ A]</td>
<td>[+ A]</td>
<td>[- A]</td>
<td>[+ E]</td>
<td>[- E]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = animate, E = Extreme

Both people and animals were considered [+ animate] while every other referent was classified as [- animate]. Superlatives and diminutives were categorized as [+ extreme] while all other
adjectives were coded as [- extreme]. Additionally, adjectives such as ‘enorme’ enormous were also considered [+] extreme as they still convey the idea or concept of being ‘big’, only to a greater degree.

3.4 Procedure

During the data collection process, the test group made up of learners used a class period to complete all questionnaires, consent forms and exams. Those students who volunteered to participate received extra credit points on their final class project. They completed the contextualized questionnaire on a computer and the data was subsequently extracted by the researcher. The participants in the control group were met individually by the researcher and completed the contextualized questionnaire on a computer. All data was compiled and prepared for statistical analyses.

3.5 Analyses

To determine which factors affect the use of innovative estar, a logistic regression analysis was carried out. A logistic regression model is used to explain the probability that a certain event will occur as a function of a set of explanatory variables. In the current study, an event is defined as a choice of estar. Since a choice of ‘both’ represents something in between the selection of ser and estar, it was counted as half of an event. The explanatory variables in the current study are proficiency level, animacy, extremity and adjective class.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and statistical analyses yielded from the current study. Section 4.2 will explain and discuss the general findings for both learner groups and the native speaker group. Section 4.3 will move on to detail and examine the results found for each specific group and how they are both similar and different. Section 4.4 will present a qualitative analysis based on the responses recorded by the participants and the contexts provided on the instrument.

4.2 General Results

This section will present and discuss the general results for all participant groups. It is important to note that percentages were calculated combining the choices ‘both’ and ‘estar’. The choice estar was given the value 1 while ‘both’ was assigned the value .5 because while it is not a deliberate choice of estar, by choosing ‘both’, the participants are allowing this copula in the given context. The variables that were tested were proficiency level, adjective class, animacy of the referent and extremity of the adjective. Table 4.2.1 summarizes the percentage of use of innovative estar by all three participant groups for all contexts according to proficiency level.
Table 4.2.1 Individual variable analysis: Proficiency level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>50.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>25.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>23.28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DF = 2, Wald Chi² = 55.9657, P-value < .0001)

This table shows that native speakers employ innovative *estar* at a much higher rate than the two learner groups, twice as high and more than two times as high for the Intermediate-High and Intermediate-Mid groups respectively. This finding suggests that copula selection for native speakers for the contexts presented is equally divided between *ser* and *estar*, suggesting that the use of *estar*, for these native speakers, is extending into traditional *ser* contexts. The learners, on the other hand, demonstrate more conservative copula selection as their percentages of use of innovative *estar* are considerably lower than those of the native speaker group. The noticeable differences in these percentages imply that these learners have not yet reached a native-like level of copula selection for the contexts presented, and most importantly, that they follow the prescriptive rules, and not the innovative uses, for copula selection. Nevertheless, there is a slight increase in the use of innovative *estar* by the Intermediate-High group, suggesting that they are slowly progressing toward a native-like copula selection. The statistical analysis of this variable yielded a P-value of < .0001 which shows that this variable is a significant factor in predicting the extension of *estar*. As proficiency level increases, the use of innovative *estar* will do the same.
The next variable that was examined was adjective class. Only adjectives of physical appearance (PA; feo) and size (S; pequeño) were used in the instrument. Table 4.2.2 presents the percentage of use of innovative estar with each adjective class for all participants (both learner groups and native speakers) in all given contexts.

Table 4.2.2 Individual variable analysis: Adjective class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of estar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DF = 1, Wald Chi² = 16.0556, P-value < .0001)

Because of the higher percentage for adjectives expressing physical appearance, this table demonstrates that this adjective class favors innovative estar more so than adjectives expressing size. While previous studies have shown that adjectives of size and physical appearance greatly favor the extension of estar, these studies (Silva-Corvalán 1986; Gutiérrez 1992) have also indicated that size favors estar extension more than physical appearance. The results in the current study (as shown in Table 4.2.2) demonstrate the opposite trend. The P-value generated for this variable after statistical analysis was < .0001 which signifies that adjective class is a significant factor when examining the extension of estar and more specifically, adjectives that express physical appearance increase the possibility of employing innovative estar in this study.

The third variable considered was the animacy of the referent. Both humans and animals were considered [+ animate] while any other referent was classified as [- animate]. Table 4.2.3 shows the percent of use of innovative estar with both [+/- animate] referents for all participants in all given contexts.
Table 4.2.3 *Individual variable analysis: Animacy of the referent*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animacy</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[+ animate]</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>32.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[- animate]</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>30.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DF = 1, Wald Chi² 0.5462, P-value = 0.4599)

The percentages of use of innovative *estar* with [+/- animate] referents is much closer than the percentages already presented for the previous two variables. In fact, the P-value rendered for this variable after statistical analysis was 0.4599 which indicates that this variable is not significant in predicting the use of innovative *estar*. This result supports the findings of previous studies (Geeslin & Guijarro-Fuentes 2008; Geeslin 2002) which have shown animacy to be either not relevant or relevant only at one level for second language learners.

The last variable examined was the extremity of the adjective. Table 4.2.4 demonstrates the percent of use of innovative *estar* for both [+extreme] (*bellísima*) and [- extreme] (*pequeño*) adjectives for all participants in all given contexts.

Table 4.2.4 *Individual variable analysis: Extremity of the adjective*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[+ extreme]</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>27.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[- extreme]</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>35.88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DF = 1, Wald Chi² = 8.6103, P-value <.0033)

Due to a higher percentage of innovative *estar*, this table indicates that [- extreme] adjectives favor the extension of *estar* for the contexts examined in this study, more so than [+ extreme]
adjectives. This finding contradicts my original hypothesis that a [+ extreme] adjective would increase the possibility of choosing innovative *estar*. This variable yielded a P-value of < .0033 after statistical analysis, meaning extremity of the adjective is in fact significant when examining *estar* extension. However, this variable negatively correlates to the use of innovative *estar* as a [+ extreme] adjective promotes the selection of *ser* rather than *estar*.

While each variable was analyzed separately to determine its relevance to *estar* extension, all possible combinations of all variables were also analyzed to ascertain whether or not different factors combined would favor the extension of *estar* more so than others. Table 4.2.5 shows the percent of use of innovative *estar* with each possible combination for all groups in all given contexts. (Please refer to Table 3.3.1 for a list of each variable combination coupled with an example that appeared on the contextualized questionnaire.) Although each variable except animacy was found to be significant when analyzed separately, when the variables are combined, the results seem to be somewhat inconclusive. The combination that rendered innovative *estar* the most, [PA, - animate, - extreme] (árbol + feo) is not surprising based on the individual variable results presented in tables 4.2.2 and 4.2.4. This combination contains a [- extreme] adjective of physical appearance, both of which favor the extension of *estar* in the current study. On the other hand, the second highest use of innovative *estar* occurs with [PA, + animate, + extreme] (chica + bellísima). This combination seems less likely to favor innovative *estar* because it contains the feature [+ extreme] which was previously shown to favor the use of *ser* in this study. However, it is possible that the adjective class weighs more heavily on copula selection and therefore increases the possibility of choosing innovative *estar* despite the fact that the adjective is [+ extreme]. The combination [S, - animate, - extreme] (mesa + pequeña) is the fourth highest combination for the use of innovative *estar* in this study. This combination
yielded more *estar* responses among these participants than the sixth ranked combination of [PA, -animate, + extreme] (*pinturas* + *feísimas*). This order seems contradictory because according to the results of the current study, adjectives of physical appearance favor innovative *estar* more so than those of size. Because of this, one might expect that variable combinations containing an adjective of physical appearance would demonstrate a higher percentage of use of innovative *estar* than those containing an adjective of size. However, the combination with the adjective of size contains a [- extreme] adjective, favoring *estar* extension, while the adjective of physical appearance is coupled with a [+ extreme] adjective, favoring the selection of *ser*. This ordering would suggest that extremity of the adjective weighs more heavily in these participants’ choices because the combination with a [- extreme] adjective is ranked more highly percentage wise than the one containing a [+ extreme] adjective despite the adjective class that is present.

Table 4.2.5 General results: All variables, all participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Animacy</th>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>40.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>38.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>28.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>42.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>20.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>19.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>31.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The general analyses carried out indicated that for this study, proficiency level is a significant factor when considering the extension of *estar*. Also, in this study, adjective class correlates positively with the employment of innovative *estar*; in other words, adjectives of physical appearance favor the extension of *estar* more so than adjectives expressing size. The general results also indicate that for these participants, extremity of the adjective corresponds negatively with *estar* extension in the sense that a [+ extreme] adjective actually favors *ser*. While proficiency level, adjective class and extremity were all found to be significant factors for the extension of *estar*, the results in this study also indicated that animacy of the referent was not a significant factor for these participants. Although different variables in the current study were determined to be significant individually, when the variables were combined, the percentages of use of innovative *estar* for these participants were somewhat inconclusive. It is possible that the inverse relations between adjective class and extremity interacted in such a way to obscure the data and the results yielded from the contextualized questionnaire.

4.3 Results by Group

In an attempt to better understand the copula selection of the participants in this study, the results for each individual participant group were also examined. The following subsections will detail the results rendered from each specific participant group beginning with the native speakers.

4.3.1 Native Speakers

This section presents the results of the native speaker group. Table 4.3.1 presents the percentage of use of innovative *estar* for the native speaker participants for all possible variable combinations.
Table 4.3.1 *Individual group analysis: Native Speakers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Animacy</th>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that the combination that elicited innovative *estar* the most for the native speakers was [PA, + animate, - extreme] (*niño* + *flaco*) where they selected the innovative use 62.5 percent of the time. This result is not surprising as the adjective class and extremity both favor the extension of *estar*. Much like the general results for all groups, there are some unexpected findings. For example, the third highest combination is [S, - animate, -extreme] (*mesa* + *pequeña*) while the combination that elicited the least amount of innovative *estar* is [PA, - animate, + extreme] (*pinturas* + *feísimas*). This ranking is somewhat surprising because in the current study, adjectives of physical appearance favor *estar* extension more than those of size, yet the combination with the adjective of size received more choices of innovative *estar* than the one with an adjective expressing physical appearance. Nevertheless, the combination with the adjective of size also has the quality of being [- extreme] which favors *estar* in this
study. It may be that the [- extreme] feature caused these participants to choose estar more often for the given contexts regardless of the adjective class. Additionally, the fourth highest combination to receive innovative estar is [PA, + animate, + extreme] (chica + bellísima). This seems inconsistent with the third and last ranked combinations because it contains a [+ extreme] adjective, yet it is ranked relatively high in its favorability towards the extension of estar. Aside from the combination that yields the most selections of estar ([PA, + animate, - extreme]), it is difficult to determine with absolute certainty which variable (adjective class or extremity of the adjective) weighs more heavily in copula selection for these native speakers due to the slightly inconsistent ranking of different combinations of variables. I will attempt to shed some light on why these inconsistencies occurred in section 4.4 where I examine individual contexts presented on the contextualized questionnaire to try to determine what other factors, if any, are affecting copula selection.

4.3.2 Intermediate-High

The next individual group to be analyzed is the Intermediate-High participant group. Table 4.3.2 shows the percent of use of innovative estar for all possible variable combinations for all members of this group.
Table 4.3.2 Individual group analysis: Intermediate-High

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Animacy</th>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of estar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This learner group and the native speaker group do not share a single ranking and seem to be quite different despite the fact that these learners chose innovative *estar* more frequently than the Intermediate-Mid group. The results yielded from this learner group appear to be more consistent than those of the native speaker group. For example, out of the top four variable combinations that favored *estar* the most, all contained adjectives of physical appearance and the single combination that elicited *estar* the most also contained the variable [- extreme] which is consistent with the general findings presented in Section 4.2. This ranking would suggest that adjective class is the variable that weighs more heavily with these learners as they consistently choose *estar* more frequently with adjectives expressing physical appearance regardless of the extremity of the adjective. It is also interesting to note that the two lowest ranked combinations ([S, - animate, + extreme], [S, + animate, +extreme]), in other words, the two combinations that favor innovative *estar* the least, both contain a [+ extreme] adjective. Again, this is consistent with the general findings that a [+ extreme] adjective favors *ser* over *estar*. Although this learner group does not employ *estar* as often as the native speaker group, it seems as though when they do choose *estar* over *ser*, they are relying on both adjective class and, to a lesser extent, extremity for their copula selection. This is evidenced by the fact that when the adjective class expresses physical appearance, the importance of extremity in the given contexts is less evident as the combination [PA, + animate, + extreme] receives more choices of innovative *estar* (35.23%) than the combination [PA + animate, - extreme] (32.95%). On the other hand, when the adjective class expresses size, the percentages indicate that for these participants, extremity is playing a role as the [+ extreme] adjectives consistently receive less choices of innovative *estar*.

4.3.3 Intermediate-Mid
The last group to be examined is the Intermediate-Mid learner group. Table 4.3.3 displays the percent of use of innovative *estar* for all Intermediate-Mid participants for all possible variable combinations.

**Table 4.3.3 Individual group analysis: Intermediate-Mid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Animacy</th>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage use of <em>estar</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Intermediate-Mid group resembles the native speaker group in a couple of ways. Firstly, out of the top four variable combinations that favored innovative *estar* the most, three of these combinations are adjectives of physical appearance and three possess the feature [- extreme]. The same is true for the native speaker group. Secondly, for both groups (Intermediate-Mid and Native), the adjective expressing size that falls into the top four variable combinations also includes the feature [- extreme]. This would suggest, because three out of the top four combinations contain an adjective of physical appearance, that adjective class again is the most important feature affecting copula choice followed by the feature [- extreme]. The Intermediate-Mid group is also similar to the Intermediate-High group in that the two variable combinations that favor innovative *estar* the least are [S, + animate, + extreme] (*serpiente* + *grandísima*) and [S, - animate, + extreme] (*zapatos* + *chiquitos*). These results are not surprising as the general results in section 4.2 indicated that adjectives expressing size and [+ extreme] adjectives do not tend to favor the extension of *estar* as frequently as other variables. Although the Intermediate-Mid group is similar to both the native speaker group and the Intermediate-High group, due to somewhat inconsistent rankings of variable combinations, it is difficult to establish with certainty which variable weighs more heavily on the copula selection of these learners. The low percentage of use of innovative *estar* coupled with inconsistencies among variable combinations would suggest that these learners have not reached a native-like copula selection.

Up until this point, all of the results presented in section 4.3 have factored in animacy of the referent. However, it was shown in section 4.2 that animacy was not a significant factor when considering the extension of *estar*. Because of this, the model can be reduced by dropping the insignificant animacy effect to yield table 4.3.4.
Table 4.3.4 *General results with all significant variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Extremity</th>
<th>Fitted probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>52.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>37.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>26.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>16.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>24.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>14.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table indicates the variable combinations and the fitted probability of the use of *estar* with all significant variables. The two combinations that favor innovative *estar* the most are [Native, PA, - extreme] and [Native, PA, + extreme]. It is not surprising that the extension of *estar* is found most at the native speaker level. Spanish is their first language and they are able to use the language in different and nuanced ways to convey different messages. Setting the native speakers aside, the next highest combinations that favor innovative *estar* are [High, PA, - extreme] and [Mid, PA, - extreme]. These combinations are consistent with the general results presented in section 4.2 as they contain a [- extreme] adjective expressing physical appearance,
two variables that were shown to favor the selection of innovative *estar* in the current study. However, if the extremity of the adjective is changed from [-] to [+], the odds of choosing *estar* will decrease by 35.3 percent. It is also interesting to note that the two lowest ranked combinations are [Mid, S, + extreme] and [High, S, + extreme], meaning they favor innovative *estar* the least. This finding is not entirely surprising as both combinations contain the feature [+ extreme] and both possess an adjective of size. Each of these two variables is less likely to favor the extension of *estar*. However, if adjective type is changed from size to physical appearance, holding all other things constant, the odds of choosing *estar* will increase by 81.7 percent. Although the percentages for each group are different, Table 4.3.4 shows that the tendencies among these participant groups are the same. For example, all participant groups are more likely to choose innovative *estar* with an adjective of physical appearance. Furthermore, when the adjective expresses size, all participant groups were less likely to choose innovative *estar*. Likewise, the combination [S, + extreme] was the variable combination least likely to elicit innovative *estar* for each participant group for the given contexts.

The results presented in this section show that both adjective class and extremity of the adjective are significant factors when considering the extension of *estar* while animacy of the referent is not. However, because of the inconclusive percentages and rankings, the data do not allow the researcher to conclude with confidence which variable weighs more heavily in copula selection. The only group to show a seemingly constant preference is the Intermediate-High group as they chose innovative *estar* the most with adjectives of physical appearance despite the feature [+/- extreme]. The Intermediate-Mid and native speaker groups however, showed more variability among rankings. Additionally, although the Intermediate-High group chose innovative *estar* more than the Intermediate-Mid group, the results indicate that the variable
combinations favoring the extension of *estar* for this group (Intermediate-High) are in fact quite different than those of the native speakers. This suggests that while these learners may be moving toward a native-like copula selection, the factors that govern their choices are not yet compatible with those of the native speakers in the current study. Likewise, although the Intermediate-Mid group shared more rankings with the native speaker group, they still did not select innovative *estar* as frequently. This would also suggest that these learners have not reached a native-like copula selection for the given contexts despite some of the similarities between the two groups. Although the rankings for each individual participant group were inconclusive at times, when the insignificant variable of animacy was dropped, Table 4.3.4 demonstrated that the tendencies for each participant group in this study were the same despite the differing percentages and rankings of variable combinations.

4.4 Qualitative Analysis of Contexts

Because some of the data were inconclusive, and in an attempt to better understand copula selection among all participant groups, this section will adopt a more qualitative approach by examining some of the specific contexts on the contextualized questionnaire that elicited unexpected responses. The following example and table represent sentence three on the contextualized questionnaire and the individual group responses for this specific context. It should be noted that the participants had the option of choosing ‘both’ as well.

(1) John and Mary go inside. Mary sees her best girlfriend Jennifer in the crowd and says to her:

¡Hola chica! ¡Estás/eres bellísima!
The responses elicited for this specific context are interesting in part because the native speakers chose innovative *estar* 100% of the time. The reason for such a unanimous selection may be due to the fact that *estar* is often used to signify ‘to look’ (Gili y Gaya 1955). It may be that this is the message that the native speakers felt was most appropriate given the context provided. Although the learner groups did not choose innovative *estar* unanimously, they did choose *estar* and ‘both’ at relatively high frequencies. These two choices comprise 81.82 percent and 90 percent for the Intermediate-High and Intermediate-Mid groups respectively. This would suggest that while these learners are not as deliberate in their choice of *estar* as the native speakers, they are picking up on the nuanced alternate meaning ‘to look’ and for that reason are allowing the possibility of employing innovative *estar* in the given context as evidenced by the relatively high frequencies of the selection of ‘both’. Regardless of the [+ extreme] nature of the adjective, *ser* is still selected with low frequency. This may be due to the fact that the adjective expresses physical appearance. Another possible explanation for the elevated use of ‘both’ and *estar* may be that this context provides an element of surprise. Some studies claim that such a condition favors the use of *estar* because it is dependent on immediate experience (Gili y Gaya 1955; Franco & Steinmetz 1986). Perhaps it was not expected that Jennifer would look so beautiful and the speakers, in other words, the participants, felt more inclined towards *estar*
given the unexpected nature of the context or given the previous experience with the best friend. Another factor that may have influenced copula selection in this specific context is the fact that the referent was already known. Because the context was set up so that the referent was known to the speaker, the participants may have been more likely to choose or allow innovative *estar*. In any case, although these learner groups are not choosing *estar* unanimously as the native speakers are, in this specific context they are allowing *estar* to be utilized quite frequently and this suggests that for this context, they are moving toward a native-like copula selection.

The next context to be examined is provided in sentence number 15. Table 4.4.2 shows the distribution of responses for all participant groups and is preceded by the context that appeared on the contextualized questionnaire.

(2) Suddenly, two new girls walk into art and John says:

¡Ay! Esas chicas son/están bellísimas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Native</th>
<th>Intermediate-High</th>
<th>Intermediate-Mid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ser</td>
<td>Estar</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results presented in this table are interesting due in part to the fact that neither learner group deliberately selected *estar* while the native speakers chose *estar* 25 percent of the time. It is also interesting because the responses for each group are noticeably different. Although the learners
did not choose *estar* for this specific context, the Intermediate-High group overwhelmingly chose ‘both’. This could be viewed as a positive move toward native-like copula selection because even though they are not deliberately choosing *estar*, the majority of these learners are at least allowing it. The Intermediate-Mid group, on the other hand, still demonstrates a stronger tendency toward *ser* for this context suggesting they still have a ways to go before reaching native-like copula selection. This context was coded as [PA, + animate, + extreme]. While adjectives of physical appearance favor innovative *estar*, [+extreme] adjectives do not in this study. The extremity of the adjective for this context may be causing these learners not to choose innovative *estar*. However, this context, though not deliberately, very clearly presents a situation that possesses an element of surprise. This may explain the choices of *estar* by the native speakers as well as the selection of ‘both’ for all groups. Another factor to consider is whether or not the referent is known. In this context, the referent was not known beforehand which could have caused the elevated use of *ser* on the part of the intermediate-Mid group, as well as the use of *ser* by some of the native speakers despite the fact that the variable combination in this context is exactly the same as the variable combination presented in table 4.4.1. This type of context could have caused some of the inconsistencies among the rankings that were presented in section 4.3.

Another context that yielded unexpected responses was sentence number 17. The context is provided below along with a table that details the responses recorded along with the percentages of use of each possible answer.

(3) Lucia and her husband Eric are going on an African Safari. They are getting ready to board the plane when Eric says:

¡Mira! ¡El avión está/es chiquito!
This table demonstrates that no participant group selected the option ‘both’ for this specific context. Although two native speakers did choose *estar*, the selection of *ser* was still significantly higher and the same is even truer for the Intermediate-High group, as they only selected *estar* one time. Interestingly, the choice was unanimous for the Intermediate-Mid group toward the Spanish copula *ser*. The high frequency selection of *ser* for this particular context corresponds to the data presented in section 4.3 as the variable combination includes an adjective of size coupled with the feature [+ extreme]. This was one of the variable combinations that received a very low ranking for favorability toward innovative *estar* for all participant groups. However, even though the variable combination present in this specific context has been shown to greatly favor *ser, estar* was still chosen. It is possible that *estar* was chosen due to an element of surprise present in the context which is dependent on previous experience. It may be that the participants who chose *estar* felt that Eric was surprised by the size of the plane compared to his previous knowledge about airplanes. Also, in this context the referent is not known to the speaker. Although the speaker may have some ideas about the size of airplanes, the specific airplane in this context is a new referent which also could have sparked more choices of *ser* among all participant groups. The results presented in this table support the finding that the Intermediate-High learners are closer to a native-like copula selection than the Intermediate-Mid
group as their responses resemble those of the native speakers slightly more so than the Intermediate-Mid group. However, neither group in this study has reached native-like proficiency with the use of the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar*.

The next context that will be examined is sentence number 19. The context is provided below along with a table that shows the recorded responses for all participant groups.

(4) While in the air, they look out the window at the countryside below, Eric says:

¡Mira! ¡El paisaje es/está maravilloso!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4.4 Qualitative Analysis: Sentence 19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses recorded for this context are interesting because the native speakers chose *ser* 100% of the time for this context. The learners, on the other hand, chose *estar* and ‘both’ at higher frequencies. This context was coded as [PA, - animate, + extreme]. It is possible that the context was perceived as somewhat ambiguous and because of this, the responses show apparent variability. For example, the adjective was coded as one of physical appearance; however, the participants may not have regarded it as such. Additionally, this adjective was classified as [+ extreme] because it was considered by the researcher to express the idea or notion of beauty only to a greater degree. Again, the participants may not have viewed the classification in the same way.
way and may have considered this adjective to be [- extreme] as it is neither overtly a superlative nor a diminutive like many other adjectives on the contextualized questionnaire. This might explain some of the selections of estar and ‘both’. Another interesting result yielded from this context is that the Intermediate-Mid group actually behaves more like the native speaker group than the Intermediate-High learners as evidenced from the higher percentage of use of ser despite the fact that estar and ‘both’ were also chosen at times. Much like the previous context, the referent in this context is not known to the speaker which could have caused an elevated selection of ser among the native speakers as well as the Intermediate-Mid group. There is a possibility that contexts such as these caused the somewhat inconclusive results produced by the statistical analyses as the learner groups and native speaker group show apparent differences in copula selection.

The last context to be discussed appears in sentence number 27. The table that follows details the responses recorded for all participant groups and is preceded by the context that appeared on the contextualized questionnaire.

(5) Lucia is examining a tree next to her and she responds:

¡Sí! Y mira las hojas de este árbol. ¡Son/Están colosales!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Native</th>
<th>Intermediate-High</th>
<th>Intermediate-Mid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ser</td>
<td>Estar</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4.5 Qualitative Analysis: Sentence 27
This specific context is interesting due to the fact that neither learner group deliberately selected 
*estar* while the native speakers selected *estar* 62.50% of the time. This context was coded as [S, - animate, + extreme]. The statistical analyses already presented in Chapter Four indicated that this variable combination was the one that would be least likely to elicit innovative *estar* from the learner groups. The results presented in Table 4.4.5 support this finding as no learner chose *estar* in this context. On the other hand, the native speakers in this study chose *estar* and ‘both’ quite frequently. As mentioned before with previous contexts, it is feasible that the native speakers perceived an element of surprise in this sentence, causing them to select *estar* and ‘both’ more than *ser* despite the variable combination of size and [+ extreme]. Additionally, although the referent is unknown, the speaker may already have ideas or preconceived notions about the size of leaves. This familiarity with referent may have caused the native speakers and the Intermediate-High groups to choose innovative *estar* or ‘both’ with higher frequencies. In any case, neither learner group appears to be sensitive to the same factors that are affecting copula selection for the native speakers as evidenced by their overwhelming preference for *ser* in this specific context. The results yielded from this sentence show that these learners are still not behaving like the native speakers; rather, they are applying the rules that they have most likely been taught in their Spanish classes as the prescriptively correct answer to this sentence would be *ser*.

This section has provided a brief qualitative analysis of some of the contexts presented on the contextualized questionnaire in an attempt to better understand some of the discrepancies presented in section 4.3. While there were some contexts where the learners’ choices resembled the choices of the native speakers, there were also contexts that showed significant variability. It is possible that an element of surprise present in some of the contexts or the familiarity with the
referent caused these participants to make a choice that was unexpected based on the statistical analyses and this may explain some of the inconsistencies among the rankings of the variable combinations presented in section 4.3. Additionally, some of the contexts may have been somewhat ambiguous in their coding scheme and because of this, may have obscured some of the results generated from the statistical analyses. In any case, this brief qualitative analysis has shown that none of the learner groups in this study responded in exactly the same way as the native speakers for the contexts presented. This variability suggests that these learners have not reached a native-like copula selection. Nevertheless, some of the contexts presented showed similar tendencies for all groups which would imply that these learners are moving toward native-like copula choice even though they have not yet reached that level.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The variables that were examined in the current study were proficiency level, adjective class, animacy of the referent and extremity of the adjective. All variables except animacy of the referent were found to be significant when analyzing the phenomenon of estar extension.

According to the data, proficiency level correlates positively with the selection of innovative estar. As proficiency level increases, so does the choice of innovative estar. This was evidenced by the higher percentage of use of innovative estar by the Intermediate-High group.

The results presented in Chapter Four indicated that adjectives of physical appearance favor the extension of estar more so than adjectives of size. Also, an adjective bearing the feature [+ extreme] actually favors the selection of ser while a [- extreme] adjective will favor estar extension.

The participant groups in this study demonstrated variability among rankings of variable combinations. Three out of the top four variable combinations for the native speakers contained an adjective of physical appearance. The variable combination that contained an adjective of size that fell into the top four combinations also contained the feature [- extreme]. This same pattern occurred for the Intermediate-Mid participants. The Intermediate-High participants did not share a ranking with the native speaker group. All of the top four variable combinations for this group (Intermediate-High) contained an adjective of physical appearance despite the [+/- extreme] feature of the adjective. However, extremity played a role in their copula selection as
the combinations containing a [+ extreme] adjective of size received lower percentages of use of innovative *estar*.

Although the rankings were different among each individual group and appeared to be somewhat inconclusive, after the insignificant animacy effect was dropped, all participant groups demonstrated similar tendencies. All groups were more likely to select innovative *estar* when the adjective expressed physical appearance. Furthermore, the combination that was least likely to elicit innovative *estar* for each group was [S, + extreme]. The variable combinations that were most likely to elicit innovative *estar* were [Native, PA, + extreme] and [Native, PA, - extreme]. However, if the native speaker group was set aside, the next highest combinations to evoke innovative *estar* were [Intermediate-High, PA, - extreme] and [Intermediate-Mid, PA, - extreme].

After completing a brief qualitative analysis of some specific contexts presented on the contextualized questionnaire, it was found that some of the contexts presented known and unknown referents. Also, it was determined that some of the coding schemes may have been somewhat ambiguous. These conditions could have caused some of the inconsistencies found in the rankings of the variable combinations among the three participant groups because the participants made some choices that were not consistent with the statistical analyses.

5.2 Significance of Findings

The results of this study have shown that these learners are employing innovative *estar*, only at a slower rate than the native speakers. The data have also indicated that as proficiency level increases, so does the selection of innovative *estar*. However, the learners in the current study still did not come close to the native speakers’ selection of innovative *estar*. This gap
suggests that these learners are still relying on the prescriptive rules they have been taught in their foreign language classrooms, rather than using the Spanish copulas in the same ways as the native speakers. It is possible that the reason why these learners are not employing innovative *estar* at the same rate as the native speakers is because its innovative use is not salient in the input that they receive in the classroom environment. Additionally, the individual rankings of variable combinations presented in section 4.3 indicated that each participant group appears to be sensitive to different factors for copula selection. In fact, the rankings made it difficult to determine which factors, adjective class or extremity, weighed more heavily on copula selection for each group. The results indicated that [- extreme] adjectives favored innovative *estar* over [+ extreme] adjectives. This may be due to the fact that the morphology is more complex and marked for the [+ extreme] adjectives, causing the learners to result to a sort of default copula selection of *ser* when a [+ extreme] adjective is present. Only the Intermediate-High group seemed to be relying on adjective class more so than extremity. Despite some discrepancies among the three groups, the results indicated that the general tendencies for choosing innovative *estar* were the same for all groups; so while it is possible that these learners are relying more heavily on prescriptive rules, when they are choosing innovative *estar*, it appears they are behaving similarly to the native speakers which would suggest that they are slowly moving toward a more native-like copula selection. Nevertheless, the variability among responses for specific contexts suggests that these learners are not always sensitive to the same factors that the native speakers are when choosing between *ser* and *estar*.

While this study has shown that native speakers and learners are employing innovative uses of *estar*, it is still important to understand why *estar* may be encroaching on the semantic domain of *ser*. The Spanish copula *estar* comes from the Latin verb ‘stare’ which originally
meant to stand. However, as the Spanish language has developed over time, estar has slowly begun to gain more functions and meanings. The Spanish copula estar first began to compete with ser in adjectival constructions in the XII century (Gutiérrez 1992). It is possible that the phenomenon referred to as innovative estar may be a continual extension of this verb’s functions and meanings as the Spanish language continues to change and develop over time.

5.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

My first research question follows: At what rate are second language learners employing innovative estar and how does that rate differ from native speakers? I hypothesized that second language learners would employ innovative estar at a lower rate than the native speakers. This hypothesis was confirmed as the native speakers employed innovative estar 50.20% of the time and the Intermediate-High and Intermediate-Mid group only selected innovative estar 25.57% and 23.28% of the time respectively. As mentioned before, this could be because the use of innovative estar is not salient in the input that these learners have received. Another reason why these learners may not be using innovative estar as frequently as the native speakers may be due to the stages of acquisition (Van-Patten 1987). Research has shown that estar and its uses are among the last features to be acquired by second language learners. It is possible that these learners have not yet passed through all of the stages of acquisition of the Spanish copulas or that they are still trying to master the different prescriptive uses of estar, making it less likely that they would be sensitive to its innovative uses.

My second research question follows: Does animacy of the referent favor the innovative use of estar? I hypothesized that [+ animate] referents (i.e. humans and animals) would favor the extension of estar. This hypothesis was not confirmed. Statistical analyses indicated that
animacy was not a significant factor when examining the extension of estar. Because of this, [+ animate] referents do not favor the extension of estar.

My third research question follows: Does extremity of the adjective favor the innovative use of estar? I hypothesized that a [+ extreme] adjective (i.e. pequeño, enorme) would favor the innovative use of estar. This hypothesis was not confirmed. Although extremity of the adjective was found to be a significant factor when examining innovative estar, [+ extreme] adjectives actually favor the selection of ser while [- extreme] adjectives favor innovative estar. For the learners, it is possible that [+ extreme] adjectives favor ser because the morphology of these adjectives is more complex and the learners may result to a sort of default copula selection of ser when they come across a more marked form.

5.4 Avenues for Future Research

The current study has examined the use of innovative estar among second language learners of Spanish as well as native speakers. However, the sample sizes were relatively small and it is suggested that more participants be used for future studies of the same nature. Also, the proficiency level of the learners in this study was classified as Intermediate. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study using advanced learners as the subjects to explore the differences between intermediate and advanced learners as well as advanced learners and native speakers.

Additionally, the current study was able to identify another significant factor that influences copula selection, particularly the extension of estar. This factor was identified as extremity of the adjective. Because this study was the first to exclusively test such a variable, it
is suggested that future research continues to investigate the effect of this variable on copula selection among both second language learners as well as native speakers.

Although the current study showed that all variables examined were significant except animacy, inconsistencies still existed in the data. After conducting a brief qualitative analysis of specific contexts that appeared on the contextualized questionnaire, it was found that in some contexts the referent was known and in others it was not. For future research, it might be interesting to examine the role of this contextual factor coupled with other linguistic variables on the extension of estar.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: LANGUAGE BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

LANGUAGE BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this brief questionnaire for research purposes. Your name will remain anonymous when reporting the results of the study.

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Age: _______________ Gender: □ M □ F

Major: ________________________________________________________________

1. How many years of Spanish instruction did you receive in high school?
   □ 1 year or less □ 2 years □ 3 years □ 4 years

2. Have you formally studied any other languages besides Spanish?
   □ NO □ YES; please list the language(s) and how many years of instruction you received:
   ______________________________________________________________________

3. Is Spanish spoken in your home?
   □ NO □ YES

4. Are you dominant in English or Spanish?
   □ English □ Spanish

5. Have you spent time abroad?
☐ NO  ☐ YES

Country: _______________________________
Time spent: ___________________________

6. What is your parents’ place of birth?

Mother: ___________________________________________________________
Father: _____________________________________________________________

7. I use Spanish outside of the classroom:

Never  Rarely  Occasionally  Frequently

---

CUESTIONARIO DE BIODATA

Por favor complete este breve cuestionario con fines de investigación. Su nombre permanecerá anónimo al reportar los resultados del estudio.

Nombre: __________________________________________________________

Edad: __________________________  Sexo:  α M  α F

Carrera: ___________________________________________________________

Año __________________________

1. ¿Cuál es su lengua materna? _________________________________________

2. ¿Se habla otro idioma en su casa?
α NO  α Sí  ¿Cuál(es) ________________________________________________________________

3. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva aquí en los Estados Unidos? ________________________________

4. ¿Estudió inglés (u otra lengua) en la preparatoria?

α NO  α Sí  ¿Cuántos años? _________________________________________________

5. ¿Ha estado en el extranjero?

α NO  α Sí

País: ________________________________________________________________

Tiempo: ________________________________________________________________

6. ¿Cuál es el lugar de nacimiento de sus padres?

Madre: ___________________________________________________________________

Padre: ___________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B: DELE EXAM

INTERMEDIATE DELE GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY SECTION

**Question 1**  (1 point)

Complete el siguiente texto (preguntas 1 a 20) eligiendo para cada uno de los huecos una de las tres opciones que se le ofrecen.

El ulama, así se llama el "tenis" precolombino. Es una especie de tenis sin red en el que participan de tres a cinco jugadores por equipo. Hay tres modalidades: ulama de antebrazo o ulama de cadera, ____1____ la parte del cuerpo que se emplee,

- a. de acuerdo
- b. según
- c. depende

**Question 2**  (1 point)

y ulama de mazo, llamado así por el ____2____ con el que se golpea la pelota.

- a. instrumento
- b. herramienta
- c. material

**Question 3**  (1 point)

El formato de partido clásico ____3____ de tres o cuatro jugadores por equipo.
Question 4  (1 point)

El tamaño del campo varía dependiendo de la modalidad ____4____ la que se juegue, pero siempre es alargado y estrecho.

  a. por  b. de  c. a

Question 5  (1 point)

Hay una línea ____5____ pintada en el suelo, que divide el campo por la mitad.

  a. central  b. centrada  c. céntrica

Question 6  (1 point)

La pelota para el ulama de antebrazo es ligera, de medio kilo, pero para el ulama de cadera, que es la modalidad ____6____ antigua,

  a. muy  b. tan  c. más

Question 7  (1 point)

se usaba una pelota de cuatro kilos que ____7____ una fuerza mucho mayor.
La rutina del juego funciona ____8____ en el tenis: un equipo golpea la bola una vez y el contrario responde.

Para sumar un punto hay que ____9____ que la pelota pase la línea del fondo del equipo contrario.

Si se __10__ la pelota con dos partes del cuerpo se considera falta

Question 11  (1 point)
y es un punto ____11____ el contrario.

- a. por  c. para

**Question 12**  (1 point)

La forma de contar es peculiar, ya que no se hace por suma de puntos, ____12____ restándoselos al contrario cada vez que se puntúa.

- a. pero  c. aunque

**Question 13**  (1 point)

Hay que llegar a ocho, pero ____13____ se va sumando y restando,

- a. como  c. debido a

**Question 14**  (1 point)

los partidos pueden ____14____ eternos.
En la actualidad se ha fijado un máximo de dos horas por partido y gana el equipo que más puntos tenga en ese momento.

- a. ser  c. sido
**Question 15**  (1 point)

El ulama es una de las muchas modalidades de pelota a la que ____15____ los aztecas en la época precolombina.

- a. tocaban
- b. hacían
- c. jugaban

**Question 16**  (1 point)

En la actualidad ____16____ practican en México trece juegos

- a. se
- b. los
- c. lo

**Question 17**  (1 point)

o deportes que ____17____ existían en época de los aztecas.

- a. ya
- b. aún
- c. todavía

**Question 18**  (1 point)

La mayoría de estos juegos sufrió modificaciones a partir de la ____18____ de los colonizadores españoles, especialmente los vascos, que llevaron su propia modalidad de pelota.

- a. llegar
- b. llegando
- c. llegada
Question 19  (1 point)

En Mesoamérica han sido localizados más ____19____ mil quinientos campos de juego de pelota,

a. de  b. que  c. a

Question 20  (1 point)

____20____ da idea de la importancia que tuvo la actividad física desde tiempos antiguos.

a. lo que  b. el que  c. la que

Question 21  (1 point)

En cada una de las frases siguientes (preguntas 21 a 30) se ha marcado con paréntesis un fragmento. Elija, de entre las tres opciones de respuesta, aquélla que tenga un significado equivalente al del fragmento marcado. Por ejemplo:

− No he hablado todavía con Javier porque el teléfono (está comunicando).
  a) está estropeado  
b) no da señal  
c) está ocupado

La respuesta correcta es la c.

− Pero, ¿todavía no ha terminado Sandra el trabajo?
− (¡Qué val!) Y ahora está hablando por teléfono.
a. ¡Ni idea!  b. ¡Claro que no!  c. ¡Por supuesto!

**Question 22**  (1 point)

– Desde que ascendió en la empresa, (nos mira por encima del hombro).
– Pues no entiendo por qué.

a. ha crecido mucho  b. no viene a vernos  c. se cree superior a nosotros

**Question 23**  (1 point)

– ¿Qué tal está el pescado?
– Para mi gusto, (insípido).

a. muy rico  b. bastante salado  c. no tiene sabor

**Question 24**  (1 point)

– Al principio, aceptar este cargo directivo supuso un gran (reto) para mí. Pero ahora estoy muy satisfecho.
– ¡Cuánto me alegro!

a. desafío  b. problema  c. esfuerzo
**Question 25**  (1 point)

– ¿Quieres que salgamos esta noche?
– Lo siento, (pero tengo una cita).

☐ a. he quedado con otra persona ☐ b. no me encuentro bien ☐ c. no tengo ganas

**Question 26**  (1 point)

– ¿Cómo te fue en el examen de conducir?
– Bueno, sólo (fallé) cinco preguntas.

☐ a. me confundí en ☐ b. contesté ☐ c. respondí correctamente

**Question 27**  (1 point)

– Habla con Vera y dile lo que piensas (sin rodeos).
– ¡No es tan fácil! Vera me pone muy nervioso.

☐ a. sinceramente ☐ b. directamente ☐ c. tranquilamente

**Question 28**  (1 point)

– ¡Deja de (canturrear)! No puedo concentrarme.
– Perdona, no sabía que estabas trabajando.

☐ a. hacer ruido ☐ b. hablar ☐ c. cantar
Question 29  (1 point)

–Carlos, vete redactando el informe y, (entretanto), yo busco las facturas de los clientes.
– Vale, ahora mismo.

☐ a. mientras ☐ b. después ☐ c. al final

Question 30  (1 point)

– ¿Sabes algo de Ana?
– Sí, nos llamamos (a menudo).

☐ a. alguna vez ☐ b. con frecuencia ☐ c. en contadas ocasiones

Question 31  (1 point)

Complete las frases siguientes (preguntas 31 a 60) con el término adecuado de los dos o cuatro que se le ofrecen.

– ¿A qué día ___ hoy?
– A miércoles, 25 de mayo.

☐ a. estamos ☐ b. es

Question 32  (1 point)
– ¿Sabes qué puso Andrés en el examen? ¡Que Vivaldi era pintor!
– _____ increíble. Como siga así no va a aprobar ni una.

☐ a. Está  ☐ b. Es

**Question 33 (1 point)**

– ¿Cómo _____ tu madre a los 16 años?
– Pues completamente diferente a mí. Dice mi abuela que nunca nos hemos parecido.

☐ a. era  ☐ b. fue

**Question 34 (1 point)**

– Mira qué nubes más negras. _____mí que va a llover.
– Pues en las noticias anunciaron buen tiempo.

☐ a. Por  ☐ b. Para

**Question 35 (1 point)**

– ¿Qué te parece Lucía para jefa de departamento?
– _____ un poco verde. Le hace falta más experiencia.

☐ a. Es  ☐ b. Está
Question 36  (1 point)

– ¿Por qué está Javi tan pensativo?
– Porque Ana se ha enfadado con él _____ no haber terminado el trabajo a tiempo.

☐ a. para  ☐ b. por

Question 37  (1 point)

– ¿Qué tal la novia de Luis?
– ¡Genial! _____ divertidísima. Sabe un montón de chistes.

☐ a. Es  ☐ b. Está

Question 38  (1 point)

– ¿Tienes un bolígrafo rojo?
– Creo que no tengo _____, pero espera que voy a mirar.

☐ a. ninguno  ☐ b. alguno

Question 39  (1 point)

– ¿Qué tal tu abuelo?
– Pues ayer me dijo que se _____ a Caracas a ver a unos amigos.
Question 40  (1 point)
– Pero bueno, ¿no hay ____ que haya terminado el informe?
– Me temo que no.

☐ a. nadie  ☐ b. ningún

Question 41  (1 point)
– _____ me toque la lotería, hago un crucero por el Caribe.
– Pues yo, cambiaría de casa.

☐ a. Porque  ☐ b. Ya que  ☐ c. Puesto que  ☐ d. Como

Question 42  (1 point)
– Estamos ____ invierno y hace un calor insoportable.
– ¡Qué exagerado eres!

☐ a. a  ☐ b. en  ☐ c. por  ☐ d. hacia

Question 43  (1 point)
– ____ salí de clase, me encontré con César.
– Y ¿qué te dijo?
a. Nada más  b. En cuanto  c. Al  d. Después de

**Question 44**  (1 point)

– ¿Te importa si invito a Serafina a la cena?
– No, haz _____ te parezca mejor.

a. lo que  b. lo cual  c. el que  d. la que

**Question 45**  (1 point)

– Como no había ningún taxi tuvimos que ir al hotel _____ pie.
– ¡No me digas!

a. en  b. a  c. hacia  d. para

**Question 46**  (1 point)

– Te lo contaré _____ no se lo digas a nadie.
– Que no, tranquila, que no se lo digo a nadie.

a. si  b. como  c. siempre que  d. como si

**Question 47**  (1 point)

– Si pudieras volver a tu antiguo puesto de trabajo, ¿lo _____?

92
– La verdad es que lo he pensado mucho, pero no lo sé.

c. hicieras

d. harías

**Question 48** (1 point)

– ¿Vas a ir por fin a Argentina?
– No sé, depende _____ Javier. Todavía no sabe si tendrá vacaciones o no.

b. en
c. con
d. a

**Question 49** (1 point)

– Pide un deseo.
– A ver... Ya está: ¡que _____ Manuel la próxima semana!

b. viene
c. viniera
d. vendrá

**Question 50** (1 point)

– Estás agotado, Andrés.
– Es que no estoy acostumbrado _____ hacer tanto ejercicio.

b. de
c. en
d. para
Question 51  (1 point)

– ¿Me dejas el libro que estabas leyendo ayer?
– Hasta que no lo _____ no, es que está muy interesante.

☐ a. terminaré ☐ b. termine ☐ c. terminara ☐ d. termino

Question 52  (1 point)

– Venga, ven conmigo al cine.
– ¡Ojalá ____ ! Pero tengo un montón de trabajo.

☐ a. pueda ☐ b. puede ☐ c. pudiera ☐ d. podría

Question 53  (1 point)

– ¿Lleváis mucho tiempo viviendo en Bolivia?
– Nos mudamos a La Paz cuando yo _____ 10 años.

☐ a. tenía ☐ b. tuve ☐ c. he tenido ☐ d. había tenido

Question 54  (1 point)

– ¿Te acostaste muy tarde anoche?
– Sí, me quedé estudiando _____ las cinco de la mañana.

☐ a. a ☐ b. hasta ☐ c. desde ☐ d. por
Question 55  (1 point)
– ¿Cuándo te vas a cortar el pelo? Lo tienes larguísimos.
– Cuando ______. Ahora no tengo tiempo.

☐ a. puedo  ☐ b. podré  ☐ c. pueda  ☐ d. pudiera

Question 56  (1 point)
– _____ he contado a Laura todos mis problemas.
– Seguro que ella te habrá dado buenos consejos.

☐ a. La  ☐ b. Las  ☐ c. Le  ☐ d. Los

Question 57  (1 point)
– ¿Fuiste ayer a la cena de Sergio?
– No pude. Ojalá _____ me dijo Julio que estuvo muy bien.

☐ a. hubiera ido  ☐ b. fuera  ☐ c. haya ido  ☐ d. vaya

Question 58  (1 point)
– Estoy preocupada. Omar lleva una semana fuera y todavía no ha escrito ni una sola carta.
– ¿Por qué no _____ escribes tú?

95
Question 59  (1 point)
– ¿Dónde estuvo ayer tu madre? La estuve llamando toda la mañana.
– No sé, _____ en la piscina. Me dijo que tenía muchas ganas de ir.

☐ a. estaría ☐ b. estará ☐ c. estuvo ☐ d. estuviera

Question 60  (1 point)
– Me gustaría hablar perfectamente español y que no se me _____ el acento.
– Es cuestión de tiempo.

☐ a. notaría ☐ b. nota ☐ c. notara ☐ d. notará
APPENDIX C: CONTEXTUALIZED QUESTIONNAIRE

1. John and Mary are going to a party. Mary walks out of her house because John is in her front yard. When John sees her he says:

   A. ¡Qué guapa eres!
   B. ¡Qué guapa estás!

   _____ I like sentence A
   _____ I like sentence B
   _____ I like both options

2. Mary thanks him and they head toward the party. As Mary and John arrive at the party, they notice that their friend has planted a new tree in the front yard. When Mary sees the tree she says:

   A. No me gusta el árbol. Es feo.
   B. No me gusta el árbol. Está feo.

   _____ I like sentence A
   _____ I like sentence B
   _____ I like both options

3. John and Mary go inside. Mary sees her best girl friend, Jennifer, in the crowd and says to her:

   C. ¡Hola chica! ¡Estás bellísima!
   D. ¡Hola chica! ¡Eres bellísima!

   _____ I like sentence A
   _____ I like sentence B
   _____ I like both options

4. Jennifer thanks her when all of a sudden she feels something jumping on her leg. She looks down to see a Chihuahua and she says:

   A. Mira este perro. Es pequeño.
   B. Mira este perro. Está pequeño.
5. Mary and Jennifer head over to the refreshment table to get a drink and some food and they notice how crowded the table is with food and drinks. Mary says:

A. ¡Ay! Esta mesa es chica. No hay espacio suficiente.
B. ¡Ay! Esta mesa está chica. No hay espacio suficiente.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

6. After getting drinks and some food, Mary and Jennifer go sit on the couch with John. John says:

A. ¡Cuidado con el tenedor! Este sofá está suavesísimo.
B. ¡Cuidado con el tenedor! Este sofá es suavesísimo.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

7. While sitting on the sofa, Jennifer notices a pet snake in a tank on the other side of the room. She says to Mary and John:

A. ¿Ustedes ven a la serpiente? ¡Está grandísima!
B. ¿Ustedes ven a la serpiente? ¡Es grandísima!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

8. The party soon comes to an end and as the friends are leaving John notices the shoes of their friend’s baby brother sitting by the door. He says to Mary and Jennifer:

A. ¡Mira! Estos zapatos son chiquitos.
B. ¡Mira! Estos zapatos están chiquitos.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
9. A week after the party John, Mary and Jennifer have to start school again. As they pull up in the parking lot they see a group of freshmen getting off the bus. Jennifer says:

A. ¡Mira a los estudiantes nuevos! ¡Qué bajos son!
B. ¡Mira a los estudiantes nuevos! ¡Qué bajos están!

 _____ I like sentence A  
 _____ I like sentence B  
 _____ I like both options

10. A new wing was built onto the school. John says:

A. ¡Ay! El nuevo edificio está grande.
B. ¡Ay! El nuevo edificio es grande.

 _____ I like sentence A  
 _____ I like sentence B  
 _____ I like both options

11. As the three friends enter the new building Mary says:

A. ¡Dios mío! ¡Este pasillo es anchísimo!
B. ¡Dios mío! ¡Este pasillo está anchísimo!

 _____ I like sentence A  
 _____ I like sentence B  
 _____ I like both options

12. They have to go to Art first. The teacher has painted flowers on one of the tables and Mary says to Jennifer:

A. ¡Ay! ¡Qué linda es esta mesa!
B. ¡Ay! ¡Qué linda está esta mesa!

 _____ I like sentence A  
 _____ I like sentence B  
 _____ I like both options

13. The students then notice that the teacher has hung paintings on the wall. Jennifer says:
A. ¡No me gustan las pinturas! ¡Están feísimas!
B. ¡No me gustan las pinturas! ¡Son feísimas!
_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

14. The art teacher has also brought in a class pet. It is a rat. Mary says:

A. ¡Mira! ¡Ese ratón es pequeñito!
B. ¡Mira! ¡Ese ratón está pequeñito!
_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

15. Suddenly, two new girls walk into art and John says:

A. ¡Ay! ¡Esas chicas son bellísimas!
B. ¡Ay! ¡Esas chicas están bellísimas!
_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

16. After art class, the friends bump into the new football coach in the hallway. Jennifer says:

A. ¡Caramba! ¡Él es alto!
B. ¡Caramba! ¡Él está alto!
_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

17. Lucia and her husband Eric are going on an African Safari. They are getting ready to board the plane when Eric says:

A. ¡Mira! ¡El avión está chiquito!
B. ¡Mira! ¡El avión es chiquito!
_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
18. Lucia agrees but they board the plane anyway. They immediately notice the seats on the plane and Lucia says:

A. ¡Qué raro! Para un avión tan pequeño, los asientos son grandes.
B. ¡Qué raro! Para un avión tan pequeño, los asientos están grandes.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

19. While in the air they look out the window at the countryside below. Eric says:

A. ¡Mira! ¡El paisaje es maravilloso!
B. ¡Mira! ¡El paisaje está maravilloso!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

20. The plane lands in Kenya and they get off. A child greets them as they exit the terminal and asks to shine their shoes. They decline but Eric says:

A. ¡Ese niño era flaco!
B. ¡Ese niño estaba flaco!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

21. As they leave the airport they see a camel pulling a taxi cart. Lucia says:

A. ¡Mira el camello! ¡Es gordísimo!
B. ¡Mira el camello! ¡Está gordísimo!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

22. They both laugh and head to the hotel. As they pull up Lucia says:
A. ¡El hotel está lindo!
B. ¡El hotel es lindo!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

23. In the center of the lobby of the hotel, there are baby chimpanzees swinging in a cage. Eric says:

A. ¡Ay! ¡Esos monos están pequeños y juegan mucho ¿no?
B. ¡Ay! ¡Esos monos son pequeños y juegan mucho ¿no?

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

24. When Lucia and Eric get to their room they open the curtains and see elephants walking on the property. Lucia says:

A. ¡Dios mío! ¡Los elefantes están enormes!
B. ¡Dios mío! ¡Los elefantes son enormes!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

25. The next day, Lucia and Eric go to visit the Swahili tribe. A worn out truck comes to pick them up. Lucia says:

A. ¡Ay! El camión es espantoso.
B. ¡Ay! El camión está espantoso.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

26. They begin their journey into the jungle. They stop on a trail to look around when Eric sees a large anthill. He says:

A. ¡Caramba! ¡Ese hormiguero es grande!
B. ¡Caramba! ¡Ese hormiguero está grande!
27. Lucia is examining a tree next to her and she responds:

A. ¡Sí! Y mira las hojas de este árbol, ¡Están colosales! ¡Más grandes que mi cabeza!
B. ¡Sí! Y mira las hojas de este árbol, ¡Son colosales! ¡Más grandes que mi cabeza!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

28. Finally they arrive at the Swahili village. Eric immediately says:

A. ¡Mira a los niños! ¡Son altos!
B. ¡Mira a los niños! ¡Están altos!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

29. Lucia immediately spots a toddler running around and says:

A. ¡El niño es precioso!
B. ¡El niño está precioso!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

30. Eric and Lucia then tour the village. Eric comments about the sloppy straw huts:

A. Las cabañas son feas.
B. Las cabañas están feas.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

31. They then go on a safari with some of the villagers. They come very close to a male lion. Lucia says:
A. ¡Tengo miedo! ¡Ese león es grandísimo!
B. ¡Tengo miedo! ¡Ese león está grandísimo!

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options

32. One of the villagers then points to a group of lion cubs and says:

A. ¡Sí! pero esos leones están chicos, no te deben dar miedo.
B. ¡Sí! Pero esos leones son chicos, no te deben dar miedo.

_____ I like sentence A
_____ I like sentence B
_____ I like both options