

GAZİ UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM**

EVALUATION OF THE FOUR COURSEBOOKS USED IN TOBB ETU  
IN TERMS OF THREE SPEECH ACTS: REQUESTS, REFUSALS,  
COMPLAINTS

M.A. THESIS

By  
**Büşra DELEN**

**Ankara**  
**May, 2010**

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**Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Zekiye Müge TAVİL**

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Büşra Delen'in "Evaluation of the Four Coursebooks Used in TOBB ETU in Terms of Three Speech Acts: Requests, Refusals, Complaints" başlıklı tezi 02.06.2010 tarihinde jürimiz tarafından İngilizce Öğretmenliği Ana Bilim Dalında Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **EVALUATION OF THE FOUR COURSEBOOKS USED IN TOBB ETU IN TERMS OF THREE SPEECH ACTS: REQUESTS, REFUSALS, COMPLAINTS**

DELEN, Büşra

Master's Thesis, English Language Teaching Program

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In a world where communication between cultures and nations gains importance with every passing day, English as a common tool for communication has been indisputably one of the most indispensable parts of this process. English language teaching has been in line with the current view on English itself; achieving communication through English has moved to the foreground for the last thirty years or so, replacing the role of having complete control of grammatical rules for language proficiency.

This study set out to find out to what extent English language learners at TOBB University of Economics and Technology Preparatory School can perform strategies of three speech acts, which serve as an important part of everyday communication with English. The specific speech acts were requests, refusals and complaints and they have several ways to be realized through strategies. Data was collected from 90 students with a discourse completion task. The other aim of the study was to check the presentation of the aforementioned speech acts in the coursebooks used during the three semesters in the preparatory school program. So, second group of data was gathered from the coursebook evaluation phase, at which eleven coursebooks were evaluated in terms of their inclusion of requests, refusals and complaints.

The study was designed as a descriptive one; the purpose was to take a picture of the current state of the problem and offer some solutions, if there were such a necessity. In the data analysis part, the frequencies of request, refusal and complaint strategies were identified both in the discourse completion task and coursebook evaluation data.

The results of the DCT demonstrated that students at the TOBB ETU Preparatory School were able to perform requests and refusals more or less while their complaints were realized appropriately to some extent; the appropriateness of their complaints included less care than their requests and refusals did. A common point in their speech act performances was that majority of the answers lacked variety, which meant several specific strategies' always being on the top. Results of coursebook evaluation were common at some point with the results of the DCT. Although the frequency of requests in the books was not problematic, the refusals and complaints were barely included in most of them. They also had a paucity of various strategies not only in their contents, but also in their other parts such as exercises, audioscripts and so on.

Key Words: English Language Teaching, Teaching Pragmatics, Coursebook Evaluation, Requests, Refusals, Complaints

## ÖZET

### DERS KİTAPLARININ SÖZ EDİM GRUPLARININ KULLANIMI VE ÖĞRETİMİ AÇISINDAN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

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Kültürlerarası ve uluslararası iletişimin her geçen gün önem kazandığı dünyada, İngilizce bu sürecin tartışmasız en vazgeçilmez parçalarından biri konumundadır. İngiliz dilinin öğretimi de dile olan şu anki bakış açısıyla aynı doğrultudadır. Öyle ki, dil yeterliliğinin tanımlanmasında İngilizce ile iletişim kurmak, son otuz küsur yılda dilbilgisi kurallarının tamamen bilinmesi gerekliliğinin yerini alarak ön plana çıkmıştır. Bu esnada yapılan çalışmalar dil öğrenen bir kişinin dilbilgisi kurallarını ezbere bilmesinin yeterli olmayacağını, bu kurallar uygulanamadığı sürece kişinin dil bildiğinin söylenmesinin mümkün olmayacağını belirlemiştir.

Bu araştırmanın amacı TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu öğrencilerinin günlük dilin önemli bir parçası olan üç söz edim grubunun stratejilerini ne kadar kullanabildiklerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Söz konusu söz edimleri rica, reddetme ve şikâyetler ve bunların kullanımında bazı stratejiler önemli rol oynar. Veriler 90 öğrenciden bir söylem tamamlama testi ile toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın diğer amacı, hazırlık okulu programında öğrenciler tarafından üç dönem boyunca kullanılan ders kitaplarında daha önce sözü geçen söz edimlerinin sıklığını belirlemektir. Bu sebeple, ikinci grup veri, on bir adet ders kitabının ricalar, retler ve şikâyetler açısından değerlendirildiği aşamanın ardından elde edilmiştir.

Araştırma nitel bir çalışma olup, amaç problemin şu anki durumunun belirlemek ve gerekliyse çözüm önerileri getirmektir. Veri analizi kısmında ricaların, retlerin ve şikâyetlerin hem söylem tamamlama testi verilerinde ve ders kitaplarında bulunma frekansı tespit edilmiştir.

Araştırmanın sonuçları TOBB ETÜ Hazırlık Okulu'ndaki öğrencilerin şikâyetleri belli ölçüde uygun olarak ifade edebiliyorken, ricaları ve retleri büyük ölçüde ifade edebilmişlerdir. Öğrencilerin ricalarının ve retlerinin uygun olmasına gösterdikleri özenin, şikâyetlerine gösterdikleri özenden daha az olduğu da görülmüştür. Söz edim performanslarının hepsinde görülen ortak özellik ise cevapların çoğunun çeşitlilikten yoksun olmasıdır, yani verilen cevaplarda genellikle birkaç stratejinin baskın çıktığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ders kitabı değerlendirmesi bir noktada söylem tamamlama testi ile ortak sonuçlar ortaya çıkarmıştır. Kitaplarda ricaların yeterli sayıda bulunmasına rağmen reddetme ve şikâyet söz edimleri bunların çoğunda neredeyse hiç yer almamıştır. Ders kitaplarının sadece içerik kısımlarında değil, aynı zamanda alıştırma, ses kayıtları gibi kısımlarda da stratejilerin çeşitliliği açısından sorun sahibi olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Edimbilim Öğretimi, Ders Kitabı Değerlendirmesi, Rica, Reddetme, Şikâyet

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|        |                                                          |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| CCSARP | (Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns Project) |
| DCT    | (Discourse Completion Task)                              |
| EFL    | (English as a Foreign Language)                          |
| ESL    | (English as a Second Language)                           |

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

It is a commonly acknowledged fact that language has taken up a global quality along with the world itself. Hence, its primary function as a tool for communication has gained a great deal of significance. Teaching and learning English are also arranged around this function of language according to modern methods and approaches. The first attempts to change the tide in language teaching started in 1970s with Hymes' (1972) suggesting the term 'communicative competence' as a reaction to Chomsky (1965), whose idea of competence was mostly based on the linguistic features of the language. Hymes (1972) used communicative competence as a representation of one's skills of saying something appropriate to people in an appropriate way. The term was later coined by Canale and Swain (1983), who developed it into a framework for language teaching professionals.

Canale and Swain's (1983) model of language competencies were later developed by Bachman (1990). Having no basic differences between, both models can be said to be the closely knit. They both attach a great deal of importance to the communicative aspect of language along with the grammatical aspect. The communicative aspect of the language is realized as 'pragmatic competence', which refers to "the ability to perform language functions in a context" (Taguchi, 2008, p. 34).

Pragmatics has been both a controversial and popular topic in language research since 1960s. However, its rising to prominence occurred with the rising importance given to language as a communication tool. Pragmatics is simply the study of meaning in interaction and has two main subcategories: sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics

(Leech, 1988; Thomas, 1983, 1995). The former is the social aspect of pragmatics while the latter refers to the linguistic features related to pragmatics. The most important difference between these two categories is the challenge they offer. As Thomas (1983) and Kasper (2001) put, sociopragmatics is open to failure since it is based on a set of beliefs of the speaker, whereas pragmlinguistics is easy to learn and teach due to its being a part of grammar.

It is usually seen in the pertinent literature that a learner's being fully knowledgeable about the grammar of the target language does not guarantee that s/he is pragmatically competent, too (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990; Kasper & Rose, 1999; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Olsthain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). They can produce grammatically correct but pragmatically inappropriate utterances, which may lead to breakdowns in communication. This is called 'pragmatic failure' and may result from some factors. In EFL settings, one of the most dominant reasons is the learners' transfer of speech act strategies from their native language (Beebe et al., 1990; Ellis, 1994). Another reason is the problems with input. Learners are supposed to be exposed to a great amount of input in the classroom surroundings. However, as the most common source of input, even coursebooks seem to have problems with the presentation of pragmatics, i.e. speech acts (Kasper & Rose, 2001).

## **1.2. Purpose of the Study**

Speech acts are not a new topic for researchers. On the contrary, they have been very popular since their emergence in the late 1960s. The framework of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), which helped the tides in language teaching turn in favor of communication as the ultimate goal, led to speech acts' rising to prominence again because speech acts are the functions of a language.

Despite their popularity in applied linguistics, speech acts have been overlooked in language teaching. First studies on teaching speech acts started to be conducted in the early 1990s with Olshtain and Cohen (1990) and went on with studies such as Billmyer's (1990), King and Silver's (1993) etc. Teaching speech acts is still a favorite topic in the realm and it has begun to offer a wider range of research opportunities since

the number of problematic elements in the dynamic process of teaching speech acts is increasing day by day, waiting to be clarified by researchers.

Another problem waiting to be solved with the help of empirical evidence is the one that lies with course materials, particularly coursebooks. Especially in EFL contexts, coursebooks are the main source of input, putting it in a central position in language teaching. Nevertheless, coursebooks have been found not to include all the necessary input they have to, at least in terms of authenticity and coverage of important aspects of speech acts as a result of the studies on the topic (Bouton, 1996; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Salazar Campillo, 2007; Schmidt, 1994; Uso-Juan, 2007; Vellenga, 2004). A gap which needs to be filled in terms of a close check of coursebooks' adequacy in fulfilling the expectations for the input factor still exists in the field since only one study (Vellenga, 2004) can be said to have a clear-cut focus on speech acts and EFL coursebooks.

To sum up, this study sets out with the aim of clarifying Turkish EFL learners' performances of some specific speech acts such as requests, refusals and complaints and checking the coursebooks with the presentation of the aforementioned speech acts in mind.

### **1.3. Importance of the Study**

As mentioned above, teaching speech acts and evaluation of materials related to the teaching of speech acts are two topics which require further research not only around the world, but also in Turkey. Studies on efficiency of instructional materials have been rare, too (Akpınar, 2009; Crandall & Baştürkmen, 2004). Studies that look into the presentation of speech acts in coursebooks are more common than the efficiency studies in the literature (Bouton, 1996; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Vellenga, 2004). However, they are almost non-existent in Turkey as far as it is known, which makes this study an invaluable contribution to the literature.

This study is expected to turn a new page presenting a new aspect of the teaching of speech acts and to be a step towards providing language teachers with a new perspective on their classroom procedures, especially in the way they make use of coursebooks. It is also a study which can give material developers and coursebook

writers the empirical evidence on which they need to base their concept of materials design. Teacher trainees are another group of language teaching professionals who can gain useful insights into teaching how to communicate in a target language and make use of them throughout their future career thanks to the results that this study comes up with.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

The study looks for answers for the following questions:

1. Do Turkish learners of English at preparatory schools, who undergo intense English programs during at least 8 months, make use of semantic formulas in their request, refusal and complaint realizations?
2. Do the coursebooks that the learners have as input throughout their courses present request, refusal and complaint strategies?

#### **1.5. Limitations of the Study**

This study focuses on some specific speech acts, namely requests, refusals and complaints. Their common feature is that they are all face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and their use is very frequent in communication. Many more speech acts exist in the flow of communication; however, this study focuses on only three of them, which is one of its limitations.

Another limitation of this study is the number of coursebooks that are inspected in it. That is, the number of the coursebooks is limited since it would be impossible to dissect an unlimited number of books in terms of their presentation of speech acts since it would be fruitless.

Some other variables such as gender and age were not top priority in the study, which may have affected the answers given in the discourse completion test. In addition, since intermediate level students were the ones to provide data for the study, it was not possible to draw conclusions for the speech act realization of learners of other proficiency levels. But the diversity of levels gathered under the umbrella of

‘intermediate level’ provided a wide range of data to arrive at various conclusions, at least to some extent.

The last limitation that can be listed is the lack of native speaker data functioning as a baseline for the study. However, this limitation was eliminated with a thorough examination of the relevant literature on requests, refusals and complaints, which provided researchers with clear-cut statements of native speaker norms in the realization of these speech acts.

### 1.6. Definition of Terms

**Communicative Competence:** It is the ability to use the language in a culturally and socially appropriate manner while getting the message across.

**Pragmatics:** Pragmatic refers to a whole consisting of meaning, communicative action, and context, which are closely knit to each other for successful communication.

**Speech Act:** It refers to the smallest functional unit of communication. *Promises, apologies*, etc are examples of speech acts.

**Semantic Formula:** A semantic formula is a set of utterances which enables a speech act to be realized. It is used interchangeably with the term *strategy*.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0. Presentation

The focus of this section is the pertinent literature on the present study. First communicative competence and pragmatics are examined. The latter is covered in detail with the title interlanguage pragmatics. The next focus in the study is the speech act theory, classification of speech acts, politeness theory and a brief examination of speech act sets of request, refusal and complaint. The last part of the section is on teaching pragmatics, speech acts and the role and problems of coursebooks throughout the process.

#### 2.1. Communicative Competence as a Key Concept in ELT

The aims and means of language teaching have been in continuous change since the start of the profession. After the use of various approaches which tried to enable language learners to excel the last destination on this long road seems to be the ones that concentrate on communication. McConachy (2008) states that language teaching models which put an emphasis on communication have a common point. That point is the fact that being competent in a foreign language does not mean knowing all the grammar rules of that language and putting them into the correct order but it rather means being able to communicate in that language properly. In other words, the ultimate aim of language teaching is to have language learners to achieve communicative competence.

As a term ‘communicative competence’ has its roots both in Europe and North America. In Europe the word “*communicative*” was related to instructional programs

which used functional-notional syllabus in 1970s. At the same time in North America, Hymes (1972) suggested the term *communicative competence* to stand for the social use of language and its appropriateness according to sociolinguistic norms as a reaction to Chomsky's definition of linguistic competence. Meanwhile, Savignon used the same term in a research project at the University of Illinois in order to express language learners' ability to interact with other speakers and make meaning (Savignon, 2001). Later on communicative competence was used by Canale and Swain (1980) to define their framework and this definitive term has been in use with the same meaning so far.

Hymes (1972) thought the inadequacies of previous linguistic theories that emphasize linguistic competence lie with their ignorance of the use of language in communication and reported it with the following lines:

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner (p. 277).

Chomsky's concept of competence was on the focus of Hymes' criticism since in language use "some occasions call for being appropriately ungrammatical" (Hymes, 1972, p. 277) while generative grammar dealt with the use of language to a minimum extent. So, he came up with communicative competence, which makes the transmission and interpretation of messages between people in specific contexts possible (Brown, 2000).

Other definitions offered in the literature usually reflect the same point of view. For instance, Munby (1978) states that communicative competence encompasses "the ability to use linguistic forms to perform communicative acts and to understand the communicative functions of sentences and their relationships to other sentences" (p. 26).

Ellis (1994, p. 13) also makes a definition which is in line with Brown (2000), Hymes (1972), Munby (1978) and Savignon (2001):

Communicative competence includes knowledge the speaker-hearer has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behavior and also of what constitutes effective language behavior in relation to particular communicative goals.

Taking communicative competence from its interdisciplinary use and putting it into the language teaching context, Canale and Swain (1980) use ‘communicative competence’ as a term “to refer to the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence, or knowledge of the rules of grammar and sociocultural competence, or knowledge of the rules of language use” (p. 6). They offered a practical three dimensional framework for the concept of communicative competence which is an integrative one. The components are *grammatical competence*, *sociolinguistic competence* and *strategic competence*. *Discourse competence* was added as the fourth dimension by Canale (1983) later.

Grammatical competence is the aspect which is related to the speaker’s knowledge of syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological constructions of the language. In other words, it is “the mastery of the language code (verbal or non-verbal) itself” (Canale, 1983, p. 7). Savignon (2001) adds another perspective by mentioning that grammatical competence is illustrated not in the statement of a rule by the language learner but in his use of the rule in the process of communication.

Sociolinguistic competence is the component that pertains to the social use of the language, i.e. its appropriateness. Furthermore, sociolinguistic competence “addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction” (Canale, 1983, p. 7).

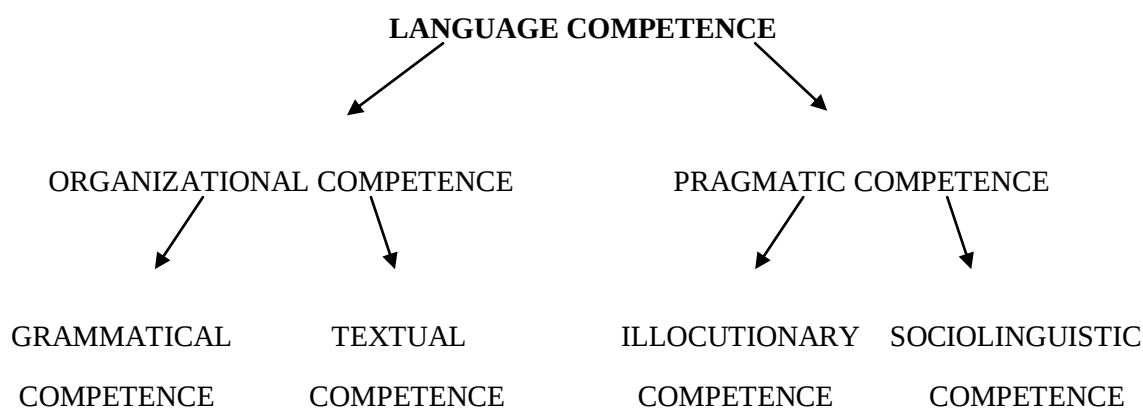
Strategic competence is about the knowledge of both verbal and non-verbal strategies that speakers make use of in order to overcome possible barriers in communication or to make communication more effective. Canale (1983) argues that although strategies used in actual communication are universal and acquired during first language acquisition, second language learners should be taught how to make use of them in their second language use despite many objections to their teaching in the classroom. Savignon (2001) also points out the significance of strategic competence saying that strategic competence is different from the other competencies since it “distinguishes highly competent communicators from those who are less so” (p. 18).

Discourse competence is the last dimension of communicative competence. As Alptekin (2000) puts it, discourse competence deals with the “extended use of language in context” (p. 2). Canale (1983) refers to it as “mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres” (p. 9). In other words, it is the knowledge of the interconnected quality of both spoken and written words and sentences as a meaningful whole in the form of a text. Discourse competence encompasses the knowledge of cohesion and coherence, which are essential concepts for the unity of a text in form and in meaning, respectively.

Along with Canale (1983), Savignon (2001) puts an emphasis on the integrated quality of communicative competence:

All components are interrelated. They cannot be developed or measured in isolation and one cannot go from one component to the other as one string beads to make a necklace. Rather, an increase in one component interacts with the other components to produce a corresponding increase in overall communicative competence (p. 17).

As an alternative to Canale and Swain’s communicative competence model, Bachman suggested a model of communicative language ability (1990). Bachman’s model can be said to be in accordance with other studies done in the field. His framework has three main parts: *language competence*, *strategic competence*, and *psychophysiological mechanisms*. Language competence is divided into two main branches, namely *organizational competence* and *pragmatic competence*. They also have some subcategories which can be seen in Figure 1:



**Figure 1: Components of language competence in Bachman’s model** (Bachman, 1990, p. 87)

There are some differences between Bachman's (1990) communicative ability model and Canale and Swain's (1980) communicative competence framework. Most striking difference is that Bachman regards strategic competence not as a part of language component but as an elementary part of communicative ability itself. Secondly, Bachman presents *textual competence* instead of discourse competence. Thirdly, he breaks sociolinguistic competence of Canale and Swain's framework into two separate parts, first of which deals with the conveyance of intended meanings, namely *illocutionary competence*. The second part, *sociolinguistic competence* refers to sociocultural norms of culture, politeness, register, formality and so on (Brown, 2000).

As Widdowson (as cited in Handford, 2002, p. 2) states: "Understanding what people mean by what they say is not the same as understanding the linguistic expressions they use in saying it". In other words, being competent in a language equals not only knowing grammatical patterns of the target language, but also functioning appropriately, cohesively and strategically correctly with them in the language.

Although communicative approaches to language teaching prevailing among other methods and approaches for the last forty years set their sights on teaching communication in a second or foreign language, there are still problems in practice. Old habits seem to die hard, that is, teaching the social meaning and appropriate use of the target language is still overlooked. However, it does not reduce the significance of sociocultural or pragmatic aspects of a language in the realm of second or foreign language teaching.

## **2.2. Pragmatics**

As a term used not only in the realm of language, but also in philosophy, pragmatics has been defined with two main approaches on the basis of its meaning: The first one is American pragmatism, which was the philosophical tradition of 1930s. The second one which stands for a language philosophy was presented by Wittgenstein and Searle in 1950s. It was later developed into speech act theory and intentionality by Searle and into a theory of meaning and communication by Grice (Mwinyelle, 2005). The part on the focus of this study is the second one; pragmatics as a part of language.

Despite the fact that pragmatics is regarded as an indispensable part of language now, as Mey (1993) states: "...pragmatics didn't just 'happen' by itself, appearing out of nowhere" (p. 18). Prior to the increase in its popularity, there were the stages where linguistics meant phonetics and phonemics and syntax was too abstract a concept to dwell on. In late 1950s, however, the view on language changed in favor of syntax with Chomsky's revolutionary hypothesis, which put an emphasis on its importance in language acquisition. Nevertheless, Chomsky also viewed meaning as "altogether too messy for serious contemplation" (Leech, 1988, p. 1). In early 1960s, new challenges came into existence; for instance, Katz and his collaborators began trying to find ways to put meaning into a linguistic theory. At last, in the beginning of 1970s Lakoff and his supporters caused a shift in previous hypotheses and theories and claimed that "syntax could not be legitimately separated from the study of language use" (Leech, 1988, p. 2). In addition to the linguists from the American branch, linguists such as Firth with the importance he attached to situational meaning and Halliday with his social theory of language from Britain contributed to the process.

It should be noted that steps whose long lasting effects played an important role in the development of pragmatics were taken by philosophers such as John L. Austin, John Searle and Paul Grice along with the linguists pioneering the change in linguistics. In 1962 Austin published *How to Do Things with Words*, which is one of the milestones of the development of pragmatics. His work was followed by another essential work in the realm of pragmatics, Searle's *Speech Acts* (1969). Another important philosopher for the development of pragmatics is Grice with his invaluable contributions.

After all pragmatics got through over those years, "pragmatics has come into its own, and it is here to stay" as Mey puts it (1993, p. 18). As a result of its ever-growing popularity, pragmatics has a wide range of definitions from different points of views. For instance, Fraser (1983) offers a linguistic perspective with his definition stating that "pragmatics is the theory of linguistic communication" (p. 30). Wierzbicka (1991) also focuses on the linguistic aspect; however, she has a much simpler definition for such a complicated concept as pragmatics: "The discipline studying linguistic interaction between 'I' and 'you' is called pragmatics" (p. 5).

Thomas (1995, p. 23) puts an emphasis on "meaning in interaction" since she regards pragmatics as a whole consisting of the contributions of the speaker, the hearer,

the utterance itself and of the context. She also points out that “pragmatics is not about meaning; it is about making meaning, about meaning potential, showing how people negotiate meaning in interaction” (Thomas, 1995, p. 183). Leech’s definition is another one based on meaning and it is usually posited as an essential definition in the realm for pragmatics, to which he refers “as the study of meaning in relation to speech situations” (1988, p. 6).

Grundy (2008) supports a definition of pragmatics which draws attention to the difference between the literal meaning of a speaker’s words and the speaker’s real intention in uttering those words.

From a more pedagogical point of view rather than a linguistic one, Kasper and Rose (2001) define pragmatics as in the following:

In other words, pragmatics is defined as the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context. Communicative action includes not only using speech acts (such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting and requesting), but also engaging in different types of discourse and participating in speech events of varying length and complexity (p. 2).

Mey (1993) asserts that pragmatics has a distinctive quality when compared to other disciplines in linguistics since it deals not only with the output, language, but also with the parties partaking in the process of producing it and the process itself. Thus, he prefers a definition combining the elements in the process of language production with the social aspect: “Pragmatics is the study of the conditions of human language uses as these are determined by the context of society” (Mey, 1993, p. 42). Grundy (2008) offers a compact definition of pragmatics as “the study of the way in which language is appropriate to the contexts in which it is used” (p. 20).

As pragmatics got into exploring pragmatics more and more, new horizons began to appear. One of them is the separation of pragmatic competence into two subcategories suggested by Thomas (1983) and Leech (1988) namely *sociopragmatics* and *pragmalinguistics*. Leech (1988) defines sociopragmatics as the “sociological interface of pragmatics” and pragmalinguistics as “the more linguistic end of pragmatics-where we consider the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions” (pp. 10-11). Kasper and Rose (2001) identify those

resources as pragmatic strategies like directness or indirectness, a lot of linguistic forms which can make changes in communicative acts such as intensifying the meaning. They list speakers' and hearers' concepts of social distance and power, their responsibilities and rights in communicative acts as the resources for sociopragmatics. Cook (2001) illustrates the distinction between these two as "They (interlocutors) further need to know that certain linguistic features collocate in a certain speech style or register (pragmalinguistic knowledge) and that a particular co-occurrence structure is linked to certain social roles and situations (sociopragmatic knowledge)" (p. 84) .

When compared to each other, the territory of sociopragmatics turns out to offer more challenges than pragmalinguistic does, that is, dealing with the former is much more difficult than the latter. Thomas (1983) draws attention to this basic difference as follows:

I suggest that there is an area of pragmatic failure ('pragmalinguistic failure') which is fairly easy to overcome. It is simply a question of highly conventionalized usage which can be taught quite straightforwardly as 'part of the grammar'. The second area ('sociopragmatic failure' is much more difficult to deal with, since it involves the student's system of beliefs as much as his/her knowledge of the language (p. 91).

Similarly, Kasper (2001) regards handling sociopragmatic problems more challenging than pragmalinguistic ones, describing it as "things get murky" (p. 51). However, she asserts that it is caused by the difficulty of identifying a sociopragmatic error while it is much easier to find the pragmalinguistic problem with the help of a single utterance.

It can be inferred that pragmatics has to do with the language in use, which assigns it a vital role in language according to the literature in the field. Hence, its significance is reflected to language acquisition research; pragmatics takes its place as a basic component of a speaker's communicative competence with the term 'pragmatic competence' (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Swain, 1983). Bachman (1990) describes pragmatic competence as a part of communicative language ability which "includes illocutionary competence, or the knowledge the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions

appropriately in a given context” (p. 90). Kasper’s definition is also in line with previous studies: “Pragmatic competence is not a piece of knowledge additional to the learners’ existing grammatical knowledge, but is an organic part of the learners’ communicative competence” (as cited in Edwards & Csizér, 2004, p. 17). Edwards and Csizér define pragmatic competence in terms of its contents as “the knowledge of social, cultural, and discourse conventions that have to be followed in various situations” quoting Edwards and Csizér (2004, p. 17). To sum up, pragmatic competence can be said to be “the ability to perform language functions in context” in its simplest form (Taguchi, 2008, p. 34).

Significance of pragmatic competence is recognized better in examples such as the following one: In an EAP classroom project where the aim was getting students from overseas ready for oral interaction in academic settings, a native speaker student says: ‘Eva, YOU haven’t said much’ to Eva, an overseas student. It is said by a tonic stress on “you” and with a low key falling tone on the rest of the sentence, which means a gentle invitation. However, when asked by the tutor of the class, Eva said that it was a remark made to criticize her lack of participation and that she did not understand it as an invitation to join the discussion more (Clennell, 1999). Wolfson (1983) provides some examples, too. She elaborates on her experiences with her foreign language learners who think Americans are insincere because they offered invitations which were not realized. However, if these language learners had known that in American English invitations are classified into two groups: genuine ones (such as ‘Come over for dinner next Monday’) and utterances formed as invitations used at the end of leave-takings etc (such as ‘let’s have lunch together when you’re available’). These examples clearly illustrate that it requires a speaker to have not only grammatical or lexical knowledge but also pragmatic knowledge to decipher the meaning in utterances. Furthermore, during an interaction with a native speaker, while a linguistic error may not be a problem in the flow of interaction, a pragmatic error may lead to a serious communication breakdown due to misunderstanding, sounding impolite, cold or even insulting. All these failures in a language learner’s attempt to communicate in the target language lead to the failure of the language learning/teaching process, which aims communicatively competent language learners.

When the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic competence is in question, it might come as a surprise that language learners’ being identified as

proficient and competent in grammar does not require them to be competent in pragmatics, which is the common result of the studies conducted (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Kasper & Rose, 1999). As Niezgoda and Röver (2001) point out language learners are likely to produce grammatically complex and correct but pragmatically inappropriate utterances and vice versa, that is, they might produce grammatically incorrect but pragmatically correct utterances. In a research project of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) on language learners of awareness of pragmatic and grammatical errors, it was found that 103 high-proficiency EFL learners identified grammatical errors as more serious than pragmatic errors, which proves the point.

The field of pragmatics has been in continuous change. Thus, it flourishes rapidly, bringing new concepts and ideas into the mix. *Cross-cultural pragmatics* and *interlanguage pragmatics* are two of those concepts which are developing day by day due to the need for them in the realm of pragmatics.

Cross-cultural pragmatics appeared as a reaction to the tendency to get the use of a given language to acquire a universal quality for all the speakers of that language as if there were no differences between those speakers' backgrounds, i.e. native languages and cultures. Hence, cross-cultural pragmatics can be said to be a subdivision of pragmatics which looks into the linguistic action carried out by speakers from different cultural backgrounds (Wierzbicka, 1991).

Since the focus of this study is closer to interlanguage pragmatics rather than cross-cultural pragmatics, the former will be discussed further.

### **2.2.1. Interlanguage Pragmatics**

As for the explanation of interlanguage pragmatics, it seems much better to begin with the emergence and evolution of the term '*interlanguage*' at a glance. The term, which is coined by Selinker (as cited in Ellis, 1994), stands for "the special mental grammars that learners constructed during the course of their development" (p. 44). Trosborg's definition is similar to Selinker's concept of interlanguage. She puts it as "the language system(s) developed by the learners on his/her path to acquire the target language" (Trosborg, 1994, p. 53).

However, throughout twenty years or so after the emergence of interlanguage in the field of second language acquisition, many other definitions have been propounded. One of the most clear-cut definitions is the one given by Ellis (1994) himself, which refers to interlanguage as “the systematic knowledge of an L2 which is independent of both these learners’ L1 and the target language” (p. 710). This version makes interlanguage incline towards acquiring a transitional quality.

The concept of interlanguage was originally posited as an approach to second language acquisition and as Mwinyelle (2005) mentions, it was meant to include some aspects of language such as morphology, syntax, phonology etc. Later on, the term happened to be extended by researchers and the pragmatic aspect was added to the mix, which introduced *interlanguage pragmatics* to the field.

Just like the fact that there are many perspectives to the definition of pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics has been defined from different perspectives. To some, it is a part of SLA research which deals mostly with speech act realizations of non-native speakers (Mwinyelle, 2005). For instance, Kasper and Dahl (1991) suggest that interlanguage pragmatics refers to “nonnative speakers’ comprehension and production of speech acts, and how that L2-related knowledge is acquired” (p. 216). On the other hand, another group of researchers share a broader view of interlanguage pragmatics. As Bardovi-Harlig (1999) puts it, “interlanguage pragmatics deals with the pragmatics of language learners” (p. 678). Kasper and Rose (1999, 2001) are supportive of Bardovi-Harlig’s definition after a review of their previous definitions. They state interlanguage pragmatics is the study of nonnative speakers’ use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge.

The broader view of interlanguage pragmatics seems to be favorable for researchers today as it can be seen from Balcı’s (2009) conclusion based on Alcon and Martínez-Flor’s work: “Interlanguage pragmatics research has focused on describing and explaining learners’ use, perception, and acquisition of second language (L2) pragmatic ability both in L2 and FL contexts” (Balcı, 2009, p. 19). There have been some reviews on interlanguage pragmatics’ area of research, two most recent of whose are Geyer’s (2007) and Balcı’s (2009). They follow the list made by Kasper and Rose (1999 p. 81) on interlanguage pragmatics’ research topics:

1. The perception and comprehension of illocutionary force and politeness;

2. The production of linguistic action;
3. The impact of context variables on choices of conventions of means (semantic formulae or realization strategies) and form (linguistic material used to implement strategic options);
4. Discourse sequencing and conversational management;
5. Pragmatic success and failure;
6. The joint negotiation of illocutionary, referential, and relational goals in interpersonal encounters and institutional settings.

However, it is possible to add another research topic into the list above: teaching L2 pragmatics both in EFL and ESL settings, which has attracted a considerable amount of attention especially for the last ten years. This dimension of interlanguage pragmatics will be discussed in detail in the following parts of this study.

Interlanguage pragmatics has some distinguishing features. For instance, it is an interdisciplinary field since it is both a branch of second language acquisition and a subcategory of pragmatics (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). Furthermore, it covers an area which belongs neither completely to their native language pragmatics nor to the target language pragmatics. As Phillipson, Kellerman, Selinker, Sharwood Smith, and Swain (1990) put it, interlanguage pragmatics has its own characteristics “which differentiate it from source and target culture” (p. 251). Along with its distinctive quality, interlanguage pragmatics has some developmental stages in its emergence offered by Blum-Kulka (1990). They are the message-oriented, unsystematic phase, the IL oriented, potentially systematic phase, and the ultimately and interculturally oriented, potentially systematic phase respectively. In the message oriented-unsystematic phase, which is the beginning, the learner’s main aim is to get his message across. His priority in the communicative act is not grammaticality or acceptability. The next phase, namely, interlanguage oriented, potentially systematic stage is “characterized by both grammatical and pragmalinguistic unacceptability” (Blum-Kulka, 1990, p. 270). That is, the learner’s interlanguage begins to develop pragmatically; however, what he produces may be partially acceptable and partially unacceptable in pragmatic terms. Lastly, in the interculturally oriented, potentially systematic stage, the learner can produce grammatically correct but pragmalinguistically unacceptable utterances. However, it

should be mentioned that these stages are not the compulsory phases in the interlanguage pragmatic development of a language learner, but rather a framework presented for a better understanding of the field, which is numerous research projects aimed to achieve.

Since its mention in the field of second language acquisition research, interlanguage pragmatics has been looked into from different perspectives. Most of the studies have focused on English as L2 with a few exceptions and have been conducted with participants who are nonnative speakers, which contributed to its qualification as a branch of SLA research (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). There have been different approaches and aspects of pragmatics in these studies such as cross-sectional studies, longitudinal ones and studies whose focus was teaching pragmatics.

These studies were compiled by some researchers in the field to offer an insight into the present and future state of research in interlanguage pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Kasper & Rose, 1999; Rose, 2000; Kasper, 2001). According to their reviews, cross-sectional studies outnumber longitudinal studies in the literature, which are really few (Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Bouton, 1992; Ellis, 1992; Siegal, 1994; Cohen, 1997). These longitudinal studies drew attention mainly to alternative aspects of pragmatics such as pragmatic competence, implicature or conversational ability. Thanks to their evaluation, cross-sectional studies, on the other hand, can be said to be numerous (Scarcella, 1979; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Takahashi & DuFon, 1989; Koike, 1996; Takahashi, 1996 etc). These studies' focus was mostly on realization of speech acts; however, some of them had different research topics such as assertiveness (Kerekes, 1992) or pragmatic awareness (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). Studies on certain speech acts will be examined in detail.

This study can be seen as a contribution to interlanguage pragmatics with a cross-sectional quality since it dwells on a certain part of the interlanguage pragmatics of language learners rather than a whole process in itself.

Especially for the last fifteen years research objectives in interlanguage pragmatics have taken a turn towards teaching L2 pragmatics in the classroom and its possibility. In his summary of the literature, Ellis (1994) shows that starting with House and Kasper's (1981) study on discourse markers and strategies, a series of research projects were conducted (Billmyer, 1990; Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Lyster, 1994;

Wildner-Bassett, 1994; Kubota, 1995; Tateyama et al., 1998 Takahashi, 2001 and so on). There will be a part dedicated to teaching pragmatics and speech acts in this study where the pertinent studies are examined more elaborately.

As it can be inferred from the details given about the development of interlanguage pragmatics, it is still a broad field that has many parts waiting for blooming. Nevertheless, speech acts were always its focus and they still occupy a significant part of interlanguage pragmatics research. This study takes on this widely known aspect of interlanguage pragmatics, too. So in the next step a detailed look is given to the speech act phenomenon and its development since its emergence in 1960s.

### **2.3. Speech Acts**

Speech acts have always been popular since their emergence in philosophy with the speech act theory. Their popularity spread to other research fields immediately afterwards, at last making it one of the indispensable parts of linguistics and especially pragmatics.

In order to clarify the concept of ‘speech acts’, many definitions have been suggested by many researchers. Searle (1969), one of the main philosophers behind the theory along with Austin (1962), define speech acts as in the following: “More precisely, the production or issuance of a sentence token under certain conditions is a speech act, and speech acts (of certain kinds to be explained later) are the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication” (Searle, 1969, p. 16). Leech (1988) also points out the ‘action’ aspect of speech acts stating that a speech act is “the utterance as a form of act or activity” (Leech, 1988, p. 14). Grundy (2008) follows Searle’s lead and explains a speech act as “the performative, or action accomplishing aspect of language use, and particularly the (illocutionary) force associated with an utterance” (p. 301).

Different definitions for the term ‘speech act’ are also existent. For instance, Verschueren (1999) comes up with an association of sentences and speech acts and he says “Speech acts are units structurally corresponding to sentences” (p. 22). Cohen (1996), on the other hand, presents a more simplified and practical definition and asserts that “A speech act is a functional unit in communication” (p. 383).

It is possible to come up with various statements on what a speech act is; however, looking into the ‘history’ of speech acts will be more fruitful in the process of gaining an insight into the phenomenon itself.

### 2.3.1. Speech Act Theory

Not a linguist at all, J.L. Austin is known to be the ‘father’ of speech act theory although his ideas were mentioned by other philosophers such as Moore and Wittgenstein previously. According to Thomas (1995) his views on language gained widespread acclaim since he presented his ideas in a very orderly and understandable manner including the main topics of pragmatics in his posthumously published work, *How to Do Things with Words*.

Austin’s (1962) first step on the way to the exploration of speech acts was classifying utterances into two groups: constatives and performatives. He explains his reason for naming some statements as constatives saying that “Not all true or false statements are descriptions, and for this reason I prefer to use the word ‘Constative’” Austin, 1962, p. 3). Thomas (1995) clarifies the term constative and asserts that constatives are simply statements and that “it is a simple matter to establish empirically whether or not the statement is true” (p. 32). To illustrate, “I have only one bag.” is a statement whose truth can be proved very easily. Performatives, on the other hand, are rather complex. Austin (1962, p.5) mentions some utterances which have some features as in the following:

- A. they do not ‘describe’ or ‘report’ or constate anything at all, are not ‘true or false’; and
- B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not be normally be described as, or as ‘just’, saying something.

He names these utterances as performatives, referring to their tight relation with the doing of the action. One of the most illustrative examples for a performative is a marriage vow as in ‘I do’, a simple statement with a lasting effect which is not limited to just saying something but including doing something.

It cannot be denied that Austin's ideas on performative vs. constative had the utmost effect on the concept of language and its use. Nevertheless, there were some problems with distinguishing these two groups of utterances from each other due to a couple of complications, which are listed below:

(i) There is no formal (grammatical) way of distinguishing performative verbs from other sorts of verbs.

(ii) The presence of a performative verb does not guarantee that the specified action is performed.

(iii) There are ways of 'doing things with words' which do not involve using performative verbs (Thomas, 1995, p. 44).

As a result of the problems he encountered in his hypothesis, Austin (1962) transformed his previous ideas into a three-dimension model. He named these aspects as *locutionary acts*, *illocutionary acts*, and *perlocutionary acts*. In his framework, the locutionary act stands for an utterance "which is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference" (Austin, 1962, p. 109). In other words, a locutionary act gives the literal meaning of an utterance. Illocutionary act is described as "utterances which have a certain (conventional) force" (Austin, 1962, p. 109) such as a warning or a promise. A perlocutionary act has a different standing from others, in that, it is about "what we bring about or achieve *by* saying something" (Austin, 1962, p. 109). It is specifically related to the effect of the speech act. For instance, when the statement "It's hot in here." is uttered or written from the locutionary aspect it might refer to the high temperature of the surroundings. When the same statement is interpreted from the illocutionary perspective, it might stand for a request to lower the heat or a complaint depending on the manner in which it is said. If the utterance is succeeded by an action such as the hearer's opening windows etc. in order to reduce the temperature, perlocutionary act dominates the interpretation of the utterance (Cohen, 1996).

Placing performatives on the focus of his schema of speech acts, Austin (1962) went on keeping them in the center of the theory under the name 'illocutionary acts' and subdivided them into some groups: *verdictives*, *exercitives*, *commissives*, *behabitives* and *expositives*. Verdictives are easy to understand due to its name; they are used to state a verdict, usually by a suitable speaker for the position that the act requires, such

as a jury. Secondly, exercitives are “the exercising of powers, right or influence” (Austin, 1962, p. 151), like ordering or warning. The third group, commissives are the acts which commit somebody to do something such as promises, declarations which show intention. Behabitives are the acts which caused difficulty for Austin in his classification. They are the ones related to attitudes and social behavior; apologizing and congratulating set good examples for this problematic group. The last set of illocutionary acts is expositives, which “make plain how our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation, e.g. ‘I reply’ or ‘I argue’.

Austin (1962) also mentions that he has problems with the last two groups and points out a possible need for a new way of classification by saying “I am not putting any of this forward as in the very least definitive” (p. 152). Searle (1969) takes his ‘advice’ and offers another classification of speech acts, which will be introduced in the next section.

### 2.3.2. Classification of Speech Acts

Austin (1962) attempted to change the assumption “to say something is always and simply to state something” (p. 12) to the understanding “to say something is to do something” (p.12). What is important is that, he accomplished it and his success’s solid proof stands still today. The current state of the speech act theory has a lot to do not only with J.L. Austin but also with J. R. Searle, who made Austin’s speech act theory more systematic with the dimensions he replaced, added or adapted.

One of the things Searle (1969) offered in his framework of the speech act theory is his classification of speech acts. Searle (1969) attaches such a great deal of importance to illocutionary acts that he defines an illocutionary act as “the minimal unit of linguistic communication” (1991, p. 254). Searle is not alone in his view of illocutionary acts; Thomas (1995) also notes that “today the term ‘speech act’ is used to mean the same as illocutionary act” (p. 51). So, it is only natural that Searle (1969) places illocutionary acts in the center of his classification.

In his model, Searle (1969) divides illocutionary acts into five categories which are *representatives*, *directives*, *commissives*, *expressives* and *declarations*. Representatives, or assertives are assertions, as the name implies, and “they carry the

values ‘true’ or ‘false’” (Mey, 1993, p. 163). Leech (1988) offers some assertive verbs from English such as *affirm*, *allege*, *forecast*, *predict* etc. The second group, directives encompass usually the speaker’s intention to ‘direct’ the hearer towards something; in other words, with the use of directives, the speaker aims to get the hearer to do something. Sample directives from English language are *ask*, *beg*, *command*, *recommend*, *request* and so on. The next category is commissives, which create an obligation with their use in the person who utters them. Mey (1993) points out that this is what makes a commissive different from a directive; the former forms an obligation in the speaker, whereas the latter forms an obligation in the hearer. The verb *promise* sets a very good example; after the use of a promise, the person who has to bear the responsibility is the speaker himself. Other examples for commissives are *offer*, *promise*, *vow*, etc. The fourth category is expressives. They refer to the acts that “express an inner state of the speaker” (Mey, 1993, p. 165). They are subjective and do not cause a change in the situation that leads to the realization of the act. For instance, when a person apologizes with the phrase “Excuse me!”, no change can be observed in the situation since what’s done is done, as Mey (1993) puts it very well. Sample verbs for expressives are *apologize*, *thank* or *congratulate*. Finally, declarations take their place in Searle’s classification of speech acts. Indeed, declarations are the acts which originally inspired Austin to give some thought to doing things with words (Mey, 1993). They are the ones which alter something with an object or a person through their realization. When a priest says “I declare you to be husband and wife”, there is a change these words lead to, i.e. a change in the marital status of two people and their being a couple. Declarations have some different features than the other illocutionary acts mentioned above, but most important of all is their exclusivity in including the performative verb in the utterance such as ‘I declare...’, ‘I vow...’ or ‘I name...’ while the other acts do not necessarily entail the speech act verb itself in the utterance. As Leech (1988) notes, it is the case in declarations “because on the whole it is important for society, or some social group, to know precisely when that category of speech act has been performed” (p. 179). This version of speech act classification still keeps its value as a basic reference point for speech acts studies-the same goes for this study, too.

Although Searle (1969) himself criticizes Austin (1962) for the “inconsistency and incompleteness” of his grouping (as cited in Mey, 1993, p. 162), he does the same mistake in the classification part of his theory. In addition, there are flaws of the theory

in some aspects (Flowerdew, 1990). However, these should not degrade the speech act theory itself; it has now become commonplace to state that speech act theory had a revolutionary impact in each and every field of language. Its effects have been observed and reflected also in ESL and EFL teaching, which is the topic of another part of the study.

To sum up, since the speech act theory in its most elemental and functional state is important for this study, it is not necessary to delve deeper into the extensive area of speech acts in linguistics and philosophy. It seems more appropriate to set eyes on an aspect of speech acts which is rather complementary in their realizations-in short politeness theory.

### **2.3.3. Politeness Theory**

Thomas (1995, p.51) presents an example which she adapted from Levinson (1983) in order to illustrate the different ways to express a request where the speaker requests the hearer to close the door:

Shut the door!

Could you shut the door?

Did you forget the door?

Put the wood in the hole.

Were you born in a barn?

What do big boys do when they come into a room, Johnny?

There are many factors affecting the way a speaker performs a speech act. One of these can be inferred from the difference between the requests ‘Shut the door!’ and ‘Could you shut the door?’. It is crystal clear that the latter is more ‘polite’ than the former, which paves the way for a detailed examination of the politeness phenomenon.

Politeness has various definitions from different perspectives. For instance, Sifianou (1999) chooses to relate politeness to behavior and asserts that rules of politeness “determine appropriate behavior” (p. 12). Marquez Reiter (2000), on the

other hand, draws attention to the social aspect of politeness and to its being constructed through interaction in a specific social group. She contends that “politeness is thus a form of social interaction, a form that mediates between the individual and the social” (p. 3). Nonetheless, the pragmatic point of view is favored in this study since pragmatics is its main concern. Thomas’s (1995) definition sets a good example for the pragmatic view. She draws her conclusions from the studies of Leech (1988) and Brown and Levinson (1987) and defines politeness as a collection of strategies that a speaker makes use of in order to reach some goals such as being on the same wavelength with the hearer during communication. Similarly, Trosborg (1994) offers a definition based on strategies, but names them as ‘structures’. Quoting Weydt, she defines politeness as a pragmatic mechanism, “in which a variety of structures (including non-verbal and prosodic features) work together according to the speaker’s intention of achieving smooth communication”. However, it is necessary to point out that what this study focuses on is politeness based on verbal features, namely linguistic politeness. Grundy (2008) also suggests a definition, but his version of politeness is a bit far from the definitions that emphasize strategies; he says politeness is “the relationship between how something is said and the addressee’s judgement as to how it should be said” (p. 300). Obviously, there is a wide range of definitions even within pragmatics. It should be borne in mind that all definitions of politeness may make sense to some extent; however, one may not be able to move further unless they are not presented within a framework along with their practical applications. That is what principles and theories of politeness do; they give us that much needed opportunity.

Focus of attention for the last thirty years in the realm of pragmatics, politeness attracted a considerable amount of interest, which resulted in studies trying to systematize it. Consequently, a couple of principles and theories have come to existence in the process, first of which is Cooperative Principle postulated by Grice in 1975. Grice suggested some principles with the name *maxims*, namely, quantity, quality, relation and manner, which served as the criteria for successful communication. He also noted “the importance of politeness as a factor in the account of conversational meaning” (Leech, 1988, p. 18). As Trosborg (1994) and Marquez Reiter (2000) put it, Lakoff (1975) and Leech (1983) followed in his footsteps with some additions to his principle. Lakoff (1975) came up with some rules of politeness, which are:

1. Formality: keep aloof

2. Deference: give options

3. Camaraderie: show sympathy (as cited in Marquez Reiter, 2000, p. 7).

Leech (1983, 1988) added a politeness principle with six maxims, i.e. tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy (Trosborg, 1994). Later in 1978, all these principles were bundled up with new ideas by Brown and Levinson under the title ‘Universals in Language Use: Politeness Phenomena’. Their work has come to be known as the most influential framework so far (Akıncı Akkurt, 2007; Grundy, 2008; Marquez Reiter, 2000; Mwinyelle, 2005; Person, Kreuz, Zwaan & Graesser, 1995; Thomas, 1995), so it seems appropriate to discuss Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory in further detail.

The most striking feature of politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) is its placing the concept of ‘face’ in the center. Originally suggested by Goffman, ‘face’ is supposed to come from Chinese, which is actually accepted by Goffman himself. This Eastern concept was transferred to Western way of thinking (Bargiela-Chiappiani, 2003) and had a counterpart in English language with the idiomatic expressions such as ‘losing face’ or ‘saving face’. The term’s last destination is Brown and Levinson’s well-known politeness theory. Grundy (2008) states that everybody has a face which they put at risk during each social encounter and that it resembles self-esteem. Thomas (1995) sees face as “every individual’s feeling of self-worth or self-image” (p. 169). Similarly, Martı (2006) refers to ‘face’ as “the public self image, reputation, or self-esteem of a person” (p. 1838). Brown and Levinson (1987) define face as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). They assert that face consists of two aspects: *negative face* and *positive face*. Positive face stands for the individual’s wish to be appreciated, respected and approved of. Negative face, on the other hand, means one’s wish to act free of somebody else’s imposition and prevention. In this respect, there are some *face-threatening acts*, which may be problematic in terms of harming the other person’s face. For instance, a complaint might be a FTA for the hearer’s positive face, whereas informing a person about a ban on smoking at a certain place is a FTA for that person’s negative face. Brown and Levinson pinpoint five strategies in order to deal with face threatening acts, namely bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record and not performing the FTA. It should be kept

in mind that these strategies change according to some factors such as power, distance and rating of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Thomas, 1995). Losing 'face' is more likely when a person moves from the first strategy to the fifth one, so "the greater the risk the more polite the strategy employed" (Marquez Reiter, 2000, p. 14).

The first strategy is bald- on record, in which the interactants are under no risk of losing face. That is, the participants are either on close terms with each other or the situation itself is so important that face does not seem like something to be threatened. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that this strategy includes doing an act "in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible" (p. 69). A mother's saying "Turn down the volume, Sue!" to her daughter is a good example for bald-on record strategy.

Positive politeness involves redressing and is shaped around appealing the positive face of the hearer. Grundy (2008) gives the sentence "Got the time, mate?" as an example for positive politeness. The utterance 'mate' implies a close relationship appealing to the hearer's positive face, in other words, his wish to belong.

Negative politeness is another strategy including redressing. It is "oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) hearer's negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 70). For instance, a request from a teacher to a colleague such as "I know you're stuck with papers to mark, but could you substitute for me for two hours?" shows that the speaker does not want to interfere with his/her colleague's freedom, mitigating his/her request.

Off-record strategy is the fourth one; it is alternatively called "hints or non-conventional indirectness" (Marquez Reiter, 2000, p. 14). It is used when there is a serious danger of losing face and the act is carried out ambiguously on purpose. The speaker leaves the interpretation of the utterance to the hearer (Person, et al., 1995). As a result, it depends on the hearer to act according to the hearer's utterance.

The last strategy is not performing the face threatening act at all. The risk of loss of face is too much to take, so the speaker opts out and does not do the act.

Politeness is a core element in communication and it makes great changes in reaching communicative goals. It is such a natural part of our interactions that it is possible to overlook its existence. Politeness is vital in realization of speech acts, too. As a result, it will take its place as a complementary part of the study, which is based on

the examination of some specific speech acts. Those speech acts will be explained in the next section.

#### **2.3.4. Speech Act of Request**

Requests belong to directives in Searle's (1969) classification, which means with a request the speaker wants the hearer to do something for him or her. In other words, the request made is "for the benefit of the speaker" (Trosborg, 1994, p.187). Marquez Reiter (2000) concludes from Bach and Harnish's work and states that there are some types of requests such as requests for attention, for information, for action or for sympathy. However, all of them have the common aspect of the speaker's asking something from the hearer, which leads to the conviction that requests are face threatening acts at the same time. They are said to threaten a person's negative face since there is a certain amount of risk in intruding the hearer's own territory and in the speaker's losing face in case of a refusal of the request (Ellis, 1994; Marquez Reiter, 2000; Schmidt, 1994; Sifianou, 1999; Trosborg, 1994; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008). As a result of their quality as a FTA and their realization's being dependent on some social factors such as the distance between the speaker and the hearer, requests entail a range of strategies and politeness options to choose from (Ellis, 1994). Strategies will be discussed in detail later on.

Structurally, requests have two parts in their formation: the core request or head act and the peripheral elements. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) define the head act as "the minimal unit which can realize a request" (p. 275). In other words, the head act is the part of the request that carries out the role of requesting and that can function on its own without the need for additional features, namely peripheral elements. These peripheral elements are additions to the head act that can "mitigate or aggravate" the force of the request (Sifianou, 1999, p. 99). The first group of these non-essential features is *alerters* which encompass a wide range of options from a form of address or an attention getter such as 'Excuse me'. The second group, supportive moves are the ones which causes a change in the effect of the request such as explanation after or before the head act.

In English, requests take form in some structures such as imperatives, interrogatives, negative interrogatives and declaratives. Imperatives are thought to be inappropriate in most situations because commands and instructions are usually given in imperative forms (Marquez Reiter, 2000). Requests in the form of interrogatives are described as more “socially acceptable” by Sifianou (1999, p. 100) and they are very common in English. Interrogatives as requests have constructions with modals such as “Can you pass the salt?”. It should be added that yes-no questions and wh- questions are the common forms for requests in English. Negative interrogatives are utterances such as “I wouldn’t mind a piece of cake.” (Sifianou, 1999, p. 100). However, they are not as common as interrogatives. Declaratives, which mean ‘statements’ in this case, function as requests, too. “I’d like you to stay with me for a while.” is an example for declarative requests.

Since the emergence of Speech Act Theory and the classification of speech acts by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), researchers have delved into speech acts one by one and they can be said to have found out a great deal about them. Destiny of requests has been shaped in the same way and request strategies have taken their place in language sciences. In order to gain a better insight into the speech act of requests, it is thought that having a look at these strategies will turn out to be fruitful.

#### **2.3.4.1. Request Strategies**

Request strategies have been highlighted as a research area along with politeness of requests since the beginning. Almost all researchers have a certain amount of explanation related to request strategies in their books and articles (Ellis, 1994, 1997; Li, 1998; Marquez Reiter, 2000; Martı, 2006; Sifianou, 1999; Trosborg, 1994; Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008). It has now become commonplace to state that all the careful classification and explanation of request strategies result from Blum-Kulka et al.’s (1989) comprehensive study on requests and apologies, namely Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns Project (CCSARP). They unearthed the strategies that language users make use of during the realization of requests and apologies step by step. So, it is possible to state that the information that Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) obtained from their study serves as a point of departure for this study, too.

Blum-Kulka (1989) started with pinpointing what a request strategy is. They asserted that a request strategy is making the decision on the degree of directness with which the request is to be made. Their criterion in the order of the strategies is the decreasing level of directness. The strategies are *mood derivable*, *explicit performative*, *hedged performative*, *locution derivable*, *want statement*, *suggestory formula*, *preparatory*, *strong hint* and *mild hint*. These strategies are grouped more functionally and they are usually mentioned in that form (Ellis, 1994; Francis, 1997; Han, 2005; Hassal, 2003; Li, 1998; Marquez Reiter, 2000). Distinctive qualities of these strategies along with their examples can be seen in the Table 1.

As Kasper (1989) and Ellis (1997) put it, there are other ways to modify a request along with the strategies classified in terms of directness levels. They are external and internal modification. They are put into action in the use of requests in order to elaborate simple requests (Blum-Kulka, 1990). Internal modifications are connected to the head act of the request and can be seen the form of downgraders and upgraders. The former “mitigate the force of the act”, whereas the latter “increase the degree of coerciveness of the act” (Ellis, 1994, p. 167). External modifications are realized either before or after the head act. They consist of questions and explanations for the request.

Thomas (1995) implied that there are many ways to say something and that the same goes for speech acts. The speaker’s intention emerges in various forms when s/he utters something functioning as a request, which brings researchers to a precise examination of strategies. They are vital for making sense of requests. So, they have an important role in this study, too.

**Table 1: A summary of request strategies in terms of directness levels**

| Level of Directness | Strategy              | Explanation                                                                                                                 | Example                                                                                      |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Direct</b>       | <i>Mood derivable</i> | The grammatical mood of the verb demonstrates the illocutionary force of the request. Imperatives are the most common type. | <p>“<i>Leave me alone!</i>”</p> <p>“<i>The menu please</i>”</p> <p>“<i>You shut up!</i>”</p> |

|                                    |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Conventionally<br/>Indirect</b> | <i>Explicit<br/>performative</i>                             | The illocutionary intent is clearly mentioned with a verb.                                                                                                      | <i>"I am asking you to move your car."</i><br><br><i>"I am telling you to shut up."</i>                                   |
|                                    | <i>Hedged<br/>performative</i>                               | The verb demonstrating the illocutionary intent is replaced with hedging expressions such as modals and verbs expressing intention.                             | <i>"I must/have to ask you to clean the kitchen now."</i><br><br><i>"I'd like you ask you to present a week earlier."</i> |
|                                    | <i>Locution<br/>derivable<br/>(Obligation<br/>statement)</i> | The illocutionary intent is obvious from the semantic meaning of the locution.<br>The obligation of the act to be carried out by the hearers is clearly stated. | <i>"Madam, you'll have to/should/must move your car."</i><br><br><i>"I want you to shut up."</i>                          |
|                                    | <i>Want<br/>statement</i>                                    | The utterance reveals speaker's desire for the act to be carried out by the hearer.                                                                             | <i>"I'd like to borrow your notes for a little while."</i><br><br><i>"I really wish you'd stop bothering me."</i>         |
|                                    | <i>Suggestory<br/>formula</i>                                | The illocutionary intent is stated with a suggestion formula.                                                                                                   | <i>"Let's play a game."</i><br><br><i>"How about cleaning up the kitchen?"</i>                                            |
|                                    | <i>Preparatory<br/>(Query-<br/>preparatory)</i>              | There is a reference to the preparatory elements such as willingness and ability.                                                                               | <i>"Can I borrow your notes?"</i>                                                                                         |

|                                             |                    |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-<br/>conventionally<br/>Indirect</b> |                    |                                                                                                                                                         | <i>"I was wondering if you would give me a lift."</i>                                                                                                                             |
|                                             |                    |                                                                                                                                                         | <i>"Can you draw a horse for me?"</i>                                                                                                                                             |
|                                             | <i>Strong hint</i> | The illocutionary intent is not directly reflected in the utterance, but there are certain elements related to the intent in it.                        | <i>"Will you be going home now?" (intent: getting a lift home)</i><br><br><i>"This game is boring." (intent: get the others to quit the game)</i>                                 |
|                                             | <i>Mild hint</i>   | No obvious relevance can be found between the utterance and the elements of the intent. It is highly contextual and requires a great deal of inference. | <i>"You've been busy here, haven't you?" (intent: getting the hearer to clean the kitchen)</i><br><br><i>"I am a nun." (intent: getting a persistent harasser out of the way)</i> |

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(adapted from Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Ellis, 1994; Han, 2005; Li, 1998; Marquez Reiter, 2000).

#### 2.3.4.2. Previous Studies on Requests

There have been a great number of studies conducted in order to look into the speech act set of request. Suh (1999) associates this huge interest in requests to their frequent use in daily communication "for gaining information, help, or cooperation from others in general" (p. 3). Koike (1989), who chooses another perspective, regards requests as important due to their taking part in L2 learners' possible future interaction in the target language.

Although most studies are based on English as L2, there are also some of them that concentrate on request performances of native speakers of English in some other language such as Jewish, Indonesian, Korean, Spanish, French and Russian (Olshtain &

Blum-Kulka, 1985, as cited in Ellis, 1994; Owen, 2001; Hassal, 2003; Byon, 2004; Cohen & Shively, 2007, respectively). These studies were mostly cross-cultural; they tended to outline the differences between languages in the use of requests.

Due to the comprehensive area covered by research on speech act of request, adopting a selective approach in listing the studies done on requests seems practical. That is, studies conducted with English as L2 are to be mentioned here since this study also focuses on English as the target language.

All studies that deal with speech act of request cover its various aspects i.e. politeness, its strategies, modifications, etc. First studies on requests date back to late 1970s. Schmidt (1994) states that Ervin-Tripp outlined the directives of American English and offered a framework for requests in 1976.

One of the most popular topics is politeness in requests. In a list of studies prepared by Ellis (1994), it is obvious that important conclusions were drawn as a result of some studies such as Scarcella's (1979), Walters' (1979) and Carrell and Konneker's (1981). These studies revealed that learners use a limited range of politeness feature; however, they make clearer distinctions between polite and impolite forms and they are more perceptive. Ellis (1994) also summarized Tanaka and Kawade's (1982) and Tanaka's (1988) studies, which were on the use of politeness strategies in the realization of requests by Japanese learners of English. The result was that both native and non-native speakers are more polite with the increasing social distance. However, the latter are generally less polite. Their requests are also more direct and inappropriate in terms of politeness strategies when compared to native speakers' requests.

Another well-known research area of requests is strategies and modification types in request. As Ellis (1994) explains, Schmidt (1983) carried out a longitudinal study with a Japanese subject named Wes for 3 years in Hawaii. He examined Wes's development of requests and found that he prefers a limited group of formulas in the beginning. Later on, there is an improvement and he has the control of a wide range of request formulas. Nevertheless, he cannot use them appropriately all the time. Another longitudinal study was conducted by Ellis (1992) in classroom settings. The subjects were two boys whose ages are 10 and 11 with Portuguese and Punjabi as their native languages. Throughout the study, they learned to use various request strategies ranging from want statements to strong hints in order to meet their needs in the classroom.

Achiba (2002) studied the development of requests in her daughter in Australia for 17 months. With her increasing interaction with community, development in her use of external modification was observed along with the change in her choice of request strategies. That is, her use of mood derivable decreased while she started using more query preparatory requests. Schauer (2004) is another researcher with a longitudinal study. The subjects are German learners of English who stay in Great Britain for 1 year. He specifically examined the acquisition order of modifiers, which turned out to be heavily linked to their length of stay in Great Britain (Ellis, 1994).

There are also numerous cross-sectional studies based on request strategies and modifiers. For instance, Kim (1995) looked into Korean learners' realization of requests strategies and external modification. The study demonstrated that both native and non-native speakers of English use the same level of directness in their choice of request strategies. However, native speakers mitigate their requests more by making use of internal modification. She also identified that there are some differences between both sides' use of external modification types. Francis's (1997) study was done in an attempt to pinpoint the request strategies used according to social distance factor. The results revealed that most learners prefer want statements in the public office. The rest of the subjects use mood derivable and the preparatory form of requests. In classroom settings both want statements and mood derivable are used equally. Conventionally indirect requests are not used a lot; they are preferred mostly in the advisor's office. On the other hand, non-conventionally indirect requests are very rare.

A lot of studies attached a great deal of importance to the relationship between the learners' level of proficiency and the strategies and modifiers they use. Generally, these studies conclude that the more proficient the learners are, the closer they get to native speaker norms of request (Zıngır Gülten, 2008). Trosborg (1994) proves this point in her study with three groups of Danish learners of English from secondary school, high school and university students. In another study that is cited by Ellis (1994) House and Kasper (1987) identify similar levels of directness with native speakers in request performances of Danish and German learners of English. But their use of downgraders is less frequent when compared to native speakers. Zıngır Gülten (2008) comments on Takahashi and DuFon's (1989) and Hill's (1997) studies, which showed that the higher Japanese learners of English get in their level of proficiency, the more direct patterns in request strategies and that non-native speakers are more direct than the

native speakers . Cole and Anderson's (2001) study offers a different perspective with its longitudinal quality. They gathered data from 35 Japanese high school students who spend certain amount of time in New Zealand or Canada. It is found that they tend to produce more conventionally indirect requests after their stay in those countries, which means that they became more pragmatically aware of the language they have been learning.

A group of studies emphasizes on a common occurrence in non-native speakers' request realization. It is referred to as 'the waffle phenomenon' by Edmonson and House (1991), in other words, verbosity. Ellis (1994) notes that Cathcart (1986), House and Kasper (1987), Faerch and Kasper (1989), Rintell and Mitchell (1989) reached the same conclusion: Non-native speakers of English construct longer request utterances than native speakers do.

There have also been studies which focus on Turkish EFL learners' realization of requests and contrastive analyses of English and Turkish requests. Research areas have been parallel with the ones abroad, i.e. politeness strategies (İrman, 1996; Tolon, 1997), use of requests (Adak, 2003; Martı, 2006; Mengi, 2001; Otçu, 2000; Yıldız, 2001), pragmatic transfer (Mızıkacı, 1991). There are also other perspectives such as looking into the factor of gender in the use of requests (Madak, 2004). Another different area is examining the requests of teacher trainees in teacher education departments (Ünal Kal, 2004). Most of the studies reveal that Turkish speakers of English prefer to be more direct in requests than native speakers (Mızıkacı, 1991; Martı, 2006). In addition, another common point, as stated by (Zıngır Gülten, 2008) is that despite their high-level proficiency, Turkish learners have difficulty in performing requests. These problems usually lie in politeness strategies, directness or indirectness of requests, making use of supportive moves, etc. (Adak, 2003; İrman, 1996; Madak, 2004; Ünal Kal, 2004). Ünal Kal (2004) observed the problem of verbosity also in Turkish speakers, especially in teacher trainees' request performances (Zıngır Gülten, 2008).

In all the studies carried out in search of more information on requests, Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) is by far the most comprehensive and widely-acclaimed study. Its effectiveness in the field of speech act research is reflected in almost all studies, in that, researchers studying on speech act performance make use of its coding schema of requests in the data analysis of their projects (Cohen

& Shively, 2007; Cole & Anderson, 2001; Eslamirasekh, 1993; Francis, 1997; Suh, 1999; Marquez Reiter, 2000; Martı, 2006; Owen, 2001; Zıngır Gülten, 2008). Similarly, the framework outlined with CCSARP acts like a road map in this study, too.

### **2.3.5. Speech Act of Refusal**

Refusal is simply saying no and it refers to the hearer's non-acceptance of an act realized by the speaker (Nguyen, 2006). Felix-Brasdefer (2004) classifies refusals as commissives taking Searle's (1969) grouping of speech acts into account since they commit the speaker to something. They are also regarded as face-threatening acts. Their face threatening quality is more dominant than other speech acts'. Consequently, they require a high level of pragmatic competence in order to be realized (Chen, 1996; Ellis, 1994; Felix-Brasdefer, 2004). Morrow (1995) supports this point by quoting Rubin (1983), who states that "A great deal of knowledge is required to send or receive a message of 'no'" (p. 33). Besides, they encompass more indirectness in their use (Akpınar, 2009; Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990).

Speech act of refusals is particularly distinctive in some ways. First of all, they are different from other speech acts in terms of the side to be threatened by losing face. That is, the hearer is the party at risk of losing face during the refusal performance (Ellis, 1994). Another difference is that a refusal is a part of an 'adjacency pair', which means they are uttered as a response to a group of other speech acts such as invitations or requests (Nguyen, 2006). Thirdly, they are complex since they require a longer sequence of conversation and sociolinguistic factors such as social distance, making them harder to perform (Beebe et al., 1990; Chen, 1996; Felix-Brasdefer, 2004; Sadler & Eröz, 2002).

As Beebe et al, (1990) put, refusals are a "sticking point" (p. 56) for non-native speakers, which makes them essential for language teachers and researchers of cross-cultural communication. Saying 'no' is a kind of art in all languages since its failure will possibly be detrimental to interpersonal relations. As a result, all languages and cultures have different strategies for the act of refusing. Delving into those refusal strategies should prove to be useful for the later stages.

### 2.3.5.1. Refusal Strategies

During an interaction including a refusal how the refusal is worded is much more important than other factors due to this speech act's being 'sensitive'. So, some semantic formulas, which function as strategies in decoding speech acts, have been devised as a result of a great many studies. However, despite all the research projects conducted in the realization of refusals, one of them seems to be dominating the field with the strategies it offers as an outline. In most of the studies on refusals, Beebe et al.'s (1990) framework has been utilized for the data analysis processes (Akpınar, 2009; Felix-Brasdefer, 2004; King & Silver, 1993; Kwon, 2004; Nelson, Carson, Al Batal & Al Bakary, 2002).

Beebe et al. (1990) made use of semantic formulas in their outline and divided refusal strategies into three main groups: *direct refusals*, *indirect refusals* and *adjunct to refusals*. Refusal strategies are as in the following (Beebe et al, 1990, pp. 72-73).

#### I. Direct

- A. Performative (*'I refuse'*)
- B. Nonperformative statement
  - 1. "No"
  - 2. Negative willingness/ability (*'I can't.'* *'I won't.'* *'I don't think so.'*)

#### II. Indirect

- A. Statement of regret (*'I'm sorry...'* *'I feel terrible...'*)
- B. Wish (*'I wish I could help you...'*)
- C. Excuse, reason, explanation (*'My children will be home that night.'* *'I have a headache'*)
- D. Statement of alternative
  - 1. I can do X instead of Y (*'I'd rather'* *'I'd prefer'*)
  - 2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (*'Why don't you ask for someone else?'*)
- E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (*'If you had asked me earlier, I would have...'*)
- F. Promise of future acceptance (*'I'll do it next time.'* *'I promise I'll...'* or *'Next*

time I'll...'-using 'will' of promise or 'promise')

G. Statement of principle ( *'I never do business with friends.'* )

H. Statement of philosophy ( *'One can't be too careful.'* )

I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor

1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester ( *'I won't be any fun tonight'* to refuse an invitation)
2. Guilt trip (waitress to customers who want to sit a while: *'I can't make a living off people who just order coffee.'* )
3. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion) ( *'Who do you think you are?'* *'That's a terrible idea!'* )
4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
5. Let interlocutor off the hook. ( *'Don't worry about it.'* *'That's okay.'*   
 *You don't have to.'* )
6. Self-defense ( *'I'm trying my best.'* *'I'm doing all I can do.'* )

J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal

1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
2. Lack of enthusiasm

K. Avoidance

1. Nonverbal
  - a. Silence
  - b. Hesitation
  - c. Do nothing
  - d. Physical departure
2. Verbal
  - a. Topic switch
  - b. Joke
  - c. Repetition of part of request, etc. ( *'Monday?'* )
  - d. Postponement ( *'I'll think about it.'* )
  - e. Hedging ( *'Gee, I don't know.'* *'I'm not sure.'* )

### *Adjuncts to Refusals*

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement ('That's a good idea...' 'I'd love to...')
2. Statement of empathy ('I realize you are in a difficult situation.')
3. Pause fillers ('uhh' 'well' 'oh' 'uhm')
4. Gratitude/appreciation

As mentioned before, it is really a hard task to say 'no', which leads one to make use of the refusal strategies one way or the other. To illustrate, in a situation where a teacher asks a fellow teacher to substitute for him or her the next day and the hearer does not comply with the request s/he may say: 'I'm sorry but I have a dental appointment that I can't cancel.' The refusal includes negative willingness ('I'm sorry') and a reason to the requester (dental appointment), which enables both participants to save their faces.

Refusals have a great deal of potential as a favorite topic for pragmatics research due to their aforementioned unique features. Nevertheless, the number of studies conducted on refusals is relatively less than the ones on other speech acts such as requests, apologies, etc. (Ellis, 1994). Looking at these studies closer may help useful to demystify this complex speech act.

#### **2.3.5.2. Previous Studies on Refusals**

When a general look is spared at the studies on refusals, one cannot help noticing that all of them are cross-sectional rather than longitudinal (Ellis, 1994). Research of refusals looks like a field that is yet to be flourished.

As Chang (2009) puts it, studies on refusals can be grouped into two: ones that compare languages and that look into refusal performances of nonnative speakers of English.

In the first group, there are some conclusions drawn from those invaluable studies taking place in the literature. For instance, Al-Shalawi's (1997) study on Saudi Arabic refusals demonstrated that Saudi Arabic and American English refusals are

similar in terms of the use of semantic formulas except for the direct use of 'no'. Besides, their explanations have a more collectivistic nature when compared to Americans' individualistic ones, which means Saudis' explanations are related to their families or to their social groups. Lyuh's (1992) study, which is on Korean and American refusals, revealed that Koreans employed more semantic formulas with different contents. They showed less gratitude and more avoidance than Americans. In another study, Nelson et al. (2002) compared Egyptian and Arabic and American English refusals and found that both use similar strategies to reach their aim.

As a result of the cross-cultural refusal studies, the strategy of giving an explanation is found to be common in almost all languages and cultures covered. However, its quality seems to differ. That is, the details given in the explanation parts of refusals are different; Americans and Chinese elaborated theirs with details, whereas Saudis and Koreans avoided it and made vague explanations instead (Chang, 2009).

As for the second group of studies, it is possible to say that they mainly focus on the L2 learners' refusal performance and the effect of their native language on it (Chang, 2009). The most prominent study in the field with the framework of refusal strategies the one carried out by Beebe et al. (1990). Their subjects were 20 Japanese speaking Japanese, 20 Japanese speaking English and 20 Americans speaking English. The data was collected with a Discourse Completion Test consisting of 12 situations, which were designed to elicit refusals to four groups of other speech acts, i.e. requests, invitations, offers and suggestions. Another factor taken into consideration was social status. The results of the study revealed that there are traces of pragmatic transfer in the refusal performance of Japanese speakers of English in terms of the order, frequency and content of the semantic formula they use in their refusals.

Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) drew some conclusions from their previous studies on native and nonnative speaker English refusals. Native languages of the nonnative speakers that provided data in the study were diverse; the languages in question were Korean, Malay, Chinese, Arabic, Thai, Japanese, Bengali, Spanish, Chichewa and Yoruba. The first point made is that nonnative speakers prefer refusals more than native speakers do. Secondly, nonnative speakers use more suggestions than refusals while the situation seems to be the other way round with native speakers. The semantic formulas or strategies both sides are also different although they share some

similarities such as the use of explanations in the act of refusal. The distinction between the two groups is that nonnative speakers do not prefer using alternatives as much as native speakers do, but they tend to choose avoidance as a common strategy instead (Al-Issa, 1998).

Morrow's (1995) focus in his study was effect of instruction on the refusal strategies utilized by nonnative speakers of English. Prior to instruction the subjects, whose native languages ranged in variety, happened to be more direct and less generous in terms of explanation while performing refusals in English. A certain improvement was observed after the instruction phase. Other studies on the same topic were conducted; however, since it is a subject preferred to be discussed later, it is more appropriate to get on with the studies done in Turkey and on Turkish.

Typically, studies on a comparative analysis of Turkish and English refusals along with the ones on Turkish EFL learners' realization of refusals are rare. The research topics are cross-cultural analysis of Turkish and English refusals (Bulut, 2003), bidirectional pragmatic transfer in the use refusals by Turkish users of English (Demir, 2003), a comparative study on refusals by Turkish EFL learners in rural and urban areas (Tekyıldız, 2006). A different perspective is offered by Akpınar's (2009) study, which not only looks into refusal performances of Turkish EFL learners, but also aims to search the effects of instruction on their refusals with the help of theatrical texts. Another study focuses on teacher trainees as its subjects and goes deeper into their performances of refusals of requests (Hergüner, 2009). In addition to these studies, Sadler and Eröz's study, which examines English refusals by native speakers of English, Lao and Turkish, is a significant one. At the end of the study, Turkish subjects were found to be the most conservative in terms of the number of strategies they use. Some patterns such as the order of semantic formulas turned out to be similar between the three groups.

Refusals are common in everyday communication both in target and native languages. However, as it is mentioned previously, they are relatively difficult to perform since 'feelings' are involved in the process to a great extent. If the aim is to get the message across with optimal results, awareness is compulsory. But it is obvious that there is a great deal to cover in the research of refusals; in other words, the unknown territory lies in front of researchers, waiting to be fully explored.

### 2.3.6. Speech Act of Complaint

It is a truth universally acknowledged that complaining is a difficult task even in one's native language. Naturally doing the task in a second language is much more challenging and it requires serious effort to get the message across without the least harm possible.

In Searle's (1969) widely acclaimed classification of speech acts, complaints belong to expressives since performing the speech act of complaint does not aim a change in status; it is simply a statement of dissatisfaction. As for the definition of there are various alternatives offered in the pertinent literature. For instance, Trosborg (1994) clarifies the meaning of a complaint for her study as in the following:

A complaint is defined here as an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the complainer) expresses his/her disapproval, negative feelings etc. towards the state of affairs described in the proposition (the complainable) and for which he/she holds the hearer (the complaine) responsible, either directly or indirectly (pp. 311-312).

Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) explain the speech act of complaining as the speaker's expression of "displeasure or annoyance-censure-as a reaction to a past or ongoing action" (p. 108). In their definition, a complaint also entails the results of the hearer's actions, which affect the speaker besides the speaker's holding the speaker for the consequences at least to some extent. In addition, DeCapua (1989) adds that the speaker's expectation that the hearer has the power to remedy the situation is also significant in the realization of the complaint.

Having a substantial potential to cause damages in relations between people, complaints are classified as a face threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987; DeCapua, 1989; LaForest, 2002; Murphy & Neu, 1996; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Trosborg, 1994). In this sense, its realization involves a great deal of indirectness in order to soften its impact. So, many researchers find it useful to split complaints into two categories (Boxer, 1993; Majam-Finch, 2003).

According to Boxer (1993) in direct complaints, the complainer interacts with the person who is responsible for the complaint or can offer remedy for the offense. As a result, direct complaints have "a high probability of upsetting a situation or a

relationship” (Majam-Finch, 2003, p. 8). An example for direct complaints is a situation where a customer at a restaurant complains about the cold soup he or she is brought to the waiter, who is not responsible for the soup’s being cold but who may help with the solution of the problem. Majam-Finch (2003) asserts that their use is not as frequent as indirect complaints.

Unlike direct complaints, indirect complaints occur when the hearer is not responsible for the offense that the speaker complains about. Boxer (1996) defines an indirect complaint as “the expression of dissatisfaction to an interlocutor about oneself or someone/something that is not present” (p. 219). For instance, when a student complains about the difficulty of an exam to a classmate, it is classified as an indirect complaint. In fact, the basic functions of indirect complaints can be pinpointed as establishing solidarity or building rapport (Boxer, 1993; Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). In American culture, stating a complaint, especially an indirect one, which is likely to be shared by both sides, may function as an opening of a conversation between strangers (Boxer, 1993; Eisenstein Ebsworth et al., 1996). In fact, it is possible to say that they emerge in language use on a daily basis in the form of ‘small talk’.

Despite the common occurrence of indirect complaints in language use, the emphasis in this study is on direct complaints, which are rather thornier both in native language and target language performance.

### **2.3.6.1. Complaint Strategies**

Many researchers refer to semantic formulas or speech act strategies as ‘semantic components’ in their studies when it comes to the speech act of complaint (Murphy & Neu, 1996). It should be borne in mind that these terms are interchangeable in the literature.

Unlike the aforementioned speech acts, i.e. requests and refusals, strategies for complaints have been classified by different researchers in different manners. However, three of them seem to dominate the field (Murphy & Neu, 1996; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Trosborg, 1995). However, the framework that Trosborg (1994, pp.315-319) offers seems to be clear-cut in many ways, which can be seen in the table below:

**Table 2: A summary of complaint strategies**

| <b>Complaint Strategies</b>                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>(presented at levels of increasing directness)</b>           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |
| <i>Situation: Damaged car</i>                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |
| <i>Hearer has borrowed speaker's car and damaged it.</i>        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |
| <i>Speaker complains.</i>                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |
| <b>Category I</b><br><br><b>No Explicit<br/>Reproach</b>        | The complainer implies that s/he knows about the offence and holds the complainees indirectly responsible. Since there is only an imply, the complainees may not know whether an offence is referred to or not. | Strategy 1<br><br><i>Hints</i>            | <i>'My car was in perfect order when I last drove it.'</i>          |
|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           | <i>'There was nothing wrong with my car yesterday.'</i>             |
|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Strategy 2<br><br><i>Annoyance</i>        | <i>'There's a horrible dent in my car.'</i>                         |
|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           | <i>'Oh dear, I've just bought it.'</i>                              |
| <b>Category II</b><br><br><b>Expressions of<br/>Disapproval</b> | The complainer implies that s/he holds the complainees responsible but avoids mentioning him/her as the guilty person. The utterance may include the consequences resulting from the offense.                   | Strategy 3<br><br><i>Ill consequences</i> | <i>'How terrible! Now I won't be able to get to work tomorrow!'</i> |
|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           | <i>'Oh, damn it, I'll lose my insurance bonus now.'</i>             |
|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                           |                                                                     |

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                  |                                         |                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Category III</b><br><br><b>Accusation</b> | The complainer can ask questions and make the complainea a part of the complainable or s/he can directly accuse the complainea with the offense. | Strategy 4<br>Indirect                  | <i>'You borrowed my car last night, didn't you?'</i>                        |
|                                              |                                                                                                                                                  | Strategy 5<br>Direct                    | <i>'What about the dent here, you bumped my car!'</i>                       |
|                                              |                                                                                                                                                  | Strategy 6<br>Modified Blame            | <i>'Honestly, couldn't you have been more careful?'</i>                     |
| <b>Category IV</b><br><br><b>Blame</b>       | It is presupposed that the accused is guilty of the offence. The complainer passes a value judgment on the complainea.                           | Strategy 7<br>Explicit Blame (behavior) | <i>'It's really too bad, you know, going round wrecking people's cars.'</i> |
|                                              |                                                                                                                                                  | Strategy 8<br>Explicit Blame (person)   | <i>'Oh no, not again! You really are thoughtless.'</i>                      |

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In addition to complaint strategies, Murphy and Neu (1996) arrive at some conclusions about the form of complaints in American English. They say that complaints show some characteristics such as "acceptance of partial responsibility, depersonalization of the problem, use of questions, use of mitigators, and use of the pronoun 'we'" (p.205).

Being a complicated speech act set to perform in itself, it can be said that the speech act of complaint is a challenging area to work on.

### 2.3.6.2. Previous Studies on Complaints

When compared to other speech acts, complaints can be described as unexplored territory since studies conducted on complaints are far less than the ones on other speech acts such as requests or refusals. The number of these studies are even less if the ones conducted with subjects as nonnative speakers of English.

In an attempt to pinpoint complaints in American English,, Schaefer carried out a study on discourse and syntax of complaints in American English in 1982 (Majam-Finch, 2003). There have also been studies on interlanguage complaints in the field (Boxer, 1993; DeCapua, 1998; Murphy & Neu, 1996; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1987; Tamanaha, 2003; Tatsuki, 2000; Trosborg, 1994). Cohen (1996) refers to a study conducted in 1987 by Piotrowska, whose subjects were EFL learners in University of Hong Kong. She made use of Schaefer's categories in her research and as a result of the study she adapted the categories in question adding some more categories based on the data gathered. At the same time, Olshtain and Weinbach presented their study on realization of complaints in Hebrew in 1987, which is indeed a milestone in the research of complaints with the five categories of complaint it presents, namely *below the level of reproach, disapproval, complaint, accusation and warning*, and *threat*. (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993). As another nonnative speaker study, Boxer (1993) examined indirect complaints and the answers given to them with Japanese nonnative speakers of English. She found that indirect complaints do not merely function as expressing dissatisfaction, but they also help people open conversations or build rapport and solidarity. She identified six types of answers given to indirect complaints. Trosborg (1994) also studied on complaints. Her subjects were Danish speakers of English and native speakers of English. The data she collected with role-plays demonstrated that performing complaints is really hard for a nonnative speaker due to extensive use of indirect strategies. Danish speakers turned out to be more direct in their complaints and they lacked in the use of supportive moves for justification. In the end, she presented a framework which outlined complaint strategies on a scale of directness. Murphy and Neu (1996) came up with another set of semantic components with their study on Korean speakers of English. They identified four groups of semantic components: *an explanation of purpose, a complaint, justification* and *a candidate solution: request*. The results of the study revealed that both Korean and American speakers of English mostly performed components in the same way; however, they differed in the

‘complaint’ part. The distinction was that the Korean subjects tended towards criticism during their performance of a complaint. DeCapua (1998), whose study was also based on the data gathered from nonnative speakers of English, looked into complaint realizations of German speakers in English. The subjects were American Field Service students in the USA and the data they provided were consistent in terms of the formulas used such as a request or a demand for remedy (Cohen, 1996). Some researchers along with Morrow (1995) carried out some studies on teaching the speech act of complaint, which is the topic of another title in the study

As for the studies conducted in Turkey, they can be described as ‘rare’. An analysis of complaints in terms of politeness in Turkish (Akıncı, 1999), Turkish EFL learners’ use of complaints (Deveci, 2003) and another study on EFL learners’ pragmatic awareness in terms of complaints (Akıncı Akkurt, 2007) are the studies to be listed.

As the most popular of speech acts, requests have been highlighted in pragmatics research for a long time. Refusals and complaints seem to be waiting for their turns. However, when one happens to take a broader look, it is crystal clear that there is still a long way to go for their full disclosure, especially for their nonnative realizations in this global village where people all around the world are struggling to communicate properly and to learn and teach new languages. A more detailed view of the teaching part is given in the next section.

## **2.4. Teaching Pragmatics**

It is common knowledge that pragmatics includes speech acts, conversational implicature and management and sociolinguistic aspects of the language. However, it is also known that their realizations differ between native and non-native speakers. There are some elemental distinctions between them in their use of speech acts, conversational openings and closings, etc. It is also shown in studies that these differences may exist despite learners’ high level of proficiency in the language (Eslamirasekh, 2005; Olshtain & Cohen, 1990). The important point to be made here is that grammatical errors made during communication may be associated with the problems in the learning process and may cause no problems at all, whereas pragmatic errors caused by

pragmatic differences between speakers may lead to a communication breakdown. Examples of possible results of these errors might be the speaker's sounding impolite or unintentionally insulting towards the other speaker (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003).

Since pragmatics is an indispensable part of communication and communication through a language is the ultimate goal of language teaching and learning, teaching pragmatics has been very popular in the field. On the other hand, pragmatics has not always been seen as a basic part of language curriculum, which causes it to be referred as "the secret rules of English" (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003, p.1). Researchers have been hesitant about the concept of pragmatics in language teaching. Research on it has been based on the opportunities offered to language learners for learning pragmatics, the existence of a need for teaching pragmatics and the effect of instruction on learners' pragmatic development (Kasper & Rose, 2001). The commonly shared opinion used to be that adult EFL and ESL learners are perfectly capable of acquiring pragmatic knowledge in a target language since they already have it in their native language. For instance, an adult learner is aware of request strategies in his native tongue, which will enable him to develop pragmatically in the classroom. However, this view overlooked the fact that not only adults but also children, who are not developed in pragmatics in their native language, learn a second or foreign language in classrooms. Another point is that after many cross-cultural studies, speech acts are found to differ in various languages and culture, which means first language pragmatics may not work to the fullest while acquiring the second one. Lastly, as Kasper and Rose (2001) put it, "Learners do not always use what they know" and "Students do not always transfer available knowledge and strategies to new tasks" without a certain amount of intervention in the process (p. 6). Bardovi-Harlig (2001) also adds after a review of studies that "It is clear from this review of representative studies that the empirical evidence shows that learners who have received no specific instruction in L2 pragmatics have noticeably different L2 pragmatic systems than native speakers of the L2" (p. 29). In addition to the discrepancy between native and non-native speakers, Kasper and Rose (2001) assert that some areas in pragmatics cannot be learned without instruction and that some other aspects are "learned more slowly" (p. 8). All this observation of the need for teaching pragmatics in classroom surroundings leads to a conclusion drawn by many researchers in the field: "There is thus a strong indication that instructional

intervention may be facilitative to, or even necessary for, the acquisition of L2 pragmatic ability.” (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p. 8). Schmidt (1993) also supports this opinion stating that only exposing learners to pragmatic input may not be enough for their learning pragmatics. It may result from the fact that pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features of the language may not be noticeable enough for the learners to grab in case of mere exposure (Takimoto, 2007).

After establishing the necessity of teaching pragmatics, its teachability is considered. Debates about both the teachability of pragmatics and the need for teaching pragmatics have led many researchers to look into the prospect in more detail through numerous studies. A general outline of studies conducted in the field is offered by researchers (Kasper, 2001; Rose, 2005; Kasper & Rose, 1999). Rose (2005) states that results of the studies conducted on the teachability of pragmatics are various. For instance, LoCastro (as cited in Rose, 2005) could not find any change occurring after the treatment phase. However, Olshtain and Cohen (1990) asserted that using strategies and taking situational features into consideration are the elements of apologies that can be taught. Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) found that not all elements of the content of the instruction were learned; that is, conversational style was observed to be more open to teaching. Safont’s (2004) study on instruction of requests seems to be in line with Olshtain and Cohen’s (1990); she also found that strategies are possible to teach. Kondo (2004) is another researcher who found that instruction in pragmatics works out well for teaching different refusal strategies. To sum up, the evidence gathered from previous studies demonstrates that pragmatic features are ‘teachable’ (Han, 2005; Kasper & Rose, 1999; Rose, 2005). It directs researchers to another important question whether instruction works out in classroom settings or not.

In addition to the studies above, there are many other studies based on testing the effectiveness of instruction in pragmatics. For instance, Billmyer (1990) found that formal instruction has a positive effect on learners’ realization of compliments. In another study by Morrow (1995), it was found that politeness and clarity levels of the learners’ speech act use of complaints and refusals increased after the study. Results of Pearson’s (2003) study on effects of instruction on four groups of Spanish speech acts revealed that learners receiving instructions performed intensifiers while expressing gratitude and apology and softener in directives at higher levels than the ones who were not instructed. Edwards and Csizér (2004) also carried out an experiment about the

explicit teaching of openings and closings, with high school students in Hungary. Four activities designed for pragmatic instructional purposes were applied in the classrooms by their teachers along with their program. According to the results of the pre and post-test, which were in the form of role-play activities assigned to pairs, the students in the treatment group used more elaborate openings and closings than the ones in the control group which proved that instruction worked effectively. Martínez-Flor and Alcón Soler (2007) proved that instruction makes a difference in EFL learners' awareness of the speech act of suggestion. Similarly, Koike and Pearson (2005), who also conducted a study on suggestions, arrived at the same conclusion as for the effect of instruction in pragmatics. Alcón Soler (2005) is another researcher whose study's results are in accordance with the others' in the literature; she expressed the benefit of instruction in learners' pragmatic development in requests.

Most of the studies done on teaching pragmatics are also connected with another issue, i.e. explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatics. As Kasper and Rose (1999) put it, results of the majority of studies conducted with the comparison of explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatics in mind reveal that explicit teaching is more effective than implicit teaching (Alcón Soler, 2005; House, 1996 as cited in Rose, 2005; Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Tateyama, 2001; Yoshimi, 2001). However, there are some studies which conclude that explicit teaching is effective in certain areas, whereas implicit teaching works in other aspects of pragmatics. Koike and Pearson (2005) report that "the explicit instruction and feedback led to an effect in helping learners to read, interpret, and select the most appropriate pragmatic choices in the multiple choice sections of the tests. By contrast, implicit feedback and possibly implicit instruction led to an effect in these learners' open-ended responses in a dialogic context" (p. 495). Martínez-Flor and Alcón Soler (2007) also explain that both approaches proved to be effective in their study.

It would not be wrong to say that studies which shed light on mysteries of language in terms of pragmatics have also contributed to the teaching process in the classroom. They have provided language teachers with a framework with which they can teach their students not only the mechanical rules of English, but also the rules that will help them stop being 'outsiders' in communication in their second or foreign language (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003).

Along with the aforementioned elements in teaching pragmatics, input is a vital aspect. It is widely known that “without input, acquisition cannot take place” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 31). Bardovi-Harlig (1996, 2001) asserts that the sources of input may be limited especially in EFL contexts; classroom interaction and course materials are the most prominent sources for learners to grab whatever they need during the process. As a very important source, teacher talk may not be enough for learners in the pragmatic sense because teacher-student interaction is doomed. That is, the only model the learner can see is the one between higher status-lower status speakers, which is indisputably insufficient as a form of input. As a result, coursebooks attempt to fill the gap and compensate for lack of input. Nonetheless, they have problems presenting the pragmatic content of the language in real terms; in other words, they fail to meet expectations in terms of authenticity (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001).

However, before delving deeply into the problem of coursebooks, it seems like a better option to take a glance at the concept of teaching speech acts in the classroom settings, which is the core of this study.

#### **2. 4. 1. Teaching Speech Acts**

With the help of the studies mentioned previously, it is possible to speculate that most of the research done in teaching pragmatics has had speech acts as their point of departure (Billmyer, 1990; Morrow, 1995).

Teaching speech acts is important because they form an indispensable part of language use, i.e. functions and their teaching is a crossroads where structure and use meet (Baleghizadeh, 2007; Byon, 2005). Just like other features of pragmatics, speech acts have also been long thought to be acquired by second language learners without a need in instruction. Besides many studies done on the need for teaching pragmatics, Holtgraves (2007) conducted another on speech acts, which looked into the assumption that non-native speakers are able to recognize speech act patterns thanks to their pragmatic ability in L1. However, he found that “speech act activation is not an automatic component of comprehension for people acquiring a second language” (Holtgraves, 2007, p. 595). Holtgraves’ (2007) results lead to the same path as other studies did; teaching speech acts is necessary and can be done.

Although teaching speech acts proves to have a central role in language teaching, there are not so many studies to comment on. One of those studies belongs to Olshtain and Cohen (1990), which can be regarded as the first of the field. The purpose of their study was to look into the change of semantic formulas used by students if there is any, length of utterances and frequency of intensifiers before and after instruction. It also aimed at learners' evaluation of teaching materials along with their judgments of appropriateness in speech act of apologies. Their subjects were 18 adult learners of English, who were native speakers of Hebrew. They collected data with a pre-teaching questionnaire and a post-teaching questionnaire. The former was composed of both discourse completion and appropriateness items. The administration of the questionnaire was followed by three teaching sessions, each of which lasted 20 minutes. After the instruction part, the post-teaching questionnaire was administered. It included discourse completion items based on the ones in the pre-teaching questionnaire with new additions. It also had five questions designed for learners' evaluation of the lessons and materials designed for teaching apologies. At the end of the study it was found that despite the lack of an accurate quantitative improvement, there is a certain amount of improvement in qualitative terms such as types of intensifiers and downgraders, use of strategies and awareness of situations. Besides, learners used shorter utterances while expressing apology, which seems like an answer to the problem of verbosity.

Another study was the one conducted by Billmyer (1990) on compliments. Her aim was to find the answer to the question whether instruction affects learners' production of compliments and replies to them. The subjects in the study, 18 adult Japanese ESL learners were divided into two groups, one of which was tutored in compliments. Data was collected with 'compliment-inducing tasks' in weekly conversation meetings in which the subjects worked in pairs, where one of the partners was American. These performances were recorded and the recordings were transcribed for analysis. The results revealed that the tutored group's performance of compliments got closer to native speaker norms in terms of the production of compliments spontaneously and use of positive adjectives while complimenting.

King and Silver's (1993) study on teaching refusals is another stepping stone in the research of teaching speech acts. They conducted their study with six intermediate level ESL learners and they gathered their data with a discourse questionnaire as the pre and post-test besides a couple of telephone conversations. As a result of the instruction

given for 70 minutes, it turned out that instruction had little effect on the treatment group's performance of refusals; however, their responses demonstrated sensitivity to the level of familiarity in their dialogues. They found a discrepancy between the results of the discourse questionnaire and the conversations, in that, the latter turned out to be less fruitful in the number of strategies that learners used.

Morrow (1995) looked into the effect of instruction on learners' realization of complaints and refusals. Similar to King and Silver's (1993) study, the subjects were intermediate ESL learners and there were twenty of them. Data collection instrument was role-play tasks in the pre-teaching and post-teaching parts and a four-week instruction took place in between. A significant increase in the clarity and politeness of complaints and refusals was observed in the results of the study.

Silva (2003) also conducted a study on teaching speech acts and his was on refusals. His subjects were fourteen low-intermediate learners; seven of them belonged to the control group and the other seven formed the treatment group. Pre-tests and post-tests were applied in the form of role-play tasks based on refusals of invitations. The results of Silva's (2003) study were in line with other studies. That is, there was an obvious improvement in the use of refusal strategies, whose quality showed a tendency towards native speaker use. Furthermore, increase in indirectness levels and in the use of regret statements was noted at the end of the study.

Unlike other studies mentioned so far, Kondo's (2004) study entailed a longer instruction period, which is 12 weeks. The subjects, who were 36 Japanese EFL learners, took the lessons on speech acts once a week and they lasted 90 minutes. Another distinctive quality of this study was that its focus was broader; that is, a wide range of speech acts from compliments to complaints were included in the instruction content. The data was collected by audio taping the classroom discussions on refusals, which followed the stages such as warm-up, thinking stage and doing stage. These recordings were analyzed later and they illustrated that there is an improvement in the variety of refusal strategies and in learners' awareness of the notions of 'face' and politeness.

Safont (2004) dealt with the teaching of requests to EFL learners. The scope of the study was much broader than the previous ones; the number of subjects was 160 and they were beginner and intermediate level students. There was a pre-test and post-test

design in the study. The former was composed of two parts; first part was devised in order to elicit requests from the learners while the second part asked learners to evaluate the give requests and to present alternatives if they want to. After the pre-test, learners were given two oral and two written production tasks along with explicit instruction sessions on requests. Following the instruction phase, a post-test of the same quality with the pre-test was administered. Similar to the other studies in the literature, Safont's (2004) study also illustrated that instruction works well and causes an increase in politeness and indirectness levels of the request formulations used by learners.

The studies pertinent to teaching speech acts are not limited to offering concrete results about the effect of instruction. In some studies researchers view the idea of teaching speech acts from another perspective and put emphasis on classroom applications with their suggestions such as activities for classroom use. For instance, main activities that can be used for teaching speech acts are listed by Cohen and Olshtain (as cited in Cohen, 1996). They offer diagnostic assessment, model dialogues, evaluation of a situation, role-play activities, feedback and discussion as fruitful steps to be involved in lessons throughout the process of teaching speech acts. These steps are also adopted by many other researchers in the field (Baleghizadeh, 2007; Byon, 2005; Garcia, 1996).

In Turkey, studies done on speech acts in coursebooks have been rare and seem to be on its way of being popular. Akpınar (2009) conducted a study on teaching pragmatics; however, her approach was more based on the effect of the instructional materials used rather than the effect of instruction, which makes its discussion necessary in the next section.

As it can be seen clearly from previous studies mentioned above, teaching speech acts is not a far-fetched goal since results of studies in the literature are promising indicating that it is applicable.

#### **2.4.2. Speech Acts in Coursebooks**

As mentioned before, input is another significant point in teaching pragmatics. Naturally, the same goes with teaching speech acts, which makes coursebooks a vital part of instruction in speech acts. Nonetheless, there are problems with the presentation

of speech acts in coursebooks, which is a fact reported by a number of researchers in the realm (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Bouton, 1996; Cohen, 2005; Lee & McChesney, 2000; Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Tateyama, 2001; Wolfson, 1983; Zingir Gülten, 2008). Linguistic competence still seems to be the most emphasized aspect in coursebooks, so there is generally a paucity of speech acts in them. More functional ones include speech acts; however, their authenticity is problematic.

As for authenticity of the speech acts in coursebooks, there are studies with striking results. For instance, Wolfson (1983) asserts that although most coursebooks present *ma'am* or *sir* as the way of addressing people when names are not known, it was found that addressing forms may vary from no address form to endearments such as *dear* or *hon*.

Another illuminating example belongs to Schmidt (1994) who conducted a study on the authenticity of request in ESL coursebooks. He compared native and non-native speaker requests and looked into them in four ESL coursebooks chosen for their emphasis on facilitating communicative competence. The conclusion Schmidt (1994) arrived at was no different; he found that the request types used in conversation by native speakers were not found in the coursebooks. Besides, the ones found were vague in terms of the explanation of the variables affecting the choice of appropriate request type.

One of the most prominent studies on this research topic is Boxer and Pickering's (1995) (as cited in Akpınar, 2009). It was on the problems of coursebooks with the presentation of speech acts, especially complaints. They concluded that coursebooks usually overlooked the social distance factor, presenting complaints realized only between friends instead of offering a wider range of complaints requiring more indirect strategies, i.e. complaints to people from different levels of familiarity.

Bouton (1996) is another researcher who made a point of the lack of authenticity. After a close look at a coursebook, Bouton (1996) found that 80% of the invitations in that coursebook were used only at a rate of 26% in natural conversation.

A more specific approach to the study of coursebooks in terms of speech acts was adopted by Vellenga (2004), who evaluated eight coursebooks, four of which were ESL coursebooks, which were generally grammar-focused books. The other half of the

books were EFL coursebooks and they were integrated skills books. Vellenga (2004) criterion in choosing the coursebooks was the extent to which they were used around the world, which was determined by the representatives of publishing companies. She looked into pragmatic elements and speech acts separately and discovered that the range of speech acts in EFL coursebooks were more limited than the ones in ESL coursebooks. Besides, concepts such as politeness and appropriacy were not mentioned in the texts in coursebooks and situational factors such as social distance, level of familiarity etc. were not included. A noteworthy example is about the presentation of complaints, which are highly face-threatening. However, coursebooks seem to overlook the fact since they provide the learners with rather direct complaints as the norm in English language, whereas previous studies revealed that indirect strategies are more common in their realization. With the importance attached to coursebooks in classroom settings, a mistake in this design could possibly lead learners' wrong use of the speech act. To put it in a nutshell, as Vellenga (2004) states, there is a great deal of improvement for coursebooks to undergo because they lack the appropriate presentation of pragmatic knowledge, i.e. speech acts.

Salazar Campillo (2007) and Usó-Juan (2007) both checked out some coursebooks used in tourism departments in Spain in terms of their presentation of mitigation devices in requests. Salazar Campillo (2007) concluded that although the books included a group of softeners such as *please*, many mitigators were ignored. Taking a picture of the current state of coursebooks, Usó-Juan (2007) drew similar conclusions; she found the books to be insufficient in many aspects such as providing the learners with contextual factors for the production of a request and the necessary input for learning.

Studies that not only refer to the lacking quality of coursebooks but also offer compensations for it can be found in the literature. For example, Crandall and Baştürkmen (2004) conducted a research project where the aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the pragmatic-focused materials devised for the study with requests in mind. Prior to the study, their observation regarding the coursebooks was that their approach to teaching speech acts, if there is any, is the presentation of lists of 'useful expressions' for them, which is against the very nature of speech acts since they are heavily context-bound. So, Crandall and Baştürkmen (2004) developed some pragmatic-focused materials for instruction, tried them out and tested the effects with a

appropriateness questionnaire in requests prior to and following the instruction stage. The results revealed that students' perception of appropriateness of requests became more similar to native speakers' after instruction, which proved the materials to be successful. Another study based on the testing the effect of instructional materials belongs to Akpınar (2009), who carried out her study on refusals and apologies. The materials she adapted for classroom use were based on theatrical texts, whose basic feature is authenticity. As a result of the study, Akpınar (2009) found that learners who were instructed with theatrical texts showed a more significant amount of improvement in the variety of refusal and apology strategies and in sensitivity to situational factors affecting the production of a speech act when compared to the learners who received instruction with the usual coursebook.

As nearly all of the studies done on coursebooks demonstrate, there is a mismatch between what the coursebooks offer and what natural conversation entails. Coursebooks look like they are written on the writers' intuitions rather than the evidence provided by researchers with their studies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Usó-Juan, 2007), which makes it crystal clear that the attitude towards the teaching of pragmatics and speech acts has to change since coursebooks have a fundamental role in teaching a language, particularly a foreign one.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0. Presentation**

This chapter includes the basic information on subjects, the data collection instruments and procedure along with the details on the analysis of the data, which has two aspects, namely the coding of the data collected from the students and the coursebook evaluation phase.

#### **3.1. Subjects**

The subjects of the study were students of TOBB University of Economics and Technology Preparatory School. They were intermediate level students who had been receiving instruction for ten months at the time of data collection. All new students at TOBB ETU have to take the placement exam in the very beginning. The English language program the students are taken into has a tight schedule; the subjects are supposed to attend the 90% of the classes, which are 30 hours a week. 15 hours is allotted as ‘main course’ lessons, where Top Notch and Summit series are used as the coursebook. Reading-Writing and Listening-Speaking are given 10 hours and 5 hours respectively and the coursebook used in those classes are Northstar Reading-Writing and Listening-Speaking series. Their instructors are non-native speakers of English; however, they have American instructors every semester both as a part of the listening-speaking course and as an extra-curricular activity, i.e. conversation clubs. At the end of the three semesters, students at the preparatory school take the institutional TOEFL in order to be regular students in their majors, which range from engineering to economics and business administration.

Prior to the administration of the discourse completion task, a background questionnaire was administered. 90 students took part in the process. Their background in learning English was also included in the questionnaire and it turned out that the majority of them had six to eleven years of experience of learning English. Another item was placed in the questionnaire in order to find out whether they had an experience abroad where English was spoken as a native language. There was only one subject with the abroad experience; however, her length of stay was just one and a half months.

### **3.2. Data Collection Instrument**

The data collection instrument in this study was a written discourse completion task, which is one of the most common instruments in collecting speech act data. Due to its widespread use in the literature, it requires a more detailed look into its features. It is also important to explain the development and the piloting stages of the discourse completion test prior to its administration.

#### **3.2.1. Discourse Completion Tasks**

Discourse completion tasks (DCTs) are brief descriptions of some situations designed to elicit the target speech act. After reading the descriptions, students are expected to fill the slot with the appropriate speech act in the context. They have always been popular with speech act research since their emergence in the field when they were first developed by Levenston and Blum. They were adapted for the elicitation of speech act data for the first time by Blum-Kulka (as cited in Kasper & Dahl, 1991) and have been used in many studies as the data collection instrument in many studies so far (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993).

Discourse completion tasks have played a key role in speech act research not only as the data collection instrument, but also as the very topic of research. That is, studies have been conducted comparing different ways of collecting data in the research of pragmatics (Golato, 2003; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992; Brown, 2001; Hinkel, 1997; Kodama, 1996; Margalef-Boada, 1993; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Rose & Ono,

1995; Sasaki, 1998; Yamashita, 1996; Yuan, 2001). Most of these studies revealed the same results. For instance, it turned out that non-native speakers' utterances were much longer in DCTs than in role-plays due to the use of hesitation and supportive moves. Data collected with DCT tends to be less complex when compared to other instruments such as role-play. It was also found that strategies are used with the same frequency; however, they are less diverse in DCTs. Furthermore, in DCTs subjects are also prone to be more direct since they are not face to face with the people described in the situation (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992).

As all data collection instruments, discourse completion tasks have both advantages and disadvantages to them. Beebe and Cummings (as cited in Kasper & Dahl, 1991) report the advantages as helping the researcher collect speech act data from a greater number of people in a short time, which enables any possible bias to be reduced (Chen, 1995). They are also useful in the classification of the semantic formulas of natural speech easily. The disadvantages, on the other hand, are important, too. First of all, they have some problems in representing the actual wording of the utterance in natural speech, the variety of strategies, the length of the actual response, etc. Secondly, the response given by a subject may be affected by its written nature since it lacks spontaneity to some extent. In addition, Wolfson, Marmor and Jones (as cited in Margalef-Boada, 1993) support Beebe and Cumming's point, raising the question whether it is really possible to regard those written excerpts as the representation of the spoken ones. Similar to Beebe and Cummings and Wolfson et al, Billmyer and Varghese (2000) pinpoint several problems. One of them is the construction of the background for the act of communication, which normally belongs to two interlocutors. They state that subjects are left with two options with a DCT: either to construct that background or opting out of doing it, which will lead to the failure of the test.

Despite all the argument they cause, discourse completion tasks are still a significant data collection instrument in speech act research. In studies that are based on learners' use of strategies instead of exploration of the mechanism in a conversation such as turn taking, etc, which is the also the case here, it is asserted that using a discourse completion task is reasonable (Kasper, as cited in Kwon, 2004). Besides, since this study had a lot of subjects to gather data from in order to be able to draw more

generalized conclusions, a written discourse completion task was the data collection instrument chosen for it.

### **3.2.2. Development of the Discourse Completion Task**

In the construction process of the discourse completion task, the first thing to be done was to look into the studies on speech acts of requests (Eslamirasekh, 1993; Han, 2005; Kim, 1995), refusals (Chen, 1996; Jernigan, 2007; Kwon, 2004; Lauper, 1997; Nelson et al., 2002; Nguyen, 2006; Tanck, 2004; Tekyıldız, 2006) and complaints (Rinnert, Nogami & Iwai, 2006; Tamanaha, 2003; Tanck, 2004). These studies' common feature was the data collection instrument they utilized, namely the discourse completion task. After taking a brief glance at them, it was found that most studies used some definite DCTs, whose reliability is not a question for debate any more. For instance, the DCTs used for the elicitation of requests were usually adapted from the one from the CCSARP project by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). Another commonly used DCT was Beebe et al.'s (1990), whose focus was refusals. The most popular DCT designed for complaints belongs to Olshtain and Weinbach (1993).

Following the review of the studies in the literature, 15 items, 5 items for each speech act, were selected for the discourse completion task of this study. Like the other studies mentioned above, these 15 descriptions were also the adaptations from the original DCTs of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), Beebe et al.'s (1990), and Olshtain and Weinbach (1993). While choosing the items composing the task, the most important criterion was the situations' relevance to a university student's life, so that the subjects would not have difficulty in imagining the situations described in the scenarios (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Jernigan, 2007).

The elimination process of the items was followed by their adaptation. The original content of the items was kept; however, the prompts that the subjects were provided with were taken out in order not to affect their answers. There were studies carried out on whether the existence of the hearer response affected the answers (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Rose as cited in Beebe & Cummings, 1996). Although the results showed no serious distinction between the classical style and the no hearer response

style, the answers written in the latter were found to be longer and inclusive of slightly more supportive moves.

Afterwards, the translation phase took place. The situations were decided to present in the subjects' native language, Turkish because there was a possibility that they would have trouble in understanding the situation properly, which would cause them to opt out of doing what they were asked or would lead them to incorrect assumptions about the situations, causing them to give irrelevant answers (Cole & Anderson, 2001). So, three English language professionals translated the items from English to Turkish. Then, another group of researchers compiled those three translations in the most appropriate way that keeps the original meaning. The draft in Turkish was checked by professors who are experts especially on English-Turkish translation. After the correction of the mistakes they pointed out, the Turkish version of the discourse completion task was taken to Turkish language professionals just in case there were problems hindering comprehension. Their approval was the last step before the pilot study, which is explained in the next section.

### **3.2.3. Pilot Testing of the Discourse Completion Task**

Although piloting has more importance in quantitative studies than in qualitative studies, it can be applied in the latter, too (Dörnyei, 2007). It seemed appropriate to test the discourse completion task in a pilot study prior to its actual administration despite the items' being used in the field in different studies repeatedly before, for the discourse completion task to be used in the study was a compilation and it was originally in English. So, a pilot study was regarded as a useful tool in order to pinpoint the problems likely to arise with it.

The pilot study was conducted again with the students of TOBB University of Economics and Technology Preparatory School. It should be noted that the subjects of the pilot study were different from those who participated in the main study. There were 35 subjects and their proficiency level was slightly higher than the subjects in the main one. Students with a higher level were chosen for the pilot study to identify the scenarios that would not work for the subjects however simple it was to imagine an answer in English in those situations.

The pilot study seemed to function very well, indeed. As a result of the answers taken from the subjects and the feedback received both from the students and the instructors, some changes were done in the discourse completion task. First of all, the DCT was found to be too long with 15 items by the subjects, which was especially pronounced by the instructors that administered the task in their classes. Secondly, no definite time limit was identified for the task. However, it was found that when there was not a certain time limit, the answers for the situations took longer to be written. It meant the subjects' dwelling on the answers too much, which caused the data to get unrealistic. Lastly, some items could achieve to get answers from very few subjects, which led to the idea that those scenarios may not work out in the actual administration of the DCT.

#### **3.2.4. The Last Version of the Discourse Completion Task**

In order to iron out the kinks in the DCT, it was shortened and rearranged in the form of a DCT with 9 situations including 4 requests, 3 complaints 2 refusals (See Appendix A and B). The scenarios included interactions that were realized in places varying from the classroom to an apartment building. The interactants were various, too; the subjects were asked to imagine themselves in conversations with their lecturers, neighbors or friends. There were no specifications about the gender of the speakers in the descriptions of the situations since gender was not regarded as variable in the study. However, degree of familiarity and differences in social status were important elements, for they affect the directness and naturally the strategy used for the realization of the speech act to a great extent. So, as far as the contexts relevant to a university student's life allowed, the contextual factors in the situations were as in the Table 3.

**Table 3: Social status and degree of familiarity of the interactants in the scenarios**

| <b>Situation</b> | <b>Speech Act</b> | <b>The Subjects' Status</b> | <b>Degree of Familiarity</b> |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1                | <i>Request</i>    | lower                       | familiar                     |
| 2                | <i>Request</i>    | equal                       | familiar                     |
| 3                | <i>Request</i>    | equal                       | stranger                     |
| 4                | <i>Request</i>    | higher                      | stranger                     |
| 5                | <i>Refusal</i>    | equal                       | familiar                     |
| 6                | <i>Refusal</i>    | equal                       | close                        |
| 7                | <i>Complaint</i>  | lower                       | familiar                     |
| 8                | <i>Complaint</i>  | equal                       | stranger                     |
| 9                | <i>Complaint</i>  | equal                       | close                        |

Since the realization of a refusal in situation where the subjects were at a lower or higher level seemed out of the limits of this study, having the potential of being the focus of another research project, an equal social status option in both refusal scenarios was preferred.

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

There were two dimensions of data analysis in the study. First dimension was the analysis of the data gathered with the discourse completion task. The other one is the evaluation of the coursebooks on the focus of the study in terms of their inclusion of their presentation of semantic formulas that function as strategies of requests, refusals and complaints.

#### **3.3.1. The Coding of the Discourse Completion Task**

In the coding of the data gathered with DCT, lists of semantic formulas provided by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989), Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) and Trosborg (1994) were used as a road map. Although the speech acts on their focus

are different from each other, they share a common feature: All these outlines of semantic formulas (strategies) adopted levels of directness as their criterion for classifying request, refusal and complaints, which makes the coding of the study more systematic with one criterion in mind.

### 3.3.1.1. Requests

Speech act of request is indisputably the mostly covered speech act in the literature. They are also one of the main parts of this study with the same reason; request is an important speech act because requesting is a principal behavior in language learning. Even the simplest activity done in the target language may require a certain amount of knowledge and when the crucial factors in making a request such as politeness and the status of the people interacting are taken into account, there is a great deal for the learners to tackle.

Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) shed light on requests to a great extent with their extensive study, CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns). They set out to discover request and apology realizations in seven different languages and language varieties, namely Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian French, Danish, German and Hebrew. Their data collection instrument was DCT and they analyzed the data with the coding system they came up with. The framework, which is a great contribution to the field, has been used in many studies as mentioned previously. The same goes for this study; the coding of the requests made by the subjects was done with the help of the coding manual provided by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

While coding the request strategies used by the subjects in the DCTs, some codes were associated with the strategies in order to make the process faster and easier. The first group of strategies, direct ones, was numbered 1 and letters represented each of the strategies. For instance, for the use of *mood derivable*, 1a was used. The second group, conventionally direct, was number 2 and the group non-conventionally indirect was number 3. Another example for the coding of requests can be the following one; the subject's answer for the situation where s/he is supposed to ask for the menu is "Can I take a menu please?". The answer was coded as 2b, 2 referring to the category of

strategies, which is conventionally direct, and *b* referring to the strategy, namely the preparatory (query-preparatory) strategy.

### 3.3.1.2. Refusals

In addition to their being a basic function of language use, refusals are more like a challenge in the speech act research. There are not so many studies on refusals although they play a significant role and are described as “sticking points” by Beebe et al, (1990). The dearth of the studies on refusals may result from the high level of pragmatic competence they require on the learner’s side. However, the very same fact makes the research on refusals worthwhile since they are a whole open sea for researchers; there is a great deal of knowledge waiting to be explored.

The most comprehensive study in terms of the classification of refusal strategies, or semantic formulas, can be said to be Beebe et al.’s (1990). Their grouping of refusals were so clear that it has been used in the coding of both written and oral data gathered in refusal studies, which has been clearly emphasized repeatedly so far.

A similar coding framework was utilized in the decoding of refusals found in the discourse completion tasks in order to facilitate the process of data analysis. *1* and *2* respectively. Letters were assigned to strategies separately such as *a* for statement of regret. For the types of strategies, numbers were used again. To illustrate, when a subject used negative willingness/ability as the refusal strategy, it was coded as 1b.2, in which *1* stands for direct, *b* for nonperformative statement and *.2* for the subcategory negative willingness/ability. A more concrete example can be presented via an answer by a subject, which is produced in response to the request of a usually absent classmate asking for class notes from the subject, who is rather hard-working in taking notes. The subject is expected to refuse the request and one of the subjects does the deed as in the following: “I need them. You were supposed to take notes, too.” The utterance entails two strategies in it. The first part provides the hearer with a reason, so it was coded as 2c (2 for the ‘indirect’ category, *c* for the *reason* strategy). The second part was interpreted as a criticism for the requester and its code was 2i.3 (2 for the ‘indirect’ category, *i* for the strategy group ‘attempt to dissuade interlocutor’ and 3 for the subcategory ‘criticize the request/requester’).

### 3.3.1.3. Complaints

As Tamanaha (2003) explains in his study, speech act of complaint is one of the essential functions of a language. It has its own complexity throughout its production process since it is one of the riskiest speech acts to perform without endangering the hearer's 'face'. Similar to refusals, complaints require finesse in expression, which means familiarity with the norms of the language and culture in which the complaint is performed. So, complaints are another group of speech acts which has been underrated in the field and are worth researching.

Unlike requests and refusals, complaints do not have a certain outline of its strategies. Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) and Trosborg (1994) provided the field with the most prominent classifications and the latter is the one used for the analysis of complaints in this study due its focus being on directness levels.

Complaints can be said to be the most challenging speech act in this study to analyze since they can be realized in various forms by the subjects. The data was coded with the same style of coding with numbers and letters as requests and refusals. 1, 2, 3 and 4 were associated with the main categories that Trosborg (1994) came up with. No Explicit Reproach had only one strategy placed with it, so hints were only numbered. Rest of the categories had two or more strategies, so they were given some letters. For example, in *3b*, category of accusation and the direct strategy can be seen with the codes 3 and *b* respectively. In the situation where the subject complains about the loud music disturbing him or her to the neighbor, an answer such as "I have an exam tomorrow, but I can't concentrate. Could you turn down the music?" was coded as *2b*, in which 2 refers to the second category of complaints, expression of disapproval and *b* stands for strategy of ill consequences.

### 3.3.2. Coursebook Evaluation

The other aspect of the data analysis of the study was coursebook evaluation. There were a total of eleven books to be evaluated. The books, their levels and writers can be seen in Table 4.

In order to make the evaluation process easier, checklists based on the coding schemes used in the discourse completion task analysis previously were prepared. Each book had three sheets of checklists, one for each speech act, i.e. requests, refusals and complaints. The checklists included strategies on the left and units of the book on the top; the evaluation was made unit by unit, for it would give the opportunity to look into each unit in minute detail and it would be much more practical than an evaluation of the book with a general look.

All the books that the subjects were presented as coursebooks throughout three semesters were taken into account since they were one of the indispensable parts of the curriculum adopted in the Foreign Languages Department of TOBB ETU. Weekly schedules are programmed mostly according to the coursebooks in question, which makes them a core element in the subjects' 10-month-long experience of learning English in this particular preparatory school. All the books were published by Pearson Education Inc. in the United States.

**Table 4: List of the books evaluated in the study**

|                                                | <b>Levels</b>          | <b>Writers</b>                             |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Top Notch</i></b>                        | 1                      | Joan Saslow                                |
|                                                | 2                      | Allen Ascher                               |
|                                                | 3                      |                                            |
| <b><i>Summit</i></b>                           | 1                      | Joan Saslow                                |
|                                                | 2                      | Allen Ascher                               |
| <b><i>Northstar Reading and Writing</i></b>    | Basic-Low Intermediate | Natasha Haugnes & Beth Maher               |
|                                                | Intermediate           | Laurie Barton & Carolyn Dupaquier Sardinas |
|                                                | High intermediate      | Andrew K. English & Laura Monahon English  |
| <b><i>Northstar Listening and Speaking</i></b> | Basic-Low Intermediate | Robin Mills & Laurie Frazier               |
|                                                | Intermediate           | Helen S. Solorzano & Jennifer P.L. Schmidt |
|                                                | High intermediate      | Tess Ferree & Kim Sanabria                 |

After checking whether coursebooks included request, refusal and complaint strategies, their presentation was subjected to close scrutiny in order to find out the ways in which they were introduced to the learners, if they were introduced at all. The scope of the evaluation can be said to be a bit broad, for not only the syllabi but also the exercises along with the other parts such as the audioscripts of the listening tasks in the coursebooks were evaluated in terms of the aforementioned criteria.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0. Presentation**

This section of the study provides the analysis of the research carried out. Since the study's foci are twofold, firstly English language learners' performance and secondly the evaluation of their coursebooks, results are revealed and discussed in the same order. After the presentation of the results of the discourse completion task and their interpretation, results of the coursebook evaluation process are shown and discussed step by step. This section is outlined on the basis of research questions of the study, so bringing them back to foreground seems to be a proof of sound judgment. The first question in mind throughout the study was whether learners of English can make use of semantic formulas or strategies of request, refusal and complaint. The other question was on their coursebooks' presentation of the aforementioned speech acts, in other words, on whether they present them properly in terms of authenticity.

#### **4.1. Results of the Discourse Completion Task**

The results of the discourse completion task are compiled under separate titles belonging to each speech act in order to frame the results in a more precise and organized manner.

##### **4.1.1. Use of Request Strategies**

In the discourse completion task that the subjects dealt with, first four items were designed in order to elicit requests. The situations were organized in a way that

they were realistic from a university student's perspective so that it would be easier for the subjects to imagine it and write the utterance with the request.

The first situation's setting was a large classroom. Subjects are expected to ask the professor, who has been teaching the same class for two months, to raise his or her voice. A request from a lower status speaker to a higher status hearer has to take place and it should be kept in mind that there is a certain level of familiarity between the parties, not a close one though. The frequency of the strategies that the subjects made use of in their answers can be seen below:

**Table 5: Frequency of the request strategies used in Situation 1**

| <i>Situation 1: Asking the professor to raise his/her voice</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1a                                                              | 7        | 8        |
| 1d                                                              | 1        | 1        |
| 2a                                                              | 1        | 1        |
| 2b                                                              | 76       | 85       |
| 3a                                                              | 3        | 3        |
| 3b                                                              | 1        | 1        |
| Missing                                                         | 1        | 1        |
| <i>n</i> = 90                                                   |          |          |

As the numbers clearly show, the most common strategy preferred by the subjects is *preparatory (query-preparatory)* strategy. The second strategy in the list is mood derivable, which was used by 7 subjects. 3 out of 90 subjects picked strong hint while *locution derivable (obligation statement)*, *suggestory formula* and *mild hint* are included in 4 subjects' answers.

From those 75 subjects' realization of the request in this situation, it can be inferred that they have adopted some certain patterns in requesting such as “*Could you*

*Speak loudly?*” or “*Would you mind speaking a bit loudly?*”. These 76 subjects also seem to be pragmalinguistically aware, for the tendency in the choice of modal verbs while making a request is towards *could*, which might be in connection with the emphasis put on the distinction between modal verbs in classrooms while teaching making a request. Nevertheless, there were some subjects who preferred to write “*Loudly, please.*” or “*Raise your voice please!*”. Although they tried to soften the request with *please*, they do not seem to have perceived the contextual factors of the situation, i.e. differences in status, which may be a sign of the problems likely to arise in their conversations with a superior. Surprisingly, three subjects used strong hint in order to express their requests. They worded them as “*I can’t hear you!*”, which was not a direct requesting the professor to raise his or her voice. Another indirect request was delivered only by one subject as in the following: “*It’s important to hear you sir.*”, putting the utterance into the ‘mild hint’ group, in other words, the highest level of indirectness. There were other variations such as “*I want you to raise your voice*” or “*If you speak louder, I can understand you clearly.*”, first of which is a locution derivable while the latter is a suggestory formula.

To sum up, the subjects can be said to meet the challenges of a requests in terms of its being a face-threatening act, especially in this very situation due to the lower status-higher status relation with the majority choosing relatively indirect strategies to perform the request.

The second situation is designed as a communicative task taking place between two classmates, whose degree of familiarity can be described as just familiar since they have spoken only once before. They are equal in status, which is supposed to be another effective factor in their answers. The speaker has to perform a request in order to achieve his or her goal, which is getting the classmate’s notes for the quiz since s/he was absent the previous week. Table 6 demonstrates the distribution of the strategies the subjects used.

The subjects who used *preparatory (query-preparatory)* strategy outnumber those who preferred other strategies with a number of 82 subjects choosing the former. 4 subjects regarded *strong hint* as an effective strategy in this situation, whereas *mood derivable* and *want statement* are other choices.

“*Can I borrow/take your notes?*” or “*Can you lend/give me your notes?*” are the most common utterances written by the subjects. Sentences with ‘could’ can also be seen in the answers; however, it is not as common as the ones with ‘can’. Four subjects’ wording was exactly the same when they utilized strong hints in their requests; they wrote “*Do you have notes?*”, which implied the request instead of its direct statement. Two subjects, whose judgment of the situation does not seem sound enough, wrote “*I wish you gave me your notes.*” and “*Give me your notes.*”, which may put the success of their requests at risk since they are more direct and from another point of view, less impolite. Furthermore, nearly half of the subjects chose to elaborate on their requests with reasons such as their being sick or absent without being verbose in their utterances.

The slightly familiar relationship between the parties in the conversation led most subjects to the use of a conventionally indirect strategy and a more indirect one. It is possible to assert that the subjects are able to judge the situation in terms of the contextual factors in question properly and act appropriately.

**Table 6: Frequency of the request strategies used in Situation 2**

| <i>Situation 2: Asking the<br/>classmate for class notes</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1a                                                           | 1        | 1        |
| 1e                                                           | 1        | 1        |
| 2b                                                           | 76       | 85       |
| 3a                                                           | 6        | 6        |
| Missing                                                      | 3        | 4        |

*n* = 90

The third situation in the discourse completion task is the one between two university students who are complete strangers. Subjects are asked to write a request for asking a pen from the other student in the school library. As table 7 illustrates, four strategies stood out in the subjects request performances.

**Table 7: Frequency of the request strategies used in Situation 3**

| <i>Situation 3: Asking for a pen from another student</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1a                                                        | 2        | 2        |
| 1e                                                        | 1        | 1        |
| 2b                                                        | 78       | 85       |
| 3a                                                        | 6        | 3        |
| Missing                                                   | 3        | 3        |

*n*= 90

It is obvious from the numbers given above that *preparatory* (*query-preparatory*) strategy dominated the subjects' choice of a strategy in situation 3. Out of 78 subjects who preferred this strategy 44 of them used "*Can I take/borrow your pen?*" or "*Can you give/lend your pen?*" in their utterances to realize the request function. 6 subjects made use of *strong hint* and wrote their requests using "*Do you have any pens?*" while 2 of them tended towards the opposite direction in terms of directness, namely *mood derivable*, writing "*Please give me your pen*" and "*Pen please.*". The lowest frequency belongs to *want statement*, with only 1 subject wording the request as "*I hope you give me your pen.*"

The results regarding situation 3 also showed that some subjects felt the need to explain why they were asking for a pen. This can be interpreted as an example of verbosity, which is a commonly occurring phenomenon in non-native speakers' speech act realizations since the focus of the request is clear-cut: asking for a pen and possibly getting it. However, 16 subjects found it necessary to state that they needed a pen in order to fill out the form or that they had lost theirs, which may be defined as extra information for the hearer.

The last situation aiming at the production of a request described a very common scene, which takes place at a restaurant. The subject's task is to ask for the menu from the waiter.

**Table 8: Frequency of the request strategies used in Situation 4**

| <i>Situation 4: Asking the waiter for the menu</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1a                                                 | 6        | 7        |
| 1d                                                 | 1        | 1        |
| 1e                                                 | 3        | 3        |
| 2a                                                 | 1        | 1        |
| 2b                                                 | 66       | 74       |
| Missing                                            | 13       | 14       |

---

*n*= 90

Similar to other request situations, the highest frequency was found in the use of *preparatory (query-preparatory)* with 66 subjects. “*Can I take a menu?*” or “*Can you give/bring us a menu?*” were the most common choices as a request while there were some subjects which used the phrase “*May I take a menu?*”, taking its ‘asking for permission’ to a further use. 6 subjects used *mood derivable* most probably due to the fact that the subjects regarded themselves as at a higher level than the waiter most probably due to his occupation as serving customers, in this case, the subjects. “*I want a menu.*” was written by 3 subjects, whereas “*I want you to bring a menu.*” presented itself in only one subject’s answer, putting the two other strategies into the mix, namely *want statement* and *locution derivable* respectively.

A striking detail in the results was the number of the subjects whose answers were classified as no answer’, for they did not correspond to the demands of the situation. That is, they misunderstood the situation and wrote orders for meal instead of a request for asking a menu, which may have resulted from the patterns formed in their minds with the input they had received throughout their experience of learning English. For instance, in the dialogues that coursebooks usually present, when the setting is a restaurant, the conversation typically revolves around the customer’s ordering food, which may condition the learners as it may have done here.

When one happens to have a general look at the request strategies that subjects use, it is possible to draw both positive and negative conclusions. As mentioned before, the subjects can be said to be sensitive to contextual factors such as social distance and differences in social status. The high frequency in the use of indirect strategies demonstrates that they are aware of the fact that the use of indirect strategies lessens the face-threatening effect of the speech act of request. For instance, they know that it is not appropriate to use direct strategies such as mood derivable with people with a higher status. However, it is debatable whether they know this rule and apply it consciously or they use it since preparatory strategy is the most common element in the input they are exposed to, i.e. coursebooks. The latter paves the way to another point which can be expressed as a slightly problematic point. It is crystal clear from the numbers the data analysis revealed that there is a lack of diversity in the strategies used by the subjects. There is a domination of preparatory strategy among the others, which shows that subjects are not accustomed to using non-conventionally indirect strategies as much. In conclusion, the subjects in this study can be said to be successful in making requests appropriately despite having some deficiencies that can be remedied.

#### **4.1.2. Use of Refusal Strategies**

The second group of strategies that were aimed to be elicited belonged to the speech act of refusal. There were two situations that led to the realization of a refusal by subjects and they revolved around familiar topics for a university student just like those designed for requests.

In the first situation there were two classmates talking about class notes, a similar one to the situation 2 in requests. However, this situation differed in that subjects were supposed to produce a refusal for the classmate's request to borrow their notes since they do not want to share them with someone who does not even attend the classes as often as themselves. The frequency of the strategies used in this specific situation can be seen in Table 9:

**Table 9: Frequency of the refusal strategies used in Situation 5**

| <i>Situation 5: Refusing the<br/>classmate who asks for<br/>class notes</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1b.1                                                                        | 2        | 2        |
| 1b.2                                                                        | 3        | 4        |
| 2c                                                                          | 8        | 9        |
| 2d.1                                                                        | 2        | 2        |
| 2g                                                                          | 2        | 2        |
| 2i.1                                                                        | 3        | 4        |
| 2i.2                                                                        | 1        | 1        |
| 2i.3                                                                        | 4        | 6        |
| 2a+2c                                                                       | 12       | 13       |
| [2a+2c]+2i.1/1b.2/2f/2i.3/2g                                                | 17       | 18       |
| [2i.3]+1b.2/2c/2a/2g                                                        | 11       | 12       |
| [1b.2]+2a/2i.1/2d.1/2c/2g/2h                                                | 12       | 13       |
| 2a+2g                                                                       | 1        | 1        |
| [2d.1]+ 2i.1/2c                                                             | 2        | 2        |
| 2c+2i.1                                                                     | 1        | 1        |
| Missing                                                                     | 9        | 10       |

The most significant point in the results of the refusals part of the discourse completion task was that subjects did not prefer to use them separately, but they usually made use of different combinations of them. There were only eight types of strategies that were used on their own by the subjects. They were nonperformative statements, i.e.

'no' and *negative willingness/ability*, *excuse/reason/explanation*, *statement of the alternative*, *statement of principle* and *attempt to dissuade interlocutor*. 25 subjects were identified to use them in this way and their answers ranged from *"I can't give them to you"* to *"I don't prefer to share my notes with others. It is my principle."* Most common these stand-alone strategies were *excuse/reason/explanation* and *criticism of the request/requester* and these ones were also very popular with other answers in different combinations. One of them is the combination of a *statement of regret* and *excuse/reason/explanation*, which was used by 12 subjects. Their answers resembled each other and they were like *"I'm sorry. I lost my notes."* Another widely-used combination is one formed as a *statement of regret+ excuse/reason/explanation+ negative willingness/ability* just like in the statement *"I'm sorry, but I can't lend you my notes because I will study the notes today."* The only variation in these 10 answers was the reason or excuse the subjects provided. 4 subjects made another choice and combined the popular a *statement of regret+excuse/reason/explanation* formula with *criticism of the requester* as in the following: *"I'm sorry but I don't want to give it to you. If you had wanted to get high marks in the exam, you would attend all the courses and take notes."* In fact, *criticism of the requester* was very common in the answers of the subjects; it was seen in 20 subject's refusals in different combinations with *statement of principle* and *statement of regret* along with the one mentioned above. Other uses of strategies worth mentioning here are *guilt trip* and *statement of philosophy*. They may be regarded as more challenging when compared to other strategies, so their use are rare here. Guilt trip was used by only one subject with the utterance *"Of course you can do it but I have to tell you it isn't fair. Am I right?"*, which aims at the requester's conscience. The other rarity was achieved through the use of an idiom, which demonstrates the subject's philosophy in these kinds of exchanges. The answer the subject found appropriate in that context was *"I'm sorry. I don't want to share these with lazy students. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours."*

The second task that subjects had to produce a refusal was designed as a conversation taking place between two friends at the hearer's place. The hearer offers another slice of cake to the subject, which the subject is supposed to refuse since s/he does not really want to eat it. The numbers of the subjects that used each strategy are given in Table 10 along with the strategies themselves.

Unlike the first situation, in the second situation refusals seem to have a tendency towards the use of *excuse/reason/explanation* with 37 subjects using it. The most common reason or excuse subjects presented was “*I’m full.*”, which is understandable in these circumstances. Another prevalent answer is *negative willingness/ability*, which was used by 12 subjects. The rest of the subjects preferred various combinations of strategies such as *excuse/reason+negative willingness/ability* by 7 subjects, *excuse/reason+statement of alternative* by 5 subjects or *excuse/reason+promise of future acceptance* by 3 subjects. The sample statements the subjects provided can be seen below:

“*Thank you very much, but I have already eaten a lot, so I can’t eat anything.*”

(=*excuse/reason+negative willingness/ability*)

“*I’m really full. You can store it in the refrigerator.*”

(=*excuse/reason+statement of alternative*)

“*I’m really full. I will try another day.*”

(=*excuse/reason+promise of future acceptance*)

Along with the others mentioned above, 3 subjects used *statement of negative consequences to the requester* separately and 3 other subjects wrote its combinations with other strategies such as *negative willingness/ability*, *excuse/reason*, and *statement of regret*. One of their answers is as in the following: “*If I eat one more piece, I’m going to blow up.*”

It should also be noted that refusals of most subjects, 56 of them indeed, were accompanied by either thanks or compliments and both of them at times. Their favorite words were “*It is very delicious, but...*” or the well-known “*Thanks/Thank you very much, but...*”.

**Table 10: Frequency of the refusal strategies used in Situation 6**

| <i>Situation 6: Refusing a friend's offer of cake</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1b.2                                                  | 12       | 13       |
| 2c                                                    | 37       | 38       |
| 2d.1                                                  | 2        | 3        |
| 2a+2c                                                 | 2        | 3        |
| [1b.2]+2a/2c/2f/2i.1                                  | 13       | 14       |
| 2f                                                    | 2        | 3        |
| 2c+2f                                                 | 3        | 4        |
| 2c+2d.1                                               | 5        | 6        |
| 2c+2i.1                                               | 1        | 1        |
| 2i.1                                                  | 3        | 4        |
| 2a+2c+2i.1                                            | 1        | 1        |
| 1b.1                                                  | 1        | 1        |
| 1b.1+1b.2                                             | 1        | 1        |
| Missing                                               | 7        | 8        |

*n*= 90

Another point to note is that only 4 subjects made use of *adjunct to refusals* in two refusal situations and all of them preferred a *pause filler*, ‘oh’. However, its lack of use may have resulted from the written form of the discourse completion task.

At least for the first situation, it is easy to say there is a wide range of strategies the subjects made use of. However, their main choices are heavily dominated by a couple of strategies, namely *excuse/reason/explanation*, *criticism of the requester* and *statement of regret*. The answers provided for the second situation offer less variety,

probably because of the circumstances of the situations, being a bit limited for the use of different strategies. However, it is possible to state that the use of other strategies than excuse/reason or negative willingness should be improved since refusals are much more risky than many other speech acts in terms of their face-threatening value and requires a great deal of finesse during their realization. Stating a reason or excuse may not be enough in many situations; the need for making up for the refusal in order to soften its effect may arise, which can be achieved with the use of other strategies such as *setting condition for past acceptance*. So, the speaker may not have to revolve around the same strategies and most significantly, carries out a communication task without losing face.

#### 4.1.3. Use of Complaint Strategies

Being one of the most complex speech acts to perform, complaints were the aimed speech act to be elicited in three situations in the discourse completion task. Due to its face-threatening nature, not only its production but also its analysis proved to be challenging.

The first situation for the elicitation of a complaint was a very usually-occurring one, especially for a student. The subject, who got a C from the final exam despite studying a lot and having got A from the project of the course and who is totally confused about it, wants to complain about his or her mark. The results for this task are given below in Table 11.

30 subjects regarded *annoyance* as appropriate to complain about their unexpectedly low marks. This strategy is relatively indirect and its most important feature is that although the hearer is held responsible for the offense, there is no direct mention of it. The subjects' answers were in line with this feature; they were more or less like the following example: *"I can't understand why I got C although I always studied hard and joined the lessons. I didn't deserve it."* Hints were also another strategy that the subjects picked. In the answers given by 17 subjects it was observed that they found a way to express their thoughts without risking the professor's face; so much so that it was not easy to understand the meaning of complaint in the statements. *"I think that there is a mistake about my grade."* is one of them that can set a good

example of all the other answers. It is mentioned that there is something wrong with the mark; however, the speaker does not hold anyone responsible, which puts the complaint into the *hints* category. 17 subjects, on the other hand, made their choice of strategies from a more direct category, *accusation*. What was found to be common in their answers was the question “*Why did you give me C?*”, which illustrated that they ‘convicted’ the professor of the offense and did not avoid mentioning it. However, there were 4 subjects who similarly thought that the professor is guilty and prefer a more indirect path. Instead of a direct statement of conviction, they use questions to clarify the guilty party such as “*Could you explain why I take C for my exam?*”, “*Why C?*” and “*What did I do? You have got a problem with me?*”.

**Table 11: Frequency of the complaint strategies used in Situation 7**

| <i>Situation 7:</i>                                    |          |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Complaining about the low mark to the professor</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
| 1                                                      | 17       | 18       |
| 2a                                                     | 30       | 34       |
| 3a                                                     | 4        | 5        |
| 3b                                                     | 17       | 18       |
| 4b                                                     | 1        | 1        |
| 4c                                                     | 4        | 5        |
| No complaints                                          | 14       | 15       |
| Missing                                                | 3        | 4        |

*n*= 90

Another striking point related to the results gathered for situation 7 was that 14 subjects simply wrote requests which did not include any meaning of complaint although the situation was described in minute detail for the elicitation of a complaint.

It is worth mentioning that 5 subjects used the most direct strategies, in the *blame* category, to express their thoughts to the professor. Four of them expressed their thoughts in the harshest way, directly blaming the professor himself or herself, whereas one of them put the blame on the professor's behavior, which can be defined as inappropriate due to the differences between social statuses. In addition, some of the complaints had requests with them, which can be interpreted as the demand for repair made by the complainer.

The second complaint situation took place in an apartment building and the complaineer was another university student who was listening to music so loudly that it disturbed the speaker, who had an important exam the following day and had to study. Subjects were asked to write what they would say in such a situation. The answers were distributed as in Table 12.

The highest frequency belongs to a strategy in category of *expressions of disapproval* and they are used when possible negative consequences of the offense are made known by the subject, which is an indirect way to express a complaint. Here, these 43 subjects made their complaints by stating that the loud music prevented them from studying with sentences such as "*I can't concentrate/study.*" or "*The noise is disturbing me.*" They make sense in the given situation and have a great potential to meet their needs for conveying the meaning of a complaint without taking too many risks. Nevertheless, an important amount of subjects, namely 25 of them, did not prefer to perform a complaint, but requests and threats instead. Their aim was most probably asking for the repair of the offense; however, they did it only with the help of different methods. The other strategies applied by the subjects are more direct ones; for instance, 6 subjects used *accusation* with a *direct* strategy in order to make themselves clear. A sample statement with this semantic formula is was "*Stop it! I have to study. OK?*". With *explicit blaming of the behavior*, 4 subjects expressed their thoughts while 3 of them made use of *explicit blaming of the person*. Their choice of words was generally "*The sound is disturbing me.*" for the former and "*You're very rude. Close the music.*" for the latter. It is also important to note that almost all the complaints made by the subjects had requests or threats preceding or following them as a demand of repair like "*Could you turn down the music?*".

**Table 12: Frequency of the complaint strategies used in Situation 8**

| <i>Situation 8: Complaining<br/>about loud music to the<br/>neighbor</i> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1                                                                        | 1        | 1        |
| 2a                                                                       | 1        | 1        |
| 2b                                                                       | 43       | 48       |
| 3a                                                                       | 1        | 1        |
| 3b                                                                       | 6        | 7        |
| 4a                                                                       | 1        | 1        |
| 4b                                                                       | 4        | 5        |
| 4c                                                                       | 3        | 4        |
| Request or Threat                                                        | 25       | 26       |
| Missing                                                                  | 5        | 6        |

*n* = 90

The last situation built on complaints was between two roommates who started to share the same house with a deal on being quiet after 11.30 p.m. However, the hearer began coming home late every night and making a lot of noise. After putting up with the noise for a few days, the speaker, who is the subject, decided to say something about it. The results of the analysis of the data gathered from this situation can be seen in Table 13.

**Table 13: Frequency of the complaint strategies used in Situation 9**

| <b>Situation 9:</b>                                   |          |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b><i>Complaining about noise to the roommate</i></b> | <b>f</b> | <b>%</b> |
| 1                                                     | 2        | 2        |
| 2a                                                    | 2        | 2        |
| 3a                                                    | 5        | 6        |
| 3b                                                    | 2        | 2        |
| 4a                                                    | 33       | 37       |
| 4b                                                    | 20       | 22       |
| 4c                                                    | 8        | 9        |
| Request or Threat                                     | 15       | 16       |
| Missing                                               | 3        | 4        |
| <i>n</i> = 90                                         |          |          |

As the numbers above reveal, the style of making a complaint apparently underwent a great change towards more direct strategies since 33 subjects wrote answers that included *modified blame*, which means they not only complained about the offense directly but also added a value judgment to their statements. These subjects' common utterance was "*We made a deal. You have to obey the rules.*". There are also answers that show further directness than modified blame. 20 subjects made use of explicit blaming of behavior making sentences such as "*I can't stand this behavior.*" or "*Your behavior isn't acceptable.*" putting a definitive quality of the behavior of the complaine. Similar to the previous situation, 15 subjects chose to use requests like "*Don't be late anymore*" or threats such as "*If you do this again, you will leave the home.*" as a complaint but they cannot said to have performed the speech act itself. 8 subjects used the most direct way of making a complaint, an *explicit blaming of person*. Nonetheless, milder strategies were found, too. For example, 5 subjects wrote sentences such as "*I suppose we talked about this situation, don't you remember?*" and 2 subjects

picked a more indirect route; they made do with expressing *annoyance* as in “*I need some quiet places for studying.*” In addition to the aforementioned strategies, there was a widespread use of requests and threats to ‘support’ the point of the complaint.

As for the use of complaint strategies, it is easy to say claim that the subjects have a great deal to do in terms of complaining since in some situations it was nearly impossible to categorize the utterances. Although they can said to be perform a complaint appropriately in some situations such as the noisy neighbor, it is indisputable that they still need more guidance in the realization of speech acts. That is, they dared using even explicit blaming of the person, which may increase its face-threatening value, let alone decrease it. Another point to ponder is the variety of the strategies the subjects used. In fact, there is a paucity of different strategies, limiting them to a few of them such as statement of ill consequences or annoyance.

To put it in a nutshell, the subjects turned out to have both positive and negative qualities in the use of request, refusal and complaint strategies. They may have acquired these qualities from different sources of exposure; however, a look into their main source, namely coursebooks, as previously mentioned, is taken into consideration in the next section.

## **4.2. Results of the Coursebook Evaluation**

There were eleven books that the subjects of the study had as their coursebooks throughout three semesters at the preparatory English program. It seemed like a better option to deal with them separately since all sets of books had their own patterns, which would make their evaluation both easier and systematic.

### **4.2.1. Top Notch Series**

Top Notch series comprised of three books which were the main coursebooks of the subjects for one and a half semesters. The series took the 15 hours of a total of 30 hours in the classroom.

Top Notch series were designed as an integrative book; it had all four language skills along with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Besides, in their syllabi they had a bonus component, which was named as *conversation strategies* in the first two books and as *social language* in the last book. So, the series can be said to put an emphasis on communication via English rather than the knowledge of grammar rules of English.

The books in the series followed a similar pattern; there were 10 units in each and every unit comprised 4 lessons and a preview part. In the preview section, there were two parts: *topic preview*, which was used as a tool to familiarize the learners with the context of the unit and *sound bites*, which was a dialog designed as an introduction both to the context and aims of the unit. The following four lessons revolved around the unit's grammar point and vocabulary items along with their practice through skill-based exercises, i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing activities. The units were concluded with *checkpoint* sections, which can be regarded as the wrap-up parts of each unit. There were also *grammar booster* sections, which were normally designed as learners' self-help pages including detailed explanations of grammar points. However, since the weekly schedules prepared by the Foreign Languages Department involved them actively in the classroom activities, they were the indispensable parts of the lessons, which led to their being included also in the evaluation process.

#### 4.2.1.1. Requests

In order to explore the extent to which request strategies were covered in the books, every single part of them that was exposed to the learners was examined. The scope of the evaluation ranged from the texts in all sections to the audioscripts of the listening activities. The strategies used in the analysis of the discourse completion task were the baseline for their evaluation, too. This close inspection of the books revealed the results given in Table 14.

As it can be seen from the numbers below, *preparatory* strategy is the most commonly used strategy in the Top Notch series with a repetition of 74 times. It is followed by *mood derivable*, which was seen 56 times in the books. Another important strategy in the books is *want statement* with 45 samples. Four other strategies, i.e.

*strong hint, suggestory formula, locution derivable* and *hedged performative*, were found; however, they were rare since they were only mentioned 5 times throughout the all three books.

**Table 14: Frequency of request strategies in Top Notch series**

| <i>Requests</i> | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i> | <i>1c</i> | <i>1d</i> | <i>1e</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Top Notch 1     | 9         | -         | -         | -         | 15        | 1         | 9         | 1         | -         |
| Top Notch 2     | 13        | -         | 1         | 1         | 18        | 1         | 33        | 1         | -         |
| Top Notch 3     | 34        | -         | -         | -         | 12        | -         | 32        | -         | -         |
| <b>Total</b>    | 56        | 0         | 1         | 1         | 45        | 2         | 74        | 2         | 0         |

The distribution of strategies did not show a certain pattern; it may have been shaped depending on the context of the units. For instance, in the first book, most of the examples of a *want statement* were found in three units, whose contexts revolved around ordering at a restaurant, shopping for clothes and using transportation. So, the dialogs in these units were full of statements such as “*I’ll have the pasta for the main course.*” or “*I need a limousine.*”

However, it was not the same for the use of *preparatory* strategy. It was possible to find its samples almost in all units of all books; its use was that common. Preparatory semantic formulas ranged from questions such as “*Can you help me?*” to more polite versions like “*Would it be possible to get these pictured framed by next week?*” or “*Would you be nice enough to gift wrap it for me?*”.

Similarly, the other common strategy, *mood derivable* did not follow a pattern in its appearance in all the three books. The samples of mood derivable were easy to identify since it made itself visible in short utterances such as “*Two tickets, please.*”, “*Fill it up, please, with regular.*” or “*Please tell me about your qualifications.*” As it is obvious from the table, there were too many of them especially in the third book in the unit whose context was based on natural disasters and they were mostly used to list the precautions to be taken prior to a possible natural disaster.

The ‘rare’ strategies are also worth mentioning. “*Let’s talk first about you and your brother.*” and “*Let’s stop by the drugstore and get some of that Hawaii Bronzer before we get to the beach.*” were the samples of *suggestory formula* provided in the dialogs. The other strategy used in the books twice was *strong hint*. One of the examples is the sentence “*I don’t see any menus on those tables.*”, which left just a hint to the request rather than directly wording it as “Can you bring the menu?” Another example is “*Dave, I’m going to need some help here.*”, which was uttered by a woman in need of help with a problem in her computer to a colleague. She did not ask for help more directly like “Can you help me?” but used this semantic formula instead. Other difficult-to-find strategies were worded as “*I’ll need to see your driver’s license and a major credit card.*”, which functioned as a *hedged performative* in a dialog between a customer and a rental car agent. Another unique strategy found in Top Notch series was *locution derivable* and it was said by another customer at a beauty salon to a receptionist as in the following: “*I have to cancel my appointment.*”

It should also be noted that requests were mentioned once or twice in the syllabus of each book and those units turned out to be the ones in which larger numbers of request strategies were found. Besides, requests are found both in dialogs and in sections such as *useful language* in speaking activities.

To sum up, it is possible to say that Top Notch series are rich in terms of the number of request strategies they provide. However, it is not so easy to say that the same goes with their diversity. The distribution of the strategies demonstrates that three strategy types dominate the field, which may lead to various consequences.

#### 4.2.1.2. Refusals

Similar to what was done with requests, the same coding scheme was used in the evaluation of the books in terms of refusals. However, since they differed in their much more detailed classification and in their nature which requires different combinations, a string of utterances was used as a single statement. In order to make the understanding of refusals in Top Notch series clearer, those utterances were divided and put into their rightful categories. In Table 15, 16 and 17. The results are shown in a different manner,

with each group of strategies having independent tables due to the reasons mentioned above.

**Table 15: Frequency of direct refusal strategies in Top Notch series**

| <i>Refusals-Direct</i> | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i>   |             |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
|                        |           | <i>1b.1</i> | <i>1b.2</i> |
| Top Notch 1            | -         | 4           | 4           |
| Top Notch 2            | -         | 2           | 6           |
| Top Notch 3            | -         | -           | 1           |
| <b>Total</b>           | 0         | 6           | 11          |

As it seen from Table 4.11., *nonperformative statement* of a refusal is preferred in Top Notch series. ‘No’ is included only 6 times, whereas utterances which are the variations of *negative willingness/ability* such as “*I can’t.*” or “*I don’t think so.*” were found 11 items in the texts provided in all Top Notch books.

**Table 16: Frequency of indirect refusal strategies in Top Notch series**

| <i>Refusals-Indirect</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>2c</i> | <i>2d</i> | <i>2e</i> | <i>2f</i> | <i>2g</i> | <i>2h</i> | <i>2i</i> | <i>2j</i> | <i>2k</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Top Notch 1              | 3         | -         | 9         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | -         |
| Top Notch 2              | 1         | -         | 7         | 4         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 2         | -         | 3         |
| Top Notch 3              | -         | -         | 2         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |
| <b>Total</b>             | 4         | 0         | 18        | 4         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 3         | 0         | 3         |

The second group of refusals accompanied the ones mentioned above with the numbers given in Table 4. 12. The most common indirect refusal strategy in Top Notch series was coming up with an *excuse/reason/explanation*. In fact, a significant point for refusals was made by the writers which stated that refusing something without

expressing an excuse or a reason was impolite. So, the books presented some reasons such as “*I have to meet my sister at the airport.*” or “*I’m running late.*” There were five more strategies used in the texts of the books. *Statement of regret* was found to be repeated four times and the pattern was the same; “Sorry” or “I’m sorry” was the words uttered for this strategy. Similarly, *statement of alternative* was seen only in Top Notch 2 most probably due to the fact that one of the grammar points of the unit was the phrase ‘I’d rather’, expressing preferences. The examples for statement of alternative were ones like “*Actually, I’d rather see something else.*” as a refusal of a suggestion; the other option in stating an alternative with phrases such as “Why don’t you do...” was not seen in these books.

As for the use of the indirect refusal strategy of *attempting to dissuade the interlocutor*, it was seen that only two options were in use in the texts of Top Notch series. Those two strategies were *criticism of the request* and *letting the interlocutor of the hook*. The former was realized with a sentence like “*Well, I don’t mind repainting it, but gray’s out of the question.*”, which was a refusal of a suggestion, whereas the former was worded as “*That’s OK. I’m fine.*” as a refusal of an offer of help.

The use of avoidance strategies was also observed in sentences such as “*Oh, clams. Hmm. Maybe something else.*”, where the word ‘clams’ was repeated. As a result, the statement adopted *repetition of a part of request* as a strategy. Another example was “*I don’t know. I saw the trailer. It doesn’t sound that interesting to me.*”, an utterance as a refusal of a movie suggestion and the strategy used here was *hedging*.

An utterance which seemed like it did not belong to any other category. The sample was “*Maybe some other time.*” and it was a refusal of an invitation. Although it did not include a clear-cut promise, it was regarded as *promise of a future acceptance* since it had a future meaning in it.

The last component of refusal strategies was adjuncts to refusals and their use was found to be equally frequent in written dialogs and listening audioscripts. As Table 4.12 shows, pause fillers such as *well, hmm, oh, actually* were the most favored ones while expressing gratitude with *thanks* was another common adjunct. Statement of positive opinion/feeling/agreement was the last adjunct preferred in four utterances and the favorite ones were “I’d like to...”, “I’d love to...” or “I would...”.

**Table 17: Frequency of adjuncts to refusals in Top Notch series**

| <i>Refusals-Adjuncts</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> | <i>3c</i> | <i>3d</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Top Notch 1              | 1         | -         | 2         | 4         |
| Top Notch 2              | 2         | -         | 8         | 3         |
| Top Notch 3              | 1         | -         | -         | -         |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>      | 4         | 0         | 10        | 7         |

Refusal strategies in Top Notch series can mostly be found in dialogs and listening audioscripts of the tasks. However, in some parts, they are also presented as useful language helping the learners carry out the speaking task. Refusals are not completely overlooked in Top Notch series, but their frequency is much less than requests'. Furthermore, just like the case with requests, the range of strategies presented in the books is not wide which means refusals are usually stuck with statement of an excuse or reason as a strategy. Additionally, in dialogs refusals are observed to be usually uttered in response to offers although there are many other options such as invitations or requests.

#### **4.2.1.3. Complaints**

As a result of the evaluation of all three Top Notch coursebooks, it was found that there was hardly any presentation of complaint strategies in them. Moreover, the complaints found in the books were indirect complaints, which Boxer (1993) defines as the ones in which the complainees are not responsible for the offense. Since this study's focus was on direct complaints, complaint samples in these three books were of no use for the learners' improvement of direct complaints.

There was only one example of a direct complaint in Top Notch series which expressed the thought with *modified blame*. The utterance "This isn't fair!" was said by a competitor to the presenter whom he held responsible for his defeat in a TV show adding a value judgment to his statement.

It is crystal clear that complaints were not presented as they should have been despite their being an important part of everyday communication via English. One thing is for sure; lack of complaints is an obvious shortcoming of Top Notch series.

#### 4.2.2. Summit Series

Summit series, the second set of books that were used as the coursebooks for 15 hours a week in the program, had two books in it. They had a similar pattern to Top Notch series' with 10 units and 4 lessons in each unit. But there were minor changes in these series such as discussion sections' replacing speaking tasks and the reduced number of dialogs when compared to their number in Top Notch books. The contextualization of grammar points were achieved through dialogs in Top Notch, whereas it was done with short reading texts in Summit, which affected the number of the speech acts found in the books. That is, there was a certain decline in the frequency of requests, refusals and complaints in Summit 1 and 2.

Like the evaluation of the books in Top Notch series, the syllabi of the books along with the reading texts, exercises, extra sections such as *grammar booster* and audioscripts were checked in Summit books in order to find the frequency of the speech acts of requests, refusals and complaints.

##### 4.2.2.1. Requests

The evaluation process of Summit 1 and Summit 2 with requests in mind revealed the numbers listed in Table 18 below:

**Table 18: Frequency of request strategies in Summit series**

| <i>Requests</i> | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i> | <i>1c</i> | <i>1d</i> | <i>1e</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Summit 1        | 17        | -         | -         | 2         | 2         | 3         | 4         | -         | -         |
| Summit 2        | 6         | -         | -         | 2         | -         | 1         | 27        | -         | 1         |
| <i>Total</i>    | 23        | 0         | 0         | 4         | 2         | 4         | 31        | 0         | 1         |

The aforementioned decline in the number of speech acts in Summit series can be seen clearly in the table. It was found that the frequency of *preparatory* strategy in Summit series is 31, most of which resulted from the introduction of making a polite request as an independent topic in the second book in one specific unit. Various examples of the strategy were given in the books and they were especially practiced in the unit they were presented separately. Some examples excerpted from the books are like “*I wonder if you could do me a favor.*”, “*Do you think you could keep an eye on my things for a few seconds?*” or “*We can’t hear the TV. It’s too low. Can you reach it?*”. The other common request strategy in Summit 1 and 2 were *mood derivables* with a frequency of 23. The strategy was mostly found in audioscripts of listening activities which were usually interviews. They generally functioned as the initiation to the conversation such as “*Tell us the basic story of what happened.*” or “*Just tell me what training you’ve gotten.*” There were other situations where a mood derivable was used such as a conversation taking place while shopping: “*Hold it up so I can see it.*”.

*Locution derivable* and *suggestory formula* were equally frequent, each of which was found 4 times in the books. Statements like “*Here’s what I want you to do*” and “*I want you to taste my soup*” were regarded as locution derivables and they were found both in audioscripts and reading texts in the books. Suggestory formula was associated with the statements which looked like only a suggestion but functioned as a request in that particular context. “*Vivian, let’s start with you.*” and “*Why don’t you tell us what you do?*” were two examples of this strategy and it should be useful to note that they were also found in interviews as their beginning lines.

There was a strategy in the books regarded as unusual, namely a *mild hint*. In a dialog between two colleagues, one of them intends to ask for help for the heavy workload from another colleague. However, she does not prefer the rather direct route and ask “*Could you help me?*” but puts it like “*But I don’t think I can do it all alone.*” It is an utterance which has the potential to be regarded as a simply stated fact rather than a request and its interpretation as a request is heavily dependent on the hearer, which makes it an indirect request.

The results of the evaluation of Summit series can be said to be similar to the ones of Top Notch since mood derivables and preparatory strategy were the ones to

dominate other strategies. So, the range of request strategies is not very broad, which is another point similar to the results of Top Notch series' evaluation.

#### 4.2.2.2. Refusals

After the close look taken at Summit1 and Summit 2 refusals were found to be not so common in the books. There were eleven utterances that can be defined as refusals and the strategies they included are given below in Table 19, 20 and 21.

**Table 19: Frequency of direct refusal strategies in Summit series**

| <i>Refusals-Direct</i> | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i>   |             |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
|                        |           | <i>1b.1</i> | <i>1b.2</i> |
| Summit 1               | -         | 2           | 2           |
| Summit 2               | -         | -           | -           |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>    | 0         | 2           | 2           |

All the direct refusal strategies in Summit series included *nonperformative statements*, two of which were classified as *negative willingness* with the use of “*I don’t think so.*” while the other two utterances were a simple “No.”

These direct refusals were accompanied with a couple of indirect refusal strategies. As usual, the most common of them was providing an *excuse, reason or explanation*, with a frequency of 7 times. Sample reasons provided were “*I’m in the mood for looking-not buying*” for a refusal of a suggestion to try a pair of sunglasses on and “*I’m trying to save money.*” as a part of a refusal of a suggestion of going out and having dinner. Another popular strategy with Summit books was the *attempt to dissuade interlocutor*, which was used 3 times. Two of them were said by the speakers with the intent of *letting the interlocutor of the hook* with statements such as “You didn’t have to do that.” and “That’s really not necessary.” uttered as a refusal of an offer of compensation. The other attempt to dissuade the interlocutor was *criticism of the*

request by a speaker who refuses a suggestion that he take a break by saying “*Are you kidding?*”. In a listening activity where people discuss having a pet in Summit 1, two speakers preferred *avoidance* with the help of *hedging* and tried to form a refusal. Their sentences included the clues of this strategy such as “*Gee, I don’t know.*” Lastly, only one refusal found in the books showed statement of regret with the well-known utterance “*I’m sorry.*”

**Table 20: Frequency of indirect refusal strategies in Summit series**

| <i>Refusals-Indirect</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>2c</i> | <i>2d</i> | <i>2e</i> | <i>2f</i> | <i>2g</i> | <i>2h</i> | <i>2i</i> | <i>2j</i> | <i>2k</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Summit 1                 | 1         | -         | 5         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | 2         |
| Summit 2                 | -         | -         | 2         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 2         | -         | -         |
| <b>Total</b>             | 0         | 0         | 7         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 3         | 0         | 2         |

The last item to be evaluated in terms of refusals was adjuncts used in them. It was not such a challenging task to evaluate them since they were really few in number. There was a total of 4 adjuncts to refusals; 2 of them expressed gratitude with “*Thanks*”, another 2 were pause fillers such as “*Uh*” and “*Oh*” and only one of them showed statement of agreement with “*I would*”.

**Table 21: Frequency of adjuncts to refusals in Summit series**

| <i>Refusals-Adjuncts</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> | <i>3c</i> | <i>3d</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Summit 1                 | -         | -         | 2         | 1         |
| Summit 2                 | 1         | -         | -         | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>             | 1         | 0         | 2         | 2         |

Refusals found in Summit 1 and Summit 2 can be said to set good examples for the use of the speech act. However, their number is really inadequate when their

important role in everyday communication is taken into consideration. The frequency of refusals in the books is parallel with their variety and not surprisingly, the highest frequency belongs to giving an *excuse, reason or explanation*, which is limited when one happens to think of all the other strategies and how they would be useful in learners' experiences with English language.

#### **4.2.2.3. Complaints**

Summit 1 and 2 proved to follow in their predecessors' footsteps with their inclusion of complaints. As mentioned before, this study's focus was direct complaints rather than indirect ones. So, when checked for direct complaints, all the parts of the first book that were under close scrutiny showed no signs of a complaint. In the second book, it was possible to find an utterance that can be regarded as a complaint. However, it could be found only in one dialog of a listening activity. The utterance was "*Uh, what happened to this suitcase? When I loaned it to you, it had two wheels.*" and both parts of the utterance implied a complaint. As for the strategies used in these sentences, the first part was defined as a *hint* since it may not be interpreted as a complaint at first glance especially due to the lack of the mention of a complaine. The second part, however, involved the hearer in the conversation as the party responsible for the offense, so it was classified as an expression of *annoyance* because there was still an open door for the hearer to make an explanation for the lack of wheels although he was openly held responsible.

Except for the utterance that can be interpreted as a complaint mentioned above, no other samples could not be found, which leads to the same conviction of the Summit series as Top Notch books. These series also suffers from a paucity of complaints, whose teaching is necessary mostly because of their complex nature and it is not definitely one of the strengths of Summit 1 and Summit 2.

#### **4.2.3. Northstar Reading and Writing Series**

Northstar Reading and Writing series by Pearson Education comprised of three books at different levels, i.e. basic-low intermediate, intermediate and high

intermediate. In the preparatory classes of Foreign Languages Department where the subjects were taught English, these series were used throughout all the three semesters in reading and writing classes for 10 hours a week.

There were 10 units in each book. The outlines of the books were the same; there were four main parts in every unit, namely *focus on the topic*, *focus on reading*, *focus on vocabulary* and *focus on writing*. Like the evaluation of the other books in the study, each and every part of the books were examined in search of request, refusal and complaint strategies and as a result, only requests could be found in the books. It may have resulted from the fact that the books focuses on reading and writing, two skills that do not include an oral performance, through which speech acts come to life.

Requests that were found in Northstar Reading and Writing series were picked from dialogs either in the reading texts or in the exercises. It should also be pointed out that in two units, one in the Basic-Low Intermediate book and another one in the Intermediate Northstar Reading and Writing, requests were dealt with as a grammar topic. In the former there was a slight mention of *can* and *could* with their use as a way to make polite requests while in the latter the whole grammar part of the unit along with its practice section was allotted to the explanation of modals *can*, *could* and *would* as modals of requests.

The distribution of request strategies for all the three books can be seen in Table 22.

**Table 22: Frequency of request strategies in Northstar Reading and Writing Series**

| <b>Requests</b>        | <b>1a</b> | <b>1b</b> | <b>1c</b> | <b>1d</b> | <b>1e</b> | <b>2a</b> | <b>2b</b> | <b>3a</b> | <b>3b</b> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Basic-Low Intermediate | 9         | -         | -         | 1         | 4         | -         | 16        | -         | -         |
| Intermediate           | 12        | -         | -         | -         | -         | 4         | 15        | -         | -         |
| High intermediate      | 17        | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 2         | -         | -         |
| <b>Total</b>           | 38        | -         | -         | 1         | 4         | 4         | 33        | -         | -         |

As it can be clearly seen from the table above, 38 *mood derivables* and 33 samples of *preparatory* strategy were found in all the books of the set. The utterances in which these strategies were used were similar to all others like “*You go first. Don’t wait for me.*” or “*Could you explain this to me?*” Want statements and suggestory formulas were also seen in the books for 8 times, 4 for each. “*I’d like to make an appointment with a psychiatrist.*” is an example of a want statement from the books. Surprisingly, suggestory formulas were used only in the intermediate level book and just like in Top Notch and Summit series, they were picked out on interview context since they showed the beginning of an interview with a sentence such as “*Let’s start with the high point of your career.*”

The frequencies of request strategies in Northstar Reading and Writing series are not disappointing; however, the same problem that emerged in the other series of books existed also with these books. The trouble was again with the diversity of request strategies presented. Typically, two strategies were far more common than the others in the books, which caused the books to be regarded as inadequate from this point of view.

#### **4.2.4. Northstar Listening and Speaking Series**

The last set of books that was evaluated Northstar Listening and Speaking series, which was composed of three books like the reading and writing series. The books, which were presented in three levels as basic-low intermediate, intermediate and high intermediate, were used in the subjects’ classes 5 hours a week during three semesters.

Listening and Speaking series had the same number of units and the outlines of these 10 units are exactly the same. Despite minor differences, the topics of the units in both series are closely related. For instance, in the first book of the reading and writing series, unit 3 has counterfeiting money as the topic while the listening and speaking version has the history of money instead. Furthermore, since listening was the half of the content in this coursebook series, audioscripts were also checked along with the other elements such as exercises.

#### 4.2.4.1. Requests

Evaluation of these three listening and speaking books provided the similar results to the evaluation of other books used in the preparatory class program of TOBB ETU. Requests could be easily found in Northstar Listening and Speaking books. Number of the request strategies seen in the books can be seen below:

**Table 23: Frequency of request strategies in Northstar Listening and Speaking Series**

| <i>Requests</i>        | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i> | <i>1c</i> | <i>1d</i> | <i>1e</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Basic-Low Intermediate | 22        | -         | -         | 1         | 8         | 2         | 11        | -         | -         |
| Intermediate           | 6         | -         | -         | -         | 5         | 3         | 9         | -         | -         |
| High intermediate      | 10        | -         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | 16        | -         | -         |
| <b>Total</b>           | 27        | 0         | 0         | 1         | 14        | 5         | 34        | 0         | 0         |

The information provided in table 23 resembles the other ones mentioned in the evaluation of other books. As usual, there are three most frequent strategies, namely *preparatory* strategy, *mood derivables* and *want statements*. Samples of these strategies that were found in the books were typical ones such as “*Can you give us an example?*” or “*Hold on.*” However, there are some units where requests are emphasized, which affects the frequency of some request strategies. For instance, in the basic-low intermediate coursebook, two units, Unit 7 and 8, highlighted expressing wants politely and making polite requests, respectively. So, there was an increase in the frequency of *preparatory* strategy and *want statements* especially in these units. Another point to ponder might be the relatively high number of mood derivables especially in the first book, which may have resulted from the low level of the book. Since mood derivables in the most clear and simple form of making a request, it may have been used so frequently in the book. Another similarity in the results was the role the strategy of suggestory formula played. Like in the other books, it was mostly used as an initiator to

an interview or a lecture with an utterance such as “*Let’s start with the first item on our agenda.*”

#### 4.2.4.2. Refusals

The evaluation of Northstar Listening and Speaking series demonstrated that a couple of examples of refusals were existent here and there in the books. There were exactly fifteen refusals in all three books and it should be noted that the basic-low intermediate coursebook zoomed in on refusal of suggestions in its third unit. Its effect on the frequency of refusals can be seen in the tables below.

**Table 24: Frequency of direct refusal strategies in Northstar Listening and Speaking Series**

| <i>Refusals-Direct</i> | <i>1a</i> | <i>1b</i>   |             |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
|                        |           | <i>1b.1</i> | <i>1b.2</i> |
| Basic-Low Intermediate | -         | 4           | 1           |
| Intermediate           | -         | 1           | 1           |
| High intermediate      | -         | -           | -           |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>    | 0         | 5           | 2           |

A certain number of direct refusals could be found in the series, which is similar to the numbers found in Summit series. Indirect refusals are also existent in Northstar Listening and Speaking coursebooks. Providing an *excuse, reason or explanation* is the most common choice as usual while *statement of an alternative* is also favored in these series. The utterances classified as the statement of an alternative were like “Now that’s silly, isn’t it? Here’s something serious. *How about Options for Independence?*” The first part of this statement (“*Now that’s silly, isn’t it?*”), on the other hand, was regarded as a *criticism of the request*, which was found only twice in all three books. There were only two examples for *statement of regret* and *avoidance*, one for each. The

former was realized with the common words “*I’m sorry*”, whereas the latter was formed into words with *hedging* just like in “Well, *I don’t know*.”

**Table 25: Frequency of indirect refusal strategies in Northstar Listening and Speaking Series**

| <i>Refusals-Indirect</i> | <i>2a</i> | <i>2b</i> | <i>2c</i> | <i>2d</i> | <i>2e</i> | <i>2f</i> | <i>2g</i> | <i>2h</i> | <i>2i</i> | <i>2j</i> | <i>2k</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Basic-Low Intermediate   | -         | -         | 5         | 1         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | 1         |
| Intermediate             | 1         | -         | 1         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |
| High intermediate        | -         | -         | -         | 2         | -         | -         | -         | -         | 1         | -         | -         |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>      | 1         | 0         | 6         | 3         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 2         | 0         | 1         |

**Table 26: Frequency of adjuncts to refusals in Northstar Listening and Speaking Series**

| <i>Refusals-Adjuncts</i> | <i>3a</i> | <i>3b</i> | <i>3c</i> | <i>3d</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Basic-Low Intermediate   | 1         | -         | 1         | 4         |
| Intermediate             | -         | -         | 1         | -         |
| High intermediate        | 1         | -         | -         | -         |
| <b><i>Total</i></b>      | 2         | 0         | 2         | 4         |

Adjuncts to refusals were also found in Northstar Listening and Speaking set as it is possible to their frequency above in Table 26. The most frequent one was “No, *thanks*”, expressing *gratitude or appreciation*. Expressions such as “*That’s a good idea*” preceding a refusal were also seen in two books, putting *statement of positive opinion* into the distribution of adjuncts of refusals. The last element to be observed as an adjunct was the pause filler *well*.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

#### **5. 1. Summary of Findings in relation to Research Questions**

Two main research questions served as a point of departure in this study and both can be said to have found their answers as a result of the study carried out.

First question was whether Turkish learners of English at a preparatory school of a university make use of request, refusal and complaint strategies in their speech act performances. After the revelation of the results of the discourse completion task, it is possible to draw some conclusions from them. As for the first group of strategies related to the speech act of request, the subjects turned out to be aware in terms of contextual factors such as social distance and differences in social status along with the fact that indirectness of a request plays a key role in getting things done especially in situations where degree of familiarity is low and social statuses are not equal with its lessening effect of a face-threatening act. The second group of strategies belonged to refusals, a rather complicated speech act to perform. Although there was a difference between the range of strategies used for the first and second refusal situations by the subjects, they tried to use indirect strategies in their refusal realizations in various combinations which can be interpreted as an effort to tread gently on unfamiliar ground since a refusal has the potential to create a communication disaster. The last set of strategies was the ones listed for the speech act of complaint, which was a much more dangerous territory for the subjects. They seem to be careful about indirectness in their complaint performances; however, their sensitivity towards this key element seems to be less when compared to their previous performances of requests and refusals. Half of the subjects tended to use indirect strategies in complaints while more than half of them preferred

indirect strategies in requests and refusals. It should also be borne in mind that ‘missing’ answers or answers that do not correspond to the targeted speech act were found mostly in complaint situations. These results lead to two assumptions; either the subjects did not care about the effect of their being more direct on the outcomes of the communication task or they did not simply know how to put a complaint indirectly, which may have many reasons behind it. Another important point to ponder is a common feature of all three speech act realizations of the subjects, namely the variety of the strategies used. Whether the situation requires a request, a refusal or a complaint, all the answers reflect that the subjects are stuck with certain patterns in order to get the message across, which means they use a limited range of strategies to make themselves clear while expressing a request, refusal or complaint. More specific examples would be their lack of use of the most indirect strategies such as hints and their not being able to go further than “Can you turn the volume down?” not only in their request performances but also in their complaint realizations, which require more than a request as a separate speech act.

The second question was on the presentation of the aforementioned speech acts in the subjects’ coursebooks. Following the detailed examination of the eleven coursebooks that the subjects used during their three semesters at the preparatory class, they were not found to be adequate in general terms. Taking a closer look at the three speech acts in the center of this study one by one, it is possible to state that all the coursebooks presented requests adequately in terms of their frequency. However, to say the same for the other ones, i.e. refusals and complaints is not possible. Frequency of refusals in the coursebooks is much less than requests’ and complaints are nearly non-existent in all the books. The evaluation demonstrated a common feature with the results of the discourse completion task. Like in the subjects’ answers in DCTs, some of the strategies included in the coursebooks were dominant in frequency among the other ones. For instance, in the subjects’ request strategies preparatory strategy was found in great numbers and the same result was seen as a result of the evaluation of the coursebooks, where the preparatory strategy was indeed very common. To sum up, coursebooks evaluated in this study do not provide their learners with different strategies that requests, refusals or complaint require, which may mean that teaching pragmatic aspects of the target language to the fullest is not one of the aims of the books.

The results of the DCT seem to be generally in accordance with the previous studies. The common results gathered by these studies for requests were that non-native speakers are more direct and verbosity can be observed in their utterances, which can also be seen in the utterances written in the DCT of this study. As for refusals, non-native speakers were found to prefer avoidance instead of statement of an alternative and to use explanations for their refusals as much as native speakers do. In addition, limited strategy use of Turkish language learners was also mentioned in some previous studies. All these results were the same with this study's results. In complaints, no mismatch between the results of previous studies and the present one's could be observed since both arrived at the same conclusion that in their performance of complaints non-native speakers have great difficulty in using indirect strategies.

The other dimension of this study, in other words the results of the coursebook evaluation phase are in line with the views provided by previous studies in the literature. The limited number of strategies that are presented and coursebooks' overlooking a key concept such as indirectness are the common points made not only as a result of previous studies, but also with this study's results.

Having pinpointed the problems in coursebooks in terms of request, refusal and complaint strategies, a further look on what can be done to remedy them has to be taken.

## **5. 2. Implications for ELT**

Evaluation of coursebooks with pragmatic criteria in mind is a crucial but an undiscovered territory. In a world where the role of communication in teaching a language is taking on more importance day by day, the efficiency and adequacy of coursebooks should be at a point where they can be questioned. Since coursebooks are a vital source of input especially in EFL settings, coursebook evaluation in terms of pragmatics and speech acts becomes more and more significant due to their tightly-knit relation to communication itself.

This study set out as a step taken towards bridging the gap between communication, language and coursebooks. Naturally, it is also a contribution to the field of materials evaluation in ELT with the results it provides, for it points out some

major shortcomings of coursebooks with their presentation of speech acts, which are indeed a vital part of communication. Besides, as many ELT professionals know, having coursebooks that are problematic does not mean that teachers and students have to put up with them. That's why materials evaluation and adaptation exist in the realm, opening new doors in classroom experiences of both teachers and students.

In this study the evaluation phase was completed successfully for four sets of coursebooks. The next logical step should be adapting the books rather than throwing them away. So, it was thought that it would be better to follow the same route and make some adaptations to the books where it is regarded as necessary. As mentioned previously, the lacking points of Top Notch, Summit, Northstar Reading and Writing, Northstar Listening and Speaking series were identified as the limited number of strategies they provided the learners with. In order to remedy the lacking aspects of the books and present some solid examples for professionals in this field, two sample lesson plans including all three speech acts, which supplement the books, were prepared (See Appendix C). Lesson plans were based on a TV show instead of something else such as a dialog written by a non-native speaker, so the two dialogs included as the core of the plan were excerpted from the show, which means the input is purely authentic. The reason why *How I Met Your Mother* was chosen specifically was that it has the potential to appeal to almost everybody, its language is not so difficult to grasp and the humor element in it makes it a real-life experience rather than a classroom one.

Hopefully, this study will be an eye-opener for language teaching professionals who have serious doubts about the coursebooks they use as their guides and attempt to take a much closer look at them both for themselves and for their students' sakes.

### **5. 3. Implications for Further Research**

As an indispensable part of teaching profession, research is a matter of the utmost importance. Naturally, this study aimed not only broadening the horizons of language teachers, but also of researchers of language learning and teaching. As the pertinent literature revealed, evaluation of course materials, especially coursebooks in terms of the pragmatic aspects of the language they aim to help students learn, is still an area of research requiring attention. Another topic that is a wide open space for

researchers is the effect of adapted materials on learners' pragmatic performance including their speech act realization.

Further research could also be conducted on another important point which was made previously in this study. A certain amount of similarity in the variety of request, refusal and complaint strategies between the subjects' answers and their coursebooks was found in this study. However, it was not possible to come up with a result such as "these two elements may be connected" since it would be far-fetched to assume it with the data gathered for the study. But it may be proved or refuted with a different research design and data collection methodology than this study's, which may be another way to take for other researchers.

This study is one of the many small steps taken towards acquiring an understanding of language learning and teaching. Since researchers still have a long way to go for their explorations in interlanguage pragmatics and language teaching, this study is expected to serve its purpose only if it guides other studies with the small beam of light it sheds on those topics.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Discourse Completion Task (English Version)

1. You are a student at a university taking a history class from Professor Johnson for two months now. Currently you are taking the class in a large classroom. The professor's voice is too low so you can't hear the professor clearly. During class, you raise your hand ask the professor to raise his voice. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. You are a student at a university and taking a class from Professor Jones. You missed the last class because you were sick last week. There is a quiz next week and you need to borrow a notebook from your classmate to study what you missed last time. Now, you happen to see one of your classmates in the cafeteria. Although you and your classmate are taking the same class, you have talked to that person once. Now, you decided to ask your classmate to borrow his notebook. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. You are at your school's library and you want to apply for membership. For registration you need to fill out a couple of forms. You search all of your pockets and cannot find a pen. You want to ask another student who is sitting next to you. You have never met that student before. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. You and your friend go to a restaurant to eat. After taking your seats, you think that it is time to order. You need to ask the waiter for the menu. You wave a hand at the waiter and he comes. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. You attend classes regularly and take good notes. One person in your class who doesn't show up very often asks to borrow your notes. Since you have to compete with the rest of the class to earn a good grade, you don't feel like sharing your hard work with someone who doesn't work for it. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

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6. You are at a friend's house for lunch. You are already full but your friend offers you another piece of cake. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. You received your final grades. You were shocked that Professor Smith gave you a C. The class was one of your favorites and you studied very hard. You got an A on your report, so you don't understand why your final grade was so low. You knock on the door of your teacher's office and your teacher tells you to come in. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

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8. You are trying to study for an exam, which will be given tomorrow. However, your neighbor, who is also a student from your school but you've never met, is playing music very loudly, which is not the first time. You can't concentrate on what you do. The library is closed, and there is no other place to study but your apartment. What would you say to your neighbor?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

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9. You are sharing an apartment with your friend who recently comes home very late almost every night and makes a lot of noise. However, you and your friend agreed to be quiet after 11:30 p.m. when you first decided to live together. You have put up with the noise for several days, but tonight you feel you should say something. What would you say?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPENDIX B

### Söylem Tamamlama Testi

1. Üniversitede Profesör Johnson'dan tarih dersi alan bir öğrencisiniz. Şu an dersi geniş bir sınıfta yapmaktasınız. Profesörün sesi oldukça alçak ve onu net bir şekilde duyamıyorsunuz. Profesör Johnson'ın dersini iki aydır almaktasınız. Ders sırasında elinizi kaldırdınız ve sesini yükseltmesini istediniz. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Üniversitede öğrencisiniz ve Profesör Jones'tan ders alıyorsunuz. Geçen hafta hasta olduğunuz için son dersi kaçırdınız. Gelecek hafta quiz var ve geçen ders kaçırdıklarınıza çalışabilmek için bir sınıf arkadaşınızın defterini ödünç almanız gerekiyor. Şu an kafeteryada böyle bir sınıf arkadaşınıza rastlıyorsunuz. Aynı dersi almanıza rağmen bu sınıf arkadaşınızla daha önce yalnızca bir kez konuşmuşluğunuz var. O anda sınıf arkadaşınızdan defterini ödünç almaya karar veriyorsunuz. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Okulunuzun kütüphanesindesiniz ve üyelik için başvurmak istiyorsunuz. Kayıt için birkaç form doldurmanız gerekiyor. Bütün ceplerinize bakıyorsunuz ama bir kalem bulamıyorsunuz. Yanınızda oturmakta olan bir başka öğrenciden almak istiyorsunuz. Bu öğrenciyle daha önce hiç karşılaşmadınız. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Arkadaşınızla bir restorana gidiyorsunuz. Yerinize oturduktan sonra, sipariş vermek istiyorsunuz. Garsondan menüyü istemeniz gerekiyor. Garsona işaret ediyorsunuz, o da geliyor. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Derslere düzenli olarak giren ve iyi not tutan bir öğrencisiniz. Sınıfınızdan derslere pek sık gelmeyen bir öğrenci notlarınızı ödünç almak istiyor. İyi bir not

almak için sınıfın geri kalanıyla rekabet etmek durumunda olduğunuzdan büyük emeklerle tuttuğunuz notlarınızı çalışmayan biriyle paylaşmak istemiyorsunuz. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Öğle yemeği için bir arkadaşınızın evindesiniz. Doydunuz; ancak arkadaşınız size bir dilim pasta daha ikram ediyor. Gerçekten yemek istemiyorsunuz. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Final notlarınızı öğrendiniz. Profesör Smith'in size C verdiğini görünce şok oldunuz. Onun dersi en sevdiğiniz derslerden biri ve bu derse çok çalışmıştınız. Proje ödevinizden A almıştınız, bu yüzden final notunuzun neden bu kadar düşük geldiğini anlamıyorsunuz. Ofisinin kapısını çalıyorsunuz, o da "Girin!" diyor. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Yarın yapılacak olan bir sınava hazırlanmaya çalışıyorsunuz. Fakat sizinle aynı okulda öğrenci olan komşunuz çok yüksek sesle müzik çalıyor. Bu da ilk kez olmuyor. Bu komşunuzla daha önce hiç tanışmadınız. Yaptığınız işe konsantre olamıyorsunuz. Kütüphane de kapalı ve evinizden başka çalışacak yer yok. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Bir arkadaşınızla aynı evi paylaşıyorsunuz. İlk kez birlikte yaşamaya karar verdiğinizde gece 11.30'dan sonra sessiz olma konusunda anlaşmıştınız. Ancak arkadaşınız neredeyse her gece eve geç gelmeye ve çok gürültü yapmaya başladı. Birkaç gün gürültüye katlandınız, ancak bu gece bir şeyler söylemeniz gerektiğini düşünüyorsunuz. Ne söylediniz?

Siz: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### LESSON PLAN 1

**Level:** Intermediate to Advanced

**Age:** 15+

**Time:** 40 minutes

**Materials:** A twenty seven-second video from *How I Met Your Mother*, A PowerPoint presentation on the characters of the show

**Goal:** Raising learners' awareness of speech acts in requests

#### **Description of the Lesson**

It should be noted that this lesson plan should be integrated with a relevant topic in one of the books such as the one Northstar Listening and Speaking Intermediate, Unit 10, whose topic is marriage. It can be connected to the unit with a line such as *"Let's look at the concept of marriage from a different point of view, from the perspective of a couple who is madly in love enough to elope."*

#### **1. Pre-Teaching (10 min.)**

In this part of the lesson the teacher tries to familiarize learners with the context of the unit, which is a TV show called *How I Met Your Mother*. S/he starts with showing some pictures from the show and with asking questions such as "Do you know *How I Met Your Mother*?" and s/he gets answers from the learners. Then as the second step, the teacher shows the class a PowerPoint presentation on the show which summarizes its storyline, the characters' personal traits along with the relationships between each other. After the introduction, which has warmed the learners up enough for the next stage, the teacher provides a smooth transition and says *"Then, let's watch a part of it."*

#### **2. While-Teaching (20 min.)**

The video used in this lesson is a scene between Robin, Marshall and Lily, three main characters of the show. Marshall and Lily decide to get married in Atlantic City without any ceremony since they do not want to carry the burden of a huge wedding. So, they go in a rush and ask their best friends, Robin, Ted and Barney, to come with them. In this scene, it is Robin's turn, who is at work at that moment. She has to ask if she can leave to her director, which is the main point of this lesson.

Before watching the video the teacher gives instructions and says *"You will watch the video without any sound first. Just pay attention to the speakers' gestures, mimics, body movements and try to guess what's happening there."* Watching the video without any sound and the instructions the teacher gives will lead the learners to 'read' the speakers' facial expressions, which is supposed to be another step taken towards their acquisition of another important skill in communication.

After watching the video with its sound off, the teacher asks the class about their ideas on the things taken place in the video. S/he also asks how the learners had their ideas aiming to see if they followed the facial expression and body movements of the speakers.

Following the brainstorming session the teacher says “Let’s see if you guessed right.” and plays the video again, this time with the sound on. Then, s/he asks “Were you right about them?” After getting the answers, the teacher asks other questions which lead the learners to the core of the lesson such as the place of the incident (Robin’s workplace), what she was doing before Marshall and Lily rushed into the studio (presenting the news), other people there (the director, who is Robin’s superior) and so on. The final question to be asked in this part is “Does Robin leave just like that or does she do something before she says yes to Marshall and Lily’s invitation?” The teacher shows the video again if it is necessary. The expected answer is that Robin asks for permission, which means she makes a request. As soon as this answer is taken, the teacher works on it and moves onto the topic of making a request elaborating on the topic with the rules of making a request directly and indirectly, taking contextual factors into consideration etc. The lesson is not a lecture, though. Learners should also participate in the process.

The dialog between Robin, Marshall and Lily is below:

*(at the TV studio)*

**Marshall:** Robin! Stop the news!

**Director:** What the hell?

**Robin:** It’s OK. They’re my friends.

**Lily:** We’re going to Atlantic City to elope. You got to come with us.

**Robin:** Oh my God. This is so fantastic. I-I don’t know if I can just leave work.

**Director:** It’s okay, Mike can read the news tonight. *(To Mike)* Hey, Mike! You can read, right?

**Mike:** Yeah, I’m the best at reading.

**Robin:** Let’s go to Atlantic City!

**Marshall and Lily:** Yeah!

The underlined sentences are the requests which the teacher is supposed to introduce to the learners. The first one a strong hint made as a way of asking for permission while the second one is a preparatory request made by speaker at a higher level of social status to one at a lower level.

### 3. Post-Teaching (10 min)

After the wrap-up of the lesson with some basic questions, the teacher assigns the learners a task. They are supposed to watch a part of the same show or any other TV show that appeals to them and analyze it as it was done in class. They

are asked to note down the details such as the characters of the show, their moods in the part they watched, the incident occurring etc. They also have to look for requests and write them down if there is any.

## LESSON PLAN 2

**Level:** Intermediate to Advanced

**Age:** 15+

**Time:** 40 minutes

**Materials:** A twenty four-second video from *How I Met Your Mother*, Photos of two main characters, Robin and Ted

**Goal:** Raising learners' awareness of speech acts in complaints and refusals

### **Description of the Lesson**

Since the show itself has already been introduced, more specific information is given on two characters in this lesson, Robin and Ted. They are the speakers of the video here, so they receive extra attention. The outline and flow of activities are similar to the ones given in requests, making it easier for learners to get the main point out of the dialog. The activity can be used as a supplement in a unit on complaints such as the one in Summit series, bringing another kind of complaint into the view of the learners.

#### **1. Pre-Teaching (5 min)**

Learners are used to a lesson based on *How I Met Your Mother*, so presenting them the two main characters makes sense to the learners. The teacher shows some photos from the show with Robin and Ted in them and asks questions that lead to the understanding of the relationship between these two characters so that the following dialog will be meaningful for them. After they warm up to the topic, the teacher makes the transition saying "*Here's a video of Robin and Ted. Let's see what they talk about.*"

#### **2. While-Teaching (25 min.)**

Before watching the video, the teacher asks the learners to note down the main elements in the conversation such as the place, people and the incident in the video. The first play of the video is not soundless this time since it is not a novelty for the learners any more, which may make them unwilling to participate and since there is much more to analyze in this video.

Following the first play, the teacher repeats his/her question and gets answers from the learners. Afterwards, s/he asks about the problem of the couple and plays the video again with this question lingering in the learners' minds. Then, the analysis of the video is done together based on the questions asked previously by the teacher.

The last stage in the while-teaching part is the introduction of the relevant speech acts, i.e. complaints and refusals. Just like the way the teacher introduced

them in the first lesson, s/he asks questions to lead them to the trail so that their grasping the main points will be easier.

The scene in the video shows Robin and Ted, a couple, having their first fight due to Robin's discomfort since Ted started complaining about his work problems every day. In the end, Robin reacts and they both start complaining.

The dialog between Robin and Ted can be seen below:

*(Robin comes in)*

**Ted:** Hey!

**Robin:** Hey!

**Ted:** How was your day?

**Robin:** Good.

**Ted:** Wow, you're a great interviewer. Aren't you gonna ask how my day was?

**Robin:** I know how it was. It was awful. Oh, you want to rent a movie tonight?

**Ted:** You know, um... I listen to your work stories all the time.

**Robin:** Yeah, but...I don't wanna be rude here, but my work stories are interesting. I'm a television news reporter.

It can be seen that both sides use several complaints in addition to the refusal made by Ted. The directness level of complaints in the dialog increases degree by degree. Ted starts with a hint ("Wow, you're a great interviewer." and "Aren't you gonna ask how my day was?"). Robin seems to comprehend the hint and then she makes a suggestion, which is received with a refusal by Ted with the strategies of hedging+pause filler+topic switch. Robin reacts harder and answers with another complaint which is another hint.

Naturally, it is not expected from both the teachers and the learners to cover all the strategies after one class; however the dialog, which indeed includes native speaker norms in terms of directness of complaint and refusal strategies, can be an introduction to the most indirect types of complaints and refusals.

### 3. Post-Teaching (10 min.)

The post-teaching part of the second lesson plan serves as a wrap-up for both lessons. It is up to the teacher whether to use only questions to check the learners' comprehension or to provide learners with something more creative such as situations for which they are asked to produce an utterance like a request, complaint or refusal. This part can also be assigned; however, it will require a serious evaluation of the assignments later since the topic is liable to problems in comprehension and application.

## ÖZET

Kültürlerarası ve uluslararası iletişimin her geçen gün önem kazandığı dünyada, İngilizce bu sürecin tartışmasız en vazgeçilmez parçalarından biri konumundadır. İngiliz dilinin öğretimi de dile olan şu anki bakış açısıyla aynı doğrultudadır. Öyle ki, dil yeterliliğinin tanımlanmasında İngilizce ile iletişim kurmak, son otuz küsur yılda dilbilgisi kurallarının tamamen bilinmesi gerekliliğinin yerini alarak ön plana çıkmıştır. Bu esnada yapılan çalışmalar dil öğrenen bir kişinin dilbilgisi kurallarını ezbere bilmesinin yeterli olmayacağını, bu kurallar uygulanamadığı sürece kişinin dil bildiğinin söylenmesinin mümkün olmayacağını belirlemiştir.

Çok geniş bir alan olan dil öğretiminde, edimbilim farklı bir yere sahiptir. Dilin içinde bulunduğu bağlama göre anlam bulması; neyin, ne zaman, kime, nasıl söylendiği; dilin ‘uygun’ kullanımını içine alan bir kavram olan edimbilim, başarılı bir iletişim için gereklidir. Dil için önemli bir öge olan edimbilim, haliyle dil öğretiminde de önemlidir.

Edimbilimin en geniş biçimde araştırılan başlığı olan söz edimleri ise iletişimin en küçük parçası olarak nitelenebilir. Basit iletişimsel etkinliklerden, karmaşık olan etkinliklere kadar birçok işlev söz edimlerle yerine getirilebilir. Söz edimlere örnek olarak rica, davet, reddetme, teşekkür etme vs. verilebilir. Bu yapıların öğretimi de dil öğrenen kişinin hedef dilde aynı işlevleri yerine getirebilmesi için gereklidir.

Bu çalışmada üç söz edim ele alınmıştır. Bunlar rica, reddetme ve şikâyet. Bu söz edimlerinin seçilme sebepleri ise günlük iletişim esnasında bunların sahip olduğu önemdir. Kimi zaman temel gereksinim bile bildirebilecek niteliğe sahip bu söz edim grupları, uluslar arası alanda ilgili araştırmalarda da büyük ölçüde ilgi görmüştür. Aynı ilgi ülkemizde henüz görülemezken, bu alana yönelik araştırmaların sayısında yavaş yavaş bir artış görülmeye başlanmıştır. Bu çalışma da Türk öğrencilerin içinde olduğu bir çalışma olarak bu alandaki boşluğu doldurmak için bir adım olarak yapılmıştır.

İlgili araştırmalara göre, rica, reddetme ve şikâyet söz edim grupları dili konuşanlar tarafından belli stratejiler aracılığıyla dile getirilmektedir. Bu stratejiler genellikle dolaylılık seviyesine göre kendi içlerinde ayrılır; araştırmalardan elde edilen veriler İngilizceyi anadili olarak konuşanların belli durumlarda çoğunlukla herhangi bir

rica, ret ya da şikâyeti dile getirmek için daha dolaylı stratejileri kullandıklarını göstermektedir.

Araştırmanın temel olarak iki soru için cevap aranmıştır. Bunlardan ilki TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi'nde Hazırlık Programı'ndaki öğrencilerin bu üç söz edimin stratejilerini kullanıp kullanmadıkları, ikincisi ise bu öğrencilerin okullarındaki üç yarıyıl boyunca kullandıkları ders kitaplarının rica, reddetme ve şikâyeti kapsayıp kapsamadığıdır.

Araştırmanın cevaplamayı hedeflediği ilk soru için veri, bir söylem tamamlama testi ile toplanmıştır. Uluslar arası alanda daha önce yapılmış olan, geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği test edilmiş çalışmalardan derlenen söylem tamamlama testi, her ihtimal göz önünde bulundurularak asıl uygulama öncesi bir pilot uygulamaya tabi tutulmuştur. Pilot uygulamanın ortaya çıkardığı bazı eksiklikler asıl uygulama öncesi dikkate alınıp giderilerek söylem tamamlama testi son haliyle 90 öğrenciye uygulanmıştır. Test tamamen açık uçlu sorulardan oluştuğu ve nitel bir özellik taşıdığı için veri daha önce sözü edilen üç söz edim grubunun stratejilerinin öğrencilerin yazdıklarının içinde geçme sıklığı hesaplanmıştır. İkinci sorunun cevabının aranmasında da aynı yol izlenmiştir. Okuldaki İngilizce Hazırlık Programı'nda okutulan bütün ders kitapları tek tek incelenerek bu kitaplardaki rica, reddetme ve şikâyet söz edim gruplarının görülme sıklığı belirlenmiştir. Değerlendirme işlemi yapılırken de sadece kitap içeriğine değil, kitapta ses kaydı, alıştırma gibi öğrencinin görüp duyabileceği her şeye bakılmasına özen gösterilmiştir.

Araştırmanın sonuçlarını her iki araştırma sorusu açısından ayrı ayrı ele alırsak, sonuçlar daha iyi anlaşılabilir. Buna göre, birinci sorunun cevabı öğrencilerin bahsi geçen üç söz edim grubuna ait stratejileri kullanabildikleri sonucuna varılmıştır. Ancak geniş bir yelpazeye sahip olan bu stratejilerin çok kısıtlı olarak kullanımda olduğu görülmüştür. Sıklık derecesi fazla olan bir veya iki strateji, durumun gereklerini karşılayıp 'uygun' olarak nitelendirilebilse bile, öğrencilerin daha dolaylı stratejileri kullanma konusunda sıkıntı yaşadıkları belirlenmiştir. Kendini dolaylı yoldan ifade etme kaygısının da öğrencilerde daha çok rica ve reddetme söz edimlerini dile getirmelerinde görüldüğü ortaya çıkmıştır. Diğer araştırma sorusu ise kullanılan ders kitaplarının bu söz edim gruplarının sunumu ve öğretimi açısından olması gereken seviyede olmadığı belirtilerek verilebilir. Öncelikle, ders kitaplarında rica söz ediminin

sorun yaratmayacak sıklıkta görüldüğü belirlenmiştir. Fakat aynı şey reddetme ve şikâyet için geçerli olmamıştır, bu söz edim gruplarına ait stratejiler kitaplarda neredeyse yok denecek kadar azdır. Öğrencilerden elde edilen verilerden çıkan bir sonuç burada da tekrarlanmıştır; ders kitaplarında stratejilerin çeşitliliğine bakıldığında bunun olmadığı görülmüştür. Kitaplarda da birkaç stratejinin diğerleri arasından sivrilmesi sıklıkla görülen bir durum olarak göze çarpmıştır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, literatürde daha önce yapılan çalışmalarla da aynı doğrultudadır; öğrencilerin söz edim kullanımları diğer anadili İngilizce olmayanlarda olduğu gibi daha direkt, fazla kelime kullanımına açık ve daha az çeşit stratejiye sahip olarak belirlenmiştir. Ders kitaplarına dair sonuçlarda da aynı şey söz konusudur; kitaplar genel olarak stratejiler açısından zengin değildir.

Ders kitaplarındaki bu eksikliği gidermek için ise iki adet ders planı hazırlanmıştır. Bu ders planlarının odaklandığı nokta içeriklerinde araştırmanın konusu olan söz edimlerinin kitaplarda bulunmayan stratejiler olmuştur. Ders planları üç söz edimi de tam anlamıyla öğretmeye de, tezden faydalanacak olan uzmanların ihtiyaç duyacağı şekilde ders kitaplarının bu konudaki zayıf noktalarını tasarlayabilecekleri ek materyalle telafi etmeleri için örnek oluşturmaktadır.

Edimbilim, söz edimleri ve materyal değerlendirme özellikle Türkiye’de üzerine çok çalışma yapılmış alanlar olmadığı için, bu çalışma, bu konuyla ilgili olan dil öğretimi uzmanları ve araştırmacılar için bir nevi örnek teşkil etmesi açısından da önemlidir. Bu çalışmada amaçlardan biri olmasa da, sonuçlar itibariyle yeni bir araştırma konusu olabilecek noktalar da keşfedilmiştir. Örneğin, öğrencilerin söz edim stratejileri konusundaki performansları ile ders kitapları arasındaki olası bir bağlantı bu araştırmanın kapsamı dışına çıktığı ve veriler bu yönde analiz edilmediği için araştırılamamıştır. Bu bağlantı, başka bir çalışmanın konusu olabilme potansiyeline sahiptir. Ayrıca dil öğretiminde kullanılan materyalin edimbilimsel açıdan değerlendirilmesi üzerine daha fazla çalışma yapılması da her açıdan faydalı ve yararlı görülmektedir. Çünkü dil öğretiminde ders kitabının taşıdığı büyük önem, sınıftaki dil öğretimi etkinliklerinin hemen hepsini etkilemektedir.