

UNIVERSITAT
JAUME·I

*PRAGMATICS IN ENGLISH
AS A LINGUA FRANCA.
AN ANALYSIS OF REQUEST
MODIFIERS.*

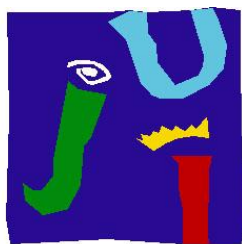
Doctoral Dissertation

*Written by:
Elina Vilar Beltrán*

*Supervised by:
Dr Eva Alcón Soler
Dr Maria Pilar Safont Jordà*

*English Studies
Department*

*Universitat Jaume I
Castelló, June 2008*



UNIVERSITAT
JAUME·I

*LA PRAGMÀTICA DE L'ANGLÈS
COM A LLENGUA FRANCA.
UNA ANÀLISI DELS AGENTS DE
MITIGACIÓ DE LES PETICIONS.*

Tesi Doctoral

*Escrita per:
Elina Vilar Beltrán*

*Dirigida per:
Dr Eva Alcón Soler
Dr Maria Pilar Safont Jordà*

*Departament
d'Estudis Anglesos*

*Universitat Jaume I
Castelló, June 2008*

For my mother Elina and my brother Pablo

**And my supervisors Pilar and Eva
To whom I am deeply indebted
for their support with this doctoral study**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to a number of people for helping to make this PhD thesis possible. First and foremost, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Dr Eva Alcón and Dr Pilar Safont, my supervisors, without their excellent academic guidance, my thesis would not have been possible. I would like to thank them for their unconditional support, their readiness and availability at every step towards the completion of this work and mainly, for the freedom I have been granted during this process. This experience has been fulfilling both intellectually and personally and I would like to thank them on both levels.

My deepest gratitude goes to all the anonymous participants, all the volunteers and friends who, as an act of good will, contributed data to this study. Many thanks also to the teachers, administrators and friends who kindly allowed me to involve their students in the data collection process. Without their unstinting cooperation, this thesis would not have been completed.

I would like to sincerely thank Dr Dominic Keown for offering me the position of Catalan Lectora at Cambridge University, where part of my research took place. Dr Christopher Pountain deserves thanks for his support during my present post as Spanish Language Instructor at Queen Mary, University of London, where most of this study was carried out. Several other people from these universities also deserve thanks: Ángeles Carreres for being a role model at the early stages of my teaching career and my appreciation is also extended to a number of colleagues, Jordi Larios, Mariana Cunha, Patricia D'Allemand, Roser Pujadas, Xelo Sanmateu and Jane Whetnall, from the Department of Languages, Linguistics and Film at Queen Mary for making me feel at home in London. I am indebted to Mr Martin Barge for his careful corrections on previous drafts of the present study.

I would also like to thank all the members of the LAELA (Lingüística Aplicada a l'Ensenyament de la Llengua Anglesa) research group for allowing me to be a part

of their remarkable team. And special thanks go to another member of the Departament d'Estudis Anglesos at Universitat Jaume I, Noelia Ruiz, for her companionship. I am also thankful to my colleagues at the Centre d'Autoaprenentatge de Llengües, especially to M^a Josep Soldevila for her generous friendship.

Very special thanks are due to my close friend Abi Loxham for being the perfect soul mate in this process and making me feel at home during the early stages of my own stay abroad in the UK. I also wish to thank all my friends in England and Spain, especially Abir Osman, for her interest and understanding, especially in the final stages of this project. Without them, I could not have overcome my ups and downs and concentrated on my studies. My most heartfelt thanks go to Marcos, who has made me realise the importance of having a balanced life and has been of great support through this process. Things would have been more difficult without him.

I am deeply grateful to my grandmother for being so understanding with all the choices I have made in my life. And last, but by no means least, to my mum, for being a pivotal part of my life and for supporting me in every possible way in any project I have undertaken in my life. I absolutely admire her; she has taught me the benefits of working hard, which have guided me through the process of creating the present project. I would also like to thank my brother for being a great support in all aspects of my life, without them I could not have got this far.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1 English as a Lingua Franca.....	11
1.1 Introduction.....	12
1.2 Lingua Franca Users.....	16
1.2.1 Models of Communicative Competence.....	20
1.2.2 Towards a New Communicative Competence Model..	32
1.3 Research on English as a Lingua Franca.....	34
1.3.1 Studies on English as a Lingua Franca.....	36
1.4 Language Learning in a Study Abroad Context.....	49
CHAPTER 2 Pragmatics.....	63
2.1 The Concept of Pragmatics.....	64
2.1.1 Speech Act Theory.....	72
2.1.1.1 Speech Acts Across Cultures.....	77
2.1.2 Politeness Theory.....	81
2.1.2.1 Politeness Across Cultures.....	92
2.2 Interlanguage Pragmatics.....	94
2.2.1 Cross-Sectional Studies.....	98
2.2.2 Longitudinal Studies.....	104
2.2.3 Studies of Pragmatic Transfer.....	107
CHAPTER 3 Investigating Request Modifiers Across Cultures.....	113
3.1 The Speech Act of Requesting.....	114
3.2 Towards a Taxonomy of Request Modifiers.....	122

3.3	Studies on Request Modifiers.....	140
3.4	Motivation for the Present Study.....	148
3.4.1	Research Questions and Hypothesis.....	151
3.4.1.1	Research Questions and Hypothesis Concerning Proficiency Level.....	151
3.4.1.2	Research Questions and Hypothesis Concerning Length of Stay Abroad.....	152
CHAPTER 4 The Study.....		153
4.1	Method.....	155
4.1.1	Participants.....	155
4.1.2	Data Collection Procedure.....	175
4.1.2.1	DCT Questionnaires for Data Collection.....	176
4.1.2.2	DET Questionnaires for Data Collection.....	182
4.1.3	Coding of the Data.....	190
4.1.3.1	Production Data.....	191
4.1.3.2	Awareness Data.....	195
4.1.4	Methodological Decisions Taken in the Analysis of the Data.....	197
4.2	Results and Discussion.....	200
4.2.1	Results and Discussion Related to the First Research Question.....	200
4.2.1.1	Hypothesis 1.....	201
4.2.1.2	Hypothesis 2.....	213
4.2.1.3	Hypothesis 3.....	222
4.2.2	Results and Discussion Related to the Second Research Question.....	231
4.2.2.1	Hypothesis 4.....	232
4.2.2.2	Hypothesis 5.....	245
4.2.2.3	Hypothesis 6.....	255

Table of Contents

CONCLUSION.....	265
REFERENCES.....	281
APPENDICES.....	303

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	<i>Alcón's (2000) suggested model of communicative competence.....</i>	29
Table 3.1	<i>Taxonomy of request linguistic realisation strategies (Adapted from Trosborg's (1995: 205)).....</i>	119
Table 3.2	<i>Sifianou's classification of peripheral elements in request realisation (1999:159).....</i>	123
Table 3.3	<i>Typology of peripheral modification devices in requests (Alcón et al. 2005).....</i>	130
Table 4.1	<i>English native speakers: demographic data.....</i>	158
Table 4.2	<i>Non-native speakers: demographic information.....</i>	161
Table 4.3	<i>English Non-native speakers: nationalities.....</i>	164
Table 4.4	<i>Correlation between nationality and mean of years of English language study: N-NSs.....</i>	169
Table 4.5	<i>First languages spoken by the N-NSs participants.....</i>	173
Table 4.6	<i>Non-native speakers' Discourse Completion Test.....</i>	179
Table 4.7	<i>Non-native speakers' Discourse Evaluation Test.....</i>	183
Table 4.8	<i>Examples of English non-native speakers' use of request head acts.....</i>	191
Table 4.9	<i>Examples of English non-native speakers use of peripheral modification devices in requests.....</i>	192
Table 4.10	<i>Effects of proficiency level on awareness of global use of requests.....</i>	203
Table 4.11	<i>Effects of proficiency level on awareness of appropriate request types.....</i>	206

List of Tables

Table 4.12	<i>Effects of proficiency level on awareness of correct request types.....</i>	209
Table 4.13	<i>Non-native speakers: distribution of requests.....</i>	214
Table 4.14	<i>Effects of proficiency level on production of global use of requests.....</i>	216
Table 4.15	<i>Effects of proficiency level on production of correct request types.....</i>	218
Table 4.16	<i>Non-native speakers: distribution of mitigators.....</i>	222
Table 4.17	<i>Effects of proficiency level on production of request act modifiers.....</i>	224
Table 4.18	<i>Effects of proficiency level on production of specific request act modifiers.....</i>	226
Table 4.19	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of global use of request.....</i>	234
Table 4.20	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of appropriate request types.....</i>	236
Table 4.21	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of correct request types.....</i>	240
Table 4.22	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on production of global use of requests.....</i>	248
Table 4.23	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on production of appropriate request types.....</i>	248
Table 4.24	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on production of correct request types.....</i>	251
Table 4.25	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on production of request mitigators.....</i>	257
Table 4.26	<i>Effects of length of stay abroad on production of specific request mitigators.....</i>	257

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	<i>World Englishes. The three concentric circles. (Adapted from Kachru, 1996).....</i>	14
Figure 1.2	<i>Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence.....</i>	22
Figure 1.3	<i>Canal's (1983) model of communicative competence.....</i>	23
Figure 1.4	<i>Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence..</i>	25
Figure 1.5	<i>Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) model of communicative competence.....</i>	27
Figure 1.6	<i>Celce-Murcia (2007) revised model of communicative competence.....</i>	28
Figure 1.7	<i>Communicative competence model for lingua franca users.....</i>	33
Figure 2.1	<i>Morris' syntax-semantics-pragmatics trichotomy (Adapted from Alcaraz, 1990: 114).....</i>	65
Figure 2.2	<i>Distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics (Leech, 1983: 11).....</i>	71
Figure 2.3	<i>Possible options for the performance FTAs (Adapted from: Olshain and Blum-Kulka, 1985: 307; Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69).....</i>	88
Figure 4.1	<i>Distribution of nationalities amongst the N-NSs participants.....</i>	165
Figure 4.2	<i>Participants' length of stay in the UK.....</i>	167
Figure 4.3	<i>Distribution of participants and the years studying English at school and high school.....</i>	171
Figure 4.4	<i>Distribution of participants and the years studying English at university.....</i>	172
Figure 4.5	<i>Distribution of participants and the years studying English at other private or public institutions.....</i>	172

Figure 4.6	<i>Distribution of first languages amongst our N-NSs.....</i>	174
Figure 4.7	<i>Distribution of participants according to their proficiency level.....</i>	202
Figure 4.8	<i>Influence of proficiency level on request act awareness...</i>	202
Figure 4.9	<i>Influence of proficiency level on request act production...</i>	215
Figure 4.10	<i>Influence of proficiency level on production of request act modifiers.....</i>	225
Figure 4.11	<i>Influence of length of stay on request act awareness.....</i>	233
Figure 4.12	<i>Influence of length of stay on request act production.....</i>	247
Figure 4.13	<i>Influence of proficiency level on production of request act modifiers</i>	256

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	<i>Non-native speakers participants.....</i>	304
Appendix B	<i>Native speakers participants.....</i>	311
Appendix C	<i>Quick Placement Test – Version 1.....</i>	313
Appendix D	<i>Quick Placement Test – Version 2.....</i>	323
Appendix E	<i>Discourse Completion Test (DCT).....</i>	333
Appendix F	<i>Discourse Evaluation Test (DET).....</i>	336
Appendix G	<i>Proficiency level descriptors of the Council of Europe.....</i>	340

CODES USED IN THE PRESENT STUDY

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DCT	Discourse Completion Test
DET	Discourse Evaluation Test
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ESL	English as a Second Language
FL	Foreign Language
FTA	Face Threatening Act
ICE	International Corpus of English
ICLE	International Corpus of Learner English
ILP	Interlanguage Pragmatics
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LFC	Lingua Franca Core
N-NS	Non-native Speakers
NS	Native Speakers
SL	Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TL	Target Language
VOICE	Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English
WE	World Englishes

INTRODUCTION

The growing globalization of the world's economic markets, increased travel opportunities and improved means of communication have made it both necessary and possible for people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to communicate with each other in a wide variety of contexts and for a wide variety of purposes. However, when those speakers do not share a common first language, it becomes necessary for them to communicate using a lingua franca, of which English is now becoming firmly established as the de-facto language of choice. In fact, and for the first time in history, a single language (English) has now reached truly global dimensions and, as a consequence, is being shaped in its international uses, at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers (Seidlhofer, 2004). Kachru (1985) uses a three concentric circle model to illustrate the global spread and assimilation of the English language. According to this model, the widening use of the English language is now such that it is used by speakers of English from the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. The Inner Circle is formed by those countries where English is the official language, the Outer Circle consists of those countries where English shares the status of official language together with another language and finally, all those countries where English is considered a foreign language are included in the Expanding Circle.

Beneke (1991) estimates that eighty per cent of verbal exchanges in which English is used as a second or foreign language do not involve any native speakers of English at all. This global spread of English, then, has resulted in its use as the international lingua franca (Burns, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2004). The English language is in a continual state of change, due largely to the fact that it is increasingly used for practical purposes by people with a wide range of cultural norms and levels of proficiency. Thus, English as a Lingua Franca (henceforth ELF) is not a language governed by native speaker norms, regardless of how we may define 'native', but is a dynamic language with norms that change, depending on who makes use of it and the circumstances in which that usage takes place. Unlike native / non-native communication, this discourse type, which has the characteristics of both interlanguage and lingua franca, has up to now received only limited attention

(Jenkins, 2006). However, scholarly interest in this field is now rapidly growing. For example, the VOICE corpus (Seidlhofer, 2004) is an attempt to further understand the nature of ELF and to move beyond the native speaker as a model for English language learning (Alcón, 2007). In addition the recent 40th anniversary of the *TESOL Quarterly*, celebrated in 2005-2006, had a slot dedicated to the topic of English as a Lingua Franca.

Considering this remarkable evolution of the English language into one that is now widely mastered by non-native speakers, it is both timely and appropriate to establish a research agenda in an attempt to provide descriptive accounts of this distinctive phenomenon. In no way does ELF research seek to propose the concept of a monolithic variety of English, nor does it aim to describe and codify a single ELF variety (Jenkins, 2006). ELF researchers do, however, seek to identify forms that are used frequently and systematically, but that differ from Inner Circle forms without causing communication problems or overriding first language groupings.

Research into ELF conducted to date has tended to pay particular attention to discrete linguistic features, such as phonology (Jenkins, 1998, 2000); lexicogrammatical structures (Seidlhofer, 2002, 2004); and various features of ELF communication (Meierkord, 1996, 1998, 2000; House, 2002, 2003; Pöltz, 2003; Piltz, 2004, 2005; Ife, 2007; among others). Findings from this research suggest that, on the one hand, there are a number of errors to which English teachers pay particular attention in classroom teaching, but which do not necessarily undermine ELF communication, such as dropping the third person present tense ‘-s’. Other findings, however, refer to those aspects of language that might be considered more problematic; for example, the lack of paraphrasing skills needed in order to overcome deficiencies in vocabulary (Seidlhofer, 2004). There is still a need for further research into the specific features of ELF; however, the findings so far seem to suggest that ELF functions as a tool to facilitate communication and to

show one's identity within different linguistic or cultural background groups (Ife, 2007).

ELF researchers argue that there is a need for a pluricentric rather than a monocentric approach to the teaching and use of English and that it is necessary for both teachers and learners to develop intercultural as well as purely linguistic competencies. Thus, rather than training students to attain native speaker or near-native speaker linguistic competence, greater emphasis is placed on helping learners to develop an intercultural personality (McKay, 2002; Velasco-Martin, 2004). In this view, then, one of the central goals of the language learning process involves training students to develop a critical awareness of both the target language and its culture along with an awareness of their own languages and cultures (Snow, Kamhi-Stein, and Brinton, 2006).

In addition to these more recent research trends, the last four decades have witnessed a major shift in linguistics research, from an emphasis on form to a focus on both form and function. These fundamental changes reflect the emerging view of language as a communication tool rather than an isolated set of grammatical rules. Following these developments, the field of language teaching has welcomed the arrival of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT henceforth) approach. With regard to learners' communicative competence, CLT holds that teaching and learning a language does not merely involve teaching and learning the grammatical rules of the language, but should instead focus on developing the competencies to use the language appropriately for communicative purposes in real-life interactional contexts. However, the appropriateness of language use, which varies from context to context within a language itself, also varies from one language to another and from one culture to another.

In this way, then, new models of Communicative Competence should take into account the broader communicative needs of lingua franca users and thus, address the issue of intercultural competence as one of its central objectives.

Byram's (1997) definition of intercultural competence emphasises the equal importance of other cultures and one's own culture in communicative situations. In a rapidly changing world, in which high-speed air travel and technology-mediated communication seem to reduce physical distances whilst simultaneously bringing increased opportunities for travel, one has not only to be competent in the target language and culture of others, but also to have a well-developed awareness of one's own.

When the European Union was created in 1993 its main objective was to facilitate citizens' mobility between EU member states. Its cooperation in the field of education is represented by the SOCRATES programme, adopted in 1995. SOCRATES incorporates ERASMUS – originally the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (see Coleman, 1998). It is to date one of the best known exchange programs in Europe, 1.5 million students from 31 different universities have benefited of an ERASMUS study period abroad to date, and the numbers rise every year (*Uk Socrates Erasmus Council, May 2008¹*). Thus, this is a programme that provides many European university students with the chance of living for the first time in a foreign country; it covers nine out of every ten European higher education institutions. This scheme is considered a social and cultural phenomenon. Indeed, there is no doubt of the impact of the Erasmus programme in the mobility of European citizens but there are other exchanges of the like that bring students to the continent. United Kingdom seems to be amongst the preferred countries in Europe for individuals from around the world to undertake higher education studies. It has the largest intake of study abroad students, the largest take-up of Erasmus's students and the highest degree of government involvement (Coleman, 1998).

These data suggests that the experience of living abroad has become increasingly appealing and that it is becoming more and more viable as the world

¹ Data obtained from the Uk Socrates Erasmus Council using June 1, 2007 updates.

evolves. At first, stays abroad were implemented considering the intuition that immersion in the target language community would bring linguistic benefits to the learner. However, this is not the case anymore as nowadays research on the effects of learning contexts has provided evidence of the superiority of second language settings to foreign language ones in terms of developing learners' both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge and competence. We consider that limiting research on stays abroad to its linguistic benefits would be a drawback of this area of enquiry. Thus, we regard of utmost importance the need of analysing further the outcomes of such experiences by examining aspects of both linguistic and pragmatic competence of users of English as a Lingua Franca in such contexts, the UK in our case. Given the scope of those two competences we decided to pay specific attention to the speech act of requesting and its pragmatic force modifiers.

The topic of study abroad has been central to research on the production and awareness of speech acts. A number of such studies have dealt with the effects of periods abroad on the pragmatic development of refusals (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004); requests and apologies (Olshtain and Blum Kulka, 1985 and Blum Kulka and Olshtain, 1985); requests, offers and refusals (Barron, 2003) and, as is the case in this present study, of requests (Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992; Achiba, 2003; Schauer, 2004, 2006). These studies have demonstrated that the realisation of a stay abroad might have positive effects on the acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, some of those studies have also suggested that the level of proficiency also plays an important role in the learner's pragmatic and linguistic awareness and production. Participants in these studies were, in most cases, learners of English, with the exception of Olshtain and Blum Kulka's (1985), Blum Kulka and Olshtain's (1985) and Felix-Brasdefer's (2004), which dealt with learners of Hebrew and Spanish respectively. The main difference between these studies and the one presented here is that all participants in the previous studies shared a common lingua-cultural background, whereas the participants in the present study comprised 104 lingua franca users of 31 different nationalities and who were speakers of 28 different first languages.

In addition, while research on the topic of stay abroad has provided insights of outcomes from different lengths of stay abroad, more studies are needed in order to shed some light in what happens during the early stages of the stay abroad and also during longer periods of time in the target language community (Schauer, 2006).

As previously mentioned, our aim was thus to contribute to the body of research in ELF regarding pragmatic awareness and production by, (a) examining how 104 ESL participants' awareness of pragmatic and grammatical infelicities and grammatical and pragmatic production of request acts and request act modifiers is affected by proficiency level; and, (b) comparing how awareness of pragmatic and grammatical infelicities and grammatical and pragmatic production of request acts and request act modifiers is affected by different lengths of stay abroad.

To the best of our knowledge, no previous studies have been carried out to investigate the effects of proficiency level and study abroad on the production and awareness of pragmatic force modifiers by such a large group of lingua franca users in the target language country. These particular issues will therefore be dealt with extensively in our study.

Having outlined the rationale and motivation for undertaking the current study, we will now proceed to provide an overview of its general structure. The present study is divided into four main chapters: the first three provide the theoretical framework underpinning the fourth chapter, the empirical study. Chapter 1 deals with the concept of English as a Lingua Franca as a field of study that concerns itself with investigating the unique status of English as a language with a greater number of non-native than native speakers. The chapter is organised into four main sections: the first one provides an introduction to the topic of English as a Lingua Franca, including a descriptive account of the origins

of the term and an outline of some of the general characteristics of this variety of English. The second section provides a broad profile of the users of English as a Lingua Franca and also the framework to describe a new communicative competence model which takes into account lingua franca users, unlike previous models which tended to use only native speakers as a model. The third section is devoted to studies of English as a Lingua Franca dealing with topics such as phonology, lexicogrammar and communication analysis. Finally, in the last section of the chapter, we review those studies that have taken into account the effects of stays abroad on the development of pragmatic and grammatical aspects of the target language.

Bearing in mind the important role played by pragmatics in the development of communicative competence in a TL, we have devoted the second chapter to this issue. Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener (Yule, 1996). It has, consequently, more to do with the analysis of the communicative purpose or effect of an utterance than what the words or phrases in that utterance might mean by themselves. In this sense, pragmatics essentially focuses on the way language is employed by its users. Within this field, two particular areas of inquiry are examined in the light of their importance for the present study. These are: speech act theory and politeness theory, which constitute the two main parts of section 2.1 of Chapter 2. Thus, section 2.1.1 presents various typologies for the classification of speech acts, namely those of Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Wunderlich (1980) and Yule (1996), and includes a discussion of the differences occurring between speech acts across a diverse range of cultures (*Speech Acts Across Cultures*). In addition, section 2.1.2 provides an explanation of politeness theory by way of an analysis of three particular views: the conversational-maxim view (Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983), the face-saving view (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and the conversational-contract view (Fraser, 1990). An overview of politeness across cultures is also provided in this section.

Section 2.2 deals with the topic of interlanguage pragmatics. Kasper (1992) defines interlanguage pragmatics as an area of second language research which studies how non-native speakers understand and perform linguistic action in a target language and how they acquire L2 pragmatic knowledge. Hence, ILP is about the acquisition and performance of speech acts in the TL by L2 learners. Since its introduction in the early 1980s, interlanguage pragmatics (ILP henceforth) has received a great deal of attention from a cross-cultural and developmental perspective. In this second section, we take into account the developmental research conducted in this field, which is divided into cross-sectional, longitudinal and pragmatic transfer studies.

Chapter 3 deals specifically with the speech act that we have examined, i.e. requests. Apart from providing a definition of this speech act, based on previous research in the area of ILP, we provide a review of studies that have elaborated taxonomies of the speech act of requesting and request act modifiers. The first section provides a description of Trosborg's (1999) taxonomy of request acts, which is the one adopted in order to analyse the request head acts found in our data. In addition, a typology of request modifiers, that of Sifianou's (1999) study is provided herein, which draws on comparisons between English and Greek requestive behaviour. Section 3.2 presents Alcón *et al.*'s (2006) typology of request modification devices, a typology developed from Sifianou's (1999) which also considers studies conducted by House and Kasper (1981), Trosborg (1995), Nikula (1996), Hill (1997), Márquez Reiter (2000) and Achiba (2003). This has been the typology used in the present study in order to analyse the mitigators found in our data. In section 3.3, we present relevant studies of request mitigators conducted to date which highlight the importance of these pragmatic items and emphasise the need for further research. Towards the end of Chapter 3, we explain the motivation behind the present study and formulate the research questions and hypotheses that guide it.

The explanation of the methodology followed in our study is presented in the first section of Chapter 4, which provides information regarding our participants, data collection procedures, the coding of the data and the methodological decisions taken in the analysis of the data. With regards to our participants we describe the control group of 18 English native speakers whose participation was of outmost importance for validating and obtaining the final version of our questionnaires; we also present the 104 participants that took part in the present study herein. Subsection 4.1.2 provides an insight of the data collection procedures that is, the discourse completion test (DCT) and discourse evaluation test (DET) used in order to compile our data. Then, subsection 4.1.3 provides information about the coding procedure employed to categorise demographic information provided by the participants and the production and awareness data, which is followed by the statistical analyses chosen in order to analyse our data. This section is then followed by a presentation and analysis of the results with a discussion of each of our research questions and their related hypotheses.

Finally, towards the end of this doctoral thesis, we include the general conclusions drawn from this research, and highlight the pedagogical implications deriving from the findings. Furthermore, any limitations of our investigation are also outlined and suggestions for further research provided. The concluding chapter is followed by a list of references and a set of appendices. The appendices provide an extended demographic description of the participants of the present study and copies of the materials employed in the data collection process.

CHAPTER 1

English as a Lingua Franca in the UK

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the speech act of requesting in English as a lingua franca in the UK context. A general definition of a lingua franca may be a natural or artificial language which is used among speakers of different mother tongues. The description of lingua franca as ‘natural’ may be considered controversial by some, but there is strong evidence to suggest that English as a lingua franca might be an already existing language that is closely related to how non-native speakers learn and assimilate English (Seidlhofer, 2004). On the contrary, describing it as an artificial language would suggest that there are cases in which the language needs to be elaborated by the interactants. In the case of understanding English as a lingua franca, its speakers can use it either *intranationally*, like for example English spoken in Pakistan, Philippines or Nigeria, or *internationally*, for example English spoken between Spaniards and Greeks. The difference is that speakers of *intranational* lingua francas have often acquired these as second languages and use them in a variety of contexts. However, most participants in *international* lingua franca conversations need to be regarded as learners of the language they use for specific purposes only. Hence, *international* lingua franca speakers come from such a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds that conversation in lingua franca English is labelled as rather heterogeneous.

Studies that seek to understand English as a lingua franca are diverse and range in theoretical positions and methodological approaches, leading to a fractured and heterogeneous terminology. This has led to the term English as a Lingua Franca being controversial in itself. It is challenged by other positions in the field describing *English as a global language* (see for example Crystal, 1997), or *English as a medium of intercultural communication* (e.g. Meierkord, 1996), and even *English as an international language* (e.g. Llorca, 2004 or Sifakis, 2004). Sifakis (2004) uses the term *Intercultural English* and Brutt-Griffler (2002) has introduced the term *World English* to describe the deterritorialization of the English language. Supporting this view, Mair (2003) refers to the phenomenon as

English as a world language. The term, *Euro English* is also being used for the English spoken among members of the European Union (see James, 2000 or Jenkins *et al.*, 2001). Although differences among these terms are set out by their proponents, they can be found as interchangeable (and changing) in the relevant literature. In our case, we have decided to use the term *English as a Lingua Franca* as the title of this chapter as it embraces the above definitions but also highlights the historical and cultural relevance of lingua francas throughout the evolution of languages (Gnutzmann, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001). Our perspective takes into account that, although some centuries ago it was Latin and then French that predominated, there is little doubt that over the last century English has become the global lingua franca in diverse domains and for speakers of different cultures (Firth, 1990).

Returning to the two subdivisions that we have already mentioned, that is English spoken *internationally* and English spoken *intranationally* further groupings for English speakers have also been identified. This subdivision is a useful perspective to start, as it stratifies the histories, locations and situations where English as a lingua franca is used. According to Kachru (1985) the colonial and postcolonial spread of English worldwide has originated a number of varieties of World Englishes (WE henceforth). The stratification of WE has been represented in terms of three concentric circles: the inner circle (where English is the mother tongue), the outer circle (where English is an additional institutionalized language), and the expanding circle (where English is a foreign language). See Figure 1.1 as an illustration of these three concentric circles:

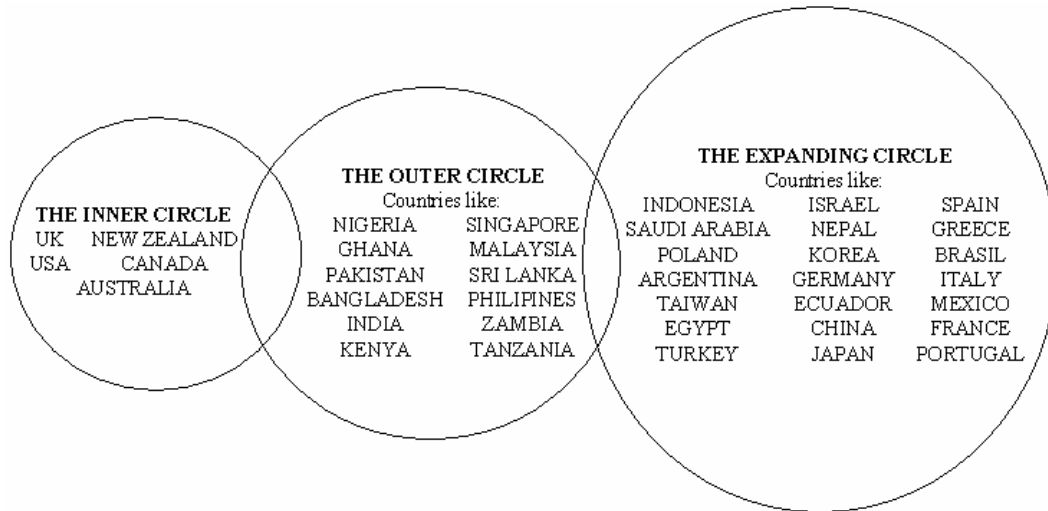


Figure 1.1 World Englishes. The three concentric circles. (Adapted from Kachru, 1996)

As Figure 1.1 above shows, the top circle is the so-called inner circle and includes countries such as UK, USA or New Zealand, where English is the main language spoken. Yet, this is the segment with the fewest countries in it. The middle circle or outer circle includes countries such as Pakistan, Kenya, Zambia, India or Malaysia, where English has the role of co-official language. Finally, the bottom circle or expanding circle, and also the bigger one of the three, includes countries such as Egypt, Greece, Spain, Taiwan or Argentina, where English is studied as a foreign language. This global phenomenon is having an effect on daily communication among people within the inner circle, who are faced with a great amount of communication in English among people with different cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. One of the central concepts in the research field on WE, as mentioned before, is the spread and stratification of English in the world. The three concentric English-speaking circles (i.e. the inner, outer, and expanding circles) represent the spread and stratification of English from its different historical, sociolinguistic and literary contexts (Kachru, 1985, 1997a). Over two billion is the estimated number of English speakers within the three circles. For instance just the Asian English speakers are far greater than the total

users of the USA, UK and Canada together (Kachru, 1997b). These figures indicate that English cannot be said to *belong* only to its native speakers: to those who belong to the inner circle. It is also used by other people in bilingual/multilingual situations with various forms of pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax and discourse. In most of these situations, English is used as a lingua franca (ELF henceforth), that is to say, it is used by those speakers who learn English as a foreign language in their countries in order to be able to communicate with people around the globe. At present, there is a growing body of ELF users who not only learn a language as part of their educational curricula, but to be able to communicate with natives and non-natives of that foreign language.

Nevertheless, no matter how relevant these developments and findings might seem, lingua franca interactions have not received much academic critique leading to a lacuna of empirical study that investigates, describes and analyses ELF (Firth, 1996). Rather, discourse or conversation analysts have focused on monolingual one-to-one English or American native speakers conversations. It is perhaps today, in an era of mass communication and economic globalisation, that studies into the English language as a lingua franca are imperative. We believe that there is a need for more research within the linguistic field that is concerned with the accomplishment of a general categorization for English as a Lingua Franca.

In order to contribute to such a challenging task, section 1.2 will provide a definition of those speakers who intervene in the ELF interaction. It will also deal with the theory of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and those existing models from second language acquisition, namely those of Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), Savignon (1983), Van Ek (1986), Bachman (1990), Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995), Alcón (2000) and Celce-Murcia (2007) and. In particular, special attention will be paid to the pragmatic and sociocultural competence within these models and a further competence will be introduced, i.e. intercultural competence. Pragmatic competence is especially relevant to this study because

we have analysed a pragmatic aspect of ELF in our data, that is, the speech act of requesting performed in specific situations. Furthermore, sociocultural competence is relevant due to the nature of the study which deals with non-native speakers of English studying at higher education institution in the UK, which is a cultural and linguistic framework different to their own.

Drawing on all the aforementioned communicative competence models, an attempt to provide a new one in which the lingua franca user is taken as a reference will be suggested. Section 1.3 will tackle the research conducted in ELF so far. We will present studies on ELF phonology (Jenkins, 1998, 2000), lexicogrammar (Seidlhofer, 2004) and ELF discourse analysis and pragmatics. Finally, section 1.4 will introduce the issue of study abroad as the context for the present study. Relevant research conducted so far on the issue of study abroad context will be described herein. Firstly, we will examine those studies that deal with individual differences and pragmatic development towards a native norm. Secondly, we will describe those studies that deal with time and pragmatic development in the study abroad environment. Finally, we will present those studies that have a focus on the pragmatic development of requests in the study abroad context. Most of these studies deal with university students during a study abroad period, which is one of the characteristics of the participants in our study. Below we start by providing a general definition of these participants who are lingua franca users.

1.2 Lingua franca users

Any lingua franca user is someone who uses a language other than their mother tongue and in doing so, the speaker already possesses other linguistic and cultural knowledge. Lingua franca users are mediators, that is, they manage communication and interaction between people of different cultural identities and languages. They have to come out from their own perspective and take up others;

they need to be able to handle different perspectives of reality as well as their own. Thus, lingua franca users are in a privileged position between their own culture and that of the target language. Although there is no question about the fact that probably most of them will be less skilled than native speakers regarding the mastery of the target language, it is also true that lingua franca users will be more skilful with regards to communication abilities and interaction with people from other cultures and with different languages. Hüllen (1982: 86) describes both English as a lingua franca and its speakers as follows:

“English as a lingua franca does not rest on the everyday hypotheses of Englishmen or Americans. But what does it rest upon? If English does continue to be employed as a lingua franca in Europe (or as one of several linguae francae) and in various parts of the world, there will arise a secondary speech community which is maintained neither by the understanding of reality by native English speakers in their society nor the knowledge of professional specialists. In such a case, neither the everyday knowledge of Englishmen nor the shared knowledge or behavioral norms of scientists, technologists or businessmen form the decisive background, but a complex consciousness of reality of the partners who are of different nationalities but who all use a common language. With every Italian and German, Dutch and Frenchman who uses English as a mediating language, there arises a unique and genuine speech community where the roles and the rules of mutual understanding have to first be established.”

Lingua franca users are language learners at some stages but are language users in their own right. There is no doubt that lingua franca users need rules of language in order to be successful while communicating in a different language. However, these rules need to exemplify the use of language in the context where it will take place. ELF users need to be skilful at handling varied discourse

situations, they need to be able to make their discourse comprehensible to their interlocutors. By making repairs, shortening utterances, asking questions, adapting their output, ELF users are able to construct a distinctive form of communicating in English (Byram *et al.*, 2001).

Another related factor to take into account is that lingua franca communication usually happens between non-native speakers which differs from the native style of communication. ELF users, as Brutt-Griffler (2002: 32) describes them “are agents in the spread and development of English: they are not just at the receiving end”. They are not passive users of English, but rather, they are creative – contributing to re-constructing the language and the functions it fulfils. And so, as it happens with any speech community, they take possession of the language. Clearly, this is a perspective with considerable implications for the conceptualization of English as a lingua franca. ELF users are not defective speakers of the different aspects of English language (grammar, phonology, pragmatics and so on), instead they are language users capable to adapt themselves and show their identity in a different language for communication purposes.

Lingua franca users have existed for as long as there has been linguistic and cultural diversity (Sifakis, 2004). However, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication is more frequent and obvious in the modern world which allows us to identify lingua franca speakers in a variety of locations and situations. Such situations may involve interactions between mother tongue or native speakers (L1) and those using English as a second or foreign language (L2). These would be considered native-non-native / non-native-non-native interactions. Further situations in which a language might be used as a lingua franca may involve speakers using different varieties of the same L1, as within the varied English-speaking or Spanish-speaking world, where cultural assumptions are not necessarily shared, regardless of a shared language (Ife, 2007).

As it has already been argued, the language that dominates today is English as a lingua franca (ELF), where the parties involved in an interaction use a language adopted for the purposes of wider communication. Dealing with lingua franca users means that we are dealing with different cultures and languages, different ways of understanding life, different ways of participating in conversations and so on. Hence, the problem would be to choose one culture and a set of values in a context where different languages and cultures are in contact and English is used as a means of communication among people. Thus, it seems that the concept of communicative competence, based on native speakers' models and taken as a reference to set the language learning objectives, might fail to develop plurilingual and pluricultural speakers. In this vein, Alptekin (2002) and Coperías (2002) also question the validity of those pedagogical models which focus on native speaker's competence in the target language setting. Alptekin (2002) posits that the traditional notion of communicative competence, based on the native speaker, is utopian, unrealistic, and constraining in relation to English as a Lingua Franca. This is so because inner, outer, and expanding circles co-exist in a globalising world, and if one of these varieties is preferred over others this is achieved by general consensus of those involved not according to linguistic criteria. Furthermore, Coperías (2002) alerts us about the pedagogical consequences of placing the native speaker as a model since it means creating an impossible target to accomplish for lingua franca users. With the increasing condition of English as a world language it seems reasonable to request an upcoming redefinition of the notion of communicative competence, one which recognises English as a world language and the diverse cultural and linguistic nature of its speakers. This would encompass local and international contexts as settings of language use, involve native–non-native and non-native–non-native discourse participants, and consider as potential users successful bilinguals with intercultural insights and knowledge. As such, it would aim at the realisation of intercultural communication in English language teaching.

There have been claims for a hybridity hypothesis, that is to say, accepting not only the use of English by its native speakers but also the use of the language as a lingua franca, as well as the need to analyse the discourse constructed in such intercultural exchanges. Sifakis (2004) suggests that a new perspective that prioritises the nature of cross-cultural comprehension rather than regularity patterns or standards is needed. Firstly, this will imply a replacement of the native speaker as a reference point by that of the mediator between cultures. Secondly, the same components that are included in the pedagogical models of communicative competence will be considered, but from the mediator point of view instead. By doing that, the focus of discourse analysis should also include the discourse of those mediators who do not aim to become monolingual but plurilingual speakers, and whose level of communicative competence may vary in their knowledge of languages (Alcón, 2007). Thirdly, an analysis of how individuals' knowledge of more than one language is used in interaction will be required. From this perspective, N-NS's performance will not longer need to be measured by native speakers' pragmatic norms, but by the notion of language users' *expertise*. Lingua franca users' aim is to become experts rather than native speakers. Bearing this in mind, the fact that language learning will be measured in relation to the concept of expertise instead of adopting a monolithic perception of native speaker's language and culture will doubtless result in setting realistic as well as useful objectives for ELF speakers. Given the importance of communication among lingua franca users, it may be noteworthy to provide an outline of the different models of communicative competence developed so far.

1.2.1. Models of Communicative Competence

The term communicative competence was introduced as a concept in the 1970s by Hymes as a reaction to Chomsky's theory of competence. Chomsky (1965) made a distinction between the terms competence and performance. While he referred to competence as the linguistic system that an ideal native speaker

(NS) of a given language has, performance was defined as the psychological factors that are involved in the perception and production of speech. However, Chomsky was not interested in language in use (performance in his terms) but rather in the language system (competence as he had defined it). This focus on a theory of grammar brought a good deal of criticism and the term that he had originated was further extended by other authors. Hymes (1972) argued that in addition to linguistic competence (the rules for describing sound systems and for combining these into morphemes and these into sentences) one also needed notions of sociolinguistic competence (the means to use language appropriately in context) to account for language use. From that point, the construct communicative competence was further developed and applied to foreign language learning and teaching as a key concept in the development of the approach known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT henceforth).

CLT is a method that aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and to acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. However, there is not an agreed definition for this approach. CLT appealed to those who were looking for an approach to teaching in which the interactive processes of communication received priority. Such a focus on process highlighted that in order to acquire a new language one has to be continuously exposed to input in the language being learnt. In other words, both context and input are necessary for learning a language. However, the circumstances in which a new language is learned are often limited, in the sense that, contrary to the acquisition of the native language, both the second language (SL) and the foreign language (FL) learner have access to considerably less data for making appropriate generalisations as one would make in their mother tongue. This is particularly evident in situations in which the classroom is the only resource for such data and where the contact with real life communication is very limited, which is the case of the foreign language learner. Due to this fact, the introduction of communicative practices in the classroom setting became a general concern. One of the criticisms of the CLT refers to the primary focus of developing L2

functional competence. Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) argue that, although language functions were introduced in a range of contexts, a purely functional approach to language use did not do justice to the whole issue of communication. The main reason for this is that when the principles of the CLT approach were starting to be developed, applied linguists had not yet produced a clear description of the nowadays so-called communicative competence, which we tackle below. Consequently, tasks and materials were fully developed to foster maximal communication in class. However, neither teachers nor learners had pre-established guidelines to follow. This had as a final result the preparation of students for real-life communication with minimal emphasis on structural accuracy, which is essential for developing communicative competence as well.

At this point we shall look at the models of communicative competence that have influenced language teaching for the last decades and from which we will suggest a communicative competence model bearing in mind the characteristics of lingua franca users and their needs. The first communicative competence model to appear was suggested by Canale and Swain (1980) who proposed that communicative competence was composed of grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence, as the following figure illustrates:

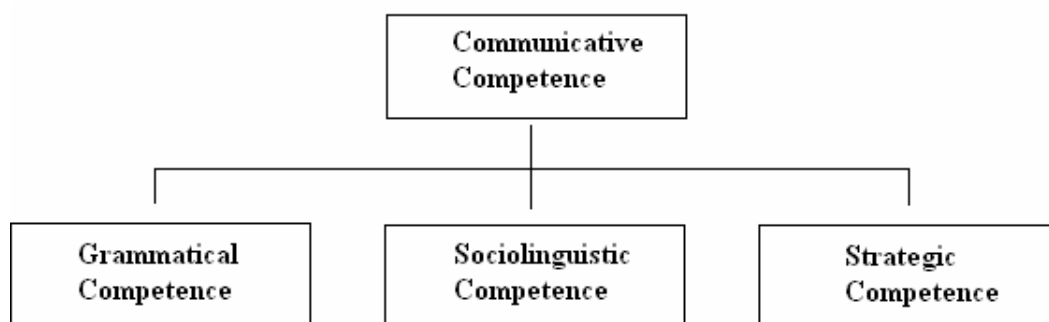


Figure 1.2 Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence

The competencies included in Figure 1.2 of Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence can be summarised as follows:

1. Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology.
2. Sociolinguistic competence is made up of two sets of rules which are sociocultural and discourse. The first set focuses on the extent to which certain propositions and communicative functions are appropriate within a given sociocultural context, whereas the rules of discourse are concerned with cohesion and coherence of groups of utterances.
3. Strategic competence consists of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies which may be used to compensate for problems or deficits in communication. These strategies may relate to grammatical competence (for example how to paraphrase) or sociolinguistic competence (for instance, how to address strangers when one is unsure of their social status).

A few years later, Canale (1983) extended this model further by adding discourse competence as a separate competence from sociolinguistic competence, which entails the ability to produce and interpret language beyond the level of a single sentence. Thus, there were four components within the construct of communicative competence as Figure 1.3 below shows:



Figure 1.3 Canal's (1983) model of communicative competence

These, however, were not the only models of communicative competence developed during the 1980s. In 1986, Van Ek presented six new dimensions of communicative competence, which overlapped, and were mutually dependent. These were: linguistic competence (the ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances), sociolinguistic competence (the ability to establish a relation between linguistic signals and their contextual meaning), discourse competence (the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts), strategic competence (the ability to make ourselves understood and understanding others in different situations), sociocultural competence (the ability to recognise the contexts related to the target language and that are different to one's own context) and finally, social competence (the ability to interact with others). This model is similar to the previous ones but it includes two competences more, namely that of social competence and sociocultural competence.

Another model that also presents competences that interact with each other in a similar way to the model just proposed is Savignon (1983, 1997, 2001). In Van Ek's model the competences depend mutually and in Savignon's model there is also a relation of interaction between the four competences that he proposes as opposed to the models aforementioned, which paid no attention to the relationship between the competences. Savignon (1983, 1997, 2001) proposes the following competences: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic, just as the model developed by Canale (1983). The relevance of this model lays in that one's level of communicative competence depends on the interaction of all or part of the four components. Hence, Savignon's argument is more sophisticated as she shows that without any knowledge of grammatical competence, one might still use his/her sociolinguistic and strategic competences to be communicatively competent (for example, one could communicate through gestures without the use of language). As she states: "an increase in one component interacts with other components to produce a corresponding increase in overall competence"

(Sauvignon, 1983: 17). However, even though these two last models showed an evolution in the understanding of communicative competence and stated that there was interaction between the competencies, there was still one competence that was lacking among all these models: the pragmatic competence.

Bachman was the first researcher to include pragmatic competence within the model of communicative competence. The following figure illustrates the distribution of competences within this model:

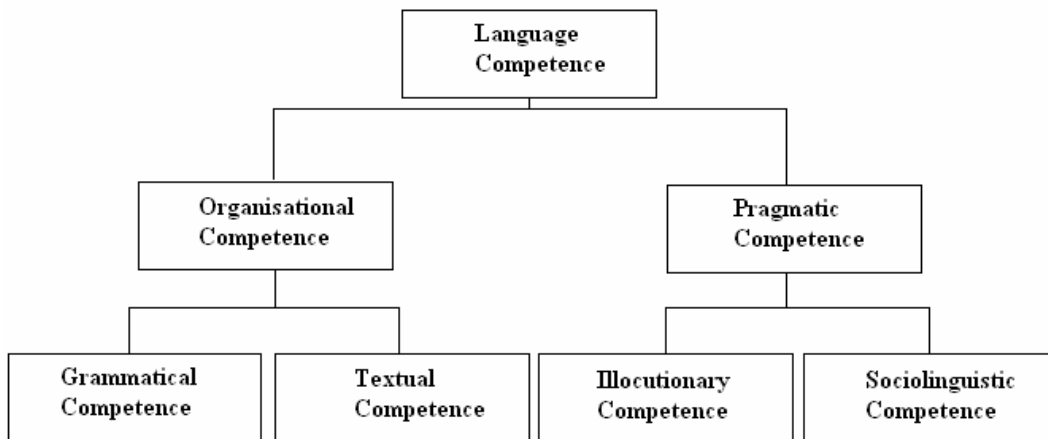


Figure 1.4 Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence

Bachman (1990) presented a model with different levels of competences, the two top ones, as Figure 1.4 above shows, were organisational competence and pragmatic competence, and these in turn were subdivided into grammatical and textual competence the former one and illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence the latter one. According to Bachman (1990), organisational competence implies the control of the formal structure of language and it is subdivided in grammatical competence, which consists of a number of independent constituents, such as knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, phonology, graphology and syntax, and textual competence, which includes knowledge required to join utterances together to form a text. Furthermore, and at the same level as organisational competence, as Figure 1.4 above illustrates, is

pragmatic competence. This competence was concerned with the relationship between the linguistic signals in communication and its referents and also with the relationship between language users and the context of communication. As Figure 1.4 shows, pragmatic competence was further subdivided into two subcomponents, namely those of illocutionary competence (the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions) and sociolinguistic competence (the knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions appropriately in a set context). Bachman's model was a step forward in the definition of communicative competence and it contributed with the inclusion of such a relevant competence as the pragmatic one, yet it received similar criticism as the models proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). For instance, Alcón (2000) claimed that the framework did not establish any relationship among their competences. Of the models presented so far only Savignon (1983) and Van Ek (1986) established a relationship among the subcomponents of their frameworks, however they did not include pragmatic competence within their frameworks. In this sense, the model proposed by Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) and a suggested revision of that model by Celce-Murcia (2007) have been the ones to specify the connection existing between the components of the concept of communicative competence, with special attention being paid to the pragmatic component, lacking in Savignon's and Van Ek's models. Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) model is illustrated in Figure 1.5, which makes explicit the interrelationships of each of the competences.

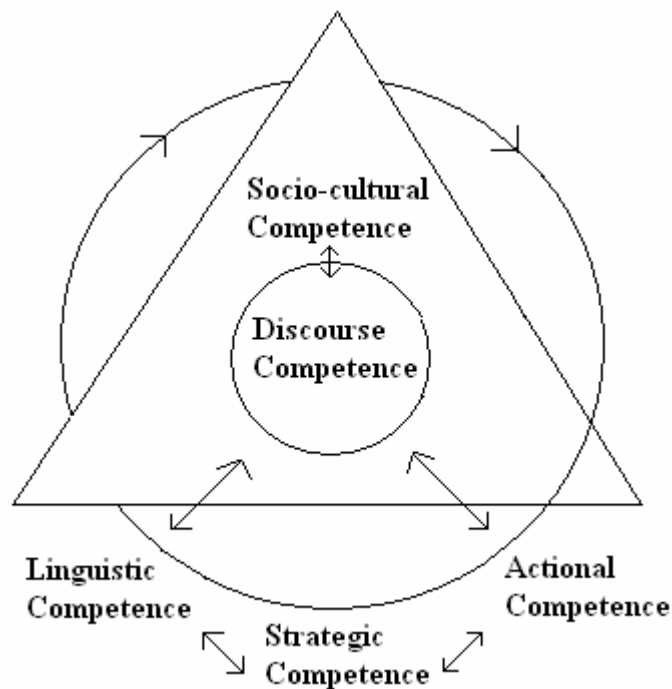


Figure 1.5 Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) model of communicative competence

In this model, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) proposed actional competence as an addition to the previous models, which referred to the ability to comprehend and produce all significant speech acts and speech act sets. Furthermore they also made two other changes with regards to previous models; on the one hand, they modified sociolinguistic competence and named it sociocultural competence and on the other hand, grammatical competence became linguistic competence. The former one referred to the cultural background knowledge needed to interpret and use a language effectively and the latter included both lexicon and grammar (morphology and syntax). However, this was not the only important contribution of this model. The model also specified how the various components of communicative competence were interrelated and the nature of this interrelation, which is illustrated in Figure 1.5 above. The core competence of this model is, as shown in the figure above, the discourse competence which is surrounded by the sociocultural competence on the top of the triangle, the actional competence and the linguistic competence on the bottom left and right respectively. The arrows in the figure indicate that all the

competences interact with each other constantly and the strategic competence around them helps the interlocutor in complex communicative situations. This model has been revised and extended recently by Celce-Murcia (2007) as an attempt of the author to give a more central role to formulaic language and to the paralinguistic aspects of face-to-face oral communication. The new model is illustrated by the figure below:

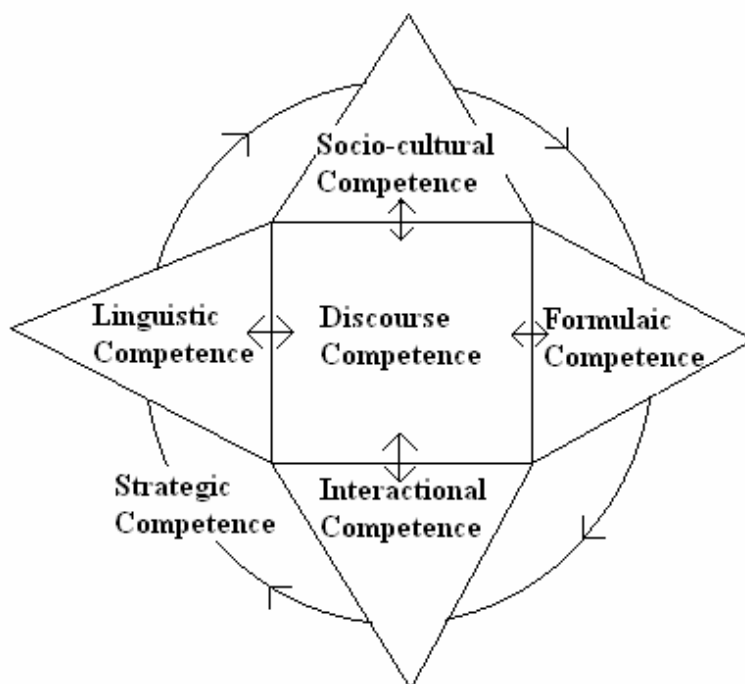


Figure 1.6 Celce-Murcia (2007) revised model of communicative competence

While in this model the actional competence has been removed from the previous one, two new competences have been included, namely those of interactional competence (including actional competence, conversational competence and non-verbal/paralinguistic competence) and formulaic competence (including routines, collocations, idioms and lexical frames). The rest of the model is very similar to the previous one and has kept sociocultural competence at the top. Celce-Murcia (2007) claims that sociocultural competence refers to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge and that it includes knowledge of language

variation with reference to sociocultural norms of the target language. She states that a social or cultural blunder can be more serious than a linguistic error in oral communication. Van Ek's (1986) model also incorporated and stressed the importance of sociocultural competence by claiming that every language comprises a socio-cultural context and implies the use of a particular reference frame which is different from that of the foreign language learner. For this author, socio-cultural competence entails a certain degree of familiarity with the context. As already stated, Van Ek's model incorporated the sociocultural competence and the social competence which were concerned with values and beliefs on the one hand, and attitudes and behaviours, on the other. Although models such as Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) include sociocultural factors within their explanation of sociolinguistic competence, only Van Ek (1986) Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) and Celce-Murcia (2007) include a competence called sociocultural competence. This competence is important for our study due to the attention it pays to pragmatics and context and the linguistic and cultural differences with the foreign linguistic system and culture.

Finally, the last model we will include in this section will be that of Alcón (2000). Similar to the way Bachman's (1990) model introduced a competence that was called pragmatic competence, Alcón's (2000) model includes pragmatics in her model and explains the interrelation between all the other components within her framework. This model is also similar to Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) in that the discourse competence remains as the core of her model. Table 1.1 below illustrates Alcón's (2000) framework.

Table 1.1 Alcón's (2000) suggested model of communicative competence

DISCOURSE COMPETENCE	Linguistic competence Textual competence Pragmatic competence
----------------------	---

PSYCHOMOTOR SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES
Listening
Speaking
Reading
Writing
STRATEGIC COMPETENCE
Communication strategies
Learning strategies

The first competence provided in Table 1.1 above is discourse competence, which in turn has three subcomponents: linguistic competence, textual competence and pragmatic competence. Linguistic competence refers to the linguistic system in general and the textual and pragmatic competences are necessary for the creation and interpretation of discourse. At the same time, discourse competence is influenced by the abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing which are part of the psychomotor skills, which in turn are interrelated with each other in order to use language for communication purposes. Finally, communication strategies and learning strategies (which fall into the strategic competence) also influence discourse competence and may be found within the psychomotor strategies as well. The relevance of this model to our study is that all its components are interrelated to each other in order to facilitate communication in a second language and that it presents the pragmatic component as a necessary competence. Yet, after the revision of communicative competence models presented so far there is still one competence that has not been included in any of them and that shall be now introduced due to its importance when dealing with lingua franca users: intercultural competence.

The native speaker as a model and the idea that the language and culture presented in the classroom should be as authentic as possible are implicit in the above mentioned models (Alptekin, 2002). As it has been previously stated, the problem with having the NS as a model is that it becomes an impossible target for the second language learner (Coperías, 2007). If the native speaker is kept as the

model of communicative competence, the language and culture of the learner might not have a part in the process of learning the L2, which in turn could help in some cases to give confidence and to generate more interest on behalf of the language learners. According to the model, lingua franca users should be able to use their second language to talk about their own culture apart from that of the target language, learners' own culture and language should be used in foreign or second language learning settings. When dealing with English as a lingua franca, communication might take place between two or more people from very different cultures or between people with similar cultures but different languages, and this fact needs to be acknowledged by all the parts. Knowledge of the other cultures as well as good knowledge of one's culture would be desirable. However, if this were not possible a positive attitude towards understanding any cultural differences would help during the process of communication. For this reason, and as has been previously stated, a new notion of communicative competence is needed, one that reflects the lingua franca status of English and does not represent a monolithic perception of the native speakers' language and culture (Alptekin, 2002). To this end, Byram (1997: 32-33) has defined intercultural competence and has included five *savoirs* within its scope, these are: *savoir apprendre*, *savoirs*, *savoir être*, *savoir apprendre/faire* and *savoir d'engager* which would be the factors to be acquired by lingua franca users.

The first *savoir*, *savoir apprendre*, is a matter of understanding otherness, of using and creating opportunities for observation, analysis, insight and interpretation. It is related to the ability to interpret an event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to events from one's culture. The second one, *savoirs*, embraces cultural knowledge, the knowledge of social groups and its traditions. It includes sociolinguistic competence, and an awareness of non-explicit reference points such as values, beliefs, and meanings. The third one, *savoir être*, is both affective and cognitive, covering attitudes and values, including understanding how one's own identity and culture are socially constructed; setting aside ethnocentric attitudes and perceptions and being able to suspend disbelief about

other cultures. It also consists of openness and interest towards others; intercultural mediation. The fourth one, *savoir apprendre/faire*, refers to the ability to operate the knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. Finally, *savoir s'engager* relates to the ability to evaluate critically practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries. These *savoirs* only mention cultural aspects and the relationships between cultures, yet no pragmatic or linguistic aspects have been mentioned. For this reason, we think that a communicative competence framework should include the cultural aspects mentioned above and also a discourse component. Below we provide an attempt at describing a communicative competence framework for lingua franca users.

1.2.2 Towards a New Communicative Competence Model

Taking into account the necessities lingua franca users might encounter, we provide a framework which includes pragmatic, sociocultural and linguistic components taken from the models already described above. First of all, as opposed to previous models, in which the native speaker was the reference point, the lingua franca speaker would be regarded as the inspiration for the production of the new model. The lingua franca user will be the centre of the model, notwithstanding the native speaker would also have a role in this framework as we are aiming at reflecting the situation occurring in real life encounters. The five *savoirs* provided by Byram (1997) which constitute what he has named intercultural competence together with Alcón's (2000) model of communicative competence, which gave a central role to discourse competence (formed by linguistic, textual and pragmatic competence) could provide a complete framework for the lingua franca user. These competences would need to interact amongst them, which is illustrated in the figure below.

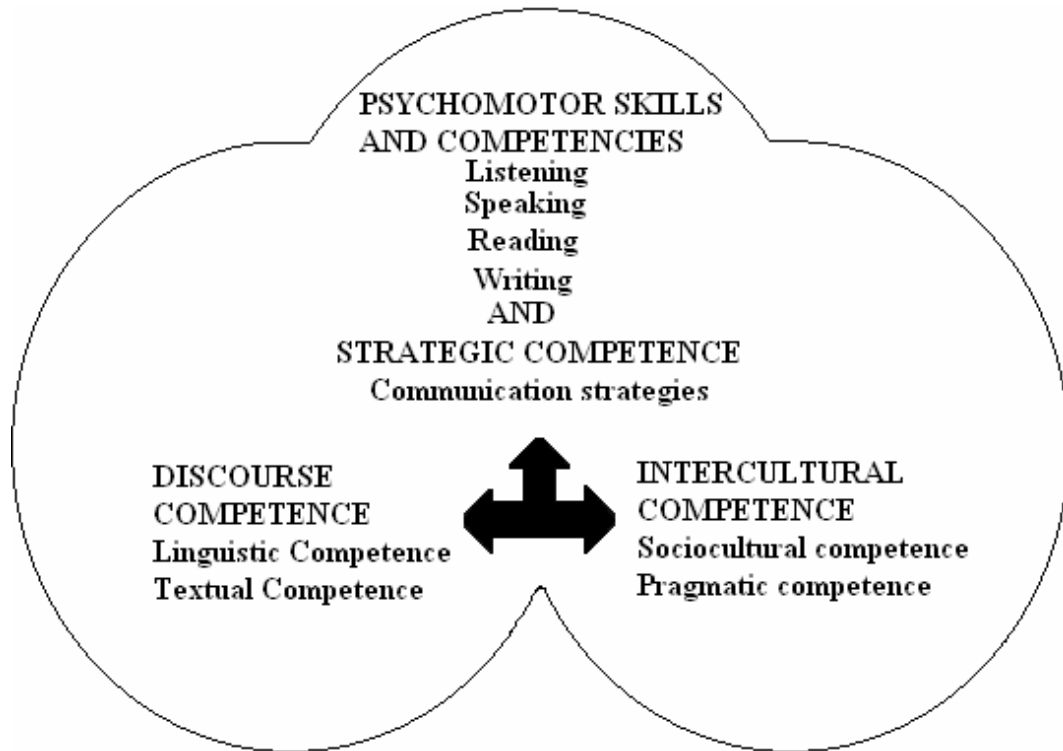


Figure 1.7 Communicative competence model for lingua franca users

Figure 1.7 above shows that the psychomotor skills and competencies such as listening, writing, reading and speaking are essential in order to be communicative competent and of course, just as in Alcón's (2000) framework, both learning strategies and communication strategies influence discourse competence as well. However, in this suggested model the intercultural competence plays a role as important as the discourse competence and is also influenced by the psychomotor skills and the strategic competence. The discourse competence interrelates with the intercultural competence and the other way round. The first one deals with the linguistic system in general and the textual system for the creation of discourse. However, it is the intercultural competence adopted from Byram (1997) which makes a difference for the lingua franca users. The intercultural competence includes sociocultural competence and pragmatic competence. As already stated, Byram (1997) defines intercultural competence as

a combination of five *savoirs*, which explain the importance of not only other's culture but also of one's culture. Hence, if we include this idea into the sociocultural competence, as already described by Van Ek's (1986) model, which was mainly concerned with the sociocultural context of the target language and the pragmatic competence as described by Bachman (1990) and, instead of focusing on the target language culture and linguistic system we focus on the lingua franca user's own culture and language, we would be able to provide a thorough communicative competence framework for lingua franca speakers. All these competences (i.e. psychomotor competence, strategic competence, discourse competence and intercultural competence) interrelate with each other and a lingua franca user would not be able to be communicatively competent unless all these competencies have developed correctly.

Furthermore, if we are faced with teaching English, aspects of its historical and cultural status in the world will also need to be introduced and some of the characteristics of ELF dealt with in the class. Students going abroad will need to be aware of the fact that English is now spoken by more non-native speakers than native speakers and that they might be involved in these communicative situations very often in the target country. Although in this study, the data was collected in UK higher education institutions English can become a lingua franca in many other countries. The following section will deal with research conducted in English as a lingua franca so far.

1.3 Research in English as a Lingua Franca

As mentioned in the introduction of the present chapter, although there has been a lot of research dealing with ELF aspects recently, more research is needed in order to provide a general definition for ELF and to reach a consensus on ELF general features. Due to the heterogeneous nature of ELF and the diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds of its speakers, it is very difficult to come

across a definition as such. In addition, until recently, most of the research on intercultural communication has focused on native/non-native speaker interaction both in the context of immigration and minorities and in intercultural politics and business (Meierkord, 2000). Previous research on ELF has focused on its use in a variety of contexts, including casual conversation (Meierkord, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002); interactions between learners (House, 2003); or business negotiations (Firth, 1990, 1996; Gramkow Andersen, 1993; Piltz, 2004, 2005). While some studies focus on ELF as a linguistic system (see Jenkins, 1998, 2000 for phonological aspects of ELF and Seidlhofer, 2002, 2004 for lexicogrammatical aspects), other focus on the characteristics of lingua franca communication (see Meierkord, 1996, 1998, 2000; House, 2002, 2003; Firth and Wagner, 1997; Wagner and Firth, 1997;).

Results emerging from studies to date suggest that ELF communication may frequently be superficial in nature, with speakers opting for what they consider to be safe topics on which they can achieve a degree of consensus and avoid taboo subjects (Meierkord, 2000). At other times they engage in parallel monologues, not really interacting with each other (House, 2002) perhaps because of different cultural assumptions about what polite interaction consists of (see next chapter for a description of politeness across cultures). Generally, though, ELF users seem to be supportive, with ELF speakers helping each other out, not focusing on others' linguistic weaknesses and not focusing on misunderstandings. The expression "let-it-pass phenomenon" recurrently appears in the literature, referring to the action of allowing an unclear item to go unnoticed in the process of a conversation on the grounds that it will either become clear or irrelevant later on. Furthermore, reference is made to the co-operative nature of ELF interaction (Meierkord, 2000; House, 2002; Ife, 2007) and the influence of L1 cultural and linguistic system in ELF (Pöltz, 2003).

Following this introduction we will next provide a description of the studies that we have mentioned above. Firstly, we will outline those studies that

focus on ELF's phonological and lexicogrammatical system and then we will describe those that deal with ELF at the pragmatic and discourse level.

1.3.1 Studies on English as a Lingua Franca

Firstly, we will describe studies dealing with English as a Lingua Franca (ELF henceforth) phonology. Herein, we will include those studies carried out by Jenkins as she has suggested that the language spoken by lingua franca users differs most at the phonological level. Jenkins' (1998, 2000) research is based on interactions collected between L2 speakers of English. Her results have provided descriptions for causes of intelligible pronunciation when English is spoken in lingua franca context. Her work (Jenkins, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004a, 2004b) has led to what she has termed the Lingua Franca Core (LFC), useful in order to assess which phonological features are and are not essential for intelligible pronunciation in ELF interactions. Her data is based on speakers of a large range of different L1s. The divergences from native speakers' realisations that she found in the non-core areas (i.e. different from NS production, but not "wrong") are regarded as acceptable instances of L2 sociolinguistic variation. Her research contributes to the better understanding of ELF phonology, however and as she posits, the Lingua Franca Core might need some future modifications as a result of compilation of more ELF data to this end, which yet has not taken place. Although pronunciation matters will not be analysed in the present study, it is important to highlight the value of Jenkins research in that it describes the phenomenon of ELF speech and gives an opportunity to lingua franca users to focus on those aspects of pronunciation that are crucial both for ELF mutual intelligibility and L1 non-L1 English speakers goals. Her prime concern is to highlight how ELF speakers can be aware of the diverse linguistic competence levels and linguacultural variations that mediate interactions between them and others.

The second aspect of ELF analysed is that concerning research carried out at the lexicogrammar level. In the 1960s, a large compilation of English corpora began, yet it was concerned with American and British English, most of which only included written materials. The increase of English speakers in the world brought an interest in the creation of corpora which reflected this situation. Hence, in the early 1990s the International Corpus of English (ICE) and the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) were initiated. The former was a written and oral language corpus representing countries in the inner and outer circle, and the latter consisted of a written language corpus devoted to the language spoken in the countries in the expanding circle, where the language has a foreign language status. However, research on ELF lexicogrammar mainly derives from The Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE henceforth), which is a structured collection of oral language data. We can claim that it is the first computer-readable corpus of spoken ELF interactions. The ELF interactions recorded cover a variety of different settings, functions, participants' roles and relationships and a varied range of speech events. The data recorded comprises naturally occurring conversations in ELF and the speakers are fairly fluent ELF users from different first language backgrounds. From this research, there are already some characteristics of ELF that have been identified. Some of them include those “errors” that teachers pay attention to during English lessons. The interesting point here is that those errors seem to be generally unproblematic in the analysed data and they do not necessarily undermine ELF communication. Some examples from Seidlhofer (2004: 220) are:

- Dropping the third person present tense –s.
- Confusing the relative pronouns who and which.
- Omitting definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in English Native Language (ENL henceforth), and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL.
- Failing to use correct forms in tag questions (e.g., *isn't it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn't they?*).

- Inserting redundant prepositions, as in *We have to study about...*
- Overusing certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as *do, have, make, put, take*.
- Replacing infinitive-constructions with that-clauses, as in *I want that...*
- Overdoing explicitness (e.g. *black color* rather than just *black*).

While the findings presented above have proven to be generally unproblematic in order to keep the flow of a conversation, there are other findings that refer to those aspects that cause communication problems and also misunderstandings. One main cause of misunderstanding is the unfamiliarity with a vocabulary item and the lack of paraphrasing skills in order to overcome this problem. In this same vein, it was found that there were cases in which an idiomatic expression could be problematic if the other participant(s) had not come across it beforehand (Seidlhofer, 2002). The same could happen with idioms, phrasal verbs, metaphorical language use, and native language expressions such as for example, *Can I give you a hand?* (Seidlhofer, 2004). Although this ELF corpus is still being developed and it is, for that reason, too soon to make any conclusive claims, the data seem to indicate that there are some common features of ELF despite the range of L1 and L2 backgrounds and ELF proficiency levels. Furthermore, it seems that there are features which are ungrammatical in English but they do not cause any communication problems.

Although our study does not focus on lexicogrammar as such, it does devote some attention to the issue of evaluating whether an utterance is grammatically correct or incorrect. Our study deals with 104 participants from different L1 and cultural backgrounds, who use English as a lingua franca to communicate in an L2 context (i.e. UK) and in a section of the Discourse Evaluation Test (DET) they filled they had to evaluate whether the request forms presented are grammatically correct or incorrect. This might identify common, systematic features of English used as a lingua franca, although this can be found

in written occurrences as opposed to the oral data registered by the VOICE corpus.

The third group of studies presented in this section deals with ELF discourse analysis and pragmatic aspects. These studies have been conducted in different contexts, both in English and outside English speaking countries and have also looked at different types of discourse (i.e. small talk, telephone conversations, business conversations or academic discussions). These studies have been carried out by Meierkord (1996, 1998, 2000) analysing dinner conversations in the United Kingdom; Firth (1990, 1996) and Wagner and Firth (1997), examining business telephone calls from and to Denmark; Piltz (2005) examining two different business meetings, one at an Austrian company and the other one at an international company in Luxemburg. With regards to academic discussions, House (2003) tackles classroom discussions in Germany; Ife (2007) deals with the use of ELF in mediating the learning of a third language in the foreign language classroom in a university in the UK, and Pölzl (2003) considered ELF as a tool in casual conversations among academics and/or students in different situations in Cairo/Egypt and Amman/Jordan. While most of the results indicate that ELF talk is robust, consensus-centred, and unlikely to contain frequent misunderstandings this still needs to be corroborated with a larger amount of research on the topic of ELF pragmatics. Similar studies to the ones described below need to be carried out in order to obtain unanimous results.

Meierkord (1996) conducted an empirical study of ELF interactions in the United Kingdom. She argues that participants in international lingua franca talk need to be regarded as learners of a language which they make use in restricted situations. Meierkord thus assumes that ELF talk has interlanguage features and that it is easily adjustable as a result of the communicative potential of the English language. Her data consist of audiotaped English dinner table conversations elicited in a British students' residence from subjects with 17 different L1 backgrounds. She found surprisingly few misunderstandings in ELF interactions,

and if misunderstandings did occur, they were often left unresolved, i.e. not overcome by negotiations, but rather by, often abrupt, topic changes. She also found that ELF interactants use a markedly reduced number of tokens, especially in ritualised phases of ELF talk, and that transfer from L1 interactional norms is almost completely absent.

In a similar study, Meierkord (1998) summarises the findings of research on non-native speakers during small talk conversations. Considering both discourse structure and politeness phenomena, it attempts to characterise the pragmatics of a variety of EFL users. The corpus comprises 23 small talk conversations with a total of 13.5 hours, which were tape-recorded in a student hall of residence in Great Britain. The corpus is not homogeneous in that some of the factors influencing communication (i.e. the demographic characteristics of the speakers) could not be controlled. The participants of the single conversations were of both sexes, aged 20 to 30 with a range of 17 different mother tongues. They were grouped together into broad cultural groups: European, African, Arab, Indian/Pakistan and Asiatic speakers. Speakers were divided intuitively into more and less communicative competent speakers. Data resulting from the corpus were compared to the results from studies on native speakers and on learner discourse. The data used for comparisons were Oreström (1983) for turn-taking, Bublitz (1988) and Schneider (1987 and 1988) for topic development and choice, Kasper (1981) for gambits and Edmondson and House (1981) for the identification of back-channels, gambits and illocutions. Quantitative conversation analysis was the method used to describe lingua franca in Meierkord's (1998) study just like the native speakers' studies had done. Results show similarities with the standard varieties of British and American English for length of turns, simultaneous speech and back channel behaviour. Characteristics attributed to learner language (i.e. low variation in ritual speech acts and preference of "safe topics") were also found. Drawing from her findings, specific characteristics of lingua franca English consist of: use of laughter, use pauses to indicate topic changes and to mark the transition between different phases of a conversation, extensive use of gambits,

especially cajolers and underscorers, and back-channels with supports. Another salient feature was that ELF conversations were built up collaboratively amongst the interactants. In short, the results show that non-native speakers establish a special variety of English, which is successful in informal conversations like the ones Meierkord (1996) analysed.

In a different study, Meierkord (2000), dealt with discussions based on tape-recorded naturally occurring face-to-face group conversations. The data were collected in a student hall of residence for overseas students in Great Britain and comprised 23 conversations of a total of 13.5 hours. The speakers participating in the conversations were aged roughly between 20 and 30. They were males and females, spoke 17 different mother tongues and included both more competent and less competent speakers. The corpus thus is very heterogeneous, but is, nevertheless, representative of the situations which involve lingua franca communication. Her results showed that as a general rule, the linguistic behaviour of participants in lingua franca face-to-face conversations seems to be governed by the following two principles: on the one hand, participants wish to save face. They avoid insulting behaviour and putting their partners into embarrassing situations by using expressions their interlocutors may not understand. As a result of the uncertainty regarding the cultural norms and standards that apply to lingua franca conversations, participants wish to assure each other of a benevolent attitude. The high amount of supportive back-channels - both verbal (e.g. *mhm*, *right*, *yeah*) or in the form of laughter - as well as the excessive use of cajolers (verbal appeals for the listener's sympathy, e.g. *you know*, *I mean*, *you see*) found in the corpus are discursive manifestations of this intention.

In a more recent study, Meierkord (2002) concludes that lingua franca communication is "both a linguistic masala and a language 'stripped bare' of its cultural roots" (2002: 128), as opposed to Pölzl's (2003) claim about the possibility to assert, negotiate or expand the speaker's cultural identity in lingua franca situations. Although the three studies described above (Meierkord 1996,

1998, 2000) provide analyses of the discourse features of lingua franca small talk, further data are needed from other non-small-talk types of lingua franca interaction to corroborate the findings on a more general level. Some of Meierkord's findings are similar to the work of Firth (1990, 1996) which is presented next.

Firth (1990) analysed ELF telephone negotiations which took place between a Danish exporter/producer of cheese and his international buyers. In the sequences he presents participants negotiate meaning interactively in order to carry out their conversations. Although non-native language has been identified as being linguistically idiosyncratic (Gumperz, 1982), findings from Firth's (1990) study evidence that this is not a matter for unsuccessful communication. Even if there was a lack of shared sociolinguistic knowledge, since participants were from very different cultural backgrounds, they all achieved a working consensus. However, this consensus might be influenced by the type and purpose of the given interaction (i.e. international business conversations) in which importance is placed in arriving at an agreement between the two parties. In this type of international communication, i.e. negotiations among non-native speakers, there is a set of rules that permit frequent interaction. These are well known by all its users and might leave aside any cultural difference. In a similar study, Firth (1996) also analysed telephone conversations between Danish export managers and their international clients. These exchanges were of the lingua franca type which is described as being not only meaningful but also ordinary and normal. These features were achieved by its participants by means of avoiding, in most of the cases, irregular linguistic behaviours. The hearer lets the unknown or unclear action pass assuming that it will either become redundant or clear as the talk processes. Unless there is a required focus on the form of the discourse, lingua franca users try to avoid focusing attention on the form of the other's talk. Three features could summarise the lingua franca analysed in these two studies: the let-it-pass idea; make what is being done and said normal; and finally, its interactional robustness. The first feature, or let-it-pass phenomena, refers to those

items that the interactants avoid and either they become clear during the flow of the conversation or become irrelevant. However, there are no evidences to prove that the participants avoid the problem or whether they do not notice it at all. The second and third features with regards to Firth's (1996: 242) features of lingua franca interactions can be explained as follows:

“First, to pursue, through talk, substantive institutional goals (e.g. to agree upon conditions of economic exchange); second, to furnish the talk with a ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ appearance in the face of sometimes ‘abnormal’ and ‘extraordinary’ linguistic behaviour.”

A similar study by Wagner and Firth (1997) also points to ELF interactants' attempts to normalise potential trouble sources, rather than attend to them explicitly, via for instance repair initiation, reformulation, or other negotiating behaviours. As long as a certain threshold of understanding is achieved, ELF participants appear to adopt a principle of “let-it-pass”, an interpretive procedure which makes the interactional style both robust and explicitly consensual. Furthermore, Firth and Wagner (1997) stress that lingua franca talk is basically meaningful and ordinary. This is a joint achievement of the interactants, who successfully engage in their interactional and interpretative work in order to sustain the appearance of normality despite being exposed to any abnormal linguistic behaviour. That joint achievement is believed to be the direct outcome of the “let-it-pass” procedure, which interactants resort to whenever understanding becomes difficult.

Unclear talk is routinely allowed to slide on the common sense assumption that, as the talk progresses, it will either eventually become clear or become redundant, as stated by prior findings (Firth, 1996). In other words, ELF interactants firstly develop a strategy of pretending to understand. Secondly, participants in ELF talk achieve ordinariness via a “make-it-normal” orientation.

There is an avoidance of potentially complex exchanges when it comes to dealing with faulty utterances, which becomes evident in the marked absence of requests for information or confirmation, as these would only expose their conversational partner's linguistic incompetence. Rather, ELF speakers routinely incorporate the other's "abnormal" linguistic material, demonstrating what could be understood as tolerance. According to Firth (1996) ELF participants have demonstrated to have an ability to tolerate anomalous usage and marked linguistic behaviour and even to have a positive approach towards language that seems difficult to understand.

Another study that also deals with the way ELF speakers manage miscommunication is Piltz's (2005). This is a rather different study in comparison to the studies presented above in the sense that participants in these studies did negotiate meaning when some sort of miscommunication took place. Piltz (2005) analysed two business meetings: one meeting that was recorded in an international company in Luxembourg and a second meeting that was recorded at an Austrian company. The first meeting involved native speakers of German and a native speaker of Dutch and the second one involved three native speakers of Austrian German and two native speakers of Korean. Three hours of the recorded data were transcribed and analysed. The three main types of miscommunication in ELF found in the data were: local non-understanding, strategic miscommunication and global misunderstanding. Piltz (2005) describes misunderstanding as the period in which an understanding problem arises but none of the participants are aware of it; in contrast to the term non-understanding, which means that at least one participant is aware of understanding the problem. Her findings show that non-understandings are miscommunication phenomena occurring with more frequency during ELF communication, but they are resolved by means of negotiation, regardless of causality or length. The models she follows for identifying the occurrences of non-understanding in the text are Vasseur, Broeder and Roberts's (1996) continuum of indicating procedures and Varonis and Gass's (1985) model of the negotiation of meaning, both of which had been previously used in studies on non-native speakers.

These findings are closely linked to those of Firth (1996) and Meierkord (1996) in that they also show the cooperative nature of ELF interactions. However, they contradict studies such as Firth (1996) in that participants in Piltz's study did not avoid non-understandings. Her conclusions show that from the point of view of pragmatics, ELF speakers in her data showed a high degree of interactional and pragmatic competence and a very adequate and competent way to overcome non-understanding. ELF speakers signalled the need to negotiate meaning in any of those cases where they could not understand something, then there was a period of negotiation of meaning and the not-understanding was solved. Thus, it seems that all the participants could follow the interaction successfully.

Within an academic context, House (2003) looked at the interactional style in ELF talk as performed by students at the University of Hamburg with L1s as different as German, Korean, Chinese, Indonesian, Spanish, Turkish, French, Danish, and Greek. Subjects in this study were between the ages of 25 and 35. They were asked to interact among themselves and with members of the support staff of Hamburg University. They engaged in a discussion after reading the same text on the role of English as a Lingua Franca. This was followed by a personal reflection on how they and their interlocutors managed the ELF talk. The data collected had interactions from ELF-ELF, native-native and native-ELF interactions. House (2003) presents the results obtained from four of the above mentioned interactants. These were two males and two females between 25 and 30 years old. The two female students were a German student and a Korean student of applied linguistics and the two male students were a Chinese student of history and an Indonesian student of business administration. It reports on 30 minutes of ELF-ELF interaction on the discussion of the text abovementioned. Participants were asked to comment on the audio and its transcription two weeks after the study had taken place. They were not only asked to assess their own interactional behaviour but also that of their interlocutor in selected moments of

the discourse. Findings from this study suggest similar scarcity of misunderstandings and the related presence of the phenomena of “let-it-pass” and the general “robustness of talk” found by previous research. The analysis of the transcripts shows the ELF interaction to be idiosyncratic in terms of coherence and to have a marked demonstration of solidarity and consensus-orientation by the three Asian participants. The participants themselves acknowledged their interaction as a reflection of L1 cultural norms.

On a similar context, i.e. higher education, but on a different environment for ELF interactions, Ife’s (2007) deals with the use of ELF in mediating the learning of a third language in the foreign language classroom. The data was collected in a two hour Spanish as a foreign language beginners’ class in a UK university. The thirty-five students were from ten different nationalities including English and the two teachers were Spanish and English, both bilinguals in English and Spanish respectively. The purpose of the study was to examine ELF use in the provision of input, in metalinguistic commentary, in classroom management and in classroom interaction both between teachers and learners and among learners themselves. Similar to the studies presented above, ELF users create a mutually supportive environment with a common goal, in this case the learning of a foreign language. This study claims for the need of further research into the use of ELF as an efficient support system in contexts of language learning. In addition, according to Antón and DiCamila (1998) the assistance of ELF provides a cushion, or scaffolding in socio-cultural terms, to enable learners to negotiate the difficult early stages of language learning and offers protection for the psychological vulnerability of the new language learner. In a similar study, Pölzl (2003) also considered ELF as a tool. The twenty hours corpus analysed in her study included a variety of settings (professional, educational and private); professional profiles (academics, students, a judo instructor and a pensioner) and different ELF proficiency levels. The cultures of the participating lingua franca speakers were rather diverse, they included the following: Turkish, Austrian, Greek, Arabic, Japanese and German. The participants in the study were assumed

to be bilinguals based on the fact that they were able to communicate in two languages (L1 and ELF). These participants could also use an L_n¹. Hence, code-switching and borrowings could occur between ELF, L1 and possibly a L_n. Pölzl (2003: 21) claimed that “a speakers’ loyalty towards his/her language can function as a motivational force for embedding the L1 into ELF”, which is something different to what had always been considered as a lack in language proficiency. This cultural identification was found in all the addressed categories in the study. These were the following:

1. Terms of address: The participants in a conversation might use the English term of address system, their L1 system or even their co-participants’ L1-terms (the L_n is involved).
2. Activity-based expressions (e.g. toasts): Activities such as going out for a meal or having a drink might enhance the use of interactants L1 or L_n, specially if there is someone else who belongs to the same in-group.
3. Greetings used in L1 or L_n very much depend on the participants of the conversation and on the context where they are used. If the ELF is being used in a Spanish speaking country Spanish terms of greeting might be adopted as a sign of sympathy to the Spaniards.
4. Speech acts performed with a pragmatic accent: Using the L1 to thank or apologise to someone for example. There are expressions used in some languages to thank others that are not said in English, for example you might ask God to save someone’s hands in Arabic because you do things with them. This would sound strange if translated to English but might be used in an Arabic context and included in the ELF conversation both as the L1 or L_n.
5. Culture laden labels: Expressions which are none of the above but label activities or concepts of a particular culture (such as the

¹ A co-participant’s L1 if necessary and if known

difference of what the term prayer might mean to a Christian and to a Muslim generally speaking).

The possibility to signal cultural identity and show a partial or total understanding of the co-participants' norms is probably one of the main differences between ELF and native English. In this sense, just like in the previous study (Ife, 2007) ELF functions as a tool to facilitate communication, to assist and to show one's identity within different linguistic or cultural background groups.

Although more research on ELF is needed along with larger datasets of findings in order to reach a definition for English as a Lingua Franca, it is worth mentioning that the body of research on this topic is gradually growing. Furthermore, ELF corpora are being compiled these days in several areas of study, which might provide us with enough data to explain ELF. Research looks upon ELF talk as a specific type of intercultural communication and try to identify its special features at these linguistic levels without making claims about a stable form of English used in ELF situations. So far, the studies revised above agree in defining ELF as a language for communication based on the following general themes: different socio-cultural backgrounds of ELF users; no consistency of form that goes beyond the participant level; ELF discourse is characterised by abrupt topic changes, robustness of talk or the so called let-it-pass phenomena (although as we have seen non-understandings are also overcome by ELF speakers); and finally, participants engaging in the achievement of understanding and creating a collaborative environment. With regards to contexts of ELF use, these are infinite variable as ELF is used everyday by millions of users (as already stated, non-native speakers outnumber English native speakers) and in different contexts (emails, phone calls, conferences, meetings, households, student residences, lectures, markets, and so on.)

Our research focuses on non-native speakers of English realisation of requests in different given contexts. Participants in our study are of varied L1s and

cultural backgrounds. The study has been carried out in the UK, an inner-circle country following Krachu's (1994) organisation. At this point, the studies that have been conducted in higher institutions in England with speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds are Meierkord's (1996, 1998, 2000) studies in an internationally students' residence and Ife's (2007) study also conducted in England but in a different context, namely that of foreign language acquisition environment. The rest of the studies described above deal with ELF communication, but of the kind occurring in non English speaking settings or expanding circle countries. Furthermore, none of them has focused on the speech act of request as such. Since in the area of research on ELF at the level of pragmatics, there is a clear need to create a larger pool of data to make more conclusive claims about the nature of ELF interaction (Burt, 2005), our aim was to provide written instances of requests produced by different lingua franca users. Although some authors propose that there is a need for a compilation of ELF oral materials (Seidlhofer, 2004), we also believe that ELF written materials are needed as they might show revealing differences between Standard English written forms and ELF written forms.

1.4 Language Learning in a Study Abroad Context.

It has long been assumed that the combination of immersion in the native speech community and formal classroom learning creates the best environment for learning a second language. The power of this assumption is such that there is a popular belief shared by students and teachers, parents, administrators and funding bodies, that students who spend a period abroad are those who will ultimately become the most proficient in the use of their language of specialization (Freed, 1998). For this reason, an increasing number of students have taken part in study abroad programs recently. The diversity of study abroad programs these days is representative of the rising number of students (be these undergraduates or postgraduates) and professionals that are experiencing these

stays abroad. For instance, students involved in studying modern languages in the UK have to spend some time abroad as a compulsory part of their degree (their third year has to be spent in another country in most cases).

When the European Union was created in 1993 its main objective was to facilitate citizens' mobility between EU member states. Its cooperation in the field of education is represented by the SOCRATES programme, adopted in 1995. SOCRATES incorporates ERASMUS – originally the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (see Coleman, 1998). It is to date one of the best known exchange programs in Europe, 1.5 million students from 31 different universities have benefited of an ERASMUS study period abroad to date, and the numbers rise every year (*European Union Education Archives, May 2008*²). These data suggests that the experience of living abroad has become increasingly appealing and more viable, to the European community at least. In addition, many undergraduate and postgraduate students choose to go to university in the UK regardless of whether they have secured institutional funding or not. Furthermore, students from a wide range of nationalities take part in UK university courses every year, providing this country with the largest intake of international students (Coleman, 1998). Still today, there is unequal demand for European languages, English being the most popular. This preference is followed by Spanish, French and then German. There are three main options why students choose to live abroad, these are: to work as a foreign language assistant, on a work placement or as a student (university students being the largest group of non-resident British in the UK). The term generally used to refer to these populations is “residence abroad”.

Residence abroad programs offer the opportunity for their participants to learn another culture, express themselves in another language and experience a different context to their own. Participants in residence abroad contexts are

² Data obtained from the European Commission Education and Training website using November 11, 2007 updates.

usually exposed to a great amount of L2 input and they are required to utilise L2 in different situations. These practices are generally regarded as beneficial for the development of language learners' proficiency in their second language (Coleman, 1998). Learners in a sojourn abroad or an exchange programme learn about a culture that is different from the learner's own culture, and this difference is an important part of the learning experience (Regan, 1998). Researchers are also aware that acquisition is a multidimensional phenomenon and entails linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects. Exchange or foreign students are placed in a new social and linguistic environment and they have to communicate with other people even though they may not have all the necessary means at their disposal to do so. The learner thus needs to be able to learn new things and communicate simultaneously. Furthermore, there are many factors that can contribute to the experience of living and studying abroad, for example the culture of the host country, the purpose and motivation of the learner, or the level of proficiency.

Research on study abroad contexts had not experienced too much interest until the publication of *Second Language Acquisition in a Study Abroad Context* (Freed, 1995), the first book devoted to integrating a group of cross-linguistic studies which explored the relationship between the study abroad setting and language learning. That was the starting point of a growing body of research on study abroad matters. Since then, a number of studies concerning the impact of study abroad on learners' L2 proficiency regarding oral fluency, literacy, student perspectives, language contexts, communication strategies, morphosyntactic and lexical issues, among others, have been published (see for example, Kline, 1998; Isabelli Garcia, 2003; Colletine, 2004; Lafford, 2004; Segalowitz and Freed, 2004 among others). However, even though the study abroad context has attracted the interest of many researchers in recent years (see for example Coleman, 1998 for a review of studies regarding foreign language proficiency and intercultural competence in residence abroad or Freed, 1998 and DuFon and Churchill, 2006 for a review of studies according to applied linguistics disciplines), only a reduced

number of studies have examined the effect of the sojourn abroad on the development of language learners' pragmatic competence. These will be focus of our attention due to the nature of our study.

One of the earliest studies focusing on the effect of the study abroad context on language learning pragmatic development is Sawyer (1992) which examined the use of the Japanese sentence-final *ne* by 10 students of different first languages (L1s) who were enrolled at a Japanese University. According to Sawyer, the sentence-final particle *ne* that invites the agreement or confirmation of the listener occurs extremely frequently. Data was gathered with elicited interviews every three months during the residence abroad period of 12 months. Sawyer found that the learners made a substantial gain over the time in their employment of *ne*. However, this was not as high as the native speakers employed it. The data also showed that the pragmatic proficiency of the subjects concerning the use of *ne* varied considerably, which indicated the importance of individual learner differences. These were first accounted by DeKeyser (1991) and as he argues they have a strong impact on the way language learners are perceived by native speakers. Individual differences are also stressed in other studies that will be described below (see for example Matsumura, 2001, 2003 or Kinginger and Belz, 2005).

Regan (1995, 1996) also focuses on the use of the particle *ne* although in French. Regan looks at anglophone learners of French. The variable chosen was the deletion of “*ne*” in the expression of negation. “*Ne*” deletion appears to be a highly sensitive sociolinguistic variable and a powerful indicator of formality, issues of power and solidarity, style and register and thus, and important matter for the proper use of French. The question was how usage of this variable is affected by their stay abroad. Data for the study were elicited by means of controlled sociolinguistic interviews. The first interviews were carried out just before students left for France and the second ones took place just after they returned. These interviews were adapted to the lives and situations of the speakers

who spent a year abroad. The participants were six Erasmus students, five in universities in France and one in a university in Brussels. Results show that a stay abroad results in a dramatic change in the acquisition of this sociolinguistic variable. Similarly to native speaker usage, the trend toward *ne* deletion on the part of the students had radically increased after a year abroad. Nevertheless, deviations from native speaker styles and individual variation among the students are present in the findings.

Also examining anglophones, in this case US-American students' pragmatic development in a romance L2, Kinginger and Farrell (2004) and Kinginger and Belz (2005) investigated French learners' use of the formal/informal address forms *vous* and *tu*. Data from the former study were collected with role-plays and language awareness interviews. The focus of the paper was the development of learners' metapragmatic awareness of the T/V (*tu* versus *vous*) system in French during the study abroad experience. The participants were eight undergraduate students studying in France. The interviews with the learners, conducted before and after their sojourn abroad, showed that their awareness concerning the use of *vous* or *tu* increased during their stay in the target environment and that this awareness had improved their communication with French age-peers, who the learners consequently addressed with *tu*. This shows that the study abroad context may complement classroom foreign language learning as students are socialised into language use, facing varied situations and interacting with different social groups. On a similar vein Kinginger and Belz's (2005) study analysed how learners' willingness to speak the L2 in the target environment and their relationships with their peers affect their pragmatic competence. Results show that learners who exposed themselves more frequently to L2 and tried to establish social relationships with native speakers increased their pragmatic competence more than those who preferred not to interact with native speakers.

Examining the equivalent of the French *vos/tu* differentiation in German, *Sie/du*, Barron (2006), using production questionnaires and interviews, followed the pragmatic development of Irish university students during their study abroad year in Germany. The results of her study show that her learners increased their use of reciprocal address terms, while decreasing learner-specific switching between *Sie* and *du* forms. However, learners did not achieve a consistent and stable use of address forms comparable to that of German native speakers. Possible reasons for the sustained presence of learner specific features in learners' use of address forms are, according to Barron, scarce appropriate input in the L2 context, more specifically in formal contexts. Barron also claims that it might also be caused by insecurity on behalf of the learners caused by the complexity of the German address system.

Marriott (1995) and Siegel (1995) look at the acquisition of politeness forms by Japanese L2 students, although in this case participants were not university students, but secondary students in the first case and two female adult learners in the second. Marriott's study was quantitative and Siegel's qualitative. Marriott studied eight Australian secondary students who participated in one-year exchange programs in Japan. Politeness forms constitute a fundamental area of sociolinguistic competence in Japanese. These include knowledge of the honorific system and involve both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge, which is crucial in the perception of learners by Japanese native speakers. The subjects lived with Japanese host families and attended regular school with native Japanese students. They received a minimal amount of individualised instruction in the L2 at the school. The speakers had maximum opportunity for exposure to Japanese, with lots of contact with native speakers. Marriot (1995) used role-play situations for the basis of the quantitative analysis. Results of this study indicate that there was a great variation in the acquisition of politeness norms among the students. More specifically, students showed considerable changes in their use of politeness phenomena after their stay in Japan, but these changes did not approximate to the Japanese norm.

Similarly, Siegel (1995) studied two Western female learners of Japanese in their everyday interactional encounters while abroad, both of whom had equally large amounts of exposure to native speaker input. Siegel's qualitative analysis demonstrates learner differences, the ambivalence experienced by each of these women and the way in which each seeks forms to speak politely and to maintain at the same time their own sense of identity within the Japanese society. Siegel found that differences occurred because of the images the speakers wanted to present and the contexts they interacted in. She suggests that the learning abroad experience is important for learners of Japanese for the acquisition of elements which they do not manage to pick up in the classroom. Likewise, Marriott's (1995) quantitative study of the acquisition of Japanese and Regan's (1996) study of the acquisition of French show that there was great individual variation in the acquisition of pragmatic aspects, and also that the participants performance deviates from the native speaker norm.

Another group of studies deal with length of stay and pragmatic development in the study abroad environment. Matsumura (2001) focus on Japanese university students taking part in a student exchange programme in Canada. The goal was to investigate the pragmatic development of her learners' competence with regard to sociocultural perceptions of social status when providing advice in the L2 to three different levels of social status (i.e. lower, equal and higher status). Matsumura (2001) compared the development of 97 Japanese exchange students' pragmatic competence with that of 102 peers in Japan who did not undertake a year abroad. In-class questionnaires were administered four times during an academic year, these consisted of questionnaires on personal information and multiple-choice questionnaires to assess perceptions of social status. Japanese students' pragmatic development was examined by comparing the approximation of their preferences for advice type to native speakers' preferences (a group of 82 native speakers who had also completed the questionnaires). Her findings showed that learners' changes in the

perception of social status generally occurred during the three first months. The level of exposure to the L2 was the single factor that determined gains in pragmatic competence, while proficiency only had an indirect effect on pragmatic development when linked with exposure to the L2. Results suggest that living and studying in a target speech community might be effective in developing pragmatic competence. On the other hand, given that no dramatic change was observed in the group that stayed in Japan during the observation period, it might be assumed that living and studying in an EFL environment alone may not be sufficient to become pragmatically competent in the target speech community.

In a similar study, Matsumura (2003) also stresses that exposure to the target culture has greater potential to account for pragmatic development than level of proficiency. Participants in this study consist of 137 university-level Japanese students who spent 8 months in Canada on an academic exchange programme and 71 native speakers of English who studied at the same university. Data were recorded at three times at three month intervals from the Japanese students in order to observe developmental change in their pragmatic competence. The first data collection process was conducted in Japan when the students prepared for the study abroad, and the second and the third data collection processes were conducted in Canada when they had spent approximately one month and four months on the exchange programme. Like Matsumura (2001) data were gathered using multiple-choice and self-report questionnaires. Results show that Japanese students who received a larger amount of exposure to English even in their home country became more pragmatically competent early on in their study abroad. The following remarks account for Matsumura's (2003: 485) conclusions:

- (a) Amount of exposure has greater potential to account for the development of pragmatic competence than levels of proficiency;
- (b) Amount of exposure is determined in part by levels of proficiency;

(c) None of those direct and indirect effects was as strong an indicator as the persistent effect of pragmatic competence on itself.

While Matsumura's results indicate that the first three months are particularly significant for learners' pragmatic development in their L2 in the study abroad context, the findings of Félix-Brasdefer (2004) investigation of refusals suggest that considerable progress in learners' pragmatic competence is made in the latter stages of learners' residence in the target context. It also claims that the more the students stay in the foreign country the better for their pragmatic performance. This study investigates the sequential organisation of politeness strategies of 24 L2 Spanish learners at university level and whether the learners' ability to negotiate and mitigate a refusal was influenced by length of residence in the target community. The length of residence abroad ranged from 1.5 months to 30 months. Data were collected by means of role-plays and retrospective verbal reports. Results show that those learners who spent nine months or more in the target community demonstrated greater attempts at negotiation of a refusal and higher degrees of politeness, such as higher frequency of conversational turns and a greater degree of indirectness, than those who spent less than five months abroad. Those participants who stayed abroad longer (i.e. nine months or more) decreased the use of supportive moves and their ability to mitigate a refusal approximate NS level. Although these findings contradict Matsumura's (2001), this might be due to the fact that the students in Félix-Brasdefer's study stayed for longer periods than those in Matsumura's study which had a limited stay of eight months.

Other studies concerned with the effect of length of residence in the target community as a factor in pragmatic development are Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986). Olshtain and Blum Kulka (1985) investigated whether N-NSs of different L1 backgrounds with lengths of stay in Israel that ranged from two to ten years would assimilate their acceptability perceptions of requests and apologies to NS norms. It was found that after ten

years in Israel, learners' perceptions became similar to those of NSs, learners displayed appropriate levels of directness according to the Hebrew politeness system and had developed a greater tolerance for positive politeness strategies. Hence, the N-NS of Hebrew were closer to the norm after their sojourn in Israel. In a similar study, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) examined whether the use of external modification of requests and apologies elicited via DCTs influenced the pragmatic production of advanced learners with various lengths of stay in Israel. Consistent results were found with the previous study, in this case after five years of sojourn the amount of external modification decreases to approximate to the native norm.

Finally, the next studies focus on the pragmatic development of requests in the study abroad context. Barron (2003) investigated learners' pragmatic development with regard to requests, offers and refusals. Barron's participants were Irish university students at a German university. She focused on internal modification in her analysis of requests and found no significant development towards the native speakers' norm in the case of syntactic modifiers. However, the results revealed an increasing frequency of native speaker's lexical/phrasal modifiers.

Also investigating requests, Schauer (2004, 2006) examines the pragmatic development of German learners of English at a British university over a period of one academic year. The results suggest that all learners in the study abroad context increase their pragmatic repertoire of internal and external modifiers by at least one not previously used modifier type, thus highlighting the impact of individual learner differences previously noted by Sawyer (1992) and Regan (1995, 1996). In a further investigation with some of the learners of the above mentioned study, Schauer (2006) examines the development of learners' pragmatic and grammatical awareness in the L2 context. Data elicited from Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) video-and-questionnaire task and one-to-one interviews with the students shed light on this phenomenon further. The video

contained scenarios that were familiar to the students and that they experienced on a regular basis at school. Three groups of university students participated in the study, 16 German learners of English L2 in England, 17 German students of English L2 in Germany and 20 British English native speakers. Data analysis with regards to pragmatic awareness show that German students in England and English native speakers recognized significantly more errors in scenarios containing a pragmatic infelicity than the learner group in Germany. Findings suggest that the learning environment plays a substantial role in priming the language learners' linguistic awareness. ESL German students increased their pragmatic awareness during their stay in England regarding everyday situations in an academic context.

With regards to research on requests during a stay abroad, three studies more need to be mentioned (Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992 and Achiba, 2003), although these do not concern university student as the studies described above. Schmidt (1983) analyses a three-year study of Wes, a Japanese adult learner of English. When the study started Wes' use of directives was very limited, the use of requestive markers such as *please* was more frequent, and he associated the verb morpheme *-ing* with requestive form (for example *eating* for the form *let's it*). When the observation period finished findings showed that some improvements had taken place: Wes used imperatives frequently, the incorrect use of the *-ing* form had disappeared, routines were used productively and his directives were usually more elaborated. Hence, the stay abroad had proven to have positive results. The second study, Ellis (1992) followed the development of two immigrant boys aged 10 and 11, in a British educational institution over four and six school terms respectively. In line with Schmidt's (1983), Ellis' subjects also used the internal modifier *please* from a very early stage. Similarly, they did not employ a high number of either Internal or External modifiers in their requests. It is important to state that in this study individual differences were also found since the younger participant used significantly more modifiers than the older one. However, both these individual differences and the similarities they

showed in their acquisition of request formulas, such as indirect requests, seem to have influenced the pragmatic development of both learners.

Also dealing with pragmatic development of requests over a period of time in a foreign country is the third study, Achiba (2003). This study involved Achiba's observation of her seven year-old daughter, Yao, during a period of seventeen months spent in Australia. Results show that over that period of time, Yao refined her means of requesting in a second language, i.e. English. At first she used more internal modifiers than external modifiers, which she acquired later in time. This might imply that using internal modifiers is easier at earlier acquisition stages than using external modifiers, a similarity showed by Yao and the participants in the two previous studies. At the end of the observation period Yao was able to vary the forms and strategies employed for requesting as her linguistic knowledge and sociocultural perceptions increased. These results show that the stay abroad helped Yao improve her pragmatic development with regards to requesting.

This overview of the relationship between pragmatic development and the study abroad experience suggests that there are indeed differences between the levels of language proficiency of those who have had the opportunity to live abroad and those whose language learning has been limited to the formal language classroom at home (Freed, 1998). Several studies show that there was still a gap between even proficient L2 learners who have studied abroad and native speaker linguistic behaviour (Sawyer, 1992 or Regan, 1995, 1996). In the light of these difficulties, some researchers point to some implications for (1) stay abroad arrangements prior to departure, and (2) classroom interventions on the return of the speakers after the time spent away (Regan, 1998).

From the studies described above, we can infer that the amount of contact with the target language is an important factor in the acquisition of sociolinguistic and sociocultural knowledge (Kingtoner and Farrell, 2004; Kingtoner and Belz,

2005), as well as the length of stay in the target country (Matsumura, 2001, 2003; Felix-Brasdefer, 2004). It seems that grammar usually plays a very important role in the FL classroom but, as research has shown, pragmatic aspects are not as present in the FL class. As Schauer (2006: 313) states:

“...this is disappointing because it seems clear that an insufficient recognition of pragmatic issues in foreign language curricula results in a marked linguistic disadvantage on the part of the EFL students whose L2 input is primarily restricted to what the curriculum offers”.

Another relevant factor to take into account is individual differences, which seem to play an important role in the acquisition of second languages in the context of the year abroad. Much research has found that there is a greater range of individual variation among learners who spend time abroad than those studying at home (Huebner 1995; DeKeyser, 1986; Freed, 1995; Guntermann, 1995; Regan, 1995). In sum, all the studies described above have shown to varying degrees that the realisation of a stay abroad might have positive effects in the acquisition of sociolinguistic and sociocultural knowledge. This is particularly noteworthy in the light of the fact that the studies we have described involve different linguistic and cultural groups. They include research on children, university students and adult learners with different proficiency levels and lengths of stay in the second language country. The target languages also varied from romance languages such as Spanish or French to languages such as English or Japanese. We have mainly focused on studies concerned with the acquisition of pragmatic aspects and university students due to its importance for the present study.

As we have already mentioned, pragmatic aspects are sometimes overlooked in the foreign language classroom and this have proven to be extremely necessary and useful. Deriving from previous research we have found

that there are several studies (Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992; Achiba, 2003; Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004; 2006) that focus on requests in the study abroad context, from which only Schauer's studies (2004, 2006) and Ellis (1992) have been developed in the UK. Furthermore, only Schauer's research (2004, 2006) is conducted in a higher education setting, but her students are all German and thus, share the same linguistic and cultural background. On the contrary, in our study we will take into account the study abroad factor in the production and awareness of request formulae of lingua franca users, with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, in UK Higher Education settings. Due to the importance of awareness and appropriate production of pragmatic aspects for lingua franca users who communicate with people from different cultures we will pay attention to pragmatic aspects across cultures in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Pragmatics

Chapter 2 contends with the issue of pragmatics after first providing a definition of the term in section 2.1 below. The primary aim of this section is to emphasise the importance of users of language, the context in which these users interact and interaction itself as the key features of pragmatics. Furthermore, the distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics is made. Section 2.1.1 presents various typologies for the classification of speech acts, namely those of Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Wunderlich (1980) and Yule (1996), and includes a discussion of the differences occurring between speech acts across a diverse range of cultures (*Speech Acts Across Cultures*). Section 2.1.2 provides an explanation of politeness theory by way of an analysis of three particular views: the conversational-maxim view (Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983), the face-saving view (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and the conversational-contract view (Fraser, 1990). In addition, an overview of politeness across cultures is presented in this section. Section 2.2 explains interlanguage pragmatics, which can be defined as the language system developed by language learners on their way to developing a target language (Trosborg, 1995). Finally, the last three sections present research conducted into interlanguage pragmatics, mainly cross-sectional studies, longitudinal studies and studies of pragmatic transfer. In order to illustrate the research conducted in these three sections a distinction is made between studies conducted in SL environments, which are of the utmost importance to this study, and those conducted in FL environments.

2.1 The Concept of Pragmatics

As the inadequacies of earlier purely formalist and abstract approaches to the study of language have become evident in recent years pragmatics has become a crucial branch of linguistics. The last three decades have seen a significant rise in the number of scholars interested in the area of research known as pragmatics. The term itself was coined by the philosopher Charles Morris (1938) who developed the science of signs known as semiotics. As shown in Figure 2.1,

Morris divided semiotics into the three main components of syntax, semantics and pragmatics:

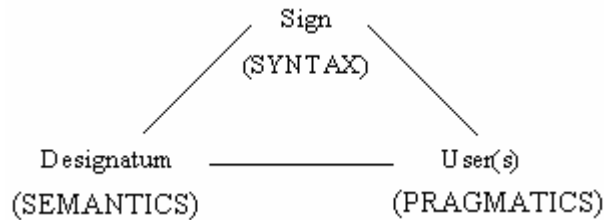


Figure 2.1 Morris' syntax-semantics-pragmatics trichotomy (Adapted from Alcaraz, 1990: 114)

The three branches of semiotics consist of signs, the objects to which the signs refer, and the sign users or interpreters. Syntax, which entails the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the identification of well-formed sentences, constitutes the first of these three components and denotes grammatically acceptable sequences. Semantics, which is fundamentally concerned with the meaning of lexical items, addresses both the relationship between literal words and entities in the meaning of lexical items and the relationship between literal words and entities in the world. Finally, taking into account the fact that neither syntax nor semantics considers the user(s), Morris (1938) refers to pragmatics as the semiotic relationship between sign and sign user(s). As stated more specifically by Yule (1996), pragmatics deals with the relationship between linguistic forms and the human beings who use those forms.

Although pragmatics, or the study of language in use, originated in semiotics, in 1970 it came to be regarded as a discipline in its own right. This change was stimulated by the work of a series of philosophers of language, such as Austin (1962), Searle (1969) and Grice (1975), who developed pragmatics as a discipline of relevance to the science of language in general. Prior to this development researchers such as Saussure (1959) and Chomsky (1965) had only

been concerned with isolated linguistic forms and structures. Saussure's concepts of *langue* and *parole* from the paradigm of structuralism, and Chomsky's generative-transformational grammar based on notions of competence and performance, merely accounted for ideal grammatical knowledge as shared by the native speakers (NSs) of a given language. Neither of these two paradigms took into consideration the actual use of language within a particular context. In essence, they disregarded the notion of communication.

In view of this historical and developmental background, Levinson (1983) argued that the new interest in pragmatics comprised a reaction to Chomsky's use of language as an abstract construct on the one hand, and the realisation of a necessity to bridge the gap between existing linguistic theories of language and accounts of linguistic communication on the other. In light of the fact that Chomsky's (1965) theory of mental faculty was a *competence* theory based on *performance* theory, Leech (1983) similarly encouraged a shift within linguistics away from *competence* and towards *performance* through the creation of a fresh paradigm, that is to say pragmatics. This paradigm focused on meaning in relation to usage rather than meaning in relation to abstraction, which Chomsky had been concerned with. Alcaraz (1990) also adopted the term paradigm when referring to pragmatics and established a new paradigm containing key attributes which stood directly in contrast to those of structuralism and generativism. According to Alcaraz (1990: 116-117) and Cenoz (1999: 375) the main characteristics that define pragmatics are: (1) the use of language as a means of communication; (2) the importance of language usage as a function rather than a form; (3) the study of the processes that occur in communication; (4) the importance of context and the authentic use of language; (5) the interdisciplinary nature of pragmatics; and (6) the application of linguistic theories based on the concept of communicative competence.

Various scholars (Stalnaker, 1972; Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch, 1980; Wunderlich, 1980; Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983; Crystal, 1985; Mey, 1993;

Verschueren, 1999; and many others) have provided numerous definitions of the term pragmatics bearing in mind that the interpretation of words varies according to the specific context in which they are used. For instance, Stalnaker (1972: 383) defined pragmatics as “the study of linguistic acts and the context in which they are performed.” Similarly, in their introduction to *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatic*, Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch (1980) referred to pragmatics as “concerned with the conditions according to which speakers and hearers determine the context- and use-dependent utterance meanings.” The central importance of context dependency was also espoused by Wunderlich (1980: 304), who stated that “pragmatics deals with the interpretation of sentences (or utterances) in a richer context.” In the same vein, Levinson (1983: 24) regarded pragmatics as “the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate.” Finally, Leech (1983) defined pragmatics as the study of the use of and meaning of utterances in relation to their situations.

Upon considering the aforementioned definitions collectively, two important characteristics can be observed which differentiate pragmatics from any other linguistic discipline such as syntax or semantics. First, pragmatics devotes particular attention to the users of language and second, it places a great emphasis upon the *context* in which these users interact. Correspondingly, Yule (1996) regards pragmatics as primarily concerned with the study of both speaker meaning and contextual meaning. Verschueren (1999) also considers pragmatics to be the study of meaning in context, since meaning is not regarded as a static concept but as a dynamic aspect negotiated through the process of communication. Context is also a crucial component for LoCastro’s (2003: 12) definition of pragmatics, which identifies pragmatics as a discipline that explores “how utterances have meaning in the context of situation.” Aside from the aforementioned considerations concerning pragmatics, and in line with Kasper (1997), we believe that one of the most detailed definitions was proposed by Crystal (1985: 240), who understood pragmatics to be:

“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.”

This definition has been further explained by Kasper and Rose (2002) and also by LoCastro (2003: 29), the latter of whom deems pragmatics to be characterised by the following distinguishing features:

- Meaning is created in interaction with speakers and hearers.
- Context includes both linguistic (co-text) and non-linguistic aspects.
- Choices made by the users of language are an important concern.
- Constraints in using language in social action (who can say what to whom) are significant.
- The effects of choices on co-participants are analyzed.

We find that these characteristics clearly delineate all the aspects of pragmatics. Moreover, interaction plays a pivotal role when dealing with pragmatics, in addition to the importance of users and context. This is because the process of communication does not focus solely on a speaker’s intentions, but on the effects of those intentions on the hearer(s) as well. Indeed, for Thomas (1995) pragmatics mean interaction. According to this author pragmatics involves three main processes: the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (whether physical, social or linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance. In the same vein, LoCastro (2003) defines pragmatics as a discipline grounded in meaning in interaction and not in forms of analysis which only deal with levels of sentence meaning. We ultimately agree with the positions adopted by Thomas and LoCastro, since the use of language in communication necessitates not only speaker performance but also hearer perception and

interpretation of utterance. As a result, pragmatics depends on interaction amongst the users of the language.

Furthermore, Thomas (1995) focuses on the social and psychological factors bound up in the generation and interpretation of utterances, since they both affect communication. However, Thomas (1995) states that work carried out in the field of pragmatics has only paid attention to one of these factors. This locates such work in one of two different approaches, namely the cognitive approach or the social approach. The cognitive approach is concerned with *utterance meaning*, thus focusing its attention on the receiver of the message. Conversely, the social approach centres its studies on the analysis of *speaker meaning*. An example of the former would be that of relevance theory as found in Sperber and Wilson (1986). Relevance theory limits pragmatics to whatever can be said in terms of a cognitively defined notion of relevance. Blakemore (1992) also adopts a cognitive approach and denies the possibility of combining a cognitive and a social approach into one general theory of pragmatics. In contrast, authors such as Mey (1993) omit a cognitive approach and focus solely on a social approach. Specifically for Mey (1993: 42), “pragmatics is the study of the conditions of human language uses as these are determined by the context of society.” Other studies which utilise the social approach, and so focus their examination on the producer of the message, include Grice’s (1975) model of logic and conversation and Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) models of politeness theory. Speech act theory has also been criticised for being primarily speaker-oriented, consequently placing the hearer in a passive role (Barron, 2003).

In the light of these considerations, Thomas’ (1995) assertion that it is a mistake to adopt an approach to pragmatics which focuses on cognitive factors to the exclusion of social factors, and vice versa, is perceptive and insightful. As previously mentioned, Thomas’ (1995) position regarding pragmatics is that the discipline cannot be limited to a solely speaker-oriented or a solely hearer-oriented approach, but rather that both approaches should be taken into account.

Therefore, Thomas (1995) suggests the alternative of a social, psychological and cognitive approach to pragmatics. Likewise, LoCastro's (2003) view of pragmatics as social action also assumes this perspective. According to this author, pragmatics is inherently related to language as it is used and, more specifically, constitutes a form of social action. LoCastro (2003: 15) defines pragmatics as "the study of speaker and hearer meaning created in their joint actions that include both linguistic and non-linguistic signals in the context of socioculturally organized activities." This stance regarding social action has its origins in the action theory developed by Clark (1996), who accounts for both speakers' and addressees' actions of language. As a result Clark's theory, which stands in line with Thomas' (1995) view of considering both cognitive and social aspects of pragmatics, acknowledges and accommodates for the integration of both aspects in explaining the use of language.

Up to this point we have dealt with pragmatics as a general discipline by providing different definitions of the term and outlining its core characteristics. We have stated that the study of pragmatics concerns the use of language in communication and the speaker's intentions when making utterances in a particular context. Therefore concepts such as users, context, interaction, real language and communication may all be applied to pragmatics. Nevertheless, this area of language is not a unitary field. It rather incorporates different theoretical and methodological approaches, all of which depend on specific aspects of human communication. Along these lines Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) made a distinction between general pragmatics and the areas of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics.

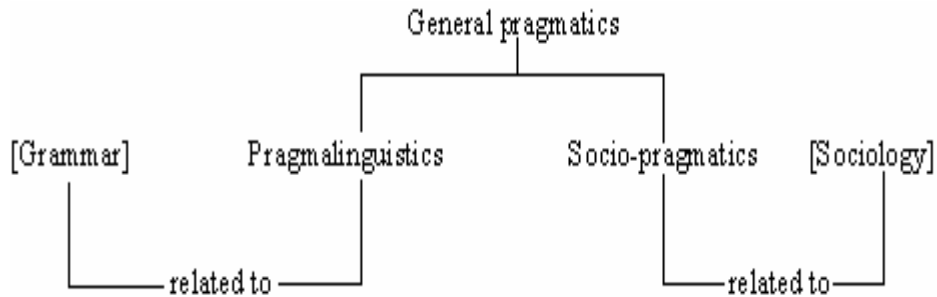


Figure 2.2 Distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics (Leech, 1983: 11)

As illustrated in Figure 2.2 above, Leech (1983: 10-11) defines general pragmatics as “the study of linguistic communication in terms of conversational principles”, whereas pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics belong to local conditions of language usage. Pragmalinguistics refers to the grammatical side of pragmatics and addresses the resources required for conveying particular communicative acts. These resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, pragmatic routines, and a range of modification devices which can intensify or soften the communicative act. Alternatively, sociopragmatics deals with the relationship between linguistic action and social structure, since it refers to social factors such as status, social distance and the degree of imposition influencing which kinds of linguistic acts are performed and how they are performed.

These two sides of pragmatics are particularly relevant to our study, since it has been claimed that although they already possess universal pragmatic knowledge, adult learners require a great deal of time in order to develop the ability to choose the linguistic forms appropriate for particular social categories (Kasper and Rose, 2002).

This distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983) has also been addressed by Trosborg (1995), who refers to

both areas of study as components of the field of sociolinguistics. According to this author (1995), apart from a general area of pragmatics there also exists a pragmatic scope, which comprises sociopragmatics, contrastive pragmatics, cross-cultural pragmatics and ILP. For this author sociopragmatics entails an analysis of the use of speech acts in relation to social situations. Contrastive pragmatics has developed into a particular field of cross-cultural pragmatics concerned with contrasting pragmatics across cultural communities. The latter of these two subdisciplines has been examined by authors such as Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) and Wierzbicka (1991). Finally, Trosborg (1995) addresses ILP, defined by Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993: 3) as “the study of people’s comprehension and production of linguistic action in context.” For the purposes of the present study the second section of the present chapter will be devoted to this definition of ILP, since we are dealing with the pragmatic competence of non-native speakers (N-NSs) within an ESL context.

In view of what has been averred above we may assume that pragmatics is a general area within linguistics that covers a wide range of phenomena, such as deixis, conversational implicature, presupposition, conversational structure, relevance theory, speech act theory or politeness theory. Indeed some researchers (Mey, 1993; Yule, 1996) have referred to this discipline as a wastebasket. Of the aforesaid phenomena we are particularly going to focus on the theory of speech acts, introduced by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969, 1976), and the theory of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

2.1.1 Speech Act Theory

One of the most influential studies of speech acts was conducted by Austin (1962) and later complemented by Searle (1969, 1976); both of whom were working in the field of the philosophy of language. Austin (1962) has long been considered as the father of speech act theory, following his famous assumption

that people use language not just to say things but to do things. According to this performative hypothesis, Austin claimed that when people use language they also perform actions. Yet Austin (1962) soon discovered that it was not only performative verbs that could perform actions. Moreover, Thomas (1995) actually argues that Austin's assumptions regarding a direct correlation between "doing things with words" and the existence of a corresponding performative verb is clearly erroneous, since there are many acts in real language usage where it would be impossible, or at least very unusual, to use a performative verb. Correspondingly, Austin (1962) developed his three-fold classification of utterances into locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts refer to acts of saying something that is, uttering actual words. Illocutionary acts represent what is done in saying something, or in other words the force or intention behind the words. Finally, perlocutionary acts denote what is achieved by saying something, that is, the effect of the illocution on the hearer.

Austin (1962) focused mainly on the second type of speech acts and developed a taxonomy of five types of illocutionary acts: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives. Verdictives entail the giving of a verdict of judgment (i.e. to acquit, convict or diagnose). Exercitives refer to the exercising of power, right or influence (i.e. to appoint, order or name). Commissives are illocutionary acts that require the assumption of obligation or the giving of an undertaking (i.e. to prime, agree or bet). Behabitives relate to the adoption of an attitude (i.e. to apologise, compliment or welcome). Finally, expositives are speech acts that address the clarification of reasoning, argument and the expounding of views (i.e. to deny, inform or concede).

On the basis of this taxonomy Searle (1969) distinguished between propositional content and illocutionary force, which corresponds with locution and illocution in terms of Austin (1962). Focusing on the illocutionary point or purpose of an act from the speaker's perspective, Searle (1976) developed a taxonomy of illocutionary acts grouped according to common functional

characteristics; a taxonomy that has since been discussed by many researchers. This taxonomy includes five major categories, namely those of representatives, directives, expressives, commissives and declarations (Searle, 1976: 1-16). Representatives can be defined as linguistic acts in which the speaker's purpose in performing the act is to commit himself to the belief that the propositional content of the utterance is true. Or in the words of Searle (1976: 3) the speaker tries to make his words match the world. Directives refer to acts in which the speaker's aim is to induce the hearer into committing himself to some future course of action. In Searle's words, directives are attempts to make the world match the words. Those acts in which the speaker does commit himself to some future course of action are regarded as commissives. Expressives have the purpose of expressing the speaker's psychological state of mind concerning or attitude towards some prior action or state of affairs. Finally, declarations constitute acts which require extralinguistic institutions for their performance.

Although Searle's theory of speech acts has had a tremendous influence on the functional aspects of pragmatic theory, it has also been subject to heavy criticism. According to Geis (1995), Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) are not alone in basing their work principally on intuition and focusing exclusively on sentences as isolated from the context in which they might be used. Correspondingly, one of the most important issues on which various researchers have argued against Searle's (1976) suggested typology concerns the fact that the illocutionary force of a concrete speech act cannot take the form of a sentence as Searle considered it. Trosborg (1995) subsequently claims that whereas the sentence is a grammatical unit within the formal system of language, the speech act necessitates a communicative function. Moreover, Thomas (1995) also criticises Searle's typology on the grounds that it only accounts for formal considerations. In particular, the author explicitly states that speech acts cannot be regarded in the same way as grammar, as Searle had tried to do. He then proceeds to suggest that these functional units of communication may be characterised in terms of principles instead of formal rules (see also LoCastro's (2003: 16) view of

pragmatics as governed by principles). In line with Leech (1983), who focuses on meaning and presents a functional perspective of speech acts against a formal viewpoint, Thomas (1995) also discusses the functional, psychological and affective factors influencing speech acts. Furthermore, Thomas (1995) claims that distinguishing among speech acts by way of clear cut categories, such as those created by Searle's rules, is not always possible. According to Thomas, although it may seem that some speech acts are in a sense related to one another, they are by no means interchangeable when contextual and interactional factors are taken into consideration. The author refers specifically to speech acts that share certain key features, for example, asking, requesting, ordering, commanding or suggesting, all of which involve an attempt on behalf of the speaker to make the hearer do something. As far as we are concerned, it is in this sense that we agree with Thomas' (1995) assumption that speech acts cannot be classified following formal rules, and that instead they should be classified on the basis of their interactional meaning and alternative factors such as the context of performance. LoCastro (2003) also claims that there is a need to expand the analysis of speech acts from analysis in isolation to analysis in context. This is because comprehension of the pragmatic meaning implied in a speech act must take into consideration not only linguistic forms, but also all the other previously mentioned factors.

Wunderlich (1980: 297) has strongly argued that Searle's typology of five illocutionary acts was not wholly convincing. The author has contended that the typology's weakness lies in the fact that Searle's taxonomy did not account for speech acts such as warnings, advice acts, proposals and offers, all of which share some of the properties of the representative and the directive categories. Wunderlich proposes as an alternative four main criteria for the classification of speech acts, namely (1) the use of grammatical markers; (2) the type of propositional content and the illocutionary outcome; (3) their function; and (4) their origin, that is to say, whether they are primary or natural speech acts, or secondary or institutional speech acts.

A further possibility for the classification of speech acts has been put forward by Yule (1996), whose primary focal point is the structure of such acts. The author asserts that a relationship exists between the three structural forms of speech acts, namely declarative, interrogative and imperative, and the three general communicative functions, namely statement, question, and command or request. This is illustrated in the following example (Yule, 1996: 54):

Example:

- a. You wear a seat belt. (declarative)
- b. Do you wear a seat belt? (interrogative)
- c. Wear a seat belt! (imperative)

According to Yule (1996) this distribution requires a distinction to be made between direct and indirect speech acts, since a direct speech act consists of a direct relationship between a structure and a function, whereas an indirect speech act involves an indirect relationship between a structure and a function. A direct speech act would therefore relate a declarative structure to a statement, whereas an indirect speech act would identify the use of the same declarative structure for the making of a request. Or to phrase it alternatively, with an indirect speech act the structure and the speech act cannot be matched (LoCastro, 2003). These two pragmatic strategies of indirect and direct or routinised pragmatic intent are posited by Kasper and Schmidt (1996) as universally applicable; this is due to their connection with the politeness theory terms of on-record and off-record.

The question of universality has been regarded as controversial on the grounds that it does not account for cultural differences (Barron, 2003). However, empirical research has shown that a number of areas may be regarded as universal. According to Barron (2003: 25-26), these areas relate to the occurrence

of indirect speech acts (mentioned above), pragmatic routines, ability to vary linguistic realisations depending on contextual factors, importance of contextual variables, basic speech act categories, external and internal modification and range of realisation strategies entailed in speech acts. The existence of such universals is of extreme importance in the context of SL learning (Schmidt and Richards, 1980), particularly for the facilitation of the acquisition of pragmatic competence (Barron, 2003). In fact the most thorough argument for the universality of speech acts has been supported by the politeness theory put forward by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), which will be addressed in section 2.1.2.

After considering all of the aforementioned taxonomies, we would like to emphasize that in order to fully understand a speech act one needs to analyse it within a context. In the next section we provide a more detailed description of how identical speech acts might vary across different cultures and in various contexts.

2.1.1.1 Speech Acts Across Cultures

Speech acts, which are universal *per se*, may differ greatly in terms of the way they are realised in assorted and distinct cultures. They may, for example, vary to a great extent in terms of the politeness strategies employed to mitigate face-threatening force. Indeed, requests are not equally performed by speakers of English or Spanish. Even the names used for speech acts can reveal differences in the functions performed. This is certainly the case with thanks and apologies, to take just one example. Both thanks and apologies can be replied to with similar terms (*That's all right / Not at all*). It is the common concept of indebtedness which makes them so similar. Expressions of thanks imply the indebtedness of the speaker to the listener and so closely resemble apologies, in which the speaker actually recognises his/her indebtedness to the listener. However, one example of

cultural difference in how thanks are perceived amongst cultures can be found in the fact that the Japanese tend to equate gratitude with guilt. In numerous situations where Western cultures would use expressions of gratitude, expressions of apology appear to be the most appropriate means in Japanese cultures for the same situation (upon receiving a gift, for example) (Coulmas, 1981).

With regards to Australian Aboriginal languages, Wierzbicka (1986) suggests that the absence of verbs for expressions of thanks and apology, and the abundance of verbs referring to attitudes based on affinity, reveals crucial aspects of this and similar cultures. Essentially, in societies where relationships based on kinship prevail, clearly determining the rights and obligations of all the individuals concerned, favours performed and received are interpreted within a framework of duties. They are not, therefore, seen as acts based on the free will of individuals. Strong supportive evidence for this can be found in cultures characterised by strong bonds between family members, where the need to show gratitude or indebtedness to members in an explicit way does not consequently exist. Therefore, the values of each society need to be fully assessed and understood before we determine what is appropriate and polite for each specific situation. For example, the verbalising of thanks or an apology amongst acquaintances might be considered inappropriate and even insulting in South Asian languages (Apte, 1974).

Another speech act which is also realised differently amongst differing cultures is that of complimenting. Compliments are quite commonly used by middle class Americans to express approval in an attempt to achieve and maintain successful and social relationships with others. Yet students from Indonesia or Malaysia find the high frequency of complimenting prevalent in America rather strange (Wolfson, 1981). Furthermore, Americans will judge South Africans as impolite and insincere because of their unhesitant acceptance of compliments. South Africans will in return judge Americans as impolite for their excessive offering of compliments (Herbert and Straight, 1989). Contrary to the perceived

immodesty in the acceptance of compliments by South Africans, Chinese speakers choose to affect a large amount of modesty when responding to compliments, believing that the appearance of being humble will help them to maintain face and enhance their image (Chen, 1993). On the whole, the degree of directness required for the successful performance of speech acts is a major feature of cross-cultural communication. In addition to the examples above, Egyptians and Spaniards perform the speech act of complimenting in a very direct way whereas Asian speakers are not as explicit.

With regards to the speech act of complaining, we find that in American English direct complaints are addressed to a complaineer who is held responsible for the offensive action. Indirect complaints, however, are directed at addressees who are not responsible for the perceived offence. Indirect complaints are often used to open a conversation and establish solidarity between the interlocutors (Boxer, 1993). Native Hebrew speakers mainly use explicit complaints and do so in a strategic way that appears to be most affected by the social status (power difference) of the interlocutors and least affected by social distance (e.g. strangers, acquaintances, friends, relatives) (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1985, 1993).

On the topic of refusals, native speakers of Egyptian Arabic tend to utilise substantially more indirect refusal strategies as opposed to direct ones. Certainly, if compared to native speakers of American English, Egyptian Arabic speakers tend to employ fewer refusal strategies. Egyptian refusals are primarily composed of reasons given for the refusal, especially when someone of a lower status is being refused. Even when refusing the request from a boss request to work late, an employee who offers reasons for his refusal may find these sufficient as justifications for the refusal itself. A worker who is a native speaker of Egyptian Arabic might find such a situation very difficult to negotiate and choose not to refuse at all. Such refusals might therefore be of rare occurrence (Nelson *et al.* 2002). In British English direct refusals are rare and performative refusals (*I refuse...*) are hardly ever used. "No" and statements of negative willingness (*I*

can't, etc.) hardly ever occur, yet they do occur in other cultures such as Israeli cultures. In the case of Chinese speakers, they express their intention of not complying with the interlocutor's proposed action plan by indicating "no" in a polite way. This type of negative response is sometimes referred to as a "substantive refusal". Chinese speakers are generally not supposed to accept an invitation or an offer immediately. Instead, they should refuse an invitation several times before finally accepting it. Such refusals are termed "ritual refusals" and are almost obligatory in Chinese (Chen *et al.* 1995). Spaniards combine both direct and indirect refusals and German speakers are less direct than, for example, Americans.

In relation to requests, which are of utmost importance for the present study, when compared with English and French requests, Spanish requests come out as being the most direct. While Australian English speakers employ indirect requests 90% of the time, only about 60% of Argentinean Spanish requests are indirect (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989). When making a request German speakers tend to opt for greater levels of directness than speakers of English, but not as much as Spanish or Hebrew speakers do. In Hebrew indirect requests occur slightly more frequently than 50% of the time, which is almost as often as in Argentinean Spanish. Japanese speakers tend to vary their choice of request strategy according to their status in relation to the recipient of the request, rather than according to the severity of the imposition (Mizutani, 1985). For instance, when interacting with someone of a lower status a speaker tends to employ a fairly direct request strategy. Conversely, the same speaker may prefer to adopt a less direct strategy when speaking to someone of a higher status.

Whereas in Japanese the relative status of interlocutors often influences their use of language, the severity of an imposition may have little impact on the directness of a request. Take for instance a request made within a close or intimate relationship in Japanese, this often tends to be casual; for example, *Mom, [make me] some tea!* (Rinnert, 1999). Consequently, a certain intimacy is indicated by

Japanese speakers between the person being requested to do something and the person making the request. Such a request would probably be viewed as impolite in English. Yet in return, an expression used by the English such as, *Would you please make me a cup of tea?* would be considered inappropriate for a close or intimate relationship in Japanese culture. A minor request is not usually given a formal mode of expression between family members or close friends in Japanese, unless the speaker is being sarcastic. This stands in contrast to the American English style, which varies the level of politeness used depending on the situation and the severity of the imposition (Mizutani, 1985). An American dinner table request would be likely to take the form of *Can/could you pass me the salt?* Formal requests made in English are often delivered in a polite manner and involve some sort of mitigation or politeness marker, even in close relationships. On the whole, indirect requests are used four times more frequently than direct requests (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989).

A few indications as to the differences occurring in several speech acts (thanks, apologies, compliments, complaints, refusals, requests) between various cultures have been provided above. Yet it is impossible to account for all such differences here, due to the vast number of speech acts and cultures that exist. A more detailed description of the differing realisations of requests across cultures will be provided in our third chapter, as such realisations are of central import for our study.

2.1.2 Politeness Theory

In light of the importance of directness and indirectness for the classification of speech acts we now present an overview of politeness theory. Such an overview is relevant since politeness theory affects both research carried out in the field of ILP (Trosborg, 1995; Hill, 1997; Matsumura, 2001, 2003; Safont, 2001; Barron, 2003; Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos, 2003; among many

others) and the choosing of specific speech acts for learners. As stated by LoCastro (2003: 274), politeness “has to do with the addressee’s expectation that the speaker will engage in situationally appropriate behaviour.” In their study of politeness in language Watts, Ide, and Ehlich (1992) made an important distinction between first-order and second-order politeness. First-order politeness involved common sense notions of politeness, such as terms of address, whereas second-order politeness concerned a theoretical approach within a theory of social behaviour and language usage. Second-order politeness has been addressed by Kasper (1990) who identifies it as strategic politeness consisting of pragmatic phenomena, which involves the tactical use of language. Within the varying pragmatic perspectives of the theory of linguistic politeness exist the following three views: the conversational-maxim view (Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983), the face-saving view (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and the conversational-contract view (Fraser, 1990).

These three perspectives have all been revised by Fraser (1990) who starts his review by outlining the historical concept of politeness, otherwise termed the *social-norm view*. According to this author, the approach assumed by the social-norm view regards politeness as a group of social rules followed by a particular society. However, we are specifically interested in reviewing the three principal approaches he cites as characterising the study of politeness from a pragmatic perspective. The first two of these views are based on Grice’s cooperative principle, which is related to verbal interaction, and the four maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. The cooperative principle can be briefly explained as follows (Grice, 1975: 45):

“Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”

This principle is associated with the following four maxims of conversation: quantity, quality, relation and manner (Grice, 1975: 45-46). These can be identified more specifically in the following ways:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| <i>Quantity</i> | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required. |
| <i>Quality</i> | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do not say what you believe to be false.2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence. |
| <i>Relation</i> | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Be relevant. |
| <i>Manner</i> | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Avoid obscurity of expression.2. Avoid ambiguity.3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).4. Be orderly. |

Grice (1975) posited that the first of these three categories is associated with what is said and the fourth with how something is said. He also claimed that all interactants share an implicit knowledge of these maxims. As a consequence of this approach Grice's maxims can be identified as governing all human interactions which involve language, in the sense that we assume by default that they are being adhered to in our conversations. On the basis of this assumption we regularly draw what Grice calls implicatures, that is to say non-logical inferences

from what is said or written. These implicatures contribute to the conveyance of meaning beyond the literal meaning of what is said. One of Grice's most quoted illustrations of implicatures involves a letter of recommendation written by Professor A for a candidate applying for a job in philosophy. This letter violates the first submaxim of Quantity (i.e. make your contribution as informative as is required). It reads as follows: "Dear Sir, Mr. X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc." One interpretation of this letter might be that the writer is implying that Mr. X is a poor candidate, because otherwise Professor A would have given more information about the candidate in order to give him a greater chance of getting the job. This constitutes an example of what Grice calls: conversational implicature.

When analysing daily interactions purely informative speech appears to be the exception rather than the norm (Sifianou, 1999). This observation has indicated a variety of grounds upon which Grice's maxims may be challenged, especially as far as informativeness (maxim of Quantity), truthfulness (maxim of Quality) and their supposed universality are concerned. More importantly, a number of linguists have actually taken up these concerns and tackled Grice's work. Grice implied that his maxims were universal, mainly on the assumption that they stemmed from both verbal and non-verbal rational behaviour. However, Hymes (1986) strongly objects to the supposed universality of these maxims and states that only if they are reinterpreted as dimensions of behaviour can one claim that they are universal.

Furthermore, a number of studies (Keenan, 1976; Eades, 1982; Loveday, 1983; Harris, 1984) have found evidence in favour of the objections raised against the generality and universality of Grice's maxims. For example, Keenan (1976) stated that Malagasy speakers, especially men, violate the maxim of quality regularly. Similarly, in a study comparing middle class white Americans and South-East Queensland Aborigines, Eades (1982) analysed the conversational behaviour of the two groups and came to the conclusion that the notion of

informativeness is culturally dependent. Furthermore, Loveday (1983) posits that Grice's maxims are culturally relative; he claims that in Japan the maxim of manner is rarely attended to because, in most contexts, clarity and explicitness could be interpreted as offensive. This is so even in academic contexts and is something that clearly differs within other cultures. Likewise, Harris (1984) analysed Egyptian politeness and truth-telling behaviour and concluded that truthfulness depends on both the relationship between the participants and the socio-cultural groups to which they belong. These studies represent just a handful of examples concerned with the non-universality of Grice's maxims. Without disregarding the importance of Grice's work, we need to bear in mind that if such maxims were universal then we would be able to infer the same meaning from any given utterance regardless of culture, and this is clearly not the case.

Regarding the conversational-maxim view, Lakoff (1973) was the first to try to adopt Grice's assumptions concerning conversational principles in order to account for politeness. According to Lakoff (1973) politeness is a device used to reduce friction in personal interaction. She proposed two rules of pragmatic competence, namely be clear and be polite, and three sub-maxims: (1) don't impose, (2) give options, and (3) make [the other person] feel good. These three rules are employed depending on the speaker's perception of the type of politeness situation he or she is faced with. Yet Fraser (1990) argues that Lakoff fails to explain how the required level of politeness for a particular situation is to be assessed. The second proponent of the conversational-maxim view is Leech (1983), who proposed a politeness principle which has subsequently been defined as "other things being equal, minimize the expression of beliefs which are unfavourable to the hearer" and, when possible, maximize those favourable to the hearer (Fraser, 1990: 225). By means of this principle Leech tried to explain the role of indirectness in the conveyance of meaning between people. Furthermore, he intended to further differentiate his principles by proposing six maxims relevant to his politeness principle. These maxims were those of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy. The first maxim is particularly

interesting for our study, which deals with a directive speech act. The tact maxim is concerned with minimising costs for the hearer and maximizing his or her benefit. This maxim would therefore explain why it is polite to use certain mechanisms in order to minimise costs for the hearer. Although such an approach to politeness has been heralded as accurate by numerous scholars, and has been used to account for variations in rules of politeness across a diverse range of cultures, it has also received strong criticism for containing too many maxims and for not providing an adequate empirical basis upon which to sustain them (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Fraser, 1990; Thomas, 1995).

Before providing a description of the face-saving view we will first consider the conversational-contract view, as this is of particular relevance to our study. Most importantly, the conversational-contract view (Fraser and Nolen, 1981; Fraser, 1990) differs from the face-saving and conversational-maxim views as it regards politeness as an integral part of interaction and, instead of focusing on speech acts, is fundamentally centred upon a discourse-based approach. According to this view, participants in a conversation are supposed to act in a polite manner towards one another by following a conversational contract. This contract essentially makes them negotiate their conversational rights and obligations on the basis of their social relationships. However, we will not focus on this view in our present study given the fact that it has proved difficult to realise in empirical research. Moreover, Thomas (1995) has argued that this view adopts a sociolinguistic rather than a pragmatic approach.

Both of the views of politeness described so far embody a desire to avoid friction in conversation through the employment of tact (Leech, 1983). Furthermore, they also consider the importance of the rights and obligations brought to an interaction by the interlocutors (Fraser, 1990). Yet this study will devote its attention to the face-saving view (Brown and Levinson, 1987), since it contains a comprehensive construct that deals with the analysis of speech act realisation and the various factors affecting it. In fact, it is because of this

construct that this view has been heralded as one of the most influential politeness theories within the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP henceforth).

As its name indicates, the face-saving view of politeness is premised upon the notion of face (Goffman, 1967). The concept of face has been described by Goffman (1967: 3) as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.” Or as Brown and Levinson (1987) have put it, face identifies a person’s feeling of self-worth or their self-image. In a similar way to the conversational-maxim view, the term politeness also relates to the flouting of Grice’s (1975) cooperative principle, the latter of which consists of the four maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. It does so because the violation of these rules occurs in interactional situations in which the main goal of the participants has to be the preservation of face. In this sense politeness is regarded as an activity that serves to enhance, maintain or protect face. In addition, face can be positive or negative. Positive face refers to a desire to be liked, approved of, respected and appreciated by others. In contrast, negative face denotes a wish to maintain one’s territory unimpeded, that is to say a desire not to be imposed upon by others.

This concept of face is inherently linked to directive speech acts because, as claimed by Brown and Levinson (1987: 60), some speech acts intrinsically threaten face; these acts are called face-threatening acts (FTAs henceforth). This link is particularly relevant to our study as it allows us to state that the politeness approach adopted by Brown and Levinson is speech act based. Participants must therefore engage in some form of face-work when interacting. This may take one of two forms: either they seek to avoid FTAs or they decide to perform FTAs. Figure 2.3 illustrates these two decisions more clearly, along with the different options that might be adopted to reduce any possible offence to the participants involved in the interaction.

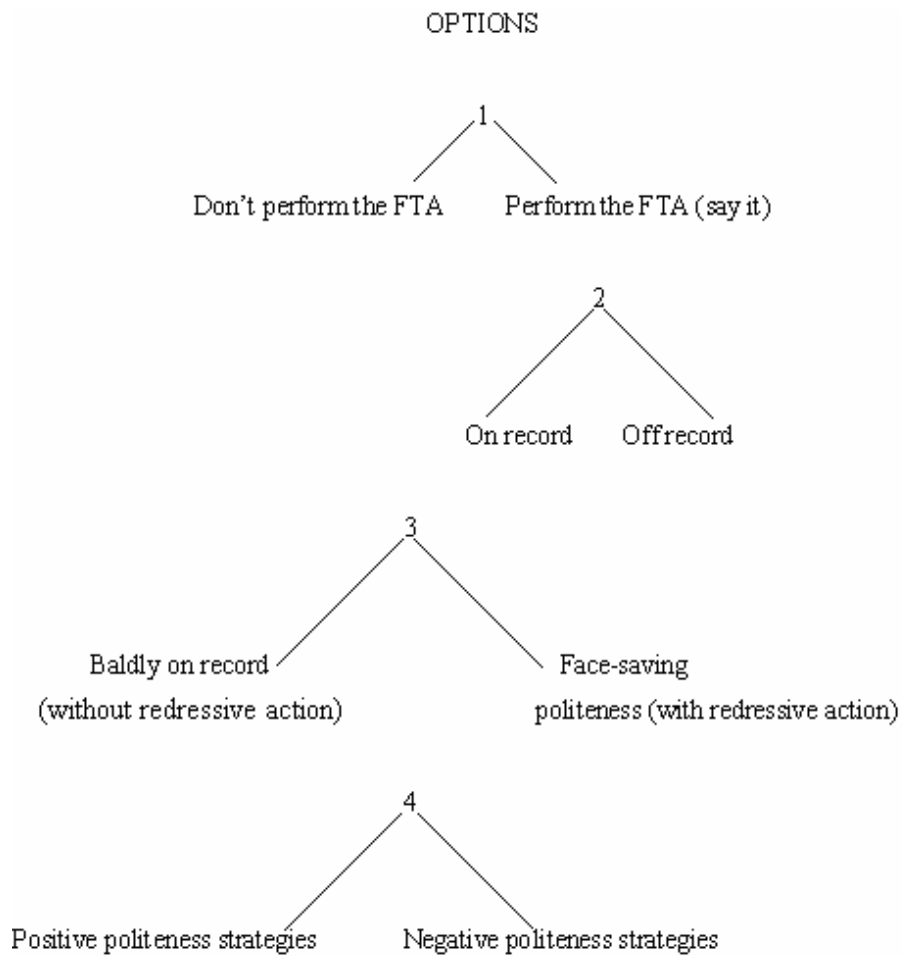


Figure 2.3 Possible options for the performance of FTAs (Adapted from: Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985: 307; Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69)

According to Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) - on the basis of Brown and Levinson's (1978) model of politeness in which participants are faced with the performance of a speech act that may threaten the interlocutor's face - participants are confronted with a series of options and at each of these junctures (exemplified from 1 to 4 in Figure 2.3 above) the participants must make a decision. As already mentioned, the first option available is whether or not to perform a FTA. If the participants decide to perform the FTA then they have to make a second decision; they can either go off record, in which case the participants' communicative intent may imply more than one intention by way of hints or indirect suggestions, or

they can go on record, by expressing their intentions clearly and unambiguously. If at this juncture the participants decide to choose the latter of the two options then they have two more choices to make when performing their FTA *on record*. This choice concerns the use or non-use of redressive action. Redressive action refers to the effort made by participants to soften the force of a speech act; they either execute the FTA baldly and so without any redressive action (the use of direct strategies) or they can decide to utilise face-saving politeness, which includes redressive action strategies. Finally, participants can choose to employ either positive or negative politeness strategies. In using positive politeness strategies participants appeal to the positive face of their interlocutors by desiring that the others approve of them. These strategies include the use of in-group identity markers or markers of affection. Conversely, if participants employ speech acts that pose a threat to the face of their interlocutors, such as directives, which are investigated in this study, they may employ negative politeness strategies which serve to minimise the imposition of the FTA. Examples of this type of negative politeness strategy include the use of conventionally indirect formulae or different means of hedging or mitigation. According to Fraser (1990) mitigation refers to the reduction of certain undesired effects which an FTA may have on a hearer.

Given the fact that the participants must adopt certain strategies in order to preserve hearers' face, Brown and Levinson (1987) also propose that the choice of strategy will depend on the speakers' assessment of the force of the FTA, which is constrained by contextual factors. Such an assessment is based upon three variables, all of which determine the seriousness of the FTA. The first variable is that of social distance between the speaker and the hearer, that is the degree of familiarity existing between the interactants; as social distance increases, politeness also increases. The second variable is that of the relative power of the speaker in relation to the hearer; it is assumed that the more powerful the hearer is, the more polite the speaker will be expected to be. Finally, the ranking of imposition constitutes the third variable. The assumption here is that the greater

the imposition on the hearer, the more polite the speaker is required to be. These factors are pivotal for this study since, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, the situations used in the questionnaires are formulated to incorporate different levels of power and status in each of the situations.

Bearing in mind the importance of this theory for the study of speech acts, Rinnert and Kobayashi (1999) acknowledged in their work the significance of the relationship between indirectness and politeness implied by Brown and Levinson (1987), stating that a higher degree of indirectness shows more politeness. According to Rinnert and Kobayashi (1999), when participants risk a loss of face through the performance of an act such as a request, they must employ an indirect strategy in order to be polite. In other words, “the greater the face threat, the greater the need to use linguistic politeness, and the more indirectness is used” (LoCastro, 2003: 123). Yet this correlative relationship, namely that indirectness is regarded as the equivalent of being polite, has been strongly questioned. Blum-Kulka (1987) reported that whereas NSs of both English and Hebrew rated conventionally indirect requests as more polite, they judged hints to be the most indirect but also perceived them to be less polite. In the same study she also argued for clarity of message as an essential constituent of politeness and that, therefore, the absence of pragmatic clarity in hints could explain their lower politeness rating. It can be argued accordingly then that indirectness is not the same thing as linguistic politeness, although Brown and Levinson’s framework regards indirectness as a negative politeness strategy for the mitigation of FTAs (LoCastro, 2003).

In addition to this criticism, and although Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory has been regarded as one of the most influential linguistic views of politeness, it has also been criticised by a number of researchers of non-Western perspectives.¹ According to Watts (1989) and Wierzbicka (1991) the

¹ For a recent overview of aspects related to politeness see the special issue of *Journal of Pragmatics*, volume 35/10-11 on “About Face” edited by Mey et al. (2003).

whole idea of face as presented by Brown and Levinson (1987) is biased towards Western culture. Similarly, many researchers from Asian speaking countries (Ide, 1989; Matsumoto, 1989; Gu, 1990) have argued against Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework. The principle criticism has been that it fails to address formal linguistic forms such as honorifics, a fundamental way of expressing linguistic politeness in languages such as Japanese. Other criticisms centre on issues omitted by Brown and Levinson (1987), such as finding an FTA which is simultaneously threatening to the face of both speaker and hearer or finding both positive and negative face in a single utterance. This latter criticism of omission is supported by Thomas (1995: 176), who states that "a single utterance can be oriented to both positive and negative face simultaneously."

As already highlighted, the politeness principle developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) is particularly important for our study. This is because the taxonomy employed to analyse the speech act that we have examined has been constructed on the basis of this politeness theory, primarily because it distinguishes between on record (direct strategies) and off record (indirect strategies). Moreover, as these are claimed to be universal they are closely related to two particular pragmatic strategies, namely those of an indirect and a direct or routinised pragmatic intent. Both of these pragmatic strategies have also been asserted as universally available by Kasper and Schmidt (1996) (see previous subsection on speech act theory).

Yet as White (1993) states, particular care has to be taken when dealing with language learners since they only know the rules of politeness within their own language and culture. So pragmatic failure may occur if they attempt to transfer their native conventions to the TL (Thomas, 1983); they may be misunderstood or wrongly interpreted as being rude. For this reason, as suggested by Thomas (1995: 157), it is not only the linguistic form alone which makes the speech act polite or impolite, but also the linguistic form together with the context of the utterance and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. These

considerations must be taken into account since we are going to be dealing with a directive speech act, that of request. Yet we will first provide an overview of politeness across cultures before tackling this speech act in the next chapter.

2.1.2.1 Politeness Across Cultures

As Sifianou (1999) argues, no nation can be objectively verified as more polite or less polite than any other, regardless of popular stereotypes. Nations are polite in varying and culturally specific ways. Differences in the structures of languages seem to correspond to distinctions exhibited between the cultures in which those languages are used. Research into a range of diverse languages has shown that the more diverse two cultural systems are, the more distinct their languages will be. As Lyons (1981: 312) maintains, there are many grammatical and lexical differences which can be related to differences in the cultures with which particular languages are associated. However, similarities in language structures also occur because of similarities in culture and these similarities increase in proportion to extant heritage or cultural contact. As claimed by Sifianou (1999), the term politeness is most probably universal in some form or another. But its realisation both verbally and non-verbally might differ from one culture to another. It is therefore important to raise awareness amongst language learners of the similarities and differences between cultures so that people don't believe that their patterns for expressing politeness or impoliteness are universally applicable.

The following examples illustrate some of the differences evident in the way politeness is recognised and expressed in different cultures. For instance, it is polite in Oriental cultures to develop topics in a spiralling form, as opposed to the more linear form employed by Western cultures (Clyne, 1987; Kachru, 1987). This will evidently cause problems in understanding between native and non-native speakers; the former will include all the points which they regard as

relevant and necessary whereas their non-native interactants will alternatively deem them to be illogical and irrelevant. It is important to note that these differences do not only occur between cultures as apparently different as the two described above. Differences in discourse organization can also be observed between the Italians, Greeks and Russians for example. The latter group specifically prefers a more spiralling pattern for the development of their argumentation (Clyne, 1987).

Another significant difference between Oriental and Western cultures is the fact that some oriental cultures allow one to say to an addressee of a higher status what one assumes the addressee would like to hear, as opposed to telling them the concrete facts (LoCastro, 1987). Furthermore, indigenous cultures, such as the South-East Queensland Aborigenes or the Warm Spring Indians, might hold back an answer to a direct question because such questions are considered to be impolite. Cultural differences can also be discerned in lower-level linguistic phenomena like back-channel cues such as 'uh', 'huh' and 'yeah'. In Japanese, for instance, it would be considered impolite not to use such cues, regardless of whether the hearer is in agreement or not with the speaker. This stands in direct contrast to the use of back-channel cues in, for example, British culture; here a nod or a 'yes' are only used when one understands something. The openings of telephone conversations also demonstrate interesting cross-cultural variations. For instance, overt self-identification is the preferred, and consequently the appropriately polite strategy, for achieving recognition on the telephone in some cultures (British culture), but is an undesirable tactic in some other cultures (Spanish culture) (Schegloff, 1979). Many more examples similar to those above could be provided for as there are so many varying cultures in the world.

Yet politeness cannot be limited to form and nor can it be restricted to the linguistic medium. Rather politeness can also be shown by way of non-verbal actions, which also vary across cultures (Goody, 1978). Natives of high-contact cultures, such as Arab, Latin American and Greek cultures, feel more comfortable

when interacting at short distances with people. In contrast, natives of low-contact cultures, such as American and North European cultures, prefer greater distances. More precisely, in certain Arab countries closeness is related to how near to your interactant you place yourself, to the extent that you can even smell his or her breath. Failure to do this might even be considered impolite. Henley (1973) states that touch may be regarded as the non-verbal equivalent of calling someone by their first name in cultures such as the Greek or the Spanish cultures. If used reciprocally touch indicates solidarity and when non-reciprocal it indicates status.

It has been argued that this relationship between physical and social distance is the case in all cultures (Hudson, 1980). For instance, Sifianou (1999) asserts that the common reliance on indirect structures in English, mainly in relation to requests, represents related distancing devices. De Silva (1976) states that societies which rely greatly on elaborated systems of non-verbal expression for politeness have very few or indeed no relevant expressions for politeness (such as “thank you”, “please” and “sorry”). In such a case one system can be regarded as having replaced the other. One interesting consequence of this difference is reported by Singh *et al.* (1988), who explain that although Hindi speakers do not verbalise their gratitude as frequently as the English do, they express it habitually through alternative non-verbal means. Performing acts in a polite manner is a complex process which requires the acquisition of a combination of linguistic, non-linguistic and social skills. Children are reported to learn the structure of their language and its social functions simultaneously and at a very early age (Tannen, 1984). They imitate what they see others do around them which, as already stated, varies from culture to culture. The same also happens with speech acts, as mentioned in the previous section.

2.2 Interlanguage Pragmatics

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILT henceforth) is a relatively new subfield within the field of second language acquisition (Safont, 2005). It has been defined as the language system developed by language learners on their way to developing a target language (Trosborg, 1995). As a result it is concerned with the pragmatic competence and performance of second and foreign language learners. Research into interlanguage pragmatics therefore focuses on non-native speakers' use and acquisition of a pragmatic knowledge of the target language. The term interlanguage was coined by Selinker (1972), although other terms have been used to refer to the same phenomenon. For example, Nemser (1971) and Corder (1971) employed the terms approximative systems and idiosyncratic dialects or transitional competence respectively. These terms refer to two different concepts: the notion of interlanguage and the interlanguage continuum. According to Ellis (1985: 47), the former deals with "the structured system which the learner constructs at any given stage in his/her development," while the second term addresses the series of interlocking systems forming what Corder (1967) calls the learner's "built-in syllabus".

Ellis (1985) defined interlanguage as the knowledge of a language which is different from both the learners' mother tongue and the TL system that learners are trying to acquire. For him, the basic assumptions underlying the notion of interlanguage imply that the learner's language is permeable, dynamic and systematic (Ellis, 1985). Language permeability implies that the rules constituting a learner's knowledge at any particular stage can be amended. Its dynamism refers to the never-ending process of revision taking place within the internal system of rules and adoptions of new hypotheses about the TL system. Finally, a learner's selection of interlanguage rules is undertaken in a systematic and predictable way, based on his or her existing rule system. All of these characteristics are summarised in Koike's (1996: 257) definition of interlanguage as "a system that represents dynamic stages in the learning process and that are subject to continual change and modification."

The importance of the interlanguage system in the process of becoming communicatively competent also revolves around the acquisition of pragmatic skills. According to Kasper (1982) the interlanguage system involves syntactic, morphological, phonological, semantic and pragmatic rules, just like any other language. Kasper (1982: 110) defines interlanguage as “the linguistic knowledge system learners activate when trying to communicate in the target language.” Kasper (1982) additionally states that in contrast with other languages, interlanguage is typically developmental and can be permeated through the utilisation of different learning and communication strategies. This means that the interlanguage system might evolve within the context of the target language and prove to be dependent upon many potential influencing factors. These include the length of stay in the target language country and the proximity of the cultures involved (target culture and native culture), both of which are relevant to our study. Furthermore, if we consider Kasper and Blum-Kulka’s (1993: 3) definition of ILP as “the study of non-native speakers’ use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language,” we can infer that the main focus of ILP has been linguistic action or speech acts. Both of which are again relevant to our study.

The earliest studies into interlanguage pragmatics appeared almost three decades ago, both in Europe (Hackman, 1977) and North America (Borkin and Reinhart, 1978). It was during this time that scholars started paying attention to the performance of speech acts by learners of a second language. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) is one of the most influential works in this field. They analysed the realisation of speech acts by participants from differing linguistic backgrounds. They found that both second language learners and native speakers used different linguistic realisations for various situations. The choice of certain routines for use in specific contexts by language learners differed from the choices made by native speakers. Language learners did not always take into consideration the appropriateness of the selected routine. Results from this study showed differences between SL learners grammatical and pragmatic competence. The

mismatch in second language learners between grammatical and pragmatic competence has been highlighted frequently (Blum-Kulka, 1996) and has sparked an interest in the study of pragmatic competence by second language acquisition researchers.

As Bardovi-Harlig (1999a, 2001) has stated, a high level of grammatical competence does not necessarily denote a high level of pragmatic competence. As maintained by LoCastro (2003: 253), there are six main areas that influence the level of difficulty experienced by a learner in either comprehending or producing pragmatic knowledge, each of which may lead to pragmatic failure. The six primary possible causes of pragmatic failure are (1) pragmatic transfer, (2) stages in interlanguage development, (3) lack of adequate exposure to pragmatic norms, (4) inadequate or uninformed teaching, (5) loyalty to first language culture and (6) motivation.

As claimed by Kasper (1989), most of the research carried out in SLA has been devoted to a comparison of interlanguage speech act realisations as performed by learners with those performed by NSs. It has also been primarily concerned with analysing the production or perception of different speech acts within the same group of learners. The former of these two focal points, that is the comparison of NS and N-NSs performance in relation to certain aspects of pragmatics, belongs to cross-cultural pragmatics. Cross-cultural pragmatics has served as a model for ILP research and it has contributed to the dominance of comparative studies over acquisition studies in ILP. This is clearly illustrated by the large number of research projects that examine speech act use, compared to the relatively small quantity of studies concerned with the acquisition of pragmatic aspects of the target language. Rose (2000) rightly points out that studying pragmatic development requires two types of research, both of which should be incorporated into ILP. These are on the one hand the area of cross-sectional studies involving participants at various stages of development, and on

the other hand longitudinal research, which implies the study of a given group of subjects over an extended period of time.

In order to demonstrate the research that has so far been carried out in the area of ILP, we will devote the next three subsections to the differing perspectives dealing with ILP in both SL and FL environments. Firstly, we present a subsection addressing cross-sectional studies which focuses on the use of speech acts. Secondly, we focus on longitudinal studies and its relation to the development of speech acts. Lastly we look at studies of pragmatic transfer, an area which analyses the positive and negative transfer of pragmatic aspects from the mother tongue to the TL.

2.2.1 Cross-sectional Studies

Cross-sectional studies focus mainly on the use of speech acts and investigate developmental processes by examining features observed at different stages of development (Rose, 1997). Most cross-sectional research conducted so far has focused on the effects that different levels of proficiency and lengths of stay in the TL community have had on pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a). A characteristic feature of such studies has been that the majority of participants have been adults.

Regarding studies carried out in SL settings, research which has focused on comprehension and awareness includes studies by Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985; Kerekcs, 1992; and Koike, 1996. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka's (1985) study into the appropriateness of request and apology strategies as used by learners of Hebrew showed that N-NSs tended to be more accepting of TL pragmatic norms as their length of residence in the target language community increased. Whereas this first study focused on length of stay in the TL community as a decisive factor in the perception of more appropriate forms of request and apology, the other two

studies concentrated on the effect of proficiency. In Kerekes' (1992) study of assertiveness and supportiveness in troubles talk the author found that proficiency influenced ESL learners' perceptions of qualifiers (i.e. *I think, sort of*). Furthermore, with increased proficiency their perceptions became similar to those of native speakers. Similarly, Koike (1996) found that proficiency had a similar effect in her study of the perception of Spanish suggestions by English-speaking learners of Spanish.

With regards to the group of cross-sectional studies which considers learner performance of speech acts in an SL environment we find that learners have access to the same range of realisation strategies as NSs, regardless of their level of proficiency (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996; Kasper and Rose, 1999). This is documented in numerous studies that focus on requesting (Takahashi and DuFon, 1989; Svanes, 1992; Hassal, 1997, 2001), apologising (Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper and Ross, 1996) and refusing (Robinson, 1992). However, Kasper and Rose (1999) note that second language learners differ from NSs in their use of linguistic conventions depending on social factors. In a result linked to this finding proficiency was found to affect both the frequency and contextual distribution of realisation strategies (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996). Scarcella (1979) carried out one of the first studies to examine this area and showed that learners' repertoires of pragmatic routine, and other linguistic means of speech act realisation expanded as their proficiency increased.

Concerning findings into the speech act of requesting, Takahashi and DuFon (1989) reported that the Japanese learners of English moved from a preference for indirect requestive strategies towards a preference for more direct and target-like strategies as their proficiency increased. As previously noted, a similar development was discerned in Olshtain and Blum-Kulka's (1985) study of N-NSs of Hebrew; although here the subjects' increasingly TL orientated perceptions of directness and positive politeness were associated and correlated with their length of residence in the target community, rather than their

proficiency in the TL. In another study, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) observed that the learners' use of supportive moves in request performance also approximated a target-like distribution in line with increasing TL proficiency. Finally, in Hassall's (1997, 2001) studies of English speakers learning Bahasa Indonesian as SL the author found that learners with a higher proficiency in the SL came closer to TL use. Examples cited in this study included a decline in the use of "want" statements, a preference for elided imperatives in the expression direct requests or in hinting as proficiency increased. Hassal (2001) showed that an absent or weak lexical and grammatical knowledge can seriously affect a learner's capacity to be pragmatically effective.

What seems to be evident is that most of these cross-sectional studies have been based on the use of either one or various speech act realisations. Aside from this research only a few cross-sectional studies have investigated conversational abilities (Scarcella, 1983) or greetings (Omar, 1991, 1992). Omar's (1991) study of greetings as used by sixteen beginner and sixteen intermediate/advanced N-NSs of Kiswahili revealed little difference between the two groups, since both failed to conform to the more elaborate Kiswahili greeting routine. Consequently, Omar (1991) found that being immersed in the target culture implied the use of more appropriate greeting routines.

Dealing with studies conducted in foreign language (henceforth) FL settings, it is important for us to remark that only a few cross-sectional studies deal with the development of pragmatic competence in the context of EFL. The studies conducted by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) and Niezgoda and Röver (2001) represent those which have focused on the effects of learning environment on the development of EFL learners' pragmatic awareness. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) compared pragmatic and grammatical awareness in different EFL and English as a second language (ESL) populations consisting of both learners and teachers. Their study dealt with different speech acts, namely those of requests, suggestions, apologies and refusals. These speech acts appeared at the

end of videotaped interactions between two university students, one female and one male. To allow the study to focus on the participants' degree of awareness regarding errors in grammar and pragmatics the participants were asked to watch the video and distinguish between appropriate-inappropriate and correct-incorrect utterances. The results of this study clearly indicated that learning was affected by context (ESL/EFL), proficiency and learner versus teacher status. In fact, within the ESL group learners with a higher level of proficiency exhibited greater pragmatic awareness than learners with a lower level of proficiency. Moreover, both the ESL learners and teachers scored significantly higher on pragmatic appropriateness judgments than the two groups of EFL learners, the latter groups comprising students in Hungary and Italian primary school teachers in Hungary. In contrast, the EFL groups, whether made up of learners or teachers, registered a significantly higher number of grammatical errors than the ESL learners and teachers. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) have emphasised that although awareness increased in both groups there is a need to carry out more studies focusing on both awareness and production within the same groups of participants.

Niezgoda and Röver's (2001) replication of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study also focused on the effects of learning environment on the development of grammatical and pragmatic awareness. This replicative study was undertaken in order to determine whether the earlier study could be generalised to all SL and FL settings. Niezgoda and Röver (2001) employed the same instruments and procedures as those used in Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study. They dealt with different learner populations and did not consider teachers. Participants in this study consisted of 48 ESL and 124 EFL Czech students, all studying at university level. In similar findings to those of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), the authors found that the ESL students rated pragmatic errors as significantly more serious than grammatical errors. However, the Czech EFL students noticed more pragmatic and grammatical errors. Furthermore, they deemed these two types of errors to be more serious than the ESL population did.

This finding highlighted the fact that the learning environments differed between the two studies. The Hungarian EFL students in Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) research were studying at both secondary school and university levels and receiving only 3 to 6 hours of English instruction per week. Conversely, the Czech EFL students in Niezgodá and Röver's (2001) study consisted of a highly selective sample of university students who received 14 to 20 hours of monolingual English instruction per week. This accounts for the authors' suggestion that not all FL settings are equal in the development of learners' pragmatic competence.

In contrast to cross-sectional studies focusing on the comprehension and awareness of speech acts studies dealing with the production of speech acts by learners are more numerous. The types of speech acts examined have included requests (Trosborg, 1995; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Safont, 2001, 2005); apologies (Trosborg, 1987, 1995; Rose, 2000) complaints (Trosborg, 1995); refusals (Takahashi and Beebe, 1987; Houck and Gass, 1996) and compliments (Rose, 2000). The nationalities of the participants in these studies include Japanese (Takahashi and Beebe, 1987; Houck and Gass, 1996; Hill, 1997), Danish (Trosborg, 1987, 1995), Cantonese (Rose, 2000) and Spanish (Safont, 2005).

In Takahashi and Beebe's (1987) study the authors compared the written refusals of 20 NSs of Japanese, 20 NSs of English and 40 Japanese N-NSs of English (20 in Japan and 20 in the United States). The N-NS groups were further divided into groups of low and high proficiency. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) revealed that pragmatic transfer from Japanese to English was to be found in both ESL and EFL contexts and at both levels of proficiency. However, Japanese ESL learners approximated NS norms more accurately than EFL learners in their acts of refusal. In another study Hill (1997) analysed the requests of 60 university level Japanese learners of English representing three levels of proficiency in total. The author found that learners in the low proficiency group relied heavily on direct requests, while learners in the advanced group employed direct requests far less

frequently. Yet the opposite pattern was found for conventionally indirect requests. According to the author this indicated a clear developmental trend in request strategy. Trosborg's (1995) role-play study of three groups of Danish learners of English also showed a clear developmental pattern; a pattern comparatively similar to the findings in Hill (1997). According to Trosborg (1995), as proficiency increased an approximation of native-like request strategies began to occur, including the use of upgraders, downgraders and supportive moves.

The only cross-sectional study dealing with preadolescent participants was conducted by Rose (2000) and is based on the development of requests, apologies and compliment responses in English among three groups of Cantonese-speaking primary school students in Hong Kong. The author found little evidence of situational variation for any of the speech acts, although he did suggest that pragmalinguistics took precedence over sociopragmatics in the early stages of pragmatic development in the TL. Given the need to focus on beginner populations due to an absence of such studies in the field, Safont (2001) analysed the acquisition of the speech act of requesting in beginner and intermediate students within the instructional setting of a university. The author focused on the impact of the level of proficiency of the learners, the type of task to be performed, the sociolinguistic background of the learners (monolinguals versus bilinguals) and the role of instruction. In conclusion, Safont (2001) reported the explicit teaching of requests to EFL learners as playing a positive role. In fact learners at both of the two levels of proficiency improved their awareness and use of request act formulae, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Similarly, Safont (2005) focuses on learners of English in the Valencian Community, a bilingual community with Catalan and Spanish as its official languages. The author chose 160 female monolingual and bilingual students at the beginner and intermediate levels of learning and used an open role-play and an open discourse-completion test to elicit requests. Results regarding the effects of proficiency on pragmatic

production show that the higher the proficiency level of the subjects, the more request strategies they employ.

The current lack of information concerning developmental stages as derived from cross-sectional studies can be overcome by longitudinal investigations. In the field of interlanguage pragmatics, however, only a few longitudinal research projects have been carried out concerning speech act realisation and development.

2.2.2 Longitudinal Studies

A major advantage of longitudinal studies is that they generate data from different points in time, making it possible to construct a reliable profile of the second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) of individual learners. Yet a significant disadvantage is that longitudinal studies involving large numbers of learners are not easy to undertake. Correspondingly, it is difficult to generalise the findings based on the profiles of a small number of learners.

Most longitudinal studies to date have focused on learners at the earliest developmental stages of pragmatics. In addition, the settings for such data collection have usually been SL classrooms. Compared with cross-sectional studies, longitudinal interlanguage pragmatics research deals with a far wider range of aspects related to pragmatics, including the study of speech acts (Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1993; Kondo, 1997; Ohta, 1997; Barron, 2000, 2003; Achiba, 2003), interactional routines (Kanagy and Igarashi, 1997; Kanagy, 1999), discourse markers (Sawyer, 1992), conversational ability (Schmidt and Frota, 1986), implicature comprehension (Bouton, 1994), politeness (DuFon, 1999, 2000, 2003), communicative and pragmatic competence (Siegal, 1994, 1996; Cohen, 1997), listener responses

(Ohta, 1999; 2001a, 2001b) and modality within disagreements (Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig, 2000).

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the studies conducted by Schmidt (1983), Ellis (1992) and Achiba (2003) took place in an ESL context and examined the interlanguage development of one particular speech act, namely the act of requesting. Schmidt's (1983) three-year study of Wes, a Japanese adult learner of English, offered some insight into aspects of Wes' acquisition of pragmatics. At the start of the study Wes' use of directives was very limited. Furthermore, his use of requestive markers, such as "*please*", was more frequent and he associated the verb morpheme *-ing* with requestive force (*sitting* for "let's sit"). By the end of the observation period some improvements had been made; Wes had begun to use imperatives frequently, had dropped his previously incorrect utilisation of *-ing*, routines were now used productively and his directives had generally become much more elaborate. In a similar study, Ellis (1992) two-year study of the requests of two learners of English aged 10 and 11 within a classroom setting, also dealt with pragmatic development. The directives given by his subjects were initially characterised by propositional incompleteness. Yet this flawed characteristic diminished considerably over time, as did their use of direct requests. Correspondingly, their use of conventionally indirect requests increased over time.

Achiba's (2003) study also involved a beginner learner, namely Achiba's seven-year old daughter, Yao. Achiba observed Yao's acquisition of acts and expressions of requesting over a period of seventeen months and described how she experienced four different stages of development. Her pragmatic development when requesting became more refined as she progressed through each stage, eventually enabling her to fine tune the force of her requests and even adopt two hinting strategies. Moreover, Yao was able to vary the forms and strategies employed in her requests as her linguistic knowledge and sociocultural

perceptions expanded, as well as being able to draw on a developmental pattern when requesting depending on sociopragmatic factors.

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's (1993) study examined the development of suggestions and rejections by N-NSs of English in the context of academic advisory sessions. Their results revealed an interesting pattern of development which favoured sociopragmatics over pragmalinguistics, a pattern prompted by the participants' increase in competence over time whilst still not knowing how to mitigate their speech act realisations. Another relevant finding of this study is that of the taxonomy employed by the authors to analyse their data. This taxonomy focused on the relationship between the statuses of the speakers and the appropriateness of certain realisation strategies to a specific context. This taxonomic combining of congruent speech acts with the expected role of participants in a given situation is termed the Maxim of Congruence (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1990), more specifically defined as "make your contribution congruent with your status" (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1993: 281). This maxim can be described in more detail on the basis of six status-preserving strategies: (1) appear congruent, use the form of a congruent speech act where possible; (2) mark your contribution linguistically, use mitigators; (3) timing, do not begin with an incongruent contribution; (4) frequency, avoid frequent incongruent turns; (5) be brief; and (6) use appropriate content. In the light of this maxim the authors state that in the particular academic setting of an advisory session certain speech acts are congruent with the status of the teacher, whereas others are applicable to the status of the student.

Moving now to longitudinal studies conducted in FL settings, we can state that most of these studies have been set in Japanese foreign language (JFL) classrooms (Cohen, 1997; Kanagy and Igarashi, 1997; Ohta, 1997, 1999, 2001a, 2001b; Kanagy, 1999). In Cohen's (1997) study, which employed a method similar to that used in Schmidt and Frota's (1986) investigation of Schmidt's own acquisition of Brazilian Portuguese, the author kept a diary and developed a study

based on his own learning of Japanese for the duration of a semester-long course. Although Cohen acquired the ability to perform speech acts such as requests, expressions of gratitude and apologies, by the end of the course the level of his pragmatic ability did not meet his expectations. The studies by Kanagy and Igarashi (1997) and Kanagy (1999) took place in a Japanese immersion kindergarten where the authors analysed the acquisition of pragmatic routines by the kindergarten children. Their results indicated that children increased their use of spontaneous utterances after seven weeks of immersion. The studies conducted by Ohta (1997, 1999, 2001a, 2001b) also illustrated the development of different aspects of pragmatics, such as the use of affective particles or the productive use of *ne*. Furthermore, these studies have provided evidence for language socialisation as a productive framework for the acquisition of pragmatics in the FL classroom.

A different TL, that is German, was addressed in the studies by Barron (2000, 2003), who examined the development of pragmatic competence in a group of Irish students of German for the duration of an academic year in the target speech community, therefore analysing the effects of study abroad. Barron's (2000) first study dealt with pragmalinguistic issues relating to requests, specifically the issue of internal modification. Alternatively, Barron (2003) analysed internal modification along with both aspects of discourse and the pragmatic competence of learners in realisations of requests, offers and refusals of offers. In both studies results showed that the undertaking of study abroad had a positive effect on the pragmatic development of the learners.

2.2.3 Studies of Pragmatic Transfer

Kasper (1992) defined pragmatic transfer as the influence of one's pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than the TL on their comprehension, production and learning of pragmatic information in the TL. We

can therefore say that pragmatic transfer refers to the influence of the mother tongue and native culture on the interlanguage pragmatic knowledge and performance of learners (Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993). Most studies concerning pragmatic transfer have been based on negative rather than positive transfer, which refers to the use of the same pragmatic feature in both the mother tongue and the TL of a learner.

Interlanguage pragmatics studies into negative transfer have investigated both the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic features of such a transfer. On the one hand studies carried out by Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Blum-Kulka (1982), Olshtain (1983), House (1988), García (1989), Olshtain and Cohen (1989), Wolfson (1989), Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990), Robinson (1992), Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) and Takahashi and Beebe (1993) have all addressed the issue of sociopragmatic transfer, which refers to the transfer involved in a learner's awareness of a particular speech act as being appropriate for the context in which it is performed (Takahashi, 1996). On the other hand studies examining pragmalinguistic transfer at the level of form-force mapping, this being the selection of a linguistic realisation from the mother tongue for transference into the interlanguage, are not so widely documented (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Olshtain, 1983; House and Kasper, 1987; Faerch and Kasper, 1989; Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Bergman and Kasper, 1993; Maeshiba *et al.*, 1996).

Research conducted by Olshtain (1983) and Robinson (1992) suggested that learners with a universalist view of pragmatic norms might harbour a stronger tendency for the transference of pragmatic knowledge from their mother tongue to the TL. In Olshtain's (1983) study both English and Russian students exhibited transfer from their own language by expressing more apologies than NS of Hebrew. Alternatively, in the research conducted by Robinson (1992) Japanese students did not demonstrate a transfer of refusal patterns from their mother tongue to the TL, in this case English. A similar result occurred in Bodman and

Eisenstein's (1988) research into expressions for the articulation of gratitude in English and other languages. The subjects here did not display a transfer of ritualised gratitude in role-play performance using the TL. Other studies of pragmatic transfer carried out by Blum-Kulka (1982), House and Kasper (1987) and Faerch and Kasper (1989) and based on the speech act of requesting examined the influence of the mother tongue on learner perception and production of form-function mappings in the TL, essentially pragmalinguistic transfer. The findings of these studies revealed that transfer did not occur if learners identified features from their mother tongue as language-specific.

As is the case with cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, the role of proficiency has often been considered an important feature of studies into pragmatic transfer. The first study to advance a positive correlation between proficiency in the TL and pragmatic transfer was executed by Takahashi and Beebe (1987). The authors predicted that a greater amount of pragmatic transfer would occur amongst learners of a higher proficiency. Yet their study of refusals by Japanese learners of English, at two different levels of proficiency, did not verify their prediction. Other studies designed to test this correlation include those by Maeshiba *et al.* (1996), Rossiter and Kondoh (2001) and Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003). Maeshiba *et al.* (1996) examined apology strategies used by Japanese learners of ESL at two levels of proficiency, namely intermediate and advanced. Their results suggested that the lower proficiency learners transferred more strategies for apology from Japanese to English than the group exhibiting a high level of proficiency, therefore indicating a negative correlation between transfer and proficiency.

Negative correlation was also present in the study of requests carried out on Japanese EFL learners by Rossiter and Kondoh (2001). The authors found that the mid-proficiency learners, rather than those of a higher proficiency, transferred more forms of request from their mother tongue. Consequently, the results of the two aforementioned studies did not lend support to Takahashi and Beebe's (1987)

hypothesis. A more recent study conducted by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003), which compared data compiled from both the role-play performances of two groups of Japanese EFL learners and samples of naturally occurring English and Japanese requests, did not support either a positive or a negative correlation between pragmatic transfer and language proficiency. From three possible instances of transfer the authors found that the high proficiency learners employed the strategy of delayed requests more frequently; this may have been due to a positive correlation. However, no examples of negative correlation were observed since the other two strategies, namely those of positioning the grounders before requests and using want-statements as head acts, were used by both groups regardless of their level of proficiency.

All of the research listed above proves that transfer does exist at the pragmatic level (Kasper, 1992). However, as Takahashi (1996) points out, most studies of pragmatic transfer have followed a product-oriented research method, consisting of non-developmental studies comparing interlanguage performance with data from both the mother tongue and the TL of the learners. As a result of this, Takahashi (1996: 190) argues for the “need to undertake process-oriented studies of pragmatic transferability exploring the conditions under which transfer occurs”. Takahashi’s (1992, 1993, 1995, 1996) studies based within the context of EFL were specifically designed to investigate pragmatic transferability. In her 1996 study Takahashi analysed whether Japanese learners’ TL proficiency or the degree of imposition involved in the requestive goal influenced their perception of the transferability of request strategies existing in their mother tongue. The results of her study showed that proficiency had no effect on transferability, with the exception of want-statement requests. The reason for this being the fact that both low and high proficiency learners relied on conventions of request drawn from their mother tongue when performing TL request realisations. In contrast, as regards the degree of imposition, learners were found to be sensitive to this concern in their transferability judgments. However, Takahashi (1996) did not examine whether the articulation of requests by learners might also be affected by

the degree of imposition. In light of this omission the issue of imposition was taken into consideration in the study conducted by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003), which also focused on requests made by EFL Japanese learners. The authors found clear evidence of imposition having an effect on the production of requests by learners; this effect being stronger for learners with a higher level of language proficiency. The same authors also stated that the levels of imposition and proficiency were positively correlated in their study.

We have focused on the importance of pragmatic competence as one of the main competencies that learners have to acquire in the TL in order to become communicatively competent. Likewise we have described the field of ILP as being closely related to SLA research and next, we will present the speech act investigated in our study in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Investigating Request Modifiers Across Cultures

This third chapter deals with the speech act of requesting, the central speech act analysed in the present study. To begin with we provide a definition of request together with a discussion of Sifianou's (1999) and Trosborg's (1995) typologies of request head acts. In this section we also include an examination of various studies into request head acts. The following section (3.2) includes several taxonomies of request act mitigators from which Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) taxonomy derives. The first classification provided is that of Sifianou's (1999) study, which draws on comparisons between English and Greek requestive behaviour. References to Edmonson's (1981) classification are also included herein. Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology resulted from an analysis of Spanish EFL learners' oral production data and is used in the analysis presented in the next chapter of this study. Section 3.3 presents relevant studies of request mitigators conducted to date. The final section of the third chapter (3.4) outlines the motivation behind the present study by presenting the relevant research questions and hypotheses which lead to the study itself (chapter 4).

3.1 The Speech Act of Requesting

Requests are illocutionary acts and belong to Searle's category of directives. Searle describes them as speaker's attempts to get the hearer to do something. The grade of these attempts may vary from very modest attempts as invitations to do something to fierce attempts that almost oblige one to do something. Speakers perform request acts in order to engage the hearer in an action which will subsequently be of benefit to the speaker. Requests can therefore be categorised as pre-event acts, namely are acts which anticipate the expected action; this is as opposed to acts performed after an action has occurred, which would be labelled as post-event acts, an example of which is the speech act of apology. Given that asking somebody to do something for you for your own gain forms an act of an impositive nature, the speech act of requesting might be regarded as an intrusion into the interlocutor's territory.

In Brown & Levinson's terms (1987) requests are characterised by their face-threatening nature. In fact some authors prefer the term: impositive, with respect to requests (Green, 1975; Leech, 1983), rather than Searle's softer classificatory term: directive. In our case we agree with Sifianou (1999) that requests do not always bear an imposition on the hearer, although they do frequently direct him/her to perform some action. The term directive is therefore preferred. As Sifianou states, requests such as those addressed to shop assistants are not imposing acts. Sifianou (1999) also highlights that languages provide their speakers with a variety of grammatical possibilities in order to avoid or mitigate the impact of a potential face-threat. Furthermore, request acts indicate the existing social relationship between participants as they may choose who or what will be placed in a prominent position when performing the request: (a) the speaker '*Can I open the window?*', (b) the addressee '*can you open the window?*', (c) both speaker and addressee '*Could we open the window?*', and (d) the action '*Would it be possible to open the window?*' The reason for choosing one of these options at the expense of the others might be due to the intention to indicate intimacy with the hearer. Such features are taken into account by Trosborg (1995) in her suggested classification of request formulations.

Many different linguistic forms can convey a request act. Requests are made up of two main parts: the core or head of the request, which is the main utterance and performs the function of requesting, and its peripheral elements, which mitigate or aggravate the force of the request. The core of the request can be used successfully without the adoption of a mitigation device; however, this is not usually the case. In her attempt to compare Greek and English politeness phenomena Sifianou (1999) distinguishes between interrogatives, imperatives, declaratives, negatives and elliptical forms as possible linguistic realisations for the core of a request. She states that interrogatives can range from simple questions such as '*what time is it?*' to embedded imperatives such as '*could you tell me the time?*' the latter of which are commonly introduced by a modal verb.

She goes on to say that within interrogatives both of the aforementioned structures are common in English and Greek but that Greeks, unlike the English, also form requests with present indicative constructions. These are also common in languages such as Catalan, for example, '*Em dónes foc?*' or Spanish '*¿Me das fuego?*' '*do you give (sing.) me fire (lighter)?*' Sifianou (1999) also asserts that imperative constructions are very common in Greek, unlike in English where interrogatives are preferred. Statements can also function as requests according to Sifianou (1999) and can be divided into two groups: hints and, to use the terminology of Ervin-Tripp (1976): need statements. The latter of these covers a range of statements from '*I want/need an appointment with the doctor*' to more elaborate statements such as '*I'd like*' in English or '*I would want*' in Greek. Hints can also be found in both languages and, like need statements, range from abbreviated request statements such as '*coffee, please*' to more elaborated statements such as '*it's too cold in here,*' intended by the speaker as a request for the addressee to perform an action such as turn the heater on or close a window. Finally, negative constructions can also be identified as requests in Sifianou's (1999) classification, although less frequently in Greek than in English. Conversely, elliptical constructions are more frequently employed in Greek than in English.

In addition to Sifianou's (1999) classification, and as far as the head part is concerned, we shall focus on Trosborg's (1995) taxonomy of request strategies, based on Austin's (1962) and Searle's theories (1969), Brown & Levinson's reformulations (1987) and Blum-Kulka & Olshtain adaptations (1986). This classification of request act realisations comprises three main categories and so illustrates the indirectness to politeness continuum suggested by Brown & Levinson (1987). Despite the criticisms made against this relationship, it has been demonstrated through research into interlanguage pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, 1991) that none of the speech communities studied were devoid of the directness to indirectness scale. Request head categories in Trosborg's (1995) suggested classification comprise indirect, conventionally indirect and direct request

strategies. Sifianou (1999) also considers this distinction in her treatment of indirectness in requesting behaviour. Both authors differentiate between pragmatic and structural indirectness. Pragmatic indirectness is mainly realised by way of declaratives taking forms such as '*It's rather hot in here*', and can be identified as one of Brown & Levinson's off-record strategies (1987), also classified as hints. In contrast, structural indirectness involves a wider variety of forms, such as interrogatives, declaratives or negatives, as in '*Would you open the door?*' or '*I would like to ask you to open the door*'. This type of indirectness (or on-record strategies, Brown & Levinson, 1987) heavily relies on form.

Indirect request strategies (or in Sifianou's terms pragmatic indirect strategies, 1999) are examples of imprecise expressions employed by the requester when choosing not to show his/her intention explicitly. The intention of such unclear expressions is that they are interpreted by the hearer as utterances that convey content additional to that expressed by their surface structure. For instance, when using the expression '*I haven't eaten anything since yesterday*' the requester would actually be asking for some food. Given the nature of these expressions it is necessary that the speaker knows the hearer to a certain extent or that the situation enables the hearer to fulfil the speaker's request in order for the requester to achieve his/her goal by means of hints. So if the speaker knows that hints are commonly used as a method of requesting among a specific social group, the use of hints by the speaker will allow for potential positive outcomes.

One method by which speakers might make their intention explicit is that of using conventionally indirect strategies. These correspond with Sifianou's (1999) structural indirect strategies, whereas Trosborg (1995) distinguishes between hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented strategies. By adopting such strategies the requester specifies his/her goal while taking into consideration the threatening nature of their request. Hearer-oriented formulations refer to the hearer's ability and willingness to perform the action requested and this subcategory comprises expressions of ability, willingness, permission and

suggestory formulae. Ability substrategies usually take the form of a question and include the modal verbs ‘*can*’, ‘*could*’ or ‘*may*’ as in the expression ‘*Can/Could you please help me with my homework?*’ In utterances where the speaker refers to the hearer's willingness to undertake an action we find formulations such as:

- (1) ‘*Would you let me in?*’
- (2) ‘*Will you come to the party with me?*’
- (3) ‘*I'd appreciate it if you would come at another time.*’
- (4) ‘*I'd be grateful if you wouldn't mind writing a reference for me.*’

The requester may also ask for permission from his/her interlocutor when making a request, as in ‘*Can I borrow your pen?*’ Alternatively, s/he may also use suggestory formulae for the same purpose, such as ‘*How about lending me your pen?*’ According to Trosborg (1995), by resorting to suggestions the speaker may test his/her interlocutor's willingness to co-operate while also softening his/her own intention.

The second category of conventionally indirect request formulations focuses on the speaker and is termed speaker-oriented; it comprises two main subcategories, those of wishes and desires. Wishes describe the polite ways by which a speaker addresses his intention in order to modify the hearer's behaviour for his/her own benefit, e.g. ‘*I would like to borrow your student card.*’ On the other hand desires refer to more direct ways of addressing the hearer and so lessen the degree of politeness implied, e.g. ‘*I need your student card.*’ Resorting to speaker-oriented strategies makes the speaker's intention more explicit and subsequently increases the level of directness adopted in performing the request. However, these formulations are not as explicit as those found in the last category of Trosborg's (1995) classification, namely direct request realisations. These involve the requester making explicit his illocutionary intent by means of obligation statements or imperatives. Obligation is characterised by certain modals which attribute a degree of authority to the speaker over the hearer, for

example, ‘*You must come to class.*’ Performative verbs such as ‘*ask*’, ‘*request*’, ‘*demand*’ or ‘*order*’ express the speaker's intent to make a request, one example would be ‘*I would like to request a change of course.*’ Both obligation statements and performatives are direct and authoritative and the level of politeness involved varies in accordance to the propositional content of the expression chosen. For instance, the utterance ‘*I ask you to be quiet*’ is more polite than ‘*I order you to be quiet.*’ Finally, imperatives or elliptical phrases are the most direct and impolite forms for addressing a request in English, for example, ‘*Lend me your car*’ or ‘*Your car (please).*’

The following table outlines Trosborg’s (1995) taxonomy of request linguistic realisation strategies provided above.

Table 3.1 Taxonomy of request linguistic realisation strategies (Adapted from Trosborg (1995: 205))

TYPE	STRATEGY	EXAMPLE
Indirect Request	1. Hints (mild or strong)	<i>‘I have to be at the airport in half an hour.’</i> <i>‘My car has broken down.’</i>
Conventionally Indirect Hearer-Oriented	2. Ability	<i>‘Could you lend me your car?’</i>
	2. Willingness	<i>‘Would you lend me your car?’</i>
	2. Permission	<i>‘May I borrow your car?’</i>
	3. Suggestory formulae	<i>‘How about lending me your car?’</i>
Conventionally Indirect Speaker-Oriented	4. Wishes	<i>‘I would like to borrow your car.’</i>
	4. Desires	<i>‘I need to borrow your car.’</i>

Direct Request	5. Obligation	<i>'You must lend me your car.'</i>
	5. Performatives	<i>'I would like to ask you to lend me your car.'</i> <i>'I ask you lend me your car.'</i>
	6. Imperatives	<i>'Lend me your car.'</i>
	6. Elliptical phrase	<i>'Your car (please).'</i>

Trosborg's taxonomy (1995) has been used in studies investigating second and foreign language learners' production and assessment of request acts. Indeed Trosborg made use of this classification in her own study, which contrasted Danish and English native and non-native English learners' use of requests in a role-play task made up of 10 request situations. Regarding the use of certain strategies, all learners exhibited a preference for strategies of the conventionally indirect type. However, their realisations varied from those of native speakers with regards to the use of mitigators or supporting moves. Lower level learners utilised hints to a lesser extent than the more advanced learners and native speakers of English. Trosborg attributes these findings to the lexical and grammatical difficulty implied in performing hints. Direct strategies were also less frequently employed by both learners and native speakers. Trosborg (1995) reports on the underuse of direct formulae on the part of beginner and intermediate learners when compared with the number of direct strategies employed by native English speakers.

Different results were obtained by House & Kasper (1981) and Blum-Kulka (1983), both of whose studies examined German and Hebrew participants. It was consistently the case in these studies that the learners resorted to direct strategies more frequently than did the native speakers of the target language. As reported by Trosborg (1995), this apparent controversy in her findings may be associated with the social parameters involved in the situations, L1 influence and the task type that elicited the use of requests in all of these studies. On the one hand, the social parameters in Trosborg's study (1995) varied according to

dominance and social distance: interlocutors were assigned the varying roles of authoritative figures, strangers and friends in the oral role-play task that they were required to perform. On the other hand, House & Kasper (1987) elicited requests by way of a written, closed discourse completion test. This involved a dominance parameter in most situations, that is authoritative roles, with only a few situations illustrating degrees of familiarity (roles of strangers or friends). House & Kasper's (1987) subjects were faced with situations in which authoritative roles needed to be enacted, thus eliciting the use of imperatives or obligation realisations. The fact that these participants were engaged in a written task that included response moves in all situations and the absence of an interlocutor might also have affected the learners' possibilities for selecting a wider range of strategy types. This would be attributable to the degree of imposition of the request act not having been perceived as prominent as it is in oral face-to-face encounters.

The overuse of direct strategy types is also reported in Hill's study (1997), which focused on an analysis of the request strategies employed by Japanese learners of English as a foreign language. Hill found that learners at lower levels of proficiency overused direct strategy types. Yet as their level increased learners used conventionally indirect strategies more frequently, particularly strategies belonging to the willingness subtype. In this respect learner development denoted an approximation to the norms of the target language. These findings correspond with those of Ellis (1992), a study noted in the previous chapter which concerned the pragmatic development of two participants with regards to the production of requests. Initially, the participants resorted to imperatives of the direct category and as soon as their proficiency increased they started to use of conventionally indirect strategies of the ability type. From the aforementioned studies it is possible to assume that the choices governing request realisations are influenced by the context, the elicitation method adopted in the study and the proficiency level of the participants.

Yet taking into account the differences between Trosborg's (1995) and House & Kasper's (1987) findings, in terms of the subjects' strategy selection, there seems still to be a need for studies which implement various elicitation techniques in order to fully and effectively contrast the effects of these instruments on the behaviour involved in request acts. Furthermore, due to the international status of English today it is of the utmost importance to examine the means by which international students produce requests.

The majority of interlanguage pragmatics research dealing with the speech act of requesting has focused on linguistic realisations of the request head act (Scarcella, 1979; Walters, 1979; Schmidt, 1983; Baba and Lian, 1992; Ellis, 1992; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993; García, 1993; Weizman, 1993; Francis, 1997; Ohta, 1997; Takahashi and DuFon, 1989; Svanes, 1992; Trosborg, 1995; Zhang, 1995; Takahashi, 1996; Hill, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Rinnert, 1999; Rinnert and Kobayashi, 1999; Li, 2000; Rose, 1999; 2000; Cook and Liddicoat, 2002; Warga, 2002; Achiba, 2003; Barron, 2003; Hassall, 2003). Moreover, as stated by Hassall (2001), most research has focused on forms related to the request head act, while modifiers have received less attention from IL pragmatics scholars. It is for this reason then that we will now direct our attention towards the different taxonomies of request modifiers developed so far.

3.2 Towards a Taxonomy of Requests Modifiers

Request modifiers accompany the request head act with the purpose of varying politeness levels and lessening threatening conditions (Safont, forthcoming). They entail the modification of the head or core of the speech act and are of foremost importance when dealing with requests. Trosborg (1995), Sifianou (1999), Márquez Reiter (2000), Safont (2005) and others have claimed, as already noted, that requests consist of two parts, namely (i) a core request or head act and (ii) peripheral elements. The head act is the main utterance and

constitutes the actual function of requesting; as already explained in the previous section, the head act can stand by itself. Any additional items form the peripheral elements and may follow and/or precede the request head act. They do not function in order to change the propositional content of the request head act, but rather serve to either mitigate or aggravate its force. Both Trosborg (1995) and Sifianou (1999) analyse modification in requesting and here we shall provide a description of Sifianou's (1999) classification. It is most applicable to our study since first, it is based on similar classifications proposed by Edmondson (1981), House & Kasper (1981) and Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984) and second, because it constitutes the basis of the typology (Alcón *et al.*, 2005) presented at the end of this subsection and used in the analysis of our data.

Sifianou (1999) draws a distinction between external and internal modification in request realisations. Internal modification may be performed by way of openers, hedges and fillers, while external modification is realised by what the author terms commitment-seeking devices and reinforcing devices. This distinction is illustrated in Table 3.2

Table 3.2 Sifianou's (1999:159) classification of peripheral elements in request realisation

INTERNAL MODIFICATION	OPENERS		
	HEDGES	Softeners	Diminutives Miscellaneous Tag questions
		Intensifiers	
	FILLERS	Hesitators Cajolers Appealers Attention-	

		getters	
EXTERNAL MODIFICATION	COMMITMENT-SEEKING DEVICES		
	REINFORCING DEVICES	Grounders Disarmers Expanders Please	

In the above classification openers are recognised as an instance of internal modification and identified by Sifianou as opening words and expressions which look for the addressee's co-operation. They can appear either at the beginning or end of the request, as demonstrated in the following examples:

- (1) '*Do you think you can help me with my homework?*'
- (2) '*Can you help me with my homework, do you think?*'

Openers are regarded as pragmatic features involving a certain degree of formality in English and so usage of them is highly conventionalised. As a consequence these devices have the potential to soften the impositive nature of request acts by virtue of the fact that they highlight the addressee's collaboration. Sifianou (1999) also asserts that some openers might take the form of if clauses when placed at the end, causing them to become external modifiers instead:

- (3) '*Make me a cup of tea in the red mug, if you wouldn't mind, please.*'

Sifianou's data shows that such introductory items in requests are much more commonly used in English than in Greek and that when used in Greek they tend to retain their literal meaning.

Hedges, another internal mitigation device, are also regarded as able to decrease any threatening behaviour when employed during the act of requesting. In an attempt to account for languages other than English, Sifianou (1999) groups hedges into softeners and intensifiers, the latter of which are less often employed in English since they aggravate the impositive character of an act and are therefore considered to be demonstrative of impolite behaviour, for example, 'come here *at once!*' English request acts more frequently employ softeners, which comprise further subtypes such as diminutives, tag questions and various fixed expressions.

Diminutives, and in particular diminutive suffixes such as '*doggy*', are not commonly utilised in English except when talking to children. As Sifianou (1999:167) reports, "the use of diminutives is related to intimacy, group membership and familiarity," and so they are not employed in cases where differences of status come into play. However, although some European languages such as Catalan, Spanish and Greek are very rich morphologically, therefore enabling diminutives to be created by way of suffixes, this is not the case in English. Conversely, the use of tag questions in English is very common in request realisations, since they restrict the number of possible consequences of the speaker's request and protect him/her from a potential refusal by the hearer. The widely developed system of modal verbs characteristic of English might also have contributed to the formal variety of tag questions. Yet this is not the case in other languages such as Greek, Hebrew (Blum-Kulka, 1982 and 1983) and Polish (Wierzbicka, 1985).

Examples of tag questions in requests are as follows:

- (4) 'Pass me the water, *will you?*'
- (5) 'You could do me a favour, *couldn't you?*'

Several fixed expressions are also employed when softening the request act, for instance terms such as ‘*a moment*’ or ‘*a second*’ and various adverbs such as ‘*just*’, ‘*possibly*’, ‘*perhaps*’ and ‘*sort of*’:

- (6) ‘*Will you possibly* make these phone calls for me?’
- (7) ‘Can you *just* be quicker?’
- (8) ‘Could you *perhaps* come to work an extra day this week?’

Finally, although not commonly used in English, intensifiers are also classified within the first subgroup of hedges (see Table 3.2 above) and are used to intensify one item and consequently the utterance as a whole. As already stated, common intensifiers in the English language are ‘*come on*’ and ‘*at once!*’ Sifianou (1999) posits that English speakers use fewer intensifiers with requests than Greeks and that English speakers generally use softeners more than they use intensifiers.

A second subgroup denoting internal modification is that of fillers, or more specifically lexical items or simply noises used by a speaker in order to complete any gaps present during an interaction. This subgroup comprises hesitators, cajolers, appealers and attention-getters, as illustrated in Table 3.2. Hesitation devices denote a certain degree of insecurity in the performing of a request act or speaker uncertainty as to the impact of a request act. For this reason s/he makes use of repetition or synonym expressions, for example, ‘*could you...could you...*’ ‘*perhaps you could inform me about that meeting later.*’ According to Sifianou (1999) this type of mitigation device is more common in English than in Greek. Cajolers are the next type of filler and are addressee-oriented devices that aim to clarify the intention of the speaker when s/he is asking for the co-operation of the hearer in the request move. Instances of cajolers in English are expressions such as ‘*you know, you see*’ or ‘*I mean*’. In comparison, the only expression of this type used with requests in Greek is *you see*. Appealers are also addressee-oriented fillers and seek a sort of compromise on the part of the hearer. They are placed at

the end of the sentence and the terms most often employed for this purpose are ‘OK’ and ‘right’, as it has been observed by Sifianou (1999). Appealers tend to be more frequently used in Greek than in English. Finally, in order to attract the hearer’s attention the speaker may resort to attention-getters. These include formulaic entreaties such as ‘excuse me’, formulaic greetings such as ‘hello’, and imperative constructions with perception verbs such as ‘Listen...’, all of which are used before the actual request is formulated.

The second type of request modifier is that of external modification and entails the use of various optional clauses designed to soften the threatening or impositive nature of the request head. Sifianou (1999) distinguishes between commitment-seeking and reinforcing devices. The first of these subsections corresponds with Edmondson’s (1981) pre-exchanges, these being the initiation moves which focus on the speaker’s assurance of fulfilment before realising the request. Speakers do not usually expect a negative response to pre-request moves and this has led to their conventionalisation. Indeed sometimes they no longer constitute a separate move on the part of the speaker. Such conventionalized usage can either mitigate (example 9) or intensify (example 10) the force of the request:

- (9) ‘*I wondered if you could do me a favour and take it to the dry cleaners.*’
- (10) ‘*Do me a favour and leave me alone.*’

Sifianou (1999) has reported that this mitigation device is used in both English and Greek, although in differing ways. In English it is used at all levels of social distance, regardless of the degree of imposition involved. Alternatively, in Greek it is mainly used in contexts where the degree of imposition is high and where greater social distance is present.

The second subsection of external mitigation includes reinforcing devices. Edmondson (1981) calls such devices supportive moves and Sifianou (1999) subdivides them into grounders, disarmers, expanders and please. According to Sifianou (1999), these devices possess a dual function because they can both mitigate the force of the request and intensify its impact; this is similar to the above description of commitment-seeking devices. *Grounders* can be regarded as an exemplification of this double function as they are clauses that either precede or follow a request act and may either provide an explanation for or threaten the hearer:

- (11) 'Could you switch off the light? *I have a terrible headache.*'
- (12) 'Can you be here on time? *Otherwise we will talk seriously about your delay.*'

Example 11 illustrates a softening of the impositive nature of the request, while example 12 denotes a threat to the hearer and subsequently intensifies the force of the act. Sifianou (1999) states that *grounders* are more frequently found in requests performed by Greeks than in requests performed by the English. In focusing on the addressee *disarmers* aim at limiting the hearer's possibilities for refusing to perform the requested action, just as the name itself indicates. Typical examples of English disarmers include if clauses, for example, '*If you have the time, could you please type this letter for me?*', although declaratives can also be used, for instance, '*I wouldn't like to bother you*' but could you type this letter for me?' The speaker may also opt to repeat the request move in order to increase its effect on the hearer. Sifianou (1999) refers to this as the use of expanders, because by repeating or providing synonym expressions for the request act the speaker expands his intention:

- (13) Could you come to the party? We'll have a good time. *Please, come.*

A final instance of external modification proposed by Sifianou (1999), which is very common in English requests, is the use of the particle ‘*please*’. Given its multifunctionality this particle is treated independently as a sole entity that softens the force of the request and which may appear at the beginning or end of the request move. Furthermore, it may be isolated when social distance is high or low and, as stated by Ervin-Tripp (1976), present in direct, indirect or conventionally indirect realisations. However, House (1989) states that ‘*please*’ cannot be employed with opaque (i.e. indirect) strategies, since it would mark the utterance as a request and result in a contradiction. According to Searle (1975) *please* may be regarded as the most conventional form for requests in the English language:

- (14) ‘*Please* pass me the bread.’
- (15) ‘Could you *please* look for the report?’
- (16) ‘I wonder whether you could tell me what happened yesterday, *please*.’
- (17) ‘A: Could you photocopy that for me?
B: ... Sure!
A: *Please*.’

As is illustrated above, ‘*please*’ is frequently used in various request realisations and is clearly the most transparent marker of politeness in both Greek and English (Sifianou, 1999).

Following Sifianou’s (1999) described taxonomy an adaptation is presented below in Table 3.3. Furthermore, studies by House and Kasper (1981), Trosborg (1995), Nikula (1996), Hill (1997), Márquez Reiter (2000) and Achiba (2003) were also considered in Alcón *et al.*’s (2005) classification of request modifiers. While Sifianou’s (1999) typology, was the outcome of analysing Greek and English written data, the analysis of Spanish EFL learners’ oral production

data, as far as their use of modification devices when requesting is concerned, was taken into account in the design of the next taxonomy.

Table 3.3 Typology of peripheral modification devices in requests (Alcón *et al.*, 2005)

TYPE	SUBTYPE		EXAMPLE	
Internal Modification				
		Openers	'Do you think you could open the window?'	
			'Would you mind opening the window?'	
		Softeners	Understatement	'Could you open the window <i>for a moment?</i> '
			Downtoner	'Could you <i>possibly</i> open the window?'
			Hedge	'Could you <i>kind of</i> open the window?'
		Intensifiers		'You <i>really</i> must open the window.'
				' <i>I'm sure</i> you wouldn't mind opening the window.'
		Fillers	Hesitators	'I <i>er, erm, er</i> – I wonder if you could open the window'
			Cajolers	' <i>You know, you see, I mean</i> '
			Appealers	' <i>OK?, Right?, yeah</i> '
			Attention-getters	' <i>Excuse me ...; Hello ...; Look ...; Tom, ...; Mr. Edwards ...; father ...</i> '
External Modification				
		Preparators	' <i>May I ask you a favour? ...</i> Could you open the window?'	
		Grounders	' <i>It seems it is quite hot here.</i> Could you open the window?'	
		Disarmers	' <i>I hate bothering you but</i> could you open	

			the window?’
	Expanders		‘Would you mind opening the window? ... <i>Once again, could you open the window?</i> ’
	Promise of reward		‘Could you open the window? <i>If you open it, I promise to take you to the cinema.</i> ’
	Please		‘Would you mind opening the window, <i>please?</i> ’

Table 3.3 above shows that the main distinction provided by Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) taxonomy is also centred on internal and external modifiers. The varying subtypes of internal modifiers proposed in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) taxonomy have mainly followed Sifianou's (1999) description of the same form of modification, rather than Trosborg's (1995) classification. Trosborg (1995) follows House and Kasper's (1981) classification of modality markers by dividing internal modification devices into downgraders and upgraders. Downgraders refer to modality markers which tone down the impact that an utterance is likely to have on the hearer, whereas upgraders have the opposite effect of increasing the impact of an utterance on the hearer. Yet as stated above, Sifianou (1999: 157) highlights the fact that “intensifying devices are rarely used with requests” in English. Therefore, an extensive description of downgraders (or softeners, as they are called in the typology presented in Table 3.3 instead of upgraders (or intensifiers) is provided. Trosborg (1995) also divides downgraders into two further subtypes, the result of focusing on the grammatical aspects involved in the production of these modifiers: (i) syntactic downgraders and (ii) lexical/phrasal downgraders. In contrast, Sifianou (1999) claims that not only linguistic and syntactic knowledge is required to modify a request appropriately, but that knowledge of the interactional and contextual factors influencing the realisation of a particular request is also crucial.

Bearing these considerations in mind, four subtypes of internal modification are included in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology, namely openers, softeners, intensifiers and fillers (see Table 3.3). Openers are opening words and expressions which look for the addressee's co-operation and modify the request as a whole (Sifianou 1999). As previously stated, the use of openers is a conventionalised way of introducing requests in English since they are associated with formality by virtue of their softening of the declarative illocutionary force of the sentence (Lakoff, 1977). They can either initiate the request (example 18) or be placed at the end (example 19):

(18) 'Do you think you could open the window?'

(19) 'Could you open the window, do you think?'

The making of openers function as questions has also been looked into by Trosborg (1995), who notes that questions are more polite than statements. Other examples of openers include: '*would you mind ...?, I don't suppose ..., and I would be grateful ...*'. The first of these examples is similar to Trosborg's (1995) lexical/phrasal downgrader in the form of a consultative device, whereas the second example refers to negation and the third to a conditional clause. Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) taxonomy does not include this classification.

The second subtype of internal modification consists of softeners, that is to say those devices that serve to soften and mitigate the force of the request (Sifianou 1999). As has already been detailed, Sifianou (1999) makes a further distinction between three types of softeners, namely diminutives, tag questions and a variety of fixed expressions otherwise termed miscellaneous. Regarding diminutives, Sifianou (1999) claims that they are not very frequently used in English in contrast to their high frequency of usage in other languages such as Greek (Sifianou, 1999) or Uruguayan Spanish (Márquez Reiter 2000). This explains why they have not been considered in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) proposed typology. Although Sifianou (1999) claims that English requests can be often

softened by tag questions, Alcón *et al.* (2006) also omitted this subtype of softener from their taxonomy, since no instances of tag questions appeared in the Spanish EFL data analysed. Yet they did include the third subtype of softeners considered by Sifianou (1999), that of miscellaneous, due to their importance and high frequency of occurrence in English. Alcón *et al.* (2005) further divided this category into three subtypes along the lines of House and Kasper's (1981) and Trosborg's (1995) classifications: (i) *understatements*, (ii) *downtoners*, and (iii) *hedges*. Whereas *understatements* include a variety of fixed expressions, such as *a moment* (example 20), *a second* or *a little bit*, *downtoners* involve a series of adverbs, such as *possibly*, *just*, *simply*, *perhaps*, *rather*, *maybe*. According to Sifianou (1999: 172) these are used "to tentativize what speakers say, thus allowing them not to fully commit themselves to what they are saying" (example 21). Finally, *hedges* have been defined as adverbials, such as '*kind of*, *sort of*, *somehow*, *and so on*, *more or less*' (example 22), and are "used by the speakers when they wish to avoid a precise propositional specification" (Márquez Reiter 2000: 139).

- (20) 'Could you open the window *for a moment*?'
- (21) 'Could you *possibly* open the window?'
- (22) 'Could you *kind of* open the window?'
- (23) 'You *really* must open the window.'

Regarding the third subtype of internal modification proposed in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology, that of *intensifiers*, Sifianou (1999: 179) has described these as modifiers which "aggravate the impact of the request indicating instances of impolite behaviour" (example 23). Although House and Kasper (1981) and Trosborg (1995) have also subdivided this internal modifier into three subtypes, namely those of adverbial intensifier (e.g. '*such*', '*so*', '*very*', '*quite*', '*really*', '*terribly*', '*awfully*', '*absolutely*'), commitment upgrader (e.g. '*I'm sure*', '*I'm certain*', '*it's obvious*', '*surely*', '*obviously*') and lexical intensification (e.g. *the hell* - use of swear words), Alcón *et al.* (2005) only include one type of intensifier.

This inclusion follows from Sifianou's (1999) assumption that this type of internal modifier is rarely employed in English, a fact which has been supported by Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan's (2006a) study which illustrated that no instances of intensifiers occurred in role-plays eliciting request use.

The last subtype of internal modification devices included in Alcón *et al.*'s taxonomy refers to fillers. These are optional lexical items used by the speaker to fill in any gaps occurring during an interaction. Sifianou (1999: 179) specifically underlines the fact that the function of these devices is more socio-pragmatic than semantic, since they are "highly formulaic and mostly semantically void in that although they have a certain literal meaning, they do not retain it when used as fillers." The most common fillers employed with requests are those of (i) *hesitators*, (ii) *cajolers*, (iii) *appealers*, and (iv) *attention-getters*. As already noted, hesitators occur "when the speaker is uncertain of the impact of a request on the addressee" (Sifianou 1999: 179). Various means of hesitation may therefore be used, such as simply stuttering (e.g. 'erm', 'er'), repetition, or a combination of the two, as example 24 illustrates:

(24) 'I er, erm, er – I wonder if you could open the window.'

The use of hesitators can be regarded as an important form of modification which usually takes place in interactive situations that elicit a speaker's request use. The frequent use of this type of filler has been reported by studies such as Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan (2006a, 2006b), who claim that such a level of frequency might be attributed to the interactive oral performance of learners in spontaneous role-plays. *Cajolers* were also recorded in the EFL data analysed, although to a lesser extent when compared to the use of hesitators. These items specifically refer to addressee-orientated modifiers that function as "attempts by speakers to make things clearer for the addressees and invite them, at least metaphorically, to participate in the speech act" (Sifianou 1999: 180). As outlined above, examples of cajolers are expressions such as 'you know', 'you see' and 'I

mean'. Other addressee-orientated modifiers are classified as appealers and are employed by the speaker at the end of a sentence to appeal to the addressee's understanding and elicit consent (Sifianou 1999; Achiba 2003). Instances of appealers in English include 'OK?', 'right?' and 'yeah', the first two of which were identified after analysing the oral request production data of a selection of EFL learners.

Finally, a speaker may also employ *attention-getters* in order to attract and alert the addressee before an actual request is made (Sifianou 1999; Achiba 2003). As already discussed, Sifianou (1999: 181) divides attention-getters into three main categories, those of formulaic entreaties (i.e. 'excuse me'), formulaic greetings (i.e. 'hello'), and imperative constructions (i.e. 'look', 'listen', 'wait'). With respect to the use of these types of fillers, the analysis of the request data compiled from the EFL learners' performance in oral role-plays illustrated that learners used these three categories to a considerable extent. Furthermore, Alcón *et al.* (2005) took into consideration the addressee's name (e.g. 'Tom ...', 'Mr. Edwards ...') when analysing this type of internal modifier, in addition to taking into account what Hassall (2001) calls the kinship term of address (e.g. 'father', 'mother'). Hassall (2001) claims that the speaker's use of this kinship term of address can have either a positive politeness function by showing some degree of intimacy when metaphorically including the addressee within the family of the speaker, or a negative politeness function by showing respect for the addressee by virtue of his/her position or age.

With respect to the classification of the different subtypes of external modifiers proposed in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology they did not follow the terminology employed by Sifianou (1999), who divided these modifiers into commitment-seeking devices and reinforcing devices. They adopted instead the terminology proposed by Trosborg (1995), Márquez Reiter (2000) and Achiba (2003), all of whom considered the different external modifiers at the same level, with the exception of please, which according to these authors constitutes an

external modifier. Additionally, Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology comprises six subtypes of external modification devices, namely preparators, grounders, disarmers, expanders, promise of reward, and please (see Table 3.3).

The first external modifiers considered in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) typology, those named preparators, refer to those elements employed by the requester to prepare the addressee for the ensuing request (House and Kasper 1981; Trosborg 1995; Márquez Reiter 2000; Achiba 2003). Trosborg (1995) distinguishes between the differing ways in which a requester might prepare his/her request: (i) preparing the content, (ii) preparing the speech act, (iii) checking availability, and (iv) obtaining a pre-commitment. The authors referred to preparators as being included in the last category, which corresponds with the commitment-seeking devices proposed by Sifianou (1999) or the pre-exchanges mentioned by Edmonson (1981). As Sifianou (1999: 183) claims, when the requester employs this type of preparator or pre-request they do not tell the addressee the content of his/her request, but oblige the addressee to respond either positively or negatively (example 25).

(25) ‘*May I ask you a favour?*’

Requesters usually anticipate a positive response, expecting that it will both place him/her in a safe position for making the request and increase the chances of the request being successful. Other examples of preparators include ‘*Would you mind doing me a favour?*’, ‘*Would you help me out?*’ or ‘*I wonder if you’d give me a hand*’ and ‘*I have to ask you a question*’ or ‘*I would like to speak to you*’.

Grounders form the second subtype of external modification and consist of reasons and justifications for the request being made (House and Kasper 1981; Trosborg 1995; Márquez Reiter 2000; Achiba 2003). As Alcón *et al.* (2005) noted, this type of external modifier occurred repeatedly in the EFL learners data

analysed in comparison to other external modifiers. Grounders are a form of reinforcing device, according to Sifianou (1999: 185), and they “contribute to a harmonious encounter in that the speaker, by giving reasons for a request, expects the addressee to be more understanding and willing to co-operate.” Furthermore, Hassall (2001) claims that providing reasons makes the request more polite and can convey either positive or negative politeness. Positive politeness occurs when the requester assumes the cooperation of the addressee if he/she sees why such a request is necessary, whereas negative politeness takes place when the requester shows the addressee that he/she would not impose on him/her without a good reason. Grounders can either precede (example 26) or follow (example 27) the request head act.

(26) ‘*It seems quite hot in here. Could you open the window?*’

(27) ‘*Could you open the window? It seems quite hot in here.*’

The third subtype of external modification refers to disarmers, which are also a type of reinforcing device according to Sifianou (1999). These elements consist of external modifying devices that aim at disarming the addressee so as to circumvent the possibility of refusal. In other words, in utilising a disarmer the requester tries to remove any potential objections that the addressee might raise upon being confronted with the request (Márquez Reiter 2000). As Sifianou (1999: 187) explains, this particular type of external modifier may be expressed as “complimenting phrases, entreaties, or formulaic promises, and, in general, phrases which express the speakers’ awareness and concern that the requests might be an imposition on the addressees” (see example 28).

(28) ‘*I hate to bother you but could you open the window?*’

The fourth subtype of external modification proposed in Alcón *et al.*’s (2005) typology, is that of expanders. Sifianou (1999) was the only author to mention this kind of modification in her classification of request modifiers.

Expanders are related to repetition and serve to indicate tentativeness. More specifically, Sifianou (1999: 188) claims that when employing this form of device, “speakers can repeat their words identically, expand on them by adding further elements, or use synonymous expressions.” Expressions typically used as expanders include ‘*have I told you this before?*’ or ‘*once again*’ (see example 29). It has also been argued that expansion is a feature of consecutive turns, rather than single acts, and that they can be used to stress agreement between interactants.

(29) ‘Would you mind opening the window? ... *Once again, could you open the window.*’

The fifth subtype of external modification devices included in Alcón *et al.*'s typology is *promise of reward*. The authors also considered including Trosborg's (1995: 218) *cost minimizing* category of modification however, no instances of this latter form of modification were found in their data and consequently, only the *promise of reward* was included. This subtype has also been taken into consideration by Márquez Reiter (2000). The *promise of reward* consists of offering the addressee a reward, to be given upon fulfilment of the request. This modification is therefore employed by the speaker in order to make a request more attractive to the addressee and consequently increase the possibility of compliance (Trosborg 1995; Márquez Reiter 2000) (see example 30).

(30) ‘Could you open the window? *If you open it, I promise to take you to the cinema.*’

The final subtype of external modification included in Alcón *et al.*'s (2006) typology is that of the politeness marker ‘*please*’, the usage frequency of which was very high in their EFL learners' oral production data analysed for the creation of this typology. In contrast to the classifications proposed by House and Kasper (1981), Trosborg (1995) and Achiba (2003), all of which regard this politeness marker as an internal lexical modifier, Alcón *et al.* (2005) followed

Sifianou's (1999) assumption that this particle should instead be dealt with as another external modification device. According to Sifianou (1999: 189) '*please*' is "possibly the commonest and most significant modifier in requests" and it signals politeness by softening the imposition carried out by this speech act, subsequently eliciting cooperative behaviour from the addressee. In addition to this primary function, Trosborg (1995: 258-259) and Achiba (2003: 134) highlight the fact that the supplementing of an utterance with please "explicitly and literally marks the primary illocutionary point of the utterance as a directive" (Searle 1975: 68). The unique presence of please in any given utterance therefore has the role of marking it as a directive and it can be employed as a request marker. Achiba (2003: 134) states that, in addition to these two functions, please can be used: (i) to beg for cooperative behaviour from the addressee (i.e. in an emphatic way), and (ii) to emphasise what a speaker says. Further to this, as Sifianou (1999) has stated, please can be used in situations in which the speaker is not concerned with manners but rather intends to communicate a clear request, for example '*Oh! Why don't you shut up, please!*'

Safont (2005) also underlines the importance of treating the politeness marker *please* as a sole entity due to its multifunctionality. Indeed, it is the only modifying device, either internal or external, which can substitute a whole utterance. Please is therefore examined in Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) proposed typology as a unique modification device, one which can be employed at the beginning (example 31) or at the end (example 32) of the request act. It can also appear in an embedded position, in a way similar to most downtoners (an internal modification device described above, see example 33). Finally, it can appear alone when performing the function of substituting a whole utterance (example 34).

- (31) '*Please, open the window.*'
- (32) '*Would you mind opening the window, please?*'
- (33) '*Could you please open the window?*'
- (34) '*A. Can you open the window?*'

B. ... Mm ... I have to ...

A. *Please*'

To sum up, Sifianou's (1999) taxonomy was developed from data compiled in relation to English and Greek native speakers and Alcon *et al.*'s (2006) was developed from non-native speakers of English data within the context of a foreign language. In addition, these two taxonomies were adapted from Trosborg's (1995) study of three groups of Danish foreign language learners of English; Edmonson's (1981) model for the analysis of spoken discourse; House and Kasper's (1981) study on politeness in English and German; and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) contrast of requests and apologies across Australian, American and British English, Canadian French, Danish, German, Hebrew and Russian. Next we shall deal with findings derived from various studies that focused on request modifiers.

3.3 Studies Dealing with Request Modifiers

Despite the presence of please and other modifiers in request acts, most research into interlanguage pragmatics has focused on strategies involved in the request head act itself. Yet the ability to use request modifiers appropriately is one aspect of pragmatic proficiency, which according to Nikula (1996: 29) refers to "speakers' ability to use language not only correctly as far as grammar and vocabulary are concerned but also appropriately, so that language use fits the social situation in which it is being used." Following this assumption, we may state that speakers need both linguistic knowledge and information regarding the contextual factors that may influence a given communicative act. In other words, and as stated in the previous chapter, the speaker requires pragmlinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge in order to be able to use the language appropriately, as both forms of knowledge constitute pragmatic competence. The requester will in fact have to choose from the wide range of language forms and s/he may also

need to consider other issues. Such issues might concern (i) the topic of a given situation, (ii) the relationship between the participants in such a situation, and (iii) the contextual constraints involved in that particular situation (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983).

In line with these ideas, Nikula (1996) notes the contextual factors which affect the appropriate use of peripheral modification devices on the basis of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. We further uphold that sociopragmatic knowledge should be considered in light of the politeness systems suggested by Scollon and Scollon (1995), which have been presented on the basis of Brown and Levinson's proposals (1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) identify three main sociopragmatic variables or parameters that influence the selection of specific pragmalinguistic forms, namely power, social distance and ranking of imposition. Power is related to the relationship between speaker and hearer (e.g. boss-employee or mother-son). Those in a lower position of power, such as the employee or the son, will need to adopt modification devices when making a request to those of a higher position of power, such as the boss or the mother; the intended result of this is that they soften the imposing nature of their requests. On the contrary, those in a higher position of power might not need to soften their requests to someone in a lower position. The second variable or parameter, social distance, is linked to the degree of familiarity and type of relationship between interlocutors (e.g. close friends versus two strangers). It is probable that strangers will employ a higher number of modification devices than those who know their interlocutor well. Finally, the ranking of imposition concerns the degree of imposition involved in asking something to the hearer. Accordingly, it may relate to the topical nature of the request made (e.g. asking for a day off versus asking for borrowing one's car).

On the basis of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, briefly described above, Scollon and Scollon (1995) identify three main politeness frameworks. These include general and persistent regularities in face

relationships, namely those of a deference politeness system, a solidarity politeness system and a hierarchical politeness system. The first framework, also called the deference politeness system (-P, +D)¹, concerns relations in which no power differences are present, but social distances are (e.g. colleagues at work). The second system refers to solidarity politeness (-P, -D), in which power differences are not present and social distance is also absent (e.g. family members); the participants are both close and equal. The third system relates to hierarchical politeness (+P), in which both power differences and social distance are present (e.g. boss and employee). This final system is characterised by asymmetrical social relations among the participants. The speaker should also be aware of these three systems when producing pragmatically appropriate requests, which would in turn involve the use of modification devices.

As it has already been highlighted, when compared with the vast number of studies dealing with the request head act, the number of studies concerning the use of request modifiers is much more limited. Yet we do find that some studies consider modification devices in addition to their analysis on the use of the request head act (Kasper, 1981; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; Faerch and Kasper, 1989; Hill, 1997; Achiba, 2003; Kobayashi and Rinnert, 2003; Safont, 2005). Seeing that the focus of the present study concerns the use of modification devices a more detailed description of the findings related to the use of modifiers is presented below.

Kasper's (1981), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1986) and Faerch and Kasper's (1989) studies focus on request modifiers from a cross-cultural perspective. Kasper (1981) drew a comparison between English learners and English native speakers and made use of a role-play task when collecting her data. She found on the whole that native speakers of English employed a greater

¹ P stands for Power and D for Distance. The symbol + means that there is a difference in Power or Distance amongst the participants, whereas the symbol – means that there is a close relationship of Power and Distance.

number of internal modification items than English learners, particularly consultative (e.g. *'if that is OK with you?'*) and downtoner (e.g. *'kind of'*) modifications. Nevertheless, the number of occurrences was similar in the two groups as far as external modifiers were concerned. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) also compared the performance of native and non-native speakers of English. Unlike Kasper (1981), these authors made use of a discourse completion test when collecting their data and their results reported no differences in their subjects' use of internal modifiers. This divergence in results might possibly be related to the effects of the tasks undertaken as Kasper (1981) employed an oral task instead. External modifiers, particularly those of the grounder type, were also more frequent in the learners' group and the learners produced longer sentences than the native speakers. Yet this last aspect has been connected to an overproduction or 'verbosity' frequent in numerous learners and characteristic of their effort to overcome communicative problems. The use of too many words may indicate a lack of knowledge regarding mitigating devices and it may be considered inappropriate, resulting in pragmatic failure.

A third cross-cultural study comparing learners of English and English native speakers was conducted by Faerch and Kasper (1989) and utilised a discourse completion test, as was the case with the previously described piece of research. The results indicated the subjects' preference for internal rather than external modifiers in a trend common to both the learner and the native speaker group. This finding was attributed by the authors to the idea that internal modifiers can be regarded as obligatory, while this is not the case for external modifiers. Focusing on the use of internal modifiers, learners employed fewer downtoners (e.g. *likely*) than their native speaking counterparts and frequently resorted to the word *'please'*. This distinction in the production of modifiers may be connected to the proficiency level of the learners or their grammatical competence. As has been reported in other studies (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996), internal modifiers may entail a particular syntactic knowledge, such as is the case

with downtoners, whereas the use of please does not necessarily imply a knowledge of subordination or of complex syntactic structures.

We have so far referred to those cross-cultural studies whose main focus was a comparison of learner performance with native English speaker performance. Yet studies that deal with acquisitional aspects of the pragmatic competence of learners adopt a developmental perspective, as is reported in the IL pragmatics literature (Kasper, 1996; Kasper and Rose, 1999; Kasper and Rose, 2002). The aim of such studies is not only to contrast the performance of native and non-native speakers or speakers of various nationalities, but also to identify any variables that might influence the pragmatic performance of learners. To reiterate, we shall comment on the developmental studies of Hill (1997), Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003), Achiba (2003), Safont (2005) and Nickels (2006) with regards to this issue.

Hill (1997) examined the effects of proficiency on Japanese learners of English in the use of internal and external modifiers by way of a discourse completion test. Although it was not the only focus of his study, he also compared the performance of learners to that of native speakers. Results revealed a global underuse of modifiers by learners when compared to the group of native speakers. Hill (1997) attributes this underuse to L1 interference. Regarding the type of modification item involved, learners frequently resorted to the word '*please*'; yet this frequency decreased as their level of proficiency increased. We should also underscore the fact that the use of grounders improved in line with the learners' proficiency level. So as is argued by the author, the results of this study indicate some developmental stages in the performance of learners as far as the use of particular internal and external modifiers is concerned.

Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003) analysed the pragmatic production of Japanese learners of English; as was also the case with Hill's study (1997) reported above. The participants were distributed into two groups on the basis of

their proficiency level (i.e. high or low). Their performance in two role-play tasks was then examined and compared with that of native English and Japanese speakers. The authors reported that the higher proficiency learners used a greater amount of supportive moves than the lower proficiency groups and that these were also more varied for the higher proficiency learners, particularly in the high imposition situation. So as was the case with Hill's study (1997), the performance of the learners improved in line with their level of proficiency. Furthermore, learners in the high proficiency group employed longer turns and pre-request sequences than learners in the lower proficiency group. Specific developmental stages may also be illustrated by this finding, as has been agreed by the authors.

Contrary to the groups of participants taking part in the studies above, mainly comprising university and adult learners as well as cross-sectional studies, Achiba (2003) presents a longitudinal study in which the focus is a child. The author examined her seven-year-old daughter's requesting behaviour in English during her 17-month stay in Australia and observed that the adoption of modification devices to accompany the request head act increased over time. The subject of the study employed more downtoners and grounders towards the end of her stay in Australia, compared to her scant use of such items at the beginning. In this sense then we might also state that some development can be attributed to the length of stay undertaken in an English-speaking country. As the author asserts, more longitudinal studies are needed to corroborate such findings and to examine the effects of specific factors on pragmatic development.

The focus of Safont's study (2005) is the role of bilingualism, and so it centres on monolingual and bilingual learners of English as a third language. This study examined the pragmatic production of monolingual (L1 Castilian) and bilingual (L1 Catalan, L2 Castilian) learners of English within a foreign language learning context, namely the Valencian Community in Spain. In particular, the author concentrated on the effects of level of proficiency and the function of the task type in the use of peripheral modification devices in request acts. The degree

of bilingual competence of each of the participants was ascertained by means of a bilingualism test designed on the basis of previous research (Li Wei, 2000). A level placement test was also distributed to the participants and their performance assessed on the basis of the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. Data for the analysis were collected using an open discourse completion test and role-play task. The results of the analysis point towards differences between the use of peripheral modification devices by bilinguals and monolinguals. More specifically, the study shows that (1) L3 learners of English employed request modifiers more frequently and appropriately than L2 English learners; (2) intermediate learners performed better than beginner learners, in both the oral and written tasks; (3) the written task allowed for a greater use of peripheral modification devices, although results also show that internal modification devices were frequently employed in the oral task. The findings of Safont's study (2005) appear to call for further research into the pragmatic competence of third language learners of English, subsequently considering in the process other speech acts or pragmatic aspects and analysing subjects from different linguistic backgrounds.

Finally, the effects of setting on the use of request mitigation devices has been analysed by Nickels (2006). It is worth mentioning at the outset that this study sheds light on the importance of setting as an independent variable in interlanguage pragmatics research. It describes the effects of setting on learners' production of requests and the findings of this study are relevant for both ILP research and language teaching. It proves that "the development of scenarios suggests that learner judgments of the degree of imposition of a request and the status of the hearer may differ from native speakers' judgments" (Nickels, 2006: 269). It might then be the case, drawing from the analysis of EFL and ESL data, that learners do not understand status and imposition in the same way that native speakers do. Rose (2000) revealed a similar finding, which may indicate the precedence of pragmalinguistics over sociopragmatics in the early stages of pragmatic development in a second language.

The participants in Nickels' study comprised 34 learners from the Intensive English Program (IEP) at Indiana University, all of whom were assigned to three groups according to their listening scores: beginners (n=14), intermediate (n=10) and advanced (n=10). The first languages and lengths of stay varied from group to group. Learners from the beginner group reported having been in the United States between 2 weeks and 7 months and their mother tongues were varied (Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, French, Albanian, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish and Mongolian). The intermediate group had stayed in the United States from half a week to 7 months and spoke Korean, Japanese, Creole, Spanish, Tibetan and Mandarin as their first language. The third group of learners had spent between 3 weeks and 7 months in the United States, with one student having spent 7 years there. Similarly to the composition of the other groups, the first languages of the learners were Korean, Japanese, Thai, Mongolian, Spanish and Chinese. In addition, the group contained one Chinese-Spanish bilingual. Results were obtained by way of a photo-enhanced oral production task.

Nickels (2006) distinguished between higher and equal status hearers and analysed how this distinction affected her participants' requestive moves in different settings. Concerning grounders and their use in different settings, degree of imposition and status, her results show that requests of low imposition in a non-academic setting found learners addressing equals with more grounders than superiors, yet with relatively fewer in an academic setting. When the imposition was high the use of grounders increased as the request target increased in status in the non-academic setting; this only decreased slightly when the setting changed. Grounding in medium impositions increased with status equality, but was used similarly in both settings. We might therefore summarise these findings by stating that if the degree of imposition was high, participants used more mitigation (grounders) with higher status targets in both academic and non-academic settings. This study shares similarities with our study (i.e. participants from different linguistic backgrounds and second language context), which also takes into account the effects of social distance in the production of request modifiers.

However, the second language context in this study, the United States, is different to that of our study, the UK. Furthermore, the number of participants, 34, is lower than that of our study 104; and finally, and most importantly, Nickels' (2006) study did not consider the effect of proficiency and length of stay of her participants regarding awareness and production of request act modifiers, which is our main and distinguishing factor from her study. The next section outlines the research questions and hypotheses that motivated our study.

3.4 Motivation for the present study

As it is often noted, pragmatic errors may have more serious consequences than grammatical ones. This is because NSs tend to treat pragmatic errors as offensive rather than as simply demonstrating lack of knowledge, as they do with N-NSs' grammatical errors (Thomas, 1983; Rintell and Mitchell, 1989, Bardovi-Harlig *et al.*, 1991). Wolfson (1989) and Boxer (1993) posit that L2 learners' personal pragmatic behaviour may deprive them of the opportunity to interact with NSs. Without this opportunity, the learners may receive less input and also produce less output, which might affect their L2 learning.

Previous research on pragmatic aspects of language learners generally supports the claim that target language (TL henceforth) speech act knowledge is incomplete for many L2 learners (see Ellis, 1992 for a review). Low proficiency learners, for example, tend to employ a rather narrow range of linguistic realisation devices as well as illocutionary force mitigating devices (Scarcella, 1979; Safont, 2005). There is also evidence that even advanced learners do not acquire the full native-like pragmatic competence in terms of their awareness as well as production of speech acts (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; House and Kasper, 1987). Their L2 speech acts are usually characterized by over-sensitivity to politeness and verbosity as a "play-it-safe" response to the absence of the TL socio-pragmatic knowledge. This evidence seems to suggest that L2 learners'

pragmatic competence tend to be less developed than their grammatical competence.

Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study on the effect of proficiency level on participants' degree of awareness regarding errors in grammar and pragmatics showed that within their ESL group learners with a higher level of proficiency exhibited greater pragmatic awareness than learners with a lower level of proficiency. Bardovi-harlig and Dörnyei suggest that although awareness increased in both groups there is a need to carry out more studies focusing on both awareness and production within the same groups of participants. This need motivated our first research question.

Regarding production of request acts, Trosborg's (1995) role-play study of three groups of Danish learners of English showed that as proficiency increased an approximation of target-like request strategies began to occur. Her subjects also showed a different use of certain request types, preferring conventionally indirect forms to direct forms or hints. Safont (2005) also investigated the production of requests by English language learners and similarly found that there were differences between the two proficiency levels, intermediate participants performing better at global request production than beginners. However, her findings also show that these differences did not apply to all the request types as learners' use of desire and performative realisation was not related to proficiency level in her study. Furthermore, she investigated whether the subjects' level of target language would also affect their use of peripheral modification devices and concluded that intermediate learners performed better than beginner learners. In addition, Hassall (2001) stresses the need to pay more close attention to whether language learners modify their requests, and which modifiers they employ to accompany this speech act.

With regards to the inspiration of our second research question we should bear in mind previous research on the effects of learning contexts that have

provided evidence of the superiority of second language settings to foreign language ones in terms of developing learners' pragmatic knowledge and competence. The above mentioned study, Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), for example, found a higher rate of pragmatic awareness for Hungarian ESL learners than for EFL learners. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) found that Japanese learners in the ESL context made use of their NL when performing refusals far less frequently than their counterparts in the EFL context. Similarly, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's (1993) one-year longitudinal study of academic advising sessions showed an increased approximation of TL suggestions and rejections as the learners' lengths of stay in the TL environment increased. Barron (2000) also found that Irish learners of German FL produced more target-like offer-refusal exchanges after just a few months in Germany, thus adding evidence of the advantages of SL contexts. Barron's (2003) study of pragmatic development of internal modification of requests showed that her participants approximated to the native norm in the use of some mitigation types. Schauer's (2004) research of German learners of English during one academic year at a British University also suggested that the use of internal and external modification devices increased during stay abroad. Furthermore, Félix-Brasdefer (2004) research on refusals suggest that considerable progress in learners' pragmatic competence is made in the latter stages of learners' residence in the target context. He claims that the more the students stay in the foreign country the better for their pragmatic performance.

To account for the advantages of the SL context, Bialystok (1993, 1994) claims that in order to acquire L2 pragmatics, learners must develop control in processing input, which can only be done through sustained practice. To that respect, it can be argued that the SL context may provide learners with more opportunities for both obtaining TL pragmatic input and practicing it. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) argue that learning a language outside the TL environment does not seem to facilitate both contextual familiarity and acquisition of the TL patterns required for learners to approximate TL behaviour. Additionally, learning a

language outside the TL environment does not seem to provide learners with sufficient opportunities for engaging in interaction, and thus, to put into practice what they have learnt. But it might also be true that as recent studies on instruction effects have shown, instruction benefits the development of TL pragmatic competence. Specifically, instructed learners have an advantage over uninstructed learners in terms of NS approximation in both pragmatic comprehension and production (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001).

To sum up, the needs that have motivated our study are on the one hand, the need to broaden the scope of research on the effects of proficiency on the use of pragmatic force modifiers and on the other, the need to investigate further the effects of length of stay abroad on the knowledge of pragmatic force modifiers.

3.4.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on the need for more research on the effect of N-NSs experience in the target language community and the effects of proficiency level on the development of ILP the following research questions were investigated.

3.4.1.1 Research Questions and Hypothesis Concerning Proficiency Level

The first research question with its related hypotheses is concerned with the effects of proficiency level on the different issues explored (i.e. awareness and production of requests and pragmatic force modifiers) in the present study.

Research Question 1: “Does participants' proficiency level affect the use of pragmatic force modifiers with regards to the speech act of requests?”

Hypothesis 1 Participants' proficiency level will affect the awareness of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Niezgodna and Röver, 2001).

Hypothesis 2 Participants' proficiency level will affect the production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Trosborg, 1995).

Hypothesis 3 Participants' proficiency level will affect the production of request act modifiers (Safont, 2005).

3.4.1.2 Research Questions and Hypothesis Concerning Length of Stay Abroad

The second research question with its related hypotheses is concerned with the effects of length of stay abroad on the different issues explored (i.e. awareness and production of requests and pragmatic force modifiers) in the present study.

Research Question 2: Does length of stay abroad affect the knowledge of pragmatic force modifiers?

Hypothesis 4 Length of stay will affect the awareness of the request acts, in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Matsumura 2003, Schauer, 2006).

Hypothesis 5 Length of stay will affect the production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004).

Hypothesis 6 Length of stay will affect the production of request modifiers (Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004).

CHAPTER 4

The Study

In order to answer the research questions and hypotheses presented in the previous chapter, we will now describe the methodology employed in our study. In the first section (4.1), we provide an explanation of the method followed in the present study. First we introduce the participants that took part in this research in section 4.1.1. We include the native speakers (henceforth referred to as NSs) who participated in the early stages of the present study and also the non-native speakers (henceforth referred to as N-NSs) who formed our corpus of analysis. Section 4.1.2 deals with the data collection instruments employed to elicit the learners' responses, with information provided about the English proficiency test used, the demographic questionnaire and the production and awareness questionnaires employed in the present study. Section 4.1.3 provides information about the coding procedure used to categorise demographic information provided by the participants and the production and awareness data. Section 4.1.4 explains the statistical analyses chosen from the Statistical and Presentational System Software (SPSS 14.0) for Windows (previously known as the Statistical Package for Social Scientists).

In the second section (4.2) we present the results and discussion from our research questions and related hypotheses. Section 4.2.1 describes the results regarding our first research question, which is concerned with the effects of proficiency level on the awareness and production of pragmatic force modifiers. In this section we provide the findings to our first three hypotheses. The first hypothesis suggests that the level of proficiency of our participants would affect their awareness with regards to pragmatic appropriateness and grammar accuracy. The second hypothesis deals with the effects of proficiency level in the production of pragmatic appropriate and grammatical accurate request acts. The third hypothesis is concerned with the connection between the proficiency level and the use of peripheral modification devices. Finally, section 4.2.2 describes results regarding our second research question, which deals with the effects of length of stay on the awareness and production of pragmatic force modifiers. These findings provide answers to the last three hypotheses of the present study. Our

forth hypothesis suggests that length of stay will have an effect on our participants' awareness regarding appropriate and accurate evaluation of request acts. Our fifth and sixth hypotheses are concerned with the effects of length of stay in our participants' accurate and appropriate production of speech acts and request acts modifiers respectively.

4.1 Method

4.1.1 Participants

The participants in the study were 104 non-native speakers (N-NSs) of English. Although there were initially 113 participants, the data of seven participants were excluded from the analyses due to the fact that their nationalities belonged to what Kachru (1996) refers to as the 'Outer Circle', these being nationalities in which English is an official language in addition to the country's own official language (see chapter 1 for further discussion on this topic). For the present study, we only considered those participants whose nationalities were included in the so-called 'Expanding Circle', that is, those countries in which English is learnt as a foreign language in an instructional environment and that is not normally used outside of this restricted location (Kachru, 1996). Another participant was excluded as a result of poor results in the proficiency test (elementary level) as opposed to the remaining 104 participants who were either intermediate or advanced students.

Apart from the fact that their nationalities were all included in the Expanding Circle, a common factor amongst our 104 participants was that they had all been studying in a UK university for a minimum of 4 months. Some of them were doing a degree, some were doing their Master's studies and some were working towards completion of their PhD. They were taking various courses

(undergraduate degrees, Masters and PhD's) in different higher education institutions within the UK, see table 4.1 below for a detailed demographic description of our N-NSs participants.

Before we started collecting data from the N-NSs, we carried out a pilot study in which 18 English NSs took part (see table 4.1 below for a detailed description of our NS participants). This group completed all the tasks for our study (see section 4.2 for a detailed explanation of these tasks) and provided us with the information needed in order to obtain the final version of the questionnaires later used with our 104 N-NS participants. The English NSs taking part in our pilot study, whose answers to the questioners were later used as a reference initially, consisted of twenty-three undergraduate students. However, the data of five students were excluded from the analyses due to the fact that two of them were from the United States, another one was born in Japan and had lived there for a few years and two more were born in Greece and had spent some time there before moving and settling in the UK. Although the latter three considered themselves English NSs and the two first were, indeed, English NSs, we decided not to include them in our English NS data, considering only those who had been born and raised in the UK as a qualifying factor. Hence, the final number of participants in our pilot study was eighteen ($n=18$) and they were taking their degrees at two UK universities: the University of Cambridge and Queen Mary, University of London. They were asked to take part in a series of sessions in order to complete our questionnaires on general information about themselves and on request realisations.

The participants in this pilot study consisted of nine female and nine male students from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. All of them were native speakers of English and all, except for one, indicated they knew at least one other language to a certain extent (some of our participants were doing a degree in modern languages, such as French or Spanish, and others had studied foreign languages at school or elsewhere). They were studying a wide range of degrees,

such as Modern Languages, Social and Political Sciences or Veterinary Medicine (table 4.1 below provides a detailed explanation of each degree included in this group).

The researcher conducting the present study also carried out this pilot study, one of the aims of which was to find out whether or not our questionnaires elicited request mitigation devices. Our purpose was to identify those situations in which a greater quantity of request modifiers would be elicited, in order to use them with English second and foreign language users. The data were collected during two one-hour sessions that the participants voluntarily attended by arrangement with the first researcher of this study. In addition to this, two periods of one hour were assigned to the participants in order for them to complete both questionnaires separately (the questionnaires are explained in section 4.1.2). They were given the instructions and had an hour to complete each of the questionnaires.

The two tests were specifically designed for this pilot study, since they elicited request use and varied according to the three politeness systems that Scollon and Scollon (1995) have identified, namely those of a 'deference politeness system', a 'solidarity politeness system' and a 'hierarchical politeness system'. These three politeness systems include the general and persistent regularities found in face relationships. Within the deference politeness system (-P, +D)¹, there is a shared social level among the participants but there is no closeness between them. With regards to the solidarity politeness system (-P, -D) the participants share both closeness and equality. Finally, the hierarchical politeness system (+P) is characterised by asymmetrical social relations among the participants (see chapter 3 for more information on Scollon and Scollon's (1995) politeness system). Thus, we elaborated our questionnaires, taking into account this politeness system classification (see section 4.1.2 for a detailed

¹ P stands for Power and D for Distance. The symbol + means that there is a difference in Power or Distance amongst the participants, whereas the symbol – means that there is a close relationship of Power and Distance.

explanation of each situation included in both the production and awareness questionnaires).

In our analysis of the data we took into account the typology of peripheral modification devices in requests developed by Alcón, Safont and Martínez-Flor (2006) (see Chapter 3 for a detailed explanation of request modification devices). Table 4.1 below provides further information on the English NSs participants in the pilot study.

Table 4.1 English native speakers: demographic data

#	GENDER	AGE	PLACE OF BIRTH /NATIONALITY	UNIVERSITY	DEGREE	YEAR	LANGUAGES
1	Female	22	London / English	Cambridge University	Modern and Medieval Languages (MML): French and Spanish	3 rd	French, Spanish, Chinese, Italian
2	F	21	London / English	Cambridge University	Social and Political Science	2nd	French, Spanish
3	F	23	London / English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4th	French, Spanish
4	Male	21	Reading / English	Cambridge University	MML: Russian and Spanish	4th	Spanish, Russian, Catalan
5	M	22	Plymouth / English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4th	French, Spanish, Catalan
6	M	22	Belfast / Northern Ireland	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4th	French, Spanish
7	M	21	Ashford, Kent / English	Cambridge University	Veterinary Medicine	4th	French
8	M	22	Ascot / English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4th	French, Spanish
9	F	22	Edinburgh / Scottish	Cambridge University	MML: French	4th	French
10	M	20	Manchester / English	Cambridge University	Archaeology	3 rd	None
11	F	18	Kent / English	Queen Mary, University of	Hispanic Studies and	1st	French, Spanish

				London	Geography		
12	F	18	Kent / English	Queen Mary, University of London	Hispanic Studies and European Studies	1st	Spanish
13	F	19	English	Queen Mary, University of London	Hispanic Studies and European Studies	1st	Spanish, Iranian, Portuguese
14	M	19	Chelmsferd, Essex / English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	1st	French, Spanish
15	M	18	Tooting / English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	1st	French, Spanish, Urdu, Punjabi
16	M	19	Birmingham / English	Queen Mary, University of London	English Literature and Hispanic Studies	1st	French, Spanish
17	F	19	Ascot / English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	2nd	French, Spanish
18	F	20	Trowbridge, Wiltshire / English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	2nd	French, Spanish

As can be observed from the table provided above, the age of our English native speakers ranged from 18 to 22 years of age, with the mean age being 20.33. As already stated, there were nine female and nine male participants ($n=18$). The majority of them were English ($n=16$) from a number of regions (i.e. London ($n=5$), Reading ($n=1$), Plymouth ($n=1$), Kent ($n=2$), Ashford ($n=1$), Ascot ($n=2$), Manchester ($n=1$), Chelmsford ($n=1$), Birmingham ($n=1$) and Trowbridge ($n=1$)), there was also one participant from Northern Ireland and one from Scotland. The diverse range of regions found in this group of 18 participants is a clear indication of the fact that within the UK people tend to attend university in places other than their home towns and, therefore, the classroom population is usually very varied. This variation is increased when one takes into account the range of students of different cultures or nationalities that comprise the student population of most modern universities.

Ten of these participants were studying at Cambridge University and eight were studying at Queen Mary, University of London. They were all doing undergraduate degrees: Modern and Medieval Languages ($n=7$); Social and Political Sciences ($n=1$); Veterinary Medicine ($n=1$); Archaeology ($n=1$); Hispanic Studies and Geography ($n=1$); Hispanic Studies and European Studies ($n=2$); French and Hispanic Studies ($n=4$) and English Literature and Hispanic Studies ($n=1$). There were first years ($n=6$), second years ($n=3$), third years ($n=2$) and fourth years ($n=7$). For those students doing a degree in something other than languages, their third year would be their final year, whereas students doing a degree in languages have to spend a compulsory period of their course abroad (known as the Year Abroad), thereby adding an extra year to their degree, although this is still equivalent to a three year degree. In the UK Higher Education system, a student doing a language degree at university will spend a Year Abroad in the country of the language of study. Therefore, some of the participants stated they were in their 4th year but are still considered finalists in the same way as a 3rd year student of a non-languages degree.

As briefly mentioned above, all participants but one had some knowledge of different languages. Most of them knew both French and Spanish ($n=12$), as it was part of their degree; one student indicated having some knowledge of Chinese and Italian; two students reported knowing Catalan (a very strong subject both at Cambridge University and at Queen Mary); another also knew Russian (usually offered as a degree in the UK, either on its own or alongside another language or subject); two people said they only knew Spanish and one only knew French. Furthermore, one of the participants had some knowledge of Urdu and Punjabi as he was first generation British in his family, who came from Pakistan to the UK in the late 60s/early 70s². Thus, having carried out this analysis of our group of English NSs, we were able to conclude that this heterogeneous group corresponds to an accurate representation of the demographic make-up of the UK population in general and the university population in particular.

² Note that the UK has large Indian and Pakistani communities.

Once we had analysed the data/answers provided by our participants in the questionnaires of the pilot study, we kept those situations that had elicited most request mitigators and excluded those situations that had elicited fewer mitigation devices. It was then time to start collecting the data from our 104 English N-NS participants. As some of these participants were in the UK as Erasmus students ($n=21$), they were in the UK for one or two semesters only and had come from universities in various regions in countries such as Spain, France, Germany and Belgium. These 21 Erasmus students were distributed as follows: 12 came from different Spanish universities, 5 were registered in French universities, 1 was an Erasmus exchange student from a German university; the students themselves were all Spanish, French and German native speakers respectively. Furthermore, there were 2 students from French universities, but whose nationalities were Turkish and Romanian and 1 student who was an Erasmus student from a Belgian university, but whose nationality was Portuguese. There was also 1 participant from Mexico on a different exchange. Thus, the final number of participants on exchange programmes was ($n=22$). The remaining participants ($n=83$) were all studying in the UK either self-funded or with different sorts of grants from the UK or from their home countries overseas (see Appendix A for a thorough demographic description of each English non-native participant).

The researcher of the present study carried out the data collection for the 104 English N-NSs. Bearing in mind that our participants had different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and that the only two things they had in common at the beginning of the test were that they had been studying at a Higher Education Institution in the UK for 4 months, we first distributed a proficiency test in order to find out our participants' levels of English. In order to measure learners' grammatical competence, a Quick Placement Test elaborated by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) in 2001 was administered. This test assessed lexical and syntactic written knowledge but not listening or speaking skills. Since the latter two skills were not going to be assessed in our

study, we decided this English placement test was appropriate for our study, in which we analysed the participants written command of the English language, assessing both their grammatical and pragmatic competence. Once they had completed the level test, we gave the students the production questionnaire (which will be explained in the next section of this chapter). This had two sections: Section 1 contained some personal questions about participants, which we used in order to find out their age, gender and nationality. This first section also included some questions regarding our students' previous formal contact with the English language, the time they had spent in England up to that date and their intuitive knowledge and command of other second or foreign languages. A summary of this information is provided in table 4.2 below. As already mentioned, we have also included more detailed information on each participant in Appendix A.

Table 4.2 Non-native speakers: demographic information

CATEGORY	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION
Nationality	31	Mexican, German, French, Spanish, Romanian, Norwegian, Greek, Polish, Burkinese, Italian, Finnish, Brazilian, Chinese, Portuguese, Colombian, Georgian, Argentinean, Cypriot, Turkish, Iranian, Ecuadorian, Venezuelan, Russian, Malaysian, Serbian, Egyptian, Latvian, Croatian, Thai, Japanese, Sri Lankan
Gender	83 / 21	83 Female / 21 Male
Degree	53	Languages: Spanish and French, Law, Business Management, English, MSc Financial Economics, Hispanic Studies and/with Business Management, Psychology, BSc Environmental Conservation, PhD: Humanities, PhD: Sciences, Graphic Design, PhD, Mathematics, Illustration and Animation, Computer Science, Politics, MSc: New Media, Information and Society, MA: Linguistics, Geography and Hispanic Studies, German and Economics, Economics, French and Economics, Film Studies, English and French, MA Film Studies, Kulturwissenschaften/ästhetische Kommunikation, Science and Engineering Foundation Programme, French and Business Management, French and European Studies, Journalism and History, English Studies and Spanish, French and Russian, French and Linguistics, PG Dietetics, PhD: Nursing, Management Science, Marketing, Education and

		Spanish, Journalism and Spanish, TESOL, Postgraduate studies in Law, PhD: Psycholinguistics, PhD: English Applied Linguistics, Education Studies and Modern Languages, Master in Translation Studies, MPhil Management, MPhil, BA, Filología Hispánica, Filología Catalana, German and Hispanic Studies (European Studies), Hispanic Studies and Linguistics, Hispanic Studies and Politics
Exchange or UK student	21 / 83	21 Exchange students / 83 Otherwise funded
Age	17 – 45	Youngest participant: 17 / Oldest participant: 45
Proficiency level	2 / 4	2 –Intermediate level: 34 4 – Advanced level: 70
Length of stay in months	4 – 192	Minimum of months spent in the UK: 4 Maximum of months spent in the UK: 192
Years studying English at School	0 – 12	Minimum of years studying English at School level: 0 Maximum of years studying English at School level: 12
Years studying English at High School	0 – 9	Minimum of years studying English at High School level: 0 Maximum of years studying English at High School level: 9
Combination of years studying English at School and High School	0 – 15	Minimum of years studying English at School and High School: 0 Maximum of years studying English at School and High School: 15
Years studying English at University	0 – 11	Minimum of years studying English at University level: 0 Maximum of years studying English at University level: 11
Years studying English at other private or public institutions.	0 – 13	Minimum of years studying English at other private or public institutions: 0 Maximum of years studying English at other private or public institutions: 13
First language	28	Catalan, Spanish, French, German, Romanian, Italian, Norwegian, Galician, Portuguese, Greek, Turkish, Polish, Mooré, Finnish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Georgian, Russian, Arabic, Persian, Chinese, Serbo-Croatian, Latvian, Croatian, Serbian, Thai, Sinhalese
Multilingualism	22 – 82	22 Bilingual Participants 82 Multilingual Participants

Table 4.2 above shows the personal data that we collated in order to group our students according to the following categories: nationality, gender, degree, type of stay, age, proficiency level, length of stay, years studying English (at school, at high school, at university or at any other private or public institution), first language and the number of languages known. These categories will be individually commented below.

Regarding nationality, there were 31 different nationalities amongst the 104 participants of this study which were distributed as shown in the following table (Table 4.3) and illustrated in figure F1 below:

Table 4.3 English Non-native speakers: nationalities

NATIONALITY	PARTICIPANTS	NATIONALITY	PARTICIPANTS
Spanish	25	Latvian	2
French	10	Turkish	1
Italian	7	Burkinese	1
German	7	Venezuelan	1
Polish	6	Egyptian	1
Greek	6	Sri Lankan	1
Chinese	4	Iranian	1
Serbian	3	Japanese	1
Cypriot	3	Colombian	1
Finnish	3	Malaysian	1
Mexican	3	Georgian	1
Portuguese	3	Romanian	1
Ecuadorian	2	Argentinean	1
Brazilian	2	Thai	1
Russian	2	Croatian	1
Norwegian	2		

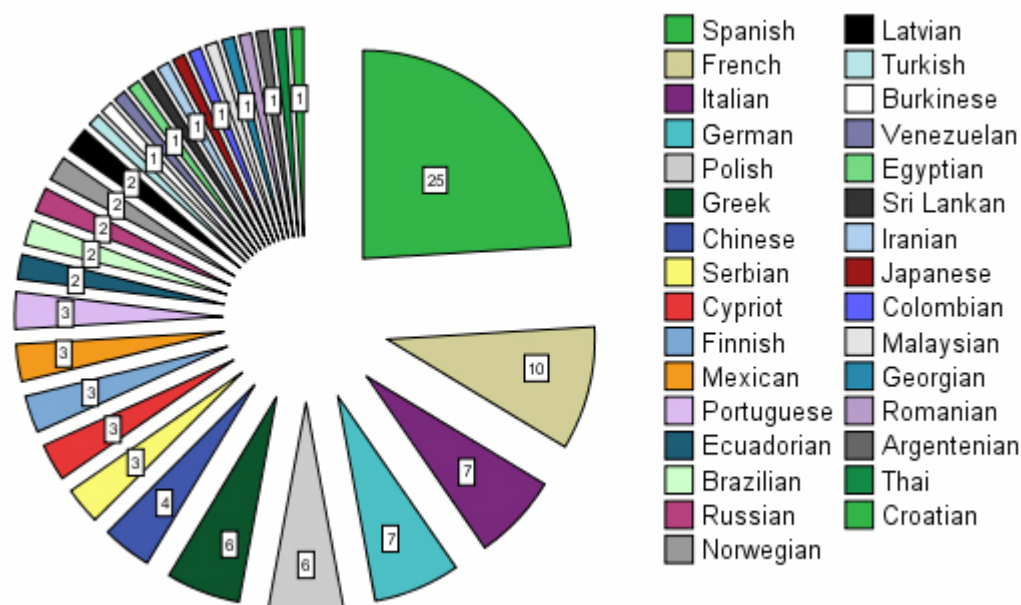


Figure 4.1 Distribution of nationalities amongst the N-NSs participants

Table 4.3 shows that the highest number of participants of the same nationality was Spanish (n=25). This was probably due to the fact that, as the researcher collecting the data for the present study was also Spanish, she was in frequent contact with Spanish people who came as Erasmus exchanges to the UK. Of the other nationalities included: 10 out of the 104 participants were French; 7 German; 7 Italian; 6 Polish and 6 Greek, 4 were Chinese and there were 3 participants from each of the following nationalities: Serbian, Cypriot, Finnish, Mexican and Portuguese, there were 2 participants from each of the following nationalities: Ecuadorian, Brazilian, Russian, Norwegian and Latvian and 1 participant from the remaining nationalities (i.e. Turkish, Burkinese, Venezuelan, Egyptian, Sri Lankan, Iranian, Japanese, Colombian, Malaysian, Georgian, Romanian, Argentinian, Thai and Croatian). The nationalities have been ordered in descending order starting with the one with the highest number (i.e. Spanish) and moving clockwise from there. Hence, we consider our data, formed by 31 different nationalities in 104 randomly chosen English N-Native speakers, to be

an accurate representation of the situation in the UK generally and the UK higher education system specifically, with its diversity of cultures and the high proportion of different nationalities.

Concerning gender, it is worth mentioning that there were more female than male participants, which may be related to the fact that out of the 53 different degrees encountered in our data, Languages degrees, be it English, Spanish or French, were the most popular. There is a tendency for female students to choose language degrees more often than do male students, which is not only true for the UK but also for Spain. There were 83 female participants and 21 male participants. Although it has been claimed that gender may be one of the variables that influences participants' use of speech acts (see Kasper and Rose, 2002), we decided not to exclude the data obtained from the male participants, since our aim was to obtain a group of intercultural speakers, or speakers of English as a Lingua Franca. Therefore, as this is the random sample we obtained from the sessions our participants voluntarily attended, we chose not to exclude any participant from the data.

Most of our participants were paying for their studies ($n = 83$) whereas a smaller number were benefiting from an Erasmus exchange or another exchange programme ($n=21$). The mean age of the whole group was 24.27, the youngest of the group being 17 and the oldest 45. Regarding the participants proficiency level, we used the Quick Placement Test, as already mentioned. These tests contained sixty written questions related to lexis and syntax. We had two versions (Version 1 and Version 2) of the questionnaires in order to avoid participants copying the answers from one another and both versions were graded to the same level of difficulty. The students could fall within one of the following two groups depending on their performance: intermediate and advanced. Following the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) performance descriptors, we considered that if a student gave correct answers within the range of 30 to 47 they were placed at an intermediate level which is the equivalent to the B1 and B2

levels of the Council of Europe. In the case the student answering 47 to 60 questions correctly, they were placed at C1 and C2 of the Council of Europe. According to our data 34 participants were intermediate and 70 were advanced.

Regarding the length of stay, the participant who had spent the shortest period of time in the UK had arrived 4 months prior to completing the questionnaires, whereas the participant who had been the longest in the UK had lived there for a total of 16 years (or 192 months). Figure 4.2 below shows the distribution of years spent in the UK amongst our participants.

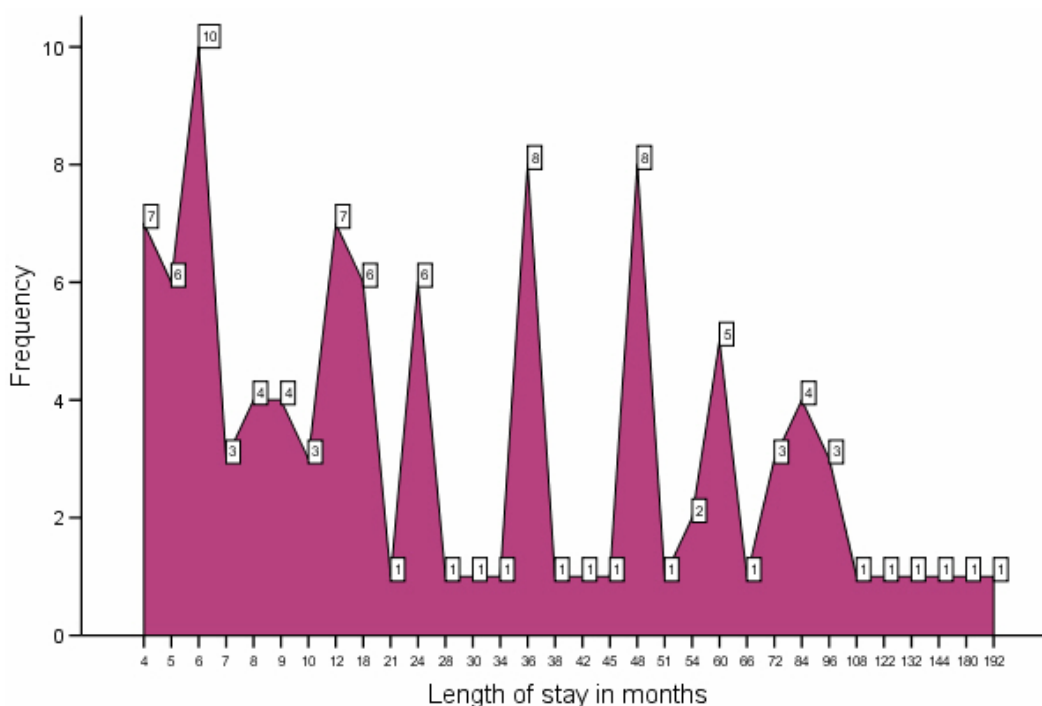


Figure 4.2 Participants' length of stay in the UK

Although as Figure 4.2 shows our 104 participants' length of stay varied from 4 months to 192 months, we distributed them in three groups for research purposes and grouped those participants who had spent between 4 and 6 months in the UK in the first group, those who had spent between 7 months and 5 years in the second group and the third group was formed by those participants who had spent from 5 and a half years to 16 years in the UK. Thus, according to this

distribution, Group 1 had 23 participants, Group 2 had 64 participants and Group 3 had 17 participants.

Moving on to the next variable, years studying English, respondents stated how long they had studied the language in school, high school, university and any other private or public institution. Since we are dealing with such a heterogeneous group with 35 different nationalities amongst the 104 participants, we encountered some difficulty with what each participant considered the terms 'school' and 'high school'. This not only happened between different countries but even among participants from the same country, a difference that might be due to participants having been under different education policies within the same countries. In the case of the Spanish participants, for example, their answers varied between 2 years, 4 years and 6 years. This can be explained as follows: if the participant had studied in Spain and was 25 years old or older, they stated that their high school education had lasted for 4 years. However if the participants were 22, 23 or 24 by the time they completed the questionnaires, they considered high school to have covered a period of 2 years, whereas if the participants were 21 years old or younger, they considered high school to have been a period lasting 6 years. These seemingly incongruous variations are due to a series of educational changes that have taken place in Spain over the last few years. Likewise, then, it is possible that similar changes have taken place in some of the other countries included in our data.

Furthermore, some of our participants provided us with an absolute number for the two categories instead of breaking them down into school and high school. We therefore decided to group the school and high school years under the same category, as all our participants had reached university level by that stage. This provided us with a global figure for the years they had studied English before entering university, regardless of whether it had been at the school or high school. The mean number of years studying English at school and high school was 7.83; the mean for years studying English at university was 1.95; and the mean for

years studying English at private or public institutions was 1,16. Although some participants (most notably the Greek, Spanish and Portuguese) stated that they had studied at public or private institutions, for even up to 13 years, the rest of the participants had not studied English outside of their formal obligatory education and that is the reason for the mean being so low. The same applies to the mean for the years studying English at university, as most participants stated they had never studied English at university, while there were some doing English who had studied for 3 years or more (even up to 11 years). These results, distributed amongst our 31 different nationalities, are presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Correlation between nationality and mean of years of English language study: N-NSs

Nationality	Number of participants	Years studying English at School and High School	Years studying English at University	Years studying English at other private or public institutions
Mexican	3	2.67	1.00	0.33
German	7	6.71	1.43	0.00
French	10	7.60	1.90	0.20
Spanish	25	9.32	2.56	2.16
Romanian	1	11.00	1.00	0.00
Norwegian	2	10.50	0.00	0.00
Greek	6	6.33	3.50	2.33
Polish	6	8.00	1.33	0.67
Burkinese	1	6.00	1.00	1.00
Italian	7	5.57	1.29	0.29
Finnish	3	10.67	0.00	0.00
Brazilian	2	5.00	2.00	4.00
Chinese	4	10.25	2.00	0.00
Portuguese	3	2.67	1.67	1.67
Colombian	1	8.00	0.00	0.00
Georgian	1	0.00	0.00	0.00
Argentinean	1	7.00	0.00	0.00
Cypriot	3	9.00	2.67	4.33
Turkish	1	7.00	2.00	0.00
Iranian	1	0.00	0.00	6.00
Ecuadorian	2	10.00	2.00	0.00
Venezuelan	1	5.00	4.00	2.00
Russian	2	9.50	2.50	0.00

Malaysian	1	15.00	0.00	0.00
Serbian	3	7.33	1.33	0.33
Egyptian	1	8.00	0.00	5.00
Latvian	2	7.00	2.50	0.50
Croatian	1	11.00	11.00	0.00
Thai	1	14.00	1.00	1.00
Japanese	1	6.00	2.00	1.00
Sri Lankan	1	13.00	4.00	0.00
TOTAL	104	7.83	1.95	1.16

From the table presented above we can observe that the nationality that had had the highest mean for years of English instruction before university in formal and compulsory education was the Thai, having a mean of 14 years of English language education in school and high school. The groups with the lowest number of years, on the other hand, were the Turkish and Georgian with a mean of 0 years. With regards to years learning English at university level, it was the Croatian participant who had the greatest number of years of instruction in English at university level before completing the questionnaires for the present study. However, in most of these cases it might be an isolated case as there were not many representatives of each country. The remaining high means regarding the study of English at university level might be due to the fact that many of the participants in this study were doing English Studies as a degree. Numerous nationalities, however, had not received any instruction in English at university level. Finally, with regards to the nationalities that had had English classes at a private or public institution, we found that among the different nationality groups there were more than half of them that had not attended any non-compulsory English courses, while those who had attended these types of courses were the Mexican, French, Spanish, Greek, Polish, Burkinese, Italian, Brazilian, Portuguese, Cypriot, Iranian, Venezuelan, Serbian, Egyptian, Latvian, Thai, and Japanese participants. However, it must be noted that for those nationalities for which we only had one or two participants these figures might not provide an accurate representation of what happens in those countries. Furthermore, although most of our participants seem to have referred to private or public institutions in their country there might have been participants who attended these courses in

their stay in England and this might not be a representation of what happens in their countries. In spite of these limitations, it is important to point out that it does represent what happens in Spain, for example, where people usually go to other public or private institutions to learn English. The three figures below illustrate the distribution of our participants in relation to the study of English in school and high school, university and other private or public institutions.

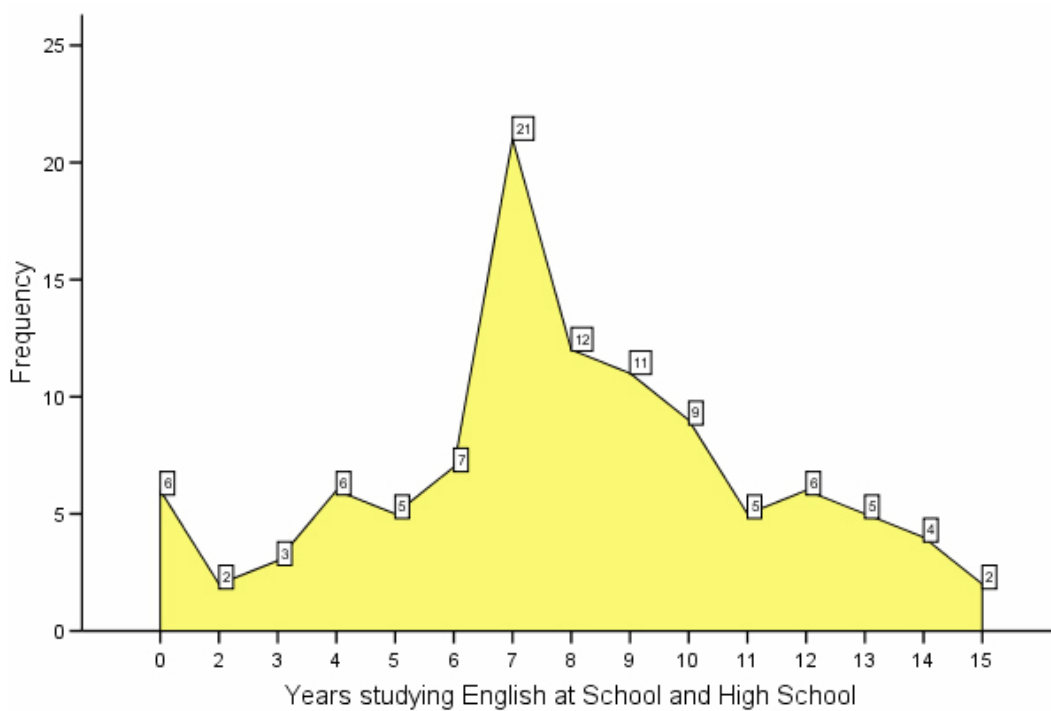


Figure 4.3 Distribution of participants and the years studying English at school and high School

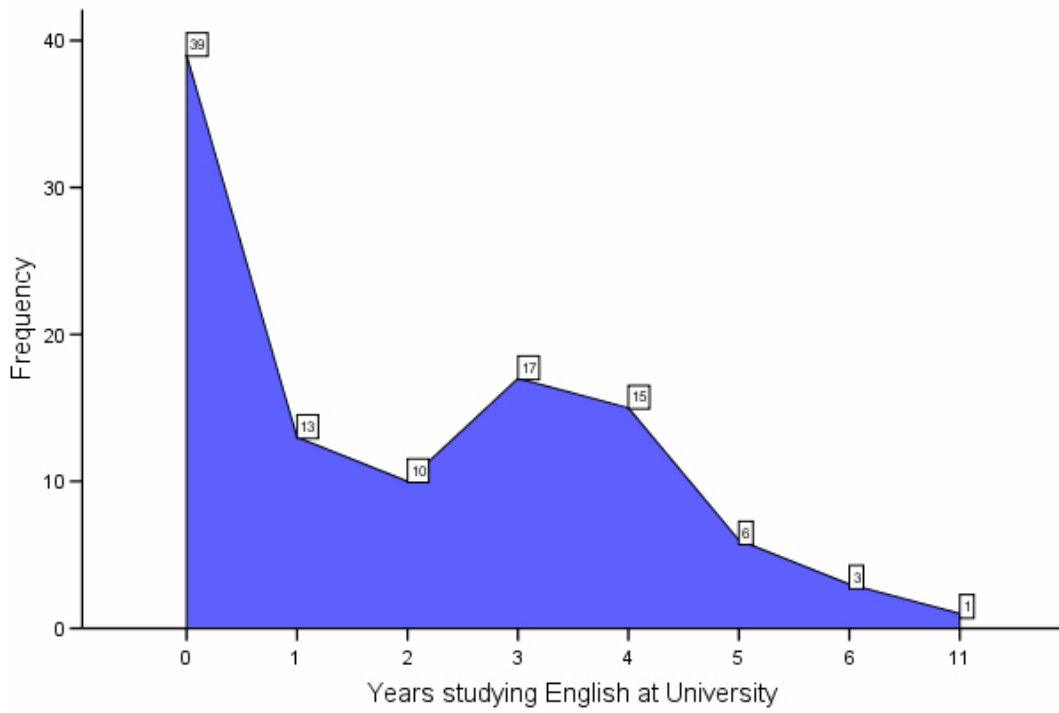


Figure 4.4 Distribution of participants and the years studying English at university

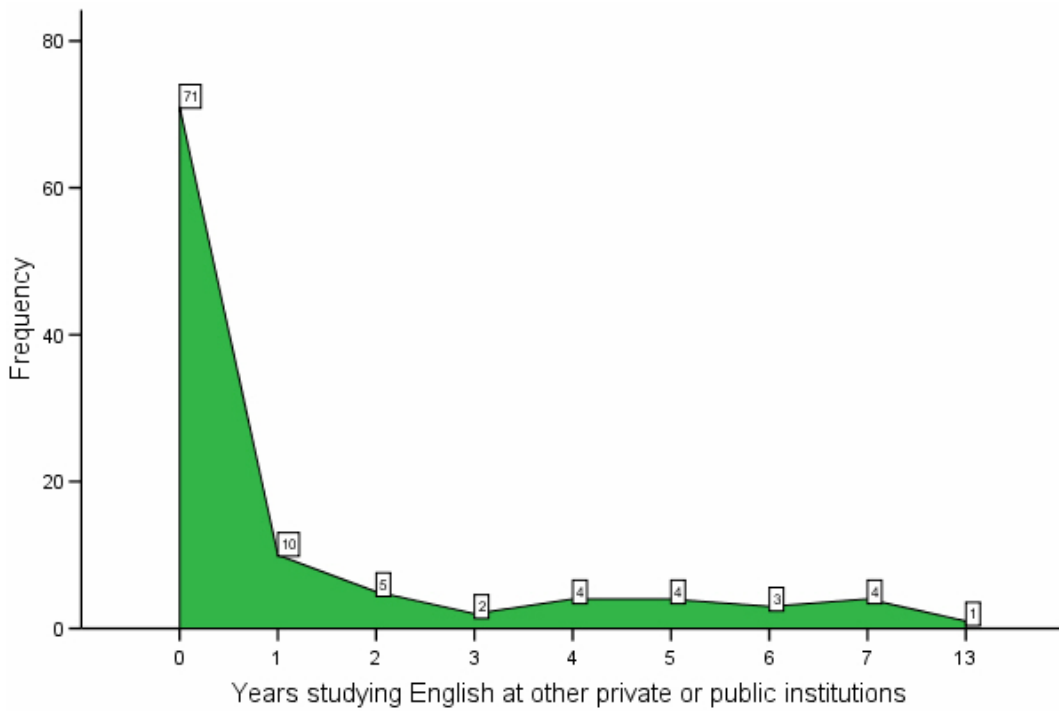


Figure 4.5 Distribution of participants and the years studying English at other private or public institutions

From the above figures it is clear that on the one hand the majority of our participants studied English at school and high school, but also that many of our participants did not study English either at university or at other private or public institutions.

Finally, the number of different languages spoken ($n=28$) by our participants was almost the same as the number of nationalities we had ($n=31$). The reason for the number being different is that there are several nationalities that share a common language, for example Mexicans and Spaniards or Greeks and Cypriots or Brazilian and Portuguese, thereby resulting in a greater number of nationalities than languages. However, keeping Spain in mind, we should also note that some of our Spanish participants considered Catalan or Galician, rather than Spanish, to be their mother tongue, thus increasing the number of first languages specified. This would also be the case for those participants from Latvia whose nationality was Latvian but whose mother tongue was Russian or Latvian. The reasons behind this are socio-political and there is not sufficient scope in this project to expand on these factors further. There was also the odd case whose nationality was Portuguese but whose mother tongue was Cantonese and a similar case of one of our participants who was Italian but did not speak Italian. The table and figure below shows the distribution of languages amongst our participants:

Table 4.5 First languages spoken by the N-NSs participants

LANGUAGE	PARTICIPANTS	LANGUAGE	PARTICIPANTS
Spanish	29	Serbian	1
French	10	Mooré	1
Greek	9	Persian	1
German	7	Croatian	1
Polish	6	Arabic	1

Catalan	5	Georgian	1
Italian	5	Serbo-Croatian	1
Russian	4	Turkish	1
Portuguese	4	Latvian	1
Chinese	3	Mandarin	1
Finnish	3	Romanian	1
Norwegian	2	Japanese	1
Cantonese	2	Thai	1
Galician	1	Sinhalese	1

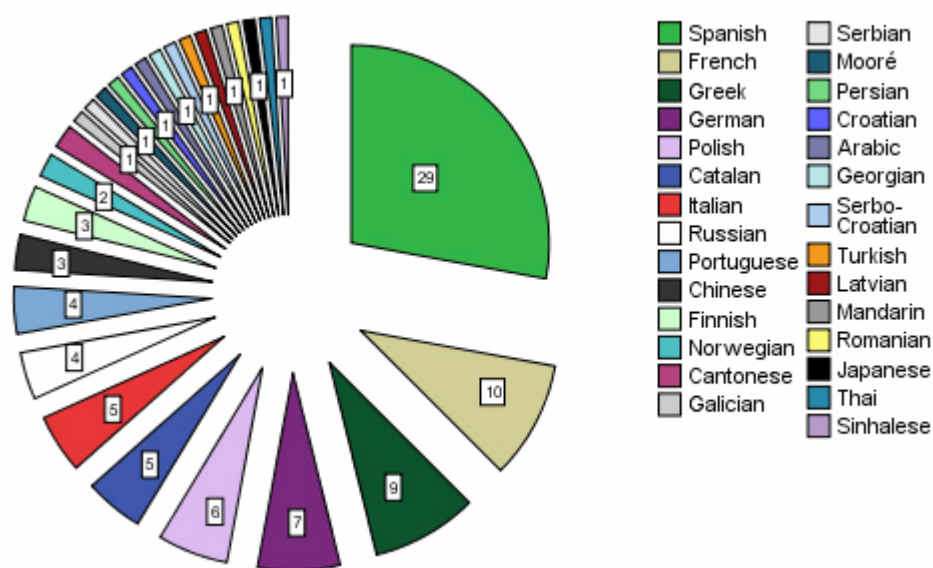


Figure 4.6 Distribution of first languages amongst our N-NSs

Due to the fact that all the participants knew their mother tongue and had been exposed to an additional language for a minimum of four months when the study took place, we therefore considered all our participants to know at least two languages, albeit not necessarily to the same level of proficiency. However, bilinguals were the exception rather than the norm, as the majority of our participants could use at least three different languages. There were 22 bilinguals and 82 multilingual participants, from which there were 34 who could speak 3 languages, 23 who could speak 4 languages, 19 who could speak 5 languages, 5 who spoke 6 languages and 1 who knew 7 languages. The languages that were not considered first languages were the following: English, Dutch, Korean, Swedish, Danish, Bengali, Tamil, Hindi, Marathi, Estonian, Latin, Taiwanese, Dioula,

Japanese, Buryat, Greek Sign Language, British Sign Language, American Sign Language and International Sign Language.

The researcher ensured all participants were made aware of the fact that they were taking part in an experiment, by providing clear explanations at the beginning of the numerous sessions that were carried out. Furthermore, it is important to stress that all participants contributed voluntarily to the present study. As a sign of gratitude, the researcher offered the volunteers an opportunity to socialise in her office over snacks and drinks after each session. She also gave the results of the proficiency level test to each participant who requested it. Being non-native speakers of English, most of them were interested in having an updated and official result indicating their level of English at that stage. Some of the participants also requested feedback on the answers to their performance in the questionnaires, so the researcher promised to provide this once the analysis of all the questionnaires was completed.

Taking into consideration all the information outlined above, which has been analysed and presented in order to provide a detailed profile of our heterogeneous group of 104 N-NSs of English, it is clear that, although they differed in many respects, all our students had been in the UK for at least 4 months and were all following courses of study in a Higher Education Institution. The following section will provide information on the instruments used in the present study in order to collect the data on request realisations.

4.1.2 Data Collection Procedure

In order to examine our subjects' knowledge of requests, both in terms of their production of linguistic formulations and their awareness of the appropriate use of this specific speech act in different situations, we asked them to complete a

production test (Discourse Completion Test) and an awareness test (Discourse Evaluation Test).

The tests created for this study were based on previous research in the field of ILP (Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig, 1999b; Kasper and Rose, 2002). Additionally, the construction of the situations was also reviewed and modified according to the answers provided by the 18 English native speakers of the pilot study (November-December 2005).

4.1.2.1 DCT Questionnaires for Data Collection

The last two decades have witnessed an ongoing debate on the preferred way to collect data on speech acts (Beebe and Cummings, 1996). Some researchers (Manes and Wolfson, 1980, among others) claim that the best approach is to collect samples of natural speech occurring in situations where none of the participants are aware of the fact that they are being observed. However, it is widely accepted as good practice, when dealing with research that involves human beings as subjects, to obtain approval from relevant ethics committees as well as the subjects' permission to participate. This, therefore, presents the researcher with a dilemma: on the one hand, collecting data from unwitting subjects may provide more naturally authentic linguistic data, but the method itself is considered unethical. On the other hand, however, having obtained participants' permission to be observed makes it more difficult to collect naturally occurring data, because the subjects are aware that they are being observed.

Furthermore, other forms of collecting natural data such as field notes on naturalistic data or memorised data also have major drawbacks, as they might not be totally accurate, in addition to being extremely time-consuming. Hence, spontaneous speech gathered by ethnographic observation has proven to be

difficult (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989), which has led to the wide use of an elicitation procedure known as the discourse completion test (DCT henceforth). This has been used and is still used to elicit varied speech acts across different languages (Beebe *et al.* 1990). DCTs are a type of written questionnaire that elicit data by means of providing a situation and allowing some space for the subjects to write what they think is appropriate to say in such circumstances. Some of the limitations of DCTs are that, as a written questionnaire, participants are not faced with the situations in real time and they might produce responses that differ considerably from those that would be given in an authentic 'real life' situation or in an oral exchange.

Criticisms of DCTs have labelled it an instrument that limits the capturing of authentic communication and it has been termed 'artificial' (Rose, 1994). However, these written questionnaires have administrative advantages that make them well-suited to this type of data collection. They can be distributed amongst a large number of participants over a short period of time and a significant amount of data is collected relatively quickly (Cohen and Olshtain 1981; Beebe and Cummings 1996; Wolfson 1989; Beebe *et al.* 1990). Yet, as Kasper and Rose (2002) posit, this does not mean that DCTs are the easiest instrument to use.

As stated above, one of the data collection methods in this study was a written DCT in order to collect learners' production of requests. Despite reported disadvantages of using DCTs, researchers have attempted to assess the validity of DCTs by comparing DCT data with equivalent data from other methods. The following three studies provide relevant findings on this topic. Rintell and Mitchell (1989) compared the DCT data to role-play data involving both requests and apologies of native English speakers and non-native English speakers and found differences between the two modalities. Non-native speakers' oral responses were significantly longer than their written responses, and both native and non-native speakers were more direct on the DCT than in role-plays in certain situations. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) compared naturally occurring

rejections with those elicited by DCTs finding that the two types of data differed in terms of type and frequency of rejection strategies. Their studies found that the use of DCTs has benefits such as the availability of large samples and experimental controls, but DCTs also created biases as respondents used a narrower range of semantic formulas on the DCT (as Beebe & Cummings, 1985, found), used fewer status preserving strategies, and lacked the extended negotiations found in the natural data. This is because the DCT does not promote the turn-taking and negotiation strategies found in natural conversation.

DCTs also allow interactants to be less polite, and more bald-on-record statements are used than in the natural situation - even in the status-unequal contexts. Furthermore, respondents can opt out with the DCT, which is much less likely in a natural conversation. Beebe and Cummings (1996) compared the use of natural data (telephone calls) and data collected through DCTs (Beebe and Cummings, 1996) showing that although DCT data might not have the repetitions, the number of turns, the length of responses, the emotional depth, or other features of natural speech, they do seem to provide researchers with a good understanding of the shape of the speech act.

Hence, considering that the goal of our study is to investigate the subjects' use of requests in different contexts, rather than to study those pragmatic aspects that are specific to the dynamics of a conversation, a DCT was believed to be an adequate instrument for that purpose. Furthermore, a DCT is employed as an instrument of data collection in the present study because it is a controlled elicitation method that meets the demand for cross-cultural comparability (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Rintell and Mitchell 1989), and it allows researchers to control the variables of the situation (i.e. status of interlocutors and rank of imposition) in order to provide a consistent body of data. Furthermore, it is a method that allows for compilation of a large quantity of data from different participants in a relatively short period of time.

For the creation of our production test we took into account Bardovi-Harlig's (1999b) findings regarding the use of the DCT, namely that this type of instrument should be tailored to fit each particular research study instead of employing one that has already been used in other ILP studies. Moreover, although it has been claimed that one of the advantages of the DCT is its fast and easy administration, we believe, in line with Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) and Kasper and Rose (2002), that the hard work and difficulty involved in a production questionnaire lie in its design and construction. We devoted approximately two months (September 2005 – November 2005) to create the situations that would be appropriate for the potential participants in our study (i.e. English native speakers for the pilot study and non-native speakers for the present study). We devised situations that could take place in the UK and that the students would consider possible. These situations had to include real contexts for all our potential participants, regardless of gender, age or cultural and linguistic background. Our first version of the DCT included 27 situations, from which 11 were removed after we analysed the data from the English native speakers.

The non-native speakers in our study were given the production questionnaire, which consisted of the 16 situations. Table 4.6 below shows the general characteristics of the DCT written questionnaire. We also made the decision of using the verb 'ask' as opposed to other verbs like 'say' or 'tell' as we considered 'ask' to be a verb more semantically related to requests.

Table 4.6 Non-native speakers' Discourse Completion Test (see Appendix D)

Sit	Participants	Politeness System	Rank of Imposition	Topic
1	friend – friend	solidarity	strong	request for money to pay for a hotel room
2	customer – bar tender	deference	weak	request for the menu at a restaurant

3	passenger – bus driver	deference	strong	request for the bus driver to slow down
4	sister – sister	solidarity	weak	request to borrow a pair of shoes
5	customer – customer	deference	strong	request to stop smoking
6	student – teacher	hierarchical	weak	request for help with a presentation
7	neighbour – neighbour	solidarity	strong	request for someone to walk their dog outside the building
8	nephew/niece – uncle	solidarity	strong	request to use an apartment
9	pedestrian – policeman	deference	weak	request for help with a heavy suitcase
10	shop assistant – boss	hierarchical	strong	request for days off with no holidays left
11	brother – sister/brother	solidarity	strong	request for help with breaking bad news to the parents
12	travel information desk assistant – traveller	deference	weak	request for the directions to get to central London
13	boss – administrator	hierarchical	strong	request to stay longer in the office to do some extra copies
14	bar tender – customer	deference	strong	request to leave the pub
15	friend – friend	solidarity	strong	request to water the plants for a month
16	friend – friend	solidarity	strong	request to feed the cats for a week

Note. Sit = Situation

We considered that it would be possible for our participants to place themselves in each of these situations without difficulty. There were situations

involving requests to friends (situations 1, 15 and 16), to family members (situations 4, 8 and 11), to neighbours (situation 7), to the teacher (situation 6), to a policeman (situation 9), to a travel assistant (situation 12) and there were also a variety of settings, such as bars (2, 5, 14), at work (10 and 13), on public transport (3). Out of the 16 situations included in the DCT, there were 7 which had been designed within the solidarity politeness system (1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16), that is to say, interactions between friends, members of the same family, neighbours or workmates who have a regular contact and share the same hierarchical level within a social group. There were 5 situations within the deference politeness system (2, 3, 5, 9, 12, 14); that is to say, situations which involve professional colleagues who do not know each other well or people who do not know each other but belong to the same social class.

Situations within the solidarity politeness system and the deference politeness system clearly outnumber the other two groups. In our opinion, this distribution represents the distribution of situations in real life in that, exchanges with people one is usually in contact with, and who belong to one's own social group are the most common (solidarity politeness system). Likewise, many exchanges between people that do not know each other and that usually occur in public places also take place between persons belonging to the same social group. Finally, there were 3 situations that belonged to the hierarchical politeness system (6, 10 and 13), situations that are characterised by asymmetrical social relations among the participants. In our case, we have included exchanges between student and teacher, boss and worker and worker and boss. This distribution seems to be representative of daily interactions, while also corresponding to the frequency of each politeness system type most often encountered.

Regarding the rank of imposition that we allocated to the 16 situations included in the DCT, this was either 'weak' or 'strong', depending on the topic of negotiation. Hence, we had 5 situations with a weak rank of imposition (2, 4, 6, 9 and 12), in which the request was not considered an excessive burden to the

person who received the request; and there were 11 situations with a strong rank of imposition (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16), in which the request was considered to have significant implication for the person receiving the request. As studies such as Nickels (2006) have claimed, there may be considerable variations in native speakers' judgements of the status of the hearer and the degree of imposition of a request. Therefore, we elicited opinions, of both the English native speakers and the non-native speakers, regarding the information provided in Table 4.6 above. The general consensus reached was that included on the table. However, some of the situations did reveal discrepancies amongst those consulted, thereby highlighting the difficulty of labelling the situations to reflect everyone's personal opinion. Herein, then, we have presented the table with the results suggested by the majority of those asked.

4.1.2.2 DET questionnaires for data collection

In addition to the DCT that elicited request-act use, we also analysed our participants' pragmatic awareness. For this purpose, we decided to use a discourse evaluation test (henceforth referred to as DET) because of the validity of this instrument in measuring pragmatic awareness had also been demonstrated by previous research in the interlanguage pragmatics field addressing second language learners (Hudson *et al.*, 1992, 1995; Fouser, 1997; Jessner, 1999; Safont, 2001, 2005). Hudson *et al.*'s (1992, 1995) studies used six different instruments when examining ESL learners' and NSs' production of requests, refusals and apologies. These instruments were a multiple-choice DCT, an open DCT, a listening lab production test, a videotaped role-play, a self-assessment test, and a self-assessment test of the videotaped role-play. Results from these studies not only varied depending on the instrument employed, but also according to the contextual situation they were presented with. Safont (2001, 2005) used a discourse-evaluation test in order to measure specifically both monolingual and bilingual learners' metapragmatic awareness of requests. The subjects had to

evaluate different request act exchanges according to the appropriateness of the request realisation strategy in particular contexts where the requests were employed. Learners were asked to justify their evaluation and to provide alternative suggestions in the situations where they had found that the request was inappropriate to the context. The discourse-evaluation test employed in these studies revealed that bilingual subjects outperformed their monolingual counterparts in recognising pragmatic failure and in providing suggestions for those request formulas they found inappropriate.

Following the same procedure as in the construction of our production task, the discourse-evaluation test initially consisted of 26 from which 9 were eliminated after the analysis of the English native speakers' data. The remaining 17 exchanges included request acts which subjects had to evaluate on the basis of the appropriateness and correctness of the request formulation for the context in which it was used. Additionally, learners were required to justify their evaluation and to note down suggestions in those cases where they found the request formulation inappropriate, incorrect or both inappropriate and incorrect for the context provided. These 17 exchanges (see Appendix F) varied depending on the pragmatic variables of politeness distance and degree of imposition, as summarised in Table 4.7 below. Again, all the students were asked to imagine themselves in those situations and were told that, if in doubt about any of the content provided in the questionnaires, they could ask the researcher as many questions as they needed in order to fully understand the materials and provide accurate answers.

Table 4.7 Non-native speakers' Discourse Evaluation Test (see Appendix E)

Sit	Participants	Politeness System	Rank of Imposition	Topic	Corr	App
1	customer – bar tender	deference	weak	request for a free glass of water	NO	YES

2	neighbour – neighbour	solidarity	strong	request for a free glass of white wine	NO	YES
3	student – teacher	hierarchical	strong	request for a retake of a past exam	YES	YES
4	student – student	solidarity	strong	request copy parts of an essay	NO	NO
5	worker – boss	hierarchical	strong	request for money from your boss	NO	NO
6	friend – friend	solidarity	weak	request for your friend to close the window	NO	YES
7	patient – doctor's assistant	deference	weak	request for the doctor's phone number	YES	YES
8	client – bar tender	deference	weak	request for a beer	YES	NO
9	hotel client – receptionist	deference	weak	request to get the heating fixed	NO	NO
10	student – librarian	deference	weak	request to enter the library without a card	YES	NO
11	baker – customer	deference	weak	request for two loaves of bread	YES	NO
12	taxi driver – client	deference	weak	request to be taken somewhere	NO	NO
13	friend – friend	solidarity	strong	request to use your friend's mobile phone	YES	NO
14	workmates – workmates	solidarity	strong	request for someone to organise a party for you	YES	NO
15	Passenger – flight crew	deference	strong	request to board a plane after the check in has closed	YES	NO
16	exchange student – host	solidarity	strong	request to your host family to be picked up	YES	NO

	family			from the airport		
17	Passer by – elderly person	deference	weak	request to hold the door for someone	NO	YES

Note. Sit = Situation; Corr = Correct; App = Appropriate

Amongst these 18 situations that the English non-native speakers had to assess, for pragmatic accuracy and grammatical correctness, there were requests made to neighbours (situation 2), friends (situations 4, 6 and 13), family members (situation 16), to a teacher (situation 3) and to a taxi driver (situation 12). The requests occurred in different contexts, such as at work (situations 5 and 14), at a shop (situation 11), at a bar (situations 1 and 8), at a hospital (situation 7), at a library (situation 10), at a hotel (situation 9), at the airport (situation 15), or on the street (situation 17).

As with the DCT prompts, we tried to include as many situations as possible that the students could relate to. Of the 17 situations, 6 were of the solidarity politeness system (2, 4, 6, 13, 14 and 16). Also in common with the DCT, the situations within the solidarity politeness system in the DET referred to neighbours, friends, workmates and a host family; that is, members of the same social group in regular contact. With regards to the deference politeness system, there were 9 situations included in the DET (i.e. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 17). These took place at bars, shops, between costumers and bar tenders, shop assistants and costumers and at a hotel, at a library, at a bakery, in a taxi (an exchange between a taxi driver and a passenger), at an airport (a request from a passenger to a flight crew member) and on the street (an exchange between two unknown people). The situations related to the solidarity and the deference politeness systems outnumbered the 2 situations linked to the hierarchical politeness system (i.e. 3 and 5). This is, representative of what happens in real life exchanges, as requests between people who know each other, or between people who are in the same social group, happen more often than requests between people in different (higher or lower) social groups. Examples of the latter would

be situations 3 and 6 in our DET, between student and teacher and between worker and boss. Regarding degree of imposition, half the situations had a strong degree of imposition (i.e. 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 14, 15 and 16) and the remaining 9 situations had a weak degree of imposition (i.e. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13).

Once all the questionnaires had been administered to the English native speakers between November and December 2005 the data was analysed (January 2006 – March 2006). The collection process took place in Cambridge, at the University of Cambridge, and in London, at Queen Mary, University of London. Both places are closely linked to the researcher of this study, as, by that time she had spent two years as a Catalan Lectora in the Department of Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge and was about to take up a new role as Language Instructor in Spanish in what was then known as the School of Modern Languages, Queen Mary, University of London (now the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film).

In order to examine our subjects' knowledge of requests, in terms of both their production of linguistic formulations and their awareness of the appropriate use of this specific speech act in different situations, we distributed two questionnaires. Thus, two types of tests were used in this study: (1) a written production test or DCT; (2) a written awareness test or DET. All the situations included in the tests were everyday situations that were piloted with a group of British native speakers, who rated the real-life authenticity of each. As already stated, we retained those situations which had elicited the greatest number of request modifiers from the British native speakers in the piloting stage; we also took into account the fact that the situations were not repetitive regarding setting, as well as being representative of everyday encounters. When the questionnaires were finalised, we started the data collection procedure with the group of English non-native speakers, which took place from March 06 to December 07.

The data collection procedure with the non-native speakers started in March 2006 and finished in December 2007, spanning five complete terms of UK Higher Education. One of the difficulties with using a heterogeneous group, such as the one presented in this study, is that a considerable number of individual sessions had to be arranged, thus making it a time-consuming process for the researcher, who, in order to achieve the goal of compiling a corpus of 100 non-native speakers of English, individually organised and sat through each session. Although this might not appear to be a difficult aim to accomplish in a multilingual and multicultural place like the UK and, in particular, London (where the researcher was based), the fact that the students were to participate as an act of good-will during their private time, proved very daunting. As already stated, the participants were volunteers who devoted their own time to this study out of personal choice.

The procedure in order to arrange the sessions was as follows: first, the researcher suggested some afternoons for the volunteers to take part in the study in the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film where the researcher is a permanent Language Instructor in Spanish. Data collection in the UK, such as that carried out in this study, is usually remunerated, proving it difficult to obtain a very large number of participants on a purely voluntary basis. Hence, the researcher extended her search for volunteers to other universities, including Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge; Birbeck College, University of London; University of Birmingham; University of Cambridge; University of Cardiff; City University, London; University College London (UCL); London College of Communication; Greenwich University, London; Kings College, London; Kingston University; Roehampton University, London; London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE); Thames Valley University and the University of the West of England, Bristol (the names have been displayed by alphabetical order). This search proved fruitful and we were fortunate to gain the involvement of a number of volunteers from the universities we contacted and,

although from some we only obtained one volunteer, it was an great help towards achieving our goal of 100 participants.

In order to collect the data from participants at other universities, emails were usually sent out by the researcher to colleagues, departments and international services across UK Higher Education Institutions and the reply was always positive and helpful. Sessions lasted no more than two hours each and attendance ranged from a minimum of one student to a maximum of six. At the beginning of every session the researcher explained each task the participants were about to carry out. The first task was always the English proficiency test and the participants were told they had to write their answers on the answer sheet provided and that the information was going to be used to classify them according to different levels of proficiency. During the first session they were also told that the results would be available to them if so they wished. Once they all had finished the first task (the English proficiency test), the researcher explained the content of the second one, the production test. For this, they first had to provide answers to the personal questions, but were informed that all the information would be kept confidential and anonymous and that it would only be used in order to classify them according to age, gender, nationality and the like.

The researcher also explained that the rest of the session would consist of the completion of 16 prompts, in which they should write the first thing that came into their mind; what they would say if placed in such a situation. During the second session, they were involved in the completion of the awareness questionnaires, in which they were told they had to read the information provided and to tick two boxes: one to indicate whether they considered the responses to be either correct or incorrect, and another to indicate whether they were appropriate or inappropriate in the situations provided. Furthermore, it was explained that, in cases where any of the requests were deemed to be incorrect or inappropriate, they should provide a suggestion which would, in their opinion, make the answer correct and/or appropriate in the given situation.

Once these two sessions had been completed, the researcher asked participants whether they could stay for a further 30 minutes to complete a role-play activity. The students that were able to give some extra time were asked to take part in a role-play activity consisting of ten situations designed to elicit requests. Participants were assigned to randomly formed pairs and told that the task consisted of listening to and reading ten situations, illustrated with photographs taken by the researcher. It was then explained that they would act out each situation depending on the roles assigned to them and that their interactions would be recorded. They had no time to prepare the role-plays in advance, since we were interested in their spontaneity when involved in oral communication. After performing the ten role-plays, other pairs followed the same procedure, until those volunteers who had been able to stay longer had completed the tasks.

The ten role-plays described were specifically designed for this study, since they elicited request use and varied according to the three politeness systems that Scollon and Scollon (1995) identified, namely those of a deference politeness system, a solidarity politeness system and a hierarchical politeness system (see Chapter 3 for a thorough explanation). Fifteen role-play situations had been devised at the beginning of the study, but 5 were later excluded after the analysis of the English native speakers' data. All role-plays were tape-recorded and transcribed in order to analyse the quantity and type of internal and external modifiers employed by the students when making the requests elicited by the different situations. For this analysis, we took into account the typology of peripheral modification devices in requests developed by Alcón, Safont and Martínez-Flor (2005), since, as stated in Chapter 3, it has been elaborated on previous research from the fields of interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics. Results obtained from these role-play activities have not been included here, due to the limited number of English non-native speakers who were able to complete the task. Only 24 participants took part in the role-plays and one of those 24 was not included in the 104 group of participants as she was not a permanent student

of a Higher Education institution in the UK. The fact that this role-play required participants to be paired in order to carry it out and, also, that it added extra time to the already very generous amount of time participants had already devoted to the study, made the collection of data for the role-play activity very difficult. In fact, since only 24 non-native speakers were able to complete it, the results obtained from this task will not be considered in the present study.

Hence, as already mentioned, the first of the two sessions we arranged consisted of the level placement test, for which students were given 30 to 40 minutes to complete; the demographic test in which, as already explained, we asked the participants to write an identification name, the name of their University (or Universities, in the case of Erasmus or exchange students), where they were studying, their age, gender, nationality, place of birth, years studying English at school, high school, university and any other private or public institution, their mother tongue and the languages they used in both their personal and academic life. During that same session, they also completed the 16 questions of the production questionnaire, also taking up to 40 minutes of the participants' time. The second session consisted of the 18 questions of the awareness test and lasted a similar amount of time to the two previous questionnaires (i.e. 40 minutes). The structure of the sessions never varied and they were always arranged in exactly the same way.

In December 2007 we completed the data collection process with 113 participants, all of whom had completed the proficiency level test, the production test and the awareness test, but of which the data from 104 was used for our study. The next part will describe the coding procedure followed in order to analyse both the production and awareness data collected.

4.1.3 Coding of the data

Given the fact that the procedure adopted differed depending on the type of data examined, we begin by explaining the different steps followed in order to analyse the production data. This will be followed by our analysis of the awareness data (subsection 4.1.3.2).

4.1.3.1 Production Data

In order to classify these data, we adopted the taxonomies for both head acts and mitigators as presented in Chapter 3 (section 3.1), both derived from previous research into the speech act under study. That is, we categorised the head acts according to Trosborg's (1995) classification of requests' head acts and we followed Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) in order to classify the peripheral elements accompanying the head act. Both these taxonomies are included in Chapter 3 and are also summarised in the table below (Table 4.8) to provide examples of the non-native speakers' requests obtained from the DCT.

Table 4.8 Examples of English non-native speakers' use of request head acts

TYPE	STRATEGY	EXAMPLE
Indirect Request	1. Hints (mild or strong)	<i>NONE</i>
Conventionally Indirect		
Hearer-Oriented	2. Ability	<i>I was wondering, if you could give me some advice on this.</i>
	2. Willingness	<i>Would you mind lending me some money to pay for the hotel?</i>
	2. Permission	<i>Could I borrow you apartment?</i>
	3. Suggestory formulae	<i>Sweetie, how about lending me your shoes?</i>
Speaker-Oriented	4. Wishes	<i>I would like a ticket for central London.</i>
	5. Desires	<i>I need 40 copies of this report urgently.</i>

	6. Obligation	<i>I'm sorry sir, you must leave this premises.</i>
	7. Performatives	<i>May I ask you not to smoke please?</i>
Direct Request		
	8. Imperatives	<i>Please, help me out!</i>
	8. Elliptical phrase	<i>London?</i>

Source: Trosborg (1995: 205)

Within this category, the type of request realisation that the students used most was the *conventionally indirect, hearer-oriented* request type, mainly of *ability, willingness* and *permission*. This was the case for both native speakers and non-native speakers (see Chapter 5 for a thorough analysis of the data). In the data we did not find *Indirect requests (hints)* and we only found 1 *Direct requests* of the *elliptical phrase* type, as included in Trosborg's (1995) taxonomy, for either the grammatically correct responses or the pragmatically accurate ones. Table 4.9 below provides examples of our non-native speakers' use of request modification devices.

Table 4.9 Examples of English non-native speakers use of peripheral modification devices in requests

TYPE	SUB-TYPE	EXAMPLE	
Internal Modification	Openers	<i>Do you mind</i> slowing down and explaining that again?	
	Softeners	Understatement	Can you <i>just</i> make 40 copies of this report?
		Downtoner	Could you please slow down <i>a bit</i> ?
		Hedge	Would you mind <i>at all</i> not to smoke here, please?
	Intensifiers	<i>I really</i> need your help, please?	
	Fillers	Hesitators	<i>I was wondering</i> if you could give me some advice on this.
		Cajolers	<i>NONE</i>
		Appealers	Can I borrow your shoes, please? I'll do something for you later, <i>ok</i> ?

	Attention-getters	<i>Hey uncle, can I borrow your apartment?</i>
External Modification	Preparators	<i>Can you do me a favour? I need...</i>
	Grounders	<i>Could you stop smoking? I haven't finished my dinner.</i>
	Disarmers	<i>If this was not too much to ask, would you mind watering my plants while I'm away?</i>
	Expanders	<i>Please, sister! I need your help and support! I need you to tell them!</i>
	Promise of reward	<i>...Could you look after my lovely cats? It's only for a week. I'll buy you dinner next month if you take care of them!</i>
	Please	<i>Could you please speak a little slower?</i>

Source: Alcón et al. 2006

The modification devices most frequently used by the English non-native speakers were *openers*, *grounders* and *please*, as was also the case for native English speakers (see Table 4.10 below for the quantity of request mitigators found in our English N-NSs data). Some of the types of peripheral devices included in this table (i.e. cajolers) were not found at all in our English N-NSs participants' data and only 1 was found in the Ns data. Furthermore, out of the least used devices, we found that for both the non-native and native speakers, *hedges*, *hesitators* and *appealers* were rarely used (see section 4.2 for a thorough analysis of the data).

The DCT was a written task that was carried out individually. As already explained, the DCT we opted for included 16 prompts that required the use of request formulations. Situations varied in terms of the degrees of deference, solidarity and hierarchy and of imposition in making the request. An example from the DCT is provided below (see Appendix E):

Example 1: Codification of an N-NS request obtained from the first situation on the DCT

5 You and a friend arrive in Dublin and go to your hotel. You left your credit card at home and you don't have enough money to pay for the hotel. You ask your friend:

POLITENESS SYSTEM: solidarity

RANK OF IMPOSITION: + (strong)

Request: Could you possibly lend me your credit card?

The way this participant's request was coded was by first considering whether the request was grammatically correct and pragmatically appropriate. If it was found to be both correct and appropriate, as in example 1 above, we then coded the request with a 1 for the *ability* type. We then also coded the mitigation devices as follows: '*possibly*' was classified as a *downtoner* and coded as 1 in the solidarity politeness system requests category with a strong degree of imposition. With regards to coding the mitigators, all were included, even if the request was incorrect or inappropriate, whereas any request that we considered grammatically incorrect or pragmatically inappropriate was coded as 0 (see examples 2 and 3 below). If the request was grammatically incorrect but pragmatically appropriate, as in example 2 below, we coded the request as 0 for grammatical correctness but 1 for pragmatic appropriateness; the opposite would apply to example 3 below. We only coded them as 0 if the request was both grammatically incorrect and pragmatically inappropriate. In both cases, all mitigators were coded.

Example 2: Codification of an N-NS request obtained from the ninth situation on the DCT

9 You have a very heavy suitcase and cannot open the train door to get in the train.

You ask a policeman passing by:

POLITENESS SYSTEM: deference

RANK OF IMPOSITION: - (weak)

Request: Excuse me sir, could you please help me for opening the train door?

Example 3: Codification of an N-NS request obtained from the sixth situation on the DCT

6 You have your first oral presentation tomorrow. You need some advice. You ask a teacher:

POLITENESS SYSTEM: hierarchical

RANK OF IMPOSITION: - (weak)

Request: Help me with my presentation, please.

4.1.3.2 Awareness data

As with the students' responses to the discourse completion test, discourse-evaluation tasks were also analysed and codified afterwards. The discourse-evaluation test consisted of 18 exchanges incorporating request acts, which the participants had to evaluate on the basis of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the request formulation for the context in which it was used. Additionally, learners were required to evaluate the situations on the basis of correctness or incorrectness. Furthermore, in those cases where they found the request formulation inappropriate to the context or linguistically incorrect, learners were required to suggest correct and/or appropriate alternatives (see Example 4 below).

The way we coded the data of these requests was as follows: we considered whether the participant had marked the expected box for grammatical correctness or incorrectness and for pragmatic appropriateness or inappropriateness. For analysis purposes, if the boxes were marked as expected, we coded them with a 1 each; if one of the boxes was wrongly marked, that exchange received a 0; and if both boxes were incorrect they both received a 0. These replies were classified under the request types provided in Trosborg's (1995) taxonomy. Of the 17 exchanges included in the DET, there were 1 *hint*

(prompt 6); 1 *ability* (prompt 16); 3 *willingness* (1, 11 and 17); 3 *permission* (prompts 1, 3 and 7); 1 *suggestory formulae* (prompt 5); 2 *desire* (prompts 4 and 13); 2 *obligation* (prompts 14 and 15); and 4 *imperative* (prompts 8, 9, 10 and 12). Hence, we added together all of the similar types and allocated the right number of correctly ticked boxes. We then considered all the suggestions provided by each participant and classified them according to type and request modification device. In this case, if the suggestion was grammatically incorrect or pragmatically inappropriate, we did not consider the request or the mitigation devices provided, as we had with the coding of the DCT data. Below we provide an example (Example 4) to illustrate the procedure followed in the coding of the DET data.

Example 4: Codification of an N-NS request obtained from the first situation on the DET

1. A girl is very thirsty. She goes into a bar and says:

Could I had a glass of water, please?

Correct

Incorrect

Appropriate

Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:

In the example above we expected the boxes *Incorrect* and *Appropriate* to be ticked. If this was the case, we would then assign code 1 to the grammatical component and 1 to the pragmatic component and this result would be included within the *permission* type. We also expected to find a suggested amendment to the grammatical incorrectness of the given request. If the answer provided was correct, we coded it as 1 in the *permission* (or other functional) type that the participant might have provided as an alternative suggestion and 1 for the request mitigator '*please*'.

The tests were created in such a way as to offer eighteen exchanges, from which eight were grammatically incorrect (i.e. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12 and 17) and nine grammatically correct (i.e. 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16), eleven were pragmatically inappropriate (i.e. 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) and six

pragmatically appropriate (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 17). The grammatical correctness or incorrectness and pragmatic appropriateness or inappropriateness of the exchanges were combined as follows: 4 were incorrect but appropriate (i.e. 1, 2, 6 and 17); 2 were correct and appropriate (3 and 7); 4 were incorrect and inappropriate (4, 5, 9 and 12) and 7 were correct but inappropriate (8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16). These values were confirmed after piloting the test with NSs, so we felt confident that the correlation with the scores we had predicted was accurate.³

4.1.4 Methodological Decisions Taken in the Analysis of the Data

The application of statistical procedures in this study was done following the advice of experts in statistics and under the supervision of a senior researcher from the field of second / foreign language acquisition. According to their advice we interpreted and analysed the data collected in the present study. We started by examining normality tests in order to find out whether our data were normal. To that end, we applied the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov procedure to test the null hypothesis; this test is designed to measure whether a particular distribution differs significantly from a normal distribution. Results from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z in all the analyses showed a probability of ≥ 0.050 which enabled us to make use of statistical parametric tests. These tests provide stronger assumptions and perceived differences are considered more significant than results deriving from non-parametric measures. We were able to apply parametric tests throughout the whole research process involved in the present study.

³ Rose and Kg Kwari-fynn (2001: 157-158) also relied on NSs' "correct" responses as a means of analysing their data on a metapragmatic assessment questionnaire. We also believe that, since the participants in our study were in a British context, piloting the test with British students would provide us with appropriate guidance.

Concerning the first research question of our study, which referred to the effects of participants' proficiency level on the use of pragmatic force modifiers within the speech act of requesting, we had three hypotheses:

Research Question 1: "Does participants' proficiency level affect the use of pragmatic force modifiers with regards to the speech act of requests?"

Hypothesis 1 Participants' proficiency level will affect the awareness of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Niezgodá and Röver, 2001).

Hypothesis 2 Participants' proficiency level will affect the production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Trosborg, 1995).

Hypothesis 3 Participants' proficiency level will affect the production of request act modifiers (Safont, 2005).

The first hypothesis focused on whether proficiency level affected the awareness of our participants regarding accuracy and appropriateness of the request head acts. In order to account for statistically significant differences, we chose a T-test for independent measures, as we compared the performance of each proficiency group (i.e. Intermediate and Advanced) in relation to one variable, their awareness of pragmatic appropriateness and the grammatical accuracy of the request acts.

Similar statistical procedures were employed in testing our second and third hypotheses since they also dealt with the effects of proficiency level on the use of pragmatic force modifiers within the speech act of requests. In particular, the second hypothesis examined participants' pragmatic production of appropriate and accurate request acts, while the third hypothesis concerned the production of pragmatically appropriate and grammatically correct request act modifiers.

Our second research question concerned the effect of length of stay abroad on knowledge of request force modifiers. To address this we formulated three hypotheses.

Research Question 2: Does length of stay abroad affect the knowledge of pragmatic force modifiers?

Hypothesis 4 Length of stay will affect the awareness of the request acts, in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Matsumura 2003, Schauer, 2006).

Hypothesis 5 Length of stay will affect the production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004).

Hypothesis 6 Length of stay will affect the production of request modifiers (Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004).

The fourth hypothesis tackled the effect of length of stay abroad on the awareness of pragmatically appropriate and grammatically correct request head acts. In order to account for statistically significant differences we made use of the 'One-way ANOVA' to test for differences among two or more independent groups. In our case we compared three different subgroups of participants that had stayed abroad for different periods of time (i.e. from 4 months to 6 months; from 7 months to 5 years; from 5 and a half years to 16 years). The reason why we chose this statistical procedure was due to the fact that the data were continuous; we dealt with three different periods and contrasted participants' performance on the same task. We also made use of the parametric test described above, to deal with the effect of length of stay abroad on the production of request acts and the production of request modification devices (Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6 respectively).

All the data obtained as a result of applying these parametric statistical procedures were coded and processed using the Statistical and Presentational System Software (SPSS 14.0) for windows. An alpha level of $p < 0.05$ was chosen as the significant level, since it has been considered the standard for the applied linguistics field (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The results obtained from the application of this statistical analysis are presented and discussed in the following section.

4.2 Results and discussion

In this section, we present the results in two parts. The first section (4.2.1) addresses the results related to the effects of proficiency level on the use of pragmatic force modifiers within the speech act of requesting; and the second section addresses the results related to the effects of length of stay abroad on the knowledge of requests and request force modifiers.

4.2.1 Results and Discussion Related to the First Research Question

The first research question that motivated our study was formulated as follows:

Research Question 1: “Does participants' proficiency level affect the use of pragmatic force modifiers with regards to the speech act of requests?”

Previous research on the pragmatic aspects of language learners has claimed that target language (henceforth TL) speech act knowledge is incomplete for many L2 learners (see Ellis, 1994 for a review). According to some authors (Scarcella, 1979) low proficiency learners tend to employ a rather limited range of linguistic realisation devices and illocutionary force mitigating devices. Research to date has shown that even advanced learners do not acquire the full native-like

pragmatic competence in terms of their awareness and production of speech acts (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; House and Kasper, 1987). L2 speech acts are usually characterized by over-sensitivity to politeness and verbosity, which seems to suggest that L2 learners' pragmatic competence tend to be less developed than their grammatical competence. Thus, in order to find out whether proficiency affected our participants' pragmatic awareness and production of pragmatic force modifiers and whether there was any difference between their pragmatic and grammatical competence, we formulated our first research question with its three hypotheses. Below we provide the analysis of the results and discussion of the three first hypotheses.

4.2.1.1 Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis suggested that the proficiency level of our participants would affect their awareness of pragmatic appropriateness and grammatical accuracy of the request head acts. Hence, in order to test our first hypothesis, we examined the data obtained from the subjects' performance in the discourse evaluation test (henceforth DET) in which the participants were required to evaluate the appropriateness and correctness of particular request formulations for specific situations. Regarding the participants' performance in the DET, we carried out a quantitative analysis on the basis of the appropriateness and accuracy of their evaluation. As has previously been explained, we distributed our participants into two groups (intermediate and advanced) according to their proficiency level. There were 34 participants in the intermediate group and 70 in the advanced group. This meant that 34 participants had provided correct answers to at least 30 to 47 questions out of the 60 included in the English proficiency test and thus had the equivalent to the B1 and B2 levels of the Council of Europe⁴. The remaining 70 participants provided correct answers to a minimum of 48

⁴ Appendix G explains the meaning of these proficiency level descriptors provided by the Council of Europe.

questions and a maximum of 60 out of 60. These participants' proficiency level was equivalent to the C1 and C2 levels of the Council of Europe.

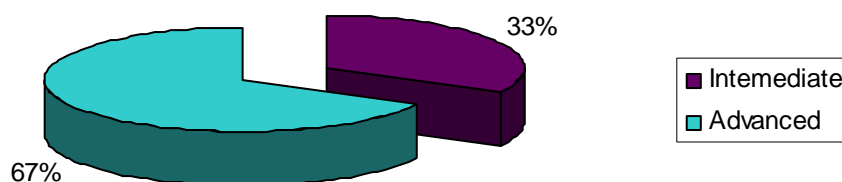


Figure 4.7 Distribution of participants according to their proficiency level

In order to provide an answer to our first hypothesis, we decided to find out whether there would be any difference between the two groups of participants (i.e. intermediate and advanced) regarding awareness of global request strategy. To this end we compared their pragmatically appropriate evaluations and also their grammatically accurate ones. Differences between intermediate level and advanced level participants are illustrated in Figure 4.8 below.

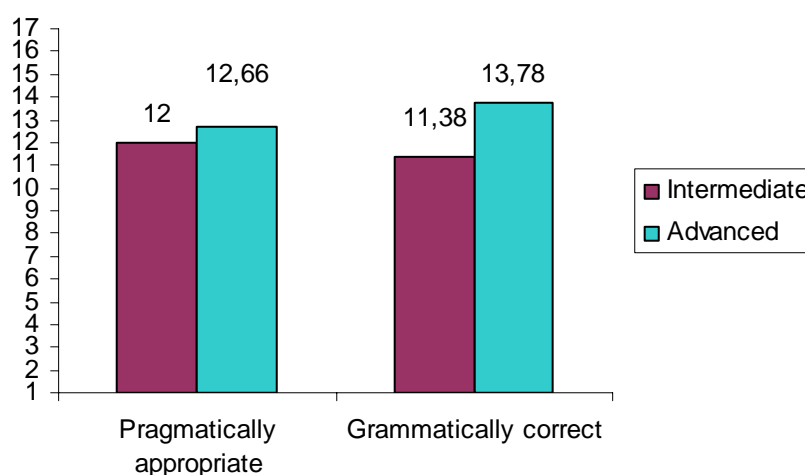


Figure 4.8 Influence of proficiency level on request act awareness

Considering the results presented above, it seems that advanced participants outperformed intermediate ones in recognising both pragmatic and grammatical failure. As shown in the first two items in Figure 4.8 (which refer to the acknowledgement of the degree of appropriateness of a given request routine to a particular situation), advanced participants recognised slightly better (12.66 prompts out of 17 included in the DET) than intermediate participants (12 prompts out of 17), those expressions that seemed more convenient, for the description provided. Furthermore, the second items show that advanced participants also performed better (13.78 out of 17 prompts) in recognising the linguistic correctness of the sentences, than participants with an intermediate level (11.38 out of 17 prompts).

Although Figure 4.8 above seems to indicate differences between intermediate and advanced participants in terms of both pragmatic and grammatical awareness, we aimed to confirm the difference by applying statistical analysis to our data. As we were dealing with the effects of two proficiency levels on one independent variable (i.e. evaluation of global strategic use of request acts: whether they were appropriate or correct) and taking into account that our data were continuous, we applied the t-test for independent sample data as a statistical procedure. Our aim was to find out whether or not ‘the null hypothesis’ (no differences between groups) was rejected. Results are displayed in terms of global request strategy use and the Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances which includes: the F-value and significance.

Table 4.10 Effects of proficiency level on awareness of global use of requests

PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	12.00	0.606	0.438
Advanced – appropriate evaluation	12.66		

Intermediate – correct evaluation	11.38	1.467	0.229
Advanced – correct evaluation	13.74		

*p<0.05

According to the probability levels shown in the above table, there seem to be no statistically significant differences between our participants' proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced) and their performance in evaluating request strategies. In this sense, we may assume that our first hypothesis, which predicted differences of pragmatic and grammatical awareness depending on proficiency level, is not supported by our findings. In fact, this would contradict Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study in that their ESL learners with a higher level of proficiency exhibited greater pragmatic and grammatical awareness than learners with a lower level of proficiency. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei investigated the recognition and rating of grammatical errors and pragmatic infelicities by ESL and EFL learners as well as teachers of English. Their participants first watched a video comprising 20 scenarios, some of which contained either grammatical or pragmatic errors, and were subsequently asked to evaluate the severity of the perceived linguistic problems in a questionnaire. The speech acts examined in their study were apologies, refusals, requests, and suggestions.

Results from Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study indicated that there were clear differences related to proficiency. They found that members of the high-proficiency set in Hungary scored both the pragmatic and the grammatical items higher than the low-proficiency EFL participants. In the United States, the high-proficiency ESL group perceived the pragmatic infelicities to be more severe than the ESL low-proficiency group, but at the same time, they rated the grammatical errors less severely.

Therefore, if we analyse further, the mean values provided above, we might state that in our case, the group of advanced participants also evaluated pragmatic failure better than the intermediate group and the same happened with

the grammatical evaluation. According to the mean values, advanced learners recognised more pragmatic and grammatical errors included in the DET. Furthermore, we could state that the intermediate group performed better at the pragmatic evaluation than at the grammatical and on the contrary, the advanced participants, although superior in both cases, were more aware of grammatical failure. This might imply that grammar and pragmatic awareness are not at the same level and that each might be more developed than the other at different proficiency levels, that is, pragmatic awareness for the intermediate participants in our study and grammatical awareness for the advanced subjects. Other studies carried out in this field (Blum-Kulka, 1996) have also ascertained discrepancies between learners' grammatical and pragmatic competence.

Due to the fact that proficiency seems to have an effect on evaluation of pragmatic and grammatical failure, that is, the higher the proficiency level of the participants in our study the more aware they were; there might be a need to train students at lower levels to improve their evaluation of correctness and appropriateness of particular utterances (such as speech acts) in set contexts. Furthermore, bearing in mind that we were dealing with intermediate and advanced students, their results concerning pragmatic and grammatical assessment are still far from perfect. The advanced group received the lowest score of the two categories (i.e. pragmatics and grammar), in the evaluation of pragmatic failure (79.13% vs 86.13%), which might imply that there is still a need for more attention to raising pragmatic awareness when training language users.

As has already been stated, findings presented in Figure 4.8 above, showed differences between the means of the two groups (intermediate vs advanced) but these differences were not statistically significant. This might be due to the fact that the differences reported in Figure 4.8 might refer to the evaluation of specific request strategies as opposed to that of global strategies. Since results in Table 4.10 show our findings for global use of request strategies and there are discrepancies between the results provided so far, we shall now investigate further

the types of request strategies analysed in our data in order to pinpoint the differences, between intermediate and advanced participants' performance in the DET.

We coded the data obtained from the subjects' performance in the discourse evaluation test (see Appendix F) following Trosborg's (1999) classification of request acts. The DET contained 17 prompts, in which the request act types were distributed as follows: 1 *hint* (prompt 6); 1 *ability* (prompt 16); 3 *willingness* (2, 11 and 17); 3 *permission* (prompts 1, 3 and 7); 1 *suggestory formulae* (prompt 5); 2 *desire* (prompts 4 and 13); 2 *obligation* (prompts 14 and 15); and 4 *imperative* (prompts 8, 9, 10 and 12). There were no *wishes*, *performatives* or *elliptical phrases* included in our DET. In order to find out whether there was any connection between our two groups of participants' proficiency level (i.e. intermediate and advanced) and the strategy type employed, we applied a t-test to our data. Thus, Table 4.11 below shows the connection between level of proficiency and appropriate evaluation of the 17 prompts included in the DET and Table 4.12 shows the relationship between level of proficiency and correct evaluation of those prompts. Results in both tables are displayed in terms of mean values, F-value and significance.

Table 4.11 Effects of proficiency level on awareness of appropriate request types

REQUEST TYPE	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.79	0.691	0.408
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.83		
Ability	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.85	0.863	0.355
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.89		
Willingness	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	2.09	4.240	0.042*
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	2.13		
Permission	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	1.50	6.145	0.015*
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	1.27		
Suggestory formulae	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.88	0.528	0.469
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.87		
Wishes	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.00		

Desires	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	1.38	0.903	0.344
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	1.60		
Obligation	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	1.38	16.349	0.000*
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	1.70		
Performatives	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
Imperatives	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	3.12	0.007	0.932
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	3.37		
Elliptical phrases	Intermediate – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – appropriate evaluation	0.00		

* $p < 0.05$

***no data

According to the probability levels shown in the above table, we can state that our participants' appropriate evaluation of hint, ability, suggestory formulae, desire and imperative realisations was not related to their proficiency level, as no significant differences were found between these two groups. However, from the above findings, we can also state that our participants' appropriate evaluation of willingness, permission and obligation realisations was indeed related to their proficiency level, with a probability level of $p < 0.05$. These three categories fall within the conventionally indirect hearer-oriented and direct request types, two of the four main groups established by Trosborg (1999). This means that there was a certain connection between proficiency level and pragmatic assessment of some request strategy types (i.e. willingness, permission and obligation). Advanced students rated better the pragmatic infelicities found within the willingness and the obligation situations, which relate to willingness situations 2, 11 and 17 and obligation situations 14 and 15 of the DET (see Appendix F). One example of each is illustrated below. Both examples were obtained from answers provided by participants in the advanced group.

Example 1

11. Your mother told you to go to the bakery and buy some bread. You tell the baker:
 - I wonder if you could...if you would be so kind as to give me two loaves of bread.

Correct

Incorrect

Appropriate

Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *Can I have two loaves of bread, please?*

In the above example, a request for a loaf of bread in a bakery, we observe how an advanced student rated as inappropriate a request that contained too many mitigation devices for a situation with a very low demand on the hearer and provided a request of the permission type with only one mitigator (i.e. please) instead. Example 2 below shows how another advanced student also rated correctly the following situation with a request of the obligation type:

Example 2

14. You are organising a big party at work, with a lot of people. However, you have to go on a work trip and you don't have time to organise it properly. You need help. You say to a workmate:

- It looks as though I won't have time to organise the party. You'll have to do it for me.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *It looks as though I won't have time to organise the party. Could I ask you to help with it?*

Example 2 above shows how an advanced student marked as inappropriate the obligation request provided for situation 14 and provided a request of the performative type instead. As has already been mentioned, from our results we observed that advanced students evaluated pragmatic failure better than their intermediate counterparts in the case of willingness and obligation requests. However, participants in the intermediate groups assessed those situations which included permission requests (1, 3 and 7) better than advanced participants. Example 3 below illustrates this finding:

Example 3

3. You were very sick the night before an important exam and you missed it. You ask your teacher:

- May I ask you a favour? I was very ill the night before the exam, may I do it another day?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:

Situations with permission requests were pragmatically better assessed by intermediate participants than by advanced. In Example 3 above we observe how the intermediate participant considers the request is appropriate for the given situation and for that reason a suggestion is not provided. Most of our advanced participants rated it as inappropriate.

With regards to the accurate evaluation of specific request types, Table 4.12 below, reveals the following findings:

Table 4.12 Effects of proficiency level on awareness of correct request types

REQUEST TYPE	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.62	12.098	0.001*
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.80		
Ability	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.79	0.230	0.632
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.81		
Willingness	Intermediate – correct evaluation	1.76	2.512	0.116
	Advanced – correct evaluation	2.26		
Permission	Intermediate – correct evaluation	1.91	0.002	0.968
	Advanced – correct evaluation	2.30		
Suggestory Formulae	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.59	103.010	0.000*
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.94		
Wishes	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.00		
Desires	Intermediate – correct evaluation	1.38	6.102	0.015*
	Advanced – correct evaluation	1.73		
Obligation	Intermediate – correct evaluation	1.35	4.902	0.029*
	Advanced – correct evaluation	1.64		
Performatives	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.00		
Imperatives	Intermediate – correct evaluation	2.97	2.622	0.108
	Advanced – correct evaluation	3.26		
Elliptical phrases	Intermediate – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – correct evaluation	0.00		

*p<0.05

***no data

According to the probability levels shown in the above table, we can state that our participants' accurate evaluation of ability, willingness, permission and imperative realisations was not related to their proficiency level, as no significant differences were found between these two groups, with probability levels of $p > 0.05$ in all cases. However, from the above findings, we can also state that our participants' accurate evaluation of hint, suggestory formulae, desire and obligation realisations was indeed related to their proficiency level, with probability levels of $p < 0.05$. These four categories fall within the indirect, conventionally indirect hearer-oriented, conventionally indirect speaker-oriented and direct request types, the four main groups established by Trosborg (1999). This means that there was a connection between proficiency level and participants accurate assessment with regards to certain request strategy types (i.e. hint: prompt 6, suggestory formulae: prompt 5, desire: prompts 4 and 13 and obligation: 14 and 15, see Appendix E). In this case, it was the advanced students who performed better in the assessment of grammatical failure, as stated by the mean values, which are higher for the 4 request types. Below we provide one example of each type that shows grammatical errors that the intermediate participants failed to assess and that advanced participants corrected accurately:

Example 4

6. Two friends are watching TV at one's house. One feels cold and tells his/her friend:
- It's getting cold in here, doesn't it?

Correct

Incorrect

Appropriate

Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *It's getting cold in here, isn't it?*

The advanced participants noticed that the tag question was wrong and suggested a correct option.

Example 5

5. At a company, one of the workers needs some money urgently. He/she asks the boss:
- How about lend me some money?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *I am sorry I am asking you such a favour but could you please pay me in advance?*

The above example is a hint and presents a grammatical mistake in the verb form, as it should be provided as a gerund instead. The student resorts to a whole new request strategy of the ability type, not only to correct the grammatical error but also to adapt it appropriately to the situation.

Example 6

4. A student has to finish an important composition for the following day, but s/he doesn't have enough time to finish it. S/He asks a classmate:
- I hate bother you but I need to copy some sections from your essay.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *Do you think I could have a look at your essay in order to compare it with mine?*

In the example above the problem was in the mitigation device, in the disarmer and the advanced participant solved it by providing a different mitigation type, an opener. The fourth request type that the advanced participants rated more accurately was obligation, for which the two request types provided were grammatically correct and that in some cases, intermediate students rated as incorrect.

Therefore, though the global evaluation of request strategies does not point to statistically significant differences on the part of intermediate and advanced participants, we may state that this is not so for all particular realisations. Findings presented in Tables 4.11 and 4.12 suggest that there is a certain connection between proficiency level and specific strategy evaluation, with levels of probability of $p < 0.05$. Regarding pragmatic awareness higher proficiency learners had an advantage in evaluating some conventionally indirect hearer-oriented and

direct request types (i.e. willingness and obligation) and intermediate participants had an advantage in assessing permission strategies. With regards to grammatical awareness, higher proficiency learners had an advantage in evaluating some conventionally indirect hearer-oriented, conventionally indirect speaker-oriented and direct request types (i.e. hint, suggestory formulae, desire and obligation), the four types that showed statistically significant differences.

Thus, we might state that there are some connections between a number of aspects: proficiency level and pragmatic awareness to evaluate willingness, permission and obligation realisations; and proficiency level and grammatical awareness to evaluate hint, suggestory formulae, desire and obligation realisations. According to our findings, this means that the higher the proficiency level of our participants the better they will be able to evaluate request failure regarding accuracy and appropriateness of some strategy types. Intermediate participants only scored higher in the case of pragmatic evaluation of permission requests; in the remaining strategic types mentioned above advanced participants performed better. This fact may partly confirm Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) findings about the advantage of higher level ESL learners in terms of greater pragmatic and grammatical awareness. Furthermore, our results also corroborate those obtained by Niezgodá and Röver (2001) who replicated Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study with EFL learners in the Czech Republic and ESL learners in Hawaii. They employed the same video and questionnaire that had been used in the original research design. In an analysis within both high and low proficiency groups they found that low proficiency learners recognised significantly more the pragmatic errors than the grammatical errors (60% versus 46%), which coincides with our findings (70.59% versus 66.94%). In addition, high proficiency learners showed the opposite tendency, which is in line with our findings (74.47% versus 81.05%). Bearing this explanation in mind, we might state that our first hypothesis is partly confirmed, as there were statistically significant differences in relation to the appropriate and

accurate assessment of some strategic types which was affected by proficiency level.

This might imply that the higher the proficiency level the better the pragmatic and grammatical evaluation of certain request types, as the statistical results show that our advanced group performed better in assessing the majority of the request types. According to the statistical analysis, it seems that the intermediate group was only better at assessing the appropriate use of the permission type. Furthermore, it might be the case that more attention needs to be devoted to the learning of each one of the types included in Trosborg's (1999) taxonomy, providing also contexts in which their use might be considered both appropriate and accurate. Future research on pragmatic and grammatical awareness might need to consider more prompts of each type in elaborating the DET, as the fact that there were only a few examples of each type might have affected our overall results.

As already mentioned, we were also interested in the relationship between proficiency level and production of request acts and request modifiers. For this reason, we shall next present the hypotheses regarding pragmatic production, in the next two sections.

4.2.1.2 Hypothesis 2

Our second hypothesis suggested that the proficiency level of our participants would affect their production of pragmatically appropriate and grammatically accurate request acts. Hence, in order to test our second hypothesis, we examined the data obtained from the subjects' performance in the discourse completion test (henceforth DCT) in which the participants were required to provide appropriate and accurate requests for specific situations. Regarding the participants' performance in the DCT, we carried out a quantitative analysis, on

the basis of appropriate and accurate production of request acts. As with the coding of the data of the DET we coded the data obtained from the subjects' performance in the discourse completion test (see Appendix E) following Trosborg's (1999) classification of request acts. In total 1431 pragmatically appropriate requests and 1301 grammatically correct requests were coded for the DCT. The distributions for each request category according to Trosborg's classification can be seen in Table 4.13 below:

Table 4.13 Non-native speakers: distribution of requests

TYPE	STRATEGY	QUANTITY	
		Pragmatically appropriate	Grammatically correct
Indirect Request	1. Hints (mild or strong)	0	0
Conventionally Indirect			
Hearer-Oriented	2. Ability	793	730
	2. Willingness	287	243
	2. Permission	237	219
	3. Suggestory formulae	2	0
Speaker-Oriented	4. Wishes	5	5
	5. Desires	39	42
	6. Obligation	11	8
	7. Performatives	20	17
Direct Request			
	8. Imperatives	37	36
	8. Elliptical phrase	0	1
TOTAL		1431	1301

Hence, as observed in Table 4.13, the request type most often used in the DCT was the *ability* type both in terms of appropriateness ($n=793$) and accuracy ($n=730$) while the least used were *hints*, as no occurrences were found. Furthermore, there was only 1 request of the *elliptical phrase* type, which was not

appropriate for the given context, and 2 of the *suggestory formulae* type, which had some sort of linguistic hitch.

In order to find out whether there was any difference between the production of global request strategy by the two subgroups (i.e. intermediate and advanced), we first compared the means of their pragmatically appropriate answers and also their grammatically correct ones. Differences between intermediate level and advanced level participants are illustrated in Figure 4.9

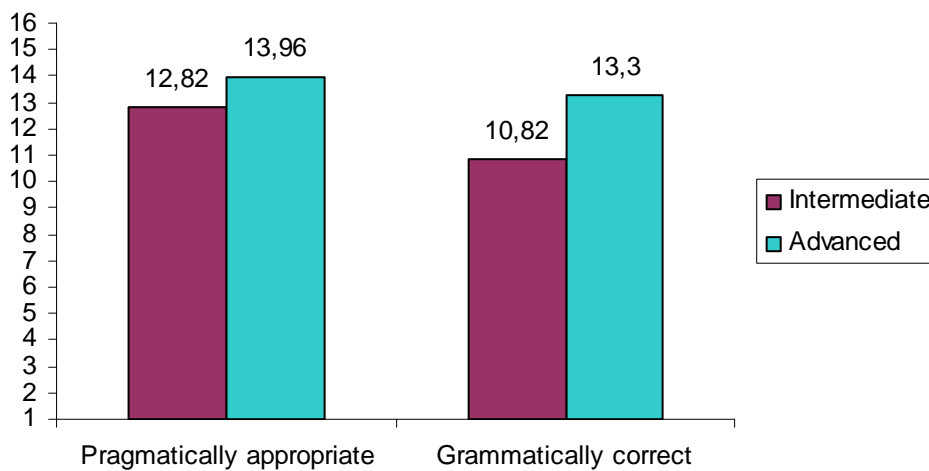


Figure 4.9 Influence of proficiency level on request act production

Considering the results presented above, it seems that advanced participants outperformed intermediate ones in producing pragmatically appropriate and grammatically accurate requests. As shown in the first two items in Figure 4.9 (which refer to the pragmatically appropriate responses given to a particular situation), advanced participants produced slightly more appropriate requests (13.96) than intermediate participants (12.82). Furthermore, the second items show that advanced participants also produced more grammatically correct requests (13.30) than intermediate participants (10.82), the difference between the means in this case being the largest so far (2.48). Therefore, these findings, and especially the latter, suggest that advanced proficiency participants were able to

produce more pragmatically appropriate and grammatically accurate requests than intermediate level participants.

Although Figure 4.9 above, seems to indicate differences between intermediate and advanced participants in terms of both pragmatic and grammatical production, we aimed to confirm the difference by applying a statistical analysis to our data. As we were dealing with the effect of two proficiency levels on one independent variable (i.e. production of global strategic use of request acts: whether they were appropriate or correct) and considering our data were continuous, we applied the t-test for independent sample data as a statistical procedure. Our aim was to find out whether or not the null hypothesis was rejected. Results are displayed in terms of means in global request strategy use and the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances which includes the F-value and significance.

Table 4.14 Effects of proficiency level on production of global use of requests

PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Intermediate – appropriate production	12.82	13.201	0.000*
Advanced – appropriate production	13.96		
Intermediate – correct production	10.82	5.518	0.021*
Advanced – correct production	13.30		

*p<0.05

As may be observed in Table 4.14, results point to a statistically significant difference between intermediate and advanced participants' use of request realisations in terms of appropriateness (sig. 0.000, p<0.05) and accuracy (sig. 0.021, p<0.05). The overall differences in mean scores reveal that subjects at an advanced proficiency level produced more request formulations than those at an intermediate level. Regarding appropriateness, advanced participants produced more appropriate requests than intermediate participants (87.25 % versus 80.12%)

for the given situations in the DCT, which as has been already explained contained varied scenarios with different interlocutors and degrees of imposition. Regarding accuracy, advanced participants also produced more accurate request acts than intermediate participants (83.13% versus 67.63%).

Findings provided in Table 4.14 above, would reject the null hypothesis, and thus account for differences between the two groups of participants. We may assume, then, that a better command of the target language enables a more frequent use of appropriate and accurate request formulations. In this sense, we may suggest that our second hypothesis, which predicted differences of pragmatic and grammatical production in request acts depending on proficiency level, is supported by our findings. According to Trosborg (1995), as proficiency increased, an approximation of native-like request strategies began to occur. Trosborg's (1995) study contrasted Danish and English native and non-native English learners' use of requests in a role play task including ten request situations.

Our results show that advanced learners, those participants that scored from 48 to 60 correct questions, performed better with regards to pragmatic appropriateness (advanced participants mean score = 13.96 out of the 16 prompts provided in the DCT, and intermediate participants mean score = 12.82) and also, with regards to grammatical correctness (advanced participants mean score = 13.30 and intermediate participants mean score = 10.82). This might imply that proficiency level does have an effect on appropriate and accurate production of speech acts and thus confirm our second hypothesis. These results also show that appropriate production of request acts obtained higher mean scores than accurate production, both for advanced and intermediate participants, which might imply that our participants' pragmatic performance was better than their grammatical production for the 16 given situations in the DCT. We consider this to be an interesting finding in that it might imply that participants, as results from our first hypothesis also show, are conscious of the importance of pragmatics for

successful communication between speakers of the same and different languages. According to Díez Prados (1998) pragmatic errors can be far more embarrassing than grammatical ones and are less excusable on the part of native speakers; the learners' personality or attitude could be misjudged as these errors do not apparently denote lack of linguistic knowledge.

Apart from discovering the frequency of global strategy use, we were also interested in finding out if similar results to the ones presented regarding awareness would apply to specific strategy use. Thus, our interest lay in finding out whether there was any sort of connection between our learners' proficiency level and the strategy type employed. To this end, we first classified the responses obtained from the 16 situations included in the DCT according to Trosborg's (1999) taxonomy of request acts and then, we compared intermediate and advanced participants' use of these specific request strategies. It should be stated however, that we did not find any realisation of hints in the data obtained from the participants' responses to the DCT, neither pragmatically appropriate nor grammatically accurate, or suggestory formulae realisations amongst the grammatically correct responses.

Since our findings, regarding awareness, showed that it was in the accurate evaluation of requests that proficiency had a stronger effect, we were interested in finding out the connection between proficiency level and request act production regarding accuracy. Table 4.15 shows the relationship between level of proficiency and correct production of request realisations in the DCT. Results are displayed in terms of mean values, F-value and significance.

Table 4.15 Effects of proficiency level on production of correct request types

REQUEST TYPE	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Intermediate – appropriate production	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – appropriate production	0.00		

Ability	Intermediate – correct production	6.50	6.100	0.015*
	Advanced – correct production	7.24		
Willingness	Intermediate – correct production	1.35	3.734	0.056**
	Advanced – correct production	2.81		
Permission	Intermediate – correct production	1.79	1.023	0.314
	Advanced – correct production	2.26		
Suggestory Formulae	Intermediate – appropriate production	0.00	***	***
	Advanced – appropriate production	0.00		
Wish	Intermediate – correct production	0.03	1.569	0.213
	Advanced – correct production	0.06		
Desires	Intermediate – correct production	0.50	0.775	0.381
	Advanced – correct production	0.36		
Obligation	Intermediate – correct production	0.09	0.222	0.639
	Advanced – correct production	0.07		
Performative	Intermediate – correct production	0.15	0.332	0.566
	Advanced – correct production	0.17		
Imperatives	Intermediate – correct production	0.41	0.415	0.521
	Advanced – correct production	0.31		
Elliptical Phrases	Intermediate – correct production	0.00	1.990	0.161
	Advanced – correct production	0.14		

*p<0.05

** p<0.1

***no data

As displayed in Table 4.15, no differences were found between intermediate and advanced participants in their correct production of most specific request realisations, yet there were two types (ability and willingness) that did provide us with statistically significant differences. Thus, we may suggest that a better command of the target language might enable a more accurate use of request formulations and more concretely, of the ability and willingness type. These two types belong to the conventionally indirect hearer-oriented. Below we provide two examples of these request strategies found in our data. Example 7 presents a request of the ability type and Example 8 presents a request of the willingness type. In both examples we provide answers obtained from advanced participants as they produced more accurate solutions, being the mean scores for advanced participants' use of the ability strategy 7.24 and for intermediate participants 6.50. Regarding production of willingness request types, advanced participants' mean value was 2.81 and intermediate participants obtained a mean value of 1.35

Example 7

- 1 You and a friend arrive in Dublin and go to your hotel. You left your credit card at home and you don't have enough money to pay for the hotel. You ask your friend:

Could you please pay for me tonight and I'll give you cash as soon as I get cash?

The request provided for the first situation of the DCT by one of our advanced participants is a request of the ability type which is grammatically correct and includes requests mitigators, such as "please" and promise of reward, as well.

Example 8

- 3 A father and his daughter are on a bus. The driver is driving very quickly and the daughter is scared. The father asks the driver:

Would you please slow down a little bit? My daughter is a bit scared...

Example 8 provides a request act of the willingness type according to Trosborg's (1999) taxonomy and, like Example 7, it has also been obtained from the data of one of our advanced participants - as they performed better at the accurate production of this specific request type. In this case, there are also mitigators, such as "please", downgraders and grounders, in the answer provided.

These findings are similar to Trosborg's (1995) study in that her participants also showed a preference for strategies of the conventionally indirect type. As has already been stated, the two research strategies that our participants used the most, were the ability and the willingness types. In both cases, higher proficiency participants produced more grammatically accurate requests. Furthermore, Trosborg (1995) stated that lower level learners of the language utilised hints to a lesser extent than the more advanced learners and native speakers of English. The author attributed this to the lexical and grammatical

difficulty implied in performing hints and as a matter of fact, we did not find any realisation of hints in our data. Neither advanced participants nor intermediate ones produced any hints. This might be due to the fact that these strategies are linguistically highly demanding of the learners or that the situations presented in the DCT did not require this sort of request types; the same applies to suggestory formulae. According to Trosborg (1995), by resorting to this type of request strategies the speaker may test the interlocutor's willingness to co-operate while softening the request's intention. However, none of these instances were found in our data.

Our findings also coincide with Trosborg's (1995) in the lower use of direct formulae on the part of both intermediate and advanced students. Therefore, according to our findings we could state that although there were only statistically significant differences regarding accurate use of ability and willingness on the part of intermediate and advanced participants, and no other statistically significant differences were found regarding specific use of accurate forms between the two groups. Our second hypothesis has been confirmed. These results suggest a connection between proficiency level and request act production with a level of probability of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) for appropriate production and 0.021 ($p < 0.05$) for accurate production.

Furthermore, it is worth pointing out the fact, that the differences between the two proficiency groups (intermediate and advanced) in the accurate use of the request strategies ability (sig.= 0.015, $p < 0.05$) and willingness (sig.= 0.056, $p < 0.05$) were, in turn, the request types that our students used the most, compared to all the other types of requests. Out of the 1431 appropriate requests found in our data, 55.42% were of the ability type and 20.06% of the willingness type and out of the 1311 accurate requests found in our data, 55.68% were of the ability type and 18.54% of the willingness type. The remaining percentages for the other request types were lower than the ones provided above, which shows a clear preference for these two types of request strategies on the part of our participants.

Thus, this might suggest that there is a need to train language learners in the use of more request strategies in order to broaden their repertoire of request type usage and avoid restriction to one or two types.

After observing proficiency effects in the production of global and specific request types, we wondered whether our participants' level of target language would also affect their use of peripheral modification devices. To this end, we formulated our third hypothesis.

4.2.1.3 Hypothesis 3

Our third hypothesis suggested that there would be proficiency level effects on the use of request modifiers. In order to proceed with the statistical analysis we first quantified the instances of request modifiers found in our data. To this end, we used Alcón et al.'s (2005) classification of request modifiers and grouped our data according to their categories. Below we provide a table with all the types of mitigators found in our data.

Table 4.16 Non-native speakers: distribution of mitigators

TYPE	SUB-TYPE	QUANTITY	
Internal Modification	Openers	278	
	Softeners	Understatement	53
		Downtoner	91
		Hedge	1
	Intensifiers	75	
	Fillers	Hesitators	11
		Cajolers	0
		Appealers	1
		Attention-getters	285
		795	

External Modification	
Preparators	98
Grounders	465
Disarmers	95
Expanders	51
Promise of reward	68
Please	738
	1515

In Table 4.16 it can be observed that the mitigators most widely used in the DCT were ‘*please*’ (48.71% of the total of external modifiers found in our data), while the least used were *cajolers*, which were not found at all. As might be observed there was only 1 instance of a *hedge* and 1 of an *appealer* in our data. It also shows that our participants resorted to external modification devices more than internal ones (65.58% versus 34.42%). Previous studies such as the one by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) in which the authors made use of a written task in order to elicit request modifiers found that external modifiers, particularly those of the grounder type, were more frequent in their learners’ group, and that they also produced longer sentences than native speakers. Yet, this last aspect has been connected to the overproduction or ‘*verbosity*’ that is frequent in some learners as part of their communicative problems. The use of too many words may illustrate a lack of knowledge regarding mitigating devices, and sometimes, as was the case of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain’s (1986) study, it is considered inappropriate, resulting in pragmatic failure.

However, it has to be pointed out that the number of mitigators found in our data for the external request modifier type ‘*please*’, was almost as high as that found in the overall result obtained for the internal modification devices (738 occurrences of “*please*” versus 795 of the total of internal modification devices). Hence, that is the main reason why the number of external modification devices almost doubles the quantity of internal devices. Faerch and Kasper (1987)’s results, obtained from a discourse completion test in order to elicit request act modifiers, pointed to the subjects’ preference for internal over external modifiers.

Such a trend was common to both the learner and the native speaker group. The authors attribute this finding to the idea that the internal modifiers may be regarded as obligatory, whilst that would not be the case with external ones. Focusing on internal modifiers' use, learners employed fewer downtoners (e.g. *likely*) than their counterparts, while they frequently resorted to the word '*please*'. As reported in other studies (Bardovi-Harlig 1996), internal modifiers, like the downtoner group, may involve particular syntactic knowledge, while the use of '*please*' does not necessarily imply knowledge of subordination or of complex syntactic structures. Results regarding the use of internal and external modification devices, seem to be influenced by the type of elicitation technique and the participants taking part in the study.

The overall number of mitigators found in our data, regardless of their type, is a total of 2310 peripheral devices. In order to test whether there was any connection between proficiency level and the use of peripheral modification devices, we made use of a t-test for independent samples to ascertain differences between our two groups (intermediate vs advanced). These results are illustrated in Table 4.17 below:

Table 4.17 Effects of proficiency level on production request act modifiers

PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Intermediate Group – request modifiers production	20.91	1.421	0.236
Advanced Group – request modifiers production	22.87		

*p<0.05

According to the mean values in Table 4.17, it seems that advanced participants produced more peripheral modification devices than those participants belonging to the intermediate group (22.87 vs 20.91 respectively). This finding is illustrated in Figure 4.10 below. However, the statistical analysis also illustrates that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups (intermediate vs advanced). This implies that proficiency level has no

effects on the use of peripheral modification devices and that our hypothesis is not confirmed. Yet, we shall now look into the difference found between the mean values in order to provide a more accurate answer to our third hypothesis.

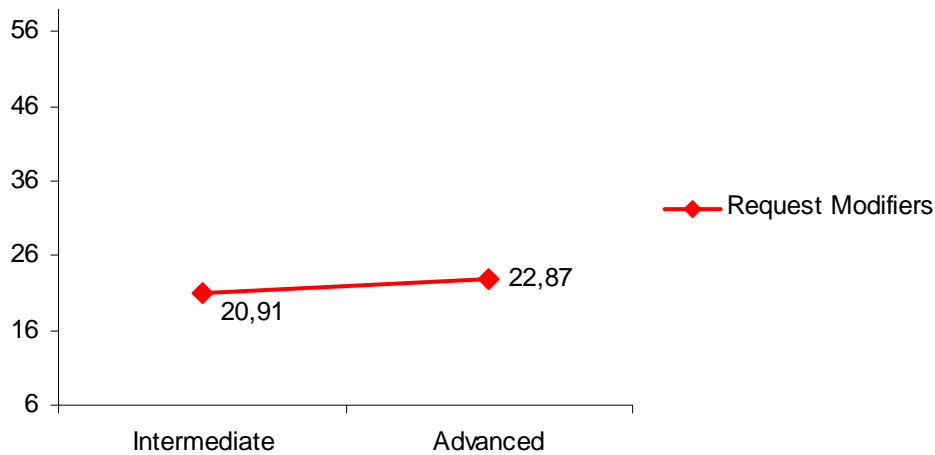


Figure 4.10 Influence of proficiency level on production of request act modifiers

Figure 4.10 above, shows that the maximum number of request modifiers produced in our data was 59 and the minimum 6, and that the mean within intermediate participants (20.91) was lower than that of advanced participants (22.87), the latter using an average of almost 2 modifiers more than intermediate participants. This may suggest that the higher the proficiency level of our participants, the more peripheral modification devices they employed. Hence, we decided to investigate further whether this difference was statistically significant with regards to specific request modifiers and applied a t-test to our data. Our aim was to find out whether there was any sort of relationship between proficiency level and specific request type. The coding of the request act modifiers obtained from the DCT was done following Alcón *et al.*'s (2005) taxonomy presented in Chapter 3. Results are displayed in Table 4.18 below, by means of the Mean, F-value and significance.

Table 4.18 Effects of proficiency level on production of specific request act modifiers

REQUEST MODIFICATOR TYPE	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Opener	Intermediate	2.59	0.104	0.748
	Advanced	2.71		
Understatement	Intermediate	0.35	3.111	0.081**
	Advanced	0.60		
Downtoner	Intermediate	0.50	8.376	0.005*
	Advanced	1.10		
Hedge	Intermediate	0.00	1.990	0.161
	Advanced	0.01		
Intensifier	Intermediate	0.44	5.374	0.022*
	Advanced	0.86		
Hesitator	Intermediate	0.00	21.829	0.000*
	Advanced	0.16		
Cajoler	Intermediate	0.00	***	***
	Advanced	0.00		
Appealer	Intermediate	0.03	8.850	0.004*
	Advanced	0.00		
Attention Getter	Intermediate	3.68	4.726	0.032*
	Advanced	2.29		
Preparator	Intermediate	0.74	0.395	0.531
	Advanced	1.06		
Grounder	Intermediate	3.97	0.015	0.903
	Advanced	4.71		
Disarmer	Intermediate	0.82	0.429	0.514
	Advanced	0.94		
Expander	Intermediate	0.41	0.251	0.618
	Advanced	0.53		
Promise of Reward	Intermediate	0.68	0.591	0.444
	Advanced	0.64		
Please	Intermediate	6.71	1.554	0.215
	Advanced	7.26		

*p<0.05

**p<0.1

***no data

According to the statistical results provided in Table 4.18 we may state that there are some statistical differences that point to a connection between specific request modifier use and the proficiency level of the user. Specifically, this is so with regards to internal modification devices of the type of softeners: understatements (0.081) and downtoners (0.005); intensifiers (0.022); fillers:

hesitators (0.000), appealers (0.004) and attention-getters (0.032). No statistically significant difference was found in the case of external modification devices. In four, out of those six types, advanced participants produced more mitigators than intermediate participants. These findings corroborate Hassal's (2001) suggestion that internal modification might involve a more complex pragmalinguistic structure. However, the mean value in the case of appealers and attention getters points to a higher use, on the part of intermediate participants (mean value: 0.03 and 3.68 respectively), than on the part of the advanced participants (mean value: 0.00 and 2.29 respectively). Regarding the use of appealers, there were limited instances used by our intermediate participants (only 1 appealers was found in our data) and no instances produced by the advanced participants. Examples of these mitigators would include the use of "Ok?", "Right?" and "Yeah", which might not correspond to modifiers commonly used in written form, although these might be more common in oral production. In our data, we found only 1 instance of "Ok?" provided by one of our intermediate participants, see Example 9 below:

Example 9

- 4 You are going to a party. You've broken the heel on your favourite shoes. Your sister wears the same size. You ask her:

Hey! I broke my heel. Can I borrow your shoes please? I'll do something for you later. Ok?

Example 9 above shows a request act provided for a situation of the solidarity type (between two sisters) and it includes various modifiers according to the classification followed in the present study. There are attention-getters ("Hey!"), grounders ("I broke my heel"), please, promise of reward ("I'll do something for you later") and the only appealers in our data ("Ok?"). The reason why we found so few appealers in our data might be due to the fact that, as suggested by Sifianou (1999) modifiers such as appealers are more used in other languages, such as Greek, rather than in English.

With regards to the other type of modifiers which were more frequently used by our intermediate participants: that is, attention-getters, which are used to attract the recipient of the request before an actual request is made, we found the three main categories that Sifianou (1999) identified. As already discussed, Sifianou (1999: 181) divides attention-getters into three main categories, those of formulaic entreaties (i.e. “*excuse me*”), formulaic greetings (i.e. “*hello*”), and imperative constructions (i.e. “*look*”, “*listen*”, “*wait*”) and also what Hassall (2001) calls the kinship term of address (e.g. “*Tom ...*”, “*Mr. Edwards ...*”). As has already been mentioned, the four categories are included in Alcón et al.’s (2005) classification, which has been used to codify our data. One of the attention-getters that our participants used more frequently was the type described by Hassall (2001) as a kinship term of address. In our case, it was the term “*Uncle*”, as shown in the following example, obtained from the data of one of our intermediate participants:

Example 10

- 8 Your friend is coming to visit. You need a place to stay and you want to borrow your uncle’s apartment. You ask him:

Hey uncle, will you be kind enough to lend me your apartment while my friend comes? I’ll make sure everything’s neat and tidy!

It could be argued that the prompt itself called for the attention-getter to be used; however it was in most cases, intermediate participants who resorted to the use of attention-getters and to the specific use of ‘*uncle*’ in this case. Hassall (2001: 265) claims that the speaker’s use of this kinship term of address (e.g. “*father*”, “*mother*”) can have either a positive politeness function, by showing some degree of intimacy when metaphorically including the addressee within the family of the speaker, or a negative politeness function, by showing respect for the addressee by virtue of his/her position or age (Brown and Levinson 1987). The second definition would be applicable to our data.

In relation to the statistical results provided in Table 4.18 above 4 types of request act mitigators pointed to a connection between specific request modifier use and proficiency level. It was the advanced participants who had produced more of each type of mitigator. These were: understatements, downtoners, intensifiers and hesitators. In the case of understatements, downtoners and intensifiers, the advanced participants used them twice as many times as the intermediate participants. As already stated, research has pointed out that internal modification requires more linguistic skills and this seems to have proved to be the case in our study. In the case of hesitators, for example, only advanced students used them and on very limited occasions, there were only 11 instances (see Table 4.16 above, for the number of instances found in each category). An example of a hesitator produced by an advanced participant and which was frequently used is provided below:

Example 11

- 5 Your neighbour always walks his/her dog inside the building. You are not happy about this. You ask him/her:

I was wondering...if you could walk your dog somewhere else?

As observed in Example 11 above, there is a hint of hesitation at the beginning of the request (*I was wondering*). The use of hesitators can be regarded as an important form of modification which usually takes place in interactive situations that elicit a speaker's request use. The frequent use of this type of filler was reported by Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan (2006a, 2006b), who claimed that such a level of frequency might be attributed to the interactive oral performance of learners in spontaneous role-plays or any other sort of oral exchanges.

From the probability levels shown in Table 4.18, we can also state that our participants' use of openers, hedges and external modification in general (preparators, grounders, disarmers, expanders, promise of reward and "please")

were not related to their proficiency level, as no significant differences were found between these two groups.

Therefore, though the global use of peripheral modification devices does not point to statistically significant differences between our intermediate and advanced groups of participants, our results regarding specific use of these devices indicate that there seems to be a connection between proficiency level and internal production of modification devices, which might partially confirm our third hypothesis. Our results are in line with Safont's (2005) study of English language learners, in that our participants' use of peripheral modification devices was related to their proficiency level. She also tackled the effects of proficiency level on the use of request act modifiers. Safont's study dealt with two proficiency levels different to our own, that is, beginners and intermediate. Findings reported in Safont (2005) show that her higher-proficiency learners made use of more peripheral modification devices than the lower-proficiency ones, which has also been the case in our study with both the overall performance (mean value=22.87, in the case of advanced students and mean value=20.91, in the case of intermediate students) and the use of four of the internal modifiers' strategy types that showed statistically significant differences (understatements, downtoners, intensifiers and hesitators).

According to our data, our advanced participants produced more request modification types and these were more varied than those of our intermediate participants, which might imply that the higher the proficiency level, the better the command of modification strategies of language learners. Furthermore, the use of the external request mitigator "please" was very high, which might undermine the use of other also possible modification devices. This might have some pedagogical implications for the teaching of the English language, in that practice of the use of more varied request types and the importance of their use in given situations might need to receive further attention in language curricula.

We have, up to this point, referred to those results obtained from the analysis of the data regarding our first research question; we will now focus on the results and discussion of our second research question.

4.2.2 Results and Discussion Related to the Second Research Question

With regards to the effect of motivation on our second research question, we should bear in mind previous research on the effects of learning environments that have provided evidence of the superiority of second language settings to foreign language ones in terms of developing learners' pragmatic knowledge and competence. In this sense, we have considered Schauer's (2006) study, a replicate of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study, which examines the development of learners' pragmatic and grammatical awareness in the L2 context. Data analysis with regards to pragmatic awareness show that German students in England and English native speakers recognized significantly more errors in scenarios containing a pragmatic infelicity than the learner group in Germany. Findings suggest that the learning environment plays a substantial role in priming the language learners' linguistic awareness, as ESL German students increased their pragmatic awareness during their stay in England.

Furthermore, we have also taken into account results obtained from two other studies on pragmatic production, namely Felix-Brasdefer (2004) which stated that the longer the students stay in the foreign country the better for their pragmatic performance. Although these findings contradict Matsumura's (2001), which stated that pragmatic development took place during the first three months of the stay abroad, which might be due to the fact that the students in Félix-Brasdefer's study stayed for longer periods than those in Matsumura's study, which had a limited stay of eight months.

Finally, some studies have dealt with request act modifiers, such as Barron (2003), and have obtained results that point towards the fact that stay abroad does have certain effects on the development of request modifiers. In order to find out whether our results shared similarities or differences with the above studies we formulated our second research question (Research Question 2: Does length of stay abroad affect the knowledge of pragmatic force modifiers?) and its related hypotheses presented below.

4.2.2.1 Hypothesis 4

As already stated, the fourth hypothesis of the present study has to do with the effects of length of stay abroad on the assessment of request acts. Differences between learners were predicted as far as evaluation of appropriate and accurate request realisation was concerned. Our participants' length of stay in the UK ranged from 4 months to 16 years and we, therefore, divided them into three different groups according to the length of time they had spent in the UK by the time they completed the questionnaires. Group 1 was formed of those participants who had stayed in the UK between 4 months and 6 months; Group 2 consisted of those who had stayed in the UK from 7 months to 5 years; and Group 3 included all participants who had lived in the UK between 5 and a half and 16 years. By doing these divisions, we were able to make comparisons between the effects of certain lengths of stay.

The distribution of participants within each group was as follows: there were 23 participants in Group 1, 64 participants in Group 2 and 17 participants in Group 3. Group 2 was more than double the size of Group 1 and more than three times larger than Group 3. This does not come as a surprise, however, as the length of stay assigned to the second group was quite large and contained those years that a student doing a degree in the UK would need in order to finish it, that is, up to at least 4 years. Within Group 1 were students that had only just arrived

in the UK 4 months earlier to start their degree, or had come for a shorter period, usually on an Erasmus exchange, of six months or one year. Group 3 was formed by those students who had stayed on to do a Masters course or a PhD at a UK institution and hence, had already been in the UK for more than 5 and a half years, but the number of participants in this group was the lowest, which is probably a fairly accurate reflection of what happens in society in general (Figure 4.2 at the beginning of the present chapter illustrates the distribution of our participants according to length of stay in the UK).

Hence, in order to try to provide an answer for our fourth hypothesis, which states that length of stay would affect our participants' awareness regarding accurate and appropriate evaluation of request acts, we analysed the data obtained from the DET (see Appendix E) and made a comparison between the three groups' overall assessment of request formulations.

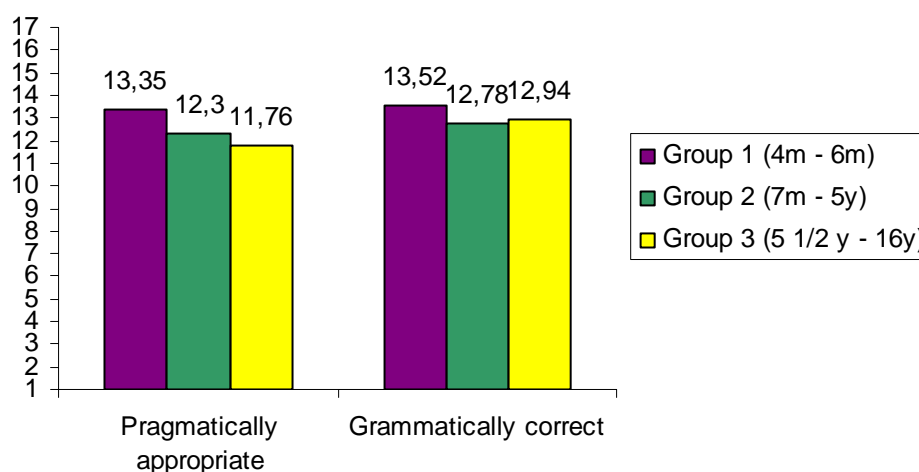


Figure 4.11 Influence of length of stay on request act awareness

As Figure 4.11 shows, the group of participants that was the best at evaluating request realisations, both in terms of appropriateness and accuracy, with regards to the 17 prompts presented to them in the DET, was the group that had spent a maximum of 6 months in the UK, with mean values of 13.35 (78.53%) for appropriate evaluation and 13.52 (79.53%) for accurate evaluation.

The second group to most effectively evaluate pragmatic (mean=12.30) failure was Group 2 which included participants who had spent from 7 months to 5 years in the UK. Group 3, formed of those students who had spent more than 5 and a half years in the UK, seemed to perform the worst at evaluating request act appropriateness (mean=11.76). However, this group performed better than Group 2 at assessing grammatical failure (mean values of 12.94 and 12.78 respectively).

In order to further confirm this apparent distinction in pragmatic and grammatical awareness on the part of our three groups of participants we applied statistical analysis to our data. In determining whether the length of stay abroad had an effect on the participants' ability to evaluate appropriate and accurate request acts, a one factor ANOVA was conducted to analyse the data, as we were dealing with the effect of three lengths of stay abroad on one independent variable. Our interest lay in discovering whether or not the null hypothesis (no differences between groups) was rejected. Results are displayed in terms of means in strategy evaluation, t-value and significance.

Table 4.19 Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of global use of requests

LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Group 1 (4 months – 6 months) – appropriate evaluation	13.35	2.765	0.068**
Group 2 (7 months – 5 years) – appropriate evaluation	12.30		
Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years) – appropriate evaluation	11.76		
Group 1 (4 months – 6 months) – correct evaluation	13.52	0.468	0.628
Group 2 (7 months – 5 years) – correct evaluation	12.78		
Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years) – correct evaluation	12.94		

*p<0.05

**p<0.1

As may be observed from Table 4.19, the results point to a statistically significant difference (sig. = 0.068, p<0.1) between the three groups' assessments of pragmatic failure. The overall differences in mean scores reveal that subjects

who had stayed in the UK for a maximum of 6 months (Group 1) were more aware of pragmatic failure than the other two groups (Group 2 and 3). These findings would reject the null hypothesis, and thus account for differences between the three groups of participants. We may assume then, that a better rating of pragmatic failure might take place during the first six months of a stay abroad. Given this finding, it may be inferred that this is the period when language users are more conscious of their learning of the L2. These results partially confirm our fourth hypothesis, in that they show the effects of stay abroad on the assessment of pragmatic failure.

Although the mean scores regarding accuracy in Table 4.19 above continue to show differences between the groups, the results are not statistically significant. This suggests that length of stay does not have an effect on accuracy and thus, the second half of our fourth hypothesis, which stated that length of stay would have an effect on the grammatical assessment of request acts, is not confirmed.

Our findings might suggest that length of stay has an effect on the appropriate evaluation of request acts and that the significant period of time for this effect to take place is the first 6 months (78.53%). After periods of between 7 months and 5 years in the country of the target language, there is still a good deal of awareness (72.35%). However, staying for more than 5 and a half years in the country where the target language is used does not mean that competence in assessing appropriateness (69.18%) of request acts will improve.

Furthermore, Table 4.19 above also shows that the three groups performed better at linguistic evaluation (Group 1: 79.53% correct answers; Group 3: 76.12% correct answers; and Group 2: 75.18% correct answers) than at pragmatic evaluation (Group 1: 78.53% accurate answers; Group 2: 72.35% accurate answers; and Group 3: 69.18% accurate answers), with higher mean values within the three groups. This might imply that length of stay has different effects on

grammatical and pragmatic awareness. Thus, in order to analyse those results further, we proceeded to analyse request strategy types following Trosborg's (1999) classification of request acts. As already stated, no wishes, performatives or elliptical phrases were included in our DET. First of all, we focused on appropriate evaluation by the three groups of participants.

Table 4.20 Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of appropriate request types

REQUEST TYPE	LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	0.87	0.295	0.745
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.80		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.82		
Ability	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	0.87	0.274	0.761
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.89		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.82		
Willingness	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	2.39	1.683	0.191
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	2.05		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	2.00		
Permission	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	1.57	0.772	0.465
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.30		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.24		
Suggestory formulae	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	1.00	2.297	0.106
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.86		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.76		
Wishes	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
Desires	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	1.61	0.425	0.655
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.48		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.59		
Obligation	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	1.70	2.458	0.091**
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.64		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	1.29		
Performative	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
Imperatives	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	3.35	0.087	0.917
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	3.28		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	3.24		
Elliptical phrases	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5 ½ y – 16 y) – appropriate evaluation	0.00		

*p<0.05

**p<0.1

***no data

Our results in Table 4.20 above show that the only statistically significant difference between groups regarding appropriate assessment of specific request strategies, was in the evaluation of obligation strategies (sig. = 0.091, $p < 0.1$). The group that performed better at assessing this type of request act was Group 1, those participants that had stayed in the UK for a maximum of 6 months (85% correct answers). This result suggests that there is a connection between this type of request act and length of stay abroad, which further confirms our fourth hypothesis in terms of appropriateness. Group 1 performed better in assessing situations such as the one illustrated in Example 12 below, which some of the Group 3 participants rated as appropriate:

Example 12

15. You are late for your flight back home for Christmas. You know the plane has not left yet. You say to the check-in staff:
- You really have to let me in.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *Please, let me in... I really can't miss my plane, I so want to go back home for Christmas!*

The request provided by the student as a better option than the phrase provided ('*You really have to let me in*') is a request act of the imperative type, but mitigated with the use of "please" before stating the request and providing a grounder to mitigate the impact on the hearer, thereby making it appropriate for the given situation.

In order to understand the mean scores better we should bear in mind that the distribution of request strategies in our DET was as follows: 1 *hint* (prompt 6); 1 *ability* (prompt 16); 3 *willingness* (2, 11 and 17); 3 *permission* (prompts 1, 3 and 7); 1 *suggestory formulae* (prompt 5); 2 *desire* (prompts 4 and 13); 2 *obligation* (prompts 14 and 15); and 4 *imperative* (prompts 8, 9, 10 and 12). By looking at

the mean scores we could state that Group 1, with those participants who had stayed in the UK for a shorter period of time, performed better at assessing all the request types, with the sole exception of the ability type, which was better assessed by Group 2. Group 3 came below the other two groups in rating pragmatic failure. It is interesting to note that the percentage of good choices with regards to Group 1's assessment of imperatives was as high as 83.75%, the highest of the three groups; although the three groups performed well in this request type. Example 13 illustrates this finding below:

Example 13

9. In a hotel a client tells the receptionist:
- My heating don't work. Go and repair it, ok?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: My heating doesn't work. Could someone please fix it as soon as possible?

The assessment made by this participant, who had only stayed in the UK for 5 months, is correct, as the use of an imperative for the situation provided was not appropriate at all. Hence, length of stay seems to affect assessment of appropriate research strategies. It seems that the participants in Group 1, formed of participants who had stayed in the UK for 6 months, performed better. This might be due to the fact that the first months of a stay abroad are the ones in which language users are more conscious of their appropriate usage of the language, thus performing better at tasks like the one they carried out in order to complete the DET. The other two groups, on the other hand (those with longer stays in the foreign country) might be more relaxed in terms of paying attention to these matters. Studies such as Matsumura (2003) have shown that the results of learner groups can vary based on their length of stay. Matsumura's study suggests that the initial period of the learners' sojourn in the L2 context might be salient with regard to increases in their pragmatic awareness.

Matsumura's (2003) investigation of Japanese ESL learners' perception of appropriateness in advice situations is one of the few longitudinal developmental studies, in interlanguage pragmatics, that is based on data that were elicited before the learners left for their stay in the target environment, as well as data that were collected during their time in the L2 context. Although the time limit of this study (8 months abroad) might have influenced its findings, it provides interesting insights into the effects of length of stay on the learners' perception of appropriateness. The data for this study were gathered in 3-month intervals, with the first data collection session taking place before the learners left Japan, followed by a second session about 1 month after their arrival in Canada, and a third session after they had spent 4 months in the target environment. The learners' responses were then compared to native-speaker controls. The statistical analysis of the data showed that the amount of exposure to the target language was the single factor in the study that determined the pragmatic development of the learners; that is, those learners who had a greater exposure to English displayed a greater amount of competence. The results further revealed that even the amount of exposure in the learners' home country influenced their pragmatic development abroad, as those learners who had received a greater amount of exposure in Japan became more pragmatically competent early on in their time in Canada. These results suggest the need to develop further studies investigating the early stages of the stay in the country of the target language and, also, to further analyse whether there is any progress in the language users' assessment of pragmatic appropriateness.

We have so far analysed the effects of length of stay with regards to appropriate evaluation of request acts. Table 4.21 shows the results obtained from the one way ANOVA regarding length of stay abroad and correct request evaluation of request strategies of our three groups of participants.

Table 4.21 Effects of length of stay abroad on awareness of correct request types

REQUEST TYPE	LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	0.74	0.031	0.969
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.73		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.76		
Ability	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	1.00	3.835	0.025*
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.77		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.71		
Willingness	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	2.00	0.708	0.495
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	2.08		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	2.29		
Permission	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	2.30	0.3413	0.712
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	2.14		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	2.12		
Suggestory Formulae	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	0.83	0.001	0.999
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.83		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.82		
Wishes	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		
Desires	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	1.61	0.027	0.973
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	1.63		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	1.59		
Obligation	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	1.74	1.131	0.327
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	1.50		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	1.47		
Performative	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		
Imperatives	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	3.30	0.456	0.635
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	3.11		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	3.18		
Elliptical Phrase	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct evaluation	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct evaluation	0.00		

*p<0.05

***no data

According to Table 4.21 there was one type of request realisation that seemed to show a relation between lengths of stay abroad and awareness with regards to accuracy. There was a statistically significant difference between groups in the correct evaluation of ability (sig. 0.025, p<0.05). Regarding the

correct assessment of ability strategies, it was Group 1, participants who had been in the UK for a maximum of 6 months, who identified grammatical failure better. There were no statistically significant differences between the remaining request types, which imply that length of stay does not have an effect on their correct evaluation.

Regarding the three groups performance in assessing each request type the mean scores show that Group 1 assessed 4 types of request act better than the other two groups (ability 100%, permission 76.67%, obligation 87% and imperatives 82.5%); Group 2 assessed 1 type better than the other two groups (desires); Groups 1 and 2 obtained the same score for correct assessment of suggestory formulae (83%); and Group 3 assessed 2 types better than the other two groups (hints 76% and willingness 76.33%). These results refer to the mean scores provided in Table 4.21 and illustrate that Group 1 performed better than the other two groups at assessing grammatical failure. Examples 13 and 14 show cases in which participants from Groups 2 and 3 failed to recognise some sort of grammatical infelicity included in the DET. Example 13 below shows how one participant from Group 3 failed to identify the grammatical mistake in one of the situations with a request of the ability type.

Example 13

1. A girl is very thirsty. She goes into a bar and says:
- Could I had a glass of water, please?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:

This participant failed to recognise that the incorrect verb tense in the request provided for Situation 1 '*had*' should have been modified to the verb tense '*have*'. This might be due to the fact that, although the tense is grammatically incorrect, the expression itself might not result in communication failure and thus, participants who have not been corrected or made aware that that was an incorrect

use of the verb, might have internalised it as such. This result might relate to Sifianou's (2004) findings regarding the dropping of the third person "-s", in that although it is grammatically incorrect, it does not cause communication failure and it is commonly found in data collected from users of English as a lingua franca. Further analysis of the type provided above might assist in the characterization of English as a lingua franca.

Example 14 shows how a student who had spent 3 years in the UK (Group 2) considered as grammatically incorrect a request that was correct. It shows how the participant rated the mitigation aspect as an incorrect expression (*'It looks as though'*) and deleted it from the request. The elimination of this mitigator was found amongst data taken from many of our participants.

Example 14

14. You are organising a big party at work, with a lot of people. However, you have to go on a work trip and you don't have time to organise it properly. You need help. You say to a workmate:

- It looks as though I won't have time to organise the party. You'll have to do it for me.

Correct

Incorrect

Appropriate

Inappropriate

SUGGESTION: *I won't have time to organise the party. Could I ask you to help with it?*

As Tables 4.19, 4.20 and 4.21 show, our study yielded mixed results. On the one hand, in terms of overall frequency of appropriate and accurate evaluation, Group 1 outperformed Groups 2 and 3. This difference was statistically significant for appropriateness, but not for accuracy in the evaluation of the 17 prompts provided in the DET. It is interesting to highlight the fact that usually Group 1, the group that had stayed in the target language country for a shorter period of time, performed better than Groups 2 and 3, the groups that had stayed in the UK for longer periods of time. When comparing Groups 1, 2 and 3 on their evaluation of specific request strategies, some statistical differences appear in our data. For example, with regards to the evaluation of appropriateness of obligation

realisations (sig. 0.091, $p < 0.1$) and regarding accuracy, there is also one request type that shows statistically significant differences between the three groups, that is ability (sig. 0.025, $p < 0.05$).

These results would suggest that length of stay abroad has an effect on pragmatic and grammatical awareness with respect to specific request act types, which partially confirms our fourth hypothesis. Our results to some extent support Schauer's (2006) findings, which suggest that the learning environment plays a significant role in priming the language learners' linguistic awareness. Participants in her study increased their pragmatic awareness during their stay in England. One of the aims of Schauer's (2006) study was to examine whether students of mixed proficiency levels who had spent 1 year in an English-speaking context had a higher degree of pragmatic awareness at the end of their stay than professional language learners who studied English on an intensive course in a foreign language context. This study replicated and extended Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) investigation of pragmatic awareness, mentioned above. The data were elicited using Bardovi - Harlig and Dörnyei's (1988) video and questionnaire instrument, accompanied by post hoc interviews. The 53 participants in Schauer's (2006) study included 16 German students studying at a British university, 17 German students enrolled in a higher education institution in Germany, and 20 British English native users.

Schauer's (2006) results for the grammatical items confirmed Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) findings, whose ESL learners detected only 54.5% of the grammatical errors, whereas their EFL participants noticed 82.4%. Niezgoda and Röver's (2001) results, the first to replicate Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study, yielded similar findings, as their ESL learners detected significantly fewer errors than their EFL counterparts (54.17% and 84.54%, respectively). In Schauer's (2006) study, the data for the scenarios containing a grammatical violation reveal that the learner group in England detected significantly fewer errors in these items at the beginning of their stay in Great Britain, than the

learners in Germany and the native speakers. At the end of their year in the target environment, however, the score of the Germans in England had increased, which meant that there was no longer a statistically significant difference among the three groups. We could draw some parallel findings from the present study, in that the two groups who stayed longer in the UK (Groups 2 and 3) identified fewer grammatical errors than Group 1, who had stayed for only 6 months, thus showing that this specific length of stay might affect grammatical assessment.

The results of the investigation into pragmatic awareness conducted by Schauer (2006) showed that the German EFL participants were less aware of the pragmatic infelicities than the ESL group and that the ESL learners significantly increased their pragmatic awareness during their stay in the L2 context, since they detected more pragmatic infelicities at the end of their sojourn in England than at the beginning. These findings are similar to Matsumura's (2003) in that length of stay seems to affect pragmatic awareness and we have found that there were statistically significant differences in our data with regards to this point. In our case, however, the fact that the participants stayed for longer periods in the target language country did not mean that their pragmatic awareness improved. In fact, the opposite seemed to be the case. Participants who had stayed in the UK for periods ranging from 5 and a half years up to 16 years, showed a poorer performance than those who had stayed for less time. Lengths of stay in Matsumura's (2003) and Schauer's (2006) studies only relate to what happens during the first months of stay and do not exceed one year in the country of the target language. For that reason, our results might shed some light on the effects of length of stay on pragmatic and grammatical awareness, providing an insight that, to our knowledge, has not been considered so far. More research needs to be carried out in this sense in the earlier stages of the stay. Furthermore, longitudinal studies controlling the development of the same groups of participants during longer periods of time abroad are also needed.

We have so far discussed those results obtained from applying statistical analysis to our data in order to provide an answer to our fourth hypothesis, which was concerned with the relationship between length of stay and pragmatic awareness. We will now discuss the findings regarding length of stay and pragmatic production.

4.2.2.2 Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesis of the present study concerned the fact that there would be differences in the production of request acts in terms of appropriateness and accuracy between our three groups of participants. In an attempt to examine the effects of length of stay on this issue, we took into account our participants' responses to the 16 prompts included in the DCT questionnaire. Grammar relates to the accuracy of the structure, including morphology and syntax among others, whereas pragmatics addresses language use and is concerned with the appropriateness of utterances given specific situations, speakers and content. We considered that grammatically correct answers were those that had no linguistic mistakes that is, we considered that all the grammatical categories included in the request provided were accurate. In case there was any grammatical mistake we considered the request as incorrect and did not include it in our final count. With regards to appropriateness, we considered the politeness system of each situation, as described by Scollon and Scollon (1995) and the people involved in the request. Bearing these two factors in mind; we considered appropriate all those answers that were suitable for each situation, we usually judged as appropriate more than one strategy type per situation. We also considered the amount of mitigation required in each scenario and whether the student had provided us with a suitable answer in this respect as well. Examples 15 and 16 below illustrate what we considered as inaccurate and as inappropriate:

Example 15 PTC60 GR30

- 5 You are in a restaurant having dinner. Someone starts smoking before you finish your meal. The smoke is annoying you. You ask that person:

Excuse me, would you mind to have your sigarette once I have finished eaten, please?

Example 16

- 6 A father and his daughter are on a bus. The driver is driving very quickly and the daughter is scared. The father asks the driver:

Can you reduce the speed?

Example 15 above, shows two grammatical errors. On the one hand, the use of the opener “*would you mind*” followed by the ‘to infinitive’ instead of a gerund form, and on the other hand, a misspelling of the word cigarette (written with an initial ‘s’). Hence, we considered this request incorrect but we still counted it as appropriate. Example 16 though, was not regarded as appropriate, due to the fact that the participant should have used some mitigation in order to make it more suitable for the situation, as it was a request to an unknown person questioning his/her driving abilities, and neither reasons (grounders) nor polite markers (such as “please” or a downtoner such as “possibly”) are provided to reduce the impact of the request. Furthermore, the modal verb used could have been substituted by “*would you mind*” or even “*could*”. This request however, did count towards the number of accurate requests.

Figure 4.12 below shows our participants’ performance in terms of accuracy and appropriate use. This might imply that there are differences in request act production in relation to length of stay abroad.

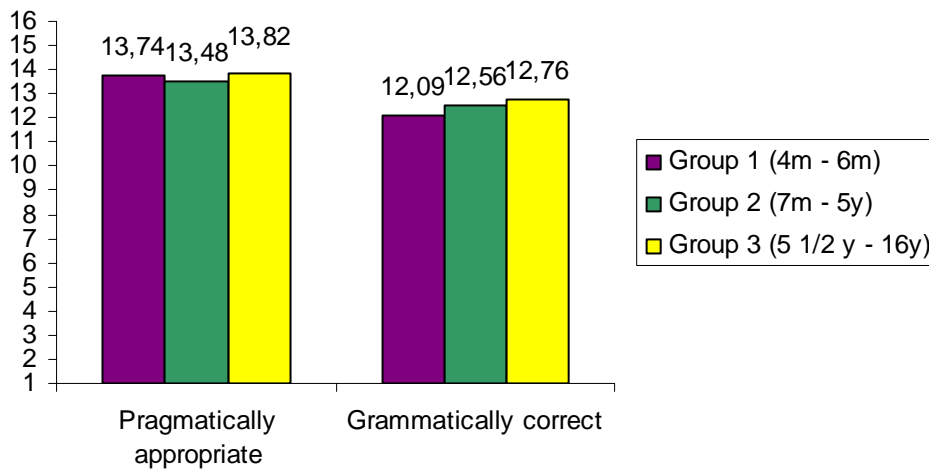


Figure 4.12 Influence of length of stay on request act production

Figure 4.12 shows that Group 3 performed better in terms of appropriate production of overall request acts, with a mean score of 13.82 out of the 16 situations included in the DCT, followed by Group 1 (mean=13.74) and finally Group 2 (mean=13.47). Regarding correctness, Group 3 performed better than the other two groups, the lowest being Group 1. This might confirm findings from previous research which reported mismatches between N-NSs grammatical and pragmatic competence (Kasper, 1997). Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) claim that L2 learners often develop grammatical competence in the absence of a simultaneous development of pragmatic competence. However, in our case, it seems that the stay abroad has had an influence in the production of pragmatically appropriate utterances as results are higher for pragmatic related issues than grammatical ones. As we can see in Figure 4.12 above, the results of the three groups for appropriate pragmatic production are higher than those referred to accurate grammatical production. Even the lowest result for pragmatic appropriateness (84.19%) is higher than the highest for grammatically correct answers (79.75%).

In order to test whether those differences are statistically significant, we applied a one way ANOVA test to our data. However, results show no statistical differences between the two groups.

Table 4.22 Effects of length of stay abroad on production of global use of requests

LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Group 1 (4 months – 6 months) – appropriate production	13.74	0.350	0.705
Group 2 (7 months – 5 years) – appropriate production	13.48		
Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years) – appropriate production	13.82		
Group 1 (4 months – 6 months) – correct production	12.09	0.536	0.587
Group 2 (7 months – 5 years) – correct production	12.56		
Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years) – correct production	12.76		

*p<0.05

These results show that no statistically significant differences are found in terms of production and length of stay, and thus, our fifth hypothesis is not confirmed. These findings suggest that length of stay does not affect the appropriate or accurate production of request acts. In order to test whether the differences shown in the mean values referred to specific request types, as opposed to overall use, we applied the one way ANOVA test to the different types of request acts found in our DCT data.

Table 4.23 Effects of length of stay abroad on production of appropriate request types

REQUEST TYPE	LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.00		
Ability	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	8.30	1.635	0.200
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	7.19		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	7.53		

Willingness	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	2.00	1.610	0.205
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	2.88		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	3.35		
Permission	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	2.13	0.844	0.433
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	2.42		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	1.88		
Suggestory Formulae	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.00	0.308	0.735
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.02		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.00		
Wish	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.04	0.027	0.973
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.05		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.06		
Desires	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.52	1.180	0.312
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.31		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.29		
Obligation	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.13	0.094	0.911
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.09		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.12		
Performative	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.17	0.219	0.804
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.22		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.12		
Imperatives	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.43	0.386	0.681
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.30		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.47		
Elliptical phrases	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – appropriate production	0.00	0.000	0.000
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – appropriate production	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – appropriate production	0.00		

*p<0.05

***no data

No statistically significant differences were found between specific request types and length of stay either. This implies that length of stay has no effects on the appropriate use of request acts and that our hypothesis is not confirmed regarding appropriateness.

Mean scores show that ability, willingness and permission were the request types that the participants more frequently used. Some examples of those requests types are presented below:

Example 17

- 13 In an office a boss needs 40 copies of a report. Her secretary is about to go home. She asks her secretary:

I'm sorry but could you please do these copies before you leave?

Example 18

- 9 You have a very heavy suitcase and cannot open the train door to get in the train. You ask a policeman passing by:

Excuse me, do you mind giving me a hand? I can't open the train door.

Example 19

- 10 You work as a shop assistant. You need two days off because your mother is ill, but you have no holidays left. You ask your boss:

Sir, is there any chance of me getting two days off because my mother is ill and I need to help her?

The request included in Example 17 was produced by a participant who had been in the UK for 5 months. We chose an example from Group 1 as it was the group that had produced more requests of the ability and permission type. Example 18 was produced by a participant who had been in the UK for 7 years and Example 19 was produced by a student in Group 2. We chose these groups for the last two examples for the same reasons as the ones stated above for Examples 17; Group 3 produced more requests of the willingness types (Example 18) and Group 2 produced more requests of the permission type (Example 19).

We did not find any hint realisation or elliptical phrases in our pragmatically appropriate data. Groups 1 and 3 did not use suggestory formulae, there were 2 instances of suggestory formulae in our data and they were produced by participants in Group 2. The remaining request types were produced by the three groups. An example of the request type that was only used by Group 2, suggestory formulae, is provided below:

Example 20

- 11 You are going to a party. You've broken the heel on your favourite shoes. Your sister wears the same size. You ask her:

Sister – darling, how about you let me wear your shoes to the party?

As Example 20 above shows this request type was used in Situation 8, in which the relationship between the participants is very close, two sisters. We find what Hassall (2001) calls the kinship term of address (e.g. “*sister*”) and a softener (“*darling*”) before the request is stated. There is also a misspelling of the word ‘wear’ and that is why we did not count it in the accurate responses, as we show in Table 4.24 below.

Thus, the mean scores continue to show some differences between request act production with regards to appropriateness. The following table provides the results obtained, from the analysis of the data obtained from the DCT, in relation to accuracy.

Table 4.24 Effects of length of stay abroad on production of correct request types

REQUEST TYPE	LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Hint	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.00		
Ability	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	7.26	0.446	0.642
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	6.81		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	7.35		
Willingness	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	1.52	1.585	0.210
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	2.58		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	2.53		
Permission	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	2.04	0.430	0.652
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	2.19		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	1.88		
Suggestory Formulae	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.00		
Wish	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.04	0.027	0.973
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.05		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.06		
Desires	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.52	1.472	0.625
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.38		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.35		

Obligation	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.13	0.831	0.439
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.05		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.12		
Performative	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.17	0.407	0.667
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.19		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.06		
Imperatives	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.35	0.053	0.948
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.33		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.41		
Elliptical phrases	Group 1 (4 m – 6 m) – correct production	0.05	1.788	0.173
	Group 2 (7 m – 5 y) – correct production	0.00		
	Group 3(5½ y – 16 y) – correct production	0.00		

*p<0.05

***no data

Similarly to our previous results regarding appropriate production, no statistically significant findings were found in our data, according to accurate production. This implies that length of stay has no effects on the accurate use of request acts and that our hypothesis is not confirmed regarding accuracy either.

The mean scores in this case show that no hints or suggestory formulae were found in our data and that, ability, willingness and permission, were the request types more frequently used by our participants. The only group that produced a grammatically correct elliptical phrase, the only one in our data, was a participant in Group 1, who had stayed in the UK for 6 months.

Example 21

- 12 You work at the information desk in Heathrow airport. A passenger wants to go to central London. He/she asks you:

London?

As Example 21 above shows, the request provided consists of one word only, it is directed to a stranger and contains no mitigation and thus, although we were able to include it in our accurate answers, it was not accounted for in our appropriate group because of its lack of suitability in such a scenario. One aspect of pragmatic competence is the ability to know how to talk to people with different status and in different roles, and it seems that the participant in Example

21 had not developed this ability yet. This example shows that the only elliptical phrase in our data was produced by a participant in Group 1 and was not appropriately used.

Regarding overall production, mean scores show that in terms of frequency participants who had stayed in the UK for more than five and a half years produced more pragmatically appropriate request acts than those who had lived in the UK for shorter periods of time. They also produced more correct request acts than the other two groups. Our fifth hypothesis, however, is not confirmed in that there are no statistically significant differences between global or specific appropriate and accurate request act production. Thus, our results contradict previous studies which had shown that length of stay in the target language country had an effect on pragmatic development.

On the one hand, Matsumura's (2001) study claimed that early stages in the target language environment (3 months in her case) were particularly significant for pragmatic development. Participants in this study spent 8 months studying at a Canadian university. On the other hand, while Matsumura's results indicate that the first three months are particularly salient for learners' pragmatic development in their L2 in the study abroad context, the findings of Félix-Brasdefer's (2004) investigation of refusals suggest that considerable progress in learners' pragmatic competence is made in the latter stages of learners' residence in the target context. He examined the effect of the length of time spent in Spanish-speaking contexts on the pragmatic development of US American university students. His results showed that considerable progress in learners' pragmatic competence was made in the latter stages of their residence. In his study, those participants who had spent more than 9 months in the target language community reached higher degrees of politeness than those participants who had spent less than 5 months. Length of residence abroad in Félix-Brasdefer's study was from 1 and a half months to 2 and a half years. We should bear in mind that these two studies were comparing different lengths of stay abroad to those in our

study and that they had considered the very early stages of the sojourn, while we only considered the data obtained from participants who had already spent 4 months in the UK. This might be the reason behind such contradictory findings. Furthermore, Matsumura's (2001) study had a time limit of eight months abroad and Félix-Brasdefer's (2004) was 2 and a half years, whereas our time limit was 16 years abroad. Matsumura (2001: 666) claims that because learners in his study knew that their stay abroad was limited to 8 months "they were very keen, from the beginning, not only on achieving higher levels of English proficiency but also interacting with native English speakers". Thus, as observed by other researchers, instead of duration of stay in the target language community, the learning process may be favoured by other factors such as intensity of interaction (Klein, Dietrich, & Noyau, 1995), and these factors might have influenced the results provided in Matsumura (2001) and Félix-Brasdefer (2004) but not in our study.

Future research into the development of pragmatic competence during the first few weeks of the participants' stay in the target country could provide some interesting insights into whether the first months are as salient as Matsumura's (2001) results showed, or whether these stages are as relevant when compared to longer periods of time, such as the ones in Félix-Brasdefer's (2004) study or those considered in the present study. Due to the approximation of the mean values regarding both appropriate and accurate request act production in our study, we believe that even participants in Group 1, who had only stayed in the UK for a maximum of 6 months, benefited from their stay abroad. Our participants also seem to prefer using limited types of requests (ability, willingness and permission), although as some participants do, the use of other request types in our DCT is also possible. Learning to use some request act types appropriately and accurately is undoubtedly essential, studies like the present one demonstrate that English language users could benefit from being provided with materials to enhance their range of strategy types.

4.2.2.3 Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 aimed to determine whether length of stay had an effect on the participants' ability to produce request act mitigators when formulating a request. Firstly, we compared the number of requests used by each group by examining their mean scores. The frequency axis in Figure 4.12 shows that the maximum number of request mitigators produced was 59 and the minimum was 6. The participant who produced the fewest mitigators (6) had stayed in the UK for 3 years and thus, belonged to our second group. The participant producing the highest number of mitigators (59) had stayed in the UK for 1 and a half years, and thus, also belonged to Group 2. This might highlight learner differences, as previous studies have stated, and might indicate that length of stay is one factor to consider. But also, that other factors might influence the results obtained in studies such as the present one. Below we provide an example of a request produced by a student in group 2 which includes a large quantity of modifiers.

Example 22

- 16 You are going away for a week. You need your neighbour to look after your three cats. He/she doesn't like cats. You ask your neighbour:

I know you really don't like cats but it would be very helpful if you could look after them when I'm on my holiday. They are not that bad and I will take you for a dinner when I get back. Please, would you?

This example shows how this participant needs to mitigate the request to the extreme as the request's degree of imposition is very high. It is an ability request with at least five types of modification device: a preparator (*'I know you really don't like cats'*) a disarmer (*'it would be very helpful'*), intensifiers (*'really'* and *'very'*), a grounder (*'They are not that bad'*) a promise of reward (*'I will take you for a dinner when I get back'*), *'please'* and an expander (*'would you'*). Other subjects from the same group used only one or two mitigators for the same situation. This is quite a telling indicator of learner differences.

Example 23

- 16 You are going away for a week. You need your neighbour to look after your three cats. He/she doesn't like cats. You ask your neighbour:

I am going away for a week. Would you mind looking after my two cats while I'm away?

This example, in contrast to Example 23, shows that this participant used only a grounder ('*I am going away for a week.*') and an opener ('*Would you mind*') for the same situation. Figure 4.13 below shows the distribution of request modifiers among our three groups.

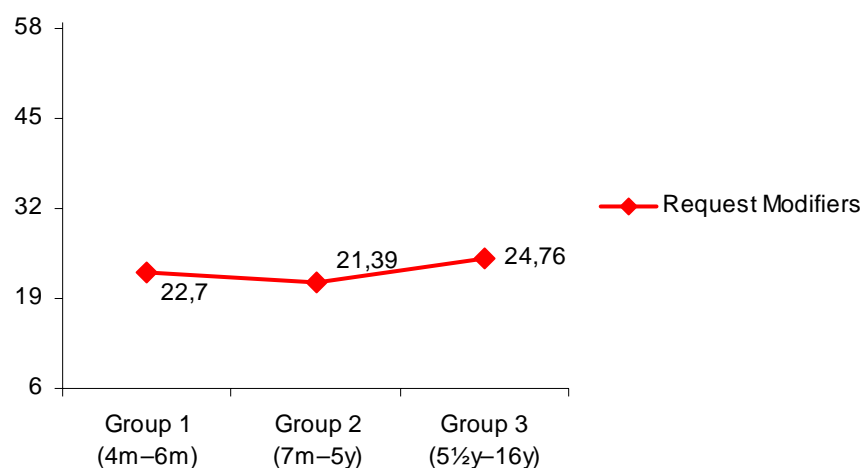


Figure 4.13 Influence of length of stay on production of request act modifiers

Figure 4.13 above shows that in terms of the overall frequency of mitigators produced by our participants, Group 3 (mean=24.76), that is participants who had stayed in the UK from 5 and a half to 16 years, seemed to outperformed Groups 1 (mean=22.7) and 2 (mean=21.39). From the given mean scores, we it can also be seen that Group 1, those participants who had stayed in the UK for a maximum of 6 months, produced more request mitigators than those in Group 2 who had spent between 7 months and 5 years in the UK. In order to determine whether these differences were statistically significant, we applied a

one way ANOVA to our data, as we had three dependent variables (three different lengths of stay) and one independent variable (quantity of request mitigators). The results are displayed in Table 4.25 below.

Table 4.25 Effects of length of stay abroad on production of request mitigators

LENGTH OF STAY ABROAD	Mean	F	Sig.
Group 1 (4 months – 6 months) – request modifiers production	22.70	1.022	0.364
Group 2 (7 months – 5 years) – request modifiers production	21.39		
Group 3 (5 ½ years – 16 years) – request modifiers production	24.76		

*p<0.05

Unlike the stated mean differences regarding production of mitigators in the three groups, no statistically significant differences appear among them and thus, our sixth hypothesis is not confirmed by these results. In order to find out whether there were there were any statistically significant differences between length of stay and use of specific types of request modifiers, we applied a one way ANOVA test to examine our participants’ performance for each type of mitigator.

Table 4.26 Effects of length of stay abroad on production of specific request mitigators

REQUEST MODIFICATOR TYPE	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	Mean	F	Sig.
Opener	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	2.22	0.592	0.555
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	2.78		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	2.88		
Understatement	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.61	1.307	0.275
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.42		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.76		
Downtoner	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.87	0.015	0.985
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.91		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.94		
Hedge	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.00	0.308	0.735
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.00		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.02		

Intensifier	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.83	0.188	0.829
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.67		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.76		
Hesitator	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.04	0.424	0.655
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.13		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.12		
Cajoler	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.00	***	***
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.00		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.00		
Appealer	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.04	1.788	0.173
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.00		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.00		
Attention Getter	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	2.70	0.142	0.868
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	2.84		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	2.41		
Preparator	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.87	0.667	0.516
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.88		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	1.35		
Grounder	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	5.17	1.765	0.176
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	4.05		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	5.12		
Disarmer	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.74	2.609	0.079**
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.80		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	1.53		
Expander	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	0.52	0.076	0.927
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.47		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.53		
Promise of Reward	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	1.09	3.366	0.038*
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	0.56		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	0.41		
Please	Group 1 (4 months – 6 months)	7.00	0.724	0.488
	Group 2 (7 months – 5 years)	6.88		
	Group 3 (5 and ½ years – 16 years)	7.94		

*p<0.05

**p>0.1

***no data

According to Table 4.26 there were significant differences between the groups' production of disarmers (sig. 0.073, p<0.1) and promise of reward (sig. 0.038, p<0.05), both within the category of external modifiers. These findings partially confirm our sixth hypothesis with regards to effects of stay and use of request mitigators. We provide examples of the two types of mitigators that showed statistically significant differences between the three groups. Example 24 below shows a request act from our data that contains the first type of request

modifier showing statistically significant differences, that of disarmers. This request type was also more frequently produced by the participants in Group 3.

Example 24

- 10 You work as a shop assistant. You need two days off because your mother is ill, but you have no holidays left. You ask your boss:

I am out of holidays but my mom is ill and I would really appreciate it if you could kindly let me take two days off.

This example illustrates a request act with a large number of mitigation devices. It starts with a grounder providing the reason for the subsequent request (*'I am out of holidays but my mom is ill'*), then a disarmer with an embedded intensifier (*'I would really appreciate it'*) and also a downtoner (*'kindly'*). Example 25 below illustrates the use of the request modifier “promise of reward”, which also revealed statistically significant differences between the three groups. The request was found in the data of one of our Group 1 participants, who tended to produce more modifiers of this type.

Example 25

- 1 You and a friend arrive in Dublin and go to your hotel. You left your credit card at home and you don't have enough money to pay for the hotel. You ask your friend:

Could you please pay for me tonight and I'll give you cash as soon as I get cash?

The example here is a request of the ability type with two modifiers: *'please'* and promise of reward (*'I'll give you cash as soon as I get cash'*). We also should point out that only participants who had stayed in the UK for more than 5 and a half years (Group 3) used the hedge type of modification device. Example 26 below shows the only example of hedging found in our data:

Example 26

- 2 A couple is having dinner in a restaurant. The waiter is speaking very quickly and they cannot understand the menu. The woman asks the waiter:

Would you mind at all not to smoke here, please?

We classified (*'at all'*) as the only hedge in our data. The request act provided above also contains an opener (*'would you mind'*) and *'please'*.

The mean scores further reveal that the mitigators used most frequently by the three groups were “please”, grounders and openers. With regards to the production of openers and “please”, it was the participants who had stayed the longest in the UK that showed the highest frequency of use. In the case of grounders, or providing reasons for the request, it was Group 1 that resorted to this modifier the most frequently. Subjects in Group 1 also showed a preference for appealers, which were not present in the data produced by the other two groups, as stated in Hypothesis 3 above. In fact, there was only one appealers in our data (*'ok?'*), which was produced by one of our intermediate participants. Furthermore, Group 1 used fewer mitigators than the other two groups; 11 instances of hesitators were found in our data distributed mainly amongst Groups 2 and 3. An example of the use of a hesitator is provided in Example 27 below:

Example 27

7 Your friend is coming to visit. You need a place to stay and you want to borrow your uncle's apartment. You ask him:

I was thinking...Do you think my friend could stay in your apartment?

The request in Example 27 above starts with a hesitator (*'I was thinking'*), followed by a preparator (*'Do you think'*) before the request for permission is used.

Instances of all the modification types were found in our data, with the sole exception of cajolers. Group 3 produced more modifiers in 8 out of the 15 categories of request modifiers provided by Alcón *et al's* (2006) taxonomy, thus showing some superiority in the amount of mitigation used. Following a similar

sort of consistency between the findings in request act production presented in Hypothesis 5 above, Group 3, formed of participants who had stayed longer in the UK, produced more modifiers. Thus, it might be the case that length of stay enables target language users to produce a wider range and variety of mitigators.

To sum up the findings of our sixth hypothesis, in terms of overall frequency of mitigators produced by our participants, there seems to be differences between the three groups. Group 3 (mean=24.76), participants who had stayed in the UK for between 7 months and 5 years, outperformed both Groups 1 (mean=22.7) and 2 (mean=21.39). However, the one way ANOVA applied to our data showed that this difference was not statistically significant.

By examining the different types of modification devices used by participants in the three groups, we found some statistically significant differences within the use of internal modifiers (disarmers (sig. 0.079, $p < 0.1$)), as well as the use of external modifiers (promise of reward (sig. 0.038, $p < 0.05$)). These findings partially confirm our sixth hypothesis, suggesting the length of stay affects the use of some external requests mitigators. We also obtained relevant data as to preferences of use by our participants, “please” being the mitigator most frequently used by our three groups. The results suggest that all learners in the study abroad context increase their pragmatic repertoire of internal and external modifiers at later stages of their stay in the UK, with the only exception being one modification type (appealers), produced only by those participants who had stayed in the UK for a maximum of 6 months. These results are in line with Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986), who examined whether the use of external modification of requests and apologies elicited via DCTs influenced the pragmatic production of advanced learners with various lengths of stay in Israel. The results were consistent with those of their previous study (Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985) and showed that after a stay of 5 years in the community where the target language is spoken, the use of external modification devices decreased until it approximated to native speaker level.

As has been already mentioned, we are not comparing our data to that produced by native users; however, those findings obtained in Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) match our own, in that after spending a relatively long period of time in the country of the target language, our participants mitigated their requests in order to make them suitable for the given situations in our DCT. Our results are also in line with more recent studies. Barron's (2003) and Schauer's (2004) results, for example, revealed an increasing frequency of target-like production of pragmatic force modifiers over periods of stay abroad. Both Barron (2003) and Schauer (2004) have stated that learners' pragmatic competence increases during their sustained exposure to authentic language use in the target environment and our results seem to suggest the same.

These results suggest some pedagogical implications. Our data could be of practical benefit to language users, by creating a database of the entire range of different responses that were appropriate and inappropriate for the given situations. We could also compile a language learning guide based on data collected from the DCT questionnaire that was used for the present study. This could be practical for language users to enlarge and enhance their repertoire of modifiers used in their everyday life. This would help to avoid cases where learners make inaccurate pragmalinguistic use of a particular L2 structure. An example of this is the overuse of the modal structures "could" and "can" or the pragmatic force modifier 'please' for requesting by the participants in the current study. In so doing, we could also contribute to characterise the speech act of requesting as employed by users of English as a Lingua Franca and contribute to a more appropriate aim for English language learning than the current target of native speaker (NS) competence.

Therefore, our sixth hypothesis might be partially confirmed, as some statistically significant differences were found with regards to the specific use of external modifiers. Furthermore, the mean scores showed an increase in the

quantity of production of mitigators and types of mitigators used by participants who had stayed in the UK for more than 5 and a half years, as opposed to those who had stayed in the UK for shorter periods of time.

To summarise the findings obtained in our six hypotheses described in the present chapter, we may state that both proficiency level and length of stay abroad have effects on the awareness and production of appropriate and correct request acts and request act modifiers. Regarding proficiency, it seems that advanced participants in our study performed better at assessing pragmatic and grammatical failure than intermediate participants. Concerning appropriateness, proficiency level seemed to affect the evaluation of three types of request acts (willingness, permission and obligation) and with regards to accuracy, proficiency level showed effects in the assessment of four request types (hints, suggestory formulae, desires and obligation). The analysis of the production data indicated effects of proficiency level on the overall production of request acts with regards to appropriateness and accuracy. It showed that advanced participants performed better than intermediate ones, which was also the case for the production of most internal request modifiers. These results point to a superiority of advanced participants in awareness and production in terms of appropriateness and accuracy of request acts and use of request acts modifiers.

Regarding length of stay abroad, the first 6 months of the stay abroad were decisive in developing an awareness of pragmatic infelicities, compared to longer periods of time in the target language country (up to 16 years in the case of the present study). No statistically significant differences were observed with regards to proficiency level and accurate evaluation or request acts. With respect to production of requests acts, our results did not show statistically significant differences, suggesting that length of stay does not affect request act use. Finally, our last hypothesis showed that length of stay had an effect on the use of two types of external request modifiers, disarmers and promise of reward. The results also suggested that all learners in the study abroad context increased their

pragmatic repertoire of internal and external modifiers at later stages of their stay in the UK.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the present study was to explore the effects of ESL participants' proficiency levels and length of stay on the production and awareness of English. We have paid particular attention to pragmatic force modifiers within the speech act of requesting. Most interlanguage pragmatics research dealing with the speech act of requesting has focused on the linguistic realisations of the request head act (Scarcella, 1979; Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993; Ohta 1997; Takahashi and DuFon, 1989; Trosborg, 1995; Takahashi, 1996; Hill 1997; Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Rinnert, 1999; Rinnert and Kobayashi, 1999; Li Wei, 2000; Rose, 1999, 2000; Cook, and Liddicoat, 2002; Achiba, 2003; Barron, 2003; Hassall, 2003) while, according to Hassall (2001), modifiers have received less attention on the part of IL pragmatic scholars.

Furthermore, most research into the development of pragmatic competence (Belz and Kinginger, 2002, 2003, Achiba, 2003, Barron, 2003, and Schauer, 2004) has provided insights into the developmental stages involved in the evolution of pragmatic production, while only a rather limited number of studies (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's, 1998; Niezgodá and Röver, 2001; Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006) have dealt with pragmatic awareness. Another area that has also received rather scant attention in the past is that of the interrelatedness of pragmatic and grammatical awareness. Although production studies (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1991, 1993; House & Kasper, 1987; Kasper, 1981) have demonstrated that a high level of grammatical proficiency does not automatically result in a correspondingly high level of pragmatic proficiency, the number of studies that explore the correlations between learners' pragmatic and grammatical awareness has been limited.

Thus, this study is intended to contribute to the body of research on pragmatic awareness and production of pragmatic force modifiers by (a) comparing intermediate and advanced ESL participants' evaluations of pragmatic and grammatical failure and (b) by examining the production of pragmatically

appropriate and grammatically accurate request acts and request act modifiers among users with differing lengths of stay in the target language country.

Our data were collected from 104 ESL participants via a written discourse completion test (DCT henceforth) and a discourse evaluation test (DET henceforth), and were analyzed with reference to L1 baseline data collected from 18 English NSs via the same written questionnaires. The DCT was used in order to assess participants' pragmatic competence in productive use and consisted of 16 items, in open-ended format, depicting everyday real-life situations and designed to prompt the learner to formulate a request. The DET was administered in order to assess participants' pragmatic awareness. All the data obtained was analysed by using statistical analyses chosen from the Statistical and Presentational System Software (SPSS 14.0) for Windows (previously known as the Statistical Package for Social Scientists).

The main findings of the study for each of the hypotheses presented below are summarized herein. Each hypothesis gives rise to a number of pedagogical implications, indicates any limitations in the study and highlights areas for further research, which are summarised towards the end.

The hypotheses tested were as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Participants' proficiency levels will affect their awareness of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Niezgodna and Röver, 2001).

Hypothesis 2: Participants' proficiency levels will affect their production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Trosborg, 1995).

Hypothesis 3: Participants' proficiency levels will affect their production of request act modifiers (Safont, 2005).

Hypothesis 4: Length of stay will affect users' awareness of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006).

Hypothesis 5: Length of stay will affect the production of the request acts in terms of accuracy and appropriateness (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004).

Hypothesis 6: Length of stay will affect the production of request modifiers (Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004).

The first hypothesis suggests that proficiency levels would have a determining effect on the awareness of appropriateness and accuracy of request acts. In order to ascertain the influence of proficiency level on our ESL participants' evaluation of request acts use, we compared the intermediate and advanced learners' performance in the DET. In the analysis within our two proficiency groups, we found that the intermediate participants identified a slightly higher number of pragmatic errors than grammatical errors (70.59% versus 69.94%). The advanced level participants, on the other hand, showed the opposite tendency (74.47% versus 81.05%): they tended to notice a greater number of grammatical than pragmatic errors. However, the difference was not statistically significant, maybe due to the fact that the difference between the mean values was very small.

Our results regarding this first hypothesis also show that there are a number of statistically significant differences in the evaluation of certain request strategy types, with the advanced participants performing better than the intermediate, which indicates that our first hypothesis is partially supported by these findings and that proficiency level has an effect on pragmatic and grammatical awareness.

These results are in line with Niezgodna and Röver's (2001) study and suggest that proficiency level has an effect on pragmatic and grammatical awareness. This might, therefore, suggest that the higher the proficiency level the better the evaluation of pragmatic and grammatical failure. Our results may also imply that there is a need to pay more attention to the training of each particular request act strategy provided in Trosborg's (1999) taxonomy, as neither the intermediate group nor the advanced group obtained 100% performance in evaluating the request acts for the given situations.

In order to test Hypothesis 2, which suggested that the proficiency level of our participants would affect their production of pragmatically appropriate and grammatically accurate request acts, we examined the data obtained from the subjects' performance in the discourse completion test (DCT), in which the participants were required to provide accurate and appropriate requests to a range of specific situations. Our results show statistically significant differences between our two groups of participants and confirm our second hypothesis. The overall differences in mean scores reveal that subjects at an advanced proficiency level produced more appropriate and correct request formulations than those at an intermediate level, indicating that proficiency level has an effect on the use of requests. These findings concur with Trosborg's (1995) study. Our results also show that appropriate production of request acts obtained higher mean scores than accurate production, both for advanced and intermediate participants, which might imply that our participants' pragmatic performance was better than their grammatical production for the 16 given situations in the DCT. Furthermore, it was observed that participants preferred using conventionally indirect hearer-oriented request types, specifically of the ability and willingness types, for the given situations, which might imply that although these strategy types are both appropriate and accurate, the participants tended to limit themselves to the use of certain types, restricting a more varied command of request strategies. A pedagogical implication deriving from this finding might be that there is a need

for training students in the production of more varied request types for given scenarios, along with the creation of materials designed for this purpose.

Hypothesis 3 dealt with the effects of proficiency level on the use of request modifiers by our group of 104 participants. In order to ascertain whether there were differences between the two groups we quantified the instances of request modifiers found in the data collected from the DCT and applied the statistical analysis to it. The results partially confirmed our third hypothesis. We did not find statistically significant differences between our two proficiency groups' overall use of request modifiers. However, the mean scores showed that the advanced group produced more request mitigators than the intermediate group which indicates minor differences between the groups. Findings reported in Safont (2005) also showed that the higher-proficiency learners in her study made use of more peripheral modification devices than the lower-proficiency ones. We further analysed our data in order to ascertain whether those differences in mean values referred to any specific type of request mitigator provided in Alcón *et al.*'s (2006) taxonomy and found that there were indeed statistically significant differences between some of them. We observed that out of the 15 different types there were 6 which showed statistically significant differences, all of them included in the internal modification group, these were understatement, downtoners, intensifiers, hesitators, appealers and attention getters. The advanced group produced not only a greater quantity but also a greater variety of each type. Furthermore, it was clear that the request modifier which our two groups of participants preferred was "*please*".

These findings seem to suggest that there is a need for more practice regarding the use of pragmatic force modifiers in the language learning environment, be it a traditional classroom or an on-line course for English language learners. Materials related to this topic should encourage learners to produce various types of request mitigators, whilst discouraging the recurrent use of only one or two types, as happened with both the mitigators and the request

head acts illustrated in our previous hypotheses. Furthermore, opportunities to improve learners' use of modifiers should also be provided. The last three hypotheses of the present study adopted a different perspective to those included so far by focusing on the effects of length of stay in the target language country as opposed to the effects of proficiency level.

Our fourth hypothesis predicted that length of stay would have an effect on our participants' awareness of request acts. We divided the 104 participants into three groups: the first group was made up of those subjects who had been in the UK for a minimum of 4 months and a maximum of 6 months; the second group consisted of those who had stayed in the UK for a period of between 7 months and 5 years; and in the third group we included those who had lived in the UK from anything between 5 and a half and 16 years. Our findings confirm that length of stay does affect appropriate evaluation of request acts, as statistically significant differences were found between the three groups. According to the mean scores, it was Group 1, that is, those participants who had stayed in the UK for the shorter period of time, who performed better than the other two groups. Our fourth hypothesis is, therefore, partially confirmed by these findings.

Although results for accuracy were not statistically significant, the mean scores showed that participants performed better at assessing grammatical than pragmatic failure. Furthermore, it was again Group 1 that performed better than the other two groups, who had lived in the UK for longer periods of time. These results support Matsumura's (2003) findings, which suggest that the initial period of the learners' sojourn in the L2 context might be salient with regard to increases in their pragmatic awareness. Furthermore, Schauer (2006) states that the longer the learners stayed in the country where the target language is spoken, the better their performance in assessing pragmatic failure. Our findings contradict this outcome, in that the longer our participants had stayed in the UK, the worse their pragmatic assessment was, with Group 3 performing worse than Group 2, who in turn performed worse than Group 1. However, the lengths of stay in Matsumura's

(2003) and Schauer's (2006) studies only relate to what happens during the first months of stay and do not exceed one year in the country of the target language. For that reason, our results might shed some light on the issue of longer stays. However, more research needs to be carried out in this area, both in the earlier stages, as we only considered participants who had already lived in the UK for 4 months, and through longitudinal studies to monitor the development of the same groups of participants during longer periods of time abroad.

Future research into the development of pragmatic awareness during these early periods of the participants' stay in the country where the target language is spoken could provide some interesting insights into whether the learners' pragmatic comprehension improves dramatically during this time and, if so, why this is the case (e.g., could it be a consequence of a high degree of contact with other English speakers?). A pedagogical implication derived from our findings is that the first stages of stays abroad are of utmost importance for the improvement of critical awareness regarding the appropriateness and accuracy of a language. Therefore, it would be useful to stress the importance of this and also to provide information for those about to go to the country where the target language is used, both before and after their arrival.

Our fifth hypothesis suggested that length of stay abroad would affect the production of request acts. Our findings show that there are no statistically significant differences between our three groups' production of request acts with regards to appropriateness or accuracy and thus, our fifth hypothesis is not confirmed. Regarding overall production, the mean scores show that participants who had stayed in the UK for more than 5 and a half years produced more pragmatically appropriate request acts than those who had lived in the UK for shorter periods of time. They also produced more correct request acts than the other two groups. However, given that our results did not show any statistically significant differences our findings contradict previous studies which had shown that length of stay in the target language country had an effect on pragmatic

development. In the case of Matsumura's (2001) study the first three months were of outmost importance for pragmatic development while Felix-Brasdefer's (2004) investigation, showed that considerable progress in learners' pragmatic performance was made in the latter stages of the sojourn abroad. His study shows that those learners who spent nine months or more in the target community demonstrated greater attempts at negotiation of a refusal, as well as higher degrees of politeness, than those who spent less than five months abroad. Both studies analysed shorter periods of time abroad and collected data at very early stages, whereas we only considered data from participants who had already been in the UK for 4 months. This might be a possible reason for discrepancies in our findings. Also, in the case of Matsumura's (2001) study, the fact that his students knew that they only had a limited time in the target language country might have affected their willingness in learning the language, which resulted in a clear effect on the first months of study abroad. This might not be an aspect which concerned our participants.

Future research into the development of pragmatic competence during the first few weeks of the participants' stay in the target country could provide some interesting insights into whether the first months are as salient as Matsumura's (2001) results showed, or whether these stages are as relevant when compared to longer periods of time, such as the ones in Félix-Brasdefer's (2004) study or those considered in the present study. Aspects such as intensity of interaction or motivation during the stay abroad should also be taken into account in future research investigating the effects of stays abroad.

Furthermore, our participants seem to prefer using limited types of requests (ability, willingness and permission). This might have some pedagogical implication in that there is a need for more instruction in the use of request act strategies in the early stages of the stay abroad, in order to provide sufficient practice using them and also to continue using them in the future. Nonetheless, comparing the length of stay with request act production, we might suggest that

longer lengths of stay abroad do have an effect on the production of more accurate and appropriate request acts.

Our last hypothesis aimed to determine whether length of stay had an effect on the participants' ability to produce request act mitigators when formulating a request. Results show that those participants who had stayed in the UK for a longer period of time (between 5 and a half years and 16 years) produced more request mitigators than the other participants. We found no statistically significant differences between the three groups' production of overall request mitigators. With regards to the production of specific types of request modifiers we found that there were some statistically significant differences between our groups' use of two types of mitigators (disarmers and promise of rewards) within the category of external modifiers, partially confirming our last hypothesis.

By examining the different types of modification devices used by participants in the three groups, we found some variations in usage within the internal and external modifiers, and also obtained relevant data as to preferences of use by our participants, being "*please*" the mitigator more frequently used by our three groups of participants. Indeed, the results suggest that all learners in the study abroad context increase their pragmatic repertoire of internal and external modifiers. These results are in line with Barron's (2003) and Schauer's (2004) findings that learners' pragmatic competence increases during their sustained exposure to authentic language use in the target environment.

To summarise the findings obtained in our six hypotheses described above, we may state that both proficiency level and length of stay in the country where the target language is used have effects on the awareness and production of appropriate and correct request acts and request act modifiers. With regards to proficiency, it seems that higher proficiency (in our case, advanced) participants performed better at assessing pragmatic and grammatical failure than those at a

lower (intermediate) level of proficiency. Regarding appropriateness, proficiency level seemed to affect the evaluation of three types of request acts (willingness, permission and obligation) and with regards to accuracy, proficiency level showed effects in the assessment of four request types (hints, suggestory formulae, desires and obligation). The analysis of the production data pointed to effects of proficiency level on the overall production of request acts with regards to appropriateness and accuracy. It showed that higher proficiency participants performed better, which was also the case for the production of most internal request modifiers. These results point to a superiority of advanced participants in awareness and production in terms of appropriateness and accuracy of request acts and use of request acts modifiers.

Where length of stay abroad is concerned, it seems that the early stages (the first 6 months) of a stay abroad are decisive in developing an awareness of pragmatic infelicities, compared to longer periods of time abroad (up to 16 years in the case of the present study). No statistically significant differences are observed with regards to proficiency level and accurate evaluation or request acts. With respect to production of requests acts, our results do not show statistically significant differences, suggesting that length of stay does not affect request act use. Finally, our last hypothesis shows that length of stay has an effect on the use of two types of external request modifiers, disarmers and promise of reward. The results also suggest that all learners in the study abroad context increase their pragmatic repertoire of internal and external modifiers at later stages of their stay in the UK.

In the light of these findings and as highlighted in the relevant hypotheses above, some pedagogical implications might be proposed. On the one hand, from the data collected in this study, materials could be created in order to be used as examples of the different request acts that can be employed in a variety of situations that contain interlocutors who correspond to different politeness systems, and in which, the degree of imposition of the request varies. By so doing,

the use of varied request mitigators could also be shown and thus, English language users could be trained in order to enhance and enlarge the variety of structures at their disposal. This might avoid users restricting themselves to the use of limited forms of requests and request modifiers. Furthermore, training courses designed to raise awareness and to be more receptive to pragmatic and grammatical failure, should also be developed and offered before the stay abroad and/or shortly after arrival in the country of the target language. This might also lead to an earlier improvement in their productive skills.

It is also important to provide an account of some of the limitations of this study. Firstly, the design of the data collection instruments, the discourse completion test (DCT) and the discourse evaluation test (DET) employed in the present study, did not allow for respondents to engage in multiple-turn exchanges and to opt out, thereby making the data obtained less representative of real communication. Furthermore, the DET did not contain every type of request strategy, which limited our ability to comment on the types that were omitted, while for the remaining strategies we could only include a limited number of samples in order to keep the length of the questionnaires down to a reasonable length and completion time.

Secondly, the participants of our study did not include all levels. Hence, the findings might have been different if the present study had involved the other proficiency levels or beginner learners. Finally, although our study analysed lengths of stay that, to our knowledge, had not been analysed before, the use of isolated tests did not allow us to carry out any follow ups. Thus, we have been unable to analyse the acquisition process of the speech act of requesting and pragmatic force modifiers during these lengths of time.

Further research might consider overcoming the limitations that have just been outlined by examining language users' improvements in their use of requests over time, by assessing their production before the stay abroad takes place and

also during a long stay in the country where the target language is used. We suggest, therefore, that future research would require a longitudinal study.

In addition, future studies may address, among other issues, the influence of transfer from other languages; the performance of participants who know more than one language and differences between the ages and genders of participants. Also, the relationship between the rank of imposition and politeness system and the request produced by our students could be taken into account. Data could also be collected from different sources, as new technologies now allow for written and oral communication to take place at and between almost any location in the world. Finally, a line of future investigation could be opened up by considering whether or not the pragmatic and grammatical mistakes found in our data do imply communication failure contributing to the characterisation of English as a lingua franca. It would also be interesting to further investigate the extent to which the early stages of the stay abroad are the ones in which language users are more receptive to internalising the language and, if so, how this process can be enhanced.

In conclusion, and despite the above limitations, the present study has contributed to the body of research investigating English language users' awareness and production of request acts and request act modifiers, by focusing on the effects of proficiency and length of stay in their appropriate and accurate evaluation and use. Our study has also shed light on the effects of lengths of stay from 4 months to 16 years of a large number of subjects with different lingua-cultural backgrounds in the country where the target language is used, an aspect that had not been considered in previous studies. Moreover, this study has evaluated a group of 104 participants, chosen at random, that represent a sample of the speakers of English as a lingua franca and that contribute to its shaping. Finally, we have also offered a number of insights into possible ways to enhance English language users' command of the language with regards to the speech act of requesting. Thus, the results obtained in this study may contribute to the scope

of enquiry in the field of interlanguage pragmatics and English as a lingua franca as well as suggest several lines of investigation for future studies.

REFERENCES

- ACHIBA, M. (2003) *Learning to request in a second language: a study of child interlanguage pragmatics*. Multilingual Matters.
- ALCARAZ, E. (1990) *Tres paradigmas de investigación lingüística*. Alcoy: Marfil.
- ALCÓN, E. (2000) Desarrollo de la competencia discursiva oral en el aula de lenguas extranjeras: Perspectivas metodológicas y de investigación. In Muñoz, C. (ed.) *Segundas lenguas: Adquisición en el aula*. Barcelona: Ariel Lingüística, pp. 259-276.
- ALCÓN, E. (2007) Linguistic Unity and Cultural Diversity in Europe: Implications for Research on English Language and Learning. In Alcón, E. & Safont, M.P. (eds.) *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*. Springer Netherlands, pp. 79-100.
- ALCÓN, E., SAFONT, M.P. & MARTÍNEZ-FLOR, A. (2005) 'Towards a Typology of Modifiers for the Speech Act of Requesting: A Socio-pragmatic Approach.' *RæL: Revista Electrónica de Lingüística Aplicada* 4, 1-35.
- ALPTEKIN, C. (2002) 'Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT.' *ELT Journal* 56: 57-64.
- ANTÓN, M. & DICAMILLA, F. (1998) 'Socio-cognitive functions of L1 collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom.' *Canadian Modern Language Review* 54, 314-342.
- APTE, M.L. (1974) "Thank you" and South Asian languages: A comparative sociolinguistic study.' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 3, 67-89.
- AUSTIN, J.L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*. Harvard University Press, Harvard.
- BABA, T. & LIAN, L.C. (1992) 'Differences between the Chinese and Japanese request expressions'. *Journal of Hokkaido University of Education* 42/1, 57-66.
- BACHMAN, L. (1990) *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (1996) Pragmatics and Language Teaching: Bringing Pragmatics and Pedagogy Together. In Bouton, L. (ed.) *Pragmatics and Language Learning*. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, pp. 21-39.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (1999a) 'Exploring the Interlanguage of Interlanguage Pragmatics: A Research Agenda for Acquisitional Pragmatics.' *Language Learning* 49/4, 677-713.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (1999b) Researching Method. In Bouton, L.F. *Pragmatics and language learning*. Vol. 9. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, pp. 235-264.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (2001) Evaluating the empirical evidence: Grounds for instruction in pragmatics? In Rose, k. & Kasper, G. (eds.). *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 13-32.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. & DÖRNYEI, Z. (1998) 'Do language learners recognize pragmatic violations? Pragmatic vs. grammatical awareness in instructed L2 learning.' *TESOL Quarterly* 32/2, 233-259.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. & HARTFORD, B. (1990) 'Congruence in native and nonnative conversations: Status balance in the academic advising session.' *Language Learning* 40/4, 467-501.

References

- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K., & HARTFORD, B. (1993) 'Learning the rules of academic talk: a longitudinal study of pragmatic change.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 15, 279-304.
- BARDOVI-HARLIG, K., HARTFORD, B., MAHAN-TAYLOR, R., MORGAN, M., & REYNOLDS, D. (1991) 'Developing pragmatic awareness: Closing the conversation.' *ELT Journal* 45/1, 4-15.
- BARRON, A. (2000) 'Acquiring Different 'Strokes': A Longitudinal Study of the Development of L2 Pragmatic Competence.' *German as a Foreign Language Journal* 2, 1-29.
- BARRON, A. (2003) *Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics. Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- BARRON, A. (2006) Learning to say 'you' in German: The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a study abroad context. In DuFon, M.A. & Churchill, E. (eds.) *Language Learners in Study Abroad Contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 59-90.
- BEEBE, L. & CUMMINGS, M. (1985) *Speech Act Performance: A Function of the Data Collection Procedure?* Paper presented at the TESOL Convention, New York.
- BEEBE, L. & CUMMINGS, M. (1996) Natural speech act data versus written questionnaire data: How data collection method affects speech act performance. In Gass, S. & Neu, J. (eds.) *Speech acts across cultures*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 65-86.
- BEEBE, L. M., TAKAHASHI, T. & ULISS-WELTZ, R. (1990) Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In Andersen, E. & Krashen, S. (eds.) *Developing Communicative Competence in a Second Language*. New York: Newbury House, pp. 55-73.
- BENEKE, J. (1991) Englisch als *lingua franca* oder als Medium interkultureller Kommunikation. In: Grebing, R. (ed.) *Grenzenloses Sprachenlernen*. Berlin: Cornelsen. 54-66.
- BERGMAN, M. & KASPER, G. (1993) Perception and performance in native and nonnative apology. In Kasper, G. & Blum-Kulka, S. (eds.) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 82-107.
- BIALYSTOK, E. (1993) Symbolic representation and attentional control in pragmatic competence. In Kasper, G. & Blum-Kulka, S. (eds) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 43-57.
- BIALYSTOK, E. (1994) 'Analysis and control in the development of second language proficiency.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 16, 157-168.
- BLAKEMORE, D. (1992) *Understanding utterances. An introduction to pragmatics*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. (1982) 'Learning how to mean in a second language: A study of the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language.' *Applied Linguistics* 3/1, 30-59.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. (1983) 'The dynamics of political interviews.' *Text* 3/2, 131-153.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. (1987) 'Indirectness and politeness: Same or different?' *Journal of Pragmatics* 11, 145-160.

References

- BLUM-KULKA, S. (1991) Interlanguage pragmatics: The case of requests. In Philipsen, R., Kellerman, E., Selinker, L., Sharwood-Smith, M. & Swain, M. (eds.) *Foreign Language Pedagogy: A Commemorative Volume for Claus Faerch*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, pp. 255-272.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. (1996) Cultural patterns in dinner talk. In Senn, W. (ed.) *Families*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, pp. 76-107.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1986) 'Too many words: Length of utterance and pragmatic failure.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 8/2, 965-981.
- BLUM-KULKA, S., KASPER, G. & HOUSE, J. (1989) Investigating cross-cultural pragmatics. In Blum-Kulka, S., House, J. & Kasper, G. (eds.) *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, pp. 1-37.
- BODMAN, J. & EISENSTEIN, M. (1988) 'May God increase your bounty: The expression of gratitude in English by native and non-native speakers.' *Cross Currents* 15, 1-21.
- BORKIN, A. & REINHART, S.M. (1978) 'Excuse me and I'm sorry.' *TESOL Quarterly* 12/1, 57-76.
- BOU-FRANCH, P. & GARCÉS-CONEJOS, P. (2003) 'Teaching linguistic politeness: a methodological proposal.' *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 41, 1-22.
- BOUTON, L.F. (1994) 'Conversational implicature in a second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught.' *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22, 157-167.
- BOXER, D. (1993) 'Social Distance and speech behavior: The case of indirect complaints.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 19/2, 103-125.
- BROWN, P. & LEVINSON, S. (1978) Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena. In Goody, E. (ed.) *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BROWN, P. & LEVINSON, S. (1987) *Politeness: Some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BRUTT-GRIFFLER, J. (2002) *World English. A study of its development*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- BUBLITZ, W. (1988) *Supportive Fellow-Speakers and Cooperative Conversations*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- BURNS, A. (ed.) (2005) Interrogating new worlds of English language teaching. *Teaching English from a global perspective*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, pp. 1-15.
- BURT, C. (2005) 'What is International English?' *Teachers College, Columbia University, Working papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics*, 5/1. (www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/Webjournal/pdf/Burt.pdf - accessed 07.06.06)
- BYRAM, M. (1997) *Teaching and assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon.
- BYRAM, M., NICHOLS, A. & STEVENS, D. (eds.) (2001) *Developing Intercultural Competence in Practice*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- CANALE, M. (1983) From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In Richards, J. & Schmidt, R. (Eds.), *Language and communication*. London: Longman, pp. 2-27.
- CANALE, M. & SWAIN, M. (1980) 'Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to Second language teaching and testing.' *Applied linguistics* 1/1, 1-48.
- CELCE-MURCIA, M. (2007) Rethinking the Role of Communicative Competence in Language Teaching. In Alcón, E. & Safont, M.P. (eds.) *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*. Springer Netherlands, pp 41-57.
- CELCE-MURCIA, M., DORNYEI, Z., & THURRELL, S. (1995) 'A pedagogical framework for communicative competence: A Pedagogically motivated model with content specifications.' *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6/2, 5-35.
- CENOS, J. (1999) La adquisición de la competencia pragmática: implicaciones para la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras. In Salaberri, S. (ed.) *Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras*. Universidad de Almería: Servicio de Publicaciones, pp. 375-401.
- CHEN, R. (1993) 'Responding to compliments: A contrastive study of politeness strategies between American English and Chinese Speakers.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 20, 49-75.
- CHEN, X., YE, L. & ZHANG, Y. (1995) Refusing in Chinese. In: *Kasper, G. (ed.) Pragmatics of Chinese as native and target language*, Technical Report #5. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center, 119-163.
- CHOMSKY, N. (1965) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT.
- CHURCHILL, E. & DU FON, M.A. (2006) Evolving Threads in Study Abroad Research. In DuFon, M.A. & Churchill, E. (eds.) *Language Learners in Study Abroad Contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp. 1-27.
- CLARK, H.H. (1996) *Using language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- CLYNE, M. (1987) 'Constraints on code-switching: How universal are they?' *Linguistics* 25, 739-64.
- COHEN, A. (1997) Developing pragmatic ability: Insights from the accelerated study of Japanese. In Cook, H., Hijirida, K. & Tahara, M. (eds.) *New Trends and Issues in Teaching Japanese Language and Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Centre, pp. 133-159.
- COHEN, A. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1981) 'Developing a measure of socio-cultural competence: the case of apology.' *Language Learning* 31, 113-134.
- COHEN, A. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1993) 'The production of speech acts by EFL learners.' *TESOL Quarterly* 27/1, 33-56.
- COLEMAN, J. (1998) 'Language learning and study abroad: The European perspective.' *Frontiers* Fall, 167-203.
- COLLENTINE, J. & FREED, B. (2004) 'Learning Context and Its Effects on Second Language Acquisition' In Valdman, A. and Gass, S (eds.) Thematic issue of *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 153-171.
- COOK, M. & LIDDICOAT, A.J. (2002) 'The development of comprehension in interlanguage pragmatics: The case of request strategies in English'. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 25/1, 19-39.

- COPERÍAS, M.J. (2002) 'Intercultural communicative competence: A step beyond communicative competence.' *ELIA, Estudios de Lingüística Inglesa Aplicada* 3, 85-102.
- COPERÍAS, M.J. (2007) Dealing with Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Foreign Language Classroom. In Alcón, E. & Safont, M.P. (eds.) *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*. Springer Netherlands, pp. 59-78.
- CORDER, S.P. (1967) 'The Significance of Learner's Errors.' *IRAL* 5, 161-170.
- CORDER, S.P. (1971) 'Idiosyncratic errors and Error Analysis.' *IRAL*, 9, 2, 147-159.
- COULMAS, F. (1981) Spies and native speakers. In Coulmas, F. (ed.) *A festschrift for native speaker*. The Hague: Mouton, pp. 355-367.
- CRYSTAL, D. (1985) *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. (2nd Edition). New York: Basil Blackwell.
- CRYSTAL, D. (1997) *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. (4th Edition). Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- DE SILVA, M.W. (1976) *Diglossia and literacy*. Manasagangothri, Mysore, India: Central Institute of Indian Languages.
- DEKEYSER, R. (1986) *From learning to acquisition? Foreign language development in a US classroom and during a semester abroad*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University dissertation.
- DEKEYSER, R. (1991) Foreign language development during a semester abroad. In: Freed, B.F. (ed.) *Foreign language acquisition research and the classroom*. Lexington, Mass.: Heath, pp. 104-119.
- DÍEZ PRADOS, M. (1998) "Say enough, but no more": pragmatics to the aid of language teaching.' *Encuentro. Revista de Investigación e Innovación en la clase de idiomas* 10, 53-63.
- DUFON, M.A. (1999) *The Acquisition of Linguistic Politeness in Indonesian as a Second Language by Sojourners in Naturalistic Interactions*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- DUFON, M.A. (2000) The acquisition of negative responses to experience questions in Indonesian as a second language by sojourners in naturalistic interactions. In Swierzbina, B., Morris, F., Anderson, M., Klee, C. & Tarone, E. (eds.) *Social and Cognitive Factors in Second Language Acquisition. Selected Proceedings of the 1999 Second Language Research Forum*. Somerville, MA: Cascadia Press.
- DUFON, M.A. (2003) Gift Giving in Indonesian: A Model for Teaching Pragmatic Routines in the Foreign Language Classroom of the Less Commonly Taught Languages. In Martínez-Flor, A., Usó-Juan, E. & Fernández, A. (eds.) *Pragmatic Competence and Foreign Language Teaching*. (pp. 109-131). Castellón: Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, 109-131.
- EADES, D. (1982) 'You gotta know how to talk- Information seeking in South-East Queensland Aboriginal society.' *Australian Journal of Linguistics* vol. 2, 61-82.
- EDMONSON, W. (1981) *Spoken discourse: A model for analysis*. London: Longman.

- EDMONDSON, W.J. & J. HOUSE (1981) *Let's Talk and Talk About It. A Pedagogic Interactional Grammar of English*. München: Urban and Schwarzenberg.
- EISENSTEIN, M. & BODMAN, J. (1993) Expressing gratitude in American English. In Kasper, G & Blum-Kulka, S (eds.) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- ELLIS, R. (1985) *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ELLIS, R. (1992) 'Learning to communicate in the classroom: A study of two language learners' requests.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 14/1, 1-23.
- ELLIS, R. (1994) *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ELLIS, R. (1997) *SLA Research and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ERVIN-TRIPP, S. (1976) 'Is Sybil there? The structure of some American English directives.' *Language Soc.* v5 i1, 25-66.
- European Commission Education and Training
http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/erasmus20_en.html - accessed 10-05-08
- FAERCH, C. & KASPER, G (1989) Internal and external modification in interlanguage request realization. In Blum-Kulka, J., House, J. & Kasper, G. (eds) *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.
- FÉLIX-BRASDEFER, C. (2004) 'Interlanguage refusals: Linguistic politeness and length of residence in the target community.' *Language Learning* 54/4, 587-653.
- FIRTH, A. (1990) 'Lingua franca' negotiations: Towards an interactional approach.' *World Englishes* 9, 269-280.
- FIRTH, A. (1996) 'The discursive accomplishment of normality. On 'lingua franca' English and Conversation Analysis.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 26, 237-260.
- FIRTH, A. & WAGNER, J. (1997) 'On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research.' *The Modern Language Journal* 81, 285-300.
- FOUSER, R. (1997) *Pragmatic transfer in highly advanced learners: Some preliminary findings*. Dublin: Centre for Language and Communication Studies Occasional Papers No. 50.
- FRANCIS, C. (1997) 'Talk to me! The development of request strategies in non-native speakers of English'. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 13/2, 23-40.
- FRASER, B. (1990) 'Perspectives on politeness.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 14 /2, 219-236.
- FRASER, B. & NOLEN, W. (1981) 'The association of deference with linguistic form.' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 27, 93- 109.
- FREED, B. (1995) What Makes Us Think that Students Who Study Abroad Become Fluent? In Freed, B.F. (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition in a Study Abroad Context*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin, pp. 123-148.
- FREED, B. (1998) 'An overview of issues and research in language learning in a study abroad setting.' *Frontiers* 4, 31-60.

- GARCÍA, C. (1989) 'Apologizing in English: Politeness strategies used by native and nonnative speakers.' *Multilingua* 8, 3-20.
- GARCÍA, C. (1993) 'Making a request and responding to it: A case study of Peruvian Spanish speakers'. *Journal of Pragmatics* 19, 127-152.
- GEIS, M. (1998) *Speech Acts and Conversational Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GNUTZMANN, C. (2000) Lingua franca. In: Byram, M. (ed.) *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge, pp. 356-359.
- GOFFMAN, E. (1967) *Interactional Ritual: Essays on Face-to-face Behavior*. New York: Double Day.
- GOODY, E.N. (1978) Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction. In Goody, E.N. (ed.) *Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology* 8. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GRAMKOW ANDERSEN, K. (1993) *Lingua Franca Discourse: An Investigation of the Use of English in an International Business Context*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Aalborg.
- GREEN, G. (1975) How to get people to do things with words. In Cole, P., Morgan, J. (eds.) *Speech Acts*, Vol. 3. Academic Press, New York.
- GRICE, H. P. (1975) Logic and conversation. In Cole, P. & Morgan, J. (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics: Volume 3, Speech Acts*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 41-58.
- GU, Y. (1990) 'Politeness phenomena in modern Chinese.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 14/2, 237- 257.
- GUMPERZ, J.J. (1982) *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GUNTERMANN, G. (1995) The Peace Corps experience: language learning in training and in the field. In Freed, B.F. (ed.) *Second language acquisition in a study abroad context*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 149-69.
- HACKMAN, D.J. (1977) 'Patterns in purported speech acts.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 1, 143-54.
- HARRIS, R.M. (1984) *Truth and politeness: a study in the pragmatics of Egyptian Arabic conversation*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge.
- HARTFORD, B.S & BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (1992) Experimental and observational data in the study of interlanguage pragmatics. In Bouton, L. & Kachru, Y. (eds.) *Pragmatics and Language Learning*. Vol. 3. Urbana: DEIL, University of Illinois, pp.33-52.
- HASSAL, T.J. (1997) *Requests by Australian learners of Indonesian*. Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation. Australian National University.
- HASSAL, T.J. (2001) 'Modifying requests in a second language.' *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 39, 259-283.
- HASSALL, T.J. (2003) 'Requests by Australian learners of Indonesian'. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35, 1903-1928.
- HATCH, E. & LAZARATON, A. (1991) *The Research Manual. Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

- HENLEY, N.M. (1973) 'Status and sex: some touching observations.' *Bulletin of the Psychonometry Society* 2, 91-3.
- HERBERT, R.K. & STRAIGHT, H.S. (1989) 'Compliment-rejection versus compliment-avoidance: listener-based versus speaker-based pragmatic strategies.' *Language and Communication* 9, 35-47.
- HILL, T. (1997) *The development of pragmatic competence in an EFL context*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Tokyo: Temple University Japan.
- HOUCK, N. & GASS, S. (1996) Non-native refusals: A methodological perspective. In Gass, S. & Neu, J. (eds.) *Speech Acts Across Cultures: Challenges to Communication in a Second-Language*: New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 45-64.
- HOUSE, J. (1988) 'Oh excuse me please ...': Apologizing in a foreign language. In Kettemann, B., Bierbaumer, P., Fill, A. & Karpf, A. (eds) *Englisch als Zweitsprache*. Tübingen: Narr.
- HOUSE, J. (1989) Politeness in English and German: The Function of *Please* and *Bitte*. In Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (eds.) *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex, pp. 123-155.
- HOUSE, J. (2002) Communicating in English as a lingua franca. In FOSTER-COHEN, S. (ed.), *EUROSLA Yearbook 2001*, Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- HOUSE, J. (2003) 'English as a lingua franca: a threat to multilingualism?' *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7, 556-78.
- HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G. (1981) Politeness markers in English and German. In Coulmas, F. (ed.) *Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech, Vol. 2*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, pp. 157-185.
- HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G. (1987) Interlanguage pragmatics: Requesting in a foreign language. In Lörcher W. & Schultze, R. (eds.) *Perspectives on language in performance. Festschrift für Werner Hüllen..* Tübingen: Narr Verlag, pp. 1250-1288.
- HUDSON, T., DETMER, E. & BROWN, J.D. (1992) *A framework for testing cross-cultural pragmatics (Technical Report, 2)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- HUDSON, T., DETMER, E. & BROWN, J.D. (1995) *Developing prototypic measures of cross-cultural pragmatics (Technical Report, 7)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- HUDSON, R.A. (1980) *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- HUEBNER, T. (1995) The effects of overseas language programs: Report on a case study of an intensive Japanese course. In Freed, B. (ed.) *Second language acquisition in a study abroad context*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp 171-193.
- HÜLLEN, W. (1982) 'Teaching a foreign language as 'lingua franca'.' *Grazer Linguistische Studien* 16: 83-88.
- HYMES, D. (1971) Competence and performance in linguistic theory In Huxley and Ingram (eds.) *Acquisition of languages: Models and methods*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 3-23.
- HYMES, D. (1972) On Communicative Competence. In Pride, J.B. & Holmes, J. (eds.). *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, pp. 269-293.

References

- HYMES, D. (1986) 'Discourse: scope without depth.' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 57, 49-89.
- IDE, S. (1989) 'Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of linguistic politeness.' *Multilingua* 8, 223-248.
- IFE, A. (2007) A Role for English as Lingua Franca in the Foreign Language Classroom. In Alcón, E. & Safont, M.P. (eds.) *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*. Springer Netherlands, pp. 79-100.
- ISABELLI-GARCÍA, C. (2003) 'Development of oral communication skills abroad.' *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 9, 149-173.
- JAMES, A. (2000) English as a European lingua franca. In: Cenoz, J. & Jessner, U. (eds.) *English in Europe: the Acquisition of a Third Language*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp. 22-38.
- JENKINS, J. (1998) 'Which pronunciation norms and models for English as an International Language?' *ELT Journal* 5, 119-126.
- JENKINS, J. (2000) *The Phonology of English as an International Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- JENKINS, J. (2002) 'A sociolinguistically-based, empirically-researched pronunciation syllabus for English as an International Language', *Applied Linguistics* 23/1, 83-103.
- JENKINS, J. (2004a) 'ELF at the gate: The position of English as a Lingua Franca', *European Messenger* 13/2, 63-68.
- JENKINS, J. (2004b) 'Research in teaching pronunciation and intonation', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 109-125.
- JENKINS, J. (2006) 'Current Perspectives on Teaching World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca.' *TESOL Quarterly* 40/1, 157-181.
- JENKINS, J., MODIANO, M. & SEIDLHOFER, B. (2001) 'Euro-English: An emerging lingua franca of mainland Europe', *English Today* 17/4, 13-19.
- JESSNER, U. (1999) 'Metalinguistic awareness in multilinguals: Cognitive aspects of third language acquisition.' *Language Awareness* 8, 201-209.
- KACHRU, B. (1985) Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the Outer circle. In Quirk, R. & Widdowson, H.G (eds.) *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 11-30.
- KACHRU, Y. (1987) Cross-cultural texts, discourse strategies and discourse interpretation. In Smith, L.E. (ed.) *Discourse across cultures: strategies in world Englishes*. New York: Prentice Hall, pp. 87-100.
- KACHRU, B. (1994) 'Englishization and contact linguistics.' *World Englishes* 13/2, 135-154.
- KACHRU, B. (1996) The paradigms of marginality. *World Englishes* 15, 241-255.

- KACHRU, B. (1997a) World Englishes 2000: Resources for research and teaching. In Smith, L.E & Forman, M.L. (eds.) *World Englishes 2000*. Honolulu, HI: College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, University of Hawaii and the East-West Center, pp. 209-51.
- KACHRU, B. (1997b) 'World Englishes and English-using communities.' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 17, 66-87.
- KANAGY, R. (ed.) (1999) *Language socialization and affect in first and second language acquisition. Special Issue, Journal of Pragmatics*, 31:11.
- KANAGY, R. & IGARASHI, K. (1997) Acquisition of pragmatics competence in a Japanese immersion kindergarten. In Bouton, L. (ed.) *Pragmatics and language learning*, Vol. 8. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, pp. 243-265.
- KASPER, G. (1981) *Pragmatische Aspekte in der Interimsprache [Pragmatic aspects in interlanguage]*. Tübingen: Narr Verlag.
- KASPER, G. (1982) 'Teaching-induced aspects of interlanguage discourse.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 4/2, 99-113.
- KASPER, G. (1989) Interactive procedures in interlanguage discourse. In Oleksy, W. (ed.) *Contrastive Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- KASPER, G. (1990) 'Linguistic politeness: Current research issues.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 14 /2, 193 - 218.
- KASPER, G. (1992) 'Pragmatic transfer.' *Second Language Research* 8 /3, 203-231.
- KASPER, G. (1996) 'Introduction: interlanguage pragmatics in SLA.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18, 145-148.
- KASPER, G. (1997) *Can Pragmatic Competence be Taught?* (NFLRC Net Work #6) [HTML Document]. Honolulu: University of Hawaii. Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Centre.
- KASPER, G. & BLUM-KULKA, S. (1993) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- KASPER, G. & DAHL, M. (1991) 'Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 13, 215-247.
- KASPER, G. & ROSE, K. (1999) 'Pragmatics in SLA.' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 19, 81-104.
- KASPER, G. & ROSE, K. (2002) *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- KASPER, G. & SCHMIDT, R. (1996) 'Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18, 149-169.
- KEENAN, E. (1976) 'The universality of conversational postulates.' *Language in Society* 5, 67-80.
- KEREKES, J. (1992) *Development in nonnative speakers' use and perception of assertiveness and supportiveness in mixed-sex conversations* (Occasional Paper no. 21). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Department of English as a Second Language.

- KINGINGER, C. & BELZ, J. A. (2005) 'Sociocultural perspectives on pragmatic development in foreign language learning: Case studies from telecollaboration and study abroad.' *Intercultural Pragmatics* 2/4, 369-421.
- KINGINGER, C. & FARRELL, K. (2004) 'Assessing development of metapragmatic awareness in study abroad.' *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 10, 19-42.
- KLEIN, W., DIETRICH, R. & NOYAU, C. (1995) Conclusions. In Dietrich, R., Klein, W. & Noyau, C. (eds.) *The acquisition of temporality in a second language*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, pp. 261-280.
- KLINE, R. (1998) 'Literacy and Language Learning in a Study Abroad Context.' *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 139-165.
- KOBAYASHI, H. & RINNERT, C. (2003) Coping with high imposition requests: high vs. low proficiency EFL students in Japan. In Martínez-Flor, A., Usó-Juan, E. Fernández, A. (eds.) *Pragmatic competence in foreign language teaching*. Castelló: Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, pp. 161-184.
- KOIKE, D.A. (1996) 'Negation in Spanish and English suggestions and requests: Mitigating effects?' *Journal of Pragmatics* 21, 513-526.
- KONDO, S. (1997) 'The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English: Longitudinal study of interlanguage apologies.' *Sophia Linguistics* 41, 265-284.
- LAFFORD, B.A. (2004) 'The Effect of the Context of Learning on the Use of Communication Strategies by Learners of Spanish as a Second Language.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 26/2, 201-225.
- LAKOFF, R. (1973) The logic of politeness: Or minding your P's and Q's. In Corum, C., Smith-Stark, T. & Weiser, A. (eds.) *Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society*. Chicago: Chicago Linguistics Society.
- LAKOFF, R. (1977) 'What you can do with words: politeness, pragmatics, and performatives'. In Rogers, A., Wall, B. & Murphy, J.P. (eds.) *Proceedings of the Texas Conference on Performatives, Presuppositions and Implicatures*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, pp. 79-105.
- LEECH, G. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- LEVINSON, S.C. (1983) *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- LI, D. (2000) 'The pragmatics of making requests in the L2 workplace: A case study of language socialization.' *Canadian Modern Language Review* 57/1, 58-87.
- LLURDA, E. (2004) 'NNS teachers and English as an international language.' *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14/3, 314-323.
- LOCASTRO, V. (1987) *Aizuchi*: a Japanese conversational routine. In Smith, L.E. (ed.) *Discourse across cultures: strategies in world Englishes*. New York: Prentice Hall, pp. 87-100.
- LOCASTRO, V. (2003) *An Introduction to Pragmatics. Social Action for Language Teachers*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press. London: Longman.
- LOVEDAY, L. (1983) 'Rhetoric patterns in conflict: the socio-cultural relativity of discourse-organizing processes.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 9, 169-190.
- LYONS, J. (1981) *Language, meaning and context*. London: Fontana Paperbacks.

- MCKAY, S.L. (2002) *Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MAESHIBA, N. YOSHINAGA, N. KASPER, G. & ROSS, S. (1996) Transfer and proficiency in interlanguage apologising. In Gass, S. & Neu, J. (eds.) *Speech Acts Across Cultures: Challenges to Communication in a Second-Language*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 155-187.
- MAIR, C. (ed.) (2003) *The Politics of English as a World Language*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- MANES, J. & WOLFSON, N. (1980) The compliment formula. In Coulmas, F. (ed.) *Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech*. Berlin/New York: Mouton Publishers, pp. 115-132.
- MÁRQUEZ REITER, R. (2000) *Linguistic politeness in Britain and Uruguay. A contrastive study of requests and apologies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- MARRIOT, H. (1995) The acquisition of politeness patterns by exchange students in Japan. In Freed B. F. (ed.) *Second language acquisition in a study abroad context*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 197-224.
- MARTÍNEZ-FLORES, A. & USÓ-JUAN, E. (2006a) 'Do EFL learners modify their requests when involved in spontaneous oral tasks?.' Paper submitted for presentation at the XXIV AESLA Conference. Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED).
- MARTÍNEZ-FLORES, A. & USÓ-JUAN, E. (2006b) 'Learners' use of request modifiers across two University ESP disciplines'. Manuscript under review by *Ibérica*.
- MATSUMOTO, Y. (1989) 'Politeness and conversational universals – observations from Japanese.' *Multilingua* 8, 207 -221.
- MATSUMURA, S. (2001) Learning the rules for offering advice: A quantitative approach to second language socialization. *Language Learning* 51/4, 635-679.
- MATSUMURA, S. (2003) 'Modelling the relationship among Interlanguage pragmatic development, L2 proficiency, and exposure to L2.' *Applied Linguistics* 24/4, 465-491.
- MEIERKORD, C. (1996) *Englisch als Medium der interkulturellen Kommunikation*, Frankfurt: Lang.
- MEIERKORD, C. (1998) 'Lingua franca English: Characteristics of successful non-native-/non-native-speaker discourse'. *Erfurt Electronic Studies in English (EESE)* (<http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/edoc/ia/eese/eese.html> - accessed 07.06.06]
- MEIERKORD, C. (2000) 'Interpreting successful lingua franca interaction. An analysis of non-native/non-native small talk conversations in English.' *Linguistik Online* 5, 1/00 [www.linguistik-online.de/1_00/ - accessed 07.06.06]
- MEIERKORD, C. (2002) "Language stripped bare" or "linguistic masala"? Culture in lingua franca communication. In: Knapp K, Meirkord C (eds) *Lingua franca communication*. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, pp. 109-133.
- MEY, J. (1993) *Pragmatics: an Introduction*. Cambridge, Mass. USA: Blackwell.
- MEY, J., CAFFI, C., FRASER, B., HABERLAND, H., JANNEY, R.W., PAVLIDOU, T. & TURNER, K. (2003) 'Special Issue on Aboat Face.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 35, 10-11.

- MIZUTANI, O. (1985) *Nichi-ei Hikaku: Hanashi Kotoba no Bumpoo* [Comparison of Japanese and English Spoken Languages]. Tokyo: Kuroshio Shuppan.
- MORRIS, C.W. (1938) Foundations of the theory of signs. In Neurath, O., Carnap, R. & Morris, C. (eds.) *International Encyclopaedia of unified science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- NEMSER, W.J. (1971) 'Approximative systems of foreign language learners.' *International Review of Applied Linguistics* IX, 115-123.
- NICKELS, E.L. (2006) Interlanguage Pragmatics and Effects of Setting. In Bardovi-Harlig, K., Félix-Brasdefer, C. & Omar, A.S. (eds.) *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, vol. 11. University of Hawaii at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- NIEZGODA, K. & ROVER, C. (2001) Pragmatic and grammatical awareness: A function of the learning environment? In Rose, K. & Kasper, G. (eds.) *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- NIKULA, T. (1996) *Pragmatic force modifiers. A study in interlanguage pragmatics*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- OHTA, A.S. (1997) The development of pragmatic competence in learner-learner classroom interaction. In Boston, L. (ed.) *Pragmatics and Language Learning: Monograph Series, Volume 8*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, pp. 223-242.
- OHTA, A.S. (1999) 'Interactional routines and the socialization of interactional style in adult learners of Japanese.' *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31, 1493-1512.
- OHTA, A.S. (2001a) *Second language acquisition processes in the classroom: learning Japanese*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- OHTA, A.S. (2001b) A longitudinal study of the development of the expression of alignment in Japanese as a foreign language. In Rose, K. & Kasper, G. (eds.) *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 103-120.
- OLSHTAIN, E. (1983) Socio-cultural competence and language transfer. The case of apology. In Gass, S., & Selinker, L. (eds.) *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publisher.
- OLSHTAIN, E., & BLUM-KULKA, S. (1985) Degree of approximation: Nonnative reactions to native speech act behaviour. In Gass, S. M. & Madden, C. G. (eds.) *Input in second language acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 303-325.
- OLSHTAIN, E. & COHEN, A. (1989) Speech act behaviour across languages. In Dechert, H.W. & Raupach, M. (eds.) *Transfer in Language Production*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Pub. Corp.
- OLSHTAIN, E. & WEINBACH, L. (1993) Interlanguage features of the speech act of complaining. In Kasper, G. & Blum-Kulka, S. (eds.) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- OMAR, A. (1991) How learners greet in Kiswahili: A cross-sectional survey. In Bouton, L. & Kachru, Y. (eds.) *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, Vol. 2. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois.
- ORESTRÖM, B. (1983) *Turn-Taking in English Conversation*. Lund: Liber (CWK Gleerup).
- PITZL, M.L. (2004) "I know what you mean" – 'miscommunication' in English as a lingua franca: the case of business meetings. MA thesis, University of Vienna.

- PITZL, M.L. (2005) 'Non-understanding in English as a lingua franca: examples from a business context.' *Vienna English Working PaperS*, 14/2, 50-71. (<http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/Views0502mlp.pdf> accessed 07.06.06)
- PÖLZL, U. (2003) 'Signalling cultural identity: the use of L1/Ln in ELF.' *Vienna English Working PaperS* 12, 3-23. (<http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/views.htm> - accessed 07.06.06).
- REGAN, V. (1998) 'Sociolinguistics and language learning in a study abroad context.' *Frontiers Fall*, 61-90.
- RINNERT, C. (1999) 'Appropriate requests in Japanese and English: A preliminary study'. *Hiroshima Journal of International Studies* 5, 163-175.
- RINNERT, C. & KOBAYASHI, H. (1999) 'Requestive hints in Japanese and English.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 31, 1173-1201.
- RINTELL, E.C. & MITCHELL, C.J. (1989) Studying requests and apologies: An inquiry into method. In: Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., Kasper, G. (eds.) *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*. Ablex, Norwood, NJ.
- ROBINSON, M. (1992) Introspective methodology in interlanguage pragmatics research. In Kasper, G. (ed.) *Pragmatics of Japanese as Native and Target language*. Honolulu: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Centre, University of Hawaii Press.
- ROSE, K.R. (1994) 'On the validity of DCTs in non-Western contexts.' *Applied Linguistics* 15, 1-14.
- ROSE, K.R. (1997) Pragmatics in the classroom: Theoretical concerns and practical possibilities. In Bouton, L. (ed.) *Pragmatics and language learning*, Vol. 8. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, pp. 267-295.
- ROSE, K.R. (1999) Teachers and students learning about requests in Hong Kong. Hinkel, E. (ed.) *Culture in second language teaching and learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 167-180.
- ROSE, K.R. (2000) 'An exploratory cross-sectional study of interlanguage pragmatic development'. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 22/1, 27-67.
- ROSE, K.R. & KWARI-FYNN, C. (2001) Inductive and deductive approaches to teaching compliments and compliment responses. In Rose, K.R. & Kasper, G. (eds.) *Pragmatics in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 145-170.
- ROSSITER, P. & KONDOH, A.S. (2001) Pragmatic transfer in making requests. In Matsuno, K. & Yoshijima, S. (eds.) *Foreign language theory: From theory to practice*. Tokyo: Asahi Shuppan, pp. 107-154.
- SAFONT, M.P. (2001) *Meta-pragmatic perspectives on L3 Acquisition: Analysing Requests in the EAP Context*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Castelló: Universitat Jaume I.
- SAFONT, M.P. (2005) *Third language learners: Pragmatic production and awareness*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- SAFONT, M.P. (forthcoming) The Speech Act of Requesting. In Alcón, E. (ed.) *Learning How to Request in an Instructed Language Learning Context*. Peter Lang.
- SALSBUURY, T. & BARDOVI-HARLIG, K. (2000) Oppositional talk and the acquisition of modality in L2 English. In Swierzbina, B., Morris, F., Anderson, M., Klee, C. & Tarone, E.

References

- (eds.) *Social and Cognitive Factors in Second Language Acquisition*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.
- SAUSSURE, F. (1959) *A Course in General Linguistics*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- SAVIGNON, S. (1983) *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- SAVIGNON, S. (1997) *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*. (2nd Ed.) New York: McGraw-Hill.
- SAVIGNON, S. (2001) Communicative language teaching for the twenty-first century, In Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, pp. 13-28.
- SAWYER, M. (1992) The development of pragmatics in Japanese as a second language: The sentence-final particle *ne*. In: Kasper, G. (ed.) *Pragmatics of Japanese as native and target language*. Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center: University of Hawaii at Manoa, pp. 83-125.
- SCARCELLA, R. (1979) On Speaking Politely in a Second Language. In Yorio, C.A., Perkins, K., Schachter, J. (eds.) *On TESOL'79: The Learner in Focus*. Washington DC: TESOL, pp. 275-287.
- SCARCELLA, R. (1983) Discourse accent in second language performance. In Gass, S., & Selinker, L. (eds.) *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publisher.
- SCHAUER, G.A. (2004) May you speaker louder maybe? Interlanguage pragmatic development in requests. In Foster-Cohen, S.H., Sharwood Smith, M., Sorace, M. & Ota, M. (eds.) *EUROSLA Yearbook vol. 4*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp. 253-273.
- SCHAUER, G.A. (2006) 'Knowing when to say what to whom: A longitudinal investigation of students' pragmatic development in a L2 university context.' *LAUD paper* 648.
- SCHEGLOFF, E.A. (1979) Identification and recognition in telephone conversation openings. In Psathas, G. (ed.) *Everyday language: studies in ethnomethodology*. New York: Irvington Publishers, Inc., pp. 23-78.
- SCHMIDT, R. (1983) Interaction, acculturation and the acquisition of communicative competence. In Wolfson, N. & Judd, E. (eds.) *Sociolinguistics and second language acquisition. Series on Issues in Second Language Research*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, pp. 137-174.
- SCHMIDT, R. & FROTA, S. (1986) Developing basic conversational ability in a second language: A case study of an adult learner of Portuguese. In Day, R. (ed.) *Talking to Learn: Conversation in Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Newbury House.
- SCHMIDT, R. & RICHARDS, J.C. (1980) 'Speech acts and Second Language Learning.' *Applied Linguistics*, 1/2.
- SCHNEIDER, K.P. (1987) 'Topic selection in phatic communication'. *Multilingua* 6/3, 247-256.
- SCHNEIDER, K.P. (1988) *Small Talk: Analysing Phatic Discourse*. Marburg, Lahn: Hitzeroth.

References

- SCOLLON, R. & SCOLLON, S.W. (1995) *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- SEARLE, J.R. (1969) *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SEARLE, J.R. (1975) Indirect speech acts. In Cole, P. & Morgan, J. (eds.) *Syntax and semantics 3: Speech acts*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 59-82.
- SEARLE, J.R. (1976) 'The classification of illocutionary acts.' *Language in Society* 5, 1-24.
- SEARLE, J., KIEFER, F. & BIERWISCH, M. (eds.) (1980) *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics*. Dordrecht, Reidel.
- SEGALOWITZ, N. & FREED, B.F. (2004) 'Context, contact and cognition in oral fluency acquisition: Learning Spanish in At Home and Study Abroad contexts.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 26/2, 173-199.
- SEIDLHOFER, B. (2001) 'Closing a conceptual gap: the case for a description of English as a lingua franca.' *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 11, 133-158.
- SEIDLHOFER, B. (2002) The shape of things to come? Some basic questions about English as lingua franca. In Knapp, K. & Meierkord, C. (eds.) *Lingua franca communication*. Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 269-302. (<http://www.basic-english.org/member/articles/seidlhofer.html> accessed 07.06.06)
- SEIDLHOFER, B. (2004) 'Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca.' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24, 200-239.
- SELINKER, L. (1972) 'Interlanguage.' *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 10, 209-231.
- SIEGAL, M. (1994) *Looking East: Learning Japanese as a second language in Japan and the interaction of race, gender, and social context*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of California: Berkeley.
- SIEGAL, M. (1996) 'The role of learner subjectivity in second language sociolinguistic competency: Western women learning Japanese.' *Applied Linguistics* 17, 356-382.
- SIEGAL, M. (1995) Individual differences and study abroad: Women learning Japanese in Japan. In Freed, B. F. (ed.) *Second language acquisition in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam /Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 225-243.
- SIFAKIS, N. (2004) 'Teaching EIL - Teaching international or intercultural English? What teachers should know.' *System* 32, 237-250.
- SIFIANOU, M. (1999) *Politeness Phenomena in England and Greece. A Cross-cultural Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SINGH, R., LELE, J. & MARTOHARDJONO, G. (1988) 'Communication in a multilingual community: some missed opportunities.' *Language in Society* 17: 43-59.
- SNOW, M.A., KAMHI-STEIN, L.D. & BRINTON, D.M. (2006) 'Teacher training for English as a lingua franca.' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 26, 261-281.
- SPERBER, D. & WILSON, D. (1986) *Relevance: a study of verbal understanding*. Blackwell.

References

- STALNAKER, R.C. (1972) *Pragmatics*. In Davidson, D. & Harman, G. (eds.) *Semantics of natural language*. Dordrecht: Reidel, pp. 380-397.
- STERN, H. H. (1983) *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SVANES, B. (1992) 'Development of realization patterns of the speech act 'Asking someone to do something' by foreign students during three years in Norway.' *Norwegian Linguistics Journal* 10, 3-38.
- TAKAHASHI, S. (1992) Transferability of indirect request strategies. *University of Hawaii Working Paper in ESL* 11/1, 69-124.
- TAKAHASHI, S. (1995) *Pragmatic transferability of L1 indirect request strategies perceived by Japanese learners of English*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Hawaii.
- TAKAHASHI, S. (1996) 'Pragmatic transferability.' *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18, 189-223.
- TAKAHASHI, T. & BEEBE, L. (1987) 'The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English.' *JALT journal* 8, 131-155.
- TAKAHASHI, T. & BEEBE, L. (1993) Cross-linguistic influence in the speech act of correction. Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (eds.) *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- TAKAHASHI, S. & DUFON, M. (1989) *Cross-linguistic influence in indirectness: the case of English directives performed by native Japanese speakers*. Unpublished Manuscript, Department of English as a Second Language, University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- TANNEN, D. (1984) 'Cross-cultural communication.' *CATESOL Occasional Papers* 10, 1-16.
- THOMAS, J. (1983) 'Cross-cultural pragmatic failure.' *Applied Linguistics* 4, 91-112.
- THOMAS, J. (1995) *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- TROSBORG, A. (1987) 'Apology strategies in natives/non-natives.' *Journal of Pragmatics* 11, 147-167.
- TROSBORG, A. (1995) *Interlanguage pragmatics. Requests, Complaints and Apologies*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Uk Socrates Erasmus Council [<http://www.kent.ac.uk/erasmus/erasmus/whatis.html>] - accessed 10-05-08)
- VAN EK, J. (1986) *Objectives for Foreign Language Learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- VARONIS, E.M. & GASS, S. (1985) 'Non-native / non-native conversations: A model for negotiation of meaning.' *Applied Linguistics* 6, 71-90.
- VASSEUR, M., BROEDER, P. & ROBERTS, C. (1996) Managing understanding from a minority perspective. In Bremer K. *et al. Achieving understanding: Discourse in intercultural encounters*, London: Longman, pp. 65-108.
- VELASCO-MARTIN, C. (2004) The nonnative English-speaking teacher as an intercultural speaker. In Kamhi-Stein, L.D. (ed.) *Learning and teaching from experience:*

References

- Perspectives on nonnative English speaking professionals*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 277-293.
- VERSCHUEREN, J. (1999) *Understanding Pragmatics*. London: Arnold.
- WAGNER, J. & FIRTH, A. (1997) Communication strategies at work. In Kasper, G. & Kellerman, E. (eds.) *Communication strategies*. London: Longman, pp. 323-344.
- WALTERS, J. (1979) The Perception of Politeness in English and Spanish. In Yorio, C.A., Perkins, K., Schachter, J. (eds.) *On TESOL'79: The Learner in Focus*. Washington DC: TESOL, 288-296.
- WARGA, M. (2002) "J'ai un petit service à te demander ..." Zur pragmatischen Entwicklung des Sprechakts "Aufforderung" bei österreichischen Französisch-Lernenden. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Graz: University of Graz.
- WATTS, R. (1989) 'Relevance and relational word: Linguistic politeness as politic behavior.' *Multilingua* 8, 2/3, 131-166.
- WATTS, R., IDE, S. & EHLICH, K. (1992) *Politeness in Language*. Berlin: Mouton.
- WEIZMAN, E. (1993) 'Interlanguage requestive hints'. Kasper, G. & Blum-Kulka, S. (eds.) *Interlanguage pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 123-137.
- WHITE, R. (1993) 'Saying please: pragmalinguistic failure in English interaction.' *ELT Journal* 47/3, 193-202.
- WIERZBICKA, A. (1985) 'Different cultures, different languages and different speech acts.' *J. Pragmatics* v9, 145-178.
- WIERZBICKA, A. (1986) Human emotions: Universal or culture-specific? *American Anthropologist* 88, 584-594.
- WIERZBICKA, A. (1991) *Cross-cultural Pragmatics. The Semantics of Human Interaction*. Berlin: Mouton.
- WOLFSON, N. (1981) 'Compliments in cross-cultural perspective.' *TESOL Quarterly* 15, 117-124.
- WOLFSON, N. (1989) The social dynamics of native and non-native variation in complimenting behavior. In Eisenstein, M. (ed). *The Dynamic Interlanguage. Empirical Studies in Second Language Variation*. New York: Plenum Press, pp. 219-236.
- WUNDERLICH, D. (1980) Methodological remarks on speech act theory. In Searle, J.R., Kiefer, F. and Bierwisch, M. (eds.) *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics*. Dordrecht: Reidel Publishing Company, 291-312.
- YULE, G. (1996) *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ZHANG, Y. (1995) Indirectness in Chinese requesting. In Kasper, G. (ed.) *Pragmatics of Chinese as a native and target language*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 69-118.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A ENGLISH NON-NATIVE PARTICIPANTS

#	GENDER	AGE	NATIONALITY	TIME IN ENGLAND	LANGUAGES	PROFICIENCY TEST
1.	Male	21	French	6 months	French, English, German	42/60
2.	Female	21	French	5 months	French, English, German, Spanish	51/60
3.	F	21	Romanian	6 months	Romanian, English, French, Spanish, Italian	58/60
4.	M	27	Norwegian	6 months	Norwegian, English	59/60
5.	M	23	Spanish	8 months	Galician, English, Spanish, Portuguese, French	46/60
6.	F	23	Spanish	8 months	Spanish, English	44/60
7.	F	22	Spanish	10 months	Catalan, English, Spanish	32/60
8.	M	23	Spanish	9 months	Spanish, English	47/60
9.	F	19	German	3 years	German, English, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese	52/60
10.	F	19	Spanish	9 months	Spanish, English, Korean, French, Portuguese	50/60
11.	M	26	Greek	9 months	Greek, English, French, Italian, Greek/ International/ American Sign Language	38/60
12.	F	22	German	5 years	German, Turkish, English, Spanish,	56/60

Appendices

					French, Italian	
13.	F	22	Polish	3 years	Polish, English, German	56/60
14.	M	28	Spanish	8 years	Spanish, English	47/60
15.	F	28	Burkinese	6 years	Mooré, Dioula, English, French, Spanish	47/60
16.	M	25	Spanish	3 and ½ years	Spanish, English	51/60
17.	F	22	Norwegian	1 year	Norwegian, English, French	56/60
18.	F	19	Italian	1 year	Italian, English, Spanish, French	48/60
19.	F	23	Finnish	4 years and 3 months	Finnish, English, Swedish, French	37/40
20.	F	26	Brazilian	4 years	Portuguese, English, French	57/60
21.	F	21	Italian	3 years	Italian, English, French	41/60
22.	F	20	Polish	8 months	Polish, English, Spanish, Portuguese	55/60
23.	M	33	Chinese	1 year	Cantonese, English, Mandarin, Japanese	56/60
24.	F	20	Chinese	2 years	Chinese, English, Mandarin	36/60
25.	F	21	Portuguese	7 years	Cantonese, English, Mandarin, Japanese	44/60
26.	M	20	Italian	3 years	Spanish, English	46/60
27.	M	20	Italian	3 years	Spanish, English	48/60
28.	F	20	Finnish	5 months	Finnish, English, Spanish, Swedish,	54/60

Appendices

					German	
29.	F	30	Spanish	2 years and 4 months	Catalan, English, Spanish, French, Italian	50/60
30.	F	35	Greek	16 years	Greek, English	55/60
31.	F	43	Georgian	5 months	Georgian, English, Russian, German, Spanish	55/60
32.	F	20	Spanish	5 months	Spanish, English, French, German	44/60
33.	F	20	Argentinian	9 years	Spanish, English	58/60
34.	M	21	Mexican	7 years	Spanish, English, German	57/60
35.	M	27	Spanish	5 years	Spanish, English	52/60
36.	M	22	Cyprus	2 years	Greek, English, German	53/60
37.	F	19	German	8 months	German, English, French	58/60
38.	M	18	Colombian	8 years	Spanish, English	49/60
39.	M	24	Greek	3 years	Greek, English, Spanish, French, German, Italian	55/60
40.	F	23	German	1 ½ years	German, English, French	59/60
41.	F	25	Turkish	5 months	Turkish, English, French, Spanish	49/60
42.	F	22	German	2 ½ years	German, English	52/60
43.	F	21	Spanish	6 months	Spanish, English, French, German, Italian	39/60
44.	F	27	Spanish	1 year	Catalan, English,	56/60

Appendices

					Spanish French, Danish, Portuguese	
45.	F	23	French	6 months	French, English, Spanish	38/60
46.	M	22	French	6 months	French, English, Spanish	42/60
47.	F	23	Spanish	4 months	Spanish, English	36/60
48.	F	22	German	6 months	German, English, French	48/60
49.	F	17	Iranian	6 months	Persian, English, Arabic, Italian	54/60
50.	F	22	Spanish	7 months	Spanish, English	40/60
51.	F	43	Spanish	15 years	Spanish, Catalan, English	57/60
52.	F	18	French	10 months	French, English, Spanish	45/60
53.	F	19	Spanish	1 year	Spanish, English, French	51/60
54.	F	27	Spanish	4 years	Spanish, Catalan, English, French	42/60
55.	F	19	Ecuadorian	12 years	Spanish, English, French	58/60
56.	F	25	French	4 years	French, English, Spanish	46/60
57.	F	20	Polish	1 year and 4 months	Polish, English, German, Spanish	52/60
58.	M	39	Venezuelan	1 year	English, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese	53/60
59.	F	26	French	7 years	French, English, Spanish	55/60
60.	F	26	Italian	6 years	Italian, English, Spanish,	46/60

Appendices

					French	
61.	F	24	Estonian	3 years	Russian, English, Estonian, French, Spanish	47/60
62.	F	19	Spanish	1 year and ½	Spanish, English, French	48/60
63.	F	19	Russian	1 year and ½	Russian, English, French	54/60
64.	F	26	Mexican	2 years and 10 months	Spanish, English, French, Latin	53/60
65.	F	18	Cypriot	7 months	Greek, English, French, Spanish	58/60
66.	F	23	Cypriot	1 and ½ year	Greek, English	57/60
67.	F	20	Spanish	10 months	Spanish, English, French, Italian	43/60
68.	F	23	Spanish	6 months	Catalan, English, German, Spanish	35/60
69.	F	22	Spanish	7 months	Spanish, English and French	52/60
70.	F	22	Ecuador	4 months	Spanish, English, French, Italian, German	51/60
71.	F	21	Malaysian	4 and ½ years	Chinese, English, Mandarin, Malay, Cantonese, Taiwanese	57/60
72.	F	21	Spanish	6 months	Spanish, English, French	47/60
73.	F	28	Spanish	2 years	Spanish, English	36/60
74.	F	22	Portuguese	4 months	Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, Dutch	36/60
75.	F	33	Mexican	4 months	Spanish,	34/60

Appendices

					English	
76.	F	32	Portuguese	8 years	Portuguese, English, Spanish	51/60
77.	F	20	Serbian	7 years	Serbo- Croatian, English, Greek, Spanish	57/60
78.	F	24	Polish	4 years	Polish, English, Greek, Spanish	52/60
79.	F	30	French	11 years	French, English	58/60
80.	F	32	Egyptian	5 years and ½	Arabic, English, French	48/60
81.	F	25	Latvian	3 years	Latvian, English, Russian, French Japanese	59/60
82.	M	21	French	4 months	French, English, Spanish	47/60
83.	F	29	Greek	5 years	Greek, English, French	54/60
84.	M	30	Greek	6 years	Greek, English, GSL (Greek Sign Language), BSL (British SL), Italian	55/60
85.	M	30	Italian	11 years	Catalan, English, Italian, Spanish	50/60
86.	F	30	Croatian	4 years	Croatian, English, Italian, Spanish, German, French	55/60
87.	F	30	Serbian	4 years	Serbian, English, Italian, French, German	58/60
88.	F	20	Greek	2 years	Greek, English, French, Spanish,	57/60

Appendices

					German	
89.	F	26	Spanish	4 years	Spanish, English, French, Italian	57/60
90.	F	23	Thai	1 and ½ years	Thai, English	55/60
91.	F	35	Japanese	1 year and 9 months	Japanese, English	56/60
92.	F	24	Chinese	2 years	Mandarin, English	46/60
93.	F	30	German	3 years and 9 months	German, English	60/60
94.	F	29	Chinese	5 years	Chinese, English, Janese	59/60
95.	F	32	Sri Lankan	4 and ½ years	Sinhalese, English	59/60
96.	F	23	Russia	2 years	Russian, English, Buryat, Chinese	49/60
97.	F	29	Brazilian	9 months	Portuguese, English, Spanish, French	50/60
98.	F	19	Polish	5 years	Polish, English, German, Spanish	48/60
99.	F	19	French	4 months	French, English, Spanish	47/60
100.	F	30	Spanish	4 years	Catalan, English, Spanish	49/60
101.	F	22	Polish	5 months	Polish, English, Spanish	54/60
102.	F	21	Italian	1 year	Italian, English, Spanish	44/60
103.	F	25	Latvian	3 years and 2 months	Russian, English, German, Latvian, Spanish	49/60
104.	F	18	Finnish	4 months	Finnish, English, Spanish, German, Swedish	51/60

APPENDIX B ENGLISH NATIVE SPEAKERS

#	GENDER	AGE	NATIONALITY	UNIVERSITY	DEGREE	YEAR	LANGUAGES
1	Female	22	English	Cambridge University	Modern and Medieval Languages (MML): French and Spanish	3 rd	French, Spanish, Chinese, Italian
2	F	21	English	Cambridge University	Social and Political Science	2 nd	French, Spanish
3	F	23	English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4 th	French, Spanish
4	Male	21	English	Cambridge University	MML: Russian and Spanish	4 th	Spanish, Russian, Catalan
5	M	22	English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4 th	French, Spanish, Catalan
6	M	22	Nothern Ireland	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4 th	French, Spanish
7	M	21	English	Cambridge University	Veterinary Medicine	4 th	French
8	M	22	English	Cambridge University	MML: French and Spanish	4 th	French, Spanish
9	F	22	Scottish	Cambridge University	MML: French	4 th	French
10	M	20	English	Cambridge University	Archaeology	3 rd	<i>None</i>
11	F	18	English	Queen Mary, University of London	Hispanic Studies and Geography	1 st	French, Spanish
12	F	18	English	Queen Mary, University of London	Hispanic Studies and European Studies	1 st	Spanish
13	F	19	English	Queen Mary, University of London	Hispanic Studies and European Studies	1 st	Spanish, Iranian, Portuguese
14	M	19	English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	1 st	French, Spanish
15	M	18	English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	1 st	French, Spanish, Urdu, Punjabi
16	M	19	English	Queen Mary, University of London	English Literature and Hispanic	1 st	French, Spanish

Appendices

					Studies		
17	F	19	English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	2nd	French, Spanish
18	F	20	English	Queen Mary, University of London	French and Hispanic Studies	2nd	French, Spanish

APPENDIX C QUICK PLACEMENT TEST – Version 1



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
Local Examinations Syndicate

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Name:

Date:

quick placement test

Version 1

The test is divided into two parts:

Part 1 (Questions 1 – 40) – All students.

Part 2 (Questions 41 – 60) – Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Time: 30 minutes

Part 1

Questions 1 – 5

- Where can you see these notices?
- For questions 1 to 5, mark **one** letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Please leave your
room key at
Reception. | A in a shop
B in a hotel
C in a taxi |
| 2 | Foreign money
changed here | A in a library
B in a bank
C in a police station |
| 3 | AFTERNOON
SHOW BEGINS
AT 2PM | A outside a theatre
B outside a supermarket
C outside a restaurant |
| 4 | CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS
Lessons start <i>again</i> on
8th January | A at a travel agent's
B at a music school
C at a restaurant |
| 5 | Price per night:
£10 a tent
£5 a person | A at a cinema
B in a hotel
C at a camp-site |

Questions 6 – 10

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the text below.
- For questions 6 to 10, mark **one** letter **A**, **B**, or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

Scotland

Scotland is the north part of the island of Great Britain. The Atlantic Ocean is on the west and the North Sea on the east. Some people (6) Scotland speak a different language called Gaelic.

There are (7) five million people in Scotland, and Edinburgh is (8) most famous city.

Scotland has many mountains; the highest one is called 'Ben Nevis'. In the south of Scotland, there are a lot of sheep. A long time ago, there (9) many forests, but now there are only a (10)

Scotland is only a small country, but it is quite beautiful.

- | | | | |
|----|---------|-----------|---------|
| 6 | A on | B in | C at |
| 7 | A about | B between | C among |
| 8 | A his | B your | C its |
| 9 | A is | B were | C was |
| 10 | A few | B little | C lot |

Questions 11 – 20

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 11 to 20, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

Alice Guy Blaché

Alice Guy Blaché was the first female film director. She first became involved in cinema whilst working for the Gaumont Film Company in the late 1890s. This was a period of great change in the cinema and Alice was the first to use many new inventions, (11) sound and colour.

In 1907 Alice (12) to New York where she started her own film company. She was (13) successful, but, when Hollywood became the centre of the film world, the best days of the independent New York film companies were (14) When Alice died in 1968, hardly anybody (15) her name.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 11 | A bringing | B including | C containing | D supporting |
| 12 | A moved | B ran | C entered | D transported |
| 13 | A next | B once | C immediately | D recently |
| 14 | A after | B down | C behind | D over |
| 15 | A remembered | B realised | C reminded | D repeated |

UFOs – do they exist?

UFO is short for 'unidentified flying object'. UFOs are popularly known as flying saucers, (16) that is often the (17) they are reported to be. The (18) 'flying saucers' were seen in 1947 by an American pilot, but experts who studied his claim decided it had been a trick of the light.

Even people experienced at watching the sky, (19) as pilots, report seeing UFOs.

In 1978 a pilot reported a collection of UFOs off the coast of New Zealand. A television (20) went up with the pilot and filmed the UFOs. Scientists studying this phenomenon later discovered that in this case they were simply lights on boats out fishing.

- 16 A because B therefore C although D so
- 17 A look B shape C size D type
- 18 A last B next C first D oldest
- 19 A like B that C so D such
- 20 A cameraman B director C actor D announcer

Questions 21 – 40

In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence. For questions 21 to 40, mark **one** letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

- 21 The teacher encouraged her students to an English pen-friend.
A should write B write C wrote D to write
- 22 They spent a lot of time at the pictures in the museum.
A looking B for looking C to look D to looking
- 23 Shirley enjoys science lessons, but all her experiments seem to wrong.
A turn B come C end D go
- 24 from Michael, all the group arrived on time.
A Except B Other C Besides D Apart
- 25 She her neighbour's children for the broken window.
A accused B complained C blamed D denied
- 26 As I had missed the history lesson, my friend went the homework with me.
A by B after C over D on
- 27 Whether she's a good actress or not is a of opinion.
A matter B subject C point D case
- 28 The decorated roof of the ancient palace was up by four thin columns.
A built B carried C held D supported
- 29 Would it you if we came on Thursday?
A agree B suit C like D fit
- 30 This form be handed in until the end of the week.
A doesn't need B doesn't have C needn't D hasn't got

- 31 If you make a mistake when you are writing, just it out with your pen.
A cross B clear C do D wipe
- 32 Although our opinions on many things, we're good friends.
A differ B oppose C disagree D divide
- 33 This product must be eaten two days of purchase.
A by B before C within D under
- 34 The newspaper report contained important information.
A many B another C an D a lot of
- 35 Have you considered to London?
A move B to move C to be moving D moving
- 36 It can be a good idea for people who lead an active life to increase their of vitamins.
A upturn B input C upkeep D intake
- 37 I thought there was a of jealousy in his reaction to my good fortune.
A piece B part C shadow D touch
- 38 Why didn't you that you were feeling ill?
A advise B mention C remark D tell
- 39 James was not sure exactly where his best interests
A stood B rested C lay D centred
- 40 He's still getting the shock of losing his job.
A across B by C over D through

Part 2

Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Questions 41 – 50

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 41 to 50, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

The tallest buildings - SKYSCRAPERS

Nowadays, skyscrapers can be found in most major cities of the world. A building which was many (41) high was first called a skyscraper in the United States at the end of the 19th century, and New York has perhaps the (42) skyscraper of them all, the Empire State Building. The (43) beneath the streets of New York is rock, (44) enough to take the heaviest load without sinking, and is therefore well-suited to bearing the (45) of tall buildings.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 41 | A stages | B steps | C storeys | D levels |
| 42 | A first-rate | B top-class | C well-built | D best-known |
| 43 | A dirt | B field | C ground | D soil |
| 44 | A hard | B stiff | C forceful | D powerful |
| 45 | A weight | B height | C size | D scale |

Scrabble

Scrabble is the world's most popular word game. For its origins, we have to go back to the 1930s in the USA, when Alfred Butts, an architect, found himself out of (46) He decided that there was a (47) for a board game based on words, and (48) to design one. Eventually he made a (49) from it, in spite of the fact that his original (50) was only three cents a game.

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 46 | A earning | B work | C income | D job |
| 47 | A market | B purchase | C commerce | D sale |
| 48 | A took up | B set out | C made for | D got round |
| 49 | A wealth | B fund | C cash | D fortune |
| 50 | A receipt | B benefit | C profit | D allowance |

Questions 51 – 60

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence.
 - For questions 51 to 60, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.
- 51 Roger's manager to make him stay late if he hadn't finished the work.
A insisted B warned C threatened D announced
- 52 By the time he has finished his week's work, John has hardly energy left for the weekend.
A any B much C no D same
- 53 As the game to a close, disappointed spectators started to leave.
A led B neared C approached D drew
- 54 I don't remember the front door when I left home this morning.
A to lock B locking C locked D to have locked
- 55 I to other people borrowing my books: they always forget to return them.
A disagree B avoid C dislike D object
- 56 Andrew's attempts to get into the swimming team have not with much success.
A associated B concluded C joined D met
- 57 Although Harry had obviously read the newspaper article carefully, he didn't seem to have the main point.
A grasped B clutched C clasped D gripped
- 58 A lot of the views put forward in the documentary were open to
A enquiry B query C question D wonder
- 59 The new college for the needs of students with a variety of learning backgrounds.
A deals B supplies C furnishes D caters
- 60 I find the times of English meals very strange – I'm not used dinner at 6p.m.
A to have B to having C having D have

APPENDIX D QUICK PLACEMENT TEST – Version 2



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
Local Examinations Syndicate

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Name:

Date:

quick placement test

Version 2

The test is divided into two parts:

Part 1 (Questions 1 – 40) – All students.

Part 2 (Questions 41 – 60) – Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Time: 30 minutes

Part 1

Questions 1 – 5

- Where can you see these notices?
- For questions 1 to 5, mark **one** letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

1

You can look, but don't touch the pictures.

- A in an office
- B in a cinema
- C in a museum

2

Please give the right money to the driver.

- A in a bank
- B on a bus
- C in a cinema

3

NO
PARKING
PLEASE

- A in a street
- B on a book
- C on a table

4

CROSS BRIDGE
FOR TRAINS
TO EDINBURGH

- A in a bank
- B in a garage
- C in a station

5

KEEP IN A
COLD PLACE

- A on clothes
- B on furniture
- C on food

Questions 6 – 10

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the text below.
- For questions 6 to 10, mark **one** letter **A**, **B**, or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

THE STARS

There are millions of stars in the sky. If you look (6) the sky on a clear night, it is possible to see about 3000 stars. They look small, but they are really (7) big hot balls of burning gas. Some of them are huge, but others are much smaller, like our planet Earth. The biggest stars are very bright, but they only live for a short time. Every day new stars (8) born and old stars die. All the stars are very far away. The light from the nearest star takes more (9) four years to reach Earth. Hundreds of years ago, people (10) stars, like the North Star, to know which direction to travel in. Today you can still see that star.

- | | | | |
|----|--------|--------|---------|
| 6 | A at | B up | C on |
| 7 | A very | B too | C much |
| 8 | A is | B be | C are |
| 9 | A that | B of | C than |
| 10 | A use | B used | C using |

Questions 11 – 20

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 11 to 20, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

Good smiles ahead for young teeth

Older Britons are the worst in Europe when it comes to keeping their teeth. But British youngsters (11) more to smile about because (12) teeth are among the best. Almost 80% of Britons over 65 have lost all or some (13) their teeth according to a World Health Organisation survey. Eating too (14) sugar is part of the problem. Among (15) 12-year-olds have on average only three missing, decayed or filled teeth.

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| 11 | A getting | B got | C have | D having |
| 12 | A their | B his | C them | D theirs |
| 13 | A from | B of | C among | D between |
| 14 | A much | B lot | C many | D deal |
| 15 | A person | B people | C children | D family |

Christopher Columbus and the New World

On August 3, 1492, Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain to find a new route to India, China and Japan. At this time most people thought you would fall off the edge of the world if you sailed too far. Yet sailors such as Columbus had seen how a ship appeared to get lower and lower on the horizon as it sailed away. For Columbus this (16) that the world was round. He (17) to his men about the distance travelled each day. He did not want them to think that he did not (18) exactly where they were going. (19) , on October 12, 1492, Columbus and his men landed on a small island he named San Salvador. Columbus believed he was in Asia, (20) he was actually in the Caribbean.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 16 | A made | B pointed | C was | D proved |
| 17 | A lied | B told | C cheated | D asked |
| 18 | A find | B know | C think | D expect |
| 19 | A Next | B Secondly | C Finally | D Once |
| 20 | A as | B but | C because | D if |

Questions 21 – 40

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence.
 - For questions 21 to 40, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.
- 21 The children won't go to sleep we leave a light on outside their bedroom.
A except B otherwise C unless D but
- 22 I'll give you my spare keys in case you home before me.
A would get B got C will get D get
- 23 My holiday in Paris gave me a great to improve my French accent.
A occasion B chance C hope D possibility
- 24 The singer ended the concert her most popular song.
A by B with C in D as
- 25 Because it had not rained for several months, there was a of water.
A shortage B drop C scarce D waste
- 26 I've always you as my best friend.
A regarded B thought C meant D supposed
- 27 She came to live here a month ago.
A quite B beyond C already D almost
- 28 Don't make such a! The dentist is only going to look at your teeth.
A fuss B trouble C worry D reaction
- 29 He spent a long time looking for a tie which with his new shirt.
A fixed B made C went D wore
- 30 Fortunately, from a bump on the head, she suffered no serious injuries from her fall.
A other B except C besides D apart

- 31 She had changed so much that anyone recognised her.
A almost B hardly C not D nearly
- 32 teaching English, she also writes children's books.
A Moreover B As well as C In addition D Apart
- 33 It was clear that the young couple were of taking charge of the restaurant.
A responsible B reliable C capable D able
- 34 The book of ten chapters, each one covering a different topic.
A comprises B includes C consists D contains
- 35 Mary was disappointed with her new shirt as the colour very quickly.
A bleached B died C vanished D faded
- 36 National leaders from all over the world are expected to attend the meeting.
A peak B summit C top D apex
- 37 Jane remained calm when she won the lottery and about her business as if nothing had happened.
A came B brought C went D moved
- 38 I suggest we outside the stadium tomorrow at 8.30.
A meeting B meet C met D will meet
- 39 My remarks were as a joke, but she was offended by them.
A pretended B thought C meant D supposed
- 40 You ought to take up swimming for the of your health.
A concern B relief C sake D cause

Part 2

Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Questions 41 – 50

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 41 to 50, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

CLOCKS

The clock was the first complex mechanical machinery to enter the home, (41) it was too expensive for the (42) person until the 19th century, when (43) production techniques lowered the price. Watches were also developed, but they (44) luxury items until 1868, when the first cheap pocket watch was designed in Switzerland. Watches later became (45) available, and Switzerland became the world's leading watch manufacturing centre for the next 100 years.

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------|------------|-------------|------------|
| 41 | A despite | B although | C otherwise | D average |
| 42 | A average | B medium | C general | D common |
| 43 | A vast | B large | C wide | D mass |
| 44 | A lasted | B endured | C kept | D remained |
| 45 | A mostly | B chiefly | C greatly | D widely |

Dublin City Walks

What better way of getting to know a new city than by walking around it?

Whether you choose the Medieval Walk, which will (46) you to the Dublin of 1000 years ago, find out about the more (47) history of the city on the Eighteenth Century Walk, or meet the ghosts of Dublin's many writers on the Literary Walk, we know you will enjoy the experience.

Dublin City Walks (48) twice daily. Meet your guide at 10.30 a.m. or 2.30 p.m. at the Tourist Information Office. No advance (49) is necessary. Special (50) are available for families, children and parties of more than ten people.

- 46 A introduce B present C move D show
- 47 A near B late C recent D close
- 48 A take place B occur C work D function
- 49 A paying B reserving C warning D booking
- 50 A funds B costs C fees D rates

Questions 51 – 60

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence.
 - For questions 51 to 60, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.
- 51 If you're not too tired we could have a of tennis after lunch.
A match B play C game D party
- 52 Don't you get tired watching TV every night?
A with B by C of D at
- 53 Go on, finish the dessert. It needs up because it won't stay fresh until tomorrow.
A eat B eating C to eat D eaten
- 54 We're not used to invited to very formal occasions.
A be B have C being D having
- 55 I'd rather we meet this evening, because I'm very tired.
A wouldn't B shouldn't C hadn't D didn't
- 56 She obviously didn't want to discuss the matter so I didn't the point.
A maintain B chase C follow D pursue
- 57 Anyone after the start of the play is not allowed in until the interval.
A arrives B has arrived C arriving D arrived
- 58 This new magazine is with interesting stories and useful information.
A full B packed C thick D compiled
- 59 The restaurant was far too noisy to be to relaxed conversation.
A conducive B suitable C practical D fruitful
- 60 In this branch of medicine, it is vital to open to new ideas.
A stand B continue C hold D remain

APPENDIX E Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Name:

Degree:

University/Universities:

Complete the following sections with information about yourself:

A. Age: _____

B. Gender: Male Female

C. Nationality: _____

D. Years studying English at:

- School: _____
- High School: _____
- University: _____
- Other public or private institutions: _____

E. Names of course books or materials studied: _____

F. How long have you been living in England? _____

G. Mother tongue (First Language): _____

H. What languages do you use?

	First language:	English	Others:	Others:
With your parents / at home				
With your friends				
When you go shopping				
In class				
With your teachers				

I. In your opinion, what is your proficiency level in these languages?

	First language	English	Others:	Others:	Others:
Bad (no idea)					
A little					
Good					
Excellent					

Read these situations and write down what you would say in English.

1. You and a friend arrive in Dublin and go to your hotel. You left your credit card at home and you don't have enough money to pay for the hotel. You ask your friend:

.....
.....

2. A couple is having dinner in a restaurant. The waiter is speaking very quickly and they cannot understand the menu. The woman asks the waiter:

.....
.....

3. A father and his daughter are on a bus. The driver is driving very quickly and the daughter is scared. The father asks the driver:

.....
.....

4. You are going to a party. You've broken the heel on your favourite shoes. Your sister wears the same size. You ask her:

.....
.....

5. You are in a restaurant having dinner. Someone starts smoking before you finish your meal. The smoke is annoying you. You ask that person:

.....
.....

6. You have your first oral presentation tomorrow. You need some advice. You ask a teacher:

.....
.....

7. Your neighbour always walks his/her dog inside the building. You are not happy about this. You ask him/her:

.....
.....

8. Your friend is coming to visit. You need a place to stay and you want to borrow your uncle's apartment. You ask him:

.....
.....

9. You have a very heavy suitcase and cannot open the train door to get on the train. You ask a policeman passing by:

.....
.....

10. You work as a shop assistant. You need two days off because your mother is ill, but you have no holidays left. You ask your boss:

.....
.....

11. Your brother has failed all subjects this year. He does not want to tell your parents. He wants you to tell them. He asks you:

.....
.....

12. You work at the information desk in Heathrow airport. A passenger wants to go to central London. He/She asks you:

.....
.....

13. In an office a boss needs 40 copies of a report. Her secretary is about to go home. She asks her secretary:

.....
.....

14. You work at a pub behind the bar. A very drunk person has just walked in. Your contract says you cannot allow drunken people into the bar. You ask him/her:

.....
.....

15. Your friend is going away for a month. S/He needs someone to water his plants. S/He asks you:

.....
.....

16. You are going away for a week. You need your neighbour to look after your three cats. He/She doesn't like cats. You ask your neighbour:

.....
.....

APPENDIX F Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Name:

✓ Tick one box to state whether the following sentences or expressions are correct or incorrect and tick another box to state if they are appropriate or inappropriate to the situation. If they are incorrect or inappropriate (or both) write down your own suggestion.

1. A girl is very thirsty. She goes into a bar and says:

- Could I had a glass of water, please?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

.....

2. A woman is cooking and she needs some white wine. She asks her neighbour:

- Would you mind give me a glass of white wine?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

.....

3. You were very sick the night before an important exam and you missed it. You ask your teacher:

- May I ask you a favour? I was very ill the night before the exam, may I do it another day?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

.....

4. A student has to finish an important composition for the following day, but s/he doesn't have enough time to finish it. S/He asks a classmate:

- I hate bother you but I need to copy some sections from your essay.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

.....

5. At a company, one of the workers needs some money urgently. He/She asks the boss:

- How about lend me some money?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

6. Two friends are watching TV at one's house. One feels cold and tells his/her friend:

- It's getting cold in here, doesn't it?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

7. You need your doctor's telephone number. You go to the hospital and ask the receptionist:

- Could I possibly ask you to give me my doctor's telephone number?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

8. It is Friday night. You go into a pub with your friends and say to the barman:

- Give me a beer, please?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

9. In a hotel a client tells the receptionist:

- My heating don't work. Go and repair it, ok?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

10. In a library a person who doesn't have a library card approaches the librarian and says:

- Let me in. If you help me now, I promise to bring my card next time.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

11. Your mother told you to go to the bakery to buy some bread. You tell the baker:

- I wonder if you could...if you would be so kind as to give me two loaves of bread.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

12. You are in Edinburgh and take a taxi from the main train station. You are going to a youth hostel, but you don't know how to pronounce its name. You point to your map and ask the taxi driver:

- You takes me there.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

13. You need to make a very important phone call but have no credit left on your mobile. You ask your friend:

- Excuse me, I need your phone for a minute.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

14. You are organising a big party at work, with a lot of people. However, you have to go on a work trip and you don't have time to organise it properly. You need help. You say to a workmate:

- It looks as though I won't have time to organise the party. You'll have to do it for me.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

15. You are late for your flight back home for Christmas. You know the plane has not left yet. You say to the check-in staff:

- You really have to let me in.

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

16. You are going to the United States as part of an exchange programme. You want your host-family to pick you up at the airport. You phone them and say:

- Look, can you pick me up at the airport?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....
.....

17. You see an old man trying to walk out of a store but the door is very heavy and he cannot open it. You tell him:

- Would you like me to held the door for you?

Correct Incorrect Appropriate Inappropriate

SUGGESTION:.....

APPENDIX G PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

		B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	Listening	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken Interaction	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken Production	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	Writing	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

*LA PRAGMÀTICA DE L'ANGLÈS COM A LENGUA FRANCA.
UNA ANÀLISI DELS AGENTS DE MITIGACIÓ DE LES
PETICIONS.*

1 Objecte i objectius de la investigació.

El procés de globalització dels mercats econòmics mundials, les incrementades oportunitats de viatjar a l'estranger i la millora dels mitjans de comunicació han fet que siga necessari, i alhora possible, que gent amb llengües i cultures diferents puguen comunicar-se en contextos diversos. D'aquesta manera, sembla necessari l'aparició d'una llengua franca per tal de facilitar aquests intercanvis i aquesta és, cada vegada més, la funció de l'anglès al món actual. De fet, per primera vegada, una llengua té més parlants no nadius que nadius, la qual cosa dóna a l'anglès una dimensió internacional global i presenta característiques de tots els seus usuaris (Seidlhofer, 2004). Kachru (1985) utilitza tres cercles concèntrics per a il·lustrar l'extensió de l'anglès; el seu model està format per un primer cercle (*Inner Circle*) compost per tots els països que tenen com a llengua oficial l'anglès, un segon cercle (*Outer Circle*) on es troben tots aquells països on l'anglès és la llengua cooficial, i finalment, un tercer cercle (*Expanding Circle*) que representa tots aquells països on l'anglès s'estudia com una llengua estrangera.

Beneke (1991) calcula que el vuitanta per cent dels intercanvis verbals en anglès es produeixen com a segona llengua o com a llengua estrangera i que no hi inclouen cap nadiu anglès. Aquesta expansió global de l'anglès n'ha comportat l'ús internacional com a llengua franca (Burns, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2004) i per aquest motiu, l'anglès com a llengua franca no està dominat pels parlants nadius, sinó per usuaris amb competències lingüístiques i cultures molt diferents, que, a més a més, contribueixen a donar-li forma. És per aquest motiu que s'ha dedecat la necessitat d'establir un àmbit d'investigació per tal d'explicar aquest fenomen singular. Segons Jenkins (2006) l'objectiu de la recerca de l'anglès com a llengua franca no és proposar un concepte monolític o descriure i codificar una única varietat de la llengua, si més no, el que pretén aquesta investigació és identificar les formes usades de manera freqüent i sistemàtica i que alhora, no suposen dificultats en la comunicació.

Partint d'aquesta idea, l'objectiu d'aquest estudi era analitzar per una part, els efectes del nivell de competència lingüística i, per l'altra, els efectes de la durada d'una estada a l'estranger en la producció i en la consciència pragmàtica i gramatical d'un grup d'usuaris de l'anglès com a llengua franca. Concretament, hem analitzat els mitigadors utilitzats en les peticions. La major part de la investigació sobre pragmàtica de l'interllenguatge que ha tractat sobre aquest acte de parla, s'ha centrat en l'anàlisi de l'estructura de la petició (Scarcella, 1979; Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993; Ohta 1997; Takahashi and DuFon, 1989; Trosborg, 1995; Takahashi, 1996; Hill 1997; Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Rinnert, 1999; Rinnert and Kobayashi, 1999; Li Wei, 2000; Rose, 1999, 2000; Cook, and Liddicoat, 2002; Achiba, 2003; Barron, 2003; Hassall, 2003) mentre que, d'acord amb les observacions de Hassall (2001), els agents de mitigació han rebut menys atenció per part dels investigadors.

A més, la major part de la recerca sobre el desenvolupament de la competència pragmàtica (Belz and Kinginger, 2002, 2003, Achiba, 2003, Barron, 2003, and Schauer, 2004) ha aportat informació sobre les etapes del desenvolupament de la producció pragmàtica i, només un nombre limitat d'estudis (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's, 1998; Niezgoda and Röver, 2001; Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006), ha examinat l'adquisició de la consciència pragmàtica. Una altra àrea que no ha rebut molta atenció en el passat ha estat la relació entre la consciència pragmàtica i la gramàtica, malgrat que nombrosos estudis sobre producció (per exemple, Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1991, 1993; House & Kasper, 1987; Kasper, 1981) han demostrat que un bon domini de la gramàtica d'una llengua no comporta automàticament un bon nivell de competència pragmàtica.

Així com el nivell de llengua, s'ha demostrat que les estades als països de parla de la llengua meta també tenen els seus efectes en el desenvolupament de la competència pragmàtica. Aquestes estades ofereixen l'oportunitat de conèixer una

altra cultura, expressar-se en una altra o d'altres llengües i tindre l'experiència de viure en un entorn diferent al propi. Normalment, quan es realitza una estada a l'estranger la quantitat d'exposició a l'altra llengua és molt elevada i la necessitat del seu ús està present en moltes i variades ocasions. Aquestes pràctiques es consideren normalment beneficioses per al desenvolupament del domini de la llengua meta (Coleman, 1998). El tema d'estades a l'estranger ha estat central a una part de la investigació sobre la producció i la consciència dels actes de parla. Alguns estudis han tractat els efectes de les estades a l'estranger sobre el desenvolupament pragmàtic dels rebuigs (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004); de les peticions i les disculpes (Olshtain and Blum Kulka, 1985 and Blum Kulka and Olshtain, 1985); de les peticions, els oferiments i els rebuigs (Barron, 2003) i com és el cas del present estudi, concretament de les peticions (Schmidt, 1983; Ellis, 1992; Achiba, 2003; Schauer, 2004, 2006). Aquests estudis han demostrat que la realització d'una estada a l'estranger pot tindre efectes positius en l'adquisició de coneixements lingüístics i culturals.

Considerant el que s'exposa anteriorment, l'objectiu d'aquest estudi és el de contribuir al cos d'investigació sobre consciència i producció de modificadors de la força pragmàtica mitjançant la realització d'una anàlisi de la consciència pragmàtica i gramatical de les peticions i la producció apropiada i correcta de les peticions i els seus agents de mitigació, comparant, per una banda, els parlants d'anglès de nivell intermedi i de nivell avançat que van participar al nostre estudi i per l'altra, tres grups de participants que havien realitzat estades de diferent durada al Regne Unit (de 4 a 6 mesos, de 7 mesos a 5 anys i de 5 anys i mig fins a 16 anys).

Per tal de portar a terme les anàlisis que acabem de comentar, vam formular les següents preguntes d'investigació amb les seues corresponents hipòtesis.

Pregunta d'investigació 1: Afecta el nivell de competència lingüística en una llengua a l'ús dels modificadors de la força pragmàtica en l'acte de parla de les peticions?

Hipòtesi 1: El nivell de competència lingüística dels participants afectarà a la seua habilitat d'avaluació de les peticions de manera correcta i apropiada (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998; Niezgoda and Röver, 2001).

Hipòtesi 2: El nivell de competència lingüística dels participants afectarà a la seua producció de peticions correctes i apropiades (Trosborg, 1995).

Hipòtesi 3: El nivell de competència lingüística dels participants afectarà a la seua producció d'agents de mitigació de les peticions (Safont, 2005).

Pregunta d'investigació 2: Afecta la durada d'una estada a l'estranger al coneixement dels modificadors de la força pragmàtica?

Hipòtesi 4: La durada de l'estada afectarà a la consciència dels usuaris de la llengua pel que fa a l'avaluació apropiada i correcta de les peticions (Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006).

Hipòtesi 5: La durada de l'estada afectarà a la producció de peticions apropiades i correctes (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004).

Hipòtesi 6: La durada de l'estada afectarà a la producció dels agents de mitigació de les peticions (Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004).

Entre març de 2006 i desembre de 2007 vam replegar dades de 104 voluntaris que van participar en el nostre estudi. Els participants eren estudiants de diferents universitats del Regne Unit, on feien, o bé estades curtes d'entre 6 i 12 mesos, o bé, cursos complets de diplomatures, llicenciatures, màsters o estudis de doctorat. Entre tots aquests subjectes triats a l'atzar, hi havia participants de 31 nacionalitats diferents i amb 28 llengües maternes; mostra evident, entre d'altres, del caràcter pluricultural i multilingüe dels parlants d'anglès avui en dia i que formen el cos d'usuaris d'anglès com a llengua franca. Tots els subjectes havien passat un mínim de 4 mesos al Regne Unit quan van completar els nostres qüestionaris.

El primer qüestionari dels tres que havien de completar, tractava de mesurar la competència gramatical dels aprenents, una prova de col·locació ràpida elaborada pel Sindicat d'Exàmens Locals de Universitat de Cambridge (*UCLES*). Aquesta prova avaluava el coneixement escrit lèxic i sintàctic però no hi incloïa habilitats d'escoltar o de parlar. Com que aquestes dues competències no eren avaluades en el nostre estudi, decidírem que aquesta prova era apropiada per a la nostra investigació. La participació dels 104 subjectes en aquest estudi va ser totalment voluntària, llevat del que es podria considerar una mostra d'agraïment per part de la investigadora d'aquest estudi, l'oferiment d'un justificant amb el seu nivell de llengua segons la puntuació que obtenien al qüestionari d'anglès i amb el qual començaven la seua vinculació en aquest projecte. Els participants van obtindre resultats relativament alts en el test de nivell: 34 participants eren de nivell intermedi, equivalent als nivells B1 i B2 del Consell d'Europa (veure Apèndix G per a una descripció d'aquests nivells) i 70 de nivell avançat que equival als nivells C1 i C2 de l'establert pel Consell d'Europa. Com ja hem dit abans, tots participants havien passat almenys 4 mesos al Regne Unit quan van començar a participar en aquest projecte i hi havia alguns que hi portaven fins a 16 anys. Per tal de facilitar l'anàlisi de les dades d'un grup tan heterogeni i amb estades de durada tan dispar; vam distribuir-los en 3 grups segons la durada de la seua estada al Regne Unit; el primer grup hi havia estat de 4 a 6 mesos, el segon

grup hi portava entre 7 mesos i 5 anys i els participants del tercer grup havien viscut entre 5 anys i mig i 16 anys al Regne Unit.

La recopilació de dades per a la subsegüent anàlisi dels agents de mitigació de les peticions i de les peticions mateixes, es va fer mitjançant dos qüestionaris escrits, un sobre producció de discurs (*DCT*) i un altre sobre avaluació del discurs (*DET*). El qüestionari sobre producció estava format per dos parts. La primera secció contenia algunes qüestions personals sobre els participants, que utilitzàrem per classificar-los segons l'edat, gènere i nacionalitat. Aquesta primera secció també incloïa algunes preguntes sobre el contacte formal previ dels nostres estudiants amb la llengua anglesa, el temps que havien passat al Regne Unit fins a aquella data i el coneixement intuïtiu d'altres llengües (un resum d'aquesta informació es proporciona dins de l'Apèndix A). La segona secció estava formada per 16 situacions que elicitaven peticions i on els participants havien d'escriure el que consideraven correcte i apropiat en cada cas. El qüestionari d'avaluació del discurs (*DET*) tenia 17 situacions que contenien peticions que els estudiants havien d'avaluar tenint en compte si eren pragmàticament apropiades i gramaticalment correctes.

Les situacions incloses en aquests dos darrers qüestionaris tenien diferents graus d'imposició per a l'oient i seguien el sistema de cortesia descrit per Scollon i Scollon (1995) on es consideren relacions de solidaritat (entre familiars per exemple), deferència (entre persones que no es coneixen) i jerarquia (entre dos persones amb categories diferents dins d'una empresa). Totes les situacions incloses en aquests qüestionaris representaven situacions de la vida diària quotidiana amb les quals, els participants es podien identificar. Les dades van ser analitzades seguint com a model les respostes que 18 nadius anglesos havien proporcionat per als mateixos qüestionaris, durant novembre i desembre de 2005, i que formaven el grup de control del present estudi. Aquests participants també estaven estudiant a universitats del Regne Unit, en aquest cas a la University of Cambridge i a la de Queen Mary, University of London.

Per analitzar aquestes dades adoptarem la classificació de les peticions aportada per Trosborg (1995) i, per classificar els elements perifèrics que acompanyen les peticions adoptarem la tipologia d'agents de mitigació elaborada per Alcón *et al.* (2006). Per tal de portar a terme aquestes anàlisis vam utilitzar el paquet estadístic anomenat Statistical and Presentational System Software (SPSS 14.0) per a windows.

3 Aportacions originals.

La primera hipòtesi suggeria que el nivell de competència lingüística afectaria a la consciència pragmàtica i gramàtica de les peticions. Per tal de constatar els efectes de la competència lingüística dels nostres participants, pel que fa a l'avaluació de les peticions en termes de conveniència pragmàtica i precisió gramatical, vam comparar els participants del grup intermedi amb els del grup avançat en la prova d'avaluació de discurs (*DET* d'ara endavant). Com ja hem esmentat abans, el grup de participants de nivell intermedi estava format per aquells que havien respost a un nombre de preguntes correctes entre 30 i 47, de les 60 proporcionades en la prova de nivell de llengua. El grup avançat el formaven aquells participants que havien contestat correctament a un determinat nombre de preguntes, entre 48 i 60 respostes, de les 60 totals. En una anàlisi entre els nostres dos grups, vam trobar que els participants intermedis reconeixien una mica més els errors pragmàtics que els errors gramaticals (un 70.59% contra un 69.94%). Els participants avançats, d'altra banda, mostraven la tendència oposada (un 74.47% contra un 81.05%); en reconeixien més dels gramaticals que dels errors pragmàtics, encara que la diferència no era significativa, probablement a causa de la proximitat entre les mitjanes obtingudes per cada grup.

Aquests resultats són similars als de l'estudi de Niezgoda i Röver (2001) i suggereixen que el nivell de competència lingüística té un efecte sobre la

consciència pragmàtica i gramatical ja que, quan es comparen els dos grups, el grup amb més nivell reconeixia millor les errades pragmàtiques i gramaticals que no pas el grup intermedi, com mostraven els percentatges a dalt. Els nostres resultats, quant a aquesta primera hipòtesi, també mostren que hi ha algunes diferències estadísticament significatives en l'avaluació d'alguns tipus d'estratègia de petició, essent els participants avançats els que actuaven millor i, per tant, aquests descobriments donen parcialment suport a la nostra primera hipòtesi; a més de suggerir que el nivell de competència lingüística té efectes sobre la consciència pragmàtica i gramatical. Això podria indicar que, com més alt és el nivell de competència, millor l'avaluaran les errades pragmàtiques i gramaticals. Els nostres resultats podrien implicar que hi ha una necessitat de dedicar més atenció a l'entrenament/formació de cada estratègia de petició proporcionada a la taxonomia de Trosborg (1999) ja que ni el grup intermedi ni el grup avançat va aconseguir una actuació del 100% avaluant les peticions per a les situacions donades.

Per tal de comprovar la hipòtesi 2, que suggeria que el nivell de competència lingüística dels nostres participants afectaria a la seua producció d'actes de petició pragmàticament apropiats i gramaticalment correctes, vam examinar les dades obtingudes de la prova de completar el discurs (*DCT* d'ara endavant) en la qual els participants havien de proporcionar peticions apropiades i correctes per a situacions específiques. Els nostres resultats mostren diferències estadísticament significatives entre els dos grups de participants, amb nivells de significació de 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) per a conveniència pragmàtica i 0.021 ($p < 0.05$) per a la precisió gramatical. D'aquesta manera, la hipòtesi nul·la es rebutja i podem suposar, aleshores, que un millor domini de la llengua meta permet un ús més freqüent de formulacions de petició apropiades i correctes. Aquests resultats confirmen la nostra segona hipòtesi ja que les diferències globals són estadísticament significatives i els resultats obtinguts de les mitjanes entre els grups mostren que els subjectes, en un nivell de proficiència avançat, produïen més peticions apropiades i correctes que els d'un nivell intermedi, i insinuen que

els efectes de proficiència afecten a l'ús de peticions. Aquests resultats s'assemblen a l'estudi de Trosborg (1995).

Els nostres resultats també assenyalen que la producció apropiada de les peticions va ser més alta que la producció correcta, tant per al grup de participants avançats com per als intermedis, el que podria implicar que la competència pragmàtica dels nostres participants era millor que la seua producció gramatical per a les 16 situacions del *DCT*. A més, s'observava que els participants preferien utilitzar els tipus de petició categoritzats a la tipologia de Trosborg (1995) com a convencionalment indirectes, específicament dels tipus anomenats d'habilitat i disposició (*ability* i *willingness*). Açò podria implicar que encara que aquests tipus d'estratègia són tant apropiats com correctes, els participants en limiten l'ús i així restringeixen un domini més variat de tipus de petició. Una implicació pedagògica que es deriva d'aquest descobriment podria ser la necessitat de la formació en la producció de més tipus de petició per a determinades situacions i la creació de materials amb aquest propòsit.

La hipòtesi 3 es basava en els efectes de nivell de proficiència sobre l'ús dels agents de mitigació de les peticions. Per constatar si hi havia diferències entre els dos grups vam quantificar els exemples d'agents de mitigació de les peticions amb les dades obtingudes al *DCT* i hi vam aplicar l'anàlisi estadística. Els resultats mostraren que la nostra tercera hipòtesi es confirmava parcialment. No vam trobar diferències estadísticament significatives entre l'ús dels nostres dos grups de nivell en l'ús general de modificadors. Les mitjanes dels grups mostraven que el grup avançat havia produït més modificadors de les peticions que el grup intermedi (la mitjana aritmètica és de: 20,01 contra 22,87), i per tant, assenyala alguna classe de diferència entre els grups. Els resultats a l'estudi de Safont (2005) també mostraven que els aprenents amb nivell de competència lingüística més alt feien ús de més mecanismes de modificació perifèrics que el grup amb nivell més baix.

En analitzar les nostres dades per constatar si les diferències atribuïdes a les mitjanes es referien a qualsevol tipus específic de modificació de les peticions amb referència a la taxonomia d'Alcón *et al.* (2006), hi vam trobar que, en efecte, hi havia diferències estadísticament significatives entre alguns tipus de mecanismes de mitigació. Hi vam observar que, dels 15 tipus diferents que hi havia, 6 mostraven diferències estadísticament significatives, tots ells inclosos en el grup de modificació interna de la petició, i també, que el grup avançat en produïa més quantitat de cada tipus i més variat. A més, era clar que el modificador de petició que els nostres dos grups de participants preferien era *per favor (please)*.

Aquests resultats podrien implicar que existira la necessitat de realitzar més pràctica quant a l'ús de modificadors de la força pragmàtica en l'aprenentatge de la llengua, bé en una aula tradicional o en un curs a la web per a usuaris de la llengua anglesa. Aquests materials haurien d'incorporar-hi oportunitats perquè els aprenents produïren diversos tipus d'agents de mitigació de peticions i perquè n'evitaren l'ús recurrent de, principalment, un o dos tipus, com passava amb els dos tipus de peticions i amb els modificadors, resultats il·lustrats en les dues hipòtesis anteriors.

La hipòtesi 4 del present estudi adoptava una perspectiva diferent a les comentades fins ara i se centrava en els efectes de la durada de l'estada al país de llengua meta i no en els efectes de nivell de proficiència. El que se suggeria en aquesta quarta hipòtesi és que la durada de l'estada tindria un efecte sobre la consciència pragmàtica dels nostres participants. Vam dividir els 104 participants en tres grups; el primer grup estava format per aquells subjectes que havien estat al Regne Unit un mínim de 4 mesos i un màxim de 6 mesos; el segon grup, contenia aquells participants que s'havien quedat al Regne Unit durant un període de 7 mesos a 5 anys; i el tercer grup incloïa aquells participants que havien viscut al Regne Unit de 5 anys i mig a 16 anys. Els resultats obtinguts assenyalen diferències estadísticament significatives pel que fa als efectes de la durada de

l'estada en l'avaluació de conveniència pragmàtica amb nivells de significació de 0.068 ($p < 0.1$). Aquests descobriments rebutjarien la hipòtesi nul·la i confirmarien efectes de la durada de l'estada en l'avaluació apropiada de les peticions. Per tant, la nostra quarta hipòtesi queda parcialment confirmada per aquests resultats. Segons els resultats de les mitjanes, podríem establir que els participants del Grup 1, els participants que havien estat al Regne Unit un període més curt de temps, van fer una millor avaluació pragmàtica que els altres dos grups. Els resultats, pel que fa a la precisió gramatical, no eren estadísticament significatius i per tant, aquesta part de la quarta hipòtesi no quedava confirmada. Les mitjanes mostraven que els participants avaluaven millor els resultats gramaticals que els pragmàtics. A més, era una altra vegada el Grup 1, format per participants que s'havien quedat al Regne Unit un màxim de 6 mesos, el que actuava millor que els altres dos que havien viscut al Regne Unit durant períodes de temps més llargs.

Aquests resultats són semblants a l'estudi de Matsumura (2003), que apunta que el període inicial de l'estada dels aprenents en el context de llengua meta podria ser bastant important pel que fa als augments en la seua consciència pragmàtica. A més, Schauer (2006) manifesta que com més temps es quedaven els aprenents al país de llengua meta millor era el seu rendiment avaluant fracàs pragmàtic. En aquest cas, els nostres resultats contradiuen això en trobar que, quan els nostres participants havien realitzat estades més llargues al Regne Unit, pitjor era la seua avaluació pragmàtica (el Grup 3 ho va fer pitjor que el Grup 2 i aquest encara pitjor que el Grup 1). Pot ser que aquesta contradicció es done per les diferències en les durades de l'estada als estudis de Matsumura (2003) i Schauer (2006) que només es refereixen al que passa durant els primers mesos d'estada i no excedeixen un any en el país de llengua meta. Per aquesta raó, els nostres resultats podrien aportar noves idees sobre el tema d'estades més llargues; tot i que cal destacar-ne la necessitat de més estudis que avaluen el que passa al principi de l'estada, on nosaltres hem trobat diferències significatives i estudis longitudinals que poden avaluar el desenvolupament de la competència pragmàtica.

Futures investigacions sobre la consciència pragmàtica durant aquests primers períodes de l'estada dels participants al país de llengua meta podrien proporcionar algunes idees interessants sobre si la comprensió pragmàtica dels aprenents millora dràsticament durant els primers mesos i, si és així, per què passa això (per exemple, podria ser conseqüència d'una quantitat alta de contacte amb parlants nadius?). Una implicació pedagògica obtinguda dels nostres resultats és la necessitat de realitzar cursos abans de l'estada i només arribar al país de llengua meta, en què es poguera fer conscients els usuaris de la llengua dels beneficis per a la competència lingüística i pragmàtica dels primers mesos de l'estada.

Centrant-nos en la nostra hipòtesi 5, suggeríem que la durada de l'estada a l'estranger afectaria a la producció de peticions. Els resultats mostren que no hi havia cap diferència estadística i per tant aquesta cinquena hipòtesi no es confirma. Quant a producció global, els resultats de les mitjanes subratllen que els participants que s'havien quedat al Regne Unit durant més de 5 anys i mig produïen més peticions pragmàticament apropiades que els que hi havien viscut durant períodes més curts de temps. També produïen més actes de petició correctes que els altres dos grups. Aquests resultats contradiuen, per una banda, els resultats de Matsumura (2001) que argumentaven que els primers mesos de l'estada a l'estranger era la més significativa per al desenvolupament pragmàtic, i per l'altra, l'estudi de Félix de Brasdefer (2004) que mostrava que es feia un progrés considerable en l'actuació pragmàtica dels aprenents en les últimes etapes de l'estada a l'estranger. El seu estudi assenyala que aquells aprenents que passaven nou mesos o més en la comunitat de llengua meta demostraven intents més grans de negociació, aproximant-se a la norma, que els que estaven menys de cinc mesos a l'estranger.

Els nostres participants semblen que prefereixen utilitzar tipus limitats de peticions (habilitat, disposició i permís), encara que, com és el cas d'alguns participants, l'ús d'uns altres tipus de peticions en el nostre *DCT* és també

possible. Això podria implicar que hi ha una necessitat de més instrucció sobre l'ús d'estratègies de peticions durant les primeres etapes de l'estada a l'estranger per practicar-les i per utilitzar-les en el futur. No obstant això, comparant els efectes de la llargada dels nostres participants al país de llengua meta, podríem suggerir que estades més llargues a l'estranger tenen un efecte en la producció de més actes de petició apropiats i correctes.

La nostra última hipòtesi, apuntava cap a determinar si la durada de l'estada tenia un efecte sobre l'habilitat dels participants per produir mecanismes de mitigació en formular una petició. Els resultats mostren que, novament, aquells participants que s'havien quedat al Regne Unit per un període més llarg de temps (entre 5 anys i mig i 16 anys) produïen més modificadors de la força pragmàtica que els altres participants, tot i que, cap diferència estadísticament significativa apareixia entre els grups pel que fa a l'ús general dels mitgadors. En examinar els diferents tipus de mecanismes de modificació utilitzats pels participants en els tres grups i per tal d'obtenir-ne dades pertinents pel que fa a preferències d'ús dels nostres participants, vam analitzar cada cas presentat a la tipologia d'Alcón *et al.* (2006). En efecte, els resultats suggereixen que tots els participants en aquest context de l'estudi a l'estranger augmenten el seu repertori pragmàtic de modificadors interns i externs. A més, vam trobar diferències estadístiques en dos tipus de mitgadors de la part externa de la petició (*disarmers* i *promise of reward*) i això confirma parcialment la nostra sisena hipòtesi.

Els resultats guarden similitud amb Barron (2003) i Schauer (2004) que han manifestat que la competència pragmàtica dels aprenents augmenta durant la seua exposició a l'ús autèntic de llengua i sembla que els nostres resultats suggereixen el mateix.

El nostre estudi ha demostrat que tant el nivell de competència lingüística en una llengua com la durada d'una estada a l'estranger afecta a la consciència i a la producció de les peticions i específicament afecta a l'ús dels modificadors de les peticions. D'aquesta manera, podem afirmar que aquest estudi recolza investigacions anteriors que suggerien que el nivell de competència lingüística en una llengua és un factor important pel que fa a la producció i a la consciència lingüística en una llengua.

Per resumir els resultats obtinguts en les nostres sis hipòtesis descrites a dalt, podem manifestar que, amb consideracions del nivell, sembla que com més alt és el nivell (en el nostre cas, avançat), els participants avaluen el fracàs pragmàtic i gramatical millor que els d'un nivell més baix (intermedi). A més, pel que fa a la producció, els nivells més alts també semblen que comporten l'ús apropiat i correcte d'actes de petició i dels mecanismes de mitigació de l'acte de parla en qüestió. Pel que fa a la durada d'estada a l'estranger, sembla que les primeres etapes (els primers 6 mesos) siguen decisives per al desenvolupament d'una consciència pragmàtica, comparats amb períodes més llargs, fins a 16 anys al present estudi. Tanmateix, respecte a la producció, períodes més llargs de temps semblen tenir un efecte més beneficiós sobre l'ús apropiat i correcte de mecanismes de mitigació, però sembla que no afecten l'ús de les peticions mateixes.

A la llum d'aquests resultats i com s'ha subratllat en les hipòtesis pertinents a dalt, es podrien proposar algunes implicacions pedagògiques. Per una banda, a partir de les dades recollides en aquest estudi, es podrien crear materials per a ser utilitzats com a exemples de peticions, que es poden emprar en una varietat de situacions que contenen interlocutors corresponents a sistemes de cortesia diferents i on el grau d'imposició de la petició varia. Així, també es podria mostrar l'ús de modificadors de les peticions i preparar els usuaris de llengua anglesa per a millorar i ampliar la varietat d'estructures a la seua disposició. Això podria evitar es restringiren a l'ús de formes limitades de peticions dels seus

mitigadors de la força pragmàtica. A més, es podrien dissenyar cursos per conscienciar els participants de la importància de les primeres etapes de les estades a l'estranger i que, com s'ha demostrat, és quan un subjecte més receptiu s'hi troba. Aquests cursos es podrien oferir abans de l'estada a l'estranger i/o en un termini breu després de l'arribada al país de la llengua meta. Això també podria conduir a una millora de les seues habilitats d'ús de la llengua.

És també important proporcionar una relació d'algunes de les limitacions d'aquest estudi. En primer lloc, el disseny de la recollida de dades, tant la prova de completar el discurs (*DCT*) com de la prova d'avaluació de discurs (*DET*) que s'hi han emprat, com eren escrites, no permetien que els enquestats participaren en intercanvis, i per tant les dades obtingudes són menys representatives del que passa normalment a les conversacions reals. Pel que fa al *DET* no contenia tots els tipus d'estratègia de petició, i això limitava la nostra habilitat per fer comentaris sobre els tipus omesos, mentre que, per a les estratègies restants, només podíem incloure-hi un nombre limitat de mostres per tal de mantenir la durada per a completar dels qüestionaris en un temps raonable.

En segon lloc, els participants del nostre estudi eren bastant similars en els seus nivells de competència lingüística en anglès, molts tenien un nivell de competència lingüística alt, fins i tot, els que havien passat només uns quants mesos al Regne Unit i aquesta podria, per això, haver estat la causa per a no obtenir diferències estadísticament significatives entre els grups en algunes de les nostres hipòtesis. Per aquesta raó, els resultats podrien haver estat diferents si aquest estudi haguera implicat la comparació de nivells de competència lingüística més dispars, considerant fins i tot nivells elementals. Finalment, encara que el nostre estudi analitzava durades d'estades a l'estranger que, al nostre entendre, no s'havien analitzat abans, el present estudi no va poder aportar un seguiment dels participants i les proves representen el que sabien en un moment determinat. Així, hem estat incapaços d'analitzar el desenvolupament pragmàtic pel que fa a l'acte

de parla de les peticions i dels seus modificadors de força pragmàtics durant diferents moments en el temps dels mateixos subjectes.

Futures línies d'investigació podrien considerar vèncer les limitacions que s'acaben d'indicar i examinar les millores graduals dels usuaris en l'ús de peticions, avaluant la seua producció abans que l'estada a l'estranger tinga lloc i també durant una estada llarga al país on s'utilitza la llengua meta. Suggerim que, per això, una investigació futura aporte un estudi longitudinal.

També seria interessant investigar els beneficis de les primeres etapes de l'estada a l'estranger, per tal d'analitzar si és en aquestes en les quals els usuaris de la llengua són més receptius a interioritzar els aspectes destacats anteriorment, i com es pot recolzar aquest procés. A més, també es podria considerar la influència del coneixement d'altres llengües; l'actuació dels participants que saben més d'una llengua i les diferències entre les edats i els gèneres dels participants. També seria força interessant analitzar la relació entre la petició produïda i el sistema de cortesia i la imposició de la petició.

Les dades també es podrien recollir de fonts diferents, com les noves tecnologies, que ara permeten que la comunicació escrita i oral pugui tenir lloc entre gairebé qualsevol localització del món. Finalment, es podria obrir una línia d'investigació futura que considerara si les equivocacions pragmàtiques i gramaticals trobades en les nostres dades realment impliquen un fracàs en la comunicació o si, avaluant totes les nostres dades d'aquesta manera, podem contribuir a la caracterització de l'anglès com a lingua franca.

En conclusió, i malgrat les limitacions esmentades, l'estudi ha contribuït al cos d'investigació que tracta la consciència dels usuaris de llengua anglesa i la producció d'actes de petició i els seus mecanismes de mitigació, centrant-se en els efectes dels diferents nivells de competència lingüística i la durada de l'estada en l'avaluació i ús pragmàticament apropiat i gramaticalment correcte. El nostre

estudi també ha aportat resultats sobre els efectes de durades d'estades des de 4 mesos fins a 16 anys d'un gran nombre de subjectes amb diferents cultures i llengües al país on s'utilitza la llengua meta, un aspecte que no s'havia considerat en investigacions similars. A més, aquest estudi ha avaluat un grup de 104 participants, escollits a l'atzar, que representen una mostra dels parlants d'anglès com a llengua franca i que contribueixen donar-li forma. Finalment, també hem ofert algunes idees sobre maneres possibles de realçar el domini dels usuaris de llengua anglesa amb consideracions a l'acte de parla de peticions. D'aquesta manera, els resultats obtinguts en aquest estudi, poden contribuir al cos d'investigació de pragmàtica de la interllengua i anglès com a llengua franca i també suggerir unes quantes línies d'investigació per a estudis futurs.

