GAZİ UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS BY NATIVE SPEAKERS AND TURKISH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

PHD DISSERTATION

By
Okan ÖNALAN

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Advisor
Prof.Abdülvahit ÇAKIR

ANKARA-2009

JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAY SAYFASI

Okan ÖNALAN'ın "İNGİLİZCEYİ ANA DİLİ OLARAK KONUŞANLAR İLE İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN KULLANDIKLARI RESMİ ŞİKÂYET KALIPLARI ÜZERİNE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA" başlıklı tezi, 11 Aralık 2009 tarihinde, jürimiz tarafından İngilizce Öğretmenliği Ana Bilim Dalında Doktora Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Adı Soyadı	İmza
Başkan (Tez Danışmanı):	.....
Üye:	.....
Üye:	.....
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ÖZET

İNGİLİZCEYİ ANA DİLİ OLARAK KONUŞANLAR İLE İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN KULLANDIKLARI RESMİ ŞİKAYET KALIPLARI ÜZERİNE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin resmi şikayet durumlarında sergiledikleri edimsel dil davranışlarını ana dili İngilizce olanların söz-eylem üretimleri ile karşılaştırarak araştırmaktır. Türk öğrencilerin İngilizcedeki dil üretimlerini belirleyip bu verileri ana dili İngilizce olanlardan elde edilen veriler ile kıyaslamak suretiyle 1) Türk öğrenciler ve anadili İngilizce olanlar arasındaki şikayet kullanımlarına yönelik dilbilimsel ve edimsel farkları tespit etmek; 2) "yaş", "cinsiyet", "yabancı dilde yeterlik" ve "yabancı dil kültürüne maruz kalma süresi" gibi Türk öğrencilerin resmi şikayetlerindeki iletişimsel tercihleri üzerinde etkili olabilecek değişkenlerin etkilerini açıklamak; ve 3) Türk öğrencilerin İngilizce resmi şikayet durumlarında kullandıkları edimsel stratejileri doğrudanlık ve dolaylılık açısından belirlemek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri 132 ana dili İngilizce olan katılımcıdan 144 İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerden, toplamda 276 katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Üç ayrı veri toplama yöntemi kullanılmıştır: a) Söylem Değerlendirme Anketi (SDA); b) video çekimli canlandırma; ve c) açık uçlu sözlü mülakat. Toplanan veriler hem nicel hem de nitel olarak analiz edilmiştir.

Elde edilen sonuçlar, ana dili İngilizce olan katılımcılar ile Türk katılımcıların şikayet üretimlerinde dilbilimsel öğeler ve edimsel tercihler açısından anlamlı farklar olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlara göre, Türk öğrenciler şikâyette bulunurken ana dili İngilizce olan katılımcılara kıyasla daha çekingen bir tavır sergilemişler ve dolaylı ifadeleri tercih etmişlerdir. Bununla birlikte, Türk katılımcıların edimsel tercihleri "yaş" ve "cinsiyet" değişkenlerine bağlı olarak ana dili İngilizce olan katılımcılara kıyasla anlamlı farklılıklar göstermiştir; bu da Türk katılımcıların kendi kültürlerine ait edimsel

özellikleri İngilizce kullanımlarına aktardıklarını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, Türk katılımcılar, "İngilizce yeterlik düzeyi" açısından kendi aralarında farklılık göstermişlerdir; yeterlik düzeyi yükseldikçe dolaylı ifadeleri sosyal olarak daha uygun bulma eğilimi artmıştır. Buna bulguya göre, İngilizce öğrenen Türk katılımcıların İngilizce anlama ve kullanma yeterlikleri arttıkça, kendi dillerine ait kültürel ve edimsel öğelerden daha çok etkilendikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu araştırmanın bulguları, öğretmenler ve müfredat geliştirenler tarafından, İngilizce öğrenen Türklerin, İngilizce iletişimde dilbilimsel ve edimsel olarak sıkıntı yaşayabilecekleri şikâyet durumlarını açıklamak ve bu sayede edimsel yeterliği artırmak amacıyla yeni materyaller ve yöntemler geliştirmek için bir fırsat olarak kullanılabilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Söz-eylemler, şikayet, dilbilimsel yeterlik, edimsel yeterlik, doğrudanlık-dolaylılık, söylem tamamlama anketi (STA), söylem değerlendirme anketi (SDA).

ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS
BY NATIVE SPEAKERS AND TURKISH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

ÖNALAN, Okan
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The aim of this study is to investigate the pragmatic language behavior of Turkish learners of English in formal complaint situations through the comparison of their speech act performances to those of native speakers. By exploring Turkish EFL learners' speech production in English, and comparing it to the data provided by native speakers, this study aimed to (1) identify linguistic and pragmatic differences between Turkish and native speakers of English in complaining; (2) account for factors such as "age", "gender", "proficiency" and "length of stay in the target culture" that govern the communicative choices made by Turkish speakers of English in formal complaints, and (3) explain what pragmatic choices native speakers and Turkish learner make in their formal complaining attempts in English in terms of directness and indirectness. The data was collected from a total of 276 participants, 132 Native Speakers (NSs) and 144 Turkish Learners (TLs) of English. Three different data collection methods were used: a) a Discourse Evaluation Task (DET); b) video-recorded role plays; and c) open-ended oral interviews. The data was both quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed.

The results indicate that native English speakers' and Turkish learners' production of complaints reflects a significant difference with respect to the linguistic components and the pragmatic choices made in complaining. According to the results, TLs are more reserved and indirect in their complaining behavior compared to NSs. What is more, the pragmatic preferences made by Turkish learners differ significantly different from those of native speakers with regard to "age" and "gender", which suggests that the learners transfer pragmatic features from their own cultural etiquette. Finally, Turkish learners differed within the group with regards to "proficiency levels"; that is, the higher the proficiency level of learners is, the more they perceive the indirect complaining strategies as socially more appropriate, which suggests that the learners are

more affected by their own culture and corresponding pragmatic elements as they get more proficient in comprehension and use of the target language. Consequently, the findings of the study can be used as an opportunity by teachers and syllabus designers to explain situations in which Turkish learners of English may fail linguistically and pragmatically; and in turn, to develop materials in order to find more effective ways of promoting pragmatic competence among Turkish EFL learners.

Keywords: Speech acts, complaints, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, directness-indirectness, discourse completion task (DET), discourse evaluation task (DET).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

JURY MEMBERS APPROVAL PAGE…… i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS…….. ii
ÖZET…….....iv
ABSTRACT ……..….v
TABLE OF CONTENTS…….vii
LIST OF TABLES…….……ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS……..…..…xi
TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS ……..……..…….xii

CHAPTERS

I. INTRODUCTION…….……1
1.1. Statement of the Problem…….…..….4
1.2. Research Questions…….9
1.3. Need for the Study……10
II. LITERATURE REVIEW……..…13
2.1. Pragmatics: Definition and Basic Concepts…… ….15
2.1.1. Context and SPEAKING…….....16
2.1.2. Implicature and Grice's Maxims…… …..17
2.1.3. Pragmatic Competence…….……...18
2.2. The Speech Act Theory……...20
2.2.1. Expressive Speech Acts ……..…23
2.2.2. Complaints …….……..24
2.3. The Politeness Theory……..……25
2.4. Interlanguage Pragmatics …….……... 29
2.4.1. Interlanguage Transfer Theory and Pragmatic Transfer…..…….31
2.4.2. Pragmatic Failure……..……35
2.4.3. Transfer Effects in Interlanguage Pragmatics and Proficiency…… 36
2.5. Interlanguage and Cross-cultural Studies on Speech Acts……..……38
2.5.1. Speech acts as Social Functions and Complaints…….....40
2.5.2. Review Research on Complaints……..……..……42
2.6. Data Collection in Speech Act Research: Methods and Issues……..……52
2.6.1. Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs)…….……..52
2.6.2. The Metapragmatic Judgment Tasks (MJTs)…….……..54

2.6.3. Role Plays……..……..55
2.6.4. Naturalistic vs. Elicited Data……57
2.7. A Conclusion to Review of Literature……..……59
III. METHOD……..62
3.1. Participants……... …62
3.2. Data Collection Instruments……....71
3.2.1. The Discourse Evaluation Task (DET)…….……71
3.2.2. Video-Recorded Role Plays…….. ...75
3.2.3. The Open-Ended Oral Interviews…….75
3.2.4. Reliability and Validity…… 77
3.3. Procedure……..80
3.4. Data Analyses……...…83
IV. RESULTS…….. ...85
4.1. Research Question 1……...…..85
4.1.1. Quantitative Analysis……...…… 85
4.1.2. Qualitative Analysis …… …90
4.2. Research Question 2……...……..94
4.2.1. Age ……. .94
4.2.2. Gender……..… 96
4.2.3. Proficiency in English…….. ...98
4.2.4. Length of Stay in Target Culture……..99
4.2.5. Method of Learning English……..…99
4.3. Research Question 3……..100
4.3.1. Quantitative Analysis……. 100
4.3.2. Qualitative Analysis …… ..102
V. DISCUSSION……...……..……...106
5.1. Theoretical Significance of the Study…….....108
5.2. Pedagogical Implications……..…….....112
VI. LIMITATIONS AND NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH…..……..... 119
VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY…….. ...122
VIII. APPENDICES……141

LIST OF TABLES

Pages

Table 1. Production of Complaint Components in the 1st Situation of the Preliminary Study…… 6

Table 2. Production of Complaint Components in the 2nd Situation of the Preliminary Study……..…. 7

Table 3. Production of Complaint Components in the 3rd Situation of the Preliminary Study……..... 7

Table 4. Overall Production of Complaint Components in All Three Scenarios in the Preliminary Study…….... 8

Table 5. Nationality of the Native Speaker Participants……. 63

Table 6. Participants by Gender…….. 63

Table 7. Participants by Age……..…..64

Table 8. Occupational Distribution of Participants…….… 64

Table 9. Participants by Field of Education…… 66

Table 10. Participants by Level of Education……. 66

Table 11. Turkish Participants' English Studying Period……... 67

Table 12. Turkish Participants' English Instruction Methods…….68

Table 13. Turkish Participants' Level of Proficiency in English ……... 69

Table 14. Proficiency Exam Scores of Turkish Participants……... 70

Table 15. Visits of Turkish Participants to English Speaking Countries…… 70

Table 16. Time Spent by Turkish Participants in English-speaking Countries……...71

Table 17. DET Likert scale Factor Analysis Results……...79

Table 18. Means of Participants' Attitude Scores (Independent Sample T-Test)……... 86

Table 19. Frequency of 1st Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Initiator……87

Table 20. Frequency of 2nd Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Establishing……..... 87

Table 21. Frequency of 3rd Complaint Component in DCT Responses: A Request …. 88

Table 22. Frequency of 4th Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Conveyance of Disappointment / Dissatisfaction / Annoyance……... 89

Table 23. Frequency of Direct-Indirect Strategy Use in the 3rd Complaint Component in DCT Responses……...…… 89

Table 24. Results Obtained from DCTs as to the Linguistic and Pragmatic Choices of the Participants …..……..90

Table 25. Results Obtained from Role Plays as to the Linguistic and Pragmatic

Choices of the Participants (12 NSs + 4 TLs)……. 91

Table 26. Comparison of TLs' DET Likert Scale Attitude Scores According to Age (One-way ANOVA Test)…….95

Table 27. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Age…….. 95

Table 28. Comparison of NSs' DET Likert Scale Attitude Scores According to Age (One-way ANOVA Test)…….96

Table 29. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Gender (Independent Sample T-Test)…….. 96

Table 30. Group Statistics on NSs' Attitude Scores According to Gender (Independent Sample T-Test)…….. 97

Table 31. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Proficiency Level (Independent Sample T-Test)…….. 98

Table 32. Comparison of TLs' Attitude Scores According to Length of Stay in Target Culture (One-way ANOVA Test)……99

Table 33. Comparison of TLs' Attitude Scores According to English Learning Method(s) (One-way ANOVA Test)…… 100

Table 34. Comparison of TLs' Direct and Indirect Items (Paired Sample T-Test)…...101

Table 35. Comparison of NSs' Direct and Indirect Items (Paired Sample T-Test)….. 101

Table 36. Comparison of Direct and Indirect Items According to Participant Groups (Independent sample T-Test)……..…102

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCT : discourse completion task
DET : discourse evaluation task
EFL : English as a foreign language
ESL : English as a second language
FL : foreign language
FLL : foreign language learning
FTAs : face threatening acts
IL : Interlanguage
ILP : Interlanguage pragmatics
L1 : first language / mother tongue
L2 : second language
MJT : metapragmatic judgment test
NSs : native speakers of English
NNSs : non-native speakers
SAs : speech acts
SAT : speech act theory
SLA : second language acquisition
SLL : second language learning
TLs : Turkish learners of English

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

(…) : pause (between 0.5 and 2 seconds)

(,) : sentence breaks

xxx : unintelligible words or stretches of talk

= : latching

(?) : a question or question intonation

( ) : additional remarks

% : voiced hesitation (err)

[: stretches of talk which overlap
[

Chapter 1

Introduction

As long as languages have existed, there have also been cultures. Culture is a vital part of the communication process, and all languages consist of culturally loaded rudiments (Pennycook, 1989; Phillipson, 1992). Therefore, language learners' command of socio-cultural rules, which is widely known as pragmatic competence, plays a crucial part in successful communication, and learning a language involves acquiring pragmatic competence that entails appropriate ways of conveying communicative intent in a variety of situations. In other words, language learners should learn to speak not only grammatically, but also "appropriately" to achieve communicative goals (Novick, 2000). This notion of "appropriateness" emphasizes that second or foreign language learners ought to master not only linguistic rules such as morphology, syntax, phonology and vocabulary, but also the pragmatic rules of target language use. Tanck (2002) asserts that speakers who seem "fluent" in a foreign language due to their expertise of the grammatical rules of that language and its vocabulary may still lack pragmatic competence; and as a result, they may not be able to produce language that is socially and culturally appropriate. Thus, language learning requires more than developing an extensive vocabulary, learning the grammar, and acquiring native-like pronunciation. As Hymes (1972b) puts it, "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (278).

For a few decades, research has given attention to investigating how second language learners (SLLs), as well as foreign language learners (FLLs), interpret and produce speech acts (e.g. apologies, complaints, compliments, refusals, requests, suggestions, thanks, etc.) in terms of socio-cultural appropriateness from a pragmatic perspective. Based on the "Speech Act Theory" (Searle, 1969) and "Politeness Theory" (Brown and Levinson, 1987), pragmatics research has underscored the importance of socio-cultural contexts in interpersonal and intercultural communication. In the field,

the focus of interest in the learner language has eventually evolved into a new branch called “interlanguage pragmatics”, a branch of pragmatics which specifically discusses how non-native speakers comprehend and produce a speech act in a target language and how their pragmatic competence develops over time (Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993). Research has mainly concentrated on establishing whether non-native speakers differ from native speakers (NS) in their use of strategies and linguistic forms to convey meaning and politeness. Hence, scholars of interlanguage pragmatics have been researching cross-cultural differences of speech act usage and second/foreign language learners’ mastery of the speech acts for some time now (Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Takashi and Beebe, 1987; Cohen, 1996a; Tanck, 2002)

Inasmuch as realization patterns and the appropriateness criteria of speech acts vary across cultures, one of the challenges learners may face in learning another language involves adjusting their own cultural and pragmatic patterns into their use of the target language (TL). Naturally, the manner in which another language functions may differ fundamentally from that of one’s mother tongue (L1). Unfortunately, non-native speakers might not be fully aware of all the socio-linguistic rules governing the appropriateness of speech acts in the target language (Einsentein and Bodman, 1996). When learners are not familiar with the different ways in which the speech acts are performed in the language being learned, they may possibly transfer their first language rules of speaking (Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss–Welts, 1990; Bergam and Kasper, 1993; Olshtain and Weinback 1993; Weizman, 1993; Tanck, 2002). Such transfers that could lead to the violation of pragmatic rules may generate pragmatically inappropriate linguistic forms, and eventually may result in communication breakdowns.

Language learners’ ability to employ the proper speech patterns compliant with the sociocultural parameters of the specific situation is crucial because failure to do so may bring about misunderstandings or even total breakdowns in communication. Listeners might miss key points, just as speakers may have their messages misunderstood. What is worse, there is always the risk of appearing uncooperative at the least, and more seriously insulting. In such circumstances, non-native speakers may be perceived as people who are insensitive, rude, or inept. Thomas (1983) names this phenomenon “pragmatic failure” and specifies two types: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic. She asserts that pragmalinguistic failure takes place when “the

pragmatic force mapped by S (speaker) onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language, or when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from L1 to L2" (p.99). Sociopragmatic failure, then again, occurs as a result of culturally different notions of appropriateness. Even second language (L2) learners who are linguistically fluent can find themselves is a vulnerable position if they sound inappropriate to the native speaker. Their pragmatic failures might not be taken lightly, and the entire interaction may break down, despite linguistic accuracy. Evidently, improper usage of pragmatic patterns can not only lead to communication that goes awry, but also affect how people feel about each other.

With the purposes of elaborating on the causes of such problems and finding ways to solve them, applied linguists, and more particularly those who are concerned with second/foreign language teaching, have focused on speech act research, which is valuable for many reasons. First of all, it provides a detailed look at how non-native speakers use the target language, and how their linguistic output is perceived by native speakers. By studying various languages, not only the general patterns, but also the similarities and differences in language use can be revealed. Additionally, speech act research allows for cross-cultural comparisons, which is very significant bearing in mind the international functions of widespread languages such as English. Consequently, identification of universal and culture-specific rules of speaking can lead to a better understanding of language acquisition/learning process. Based on this information, thus, more strategic language teaching methodologies can be developed.

Based on its significance, speech act research has been maturing over the last two decades, yet still needs to be expanded with as many languages and speech acts as possible. Increasingly, studies provide empirical descriptions of speech act performance by non-native speakers; however, the majority of the data has centered on languages such as English, Hebrew, Japanese, and Korean. Though there have been efforts to expand the line of research to different languages (Bergman and Kasper, 1993 – Thai; Johnston, Kasper and Rose, 1994 – Chinese; Mizuno, 1996 – Chinese; Márquez Reiter, 2000 – Uruguayan Spanish), the bulk of the studies have been relatively limited to the mentioned languages. Similarly, a great deal of research has been done on the speech acts of apologies and requests, including studies by Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Blum-

Kulka and Olshtain (1986), Olshtain and Cohen (1989), Blum-Kulka (1991), Ellis (1992), Kim (1995), Meier (1998), Kasper and Rose (2001). Nonetheless, there are plentiful other speech acts to be investigated such as greetings, thanks, offers and complaints. In short, much more systematic comparisons of cross-cultural pragmatic patterns, covering a broader range of languages and speech acts are required in order to uncover universal and culture-specific language behavior (Kasper, 1992).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In order to collect an initial set of data and to establish a baseline for this study, a preliminary research was conducted in January 2008. In this research, which aimed at exploring advanced Turkish learners' responses when performing the speech act of complaint, and at comparing them to those of native speakers, a survey was distributed. The survey (devised from Tanck, 2002) involved a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) that asked the participants to write their natural responses to three interactions with different levels of formality: student-professor (formal), neighbor-neighbor (semi-formal), and roommate-roommate (informal). A total of 16 subjects (8 native and 8 Turkish speakers of English) participated in the research. Responses of native English speakers were reviewed for evidence of common components of complaint sets. The responses made by Turkish speakers were then analyzed for the presence and similarity of the components as compared to the responses of the native speakers. Finally, the quality of directness in one of the components (namely "request" as a part of complaint) was evaluated. Results showed a significant difference between the two groups in the "student-teacher prompt" in that all native speakers used mostly direct requests to deal with the situation whereas fewer and indirect requests were posed by the Turkish speakers in order to address their complaints in the situation.

Out of the 30 survey distributed in person or via email, 16 returned. The 16 participants included 8 native speakers (4 American, 2 British, 2 Canadian) and 8 non-native (Turkish) speakers of English. Subjects' ages ranged from 22 to 65 years old. Of the 16 subjects, 8 were male and 8 were female. 5 NSs were teachers, and 3 were students whereas all NNSs were teachers of English. In other words, all NNSs were expected to be highly proficient in English. Each of the Turkish subjects had studied English in a formal EFL setting for 9 years at the least to 20 at the most. 6 (75%) of the

non-native speakers considered themselves fluent in English, while 1 (12,5%) reported to be “more or less” fluent and 1 (12,5%) to be not fluent. At the time of this research, 4 NNS subjects reported that they had not been to any English-speaking country. 2 of the NNSs had spent 15 days in England, and 1 of them a month in the same country. 2 NNS participant had been to the USA: 1 for 3 months and 1 for a year.

The survey used in this preliminary research (Appendix 1) was made up of three parts: (1) a piece of information about the research and the researcher; (2) demographic information of the participant; and (3) a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). In the first part of the survey, the researcher addressed the participants providing them with the purpose of the research, the procedures that would be followed, and the contact information of the researcher. In the second part, subjects were requested to give basic information such as name-surname, nationality, age, gender, course of study, and first language. If the subject was a non-native speaker, they were further asked to provide specific information which elicited their mother tongue, length of formal English study, English learning environments, self-determination of English fluency, total time spent in English-speaking countries. Lastly, the Discourse Completion Test gave the participants three complaint scenarios, in which they were asked to write down their natural oral responses.

The three situations given in the DCT descended in terms of the level of formality and they suggested unequal as well as equal power relationships of the speakers. In the first situation, the subjects were asked to complain to their professor about their final grade, which they expected to be higher than what professor gave. This first scenario involved a formal interaction of unequal power-relation between a student and a professor. In the next prompt, the subjects were expected to complain to their upper-floor neighbor, who they do not know well, about the disturbing noise. This second scenario entailed a semi-formal interaction of equal power-relation between two not-so-well-acquainted neighbors. In the last situation, the subjects were requested to complain to their smoking roommate about the inconvenience caused by the smoke. This final scenario posed an informal interaction of equal power-relation between two roommates. Subjects responded by writing what their oral response would be to each situation. They were encouraged to respond quickly, and it was requested that they not carefully analyze what they thought their response should be.

The analysis involved three phases: (1) examination of native-speaker responses in order to formulize the complaint sets, (2) review of non-native responses in order to compare the complaint components to those of native speakers, and (3) evaluation of directness in requests as a part of complaining. In the first phase of the analysis, common components of speech act sets found in the native speakers' complaints were used to establish a set of baseline responses. Five components were typically found in native speakers' production of complaints. These components were: (1) *initiators,* such as, "Hi", "Good afternoon", and "Excuse me, professor"; (2) *establishing context*, as in, "I came to discuss my grade"; (3) *a request*, such as, "Could you explain why my grade is a C?"; (4) *conveyance of disappointment/dissatisfaction/annoyance*, as in, "To be honest, I was very surprised of the grade I received"; and (5) *a warning/threat*, such as, "Either you refrain or you'll have to find a new roommate." In general, only the first four of the components were produced for each prompt. Based on the social distance between the interlocutors, the fifth component was observed only in the third situation, in which two roommates interacted. The frequency of use (by both native and non-native speakers) of the individual components for each scenario can be found in Table 1 (student-professor), Table 2 (neighbor-neighbor), and Table 3 (roommate-roommate) while Table 4 shows the overall results.

Table 1. Production of Complaint Components in the 1st Situation of the Preliminary Study

Situation 1 / student – professor
Reason of complaint: unexpectedly low final grade

	COMPONENTS	**Subjects**	**Frequency of Use***	
			#	**%**
1	*Initiator*	NS	7	87,5
		NNS	6	75
2	*Establishing Context*	NS	7	87,5
		NNS	5	62,5
3	***Request***	***NS***	***8***	***100***
		NNS	***5***	***62,5***
4	*Conveyance of Disappointment/Dissatisfaction/Annoyance*	NS	6	75
		NNS	6	75

Table 2. Production of Complaint Components in the 2nd Situation of the Preliminary Study

Situation 2 / neighbor – neighbor *Reason of complaint: disturbing noise from upper floor*				
	COMPONENTS	**Subjects**	**Frequency of Use**	
			#	**%**
1	*Initiator*	NS	8	100
		NNS	8	100
2	*Establishing Context*	NS	6	75
		NNS	5	62,5
3	*Request*	NS	6	75
		NNS	8	100
4	*Conveyance of Disappointment/Dissatisfaction/Annoyance*	NS	8	100
		NNS	5	62,5

Table 3. Production of Complaint Components in the 3rd Situation of the Preliminary Study

Situation 3 / roommate – roommate *Reason of complaint: smoking*				
	COMPONENTS	**Subjects**	**Frequency of Use**	
			#	**%**
1	*Initiator*	NS	6	75
		NNS	4	50
2	*Establishing Context*	NS	7	87,5
		NNS	7	87,5
3	*Request*	NS	4	50
		NNS	5	62,5
4	*Conveyance of Disappointment/Dissatisfaction/Annoyance*	NS	6	75
		NNS	6	75
5	*Warning / Threat***	NS	6	75
		NNS	3	37,5

** found only in the third situation.

Table 4. Overall Production of Complaint Components in All Three Scenarios in the Preliminary Study

	COMPONENTS	Subjects	number of total component use
1	*Situation 1 / student – professor (formal)*	NS	28
		NNS	22
2	*Situation 2 / neighbor – neighbor (semi-formal)*	NS	28
		NNS	26
3	*Situation 3 / roommate –roommate (informal)*	NS	29
		NNS	24
	Total	**NS**	**85**
		NNS	**72**

According to the results of this preliminary research, native and Turkish speakers of English generally produced the components of complaint speech act with roughly similar frequencies, except for the "request" component in the formal situation between the student and the professor. As Table 1 indicates, five (62,5%) of the NNSs used a request in this formal complaint context whereas all the NSs posed requests to the professor. The difference became more significant when the quality of the requests were scrutinized. Most (6 out of 8 – 75%) of the requests posed by the NS subjects were direct such as "Could you please explain to me why my final mark was a C?". However, all 5 Turkish subjects used indirect requests, as in "May I see my paper, please?". What is more, the overall number of components produced by the two groups in each situation revealed a slight discrepancy. In all of the three scenarios, NSs produced more components than NNS subjects did (see Table 4 above).

The findings may reveal that the Turkish speakers of English are more reserved in making direct requests or complaints in formal contexts, which include interaction with a superior figure. Their complaints seem too modest or fairly indirect compared to those of their native counterparts. Thus, they might sound rather inappropriate, or even may not be understood at all, if they were to make such complaints in a formal target

language context. Moreover, the fewer number of components used by the Turkish learners of English to perform the speech act of complaint might also be attributed to the limitation of the non-native speakers' pragmatic and linguistic competence. This modesty in expressing complaints may be explained in the light of the socio-cultural differences between the two groups and in the light of pragmatic transfer.

In order to account for such discussions and to address such pragmatic problems, further and more detailed research should be conducted. Obviously, the number of the subjects ought to be expanded. Besides, the Discourse Completion Test, while a time-efficient instrument, may not be the best way to obtain authentic data. Subjects are writing, not speaking, and have the opportunity to contemplate and change their responses, something that is less possible in a naturalistic spoken setting. Additionally, the reasons of the discrepancy between native and Turkish speakers' complaint use in formal contexts should be examined. To be able to come up with pragmatic-transfer-based explanations, how Turkish subjects respond in their mother tongue for the same formal situations are supposed to be included in the inquiry. Their cultural motives can also be studied via another questionnaire. Other than the components of complaint, the necessary and appropriate linguistic forms can also be outlined. In other words, examination of not only quantity but also quality of each component is required. Non-native speakers, especially those with little opportunity for interaction, may not have knowledge of the routine of semantic fromulas, or may not have internalized such rules to adequately produce them in spontaneous speech. In short, justification of the above findings necessitates a far more detailed research.

1.2. Research Questions

Therefore, this dissertation poses the following research questions to address and find solutions to the problems stated so far:

1. How do Turkish learners of English differ linguistically and pragmatically from native speakers of English in their speech act behavior in specific formal complaint situations?

2. To what extent do the following variables affect Turkish learners' complaint behavior in English?
    a. Age and gender,
    b. Proficiency in English,
    c. Length of stay in target culture,
    d. Method of learning English.

3. Do Turkish learners of English use direct or indirect complaining strategies in formal complaint situations?

1.3. Need for the Study

The learners' culturally-determined perceptions of what is appropriate to say – and what is not– differ from those of native speakers of the target language. Such perceptions are generally related to what Brown and Levinson (1987) call "face". This concept of "face" can shape and be shaped by the interlocutors' interactive decisions on what can or cannot be said by whom, to whom, when, how, and why (Harada, 1996). Especially in formal contexts, successful conversation requires well made decisions based upon status, distance, familiarity, etc. That is why, as Olshtain (1983) suggests, pragmatic transfer is more probable in certain speech acts, such as complaints, in which speakers mainly use their perceived knowledge as to what is right and what is wrong to be properly polite.

Drawing on Goffman's (1967) discussion, Brown and Levinson (1987) describe "face" as the public self-image that every person wants to claim. According to the face principle, two aspects of people's feelings engage in speech acts: positive face and negative face. Positive face is the desire to be liked and approved of while negative face is the desire not to impose. While trying to preserve face, speakers make efforts to reduce negative feelings and promote positive interactions in communication in order to maintain pleasant interpersonal relationships. Thus, facework entails the strategies that people incorporate into their speech acts to minimize or alleviate a face threat. The "Theory of Politeness" by Brown and Levinson recognizes the relational nature of facework as "the principles out of which social relationships, in their interactional aspect, are constructed (1987:55). In other words, it is believed universal that people

maintain each others' positive and negative face so as to get along in a society. These concepts will be further mentioned and explained in the literature review; yet, to come to the point, how the positive and negative aspects of face are balanced is culturally determined. It is also reflected in pragmatic norms. Consequently, learning the pragmatic system of English may be challenging for Turkish learners due to the general differences between eastern and western cultures.

Like many other speech acts do, complaining has significant cultural perceptions embedded in it. The speech act of complaining is a face-threatening act that has strong potential for disturbing the state of personal relationships (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Non-native speakers can unconsciously engage in pragmatic transfer while complaining since complaining necessitates delicate interpersonal negotiation. In the broad sense, native speakers of English from western cultures, might consider truthfulness directness, clarity, and effectiveness as more important since they assert individuality and emphasize the linguistic function of complaining, whereas Turkish learners, valuing social interaction and solidarity, may be more concerned about being indirect, preserving face, and avoiding embarrassment. Many Turkish learners may not know how to complain appropriately in English although they know the semantic formulas and conventional rules, because their cultural perceptions of pragmatic rules differ from those of native speakers of English. As a result, improper transfer of Turkish expectations to English may cause pragmatic failure, miscommunication, and even communication breakdown.

Recently, literature on speech acts has been improving in terms of empirical descriptions of speech act performance by non-native speakers. An increasing amount of data describes speech acts in possible semantic formulas that comprise them, as well as the linguistic forms most frequently used to realize these semantic formulas. The speech act of complaining, in particular, has attracted attention because it is a major cross-cultural "sticking point" for many non-native speakers (Boxer, 1993a; Boxer and Pickering, 1995; Murphy and Neu, 1995; Olshtain and Weinbach, 1993; Park, Dillon and Mitchell, 1998). Nonetheless, little research has been conducted on direct complaining activity between Turkish learners of English and native speakers in formal contexts. Above and beyond, while the majority of studies use target language baseline data, they differ in the presence or absence of L1 controls. In other words, how learners

realize speech acts in their mother tongue compared to their behavior in the target language might sometimes not be included in the studies. Whether or not L1 controls need to be included depends on the specific research questions under study; however, the absence of L1 controls precludes the examination of observed variation for transfer effects (Kasper and Dahl, 1991). As a final point, how learner variables such as level of proficiency and amount of exposure to the target culture may affect speech act behavior is not scrutinized very often because either they are usually taken for granted or they are undervalued. Yet, taking them into consideration may shed light on the nature of pragmatic transfer.

Therefore, this study investigates the pragmatic language behavior of Turkish learners of English in formal complaint situations through the comparison of their speech act performances to those of native speakers. By exploring Turkish EFL learners' speech production in Turkish and English, and comparing it to the data provided by native speakers, this study aims to (1) identify language use differences between Turkish and native speakers of English in complaining; (2) explain what pragmatic choices native speakers and Turkish learner make in their formal complaining attempts in English, and (3) account for factors such as "age", "gender", "proficiency" and "length of stay in the target culture" that govern the communicative choices made by Turkish speakers of English in formal complaints. The implications of this research will help to lay out a general understanding of the discrepancies that can exist between native and non-native complaints. The findings of the study can also be used by teachers and syllabus designers to explain situations in which Turkish learners of English may fail pragmatically; and in turn, to develop materials to handle these problems. Consequently, the study can be used as an opportunity to find more effective ways of promoting pragmatic competence among EFL learners.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Since this study focuses on the pragmatic language behavior of Turkish learners of English in formal complaint situations through the comparison of their speech act performances to those of native speakers, its theoretical framework draws mainly from Pragmatics. More specifically, it is partially rooted in Interlanguage Pragmatics, which focuses on the communication rules of target language users, and to a certain extent in Contrastive Pragmatics, which contrasts communication rules among L1 speakers of different languages. Also, Interlanguage Transfer Theory, which accounts for learners' variation in their target language performance, as well as Speech Act Theory, which provides an analytic lens through which pragmatic competence can be examined, are theoretically ingrained in the study. In addition, significant contributions to the field of pragmatics, such as Politeness Theory and the discussion of "context" should be taken into consideration. Thus, not only the relevant interlanguage pragmatic studies on complaints, which will finally be mentioned, but also the necessary literature on the pragmatic theory will be reviewed.

In the last four decades, the revised view of language primarily as an instrument of communication has brought about significant changes in the field of linguistics. Accordingly, how concepts of competence and performance are interpreted has naturally altered from idealized perceptions to more constructive context-based understandings. The first linguist to suggest the notion of competence vs. performance was Noam Chomsky (1965), whose linguistic theory underscored "an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance" (p.3). As a reaction to Chomsky's somewhat limited definition of the scope of linguistic theory, a conceptual framework of communicative competence was proposed other researchers. Dell Hymes (1962), the

first to use the term *communicative competence*, defined the ability to speak competently as knowing not only the phonology, lexicon, semantics and syntax of a language, but also knowing what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it. In other words, Hymes expanded Chomsky's notion of competence to include both linguistic and sociolinguistic competencies subsumed under the term ethnography of speaking. Similarly, Gumperz (1982) described communicative competence in interactional terms as the knowledge of linguistic-related communicative conventions that a speaker must have in order to create and sustain conversational cooperation. Therefore, the sociolinguistic approaches define language as a dynamic code, and subsequent formulations of communicative competence recognize grammar and linguistic knowledge as a resource to perform communicative functions in light of appropriateness in context.

By the impact of cultural anthropology on linguistics, the definition of language has broadened to include social aspects; hence, in order to understand how language is realized with its structures within a given context, linguists have concentrated on how language is embedded in the culture. Today, it is commonly agreed that language is not utilized in a vacuum by the speaker-hearer in a Chomskyian sense, but it is a tool used by speech communities to fulfill specific functions. As Tannen (1984) asserts "communication is, by its very nature, culturally relative" (p.194). Then, as language is rule-governed, it is not illogical that the sociolinguistic rules would be different for different speech communities as a result of the different cultures. What is appropriate in one culture might not be for another. Socialization within cultures ensures that members of that speech community are initiated and instructed in the appropriate ways of speaking. It is this socialization which enhances smooth communication. Briefly, it can be maintained that shared cultural knowledge facilitates communication whereas cross-cultural differences may result in problematic or failed communication.

In order to achieve successful communication between the speakers, both parties must have access to any aspect of cultural knowledge that will facilitate a successful communicative encounter. Here, it would be unjustifiable to suggest that the cultural norms of any party are in any way inferior/superior to those of the other. However, in language learning and teaching context, it is usually the language learners who are obliged to learn more about the culture of the native speakers, whose language they

intend to learn. Still, in the contemporary world where languages, such as English, are means of communication between many different nations and peoples, both the learners and the native speakers must learn about the cultural aspects of those with whom they somehow interact. Such interactions can only be examined through the pragmatics of language use. As Leech (1983) asserts, we can really begin to understand the nature of language if we understand pragmatics, the study of language used in communication. So, let's first elucidate the term "pragmatics" and its basic assumptions, from which this thesis draws its theoretical framework, before we expand more on the other theories, upon which it is gradually built.

2.1. Pragmatics: Definition and Basic Concepts

As a field of study, pragmatics reflects influences from various disciplines. Philosophy, logic, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and ethnography have all contributed to pragmatics. In light of such contributions, several researchers have attempted to find an answer to the question: "What is pragmatics?" Levinson (1983) states that pragmatics basically comprises "the study of language usage" (p.5). According to Crystal (1985) "pragmatics is the study of language from the point of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (240). Mey (1993) defines pragmatics as an umbrella that covers the modules of linguistics. For him, it is both a component and a perspective; in other words, pragmatics is a part of linguistics and at the same time a perspective on linguistics (p.47). Grundy (1995) asserts that pragmatics is "about trying to account in systematic ways for our ability to determine what speakers intend even when their utterances are so dramatically underdetermined" (p.10).

As the quotations suggest, it may be hard to reach a consensus on a comprehensible definition of the term pragmatics. What is more, what pragmatics deals with is an equally debatable topic. Therefore, pragmatics has been described as the wastebasket of linguistics, and supposedly it contains all those elements that are messy and that do not fit into linguistics in a neat and orderly fashion (Mey 1993, Verschueren 1987). Consequently, attempts to describe and theorize the domain of pragmatics have resulted in the compilation of some basic principles and assumptions.

2.1.1. Context and SPEAKING

As mentioned earlier, pragmatics goes beyond the literal meaning of what is said in order to focus on the intended meaning as communicated by a speaker and inferred by a listener. Since pragmatics has more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than with what the words or phrases in those utterances might themselves mean, it should too focus on the context in which those pieces of language are uttered because the meanings of the utterances may well be influenced by the context itself. As McConell-Ginet (1989) suggests, "language matters so much precisely because so littler matter is attached to it; meaning are not given but must be produced and reproduced, negotiated in situated contexts of communication" (49).

Due to its significance in communication, the term "context" has been addressed by many sociolinguists and cultural anthropologists as a part of the basic principles of pragmatics. According to Kramsch (1993), definitions of situational context given by Jakobson and by Hymes are among the best. Jakobson (1960) views situational context as co-terminus with a speech event, which consists of addresser, addressee, context, message, contact and code. Hymes (1974) coins the acronym SPEAKING to explain his notion of situational context. His term SPEAKING is a framework for understanding communication, in which S refers to "setting" and includes both time and place. P stands for "participants" including speaker/hearer, sender/receiver, addressor/addressee. E is "ends", the purposes, or goals that the participants intend to accomplish. A stands for "act sequence" and refers to form and content of utterances. K stands for "keys" and refers to the tone in which the message is relayed. I refers to "instrumentalities", the channels used for communication (oral vs. written) and the code (L1, L2, FL, etc.). N stands for "norms of interaction and interpretation" and refers to the ways in which participants interact and interpret language. Finally, G stands for "genres" and refers to categories such as poems, lectures, prayers, proverbs, etc. Kramsch (1993) also credits Malinowski and Firth for expanding the understanding of situational context by going beyond the spoken words to encompass gestures, facial expressions, the interlocutors and the audience present during the conversation, and finally the environment in which the conversation is situated. In short, the understanding of situational context, as

outlined above, provides a comprehensive framework of communication and one of the basic concepts that pragmatics deals with.

2.1.2. Implicature and Grice's Maxims

Another element of pragmatics most often studied is implicature. It was first mentioned by Grice (1975) and further developed by Levinson (1983) and Green (1989), among others. In describing how implicature works, Grice (1975) notes that generally people make an effort to cooperate with others in the course of conversation by providing information that is "relevant, appropriately informative, truthful and clear". These four principles are called Grice's maxim and this broad paradigm is called Grice's Cooperative Principle. Grice (1991) formulates the cooperative principle in the following manner: "Make your own contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (p.47). Speakers and hearers are "contractually" obliged to observe the cooperative principle.

In order to further discuss the cooperative principle, the basic concept "implicature" should first be clarified. According to the explanation provided by Grice (1991), the noun implicature can be understood as something which ahs been said, and what has been said is assumed to be "closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (the sentence)" that have been uttered (p.307). This leads to the distinction between conventional and conversational implicature. The former derives its meaning through conventional use over time whereas the latter is dependent upon context for its meaning. When the literal meaning of what they hear does not seem to follow the four maxims, the participants assume that the speaker is expressing something indirectly and search for other alternative meanings for what has been said. When they find one that does seem to have those characteristics, they assume that to be the message the speaker intended. Messages derived in this way, along with the process that produces them, can be referred to as conversational implicature (Bouton, 1994). Hence, conversational implicatures are "essentially connected with general features of discourse" and consequently feature in the functioning of cooperative principle (Grice 1991, 307).

According to Gricean pragmatics (1991, p.308), there are four maxims operating in the cooperative principle:

Maxim of Quantity:

1. Make your contribution as informative as required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than required.

Maxim of Quality:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of Relation:

1. Be relevant.

Maxim of Manner: the super-maxim operating in this category is 'Be perspicuous,' which can be further sub-divided into four general maxims

1. Avoid obscurity of expression
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

Although interlocutors generally observe these four maxims, they may also choose not to fulfill them either by violating a maxim or by opting one out. What is more, they may use one maxim in a manner which makes it conflict with another, or by flouting a maxim. Under all circumstances, the concept of implicature and Grice's Maxims (or Cooperative Principle) provide a comprehensive framework to formulize meaning not only as it is conveyed in a purely linguistic manner, but also as it is relayed in a more complicated pragmatic manner.

2.1.3. Pragmatic Competence

After Hymes (1972a) first suggested the term communicative competence, it has been divided into four aspects of grammatical, discourse, strategic and sociolinguistic competencies in one well-known analysis (Canale and Swain, 1980). What is meant here by sociolinguistic competence has tended to be perceived as pragmatic competence in second/foreign language. There has been a great deal of overlap between what was meant by sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence in that both concepts make reference to the appropriate use of language depending on contextual factors.

Although researchers frequently use these two terms interchangeably, pragmatic competence is generally known as the ability to use variety of language functions, the ability to understand the speakers' real intention, and the modification of speech according to the context (Bialystok, 1993). In other words, pragmatic competence entails a range of abilities to use language for various purposes to request, to instruct, to effect change as well as listeners' ability to get past the language and understand the speakers' real intentions especially when these intentions are not directly conveyed (e.g. indirect requests, irony, sarcasm, etc.).

As far as the pragmatic competence is concerned, Thomas (1983) makes a distinction between (a) pragmalinguistic knowledge, which refers to the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force, and (b) sociopragmatic knowledge, which refers to the perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior when talking about pragmatic competence. More specifically, Cohen (1996a) proposes two distinct levels of abilities required for acquisition of pragmatic competence. First level is the language users' sociocultural knowledge to determine which speech act is appropriate given the culture involved, the situation, and the speakers' background variables. Second level is the speakers' sociolinguistic ability to choose the actual language forms for realizing the speech act (e.g. sorry vs. excuse me; thanks vs. I appreciate it). Yet, Bachman's (1990) model of the components of communicative language ability offers a clearer version of pragmatic competence by broadening its definition to include both the illocutionary competence (i.e. the ability to express and understand the illocutionary force of language functions) and the sociolinguistic competence (i.e. the sensitivity to or the control of the appropriate conventions of language use according to the sociocultural and discoursal features of language). According to this model, pragmatic competence is concerned with the relationship between utterances and the acts or functions which speakers intend to perform through these utterances (illocutionary force) and the characteristics of the context of language use that determine the appropriateness of the language used. To be brief, pragmatic competence consists of pragmalinguistic competence, which is the knowledge of appropriate forms of language and communicative strategies that affect the intended pragmatic force; and of sociocultural competence, which entails the assessment of contextual factors in light of the appropriate schemata of speech events and language behavior in a given context.

Within second language acquisition, the most frequently studied aspect of pragmatic competence is the ability to use speech acts (SAs) appropriately. Application of pragmatics to language learning provides a lens through which to define illocutionary acts that are available in the language, decide which strategies are necessary to perform each illocutionary act, and know which the appropriate contexts for using a given strategy are. Languages may differ significantly as to when a particular speech act should be performed and with what strategy. Thus, learners should learn the conventions of the language use to attain proficiency. In other words, bearing in mind that different cultures have different means and expressions for communicative intentions, learners have to figure out what constitutes appropriate speech act behavior in order to attain pragmatic competence that will result in successful communication. Since speech acts have a considerably significant role in the attainment of pragmatic competence, the speech act theory will first be comprehensively reviewed before moving on to other related theories and research.

2.2. The Speech Act Theory

While linguists have long been fascinated with how speakers, given a finite set of rules for sentences, can produce an infinite number of sentences, philosophers have tried to understand how an infinite number of sentences can reproduce a finite set of functions. Speech situations, the largest communicative unit, are the social occasions in which speech may occur (e.g. parties, meals, fights). Although speech situations provide the setting or scene in which speech takes place, they are not governed by a single set of rules. Here, the speech acts are the minimal units of linguistic action. The Speech Act Theory, which was brought forward by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969), attempts to explain how meaning and action are related to language and is basically concerned with what people do with language and the functions of language that are related to communicative intentions.

In his famous work "*How to Do Thing with Words*", Austin (1962) suggests that in saying something, one is performing something. According to him, communication is a series of communicative acts that are used systematically to accomplish particular purposes. He also claims that all utterances perform specific actions by having a

specific force assigned to them. Austin (1962:102) ascribes three meanings to utterances in an effort to explain the function of speech acts:

a) Locutionary act:	uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference which is roughly equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense.
b) Illocutionary act:	the making of statement, request, promise, etc. when uttering a sentence by virtue of the conventional force associated with it.
c) Perlocutionary act:	all of the effects on the audience whether intended or unintended, brought about by means of uttering sentence, such effects being special to the circumstance or utterance.

In other words, locutionary act is the literal meaning of the utterance, illocutionary act is the social function that the utterance or the written text has, and finally the perlocutionary act is the result or effect that is produced by the utterance in the given context. An imaginary example may clarify these concepts. Let's suppose that entering a room, a person says to his friends: "you really need some light in here". The locutionary meaning of his statement concerns the lack of sufficient light in the room. The illocutionary meaning is a request for some more light in the room. The perlocutionary result of the utterance may be one of the friend's standing up and turning on the lights in order to make the room more comfortable for the person.

However, it may not be as simple as it appears. It may be problematic to apply these meanings to speech acts because the pragmatic intention of the speaker and the meaning of the speech act may not coincide. Yet, despite such inconsistencies, this categorization has proved helpful to applied linguists in speech act research. With the intention to formulize the speech acts more profoundly, Searle (1969) has built on Austin's work and has contributed to the development of the Speech Act Theory (SAT) in two significant ways: first, he has proposed taxonomy of speech acts expanding on the work done by Austin; and furthermore, he has established four conditions that underlie speech acts.

According to the taxonomy presented by Searle (1969:12-20), there are five basic kinds of actions that one can perform in speech: a) *representatives* which commit the speaker to the truth of the expected proposition (asserting, claiming, reporting,

concluding); b) *expressives* which express a psychological state (thanking, apologizing, complaining, welcoming); c) *directives* which are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (requesting, questioning, suggesting, commanding); d) *commissives* which commit the speaker to some future course of action (promising, threatening, offering); and e) *declaratives* which affect immediate change in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions (christening, declaring war).

What is more, Searle's systematization of Speech Act Theory is also based on the four conditions underlying these speech acts: a) *propositional content rules*, which specify the kind of meaning expressed by the propositional part of the utterance (e.g. a promise necessarily refers to some future act by the speaker); b) *preparatory rules*, which specify conditions that are prerequisites to the performance of the speech act (e.g. for an act of thanking, the speaker must be aware that the hearer has done something of benefit to the speaker); c) *sincerity rules*, which specify the conditions required for the speech act to be performed sincerely (e.g. for an apology to be sincere, the speaker must appear sorry for what has been done); and d) essential rules, which specify what the speech act must conventionally 'count as' (e.g. the essential rule of a warning is that it counts as an undertaking that some future event is not in the addressee's interest (Searle, 1969).

Although Searle classified the number of basic things that one does with languages into a limited number of illocutionary acts, he also suggests that more than one of these acts can be performed at once in the same utterance. What is more, speech acts can be realized directly and indirectly. Direct speech acts refer to the performance of certain acts where the speakers mean what they literally say (e.g. open the window!). Indirect speech acts, on the other hand, refer to performative acts where the speaker means more or something other than what is uttered (e.g. I am hungry: I want something to eat). Searle (1969) maintains that politeness is the most important motivation for indirectness in requests and that certain forms tend to become the conventionally polite way of making requests. The concepts directness-indirectness as well as the Theory of Politeness will be elaborated more in the forthcoming parts, but since this study focuses on the complaint structures, first the expressive speech acts and their significance to language learners will be briefly explained.

2.2.1. Expressive Speech Acts

The aim of expressive speech acts is to express the speaker's psychological state of mind about or attitude toward some prior action or state of affairs. What is prominent about expressives is that they usually indicate a positive or negative evaluation of the propositional content. For example, when thanking, the speaker expresses gratitude for the hearer's participation in a prior action beneficial to the speaker. In a complaint, on the other hand, the speaker communicates negative feelings towards the hearer, who is made responsible for a prior unfavorable action that had negative consequences for the hearer (Trosburg 1995:15).

The ability to express attitude, opinion or emotion about events is an essential aspect of language use. Due to the necessity of being able to assess the degrees of communicative intentions with regard to the position of the speaker and the hearer, the sensitivity in expressing such functions makes it complex even for the native speakers of a language to perform such functions, let alone the learners of that language. The intricacy of such language functions restricts language learners in the range of emotions and attitudes they can express. As a result, language learners may choose to avoid such situations or inappropriately perform such functions resulting either in a communication breakdown or in the communication of an unintended message.

Research in language classroom interaction has revealed that students are limited in their opportunities to perform a wider range of language functions. In a study conducted on classroom interaction in an intermediate EFL class, Trosborg (1995) reports that the students' use of illocutionary acts was limited to directives and representatives and there were only a few instances of expressives and other types of speech acts. Due to the lack of opportunities to use expressive speech acts in language classrooms, learners are often left to figure these out on their own. Therefore, these linguistically and pragmatically complex functions of language are usually left unattended or sometimes misunderstood.

Among expressives, the speech act of complaining is one of the necessary communicative functions for language learners to learn to perform. Interactive skills

and knowledge of social rules as well as pragmalinguistic knowledge are required to perform these acts. Thus, not only the due to the possible difficulties they might pose on learners, but also as a result of the scarcity of their use in the classroom settings, the speech act of complaint has been chosen to be the main focus of this study.

2.2.2. Complaints

The speech act of complaining involves moral judgments which express speaker's disapproval. It is essentially retrospective in that a speaker passes a moral judgment on something which the complainee has already done or failed to do or is in the process of doing. Edmondson and House (1981:145) assert that "in making a complaint a speaker potentially disputes, challenges or bluntly denies the social competence of the complainee." They suggest that a complaint flouts the hearer's supportive maxim, but the complaint is justified to the extent that the complainee (person receiving the complaint) has already flouted this maxim in committing a social offense, which constitutes ground for the complaint. The complainee must also accept that s/he has damaged or denied the social standing of the complainer.

Complaints are a part of conflictive function and by definition non-polite. Leech (1983: 105) notes that "politeness is out of the question and to threaten or curse someone in a polite manner is virtually a contradiction in terms." However, even though a complaint is intrinsically a non-polite act, a complainer can resort to mitigation devices to lessen the impact of the complaint. Due to the sensitivity involved in complaining, politeness strategies are needed in order to avoid personal conflicts within communication. Yet, finding the appropriate range of illocutionary force and politeness strategies to get the message across in a non-threatening way can be very difficult not only for the language learners, but also for the native speakers. As Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest in their Politeness Theory, complaints are highly threatening to the social relationship between speaker and hearer; therefore they are likely to pose difficulties for the language learners and warrant closer study.

2.3. The Politeness Theory

In Politeness Theory, Brown and Levinson (1987) attempt to explain how and why people in different cultures establish, maintain, or support social relations through language. The theory behind politeness, as it is widely acknowledged today, is based to a great extent on Grice's Maxims of Conversation (1975) and Searle's Speech Act Theory (1969). Politeness is a "pragmatic mechanism" governed by principles that "do not coerce the hearer" (Brown and Levinson 1987) and "minimize the cost of the other (Leech 1983).

In 1955, Goffman referred to a certain affective aspect involved in communication as "face" and defined the concept as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (1967:213). Brown and Levinson (1987) base their claims about politeness on the notions of face and rationality, and present their theory of linguistic politeness in terms of two major categories: "positive politeness", which is the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others, and "negative politeness", which is the want of every competent adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others. They claim that people try to maintain both types of face in interaction. Tracy (1990) adds and further explains that "positive face concerns the desire to be appreciated and approved of by selected others. Negative face concerns a person's want to be unimpeded and to be free from imposition" (p.210). The notion of face acknowledges politeness as a ritual and the maintenance of face as the central element in interaction According to Scollon and Scollon (1995:35), face is the negotiated public image, mutually granted to each other by participants in a communicative event." Speakers are oriented towards the saving of both their own faces as well as faces of their interlocutors. Face can "be lost, maintained, or enhanced and must be constantly attended to in interaction" (Brown and Levinson 1987:61). Since face is so vulnerable and because most participants will defend their face, the assumption is that, if threatened, it is in everyone's interest to maintain each other's face. While the content of face will vary in different cultures, Brown and Levinson assume that mutual knowledge of a member's public self-image or face and the social necessity to orient oneself to it in interaction are universal.

Brown and Levinson (1987:24) propose that "some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening." For this purpose, each speech community develops politeness principles from which they derive certain linguistic strategies. Fraser (1990: 229) summarizes the four kinds of face threatening acts (FTAs) as follows:

1. Acts threatening to the hearer's negative face, that is, the claim to privacy, freedom of action, and other elements of personal autonomy.
   (e.g. ordering, advising, threatening)

2. Acts threatening to the hearer's positive face, that is, the self image and the self-respect a person has.
   (e.g. complaining, criticizing, disagreeing)

3. Acts threatening to the speaker's negative face.
   (e.g. accepting an offer, accepting thanks)

4. Acts threatening to the speaker's positive face.
   (e.g. apologizing, accepting compliments)

In this framework, politeness strategies are used by speakers to communicate both their primary messages and their intention of being polite. Positive or negative politeness strategies are used as redressive action to mitigate the face threat that a linguistic act might pose for the interlocutor. Oriented toward the positive face of the hearer, positive politeness strategies are associated with decreasing social distance, characterized by the expression of solidarity (i.e. by treating the hearer as a member of an in-group, a friend, a person whose wants and personality traits are liked or acknowledged). On the other hand, negative politeness strategies are related with increasing social distance, characterized by self-effacement, formality, and restraint.

Different strategies may be used to express the speaker's intention depending on the speaker's assessment of risk of face loss, which is weighed on three factors: a) the relative power relationship between speaker and hearer; b) the social distance between speaker and hearer; and c) the individual ranking of the particular imposition in the social context in which it is used. What is more, Brown and Levinson's model assumes a strong relationship between politeness and indirectness based on hierarchical model of different strategies employed to get a politeness. In other words, in their theory of politeness, strategies for performing face-threatening acts are organized by super-strategies. These super-strategies can be ordered on a continuum of overall politeness or

the extent to which face concerns are encoded. Speakers have the following options: 1) to do the act badly, on-record, without redress; 2) to use positive redressive action, i.e. to give face by indicating in some way solidarity with the hearer (positive politeness); 3) to use negative redressive action, by using mechanisms which leave the addressee an option and permit them to feel non-coerced and respected (negative politeness); and finally 4) to choose to go off-record, i.e. to perform the act in a way that will enable the speaker to avoid taking responsibility for doing so. The model predicts that the more face-threatening a given act is, the more indirect strategy the speaker is likely to choose.

Let's clarify the above-mentioned strategies by an example. Consider, for instance, a person who wants to complain to another person about disturbingly loud volume of music. The most threatening strategy is to perform the compliant badly on record by saying "shut the music off." This complaint actually reflects the lack of a strategy because no attention is given to the hearer's face. The least threatening strategy is not to perform the act at all. If the act is performed, the least threatening strategy is to perform it off-record, with a hint, by saying, for example, "I am studying here for a test tomorrow morning." Off-record strategies have the feature of deniability, that is, the speaker can deny any one interpretation in favor of another. This strategy imposes very little on the hearer, allowing the hearer great flexibility in responding. Falling between these two extremes are on-record acts with redress that emphasize either positive strategies which function by indicating solidarity with the hearer (e.g. "How about turning the music down for me?") or negative politeness strategies which function by indicating respect for the hearer's freedom of action (e.g. Could you turn the music down?"). Of the two strategies, negative politeness is politer because it avoids a presumption of closeness, which may or may not be valid from the hearer's perspective (Holtgraves, 1992).

Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory predicts similarities between cultures in the structures of politeness phenomena, but differences regarding when and to whom one is polite. The researchers suggest that cultures may vary in the values assigned to the Power of each interactant over the other (P), in the Distance between the interactants or their familiarity with each other (D), and in the Ranking of the severity of face-threat created by the act (R). They suggest that the speaker calculates the proper

level of politeness for the situation by putting the three factors into the following formula: FTA=D (S, H) + P (H, S) + Rx (S= Speaker; H= Hearer).

As the formula illustrates, increases in distance, hearer's power, and severity of the act result in corresponding increases in face-threat. Brown and Levinson's theory deals mainly with the generative aspect of politeness, aiming to examine the politeness phenomenon at the interpersonal level. The theory is widely recognized by various disciplines involving politeness. However, some researchers are not completely satisfied with the theory since it is thought to be too Western-oriented; in other words, some researchers claim that the theory falls short in accounting for cultures in which people recognize themselves more as a member of society rather than as independent individuals (Hill, et al. 1986; Ide, 1989).

Another questioned aspect of the politeness theory is Brown and Levinson's claimed universality for the concept of face. Many researchers concur that speakers' constraints on verbal politeness differ across cultures. As Ide (1989:241) argues, "in a society where group membership is regarded as the basis for interaction, the role or status defined in a particular situation, rather than face, is the basis of interaction." Similarly, with reference to Chinese politeness, Gu (1990) claims that politeness is more appropriately seen as adherence to social norms than attending to an individual's face wants. What is more, Matsumoto (1988, 1989) reports that the Japanese concepts of face are "qualitatively" different from the phenomenon of face defined by Brown and Levinson. Unlike societies where the individual and the individual's rights are significantly emphasized, cultures like Japanese and Korean are not as concerned with defending their own territory from the encroachment of others. In such cultures, the emphasis is rather on sustaining their proper position in relation to the others in the group and their acceptance by the people in the group, which is the basic norm that governs all social interaction. Thus, loss of face is associated with "the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group" (Matsumoto 1988:405). In these cultures, the concept of face plays a minor role compared to what Western cultures generally believe is the case and is very different from how face has been defined in Western literature (Matsumoto 1989; Trosborg 1995).

When evaluating current theories of politeness, Brown and Levinson's model is criticized as being over-simplistic as well as being incompatible with non-western face constructs. More specifically, this model fails to offer a proper account of the use of linguistic forms such as pronouns, address terms, speech levels, speech formula, etc. The use of such linguistic forms is inherently dependent upon the speaker's observation of the social conventions of the society they belong as well as the recognition of their status in relation to the interactants engaged in the discourse. What politeness is and how it is expressed differs from culture to culture, which casts doubt on the universality of the concept. In individualistic societies where individualism is a basic cultural unit, "face" may be an important component for interpersonal communication; however, in collectivist cultures, one example of which is that of Turkish, where group membership and vertical relationships are so central, the notion of face may be overshadowed by other social conventions. Therefore, in order to achieve a truly universal perspective on the theory of politeness, it is significant to broaden our focus beyond the individual-oriented linguistic traditions and to conduct more cross-cultural and cross-linguistic studies. The insights provided by interlanguage pragmatics and cross-cultural studies should prove useful for language teachers in raising awareness of language learners on the pragmatic differences between the mother tongue and the target language such as politeness realization, which even advanced learners sometimes fail to perform (Eisenstien and Bodman, 1986) due to insufficient learning of pragmatic rules and the linguistic repertoire to realize the intended effect.

2.4. Interlanguage Pragmatics

The language system(s) constructed by the learners on their way to learn the target language is referred to as "interlanguage", a term first used by Selinker (1972). As mentioned earlier while discussing communicative and pragmatic competence, successful and effective speaking is not just a matter of using grammatically correct words and forms, but also knowing when to use them and under what circumstances. Such ability has also been recognized as significant in the development of the interlanguage of second/foreign language learners (Canale, 1983; Canale and Swain, 1980). Language learners might face a risk of offending their interlocutors or of miscommunicating when performing speech acts as a result of their insufficient communicative and pragmatic competence as well as their tendency to transfer the

pragmatic rules of their mother tongue to their target language inappropriately. Leech (1983) points out that "transfer of the norms of one community to another may well lead to 'pragmatic failure' and to the judgment that the speaker is in some way being impolite, uncooperative, etc." (p.231). In fact, such miscommunication instances have been reported (Gumperz, 1982; Thomas, 1983). Hence, the study of interlanguage pragmatics has been recognized as an important subfield of research in pragmatics.

The earliest interlanguage pragmatics research concentrated mainly on a few target languages with a limited number of speech acts, but in recent years, the research has been widened to include a significant number of other target languages with a considerable range of different speech acts. In an attempt to identify cross-cultural variables which affect realization of speech acts, a number of studies comparing different languages in speech act realizations have been conducted in the past three decades. Studies on requests include Blum-Kulka, 1983 (Hebrew ad English), House and Kasper, 1981 (English and German), House and Kasper, 1987 (English, Danish and German), and Trosborg, 1995 (English and Danish). Among those who studied apologies are Cohen and Olshtain, 1981 (Hebrew speaking learners of English), Fraser et al., 1980, and Rintell, 1981 (Danish learners of English). Although the speech act of complaint has been studies by some researchers such as Olshtain and Weinbach (1987; learners of Hebrew), and Trosborg (1995; Danish learners of English), there is still much to explore about complaints focusing on other languages.

As Kasper and Schmidt (1996) point out, what has been investigated and is still being researched in this field is cross-cultural differences and transfer from the L1 (p.150). In other words, researchers generally examine differences of use in the speech acts in the target language and the learners' mother tongue, and then analyze the learners' speech act performance in the target language to see how closely it matches the target use. Kasper (1992) also states that studies in interlanguage pragmatics have concentrated on two aspects of speech act behavior. The first is often called pragmalinguistic sets, that is the semantic formulas that comprise speech acts and the linguistic forms most frequently used to realize these semantic formulas. The second feature of interlanguage pragmatics related to speech act behavior is sociopragmatic factors such as participants' age, gender, social power/distance, and situational factors such as seriousness of the offense in the case of apology. Moreover, the influence of

learner-related factors such as attitude, proficiency, learning context, length of residence in the target community is also suspected to affect language learners' speech act behavior.

2.4.1. Interlanguage Transfer Theory and Pragmatic Transfer

The notion of pragmatic transfer refers to the use of rules of speaking from one's own native speech community when speaking or writing in a second language. Although many studies have addressed the use of transfer as a strategy in foreign and second language learning, earlier transfer studies were concerned with learners' phonological, morphological and syntactic knowledge, i.e., their linguistic competence, (Gass and Selinker 1992; Odlin 1989). In those studies, L2 learners were observed to transfer aspects of the linguistic systems of their native language to the target language. However, the adaptation of communicative competence to second language learning and teaching called for extending the scope of interlanguage transfer research to include learner's pragmatic and discourse knowledge.

Interlanguage pragmatists have attempted to identify the conditions for transfer to occur and the factors, which mediate its operation. Corder (1981) claims that the greater the similarity perceived by the learner between the first and second language, the greater the likelihood of transfer. Similarly, Kasper (1992) states that learners make freer use of their L1 when they perceive the distance between their native and foreign language as close (e.g., Danish is closer to German than English). Because of the potential for miscommunication, negative transfer, i.e., the projection of the first-language-based sociocultural and pragmalinguistic knowledge onto second language contexts where such projections result in perceptions and behaviors different from those of second language users, has been the main focus of most studies in interlanguage pragmatics. On the other hand, positive transfer where such projections result in perceptions and behaviors that are consistent with the target language have also been found in studies looking at conventionally indirect forms of requesting (Blum-Kulka and House 1989; House and Kasper 1987). For example, Kasper (1992) found that L1 Danish and German learners positively transfer their use of modals and their conventional forms of indirect requests (e.g., ability questions when learning English). However, even at the advanced level, non-native speakers differ from native speaker in

choice of speech act strategies and linguistic forms and in the content of their message (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1993; Bardovi-Harlig et al. 1991). For example, NSs used more alternatives such as suggestions and offered more reasons for rejections than NNSs. Also, NSs used more mitigated linguistic forms (e.g. "I was thinking of...," "I have an idea.."), whereas NNSs used "I will take ...," "I just decided to do...." In most instances, however, Blum-Kulka argues that it is difficult to disentangle positive transfer from universal pragmatic knowledge and inferencing strategies.

Because of its potential risk to communicative success, negative transfer of L1 pragmatic knowledge to the L2 has been the focus of many interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) studies. Positive transfer, that is, the use of pragmatic behaviors consistent across L1, IL, and L2, has received less attention. Some of these studies, however, also presented instances of non-transfer, that is, cases where transfer could be expected but did not in fact occur (Bergman and Kasper, 1993; Maeshiba et al, 1996; Trosborg, 1987). Other studies did not detect the transfer phenomenon at all (Rintell, 1981; Fraser, Rintell, and Walters, 1980).

Transfer effects have been noted at the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic levels. Sociopragmatic transfer has been found to operate in learners' perceptions of contextual factors, such as interlocutors' relative social status in assessing whether a particular linguistic action is socially appropriate (Robinson, 1992), and in choice of overall politeness styles adopted in encounters (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Garcia, 1989). For example, Beebe et al. (1990) found that mother tongue influenced patterns of style shifting for Japanese learners of English in contexts where speakers were of higher or lower status than the hearer, whereas for Americans the decisive distinction was between status-equal and status-unequal relationship, irrespective of the direction. On the other hand, pragmalinguistic transfer has been noted in learners' use of conventions of means and forms affecting the illocutionary force and politeness value of interlanguage utterances (House and Kasper 1987; Bodman and Eisenstein 1988; House 1988).

Studies of pragmatic transfer in SLA also focus on illocutions of a specific speech act and negative transfer that arises from the gap between the norms of a L1 and L2. The extent to which pragmatic transfer occurs appears to depend on various factors

(Benson, 2002): a) *setting* – transfer probably occurs more in classrooms than in naturalistic settings because of the lack of opportunities for input and interaction outside class; b) *proficiency* – transfer is usually considered to decline with proficiency (though some researchers disagree, saying that it just manifests itself differently at higher levels); c) *style* - more evidence exists for transfer in careful, monitored style than unmonitored, spontaneous speech; and finally d) *learner-type* – meaning-oriented learners appear less prone to transfer than form-focused learners, and learners with a positive attitude to the L2 are less prone than learners with a negative attitude.

Non-structural factors interacting with pragmatic transfer include learner-external factors such as learning context and learner-internal factors such as attitude and proficiency. With regards to the former, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) found that transfer of Japanese refusal strategies was more prevalent among EFL than ESL learners. This finding implies that EFL and ESL learners potentially possess different learner characteristics and thus, should be studied separately. As for learner-internal factors, several studies support the intuitive claim that the occurrence of negative pragmatic transfer from their LI decreases as learners' proficiency increases (Bouton 1995; Trosborg 1987). However, Takahashi and Beebe's (1993) study of Japanese refusals found that transfer was greater among high proficiency learners than low proficiency learners at the discourse level. They hypothesized that second language proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer because low proficiency level learners do not have the linguistic ability to transfer LI forms such as indirect request strategies. Thus, it was concluded that transferring pragmatic aspects requires learners to possess sufficient L2 resources.

In addition, it is suspected that other types of knowledge can outweigh linguistic proficiency such as learners' familiarity with the target situational context. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986), for instance, found that familiarity with a particular situation was a significant factor in L2 learners' performance of target-like expressions of gratitude. Moreover, length of stay in the target culture and the amount of interaction with NSs may be other influential factors on interlanguage pragmatic behavior. Maeshiba et al. (1996) note that no studies have examined the effects of length-of-residence on pragmatic transfer. However, there is evidence that indicates that negative transfer does not go away with increased exposure to the L2 culture. Blum-Kulka (1991) views

negative transfer by highly proficient L2 speakers as a symbolic means of disidentifications with the target community. She suggests that divergence from the target norm might help non-native speakers to maintain their cultural identity as separate from the target community.

To account for pragmatic transfer, Dogançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı (1997) proposed 1) learners' lack of linguistic proficiency, 2) their perception of speech act use as governed by universal (vs. language-specific) factors, 3) their perception of similarities between their native cultures and that of the target language, and 4) the psycholinguistic processes of overgeneralization, simplification, or reduction of new sociolinguistic knowledge. Research findings to date provide conflicting reports on the causes of pragmatic transfer. Lack of awareness of target language pragmatic norms causes miscommunication by second language users who transfer LI norms into the L2, similar to the transfer of phonemes, morphemes, and lexicon, even at an advanced level of language development. However, unlike linguistic transfer, Fukuya et al. (1998) contends that pragmatic transfer is more difficult to detect because of the implicit nature of rules of speaking, and it causes more serious damage to communication because of its socioculturally value-laden nature.

More studies are clearly needed to shed light on the transferability of the full range of realization patterns in a variety of linguistic acts. Through systematic thinking aloud and retrospective interviews, Robinson (1992) was able to ascertain that her Japanese informants consulted their L1 and interlanguage pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge in their decision to perform requests in English. In addition, Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) found that learners avoid transfer of language-specific structures, revealing an awareness of transferability of pragmatic constraints. Following the argument that noticing of information in the input is conditional for learning, instruction (teaching) can be assumed to have a major role in shaping learners' perceptions of what is and is not transferable at the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic level (Kasper 1992). Therefore, the insights that will be obtained from cross-linguistic, cross-cultural interlanguage research, such as this study, will not only be used by the linguists, but also by the language teachers.

2.4.2. Pragmatic Failure

Cross-cultural communication breakdown is often referred to as pragmatic failure. Austin (1962) uses the term "unhappy utterance" to refer to an utterance which causes pragmatic failure. Thomas (1983) understands pragmatic failure as the "inability to understand what is meant by what is said" (p. 91). She distinguishes between two types of pragmatic failure: a) pragmalinguistic failure, which in her view is easier to overcome, and b) sociopragmatic failure, which is harder to overcome because it involves the learner's system of beliefs and values tied to language. She also objects to the term ‘error’ to denote pragmatic failure, because error, in her opinion suggests a prescriptive standpoint, - which in her view is problematic for pragmatics. She cautions against adopting a prescriptive model for pragmatics because it involves the second language speaker's belief system, which they have a right to retain, and we do not have a right to alter. In addition, grammatical competence can be discussed in terms of error because grammar rules are categorical, whereas pragmatic competence "entails probable rather than categorical rules" (Candlin, 1976, p. 238 cited in Thomas 1983). Lakoff (1974) addresses this categorical nature of the pragmatic aspects of language use: "what is courteous behavior to me might well be boorish to you, because we have slightly differently formulated rules, or because our hierarchy of acceptability is different" (p. 26, cited in Thomas 1983).

Thomas (1983) maintains that typically, individuals are allowed certain latitude and the more one knows a person, the more tolerant you might be towards his/her speech behaviors. The normative speaker is under pressure to speak a super-standard English, and that the possibility of a flout (failure to observe a maxim) is not taken into account. Any deviance from expectations is explained in terms of inadequate linguistic competence. She argues that so long as the speaker is aware of the sociolinguistic conventions and still chooses to flout them, that is his/her choice. Still, they should have access to information so that they do not unintentionally flout a convention.

Lack of information about sociolinguistic conventions might lead to an image of the normative speaker as impolite or rude. In addition, such misunderstandings result in stereotypes like 'the abrasive Russian/German', 'the obsequious Indian/Japanese', 'the insincere American', and the 'standoffish Briton' (Thomas 1983, p. 97). Thomas (1983)

advocates that language teachers need to alert their students to cross-cultural differences. Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure can occur as a result of these differences. However, the language teacher steps on treacherous ground when attempting to correct pragmatic errors because pragmatics is the "place where a speaker's knowledge of grammar comes into contact with his/her knowledge of the world. But both systems of knowledge are filtered through systems of beliefs - beliefs about language and beliefs about the world" (Thomas 1983, p. 99). While pragmalinguistic failure occurs because of differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force and is thus mainly a linguistic problem, sociopragmatic failure occurs due to cross-culturally different perceptions of appropriate language use. In comparison, sociopragmatic failure does not occur due to inappropriate mapping of illocutionary force, but because the nonnative speaker has a different understanding of contextual variables such as size of imposition, cost/benefit, social distance, and relative rights and obligations.

Sociolinguistic rules of language use are intrinsically linked to one's belief system and values. Underlying our language use are cultural notions of what it means to be polite, how we view ourselves vis-a-vis others, what good conduct and upbringing is, etc. etc. Therefore, failure resulting from the transfer of pragmatic rules from the LI into L2 (i.e., sociopragmatic failure) can lead to misjudgments about others. Since language instructors are dealing with sensitive issues where sociopragmatic failure is concerned, it is ultimately a matter of judgment as to whether conventions operative in the target language should be taught or not. Some argue that it is necessary to teach them so that learners do not unintentionally commit a *faux pas.* Others, like Thomas (1983) and Saville-Troike (1982) maintain that learners should be given access to target language conventions and then the decision as to whether to operate according to the conventions of their own languages, or according to those of the target language should be left to their discretion.

2.4.3. Transfer Effects in Interlanguage Pragmatics and Proficiency

Language transfer, the effect of one language on the learning of another, consists of two types. *Negative transfer,* or "interference," is the "use of a native-language pattern or rule which leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language," and

positive transfer is "transfer which makes learning easier, and many occur when both the native language and the target language have the same form" (Richards et al., 1985, p. 160). Language transfer is claimed to play an important role in shaping many aspects of interlanguage (Gass and Selinker, 1983), and transfer at the pragmatic level is also argued to exist (e.g., Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Olshtain and Cohen, 1983; Takahashi and Beebe, 1987,1993; Ellis, 1994; Kasper, 1992). For example, Takahashi and Beebe (1993) find that Japanese ESL speakers use more style shifting (i.e., using more softeners in performing a speech act of correction to a higher-status interlocutor than to a lower-status interlocutor) than native speakers of English, but less than native speakers of Japanese. Takahashi and Beebe (1993) argue that this is evidence that Japanese ESL learners transfer Japanese style-shifting strategy when performing a speech act of correction in their L2.

Furthermore, Takahashi and Beebe (1987,1993) argue that the transfer effect, either positive or negative, is greater among high proficiency learners than their low-proficiency counterparts because high-proficiency learners have sufficient control over the target language to utilize their LI pragmatics in the L2. Ellis (1994) also states that sufficient L2 proficiency is necessary for learners to transfer pragmatic aspects. However, this appears to contradict another valid assumption, which is that as a learner acquires more linguistic proficiency, s/he should acquire more knowledge of L2 pragmatics simultaneously; therefore, negative transfer should be less for more advanced learners. This assumption is supported by some studies (Trosborg, 1987, 1995). For instance, Trosborg's (1995) study on complaints found that the advanced learners of English better approximated the native speakers' performance than the lower proficiency participants in some uses of complaint strategies. Therefore, we need more studies to clarify this issue. It is possible that the answer is not black or white; rather there may be certain areas of pragmatic knowledge that more advanced learners tend to negatively transfer, but there may be others where those advanced learners better approximate the performance of target language speakers.

Investigators of interlanguage speech acts must be careful about the level of difficulty in determining the source of obtained divergences in any given speech act taking place between native speakers and learners; that is, a divergence could be due to either cross-cultural differences or to the learner's under-developed linguistic

proficiency, or both. As Olshtain and Cohen (1983) caution, normative speakers' lack of linguistic proficiency is or may be the cause for deviation from native-speaker norms, and thus often the lack of appropriateness is a direct result of the lack of linguistic resources and not necessarily poor sociocultural proficiency. Thus, in order to make clear the source of any such mismatch, it is necessary to examine speech acts produced by native speakers of the target language as well as those produced by native speakers of the learners' mother tongue and compare these data with performances of learners at varying levels of proficiency.

2.5. Interlanguage and Cross-cultural Studies on Speech Acts

After Austin and Searle's work on speech act theory stimulated researchers' interest in speech acts, researchers have examined speech acts across different cultures with two basic goals: a) to describe the universality of speech acts across languages and cultures, and b) to examine the culture-specific differences in the realization of speech acts. Accordingly, research in interlanguage pragmatics is concerned with the investigation of non-native speakers' comprehension and production of speech acts as compared to native speakers as well as with the acquisition of L2-related speech act knowledge. What are the strategies and linguistic means by which particular speech acts are realized? Are such strategies universally available? What are the contextual factors that determine speakers' choices from speech acts sets? What is the contextual distribution of realization patterns? How does contextual variation differ cross-culturally? (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996). These topics have been borrowed from studies of native speakers' linguistic action and interaction conducted mostly in the disciplinary traditions of empirical pragmatics, especially studies of speech acts, cross-cultural pragmatics, and interactional sociolinguistics. Research in interlanguage pragmatics (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993; Beebe and Takahashi 1989; Wolfson 1989 etc.) has brought to light the actual role of pragmatic competence in the overall competence of the language learner. However, the great majority of the studies focus on L2 use rather than development.

There have been a few developmental studies using pseudo-longitudinal designs which have examined the use of speech act realization strategies by learners at different proficiency levels (e.g., request realization by Japanese learners of English: Takahashi

and DuFon, 1989; refusals by Japanese learners of English: Takahashi and Beebe 1987; and performance of apologies by Danish EFL learners: Trosborg 1987). Findings suggest that learners have access to the same range of realization strategies as NSs irrespective of proficiency levels. However, proficiency effects were found for the frequency and contextual distribution of realization strategies. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985), who examined the perception of directness and politeness by NNSs of Hebrew, reported that rather than L2 proficiency, it was the length of residence in the target community that accounted for the target-like perceptions of directness and politeness.

A few longitudinal studies have traced the development of NNSs' pragmatic competence (Bouton 1992, Schmidt 1983, Siegal 1994). Such studies revealed that the development of pragmatic competence is a very complex issue and greatly varies from individual to individual depending on the informant's personality, motivation, social environment of learning, etc. According to Kasper and Schmidt (1996), pragmatic competence seems to evolve through initial reliance on a few unanalyzed routines that are later decomposed and available for productive use in more complex sentences. Although learners need to understand and produce novel utterances in order to interpret and express nonconventional meanings, they also have to develop an increasing repertoire of pre-patterned routines, conventionalized for specific pragmatic functions in the target community.

Researchers have proposed various hypotheses to account for the apparent difficulties that L2 learners have in acquiring pragmatic competence. For example, Hymes (1972b) recognizes that "speech acts are complex and highly variable and require that the non-native speakers understand the multiple functions each serves" and points out that there is no one-to-one relationship between a grammatical form and a speech act it realizes. That is, depending on the situation, grammatically identical sentences can function as different speech acts, and conversely, the same speech act can be realized in many different ways. Blum-Kulka (1982) attributes the difficulty to cross-linguistic influences in the production of the target language. She suggests that learners will transfer their native pragmatic speech knowledge and expect to find equivalent pragmatic rules in the target language, which often leads to pragmatic failure. In addition, Hinkel (1996) examined NNSs' perceptions of and attitudes toward L2 pragmalinguistic norms and behaviors as a crucial influence on the NNSs' willingness to

adhere to L2 pragmalinguistic behaviors. The results of the study showed that despite NNSs' awareness of L2 norms of politeness behaviors and appropriateness, they were not always willing to follow L2 polite speech behaviors.

2.5.1. Speech Acts as Social Functions and Complaints

Speech acts involve attempts by language users to perform specific actions or functions such as compliments, apologies, requests, or complaints (Ellis, 1994). As stated earlier, the relationship between utterances and their function in social interaction is the concern of Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969). Since the number of things we do with words is limited, we ought to be able to assign functions to utterances (Hatch, 1992). Assigning functions to sentences is actually somewhat problematic in that the apparent sentence meaning does not necessarily coincide with the speaker's pragmatic intention, as when a person utters an apology sarcastically or when a speech act is indirect, as in the request implied by "It is hot in here" (Cohen, 1996a).

Whenever there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function, a direct speech act ensues, whereas whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, an indirect speech act emerges (Yule, 1996). Thus, a declarative used to make a statement is a direct speech act, but a declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech act. Different structures can be used to accomplish the same basic function. For instance, a speaker who wants an addressee to be quiet can say, "Be quiet, " "Could you be quiet?" "You are making too much noise," or "I can't stand you anymore." The basic function of all the utterances is a command/request/complaint, but only the imperative structure, "Be quiet," represents a direct speech act. Although it seems that all languages share a similar inventory of speech acts, the realization and the circumstances that are appropriate for each speech act may be quite different in different cultures.

Some speech acts require a higher level of pragmatic competence than others because they tend to risk the interpersonal relationship of the speakers (Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz, 1990). These speech acts generally include (but are not limited to) complaints, requests, disagreements, and refusals, often referred to as face-threatening acts. As an example of the sort of sociolinguistic information needed to

understand the problems facing second language learners, it is useful to examine in some detail one speech act: complaints. Complaints as phatic communication (Boxer and Pickering, 1995) belong to Searle's (1969) category of expressive speech acts. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the speech act of complaining implies that "the speaker (S) has a negative evaluation of some aspect of the hearer's (H) positive face" (p.66). From S's point of view, Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) provide the following preconditions needed for the speech act of complaining to take place: 1) H performs a socially unacceptable act (SUA) that is contrary to a social code of behavioral norms shared by S and H; 2) S perceives the SUA as having unfavorable consequences for him/herself, and/or for the general public, and 3) the verbal expression of S relates post facto directly or indirectly to the SUA, thus having the illocutionary force of censure. Direct complaints confront the party that is either responsible for or capable of remedying the perceived offense whereas an indirect complaint is defined as the expression of dissatisfaction by griping or grumbling about oneself or someone/something not present (Boxer, 1993b).

Complaint is a risky speech act because it could destroy the harmony and comity between people possibly leading to serious consequences such as estrangement, and disrupted relationships. The speaker must make the difficult choice between airing his/her feelings, and maintaining the relationship. Faced with this choice, the speaker selects from a repertoire of realization patterns for doing the speech act. This repertoire includes the following five strategies: a) below the level of reproach (avoid explicit mention of the offensive event), b) expression of annoyance or disapproval (e.g., "such lack of consideration", "this is really unacceptable behavior"), c) explicit complaint (e.g., "you're inconsiderate"), d) accusation and warning (e.g., "next time I'll let you wait for hours"), e) immediate threat ("you'd better pay the money right now"; or direct curses and insults, such as "you're an idiot") (Olshtain and Weinbach 1993, p. 111).

Obviously, all cultures use some speech act of complaining to perform social functions, but the way one complains and perceives complaints in particular contexts varies from one culture to another. Empirical research on direct/indirect complaints as performed by native and nonnative speakers has constituted an important contribution to the field of applied linguistics as it relates to language learning and teaching. The

following section reviews the research previously conducted on the speech act of complaints.

2.5.2. Review of Research on Complaints

Although literature on cross-cultural pragmatics offer some profound data in speech act research, complaining is one of the least studied speech acts in the field. Speech act of complaint has not been studied as widely as the other speech acts of request, apology, promise and refusals. However, the few studies conducted into this area would serve to provide a good framework for this investigation.

One of the most widely quoted studies in this area is the one conducted by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), who have investigated the speech act of complaint as produced by native and nonnative speakers of Hebrew. The researchers have developed five categories that are based on severity of the complaint for a specific scenario in which one colleague had waited for another colleague who arrived late to an appointment. The five categories are: (1) below the level of reproach, "No harm done, let's meet some other time"; (2) disapproval, "It's a shame that we have to work faster now"; (3) direct complaint, "You are always late and now we have less time to do this job"; (4) accusation and warning, "Next time don't expect me to sit here waiting for you"; and (5) threat, "If we don't finish the job today, I'll have to discuss it with the boss" (p. 202). The results of this study indicate that all members of the sample in both groups (native and nonnative speakers of Hebrew) make use of the five strategies mentioned above. However, in this particular scenario, the sample shows greater tendency to use the middle three strategies in this scale, i.e., disapproval, complaint and accusation. The two extreme strategies, i.e., "below the level of reproach" and "threat" are found to be less frequently used.

Later, the same researchers have conducted another study on complaints. (Olshtain and Weinbach, 1993). They have reported on a study comparing native speakers and learners of Hebrew on their ability to complain. They have found that learners at the intermediate to advanced level tend to be more verbose and use more words to negotiate their intentions than the native speakers. Learners also use more varied strategies such as use of intensifies, softeners, and number of moves than native

speakers. From the analysis of the data, Olshtain and Weinbach have claimed that newcomers to the language and culture want to sound less offensive and face-threatening. As a result, second language speakers' overall choice of realization patterns is consistently closer to the less severe end of the scale when compared to native speakers. As part of their variability in choice, learners also seem to be more sensitive to differences in social factors related to their interlocutors. Uniquely in this study, they found that "the notion of social obligation, when the situation was one in which social obligation was explicit either by law or convention, the learners felt more secure in their choices and were less concerned with being polite and cautious" (Olshtain and Weinbach 1993:121).

Cohen and Olshtain (1993) have reported a study describing ways in which nonnative speakers assessed, planned, and then delivered speech acts. The subjects, fifteen advanced English foreign language learners, are given six speech act situations (two apologies, two complaints, and two requests) in which they are to role-play along with a native speaker. The interactions are videotaped and after each set of two situations of the same type, the videotape is played back and then the respondents are asked both fixed and probing questions regarding the factors contributing to the production of their responses in those situations. The retrospective verbal report protocols are analyzed with regard to processing strategies in speech act formulation. The study have found that in delivering the speech acts, half of the time respondents conduct only a general assessment of the utterances called for in the situation without planning specific vocabulary and grammatical structures, often think in two languages and sometimes in three languages (if trilingual), utilize a series of different strategies in searching for language forms, and do not attend much to grammar nor to pronunciation. Finally, there have been respondents whose speech production styles characterize them as "metacognizers," "avoiders," and "pragmatists" respectively.

Frescura (1993) discusses role-play data on reactions to complaints (mostly apologies) that have been tape-recorded from native Italian speakers in Italy, native English speakers in Canada, Italians residing in Canada, and English-Canadian learners of Italian (N=83). After being tape-recorded in six role-play interactions, the respondents are asked to listen to all six recordings and to provide retrospective verbal report on (a) how close to real life they felt their performance to be, (b) how dominant

they felt their interlocutor was, (c) their sensitivity to the severity of the offense and to the tone of the complaint, and (for Italians in Canada and learners of Italian) (d) their possible linguistic difficulties. The data have been coded according to a taxonomy comprising seven semantic formulas in two categories: hearer-supportive (including formulas providing gratification and support for the "face" of the complainers) and self-supportive (including formulas uttered by the speakers to defend and protect their own "face"). Performance has been measured according to the three dimensions of production (total output of formulas, including repetitions), selection (types of formulas used, excluding repetitions), and intensity of formulas produced. According to the results of the study, native speakers of Italian have an overall preference for the self-supportive category of formulas, while native speakers of English have a preference for the hearer-supportive category. Learners of Italian do not indicate any preference, while Italian-Canadian speakers, though diverging some from the native norm, give indication of language maintenance as well. Frescura's use of verbal report has helped her establish, among other things, that the learners of Italian tend to think in English first before responding to the role plays.

On complaints, Boxer (1993a, (1993b, 1996) has conducted a series of studies. In one of them, Boxer (1993a) has studied 295 interlocutors, producing 533 indirect complaints. The study describes 3 types of IC themes (personal, impersonal, other -- trivial) followed by 6 types of IC responses (nothing or topic switch, question, contradiction, joke/teasing, advice/lecture, commiseration). Then the chapter analyzes supportive and neutral exchanges. Chapter 3 deals with gender, social status, social distance, and theme. Chapter 4 relates ICs to the norms of the community. Half of interlocutors were Jewish (Boxer's circle of friends), so possible to investigate ethnicity. Nine out of 10 strongly agreed that Jews complain more -- part of ethnicity (pp. 133-137). Next chapter focuses on what the learner needs to know about complaining and commiserating (147-166). E.g., NNSs need to know that commiserating with complaints is important -- being supportive. This builds solidarity. Chapter 6 gives the theoretical and pedagogical implications of the study. For example with respect to gender, women mostly commiserated with ICs, while men contradicted or gave advice. The results point out that ESL textbooks do not include ICs or include them but don't treat them as ICs.

In a similar framework, Boxer (1993b) has studied indirect complaint + commiseration (griping) in conversations between Japanese learners of English as an L2 and their L1 peers. An indirect complaint is defined as the expression of dissatisfaction about oneself or someone/something that is not present. The addressee is neither held responsible nor capable of remedying the perceived offense. Natives use indirect complaints as a positive strategy for establishing points of commonality. Researcher used spontaneous speech or field notes. 295 interlocutors were recorded in spontaneous conversation (195 women and 100 men). The issue that emerged was that of how to respond to an indirect complaint. Natives used joking/teasing, non-substantive reply ("hmn"), question, advice/lecture, contradiction, and commiseration. With NSs most responses were commiseration with some questioning. For NNSs, the major category was non-substantive, then with some questioning and some commiseration. The author suggests that the Japanese ESL learners are missing out on opportunities for conversation by not engaging in the interaction more fully -- utilizing talk more the way NSs do.

Furthermore, Boxer (1996) has reported on baseline findings on rules for the realization and underlying social strategies of a specific speech act set sequence. She endorses ethnographic interviewing as a way of tapping the norms of the communities both in research on speech act usage among native speakers in particular languages and research on non-native speaker pragmatic transfer. In this work, she discussed the results of 2 sets of interviews, one of which was structured and one of which was open-ended, which were designed to evaluate "troubles-telling" (indirect complaining designed for sharing mutual sentiment) in a group of native speakers. Her goal in the studies was to tap not only sociolinguistic knowledge that was explicit, but knowledge that was tacit in the "naive" respondents. There were ten informants who were students, staff, faculty members, or alumni at a large university in the northeastern U.S., all of Jewish background. [It appears that the subjects were the same for both interview sets, but Boxer interwove information in such a way that it was difficult to follow exactly what pertained to what interview process.] The spontaneous speech data consisted of 533 troubles-telling exchanges that were tape recorded or recorded in field notes. Six major categories of responses emerged as ways in which this speech community responded to indirect complaints: 1) response or topic switch, 2) questions, 3) contradiction, 4) joke/teasing, 5) advice/lecture, and 6) agreement/commiseration (a

category which made up almost half the responses). Boxer (1996) have found that troubles-telling in this community is not so much negative as positive in nature, in that it is used to further conversation, build relationships, and establish solidarity. Yet, she has also found that using the same questions with each of the subjects, as was done with the structured interview, was not the best idea because it inherently limited the depth of the subjects' responses. In the second (open-ended) interview, she used a more open format, which allowed for expansion of ideas and greater flexibility of responses. It was easier to obtain more information about the assumptions and perceptions, which shaped the respondents' answers and ideas about troubles sharing. Boxer described the factors that made for a more ideal ethnographic interview, such as rapport with the subjects, having subjects who feel comfortable doing much of the talking, and following the lead of the subjects' narratives, rather than using preconceived questions formulated by the interviewer. Her findings revealed that in terms of troubles sharing, most respondents felt that while direct complaints qualify as "complaints," indirect complaints were not seen so much as complaining but rather a positive way of sharing mutual information and building relationships. Boxer found that more women participated in troubles-talk than men and were recipients of more indirect complaints because they were seen as "more supportive in general than men." While the explicit assumption about complaining was that it constitutes negative speech behavior, tacit assumptions proved otherwise.

Du (1995) has conducted a study with thirty students (male and female) from Beijing Normal University ranging from 19 to 30 years old. The researcher first gives a definition of three face-threatening acts, complaining, giving bad news, and disagreeing, and discusses the illocutionary verbs which denote these acts and the semantics of face in Chinese culture. According to Du, in Chinese culture, face is socially oriented and reciprocal, and as such requires some method of maintaining "face balance." The act of giving bad news may in some cases be face-saving, depending on the relationship between the interlocutors and the nature of the message. However, complaining (which indicates that the person's behavior is not approved or accepted by other social members) and disagreeing (which indicates a contradiction or negative evaluation of a person's face) are in most cases, clearly face-threatening. Therefore these acts require some strategy for preserving the lian/mianzi (face) of both interlocutors. Du (1995) has explored the three speech acts listed above using a 19-item questionnaire that described

face-threatening situations and asked each subject to contemplate the situation and write his/her response. The results show that strategy choice varies according to the referential goal and the nature of the interlocutor relationship, but a general pattern can be noted: face-threatening acts in Chinese tend to be performed "in a cooperative rather than confrontational manner. By emphasizing common ground and constructive problem solutions, attention is paid to both participants' lian and mianzi" (p.203).

Morrow (1995) has studied complaints and refusals on 20 students enrolled in two spoken English classes in an intensive ESL program in the U.S.A. Model dialogues, prescribed speech-act formulae, and various types of performance activities (games and role playing) about refusals and complaints was used. Oral data were collected prior to, following, and six months after the intervention by means of seven semi-structured role-play tasks which prompted subjects to perform three direct complaints and four refusals with peer interlocutors. The data were analyzed using: a) holistic ratings of clarity and politeness, and b) comparisons of the pretest and posttest distributions of discourse features with those of native English speaking controls (N=14). T-tests comparing the pooled pretest and posttest holistic scores revealed improvements in subjects' levels of clarity and politeness which were significant at $p<.0005$. Similar comparisons of the posttest and delayed posttest scores did not attain statistical significance. The refusal analysis of discourse features (semantic formulae) revealed increases in the use of politeness strategies, especially of negative politeness strategies. Frequently these developmental changes appeared pragmatically appropriate even when they failed to converge toward the native speaker frequencies. Analysis of propositions and modifiers in the complaint data revealed gains in pragmatic competence, which were indicated by such changes as increased indirectness, more complete explanations, and fewer explicit statements of dissatisfaction. These results, which corroborated the findings from the holistic ratings, suggest that speech act instruction help the subjects to perform complaints and refusals which are clearer, more polite, and, to a limited extent, more native-like. Additional intra-task comparisons have found out that higher levels of pragmatic competence are achieved when the interlocutor's level of social distance is lower (i.e., friends as opposed to acquaintances).

Arent (1996) has reported an exploratory study that compares the relative frequency of the performance and avoidance of oral complaints by 22 Chinese learners

and 12 native speakers of American English. Respondents asked to respond to three problematic situations that were set in the same university housing complex. Audio-taped role-plays, interview data on perceived situational seriousness, and verbal report data were obtained. Respondents were allowed to opt out, and effects of social distance, power, and type of social contract controlled for. Found that sociopragmatic decision making for Chinese learners and NSs of American English appears to be associated with individual perceptions of situational seriousness and with culturally-conditioned perceptions of the flexibility of explicit social contracts. In the car being towed situation, the Chinese learners saw it as more serious than the Americans did.

In a very well-known study, Murphy and Neu (1996) have compared 14 male Korean graduate students to 14 male American graduate students on their speech act performance of complaining in an academic setting through an oral discourse completion task. They begin by providing a background about communicative competence and an overview of some of the issues covered in research on speech act production and speech act acceptability judgments. The authors then describe their own study which had two objectives: 1) to compare components of the speech act set (of complaining) produced by U.S. American native speakers and Korean non-native speakers of English, and 2) to ascertain how these speech act sets were judged by native speakers based on a number of factors (such as whether the act is aggressive, respectful, credible, appropriate, and similar to what a native would use). In this work, the researchers have studied the speech act of complaint as produced by American and Korean Learners of English. Four semantic formulas are identified. These are : (1) an explanation of purpose, (2) a complaint, (3) a justification, and (4) a candidate solution: request.

For the productive part of the study, the subjects were 14 male U.S. American and 14 male Korean graduate students from Penn State University. Twenty-three undergraduate and 4 graduate students (for a total of 27) participated in the receptive part of the study, judging the acceptability of the speech act sets. The speech act data were collected via an oral discourse completion task. A hypothetical situation was presented in which the subject was placed in the position of a student whose paper had been unfairly marked and the subjects were directed to "go speak to the professor." The subjects' response was recorded by tape recorder. The instrument in the acceptability

judgment part of the study was a questionnaire with 10 yes-no questions and one open-ended question. Five of the yes-no questions were "distractor items" and the other 5 were designed to measure the native speakers' perceptions about the speech act acceptability. The open-ended question asked, "If you were the student in this situation, would your approach be different from the student you've just heard? Please explain you answer for both speaker-student 1 and speaker-student 2." Each subject was alone during the discourse completion task and his/her data were later transcribed into written form.

The results show that when expressing disapproval about a grade received on a paper to a professor, most U.S. American native speakers would produce a complaint speech act set, while most Korean non-native speakers (11 out of 14) would not. Both native and non-native speakers used an "explanation of purpose" to begin the speech act set in similar ways. The native speakers then produced a complaint only after the explanation of purpose. This complaint appeared to be what most of these native speakers felt was the most socially appropriate option for expressing disapproval. The act involved: acceptance of responsibility, depersonalization of the problem, questioning techniques that used modals "would" and/or "could," use of mitigators, and use of the pronoun "we". The 11 non-native speakers who did not use a complaint form employed what was perceived by native speakers as a form of criticism instead which: served to abdicate responsibility, personalized the problem (placed blame), and involved using the modal "should." This represented a serious deviation from the native speakers' speech data. Both the native and non-native speakers then used similar types of "justifications" in their speech act sets, referring to amount of time, effort, and/or work put into the paper. Finally all of the native and most (12 out of 14) of the non-native speakers included a candidate solution: a request form in the speech act set in order to propose an option that would politely remedy the situation (such as reconsidering the grade, discussing the paper, or editing the paper further for an improved grade). As a result of the "criticism" form used by the many of the Korean non-native speakers, native speakers judged the non-native speakers' speech act sets to be more aggressive, less respectful, less credible, and less appropriate than the common "complaint" speech act sets offered by native speakers.

The results of this investigation also reveal a high correlation between native and nonnative speakers when producing three of the four speech act components - explanation of purpose, justification, and candidate solution. Native speakers (Americans) and nonnative speakers (Koreans), however differ in production of the second component, (the complaint). The American subjects produce a complaint in each instance, i.e., "I think, uh, it's just my opinion may be the grade was a little low," whereas most Koreans produce a criticism, i.e., "But you just only look at your point of view and uh you just didn't recognize my point" (p.200). To achieve their purpose, American NSs depersonalized the problem, incorporated politeness and hesitation markers such as modals and mitigators, and used the inclusive pronoun "we." On the other hand, Korean NNSs personalized the problem by not accepting any part of the responsibility for the problem, telling the professor what action he/she should take, and placing the blame on the professor. Criticizing a superior when a complaint was called for was perceived as aggressive, challenging, and inappropriate. Such criticism, say the authors, is very much likely to offend the hearer and may probably lead to communication breakdown in an American context. This study was limited in its scope in that it did not investigate other context-internal and external factors and based their findings on only a small group of informants. However, it suggests that Korean NNSs are likely to have greater difficulty producing face-threatening acts.

The speech act of complaining is also examined by Nakabachi (1996) cross-linguistically –Japanese L1 vs. EFL by Japanese speakers. The study has investigated whether Japanese EFL learners changed their strategies of complaint when they spoke in English, and if so, what the factors were affecting change. The subjects were 39 undergraduates with an intermediate level of proficiency in English but no experience living in English speaking countries. A discourse completion test was used, including eight situations. It was found that almost half of the subjects changed their speech strategies in English. Over a quarter used more severe expressions than natives did. This was interpreted as over-accommodation to the target language norms, and seemed to suggest the risk involved with attempting to adapt to the local sociocultural norms.

Moon (2001) has studied the speech act of complaint as produced by 129 native and nonnative speakers of English. The native language backgrounds of the 56 nonnative subjects are widely ranged. There are 15 kinds of first languages including:

Chinese, Farsi, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Napali, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, Tagalog, Tigringa and Vietnamese. In order to collect data of NS and NNS utterances in complaints, questionnaires are used with a "Discourse Completion Test" (DCT). The DCT gives four prompts that provide the subjects with complaint situations. The data collected from the subjects is analyzed based on the notion of "severity of the complaint". The results of this study reveal that nonnative speaker subjects do not always make complaints following the appropriate ways of NS's complaints. They tend to make complaints in a more explicit way, whereas native subjects use more implicit ways of complaints.

Bolivar (2002) has analyzed different complaint strategies used in Venezuelan Spanish in two different contexts (private and public arena). Fifty Venezuelan university females, ages 18-25, were surveyed utilizing a discourse completion task. Their responses were analyzed and classified into 3 types of strategies (alerters, directives, and evaluators). The results reveal the influence that social factors (i.e., distance, power, social arena) have on strategy choice. In the private sector complaint (breaking a promise to a friend), the most commonly used strategy was warning (No vuelvo a prestarte mi carro), followed by a personal complaint (Tú eres irresponsable). There were no instances of request for repair. However, in the public complaint (a stranger's dog defecating on the lawn), a request for repair (Hágame el favor y lo limpia) was the most common strategy. Other strategies used in this situation include alerters (disculpa señora) and moral instruction (Educa un poco mejor a tu perro). Detailed examples of the various uses of these strategies are given.

In another research on complaints, Tanck (2002) has compared the pragmatic competence of adult ESL speakers to that of adult native English speakers when performing the speech act of complaints and refusals. To generate data for this study, the subjects are given a "Discourse Completion Test" wherein they are asked to write their responses to six prompts, resembling the two acts and two distracters, within familiar, equal and superior\inferior relationships. Responses of native English speakers are reviewed for evidence of common components of speech act sets to establish a set of baseline responses. The responses made by the nonnative speakers are then evaluated for the presence and quality of the speech act components as compared to the native speakers. The results of this study show that while native and nonnative speakers often

produce almost identical speech act set components for complaints and refusals, the quality of the components produced by nonnative speakers differ markedly from those made by the native speakers' sample. It is also found that the nonnative speakers' responses, though generally linguistically correct, lack the pragmatic elements that allow these face-threatening acts of complaint and refusal to be well received by the hearer.

2.6. Data Collection in Speech Act Research: Methods and Issues

Data collection methods in speech act research, generally speaking, tend to fall into two basic categories: observation and elicitation (Wolfson, 1986). Cohen (1996c, p. 389) distinguishes between production and perception of speech acts and maintains that with regard to production the following data collection methods are typically used: a) observation of naturally occurring data; b) role-plays; c) discourse completion tasks; and d) verbal report interviews. In the case of perception studies, both questionnaires (examining group reactions to videotaped role play or screen play) and verbal report interviews (reviewing naturally occurring data) have been used. What is more, Cohen (1996b) also lists four methods, namely (1) ethnographic observation, (2) role-plays, (3) written completion of partial acts and (4) acceptability ratings. As he points out, ethnographic observation is obviously the best method but it is extremely time consuming and it is virtually impossible with this method to obtain data with a wide-range of situations and attributes of participants, which becomes possible with methods like discourse completion tasks (DCTs).

2.6.1. Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs)

Kasper and Dahl (1991) define discourse completion tasks as "written questionnaires including a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under study" (p. 221). Although researchers agree that naturalistic data is clearly desirable and probably the best method to study speech, they are also cognizant of the difficulties of such an undertaking. Therefore, they emphasize the need for structured elicitation formats, while acknowledging the shortcomings of such instruments. The discourse completion task

(also referred to as discourse completion test or questionnaire) has been used repeatedly in studies on speech acts, despite heavy criticism.

However, the validity of discourse completion tests has been questioned because the response is elicited through the written mode instead of the spoken mode, and also because it is obtained in a test-like situation, rather than real-life situation (Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Sasaki, 1998). Additionally, it cannot be denied that DCTs encapsulate idealized responses. In other words, respondents note down what "they would say" and not what "they do say" in specific situations. In addition, discourse completion items are limited in their scope of eliciting a range of formulas and strategies, length of responses, or number of conversational turns necessary to fulfill a function (Cohen 1996c, p. 394). What is more, Beebe and Cummings (1996) also admit that discourse completion tests are limited to some degree because in actual face-to-face interaction it is almost always the case that the interaction lasts for more than one exchange, therefore this method does not adequately show the depth of emotion, the amount of repetition, or the degree of elaboration that takes place; nor does it allow for the possibility of co-construction.

Still, discourse completion tests have been widely used because of the following putative advantages; first, because the researchers can control different sociopragmatic variables related to a given context (e.g., the relative power relationship, the social distance, and imposition), it is possible to investigate the effect of such variables; and second, because they can be readily administered to a large number of participants, discourse completion tests have made it easy to compare quantitatively the responses of native speakers and non-native speakers across different cultures (Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Sasaki, 1998). Beebe and Cummings (1996) reported that DCTs are a "highly effective means of instrumentation." They found that DCTs enable researchers to (a) gather large amount of data quickly; (b) create an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural speech; (c) study the stereotypical, perceived requirements for socially appropriate responses; (d) gain insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech act performance; (e) ascertain the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of speakers of the language; and (f) vary the situational control variables that may affect speech behavior. Another advantage of discourse completion questionnaires is that they are easy to administer, and they do not involve a large financial expenditure.

There have been several studies that have compared various methods of data elicitation such as role-plays, DCTs, natural observation, and multiple choice questionnaires (Rintell and Mitchell 1989; Eisenstein and Bodman 1993: Hudson et al. 1995; Yamashita 1996; Sasaki 1998; etc). Several studies concluded that there was no difference between role-plays, natural observation, and written questionnaires (Rintell and Mitchell 1989; Eisenstein and Bodman 1993; Hudson et al. 1995; Sasaki 1998). Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) reported that the main difference between these methods was in the degree of interaction. The findings showed that the difference in the length of speech found between oral role-plays, DCT, and natural speech was mainly due to the repetitions, hesitations, and longer supportive moves found in oral interaction. Thus, Sasaki (1998:478), who found that both "DCTs and role-plays measure a similar trait," recommended that production questionnaires need to elicit more interactive exchanges, for example, by requiring informants to produce drama scripts. Nevertheless, Bergman and Kasper (1993: 101) stated that a "DCT in whatever version provides learners with an opportunity for knowledge display that is precluded for many NNS by the cognitive demands of face to face interactive discourse and DCT may thus throw light on the state of learners' discourse production systems or the extent to which available pragmatic knowledge is readily accessible in conversation."

2.6.2. The Metapragmatic Judgment Tasks (MJTs)

Leech's (1983) metagrammar and Mey's (1993) metapragmatics concern the extralinguistic knowledge that speakers are said to possess regarding language. The use of metapragmatic instruments in speech act research has been very limited. Some studies that included a metapragmatic perspective were Fraser, Rintell and Walters (1980), Rintell (1981), Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985). All three used rating scales to examine appropriateness of responses.

Another study conducted by Chen (1996) systematically used a metapragmatic judgment task (MJT) to study metapragmatic awareness of native (i.e., Americans) and nonnative (i.e, advanced EFL learners in Taiwan) speakers with respect to requests. The MJT was constructed by randomly selecting six DCT responses to each situation. A Likert-type scale was selected to rate the responses, because the goal was to determine

the degree of acceptability of each response. The scale allowed each response to be rated on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the lowest, and 5 being the highest rating possible. An example from the MJT is given below along with the rubric subjects used to rate the request responses (Chen, 1996):

> 1 = totally unacceptable; 2 = unacceptable ; 3 = somewhat acceptable; 4 = acceptable; 5 = fully acceptable
>
> **B is taking several courses this semester and has not finished all the assignments yet. B needs an extension for one of the papers and decides to speak to the professor. B** says,
>
> 1 2 3 4 5 a) I am taking 21 credits and they have kept me on my toes. I was wondering if it would be possible to get a small extension on one of my papers ?
>
> 1 2 3 4 5 b) I wonder whether you can give me an extension for the assignment you have given me?

The metapragmatic judgment task (MJT) is a useful tool, primarily because it includes the hearer's perspective. Since conversation is a cooperative activity, and does not take place in a vacuum, the speaker's production (the locutionary and illocutionary acts) and the effect of that on the hearer (or the perlocutionary act) are both equally important. Furthermore, since pragmatics is a complex set of phenomena, the use of more than one method to examine the construct is called for.

2.6.3. Role Plays

In addition to the data collection methods presented above, role play is another alternative. Role plays are utilized in two ways: either closed format, or open role play. The closed format is identical to the DCT, except that the role play calls for oral production instead of written. The open role play on the other hand allows for more turns and negotiation. Role-play data inform us about the learner's abilities to communicate under real operating conditions; they provide us "information about the learner's skill in using this knowledge or his/her ability to build up and structure communication to achieve intended communicative goals" (Trosborg, 1995, p. 56). Also, Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993) point out that role-plays assess the learner's ability to compute contextual factors and assemble relevant linguistic material in a highly automatized fashion (p. 61). Tateyama's (2001) study on teachability of apology

routines to beginning Japanese learners employed role-plays as an assessment instrument in addition to Multiple Choice Test (MCT), self reports (subsequent to MCT), and retrospective interviews (subsequent to role-plays). She reports that role-play data were useful in elucidating whether or not the learner actually has command of using the knowledge that s/he demonstrates in MCT in face-to-face interaction (p. 221).

Walters (1980), Scarcella (1979), Trosborg (1987), Kasper (1981), and Tanaka (1988) used role plays in their respective studies on requests, requests and invitations, apologies, initiating speech acts (requests, suggestions, complaints, invitations, offers), and requests. Kasper and Dahl (1991) argue that compared to the DCT, open role plays are a richer source of data because they "allow examination of speech act behavior in its full discourse context" (p. 228). Other advantages of this method are: "they represent oral production, full operation of the turn-taking mechanism, impromptu planning decisions contingent on interlocutor input, and hence negotiation of global and local goals, including negotiation of meaning (in the SLA sense of the term), when required" (Kasper and Dahl 1991, p. 228). Finally, open role plays are replicable and allow for comparisons between normative speakers and native LI and L2 controls. However, Kasper and Dahl maintain that we cannot substitute role play for natural data even though the two reflect similar features. Role play situations are by definition artificial, force the respondent to participate with the investigator, and the presence of the tape-recorded/videotape can make the respondent feel "on the spot" and thus be likened to a test-taking situation.

Role-plays are considered to simulate much more authentic situations than discourse completion tests. Sasaki's (1998) study, which also compares these two data collection methods, "production questionnaire" (i.e., written discourse completion tests) and "closed" role-plays (i.e., the respondent is not given the opportunity to communicate freely with the interlocutor) with Japanese learners of English, mostly support Beebe and Cummings' (1996) claims. Sasaki (1998) found that the types of central speech act expressions were similar across the two methods, although the role play responses tended to be longer, and they contained a greater number and a greater variety of strategies. Nevertheless, because role-play data are time-consuming to collect and transcribe, and the effects of socio-pragmatic variables can be less easily examined

if role-plays are used due to the limitation on the number of role-play situations that can be administered, they are not used as often as discourse completion tests.

As a data collection method, several studies have used closed (or single-response) role-plays in which a respondent is given a written or oral prompt by the researcher and s/he replies without interaction (e.g., Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Rintell and Mitchell, 1989), or role-play interviews in which a respondent is requested to respond as she would in the given situation without acting it out (e.g., Castello, 1981). Although the number of interlanguage speech act studies that have used open (or interactive) role-plays, in which the respondent is given an opportunity to interact freely with the interlocutor, are growing; they are still scarce (e.g., Cohen and Olshtain, 1993; Robinson 1992; Spees, 1994; Tamanaha, 1997; Trosborg, 1987,1995). In these studies, open role-plays, though not a completely natural data-eliciting method, have proved to shed light on interactional parameters.

2.6.4. Naturalistic vs. Elicited Data

Clearly, naturalistic data would be ideal for speech act research for the following reasons: a) the data are spontaneous; b) they reflect what native speakers say rather than what they think they would say; c) the speakers are reacting to a natural situation rather than to a contrived and possibly unfamiliar situation; d) the communicative event has real-world consequences; and finally, e) the event may be a source of rich pragmatic structures (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1993 as summarized in Cohen 1996c, pp. 391-392). However, Cohen (1996c) also lists the following drawbacks of collecting naturalistic data:

1. The speech act being studied may not occur naturally very often.
2. Proficiency and gender may be difficult to control for.
3. Collecting and analyzing the data are time-consuming.
4. The data may not yield enough or any examples of target items.
5. The use of recording equipment may be intrusive.
6. The use of note-taking as a complement to or in lieu of taping relies on memory.

Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) collected naturally occurring data from academic advising sessions and compared it to data collected from a discourse completion task (DCT). Their findings indicate that the discourse completion task allowed respondents to opt out (not an option in a real face-to-face situation), to be less

polite, did not promote turn-taking and negotiations. In contrast, the natural data showed evidence of extended negotiations, more turn-taking, and more polite forms. However, the researchers were of the opinion that data from the discourse completion task helped explain and interpret natural data. Similarly, Beebe and Takahashi (1989) conducted a study on two face-threatening acts (FTAs) - disagreement and giving embarrassing information. The two groups studied were Americans and Japanese. Data were collected from discourse completion tasks, and also using the ethnographic approach of keeping a notebook for recording naturally occurring instances of the two FTAs under investigation. A comparison of the two data collection methods indicated that notebook data demonstrated a preference towards shorter exchanges, atypical ones or those that sounded normative. In addition, the interactions recorded were typically between researcher and friends, relatives, associates, as these were the people with whom the researchers interacted frequently.

Another study comparing naturally occurring data and data from a two-turn discourse completion task is the one conducted by Beebe and Cummings (1996) on refusals. The natural data were telephone conversations. The researchers came to the following conclusions: the amount of talk in the telephone conversation far exceeded that produced in the DCT, the number of semantic formulas used and the number of turns taken were also higher in the naturally occurring data. The written nature of the DCT did not allow for elaboration, repetition, or negotiation which were frequent in the telephone conversation. However, the findings also indicated that the content of the telephone conversation and the DCT was very similar. Beebe and Cummings (1996) summarize this similarity: “Questionnaires yielded 17 excuses; telephone conversations contained 16. Questionnaires had 12 statements of negative ability/willingness; telephone conversations contained 14. Questionnaires said ‘I'm sorry’ 11 times; telephone responses used it 9 times” (p.75).

In sum, it is clear that each method of collecting speech act data has both advantages and disadvantages. Thus, while naturally occurring data are ideal, one cannot control them for specific variables, permission is needed before people can be taped, and the data may not reflect very many instances of the speech act being observed. Similarly, discourse completion tasks are not without their share of problems. They are not speech, they encapsulate idealized responses, do not allow for negotiations

between interlocutors, and according to Rose (1994) may not be ideal for collecting data in all languages. Role plays using an open-ended format share many more features of oral communication, but cannot be thought of as a substitute for natural data. Therefore, as Cohen (1996b) recommends, combining as methods as possible in data collection can be an effective way to carry out research. All in all, researchers (Wolfson 1986, Johnson 1993, Kasper and Dahl 1991, Beebe and Cummings 1996) advocate gathering data through multiple approaches given the shortcomings of each method.

2.7. A Conclusion to Literature Review

This literature review has examined features of communication that are understood to be salient in the context of this study and for any discussion on pragmatics. Some of the ideas discussed here were: Dell Hymes' notions of context and the framework for understanding communication: SPEAKING, Grice's Cooperative Principle and Maxims, The Speech Act Theory, Brown and Levinson's Politeness Principle, Interlanguage Pragmatics, and Interlanguage Transfer Theory. All these components are integral to an understanding of pragmatics.

A popular and important area of research within pragmatics has been the investigation of speech acts both intra- and inter-culturally. Cross-cultural variation of speech acts has attracted the attention of researchers over the past two decades. While some speech acts such as thanking and greetings tend to be routinized and formulaic, others such as apologies, complaints, requests, and refusals tend to be more complex, because these are face-threatening speech acts. Consequently, they place greater demands on the pragmatic competence of second language speakers, and are more difficult to teach explicitly. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that belief systems and values bound with identity issues underlie ways of speaking, and though it is legitimate to point out the target community's values, it is inappropriate to expect second language learners to adopt them. The most teachers can and probably should do is give learners information about the second culture's sociopragmatic norms, and leave it to the learner's discretion to adopt or ignore them (Thomas 1983, Saville-Troike 1982). Kasper (1997) also echoes these ideas and maintains that the "cross-culturally conscious teacher" (p. 130) will ideally not impose a cultural imperialism on the

students by insisting they conform to the interactional patterns of the language learning classroom.

Data collection methods are generally of two kinds: recording/note-taking of naturally occurring data, and eliciting data via discourse completion tasks or role plays. A variety of data collection methods have been utilized to investigate speech acts such as apologies, complaints, compliments, greetings, refusals, requests, and thanking. Research has shown that there is no best method for collecting data and a combination of data collection methods is both viable and useful.

From the above literature review, which covers both theoretical and empirical studies, one may come up with the following conclusions. First, speech acts are performed in real situations of language use. They are used not only to inform, but also to have things done. Second, complaint is a speech act that occurs when a speaker reacts with dissatisfaction or annoyance to an action that has unfavorably affected him/her. Third, complaint is a face-threatening act and native speakers of English tend to realize it through the use of more indirect strategies. Fourth, nonnative speakers of English may not be quite familiar with the native speakers' conventions of complaining and as such their complaints may sound rather "improper" and this may lead to communication breakdown.

To avoid such communication breakdowns and other misgivings, it is felt important to analyze second language learners' socio-cultural communicative competence to see to what extent they adhere to the rules of politeness in the target language community. This can possibly be done by comparing their speech act behavior to that of native speakers. Such comparisons may help applied linguists, and most particularly second/foreign language teachers and syllabus designers to account for deviations that may characterize nonnative speakers' performance and to suggest the most salient strategies that may help the learners to acquire the pragmalinguistic aspects of the target language. Along this line comes this study as an investigation into the speech act of complaint as produced by advanced Turkish learners of English. It is hoped that this investigation would shed some light on the problems that face these learners in performing the challenging task of making proper complaint in English. By building on previous studies, this study will contribute to the field of Interlanguage

Pragmatics by refining the instrument and method of analysis used in past studies, broadening the scope of investigation, and providing findings that can confirm or disconfirm previous findings.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The complexities of speech act realization and strategy selection require careful development of research methodology. This dissertation poses the following research questions to address:

1. How do Turkish learners of English differ linguistically and pragmatically from native speakers of English in their speech act behavior in specific formal complaint situations?

2. To what extent do the following variables affect Turkish learners' complaint behavior in English?

   a. Age and gender,
   b. Proficiency in English,
   c. Length of stay in target culture,
   d. Method of learning English.

3. Do Turkish learners of English use direct or indirect complaining strategies in formal complaint situations?

3.1. Participants

A total of 276 subjects participated in the study. The participants consisted of two groups: 1) 132 Native Speakers (NSs) of English; and 2) 144 Turkish Learners (TLs) of English. As shown in Table 5, of the 132 NNs, 101 (%76.5) were American, 21 (%15.9) were British, 3 (%2.3) were Canadian, 3 (%2.3) were Australian, 2 (%1.45) were Irish, 1 (%0.8) was Scottish, and 1 (%0.8) was Dominican. All 144 Non-native

Speakers (NNSs) that participated in the study were Turkish learners of English and their first language was Turkish. They all learned English as a foreign language.

Table 5. Nationality of the Native Speaker Participants

Nationality (NSs)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
American	101	76,5
British	21	15,9
Canadian	3	2,3
Australian	3	2,3
Irish	2	1,5
Scottish	1	0,8
Dominican	1	0,8
Total	**132**	**100,0**

The first part of the Discourse Evaluation Task (DET) forms collected participants' demographic information, among which is data regarding their genders and ages. Of the 132 NSs, 50 (%37.9) were male and 82 (%62.1) were female. As to the 144 Turkish learners of English, 68 (%47.2) were male and 76 (%52.8) were female. Totally, 118 male and 158 female subjects took part in the study. Table 6 illustrates the gender distribution of the participants.

Table 6. Participants by Gender

Gender	Native Speakers (NSs)		Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	50	37,9	68	47,2
Female	82	62,1	76	52,8
Total	**132**	**100,0**	**144**	**100,0**

As to the age profile of the subjects, the majority of the participants' age ranged between 18 and 50, except for the fact that only 13 NSs were 50 and above. A significant proportion (163 out of 276, %59) of all the participants gathered between the ages of 18-24 since they were university students. Specifically, 59 (%44.7) NSs and 104 (%72.2) TLs were between 18 and 24. Further detailed information with reference to the age profile of the participants is illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7. Participants by Age

Age	Native Speakers (NSs)		Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
18-24	59	44,7	104	72,2
25-30	18	13,6	24	16,7
31-40	28	21,2	14	9,7
41-50	14	10,6	2	1,4
50 & above	13	9,8	-	-
Total	**132**	**100,0**	**144**	**100,0**

In addition to other aspects of demographic data, the answers given to the first part of the DET provided information on the participants' "occupation", "field of education" and "level of education". Due to the large number of participants, descriptive statistics required a structured categorization of professions. To this end, The 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) list which was published by the United States Department of Labor was used. Recently revised from the 2000 version, the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into one of over 820 occupations according to their occupational definition. To facilitate classification, occupations are combined to form 23 major groups, 96 minor groups, and 449 broad occupations. Each broad occupation includes detailed occupation(s) requiring similar job duties, skills, education, or experience. (detailed list with a PDF format can be found on http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc_structure_2010.pdf). Since students and teachers were the two groups that constituted the majority of the participants, they were not included in the SOC categorization and were treated separately; however, the rest of the subjects were categorized according to the 2010 SOC system. Table 8 shows detailed information on participants' occupational distribution.

Table 8. Occupational Distribution of Participants

Occupations	Native Speakers (NSs)		Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Student	68	51,5	110	76,4
Teacher	21	15,9	22	15,3
Management Occupations	6	4,5	2	1,4
Business and Financial Operations	5	3,8	-	-
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1	0,8	4	2,8
Architecture and Engineering	5	3,8	4	2,8
Life, Physical, and Social Science	3	2,3	-	-
Community and Social Service	1	0,8	-	-
Legal Occupations	1	0,8	-	-
Education, Training, and Library	2	1,5	-	-
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	10	7,6	2	1,4
Food Preparation and Serving	1	0,8	-	-
Sales and Related Occupations	3	2,3	-	-
Office and Administrative Support	1	0,8	-	-
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	2	1,5	-	-
Construction and Extraction Occupations	2	1,5	-	-
Total	**132**	**100,0**	**144**	**100,0**

A similar categorization system was necessary to be able to group the participants with regards to their "field of education". For this purpose, the departmentalization systems of many universities were researched on the internet. Among many, Cambridge University offers the most comprehensive and comprehensible categorization of schools and departments; therefore, that of Cambridge University (retrieved from http://www.cam.ac.uk/deptdirectory/) was implemented. In some cases, the participants' field of education was different from their occupations; thus, statistical data on participants' field of education may be slightly different from their occupational statistics. Both native speakers (NSs) and Turkish learners (TLs) show a similar distribution in terms of their fields of education. 98 NSs (%74.2) studied in one of the departments of either the "School of the Humanities and Social Sciences" or the "School of Arts and Humanities". Similarly, 108 TLs (%75) studied in a department that belongs to one of the two schools. Table 9 demonstrates the fields in which the participants received their education.

Table 9. Participants by Field of Education

Field of Education	Native Speakers (NSs)		Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
School of the Humanities and Social Sciences	66	50,0	50	34,7
School of Arts and Humanities	32	24,2	58	40,3
School of Biological Sciences	7	5,3	4	2,8
School of the Physical Sciences	2	1,5	8	5,6
School of Technology	10	7,6	22	15,3
Other	8	6,1	-	-
High School / None / Not Stated	7	5,3	2	1,4
Total	**132**	**100,0**	**144**	**100,0**

As to the highest academic levels reached, the participants fall under four categories. Of all 132 NSs, 57 (%43.2) had a continuing bachelor degree or had already ended their education before the university level. 54 (%40.9) NSs had either a bachelor degree diploma or an ongoing master's degree. 18 (%13.6) NSs had completed their master's program or was currently doing their PhD degrees. Finally, only 3 (%2.3) NSs had a degree of PhD or above. Of all the 144 Turkish learners that participated in the study, 92 (%63.9) had an ongoing bachelor degree or they were graduates of high school or less. 36 (%25) TLs had either a bachelor degree diploma or a continuing master's degree. Finally, 16 (%11.1) TLs had completed their master's program or was attending a PhD program. No TLs had a PhD degree or above. Naturally, the majority of the participants (239 participants; %86.6 of the entire group) belonged to the first two categories in terms of their level of education since the participants were dominantly students or teachers. Table 10 shows the academic level distribution of the participants.

Table 10. Participants by Level of Education

Level of Education	Native Speakers (NSs)		Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Less than or ongoing Bachelor Degree	57	43,2	92	63,9
Completed Bachelor or ongoing Master's Degree	54	40,9	36	25,0
Completed Master's or ongoing Ph.D.	18	13,6	16	11,1
Completed Ph.D. and above	3	2,3	-	-
Total	**132**	**100,0**	**144**	**100,0**

The first section of the DET, which obtained demographic information from the participants, also asked the Turkish learners their period of studying English. According to the answers received, 60 TLs (%41.7) had studied English for 5 years or less when they filled out the form. 44 TLs (%30.6) stated that they had studied English for 6-10 years, 30 TLs (%20.8) for 11-15 years, and 6 TLs (%4.2) for 16-20 years. Lastly, the number of participants who asserted that they had studied English for more than 20 years was only 4 (%2.8). The answers show that the majority of the Turkish learners (84 TLs; %59.3) had been learning English for more than at least 6 years. The distribution of participants' English studying period is given in Table 11.

Table 11. Turkish Participants' English Studying Period

Period of Studying English	**Turkish Learners (TLs)**	
	Frequency (n)	**Percentage (%)**
5 years or less	60	41,7
6 – 10 years	44	30,6
11 – 15 years	30	20,8
16 – 20 years	6	4,2
20 years and above	4	2,8
Total	**144**	**100,0**

In order to account for the different methods through which the Turkish participants (TLs) learned and studied English, the first part of DET gave the subjects three options to tick: a) grammar and grammar exercises; b) translation; and c) communicative skills. The participants could check either one, two or three options at the same time. The answers show that the English instruction given to the 66 TLs (%45.8) focused on teaching grammar and doing grammar exercises whereas that of 38 TLs (%26.4) used mainly communicative skills and their teaching. What is more, 14 TLs (%9.7) not only concentrated on grammatical aspects, but also used the translation method. Similarly, 16 TLs (%11.1) made use of grammar and communicative skills at the same time. In addition, 2 TLs (%1.4) studied English through only translation, which is also the percentage of the participants (2 TLs; %1.4) who used communicative skills besides the translation method. Finally, only 6 TLs (%4.2) marked all three

methods. Table 12 shows the information on the method(s) that the TLs made use of while learning and studying English.

Table 12. Turkish Participants' English Instruction Methods

Method of Learning and Studying English	**Turkish Learners (TLs)**	
	Frequency (n)	**Percentage (%)**
Grammar and Grammar Exercises	66	45,8
Translation	2	1,4
Communicative Skills	38	26,4
Grammar & Translation	14	9,7
Grammar and Communicative Skills	16	11,1
Translation & Communicative Skills	2	1,4
All three	6	4,2
Total	**144**	**100,0**

The participants were also asked to state their level of proficiency by choosing one of three given options: a) I can express my opinions in English freely (Advanced); b) I can say most of what I want to say despite some difficulty of doing so (High-intermediate); and c) I usually cannot express what I want to say (Intermediate or Lower). The participants were asked to tick only one of the choices. According to the answers provided by the participants, 82 TLs (%56.9) saw themselves as advanced learners and the rest 62 TLs (%43.1) thought they were high-intermediate learners of English. No participants ticked the third option; in other words, none of them considered that they were Intermediate learners or lower. The results of the proficiency level might have stemmed from the fact that the participants preferably had good command of English so that the correlations would produce skewed results on the speech act strategies due to grammar and comprehension problems. The statistical data regarding the participants' elicited level of English proficiency is presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Turkish Participants' Level of Proficiency in English

Level of Proficiency	Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
I can express my opinions in English freely. (Advanced)	82	56,9
I can say most of what I want to say despite some difficulty of doing so. (High-intermediate)	62	43,1
I usually cannot express what I want to say. (Intermediate or Lower)	-	-
Total	**144**	**100,0**

In order to verify the elicited proficiency results of the participants, they were also asked to write any proficiency exam they took and the score they got. Only 42 TLs (%29.2) stated that they had taken a proficiency exam. Of the 42 TLs, 20 (%13.9) took KPDS (Kamu Personeli Dil Sınavı – Language Examination for Public Service Personnel) which is a prestigious national proficiency exam in Turkey. 6 TLs (%4.2) took ÜDS (Üniversiteler Arası Dil Sınavı – Language Examination for Academicians), which is another national proficiency exam necessary for academic promotion, but also used as a reference point in application for academic studies like master's degree or PhD. 10 TLs (%6.9) took YDS (Yabancı Dil Sınavı – Language Examination for University Placement), which, as its name suggests, is given as a part of university placement examination for would-be university students. Finally, 6 TLs (%4.2) had a score from one of the proficiency exams offered by their universities with purposes of prep class achievement assessment. The proficiency scores (out of 100) of the 42 TLs are given in Table 14. As the table illustrates, 38 TLs (%90.5 of those that specified a proficiency score) got a score of 75 or higher out of 100. However, since the majority of the participants (102 TLs; %70.8) neither stated a proficiency exam name nor specified a score, the numbers obtained from this item do not offer a meaningful conclusion to be drawn; therefore, the data on the proficiency level of the participants as elicited in the previous item from the participants' self-evaluation will be taken into account.

Table 14. Proficiency Exam Scores of Turkish Participants

Proficiency Exam Score	Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Not stated	102	70,8
65,00	2	1,4
71,00	2	1,4
75,00	2	1,4
80,00	2	1,4
83,00	2	1,4
86,00	2	1,4
88,00	2	1,4
89,00	2	1,4
90,00	8	5,6
91,00	2	1,4
92,00	4	2,8
93,00	2	1,4
94,00	6	4,2
96,00	2	1,4
Total	**144**	**100,0**

Table 15. Visits of Turkish Participants to English-speaking Countries

Visit to an English-speaking country	Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
The United States of America	22	15,3
The United Kingdom	6	4,2
Canada	2	1,4
None stated	114	79,2
Total	**144**	**100,0**

Moreover, in order to be able to study any probable correlation between the native-like speech act strategies and "length of stay" in the target culture, the participants were asked to state total time spent in English-speaking countries. Of all the 144 TLs, 114 (%79.2) had never been to any English-speaking country. In other words, only 30 TLs (%20.8) said that they had been to an English-speaking country. 22 TLs (%15.3) had been to The USA, 6 TLs (%4.2) to the UK, and only 2 TLs (%1.4) to Canada. Table 15 shows the related data. As to the period of time, 26 TLs (%18.1) spent 6 months or less in an English-speaking country, 2 TLs (%1.4) between 7 and 12 months, and finally 2 TLs (%1.4) between 13 and 24 months. No participant spent more

than two years in any English-speaking country. Table 16 shows the participants' total time during which they were exposed to the culture of the target language.

Table 16. Time Spent by Turkish Participants in English-speaking Countries

Period of Time Spent in an English-speaking country	Turkish Learners (TLs)	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
6 months or less	26	18,1
7 - 12 months	2	1,4
13 – 24 months	2	1,4
25 months and above	-	-
None stated	114	79,2
Total	**144**	**100,0**

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

Typically, cross-cultural speech act studies address two main issues: 1) areas of pragmatic competence which the nonnative speaker needs to develop in the target language, and 2) sources of pragmatic failure in the nonnative speaker's speech which can lead to miscommunication. Rarely is there an appeal to native speakers to exercise more tolerance for nonnative production, nor is the L2 creativity of nonnative speakers addressed in such research. Although this study does compare native and nonnative speakers, the focus here is more a comparison between the two groups in an effort to better understand the productions of nonnative speakers. In other words, evaluation for itself is not the sole or primary objective. As a result, three different data collection instruments were used in this study: a) a Discourse Evaluation Task (DET); b) video-recorded role plays; and c) interviews.

3.2.1. The Discourse Evaluation Task (DET)

As noted in the literature review, the discourse completion tasks (DCTs) offer numerous advantages as well as some disadvantages to the researcher in collecting speech act data. While DCTs do not claim to be measures of authentic and actual oral production, they measure speakers' perceptions of what they would say in a given situation. Although the discourse completion tasks have been used repeatedly in studies on speech acts despite criticism, many researchers emphasize the need for structured

elicitation formats. It can be asserted that there is a need for the researchers to develop tasks that are practical, valid, and reliable so that the shortcomings of such instruments can be eliminated to a certain extent. Therefore, a Discourse Evaluation Task (DET), which is more structural than a conventional discourse completion task, has been designed specifically for this study.

The researcher attempted to minimize some of the observed limitations of the DCT by revising previously used models of the DCT (discourse completion task) and MJT (metapragmatic judgment task). The Discourse Evaluation Task (DET), which is a term that has been used for the first time in this study, is the name given to a particularly designed questionnaire with a structured discourse evaluation and completion task. Typically, a written discourse completion task provides a scenario, followed by an empty slot for a response. It could also include one or two turns. On the other hand, the Discourse Evaluation Task (Appendix 2) that was designed by the researcher and was used as the first data collection instrument in this study had four distinctive parts.

The first part of the questionnaire was the informed consent. The informed consent notified the participants about the researcher, the study and the parts and procedures to be followed. It also provided the researcher's email address and telephone number so that the participants could easily contact the researcher whenever they had a question to ask or any other comments to make. By this way, the consent of the participants, which is a vital concept in any research, was gathered.

The second part collected demographic information about the participants. It was designed to gain information about the background of the participants. Questions were asked to learn the subjects' name, age, gender, profession, field of education, educational level, nationality, and their mother tongue. Additional questions included English learning period, method of learning English, self-rating of English proficiency, experience in the culture of the target language and English proficiency test score if any. This part of the questionnaire had 11 questions. The 3rd question about profession-education included two more sub-questions. The 6th question asked the participants' first language. Naturally, native speakers (NSs) were not asked to give answers to the rest of the questions once they specified their first language as English. There were two questions with options to mark. In the 8th question, TLs were asked to specify what their

English studies focused on, i.e. the methods they used in learning English. They could check one, two or all three options given. In the 9th question, the TLs were asked to indicate their level of English proficiency by choosing one of the three options provided for them: advanced, high-intermediate, and intermediate or lower. Additionally, with the purposes of reaching at reliable data on the proficiency levels of the TLs, they were also asked to write a proficiency test score if they had any. NSs were asked to skip the questions 7-11 and move to the next part whereas the TLs were asked the fill in 11 questions before they could turn to the next part of the questionnaire, the actual discourse evaluation task.

Learners' self-assessment of proficiency in the target language is a debatable issue. Much of the current research on self-assessment has concentrated on investigating whether self-assessment instruments and self-ratings of proficiency are valid and reliable for such purposes as placement tests (Oscarson 1978, 1984, 1989; LeBlanc and Painchaud 1985; Janssen-van Dieten 1989). Oscarson (1978) reported that while additional research is needed, impressionistic self-assessment can yield quite informative and reliable results. For example, self-assessment of learners of Swedish correlated with the instructor's evaluations at .60 (Pearson Product Moment Correlation), while self-evaluations and formal standardized proficiency tests correlated at .50. LeBlanc and Painchaud (1985) investigated the reliability of self-assessment as a second language placement instrument. They found that students showed a moderate ability to assess their own knowledge of the second language yielding a correlation of .53 between the self-assessment instrument and a standardized English proficiency test. Blanche (1988) undertook a review of the literature on self-assessment in the testing of foreign language skills of lower level language learners and found that most studies showed Pearson product moment correlation of .5 to .6 between students' self-assessment rating and an external criterion. Toward this end, studies by Oscarson (1984) and Bachman and Palmer (1989) also revealed that adults are fully capable of making reliable judgment about their mastery of foreign language. As a result, in order to determine the proficiency levels of the TLs, a self-rating of English proficiency was used in the demographic information part, as well as this part's last question which asked the TLs to write their proficiency test scores.

The third part of the questionnaire was the discourse evaluation task that was made up of an instruction, the scenario, the beginning of the conversation, and a 5-likert scale evaluation task with 10 possible requests as a part of complaint. First, a short paragraph instructed the participants to read the hypothetical situation given. According to the situation, the speaker, a university student, receives an unexpectedly low final grade for a course and is about to make a verbal complaint to the course's teacher who is a 50-year-old male professor. Later, the task initiated the conversation. Next, as stated in the instructions, 10 possible responses to complete the rest of the dialog between the professor and the student were listed. Using the scale given after each question, the participants were asked to evaluate each response with regard to the extent you think it would be socially acceptable / appropriate for the student to say. The discourse evaluation tasks required that the 10 items be ranked on a five-point likert scale, ranging from "very rude" to "perfectly appropriate".

The rationale behind devising such a task stemmed from the preliminary study which has been conducted as a starting point to this study, and which has been explained in the introduction of this thesis. In an effort to structuralize the responses given by the participants, the complaints were divided into four components and the third component was determined as a request. These requests as a part of complaint discourse were sometimes found to be direct and sometimes indirect depending on the strategy used by the complainer. In this framework, the discourse evaluation task provided the first two components (initiator and the contextualization; see first chapter for details) as the beginning of the conversation and asked the participant to rate the 10 requests according to a five-point likert scale. The 10 request statements as a part of the complaint were chosen and devised using the responses from the preliminary study and other studies in the literature. Of the 10 statements, five statements (statements 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10) used direct requests whereas the other five (statements 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9) involved indirect requests as a part of the complaint in the given scenario.

Finally, the questionnaire ended with a traditional discourse completion task. The task demanded an open-ended response from the participants. They were asked to imagine that they were the student in the scenario and just knocked the professor's door to complain about their final grade. This final task wanted the participants to complete the scenario by writing what they would say. This time, however, just a small prompt by

the professor saying “Come in!” was given in order not initiate the conversation so that the participants could write freely all the components of the complaint that they feel necessary. This final discourse completion task was given not only to offer the participants a freer space to express themselves, but also to validate their responses collected from the structural discourse evaluation task.

3.2.2. Video-Recorded Role Plays

In order to gather more naturalistic data on formal complaints, the participants were asked to complain verbally for the same scenario given in the discourse evaluation task. 12 NSs and 4 TLs, totally 16 participants, volunteered to participate in the role plays. The written instructions in the DET were given verbally to the participants before they acted. With the participants’ permission, the role-plays were recorded with a handy cam (see Appendix 4-DVD for the video-recordings of the role-plays). Later the recorded role-plays were transcribed.

So as to make the setting as natural as possible, the recordings were done in a lecturer office in Boğaziçi University in İstanbul. Necessary written applications were made to the university administration for the official permission to use the lecturer office and to record role plays. Since the participants were to complain to a university professor, a 53-year-old British native speaker, Marc Mills, acted as the professor in the scenario to address the authenticity concerns. He was informed about the scenario and was also instructed to act as naturally as possible.

3.2.3. The Open-Ended Oral Interviews

Although the shortcomings of interviews as a data elicitation technique cannot be overlooked (subjects may not say honestly what they think and instead give responses they think the researcher wants to hear, researcher's own bias, etc.), Seliger and Shohamy (1989) mention the following benefits of open-ended interviews: they allow for greater depth in obtaining information, and the interviewee has greater flexibility and freedom of expression. Cohen (1996c) highlights the power of verbal reports in obtaining "feedback from respondents regarding aspects of their behavior that would otherwise be left to the intuitions and speculations of the investigator” (p. 390).

Therefore, in order to enrich the data gathered for the research and to justify the responses of the participants both in DETs and the video-recorded role plays, interviews were conducted with the 8 participants (4 NSs and 4 TLs) who already took part in the role-plays.

Eight subjects were chosen for the interviews because they were ready to answer the interview questions once they finished acting. During the interviews, the researcher asked the subjects to respond to the DET questionnaires that they had filled out and explain their language and strategy choice in their verbal complaints recorded in the role plays. The researcher asked the following questions:

1) I see that you rated this statement X (one of the ratings in the 5-likert scale; e.g. very rude, perfectly appropriate, etc.). Why did you give this statement a rating of X? Why is the response X, in your opinion?
2) Would you really normally behave the same way in a real life situation? Why?
3) In your opinion, would all native speakers / all learners of English act in this way in their formal complaints?

The aim of the interviews was to allow subjects to voice their reasons for the ratings given and also to gain insight into what native and nonnative speakers considered polite and appropriate language use. By the answers to the questions posed in the interviews, not only the language choice of the participants but also the direct and indirect strategies applied by both native speakers and the Turkish learners of English could be validated. The first question was asked after the participants filled out the DET questionnaire, and the latter two questions were asked after their performance in the role plays. The interviews were also video-recorded with the participants' permission. The interviews were carried out in the mother tongue of the participants. The questions used in the interview followed the main structure; however, depending on the informant's responses additional questions were posed to clarify and follow up on the informant's answers. The information gathered from the interview was used to provide insights on why learners use certain strategies or linguistic forms in their speech act performance (see Appendix 3 for the interview protocols).

The interview was designed to test the researcher's hypotheses regarding the informants' understanding of the task, beliefs about their speech behavior and the

sociocultural assumptions that they bring into speech act performance. The interview questions targeted informants' understanding of social norms in their native and target cultures, their beliefs about their speech behavior, difficulties they encounter in using the English language, how various contextual factors may affect their speech behavior, and their perceptions of pragmatic appropriateness when speaking in English. The questions used in the interview followed the main structure; however, depending on the informant's responses additional questions were posed to clarify and follow up on the informant's answers. The information gathered from the interview was used to provide insights on why learners use certain strategies or linguistic forms in their speech act performance.

3.2.4. Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity analyses were run for the DET that included a likert type scale, the DCT part of the DET questionnaire, the role play instructions and the interview questions. Quantitative analyses were used for the reliability and validity of the DET likert scale. On the other hand, expert opinion was made use of while determining the face, construct and content validity of the instruments. Assessment and evaluation experts made necessary changes. What is more, an American speech professor contributed to the preparation, editing and proof reading phases of both the DET items, instructions, role play guidelines and interview questions.

It is assumed that the score distribution obtained from an item in a likert type scale is a continuous variable (Tavşancıl, 2002). Besides, one of the significant primary assumptions of the likert-type scales is that every individual item in the scale has a monotonic relationship with the attitude that is aimed to be assessed. In other words, the most important feature of likert scales is their single-dimension. All the items are supposed to evaluate the same property. Therefore, in order to determine the reliability level of a likert scale, Cronbach α (alpha) coefficient, which is a criterion of internal consistency (homogeneity), is computed. Scales that have high internal consistency have a high Cronbach α (alpha) coefficient. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. However, there is actually no lower limit to the coefficient. The closer Cronbach alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale.

At the end of the analyses performed using DET ratings, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient obtained from the TLs attitude scores was found 0.72 and that of the NSs was 0.68. Similarly, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the whole participant group was computed 0.73. According to these findings, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient scores of the scale were all above 0.60, which is accepted as the tolerable limit in terms of the reliability of the likert type scales (Tabachnick and Fidel, 1989). Thus, the DET scale's Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient which was found to be 0.73 shows that the 10 items of the likert scale assessed the construct (student's formal complaint to a professor about an unexpected low grade) that was aimed to be quantified.

In order to attain the face and content validity, the instruments were subject to field expert opinions which constituted a significant standpoint. Once the preliminary draft of the DET questionnaire was prepared, a speech professor in Saint Francis College scrutinized the instructions, the DET items and the DCT instructions. Later two assessment and evaluation experts examined the instrument for the same purposes. Similarly, the role-play instructions and interview questions went under the processes. Finally, in line with the suggestions and corrections of the field experts, necessary changes were made and finishing drafts of the instruments prepared.

Additionally, factor analysis was carried out in order to establish the construct validity of the DET likert scale. In order to account for the construct validity, according to Nunally (1978), factor analysis seeks answer to the question whether the scores obtained from a scale/test assess the construct the scale/test aims to assess. In this framework, factor analysis contributes significantly to the evaluation of construct validity by the help of scale/test scores. Factor analysis is a statistical technique that aims at explaining the assessment with as few factors as possible by bringing together the variables that assess the same constructs. Factor analysis can also be explained as the process of attaining the functional definitions of concepts by making use of factor load values of items or as the process in which the new concepts (variables) named as common factors are brought into light (Büyüköztürk, 2008).

However, factor analysis may not be appropriate for all data constructs. The appropriateness of the gathered data for the factor analysis is estimated by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and Barlett Sphericity Test. When KMO coefficient is higher than 0.60 and Barlett Test is significant, it is perceived that the data is appropriate for the factor analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2008). As a result of the analyses, KMO coefficient was 0.79 and Barlett Test score was 511.38. The two values were significant at a 0.00 significance level. According to these results, the data were perceived to be appropriate for the factor analysis. The factor analyses were run using the data gathered from 276 participants. The acceptable factor load value was taken as 0.30 which was accepted as the criterion of lowest limit. The results pertaining to the factor analysis are presented in Table 17 below.

Table 17. DET Likert scale Factor Analysis Results

Items	Component
1	,669
2	,335
3	,516
4	,738
5	,715
6	,562
7	,364
8	,125
9	,558
10	,692

As the results presented in the table demonstrate, of all the 10 items of the scale, only the 8th item's factor load value was calculated below 0.30. The researcher demanded the field expert opinion once again in order to decide whether to exclude the 8th item from the likert type DET scale. The experts were asked whether or not the 8th item assessed a different construct from what the other nine items assessed. In consequence of the expert opinions, it was decided that the item was not excluded. Since the other nine items had high factor load values and they all gathered under one factor, the scale was perceived to be single-factored (assessing the same construct). All the analyses considering the research questions and sub-questions were performed based on the scores obtained from all ten items.

3.3. Procedure

The DET questionnaires were distributed and collected by using various methods. As far as the native speakers are concerned, four different methods were employed. First of all, the DET questionnaire was emailed to native speakers with whom the researcher had acquaintance and they were asked to forward it to their acquaintances. By this way, an email chain was formed and the researcher requested the native speakers, who received the DET questionnaire, to fill it in and email it back. Of all the 132 native speaker questionnaires, 22 (%16.7) were collected via email responses.

The second method was using a web site service. A private web site named www.surveymonkey.com provides its users various opportunities and technical support to design and conduct surveys. The same site creates an internet link so that the participants can click the link and enter the web page where they can easily fill in the questionnaire. What is more, the responses given to the survey as well as statistical results pertaining to the survey can be monitored. The site requires a free membership on internet. Thus, using the components of the DET questionnaire, a survey was designed by the help of the mentioned web site and its link was emailed to all the native speakers in the email chain. The survey was given in the following link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xfNHh7OekafZJX0rk7ldqQ_3d_3d
30 (%22.7) participants responded using the internet link provided by the researcher.

The third method was printed DET questionnaires. Making use of the paper and pencil technique, the researcher handed in the DET papers and collected the questionnaires as soon as the participants finished filling them out. However, it was not easy to find native speakers of English in Turkey where English is a foreign language. To overcome such a problem, the administrations of two universities in İstanbul were contacted. Since Boğaziçi and İstanbul universities had exchange students from many countries, the researcher officially asked how these students could be met. Fortunately, all foreign students had Turkish classes where they all gathered in a classroom on certain days and in certain hours. By the help of their Turkish instructors, and by the official permission from the universities, the printed DET questionnaires were handed in to the student native English speakers, who were willing to participate. The

researcher visited the Turkish classes in the two universities for three weeks consecutively and collected the filled out questionnaires, if they were not handed in back immediately on the same day. 45 (%34.1) DET questionnaires were collected by this paper and pencil method. What is more, participants with whom the role plays and interviews were conducted were chosen from among these exchange students.

Finally, 35 (%26.5) printed DET questionnaires were filled out by participants from the Saint Francis College in the U.S. and they were posted via mail to the researcher by Prof. Sims-Fletcher. As mentioned earlier, Prof. Sims-Fletcher, a speech professor in the U.S., helped a great deal in the preparation, editing and proof reading phases of the DET questionnaire. She also voluntarily accepted to give some questionnaires to her students in the Saint Francis College and to send it to the researcher by air-mail. In a period of two weeks, she delivered the questionnaires, collected them and sent them to Turkey from the U.S. This group of participants constituted an important part of the study, since they were both students in and residents of an English speaking country.

As to the Turkish learners of English that participated in the study, three similar methods were adapted in collecting data via DET questionnaires. Of all the 144 Turkish-learner DET questionnaires, 27 (%18.8) were emailed back to the researcher as a reply, 34 (%23.6) were filled out using the internet link provided by the researcher, and 21 (%14.6) were handed in by students from various universities as printed copies as the researcher personally asked the participants to fill in the DET questionnaires in their university campuses. Differently from the NSs, a significant number of DET questionnaires were collected from students at a private language course. A prominent language course as a private educational institution in İstanbul, “Prestige English” and its administrators kindly accepted to help the researcher by asking their learners if they were willing to take part in the study. In accordance with the scope of the study, printed questionnaires were given to the learners who studied in the high-intermediate and advanced level courses of the institution. This was thought to be time saving since finding the same level of learners at the same time was a difficulty in the study. The institution had three offices with course buildings in different parts of the city (Kadiyöy, Bakırköy and Mecidiyeköy). The researcher printed and took the questionnaires to the learners at different times, and then visited each office separately and collected the

questionnaires personally. As a result, 62 (%43) language learners from this institution filled in the questionnaire and handed them in back to the researcher. Similarly, participants from this group of learners agreed to participate in the role plays since a teacher room in Mecidiyeköy office of the institution was used for the recordings.

As broadly mentioned earlier, the role plays were conducted and video-recorded in two different places. A lecturer's office in the Boğaziçi University in Etiler-İstanbul was used for the role plays with the native speakers whereas a teacher's office in Prestige English Language Course was used for the role plays with the Turkish learners of English. First of all, necessary official permission from administrations of both the Boğaziçi University and Prestige English Language Course was requested. The administrators of the private course immediately accepted the request after hearing about the scope and the aim of the study. The permission from the Boğaziçi University was granted in two weeks after the official application and correspondence via email and telephone. The researcher also contacted to the university's public relations office personally and explained the scope and aim of the study.

The participants were told that there was a real professor in the office. Later the scenario and instructions in the DET were given to the participants orally. Nothing more was said about how they should complain. A friend of the researcher's, Marc Mills, accepted to act as the professor in the scenario. His being over 50 and a native speaker of English strengthened the authentic atmosphere that the researcher aimed to create.

Finally, every time a participant finished acting in the role play, the researcher asked them if they wanted to participate in the interviews. Totally, 8 participants agreed to partake in the oral interviews. As for the NSs, the interviewees were an American and three British native speakers. 3 of them were male while 1 NS interviewee was female. Similarly, the interviews included a female Turkish learner and 3 male Turkish learners. The interviews were video-recorded using a handy cam. The interviews were carried out in the mother tongue of the participants. Interviews with the NSs were transcribed whereas the interviews with the TLs were first transcribed and later translated into English.

3.4. Data Analyses

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were carried out in accordance with the research questions posed. Quantitative analyses were performed using SPSS 13.0 software. First, however, all participants' responses to the open-ended DCT and role-plays were analyzed as having a sequence of complaining semantic formulas. This was done making use of Murphy and Neu's (1995) formulas focusing on complaint speech act sets and devising the semantic units obtained from the preliminary study and the discourse completion task in the DET questionnaire. In analyzing the data, the researcher coded the semantic components used in each complaint speech act set as in the following examples:

(1) *initiators,* such as, "Hi", "Good afternoon", and "Excuse me, professor";

(2) *establishing context*, as in, "I came to discuss my grade";

(3) *a request*, such as, "Could you explain why my grade is a C?";

(4) *conveyance of disappointment/dissatisfaction/annoyance*, as in, "To be honest, I was very surprised of the grade I received".

In order to determine how the participants differed pragmatically in their complaining behavior, means and standard deviations of NSs' and TLs' DET likert scale scores were also calculated and then the means were compared using independent sample t-test. Moreover, the third component of their speech act productions in both DCT and role-plays were analyzed. In the third component of the semantic units, participants either used direct requests such as "Can you explain why I got a C?" or indirect requests such as "Could I perhaps find out how the grades were figured?". After DCTs and role play transcriptions were coded, frequency counts were carried out for the qualitative analyses. Additionally, using the data gathered from the DCT, descriptive analyses such as frequency counts of all 4 components were run in order to account for how the two groups of participants differed linguistically in their formal complaint behavior. In other words, the data gathered from the DET questionnaire were both qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed.

In order to address the second research question, and to account for any variables that affect the language and strategy choice of the participants, correlation studies were performed. First the demographic information and other variables such as

“the length of stay” and “proficiency level” were statistically coded. Later each independent variable was compared with the means of attitude scores of the two groups. Results were obtained using independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA tests. In other words, total attitude scores and their means obtained from the likert scale discourse evaluation task were statistically correlated to the participants’ information (independent variable such as age, gender, proficiency level) that they had given in the demographic part of the DET questionnaire.

Moreover, paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test was done in order to account for the third research question. Since the DET likert scale had 5 direct request statements and 5 indirect ones as the third component of the complaint acts, the means from the total scores of direct items and indirect items were calculated. Later the means of the scores gathered from the two groups of participants were compared using paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test.

The role plays and the interviews were qualitatively analyzed. Once the role plays were transcribed, the coded language and strategy use of the participants were studied in terms of the frequency counts. Similarly, the interviews conducted were analyzed to determine what patterns emerged regarding language strategy use. The focus was to explain subjects' reasons for the DET ratings, their linguistic and pragmatic choices in the role plays, and consequently their beliefs regarding appropriate language use and direct-indirect politeness strategies. The analysis of interview data was used to enhance the data gathered by the DET and role plays. The results obtained from both quantitative and qualitative analyses are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the results of both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses. The findings are organized according to the research questions posed. For each research question and sub-questions, a description of the analysis and the quantitative and qualitative findings are reported as well as a brief discussion of the corresponding results (more extensive discussion can be found in the subsequent chapter). Native speaker (NSs) utterances from the role plays as well as their interview responses are quoted. As to the second group of participants, i.e. Turkish learners of English, quotations from the role plays and individual responses to the interview questions in Turkish (together with the English translations) are presented.

4.1. Research Question 1

How do Turkish learners of English differ linguistically and pragmatically from native speakers of English in their speech act behavior in specific formal complaint situations?

4.1.1. Quantitative Analysis

In order to account for the pragmatic differences between the native speakers (NSs) and the Turkish learners of English (TLs) in terms of the formal complaints, participants' ratings of the DET likert scale were used. Using the scale given after each statement, the participants were asked to evaluate each response with regard to the extent you think it would be socially acceptable / appropriate for the student to say. The discourse evaluation task required that the 10 items be ranked on a five-point likert scale, ranging from "very rude" to "perfectly appropriate". The choice "very rude" was given a value of "1" whereas "perfectly appropriate" was evaluated as "5" in the scale.

The means of the attitude scores were calculated for both participant groups and were later compared using the independent sample t-test. The results are presented in Table 18 below.

Table 18. Means of Participants' Attitude Scores (Independent Sample T-Test)

Participant Groups	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Turkish Learners of English (TLs)	144	31,40	5,32	274	-9,53	0,00
Native Speakers (NSs)	132	37,19	4,72			

As the results in Table 18 indicate, there was a significant difference between the total attitude scores of Turkish learners of English (TLs) and the total attitude scores of Native Speakers (NSs) [$t_{(274)}$= -9,53, p<.01]. The mean of NSs attitude scores ($\overline{X}$=37,19) was higher and more positive than that of TLs ($\overline{X}$=31,40). These results may suggest that the NSs find these statements appropriate for formal complaints. On the other hand, TLs think that these statements are less appropriate. In other words, the use of the given statements in formal complaints may be rude for TLs whereas it is more appropriate for NSs.

As to the linguistic differences between the between the native speakers (NSs) and the Turkish learners of English (TLs) in terms of the formal complaints, the open-ended DCT responses were used. First, the responses of the participants were coded according to the four semantic formulas mentioned before: (1) *initiators,* such as, "Hi", "Good afternoon", and "Excuse me, professor"; (2) *establishing context*, as in, "I came to discuss my grade"; (3) *a request*, such as, "Could you explain why my grade is a C?"; (4) *conveyance of disappointment / dissatisfaction / annoyance*, as in, "To be honest, I was very surprised of the grade I received". What is more, the third component was further coded as direct or indirect requests. Finally, the frequency counts were done and compared in order to see how the two groups differed in terms of the components (to explain the linguistic choices) and strategies (to explain the pragmatic choices) they

used in complaining. The frequency values and percentages of each individual component are shown in the following Tables 19 to 22. Table 23 shows the strategy choice of the participants distinctively. Finally, Table 24 illustrates all the related results collectively.

Table 19. Frequency of 1st Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Initiator

	Use of the 1st Component *Initiator*		**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
TLs	Component Used		32	22.2
	Component Not Used		112	77.8
		Total	144	100
NSs	Component Used		99	75
	Component Not Used		33	25
		Total	132	100

As the shown in Table 19 above, only 32 (%22.2) TLs used an initiator such as “Hi”, “Good afternoon”, and “Excuse me, professor” in their responses to the situation in the Discourse Completion Task, which was given in the last part of the DET questionnaire. On the other hand, 99 (%75) NSs used an initiator in their responses to the same task. The results show that there was a significant difference between the TLS and NSs in terms of their frequency of initiator use. In other words, TLs used the 1st complaint component less that the NSs did.

Table 20. Frequency of 2nd Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Establishing Context

	Use of the 2nd Component *Establishing Context*		**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
TLs	Component Used		26	18.1
	Component Not Used		118	81.9
		Total	144	100
NSs	Component Used		95	72
	Component Not Used		37	28
		Total	132	100

Similarly, there was a significant difference between the two groups as far as the 2nd compliant component is concerned. As Table 20 above illustrates, only 26 (%18.1) TLs used a statement that can establish a context such as "I would like to discuss my grade". On the contrary, 95 (%72) NSs used this component in their responses. Thus, the results show that TLs used the 2nd complaint component significantly less that the NSs did.

Table 21. Frequency of 3rd Complaint Component in DCT Responses: A Request

Use of the 3rd Component *A Request*			**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
TLs	Component Used		96	66.7
	Component Not Used		48	33.3
		Total	144	100
NSs	Component Used		117	88.6
	Component Not Used		15	11.4
		Total	132	100

What is more, as given in Table 21 above, 96 (%66.7) TLs used a request as a part of their complaints such as "Could you explain why my grade is a C?" in their responses to DCTs while 117 (%88.6) NSs used this 3rd component. According to the results, the difference was not as significant as it was in the previous two components. This may be due to the fact that the TLs mostly used the 3rd component alone as their complaining statements. Yet, the percentage of NSs was still higher than that of the TLs.

As to the 4th complaint component, there was a significant difference between the two participant groups. As the Table 22 below demonstrates, only 50 (%34.7) TLs used a statement that conveyed disappointment, dissatisfaction or annoyance. However, 87 (%65.9) NSs used this component in their responses. Thus, the results show that TLs used the 4th complaint component significantly less that the NSs did.

Table 22. Frequency of 4th Complaint Component in DCT Responses: Conveyance of Disappointment / Dissatisfaction / Annoyance

Use of the 4th Component *Conveyance of Disappointment / Dissatisfaction / Annoyance*			**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
TLs	Component Used		50	34.7
	Component Not Used		94	65.3
		Total	144	100
NSs	Component Used		87	65.9
	Component Not Used		45	34.1
		Total	132	100

The results presented so far account for the frequency counts of the 4 compliant components as used by the two participant groups in the DCTs in order to clarify the linguistic differences between the NSs and TLs.

Table 23. Frequency of Direct-Indirect Strategy Use in the 3rd Complaint Component in DCT Responses

Strategy Choice in the 3rd Component (Pragmatic Difference)			**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
TLs	Direct Strategy		14	9.7
	Indirect Strategy		82	56.9
	Component Not Used		48	33.3
		Total	144	100
NSs	Direct Strategy		62	47
	Indirect Strategy		55	41.6
	Component Not Used		15	11.4
		Total	132	100

As to the differences between the pragmatic choices of the two groups, 3rd component was distinctively analyzed to see the percentages of direct and indirect usages. As demonstrated in Table 23 above, only 14 (%9.7) TLs used direct requests whereas 82 (%56.9) used indirect requests as a part of their complaining behavior. On

the other hand, 62 (%47) NSs employed direct strategies in complaining while 55 (%41.6) produced indirect requests as the 3rd complaint component. The results brought about significant differences in the pragmatic choices in three aspects: a) there was a significantly high difference within the TLs group in terms of direct-indirect strategy use: TLs mostly preferred indirect strategies while complaining; b) there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of indirect strategies: %9.7 TLs and %47 NSs used direct strategies; and finally c) the distribution of participants who used direct strategies and those who used indirect ones were different in the two groups: more TLs used indirect strategies within the group itself (%56.9 indirect - %9.7 direct) while the number of NSs that used direct strategies was more than those who used indirect ones (%41.6 indirect - %47 direct). Table 24 below illustrates all results related to the linguistic and pragmatic choices of the participants collectively as obtained from the DCTs.

Table 24. Results Obtained from DCTs as to the Linguistic and Pragmatic Choices of the Participants

		Components (Linguistic)				**Strategy Choice (Pragmatic)**	
		Initiator	**Context**	**Request**	**Dissatisfaction**	**Direct**	**Indirect**
TLs	Frequency (n)	32	26	96	50	14	82
	Percentage (%)	22.2	18.1	66.7	34.7	9.7	56.9
NSs	Frequency (n)	99	95	117	87	62	55
	Percentage (%)	75	72	88.6	65.9	47	41.6

4.1.2. Qualitative Analysis

In order to gather more naturalistic data on formal complaints, the participants were asked to complain verbally for the same scenario given in the discourse evaluation task. 12 NSs and 4 TLs, totally 16 participants, volunteered to participate in the role plays. The written instructions in the DET were given verbally to the participants before they acted. With the participants' permission, the role-plays were recorded with a handy

cam (see Appendix 4-DVD for the video-recordings of the role-plays). Later the recorded role-plays were transcribed.

Table 25. Results Obtained from Role Plays as to the Linguistic and Pragmatic Choices of the Participants (12 NSs + 4 TLs)

		Components (Linguistic)				**Strategy Choice (Pragmatic)**	
		Initiator	**Context**	**Request**	**Dissatisfaction**	**Direct**	**Indirect**
TLs (4)	Frequency (n)	4	4	4	2	-	4
	Percentage (%)	100	100	100	50	-	100
NSs (12)	Frequency (n)	11	12	10	11	6	4
	Percentage (%)	91.7	100	83.3	91.7	50	33.3

Video-recorded role plays of the participants produced similar results regarding the pragmatic differences between the native speakers (NSs) and the Turkish learners of English (TLs) in formal complaints. As Table 25 above illustrates, when the transcriptions were scrutinized with regard to the four complaint components, it was found out that although the frequencies of component use were similarly high in both groups, the direct-indirect strategy use differed significantly between NSs and TLs. In compliance with the results obtained from the quantitative analyses, 6 (%50) NSs used direct strategies whereas only 4 (%33.3) NSs used indirect requests as a part of their formal complaining. On the other hand, all 4 (%100) TLs employed indirect strategies in their complaints.

Examples of NSs' direct strategy uses and TLs' indirect requests as a part of complaints are presented below as transcribed pieces of utterances:

Example 1 (NS1):

NS1 : I have a concern, %, I received a final grade of a C and I'm not quite sure why

Prof : Okay

NS1 : My final grade on my project was an A, I really enjoy your class a lot but I really don't just understand why I have a C in the final exam, (as a final grade) and *I was wondering if you could explain to me why*

Example 2 (NS7):

NS7 : Okay, I was wondering if I could ask you about the final

Prof : Okay, take a seat

NS7 : Thanks. Okay, %, I got my grades and, I was a little surprised to be perfectly honest because %, that was not what I was expecting, so %, the reason I wanted to come and ask about this 'cos I've … I looked over the work that I've done previously in the course and I really spent a lot of time studying for the exam, and I'm a little surprised I got a C and *I was wondering if I could ask you why*

Example 3 (TL2):

TL2 : And you?

Prof : Fine, thank you

TL2 : % my problem is that, %, I didn't expect such a low grade in my last paper, last exam and I am very sorry … I'm so sorry, and, *I want to learn about your evaluation criteria for the last paper*

Example 4 (TL4):

TL4 : I was expecting % much more % high grade

Prof : Okay, what grade did you get?

TL4 : I got a C… *I wonder if you could check my paper again or … have a look*?

What is more, the role plays showed that NSs were more assertive in formal complaints whereas TLs were more reserved and did not want to offend the professor at any terms. 3 NSs wanted to pinpoint a certain time to meet and talk about the revised grades once the professor agreed to recheck the exam papers. On the other hand, TLs avoided any direct judgments, tended to put the blame on themselves and expressed their gratitude to the professor for his having accepted to review the grades. Here are some specific examples:

Example 5 (NS3):

NS3 : I appreciate your help

Prof : Okay, no problem at all

NS3 : Thank you… so, % should we… *should I e-mail you soon to set up another meeting time where we can review…*

Example 6 (NS7):

NS7 : Alright, thank you… I appreciate it… I would like to take a little extra time to look at it and just….for nothing if not peace of mind, thank you

Prof : Not at all

NS7 : See you later…*Oh, I will…I will check back with you and see what's a good time*

Example 7 (NS12):

NS12 : …so I really think that we should sit down and maybe look at it a little closer, if you have the time

Prof : Yes, well I can't promise anything but we can definitely have a look at that and just re-examine it to see % what may have gone wrong on the day of the exam

NS12 : Okay, *is there a time that would work for you that would be % comfortable so that I could actually come back and sit down and….*

Example 8 (TL1):

TL1 : Yes…yes…sure.

Prof : Okay, do you think there might have been a problem with your study or…?

TL1 : Yes, yes…or… %…something else. *Let's have a look and see what my mistakes are*

Example 9 (TL4):

TL4 : I got a C, *I wonder if you could check my paper again or have a look*

Prof : We can… we can have another look at the paper…yeah, %… no problem.

TL4 : *Thank you, thank you Mr. Evans*

Participants' answers to open-ended interview questions also revealed similar results. As an answer to the second interview question, which was "Would you really

normally behave the same way in a real life situation?", all of the NSs stated that they would act in the same way. This shows that their language production in the role-plays was real-life like. The third question of the interviews asked their opinions on whether all native speakers / all learners of English would act in this way in their formal complaints. The majority of the NSs thought that most native speakers of English would behave as assertive and demanding as they did. They stated that most NSs would believe "it was their right to question the grades if they were not satisfied with what they had got". However, TLs believed that most Turkish people would be as polite as possible to the professor since "it was his choice to review the grades as a superior figure". Therefore, TLs would "avoid any offensive behavior that would make the professor annoyed" such as "blaming him of miscalculation" or "asking him directly to explain why the grade was a C".

4.2. Research Question 2

To what extent do the following variables affect Turkish learners' complaint behavior in English?

4.2.1. Age

Correlation studies were performed in order to address the sub-questions of the second research question. Analyses were run to find out how particular variables affect the attitude scores of the participants. First the independent variable "age" was statistically coded according to the responses given by the participants to the demographic part of the DET questionnaire. Later the independent variable was compared with the means of attitude scores of the two participant groups (TLS and NSs). In other words, total attitude scores and their means obtained from the likert scale discourse evaluation task were statistically correlated to the age groups of the participants. Results were obtained using one-way ANOVA test. One-way ANOVA test was used for the age variable since the participants were distributed within three age groups.

Table 26. Comparison of TLs' DET Likert Scale Attitude Scores According to Age (One-way ANOVA Test)

Age		Source of the variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	Significant Categories
TLs	Between groups	409,139	2	204,569	7,921	,001	(18-24 age), (25-30 age), (31&above).
	Within groups	3641,500	141	25,826			
	Total	4050,639	143				

Table 27. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Age

Age (TLs)	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
18-24 ages	104	31,50	5,54	25,82	-2,61	,001
25-30 ages	24	33,75	4,29			
31 ages and above	16	27,25	1,83			

The results in Table 26 and 27 indicate that there is a significant difference between the attitude scores of Turkish learners (TLs) regarding their age categories [$F_{(2-141)}$= 7,92, p< .01]. In other words, the attitude scores of TLs differ significantly according to their age groups. Using these results, post-hoc Tukey test was performed to find out between which groups these differences occurred. According to the results of the Tukey test, participants' attitude scores in 18-24 age group ($\overline{X}$=31,50) and in 25-30 age group ($\overline{X}$=33,75) were higher and more positive (in terms of the appropriateness of the complaints) compared to the attitude scores of the participant who were 31 and above ($\overline{X}$=27,25).

Table 28. Comparison of NSs' DET Likert Scale Attitude Scores According to Age (One-way ANOVA Test)

	Age	Source of the variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F
NSs	Between groups	26,497	4	6,624	,291	,883
	Within groups	2887,768	127	22,738		
	Total	2914,265	131			

On the other hand, the analyses' results regarding the Native Speakers (NSs) age groups showed no significant difference, as presented in Table 28 above. That is, the results indicated that there is no significant difference between the attitude scores of Native Speakers (NSs) regarding their age categories [$F_{(2\text{-}127)}$= 0,291, p> .01]. Consequently, the attitude scores of NSs do not differ significantly according to their age groups.

4.2.2. Gender

Similarly, the independent variable "gender" was statistically coded according to the responses given by the participants to the demographic part of the DET questionnaire. Later total attitude scores and their means obtained from the likert scale discourse evaluation task were statistically correlated to the genders of the participants. Results were obtained using independent sample t-test since the gender variable had only two groups (male and female). The following group of tables illustrates the results according to the participant groups.

Table 29. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Gender (Independent Sample T-Test)

Gender (TLs)	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Male	68	30,18	4,92	142	-2,68	0,00
Female	76	32,50	5,46			

According to the results shown in Table 29 above, a significant difference is found between the attitude scores of Turkish learners (TLs) regarding their genders [$t_{(142)}$= -2,68, p<.01]. Attitude scores of the female TLs ($\overline{X}$=32,50) are higher or more positive than those of male TLs ($\overline{X}$=30,18). Yet, although a statistically significant difference is found between the means, it should also be taken into consideration that the arithmetical means of male and female TLs are close to each other.

Table 30. Group Statistics on NSs' Attitude Scores According to Gender (Independent Sample T-Test)

Gender (NSs)	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Male	50	36,64	0,75	87,4	-0,99	0,32
Female	82	37,53	0,48			

As illustrated in Table 30 above, the results indicated that there was no significant difference between the attitude scores of Native Speakers (NSs) regarding their genders [$t_{(87,4)}$=-0,99, p >.01]. In other words, the attitude scores of male and female NSs did not differ significantly.

The results on age and gender reveal that there was no significant difference between the NSs' scores in terms of the both variables. That is, the attitude scores of the native speakers did not change significantly according to their ages or genders. On the other hand, a significant difference is found between the TLs' scores regarding both variables. The attitude scores of the Turkish learners changed significantly not only according to their age groups but also their genders. Younger learners think that the use of the given statements is more appropriate compared to learners aged 31 and above. The oldest of three groups of Turkish learners finds the statements rude. These findings may indicate that Turkish learners are affected by their cultural traits in their complaining behavior. Since age and gender are important elements of culture, it may be claimed that Turkish learners transfer their own pragmatic strategies into their formal complaining behavior in English.

4.2.3. Proficiency Level in English

The demographic part of the DET questionnaire included a self-rating of proficiency by asking the participants to state their level of proficiency by choosing one of three given options. As was done with the age and gender variables, the independent variable "proficiency level in English" was statistically coded according to the responses given by the participants. Later total attitude scores and their means obtained from the likert scale discourse evaluation task were statistically correlated to the genders of the participants. Results were obtained using independent sample t-test since only advanced and high intermediate group of Turkish learners participated in the study. The results of the independent sample t-test with regard to the attitude scores and proficiency level of the TLs are provided in Table 30 below.

Table 31. Group Statistics on TLs' Attitude Scores According to Proficiency Level (Independent Sample T-Test)

Proficiency Level in English (TLs)	**N**	$\overline{X}$	**S**	**df**	**t**	**p**
Advanced	82	30,04	5,26	142	-3,66	0,00
High intermediate	62	33,19	4,89			

As the results in Table 31 show, there was a significant difference between the attitude scores of Turkish learners (TLs) with regard to their proficiency level in English [$t_{(142)}$= -3,66, p<.01]. Attitude scores of the high-intermediate TLs ($\overline{X}$=33.19) were higher or more positive than those of advanced TLs ($\overline{X}$=30,04). In other words, as the proficiency in English increased, the attitude scores decreased. Thus, it can be claimed that high-intermediate TLs think it is not rude to use the given statements in formal complaining. The results may also be interpreted as that the use of the statements is more appropriate for the high-intermediate TLs compared to the advanced TLs. This may have stemmed from the reason that as the TLs comprehend the content and the linguistic meaning of the statements better, they may be more affected by their own pragmatic and cultural traits; thus, they may find the statements less appropriate.

4.2.4. Length of Stay in Target Culture

Statically coding procedures and analyses were similarly performed for the variable "length of stay in the target culture". Since the variable had more than two categories (more than countries and periods of time) one-way ANOVA test was used. As shown in the Table 32 below, the results indicated that there was no significant difference between the attitude scores of Turkish learners (TLs) regarding their length of stay in the target culture [$F_{(3\text{-}140)}$= 0,785, p> .01].

Table 32. Comparison of TLs' Attitude Scores According to Length of Stay in Target Culture (One-way ANOVA Test)

Length of Stay in Target Culture	Source of the variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F
TLs	Between groups	67,022	3	22,341	,785	,504
	Within groups	3983,617	140	28,454		
	Total	4050,639	143			

In other words, the attitude scores of those who had visited/stayed in an English speaking country and those who had not did not differ significantly. The analyses may not have produced significant results because the majority of the TL participants either did not state a country or had not been in any (see Tables 15 and 16 in the previous chapter). Since data for this variable came from very few participants, the results may have been calculated insignificant.

4.2.5. Method of Learning English

Similarly, no significant difference was found between the attitude scores of Turkish learners (TLs) regarding their method of learning English [$F_{(6\text{-}137)}$= 3,368, p> .01]. In other words, the attitude scores of the Turkish participants who learned English through grammar, translation, communicative skills or any combination of these methods did not differ significantly (see Table 33 below). These findings may be

insignificant because there were too many categories of methods according to the responses of the TL participants.

Table 33. Comparison of TLs' Attitude Scores According to English Learning Method(s) (One-way ANOVA Test)

English Learning Method(s)		Source of the variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F
TLs	Between groups	520,715	6	86,786	3,368	,204
	Within groups	3529,924	137	25,766		
	Total	4050,639	143			

4.3. Research Question 3

Do Turkish learners of English use direct or indirect complaining strategies in formal complaint situations?

4.3.1. Quantitative Analysis

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the DET likert scale had 5 direct request statements and 5 indirect ones as the third component of the complaint acts. Of the 10 statements, statements 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10 used direct requests whereas the statements 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9 involved indirect requests as a part of the complaint in the given scenario. In order to account for the strategy choice of the participants, analyses using the grouped items were performed. First, the means from the total scores of direct items and indirect items were calculated. Later, the means of the scores gathered from the two groups of items (5 direct items and 5 indirect items) according to the two groups of participants (TLs and NSs) were compared using paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test. The results of the paired sample t-tests are shown in Table 34 and 35, and independent sample t-test in Table 36 below.

Table 34. Comparison of TLs' Direct and Indirect Items (Paired Sample T-Test)

Group of items (TLs)	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Direct items	144	13,40	2,99	-22,306	143	0,00
Indirect items	144	18,00	2,87			

Table 35. Comparison of NSs' Direct and Indirect Items (Paired Sample T-Test)

Group of items (NSs)	N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Direct items	132	17,22	2,92	-10,24	131	0,00
Indirect items	132	19,96	2,70			

As the results of paired sample t-tests in Table 33 and 34 show, there was a significant difference between the Turkish learners' (TLs) scores of direct and indirect items [$t_{(2\text{-}143)}$= -22,306, p<.01]. TLs' attitude scores for indirect items ($\overline{X}$=18,00) were significantly higher or more positive than their attitude scores for direct items ($\overline{X}$=13,40). In other words, TLs think that it is more appropriate to use indirect statements in formal complaining and that the use of direct requests as a part of complaints is rude. Also, a significant difference was found between the Native speakers' (NSs) scores of direct and indirect items [$t_{(2\text{-}131)}$= -10,24, p<.01]. NSs' attitude scores given to indirect items ($\overline{X}$=19,96) were slightly higher or more positive than their attitude scores given to direct items ($\overline{X}$=17,22). However, since the statistical difference between the means of the two attitude scores is small, it should be argued whether there is really a practical difference between the direct and indirect choices of the NSs group. These results may have resulted due to individual differences in the strategy choices of native speaker participants with various nationalities.

Table 36. Comparison of Direct and Indirect Items According to Participant Groups (Independent sample T-Test)

Item and Participant Groups		N	$\overline{X}$	S	df	t	p
Direct Items	**TLs**	144	13,40	2,99	-10,733	274	,000
	NSs	132	17,22	2,92			
Indirect Items	**TLs**	144	18,00	2,87	-5,825	274	,000
	NSs	132	19,96	2,70			

In order to justify the results obtained from the paired sample t-test, independent sample t-test was also performed using the same group of data collectively but comparing the direct and indirect item scores of TLs and NSs. The findings given in Table 35 indicate similar results. There was a significant difference between the direct item scores of TLs and NSs [$t_{(4-274)}$= -10,733, p<.01]. Attitude scores given to direct items by NSs ($\overline{X}$=17,22) were significantly higher or more positive than their attitude scores given to direct items by TLs ($\overline{X}$=13,40). Hence, TLs think that the use of direct requests as a part of complaints is rude whereas the NSs find direct statement more appropriate than TLs do. Likewise, a significant difference was found between the indirect item scores of Turkish learners (TLs) and native speakers (NSs) [$t_{(4-274)}$= -5,825, p<.01]. Attitude scores given to indirect items by NSs ($\overline{X}$=19,96) were significantly higher or more positive than their attitude scores given to direct items by TLs ($\overline{X}$=18,00). Nevertheless, it should be argued whether there is really a practical difference between the direct and indirect choices of the NSs group because the statistical difference between the means of the two attitude scores is small.

4.3.2. Qualitative Analysis

As previously explained in the qualitative results of the 1st research question and demonstrated in Table 25, video-recorded role plays revealed similar results to quantitative analyses regarding the Turkish learners (TLs) strategy choices. All 4 (%100) TLs employed indirect strategies in their complaints:

Turkish Learner 1:

Prof : Okay, what were you expecting?

TL1 : % …. A!

Prof : Okay

TL1 : …because this is my favorite course, *I did my best actually so… % could there be a mistake?*

Turkish Learner 2:

TL2 : And you?

Prof : Fine. Thank you.

TL2 : % my problem is that % I didn't expect such a low grade in my last paper, last exam and I am very sorry, I'm so sorry, and… *I want to learn about your evaluation criteria for the last paper*

Turkish Learner 3:

TL3 : Have a nice day first of all.…I would like to talk to you about my final grade

Prof : [Yeah

TL3 : [….. if you have some time… I think I have done a good job in your course and I studied very hard, and as you know % my project was good and… after all when I got my final grade I was shocked… so *I was wondering if you could explain me how the grades were figured*

Turkish Learner 4:

TL4 : I was expecting % much more % high grade

Prof : Okay, what grade did you get?

TL4 : I got a C… *I wonder if you could check my paper again or ... have a look*?

Having rated the 10 statements in the likert scale of the DET, the 4 TLs were asked the following questions regarding their ratings as the first part of their interviews: "I see that you rated this statement X (one of the ratings in the 5-likert scale; e.g. very rude, perfectly appropriate, etc.). Why did you give this statement a rating of X? Why is the response X, in your opinion? The results complied with the quantitative analyses in that all the statements that the TLs rated "rude" or "very rude" were one of the direct

statements whereas the ones they rated "appropriate" or "perfectly appropriate" were indirect components. Here are the results for each participant:

Turkish Learner 1:

TL1 rated the 3rd statement "very rude" because she found the request too direct to be uttered to a professor, who was older and in a superior position then she was. On the other hand, she rated the 6th statement "perfectly appropriate" since this indirect complaining implied that the mistake might have resulted from the participant not from the professor, if any. She also added that she would not want to sound offensive towards a professor.

Turkish Learner 2:

TL2 rated the 3rd statement "rude" because he thought the word "explain" implied a direct order, which sounded impolite. However, he rated the 4th statement "perfectly appropriate" since this indirect complaining involved a passive structure and it emphasized an indirect request of being informed. He further stated that he would prefer to be respectful towards a professor.

Turkish Learner 3:

Similarly, TL3 rated the 3rd and the 10th statements "rude" since he thought these statements directly accused the professor of deliberately misgrading the student despite the use of "please". In contrast, he rated the 2nd statement "perfectly appropriate" since this statement politely emphasize that there might have been a mistake and that its indirect nature implies no direct offense on the professor. He also called attention to the fact that this indirect statement was appropriate to use while speaking to an elder and superior figure.

Turkish Learner 4:

Finally, TL4 rated the 3rd and the 5th statements "rude" because he thought these statements contained a direct order due to its grammatical structure and word choice, which was impolite. On the contrary, he rated the 2nd and the 7th statements "appropriate" since these statements politely requested the professor to review the grades although the mistake might possibly have stemmed from the student. He also asserted our culture required indirect strategies due to respect concerns.

In this chapter the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses have been presented in the order that addressed the research questions. The next chapter will discuss the results of this study within the theoretical framework of speech act research, address the limitations of the study, and the need for future research. Some pedagogical implications that arise from this study will also be discussed.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The main motivation behind studying complaint speech act sequences of native speakers (NSs) and Turkish learners (TLs) of English was not only to investigate the complaint productions of the two groups linguistically and pragmatically, but also to find out their perceived appropriateness of complaining speech act utterances in terms of directness and indirectness. Appropriateness is crucial in social contexts if the interlocutors are to communicate with each other successfully. Appropriateness is also impacted by the culturally-determined expectations we bring to both inter- and intra-cultural interactions, i.e., both speaker(s) and listener(s) have been socialized to behave according to specific norms. If interlocutors share expectations, encounters are likely to succeed. However, when expectations conflict, there comes pragmatic failure. This may potentially lead to a breakdown of the interaction or even to damaged relationships. As mentioned earlier, interaction is a complex activity involving the careful selection of both linguistic and pragmatic strategies in order to communicate successfully "in harmony with the requirements of people, their beliefs, desires and intentions, and the real-world circumstances in which they interact" (Verschueren 1987, p. 5).

In this mentioned framework, the following conclusions were reached on the basis of the analyses conducted in the present study: 1) native English speakers' and Turkish learners' production of complaints reflects a significant difference with respect to a) the linguistic components (semantic formulas) by which the complaints are formulized, b) the pragmatic choices made in complaining with reference to direct and indirect strategies; 2) native English speakers' and Turkish learners' perceptions of social appropriateness of direct and indirect complaints also reflect a significant difference; that is, TLs are more reserved and indirect in their complaining behavior compared to NSs, which suggests that this may be a problem in interactions between a TL complainer and a NS listener in that NSs may think TL complainer is not assertive enough since there are not adequate reasons even to complain at all, and also it may be

problematic in interactions where NSs complain to TL listeners in English in that TLs may find NSs too rude or too direct though they are not in terms of their own cultural traits; 3) the pragmatic preferences made by Turkish learners are significantly different from those of native speakers with regard to “age” and “gender”, which suggests that the learners transfer pragmatic features from their own cultural etiquette; and finally, 4) there are significant differences between the pragmatic choices of learners with different “proficiency levels”; that is, the higher the proficiency level of learners is, the more they perceive the indirect complaining strategies as socially more appropriate, which suggests that the learners are more affected by their own culture and corresponding pragmatic elements as they get more proficient in comprehension and use of the target language.

Within the framework of this study, native and Turkish speakers differed not only in their pragmatic production as reflected by the DCTs, role plays and interviews, but also exhibited significant differences in their evaluations of discourse as reflected by the DET ratings and interviews. Whereas data collected via the production based instruments provided information on how the two groups produced speech acts, the latter two added another level of understanding by taking into account the hearer's perspective.

In order to understand speech act utterances, the hearer's perspective is crucial so that the potential for relative success or failure of the speech act utterance can be investigated in depth. In the final analysis, successful communication is important for the following reasons: a) to forge and maintain relationships; b) to cooperate with each other in academic and non-academic settings; and c) to facilitate an exchange of information. Therefore, DET ratings provide additional information on why some utterances 'misfire.'

As was discussed in the literature review section, there has been a debate over whether learners with higher proficiency do more pragmatic transfer than lower proficiency learners (e.g., Ellis, 1994; Takahashi & Beebe, 1993). The findings of the present study present evidence to "the higher the proficiency, the higher the pragmatic transfer." The results also support Ellis' (1994) statement that "learners may need to

reach a threshold level of linguistic proficiency before pragmatic transfer can take place" (p. 181).

The discourse evaluation task in this study provided ratings of responses while subjects' opinions regarding appropriateness of responses were collected via open-ended interviews. Generally, NSs were more assertive and direct whereas TLs were more reserved and indirect in their complaining behavior, but both groups concurred about their opinions regarding polite language use. These findings suggest that the basic need of interlocutors to maintain their own as well as the hearer's face was a motivating factor in the subjects' views on appropriate and polite language use. However, in spite of these similar views regarding politeness, the two groups demonstrated different behaviors in the DCTs and the role plays in terms of direct and indirect strategies. What is more, Turkish learners stated that they believed the native speakers would be more direct in their complaining behavior. Thus, it appears that Turkish learners are either not completely successful in translating their declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge or they choose not to do so due to their won cultural routine, which suggest that the TLs are affected by their own culture in formal complaints in English.

5.1. Theoretical Significance of the Study

Several theoretical implications for the field of second language acquisition and interlanguage pragmatics can be derived from the findings of this study. Unlike grammatical competence where there is a set of prescriptive rules that determine correct and incorrect forms, pragmatic competence involves the expression of communicative intent, which can be achieved in many different ways. Because self-expression depends on not only the cultural norms, but also the individuality of the speakers, we cannot fully understand the construct of pragmatic competence without extending the framework to include theories that can account for learners' choice of speech behavior or reasons for their choices and its consequences. Yet, it is important to understand the social and psychological processes that have an impact on the development and performance of a learner's second language. Thus, a discussion of the acquisition of pragmatic competence must factor in the learner's conflicting needs such as the need to be pragmatically correct, the need to get things done, and the need to maintain face.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the foundational work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) on speech act theory has been expanded and investigated by several researchers in the last three decades. A fairly extensive body of work which empirically examines different speech acts is available. In addition, some excellent reviews of literature on speech act studies and on speech act data collection methods is available.

A large body of cross-cultural speech act studies has typically focused on the differences between native and nonnative speakers in their use of strategies for performing speech acts. Such research has generally included L2 controls (native speaker of the L2/target language as baseline data), LI controls (so that pragmatic transfer can be explained from LI to L2), and the nonnative subjects (so that interlanguage pragmatics can be assessed). As each study sheds new light on some aspect of speech acts, it simultaneously highlights the difficulties involved in categorizing human interaction and thus reiterates the need for further research.

The current study attempted to explain speech act performance focusing specifically on linguistic elements as semantic formulas, pragmatic choices, and perceptions on social appropriateness in terms of directness-indirectness. Since cross-cultural work, particularly that which compares nonnative speakers using the native speaker as the standard or norm, focuses on problematic areas in the nonnative's interlanguage, conclusions from such cross-cultural work have generally emphasized the need for the language learners to adapt to/learn the pragmatic aspects of the target language.

The current comparative study on complaint speech act from the mentioned aspects supplied by native speakers (NSs) and Turkish learners (TLs) was significant for the following reasons: 1) a comparison on complaints has not been conducted between the native speakers and Turkish learners before; 2) since pragmatics deals to a great degree with *appropriateness* of language use, it follows that politeness is part and parcel of appropriate speech, and thus pragmatic choices on directness and indirectness as an index of politeness are of interest and importance; 3) a data collection tool with an attitude scale designed by the researcher, named Discourse Evaluation Task (DET), has not been used in a similar study before; 4) furthermore, the Discourse Evaluation Task

also required perceptions of appropriateness and consequently, the investigation of pragmatic choices was linked to the perception of politeness that both groups had.

Pragmatic failure that results from different belief systems (i.e., sociopragmatic failure) underlying language use is particularly problematic because it requires the learners both as speakers and hearers to adapt to a system of values that might be 'foreign' to them. However, the language learner should be given access to the norms/values of the target culture so that he/she is in a position to decide whether to add the new values to the existing system he/she already has, or to disregard the new system. Saville-Troike (1982) and Thomas (1983) caution against enforcing the values of the target culture on language learners, but emphasize the need to provide this information so that learners do not inadvertently commit a *faux pas*. Thus, according to the findings of this study, Turkish learners would need to have access to information about what an appropriate complaint is so that they are less likely to encounter problems in interactions with native speakers, but should not be forced to use these norms in the expense of making them conflict themselves and their own cultural characteristics.

The native speaker has been indispensable in applied linguistics research. It was also mentioned that applied linguists continue to use dichotomous terms like native / nonnative speaker as they have failed to come up with an alternative concept which has psychological reality for language users. The view of the native speaker as a monolithic construct has been problematized by many researchers. Native speakers exhibit variability in both production and perception. In this study, for instance, there was a lack of agreement between native speakers on the production of complaints as well as perceptions of what is socially appropriate in terms of directness and indirectness. For example, as the role plays and interviews show, the strategies and choices made by American and British native speakers may vary. What is more, there may be variations in different parts of the same country (in different states in the U.S.).

The variability of native speaker performance has been addressed by Hudson et. al., (1995): "the role played by the native speaker as the standard against which performance is judged is far from resolved. Much more research will need to be conducted to address the variability of native speaker performance" (p.66). Paikeday (1985) considers the term 'native speaker' a fuzzy term which in his view linguists use

to denote a theoretical construct. He finds the term problematic because it has "more political and sociological overtones than linguistic ones" (p. 72).

Additionally, the theoretical fit between linguistic competence and pragmatic competence remains to be settled. Is it possible to have grammatical ability without pragmatic ability? The answer may be yes, as was evident by the products of the structuralism age of language teaching. The fact that although learners are able to produce output but not necessarily the output of the pragmatically approved kind was what the communicative approach sought to rectify. However, can we have pragmatic ability without grammatical knowledge? This is a little more difficult to answer, but Widdowson (1989) suggests that there is evidence that excessive zeal for communicative language teaching can lead to this. For example, learners can acquire a repertoire of phrases in a range of correlating contexts, but fail to analyze them fully into linguistic constituents. Schimdt (1983) found that strategic and discourse competence improved greatly over time despite minimal improvement in linguistic competence. However, the data from this study suggest that there is a bi-directional relationship between one's pragmatic ability and grammatical (i.e., linguistic) ability. In other words, it is not the case that one first develops linguistic ability and then pragmatic ability, but the two abilities are constantly informing one another as they are played out in speech performance. Although learners maintained that it is more important for them to be clear communicators than appropriate communicators, their performance data indicated that they were constantly searching for and using the most effective and appropriate communicative strategies given the limits of their linguistic proficiency. Thus, the two entities cannot be studied separately from one another and the interplay of the two entities must be further investigated.

Furthermore, the DETs can be a useful instrument for assessing pragmatic competence of language learners. It is both quick and relatively easy to administer thus high in practicality. With intensive training a high level of inter-rater reliability can be reached, thus increasing the reliability of the instrument. The issue of training raters is crucial, as raters need to agree on what expectations they have for specific situations. This study demonstrated variability in native speaker agreement of discourse evaluation ratings; thus, addressing the fact that if native speakers are judging nonnative performance they need to agree on specific criteria for evaluation.

The current study adopted role-plays as the instrument, and they have proved to be an effective means to investigate the participants' pragmatic competence in conditions which closely resemble real interactions. These interactive role-plays have provided rich performance data, and allowed the researcher to probe the various aspects of speech act interactions. Open role-plays were appropriate and even necessary in order to examine sequential and interactional aspects of speech acts let alone use of core speech act strategies, as pointed by Sasaki (1998, p. 479). In Canale's (1983) terms, we can look into all four components of communicative competence (i.e., linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence) with these kinds of data, whereas only fairly limited aspects of these components of communicative competence can be probed with a widely used "discourse completion test."

5.2. Methodological Implications

Findings of this study also offer implications for the field of second/foreign language education. First, language teachers and curriculum developers need to recognize and plan for the different target goals language learners may have. The findings of this study show that native speakers and Turkish learners of English differ in how they apply their pragmatic ability to communicative needs. Therefore, the findings make a case for instruction so that nonnative speakers can develop their pragmatic ability and communicate successfully with native speakers of English. This leads us to the question: to what extent can pragmatic competence be taught?

Several research studies on speech acts have addressed the role and efficacy of instruction in developing pragmatic competence. For example, Cohen, Olshtain and Rosenstein's (1986) study on apologies indicated that advanced learners tend to overgeneralize some apology forms (either 'very' and 'sorry') or tend to use a wide variety of forms because they are not sensitive to subtle distinctions which native speakers make in their realizations of apologies. The authors question whether instruction would benefit advanced learners to identify the finer distinctions of language use. Wildner-Bassett (1994) concludes from two pilot studies that instruction aided the development and use of routines, and there was an "overall increase in both the quantity

and quality of routine use, as well as a greater sensitivity for the specific interactional demands and language realizations in a particular situation" (p. 14).

In a review of studies dealing with the teachability of speech acts, Cohen (1996b) concludes that several studies show that instruction is useful in developing pragmatic ability. In addition to teaching pragmatic aspects of FL, the teaching of metapragmatic awareness has also been examined. House (1996) examined the impact of providing metapragmatic knowledge about routines to learners and concludes that while such knowledge may develop metapragmatic awareness, it does not necessarily mean that learners can respond appropriately. Based on a comprehensive review of studies, Kasper (1997) argues convincingly that some aspects of pragmatic competence may not develop sufficiently without some type of instruction. In particular, she reports that L2 learners possess a good deal of pragmatic knowledge in their first language which they often underuse in the L2: "So, the good news is that there is a lot of pragmatic information that adult learners possess, and the bad news is that they don't always use what they know." Kasper thus argues for raising pragmatic awareness through pedagogic intervention of some form so that learners can transfer their "universal or transferable L1 pragmatic knowledge in L2 contexts."

The findings of this study and research on the teachability of pragmatic competence suggest that the development of non-native speakers' pragmatic competencies may need a form of instruction. This research study showed that nonnative speakers undersupplied the linguistic elements in complaints, and also perceived speech act utterances differently from native speakers in terms of the relative appropriateness of each utterance. Thus, if communication between native speakers of English and Turkish learners is to be successful, these learners would need some instruction in the appropriate use of semantic formulas, as well as in analyzing what language use native speakers of English consider appropriate in specific contexts.

Teaching pragmatics is generally beneficial to second and foreign-language learners (Kasper & Rose, 2001; Takahashi, 1989; Rose 2005; Mackey, 2006). However, researchers claim that current ESL textbooks frequently fall short in providing dialogues and examples of authentic speech act performance in English (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Jiang, 2006). Ideally, textbooks should include empirical data and provide accurate

linguistic and sociolinguistic information in order to help students increase their pragmatic effectiveness (Schmidt, 1993). According to Schmidt, employing an explicit method of "noticing" can enhance pragmatic knowledge. The researcher claims that conscious attention to nonnative pragmatic features may be useful in gaining pragmatic knowledge. Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin in their 2005 study on pragmatic awareness state that in addition to pragmatically relevant input in L2 instruction, noticing and awareness-enhancing activities should be included in teaching L2. Thus, in addition to incidental and implicit input, conscious attention to relevant features and attempts to utilize analytic exercises may be useful in enhancing pragmatic knowledge.

Although learners should be offered explicit and implicit input, the goal of teaching pragmatic practices may not necessarily be to encourage all language learners to achieve native-like speech proficiency. We cannot fully understand what makes learners pragmatically transfer without reference to theories that can account for learners' choice of speech behavior, reasons for their choices and their consequences. It is important to understand that individual and subjective processes may have an impact on the second language learner's performance. A discussion of the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer should include a consideration of possibly conflicting needs such as the need to be pragmatically appropriate, the need to get things done or the need to display individual identity. As language educators, our job is not to transform language learners into native-speakers, but to inform language learners of the pragmatic choices and their consequences. In other words, learners must be given the knowledge to make an informed choice, which allows them the freedom to flout pragmatic conventions and the freedom to express their own values and beliefs.

There is an assumption that native-speaker norms are an ideal target for non-native speakers. Kachru (2001) stated, "Those privileged constructs of 'nativeness' in English are debatable on the cross-cultural, functional and pragmatic grounds. In other words pedagogy and 'nativeness' are clearly not related" (p.3). Thus it has also been argued that a total convergence with native speaker norms may not be desirable from the native and non-native point of view. Non-natives may choose being distinct to assert their identity, and native speakers may prefer some degree of divergence as a sign of fully belonging to the target community. It was asserted that "students need to know that understanding an alternative pragmatic system does not mean abandonment of their

own. They are free to develop their own synthesis and approaches to people and situations in the target language and culture" (Ebsworth & Eisenstein, 1993, p. 6). Thus optimal range and degree of convergence should be an acceptable goal (Kasper, 1995; Hamilton, 2001).

It can be suggested that language learners be given tools to use to help them understand what is appropriate and what is not, what is rude and what is polite, and they should be allowed to make their own decisions on how to respond. The learners should be comfortable enough in target language to decide to be rude or polite intentionally rather than inadvertently. In addition, assessment of an ideal native speaker model may remain problematic since pragmatic norms vary within target languages. There is preliminary evidence that pragmatic research has failed to account for "regional and social factors on intra-lingual choices in language use in both pragmatics and dialectology" (Barron, 2005). However, it is possible that there exist potential intra-lingual pragmatic factors due to geographical or social variables influencing Turkish participants' verbal behavior. Most Turkish people realize, for example, that the perception of social distance and social dominance, or the perception of what is appropriate verbal behavior in private, official and public spheres may be different for Turkish people in rural regions of the country than for people living in urban areas. Therefore, including intra-lingual pragmatic differences in the language teaching process can prove to be beneficial to the learners as it "can extend their perspective to appreciate many levels of pragmatic variation in both linguistically-close and linguistically-distant cultures" (Barron, 2008, p. 389).

Instruction with the goal of developing pragmatic ability can be provided in various ways. It could be a potential problem in the FL classroom if nonnative instructors are not familiar with appropriate norms of interaction in different communicative contexts. However, this problem can be approached in different ways. First of all, pieces of literature, films and television shows can provide rich information on language use. As demonstrated by Kachru (1991) and D'Souza (1991) fiction in Indian English for example, provides a rich source of information about how speech acts are performed within that specific cultural and linguistic context.

In addition, teachers could invite native speakers of the target language to teach specific units of the course dealing with pragmatic issues. Actual role-plays could also be conducted between native and nonnative speakers, or vignettes with native speakers interacting in diverse situations can be used in the classroom and students asked to role-play the situations. Such opportunities would instruct learners in what routines and formulas are appropriate in a specific given context.

Including learner-production activities that are designed to enhance such knowledge may be helpful. For example, student-to-student role plays simulating real-life situations along with peer assessment of the performance may be useful. Such interactional tasks along with class discussion may facilitate effective negotiation of pragmatic norms and strategies (Long, 2006; Mackey, 2006). In addition, specific information about L2 pragmatics may also have a place in the process of teaching pragmatic rules.

Explicit instruction of second language pragmatics may be particularly beneficial for adult learners, as better understanding of the rules may enhance their social standing and confidence. Some of the recent research (Kasper & Rose, 2003; Takimoto, 2006) suggests that explicit instruction has clear advantages over its complete absence and over implicit instruction. Thus, it may be particularly important that teachers explain to all second language learners what conventionally indirect speech acts are and what sociolinguistic function they perform; the indirectness of these speech acts may be especially difficult to decipher. However, more research is necessary to assess further the effects of instruction on the acquisition of pragmatics.

Similarly, communicative activities in the classroom provide valuable production practice for the learner, but that they do not generate the type of sociolinguistic input that learners need. Moreover, research has shown that language classrooms are impoverished environments for the acquisition of pragmatic competence. For example, in teacher-fronted discourse, it was found that there is a narrow range of speech acts used, lack of politeness marking, shorter response behavior, simplified openings and closings, discourse organization management monopolized by the teacher, and a limited range of discourse markers (Kasper 1997).

To gain access to a wider range of more authentic pragmatic exchanges, both learners and teachers need to become keen observers of their target speech communities. Teachers should not rely on their own intuitions about the norms of acceptable language use to represent those of the wider speech community. Teachers should design pedagogical activities that can take complete advantage of the resources in the speech community. As teachers and learners co-construct their knowledge of pragmatic language usage, they also need to investigate the consequences and meanings that certain pragmatic speech styles carry within the speech community. Analysis of movies and TV discourse, observation tasks on sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic language use in authentic contexts, role-plays, and simulation drama can be other effective instructional interventions. Helping students understand the way pragmatic principles operate in other cultures and encouraging them to look for pragmatic or discoursal norms is the first step toward achieving the goal of pragmatic competence.

The teacher could also play tape-recordings of speech acts so that learners can identify how polite a specific utterance is/is not. Discussions of various aspects of language use, such as the importance and impact of directness-indirectness can be incorporated in the classroom so that students are given the opportunity to use a meta-language to discuss their own language use. Wildner-Bassett (1997) underscores the value of using actual examples from spontaneous speech produced by native speakers and learners so that learners may develop awareness regarding the importance of directness-indirectness (p. 124). Learners can also engage in analysis of social variables which determine speech act production in their native tongues and compare them to those at work in the L2. Such a contrastive analysis could assist learners in identifying the points of difference and similarity between their native language and the target language.

As a way of promoting students' awareness of cultural differences Rose (1994) suggests using video-taping, especially in an EFL settings, since students can be exposed to a variety of language forms and functions in socially and culturally rich contexts through video. A teacher shows a conversation between close friends and, just before a complaint is made in a scene, stops the tape and asks students to guess which complaining strategies would be the most appropriate in that scene. After the discussion, the teacher restarts the tape and the students compare their answers with

whatever happened in the video. Thus, students obtain immediate feedback and develop their knowledge of the pragmatic differences between the two languages. Kramer (1997) suggests that even in an ESL class that does not have a primary focus on pragmatic language use, using an entire episode from a sitcom as a text for class work can provide students with rich and varied input for listening work, grammar, vocabulary and idioms, and pragmatic language use. Besides, this can serve as a stimulus for oral work, such as discussion and role-plays.

In addition to these pedagogical suggestions, Cohen's (1996b) suggestion that learners keep an electronic learning log about their reflections on language learning and language use is a useful one. He also suggests that in the future, multimedia packages could assist greatly in this area by providing a "host of sociocultural and sociolinguistic contexts for given speech acts so that students will have greater assurance that they are using those speech acts in the appropriate context, employing acceptable semantic formulas, and exploiting language forms that are sociolinguistically appropriate" (p. 265).

Moreover, there is a critical need for English-language-teaching (ELT) materials to reflect spontaneous speech behavior. Similarly, this study also found that EFL learners' performance was limited in terms of formulaic responses due to a lack of authentic models of target language usage. Thus, materials development needs to be more concentrated on capturing the properties of authentic discourse.

In reconsidering pragmatic ability as a teaching goal, we must realize that native-like speech is not always the target for all learners. However, as language educators, we must at least teach learners to use language within an acceptable range of pragmatic appropriateness in the target language. It remains to be examined what instructional options are best to help students in different social environments and what contexts improve their knowledge and skill in using language effectively. For future studies, by studying developmental speech act performance over time, it may be possible to measure more rigorously the contributions and limitations of formal instruction.

Chapter 6

Limitations and Need for Further Research

The study has some limitations. The first is the nature of the sample. The findings of this study are limited to the Turkish population participating in the study. The limited size and the nature of the participant sample do not provide grounds for making any generalizations reaching beyond this group. Besides, some of the native speaker participants resided in Turkey for some time. Their exposure to Turkish culture may have affected their linguistic and pragmatic choices in formal complaining. Also, this study did not investigate participants' language acquisition from a developmental perspective. However, the findings do indicate that length of stay in the target environment does not have a significant influence on the pragmatic style choices of Turkish students.

Another drawback of the current study is that although this study attempted to target learners at higher levels of English proficiency to obtain a clearer understanding of how linguistic proficiency interacts with pragmatic proficiency, this was difficult to assess because there was not much variation in the proficiency scores of the learners due to a narrow range in the sampling population. Moreover, there was no way to confirm the self-assessment proficiency score through external language proficiency measures. It is also speculated that learners, especially EFL learners, who have not had a chance to compare their linguistic skills to other native speakers, may have had an inflated sense of their proficiency. Learners from more diverse educational and personal backgrounds need to be targeted for further studies.

Another limitation stems from the fact that data obtained from the interviews and learner variables are basically self-reported and sometimes not reported at all. Sufficient data could not be gathered for variables such as “length of stay in target

culture" and "method of learning English", which did not allow for appropriate analyses and results on these issues.

The current study focused on complaint speech act in a formal context between a student and a professor. The results cannot be generalized to different speech acts in semi-formal or informal context between people of various power statuses. Therefore, further research calls for studies including other speech acts in various contexts.

Not having collected data from the Turkish learners in Turkish in order to be able to fully account for the transfer effects is another limitation. The DET questionnaire could have been translated into Turkish and data could have been collected from Turkish learners role-playing the same scenario in Turkish. That is why future research may include more comprehensive data on the linguistic and pragmatic choices that the foreign language learners make in their first language in order to make justifiable generalization on the transfer effects.

This study did not track learners' longitudinal development. As the interview data suggests, informants' pragmatic styles and choices change depending on various circumstances. Exactly when and why such changes in their behavior occur remains to be studied through more longitudinal studies that can track a learner's development and non-development over time. However, it would be interesting to follow the participants for a longer period of time as this might shed some light on the pragmatic development and perhaps reveal the reasons for the participants' choices.

Furthermore, identification of just the differences does not inform us exactly about which of those differences may matter in interaction. Some differences between native-speaker norms and language learner performance may result in negative stereotyping by native speakers, whereas others may be heard as somewhat different, but perfectly appropriate alternatives. Therefore, carefully devised studies that examine both native and non-native hearers' reactions to language learners' pragmatic speech behavior warrant further study.

All in all, understanding second language acquisition is a complex process. In the days of the structuralism when the focus was only on grammatical competence, the

extent of second language acquisition research was to examine how forms were acquired and produced accurately, the effects of personal variables such as age, aptitude, and instructional treatments, and whether there was negative or positive transfer from the native language to name some major areas. In the current realm of communicative language teaching, there is a heavier burden on SLA research to define, identify, and prescribe aspects of language learning that make communicative competence in a target language possible. Language learning and teaching need to occur within a social and cultural context, because as one masters a language, he/she also becomes, to a certain extent, a member of the speech community that uses the language. Thus, we not only need to examine the underlying knowledge and process involved in comprehending and producing output in a second language, but also identify the additional variables pertaining to socio-cultural aspects of language that make appropriate language use possible. The area of pragmatic competence has only recently received long deserved attention in SLA research. There is still much work to be done in this area in order to understand to a fuller extent the internal processes and the external factors involved in the acquisition of pragmatic competence among foreign language learners. The great potential of language teaching for developing learners' pragmatic ability lies in its capacity to alert and orient learners to pragmatic features encountered outside the classroom, to encourage them to try out new pragmatic strategies, to reflect on their observation and their own language use, and to obtain feedback. It is imperative for the sake of language instruction to continue research that provides accurate information regarding how speech acts actually work in communicative situations within various languages and cultures.

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APPENDIX 1

Dear participant,

Okan ÖNALAN is conducting research on the English language use of adult EFL speakers for his PhD dissertation. This study intends to investigate how EFL speakers accomplish communicative purposes when speaking in English and how these responses compare with those made by native speakers of English.

In this preliminary open-ended survey in the form of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), participants are kindly asked to write the responses that they would make verbally for each situation described in the DCT. These DCTs will be collected by Okan ÖNALAN in person or via electronic mail, and examined for how participants realize communicative intent in English in certain situations. The goal is to determine what language choices EFL speakers make when performing these speech acts, and how these responses compared to those made by native speakers. Participants' performance will be kept confidential, and participants' names will not be revealed, although specific responses from the DCTs may be used for exemplary purposes.

You can ask Okan ÖNALAN about the research project at any time. You can email him at okan_onalan@hotmail.com. Thank you very much.

Demographic Information

1. Name-Surname and Nationality:

2. Age and Gender:

3. Profession:

4. Field of study at university:

5. Is English your first language?
(If Yes, please go on to the Discourse Completion Test on the next page.)

6. If not, what is your first language?

7. How many years have you studied English in classes?

8. What has your English study focused on?
(i.e., Grammar and grammar exercises, translation, conversation, reading skills, listening skills)

9. Do you consider yourself fluent in English?

10. Total time spent in English-speaking countries (please specify country and amount of time):

Discourse Completion Test

Directions: Please write your response in the blank area. Do not spend a lot of time thinking about what answer you think you should provide; instead, please respond as naturally as possible and try to write your response as you feel you would say it in the situation. Potential follow-up responses by the other person in each scenario have been left out intentionally.

1. You received your final grades. You were shocked that your professor gave you a C. You got an A on your report, so you don't understand why your final grade was so low. You feel disappointed and want to find out what went wrong. You knock on the door of the professor's office.

Professor: Come in.

You:

_____

_____

_____

2. You live in a multi-storey building. Your upper-floor neighbors, who have four kids, have been very noisy lately. You do not know them very well actually. You have tolerated the inconvenience for some time now, but you have decided to ask for a little peace and quiet. You go upstairs and knock on their door.

Neighbor: (opening the door) Hello?

You:

_____

_____

_____

3. You are sharing an apartment with your friend. Recently, (s)he smokes in the living room and you are very disturbed. You and your friend agreed not to smoke when you first decided to live together. You've put up with the smoke for several days, but tonight you feel you should say something.

Roommate: .....(watching TV and smoking).....

You:

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time and effort!

APPENDIX 2

Dear participant,

Okan ÖNALAN (a PhD student in Gazi University ELT Department – Ankara/TURKEY) is conducting research on the English language use of adult EFL speakers for his PhD dissertation. This study intends to investigate how EFL speakers accomplish communicative purposes when speaking in English and how these responses compare with those made by native speakers of English.

In the first part of the questionnaire, there are questions about your personal background. In the second part, a hypothetical situation and 10 possible responses are given, with an opportunity to give your own, unique response. The questionnaire will be collected by Okan ÖNALAN in person or via email. The participants' demographic information and their performances will be kept confidential, and participants' names will not be revealed, although specific responses from the surveys may be used for exemplary purposes.

Okan ÖNALAN is available to answer questions about this project at any time.
Email: okan_onalan@hotmail.com. Thank you very much.

PART 1 - Demographic Information

1. Full Name : email:

2. Age and Gender :

3a. Profession :
3b. Field of Education :
3c. Educational Level (B.A, M.A, PhD, etc.) :

4. Nationality :

5. Is English your first language? : ***(If Yes, please go on to the survey on the next page.)***

6. If not, what is your first language? :

7. Years of studying English :

8. What has your English study focused on?
   - ⬭ Grammar and grammar exercises.
   - ⬭ Translation.
   - ⬭ Communicative skills.

9. Level of proficiency in English? :
   - ⬭ I can express my opinions in English freely. (Advanced)
   - ⬭ I can say most of what I want to say despite some difficulty of doing so. (High-intermediate)
   - ⬭ I usually cannot express what I want to say. (Intermediate or Lower)

10. Total time spent in English-speaking countries:

Where?	_____	How long?	_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____

11. English proficiency test score : KPDS _____ TOEFL _____ Other _____

PART 2 – The Discourse Evaluation Task (DET)

Read the situation below. 10 possible responses to complete the rest of the dialog between the professor and the student have been listed. Using the scale given after each question, evaluate each response with regard to the extent you think it would be **socially acceptable/appropriate** for the student to say. In reading these responses, please assume that no irony or sarcasm is expressed in them and that they are uttered with basically "neutral" intonation.

Situation:

The speaker **(the same gender as yours)**, a university student, received his/her final grade for a course. The student was shocked that **Professor Evans (50 years old)** gave him/her a C. The class was one of the student's favorites, and he/she had studied very hard. The student got an A on his/her final exam/project, so does not understand why the final grade was so low. The student knocks on the door of the professor's office:

Prof. Evans **:** Come in.
The Student **:** Good afternoon, Professor Evans.
I would like to talk about my final grade….

		VERY RUDE	RUDE	NOT DECIDED	APPROPRIATE	PERFECTLY APPROPRIATE
1.	I was hoping you could explain why I got a C.					
2.	Would you consider the possibility that there might have been a mistake?					
3.	Please explain why I got a C.					
4.	Could I perhaps find out how the grades were figured?					
5.	Can you explain why my final grade was so low?					
6.	Can I see my final exam paper, please?					
7.	Could you explain what has gone wrong in my studies?					
8.	I was not expecting a grade that low. Could you please recalculate?					
9.	Could you spare five minutes to show me my overall grades?					
10.	Can I find out why I got a C?					

Now, consider that you are the student in the scenario above. You have just knocked the professor's door to complain about your final grade. Complete the scenario by writing what you would say.

Professor Evans **:** Come in**.**

You **:** _____

_____

_____

_____ .

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

1) I see that you rated this statement X (one of the ratings in the 5-likert scale; e.g. very rude, perfectly appropriate, etc.). Why did you give this statement a rating of X? Why is the response X, in your opinion?

2) Would you really normally behave the same way in a real life situation? Why?

3) In your opinion, would all native speakers / all learners of English act in this way in their formal complaints?