The Use of Request Strategies in English by Iranian Graduate Students: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating Iranian graduate students' use of requestive head act strategies in terms of two factors of degree of familiarity and social power. The focus was to determine any signs of pragmatic transfer from the first language to the second language and studying the pragmatic competency of Iranian graduate students regarding this specific speech act. To meet this aim 100 graduate students studying at the Eastern Mediterranean University were administered a Discourse Completion test (DCT) which was adapted from Dong (2009) with 14 situations regarding requesting head act strategies. The first 7 of the DCTs examined the degree of familiarity and the second half focused on social power. To interpret the data, two baseline groups of British native speakers of English (BNS) and Farsi native speakers (FNS) were also provided with the adapted versions of the same DCT. The collected data was coded according to Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). Coded data was later analyzed across the three groups of participants by the use of SPSS program to determine the related frequencies. The interpretation of the results revealed possible signs of transfer from the first language (L1) to the second language (L2) regarding some specific situations presented in the DCT. Evidence on the development of interlanguage by Iranian graduate students was also detected. Regarding the two factors of social power and degree of familiarity, Iranian learners were found to need more education on the choice of strategies used as they performed similar strategies used by the FNS rather than the BNS. Regarding the choice of strategies, preparatory strategy, in this study, was the most frequent strategy used by Iranian graduate students.

ÖZ

Bu calışmanın temel amacı anadili Farsça olan İranlı lisansüstü öğrencilerinin İngilizce'de istekte bulunurken kullandıkları stratejileri kişilerarası yakınlık ve sosyal güç faktörleri bağlamında araştırmaktır. Çalışmanın hedefleri arasında, İngilizce istekte bulunurken anadilden ikinci dile transfer olup olmadığını belirlemek ve çalışmaya katılan öğrencilerin edimbilim yetisini incelemek yer almaktadır. Bu hedeflere ulaşabilmek için Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi'nde eğitim görmekte olan 100 lisansüstü öğrencisine Dong'un (2009) 14 farklı durumun bulunduğu söylem tamamlama anketi uyarlanarak uygulanmıştır. Ankette yer alan ilk 7 durum kişilerin istekte bulunurken kullandıkları stratejileri kişilerarası yakınlık, diğer 7 durum ise sosyal güç yönünden incelemektedir. Toplanan verileri yorumlamak için anadili İngilizce olan İngilizlere ve anadili Farsça olan İranlılara aynı anketin uyarlanmış şekilleri uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler Blum-Kulka ve Olshtain'ın (1984) kodlama sistemine göre kodlanmış ve yukarıda belirtilen üç grup katılımcıya göre SPSS programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar, bazı durumlarda bu istekte bulunurken kullanılan stratejilerin anadilden ikinci dile aktarılabileceğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca, İranlı öğrencilerin aradillerini geliştirdikleri de saptanmıştır. Sosyal güç ve kişilerarası yakınlık derecesi faktörleri bağlamında ise, İranlı lisansüstü öğrencilerinin, stratejilerin kullanımında anadili İngilizce olan kişiler yerine anadili Farsça olan kişilerle daha çok benzerlik sergilediklerinden, bu konuda daha fazla eğitime ihtiyaçları olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Son olarak, İranlı öğrencilerin İngilizce istekte bulunurken en sık hazırlık (preparatory) stratejisini kullandıkları belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İstek strejileri, Edimbilim, Edimbilim Yetisi, Sözeylemler

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INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Languages are used to facilitate interactions and supply individuals with successful communication; however, achievement of such an end entails knowledge of different principles of language. Linguistics branches of syntax, morphology, phonology, etc. are examples of such values. Yet, simply grammatical and lexical knowledge of languages cannot guarantee such an aim; therefore, there is a need for another branch of linguistics called pragmatics, which directly deals with the quality of human communication (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Although there is not a clear cut definition for this term, all linguists are of the same opinion that it includes social and contextual factors underlying languages and refers "to those norms of interaction that are shared by the members of a given speech community in order to establish and maintain successful communication" (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008, p. 349). Crystal (1997, cited in

Kasper & Rose, 2001) defines this term as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p.2).

For the individuals to be competent in a language, along with the need for grammatical and lexical competence, there is a need for pragmatic competence. Koike (1989) has defined it "as the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (p. 279).

Individuals seem to have a tendency of creating their own pragmatic rules while learning a new language which has been referred to as interlanguage pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). Literature reveals that interlanguage pragmatics of language learners does not develop alongside their grammatical competence and the native speakers' pragmatics knowledge is different from the one of the language learners (Kasper, 1997).

The mentioned discrepancy regarding the pragmatic competence of native and non-native speakers of a language has been the focus for many researches in the field of linguistics. Some linguists have only concentrated on studying one language while others have focused on cross-cultural studies regarding interlanguage. However, English has been the most investigated target language and speech acts are the most favored area of study. In such research, the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984) has been privileged by most of the scholars. Meanwhile, among the speech acts presented by Searl (1969), request strategies have been the most

popular speech acts studied in this field due to their importance in communication and the fact that they are the most used and the most face threatening speech acts (Jalilifar, 2009; Rue, Zhang & Shin, 2007; Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008) .

1.2 Statement of the Purpose

Throughout the time, cultures have developed their own rules of appropriateness of verbal behavior particularly regarding politeness devices. Members of every culture tend to interpret communications based on their own pragmatics and sociolinguistic parameters. Therefore, when a cross-cultural communication takes place, people from different cultures decode behavior or utterances according to such rules, and when facing controversies they might miss the key points, interpret such language as inappropriate and consequently, lead to communication breakdowns. In addition, the stereotypical labeling of non-native speakers as rude, insensitive, or inept is possible (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005).

Having the knowledge of pragmatics differences among cultures and knowing appropriate ways of exercising speech acts in other languages may help to minimize the negative effects regarding unintentional rudeness and maximize the quality of the communication.

The speech act of request is considered as a face threatening act (FTA) since it requires the speaker to ask someone to do something. Seeing that it has a wide application in daily communication, applying such speech act requires adequate knowledge of the target language. Therefore, in order to have a successful communication the speaker should be aware of some variables namely social power, and degree of familiarity

(solidarity), and ranking of imposition regarding requests. When non-native speakers make requests in the target culture, despite their grammatical knowledge of that language, they may transfer their native request strategies into the target language and this may result in the production of inappropriate requests (Koike, 1989).

This study endeavors to explore the use of request strategies in English by Iranian graduate students in academic setting regarding the application of appropriate request forms along with assessing their pragmatics knowledge of degree of familiarity and power in the target culture. It also intends to explore possible pragmatic transfer from Farsi (L1) into English (L2).

The present research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the requesting head act strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL)?

2. What are the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL) in relation with degree of familiarity?

3. What are the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL) in relation with social power?

4. Is there any evidence of pragmatic transfer in the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL)?

5. What similarities and differences are displayed in the use of request strategies between British native speakers (BNS) and Iranian graduate students (IL)?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Various factors are hold up to the significance of this study. Firstly, the speech act of request is one of the most challenging units of pragmatics for the language learners as it requires a great deal of pragmatic knowledge in performing it appropriately. Although there have been several studies regarding this specific matter, there is not adequate research regarding the Iranian learners of English. Furthermore, the studies conducted concentrating on the Iranian learners were mostly about the development of such strategy and did not specifically study advanced level Iranian students.

Secondly, majority of studies in this field are all concerned with second language acquisition and less attention is paid to foreign language learning and teaching which can be more challenging for both language learners and teachers. In such contexts, teachers are to develop students' ability in communication. "This means that teaching practices should pay attention not only to the key features of the linguistic system of English, but also to its pragmatic norms since lack of this knowledge may impede communication" (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Students also need exposure to authentic material which may be hardly accessible in some EFL contexts "since teaching syllabi are centered on text books, which have been criticized for presenting isolated and decontextualized examples of communicative situations" (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008). It is hoped that this study may provide more information in this field regarding cross-cultural interlanguage pragmatics research investigating English request strategies used by Iranian graduate students.

Thirdly, the participants of the study are different from the ones in majority of studies. The participants are Iranian graduate students from different graduate programs at Eastern Mediterranean University. Unlike previous studies they are of advance level English and they do not study at the same department, which gives the research the benefit of studying request strategies in general in an setting which is familiar to the participants and as Dong (2009) states " provides the most reliable and comparable data possible" (p. 3).

Fourthly, the evaluation criteria for examining the pragmatic interlanguage of the participants is British English unlike the majority of other studies regarding Iranian Students, as in other studies American English and Australian English have been applied for this matter.

Finally, the study seems to have benefit for both Iranian EFL community to design teaching materials and Iranian students studying abroad to communicate more effectively. As clennel (1999) states, although, activities such as note-taking from the lectures at the university provide useful practice in transferring information from "spoken to written medium" (p. 84), they do not give students communicative oral practice in communication. However, if material developers and teachers introduce pragmatically appropriate input to the students, learners can become "truly proficient in communicating in the target language" (Koike, 1989, p. 287). Statistic data regarding the students may assist such aim.

1.4 Assumptions

The followings are the assumptions which this study is based on:

1. Native speakers of each language seem to develop specific pragmatics formulas for performing different speech acts which are embedded in their background and their culture. Therefore, native speakers of every language might perform differently from the native speakers of another language in the same context. As such formulas are culture based they might react towards age, gender, etc. in distinctive manners.

2. It is assumed that the pragmatics knowledge of the language learners does not develop with the same pace as their grammatical knowledge of the target language, as the focus in foreign language learning is mostly on grammatical and lexical development. Therefore, the language learners are expected to transfer pragmatics rules from their first language (L1) to their second language (L2) even in advanced levels.

3. Regarding the literature, the participants are expected to have a good command in English grammar, as they had to take EMU's proficiency exam (score 75), IELTS (band score 6.5), or TOEFL (550) before entering the graduate program. This presents the fact that all the IL participants have at least B1 level of English Proficiency. However, the over use of indirect request strategies and discrepancy regarding the social status is possible due to the literature on cross-sectional studies regarding Iranian English language learners of advance level (Jalilifar, 2009; Taghizade, 2011).

4. It is assumed that the students would voluntarily participate in completing the Discourse Completion Task, after being informed about the purpose of the study.

1.5 Definition of Terms

The following terms are adapted to be used throughout the study:

Pragmatics:

Pragmatics is concerned with the meaning regarding the context of an utterance or a text. It considers background knowledge context, that is, the understanding and information people have about each other and the world around them. Social, situational, and textual contexts are all of importance in this field. Pragmatics considers people to have a shared understanding of certain principles while communicating. However, this knowledge might vary across cultures (Paltridge, 2006)

Pragmatic competence:

Pragmatic competence is "the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (Koike 1989, p. 279).

Speech act:

Speech act is defined to be "the basic unit of language used to express meaning, an utterance that expresses an intension" (Balcı, 2009, p. 16).

Request:

Request is defined as "an act of asking politely or formally for something" (Balcı, 2009, p. 16).

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Presentation

This chapter focuses on the review of literature. Section 2.1 elaborates on the concept of pragmatics and its two subsections describe the literature on the definitions of pragmatics and the pragmatics schools of thought. Next section is concerned with theory of speech acts and includes four subsections studying this theory in depth. Section 2.4 explains request speech acts and is followed by the categories of this strategy. This is followed by illustrations on the request strategies in academic settings in section 2.5 and its subsequent subsections. At last a summary of the chapter is presented.

2.1 The Concept of Pragmatics and Its Development

The term Pragmatics, which comes from the Greek word *pragmatica* meaning "life", has its origin in the Philosophy of language." (Huang, 2007, p. 2). What concerns its history, Huang (2007), divides it into three different phases the starting point of which dates to 1930s to philosophers.

In fact, Morris (1938) introduced a "trichotomy" of "syntax, semantics and pragmatics within semiotics, a general science of signs" (Huang, 2007, p. 2). According to the trichotomy, syntax is defined as the "study of formal relation of one sign with another" while semantics as "the relation of signs to what they denote". The trichotomy defines

pragmatics as the "relation of signs to their users and interpreters" (Huang, 2007, p. 2). Carnap who mainly concentrated on the degree of abstractness concerning the constituents of the trichotomy found pragmatics least abstract vis-à-vis syntax and semantics (1942, cited in Levinson, 1983).

Other definitions of the constituents of the trichotomy have been proposed. For instance, Yule (1996), defines syntax as "the study of the relationship between linguistic forms, how they are arranged in sequence, and which sequences are well-formed" (p. 4) whereas, semantics is identified as "the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and entities in the world; that is, how words literally connect to things" (p. 4). According to Yule (1996, p. 4), the examination of the relationship between "linguistic forms and the users of those forms" is defined as pragmatics. Also, Recanati (2004b) defines the relationship among these concepts claiming that "syntax provides input to semantics, which provides input to pragmatics" (Recanati, 2004b cited in Huang, 2007, p. 2).

One of the milestones in this direction is the emergence of the two opposite schools of thought in analytic philosophy of language in 1950s: "ideal language philosophy" and "ordinary language philosophy". In fact, they both became the origins of new theories with the former responsible for the "development of today's formal semantics" and the latter involving "Austin's theory of speech acts, and Grice's theory of conversational implicature" (Huang, 2007, p. 2). As Huang (2007) mentions, Austin and Grice's theories are both milestones regarding a "systematic, philosophically inspired pragmatic theory of language use" (p. 3).

The second phase in pragmatic history is believed to be started by J. L. Austin, H. P. Grice, P. Srawson, J. Searl, and L. Wittgenstein (Huang, 2007, p. 3).

The third chapter in the development of pragmatics, however, started shortly after the second one in late 1960s and 1970s by some of Noam Chomsky's students in generative semantics, "notably Jerry Kats, J. R. Ross and George Lakoff", who were interested in "Austin, Grice, Strawson, and Searl's philosophical work" and were questioning their "teacher's treatment of language as an abstract, mental device divorced from the uses and functions of language" (Huang, 2007, p. 3).

The generative semanticists along with the pioneers of the ordinary language philosophy conducted numerous research studies on what was called "pragmatics wastebasket" in 1970s which led to having the content in certain order. As a matter of fact, it was "pragmatics" by Levinson (1983) who "systematized the field and marked the coming of age of pragmatics as a linguistic discipline in its own right" (Huang, 2007, p. 3).

As Mey (2007) diagnoses, the thriving interest in linguistics in 1970s consequently led to the development of pragmatics as the society's need for language studies. Huang (2007) also judges pragmatics to be among favored fields of study. He believes that linguistics and language philosophy are not the only disciplines interested in pragmatics, its popularity also has grounds in "other fields such as anthropology, artificial intelligence, cognitive science, psychology, and semiotics" (p. 1).

It should also be mentioned that the concept of "communicative competence" which includes both referential elements of language and social aspects related to language use seems to play crucial role in the epistemology of pragmatics. To be more specific, as Chang (2009) notes, communicative competence, takes account of linguistic and sociocultural rules of speaking, leading to the persuasion of the use of language "accurately" and "appropriately".

Pragmatic competence, being one of the important building blocks of communicative competence, entails "grammatical and lexical systems" along with "social and contextual factors underlying the English language". These elements are "shared by members of a given speech community in order to establish and maintain successful communication" (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008, p. 349). In other words, "most people within a linguistic community have similar basic experience of the world and share a lot of non-linguistic knowledge" (Yule, 1996, p. 5), which enables them to "employ different linguistic formulae in an appropriate way when interacting in a particular social and cultural context"(Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008, p. 349). Koike (1984), defines pragmatic competence as "the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (p. 279). However, the procedures, regarding the development of pragmatic competence both for native (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS), are not very clear (Hassal, 2007), excluding the common belief which indicates the acquisition of pragmatics to be a lengthy process (Politzer, 1980). Subsequently, it should be noted that, such competence is not triggered automatically as the grammatical competence progresses. There is a need for instruction of pragmatics to non-native language learners

from the beginning stages, having the language competency in mind (Politzer, 1980). Still, as Farnia and Suleiman (2009), state, "it is often claimed that pragmatic features of a language can be taught only after the students have learned the basic grammar" (p. 245).

Unlike native speakers who gain the knowledge of first language (L1) pragmatics with the grammatical competence, second or foreign language learners need "continued exposure to L2 pragmatic norms through instruction" to gain such competency (Politzer, 1980, p. 488).Yet, instruction of pragmatics would not be promising without a definition in hand.

2.1.1 Definition of Pragmatics

Various definitions have been proposed to identify the notion of pragmatics. In fact, some authors associate pragmatics directly with communication. For instance, Leech (1983) argues that the understanding of the nature of language is impossible unless, pragmatics is understood; and that is "how language is used in communication" (p.1). Crystal (1997) goes even further when defining pragmatics "from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (Crystal, 1997, cited in Koike, 1989, p. 2). Parallel definition has been proposed by Kasper and Rose (2001) defining pragmatics "as the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context" (p. 2). In this definition, communicative action includes both the use of speech acts and different contexts. Context is also seen as one of the constructs in the definition of pragmatics by Paltridge (2006, p. 3) who defines it as the study of meaning in relation to the social,

situational, textual context and background knowledge context; that is, what people know about each other and about the world. According to Paltridge (2006, p. 3), "pragmatics assumes that when people communicate with each other they normally follow some kind of co-operative principle; that is, they have a shared understanding of how they should co-operate in their communications". The author also notes that pragmatics is also cross-cultural which implies that "what may be a culturally appropriate way of saying or doing something in one culture might not be the same in another culture" (p. 3).

Focus on meaning in defining pragmatics has been emphasized by various authors. For instance, according to Yule (1996), "pragmatics deals with the analysis of the speakers' utterance rather than concentrating on what "those utterances might mean by themselves" (p. 3), focusing on what the speakers mean. Moreover, Leech (1983) argues that "the problem of distinguishing 'language' (langue) and 'language use' (Parole) has centered on a boundary dispute between semantics and pragmatics" (p. 5). As the author mentions, both fields are concerned with meaning, but the difference between them can be traced to two different uses of the "verb *to mean:* [I] what does X mean? [2] What did you mean by X?" (Leech, 1983, p. 5)

Leech (1983) argues that the meaning in pragmatics [2] "is defined relative to a speaker or the user of the language, whereas, meaning in semantics [I] is defined purely as a property of expressions in a given language, in abstraction from particular situations, speakers, or hearers" (p. 5).

Basic notions regarding semantics and pragmatics which are sentence, utterance and proposition have also been mentioned. Levinson (1983) finds the distinction between a sentence and an utterance as significant in both fields of semantics and pragmatics. These notions have also been defined by Huang (2007, pp. 10-11). The author defines sentence as "a well-formed string of words put together according to the grammatical rules of a language" whereas sentence- meaning is referred to "those aspects of meaning that are ascribed to a sentence in the abstract, that is, a sentence independent of its realization in any concrete form" (pp. 10-11). Huang (2007) refers utterance to "the use of a particular piece of language- be it a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a sequence of sentences- by a particular speaker on a particular occasion" (p. 11). As the author mentions, "utterance-meaning is studied in pragmatics whereas, sentence-meaning is studied in semantics" (p. 11).

Other terms touched upon are proposition and propositional content. The latter is defined as "what is expressed by a sentence when that sentence is used to make a statement, that is, to say something, true or false, about some state of affairs in the external world" while propositional content "refers to the meaning of part of a sentence that can be "reduced to a proposition" (Huang, 2007, pp. 11-12).

2.1.1.1 Pragmatics and Context

It can be induced that pragmatics studies the utterances speakers produce in accordance with context. Circumstances are very important in the interpretation of these utterances. It can be said that the utterance is being studied based on the situation not its meaning itself. In this field, when, how, who, and where are the important factors, helping the interpretation of the utterance. In order to shed light on the meaning of an utterance, it

should be kept in mind that, the unsaid message is also considered while interpreting an utterance. This can be either related to the common background information which the speaker and hearer have or any gesture and similar visible expressions. Mey (2005) clarifies this idea and asserts that not always the expression of important factors in communication is conveyed in words.

2.1.1.2 Types of Pragmatics

It should also be mentioned that pragmatics per se is further divided into two different aspects of pragmalinguistics and socio-pragmatics (Farnia & Suleiman, 2009, Iragui, 1996, Leech, 1983).The former can be applied to "the study of the more linguistic end of pragmatics – where we consider the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions" whereas the latter, "is the sociological interface of pragmatics" (Leech, 1983, p. 11). In other words, he asserts that, pragmalinguistics is language specific and socio-pragmatics is culture specific (figure, 2.1). Iragui (1996) also defines pragmalinguistics as expressions employed by speakers in order to apply speech acts, and emphasizes on "the contextual distribution of the linguistic expressions" (p. 53). The definition of "the contextual distribution of the linguistic expressions and how this distribution relates to the relevant contextual factors such as social power and social distance" is given for the socio-pragmatics (Iragui, 1996, pp. 53-54). In other words, pragmalinguistics is believed to be related to grammar whereas sociopragmatics relates to sociology.
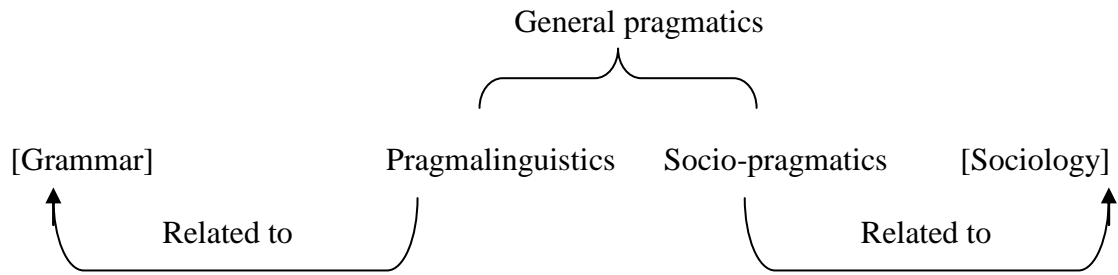
Figure 2.1 Elaboration on general pragmatics (Leech, 1983, p. 11)

2.1.2 Two main schools of thought in pragmatics

Literature review on contemporary pragmatics reveals two schools of thoughts: Anglo-American and European Continental. The Anglo-American or the component view, characterizes pragmatics as the "systematic study of language" (Huang, 2007). This school of thought considers pragmatics equal to other components of language namely phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. The European Continental, on the other hand, considers a wider view of pragmatics by including the fields of socio-linguistics, psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis as part of the field regarding pragmatics studies.

Huang (2007), regarding the European continental tradition, refers to pragmalinguistics which was an approach within the former Soviet and East European tradition and claims that "in general (pragmatics) is conceived of as a theory of linguistic communication, including how to influence people through verbal messages" (Huang, 2007, p. 4).

Yet regarding the two schools of pragmatics, Huang (2007) asserts that although the European Continental has a closer definition to the original one stated by Morris (1938) "it is a sufficiently accurate characterization of pragmatics to say that it deals with the

biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs the study of 'everything' is hardly a viable academic enterprise" (pp. 4-5). On the other hand, the Anglo American discipline would be more controlled as the "topics emerging from the traditional concerns of analytical philosophy" (Huang, 2007, p. 5) are ordered and cohesive, making the study of this principle feasible and straightforward.

2.2 Speech Act Theory

The theory of speech act (Searl, 1969) and politeness (Leech, 1983) are the two fields of pragmatics affecting second language acquisition. Wolfson notes that "sociolinguistic rules are subject to considerable variation with respect to region and status" (1983, p. 66). Therefore, communities have linguistic formulas to pinpoint politeness of their members as it is important to keep the harmony in the community. However, second language learners, not familiar with such rules, may have difficulty adjusting (Wolfson, 1983). In the field, "the study of politeness have often been intertwined with studies on speech act use, especially with those that are face-threatening (FTAs) by virtue of the message conveyed" (Doğançay-Aktuna & Kamışlı, 1996, p. 76).

According to Searl (1969, p. 18), "the speech act or acts performed in the utterance of a sentence are in general a function of the meaning of the sentence". Moreover, "the meaning of a sentence does not in all cases uniquely determine what speech act is performed in a given utterance of that sentence, for a speaker may mean more than what he actually says, but it is always in principle possible for him to say exactly what he means" (p. 18). In other words, what is said is not necessarily equal to what is meant. Pragmatics-wise, what is said is just the tip of the iceberg and the meaning is the body.

According to Searl (1969),

> All linguistic communication involves linguistic acts. The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol, word or sentence in the performance of the speech act. ……the production or issuance of a sentence token under certain conditions is a speech act, and speech acts …are the basics or the minimal units of linguistic competence (p. 16).

Holtgrave (2007), states that, language is about performing various acts. Searl (1969) asserting a similar idea claims that:

> Speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises, and so on; and more abstractly, acts such as referring or predicting; secondly, these acts are in general made possible by and are performed in accordance with certain rules for the use of linguistic elements (p, 16).

2.2.1 Felicity conditions

It should be mentioned that speaking is principled. In other words, if a speaker does not act upon these rules, the results of the intended speech act would not be satisfactory. In this regard a number of conditions (felicity conditions) are presented which need to be met for the speech act to be successful. These conditions imply that all parties involving in the conversation must recognize the context and the roles assigned to participants. Moreover, the procedure must be accepted by the parties and the action needs to be carried out completely. Finally, the interlocutors need to have the right intentions (Paltridge, 2006).

Paltridge (2006) finds felicity conditions important in speech act theory since failure regarding either the timing (right time) or the location (right place) results in the

breakdown of the action. Also, if the right intension is not met, then it can be considered as "abuse".

White (1993) also stresses the importance of these conditions by pinpointing the fact that if hearer avoids the performance of a request, regardless of recognizing the speech act, should it be the failure of the identification of the act.

Searl (1969, p. 66) also presents four rules which are needed to fulfill a speech act:

- The first rule is called "propositional content rule" which derives its meaning from the "propositional content conditions", deciding on the future action by the hearer.

- The second rule which is called "preparatory condition" refers to the possibility of the action taking place.

- The 'sincerity rule" refers to the hearer and the speaker being sincere to perform; the speaker wants this information from the hearer.

- And finally, is the "essential rule", where the request is considered as a goal for the hearer to achieve.

Comparison of the views proposed by Austin (1962) and Searl (1962) reveals that the former studies the speech acts regarding the felicity conditions, whereas the latter is more conscious about the different types of the proposed conditions.

2.2.2 Locutionary, Illocutionary, Perlocutionary Acts

Austin (1962) categorizes sentences to two categories of performatives and constative (Austin, 1962, cited in Balcı, 2009, p.26). The former refers to the performance and the sentence stating an action, however, the latter illustrates the sentence to be descriptive. According to Balcı (2009), the intention of such categorization, is to display that "saying something is also doing something" (p. 26).

When dealing with these three notions, Cutting (2008) referring to Austin (1962), defines locutionary act as "what is said" while Illocutionary act is defined as the function of an utterance, in other words, it is concerned with "what is done" (p. 16). What concerns perlocutionary act, Balcı refers to as the result or the effect of an act on the hearer. It is also asserted that illocutionary acts are the "ones most closely capturing the nature of the speaker's intension or goal in producing a particular conversation turn" (Holtgrave, 2007, p. 597).

2.2.3 Politeness Theory

This theory can be considered to be one of the most important constructs of the speech act theory. Politeness in pragmatics means the choice of linguistic expressions in language use.

It is believed that the concept of "face" originated from China (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003, p. 1454). Face is every individual's self image or expectation. People in general tend to assess different aspects of them positively, negatively, or neutrally. That means, a person might like some features of his life, and dislike some others and be on the fence about the rest. These aspects are the ones which define an individual. In other words,

they define some "core elements" regarding that person (Spencer-Oatey, 2007, p. 641). It is believed that this "public self image" is very fragile and any threat to this image is considered to be "face threatening and not acceptable" (Cutting, 2008, p. 43). Individuals have both negative and positive face. The former refers to the independence and the freedom of action, where the latter presents the act of being popular, and loved (Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı, 1996, p. 77). Speakers should be aware of the fact that, threatening the positive face of the hearer, might end in embarrassment at the speaker's side, while threatening the negative face can be offensive for the hearer.

To cope with face threatening acts (FTA), a correct form of politeness, negative or positive, should be adapted. Brown and Levinson (1987) offer several choices as how a face threatening situation should be handled:

1. Off-record: Performing a FTA indirectly means to do it indirectly. In case of the speech act of request, it would be presenting the question in form of a hint. (Example: I wonder where my keys are.)

2. Bald on record: This strategy is used when the speaker aims at efficiency rather than the hearer's face. In this strategy the speaker provides corrections or disagreement explicitly without softening the impact of the word on the hearer. (Example: Sara, where are my keys?)

3. On record- with negative politeness: This strategy includes performing a FTA through negative politeness which requires the avoidance of intruding and instead respecting the distance and presenting the request through using pauses or apologies. (Example: could I borrow your car?)

4. On record-with positive politeness: In this strategy, the speaker uses familiarity and friendship to perform a face threatening act. (Example: Jacky, you're good at computers, I would appreciate it if you helped me fix my computer.)

5. The speaker can remain silent and avoid the execution of FTA, when the FTA is believed to be too risky to request (Brown and Levinson, 1987, cited in Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı, 1996).

As Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı (1996) note, positive politeness (PP) applied when speaker chooses the on record strategy, focuses on solidarity, hearer's wants, approval, and sympathy using the means of "compliments, commiseration, and intimate address terms"(pp. 76). Negative politeness (NP), on the other hand, opts for "displaying respect while minimizing impositions on the hearer" (p. 77) while dealing with the same strategy. What concerns the assessment of the amount of face threat, depends predominantly on such variables as relative *power* of the speaker, *social distance* (between the interlocutors), and *rank* (degree of imposition) (Marti, 2006, p. 1839).

In fact, social distance, determining the amount of conveyed information, can be physical, social, or conceptual. These elements are the ones controlling the quantity of the messages being conveyed. People belonging to similar social groups, tend to share more than if they enter a different context. The reason can be the familiarity or unfamiliarity of the social patterns. The reason is that making a pragmatically not acceptable mistake in an unknown social context might be offensive or threatening for the speaker.

2.2.4 Taxonomy of Speech Act Theory

Austin (1962) divides the utterances into five types considering the illocutionary force (Austin, 1962, cited in Balcı, 2009, p. 10). Verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives. As he states, exercitives, are to make decisions or giving verdicts in favor or against an action which makes the categorization of the request probable in this category.

Austin's grouping of illocutionary acts is followed by Searl's. Based on Austin's illustrations, Searl (1969) also presents a category of indirect speech acts of five main groups: 'Declarations', 'representatives', 'commissives', 'directives', and 'expressive'. He places requests under the 'directives' and refers to them as " an attempt to get hearer to do an act which speaker wants hearer to do , and which is not obvious that hearer will do in the normal course of events or of hearer's own accord"(Searl 1969, p. 66).

2.3 Requests as Speech Acts

In pragmatic competence the understanding and recognition of speech acts in an utterance is of vital importance. It is essential for the learners to master the rules and conditions governing those notions in order to avoid the problem of misunderstanding either on the meaning or function of what is said, as well as having the hearer misunderstand the speech act generated by the speaker.

Communication in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) entails the appropriate use of speech acts, and failure to do so, can result in numerous difficulties. As White (1993) notes, "attempts at being polite can come unstuck through unwitting

violation of speech act rules, so that although an utterance is grammatically well formed, it may be functionally confusing or contextually inappropriate" (p. 193).

Indirect speech acts are challenging for non-native speakers of a language as they might not be familiar with the speech acts of the target language. Among all the speech acts, requests are the most studied ones. Various reasons are mentioned in the literature regarding this issue. As Jalilifar (2009) states, requests have become more popular in the last decades in the field of research. Koike (1989) claims that "speech act of requests are particularly important to beginning L2 learners since most of their future interaction with native speakers of L2, if there is any at all, will probably take place in the form of requests" (p. 280). Learning to get the message across in a target language entails not only the correct linguistic expressions, but also how to use new social attitudes regarding those expressions.

When dealing with reasons regarding the popularity of request strategies, Kahraman and Akkuş (2007) assert the views that the act of requesting can be looked upon as a social transaction and this strategy is the first of its kind learned by every person. Moreover, requests are useful and they occur frequently, especially among learners of a new language.

Requests are defined as face-threatening acts (FTA). And face refers to respect that an individual has for him or herself, and maintaining that self-esteem in public or private situations. Moreover, FTA is a universal aspect of language use which infringes on the hearers' need to maintain his/her self –esteem, and be respected. It is generally accepted

that requests are realized by a variety of linguistic forms like imperatives, declaratives, or interrogatives (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984, p. 201)

Considering the literature about the universality of pragmatic principles and the comprehension of speech acts, second, or foreign language learners are still to cope with the acquisition of these components as "the forms chosen to convey pragmatic meanings are specific and obey language and culture conventions" (Iragui, 1996, p. 54). In other words, to embrace a successful communication, "grammar and text organization, as well as pragmatic aspects of the target language" (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 46) are required.

2.3.1 Categorization of request strategies

Requests can be uttered in direct or indirect way, namely direct speech acts and indirect speech acts. However, "in both direct and indirect requests, though, it is S [speaker] who will be the beneficiary of the requested acts" (White, 1993, p. 194).

Direct speech acts are used to communicate the literal meaning that the words express. In other words, they focus on the direct relationship between the form and the function. Indirect speech acts, however, are concerned with a different type of meaning, the meaning which varies from the apparent surface meaning. In this type, the form and the function are not related directly.

Most of the time, "what we mean is actually not in the words themselves, but in the meaning implied" (Cutting, 2008, p. 16). Requests include a main utterance which carries the actual meaning of what is said or written. This is called a request head act. According to Byon (2004)

> A request head act is the main utterance that functions as a request and can stand by itself without any supportive move, required to convey the request. In many cases the request head act is either followed and/or proceeded peripheral elements, such as hedges, boosters, address forms, downgraders, and upgraders (p. 1675).

Moreover, "peripheral elements and request head acts can be used and examined to define and compare the performance of both native and none-native speakers of a certain language" (Byon, 2004, p. 1675).

2.3.2 Mitigation

Requests are face threatening acts (FTA) that language learners need to be competent about in order to have a successful result in communication. It also needs to be mentioned that "requests differ cross-culturally and linguistically in that they require a high level of appropriateness for their successful completion; very often they are realized by means of clearly identifiable formulae" (Byon, 2004, p. 1674).

Mitigation devices, which are used to soften the speech act of request, are usually divided into two categories of internal and external mitigation devices. As Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2008) note, "the former refers to those devices that appear within the request head act itself, whereas the latter involves the use of devices that occur in the immediate linguistic context surrounding the request head act" (p. 350).

Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2008) introduce three sub-types of internal mitigation devices.

1. Openers: are expressions introducing the request.

2. Softeners: are the items softening the imposition of request.

3. Fillers: are the items used to fill the in the pauses or gaps in interactions.

The researchers specify five subtypes of external mitigating devices. They are:

1. Preparators: prepare the hearer for the request.

2. Grounders: justify the request.

3. Disarmers: prevent refusals in return to requests.

4. Expanders: are "devices related to repetition that are used to indicate tentativeness"

5. Promise of a reward: items used to assure the accomplishment of the request. (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008)

As mentioned above, mitigation devices are to be used in order to have appropriate and successful requests. The knowledge of these mitigating devices increases the success of performing socially accepted requests. However, there is no one to one relationship between the situations and the devices; it is possible to have several mitigating devices suitable for one situation. In this regard, the learners need to be educated on choosing the most suitable device considering the contextual and interactional factors.

Nevertheless, not all the requestive behaviors require softening. Considering the two types of interaction namely transactional and interactional, the former does not require any form of mitigating device as it is to pass on information and it is not threatening the hearer's face. In case of the latter, as the aim of request is to maintain a relationship, it is better to use mitigating devices so that the hearer would not be imposed (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008).

2.4 Request and Academic Setting

Academic setting requires a great knowledge of pragmatics, specifically request speech acts. "Asking questions and engaging in questioning sequences in talk, represent a pervasive part of academic and work life that is critical for getting information, contributing ideas, and being actively involved in the environment" (Başturkmen, 2001, p. 4). Also, in such settings, the importance of the effectiveness of the exchanges made, trigger the need , especially for second language learners, to "plan, organize, and study the use of structuring strategies" as the "exchange of information and turns may be longer and more complex" (Chang, 2009, p. 4).

Clennel (1999) claims that English for academic purposes (EAP) courses given at the universities do not meet the needs of students and they have trouble when communicating with their peers and professors. Such inefficiencies require statistic data to assist resolving this problem. Wildner-Bassett (1994) emphasizes this matter and suggests that oral proficiency of adult students of any proficiency level can be progressed if adequate investigation regarding the "development of pragmatic [and] procedural knowledge of the target language is carried out" (p. 3).

2.4.1 Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP)

Interlanguage pragmatics studies "the performance and acquisition of pragmatic competence" (Byon, 2004, p. 1674) in the second language. It is "the term given to an interim series of stages of language learning between the first (L1) and second language (L2) grammar through which all L2 learners must pass on their way to attaining fluency in the target language" (Koike, 1989, p. 280).

ILP is a non-language-specific pragmatic competence which learners tend to develop in order to communicate in L2; however, it is not necessarily similar to either L1 or L2. It is possible, on the other hand, that learners transfer some rules of politeness and speech acts to their ILP for communication reasons. Nevertheless, due to L1 and L2 structures not being compatible, this might lead to the misuse of target language structure.

Considering a continuum with first language pragmatics on one end and target language pragmatics on the other, ILP can be located anywhere on this continuum in regards with the ILP competency of the L2 learner. Yet the location of the L2 learner's ILP does not remain constant and the more the ILP of the learners progresses, the closer the position gets to the target Language.

2.4.2 Pragmatic Transfer

Literature analysis reveals that the link between language proficiency and transfer in pragmatics is of complicated nature. Language learners tend to monitor their interlocutors' language competency by considering their first language culture as reference of politeness (Al-Issa, 2003). Yet, it should be noted "that behavior and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community" (Farnia and Suleiman, 2009, p. 246). The transfer and overgeneralization of the L1 pragmatics and linguistic rules might lead to communication breakdown, the emergence of stereotypes, and/or serious misunderstandings. In other words, "learners lack of knowledge of different sociolinguistic rules among cultures and then dependence on their L1 sociocultural norms in realizing speech acts in L2 (i.e., pragmatic transfer) can cause intercultural misunderstanding and lead to serious consequences" (Chang, 2009, p. 478).

However, Hassal (2003) partially disagrees and claims that novice learners are sometimes reluctant to transfer from L1 due to lack of linguistic competency and higher level learners do not transfer as they do not believe in its success.

In the reviewed literature, the notion of transfer is divided into two categories: positive and negative transfer. It is believed that the transfer is positive if a learner uses an L2 pragmatic feature with *native* form, function, and distribution because of influence from L1. On the other hand, it is negative if a learner uses an L2 pragmatic feature with non-native form, function or distribution because of L1 influence (Hassal, 2003, p. 1905). Moreover, negative transfer is identified as the probable reason, why L2 learners cannot perform requests. However, by training and appropriate education, regarding "grammatical competence, learning context, learners' aptitude, motivation, learning strategies, age, pedagogical features" (Kahraman & Akkuş, 2007, p. 124) along with compatible materials, the problem can be solved.

Literature shows that quite a large number of studies have been carried out in various contexts involving diverse languages in which transfer from native language (NL) to target language (TL) has been one of the focal points.

2.4.3 Studies on Pragmatic Transfer

Marti (2006), for instance, has focused on politeness and transfer of strategies from German to Turkish. Primarily, 230 university students were given the DCT and 199 responded positively. 107 of the participants were considered as Turkish-German and 92 were Turkish monolinguals. To gather the data, DCT and politeness rating questionnaire were administered. The results supported the findings obtained by Blum-Kula and

Olshtain (1984) and indicated that politeness and indirectness are related, but they are not linear concepts as the Turkish subjects preferred directness to show politeness where Germans had an opposite attitude. Regarding transfer, no signs were detected, yet in some situations, Turkish subjects were reluctant to perform the request, where, Turkish-German subjects chose indirect strategy.

Koike (1989) has also examined and studied the role of transfer and the recognition of L2 speech acts through listening comprehension. His study included two sections. The first section examined 40 students in 2nd year Spanish class regarding the situations of request, apology, and commands. The second section was concerned with 27 students from two classes of first semester Spanish. This group was given a DCT. For these participants their grammar and spelling were not taken into consideration due to their level of linguistic competency. The data also included a base line of 23 native English speaking students. Results were described in form of frequency and indicated that the answer to the first question regarding the recognition of speech acts was affirmative. However, in terms of transfer, only one-half of the participants showed transfer proof, the rest illustrated interlanguage pragmatics.

Hassal (2003) focused on the Australian learners of Indonesian. The study referred to request speech acts and aimed at shedding light on cross-cultural communication in languages. The subjects were 20 first and second year undergraduate students of language competency of intermediate. 18 native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia also participated as baseline. A positive transfer from L1 was detected, however, as the proficiency progresses the transfer decreases. Regarding the statements of want and hint,

it should be noted that the frequency of their use changed as the language competency increased.

Aksoyalp (2009) studied refusal strategies used by Turkish speaking EFL learners and any possible transfer. She also considered two native baseline groups of Turkish speakers and British English speakers for cross referencing. The results indicated both similarities and differences cross-culturally including the existence of transfer. Production of interlanguage, different from both native languages, was also detected.

Pearson (2006) studied pragmatic development of second language learners of Spanish. In this study instruction, L2 grammar competence, and transfer from L1 to L2 were the topics of the study. The results showed that pragmatic competence proceeds grammatical competence as well as transfer from the first language to the second language regarding production of directives.

Al-Issa (2003) studied Arabic students of English and their production of speech acts. In this study two baselines of Arabic native speakers and English native speakers were studied as criteria. The results support the existence of transfer from the first language to the second language production. Furthermore, students' pride of L1 and religious perceptions were noted as probable motivations considering transfer.

2.4.4 Studies on Pragmatics from the Perspective of Social Distance and Degree of Familiarity

Rue, Zhang and Shin (2007) studied request strategies in Korean. Their first research question was concerned with the Korean native speakers' use of request strategies with regards to the level of directness of the request utterance. The second question was about the variables of power and distance and their effect on the performance of request. 12 office workers participated in three role plays having the format of female-female, female-male, and male-male regarding power and social distance. To analyze the data, Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) was adapted and applied, revealing the results that Korean was based on status of power. The higher the addressee's power status, the more indirect the strategies were. It was also seen that the higher rank power of the addressee required strong hint. Generally, speakers preferred conventionally indirect request strategy in all three stages. But requests towards junior had relatively lower preference.

Another study regarding the language of Korean was conducted by Byon (2004). The results were parallel with Rue and Zhang and Shin (2007), referring to Korean language as a hierarchical, collective, roundabout, formalistic in comparison with Americans.

Upadhyay (2003) studied the relationship between politeness and linguistic indirectness in Nepali language. The results revealed that the directives selected depend on the definition of social factors in Nepali language. In other words, the results did not support the universality of politeness presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984).

Keshavarz (2001) concentrated on the formality of speech, role of social context, intimacy, and distance regarding the choice of forms of address in Farsi. 150 Iranians from different districts of the capital, Tehran, were studied. Their gender and educational background along with occupation and socio-economical situation were taken into account. A questionnaire of two sections was administered. The first part asking for background information and the second concerning with forms of address. The results revealed that "the use of intimate terms of address was inversely proportional to social distance and the formality of the context, i.e. as social distance and degree of formality of context increase, the frequency of familiar terms of address decrease. Also in informal situations age was more significant than sex and social class in determining forms of address. However, under formal circumstances, sex was a stronger determiner in the use of address forms" (p.5).

2.4.5 Studies on Pragmatics in Academic Settings

Regarding the academic settings, Politzer (1980) investigated the requests used by teachers and students at school through video recording and transcription of data. The results supported the fact that motivational approach compensates for structural approach regarding pedagogical analysis.

Iragui (1996) studied requests and apologies and the effect of situation on these speech acts' performance in English. This study also considered the role of gender and relative status. DCTs were given to 96 subjects, native and non-native university students. The non-native group consisted of Spanish and Basque speakers and the native speakers of English were Americans. Results showed slight difference in the use of preparatory strategy, noting that, it was the most favored by both groups. The results also supported

the universality of the pragmatic principles; yet, the linguistic expressions used to convey the pragmatic meaning were proven to be language and context specific.

Kahraman and Akkuş (2007) also researched in Academic setting. Their study focused on Japanese request head act strategies and their correct use produced by Turkish Japanese learners. Participants were 82, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, year Japanese language learning students; they were of lower intermediate or advance students. The results revealed that students were capable of requesting from their teachers, however, they failed regarding requesting from friends.

Hilbig (2009) focused on request strategies of Lithuanians based on the three main universal directness levels and their positive and negative politeness by applying the framework offered by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). Data were collected by means of DCT, an open-ended questionnaire with 12 socially divergent situations prompting requests. The subjects were 100 Lithuanian and 100 English University undergraduates. It was found out that while both groups mostly opted for conventionally indirect requests, the Lithuanian responses spread much wider along the directness-indirectness continuum. Moreover, the respondents employed notably more of direct (e.g. imperatives, explicit performatives) as well as non-conventionally indirect strategies. In fact, the Lithuanians were found to be more positive politeness oriented.

Clennel (1999) studied overseas students in an EAP class in an Australian university and revealed that the students had difficulty communicating with English native speakers (professors and peers) and suggests that by educating such students through appropriate

material, they can overcome the difficulties regarding the use of appropriate language in relation with social factors.

Garton (2000) studied native and non-native college students' use of request strategies in Hungarian and the directness level of the produced requests along with gender, age and imposition. The results showed that native speakers benefit from various forms and contents in their production of requests, however, the non-native speakers used formulaic strategies and requested in situations where the native speakers would not.

Regarding Iranian EFL learners of English, Jalilifar (2009) conveyed a cross-sectional study regarding request strategies. He studied 96 MA and PhD university students and compared the data to a baseline of 10 Australian native speakers of English. To gather data, he administered a DCT regarding request strategies in relation with two factors of social power and social distance. The results supported pragmatics development from the use of direct strategies towards conventionally indirect, however, subjects of higher English competency showed tendency towards overuse of indirect strategies, where the lower level subjects benefitted mostly from the direct strategy. On the topic of social power, the subjects showed closer similarity with the native speakers, however, regarding social distance inadequacy of their pragmatic knowledge was detected.

Taghizade (2011) also conducted a cross-sectional research on the same topic as Jalilifar (2009) studying pragmatics development of the language learners regarding request strategy use. She studied British native speakers as her baseline group; however, the

results were similar to Jalilifar's findings, support development of pragmatics competency from elementary to advance level by English language learners.

Eslami-Rasekh and Eslami-Rasekh (2008) studied the effect of planned pedagogical action on acquisition of request and apology strategies. Two groups of MA students were chosen with respective numbers of 25 and 27. The former received lessons with pragmatic focus. The results revealed that instruction can enhance the acquisition of pragmatic strategies.

2.4.6 Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP)

One of the most popular and universal projects studying speech acts is the cross-cultural speech act realization project (CCSARP) carried out initially by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). In general, it is based on the assumption that "diversity in the realization of speech acts in context may stem from at least three different types of variability, (a) intra-cultural situational variability; (b) cross-cultural variability; (c) individual variability"(p. 197). This implies that social constraints can affect the pattern of speech acts. In other words, diversity of culture can have impact on the performance of speech acts and even individuals based on their age, educational level, and gender within the same community. It might express different realization patterns. Cross-cultural speech act realization includes the study of various situations, cross-culturally, across similar situations, preferably involving different groups of individuals. In this regard, social constraints might also cause systematic differences in the realization pattern of speech acts.

In fact, the CCSARP was established to study the two speech acts of request and apology in eight languages of Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian French, Danish, German, Hebrew, and Russian from various perspectives. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) claim that:

> In order to establish the ways in which second language speakers' pattern of use differ from those of native speakers, we need to establish first how the different intra-cultural sources of variability (situational and individual) account for actual use in the two languages, the learner's native language and the learner's target language (p. 197).

In general terms, the project aimed to achieve various goals. First of all, it aimed at establishing the realization of native speakers' request- and apology-patterns vis-à-vis different social constraints. Also, it aimed to establish the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of requests and apologies cross-linguistically, relative to the same social constraints across the languages studied. Finally, it aimed to consider the issue from individual, native versus non-native variability perspective. In other words, the project aimed to establish the similarities and differences between native and non-native realization patterns of requests and apologies relative to the same social constraints (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p. 197).

As Kahraman and Akkuş (2007) note, the result of the project revealed that conventional indirectness is "the preferred request strategy in all languages examined" (p. 124).

One of the important points of the project was that it worked out categories and subcategories which were based on the levels of directness. In fact, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) called each category as a strategy type which were expected to be

applicable in all languages with indirectness being the most polite and appropriate strategy regarding requests, and directness the most face-threatening act (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Strategy types of request, coding and definitions adapted from Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p.202)

Level of directness	Strategy types	Examples
Direct	Mood derivable	Leave me alone Clean up this mess, please
	Explicit performative	I'm not asking you not to park the car here
	Hedged performative	I would like you to give your lecture a week earlier
	Locution derivable	Madam, you'll have to move your car
	Scope stating	I really wish you'd stop bothering me
Conventionally indirect	Language specific suggestory formula	Why don't you get lost How about cleaning up?
	Reference to preparatory conditions	Could you clear up the kitchen please?
Non-conventionally direct	Strong hint	You've left this kitchen in a right mess
	Mild hint	I'm a nun (in response to the persistent boy)

2.4.7 Teaching pragmatics

Wolfson (1983) suggests that, teachers have command over the sociolinguistic rules of a language, they can also perform these rules on daily basis, yet, the assumption that teachers' competency over such knowledge can guarantee their ability of training their students would not be a smart one.

The field of language teaching is interested in sociolinguistics and values the importance of communicative competence as the aim of language teaching, which is a major step in both theory and practice of the language. In this regard, lecturers of this field emphasize on the importance of the quality of instruction regarding the appropriate communicative strategies being taught in the classroom. Teaching in the class, has to include the instruction of both linguistic rules and pragmatic norms. The failure on the exposure of appropriate input on either of these concepts would "impede communication" (Uso-Juan

and Martinez-Flor, 2008, p. 352). In other words, formal instruction is considered to have positive impact on "helping learners acquire and perform L2 pragmatics" (Kasper and Shmidt, 1996, p. 160). In the field of English language teaching (ELT), language learners are expected to transfer the knowledge learnt in the classroom to the outside world, applying in communication. However, the transfer of theory into action does not happen "automatically". It is a challenging procedure which is difficult to "stimulate".

"Learning transfer" can happen in two different forms, low-road transfer and high-road transfer. The former, refers to "an unconscious process that is triggered when a situation that one is in is perceived as similar to previous situations in which learning occurred". High-road transfer on the other hand refers to a "conscious process that can occur between two situations that lack obvious similarities" (James, 2006, pp. 151-152).

Due to the fact that learning transfer cannot be assumed, techniques are presented to assure the acquisition of the fact. Hugging and bridging are the two techniques helping the teaching of learning transfer. Hugging targets low transfer and includes the design of situations that might occur in real life and the application of learned strategies in the classroom through these activities (James, 2006, pp. 151-152). Bridging is concerned with high road transfer. It persuades learners to "make conscious abstractions and identify alternative applications of instructional material" (James, 2006, p. 152).

James, (2006) identifies several teaching strategies for hugging which are "setting expectations, simulating, modeling and problem-based learning" (p. 154). 'Setting expectations implies that learners should be reminded that what they learn through

formal instruction can be applied in real-world situations whereas 'simulating' refers to the use of appropriate replicating activities. By 'modeling' the author means the presentation of appropriate concept practically. Finally, 'problem-based learning' refers to assigning students to work on similar problems they might face outside the class.

On the other hand, by Teaching Strategies for Bridging James (2006, p. 157) specifies such strategies as 'Anticipating applications', 'Generalizing concepts', 'Parallel problem solving' and 'metacognitive reflection'. By 'Anticipating applications' the author means encouraging learners to identify context of when and where they can apply the learned knowledge whereas 'Generalizing concepts' implies pinpointing general principles regarding contexts. What concerns such strategies is parallel problem solving and metacognitive reflection, the former refers to working on the problems from different areas but require similar structure while the latter implies that learners need to be in charge of their own planning, monitoring, and evaluation of their thinking.

In general, "the more we know about this procedural knowledge, the more we will be in the position to include empirically sound information about pragmatic aspects of the target language in instructional materials and syllabi" (Wildner-Bassett, 1994, 24). In other words, to have better quality of language teaching and learning, language teachers should be aware of the textbooks and classroom limitations regarding pragmatics and by improving their knowledge regarding this principle, can help learners become "truly proficient in communication in the target language" (Koike, 1989, p. 287).

2.5 Summary

To achieve a successful communication in a second language, both knowledge of grammar and lexicon of that language along with knowledge of pragmatic rules are needed (Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Failure in each part might lead to communication breakdown (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). For language learners to avoid such communication failure inter-cultural understanding is necessary and that is to be familiar with rules of appropriateness and politeness of the target language (White, 1993). As White (1993) states "erroneous attributions occur when either or both sides in an inter-cultural exchange violate not just the surface features of language, but the conditions which give meaning to speakers' and hearer's intentions and interpretations" (p. 201). Chang (2009) supporting this claim, assets that "the need for empirical study of cross-cultural communication and pragmatic transfer has been recognized in the field of second language acquisition as vital to enhance cross-cultural understanding, and provide information helpful for language instruction and language acquisition" (p. 19). To that end, study of the interlanguage pragmatics is suggested by Iragui (1996) regarding the speech acts "produced by learners of different languages" (p. 54).

The review of literature indicates that there is a considerable body of research on the study on pragmatics with the focus on the speech acts. It can also be seen that requests have attracted a considerable number of studies. The studies on this field are mainly concerned with western countries along with Japanese and Korean. However, except for limited number of studies mentioned in this section (Eslami-Rasekh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Jalilifar, 2009; Keshavarz, 2001; Taghizade, 2011), Farsi language has been overlooked. The studies on Iranians are mainly cross-sectional with the focus on the

development of pragmatics competence (Jalilifar, 2009; Taghizade, 2011). Other studies focus on the topic of Farsi language pragmatics with no reference to other languages (Keshavarz, 2001), or concentrated on the teaching of pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Eslami-Rasekh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008). Considering the importance of the speech act of request and lack of cross-cultural studies on Iranians from the perspective of social factors and transfer of pragmatic rules in a specific level of language proficiency (advance level), this study focuses on this specific strateg

Chapter 3

METHOD

Presentation

This chapter is an overall description of the research methodology used in this study. The chapter consists of 9 main sections and two subcategories belonging. In section 3.1, overall research design, is presented. Context, section 3.2, focuses on the context in which the study has been conducted in and is followed by the participants' description divided into three different categories. Data collection instrument and procedures are the subsequent sections. Afterward, the process of data analysis is described focusing on the coding and categorization of the body of the data. The last two sections are to describe the limitations of the study as well as a summary of the previous sections.

3.1 Overall Research Design

The present cross-cultural case study aims at investigating how Iranian graduate students (IL) use request strategies in English. More specifically, the study explores Iranian graduate students' "pragmatic interlanguage" (Koike, 1989) regarding request strategies and any possible transfer from L1 (Farsi) to L2 (English) as it has been stated that learners of a second or foreign language tend to develop a language (interlanguage) regarding speech acts which can be different both from L1 and L2 regarding linguistic forms, procedures, and or strategies used in their interlanguage (Koike, 1989). This study also looks into the use of request strategies from the perspective of social power and degree of familiarity.

The focus is on a cross-cultural study, examining Iranian graduate students' request strategy use in English and comparing this with British native speakers. Due to absence of cross-cultural studies regarding Iranians this area was chosen to be suitable as a research topic.

Probing the above aims, the present study has chosen a canonical design, collecting and analyzing samples of requestive speech acts from native speakers of L1 (Farsi) and L2 (English) along with the ones of interlanguage produced by Iranian graduate students. Chang (2009) states that three sets of data need to be collected for a study in the field of speech acts, to be able to establish an understanding regarding the extent to which learner performance is different from the native speakers of the target language and pin point any possible transfer from L1. First, sample of speech act in the target language produced by the learners, second, sample produced by native speakers of the target language, and last, sample of the same illocutionary act in the L1.

Considering the study as a cross-cultural case study, to sample the data, convenience sampling strategy is employed. As Dőrnyei (2007) states in case studies, the focus is on description of specific aspects concerning a topic rather than determination of mean or most probable experience within a group. For this, the goal is to find participants who can provide "rich and varied insights" (Dőrnyei, 2007, p. 126) into the investigation and convenience sampling strategy " results in willing participants, which is a prerequisite to having s rich data set" (Dőrnyei, 2007, p. 129).

The context of the study is chosen to be an academic setting (Eastern Mediterranean University). The reason behind this choice would be found in the literature as Basturkmen (2001) states "asking questions and engaging in questioning sequences in talk, represent a pervasive part of academic and work life that is critical for getting information, contributing ideas, and being actively involved in the environment" (p. 4). Also, in such settings, the importance of the effectiveness of the exchanges made, trigger the need , especially for second language learners, to "plan, organize, and study the use of structuring strategies" (Chang, 2009, p. 4) as the "exchange of information and turns may be longer and more complex" (Chang, 2009, p. 4). To that end, Clennel (1999) claims students have trouble when communicating with their peers and professors. Such inefficiencies require statistic data to assist resolving this problem.

Consequently, academic context chosen for this study was Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU). This university was established in 1979. EMU welcomes over 15000 students from 68 different countries and offers various under graduate and graduate programs to international students, including Iranian students, which was considered as a suitable context.

Considering the specific context of the study and two social factors (social power and degree of familiarity), a DCT designed, piloted, and applied by Dong (2009), specifically for such context and variables, is adapted and employed as data collection instrument. The DCT includes two different sections to be exact a sociolinguistic and a requestive section of 14 situations. However, in order to adjust the presented situations to the context of the study some adaptations were applied in both sections.

Before the analysis, data was coded according to Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). This coding system is of nine scales, categorizing requesting head acts from the direct into indirect strategies. CCSARP is a widely used coding system in the study of request speech acts (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Hassal, 2003; Iragui, 1996; Jalilifar, 2009; Koike, 1989; Rue, Zhang & Shin, 2007; Taghizade, 2011).

After the coding process, a descriptive analysis approach has been implemented to analyze the data collected for this study. As Dőrnyei (2007) mentions "the language-specific nature of qualitative analysis actually favors applied linguists, because discourse analytical techniques are part of our core discipline" (p.243). The data was processed through SPSS pack 15 and the obtained frequencies were studied considering the baseline data collected.

3.2 Context

The present study is conducted in Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) which was established in 1979. EMU offers various graduate programs in variety of fields. Yet, to enter any graduate program, applicants with English being their second or foreign language are needed to either enter and pass (score 75 or above) a proficiency examination of EMU, School of Foreign Languages, or have valid IELTS (6.5) or TOEFL (550) certificate. This qualifies postgraduate students of having at least B1 level of English proficiency.

3.3 Participants

This study was composed of three different groups of participants of total number of 127. Iranian graduate students (IL group) encompassed 105 Iranian MA/MS and PhD students at Eastern Mediterranean University who were studying in different graduate programs at the time of the study. There were also two groups of native speakers, Farsi native speakers (FNS) and British native speakers (BNS) whose responses were used as a baseline for the research. FNS comprises 12 participants and BNS includes 10. However, 7 of the questionnaires were discounted by reason of participants' disinclination to respond to some of the situations, which brings down the number of participants to 120. Information gathered from both groups of native speakers was used as criteria to study the interlanguage data cross-culturally regarding the speech act of request. Detailed information of the participants is provided in the following subsections.

3.3.1 Native Speakers of Farsi and English

Data regarding the Farsi native speakers' responses were collected from 12 Iranian monolingual native speakers of Farsi who were living in Tehran, Iran at the time of the study. The age varied from 20 to 40. Six of the participants were employees of a private company; four were employed by the national bank of Iran and two were students at the time of the study. The participants were acquaintance of the researcher and were contacted through email. The questionnaire along with the consent form were sent and received via email (Appendix E, Appendix B). However, two of the received questionnaires were disregarded due to participants' reluctancy to answer situations 1 and 2 regarding borrowing a camera from a best friend and borrowing money for lunch.

The British native speakers had the population of 10, with three English teachers, and seven university students. The participants were English monolinguals living in London, England who were also acquaintances of the researcher. Contact was made through email. They were also given a DCT and consent form (Appendix F, Appendix A)

3.3.2 Farsi-Speaking EFL Learners

Interlanguage group consisted of 105 graduate students studying in various programs in Eastern Mediterranean University. All subjects were native Farsi speakers and their age was between 24- 32. However, five of the questionnaires were excluded from the study due to participants' unwillingness to answer some of the situations, i.e. situations 1, 2, 7, and 11. Of these participants, 59 were in MA/MS and 41 were in PhD programs. Of all the MA/MS subjects, 35 were male and 24 were female. 24 of subjects of this study were male PhD candidates and 17 were Female. The DCT was presented to the subjects in person along with a consent form. Briefing was also provided to assist the participants before completing the DCT. There was no time limitation regarding the completion of the DCT, yet the researcher collected the data in person.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used to gather data was a Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which was originally designed and piloted by Dong (2009) (Appendix C). The DCT has been originally designed to elicit request strategies in academic setting taking into consideration social power, degree of familiarity and the level of imposition. As this study has also focused on the academic setting the mentioned DCT was considered to be the most appropriate choice at the time.

The original DCT starts with asking some sociolinguistic information about the age, gender, length of stay in the United States, place of birth, and level of study (MA or PhD). Following that, 14 requestive situations are designed with each situation being accompanied by a self-assessment method which enables the participants to evaluate the weight of the request on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest. Throughout the DCT, the subjects are asked to consider the situations as real life conditions. The main idea of all 14 situations is as follow (Dong, 2009, p. 51):

1. Borrowing an expensive camera from your best friend

2. Borrowing money for lunch from your best friend

3. Asking a stranger for direction

4. Borrowing a pen or a pencil from a stranger

5. Asking a friend to help for moving

6. Asking an acquaintance for time

7. Borrowing a dictionary from an acquaintance

8. Asking an instructor to extend the deadline for a paper

9. Asking an instructor to give a makeup exam

10. Borrowing a book from advisor

11. Asking an instructor to make an appointment for consultation

12. Asking a professor to write a recommendation letter

13. Asking a librarian to help look for a book

14. Asking the receptionist if the chair is in the office

The variable, degree of familiarity, is studied in situations 1 to 7. Degree of familiarity is demonstrated in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Degree of Familiarity described in DCT

Degree of familiarity	Situation
High	1,2
Medium	5,6,7
None	3,4

There is high familiarity (between a student and a best friend), medium familiarity (between the student, friend, and acquaintance), and no familiarity (between the student and the stranger).

Table 3.2 illustrates social power in this study which has been examined in two levels of power difference and no power difference. DCTs 8 t0 14 examine this matter.

Table 3.2: Social Power described in DCT

Social power	situation
Power difference	8,9,10,11,12
No power difference	13,14

The third variable in this questionnaire is the absolute rank of imposition, which has been modified along with some other parts of the questionnaire.

Since the DCT was to apply in a different academic context (Eastern Mediterranean University) and the subjects of the study were not of the same nationality as the ones in the study where the DCT was originated, some adaptations needed to take place. The first alteration initiated in a section in the sociolinguistic background information of the questionnaire regarding the place of birth and was adapted from USA to Iran for the

Iranian graduate students and Iranian baseline subjects, and Britain for the English native speakers. Next modification took place in situation 2 of the DCT as the amount and currency were changed to 10 TL for IL group (Appendix D), 10000 Tooman for Iranian native speakers(Appendix E), and 10 £ in case of British native speakers (Appendix F), so they suit the intended context. The section regarding the rank of imposition was also eliminated as it was beyond the scope of this study. Regarding the Farsi speaking native speakers, the DCT was translated to Farsi and again to English, in order to determine the validity of the translation. Moreover, in case of both groups of native speakers, the item referring to the degree of study was changed to occupation. Furthermore, in the socio-linguistic section, MS was also added regarding the Iranian EFL participants level of education. It should be noted that the section belonging to degree of imposition was omitted as it was out of the scope of this study.

To sum up, the participants were first provided with a consent form including detailed information regarding the objectives of the study. However, for Iranian graduate students and the British native speakers the consent form was in English language (Appendix A) and the Farsi native speakers received the translated version of this form (appendix B). Later, three versions of the adapted DCT were administered to three groups of participants. In all versions the section regarding the degree of imposition was eliminated along with other adaptations mentioned above. Iranian graduate students (IL) received a version of the DCT (Appendix D) specifically adapted to their situation regarding the level education, place of birth, and currency (situation 2). Farsi native speakers (FNS) also received an adapted version of the DCT (Appendix E); however, their version was adapted and translated to Farsi. The British native speakers of English as well, received an adapted version of the discourse completion test (Appendix F).

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data for this study have been gathered in three different phases. After the application of the mentioned modifications in section 3.5, a consent form and permission letter was sent to EMU administration to grant the authorization of carrying out the study along with detailed information about the objectives of the case study. After receiving the approval, the data collection process first, started by collecting information from the IL group, Iranian graduate students, in spring semester of 2009-2010 academic year. The subjects were chosen randomly from different graduate programs of Eastern Mediterranean University. Each subject was given a consent form along with concise information about the ground on which the study was being conducted (Appendix A). They were also given enough time and a briefing on how to respond to the DCT situations. All the participants volunteered to join the study.

Meanwhile, the Discourse Completion Test and the consent form were translated to Farsi, the first language of the IL group, by the researcher and had been validated by a Farsi linguist and translated back to English by a PhD candidate of English translation major to double check the validity of the DCT in Farsi Language and preventing any possible misunderstanding leading to an unreliable research data. In this stage of the study, a consent form was also translated in order to be given to the FNS prior to the completion of the DCT. After the completion of this phase, the DCT in Farsi was administered in fall semester of 2010-2011 to FNS via Email.

The BNS, on the other hand, were also given consent form and the DCT in spring semester of 2012-2013 via Email. Preceding the data collection process, data analysis procedure was aligned.

3.6 Data Analysis

A discourse completion test (production questionnaire) was administered in this study, as this type of data collection instrument enables the researcher to control the context related variables of the situations (Sasaki, 1998), for example the status of the interlocutors, and provides "prototypical responses" (Kwon, 2004, p. 341) which results in a consistent body of data. Therefore, it is suitable for cross-cultural studies (Kwon, 2004). Another reason would be the efficiency of collecting considerable data in a very short time (Kwon, 2004).

After elicitation, data were coded according to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) cross-cultural speech act realization project (CCSARP) coding manual into nine different categories as the focus of the study was on requestive head acts (Table 2.1). The coded data was typed and grouped into three categories of Farsi native speakers, British native speakers and Iranian graduate students (IL).

Descriptive analysis was used to study the use of requests from the perspectives of social power and degree of familiarity along with the study of requestive head acts used by Iranian graduate students. To that aim, data were processed through SPSS pack 15 to obtain the frequencies in percentages in order to define the information descriptively.

Regarding social power, as the context is an academic setting and the Iranian graduate students' English competency is the subject, relationships are hierarchical, the subjects either have equal or lower social status in relation with the interlocutors. The situations were divided into two sections with the first section concerning with situations 1 to 7 regarding the study of the degree of familiarity, and the next half probing social power . Head act requesting strategies used by the Iranian graduate students (IL) were examined and cross examined with the other two baselines to determine the following:

- Any possible transfer from the first language to the L2

- Development of interlanguage

- Similar strategies used by Iranian graduate students with the BNS group determining the competency in pragmatics regarding the production of requestive head acts.

3.7 Limitations and Delimitations

Regarding this study number of limitations can be mentioned. Data collection instrument mentioned in 3.4 can be one. Although DCTs are proved to be a valid instrument to collect data, "the response is produced in a test-like rather than real-life situation, and because the respondent's spoken performance is intended to be elicited indirectly through the written mode" (Sasaki, 1998, p. 458), there might be some possible information missing.

As the researcher was not able to collect the data from baseline category (FNS) in person, five of the collected DCTs were disregarded, which limits the number of DCTs in that category to 10.

Furthermore, regarding the universality of the results, due to the limited number of the participants and context, it is not possible to draw any conclusions.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter the method adapted in this study was presented. The first section gives an overall information about the design of the research, where is followed by the second part, the context of the study. The section regarding participants, two native speaker groups, and an interlanguage group, gives thorough information regarding the subjects. After presenting the data collection instrument and procedures, the analysis of data is displayed. Lastly, the limitations and delimitations of the study have been noted.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Presentation

In this chapter the results of the study are presented. More specifically, the frequency of strategies used by all three participant groups are studied and reported. The use of requestive head act strategies are studied from the perspective of degree of familiarity (DCTs 1-7) and social power (8-14). That is the results are presented under two main sections, 4.1 and 4.2.

Section 4.1 gives information about requesting head act strategies and the degree of familiarity. 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 discuss the requesting head act strategies used by two baseline groups of British native speakers and Farsi native speakers. Subsection 4.1.3, analyses the request strategies used by interlanguage group. The next subsection compares the two baseline groups regarding requests and frequency of strategies used. Subsection 4.1.5 compares the two baseline data groups with the IL group.

Section 4.2 presents an overall information about the requestive head act strategies and social power. Subsections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 are to discuss the base line data regarding situations 8 to 14. Iranian graduate students are studied in section 4.2.3 which is followed by the comparison of the two native groups and subsequently the comparison

of all three categories of participants and the produced requestive acts. The summary section gives an overall view to the discussed topics.

4.1 Analysis of requestive head act strategies regarding degree of familiarity

This part of the study focuses on the use of request strategies in English by Iranian graduate students from the point of view of degree of familiarity among interlocutors. The aim is to investigate Iranian graduate students' requesting strategies use in an academic setting to identify their competency regarding the application of appropriate strategy in three levels of high, medium, and no familiarity with the interlocutor. To that aim, the request strategies and related frequencies are studied and cross referenced to analyze the data. In this section the first seven situations presenting degree of familiarity are considered.

4.1.1 Requesting head act strategies used by British native speakers of English (BNS)

Analyzed data gathered from British native speakers of English illustrate the fact that three head act strategies are used out of the nine strategies of CCSARP presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) regarding the degree of familiarity studied in the first 7 situations. The preferred strategies are preparatory, mood derivable and strong hint (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by BNS regarding degree of familiarity

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	6	8.57
Preparatory	58	82.85
Strong hints	6	8.57
Total	70	100

The most favored strategy is preparatory with 82.85%. It is to mention that situations 1, 2, 4, and 7 are all responded only by applying this strategy. In situation 3, strategies of preparatory (60%) and strong hint (40%) are used. Situation 5 includes mood derivable (20%) and strong hint (80%) strategies. British native speakers apply three strategies of mood derivable (40%), preparatory (40%), and strong hint (20 %) to respond to situation 6 (see Table 4.3). This category includes structures such as *could you...? Would it be possible....? Can I...?* etc. Table 4.2 presents some examples of this category.

Mood derivable and strong hint, both present same percentage of 8.57%. However, considering the strategy of mood derivable, it was used in situations 5 (asking a friend to help move out) and 6 (asking acquaintance for time) with former having the frequency of 20% and the latter 40%. Utterances which their grammatical mood of their verb makes the illocutionary force a request belong to this category (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p. 202). Strong hint, on the hand, was used in situations 3 (asking stranger for direction) and 6 with respective frequencies of 40% and 20%.

Table 4.2: Native speakers head act strategies and some examples

Head Act Strategies	Examples
Mood derivable	**Example 1**: *Excuse me, what is the time?* (NS 1) **Example 2**: *Please help me move out.*(NS 3)
Preparatory	**Example 1:** *Can I have your camera?* (NS 7) **Example 2**: *Would it be possible if I could please borrow your camera. I will take good care of it.* (NS 2)
Strong hint	**Example 1**: *You wanna make easy cash, come and help me move out.* (NS 9) **Example 2**: *Drinks on me if you help me move out.* (NS 10)

Degree of familiarity in this study is examined through three categories of high, medium, and none. High familiarity is referred to in situations 1 and 2 (best friend), medium familiarity belongs to situations 5, 6, and 7 (friend and acquaintance), and situations 3 and 4 represent no familiarity (stranger). Table 4.3 presents the strategy head acts used in these situations.

Table 4.3: Requesting strategy head acts used by BNS regarding degree of familiarity

DCT	Strategies	Degree of Familiarity					
		High		Medium		None	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	-	-
2	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	-	-
3	Preparatory	-	-	-		6	60
	Strong hint					4	40
4	Preparatory	-	-	-	-	10	100

5	Mood derivable	-	-	2	20	-	-
	Preparatory			8	80		
6	Mood derivable	-	-	4	40	-	-
	Preparatory	-	-	4	40	-	-
	Strong hint	-	-	2	20	-	-
7	Preparatory	-	-	10	100	-	-

"Table 4.3 (Cont.)"

The data indicates that British native speakers of English use the preparatory strategy in all different degrees of familiarity, however, the frequencies vary. High familiarity in this study is shown to be requested with the highest frequency of preparatory strategy (100%). This percentage of preparatory strategy is also seen in situations 4 (no familiarity) and situation 7 (medium familiarity).

The second highest frequency regarding preparatory head act strategy belongs to situation 5 with 80%, where the speaker has to ask a friend for help to move out in medium familiarity category. This is followed by 60% in case of situation 3 of no familiarity and 40% in situation 6 with medium familiarity.

Mood derivable is used in requesting only for medium familiarity of 40% in situation 6 and 20 percent in situation 5. Following a similar percentage, strong hint is used for requests in medium and no degree of familiarity with respective frequencies of 20% and 40%.

4.1.2 Requesting head act strategies used by Farsi native speakers (FNS)

Regarding the degree of familiarity, native speakers of Farsi (FNS) have used only four of CCSARP's nine head act strategies. In order of the frequency of use, preparatory, mood derivable, strong hint and want statement (scope stating) are the only strategies used (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by FNS regarding degree of familiarity

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	30	42.85
Scope stating	2	2.85
Preparatory	31	44.28
Strong hints	7	10
Total	70	100

The coding of the data shows that preparatory has the highest frequency of 44.28% followed by mood derivable with 42.85%. However, strong hint and scope stating are of lower frequencies being 10% and 2.85%. Table 4.5 illustrates some examples of the responses collected along with their translations.

Table 4.5: Farsi Native speakers head act strategies and some examples

Head Act Strategies	Examples
Mood derivable	**Example 1**: *Ali jan, pool e naghd cheghadr hamrahet dari? Ye 20 hezar tooman be man bede shab mirizam be hesabet.* **Translation**: Ali, how much money do you have with you? Give me 20,000 tooman and I stransfer it to your account tonight. (FNS 1) **Example 2**: *10 toman pool dari behem bedi?(FNS 2)* **Translation:** Have you got 10,000 tooman to give me?
Scope stating	**Example 1**: *Bebakhshid, sharmandam, mikhastam doorbinet ro akhare hafte gharz begiram, shayadam ziyad ba an kar nakonam ama be harhal kheili movazebesham.*(FNS 5)

	Translation: Excuse me, I'm very sorry but I want to borrow your camera for the weekend, maybe I'm not gonna need it but I will look after it anyway.
Preparatory	Example 1: *mitoonam khodkaretoono gharz begiram?* (FNS 7) Translation: Can I borrow your pen? Example 2:*Lotfan loghatname ra bara chandlahze mitoonam gharz begiram?*(FNS 8) Translation: Can I borrow the dictionary for a second, please?
Strong hint	Example 1: *goshname, berim ghaza bokhorim, ama kif e poolam o ja gozashtam.* Translation: I'm hungry, let's go eat, but I've left my money at home.

"Table, 4.5 (Cont.)"

The categorization of the strategies used in situations as high, medium and no familiarity show that all four strategies have been used (Table 4.6). However, the preparatory strategy has higher percentage among others regarding high familiarity of 70% for the first situation and 40% for the second one. It should be noted that in the situation 2 mood derivable is of same quantity with the preparatory strategy. Scope stating and strong hint, both have equal frequency of 10% in both situations.

Regarding the medium familiarity, situations 5 and 7 show interesting results that in both situations three strategies of mood derivable, preparatory and strong hint are used with alike percentages of 20%, 70%, and 10% respectively. On the other hand, situation 6, also illustrating the medium familiarity includes only one strategy of mood derivable of 10 %. The last category, non-familiarity as well, points up the three strategies of mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint.

Table 4.6: Requesting strategy head acts regarding FNS's degree of familiarity

DCT	Strategies	Degree of Familiarity					
		High		Medium		None	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-	-	-
	Scope stating	1	10				
	Preparatory	7	70				
	Strong hint	1	10				
2	Mood derivable	4	40	-	-	-	-
	Scope stating	1	10				
	Preparatory	4	40				
	Strong hint	1	10				
3	Mood derivable	-	-	-	-	7	70
	Preparatory					2	20
	Strong hint					1	10
4	Mood derivable	-	-	-	-	4	40
	Preparatory					4	40
	Strong hint					2	20
5	Mood derivable	-	-	2	20	-	-
	Preparatory			7	70		
	Strong hint			1	10		
6	Mood derivable	-	-	10	100	-	-
7	Mood derivable	-	-	2	20	-	-
	Preparatory			7	70		
	Strong hint			1	10		

In both situations 3 and 4, mood derivable has the highest frequency of 70% and 40% which are followed by preparatory with 40% in the forth situation and 20% in the third situation. Strong hint, illustrates the lowest frequencies of 10% in situation 3, and 20% in situation 4.

4.1.3 Requesting head act strategies used by Iranian non-native speakers of English (IL)

Iranian native speakers have used five strategies out of nine strategies presented in CCSARP. The coding and analysis shows that this group has the highest number in strategies used among all three groups. However, considering the highest frequency vis-à-vis strategies used, it also illustrates preparatory as the most frequently used strategy with 67.42%. Following preparatory, mood derivable and strong hint also follow the same pattern as the previous groups of native speakers with diverse percentages of 16.57% and 13.85%. Scope stating has a frequency of 2% and the lowest percentage belongs to mild hint, 0.14%, which has not been detected in either of the native groups. Table 4.7 illustrates the gathered data in this regard.

Table 4.7: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by IL group regarding degree of familiarity

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	116	16.57
Scope stating	14	2
Preparatory	472	67.42
Strong hints	97	13.85
Mild hint	1	0.14
Total	700	100

Considering the analysis regarding situations distribution of high, medium and non-familiarity, preparatory strategy is shown to be the most frequent one of 83% for situation 1, and 67% for the second. Regarding situation 2, mood derivable and strong hint both have 14% whereas in the first situation the percentage of the mentioned strategies is lower, 5% and 9%. Mild hint is being observed in this category with the frequency of 0.14%.

On the topic of medium familiarity, situations 5 and 7 have preparatory strategy as the most frequent one with the former of 74% and the latter of 96%. On the contrary, in situation 6, mood derivable with 62% is seen to be the prominent strategy used.

With respect to no familiarity, Iranian graduate students show both strong hint and preparatory strategies to be used more often. Responses regarding situation three, favor strong hint (47%), and the next situation shows 84% for the preparatory strategy (see table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Requesting strategy head acts regarding IL group's degree of familiarity

DCT	Strategies	Degree of Familiarity					
		High		Medium		None	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Mood derivable	5	5	-	-	-	-
	Scope stating	3	3				
	Preparatory	83	83				
	Strong hint	9	9				
2	Mood derivable	14	14	-	-	-	-
	Scope stating	4	4				
	Preparatory	67	67				
	Strong hint	14	14				
	Mild hint	1	1				
3	Mood derivable	-	-	-	-	17	17
	Preparatory					36	36
	Strong hint					47	47
4	Mood derivable	-	-	-	-	5	5
	Preparatory					84	84
	Strong hint					11	11
5	Mood derivable	-	-	10	10	-	-
	scope stating			7	7		
	Preparatory			74	74		
	Strong hint			9	9		
6	Mood derivable	-	-	62	62	-	-
	Preparatory			32	32		
	Strong hint			6	6		
7	Mood derivable	-	-	3	3	-	-
	Preparatory			96	96		
	Strong hint			1	1		

As it can be seen, Iranian graduate students have some differences and similarities to both native groups presented earlier. Table 4.9 illustrates some examples from the gathered situations.

Table 4.9: IL group's head act strategies and some examples

Head Act Strategies	Examples
Mood derivable	**Example 1**: *Please give me your camera* (IL 28) **Example 2**: *Excuse me, what time is it?* (IL 55)
Scope stating	**Example 1**: *If it's possible I want your camera.*(IL 40) **Example 2**: *I will move, I need your help.* (IL 58)
Preparatory	**Example 1**: *Could you please lend me 10 TL?* (IL 57) **Example 2**: *Can I borrow one of your pens?* (IL 1)
Strong hint	**Example 1**: *Do you know where the health center is?*(IL 55) **Example 2**: *Are you free this weekend? I'm moving out.*(IL 95)
Mild hint	**Example 1**: *I have lost my pen* (IL 2)

4.1.4 Comparison of the request strategy head acts used by BNS and FNS regarding degree of familiarity

As it is shown in table 4.10, the most outstanding difference is in the number of strategies used. Both groups have mood derivable, preparatory and strong hint in common, however, FNS have benefitted from the use of scope stating as well. Native speakers of the languages seem to use preparatory strategy of a higher percentage among the rest with BNS 82.57% and their counterparts 44.28%. Regarding the second most favored strategy, in case of BNS, mood derivable and strong hint have the same percentage of 8.57%, where FNS benefited from mood derivable (42.85%), strong hint (10%) and scope stating (2.85%). In other words, preparatory, although being the most frequently used strategy, has more recurrences in English language than Farsi. On the other hand, mood derivable is a more common strategy used in Farsi than in English. It

should be noted that, as the data presents, in case of BNS mood derivable and strong hint are used with equal frequencies, where in Farsi strong hint is less favored. It is noteworthy to mention that FNS also benefit from the application of scope stating where the other group does not.

Table 4.10: Comparison of strategies used by both groups of BNS and FNS regarding degree of familiarity

Strategies used by BNS	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Strategies used by FNS	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	6	8.57	Mood derivable	30	42.85
Preparatory	58	82.85	preparatory	31	44.28
Strong hint	6	8.57	Strong hint	7	10
-	-	-	Scope stating	2	2.85
Total	70	100	Total	70	100

According to Table 4.11, the BNS have only benefitted from the use of preparatory strategy for the first two situations concerning high familiarity, where, FNS have used a range of four different strategies. Preparatory strategy is used more often. In the first situation where the speaker is asked to borrow an expensive camera from a best friend 70% of the native speakers used this strategy and the rest are of 10% value. Similarly in the second situation preparatory has high frequency, however, mood derivable also shows the same amount of 40%. In situations 3 and 4 presenting no degree of familiarity (requesting from strangers), the BNS opt for preparatory strategy use with 60% for the former and 100% for the latter. The latter also includes strong hint of 40%. FNS on the other hand, select and apply three strategies of mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint. Though, this group employs mood derivable strategy (70%) more than others in the

Table 4.11: Comparison of BNS and FNS frequency of strategies used regarding degree of familiarity

DCT	Strategies used by BNS	Degree of Familiarity						DCT	Strategies used by FNS	Degree of Familiarity					
		High		Medium		None				High		Medium		None	
		n	%	n	%	n	%			n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	-	-	1	Mood derivable	1	10				
									Scope stating	1	10				
									Preparatory	7	70				
									Strong hint	1	10				
2	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	-	-	2	Mood derivable	4	40				
									Scope stating	1	10				
									Preparatory	4	40				
									Strong hint	1	10				
3	Preparatory	-	-	-	-	6	60	3	Mood derivable					7	70
	Strong hint					4	40		Preparatory					2	20
									Strong hint					1	10
4	Preparatory	-	-	-	-	10	100	4	Mood derivable					4	40
									Preparatory					4	40
									Strong hint					2	20
5	Mood derivable	-	-	2	20	-	-	5	Mood derivable			2	20		
	Preparatory			8	80				Preparatory			7	70		
									Strong hint			1	10		
6	Mood derivable	-	-	4	40	-	-	6	Mood derivable			10	100		
	Preparatory	-	-	4	40	-	-								
	Strong hint	-	-	2	20	-	-								
7	Preparatory	-	-	10	100	-	-	7	Mood derivable			2	20		
									Preparatory			7	70		
									Strong hint			1	10		

case of situation 3 and in the following situation both mood derivable and preparatory have equal frequencies of 40%.

The data attests that regarding medium familiarity (requesting from a friend or acquaintance) all three strategies of mood derivable, strong hint and preparatory are used with various frequencies. BNS have preferred preparatory strategy more often with the exception of the sixth situation where mood derivable has the same percentage (40%). FNS has also employed preparatory with higher frequency except in case of situation 6 where only mood derivable is employed (see Table 4.11).

Considering the gathered data, British native speakers tend to use preparatory strategy more often than any other strategy regardless of the degree of familiarity between the speaker and the hearer, however, the Farsi speaking counterparts tend to use both preparatory and mood derivable. It can be seen that mood derivable is a preferred strategy with this group while requesting in non-familiar situations and only in one of the medium degrees of familiarity, situation 6, mood derivable shows percentage of 100%. In high familiarity, this strategy is also used with higher frequency than preparatory; however, in DCT 2 it has equal value with preparatory strategy both showing 40%.

4.1.5 Comparison of the request strategy head acts used by IL, BNS, and FNS regarding degree of familiarity

As table 4.13 illustrates, it can be seen that generally the strategies used by Iranian graduate students are closer and more similar to the FNS group. However, regarding the preparatory strategies, the frequency of use is closer to BNS group in situations 1, 2, 4, 6, and7. Having situation 1 in mind, as table 4.12 (Appendix G) illustrates, BNS benefit only from the preparatory strategy (100%). FNS on the other hand, choose a variety of strategies namely mood derivable (10%), scope stating (10%), preparatory (70%) and strong hint (10%). Iranian graduate students, however, perform the same strategies as the FNS with different frequencies, but the frequency regarding preparatory strategy (83%) is closer to BNS (100%) than FNS (70%). The situation 2 also shows similarity of strategy use between FNS and IL, however, the BNs only benefit from the choice of preparatory strategy. It should be noted that in this category Iranian graduate students have used strategy of mild hint which has not been used by either of the native groups and may be a sign of interlanguage development, yet the frequency regarding this strategy is 1%.

Table 4.13: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by BNS, FNS, and IL regarding degree of familiarity

Strategies used by BNS	n	(%)	Strategies used by FNS	n	(%)	Strategies Used by IL	n	(%)
Preparatory	58	82.85	Preparatory	31	44.28	Preparatory	472	67.42
Mood derivable	6	8.57	Mood derivable	30	42.85	Mood derivable	116	16.57
Strong hint	6	8.57	Strong hint	7	10	Strong hint	97	13.85
-	-	-	Scope stating	2	2.85	Scope stating	14	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	Mild hint	1	0.14
Total	70	100	Total	70	100	Total	700	100

The third and fourth situations introducing no degree of familiarity, also demonstrate similar strategy use by FNS and IL except for the strategy of strong hint in situation 3 which is used by all three groups. Regarding this situation, frequencies of mood derivable and preparatory are different from the native groups; however, the latter is closer to FNS. Furthermore, strong hint used by Iranian graduate students (47%) is closer to the percentage used by BNS (40%). In situation 4 the percentage of preparatory strategy used by Iranian graduate students (84%) is closer to the one used by BNS (100%) than 40% of FNS.

The last three situations exhibiting medium degree of familiarity, show slightly different patterns. Situation 5 displays the use of mood derivable strategy by both BNS and FNS groups with same frequency of 20%; however, Iranian graduate students have employed only 10%. Moreover, they have applied scope stating with 74% which cannot be seen in

the other two groups. This may also be regarded as interlanguage development by L2 learners. Regarding the similarities of percentages of strategies used by all groups, the preparatory strategy is employed by all three groups with close frequencies. BNS show 80%, FNS 70% and Iranian graduate students 74%. In the sixth situation, strategies used by IL group and BNS are similar, mood derivable, preparatory, strong hint, however the FNS only used mood derivable. It is noteworthy to say that although the strategies used by BNS and IL group are the same, the frequency of use regarding mood derivable (62%) is closer to that of FNS. An opposite pattern can be seen in the last situation, where the strategies used by IL group are similar to FNS, yet the percentage of preparatory strategy used by IL group (96%) is closer to that of BNS (100%) than FNS (70%). Table 4.12 illustrates the above data (Appendix G).

4.2 Analysis of requestive head act strategies according to social power.

In this section, situations 8 to 14 are being studied regarding the social power between the speaker and the hearer while requesting. However, as the study is focused on an academic setting, the speaker either has lower power (student vs. Professor, instructor, advisor) or the student has equal power (librarian, female staff member) with the interlocutor. This study does not consider the speaker to have higher power over the listener, the reason for this limitation is that "the speech acts in such situations can border on the category of orders or commands" (Dong, 2009, p. 52). In other words the study is concerned with power difference and no power difference.

4.2.1 Requesting head act strategies used by British native speakers of English

(BNS)

From nine strategies of CCSARP, the native speakers of English have only used four
strategies: mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory and strong hint (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by BNS regarding social
power

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	12	17.14
Scope stating	1	1.42
Preparatory	55	78.57
Strong hints	2	2.85
Total	70	100

Preparatory strategy is used in all situations and it is the only strategy used for situations
8,9,10, and 12 with the highest percentage (78.57). Mood derivable is used in situations
11, 13, and 14 with the frequency of 17.14 %. Scope stating and strong hint are used
with percentages of 1.42 and 2.85 with the former in situation 11 and the latter in
situation 13 (see table 4.15).

Table 4.15: Requesting strategy head acts used by BNS regarding social power

DCT	Strategies	Social power			
		Power difference		No power difference	
		n	%	n	%
8	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
9	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
10	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
11	Mood derivable	2	20	-	-
	Scope stating	1	10		
	Preparatory	7	70		
12	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
13	Mood derivable	-	-	1	10
	Preparatory			7	70
	Strong hint			2	20
14	Mood derivable	-	-	9	90
	Preparatory			1	10

Regarding the role of social power, it can be said that preparatory is the most favored strategy though, in situations where the speaker has lower social power it is used more frequently. This can be a support of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) that indirect requests are considered to be polite. Some examples of the sampled data are presented in table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Native speakers head act strategies and some examples regarding social power

Head Act Strategies	Examples
Mood derivable	**Example**: *Hey, do you know what time it is?* (BNS 4)
Scope stating	**Example**: *Hi Ms. I've been meaning to ask you if you were free anytime soon because I wanted to discuss my thesis with you.*(BNS 5)
preparatory	**Example**: *Excuse me Mr.name I wasn't able to finish my paper in time, because of a family circumstance. Is it possible to extend the deadline?* (BNS 2)
Strong hint	**Example**: *Excuse me, I'm trying to find this book, but I can't seem to find it.* (NS 3)

4.2.2 Requesting head act strategies used by Farsi native speakers (FNS)

Farsi native speakers, similar to British native speakers, have also applied four strategies out of nine strategies presented in CCSARP, with preparatory being the highest employed strategy (77.14%). This strategy is the only strategy applied in situations 9 and 10. The second most exercised strategy is mood derivable with 10% which is followed by strong hint and scope stating with respective frequencies of 8.57% and 4.28% (Table 4.17).

Table 4.17: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by FNS regarding social power

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	7	10
Scope stating	3	4.28
Preparatory	54	77.14
Strong hints	6	8.57
Total	70	100

Mood derivable is detected in situations 8,11,12,13, and 14, scope stating in 8, 11, and 12, and strong hint in 11, 13, and 14 (see table 4.18).

Table 4.18: Requesting strategy head acts regarding FNS social power

DCT	Strategies	Social power			
		Power difference		No power difference	
		n	%	n	%
8	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-
	Scope stating	1	10		
	Preparatory	8	80		
9	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
10	Preparatory	10	100	-	-
11	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-
	Scope stating	1	10		
	Preparatory	6	60		
	Strong hint	2	20		
12	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-
	scope stating	1	10		
	Preparatory	8	80		
13	Mood derivable	-	-	1	10
	Preparatory			7	70
	Strong hint			2	20
14	Mood derivable	-	-	3	30
	Preparatory			5	50
	Strong hint			2	20

Similar to British native speakers, this group also benefits from preparatory strategy regarding different contexts of social power which can be another source of support for the universality of politeness and the claim that the more indirect the requests are presented the more polite they sound across languages (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Hilbig, 2009). Table 4.19 illustrates some instances of FNS speech samples.

Table 4.19: Farsi Native speakers head act strategies and some examples regarding social power

Head Act Strategies	Examples
Mood derivable	**Example**: *Bebakhshid ostad mikhastam rajebe payanname mozahemetoon besham. Key vaght darid?* **Translation**: Excuse me professor, I wanted to see you regarding thesis, when do you have time? (FNS 4)
Scope stating	**Example***: Salam, bebakhshid ostad, azatoon baraye etmam e payan name kami vaght mikhaham tkhe ye moshkeli pish amade.* **Translation**: Hello professor, a want extra time from you to finish the thesis because I have a problem.(FNS 5)
preparatory	**Example**: *Ostad man in hafte yek moshkel e bozorgi dashtam natoonestam proje ra tamoom konam, mitoonid vaght e ezafe be man bedid?* **Translation**: Professor, I had a problem this week and couldn't finish the project, can you give me extra time? (FNS 4)
Strong hint	**Example**: *Bebakhshid, kasi pishe rais hast?* Translation: excuse me, is anyone in the chair's office? (FNS 9)

4.2.3 Requesting head act strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL)

As it is attested from the coded data, Iranian graduate students have employed five strategies from CCSARP; unlike the native groups which used four (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.20: Distribution of requesting head act strategies used by IL group regarding social power

Head Act Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	84	12
Scope stating	31	4.42
Preparatory	526	75.1
Strong hints	56	8
Mild hint	3	0.42
Total	700	100

The first four strategies are similar to what the other two groups have used; however, mild hint is also detected in IL group. As it can be seen from table 4.19, situations 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14 include mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint, with preparatory having the highest frequency excluding the last situation where mood derivable is the most frequently used strategy. In situation 12 same strategies are

employed except for mood derivable and instead mild hint is applied. All five strategies

are used in situation 13 (see table 4.21).

Table 4.21: Request strategy head acts regarding interlanguage group's social power

DCT	Strategies	Social power			
		Power difference		No power difference	
		n	%	n	%
8	Mood derivable	4	4	-	-
	Scope stating	6	6		
	Preparatory	82	82		
	Strong hint	8	8		
9	Mood derivable	5	5	-	-
	Scope stating	3	3		
	Preparatory	83	83		
	Strong hint	9	9		
10	Mood derivable	3	3	-	-
	Scope stating	2	2		
	Preparatory	81	81		
	Strong hint	14	14		
11	Mood derivable	10	10	-	-
	Scope stating	10	10		
	Preparatory	73	73		
	Strong hint	7	7		
			-		
12	scope stating	1	1	-	-
	Preparatory	91	91		
	Strong hint	6	6		
	Mild hint	2	2		
13	Mood derivable	-	-	6	6
	Scope stating			2	2
	Preparatory			84	84
	Strong hint			7	7
	Mild hint			1	1
14	Mood derivable	-	-	56	56
	Scope stating			7	7
	Preparatory			32	32
	Strong hint			5	5

4.2.4 Comparison of the requestive head act strategies used by BNS and FNS

As the table 4.22 indicates both groups have benefitted from the same strategies,

however, with different frequencies. Yet, the preparatory strategy in both groups has the

highest percentage. This strategy is employed by BNS with 78.57% and used by FNS

with 77.14%. The similarity of frequencies can be translated as the similarity of the

choice of request strategies concerning social power by both groups.

Table 4.22: Comparison of strategies used by both groups of BNS and FNS regarding social power

Strategies used by BNS	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Strategies used by FNS	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	12	17.14	Mood derivable	7	10
Scope stating	1	1.42	Scope stating	3	4.28
Preparatory	55	78.57	preparatory	54	77.14
Strong hint	2	2.85	Strong hint	6	8.57
Total	70	100	Total	70	100

To clarify the use of head act strategies used by both groups and the similarities and

differences, table 4.23 can shed some light on this topic.

Table 4.23: Comparison of BNS and FNS frequency of strategies used regarding social power

DCT	Strategies FNS	Social power				DCT	Strategies BNS	Social power			
		Power difference		No power difference				Power difference		No power difference	
		n	%	n	%			n	%	n	%
8	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-	8	Preparatory	10	100		
	Scope stating	1	10								
	Preparatory	8	80								
9	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	9	Preparatory	10	100		
10	Preparatory	10	100	-	-	10	preparatory	10	100		
11	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-	11	Mood derivable	2	20		
	Scope stating	1	10				Scope stating	1	10		
	Preparatory	6	60				Preparatory	7	70		

	Strong hint	2	20								
12	Mood derivable	1	10	-	-	12	Preparatory	10	100		
	scope stating	1	10								
	Preparatory	8	80								
13	Mood derivable	-	-	1	10	13	Mood derivable			1	10
	Preparatory			7	70		Preparatory			7	70
	Strong hint			2	20		Strong hint			2	20
14	Mood derivable	-	-	3	30	14	Mood derivable			9	90
	Preparatory			5	50		Preparatory			1	10
	Strong hint			2	20						

"Table 4.23 (cont.)"

Considering power difference between the speaker and the interlocutor regarding request, both groups have chosen preparatory for the 9th and the 10th situations. However, in situation 8, BNS opt for preparatory where the other group chooses mood derivable and scope stating, yet having preparatory as the highest frequency. In situation 11 as well, both groups show the use of three strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, and preparatory, however, the FNS have also used strong hint. The next situation is interesting due to the use of preparatory strategy with 100% by BNS, but their counterpart chooses three strategies of mood derivable, scope stating and preparatory.

In situation 13, presenting no power difference, it is shown that both groups opt for the same strategies and interestingly same frequencies. However, in the following situation, although having no power difference, the FNS chooses mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint, where the other group only benefits from the first two. Moreover, the BNS

prefers mood derivable with 90% where FNS applies 30% of that strategy and 50% preparatory. It can be seen that although preparatory has higher frequency of use between the two groups (excluding the last DCT), BNS tends to use this strategy more than the FNS and Iranians tend to employ other strategies like mood derivable (second most frequent) and strong hint. In this regard, considering direct requests as sign of impoliteness, if IL group transfers from the L1, they should be considered rude and impolite as Eslami-Rasekh (2008) states.

4.2.5 Comparison of the requesting strategy head acts used by BNS, FNS, IL group

According to table 4.25, IL group has used five requesting strategies, namely mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, strong hint, and mild hint. The last strategy mentioned is not employed by either of the native groups, and this can be considered as interlanguage developed by the language learners; however, its frequency is of 0.42% which is not a significant quantity considering the other strategies. In case of the most frequently used strategy, preparatory, IL has applied it with 75.1% which is lower than the same strategy used by BNS (78.57%) and FNS (77.14%). It is not possible to determine any transfer from the first language to L2. Regarding the second most frequently used strategy, mood derivable, IL group opts for 12%, FNS 10%, and BNS 17.14%. Considering the frequencies, the frequency of use by IL group is closer to that of BNS. Yet, the difference is not of great quantity.

The third strategy employed by all three groups, is strong hint. The respective percentage regarding the IL group is 8% which is not far from the frequency used by FNS (8.57%) and distant from BNS's 2.85%. In this case the probability of transfer from L1 to L2 may be considered. The next strategy, scope stating, has been used by IL group

with 4.42% which is close to the percentage used by the FNS of 4.28% and in distance

from BNS's 1.42%. Here also the topic of transfer from L1 can be discussed. IL group

has employed the strategy of mild hint (0.42%) which cannot be seen in the other two

groups. As it was mentioned earlier this can be a sign of interlanguage development by

the language learners. Detailed information regarding overall percentages of strategies

used by the three groups can be seen in table 4.24 (appendix H).

Table 4.25: Comparison of the strategies used by BNS, FNS, IL group and overall frequencies

Strategies used by BNS	n	%	Strategies used by FNS	n	%	Strategies used by IL	n	%
Mood derivable	12	17.14	Mood derivable	7	10	Mood derivable	84	12
Scope stating	1	1.42	Scope stating	3	4.28	Scope stating	31	4.42
Preparatory	55	78.57	preparatory	54	77.14	Preparatory	526	75.1
Strong hint	2	2.85	Strong hint	6	8.57	Strong hint	56	8
						Mild hint	3	0.42
Total	70	100	Total	70	100	Total	700	100

In regards to social power and the strategies used presented in table 4.24 (Appendix H),

situations 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are designed to study power differences, in the sense that

the speaker (participant) has lower social power than the interlocutor. Analysis of such

data indicate that in case of situation 8, where the participant needs to ask for extension

on a project from a male instructor, they use the four strategies of mood derivable, scope

stating, preparatory, and strong hint, with preparatory having the highest percentage of

82%. However, the BNS only benefit from preparatory and the FNS apply mood

derivable, scope stating, and preparatory. In that regard, the FNS also shows the highest

percentage of 80% belonging to preparatory strategy. In this situation the performance and choice of strategies by IL is closer to FNS.

Both baseline groups choose the preparatory strategy for situations 9 and 10. IL group, however, applies mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint. Considering the frequencies of the strategies used by the IL group, preparatory has the highest percentage in both situations. This strategy is applied with 83% in situation 9 and 81% in situation 10. As table 4.24 illustrates, baseline groups unlike the IL group do not apply strategies of mood derivable, strong hint, and scope stating, which may be an indication of learners developing interlanguage.

In situation 11, IL group and FNS both use same strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory and strong hint, with the first two strategies of same percentage (10%), where the BNS employ three of the mentioned strategies excluding strong hint. However, regarding the preparatory strategy, the performance of the IL group (73%) is closer to that of BNS (70%) and more than FNS (60%). The last situation concerning with power difference, presents BNS tendency of using preparatory (100%) where FNS opt for mood derivable, scope stating, and preparatory. In this situation, as illustrated in table 4.24, IL group uses strategies of scope stating, preparatory, strong hint and mild hint, eliminating one of the strategies used by FNS and applying three strategies more than the BNS. The use of mild hint with 2% should be considered as it has not been employed by other groups.

The last two situations regarding no power difference are the evidence for the similarity of strategies used by FNS and BNS. However, the IL group has employed and added different strategies tackling with such requests. In situation 13, mood derivable, preparatory and strong hint have been used by baseline groups, however, IL group has not only employed them but also added two other strategies of scope stating and mild hint. The use of mild hint can be an evidence supporting Taghizade (2011) and Jalilifar (2006), regarding the over use of politeness strategies by Iranian students at advance level and an objection to Eslimi-Rasekh's (2008) claim that Iranians are considered to be rude.

In the last situation, BNS employ strategies of mood derivable (90%) and preparatory (10%). FNS opt for preparatory (50%), mood derivable (30%), and strong hint (20). According to table 4.24, IL group, use all the strategies employed by the baseline groups along with the strategy of scope stating (7%). In this situation the strategy of mood derivable has the highest percentage between BNS and IL group with respective frequencies of 90% and 56%. FNS on the hand, employ preparatory as the highest strategy with 50% followed by mood derivable (30%).

4.3 Summary

This chapter presented and compared requesting head act strategies used by Iranian baseline, British baseline, and Iranian graduate students (IL). In this chapter the use of strategies were studied in detail from the perspective of degree of familiarity and social power in attempt to determine any transfer from the first language to the second language along with examining the similarities and differences among these three groups regarding the use of requestive head acts. The interlanguage of the Iranian graduate

students has also been studied and instances of the production of interlanguage in their requests have been identified.

As mentioned in section 4.1 and its subsections, regarding the use of requestive head act strategies by Iranian graduate students from the perspective of degree of familiarity, preparatory is the most frequently used strategy among all three groups. BNS employ this strategy more frequently than other groups with 82.85%, IL group opts for this strategy with 67.42% and FNS use this strategy with 44.28%.

Mood derivable is the second most frequent used strategy by all groups. This strategy is used with the highest frequency by FNS (42.85%). IL group uses this strategy with 16.57 % and the BNS employ this strategy with 8.57%.

The third most frequent strategy among the three groups is strong hint. BNs and FNS opt for this strategy with respective frequencies of 8.57% and 10%, however, the IL group shows the highest frequency with 13. 85%.

Scope stating, on the other hand, is only employed by FNS and IL group with respective frequencies of 2. 85% and 2%. The use of this strategy only by FNS and IL, can be a sign of transfer from L1 to L2, should the frequency be considered significant. This strategy is used in situations 1 and 2 (high degree of familiarity) by FNS and IL group. The IL group applied this strategy in situation 5 with the frequency of 7%. Provided the frequency significant in this situation, it may be a sign of interlanguage.

Strategy of mild hint (0.14%) is also employed by the IL group in situation 2. considering the frequency significant; it may also be sign of interlanguage.

Regarding the use of request strategy from the perspective of social power, all three groups of participants opt for strategies of preparatory, mood derivable, strong hint, and scope stating. Among common strategies used by all groups, preparatory strategy is the most frequently used strategy and strong hint is the least frequently used strategy. However, IL group opts for mild hint with frequency of 0.42% in situations 12 and 13 which is not used by either of the baseline groups. Considering the frequency of this strategy significant, it may be a sign of interlanguage.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Presentation

This chapter aims at elaborating on the results of the study and their interpretation. In the following section, 5.2, and its subsections, the research questions are discussed and an attempt on drawing conclusions is made. Section 5.3 includes some pedagogical implications and the subsequent section presents some suggestions regarding the future studies.

5.1 Discussion of Results

Having presented the results of the study in the previous chapter, this section aims at discussing and interpreting them, and connecting the analyzed results with the research questions presented in chapter one.

5.1.1 Research question 1*: What are the requesting head act strategies used by Iranian graduate students (IL)?*

The examination of the requesting head act strategies used by Iranian graduate students and their comparison to baseline data was one of initially considered queries of this study. In that regard, the collected data from all 14 given situations were coded according to CCSARP, analyzed, and studied thoroughly. The obtained results given in Table 5.1, illustrate the fact that the IL group benefitted from five strategies namely mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, strong hint, and mild hint. More specifically,

preparatory has been the most frequently used strategy (74.30%) followed by strong hint (11.38%) and mood derivable (11.07%). Mild hint, on the other hand, shows the lowest frequency.

Table 5.1: Total frequency of requesting head act strategies used by IL group

Requesting strategies used by IL	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mood derivable	144	11.07
Scope stating	38	2.92
Preparatory	966	74.30
Strong hint	148	11.38
Mild hint	4	0.30
Total	1300	100

Regarding the comparison of mentioned strategies among the three groups (British native speakers, Farsi native speakers, and the IL group) presented in table 5.2, the data reveals that the BNS have generally used the preparatory strategy (80.71%), which is of a higher frequency than that of the IL (74.30%). FNS have also used this strategy with higher frequency among the strategies used, however, in comparison with the other two groups, the frequency of this strategy (60.71%), is lower than the frequency of use by other groups. Marti's (2006) study of German learners of Turkish also has similar findings as the preparatory strategy is also the most frequently used strategy. Taghizade (2011) conducts a cross-sectional study and in her findings regarding advance level students, she reports that preparatory has the highest frequency of use.

Mood derivable is the second most frequently used strategy (Table 5.2). Iranian graduate students use this strategy with 11.07%. It should be noted that BNS (12.85) and FNS (26.42) have higher frequencies regarding this strategy.

Strong hint has also been used by all three groups, yet, data on interlanguage group reveals that these participants have employed this strategy more than the others. They have also applied strong hint with higher frequency than the previously mentioned strategy, mood derivable, unlike BNS and FNS. In other words, strong hint is the second most frequent strategy used by IL group.11.38% of the strategies used by IL group belongs to strong hint, which is of a closer distance to that of FNS with the frequency of 9.28%. This may be an evidence to support Jalilifar's (2009) cross-sectional study, claiming Iranian advance level language learners tend to over use the non-conventionally direct strategies regarding advance level students.

Between the baseline groups scope stating is detected to have the lowest frequency. BNS have used this strategy with 0.007% and the FNS with 3.57. The IL group shows percentage of 2.92%. The comparison reveals that the frequency of use regarding this strategy by the IL group is very close to that of FNS and very different from the BNS. In this regard, it can be concluded that transfer from L1 to L2 can be probable.

IL group's use of one extra strategy, which has not been used by the baseline groups, namely mild hint (0.30%), marks the prospect of an interlanguage used specifically by the language learners. This strategy is also detected in Jalilifar's (2009) cross-sectional study in case of advance English learners. He pinpoints the use of this strategy as evidence on pragmatic transfer.

Table 5.2 Comparison of requesting head act strategies used by BNS, FNS, and IL in general

Request strategies by BNS	n	%	Request strategies by FNS	n	%	Request strategies by IL	n	%
Mood derivable	18	12.85	Mood derivable	37	26.42	Mood derivable	144	11.07
Scope stating	1	0.007	Scope stating	5	3.57	Scope stating	38	2.92
Preparatory	113	80.71	Preparatory	85	60.71	Preparatory	966	74.30
Strong hint	8	5.71	Strong hint	13	9.28	Strong hint	148	11.38
						Mild hint	4	0.30
Total	140	100	Total	140	100	Total	1300	100

5.1.2 Research question 2: *What are the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students in relation with degree of familiarity?*

As mentioned in section 4.1, situations 1 to 7 examine degree of familiarity in three levels of high, medium, none familiarity. Regarding the high familiarity level, situations 1 and 2 are studied; situations 3 and 4 looked at no familiarity and the last three in this category, scanned medium level of familiarity. Generally, the IL group employs five head act strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, strong hint, and mild hint. According to table 4.7, preparatory is of 67.42%, mood derivable 16.57%, strong hint 13.85%, scope stating 2%, and mild hint 0.14%. Regarding high degree of familiarity, the speaker is expected to borrow an expensive camera from a best friend (situation 1) and borrow money for lunch from a best friend (situation 2). For the former, the IL group employs strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint (see table 4.12). Same strategies are also applied by the FNS; however the BNS only use preparatory. In respect to borrowing money from best friend for lunch, the IL group opts for same strategies along with mild hint; yet, the baseline groups show the same response.

Consequently, regarding requestive head act strategies from the perspective of high degree of familiarity, the IL group employs similar strategies with FNS. Preparatory strategy is the only strategy in common among all three groups and it is the most frequently used strategy as well.

Situations 3 and 4, with the former asking a stranger for direction, and the latter borrowing a pen from a stranger, represent no degree of familiarity. In this regard in situation 3, the IL group employs mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint, the same as FNS, and BNS choose preparatory and strong hint. IL and FNS groups apply the same strategies for situation 4, however, BNS only use preparatory to borrow a pen.

In regards with no familiarity, similar to high degree of familiarity, the strategies used by the Iranian graduate students are similar to those of the FNS. In this category as well, preparatory strategy has the highest frequency among other strategies in regards with all three groups.

Requesting from a friend to help for moving, asking an acquaintance for time, and borrowing a dictionary from an acquaintance are the subjects of situations 5, 6, and 7 which present medium degree of familiarity. As table 4.11 illustrates, mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint are used by IL group requesting help for moving out. In this situation, BNS use preparatory and mood derivable and the FNS applied mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint. In this DCT the strategies used by FNS are similar to IL group except for scope stating. In situation 6, a situation where the speaker needs to ask for time, the IL group uses mood derivable, preparatory, and strong

hint, similarly the BNS also use the same strategies, however, the FNS opt for mood derivable. The last DCT of this section is to borrow a dictionary from an acquaintance. For this situation, IL and FNS groups choose strategies of mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint. The BNS, however, opts for preparatory.

To sum up, it can be said that generally, the choice of strategies by the Iranian graduate students are similar to that of FNS except for situation 6, where the BNS and the Iranian graduate students opt for mood derivable, preparatory and strong hint. As a result, it can be said that regarding the choice of request strategies and social factor of degree of familiarity, the findings of the study reveal that Iranian graduate students do not perform similar to BNS regarding the choice of strategies. However, they mainly opt for indirect request strategies with high frequency of use. The results are similar to the study of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) and Iragui (1996) as the participants in all three studies, opt for preparatory strategy mainly with higher frequency.

5.1.3 Research question 3: *What are the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students regarding social power?*

As stated in section 4.2 requesting head act strategies used by the participants are examined throughout situations 8 to 14. Considering the focus of the study, an academic setting, the relation between the speaker and the hearer is studied hierarchically, yet the speaker either has equal (librarian, female staff member) or lower (professor, advisor, and instructor) social status towards the listener. In that regard the situations are divided into two groups of power difference and no power difference. The former is examined through situations 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, and the latter in the last two situations.

General use of request strategies, among all three groups of participants, is displayed in table 4.23. Mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory and strong hint are employed by all three groups. However, the IL group also makes use of mild hint which as it is mentioned in section 4.3.5, can be a sign of interlanguage development by language learners.

Asking for an extension on a deadline from an instructor is the topic of situation 8 regarding social power. The IL group applies strategies of mood derivable (4%), scope stating (6%), preparatory (82%), and strong hint (8%) which are also used by the FNS except for strong hint. It should be mentioned that the frequencies vary with the IL group as mood derivable and scope stating are used by 10% and the preparatory with 80%. As the data reveals, BNS on the other hand, only use preparatory requesting in this situation. The next two situations which require the participants to ask for a makeup exam and borrow a reference book from an instructor are responded to by the same strategies used by the IL group for the previous situation. The baseline data however, opts for preparatory.

Requesting for thesis consultation appointment is the topic of situation 11 where both groups of IL and FNS exercise four strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint. Regarding the first two strategies, the frequency of use by both groups is 10%. The preparatory strategy, however, is employed by FNS with 60% and IL with 73%. 7% and 2% are frequencies used in relation with strong hint by IL and FNS respectively. For this situation BNS opt for three strategies of mood derivable (20%), scope stating (10%) and preparatory (70%). The last situation concerning power

difference is to ask a professor for recommendation letter. In responses elicited from this situation, BNS only employ preparatory, FNS and IL group also choose preparatory with respective frequencies of 80% and 91%. The FNS use mood derivable and scope stating with equal frequencies of 10%, where the IL group uses this strategy of 1% for the former and 6% for the latter. Mild hint is also detected of 2% by the IL.

Considering no social power, situation 13 addresses a librarian and a request for help to locate a book. For this situation both baseline groups choose the same strategies of mood derivable, preparatory, and strong hint, with same frequencies. On the other hand, the IL chooses all five mentioned strategies with preparatory having the highest frequency of 84% and mild hint having the lowest of 1%. Situation 14 is on the subject of asking for an appointment from a staff member to visit the chair. Analyzed data reveals that mood derivable and preparatory are the common strategies used among all three groups, however, the IL group also benefitted from strong hint and scope stating. The FNS use strong hint as well.

 The interesting aspect of the analysis of situation 14 is that both IL and FNS groups have high frequency regarding the use of mood derivable where the BNS group emphasizes on the use of preparatory. Considering mood derivable a part of direct level of requesting, and considering direct requests as impolite form of this strategy, Iranian language learners can be considered pragmatically incompetent and socially impudent (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005).

To sum up, regarding social power, Iranian graduate students employ five strategies of preparatory, mood derivable, strong hint, scope stating, and mild hint. However, the choice of strategies is mainly different from the strategies used by BNS. This is in contrast with Byon (2004), Jalilifar (2009), and Rue, Zhang and Shin (2007) where their results support the relationship between the use of indirect strategies and social power.

5.1.4 Research question 4: *Is there any evidence of pragmatic transfer in the request strategies used by Iranian graduate students?*

Regarding pragmatic transfer from the first language (Farsi) to the second language (English), two instances can be discussed. As it is mentioned in section 5.2, scope stating and strong hint are the two strategies that the comparison of their frequencies according to the analyzed data, reveals plausible transfer from L1 to L2. Having studied the strategy of scope stating across the three groups of participants, 2.92% used by IL group is closer to 3.57% employed by FNS and in very distant from 0.07% which the BNS exercised. The frequency of the use of strong hint with reference to IL group (11.38%) also follows a similar pattern with the previous strategy in terms of having a closer frequency to that of FNS (9.28%) than BNS (5.71%). Yet the percentage is even higher than the one of FNS which might need further exploration.

It can be concluded that, regarding the choice of requesting strategies from the perspective of degree of familiarity, the strategy of scope stating employed by FNS and IL group can be a sign of transfer from L1 to L2 as the BNS does not apply this strategy in situations 1 to 7. This finding is similar to that of Al-Issa (2003) studying Arabic learners of English and Pearson (2006) regarding Spanish language learners. On the other hand, considering the use of requestive head act strategies by the IL group with

respect to social power, no sign of transfer from L1 to L2 can be detected in this study. This is similar to the findings of a study by Marti (2006) where no signs of transfer were detected.

5.1.5 Research question 5: *What similarities and differences are displayed in the use of request strategies between British native speakers (BNS) and Iranian graduate students (IL)?*

As it is displayed in table 5.3, both groups opt for preparatory with the highest frequency of use with BNS (80.71%) and IL (71.28%). The analysis reveals that the IL group cannot perform this strategy with the same competency as the baseline group of British native speakers, though, the similarity is close. The second most frequently used strategy is the mood derivable. BNS show 12.85% and the IL group 14.28%. In this category, the IL group tends to use this strategy with higher frequency than the BNS.

Table 5.3: comparison of the strategies used by BNS and IL group

Strategies used by BNS	n	%	Strategies used by IL	n	%
Mood derivable	18	12.85	Mood derivable	200	14.28
Scope stating	1	0.71	Scope stating	45	3.21
Preparatory	113	80.71	Preparatory	998	71.28
Strong hint	8	5.71	Strong hint	153	10.92
			Mild hint	4	0.28
Total	140	100	Total	1400	100

Strong hint is the third most frequently used strategy according to the analysis of the data (see table 5.3). Regarding this strategy, there is a noticeable difference in frequency of use. The BNS show 5.71% where the IL group illustrates nearly double that amount of 10.92%. The interlanguage group, similar to the previous strategy, shows an overuse of this strategy. Mild hint is only employed by the IL group and neither of the baseline

groups has applied this strategy. However, the frequency of use respectively is 0.28%. Should the frequency be significant, as it is mentioned in section 5.1.1, it can be an evidence of interlanguage production by language learners and can be proof of not sufficient pragmatic proficiency of the respective group.

5.2 Summary

The present study aimed at examining the request head act strategies used by Iranian graduate students from three perspectives: degree of familiarity, social power and any possible transfer from L1 to L2. In that regard a DCT of 14 situations adapted from Dong (2009) was administered. The DCT includes 14 situations, the first 7 situations are to examine requesting head act strategies in respect with degree of familiarity and the second half is to inspect the mentioned strategies in relation with social power.

To be able to analyze the data accurately, the IL data gathered was cross examined with two baseline groups of BNS and FNS according to CCSARSP coding manual presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The results revealed the similarity of the strategies used by baseline groups. Both BNS and FNS opted for four strategies of mood derivable, scope stating, preparatory, and strong hint throughout the DCT, however, the frequency of use and the choice of strategies in some situations varied between both groups which can be a support for the universality of politeness and use of speech acts presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984).

The IL group, on the other hand, not only applied the mentioned four strategies used by the baseline groups, but also employed a fifth strategy called mild hint. As this specific strategy was not administered by either of BNS and FNS, it was considered as a

probable evidence for the development of interlanguage. This is in contrast with the findings of Jalilifar (2009) regarding the choice of mild hint strategy by English baseline group and the IL group. In his study, the English baseline group opts for the use of mild hint strategy as well as the advance level Iranian students. Regarding the common strategies used by the IL group, evidence of transfer from L1 to L2 was detected.

Regarding degree of familiarity, all three groups employed strategies of preparatory, mood derivable, and strong hint. However, FNS and IL group benefited from an extra strategy, scope stating, which can be considered as sign transfer from L1 to L2. Iranian graduate students also use the strategy of mild hint, which is not applied by either of the baseline groups.

On the topic of the choice of request strategies from the perspective of social power, the analysis exposed similar strategy use by all three groups, however, different frequencies. Furthermore, Iranian graduate students also used strategy of mild hint. It can be concluded that concerning social power, no signs of transfer were detected.

Consequently, due to the evidence of pragmatic transfer regarding degree of familiarity and the use of mild hint strategy by the Iranian graduate students as proof of interlanguage production, need for further development of the requesting pragmatic competency in case of Iranian graduate students can be suggested.

5.3 Pedagogical Implications

This study provides pragmatic data on the production and elicitation of requestive head act strategies by Iranian graduate students in English. The findings of this study are

hoped to be helpful to those who are involved in curriculum designing and material development in related in Iran in order to study the strength and the shortcomings of the current curriculum from pragmatic point of view.

The results are also hoped to be helpful to pinpoint the limitations of the currently used educational material in English teaching classes for both receptive and production skills. As the focus of this study is on the use of requesting head act strategies from the perspective of social factors the outcome of the study may shed some light on the importance of focus on oral communication in different contexts specifically regarding degree of familiarity as the results support transfer from the L1 to L2.

Considering Politzer's (1980) idea that pragmatic competence is not initiated automatically and it requires education from the beginning stages of language learning, language teachers may benefit from the outcome of this study and present speech act strategies from the beginning stages of language learning process to prevent such shortcomings.

As the results of this study revealed, Iranian graduate students transfer requesting head act strategies from L1 to L2 regarding situations involving different degrees of familiarity. Should the administrators in Iran find the findings of this study significant, they may design English teaching materials with focus on the correct use of request strategies.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study focused on request strategies used by Iranian graduate students in terms of the variables of degree of familiarity and social power. However, scarcity of empirical data regarding cross-cultural studies on request strategies regarding Iranian language learners may imply the need for further research.

Furthermore, due to the number of participants and the context of this study, the results cannot be generalized. However, for future studies, it is hoped that the findings would be helpful to generalize the information.

Considering the literature and the current study, using DCTs as data collection instrument, future studies can benefit from a triangulation, applying various instruments to achieve more reliable and valid results.

Finally, on the literature, mainly cross-sectional studies have been carried out to determine the progression of pragmatic competence regarding Iranians. The lack of individual pragmatic studies on different competency levels is one of the reasons for the current study. However, research on different pragmatic proficiency levels could also shed some light on this topic in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: English Consent form

This study aims at investigating request strategies used by Iranian EFL-learners of English to determine their competency of requesting in an academic setting. The following is a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with 14 situations which your answers to these situations would make this study possible. The DCT consists of two sections. In the first section some background questions are presented and the second part includes situations which one might face in an academic setting that requires requesting. Please read the situations and imagine they are real and write down your answers. It should be noted that your answers will be kept confidential.

Thank you for your contribution.

Participant's signature

_____

Appendix B: Farsi consent form

هدف از این تحقیق بررسی چگونگی درخواست کردن دانشجویان ایرانی به زبان اینگلیسی در محیط دانشگاهی میباشد. این پرسشنامه شامل ۱۴ سوال میباشد. در قسمت اول سوالاتی در رابطه با سن، شغل، و محل تولد انول شده است و قسمت دوم شاره حال سوالات میباشد. لطفآ سوالات را خنده و به آنها پاسخ دهید. لازم به ذکر است که پاسخهای شما محرمانه نگاه داشته خواهد شد.

با سپاس از همکاری شما

امضا

Appendix C: Original DCT

English questionnaire:
Thank you for participating in my survey. We have created 14 situations. Please try to imagine that these situations are real and please write down what you would say in these situations in real life.
First part: Your information:
Age: □18 □19 □20s □ 30s □40s □50s
Gender: □Male   □ Female
Are you an Undergraduate or graduate student? Please circle: Undergraduate Graduate
Which state of The USA were you born?
Second part: The **14** created situations:

1a. You are a student. Your best friend has just bought an expensive new camera. You are asking your best friend to lend it to you, since you are going to a club activity this weekend. What would you say to your best friend: …………………………………………………………… ………………………………………………………….	1b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
2a. You are a student. You are asking your friend to lend you $10 for lunch, since you forgot to bring your wallet and you are very hungry now. What would you say to your best friend: ………………………………………………………….. …………………………………………………………..	2b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
3a. You are a new student on the campus looking for the medical center. You are asking a male student walking toward you where it is. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………..	3b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
4a. You are a student in a computer lab. You reached in your school bag for a pen, but you	4b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1--

could not find one. You see a girl next to you with extra pens. What would you say to her: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	-5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
5b. You are moving out next weekend. You would like to ask your friend to help you move. What would you say: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	5b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
6a. You need to know what time it is now and you see that a female classmate sitting behind of you has a watch. You have only talked occasionally with her and do not know her very well. What would you say to her: ………………………………………………….. …………………………………………………..	6b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
7a. In a class when you are reading an article, you come across an unknown word and you see that a male classmate sitting next to you has a concise dictionary on his desk, so you are asking him if you could borrow it for a second. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	7b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
8a. Due to some family-related reasons you are not able to finish a paper on time. You would like to ask your male instructor for permission to extend the deadline. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	8b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks.

	1 2 3 4 5
9a. You were sick and missed your exam, so you are asking your female instructor if she would give you a make-up exam. What would you say to her: . …………………………………………………….. ……………………………………………………	9b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
10a. You are asking your advisor who is a male professor if he could lend you the reference book, since you could not find it in the library. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	10b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
11a. You are a student. You want to make an appointment with your advisor who is a female professor regarding your thesis. You see her walking in the hallway next to the department office. What would you say to her: …………………………………………………….. ……………………………………………………..	11b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
12a. You need a letter of recommendation for a job application, and you would like to ask your instructor who is a male professor if he would write a letter of recommendation for you. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	12b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
13a. You are a student. You are asking a middle-aged male librarian to help you find a book which you could not spot on	13b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1---5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all

the shelf. What would you say to him: …………………………………………………… …………………………………………………..	the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5
14a. You are a student. You are asking a female staff member working in the Department Chair's Office if the Chair is in the office right now. What would you say to her: …………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………	14b. Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1--5. 1 is the LEAST imposition all the way to 5, 5 is the most imposition. Could you circle the one you choose? Thanks. 1 2 3 4 5

Appendix D: DCT administered to IL group

English Discourse Completion Task
Thank you for participating in this survey. **14 situations** have been created for this study. Please try to imagine that these situations are real and please write down what you would say in these situations in real life.
First part: your information:
Age: ☐ 18 ☐19 ☐20s ☐30s ☐ 40s ☐50s
Gender: ☐ Male   ☐Female
Are you a MA or PHD student?   ☐ MA/MS   ☐ PhD
Which state of Iran were you born?
Second part: The **14** created situations:
1 You are a student. Your best friend has just bought an expensive new camera. You are asking your best friend to lend it to you, since you are going to a club activity this weekend. What would you say to your best friend:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

2 You are a student. You are asking your friend to lend you 10 TL for lunch, since you forgot to bring your wallet and you are very hungry now. What would you say to your best friend:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

3 You are a new student on the campus looking for the medical center. You are asking a male student walking toward you where it is. What would you say to him:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

4 You are a student in a computer lab. You reached in your school bag for a pen, but you could not find one. You see a girl next to you with extra pens. What would you say to her:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

5 You are moving out next weekend. You would like to ask your friend to help you move. What would you say:
………………………………………………………………….……………………………......
6 You need to know what time it is now and you see that a female classmate sitting behind of you has a watch. You have only talked occasionally with her and do not know her very well. What would you say to her:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

7 In a class when you are reading an article, you come across an unknown word and you see that a male classmate sitting next to you has a concise dictionary on his desk, so you are asking him if you could borrow it for a second. What would you say to him:
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

8 Due to some family-related reasons you are not able to finish a paper on time. You would like to ask your male instructor for permission to extend the deadline. What would you say to him:

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

9 You were sick and missed your exam, so you are asking your female instructor if she would give you a make-up exam. What would you say to her:

………………………………………………………………………………………….

10 You are asking your advisor, who is a male professor if he could lend you the reference book, since you could not find it in the library. What would you say to him:

………………………………………………………………………………………….

11 You are a student. You want to make an appointment with your advisor who is a female professor regarding your thesis. You see her walking in the hallway next to the department office. What would you say to her:

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

12 You need a letter of recommendation for a job application, and you would like to ask your instructor who is a male professor if he would write a letter of recommendation for you. What would you say to him:

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

13 You are a student. You are asking a middle-aged male librarian to help you find a book which you could not spot on the shelf. What would you say to him:

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

14 You are a student. You are asking a female staff member working in the Department Chair's Office if the Chair is in the office right now. What would you say to her:

……………………………………………………………………………………….......
.

Appendix E: DCT Administered to FNS

با تشکر از شرکت شما در این تحقیق. ۱۴ مناسبت مختلف در این پرسشنامه مطرح شده است. لطفاً این مناسبتها را خوانده و سوال مورده نظر را با در نظر گرفتن حقیقی بودن این شرایط بنویسید. در جدول روبروی هر سوال از ۱ تا ۵ احتمال اتفاق افتادن هر مناسبت را با در نظر گرفتن ۱ کمترین احتمال اتفاق و ۵ بالا ترین احتمالل لطفآ مشخس نمایید.

قسمت اول :

سن :

جنسیت

شغل : محل تولد :

قسمت دوم

۱. تصور کنید که دانشجو هستید و دوست صمیمی تان بتازگی یک دوربین عکاسی خریده است . شما میخواهید از دوستتان درخواست کنید که دوربین را برای شرکت در یک فعالیت این آخره هفته قرض بگیرید.از دوستتان چطوردرخواست میکنید؟

۲.تصور کنید شما دانشجو هستید و کیف ا پولتان را در منزل جا گذاشتید. به همین دلیل میخواهید از دوستتان برای ناهار ۱۰۰۰۰ تومان پول قرض بگیرید. چگونه از دوستتان درخواست میکنید؟

۳. تصور کنید که در دانشگاه دانشجوی جدید هستید و میخاهیس به کلینیک دانشگاه مراجه کنید اما آدرس را نمیدانید.شما میخاهیس از یک دانشجوی پسر که به سمت شما درحال راه رفتن است آدرس را بپرسید. چه سوالی از این رهگذر میپرسید؟

۴. تصور کنید کا شما دانشجو هستید در کلاس آزمایشگاه کامپیوتر. متوجه میشوید که خودکار ا خود را در منزل جا گذاشتید. دختر دانشجویی که کنار شما نشسته است خودکار اضافه دارد. چطور از اودرخواست میکنید

۵. شما میخواهید آخر هفته اسبابکشی کنید و میخواهید از دوست خود درخواست کنید که به شما کمک کند. چه سوالی از او میپرسید؟

۶. شما میخواهید ساعت را از دختر دانشجویی که پشت سر شما نشسته بپرسید. چه سوالی مطرح میکنید؟

۷. در کلاس انگلیسی در حال خواندن یک مقاله هستید. اما برای دانستن مفهوم یک لغت نیاز به لغتنامه دارد. متوجه میشوید که یکی از همکلاسی های شما یک لغتنامه دارد. از این همکلاسی برای قرض گرفتن لغتنامه چه سوالی می پرسید؟

۸. در دانشگاه به دلیل خانوادگی موفق به اتمام یکی از پروژه های خود نشده اید و میخواهید از استاد مرد این درس درخواست ا زمان اضافه برای اتمام این پروژه بکنید. چه سوالی از استاد ا خود می پرسید ؟

۹. شما به دلیل بیماری سر یکی از امتحانات خود حاضرنشدید. میخواهید از استاد زن این درس درخواست کنید که یک امتحان دیگر از شما گرفته شود. چه سوالی مطرح میکنید

۱۰. برای یک پروژه درسی شما نیاز به یک کتاب دارید که در کتابخانهموفق به پیدا کردن این کتاب نشده اید. میخواهید از استاد راهنمای خود که یک مرد است این کتاب را قرض بگیرید. چه سوالی مطرح میکنید؟

۱۱. در رابطه با درس پایاننامه خود میخواهید از استاد راهنما وقت ملاقات بگیرید. در راهروی دانشگاه با استاد خود روبرو میشوید. چه سوالی مطرح میکنید؟

۱۲. شما برای پیدا کردن کار نیاز به یک معرفی نامه از طرف استاد مرد خود دارید. چه سوالی از استاد خود میپرسید ؟

۱۳. در کتابخانه دانشگاه به دنبال کتابی میگردید که موفق به پیدا کردن آن نشده اید. میخواهید از یک راهنمای مرد برای پیدا کردن این کتاب کمک بگیرید. چگونه درخواست خود را بیان میکنید

۱۴. شویک دانشجو هستید و میخواهید با ریس دانشگاه ملاقاتی داشته باشید. برای گرفتن اجازه ملاقات باید از خانوم منشی وقت بگیرید. چه سوالی مطرح میکنید؟

Appendix F: DCT administered to BNS

English questionnaire:
Thank you for participating in my survey. We have created 14 situations. Please try to imagine that these situations are real and please write down what you would say in these situations in real life.
First part: Your information:
Age: ☐18 ☐19   ☐20s ☐ 30s ☐40s ☐50s
Gender: ☐Male   ☐ Female
Are you an Undergraduate or graduate student? Please circle: Undergraduate Graduate
Which state of The UK were you born?
Occupation:
Second part: The **14** created situations:
1 You are a student. Your best friend has just bought an expensive new camera. You are asking your best friend to lend it to you, since you are going to a club activity this weekend. What would you say to your best friend:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

2 You are a student. You are asking your friend to lend you 10 pounds for lunch, since you forgot to bring your wallet and you are very hungry now. What would you say to your best friend:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

3 You are a new student on the campus looking for the medical center. You are asking a male student walking toward you where it is. What would you say to him:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

4 You are a student in a computer lab. You reached in your school bag for a pen, but you could not find one. You see a girl next to you with extra pens. What would you say to her:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

5 You are moving out next weekend. You would like to ask your friend to help you move. What would you say:
………………………………………………………………………………………......
6 You need to know what time it is now and you see that a female classmate sitting behind of you has a watch. You have only talked occasionally with her and do not know her very well. What would you say to her:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

7 In a class when you are reading an article, you come across an unknown word and you see that a male classmate sitting next to you has a concise dictionary on his desk, so you are asking him if you could borrow it for a second. What would you say to him:
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

8 Due to some family-related reasons you are not able to finish a paper on time. You would like to ask your male instructor for permission to extend the deadline. What would you say to him:

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

9 You were sick and missed your exam, so you are asking your female instructor if she would give you a make-up exam. What would you say to her:

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

10 You are asking your advisor, who is a male professor if he could lend you the reference book, since you could not find it in the library. What would you say to him:

………………………………………………………………………………………………

11 You are a student. You want to make an appointment with your advisor who is a female professor regarding your thesis. You see her walking in the hallway next to the department office. What would you say to her:

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

12 You need a letter of recommendation for a job application, and you would like to ask your instructor who is a male professor if he would write a letter of recommendation for you. What would you say to him:

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

13 You are a student. You are asking a middle-aged male librarian to help you find a book which you could not spot on the shelf. What would you say to him:

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

14 You are a student. You are asking a female staff member working in the Department Chair's Office if the Chair is in the office right now. What would you say to her:

……………………………………………………………………………………….......

Appendix G: Table 4.12

Appendix H: Table 4.24